PERCEPTION OF ISLAM IN ZOROASTRIAN ZAND LITERATURE

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Abstract

This study analyses the perception of Islam presented in Zand literature, namely, the exegetical literature of the Zoroastrian tradition that gradually lost power as a result of Muslim conquests. Zand texts, which grew during the Sasanian era and indicate a lively theological discourse, were codified and took their final form after the Muslim conquests. Zand literature talks about Islam and Muslims in an implicit manner by means of concepts such as *Tāzīg* (Arab) *Ag-dēnīh* (evil/superstitious religion). Written for guiding Zoroastrian clergy in every subject, including theology and morals, these texts have a biased and negative attitude towards Islam and Muslims. Zands initially interpret Muslim conquests in an apocalyptic sense and emphasize that the end of world is near and consequently that evil reigns now. On the other hand, due to the obligation of living together with Muslims, Zands advise minimizing relations with Muslims in daily life. They present objections to the doctrinal attitude of Islam and aim at preserving the religious status of Zoroastrians. This paper stresses the view of the Zoroastrian tradition regarding Muslim conquests, the eventual coexistence experience and Islamic theology within the framework of Zands.

Key Words: Arab/*Tāzīg*, evil religion/*Ag-dēnīh*, Zand literature, Islam, Zoroastrianism

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Introduction

Each religious tradition, which asserts the uniqueness of the truth, tends to define and describe all prior and later religions as incomplete, incorrect, and far from the truth. Indeed, such an approach is necessary to constitute the verity of its own discourse of truth. This necessity is why religious traditions have tried to construct their own theologies since the appearance of the earliest religions. Moreover, the descriptions and definitions by religions about their counterparts are actually reflections of the mentioned construction process. This fact is even apparent for religious traditions in the Middle East and Mesopotamia, such as Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, Mandaeism, Manichaeism, and Islam. Such reciprocal attempts at understanding and explanation make use of various tools throughout history; nevertheless, the objective of their polemical texts is to introduce the other through their very own perspective.

This study analyses particularly how the Zoroastrian tradition, which declined due to the influence of Muslim conquests in Iran, tries to respond to Islam and Muslims and how it warns the Zoroastrian community by means of Zand literature. Accordingly, our paper concentrates on the context of evolution of allusive expressions about Islam and Muslims in Zand literature, which took its final shape in the Islamic era.

In this respect, we touch upon concepts such as *Ag-dēn(īh), Tāzīg* and *Mahmute* regarding Islam and Muslims that are used in Zand literature. Then, our discussion focuses on how Muslim conquests and rule were received/perceived in these texts. Thus, the perception of Muslims in Zand literature will be treated in reference to its apocalyptic vision of conquests. Subsequently, this panorama will be revealed by means of certain examples regarding daily relationships between Muslims and Zoroastrians. Finally, this paper touches upon the Zoroastrian criticism based on the Islamic conception of God. Thus, the objective is to propound how Zoroastrians, who are treated as People of the Book and have *dhimmī* status in Islamic law, shaped their perception of Islam in their religious literature and how these texts exhibit an integral stance against Islam in every aspect, from theology to daily life. Accordingly, we dwell upon how Islam and Muslims are described by Zoroastrians living under Muslim rule.

I. Sasanian Exegetical Tradition: *Abestāg ud Zand*

The period between the life of Zoroaster, the founder of Zoroastrianism, and the late 10th century comprises various stages in the history of Zoroastrian religious literature. *Gatha* texts, attributed to Zoroaster in his lifetime; Avesta literature, which extends until the Sasanian era; and finally, exegetical literature by Zoroastrian clergy for comprehension of Avesta literature in the Sasanian period, namely, the Zand corpus,[1] constitute the three stages of mentioned period. These three stages also provide clues about the evolution of Zoroastrian theology and transforming religious basis in the process.

The Zand corpus is a product of exegetical activity in Sasanian era, the latest of these processes. Indeed, it possesses a structure that keeps the theological infrastructure of Zoroastrian tradition alive, falls in step with changes in daily life and is continuously refreshed against objections and accusations from other religious traditions. The Sasanian religious exegetical literature, which is passed through generations by means of Zoroastrian clerics (*mowbed*s), is not shared with anyone outside the clergy, and is subject to ceaseless codification, has always tried to respond to each religion that it encountered. Upon the beginning of Muslim conquests and the fall of Sasanian Empire, Zoroastrianism, which had lost its qualifications pertaining to a dominant religious tradition, became a stationary religious thought that retired into its shell, attempted to codify the hitherto built exegetical literature and lost its liveliness in the 9th through 11th centuries. This process led to the emergence of an apocalyptic approach heralding the days when Zoroastrian tradition was to prosper again and paved the way for the production of texts.

Within the context of comprehension of Avesta, the Zands, which appeared as a procedure for solving the clergy's problems through applying theology to daily life during the Sasanian era and for

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1 For further information about Zands and their content, see J. C. Tavadia, *Zabān wa Adabiyāt-i Pahlavī; Fārsī Miyānah*, trans. S. Najmābādī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Dānishgāh-i Tehrān, 1348/1969), 1-33; Maria Macuch, "Pahlavi Literature," in *The Literature of Pre-Islamic Iran, A History of Persian Literature*, ed. R. Emmerick and M. Macuch (New York: I. B. Tauris, 2009), 116-196; P. De Menasce, "Zoroastrian Literature after the Muslim Conquest," in *Cambridge History of Iran*, ed. Richard N. Frye (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), IV, 543-566, https://doi.org/10.1017/CHOL9780521200936.019.

eventually transferring these solutions to the clerics, were codified in the wake of Muslim conquests. It is accepted that the word *zand* is derived from the verb *zainti/azanti* (to know) in Avestan and is used in the sense of commentary and explanation.[2] Zand texts, written in Pahlavi (Middle Persian) and Pazand (Middle Persian in Avestan alphabet), are also known as Pahlavi Texts. The mentioned codification process actually arises from the concern for finalizing and writing down the religious literature of Zoroastrianism, which is no longer a dominant tradition. This fact equally brings along the concealment of religious literature from non-Zoroastrians. In Zoroastrianism, clergy descends from father to son; owing to the aforementioned practice, the sacred language and texts are kept within the family and hidden from others. To ensure this secrecy, Pahlavi Texts recommend maintaining religious literature within families and declares adverse practices as a sin, so much so that the commandment for not revealing Zands is grounded on Zoroaster himself to constitute a legitimate basis:[3]

> One should not speak, do or arrange the business of Zand differently from what the original orthodox [spoke,] did, taught, and brought forth. For heresy comes to the world by one who teaches, speaks or do the business of Zand differently... One should not teach Avesta with Zand to evil and heretical people (*wattar ān ud ahlamōgān*), for sin becomes more current in the world (by him)[4] … One should instruct peace and love in every creature, speak good deeds to every person, teach Zand in the household, and tell a secret to reliable people.[5]

According to Zand texts, Pahlavi is considered a sacred language, and religious literature should be strictly preserved. Therefore, the

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2 Eḥsān Bahrāmī, *Farhang-i Vājahhāye Avistāī*, ed. Farīdūn Junaydī (Tehran: Nashr-e Balkh, 1369/1991), I, 203.

3 This problem, reflected in Zand literature, is eventually treated in *Saddar naṣr and Saddar Bundehesh* in Persian, which recommends not teaching Middle Persian to everyone. *Ṣad Dar-i Naṣr va Ṣad Dar-i Bundihish (Saddar naṣr and Saddar Bundehesh: Persian Texts Relating to Zoroastrianism)*, ed. Ervad Bamanji Dhabhar (Mumbai: British India Press, 1909), XCVIII-XCIX, 66-67.

4 Aturpāt-ī Ēmētān, *The Wisdom of Sasanian Sages: Dēnkard VI*, trans. Shaul Shaked (Colorado: Westview Press, 1979), (C26, C28), 154-157; for further information, see Mehmet Alıcı, *Kadîm İran'da Din: Monoteizmden Düalizme Mecûsî Tanrı Anlayışı* (Istanbul: Ayışığı, 2012), 187-189, 197-198.

5 Aturpāt-ī Ēmētān, *Dēnkard VI*, (254), 98-99.

relation with sacred texts is regarded as undesirable not only for non-Zoroastrians but also for Zoroastrians outside clergy. As a matter of fact, the term "household" in the quotation above refers to the descendance of the clergy from father to son. The cases of Mani (216-276) and Mazdak (d. 524/528?), who were subject to prosecution and eventually executed because of unorthodox interpretation of Avesta during Sasanian era, clarifies the reasons behind such references.[6] According to Zoroastrian tradition, both Mani and Mazdak tried to interpret Avesta via decontextualization, even though each had different perspectives. This example explains the influence of significant religious authorities/*Mowbedān* (*Mowbed*s), such as Kartīr, on taking of a political decision about religious groups that threaten Zoroastrian tradition. Moreover, this example clarifies the motive behind their effort to warn and educate clergy about such issues through Zand texts. The related cases include prosecutions of Mani and his followers because of efforts by Kartīr in the 3rd century; of members of other religions, such as Christians, in the 4th century; and of Mazdak and his followers in the 6th century.[7] Upon Muslim conquests, the concerns about continuation of Zoroastrian tradition apparently played a part in codification of Zands and concealment of clerical opinions about the current situation.

II. Definitions of/Concepts about Islam and Muslims

Zand literature describes Islam and Muslims in a negative manner through implicit expressions. Zand texts within the Sasanian exegetical corpus concentrate on the concept of *Ag-dēnīh*, literally, "evil religion," instead of Islam and Muslims since the latter destroyed Sasanian Empire and caused the decline of Zoroastrianism. As for

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6 For criticisms about overinterpretation of Mazdak, see *Zand-i Bahman Yasn (Tasheh-i Matn, Āvānavīsī, Bargardāni Fārisi and Yāddashtehā)*, ed. and trans. Muḥammad Taqī R. Muḥaṣṣil (Tehran: Muʾassasah-ʾi Muṭālaʿāt wa-Taḥqīqāt-i Farhangī, 1380/2002), (2.2-3), 2, 23-24; About Mani, see Touraj Daryaee, "Katībay-e Kartīr Dar Naqsh-i Rajab," *Nāma-e Irān-e Bastān* 1 (1380/2002), 6-8; Walter Hinz, "Mani and Karder," in *La Persia Nel Medioevo* (Rome: Accademia Nazionale Dei Lincei, 1971), 495-496.

7 Prods Oktor Skjærvø, *The Spirit of Zoroastrianism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 236-239 (Inscription of Kerdīr on the Kaʿba-ye Zardosht at Naqsh-e Rostam ms. 276); Christelle Jullien, "Martyrs, Christian," in *Encyclopædia Iranica*, accessed October 16, 2017.

"Muslim," Zand texts use the word *tāzīg/tāzīyān*, literally, "Arab." This definition is most likely because Arabs constituted the majority of Muslim armies and Islam was established by a prophet of Arabian ethnicity. After all, in Zand literature, the term "Arab" signifies a religious concept, not an ethnic identity, and Muslim conquests are considered "Arab invasions."

A. *Ag-dēnīh*: Evil/Superstitious Religion

Zoroastrian religious literature in Sasanian era refers to "good religion" as *veh/beh-dēn* and "evil and superstitious religions" as *ag-dēnīh*. It is indicated that Iranians (*Erānān*) are distant from such religion(s) that are heresy. In this context, *ag-dēnīh* is observed as a foe of wisdom and a source of greed, hatred, and selfishness. In many Zand texts, affiliation with or membership of such an evil religion is described with the expressions *ag-dēn/ak-dēn*, ag-dēnīh, akdinih, *vat-dēnīh*, *dūš-dēnīh*, and *druvandīh*, for example. In these texts, similar terms such as *ag-dēn* and *ag-dēnīh* describe superstitious religion, whereas *ag-dēn* may mean either "superstitious religion" or "follower of superstitious religion," namely, "infidel," depending on the context. Consequently, superstitious religion is defined using *ag-dēn* and *ag-dēnīh*, whereas infidel corresponds to *ag-dēn*. Hereby, conceptualization is used as a common and general description for all religious traditions except for Zoroastrianism, such as Judaism, Christianity, Manichaeism, and Islam.[8]

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[8] Samuel H. Nyberg, *A Manual of Pahlavi: Part II, Glossary* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1964), 13; Donald N. MacKenzie, *A Concise Pahlavi Dictionary* (London: Oxford University Press, 1990), 6; Bahrām Farahvashī, *Farhang-e Fārsī beh Pahlavi* (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Dānishgāh-i Tehrān, 1381/2003), 66; *Zand-Ākāsīh; Iranian or Greater Bundahišn*, trans. Behramgore Tehmurasp Anklesaria (Mumbai: Rahnumae Mazdayasnan Sabha, 1956), (0.2), 2-5, (XXXIII.21) 276-277; Farnbagh Dādaghī, *Bundahiš,* trans. M. Bahār (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Ṭūs, 1349/1970), 31; *Kitāb-i Panjum-i Dīnkard: āvānivīsī, tarjumah, taʿlīqāt, vāzhah'nāmah, matn-i Pahlavī*, ed. and trans. Jālah Āmūzgār and Aḥmad Tafaḍḍulī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Muʿīn, 1386/2008), (9.5, 10.3, 17. 6, 24.14-15), 46-47, 50-51, 60-61, 88-91; *The Hērbedestān and Nērangestān*, ed. and trans. Firoze M. P. Kotwal and Philip G. Kreyenbroek (Paris: Association pour l'Avancement des Etudes Iraniennes, 1992), I, 59-61 (11.3, 11.6-7); Aturpāt-ī Ēmētān, *Dēnkard VI*, (B14.10), 137-137; (321), 128-129; (288), 110-111; (246), 96-97; *Dēnkard-i Haftum*, ed. and trans. Muḥammad Taqī R. Muḥaṣṣil (Tehran: Pizhūhishgāh-i ʿUlūm-i Insānī

Having a more general sense in the beginning, the expressions *Ag-dēnīh* or *Dūš-dēnīh* gradually become more related to Islam in Zand texts that describe incidents following the fall of Sasanian Empire. The definitions become even more common in apocalyptic Zand texts, which seek answers to questions about the end of the world and the manners of comprehending Muslim conquests. The need among Zoroastrians, clergy above all, for an appropriate explanation of the situation led to negative depictions of Islam. For instance, *Bundahišn*,[9] which seeks to clarify the entire history according to the Zoroastrian tradition, from the story of creation until the end of the world, and which is codified during Islamic era, tries to meet the aforementioned requirement. According to this text, Arabs invade the lands of *Ērānšahr*[10] as the end of the world draws near. Here again, the terms

va Muṭālaʿāt-i Farhangī, 1389/2010), (8.6), 264; Jason Mokhtarian, "The Boundaries of an Infidel in Zoroastrianism: A Middle Persian Term of Otherness for Jews, Christians, and Muslims," *Iranian Studies* 48, no. 1 (2015), 100-110, https://doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2014.948753; Mansour Shaki, "Dēn," in *Encyclopædia Iranica*, VII, 279-281.

9 This Zand text, meaning the "first creation" via combination of "bun (beginning)" and "*dahishn* (creation)," is available in two versions, namely, *Iranian Bundahishn* or *Great Bundahishn* and *Indian Bundahishn*. In the codification process of Sasanian religious literature, the editing by Farnbagh/Farrbay was probably finalized in the 12th century. It was translated by Westerns in the late 19th century and by Indian Zoroastrians, namely, Parsee, in the mid-20th century. Carlo G. Cereti and David N. MacKenzie, "Except by Battle: Zoroastrian Cosmogony in the 1st Chapter of the Greater Bundahišn," in *Religious Themes and Texts of Pre-Islamic Iran and Central Asia: Studies in honour of Professor Gherardo Gnoli on the occasion of His 65th birthday on 6th December 2002*, ed., Carlo G. Cereti, Mauro Maggi, and Elio Provasi (Wiesbaden: L. R. Verlag, 2003), 31-33; *Greater Bundahišn*, 1-11; Dādaghī, *Bundahiš*, 5-7; Mary Boyce, "Middle Persian Literature," in *Handbook of Oriental Studies Ancient Near East Online IV: Iranian Studies* (Leiden & Köln: E. J. Brill, 1968), I (Literature), 40-41, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004304994_003; Tavadia, *Zabān wa Adabiyāt-i Pahlavī*, 92-95, 102-104.

10 The term *Ērānšahr* is used as the general name of all regions under rule of the Sasanian Empire. For further information, see *Šahrestānīhā ī Ērānšahr: A Middle Persian Text on Late Antique Geography, Epic, and History*, ed. and trans. Touraj Daryaee (California: Mazda Publishers, 2002), 1-7, 13-25; *The Sasanian Rock Relief at Naqsh-i Rustam*, ed. and trans. Georgina Herrmann and David N. MacKenzie (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1989), 55, 58 *(Kerdir Inscription)*; Abū Rayḥān

Dūš-denīh and *Ag-dēnīh*, which mean evil and superstitious religion, are conspicuously used instead of "Islam." Likewise, *Rivāyat ī Emīt ī Ašawahištān*, which offers solutions to daily problems of Zoroastrians in Islamic era, employs the term *ag-dēnīh* instead of Islam.[11] Therefore, *ag-dēnīh* replaces Islam particularly in Zand narratives about defeat and the eventual victory at the end of the world.

B. *Tāzīg*

The term *tāzīg* is another concept that can be used to help us track down Islam and Muslims in Zand texts. In Pahlavi, the words *tāzīk/g*, *tājīk*, *tāčīk*, and *tašī*" are used for "Arab," whereas in Sogdian, "Arab" corresponds to tāzīk (t'zyk)." According to R. Frye, Arabs were called *tāzīk* by Sogdians in the Islamic era. Consequently, Arabs, who settled in the region, blended with locals over time and became known as *tajik*. In the eyes of Muḥammad Ḥamīd Allāh, a prominent historian of Islam, the term *tāzīg* is derived from the root Ṭayy, the south Arabian tribe adept at commerce. According to Samuel Thrope, the term *tāz* is derived from *tayyʿa* and *tyyʿ*, which mean "Arab" in Aramaic and Syriac, respectively, before taking its final form (*tāzīg)* with the Pahlavi suffix of -cīk, which means "evil."[12] There are various approaches

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Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Bīrūnī, *Kitāb al-tafhīm li-awāʾil ṣināʿat al-tanjīm*, ed. Jalāl al-Dīn Humāʾī (Tehran: Silsilahā-yi Intishārāt-i Anjuman-i Āthār-i Millī, 1362/1984), 196-197.

[11] Dādaghī, *Bundahiš,* 31 (Dūş-denīh); *Greater Bundahišn*, (0.2), 2-5; (XXXIII.21), 276-277 (Ak-dinih); *Rivāyat-i Emīd-i Āshavahīshtān: mutaʿalliq bih sadahʾi chahārum-i Hijrī*, ed. and trans. Nezhat Ṣafā-yi Eṣfahānī (Tehran: Nashr-i Markaz, 1386/2007), (IV.6), 16-17 (akdēnīh); Daryaee, "Dedgāhhā-yi Mōbadān ve Šāhenšāhā-yi Sāsānī Darbāraye Ēranšahr," *Nāme-ye Irān-e Bāstān* 3, no. 2 (1382/2004), 21.

[12] Nyberg, *A Manual of Pahlavi*, II, 189, 192; Farahvashī, *Farhang-e Fārsī beh Pahlavi*, 357, 477; *The Zand ī Wahman Yasn: A Zoroastrian Apocalypse*, ed. and trans. Carlo G. Cereti (Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1995), (6.10), 12; Harold W. Bailey, "To the Zamasp-Namak. I," *Bulletin of the Society of Oriental and African Studies* 6, no. 1 (1930), 55, (5), https://doi.org/10.1017/S0041977X00090959; B. Gharib, *Sogdian Dictionary: Sogdian-Persian-English* (Tehran: Farhangan Publications, 1995), (9525-9526), 385; Tavadia, "A Rhymed Ballad in Pahlavi," *Journal of Royal Asiatic Studies* 87, no. 1-12 (1955), 31-32 (5), https://doi.org/10.1017/S0035869X00106999; Richard N. Frye, *The Golden Age of Persia: Arabs in the East* (London: Weidenfeld and

regarding the etymological root of the word; nevertheless, Zand texts use this concept to refer to a religious identity, namely, Muslim, rather than an ethnicity. *Zand ī Wahman Yasn*,[13] which is codified during Islamic period as the most significant example of Zoroastrian apocalypticism, notes this fact in a clear manner. Talking about what is to happen in eschatological time spans, the text mentions the *Tāzīg* together with Turks and Rūms among those who attacked the lands of Iran.[14]

On the other hand, there are some records in Zand texts that the concept of *tāzīg* points to Arabian ethnicity. In this context, the Arabian lineage is associated with the lineage of Azi Dahaka, the villain in Persian mythology. According to the story, the lineage of Azi Dahaka

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Nicolson, 1975), 96; Muhammed Hamidullah, *İslam Peygamberi*, trans. Salih Tuğ (Istanbul: Yeni Şafak, 2003), I, 325; Samuel Thrope, "Contradictions and Vile Utterances: The Zoroastrian Critique of Judaism in the Shkand Gumanig Wizar" (PhD diss., Berkeley, CA: Jewish Studies University of California, 2012), 115, note 73.

[13] *Zand ī Wahman Yasn* is one of the most important texts within Zoroastrian apocalyptic literature. Despite not being mentioned in the Avestan canon, it is accepted as the exegesis of Vohuman/Wahman Yasht, which is thought to be lost according to the Zoroastrian tradition. The book uses an allegoric language to relate the events to happen near the end of the world and treats the end of time through four periods. According to Cereti, this text may be dated to the late Sasanian and early Islamic eras, and it took its final shape between the 10th and 12th centuries. For further information, see *The Zand ī Wahman Yasn: A Zoroastrian Apocalypse*, (I. 6-10, IV-IX), 15-26, 139, 149, 191-194; *Bahman Yast; Pahlavi Texts. Part I*, ed. F. Max Müller, trans. Edward William West (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1880), LIV-LVII, (I.6), 193; Boyce, "On the Antiquity of Zoroastrian Apocalyptic," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 47, no. 1 (1984), 59-75, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0041977X0002214X; Werner Sundermann, "Bahman Yašt," in *Encyclopædia Iranica*, III, 492-493; Cereti, "On the Date of Zand ī Wahman Yasn," in *The K. R. Cama Oriental Institute, Second International Congress Proceedings*, ed. Hormazdiar J. M. Desai and Homai N. Modi (Mumbai: The K. R. Cama Oriental Institute, 1996), 242-252.

[14] *Zand-i Bahman Yasn*, (4.59, 6.10, 9.10), VII-IX, 8-9, 12, 18, 167; *The Zand ī Wahman Yasn: A Zoroastrian Apocalypse*, 11-13, 157, 161, 167; *Zand-i Vohūman Yasn*, ed. and trans. Ṣādiq Hidāyat (Tehran: Nashr-i Jāmah'darān, 1383/2005), 50, 57, 69-70.

comes from Tāz, the ancestor of Arabs/*tāzīg* and his wife Tāzak.[15] Indeed, some texts in Middle Persian from the Sasanian period describe Arabs with the term *tāzīg* in ethnic terms and do not mention their religious status. For instance, *Šahrestānīhā ī Ērānšahr*, which depicts the Sasanian land, tells that the city of al-Ḥīrah was founded under the rule of Shapur I and that the city bordered the *tāzīg*. In the same text, *tāzīg* signifies ethnic identity also in the subject of the seizure of Ḥimyar. Likewise, *tāzīg* refers to ethnicity in Zand passages about the pre-Islamic history of the Sasanians.[16]

Zand texts associate Arabs with the villain in Persian mythology in terms of lineage, asserting that they brought disaster to *Ērānšahr* land. For example, *Bundahišn* refers to a mythological context for the origins of Arabs; accordingly, Azdahāg, the evil protagonist, made a man marry a female demon (*parīk*), in addition to making a woman marry a male demon (*dēv*), whence came the black race. This evil generation was dismissed from *Ērānšahr* upon advent of the mythological hero Farīdūn. Nevertheless, the Arab invasion brought this evil ethnicity back to Iranian geography.[17] Thus, Arabs are described with an evil genealogy due to their origins and are considered as the source of other misdeeds. This situation shows that in Zand literature, the concept of *tāzīg* lost its ethnic sense in pre-Islamic era and changed into a religious identity upon Muslim conquests. Herewith, it is implied that the evil nature of Arabs is accompanied by the evilness of their religion.

Consequently, *tāzīg* evolves from an ethnic identity to a religious context. Used in Sasanian records to define a race during the pre-Islamic period, this concept changed into a religious identity in Zand

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[15] *Dēnkard-i Haftum*, (0.34), 203; *Dinkard VIII; Pahlavi Texts, IV*, ed. F. Max Müller, trans. Edward William West (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1892), (XIII.8), 27; *Greater Bundahišn*, (XXXV.6), 292-293; *Bundahis*; *Pahlavi Texts, I*, ed. F. Max Müller, trans. Edward William West (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1880), (XV.28), 58; (XXXI.6), 131-132.

[16] *Šahrestānīhā ī Ērānšahr*, (25, 50), 26, 28; *Greater Bundahišn*, (XXXIII.16), 266-277.

[17] *Greater Bundahišn*, (XIVB.2), 138-139; *Bundahiš*, (XXIII.2), 87; Also see *The Ḍinkarḍ; The original Pêhlawi Text; the same transliterated in Zend characters; translations of the text in the Gujrati and English languages; a commentary and a glossary of select terms*, trans. Peshotun Dastur Bahramji Sunjana (Mumbai: Duftur Ashkara Press, 1874), Dinkard VI, (227.11), 372-374.

texts codified in the wake of Muslim conquests. Moreover, Arabs are originally based on an evil lineage to contribute to the construction of this negative religious identity.

C. *Mahmute* (Muḥammad)

Dēnkard,[18] one of the Zand texts, allows for a concept that may be construed as a mention of Prophet Muḥammad. In addition to more common definitions of *ag-dēn* and *tāzīg, Dēnkard*, which means "reference for religious information," also allows for another word, *mahmute*, distinctive from those that are constantly used when describing Islam and Muslims. *Dēnkard* employs this new concept in the claim that Zoroastrianism, which is the true religion, will be weakened by three men of wrong belief. These men are expressed as follows: "Mani from white race, Mazdak the helper of Satan, and Mahmute." Dastur Sanjana, the editor and translator of *Dēnkard*,

[18] According to general opinion, this work consists of nine books; we know that it has not reached our day in a complete form. Providing information about many themes, including religion, law, morals, and religious practices in Sasanian era, it sheds light on Sasanian social life. Moreover, *Dēnkard* comprises significant records about the past of the Zoroastrian tradition, in addition to information about the codification process of sacred texts. Reviewed on various occasions like other Zands, it was probably codified by two Zoroastrian clerics, namely, Ādhar Farnbagh Farrukhzādān and Ādurbād Ēmēdān, during the rule of Caliph al-Maʾmūn (r. 813-833) in the 9th century. Translation of *Dēnkard* by Edward West is included within *Pahlavi Texts IV-V* (1897) in the series *The Sacred Book of East* under editorship of F. Max Müller. D. M. Madan prepared the reviewed Middle Persian version of text as *The Complete Text of the Pahlavi Book I-II* (1911), and an English translation was performed by Sanjana under the title *The Ḍinkarḍ* (1874-1928). In addition to early publications, each book of *Dēnkard* has eventually been analyzed and translated into various languages. Accordingly, book six of *Dēnkard* (*Dinkard Book VI,* 1979) was translated into English by Shaul Shaked, whereas Persian translations include Book Three (*Kitāb-i Savvum-i Dīnkard*, 1384/2005) by Farīdūn Faḍīlat, Book Four (*Dēnkard-i Chahārum*, 1393/2014) by Maryam Riḍāyī and Muḥammad Saʿīd ʿIryān, Book Five (*Kitāb-i Panjum-i Dēnkard*, 1386/2007) by Jālah Āmūzgār-Aḥmad Tafaḍḍulī, and Book Seven (*Dēnkard-i Haftum*, 1389/2010) by Muḥammad Taqī R. Muḥaṣṣil. For further information, see Macuch, "Pahlavi Literature," 131-135; Aturpāt-ī Ēmētān, *The Dēnkard VI*, XV-XLVII; Boyce, "Middle Persian Literature," 44-45; Tavadia, *Zabān wa Adabiyāt-i Pahlavī*, 49-51; *Dinkard V; Pahlavi Texts V*, ed. F. Max Müller, trans. Edward William West (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897), (I. 1-4), 119-120.

indicates that the word *mahmute* (Muḥammad?) can be associated with the word *mōmanēn/mūmanīn* in *Gujastak Abālīš*. Thereupon, The Caliph al-Maʾmūn is called "Amīr al-muʾminīn" in *Gujastak Abālīš*, and the word *muʾminūn* is written as *mūmanīn* in Middle Persian. According to Dastur Sanjana, the word *mahmute* can also be read as *mūmanīn*.[19]

In our opinion, it is problematic to explain the term *mahmute* via *muʾmin* (believer) as Sanjana does. Indeed, *Dēnkard* refers to founders of religious traditions while mentioning three personalities. The word *muʾmin* is a general definition used for all followers of Islam and does not signify "founder of religion." Therefore, the term *mahmute* in *Dēnkard* must be referring to Muḥammad. This is why *mūmanīn* in Middle Persian given in *Gujastak Abālish* as a clear reference to Muslims, should be construed as "believers," whereas *Mahmute* is more likely to signify the prophet of Islam. Obviously, *Mahmute*, which is defined as an exception in Zand literature, means Muḥammad, whereas *mūmanīn* signifies Muslims.

III. Some Historical Records of Muslim Conquests

The first-ever contact between Muslims and Zoroastrians took place during the lifetime of Prophet Muḥammad. Upon the conquest of Bahrain and Hajar, questions about the fate of Zoroastrians came to the forefront. Prophet Muḥammad ordered that Zoroastrians should be considered People of the Book and to collect *jizyah* from them. For instance, al-Mundhir ibn Sāwā, who converted to Islam as Sasanian governor of Bahrain, asked Muḥammad about the situation of Jews and Zoroastrians. The Prophet told him to collect *jizyah* from both communities. Hereupon, Zoroastrians in the conquered lands were subject to *jizyah* like other People of the Book since the time of the earliest caliphs.[20]

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[19] Sanjana, *The Ḍinkarḍ VII*, (art. 345), 485-486, 501 (glossary); *Gajastak Abālish*, trans. Homi F. Chacha (Mumbai: The Trustees Parsi Punchayet Funds and Properties, 1936), 12, 41; Ādhar Farnbagh Farrukhzādān, *Mātīkān-i Gujastak-i Abālīsh: hamrāh bā matn-i Pahlavī bargardān-i Pārsī vāzhahʾnāmah va āvānivīsī*, ed. and trans. Ibrāhīm Mīrzā-yi Nāẓir (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Hīrmand, 1375/1996), 16-17.

[20] Mālik ibn Anas, *al-Muwaṭṭaʾ: Riwāyat Abī Muṣʿab al-Zuhrī*, ed. Bashshār ʿAwwād Maʿrūf and Maḥmūd Muḥammad Khalīl (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Risālah, 1991), I,

Historical sources provide numerous examples about the contact between Muslims and Zoroastrians in Iran during Muslim conquests. There are examples of positive and negative attitudes towards Zoroastrian locals by Muslim rulers. Consequently, there is no uniform, entirely negative or positive approach in the course of Muslim conquests. On the other hand, Zoroastrians apparently maintained their status as People of the Book in the wake of Muslim conquests.

In contradistinction to Zand literature, Muslim conquests did not actually evolve in a totally negative manner; in fact, various approaches are observed because of different reasons throughout the history. At this point, several negative and positive examples may be given. For instance, in the beginning of the 8th century, when the Muslim conquests were going on in Iran and reached Chinese borders, the practices of Qutaybah ibn Muslim (d. 96/715), the governor of Khurāsān in those days, can be given as an example of negative attitudes toward Zoroastrians. According to al-Narshakhī, Bukhārā was conquered by Muslims in an early period, whereupon the most important fire temple near Mākh bazaar was transformed into a mosque by invaders. Interestingly enough, al-Narshakhī reports that locals of Bukhārā converted to Islam upon the arrival of Arabs, before coming back to their original religion; besides, Qutaybah ibn Muslim turned the people of Bukhārā, who were Buddhist and Zoroastrian, to Islam three times, but they returned to their faiths on each occasion. On the fourth try, Qutaybah ibn Muslim ordered the townspeople to give half of their houses to Arabs and obliged them to live together with the latter and to become Muslim. Under the rule of Qutaybah ibn Muslim, temples of other religions were destroyed and many mosques were built; he also made it compulsory for locals to attend Friday *ṣalāt*. According to al-Narshakhī, the wealthier personalities, who inhabited a neighborhood of seven hundred pavilions just outside the city center, did not respond to this call. On a Friday, Muslims went to this neighborhood to call the locals for *ṣalāh*, whereupon they stoned the Muslims from the roofs of their houses. Consequently, Muslims

117, 289; Ḥamīd Allāh, *Majmūʿat al-wathāʾiq al-siyāsiyyah li-l-ʿahd al-nabawī wa-l-khilāfah al-rāshidah*, 5th ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Nafāʾis, 1985), 145-164; Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Yazīd al-Āmulī al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī: Tārīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad Abū l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1967), II, 644-646.

prevailed over them and demolished their houses.[21]

Apart from the foregoing record from Umayyad era, there are many positive examples of daily practices of Muslims toward Zoroastrians. *Tārīkh-i Sīstān* (1060?) includes the following account about the early period. Ziyād ibn Abīhi, the Umayyad governor of al-Baṣrah in 51 AH, appointed ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Abī Bakr as administrator of Sīstān and ordered him to slay Šābur, the leader Zoroastrian clergy/*Hērbed*s, in addition to put out their sacred fire. The plan was revealed upon the arrival of ʿUbayd Allāh in Sīstān; thereupon, local landowners (*dehqān*)[22] and Zoroastrians (*Gabr*) opposed him. Therewith, Muslims in Sīstān argued that such treatment of a community with which peace was established during time of Prophet Muḥammad and Rāshidūn Caliphs was unfair; accordingly, local Muslims stated that such behavior would be against the peace treaty and *sharīʿah*. Muslims informed Damascus, the center of the Caliphate, about the situation by means of a letter. In response, it was indicated that Zoroastrian temples could not be touched, together with an emphasis on the peace treaty. Consequently, the order of al-Baṣrah governor was not followed, and Zoroastrian temples and clergy remained intact. In addition to the letter, the text includes an explanation about the situation of the Zoroastrians. In this text, the Zoroastrians explain that they worship god even though they have fire temples, just as Muslims have *miḥrāb* and al-Kaʿbah. *Tārīkh-i Sīstān* clarifies the case through indication that Prophet Muḥammad granted People of the Book, namely, other religious traditions, such as Judaism and Christianity, the freedom of practicing their religion and applied only *jizyah,* a per capita yearly

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21 Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Jaʿfar ibn Zakariyyā ibn al-Khaṭṭāb al-Narshakhī, *Tārīkh Bukhārā*, trans. Abū Naṣr Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Qubāwī, abr. Muḥammad ibn Zufar ibn ʿUmar, ed. Muḥammad Taqī Mudarris Raḍawī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Bunyād-i Farhang-i Īrān, 1351/1972), 25-26, 51-58.

22 *Dehqān*s (landowners) adopted various attitudes to avoid losing their lands. Some accepted paying the *jizyah* tax and collaborated with Muslims, others handed their lands to Christian monasteries for protection, and some opted for Islam for the same purpose. For further information, see Michael Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), 199-208; Milka Levy-Rubin, *Non-Muslims in the Early Islamic Empire: From Surrender to Coexistence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 136-137, https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511977435.

tax, to them such that they could maintain their existence.[23] Therefore, the fact that the Muslims would not harm temples, leaders, and followers of other religions in peacetime is confirmed once again.

Given the aforesaid historical records, it would be inappropriate to adopt an entirely negative approach about journey of Islam in Iran and its contact with Zoroastrianism. This negative perspective becomes apparent in Zand texts that were edited for the last time in the Islamic era. It can be observed that Muslims tried to live together with Zoroastrians in daily life, except for during wartime. As observed in the last example above, for the negative behavior of a Muslim administrator to be corrected by Muslim people is remarkable.

Likewise, there are accounts that Muslim governors punished certain persons at the behest of Zoroastrian clergy to preserve Zoroastrianism. For instance, in his *al-Milal wa-l-niḥal*, al-Shahrastānī describes Zoroastrianism under the chapter "al-Majūs" and indicates that Bihāfarīd, a Sīsān according to him, denied his own religion. Therewith, Bihāfarīd of Nīshābūr abandoned Zoroastrianism, summoned his coreligionists to abandon *zamzamah*[24] and worshipping fire, and invited them to worship by kneeling down on one knee facing the sun. This is why he received a reaction from Zoroastrian clergymen. Zoroastrians submitted their complaint to Governor Abū Muslim al-Khurāsānī; their complaint was accepted, and Sīsān was executed at the door of the Nīshābūr mosque.[25] This is clear

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[23] *Tārīkh-i Sīstān: ta'līf dar ḥudūd 445-725*, ed. Muḥammad Taqī Bahār (Tehran: n.p., 1314/1935 → Tehran: Intishārāt-i Muʿīn, 1381/2002), 121-123.

[24] *Zamzamah*, in the broadest sense, means "muttering of prayers by clergymen during rituals or consecration." Particularly during consecration of bread "dron/darun (draonangha)," three moral principles of Zoroastrianism are uttered and repeated; these are Hūmata, Hukhtā, and Khvarshta, which mean good thought, good word, and good deed, respectively. Jivani Jamshedi Modi, *Religious Ceremonies and Customs of Parsees* (Mumbai: British India Press, 1922), 87-95, 296-297; *The Hērbedestān and Nērangestān*, III, 191-195; Abū l-Fatḥ Tāj al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Karīm ibn Aḥmad al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal wa-l-niḥal*, ed. Amīr ʿAlī Mahnā and ʿAlī Ḥasan Fāʿūr (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah, 1993), I, 279-281, 284-286; Mehmet Alıcı, "Şehristânî'nin 'el-Mecûs' Tasnifinin Mecûsî Kutsal Metinlerinden Hareketle Tahkiki," *İslâm Araştırmaları Dergisi* 31 (2014), 81-82, 100-101, 109.

[25] Al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal wa-l-niḥal*, I, 284; about the interchangeable use of Bihāfarīd and Sīsān, in addition to his creed, see Alıcı, "Şehristânî'nin 'el-Mecûs'

evidence of the sensitivity of Muslim rulers toward maintaining the existence of Zoroastrianism.

IV. Satanic Rule: Muslim Sovereignty according to Zand Literature

Upon the conquest of *Ērānšahr* by Muslims, Sasanian rule was terminated, and Zoroastrianism, the dominant religious tradition in the region, lost ground. As a result, apocalyptical Zand texts began to emphasize that the end of world is near and that evil will reign for a while, before victory and salvation finally arrives. At this point, Muslim sovereignty is perceived as manifestation of evil, whereas Islam is depicted as evil religion (*ag-dēnīh*), the foe of good religion (*veh-dēn*).

Zand literature underwent codification in the wake of Muslim conquests; accounts about Islam and Muslims were primarily included in Zoroastrian eschatology. *Bundahišn, Zand ī Wahman Yasn*, and *Jāmāsp-nāmah*, which are the essential accounts of the eschatology, tell about weakening of Zoroastrians as the end of the world draws near. Accordingly, it is reported that the *Ērānšahr* region was invaded by Turks, Arabs, and Rūms and that Muslim conquests are especially mentioned in a negative manner. In this context, descriptions of Arabs, more precisely, Muslims and their religion, bear importance. For instance, *Zand ī Wahman Yasn*, one of the apocalyptic Zand texts, implies that Muslim conquests represent the beginning of dark ages and herald the end of time. In this regard, the end of the world is divided into four sections: the Golden Age, when King Vištāspa accepted the doctrine of Zoroaster; the Silver Age, when Ardašīr, a descendant of Kayāniān, was in reign; the Steel Age, when Khusraw Anūshirwān, son of Kawād, reigned; and finally, the Iron Age, when evil interferes and establishes its domination.[26] The final Iron Age is described as the sovereignty of evil:

Tasnifinin Mecûsî Kutsal Metinlerinden Hareketle Tahkiki," 100-101; Ḡolām-Ḥosayn Yūsofī, "Behāfarīd," in *Encyclopædia Iranica*, IV, 88-90.

[26] *The Zand ī Wahman Yasn: A Zoroastrian Apocalypse*, (I. 6-11), 11-13, 133, 149; for a similar account, see Ervad Bamanji Nusserwanji Dhabhar, *The Persian Rivayats of Hormazyar Framarz and Others: Their Version with Introduction and Notes* (Bombay: The K. R. Cama Oriental Institute, 1932), 453-454; Maneckji Nusservanji Dhalla, *History of Zoroastrianism* (New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1938 → New York: AMS Press Inc., 1977), 403-404.

> And the one on which iron had been mixed is the evil rule of parted *dēws* of the seed of *Xēšm*, when it will be the end of your tenth century, o *Spitāmān Zarduxšt*.[27]

In the beginning of this Zand text, the identity of giants/evil creatures with messy/uncombed hair, who are descendants of Xēšm, the demon of wrath, is questioned; later in the text and other Zand works, they turn out to be Arabs/Muslims. Further in the text, the expression "giants (*dēv*s) with messy hair" is remarkably mentioned after evil rulers such as Azdahāg, Turanian Afrāsiāb, Alexander the Byzantine, in addition to the leather-belted (Turks), who were active in *Ērānšahr*.[28] Therefore, this concept might have been used to refer to Arabs, or more precisely, Muslims. Indeed, Ṣ. Hidāyat and M. Taqī R. Muḥaṣṣil, who translated *Zand ī Wahman Yasn* with footnotes, assert that the phrase "giants with messy/uncombed hair" signifies Arabs.[29] In the seventh book of *Dēnkard*, another Zand text, the "evil beings with messy hair; *tāzīg*" clearly signify Arabs.[30] In this regard, references to Muslim conquests reveal that Muslims are referred to as Arabs.

Zand ī Wahman Yasn, which is dated to the aftermath of the Muslim conquests, tells that during conquests, Turks and Rūms brought disaster to *Ērānšahr*, along with Arabs as pioneers of evil. This apocalyptic text depicts what Zoroastrians underwent upon Muslim conquests:

> And the third one <will take place> at the end of your millennium, O *Spitāmān Zarduxšt*, when all those three, the Turk, the *Tāzīg*, and the *Hrōmāyīg*, <together>, will arrive to this place (that is, there was one who said, "the plain of *Nišānag*")... And there will be such a flow of those of the seed of *Xēšm* into these *Ērān*inan lands which I, Ohmazd, have created, will arrive... <those> dwelling in the burrows, dwelling in the mountains and dwelling by the sea, few will remain. Because when a husband will able to save himself, then he will not remember <his> wife, children, and property. And then *Zarduxšt* said, "Creator, give me death and give my progeny death <so> that we shall not live

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[27] *The Zand ī Wahman Yasn: A Zoroastrian Apocalypse*, (I.11), 149.

[28] *Ibid.*, (VII.32), 165.

[29] *Zand-i Vohūman Yasn*, (I. 6-11), 34-35; *Zand-i Bahman Yasn*, (I.11), 22.

[30] *Dēnkard-i Haftum*, (8.47), 105, 270; *Dinkard VII; Pahlavi Texts V*, (8.47), 104.

in those hard times.[31]

As is observed above, the age of evil is started with invasions by non-Iranians; the text tells about invasion of Iran by Arabs and later by other nations, in addition to about their evil rule.[32] The mention of Turks and Rūms can be construed as a reference to nations who invaded Iranian land prior to Muslim conquests. Indeed, the following phrase blames all these ethnicities for being representatives of Xēšm, in line with their invasion attempts throughout history. Actually, the arrival of Arabs is described as the latest invasion attempt.

The aforementioned Zand text states that salvation will arrive at the end of the world, whereupon Ušadarmāh, one of three mythological sons of Zoroaster, will come and renovate the true religion at the end of time. In fact, the eschatological events are told through the mouth of Zoroaster to constitute a reasonable basis for the worsening situation with reference to a savior motif. In this respect, following the previous attacks of Turks and Rūms, *Ērānšahr* was finally exposed to the *Tāzīg* invasion. Accordingly, Zand text describes the evil rulings and religion of Arabs as follows:

> *Ohrmazd* said, "O *Spitāmān Zarduxšt*, this what I foretell, he will lead this creation back to its proper existence. And when the end of the millennium will be near *Pišōtan* son of *Wištāsp* will appear <and> the victorious *xwarrah* of the Kayanids will reach him... *the Turk,* the *Tāzīg*, the *Hrōmāyīg* and the worst <of> *Ērān*ian men will go <forth> with bravery, oppression, and enmity towards the lord, and will strike the fire, waken the religion, and take power <and> victory from it. And <about> that law and religion, they will smite continually whoever will accept it willingly <or>, otherwise, will accept it unwillingly –that law and religion– until it will be the end of millennium. And then, when the millennium of *Ushadarmah* will arrive, through *Ushadarmah* the creation will be more active <and> more powerful. And he will smite the demons of the seed of *Āz*.[33]

The text describes victory of Muslims as a catastrophe but also heralds the advent of a savior at the end of the world. Given that this

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[31] *The Zand ī Wahman Yasn: A Zoroastrian Apocalypse*, (VI.10-12), 161; *Zand-i Bahman Yasn*, (6.10-12), 12.

[32] *The Zand ī Wahman Yasn: A Zoroastrian Apocalypse*, (IV.58-60), 157.

[33] *Ibid*., (IX.8-11), 167; *Zand-i Bahman Yasn*, (9.8-11), 17-18; *Zand-i Vohūman Yasn*, (IX.8-11), 73-74.

text was finalized during Muslim conquests, Zoroastrian clergy were most likely trying to explain the current unfavorable situation to their community. In this context, they concentrate on the idea that the end of the world arrived, as evil will prevail for a while, the religion will be weakened, and Satanic rule will reign. Subsequent passages intensely emphasize that the evil age will be ended by the advent of a savior.

In the foregoing passage, *Zand ī Wahman Yasn* remarkably calls as foe not only the incoming foreigners but also betraying Iranians. Indeed, we know that Zoroastrians adhered to Islam for various reasons during Muslim conquests. For instance, the Zand texts tell about some landowners who converted to Islam to avoid loss of their land, in addition to converting military troops.[34]

Likewise, the seventh book of *Dēnkard* informs that the end of the world is near, the tyrants of evil religion will appear to degrade the good religion, and the sovereignty of *Ērānšahr* will be lost; thereupon, the book refers to the savior motif. According to this book, the millennium of Zoroaster has come to an end, and all evil will be eliminated once the millennium of Ušadarmāh begins.[35]

Describing Muslim conquests and eventual incidents, Zand literature makes an absolute distinction between Muslims and Iranians and depicts the former as bearers of evil. For example, a poetic Middle Persian text depicts the arrival of Arabs and the loss of sovereignty of Iranian rulers as follows:

> Who may go and speak to the Indians: Namely, "What have we seen from the hand of Arabs! For the unique people they ruined the religion and killed the kings. We are from Aryan (stock), They are like the Dēvs; and they hold religion [as nothing(?)], eat the bread like dogs. They have taken away the sovereignty from the Husravs, not by skill, nor by manliness, but by... they have taken it away (and) make mockery and scorn... They have taken away by force from men (their) wives and

[34] Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, III, 14-15; III, 620-622; IV, 5-6, 11; Micheal Morony, "Conquerors and Conquered: Iran," in *Studies on the First Century of Islamic Society*, ed. G. H. A. Juynboll (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1982), 74-78; Daryaee, "Zoroastrianism under Islamic Rule," in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Zoroastrianism*, ed. Michael Stausberg, Yuhan Sohrab-Dinshaw Vevaina, and Anna Tessmann (Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, 2015), 103-108, https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118785539.ch6.

[35] *Dēnkard-i Haftum*, (7.3), 251; (8.1-61) 263-272.

> wealth, sweet places, parks, and gardens. Capitation-tax they have imposed, they have bestowed it upon (their own) chieftains... They have demanded a heavy tribute. Consider how much evil that Druj has cast upon this world, So that nothing is worse than that -?- world! From us shall come that Shah Vahrām, the Glorious, from the family of the Kay-s. We will bring vengeance on the Arabs... Their mosques we will cast down, we will set up fires, (their idol-temples we will dig down and blot them out from the world. So that "nihil" shall be miscreations of the Druj from this world.[36]

The passage reveals the Zoroastrian point of view regarding how Muslim conquests were perceived and the deeds of Muslims, called "Arabs," in Iranian land; the text is finalized with a future conception primarily shaped around the theme of a savior. Indeed, this is the common feature of contemporaneous works and serves as a source of hope and consolation for Zoroastrians. This text criticizes the idea of conquest via Arabs, indicating that people are unfairly dispossessed and that an evil rule reigns in Iran. Stating the impossibility of any agreement or reconciliation, the text emphasizes that the only means to annihilate evil Arabs is a savior, who is associated with the lineage of mythological heroes. The text additionally tells about demolition of mosques and destruction of temples of idols when the savior arrives. These indications can be regarded as a consequence of negative and biased attitudes about Muslims in Zoroastrian literature.

Jāmāsp-nāmah, another apocalyptic Zand text, tells about extinction of sacred fire of Zoroastrianism and warns that all fires in *Ērānšahr* will be put out and perish. Likewise, *Bundahišn* relates that the sacred fires have been present since the time of King Vištāspa but that they will be put out by incoming Arabs.[37] Indeed, this fact is a

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[36] Tavadia, "A Rhymed Ballad in Pahlavi," 30-32 (4-15); Bailey, *Zoroastrian Problems in Ninth Century Books* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1943), 195-196.

[37] Bailey, "To the Zamasp-Namak. I," (51), 59; *Greater Bundahišn*, (XVIII.22), 162-163; *Jāmāsp-nāmah*, also known as *Ayādgār ī Jāmāspīg*, was written in Middle Persian; nevertheless, the current complete edition was probably originally written in Pazend, namely, the Avestan alphabet of Middle Persian. The text summarizes the essential arguments of Zoroastrianism. Treating dualist creation, the creation of Ameša Spentas by Ahura Mazda, the *Jāmāsp-nāmah* also touches upon Kayumars, the archetype of first man, in addition to Vištāspa and later kings. Finally, the text tells about the advent of Pišōtan and Ušēdar at the end of Zoroaster's millennium; moreover, this apocalyptic account stresses the fall of

symbol of the rule of evil in Iran and annihilation of sacred fire, which is a symbol of good religion. The figure of fire becomes even more important since it bears a political background in addition to religious significance. Indeed, during the Sasanian era, traditionally, a fire was lighted for each king, and it remained intact throughout his rule until his death, when a new fire was lighted for the new king.[38] Therefore, the extinction of all fires in *Ērānšahr* upon the Arab invasion was a symbol of the end of Sasanian sovereignty. Consequently, the metaphor of extinction and relighting of fire is frequently used in Zand literature.

Allowing for Zoroastrian depictions of the end of the world and beginning this period with Arab invasions, *Jāmāsp-nāmah* tells how *Ērānšahr* was seized by Arabs city-by-city. Consequently, evil began to rule the world; evil became dominant, and good became prisoner. Mentioning how the winds changed upon invasion, the text tells a comprehensive account of the entire situation. It is indicated that at the end of this period, an insignificant man from Khurāsān will turn up and bring people together and rebel the against current situation, whereupon Pišōtan, son of Vištāspa, will come forth once again. Pišōtan will eliminate evil with a special army of 150 men and consecrate fire and water; then, Ušēdar, one of mythological sons of Zoroaster, will emerge and terminate all evil. According to the text, this period will last approximately a thousand years, men will move away from honesty and seek wrong, and illegality will rule *Ērānšahr*. Seized

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Arabs, Turks, and Rūms. Boyce, "Ayādgār ī Jāmāspīg," in *Encyclopædia Iranica*, III, 126-127.

[38] For the tradition of setting fire by Sasanian kings, see Mark Garrison, "Fire Altar," in *Encyclopædia Iranica*, IX, 613-619; Michael Alram, "Early Sasanian Coinage," in *The Sasanian Era: The Idea of Iran*, ed. Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis and Sarah Stewart, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2008), III, 18-19; Kaikhusroo Jamaspasa, "Fire in Zoroastrianism," in *Third International Congress Proceedings* (Mumbai: Jenaz Printers, 2000), 143-144; for Avestan records regarding the holiness and status of fire, see *Yasna* 1.12, 16.04, 62.07; *Yasna-Gatha*. 36.01-06; *Yasna-Gatha*. 31.19; *Yasna*. 36.01-06, 62.01-12; *Yasht*. 19.34-50; *Khūrdah-i Avistā: batguzīdah-yi az nīyāyishāy-i rūzānah = Khordeh Avesta: The Zoroastrian Daily Prayers*, trans. ʿAlī Akbar Jaʿfarī and Mehrabān Khudāwandī (Los Angeles, CA: The Zoroastrian Center, 1983) (Atash Neyayesh), 53-54; for an account of the extinction of the sacred fire in the court of Kisra/Khosrow, see al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī,* II, 166-168.

by foes, the country will be deprived of all riches, and its rulers will be subject to a huge burden.[39] Likewise, the seventh book of *Dēnkard* indicates that tyrannizers of evil religion, who will devastate the good religion, will appear once the end of the world draws near, and *Ērānšahr* will be lost. In this respect, *Dēnkard* also references the savior motif. Actually, it heralds the beginning of millennium of Ušēdarmāh, once the millennium of his father Zoroaster expires, whereupon all evil will be annihilated.[40]

Bundahišn considers Muslim conquests of *Ērānšahr* as Arab invasion; likewise, it treats the process in a very negative manner. For the beginning, it tells about assaults by Arabs, their propagation of their evil and morbid religion, and the deception of some noble families and degradation of Zoroastrianism by invaders.[41] The text gives an account of what happens at the end of the world, concentrating on *Ērānšahr*, and depicts Muslim conquests as follows:

> And when the sovereignty came to Yazdkart (Yazdegird), he ruled for twenty years; then the Tājīs [Arabs] hied to Iranshahr in large numbers. Yazdkart could not stand in the battle with them. He went to Khorasan and Turkastan, and asked horses and men for help, and they killed him thither. Yazdegird's son went to Hindustan, and brought a valiant army. He passed away before coming to Khorasan. That valiant army was disintegrated, and Iranshahr remained with the Tājīs [Arabs]. They promulgated their own code of irreligion (ak-dinih) and eradicated many usages of faith of the ancients, enfeebled the Revelation of Mazda-worship, and instituted the practice of washing the dead, burying the dead, and eating dead matter. And from the beginning of creation to this day, no calamity greater than this has befallen; for owing to their misdeeds, on account of supplication, desolation, distressing deeds, vile law, and bad creed, pestilence, want, and other

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[39] Bailey, "To the Zamasp-Namak. I," (1-57), 55-60; Bailey, "To the Zamasp-Namak. II," *Bulletin of the Society of Oriental and African Studies* VI (1930-1932), (58-106), 581-586, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0041977X00093101. According to certain scholars, the "heavy burden" here signifies *jizyah*. Daryaee, "Apocalypse Now: Zoroastrian Reflections on the Early Islamic Centuries," *Medieval Encounters* 4, no. 3 (1998), 191, https://doi.org/10.1163/157006798X00115.

[40] *Dēnkard-i Haftum*, (7.3), 251; (8.1-61), 263-272.

[41] Dādaghī, *Bundahiš*, 31; *Greater Bundahišn*, 2-5.

evils have made their abode in Iran... Their wicked rule will be at an end...[42]

As is observed above, Arabs are introduced as a malignant nation in all aspects since they slay anyone who comes their way in Iran. Moreover, *Bundahišn* relates that Arabs do not content themselves with invasion and propagate their invalid religion. Accordingly, Arab invasion is considered the end of the millennium during which Zoroaster turned up and propagated his religion. Finally, it is indicated that a community with red flags and symbols will come along and weaken Arabs.[43] Interpreting Muslim conquests as Arab invasion, Zand texts call Islam a superstitious religion equivalent to social decadence.

Jāmāsp-nāmah informs about dissolution of Iranian society due to Muslim conquests; nevertheless, it heralds a time when Iranians will no more dissociate from other nations. Children born in Iran will be enslaved, and children will go against their families. In this chaotic environment, people will cheat one another and disobey agreements; the noble will follow the slaves, and the free will be put into captivity. Giving an account of social dissolution, the text interestingly asserts that such situation will even affect the climate, whereupon hot and cold winds will blow, untimely rains will pour down, fruits will expire, and the world will turn into ruins. The narrative tells that the believers of good religion will be deemed evil creatures and that people will wrap up themselves in the character of Ahriman and his creatures.[44] Indeed, Book Seven of *Dēnkard* emphasizes that it is not only an

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[42] *Greater Bundahišn*, (XXXIII.20-22), 276-279. This narrative tells about ablution of the deceased before burying, wherein there is a mention of eating "dead substance," more precisely, "something dead." In Islamic law, it is inappropriate to eat the meat of dead animals. On the other hand, according to Q 5:4, the meat of animals hunted by predators is considered *ḥalāl*. This fact may help us to understand the meaning of "eating dead substance" in Zoroastrian literature. For further information, see al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī al-musammá Jāmiʿ al-bayān ʿan taʾwīl āyāt al-Qurʾān*, ed. Maḥmūd Muḥammad Shākir and Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir, 2nd ed. (Mecca: Dār al-Tarbiyah wa-l-Turāth, 2000), IX, 543-568; Mehmet Şener, "Av (Fıkıh)," in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi (DİA)*, IV, 104-105.

[43] *Greater Bundahišn*, (XXXI.37), 268-269 (evil immoral descendants of Arabs); (malevolent and murderer Arabs), (XXXIII.9), 274-275; (XXXIII.23-24), 278-279 (community with red flag and badge); (XXXVI.8-10), 306-307.

[44] Bailey, "To the Zamasp-Namak. I," (12-25), 56-57, (44-52), 58-59.

invasion or defeat but also that the invalid and evil beliefs and thoughts of invaders in Iran devastated the locals.[45]

Later in *Jāmāsp-nāmah*, these incidents are cited as features of the Age of Iron; this mention is a reference to the Zoroastrian apocalyptical approach and the wish to return to the old glorious days. Thus, Zoroastrianism, which declined from dominance to weakness upon the fall of the Sasanians, interprets the existence of evil as a precursor of salvation and not despair. In other words, the advent of salvation is possible through absolute domination of evil. As is observed here, Zand literature, which is circulated exclusively among clergy and is built with a concealed sacred language, presents a very negative attitude toward Islam and Muslims.

V. Coexistence with *Ag-Dēnān*

Zoroastrian Zand literature comprises texts about the meaning of living together with Muslims for Zoroastrians, in addition to the abovementioned apocalyptical and messianic ones. Although Zoroastrianism is no more the dominant religion, they try to develop a perspective about the basis of practices during the Sasanian era to solve problems in daily life.[46] As a matter of fact, these texts recommend certain previous/ancient practices for which political authority is required and that became impossible upon Muslim conquests. For instance, *Dādestān ī Dēnīg* inquires about what is to be done about those who leave Zoroastrianism for another religion, and it is stated that such persons should be condemned to death.[47]

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[45] *Dēnkard-i Haftum*, (7.3), 251; (8.1-61), 263-272, (8.5-7), 263-264; *Dinkard VII*; *Pahlavi Texts V*, (8.5-7), 95.

[46] It can be mentioned that there is an extant book of law that organizes daily life in the Sasanian era. Farraxvmart ī Vahrāmān, *The Book of Thousand Judgements (A Sasanian Law Book)*, ed. and trans. Anahit Perikhanian (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 1980); *The Laws of the Ancient Persians as found in the "Mâtîkân ê Hazâr Dâtastân" or "The Digest of a Thousand Points of Law"*, trans. Sohrab Jamshedjee Bulsara (Mumbai: Hoshang T. Anklesaria, 1937), I-II.

[47] *Dādestān ī Dēnīg Part I: Transcription, Translation and Commentary*, ed. and trans. M. Jaafari Dehaghi (Paris: Association pour l'Avancement des Etudes Iraniennes, 1998), (XL.1-9), 169-171; According to Choksy, there is such a commandment in Zoroastrian literature; nevertheless, there is no record of Zoroastrians slaying a former Zoroastrian who converted to Islam. For Choksy,

Zand literature calls for active implementation of many decisions made prior to Muslim conquests, presumably as an attempt to keep together the Zoroastrian community through clergy against the proliferation of Islam. The significant amount of apostasy among Zoroastrians for various reasons throughout the conquest is described as a most evil deed with worldly and otherworldly costs according to Zand literature. For example, *Rivāyāt-ī Hēmīt-ī Ašavahištān,* which essentially focuses on questions and answers about daily life, analyses the foregoing reality in an explicit manner. Accordingly, a person who leaves good religion for the evil and chooses Islam commits a great sin (*tanāpuhl*)[48] that will keep him away from heaven; moreover, the punishment for this sin is death if he does not give up and correct such apostasy within one year. At this point, *Rivāyāt-ī Hēmīt-ī Ašavahištān* asserts that circumcision of a Zoroastrian who converts to Islam is a sin that requires the death penalty. Accordingly, any repentant who returns to Zoroastrianism can be accepted as a true Zoroastrian only after fulfilling the commandments of his religion for one year; indeed, only after a year, such a person will be interred as a Zoroastrian. The same text also declares that it is appropriate to seize the possessions of a Zoroastrian who converts to *Ag-dēnīh*, namely, Islam, but admits the practical difficulty of such a measure in those days. Negating any social relationship with Muslims, this text also disapproves marriage with non-Zoroastrians. Likewise, it forbids Zoroastrians to go to bathhouses

Zoroastrians lacked the political power required for such executions. This fact also applies for confiscation of assets of Zoroastrians who convert to Islam. Indeed, *Mātīkān ē Hazār Dātastān*, the Sasanian book of law, tells how the provision on confiscation of assets of those who try to proliferate Zendīg belief, especially Manichaeism, was implemented. *Mātīkān ē Hazār Dātastān or the Digest of a Thousand Points of Law II*, (XLII.47), 548; Jamsheed Choksy, "Zoroastrians in Muslim Iran: Selected Problems of Coexistence and Interaction during the Early Medieval Period," *Iranian Studies* 20, no. 1 (2007), 21-25, https://doi.org/10.1080/00210868708701689.

[48] *Tanāpuhl/ tanāpuhr* is defined as a sin that prevents passage from Chinvat Bridge on the way to heaven after death. Its penance was initially flogging, before being set to 300 dirham silver coins. The culprit is isolated from the society until he pays the penalty. *Rivāyat ī Hēmīt ī Ašawahistān: A Study in Zoroastrian Law*, ed. and trans. Nezhat Ṣafā-yi Eṣfahānī (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980), 316-317; Nyberg, *A Manual of Pahlavi*, II, 191.

of Muslims.[49] *Pursišnīhā*,[50] another example of Zoroastrian *Rivāyāt* tradition, also refers to apostasy among Zoroastrians. It questions whether a person who believes in Ahura Mazda and Zoroaster could go to hell and seeks verification of the afterlife. The answer is that all Zoroastrians, who pray to Zoroaster, will go to heaven via Chinvat Bridge, implying a warning against apostasy.[51] Another question asks about the status of non-Iranian followers of evil religion in afterlife. These persons, who exhibit incomplete or extreme behaviors in this world, consider sin as virtue and vice versa; therefore, they cannot be honestly appreciated by Ahura Mazda.[52]

Zoroastrian texts have much in common in terms of judgments regarding abandoning of Zoroastrianism; however, *Pursišnīhā* interestingly addresses the conversion of a follower of evil religion to Zoroastrianism and discusses his situation. The text asks what happens in case such a person declares himself as a Zoroastrian. It requires such a person to exhibit in his behaviors his belief in Zoroastrian principles.[53] This question actually refers to the allegations that certain Muslims converted to Zoroastrianism following Muslim conquests. On the other hand, this question may arise from a possibility, not an actual situation, or from a concern to keep the Zoroastrian community together.

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[49] *Rivāyāt-ī Hēmīt-ī Ašavahištān*, *vol. 1 Pahlavi Text*, ed. Behramgore Tahmuras Anklesaria (Mumbai: K. R. Cama Oriental Institute, 1962), (I. 1-6), 2-5, (IV.4-6), 10-11, (XIX.1-10), 77-79, (XXVI.2-3), 124-125, (XLII.1-8), 157-160; *Rivāyat ī Hēmīt ī Ašawahištān: A Study in Zoroastrian Law*, 20-24; *Rivāyat-i Emīd-i Āshavahīshtān: mutaʿalliq bih sadah-i chahārum-i Hijrī*, 1-3, 16-17, 133-136, 172-173, 259-262; Choksy, *Conflict and Cooperation: Zoroastrian Subalterns and Muslim Elites in Medieval Iranian Society* (New York: Columbia University, 1997), 89.

[50] *Pursišnīhā* is one of the *Rivāyāt* texts in question-and-answer form. The author of the text, which answers the questions via citations from the Avesta, is unknown. Written in the post-Sasanian era and comprising 59 questions, *Pursišnīhā* clarifies various issues, including clerics, principles of religious cleanliness, treatment of non-Zoroastrians, and the believers worthy of heaven. *Pursišnīhā: A Zorastrian Catechism Part I*, ed. and trans. Kaikhusroo M. Jamaspasa and Helmut Humbach (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1971), 7-9; Macuch, "Pahlavi Literature," 148-149.

[51] *Pursišnīhā, Part I*, (5), 14-15.

[52] *Ibid*., (38), 58-59.

[53] *Ibid*., (26), 42-43.

Pursišnīhā forbids Zoroastrians from making friends with non-Iranian followers of evil religion or from establishing commercial partnerships with them. A person who helps Zoroastrians but follows evil religion is not appreciable even if he commits praiseworthy deeds in the eyes of Zoroastrianism; indeed, the text does not want Zoroastrians to make friends with such persons.[54] Similarly, it is inappropriate for a Zoroastrian to help followers of other religions or provide them with anything. Such behavior will diminish virtue, and such a deed is equivalent to a sin. After all, a Zoroastrian can only do favor to a Zoroastrian.[55]

Likewise, the later *Rivāyāt-i Dārāb Hormozdyār* provides a comprehensive account of the details of daily interactions between Zoroastrians and Muslims. For example, it describes non-Zoroastrians as *jud-dīn* (unbeliever or abjurer) and questions whether the testimony of such persons is acceptable and whether it is appropriate to enter into commercial relations with such persons. The same text recommends refraining from eating together with Muslims at their tables since this is a sin. Muslims do not prepare their food in line with Zoroastrian criteria for cleanliness. Moreover, according to *Dādestān ī Dēnīg*, sale of cattle to non-Zoroastrians is a significant sin, and this prohibition should be obeyed even in cases of obligation. Likewise, it forbids buying meat from non-Iranians and followers of evil religion (Muslims) except for one occasion. According to this book, it is a great sin to sell a slave to a non-Zoroastrian; moreover, such a seller or buyer shall be considered a thief.[56] The foregoing rules in Zoroastrian literature were codified during the Islamic era; in fact, however, such practices were included in Sasanian law texts in the pre-Islamic period. Indeed, Sasanian law forbade trade of slaves and similar commercial activities with members of *ag-dēnīh*, which was a general concept

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[54] *Ibid*., (46), 68-69.

[55] *Ibid*., (50), 72-73, (35), 54-57.

[56] *The Dâdistân-î Dînîk, Pahlavi Texts. Part II,* ed. F. Max Müller, trans. Edward William West (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1882), 53.1-16; *Pahlavi Rivāyat Accompanying the Dādestān ī Dēnīg*: *Part 2: Translation, commentary and Pahlavi text*, ed. and trans. Alan Williams (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1990), (14.17), 27, 149 (buying meat), (30.1-4), 56 (sale of slaves); Dhabhar, *Persian Rivayats of Hormazyar*, 51-55, 267-268; MacKenzie, *A Concise Pahlavi Dictionary*, 47 (Jud-).

used for all other religions prior to Islam.[57]

Zand literature disapproves of Zoroastrians who convert to Islam in the wake of Muslim conquests and accordingly declares social relations with Muslims to be a significant sin to maintain its community. Another major sin is to marry a person that follows evil/superstitious religion. In certain texts, Ahura Mazda recommends Zoroaster intra-communal or kin marriage (*xwēdōdah*),[58] claiming this method is the only means to realize eschatological renovation. Likewise, according to *Rivāyāt-ī Hēmīt-ī Asavahistān*, it is a great sin (*tanāpuhl*) to marry a non-Zoroastrian woman and to have children with such a wife. Apocalyptic *Zand ī Wahman Yasn* also dwells upon kin marriage since it complains of disorder upon Arab invasion and considers kin marriage, ordered by Zoroaster, as the only means to re-establish order.[59]

Apparently, the foregoing rules about daily life were in effect during the Sasanian era; nevertheless, the practicability of these provisions became contradictive due to Islamic rule. In fact, past rules and principles and practices of religious life are included in religious texts after the arrival of Islam, most likely because of the Zoroastrian ambition and hope of becoming the dominant religion once again. Indeed, when Zoroastrian sovereignty returns, the foregoing rules will be required for organization of daily life, and the perpetrators of evil deeds will be duly punished. By means of religious literature,

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[57] Wahrāmān, *The Book of Thousand Judgements*, 28-29 (sale of slaves), (44.3-8), 118-119, (60.10-16), 154-155 (problem of inheritor).

[58] For discussions about this type of marriage and relevant reference texts, see Skjærvø, "Marriage, ii. Next-of-Kin Marriage in Zoroastrianism," in *Encyclopædia Iranica*, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/marriage-next-of-kin, accessed September 16, 2017; *Pahlavi Rivāyat Accompanying with Dādestān ī Dēnīg, II*, (8a1-8o3) 10-17, 126-137; *Kitāb-i Savvum-i Dēnkard*, ed. and trans. Farīdūn Faḍīlat. (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Farhangi Dehkhudā, 1381/2003), (80), 143-152, 298-319; Darab Dastur Peshotun Sunjana, *Next-of-Kin Marriage in Old Irân: An Address Delivered before the Bombay Branch, Royal Asiatic Society, on the 15th and 22nd April, 1887* (London: Trübner & Co., 1888), 49-94; Chosky, *Purity and Pollution in Zoroastrianism: Triumph over Evil* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989), 88-94.

[59] *Pahlavi Rivāyat Accompanying with Dādestān ī Dēnīg, II*, (8a1-8o3) 10-17, 126-137; Anklesaria, *Rivāyāt-ī Hēmīt-ī Ašavahištān, vol. 1 Pahlavi Text*, (XLII.1-8), 157-160; *Zand ī Wahman Yasn: A Zoroastrian Apocalypse*, (V.5), 159.

Zoroastrian clergy try to render their community uniform and closed to external influences to minimize contact with Muslims. Thus, the main objective is to maintain the community structure, in addition to the existence of Zoroastrians.

VI. Theological Opposition: Example of Mardānfarrox

Zands depict Muslim conquests as an invasion attempt and the beginning of the Age of Iron in a negative manner, maintaining hopes for a better future. The Zand texts also discuss how to live together with the newcomers, namely, Muslims. Zoroastrian literature, which recommends limited contact with Muslims, has developed a theological opposition against the proliferation of Islam and criticized Islam, particularly in terms of its conception of God. In this regard, Zands emphasize that Islam, which is far from being the religion of truth, is therefore an emergent and evil religion.

The negative definition of Islam is observable in many Zand texts. *Dēnkard-i Panjum*, the fifth book of *Dēnkard*, indicates that men are slain on unjust grounds for the sake of the fabricated, untrue, and evil religion. The text notes the necessity of honoring divine beings/Izads, such as the sun and moon, in addition to Ahura Mazda; consequently, the monotheistic worship of Muslims is considered inappropriate.[60] These arguments reveal an objection against Islam regarding the concept of God.

Škand-Gumānīg Vizār is an example of Zand texts that present implicit criticism of the post-Muslim conquest era and depict a negative panorama about Islam and Muslims; in particular, this book addresses theological aspects of the problem and mentions Islamic theology. Mardānfarrox, the author of this rare text codified in the second half of the 9th century, approaches the problem as cautiously as possible.[61]

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60 *Kitāb-i Panjum-i Dēnkard*, 50-51, (24.15), 90-91 (characteristics of *Ag-dēn*).

61 It is considered that *Škand-Gumānīg Vizār* was written during the late 9th century. It was codified in the Islamic era by the Zoroastrian clergyman Mardānfarrox, son of Ohrmazd-dād. The title literally means "Analytical Treatise for the Dispelling of Doubts." Accordingly, it follows a philosophical methodology, criticizing perceptions of God by religions in contact with Zoroastrianism and related claims; moreover, it warns Zoroastrian clergy in this regard. In this context, the text criticizes theological arguments and other philosophical and religious approaches of four religions, namely, Judaism, Christianity, Manichaeism, and Islam (Chapters

Mardānfarrox refers to the Qurʾān using the term *nibēg/nipēk*, which literally means "script," "sacred book" or "book."[62] Principally, it is forbidden to share Zand texts with anyone outside the Zoroastrian clergy; nevertheless, Mardānfarrox refrains from using the words "Islam," "Muslim," and "Qurʾān," most likely to avoid any possible problem in case of disclosure. In our opinion, the dominant power of Islam compelled him to opt for this method. Indeed, he sees no harm in criticizing religions such as Judaism, Christianity, and Manichaeism by mentioning their names.

Chapters 11 and 12 of this book comprise implicit criticisms of the monotheistic approach of Islam. The book is structured as a question-and-answer text, and the problem is explained via conditional phrases. In the process, Mardānfarrox allows for possible questions and answers, which Zoroastrian clergy may come across. Interestingly

XI-XII). We do not know the exact dates of the birth and death of the author; nevertheless, textual clues hint that it was finalized in the late 9th century. E. West performed the first-ever translation of *Shikand* into a Western language in 1885 in the series *Sacred Book of East*; soon afterwards, H. Jamasp-Asana and E. West created a Pazand and Middle Persian edition with the title *Shikand-Gumanik Vijar: The Pazand Sanskrit Text together with a Fragment of the Pahlavi* in 1887. P. De Menasce realized a French translation with the title *Shikand-Gumanik Vijar*; recently, Parvīn Shakībā translated the text into Persian as *Guzārish-i gumān shikan: sharḥ wa tarjumah-ʾi matn-i Pāzand-i 'Shikand gumānīk vīchār'* in 2001. The latest English translation was performed by Raham Asha under the name *Šak-ud-gumānīh-vizār: The Doubt-removing book of Mardānfarrox*. For further information, see *Sikand Gumanik Vigar: Pahlavi Texts III*, trans. Edward William West (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885), XXV-XXXVIII, 115-243; Tavadia, *Zebān va Adābiyāt-i Pahlavī*, 119-125; Mardānfarrox, *Guzārish-i gumān'shikan: sharḥ wa tarjumah-ʾi matn-i Pāzand "Shikandah-gumānīk vīchār": Athar-i Mardānfarrukh pisar-i Uvarmazd'dād*, ed. and trans. Parvīn Shakībā (Champaign, IL: Nashr-i Kitāb-i Kayūmarth, 2001), 4-5; Boyce, "Middle Persian Literature," 46-48; Macuch, "Pahlavi Literature," 149-151; Cereti, "Škand-Gumānīg Vizār," in *Encyclopædia Iranica*, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/shkand-gumanig-wizar, accessed November 17, 2017.

62 Donald N. MacKenzie, *A Concise Pahlavi Dictionary*, 59; Nyberg, *A Manual of Pahlavi*, II, 141; *Guzārish-i gumān shikan*, (XI.258), 122, (XI.264-269), 125; Mardānfarrox, *Šak-ud-gumānīh-vizār: The Doubt-removing book of Mardānfarrox*, ed. and trans. Raham Asha (Paris: Alain Mole, 2015), (XI.245-249), 132, (XI.264-279), 134. Cf. Q 7: 11-18.

enough, he refers to the Qurʾānic verses without explicit mention when uttering the criticisms. For example, the beginning of chapter tells about monotheists (*ēkīhuskārān*), namely, Muslims, who believe in unity of God and refers to Qurʾānic verses:

> ... First about monotheists [*ēk-bunēšt-uskār/ēkīhuskārān*] who stated thus: there is only one god [*ēk ast yazd*], who is benefactor, wise, powerful, clement, and merciful, so that both pious deed and crime, truth and falsehood, life and death, good and evil come from him.[63]

In the subsequent parts, Mardānfarrox informs that two opposite things cannot arise from the same origin and instructs Zoroastrian clergy, giving a detailed account of how they should respond to such dualist perspectives. Moreover, Mardānfarrox indicates how the clergy should ask questions. For instance, he recommends the clergy to ask why the merciful and forgiving god created Satan and other demons and send them on his creatures, and why he created hell. The text essentially develops the criticism on the ground that both good and evil come from Allah, questioning why Allah allows any harm to come to his subjects.[64] Thus, Mardānfarrox criticizes the thought of unity (*tawḥīd*), one of the essential creeds of Islam, in addition to the monotheistic view. Additionally, Mardānfarrox absolutely refuses the association between evil and God, within the framework of Sasanian dualism, to underline the problematic conception of God in Islam. Indeed, the dualist idea of god in Sasanian era stresses that Ahura Mazda is absolutely far away from evil and Ahriman. According to the author, no evil can emanate from the absolute good; the good and the evil are absolutely separated from one another by nature. Just as the arrival of light ends darkness, the existence of good annihilates evil. If God is perfect, no evil can emanate from Him. If evil comes from Him, then He cannot be perfect (good). If He is not perfect, then He cannot

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[63] Mardānfarrox, *Šak-ud-gumānīh-vizār*, (XI.3-5), Mardānfarrox, *Guzārish-i gumān'shikan*, (XI.3-5), 94-95; 113 Cf. Q 112:1; Q 2:163. Also see Qurʾānic verses in which attributes of Allah such as *al-ʿAlīm* (the Knowing), *al-Ḥakīm* (the Wise), *al-Raḥmān* (the Most Compassionate), *al-Raḥīm* (the Most Merciful), *al-Qadīr* (the All-Powerful), *al-Raʾūf* (the Kind), and *al-ʿAzīz* (the Powerful) are given.

[64] Mardānfarrox, *Guzārish-i gumān shikan*, (XI.6-16), 95-96; for criticism on Islam, see Chapters XI-XII, 94-148; Mardānfarrox, *Šak-ud-gumānīh-vizār*, (XI.6-16), 114-115 for criticism on Islam, see Chapters XI-XII, 113-146.

be worshipped as the absolute good.[65]

Interestingly enough, refraining significantly from allowing words such as Islam, Muḥammad or Muslim, the text mentions "Muʿtazilah." Accordingly, the text provides a criticism about Allah as the origin of evil, His will to wish evil and Him as origin of evil deeds within the context of Muʿtazilī arguments. Allah creates only the good (*aṣlaḥ*) for mankind;[66] then, Mardānfarrox asks, why does Allah hurt man or wish evil and does not annihilate it? For example, the coherence between the mercy of God toward His creatures and the evil He sends upon them is questioned. In case God is sovereign over every person and thing, why does not He protect them from evil? The author argues how good and evil come from the same origin and tries to prove the impossibility of such a contrast in the divine perspective. In doing so, Mardānfarrox imitates the traditional style of Islamic theology (*kalām*), writing "we say so, if they say so," etc.[67]

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[65] Mardānfarrox, *Šak-ud-gumānīh-vizār*, (VIII.92-116), 98-99; Mardānfarrox, *Guzārish-i gumān shikan*, (VIII.92-112), 76-78; for further information about Sasanian dualism, see Alıcı, *Kadîm İran'da Din*, 205-220; Shaul Shaked, "Some Notes on Ahreman, Evil Spirit and His Creation," in *Studies in Mysticism and Religion: presented to Gershom G. Scholem on His 70. Birthday by Pupils, Colleagues, and Friends*, ed., Efraim Elimelech, R. J. Zwi Werblowsky, and Chaim Wirszubski (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1967), 227-234; Philip Kreyenbroek, "Cosmogony and Cosmology in Zoroastrianism/Mazdaism," in *Encyclopœdia Iranica*, VI, 303-307.

[66] At this point, the text points to the Qurʾānic verses that indicate that both good and evil come from Allah: Q 37:96; Q 39:62; Q 23:62; Q 4:78; Q 10:11. For further information about *aṣlaḥ* doctrine of Muʿtazilah, see al-Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār, Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAbd al-Jabbār ibn Aḥmad al-Hamadānī, *al-Mughnī fī abwāb al-tawḥīd wa-l-ʿadl*, vol. 14, *al-Aṣlaḥ - Istiḥqāq al-dhamm - al-Tawbah*, edited by Muṣṭafá al-Saqqā and Ibrāḥīm Madkūr (Cairo: al-Dār al-Miṣriyyah li-l-Taʾlīf wa-l-Tarjamah), 1963, 7-180; Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Ismāʿīl ibn Abī Bishr al-Ashʿārī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn wa-ikhtilāf al-muṣallīn*, ed. Hellmut Ritter (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1980), 574-577; Avni İlhan, "Aslah," in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi (DİA)*, III, 495-496; Hülya Alper, "Mâtürîdî'nin Muʿtezile Eleştirisi: Tanrı En İyiyi Yaratmak Zorunda mıdır?," *Kelâm Araştırmaları Dergisi* 11, no. 1 (2013), 17-36.

[67] Mardānfarrox, *Guzārish-i gumān'shikan*, (XI. 1-33, XI. 268-285) 94-98, 125-127; *Sikand Gumanik Vigar*, 173-177, 194-295.

Mardānfarrox does not mention the Qurʾān but makes explicit references to Qurʾānic verses. For instance, the God of superstitious religion/Islam seals the hearts, mouths, and eyes of men by saying "I sealed."[68] These words mean that man cannot think, speak or do anything beyond the will of God. Therefore, Mardānfarrox questions the mercy of God. For him, the damnation of Satan, a great angel, for not prostrating before Adam[69] does not comply with the idea of divine wisdom in every deed of God. Consequently, the author develops his criticism on the basis of Qurʾānic verses.[70]

The book by Mardānfarrox dates to the 9th century, the heyday of Muʿtazilah under ʿAbbāsid rule. In a sense, the author of *Škand-Gumānīg Vizār* takes aim at the most striking and dominant theological school of his day. In this respect, Zoroastrian literature allowed Muʿtazilah most likely because two great masters of Muʿtazilah, Ibrāhīm al-Naẓẓām (d. 231/845) and Abū l-Hudhayl al-ʿAllāf (d. 235/849), lived during the mid-9th century and led theological discussions. Accordingly, the mention of *Kitāb ʿalá l-Majūs*, the lost work by al-ʿAllāf, refers to the vivid controversial grounds of the period.[71]

In addition to Zand texts written in Middle Persian and codified during the Islamic era, there are texts scripted in Persian with records about Islam and Muslims. *Škand-Gumānīg Vizār* does not mention Islam when criticizing the Islamic conception of the unity of God; nevertheless, *Kitāb-i Rivāyāt-i Dārāb Hormozdyār*,[72] a 13th-century

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68 For sealing of hearts, see Q 2:7; Q 6:46; Q 45:23.

69 For story of Satan, see Q 2:30-35; Q 7:11-18. For Satan as a jinn, see Q 18:50.

70 Mardānfarrox, *Guzārish-i gumān'shikan*, (XI.38-45), 99, (XI.46-60), 100-102; Mardānfarrox, *Šak-ud-gumānīh-vizār*, (XI.37-44), 117, (XI.45-60), 117-119.

71 For dominance of Muʿtazilah in the period, see İlyas Çelebi, "Muʿtezile," in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi (DİA)*, XXXI, 391-401; Osman Aydınlı, "Muʿtezile Ekolü, Teşekkülü, İlkeleri ve İslâm Düşüncesine Katkıları," *Marife* 3, no. 3 (2003), 36-40.

72 The text, written in Persian in the 13th century and known as *Kitāb-i Rivāyāt-i Dārāb Hormozdyār*, also provides information about Islam and Muslims. Two chapters mentioned therein with the title *ʿUlamā-ye Islām* provide a rare example of the questions, presumably asked by Muslim scholars, being responded to by Mowbed-i Mowbedān, the highest religious authority. The statement at the introduction of this Persian corpus as "six centuries after Yazdegerd III" notes that *ʿUlamā-ye Islām* can be dated to around the 13th century. *ʿUlamā-ye Islām* and

work, clearly uses the name of Islam. Thus, the implicit attitude of Zands is left for explicit reference to Islam and Muslims. This is because codification of Zand literature is accomplished and also because later religious texts are within the zone of influence of Zand literature.

Kitāb-i Rivāyāt-i Dārāb Hormozdyār includes *ʿUlamā-ye Islām*, a text of two chapters. The first chapter provides information about how the religion/Zoroastrianism appeared and proliferated in the course of history, how cosmological time is classified, the return of earthly deeds of man, and what will happen in afterlife, grounding on previous Zands. The text tries to give answers to some assumable questions. It criticizes once again the Islamic argument that both evil and good come from God; instead, wrongness, ignorance, and evil cannot be associated with the nature of God. Another notable discussion is about duality. According to the book, emanation of good from Ahura Mazda and evil from Ahriman does not cause any dualism; instead, Ahriman and his creatures are actually condemned to nonexistence.[73] At this point, the text touches upon the distinction between material/*gētīg* and spiritual/*mēnōg* creation that is established by the Sasanian exegetical tradition and detailed by Zands. Hereupon, creation by Ahura Mazda represents material and spiritual creation, whereas Ahriman can create only in spiritual/*mēnōg* manner. Consequently, the creatures of Ahriman have to adhere to a material being to exist, whereupon their

similar Persian texts were compiled by Ervad Maneckji Rustamji Unvala and published in 1900 under the title *Kitāb-i Rivāyāt-i Dārāb Hormozdyār*. Later on, it was published by Ervad B. N. Dhabhar in Mumbai in 1932 as *The Persian Rivayats of Hormazyar Framarz and Others: Their Version with Introduction and Notes*. Takeshi Aoki edited and published different versions of *ʿUlamā-ye Islām* (UI-1, UI-2). Dhabhar, *Persian Rivayats*, 449; *Kitāb-i Rivāyāt-i Dārāb Hormozdyār (Daftar-e Duvvum)*, ed. Ervad Maneckji Rustamji Unvala (Mumbai: Maṭbaʿ-i Gulzār-i Ḥasanī, 1900), 80; Takeshi Aoki, "A Zoroastrian Refutation of the Muʿtazilite Theology, with an Edition of *ʿUlamā-ye Islām* (UI-1)," *Journal of Central Eurasian Studies* 4 (2016), 12-27; Aoki, "A Study of Zurvanite Zoroastrianism: an Edition of *ʿUlamā-ye Islām* of *Another Version* (UI-2) and Its Long Quotation in a Book of Āzar Kayvān School," in *Researches in the Three Foreign Religions: Paper in Honor of Professor Lin Wushu on his Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Zhang Xiaogui (Lanzhou: Daxue Chubanshe, 2015), 405-425.

[73] Dhabhar, *Persian Rivayats*, 438-449; Unvala, *Kitāb-i Rivāyāt-i Dārāb Hormozdyār*, 72-80; Aoki, "A Zoroastrian Refutation of the Muʿtazilite Theology," 5-10.

existence depends on creatures of Ahura Mazda, the absolute good. At the end of the time, Ahriman and his creatures will be annihilated.[74]

The second chapter of *ʿUlamā-ye Islām* opens with the responses to questions asked by Muslim scholars. Muslim scholars ask about creation of the world, humanity, death, and resurrection, whereupon Zoroastrian clergy gives a detailed answer about the perception of time in Zoroastrian theology, including cosmology and eschatology. At this stage, there is a reference to the Zand narrative that the world is created in a perfect manner, but the situation declined upon invasion by Ahriman.[75] Later on, the times grew worse, as examples suggest; the decline reached its peak upon the invasion of Iran by Arabs. Nevertheless, the saviors will appear toward the end of the time, and finally, advent of Ušadarmāh will restore the old good days. The final part of the text indicates that it is impossible to exactly answer what God actually wishes and why He created this world since this is beyond the understanding of man.[76]

The problem of evil occupies an important place in criticism of monotheistic Islam as considered evil religion by Zoroastrian literature. Indeed, this fact emerges as the essential distinction and point of debate between monotheist and dualist approaches on god. Apparently, the premises in aforesaid texts are established within the context of allegations of inconsistency between mercy and wrath of God, and they found a criticism for the Muʿtazilī principle that Allah only creates the good for His subjects.

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[74] For further information, see *Dādestān ī Dēnīg Part I*, (II.13), 44-45, (XXXVI.51), 131; Shaked, "The Notions of *mēnōg* and *gētīg* in the Pahlavi Texts and Their Relation to Eschatology," *Acta Orientalia* 33 (1971), 59-63, 70-73, for passages about concepts of *mēnōg* and *gētīg* in Pahlavi Texts, 100-107; Alıcı, *Kadîm İran'da Din*, 221-236.

[75] For the account of invasion attempt by Ahriman, see Avesta-Vendidad. 7.01-05; *Greater Bundahišn*, (XXII.1-29, XXIII.1-9), 183-191; *Vazīdigībā-i Zādspram*, ed. and trans. Muḥammad Taqī R. Muḥaṣṣil (Tehran: Pizhūhishgāh-i ʿUlūm-i Insānī wa-Muṭālaʿāt-i Farhangī, 1385/2009), (XXXIV. 34-35), 95-96.

[76] Dhabhar, *Persian Rivayats*, 449-457; Unvala, *Kitāb-i Rivāyāt-i Dārāb Hormozdyār*, 80-86.

Conclusion

Zoroastrian Zand literature, which is codified in the wake of Muslim conquests, generally manifests negative opinions about Islam and Muslims. Zand literature tries to interpret the situation of Muslim conquests through an integrated perspective. Indeed, the negative approach of this literature is apparent in every aspect of life, from theology to daily deeds and to the conception of the future. In general, hereby approach is formed upon envision of salvation from demonic rule, daily life together with Muslims and religious-theological issues.

The Muslim conquests paved the way for an apocalyptical attitude in Zand literature towards Muslims. Islam and Muslims are considered the reason for this new order and the origin of evil. Therefore, they are observed as the true responsible for the negative perspective. Consequently, political defeat and religious degeneration enabled a new salvation motif via conception of future. In conclusion, Islam is introduced as an evil religion, and Arabs are presented as its representatives; they are the only reason for pain and misery in *Ērānšahr*. The religious origin of revolts during and after Muslim conquests is based on such an idea of salvation.

Zands dwell upon a multidimensional conception about the complete evilness of Islam and Muslims. For instance, the reflection of such a conception leads to restriction on relations with Muslims in daily life. Therefore, Zands not only inform Zoroastrians but also instruct them to behave in a proper manner in daily life. Thus, Zand literature aims at holding Zoroastrian community together; is not indifferent to conversion, which leads to weakening of Zoroastrianism; and considers apostasy a sin worthy of the death penalty. It treats and criticizes the conceptions of god of Islam and other religions through the dualist approach. Thus, Zand puts forth the attitude to be displayed by Zoroastrian clergy in theological discussions with followers of other religions.

Except for *ʿUlamā-ye Islām*, the Zoroastrian literature interestingly refrains from mentioning essential concepts, such as Islam, Muslims or Qurʾān, in spite of establishing an attitude against Islam and Muslims in every context. This is because Zoroastrians, especially the clergy, withdrew into themselves upon Muslim conquests and shied away from criticizing the dominant religion in an explicit manner. Briefly, the negative description of Islam and Muslims in this literature is reflected in every aspect of life. This may be the manifestation of the

effort by Zoroastrian clergy to maintain their religion and transfer it to posterities.

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