The Last Sasanians and Ṭukhāristān

**Abstract**

After the death of the last Sasanian monarch Yazdegerd III in 651 CE, his son Pērōz stayed in the court of the Yabghū in Ṭukhāristān (modern northern Afghanistan) from 651 to circa 674 CE before fleeing to China; likewise, Pērōz’s son Narseh lingered in the same region from 680 to circa 705 CE and fled to China as well. The study seeks to reconstruct the experiences of these two Sasanian princes in Ṭukhāristān by combining multilingual sources and numismatics and to understand why they sought refuge in Ṭukhāristān and fled to China under an increasing pressure of the Arabs. The research shows that Pērōz and Narseh stayed in the Yabghū’s court mainly because of the Turkic dynasty’s power and influence. However, they were no more than prominent fugitives who were dependent on the Turkic dynasty and their attempts to restore the lost dynasty were fruitless. When the Arabs expanded into the region, they fled to the Tang court instead of other polities, mainly because the political power of the Tang would protect them from the Arabs, with other royal members scattering in the neighboring regions such as Transoxiana and south of the Hindukush.

Keywords: Pērōz; Narseh; Ṭukhāristān; Yabghū; Arabs; China.

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## Introduction

When the Arabs were making quick progress in conquering the territories of the Sasanian Empire (224-651 CE), the last Sasanian monarch Yazdegerd III (632-651 CE) fled eastward until coming to Marw in modern Turkmenistan and was killed there in 651 CE. Both the Armenian and the Muslim historians see Yazdegerd's death as the end of the Sasanians.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Actually, after Yazdegerd’s death, the surviving Sasanian members continued to seek refuge. Both the Muslim and the Chinese sources contain information of the last Sasanian princes, Yazdegerd's son Pērōz (d. 679 CE) and the latter's son Narseh (d. in the late 700s). They stayed in Ṭukhāristān (classical Bactria),[[2]](#footnote-2) a medieval term for modern northern Afghanistan, respectively for around two decades before arriving at the Chinese Tang court.[[3]](#footnote-3)

When it comes to academic research about the history of the last Sasanian princes after Yazdegerd III, it is at best briefly mentioned by scholars of the Arab conquests of Khurasan such as Hamilton Gibb, Muhammad Shaban, Hugh Kennedy and Robert Hoyland and by scholars of Sasanian history such as Richard Frye, Arthur Christensen and Parvaneh Pourshariati. The reasons are twofold: firstly, the last Sasanian princes were of no great siginificance in both the history of the Arab conquests and the Sasanian dynasty; secondly, the Muslim sources are meagre, while the Chinese sources are unfamiliar to these scholars.[[4]](#footnote-4)

The research of Chinese scholars focusses on the Chinese sources, both written and archaeological. The articles of both Liang & Wen and Zhang study the list of the foreign rulers in the Qianling Mausoleum (乾陵).[[5]](#footnote-5) Jiang notices the appearance of a Persian army in the Turfan archives,[[6]](#footnote-6) and argues that this confirms the *Jiu Tangshu* and the *Xin Tangshu*'s records of Narseh’s returning to Ṭukhāristān in the late 670s.[[7]](#footnote-7) Moreover, Xue argues that the Sasanian princes fought the Arabs actively during the century after Yazdegerd's death with the assistance of the Ṭukhārā Yabghū and the Tang Empire, with the Tang playing an important role in these political events.[[8]](#footnote-8)

The 21st century has witnessed a significant increase in relevant research. Scholars such as Compareti, Pashazanous and Stark start to fully exploit the Chinese sources and combine them with other sources. Compareti's 2013 paper largely exhausts the available Chinese sources and presents a comprehensive study of the Yazdegerd's successors;[[9]](#footnote-9) Pashazanous and Sangari combine the Chinese sources and recent archaeological discoveries in China to trace the experiences of the Sasanian princes.[[10]](#footnote-10) Additionally, based on the Chinese records of “Persian embassies” (波斯) in the eighth century, Agostini and Stark in their 2016 article argue that a Sasanian court-in-exile existed to the south of the Hindukush until at least the middle of the 8th century.[[11]](#footnote-11)

When it comes to the last Sasanian princes in Ṭukhāristān, where Pērōz and his son Narseh respectively stayed for two decades and from where the Sasanians further scattered, Haug presents a largely descriptive account of the career of Pērōz and Narseh in the frontier Ṭukhāristān.[[12]](#footnote-12) Pashazanous and Afkande’s article is by far the only detailed research, locating Ji-ling-cheng (疾陵城) that the center of the “Persian area command” (波斯都督府) that Pērōz returned in Ṭukhāristān instead of Zaranj (Persian Zarang) identified by other scholars such as Agostini and Stark.[[13]](#footnote-13)

However, the previous research has mainly concentrated on describing the relations between the refugee Sasanian princes and the Tang court, establishing the exact chronology of the events and identifying the toponyms mentioned in the Chinese source such as the controversial identification of Ji-ling-cheng. Little attention was paid to the events themselves, and to the political and military situation in Ṭukhāristān and Sīstān in this period, which was undoubtedly the major factor in the decisions taken by the last Sasanians in their ill-fated attempt to regain the throne of Iran.

This study will, thus, deal with Pērōz and Narseh in Ṭukhāristān and address the following three important questions:

1 Why did Pērōz seek refuge in the Yabghū’s court in Ṭukhāristān and not in other principalities to the east of the Sasanian Empire?

2 What did Pērōz and Narseh experience in their stay in Ṭukhāristān between the 650s and the 700s, or in other words, what challenges they were faced with under the geopolitical situations of the region?

3 What were the reasons behind their flight to China?

**The Sources**

In order to fulfill the above-raised tasks, to reconstruct and understand the experiences of the last Sasanian princes in the wider context of the geopolitics of Ṭukhāristān, both from the side of the Turks and the Hephthalites who controlled the region and from the side of the Arabs who expanded into it, it is crucial to analyze all the relevant sources in order to minimize the negative influence of the patchiness and partiality of the Muslim and Chinese sources.[[14]](#footnote-14)

The bulk of the sources of the geopolitics of Ṭukhāristān from the 650s to the 700s is the Muslim ones. And among the Muslim sources, al-Ṭabarī’s annals are the most informative and friendly to readers because of their clear chronology, while others provide a chance to check and supplement al-Ṭabarī’s records. These supplementary sources include the histories of the earlier Arabic historians al-Kūfī (active in 810s),[[15]](#footnote-15) Khalīfa ibn Khayyāṭ (d. 854 CE) and al-Balādhurī,[[16]](#footnote-16) of the contemporaneous al-Dīnawarī and al-Yaʿqūbī (d. 897/8 CE),[[17]](#footnote-17) and of the later Ibn-’Athīr (d. 1233),[[18]](#footnote-18) together with the Persian sources of Bal‘amī’s translation of al-Ṭabarī’s annals from the 10th century,[[19]](#footnote-19) *Tārīkh-i Sīstān* and *Tārīkh-i Gardīzī* from the 11th century,[[20]](#footnote-20) and the local history of Balkh *Faḍāʾil-i Balkh* from the 13th century.[[21]](#footnote-21)

The Middle Persian or Pahlavi sources such as chapter 33 of *Iranian Bundahišn*, *the Zand ī Wahman Yasn*, and the *Jāmāsp-Nāmag* also somewhat shed light on the last Sasanian princes. However, they are not only to be used with great caution because of their apocalyptic nature, but also difficult to use because of heavy later editing.[[22]](#footnote-22)

The Chinese sources are or include valuable contemporary records: especially the travelogues of the Buddhist pilgrim Xuanzang (玄奘), who traveled through Ṭukhāristān in 630 CE and the 640s,[[23]](#footnote-23) and of the Korean monk Huichao (慧超), who went back to China through the region in the 720s, leave contemporary records of Ṭukhāristān's geopolitics. Additionally, the two dynastic histories of the Tang Empire, the *Jiu Tangshu* (旧唐书) and the *Xin Tangshu* (新唐书), compiled in 945 CE and 1060 CE respectively, incorporate relevant information from diplomatic reports.[[24]](#footnote-24) Another noteworthy source the *Cefu yuangui* (册府元龟),[[25]](#footnote-25) which was presented to the Chinese Song court in 1013 CE, collects various information about foreign states including relevant records about Ṭukhāristān, Persia and so on. Moreover, relevant epitaphs are found in the *Quan Tangwen* (全唐文), a complete collection of the proses composed during the Tang Dynasty.

Besides the Muslim and Chinese sources, the study also realizes the significance of the Bactrian documents. They were found mainly in the 1990s and include more than 150 legal and economic contracts dated to the ancient and the early medieval northern Afghanistan.[[26]](#footnote-26) These local and contemporary documents also provide provide precious political information. Consequently, they deserve preference in the research.

Another category of important primary sources is the numismatics,[[27]](#footnote-27) which are important means for the rulers’ propaganda and crucial to understand the politics of this region. The coins provide a chance to check and fill the gap of the meagre and pathy written historical sources of Ṭukhāristān.

Unfortunately, although the different relevant sources are collected and combined, the picture of the political situation is still far from complete. As for Pērōz and his son Narseh's experiences in Ṭukhāristān, basically nothing is known except the brief records in the *Jiu Tangshu* and the *Xin Tangshu*. Consequently, the dearth of information makes is necessary to employ reasonable speculation in the study.

**The Historical Background**

The study not only touches multilingual primary sources, but also involves the big powers in or close to Central Asia. And by Central Asia, both the Tarim Basin in the east (modern Xinjiang), Transoxiana (classical Sogdiana) in modern Uzibekistan, Tajikistan, southern Kazakhstan and southern Kyrgyzstan,[[28]](#footnote-28) and Ṭukhāristān in the south are included. Besides the Arabs who expanded into Central Asia after the annihilation of the Sasanian Empire and the local political entities, the Western Turkic Khaganate (581-742 CE), the Tang Empire and the Tibetan Empire (618-842 CE) competed for the control of Central Asia and played a role in the history of this part of the world in the early medieval centuries (see map 1 in Appendix I).

The Turks threw off the yoke of the Rouran Khaganate (柔然, 330-555 CE) in the 550s,[[29]](#footnote-29) and quickly expanded into Central Asia from the steppes of Mongolia when they chased the Rouran westward. In the 560s they collaborated with the Sasanian monarch Khosrow I (531-579 CE) and toppled the Hephthalite Empire (440s-560 CE),[[30]](#footnote-30) a nomadic confederation of Hunnic origin that migrated from the Altai into Central Asia in the 2nd half of the 4th century and dominated Central Asia over a century between the mid-5th and the mid-6th century.[[31]](#footnote-31)

When the Western Turks established their suzerainty in the Tarim Basin and Transoxiana, they were encouraged by the Sogdians to open the trading routes to Byzantium through the Sasanian territories. However, Khosrow I refused to cooperate with the Turks and the Sogdians.[[32]](#footnote-32) And the following decades witness the competition for the control of Central Asia between the Turks and the Sasanian Empire. Although the Sasanians won several victories in military confrontations with the Turks, such as the campaigns led by the Sasanian general Bahrām Chubineh in the late 580s and by the Armenian general Smbat Bagratuni in the late 600s,[[33]](#footnote-33) the continuous warfare in the western front with the Byzantines in the first three decades of the 7th century and the internal instability in the late 620s and the early 630s greatly undermine the capacity of the Sasanian Empire to control Central Asia. Consequently, the Western Turks became the lord of Central Asia until they were challenged by the Tang Empire from the east and the Arabs from the west in the 650s.[[34]](#footnote-34)

After its establishment in 618 CE, the Tang Empire was able to destroy the Eastern Turkic Khaganate in 630 CE. Afterwards, the Tang expanded westwards and gradually annexed the oasis principalities in the Tarim Basin. The local rulers remained, while the Tang exerted their influence and controlled the trading routes by installing four garrisons in Kucha (龟兹), , Khotan (于阗) Kashgar (疏勒) and Sūyāb (碎叶) in the 640s and the 650s.[[35]](#footnote-35) After capturing Helu in 657 CE, the Tang Empire claimed the suzerainty over the Central Asian vassals of the Western Turks.[[36]](#footnote-36) Although a kind of administration was organized in Central Asia by the Tang, Wang and Haug point out that the military presence of the Tang was found in the Tarim Basin, while other parts of Central Asia such as Ṭukhāristān was mainly under the diplomatic influence of the Tang.[[37]](#footnote-37)

The *Jiu Tangshu* and the *Xin Tangshu* record the diplomatic relations between the Tang and the Sasanians.[[38]](#footnote-38) Actually, the Sasanians kept quite frequent diplomatic relations with China in the earlier Wei dynasty (386-581 CE) and the Sui dynasty (581-619 CE).[[39]](#footnote-39) The relations between China and the Sasanian Empire include not only exchange of diplomats, but also trading, both overland and maritime, with direct maritime trade being established most probably in the 7th century.[[40]](#footnote-40)

The Tibetan Empire (618-842 CE) was founded in the Tibetan Plateau almost at the same time as the Tang Empire. After subjugating the principalities in the Plateau, it expanded outwards. It first annexed its eastern neighbor the Tuyuhun, and started to challenge the Tang control of the Tarim Basin in the 670s.[[41]](#footnote-41) However, the Tang was able to control the Tarim Basin until the rebellion of An Lushan (755-763 CE), when the bulk of the Tang army in the west withdrew to the heartland of China to fight the rebels, leaving the four isolated garrison towns to th Tibetans.[[42]](#footnote-42)the Tibetans were able to capture the four isolated garrisons of the Tang only at the end of the 8th century.[[43]](#footnote-43)

In the 2nd half of the 8th century and the early 9th century, the power of the Tibetan Empire reached its peak. And it organized an alliance to compete with the Abbasid Empire (750-1258 CE) for the control of western Central Asia since the end of the 8th century and during the first two decades of the 9th century.[[44]](#footnote-44) However, its fighting in multi-fronts with the Tang, the Uyghur Khaganate (744-840 CE),[[45]](#footnote-45) Nanzhao (738-902) in modern Yunnan after its defecting to the Tang in 793 CE,[[46]](#footnote-46) and the Arabs drained the manpower of the Empire and led to its collapse around the mid-9th century.[[47]](#footnote-47)

**The Geography**

Besides the introduction of the political powers that are involved in the history of Central Asia in the 7th and the 8th century centuries, it also benefits to conduct a geographical survey of Ṭukhāristān, where the historical events discussed in the research took place. Additionally, a brief description of the medieval routes taken by the exiled Sasanian princes between Marw and Balkh,[[48]](#footnote-48) between Balkh and Sīstān,[[49]](#footnote-49) between Ṭukhāristān and China will be included.[[50]](#footnote-50)

The richest geographical information of Ṭukhāristān is found in the medieval Muslim geographies from the 9th and 10th centuries.[[51]](#footnote-51) As for contemporary sources, which are preferred, the local Bactrian documents simply mention several subregions of Ṭukhāristān such as Rūb, Siminjān, Warwālīz, Kadagstan and Gūzgān (Jūzjān in Arabic),[[52]](#footnote-52) while the main contemporary written sources are the Chinese reports either by Buddhist pilgrims such as Xuanzang and Huichao from the 7th and 8th centuries or relevant records later compiled into the *Jiu Tangshu* and the *Xin Tangshu*.[[53]](#footnote-53)Among the Chinese sources, the most prominent is Xuanzang's travelogue *the Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions* (大唐西域记) finished in 646 CE and his biography *the Biography of Sanzang Fashi of the Great Ci'en Monastery* (大唐慈恩寺三藏法师传) composed by two of his disciples Huili and Yancong in 688 CE.

According to Xuanzang’s travelogue and biography, the Oxus runs through the center of Ṭukhāristān instead of marking its northern border as the medieval Muslim geographies show;[[54]](#footnote-54) Tirmidh, Chaghāniyān, Akharūn and Shūmān,[[55]](#footnote-55) Quwādhiyān in the Kafirnihān river, Wakhsh and Khuttalān between the Wakhsh River and the Panj River, Huoguo (活国), where the Yabghū held his court,[[56]](#footnote-56) Balkh, and so on are found in northern Ṭukhāristān; Zumathān, Gūzgān and Ṭālaqān belong to western Ṭukhāristān; southern Ṭukhāristān touches Bāmyān;[[57]](#footnote-57) its eastern part includes Khost, Mungān, Ārhan, Rāhula, Kishm, Pārghar, Hephthal, Badakhshān, Yamgān, Kurān and Dar-i Mastit in the Wakhān Corridor.[[58]](#footnote-58) In other words, Ṭukhāristān was not limited to modern northern Afghanistan, but included regions in modern Uzbekistan and Tajikistan as well. Huoguo was the political center of the region, while the traditional capital Balkh played a major religious role (see map 2 in Appendix I).[[59]](#footnote-59)

And the region is fragmentary and divided into subregions by natural boundaries such as mountains and rivers.[[60]](#footnote-60) As Haug described, these separate regions in Ṭukhāristān, being largely cities with dependent villages and agricultural hinterlands, were connected by a web of routes.[[61]](#footnote-61) Warwālīz, Bāghlān, Badakhshān and Himatala in the east of the region and Bādghīs and Gūzgān in the west had pastures and attracted the nomadic Hephthalites and Turks.

Interestingly enough, Xuanzang uses Ṭukhāristān in two different ways in his reports. One is the contemporaneous geographical region named Ṭukhāristān and the other “the old territories” of the state of Ṭukhāristān (睹货逻国故地), which apparently refer to a no-longer-existing polity.[[62]](#footnote-62) And most probably it could be identified as the Kushan Empire (20-230CE),[[63]](#footnote-63) with Ṭukhāristān as the core territory of the Empire.

A comparison between Xuanzang’s reports and the medieval Muslim geographies shows that there is a striking contrast between the boundaries given by them, with the Muslim sources reporting that Ṭukhāristān was situated between the Oxus in the north to the Hindukush passes in the south, and between Balkh and Badakhshān with both beyond the region.[[64]](#footnote-64)

An explanation is the borders of Ṭukhāristān change due to the administrative divisions during the 9th and 10th centuries. And the explanation fits the earlier geographical information found in al-Balādhurī’s history and al-Ṭabarī’s annals, which agrees with Xuanzang's reports and supports the explanation.[[65]](#footnote-65) Barthold fails to realize the historical development of the boundaries of Ṭukhāristān and tries to reconcile the contrasting borders of the region found in the Muslim sources by suggesting that the usages of Ṭukhāristān in narrower and broader senses.[[66]](#footnote-66)

Another issue is that eastern and western Ṭukhāristān are used in the study instead of Upper and Lower Ṭukhāristān to avoid ambiguity,[[67]](#footnote-67) although the two terms are found in medieval Muslim geographies. For example, Gibb employs the Lower Ṭukhāristān to refer to the regions between the Murghāb river and Balkh.[[68]](#footnote-68) This is, however, problematic, since Lower Ṭukhāristān was a region to the east of Balkh according to the medieval Muslim geographers.[[69]](#footnote-69) Consequently, the study employs

When it comes to the routes between Ṭukhāristān and China, there were two ways. One was through Transoxiana and much longer.[[70]](#footnote-70) Consequently, the alternative way through Badakhshān and the Wakhān Corridor enjoyed greater popularity among Chinese, be they imperial emissaries such as Song Yun (宋云) and Wukong (悟空), and pilgrims such as Faxian (法显) and Huichao.[[71]](#footnote-71)

Other two routes include that between Marw and Balkh and between Balkh and Sīstān. The most frequented route by medieval travelers from Marw to Balkh would first follow the Murghāb river till Marw al-Rūd, and continued northeast for Balkh via Ṭālaqān of Gūzgān and Fāryāb.[[72]](#footnote-72) This is probably the route that Pērōz traveled on his way to Ṭukhāristān after his father’s death. The second is the route from Balkh to Zaranj of Sīstān, which Pērōz traveled to recover the Sasanian territory during the First Fitna (656-661 CE), the first civil war of the Muslims after the caliph ‘Uthmān’s assassination. The first leg of the route leads to Herat via Marw al-Rūd, and the second continues southward to Sīstān.[[73]](#footnote-73)

**The Structure**

The research is arranged according to the three questions that have been raised above and divided into three chapters. The first chapter discusses why Pērōz sought refuge in Ṭukhāristān instead of other principalities to the east of the Sasanian Empire. The second chapter starts with analyses with the local political situation of Ṭukhāristān from the 650s to the 700s, especially about the Yabghū dynasty and its powerful vassal the Hephthalite Nīzak dynasty, and with the Arab who expanded to the region, and attempts to reconstruct the experiences of Pērōz and his son Narseh in the region based on the analyses of the political situation. And the third chapter seeks to understand why these two Sasanian princes fled to China instead of seeking refuge in other places after leaving Ṭukhāristān.

The study argues that the Sasanian princes sought refuge in the court of the Ṭukhārā Yabghū, mainly because of the political power and influence of the Western Turks in Central Asia. And the Yabghū received the exiled Sasanian royal members for prestige, and was glad to have an additional ally to fight the expanding Arabs.

However, the Yabghū dynasty did not receive military assistance from the Western Turks or the Tang Empire, and probably suffered from tribal feuds between the Turks and the Hephthalites. As for the Arabs in Khurasan, the Umayyad government both checked the tribal feuds and provided reinforcements. They gradually got the upper hand in the competition for the control of Ṭukhāristān with the Turks and the Hephthalites. As for Pērōz and Narseh, they were dependent on the Turks; they did not pose threat to the Arabs and attempted to restore the lost dynasty in vain.

When the Arabs expanded deep to Ṭukhāristān, Pērōz and Narseh fled to China, mainly because the political power of the Tang Empire would provide a safe refuge for them, with other Sasanian members scattered in Sogdiana, and regions to the south of the Hindukush. Still, because of the meagerness of relevant information in the sources, the reconstruction lacks details and concrete chronology.

## 1 Why Pērōz and his son Narseh sought refuge in Ṭukhāristān

According to the Arab scholar al-Masʿūdī’s (d. 956 CE), Yazdegerd had two sons, Wahrām and Pērōz.[[74]](#footnote-74) The historian al-Balādhurī (d. 892 CE) reports that Pērōz fell to the Turks, married a Turkish woman and settled among them.[[75]](#footnote-75) And this should be a Turkic princess.[[76]](#footnote-76) Clearly, as Kavad I, Pērōz intermarried with the Turks in order to win their support. However, these are basically the only information about these two Sasanian princes in the Muslim sources, although miscellaneous records about other Sasanian members are found.[[77]](#footnote-77)

The Chinese sources are more informative concerning the career of Pērōz. The *Jiu Tangshu* and the *Xin Tangshu* report that Pērōz stayed in the court of the Ṭukhārā Yabghū during the 650s and 660s before arriving at the Tang court in the mid-670s; likewise, his son Narseh lingered in the same region between the 680s and the 690s and ended in China in the late 700s.[[78]](#footnote-78)

A question that this chapter will deal with is why both Pērōz and his son Narseh sought refuge in Ṭukhāristān. For Pērōz, Ḥitti translates al-Balādhurī's record *waqaʿa fīrūz ibn yazdjird ila al-turk* as Pērōz was captured by the Turks.[[79]](#footnote-79) Ḥitti’s translation is accepted by scholars such as Pashazanous and Afkande, Khazaee and Haug.[[80]](#footnote-80) If this translation is followed, it seems that Pērōz did not seek refuge among the Turks in Ṭukhāristān out of his own will.

Actually,the above-quoted Arabic sentence could plainly mean that Pērōz came to the Turks. The records of the *Jiu Tangshu* and the *Xin Tangshu* support the second translation and show that he sought refuge in Ṭukhāristān voluntarily.[[81]](#footnote-81) Moreover, the Chinese sources clarify that Pērōz went to the court of the Ṭukhārā Yabghū. Therefore, the reasons are sought both from the side of Pērōz and the Yabghū.

From the side of Pērōz, it stands to reason that he would seek refuge of an ally, whose political and military power could provide him and his followers protection. Therefore, it is logical that he went to the Turks. It is the same logic that the Sasanian monarchs Pērōz I (459-484 CE) and Kavad I (488-496, 498-531 CE) fled to the Hephthalites, when they fled from the internal disaster.[[82]](#footnote-82) The only difference is that the hegonomy of the Hephthalites in Central Asia, who assisted Pērōz I and Kavad I to reclaim their thrones, had been replaced by the Turks.

Actually, according to al-Ṭabarī, Yazdegerd III had written to the Khāqān of the Turks, the king of the Sogdians and the king of China to seek their reinforcements in order to fight the Arabs.[[83]](#footnote-83) And Yazdegerd also planned to join the ruler of the Turks or go to China, when he was asked by the Persian nobles about his plan in front of the chasing Arabs. Again, al-Ṭabarī’s report of his crossing the Oxus with his dependents and family and joining the Khāqān of the Turks in Farghānah in ‘Umar’s years is historical unreliable.[[84]](#footnote-84) However, Yazdegerd was clearly on his way to Ṭukhāristān when being killed in 651 CE.[[85]](#footnote-85)

Why would Yazdegerd choose to go to Ṭukhāristān instead of Sūyāb or Farghānah, which was closer to the center of the Western Turks, when they were still the biggest power in Central Asia?[[86]](#footnote-86) In other words, why did Pērōz carry out his father’s aborted plan and flee to Ṭukhāristān? The explanation lies in the development of the political situation of the Western Turks.

The Western Turks suffered from internal strife during the 640s and the 650s.[[87]](#footnote-87) Irbis Duolu Khāqān was attacked and fled to Ṭukhāristān,[[88]](#footnote-88) most probably because he could find support in the region that he had campaigned. And this Khāqān stayed in Ṭukhāristān until his death in 653 CE.[[89]](#footnote-89) The relations between the new ruler Irbis Shekui Khagan (乙毗射匮可汗, 642-651 CE) and Ṭukhāristān was expected to turn sour. Yazdegerd and Pērōz apparently were aware of the situation of the Western Turks and decided to join the deposed Khāqān who probably had assisted them.

However, after the death of Irbis Duolu Khāqān, Pērōz still stayed in Ṭukhāristān. This also needs an explanation. On the one hand, he married a Turkic princess and settled down; on the other hand, as the deputy of the Western Turks to the south of Oxus since the 620s,[[90]](#footnote-90) the Yabghū was the nominal lord of larger territories, including Ṭukhāristān, Transoxiana and the regions to the south of the Hindukush according to the Chinese sources and numismatics.[[91]](#footnote-91)

It is clear that Pērōz was pulled to Ṭukhāristān by the political power of the Western Turks, which would both protect him from the Arabs and assist him to restore the lost dynasty. This is shown by his choosing Ṭukhāristān instead of Transoxiana or the regions to the south of the Hindukush, since the plains in western Ṭukhāristān were easier for the Arabs to traverse, while Transoxiana is separated from Marw by the Oxus and the regions to the south of the Hindukush protected by difficult terrains from the Arabs based in Sīstān.[[92]](#footnote-92) In other words, Ṭukhāristān was the most dangerous comparing to Transoxiana and Kabul and Zabul to the south of the Hindukush.

A possible reason of Pērōz's avoiding Zabul or Kabul is probably because of his brother Wahrām, if the reports of the Middle Persian sources of Wahrām seeking refuge to the south of the Hindukush are historically reliable.[[93]](#footnote-93) Wahrām was lauded in a medieval Zoroastrian poem that he would return with a big army of the Indians and the Chinese to restore the Sasanian dynasty.[[94]](#footnote-94) It is possible that Wahrām traveled along the Helmand valley to the regions to the south of Hindukush when Yazdegerd fled Sīstān for Marw.[[95]](#footnote-95) And Pērōz chose Ṭukhāristān so that the two princes would not meedle with each other.[[96]](#footnote-96)

From the side of the Yabghū, it is not only to host Pērōz and his immediate family, but also his dependents, which most probably numbered several thousands. Al-Ṭabarī reports that Yazdegerd were accompanied by 4000 men when he approached Marw;[[97]](#footnote-97) while the Chinese sources record that Pērōz’s son Narseh had several thousand companions in the 680s.[[98]](#footnote-98) Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that Pērōz’s companions numbered several thousands, although the number is not explicitly given. The question is why the Yabghū would receive the last Sasanians with such a big retinue.

Wu-shi-bow, who ascended the throne most probably in 651 CE, was probably the Yabghū who received Pērōz and his dependents in the early 650s.[[99]](#footnote-99) Although the presence of the Sasanian prince in the Yabghū's court would surely increase his prestige, there must be practical reasons for his hosting Pērōz and his large retinue.

Actually, western Ṭukhāristān was under attack of the Arabs in the 650s, with Aḥnaf b. al-Qays penetrated as deep as Balkh.[[100]](#footnote-100) Since Ṭukhāristān was threatened by the Arabs, Pērōz and his dependents were welcomed as allies to fight their common enemy the Arabs.

As for Narseh, Pērōz’s son, nothing is known about his early life except that he was staying in Chang’an as a hostage and probably served as a royal guard.[[101]](#footnote-101) After his father’s death in the late 670s, the Tang court bestowed on him the title king of Persia and dispatched a Chinese army named the Persian army (波斯军) led by Pei Xingjian, the vice minister of the Board of Personnel (吏部侍郎), to escort him to his country.[[102]](#footnote-102) About the date of the event, Cen suggests that 679 CE given in the *Xin Tangshu* is more reliable than 678 CE found in the *Jiu Tangshu*.[[103]](#footnote-103) Moreover, the relevant Turfan manuscript shows that Narseh was not completely deserted but escorted by a small unit of the Tang army until late 680 CE.[[104]](#footnote-104)

However, Narseh could not return to his country because of the presence of the Arabs, and sought refuge in Ṭukhāristān as his father.[[105]](#footnote-105) Firstly, he was familiar with Ṭukhāristān and the elite of the Yabghū dynasty, where he had stayed for a certain period of time before traveling to China. And part of his family must still linger in the region, and the bulk of his father's dependents.

From the side of the Yabghū, he was not under the Arab expansions in the 680s and had no problem to host Narseh. When Yazīd I (680-683 CE) inherited his father Muʿāwiya I (661-680 CE) as the new caliph, the dispute over leadership erupted and deteriorated into the Second Fitna (680-692 CE). Lack of records related to Ṭukhāristān in al-Ṭabarī’s annals in the first years of the 680s suggests that the Arabs controlled the western part of the region but did not expand into the eastern part.[[106]](#footnote-106) In such a situation, the Sasanian claimant was able to join his family in Ṭukhāristān and gather around him several thousand adherents.[[107]](#footnote-107)

## 2 What Pērōz and Narseh experienced in Ṭukhāristān

It seems that Pērōz was right to seek refuge in the Yabghū’s court. According to the Chinese sources, the Turkic ruler did send an army to escort Pērōz to Ji-ling-cheng, which had been found within the territories of the Sasanian Empire in the late 650s.[[108]](#footnote-108) Besides his return to Ji-ling-cheng, the *Jiu Tangshu* and the *Xin Tangshu* plainly report that Pērōz and his son Narseh stayed in the region respectively for two decades before leaving for China, while the Muslim sources are almost completely silent about their experiences in Ṭukhāristān.[[109]](#footnote-109)

Although no sources explicitly connect Pērōz and Narseh’s leaving Ṭukhāristān to the pressure of the Arabs imposed on the Yabghū dynasty, clearly the failure of the dynasty to resist the Arabs is directly responsible for their departure. In order to verify the suggestion, it is necessary to trace the Arabs’ expansion to the region and pay attention to the wellbeing of the Yabghū dynasty. And both to understand the brief records and to reconstruct the experiences of Pērōz and Narseh are carried out in the context of the political situation of Ṭukhāristān. Additional details, if there are any, are at best reasonable speculations.

According to Xuanzang, Ṭukhāristān was not under a centralized power such as the Kushan Empire and the Hephthalite Empire but in a state of political fragmentation and divided into 27 principalities in the 630s and the 640s by the natural barriers such as mountains and rivers. These principalities, be they Iranians or Hephthalites, were all dependent on the Turks.[[110]](#footnote-110) Thus, the analyses of the political situation will be from both the side of the local powers, especially the Yabghū dynasty and the Hephthalite Nīzak dynasty, and from the side of the Arabs.

### **2.1 The Yabghū dynasty**

Our knowledge of the dynasty is quite limited. Even a complete list of the rulers cannot be given.[[111]](#footnote-111) In their studies of the Arab conquests of Ṭukhāristān, scholars such as Gibb, Barthold and Shaban have touched the local polities.[[112]](#footnote-112) However, the focus is their interaction with the Arabs. As for the Chinese sources, the interest is largely limited to the diplomatic relations with the Tang court. In other words, the internal politics of the Yabghū dynasty, mainly its relations with the vassals, is barely studied.

The contemporary Bactrian documents shed light on the taxation relations between the suzerain and its vassals. Although the documents of taxation delivery are from the Hephthalite period,[[113]](#footnote-113) it stands to reason that the Yabghū dynasty followed the Hephthalite tradition and appointed representatives among the vassals to collect the annual taxation from the local principalities ruling the cities, villages and agricultural hinterlands. And the taxation could be grains, animals or money.[[114]](#footnote-114) Moreover, the vassals most probably were obliged to provide troops for the Yabghū in his military campaigns. For the Yabghū dynasty, the fiscal and military obligations of the principalities are of critical importance, and the military power and financial income of the dynasty rely heavily upon them.

The case of Tirmidh, probably a mint city in Ṭukhāristān,[[115]](#footnote-115) exemplifies the relations between a vassal principality and its suzerain, although no sources show that it was necessarily a vassal of the Yabghū dynasty.[[116]](#footnote-116) According to al-Ṭabarī, the king of Tirmidh Tirmidhshāh went to the Turks for help, when Mūsā b. ‘Abdallāh b. Khāzim al-Sulamī, a son of the Zubayrid governor of Khurasan ‘Abdallāh ibn al-Khāzim, expelled him from Tirmidh and seized it in 690 CE.[[117]](#footnote-117) If the Yabghū, as a suzerain, was unable to protect his vassal from the foreign invaders, he suffered from losing a source of income.

The case of Tirmidh also shows that the political influence of the Yabghū dynasty was shifting and dynamic. When the dynasty was powerful, it was able to impose the financial and military obligations upon its vassals. And its decline led to losing vassals to its competitors, who were not only the Arabs, but also the Hephthalites.

Actually, the Yabghū dynasty not only continued with the Hephthalite tradition of taxation, but also did not challenge the religious status quo of the region. The Turkic elite probably remained adhering to Shamanism in the early stage.[[118]](#footnote-118) However, they respected, patronized and gradually converted to the predominant Buddhism, which was popular in Balkh and present in Gūzgān, Zumathān, Rūb, Siminjān and so on, although the local cults were not limited to Buddhism.[[119]](#footnote-119)

Although the political and economic importance of Balkh declined even before Xuanzang's visit in 630 CE,[[120]](#footnote-120) it remained as the center of Buddhism in Ṭukhāristān. The famous Nawbahār monastery held relics and attracted both Buddhist scholars and pilgrims from far and wide.[[121]](#footnote-121) The Barmakids, its hereditary administrators, enjoyed privileges such as possessing large portions of lands surrounding the monastery,[[122]](#footnote-122) which remained largely intact under the rule of the Yabghū dynasty.[[123]](#footnote-123)

When it comes to the foreign relations of the Yabghū dynasty, it was apparently independent when Irbis Duolu Khāqān fled to the region in the 640s,[[124]](#footnote-124) although it was established in the 620s as a vassal of the Western Turks. The de facto independence of the regime is reflected by the shifting of the ruler's title from *shad* to *yabghū* during the second Yabghū Ishbara’s reign as attested by both Xuanzang's report and coins.[[125]](#footnote-125) Although *yabghū* was attested in Ṭukhāristān since the Yuezhi,[[126]](#footnote-126) its appearance on the ruler's coins supports Wang's suggestion that Ishbara was adopting a higher-ranking title in the Turkic titular system to demonstrate his de facto independence.[[127]](#footnote-127) The nominal suzerainty over Ṭukhāristān passed to the Tang in the late 650s, when the Tang army defeated Khāqān Helu in 657 CE.[[128]](#footnote-128) The suzerainty of the Tang, however, meant less to the remote region of Ṭukhāristān.[[129]](#footnote-129) In a nutshell, Ṭukhāristān remained largely independent from the Western Turks and the Tang in the 2nd half of the 7th century. And the biggest external threat were the Arabs from the west.

On the one hand, the two Fitnas slowed down the Arabs’ expansion to the Yabghū’s realm. On the other hand, its geographical location in eastern Ṭukhāristān means a greater distance to the base of the Arabs in Marw. Thanks to the two factors, the dynasty was largely intact in the early of the 700s. Nevertheless, when Qutayba became governor of Khurasan in 705 CE, the Yabghū failed to resist the Arabs because he was weak.[[130]](#footnote-130)

In contrast, the memoire presented to the Tang court by Du-ni-li’s brother Puluo portraits the Yabghū as an active defender against the Arabs and the Tibetans up to 705 CE, who never failed to levy and lead his vassals to fight the invading Arabs.[[131]](#footnote-131) Puluo's memoire is of apologetic nature with exaggerated numbers of his vassals’ troops in order to portray the Yabghū as a dutiful vassal of the Tang in defending the frontiers from both the Arabs and the Tibetans. Therefore, his fighting the Arabs is historically not trustworthy. If the Yabghūdid did engage the Arabs, he fought them in a modest way.

If the Yabghū was inactive militarily, he was not so diplomatically. Even before Qutayba arrived at Khurasan in 705 CE, the Yabghū had already sent his brother to the Tang court as a hostage to request the Tang assistance in order to deal with the trouble in two fronts, with the Arabs in the west and the Tibetans in the east. The failure of the Tang army to show up in Ṭukhāristān and the appearance of a more formidable Arab governor in Khurasan must lead to the Yabghū’s change of policy from fight to talk.

Now it is clear that the Yabghū's weakness in his choosing to talk instead of fighting the Arabs actually reflects his shrewdness as a politician. He was reluctant to fight the Arabs, because he had no reinforcements from the big powers and failed to enlist the support of his vassals for military campaigns.[[132]](#footnote-132) The independence of the Hephthalites means that the fighting forces of the Yabghū diminished greatly. However, the trades was interrupted by the hostility between the big powers.[[133]](#footnote-133)

The Yabghū was first detained by his vassal the Hephthalite Nīzak in 709 CE,[[134]](#footnote-134) and sent by Qutayba to the Umayyad caliph al-Walīd (705-15 CE) in Damascus as a hostage after the capture and execution of Nīzak.[[135]](#footnote-135) Why did Nīzak detain his lord the Yabghū instead of fighting the Arabs together? In order to answer the question, a study of the Hephthalite princepalites in Ṭukhāristān is necessary.

### **2.2 The Nīzak dynasty and the Hephthalites**

Although both the Muslim and Chinese sources record that the Yabghū dynasty was the suzerain of Ṭukhāristān, the power and influence of the dynasty was largely limited to eastern Ṭukhāristān and not beyond Balkh because of the insignificant number of Turkic immigrants into the region,[[136]](#footnote-136) while the Hephthalite principalities dominated but not were limited to western Ṭukhāristān because of their quantity superiority. Gradually, they became de facto independent or semi-independent,[[137]](#footnote-137) and were merely nominal vassals of the Turks.[[138]](#footnote-138)

And the most prominent of the Hepthalite principalities was the Nīzak dynasty based in Bādghīs, a region to the right bank of the Harī Rūd and to the left bank of the Murghāb and lying between Herat and Sarakhs. Due to its closeness to Marw, where the Arabs of Khurasan based, the dynasty interacted more frequently with the Arabs. And relevantly rich records are found in the Muslim sources.

As mentioned above, a certain Nīzak Ṭarkhān, detained his lord the Yabghū and rebelled against Qutayba.[[139]](#footnote-139) This Nīzak, who was active in Ṭukhāristān in the 690s and the 700s,[[140]](#footnote-140) is not the only ruler bearing the same name. According to al-Ṭabarī, Nīzak Ṭarkhān fought Yazdegerd III in 651 CE when called by the *marzbān* of Marw.[[141]](#footnote-141) And it is reasonable to suggest that there were two Nīzaks of the same dynasty, since it is unlikely that the same ruler could be active for nearly six decades.[[142]](#footnote-142) Moreover, these reports clearly depict a power strong enough to challenge his lord and to organize an anti-Arab coalition in Ṭukhāristān in 709 CE.[[143]](#footnote-143)

Nevertheless, the origin of the powerful dynasty is not reported in historical sources;[[144]](#footnote-144) its identity is also ambiguous in the Muslim sources and disputed among modern scholars with the vast majority arguing for its being Hephthalite.[[145]](#footnote-145) Instead of focusing on the ethnic terms, the following analyses attempt to discuss the dynasty's identity from different perspectives.

Al-Ṭabarī reports that in the 700s Nīzak was found in Bādghīs,[[146]](#footnote-146) which, together with the neighboring Herat and Qūhistān, is reported by al-Balādhurī, al-Ṭabarī, Gardīzī, and Yāqūt (d. 1229 CE) being dominated by the Hephthalites in the early medieval centuries since no later than the 650s.[[147]](#footnote-147) Therefore, the Nīzak dynasty based in Bādghīs is most likely Hephthalite. And it is reasonable to suggest that it was established in the region before the 650s, whence Nīzak sent out to meet Yazdegerd in Marw.[[148]](#footnote-148)

The reasons behind Bādghīs' becoming the power base of the Nīzak dynasty include it having excellent pastures upon which the Hephthalite tribes relied,[[149]](#footnote-149) since the nomadic tribes still constituted the backbone of the military power of the dynasty,[[150]](#footnote-150) even though the Hephthalites had started settling down in cities since the 1st half of the 6th century.[[151]](#footnote-151)

Secondly, both the titles Nīzak and Ṭarkhān do not conflict with the Hephthalite identity of the dynasty.[[152]](#footnote-152) The term Nīzak is attested by coins minted by a distinct Hephthalite dynasty found to the south of the Hindukush,[[153]](#footnote-153) while the Chinese sources show that Ṭarkhān was circulating among the Hephthalites as a title for their chieftains since pre-Turkic times, although it was found among the Western Turks and bore by the close companions of the Yabghū as well.[[154]](#footnote-154)

Thirdly, Nīzak’s adherence to Buddhism works well with his Hephthalite identity. Rich reports about Nīzak’s religion are found in the Muslim sources. He was a Buddhist and executed Barmak in the 700s, when Barmak converted to Islam and refused to return to Buddhism.[[155]](#footnote-155) Al-Kūfī reports that Nīzak converted to Islam as well, but latter apostatized.[[156]](#footnote-156) And according to al-Ṭabarī, Nīzak prayed for blessing in the Nawbahār monastery when fleeing from Qutayba.[[157]](#footnote-157) Although the story of Barmak is legendary and the credibility of Nīzak’s conversion is disputed, Nīzak as a Buddhist is a credible fact, from which latter stories evolve. Actually, Nīzak's religion is a continuation of the Hephthalite tradition that started from the imperial period, when the rulers on both sides of the Hindukush adopted the predominant religion in Central Asia.[[158]](#footnote-158)

To combine the above analyses from different perspectives, it seems secure to conclude that the Nīzak dynasty was Hephthaltie. If this is the case, an interesting question to raise is that are the Muslim sources wrong in repoting Nīzak as the ruler of the Turks. Since it does not bother the present study, it is sufficient to say that the Hepthalites were under the suzerainty of the Turks.[[159]](#footnote-159)

However, the term Turks gradually becomes a general designation for nomads on the eastern frontiers in the later Muslim sources,[[160]](#footnote-160) due to later historical development, namely the enduring predominance of the Turks in Central Asia and the decline and final disappearance of the Hephthalites. To take the Turks as a frozen term can be misleading. Finally, as de la Vassière points out, Hephthalite is more precisely a political identity that took shape most probably before or during the imperial period instead of an ethnic one.[[161]](#footnote-161)

Despite its power and influence, the Nīzak dynasty was far from being the only Hephthalite principality at this stage. After the collapse of the Hephthalite Empire, various Hephthalite polities emerged on both sides of the Hindukush, among which the dynasty that was best known by their coins under the title *nyčky* MLK῾ in Pahlavi based in Kabul. Even in Ṭukhāristān, there were other Hephthalite polities in the 7th and 8th centuries such as Chaghāniyān and Khuttal.[[162]](#footnote-162) Another noteworthy Hephthalite polity existed, about which the discussion starts with a confusing record of al-Ṭabarī.

After capturing Nīzak, Qutayba asked the Hephthalite prince if al-Sabal, the king of Khuttal, and the mytherious Shadh would come to his call. Even though Nīzak responded negatively, they did show up. When the four rulers met, the Shadh prostrated himself before the Yabghū, acknowledging the later both as his lord and enemy, while Nīzak addressed the Shadh as his lord and greeted him by kissing his hand.[[163]](#footnote-163)

The meagre information poses difficulty to identify the Shadh. Another piece of information from al-Ṭabarī, which reports that Shadh was the name of the Yabghū,[[164]](#footnote-164) further drags the identification into a self-contradictory dead end. Al-Ṭabarī's report of Shadh as the Yabghū's name seems wrong, since both *shadh* and *yabghū* were titles and could not apply to the same person at the same time.[[165]](#footnote-165) Qutayba asked Nīzak about the attitudes of al-Sabal and the Shadh towards the Arabs, because they were all Hephthalites. Gibb's suggestion that the Shadh was the supreme ruler of the Hephthalites makes sense, although he awkwardly proposes the Shadh as the ruler of Chaghāniyān Tīsh without textual evidence.[[166]](#footnote-166)

It is understandable that the Muslim sources have no further information about the Shadh, who was found most probably in eastern Ṭukhāristān and close to Khuttal, because of lack of interaction with the Arabs. Fortunately, the Chinese sources shed light on the further identification of the Shadh, the supreme ruler of the Hephthalites.

The *Cefu yuangui* records a memoire that the Yabghū’s brother Puluo presented to the Tang court in 718 CE. The memoire gives a list of the Yabghū’s vassals including their number of troops.[[167]](#footnote-167) Could the Shadh be the ruler of the Yida dynasty in the list, namely the Hephthalite dynasty?

Kuwayama proposes the Yida dynasty in Bāghlān in winter months, a region on the western fringes of Badakhshān, and in Himatala in summer months,[[168]](#footnote-168) and argues that this dynasty was the lord of all the Hephthalite principalities in Ṭukhāristān including the Nīzak dynasty and its ruler was the Shadh found in al-Ṭabarī's annals.[[169]](#footnote-169)

Among the Hephthalite principalities, the Muslim sources show that there was a kind of solidarity. When the Arab general al-Aḥnaf b. al-Qays campaigned in Marw al-Rūdh, Tālaqān, Fāryāb, Gūzgūn, Herāt and Bādghīs in 652/3 CE, he fought not only the Hephthalites from these places, but also those from Chaghāniyān who came for assistance.[[170]](#footnote-170) Shaban and Haug sensibly point out that the Turks who raided to the east of Nīshāpūr in 683/4 CE, when the Arabs in Khurasan were preoccupied with tribal factions, were actually the Hephthalites.[[171]](#footnote-171) And the third case is the coordinated insurrection led by Nīzak against Qutayba from 708 to 710 CE.

The solidarity was most probably built on common culture and common region Buddhism.[[172]](#footnote-172) An example is Nīzak most probably played the religious card to rally allies to his side. He traveled to Balkh and prayed in the Nawbahār monastery in 708 CE; only afterwards, he wrote to invite his allies to rebel against Qutayba.[[173]](#footnote-173)

Nevertheless, the solidarity is expected to be both limited and fragile, since it was based on common interests, either to defend the raiding Arabs or for expansion. On the one hand, not every Hephthalite principality would join the coalition on every occasion, for example both Chaghāniyān and Baghlān were not part of the insurrection led by Nīzak; on the other hand, the alliance lacked sturdiness in front of real challenges such as the cruel punitive expeditions that Qutayba led.

As for the Nīzak dynasty, despite being a nominal vassal of the Yabghū dynasty and a subordinate of the supreme Hephthalite dynasty in Bāghlān, it was the most formidable military power in Ṭukhāristān in the 700s. And its power nourished its appetite for independence. The dynasty allied with the *marzbān* of Marw against Yazdegerd, since both rulers were against the Sasanian monarch’s attempt to establish a central administration in their realms.[[174]](#footnote-174) In the late 7th and the early 8th centuries, the biggest threat to its independence was not the Yabghū dynasty from the east, but the Arabs from the west. Nīzak is expected to attempt to forge an alliance with both the Hephthalites and the Yabghū to fight the common enemy the Arabs. What happened, however, was that he detained his lord.

### **2.3 The tribal feuds between the Turks and the Hephthalites**

Why did Nīzak detained his lord the Yabghū instead of allying with him when the Arabs were expanding to Ṭukhāristān in 709 CE? Shaban proposes that he acted likewise so the Yabghū’s vassals would join in the insurrection to defend their lord.[[175]](#footnote-175) The logic is, however, weird, since the Yabghū was clearly treated as a captive, although he was put in golden fetters.[[176]](#footnote-176) Al-Kūfī’s record that Nīzak looted the Yabghū’s golden girdle further reinforces the argument.[[177]](#footnote-177) In short, the relations between Nīzak and the Yabghū was hostile. Is the hostility related to their ethnic identity, namely Nīzak as a Hephthalite and the Yabghū a Turk?

Not only Nīzak was hostile to the Yabghū, but also the Shadh, the supreme ruler of the Hephthalites, referred to the Yabghū as both his lord and enemy.[[178]](#footnote-178) Although the origin and development of the hostility is not clear,[[179]](#footnote-179) the isolation of the Yabghū from the Western Turks emboldened the Hephthalite princiaplies, especially those in western Ṭukhāristān, to challenge the hegemony of the Turks and seek for independence.

And the independence of the Hephthalite principalities weakened the Yabghū dynasty both financially and militarily. The financial difficulty probably caused the Turkic principalities fall on the Hephthalite ones and vice versa.[[180]](#footnote-180) The tribal conflicts probably initated as local such as the strife between the Hephthalite ruler of Chaghāniyān and the Turkic Akharūn and Shūmān in 705 CE,[[181]](#footnote-181) dragged both the Yabghū and the Shadh in, and deteriorated as a general strife between the Turks and the Hephthalites.

If an ethnic hostility did exist, its eruption was both ethnic and geopolitical.[[182]](#footnote-182) An example is the above-mentioned Chaghāniyān’s conflict with Akharūn and Shūmān in 705 CE. If the strife was a purely ethnic one, Tīsh would turn to the Shadh or Nīzak instead of Qutayba for assistance.

Actually, the conflict between the Yabghū and Nīzak was also both ethnic and geopolitical. When Nīzak rebelled against Qutayba, the Yabghū chose to stay out, since his territories were found in eastern Ṭukhāristān and secure from the threat of the Arabs, while Nīzak's territories were in western Ṭukhāristān and bore the brunt of the Arab expansions. The caculation was not limited to the Yabghū, but shared by the Hephthalites in Baghlān, Khuttal and Chaghāniyān, whose did not participate the rebellion led by Nīzak as well.[[183]](#footnote-183) He probably was glad to see that the Arabs could extinguish the Nīzak dynasty, the biggest challenger of his hegemony in Ṭukhāristān.

When the Yabghū would not join in the rebellion, Nīzak detained the Turkic ruler to present himself as the leader of the Hephthalites to confront the Turks and to organize a Hephthalite coalition to fight the Arabs instead of inviting the Yabghū's vassals to defend their lord as Shaban suggested.

The tribal feuds continued until the last days of Nīzak’s rebellion and led to his capture. When Nīzak fled from Qutayba and camped in a fortress behind a defile in Bāghlān, the difficult terrains stopped the chasing Arabs for months. However, they bypassed the defile with the help of the Khān, the ruler of Rūb and Siminjān, who showed them a path to the fortress.[[184]](#footnote-184) His title Khān reveals that the ruler was probably a Turk.[[185]](#footnote-185) He cooperated with the Arabs most probably not only for a safe-conduct, but also to correct the wrong that Nīzak did to the Yabghū by the swords of the Arabs.

To sum up, the Muslim sources show that the feuds between the Turks and the Hephthalites flared up in the 700s from local to general. Together with the geopolitical calculations, the ethnic strife hindered the Turkic and the Hepthalite principalities to form a general alliance to resist the Arabs. As for the Arabs, the situation facilitated them to divide and rule.

### **2.4 The Arab conquests of Ṭukhāristān**

As Gibb observes, Ṭukhāristān was unimportant for the Arabs, and its conquest is not reported in detail as Transoxiana.[[186]](#footnote-186) And modern scholars of the Arab conquests of Central Asia pay more attention to Transoxiana than Ṭukhāristān as well. Therefore, several comments on the Arab conquests of the region are justified.

When it comes to the Arab conquests, both of Central Asia in general and of Ṭukhāristān specifically, other terms such as the Muslim and Islamic conquests are used by scholars in order to clarify that non-Arabs were also part of the conquerors.[[187]](#footnote-187) It is ture that not all the conquerors were Arabs, but they were not limited to the Mmuslims as well.[[188]](#footnote-188) And this is true for a frontier region such as Ṭukhāristān since the 650s. Cases such as Aḥnaf ibn al-Qays’s treaty with Marw al-Rūd in the 650s and Qutayba’s treaty with Nīzak of Bādghīs in the 700s show that the conquered principalities were now and then obliged to provide auxiliary troops to the Arabs, who needed the cooperation of the local allies because of the manpower crisis in their continuous expansions. Altogether, none of the terms is precise. And the present study continues using the term the Arab conquests to avoid ambiguity. It is also interesting to be aware that the identity of Arab is far from frozen and a product of the early Islamic history.[[189]](#footnote-189)

For the Arab expansions to the eastern frontiers, the Muslim historians such as al-Kūfī, al-Balādhurī and al-Ṭabarīnarrated from the starting stage that the Arabs conquered such and such a city of Central Asia either by force or by treaty. When it rebelled, the Arabs returned to reconquer it.[[190]](#footnote-190) However, the model of conquest-rebellion-reconquest presented by the victors is misleading.

A better model is proposed by Haug: raid-abandon-raid again,[[191]](#footnote-191) with the most important objective of the campaigns being economic gains, including booty, slaves and tribute from urban centers and fertile agricultural lands instead of occupying territories and establishing an administration.[[192]](#footnote-192) The settling of 50,000 Arab families in Marw in 670 CE did not change the nature of the military campaigns but only facilitated their raiding.[[193]](#footnote-193) Even Qutayba’s campaigns were for economic gains.[[194]](#footnote-194)

However, even Haug’s model is not perfect. It fits better the early expansion to Ṭukhāristān before the 690s, since the 690s and the 700s witness the establishment of the Arab rule in the region especially after Qutayba’s crushing Nīzak’s rebellion. And it is necessary to explain the rule of the Arabs. The local rulers remained with the administration. And the Arabs imposed upon them taxation and military obligation.[[195]](#footnote-195) Because of this reason, Arab expansions instead of conquests are preferred in the study.

Apparently, the rule of the Arabs in Ṭukhāristān resembles to that of the Turks and the Hephthalites.[[196]](#footnote-196) In other words, the Arabs competeted with the Turks and the Hephthalites to control the principalities of Ṭukhāristān. As for the local principalities, they had to choose to side either with the Arabs or the local big powers, be it the Yabghū dynasty or the Nīzak dynasty.[[197]](#footnote-197)

When Nīzak rebelled against Qutayba in 709/10 CE, the local principalities faced the same problem of choosing to side with the Arabs or the Hephthalites and/or the Turks. Marw al-Rūd, Tālaqān, Fāryāb and Gūzgān responded to Nīzak’s call for an insurrection, while Nīshāpūr, Bīward, Sarakhs and Herat followed Qutayba in his punitive campaigns.[[198]](#footnote-198)

The division clearly shows that the Arabs were gradually getting the upper hand over the Hephthalites and/or the Turks in winning the local principalities in the 700s. Even the Nīzak dynasty, the most formidable power in western Ṭukhāristān, had to negotiate terms with the Arabs in order to maintain the status quo. The following question to ask is what contributed to the Arabs’ success?

Although Qutayba’s leadership played a significant role in the Arabs’ expansion,[[199]](#footnote-199) the comparison between the Arabs and the local powers in Ṭukhāristān shows that the existence of a central government is critical. The Umayyad government put out the tribal factions and united them for military expansions.[[200]](#footnote-200) Furthermore, it supplied external reinforcement of both manpower and finance to the Arabs in Khurasan. The settling of 50,000 Arab families in Marw, for example, plays a decisive role in the Muslims’ expansion in Ṭukhāristān.[[201]](#footnote-201)

As for the Hephthalites and/or the Turks in Ṭukhāristān, their lack of a central government means that external reinforcements would not arrive and the order among the principalities would not be maintained.[[202]](#footnote-202) The rivalry between the principalities was not checked and probably deteriorated into large-scale tribal feuds between the Turks and the Hephthalites. The rivalry and feuds significantly undermine their capacity to resist the Arabs. Chaghāniyān’s conflict with Akharūn and Shūmān facilitated Qutayba’s subjugating all three principalities.[[203]](#footnote-203) Another example is that the Khān of Rūb and Siminjān cooperated with Qutayba to capture Nīzak probably because of Nīzak’s detaining the Yabghū.[[204]](#footnote-204)

Qutayba punished the rebelled Nīzak:[[205]](#footnote-205) he executed him together with his male family members and close dependents.[[206]](#footnote-206) In other words, he terminated the Nīzak dynasty. As for the Yabghū dynasty, it ceded vassals to the Arabs,[[207]](#footnote-207) probably ceased minting coins, and retreated to Badakhshān at this period.[[208]](#footnote-208) However, because of its non-violence policy towards the Arabs, Qutayba let the dynasty survive under the hegemony of the Arabs and maintain its administration and foreign relations.[[209]](#footnote-209)

The Arabs were able to control the whole of Ṭukhāristān including the Hephthalite Bāghlān and the Yabghū’s Badakhshān in eastern Ṭukhāristān, with Balkh becoming an Arab garrison town.[[210]](#footnote-210) Ṭukhāristān was incorporated into the Muslim world and started the slow but steady process of Islamization.[[211]](#footnote-211) And the Arabs could cross the Oxus with a more secure base.

### **2.5 The failure of Pērōz to restore the Sasanian dynasty**

After studying the political situation from both the side of the local dynasties and the side of the Arabs, the ground is prepared to analyze Pērōz and his son Narseh’s experiences in Ṭukhāristān. According to the Chinese sources, Pērōz’s biggest achievement is the recovery of Ji-ling-cheng, whither he returned under the military escort of the Yabghū’s troops,[[212]](#footnote-212) when the Arabs retreated.[[213]](#footnote-213)

Concerning the location of Ji-ling-cheng, Pashazanous and Afkande argue against the identification of Ji-ling-cheng as the capital of Sīstān Zaranj, and suggest that it was in Ṭukhāristān.[[214]](#footnote-214) However, a close reading of both the *Jiu* *Tangshu* and the *Zizhi tongjian* shows that Ji-ling-cheng used to be part of the Sasanian territories and was out of Ṭukhāristān.[[215]](#footnote-215)

It is already clear that the region that Pērōz returned to was Sīstān. The next issue is when he returned. The *Jiu Tangshu* and the *Xin Tangshu* do not give a specific year, while *the Zizhi tongjian* gives the date of 654 CE.[[216]](#footnote-216) However, the date is impossible, since the rebellion in Sīstān is reported by both al-Balādhurī’s history and the local Persian history *Tārīkh-e Sīstān* taking place when the Arab governor of Sīstān ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Samura left Sīstān to join Mu‘awiya after the death of ‘Uthmān in 656 CE. The locals expelled his viceroy and withdrew the annual tribute imposed upon them.[[217]](#footnote-217) The rebellion lasted until ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Samura returning to the region.

Al-Balādhurī’s report varies from *Tārīkh-e Sīstān* concerning ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Samura’s whereabouts during the Fitna.[[218]](#footnote-218) Bosworth tries to reconcile the two sources and suggests that the governor was campaigning in Zābulistān.[[219]](#footnote-219) However, to campaign in a difficult region with a turbulent base is high improbable. A more likely solution is to follow the earlier historian al-Balādhurī instead of the late and chronologically difficult *Tārīkh-e Sīstān*. In other words, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Samura was absent from Sīstān until returning as a representative of Muʿāwiya I in 661 CE, while Alī also failed to establish order in the region during ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Samura’s absence. Therefore, the rebellion took place between 656 and 661 CE.[[220]](#footnote-220) And Pērōz returned to Sīstān only during the rebellion instead of before it. In other words, the year found in the *Zizhi tongjian* is not reliable.[[221]](#footnote-221) As for the exact year of Pērōz’s returning, no sources shed light on this issue.

If Pērōz was present in the rebellion, why the Muslim sources do not mention him? Do the Muslim historians deliberately erase any records of him? According to Bosworth, the sources reflect that Pērōz did not rule Zaranj.[[222]](#footnote-222) The argument makes sense. Nevertheless, it does not mean that the Sasanian prince was not involved in the rebellion at all. He was most probably a symbolic head both politically and religiously instead of the initiator or the person-in-charge.

During the turbulent years, the local rulers in Sīstān were similar to those in Nīshāpūr, Marw and Marw al-Rūd,[[223]](#footnote-223) seeking for independence and viewing any outsiders, be they the Sasanian monarch or the Arabs, as threat. They threw off the yoke of the Arabs for independence, and were reluctant to receive the Sasanian claimant Pērōz. The unwelcome Pērōz was most probably imposed forcibly by the Yabghū when the Arabs retreated.[[224]](#footnote-224) Neverethless, the local rulers held power firmly, and wound not hand over to him the military or financial power.

The argument finds support in both the absence of Pērōz in the Muslim sources and the missing of his coins, which are critical for political propaganda.[[225]](#footnote-225) Scholars actually debated over the missing of Pērōz’s coins. Daryaee and Khazaee suggest that the Sasanian claimant continued to mint coins in his father’s name, while Pashazanous and Afkande argue that Pērōz did not mint any coins, neither in his father’s nor his own name.[[226]](#footnote-226) Pashazanous and Afkande’s argument is more convincing: Pērōz did not mint coins in his own name, not because he minted in his father’s name or ruled only briefly.[[227]](#footnote-227) The Sasanian monarchs who ruled briefly such as Kavad II and Queen Būrān minted coins with a considerable number of mints.[[228]](#footnote-228)

To conclude, the lack of both mentions in the Muslim sources and coins minted in his own name clarify that Pērōz played but a minor role during the rebellion of Sīstān. When Muʿāwiya I (661-680 CE) established his dynasty and started to pacify Khurasan, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Samura returned to Sīstān, while Pērōz retreated to the Yabghū’s court and stayed there for another decade.[[229]](#footnote-229)

During the decade, Pērōz sent embassies to the Tang court in greater frequency under the increasing pressure from the Arabs,[[230]](#footnote-230) and most probably sent his son Narseh as hostage in the 660s.[[231]](#footnote-231) However, the Tang policy in the region, as Haug explains, was sharply different from the Arabs. Instead of seeking for military conquest, only a kind of nominal suzerainty was established without any effective control.[[232]](#footnote-232) Although the Tang court was generous to bestow titles on Pērōz and ready to confirm whatever he had achieved,[[233]](#footnote-233) the military assistance of the Tang army did not materialize.[[234]](#footnote-234)

Along with the viceroy of Iraq Ziyād ibn Abī Sufyān’s settling 50,000 Iraqi Arab families in Marw in 671 CE, the Arabs expanded more effectively to the eastern frontiers.[[235]](#footnote-235) When Balkh submitted to Arab rule in 671/2 CE, the Yabghū probably was no longer able to keep Pērōz in his court because of the pressure of the Arabs.

As for Pērōz, throughout the two decades, he is not mentioned in the Muslim histories in any of the military campaigns carried out by the Arabs in Khurasan from the 650s to the early 670s.[[236]](#footnote-236) Xue’s argument of Pērōz actively fighting the Arabs is not correct.[[237]](#footnote-237) Instead, he was apparently not a threat to the Arabs, and did not achieve anything significant, because he had no power base to enlist soldiers and to exact taxation,[[238]](#footnote-238) and had to depend almost totally on the Yabghū.

When even eastern Ṭukhāristān was no longer safe for him, Pērōz climbed the Pamirs, traveled eastward until arriving at the Tang court together with part of his family and the diehard adherents.[[239]](#footnote-239) The Chinese records about the date of Pērōz’s arrival are contradictory. Pashazanous and Afkande and Haug were confused and drew the conclusion that Pērōz arrived at the Tang court twice, respectively in 673 and 675 CE.[[240]](#footnote-240) This is highly improbable, since it means that Pērōz would incredibly travel on the way for three continuous years. The most compelling solution of his arrival seems to be early 675 CE found in the annals of the Gaozong Emperor in the *Jiu Tangshu*.[[241]](#footnote-241)

Pērōz was treated well by the Emperor until his death in 679 CE. The Tang court granted him allowances besides honorary titles.[[242]](#footnote-242) And a Persian temple was built in Chang’an in 677 CE in response to Pērōz’s request.[[243]](#footnote-243) Additionally, a statue of his was erected in the mausoleum of the Gaozong Emperor and the Empress Wu Zetian.[[244]](#footnote-244)

### **2.6 The experiences of Narseh in Ṭukhāristān**

After his father’s death in Chang’an in the late 670s, Narseh was granted the title the king of Persia by the Tang court and was escorted by an army led by Pei Xingjian back to his own country in 679 CE. However, the real purpose of the expedition is to crush the potential military rebellion of the Western Turks, while to escort Narseh simply served to cover up the plan. So, it is not surprising that Pei stopped at Sūyāb and left Narseh to continue the journey by himself with a much smaller number of escorts.[[245]](#footnote-245)

As for Narseh’s experiences in Ṭukhāristān, the Chinese sources simply record that his adherents gradually deserted him and he stayed in Ṭukhāristān for around two decades before returning to the Tang capital.[[246]](#footnote-246) The above analyses of the political situation from the side of the local dynasties in Ṭukhāristān and from the side of the Arabs in Khurasan permit further reconstruction of his experiences.

After Muʿāwiya I’s death, the Second Fitna tormented the Umayyad dynasty for more than one decade. As for the Arabs in Khurasan, they suffered from ferocious tribal factions. It is secure to suggest that the Yabghū was able to host Narseh, who was at ease in the Yabghū’s court in eastern Ṭukhāristān in the 680s and the 690s. Although there is room even to argue that Narseh was staying in western Ṭukhāristān in the 690s and the early 700s, when Umayyah b. ‘Abdallāh b. Khālid (693/4-697/8 CE) and al-Muhallab b. Abī Ṣufra (697/8-702/3 CE) were governors of Khurasan,[[247]](#footnote-247) and developed close relations with the powerful Nīzak,[[248]](#footnote-248) the complete absence of Narseh in the Muslim sources does not support the argument.

When Qutayba arrived at Ṭukhāristān in 705 CE, the Yabghū chose to talk instead of fighting the Arabs because of both his military incapability and the geopolitical calculations at the expenses of the principalities in western Ṭukhāristān such as the Nīzak dynasty. He probably was expecting that the Arabs could extinguish the unpleasant Nīzak dynasty, which challenged his hegomony in Ṭukhāristān.

When the Yabghū chose to talk with the Arabs, Narseh had to leave the region. He was already in the Tang court in 708 CE,[[249]](#footnote-249) and witnessed neither Nīzak’s last stand against the Arabs nor the humiliation that the Yabghū sufferd first at Nīzak’s and then at Qutayba’s hands.

Although he stayed in Ṭukhāristān for more than two decades, Narseh was similar to his father in failing to restore the dynasty. Xue’s argument that Narseh fought actively the Arabs is baseless.[[250]](#footnote-250) The complete absence of his name in the Muslim sources shows that he most probably did not fight the Arabs.[[251]](#footnote-251) This is expected, since he was totally dependent on the Yabghū because of lack man and money. And his dependents, numbering several thousands, gradually dispersed during the two decades.[[252]](#footnote-252) Not only his dependents, but also the Sasanian members scattered in other regions.

As for the Sasanians, their scattering started even before Yazdegerd III’s death,[[253]](#footnote-253) continued in Pērōz’s years, and speeded up during Narseh’s time.[[254]](#footnote-254) When Narseh left Ṭukhāristān, they further scattered in Sogdiana to the north of the Oxus,[[255]](#footnote-255) China to the east of the Pamirs,[[256]](#footnote-256) or modern southern Afghanistan to the south of the Hindukush.[[257]](#footnote-257) The most famous report is found in al-Ṭabarī’s annals. When Qutayba campaigned in Sogdiana, one of Yazdegerd’s granddaughters was captured.[[258]](#footnote-258) The Arab governor sent this Sasanian princess to the Caliph al-Walīd; she later mothered Yazīd III.[[259]](#footnote-259) However, it is impossible to reconstruct a clear chronology of their scattering. As for Ṭukhāristān, no sources show that the Sasanian princes still remained in the region, although the prestige of the dynasty would remain for centuries in Khurasan.[[260]](#footnote-260)

## 3 The Reasons behind Pērōz and Narseh's flight to China

Both Pērōz and Narseh left Ṭukhāristān for China. For Narseh, it is a simpler decision, since he had already stayed in Chang’an for several years. Consequently, it is of greater necessity to understand why Pērōz decided to travel all the way to distant China instead of other destinations.

Byzantium was in the remote west and certainly out of the question. However, other options such as the Western Turks, the Indian world and even the Tibetan Empire still existed.[[261]](#footnote-261) Actually, as discussed above, relevant Pahlavi literature seems to suggest that a group of Sasanian fugitives under the leadership of Pērōz's brother Wahrām were found to the south of the Hindukush and sought refuge in the Indian world.[[262]](#footnote-262) However, the prince made no achievement during his lifetime, the expectation for him to restore the dynasty turned out to be a religious one and was circulating among the Zoroastrians in the Indian world.

Pērōz separated from his brother and sought refuge in Ṭukhāristān, where he stayed among the Turks. When he could no longer stay in Ṭukhāristān, they went to the Tang court, from which both his father Yazdegerd and Pērōz himself sought military assistance. According to the Chinese sources, Yazdegerd III sent emissaries to the Tang court both in 639/40 CE and in 647/8 CE.[[263]](#footnote-263) The purpose was more than to present gifts as the Chinese sources report.[[264]](#footnote-264) This is clarified by al-Ṭabarī, who reports that Yazdegerd sent emissaries to the Tang in 647/8 CE to ask for military assistance.[[265]](#footnote-265) Actually, if al-Ṭabarī’s report is trusted, even Yazdegerd himself thought of seeking refuge in China, when he was asked by the Persian nobles.[[266]](#footnote-266)

Yazdegerd requested reinforcements of the Turks and China, while Pērōz sent emissaries to the Tang court in a greater frequency to ask for military expedition against the Arabs.[[267]](#footnote-267) In order to reinforce the alliance, Pērōz sent his son Narseh to Chang'an as a hostage. Yazdegerd planned to go to the Turks and to China, while Pērōz indeed traveled first to the Turks and then to China.

They turned to the Turks because of their political power. They turned to the Chinese Tang following the same logic. The prestige of the Tang’s political power among the Sasanians must be closely related to the Tang’s victory over the Turks. What is more, this is the most important reason that leads to Pērōz’s decision to fleeing to China, although the existence of prosperous Persian communities in China probably also plays a role.

The bulk of the Persians in China during the 7th and 8th centuries were mainly merchants. It is clear that the prosperity of the maritime trade between the Persian Gulf and China brought them to the ports of China such as Guangzhou and Yangzhou. And rich Persian merchants were found in Chang’an and Luoyang as well.[[268]](#footnote-268) The communities were joined by the fugitive nobles such as Nanmei,[[269]](#footnote-269) A-luo-han,[[270]](#footnote-270) members of the Suren family and so on.[[271]](#footnote-271) Although it is impossible to trace the time of their coming to China, it is certain that some nobles such as A-luo-han arrived at the Tang court independently before Pērōz.

Besides the building of a probable Nestorian temple in Chang’an in response to Pērōz’s request, temples of Zoroastrianism and Manicheanism were actually built since the 1st half of the 7th century. As Leslie commented, the foreign religions were largely limited to foreigners, while the native Chinese were forbidden to convert to them.[[272]](#footnote-272) Consequently, the continuing flourish of the temples in the 8th century also reflects the prosperity of the Persian communities in the heartland of China.[[273]](#footnote-273)

With prosperous Persian communities in China, the Sasanian claimants who fled to China could still play with the aspiration to restore the lost dynasty. On the one hand, they could try to earn the support of the Sasanian nobles and build a political base for the future restoration. On the other hand, the rich Persian communities in China certainly gave them hope to collect money and rally support for further attempts of restoration.

However, it is wrong to assume the existence of the Persian communities as the major reason of Pērōz’s fleeing to China, since the maritime trading in the Indian Ocean also led to establishment of Persian communities in the ports of the Indian subcontinent.[[274]](#footnote-274) And even in China, Pērōz and Narseh stayed in the political center Chang’an instead of Guangzhou or Yangzhou, where the biggest communities of the Perian merchants were found.

Last but not least, the fugitive princes and his adherents were able to live comfortably by relying on the allowances granted by the Tang court,[[275]](#footnote-275) which were called off only in 787 CE by the Dezong Emperor (779-805 CE). However, the abolition of the allowances was not due to hostilities towards foreigners after the An Lushan rebellion as Compareti argues,[[276]](#footnote-276) but results from the great financial burden of the allowances to the court.

As for the Western Turks, they were subjugated by the Tang army in 657 CE and recognized the suzerainty of the Tang, with their vassals in Central Asia passing to the Tang. Actually, the army of the waning Western Turks did not show up in Ṭukhāristān in the 2nd half of the 7th century.

The Tibetan Empire was expanding northward in the 670s after its annexation of its eastern neighbor the Tuyuhun, and challenged the Tang control of the Tarim Basin. As Wang argues, this region was under competition of the two empires instead of being controlled wholly by the Tibetan Empire since 670 up to 692 CE as Beckwith presents.[[277]](#footnote-277) In 677-8 CE, the Tibetan Empire was seeking an alliance with the ruler of the Western Turks Ashina Duzhi (阿史那都支) to launch a joint attack on the Tang garrisons.[[278]](#footnote-278) Nevertheless, when Pērōz traveled through the Basin, the routes leading to China were not blocked yet. The prestige of the new power was growing, but still not rival that of the Tang. Moreover, there were no Persian communities in the Tibetan plateau, from which Pērōz could rally adherents and raise support.

To sum up, after leaving Ṭukhāristān, Pērōz traveled to China mainly because of the political power of the Tang Empire, with the existence of prosperous Persian communities and the allowances to foreign princes and emissaries provided by the Tang court playing some role.

As for Narseh, his relations with the Tang court remained largely the same as in the days of his father. During the two decades of his staying in Ṭukhāristān, he sent emissaries to Chang'an in 682, 695, 700 and 706 CE.[[279]](#footnote-279) When Qutayba penetrated into the region, he could neither rely upon the weak Yabghū nor the Hephthalite Nīzak, and returned to the Tang capital to join the Persian community there.

Although Al-Ṭabarī’s record of the Tibetans penetrating as far as Tirmidh together with the Turks in 704 CE is found in the legendary and epical account of Mūsā b. ‘Abdallāh b. Khāzim al-Sulamī,[[280]](#footnote-280) it is supported by Puluo’s memoire to the Tang court in the *Cefu yuangui*, which recalled the Yabghū fighting the Arabs and the Tibetans.[[281]](#footnote-281) However, the years following the death of the Tibetan emperor in the winter of 704 CE witnessed internal political and military chaos of the Empire and its withdrawal from external expansions.[[282]](#footnote-282) Although the Tibetans would return to the Pamirs and Ṭukhāristān, this primary incursion apparently was not sufficient to convince Narseh to seek refuge among the Tibetans.

## Conclusions

Tardu Shad, the first ruler of the Yabghū dynasty of Ṭukhāristān, was established by Tong Yabghū Khāqān of the Western Turks in the 620s. The Turkic dynasty was the lord of large parts of Central Asia. Its political power and influence pulls Pērōz to his court in Ṭukhāristān, when the last Sasanians fled Marw in 651 CE.

The Yabghū dynasty was de facto independent from the nominal lords, first the Western Turks in the 640s and the 650s and then the Tang Empire since the 660s. Moreover, the dynasty could only directly control eastern Ṭukhāristān because of the limited number of Turkic immigrants found in the region, while the Hephthalite principalities were practically independent thanks to their numerical superiority.

Among the Hephthalite polities, the powerful Nīzak dynasty based in Bādghīs was the most active opponent of the Arabs who expanded into Ṭukhāristān: it was probably involved in the collaborated Hephthalite resistance against the Arabs in 653/4 CE; its last ruler made a last stand against Qutayba in 709 CE. Although it is hard to be definite, events such as the expulsion of the Hephthalite king of Chaghāniyān by the Turkic rulers of Akharūn and Shūmān in 705 CE, Nīzak’s detaining the Yabghū Du-ni-li, the supreme ruler of the Hephthalites claiming the Yabghū as enemy, and the cooperation of the Khān, the Turkic ruler of Rūb and Siminjān, cooperating with Qutayba in capturing Nīzak, seem to show the existence of tribal feuds between the Turks and the Hephthalites in the 700s.

As for the Arab conquerors, they never met a serious opponent in their expansion in Central Asia before the Türgesh moving southward to Transoxiana and beyond in the 720s and the 730s.[[283]](#footnote-283) Without foreign military assistance and molested by tribal feuds, it could have been expected that Ṭukhāristān would be conquered in an easier way by the Arabs under the capable leader Qutayba, since the Umayyad government both provided external reinforcements to the Arabs in Khurasan and checked the tribal factions of the Arabs.

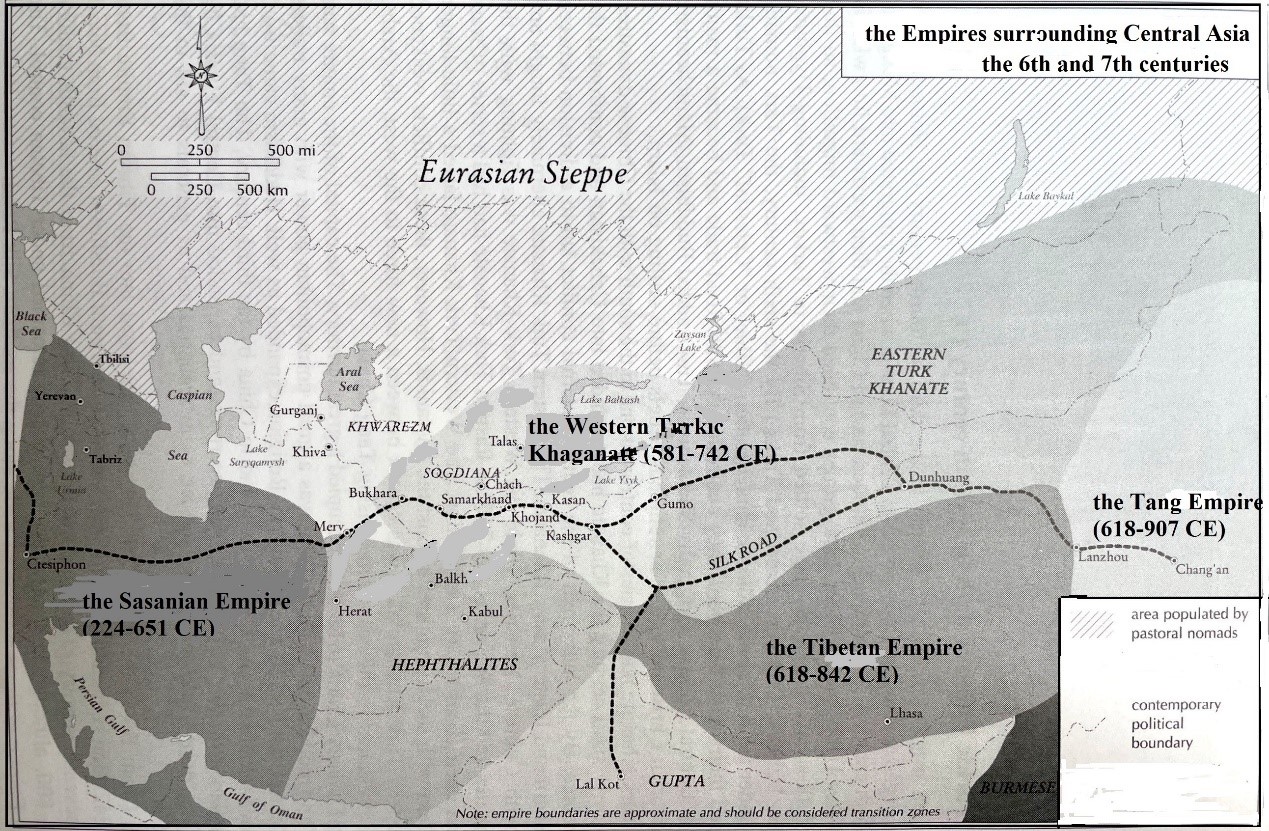
The Sasanian successor Pērōz sought refuge in the Yabghū Wu-shi-bo’s court and was able to return to Sīstān with the assistance of the Yabghū when the Arabs retreated from the eastern frontiers during the First Fitna. He played but a minor role in the rebellion because the local rulers would not hand over power to him. And he was no more than a prominent fugitive in Ṭukhāristān without base for manpower and financial income.[[284]](#footnote-284) He had to depend on the Turks, and was not active at all in fighting the Arabs. His attempts to restore the dynasty are expected to be fruitless. This is clearly shown by the absence of his name in the Muslim sources.

As his father, Narseh attempted to restore the dynasty in vain. When the Yabghū Du-ni-li had to succumb to the pressure of the Arabs when Qutayba arrived at Khurasan in 705 CE, he had to leave Huoguo and search for a new refuge. The political power of the Tang convinced him to flee to the Tang court, with the remaining Sasanian royal members further scattering to the north of the Oxus, to the south of the Hindukush.

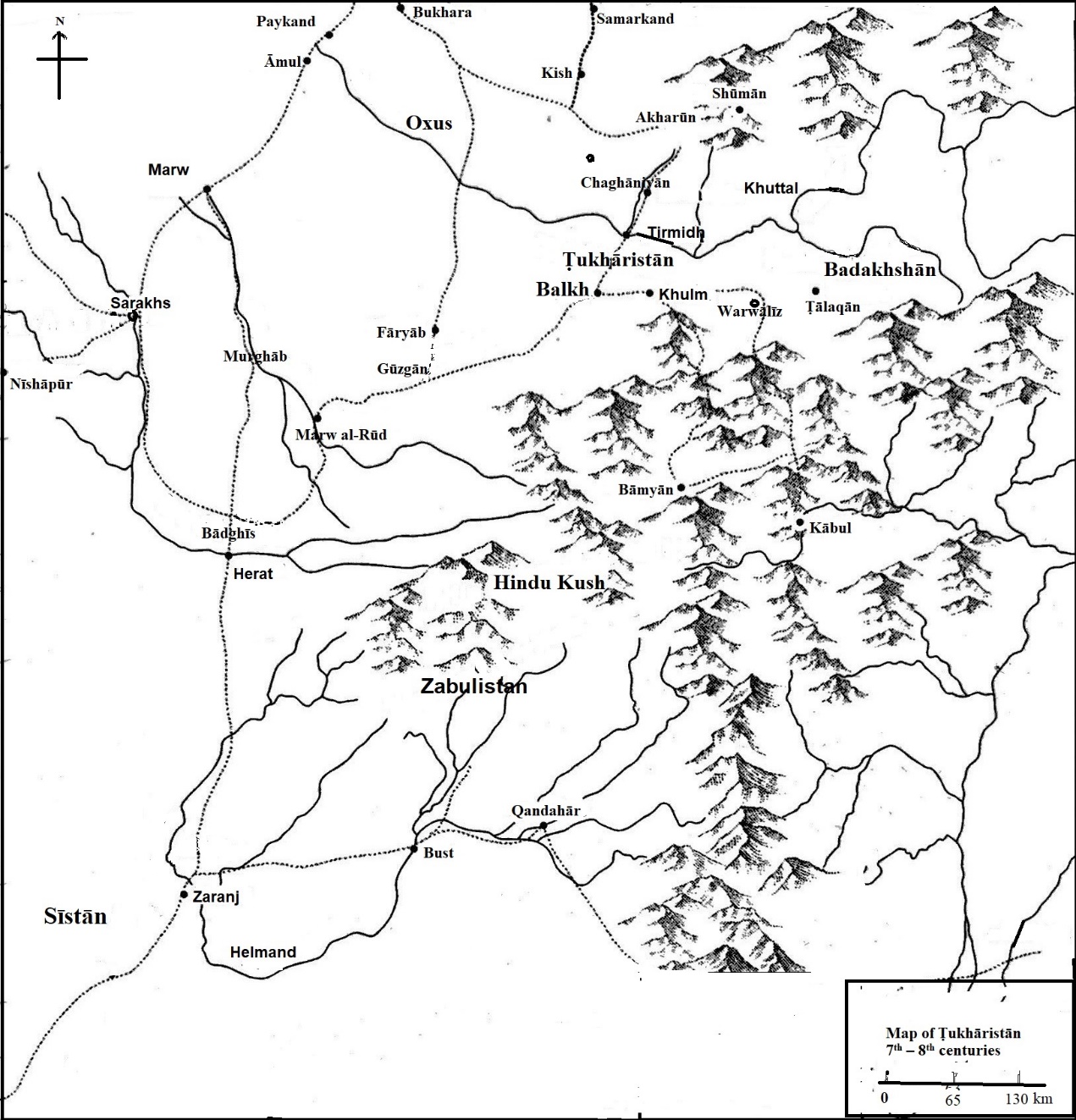
Although the political power of the Tang was the major reason behind Pērōz and Narseh’s fleeing to China, other reasons also played a role, including the existence of the Sasanian fugitive nobles and prosperous and rich communities of Persian merchants as a result of the flourishing of the maritime trade between China and the Persian Gulf, and the allowances that the Tang court granted the foreign princes and emissaries in their staying in the capital and so on. Although the later started to exert its influence in Central Asia in the 7th century and the early 8th century., its political power could not rival that of the Tang in the eyes of Narseh.

## Appendices

### **I Maps**



Map 1: The Empires surrounding Central Asia (the 6th and 7th centuries, on the eve of the Arab expansions), based on map 7 of Stanley, Brunn, Stanley, Toops and Richard Gilbreath's *The Routledge Atlas of Central Eurasian Affairs*, London and New York, Routledge, 2012.

Map 2: Ṭukhāristān and its environs during the 7th and 8th centuries, based on map 2 in Hugh Kennedy’s *the Great Arab Conquests: how the spread of Islam changed the world we live i*n, Philadelphia, Da Capo Press, 2007

### **II The *Jiu Tangshu* and the *Xin Tangshu***

*The Jiu Tangshu*, volume 198, pp. 5312-3

伊嗣候懦弱，为大首领所逐，遂奔吐火罗，未至，亦为大食兵所杀。其子名卑路斯，又投吐火罗叶护，获免。卑路斯龙朔元年奏言频被大食侵扰，请兵救援。诏遣陇州南由县令王名远充使西域，分置州县，因列其地疾陵城为波斯都督府，授卑路斯为都督。是后数遣使贡献。咸亨中，卑路斯自来入朝，高宗甚加恩赐，拜右武卫将军。仪凤三年，令吏部侍郎裴行俭将兵册送卑路斯为波斯王，行俭以其路远，至安西碎叶而还，卑路斯独返，不得入其国，渐为大食所侵，客于吐火罗国二十余年，有部落数千人，后渐离散。至景龙二年，又来入朝，拜为左威卫将军，无何病卒，其国遂灭，而部众犹存。

[Since] Yi-si-hou (Yazdegerd III) was weak, he was expelled by the great chief(s). He tried to flee to Tu-huo-luo (Ṭukhāristān). [However,] he did not arrive and was killed by the Dashi (Tāzīks, the Arabs). The name of his son was Bei-lu-si (Pērōz), who sought refuge with the Yabghū of Tu-huo-luo, and escaped [the fate of being captured and killed by the Arabs]. In the first year of the Longshuo reign-period (661 CE), Bei-lu-si presented a memorial [to the Tang court], which stated, please dispatch troops to save [me], [since] I was raided and disturbed frequently by the Dashi. [When] Wang Mingyuan, the magistrate of the Nanyou County in Longzhou, went to the Western Regions as an emissary under the royal decree to divide and arrange counties and prefectures, Wang listed his (Pērōz’s) land Ji-ling-cheng as Bo-si (Persia) Military Governate with Bei-lu-si as Dudu (military governor). Afterwards, [Pērōz] sent emissaries for several times to deliver tribute. During the Xianheng [reign-period] years (670-674 CE), Bei-lu-si arrived [at the court] personally to pay homage. The Gaozong Emperor awarded him lavishly, and bestowed upon him the title General of the Right Martial Guards. In the third year of the Yifeng [reign-period] (678 CE), [the Gaozong Emperor] conferred upon Bei-lu-si the king of Bo-si and ordered Pei Xingjian, the assistant minister of the Board of Civil Official, to escort him [back to his country]. [However,] Xingjian only reached Sui-ye (Sūyāb) and returned because of the great distance, leaving Bei-lu-si to continue the journey by himself. He could not return his own country, which was gradually invaded by the Dashi, and stayed in the country of Tu-huo-luo as a guest for around twenty years. The tribal members who adhered to him, [originally] numbering several thousands, gradually dispersed later. In the second year of the Jinglong [reign-period] (708 CE), he arrived [at the court] to pay homage again, when he was granted the title General of the Left Majestic Guards. He was sick and died in no time, while his country ceased to exist although the tribes still exist.

*The Xin Tangshu*, volume 221b, p. 6259

伊嗣俟不君，为大酋所逐，奔吐火罗，半道，大食击杀之。子卑路斯入吐火罗以免。遣使者告难，高宗以远不可师，谢遣。会大食解而去，吐火罗以兵纳之。龙朔初，又诉为大食所侵，是时天子方遣使者到西域分置州县，以疾陵城为波斯都督府，即拜卑路斯为都督。俄为大食所灭。虽不能国，咸亨中犹入朝，授右武卫将军，死。始，其子泥涅师为质，调露元年，诏裴行俭将兵护还，将复王其国。以道远，至安西碎叶，行俭还。泥涅师因客吐火罗二十年，部落益离散。景龙初，复来朝，授左威卫将军。病死，西部独存。

[Since] Yi-si-ai (Yazdegerd III) didn’t behaved in a kingly manner, he was expelled by the great chief(s). He [tried to] flee to Tu-huo-luo. [However,] he was attacked and killed by the Dashi in the midway. His son Bei-lu-si entered Tu-huo-luo and survived. [When Bei-lu-si] dispatched emissaries to report the disaster, the Gaozong Emperor declined his request [of military assistance], since the great distance made a military campaign impossible. When the Dashi relieved and left, Tu-huo-luo dispatched troops to escort him [back to his country].

In the beginning of the Longshuo [reign-period] (661-663 CE), he reported being under the attack of the Dashi. At this period, the Tianzi (the Chinese emperor) dispatched emissaries to the Western Regions to divide and arrange counties and prefectures. [Therefore,] Ji-ling-cheng was established as the Bo-si Military Governate with Bei-lu-si as its Dudu. [Nevertheless,] it was soon annihilated by the Dashi. Although he could not have a country, still he came to the court in the years of the Xianheng [reign-period] (670-674 CE), and was granted the title General of the Right Martial Guards. [He then] died. His son Ni-nie-shi originally was a hostage [in the court]. In the first year of the Tiaolu [reign-period] (679 CE), the royal decree ordered an army led by Pei Xingjian to escort him and to claim the kingship of his country. Xingjian, [however,] reīed the journey too long, and did not continue march from Sui-ye. Consequently, Ni-nie-shi stayed in Tu-huo-luo as a guest for twenty years, while his tribes further dispersed. In the beginning of the Jinglong [reign-period] (707-710 CE), he came [to the court] to pay homage again, and was granted the title General of the Left Majestic Guards. He was sick and died with the western part [of the country] still existing.

### **III The *Biography of Sanzang Fashi of the Great Ci'en Monastery***

(Excerpted from volume 3, p. 31)

自此数百里渡缚刍河，至活国，即叶护可汗长子呾度设（设者官名。）所居之地，又是高昌王妹婿。高昌王有书至其所。比法师到，公主可贺敦已死，咀度设又病，闻法师从高昌来，又得书，与男女等呜咽不能止。因请曰：“弟子见师目明，愿少停息。若差，自送师到婆罗门国。”时更有一梵僧至，为诵咒，患得渐除。其后娶可贺敦，年少，受前儿嘱，因药以杀其夫。设既死，高昌公主男小，遂被前儿特勤篡立为设，仍妻后母。为逢丧故，淹留月馀。

From here (the Iron Gate) he (Xuanzang) crossed the Oxus after a journey of several hundred li, and arrived at Huoguo (Warwālīz), where Tardu Shad (Shad being a title), who was the elder son of the Yabghū Khāqān and the husband of the sister of the king of Gaochang as well, held his court. The king of Gaochang sent a letter to his court. However, the princess Khatun had passed away when the monk (Xuanzang) arrived. What is more, Tardu Shad was sick. When he was informed that the monk came from Gaochang and then read the letter, he could not stop sobbing together with his male and female companions. He then addressed, "The eyes of your discipline behold light in seeing the master. Please stay and rest for a short while. If possible, I would usher the master to the country of Brahmin." Later an Indian monk arrived and cured the Shad’s disease after reciting spells for him. The Khatun that he married later was young and poisoned her husband when instructed by his elder son. When the Shad died, the elder son established himself as the new Shad and married his stepmother, since the boy of the Gaochang princess was of a tender age. Because of the funeral, he (Xuanzang) sojourned [in Warwālīz] for about a month.

(volume 5, p. 116)

法师从西北下数里有少平地，施帐宿，旦而进，经五六日下山，至安怛罗缚婆国，即都货罗之故地。伽蓝三所，僧徒数十，习大众部法。有一率堵波，无忧王建也。法师停五日，西北下山行四百馀里，至阔悉多国，亦都货罗之故地。从此西北复山行三百馀里，至活国，居缚刍河侧，即覩货罗东界，都城在河南岸。因见叶护可汗孙王都货罗，自称叶护。至衙停一月，叶护遣卫送，共商侣东行。

The monk (Xuanzang) found a small flat area after descending northwestward for several li, and erected his tent there for night. [He] continued in the morning, and after descending for five or six days arrived at Andarāb, an old territory of the country Tohuoluo (Ṭukhāristān). There were three monasteries with a few tens of monks, all of whom studied the teachings of the Mahāsāṃghika school. There was one stupa built by King Aśoka. The monk stopped there for five days, and arrived at Khost after descending northwestward for around 400 li, which was an old territory of the country of Tuhuoluo as well. Thence a mountainous journey for around 300 li northwestward led him to Huoguo (Warwālīz), which was located close to the Oxus and marked the eastern border of Tuhuoluo. Its capital was found on the southern bank of the [Oxus] river. Then [Xuanzang] met the grandson of the Yabghū Khāqān, the king of Tuhuoluo, who claimed [the title] Yabghū. After staying in his court of a month, the Yabghū sent guards to accompany [Xuanzang for his journey], who traveled eastward with a trading caravan.

### **IV The *Cefu yuangui***

(volume 966, p. 11365)

吐火罗国，唐永徽三年列其地为月氏府，以其叶护阿史那乌湿波为都督。

The state of Tu-huo-luo (Ṭukhāristān): in the third year of the Yonghui [reign period] (652 CE), its territories were organized as the Yuezhi fu (governate); its Yabghū A-shi-na Wu-shi-bo was appointed as the Dudu (military governor).

(volume 971, p. 11406)

六月，大食国、吐火罗国、康国、南天竺国并遣使朝贡。其吐火罗国支汗那王帝赊上表，献解天文人大慕阇：其人智慧幽深，问无不知。伏乞天恩唤取慕阇亲问臣等事意及诸教法。知其人有如此之艺能，望请令其供奉，并置一法堂，依本教供养。

In the sixth month [of the seventh year (719 CE) of the Kaiyuan reign-period] the state of Dashi, the state of Tu-huo-luo (Ṭukhāristān), the state of Kang (Samarkand), and the state of south Tianzhu (India) sent emissaries to present the tribute. Di-she (Tīsh) the king of Zhi-han-na (Chaghāniyān) of the state of Tu-huo-luo sent a memorial to present a great Mu-she (Mōzak, the title of a Manichaean priest of the highest rank) who was well-versed with astrology, which stated, this man is of profound wisdom and unfathomable knowledge. I beg [the Emperor] by the heavenly grace would question the Mu-she in person about your servant’s affairs and so on and the doctrines of various religions, so [the Emperor] knows that this man is of such abilities. I expect that he can serve [God] and erect a religious hall in order to worship according to his religion.

(volume 971, p. 11413; English, Yu, 2015, p. 249)

（七载）六月，罽宾国、悒怛国并遣使朝贡。

In the sixth month [of the seventh year (748 CE) of the Tianbao reign-period] both the state of Jibin (Kābulistān) and the state of Yida (the Hephthalites) sent envoys to present the tribute.

(volume 975, p. 11458; English based on Yu (2015, p. 249) with modifications)

七载八月庚戌，悒怛国遣使朝贡，授将军，赐二色绫袍、金带、鱼袋七事，放还蕃。

On the day gengxu, in the eighth month of the seventh year (748) [of the Tianbao reign-period] the state of Yida (the Hephthalites) sent an envoy to present tribute, who was conferred the title of general, as well as a two-colored thin silk robe, a golden belt, a “fish bag”, and seven other objects, before being sent back to his own state.

(volume 999, Chinese, 1994, pp. 11721-2; English, Yu, 2015, p. 250 with modifications)

六年十一月丁未，阿史特勒仆罗上书诉曰：仆罗兄吐火罗叶护部下管诸国王都督刺史总二百一十二人。[谢䫻](https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E8%A8%B6%E9%81%94%E7%BE%85%E6%94%AF)王统领兵马二十万众，[罽宾](https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E7%BD%BD%E8%B3%93)王统领兵马二十万众，骨吐国王、石汗那国王、解苏国王、石匿国王、悒达国王、护密国王、护时健国王、范延国王、久越德建国王、勃特山王，各领五万众。

仆罗祖父已来，并是上件诸国之王蕃望尊重。仆罗兄般都泥利承嫡继袭，先蒙恩敕差使持节就本国册立为王。然火罗叶护积代以来，于大唐忠赤，朝贡不绝。本国缘接近大食吐蕃东界，又是西镇，仆罗兄每征发部落下兵马，讨论击诸贼；与汉军相知，声援应接在于边境，所以免有侵渔。仆罗兄前后屡蒙圣泽，愧荷国恩，遂发遣仆罗入朝，侍卫玉阶。至愿献忠殉命，以为臣妾。

仆罗至此，为不解汉法，鸿胪寺不委蕃望大小，有不比类，流例高下相悬，即奏拟授官。窃见石国、龟兹并余小国王子、首领等入朝，元无功效，并缘蕃望，授三品将军。况仆罗身恃勤，本蕃位望与亲王一种，比类大小，与诸国王子悬殊，却授仆罗四品中郎。但在蕃王子弟，娑罗门瞿昙金刚、龟兹王子白孝顺等，皆数改转，位至诸卫将军。唯仆罗最是大蕃，去神龙元年蒙恩敕授左领军卫翊府中郎将，至今经一十四年，久被沦屈，不蒙准例授职，不胜苦屈之甚。敕鸿胪卿准例定品秩，勿令称屈。

On the day of dingwei, in the eleventh month (December the 13th) of the sixth year (718 CE, of the Kaiyuan reign-period from 713-41 CE), Ashi[na] Tele (tegin) Puluo presented a memorial, which stated, "The kings of states, Commander-in-chiefs and Regional Inspectors under the Yabghū of Ṭukhāristān, the elder brother of Puluo, totally number two hundred and twelve. The king of Xieyang (Zabulistan) is in charge of the infantry and cavalry numbering two hundred thousand, and the king of Jibin (Kapisa-Gandhāra) is also in charge of two hundred thousand infantry and cavalry. The kings of the states of Gutu (Khuttal), Shihanna (Chaghāniyān), Jiesu (Akharūn and Shūmān), Shini (Shignan), Yida (Bāghlān), Humi (Wakhān), Hushijian (Gūzgān), Fanyan (Bāmyān), Jiuyuedejian (Qobādiyān) and Boteshan (Badakhshān) each lead fifty thousand troops.

Since the grandfather of Puluo, [the Yabghū of Ṭukhāristān] has become king of the above-mentioned states, he is greatly respected by the frontier nations. The elder brother of Puluo succeeded and was gratefully confirmed as the king by a royal ambassador. Several generations of the Yabghū of Ṭukhāristān have been loyal to the Great Tang and never cease to pay tribute. My country joins border with the Dashi (Tāzīks, the Arabs) [in the west] and the Tibetans in the east, and is a garrison in the western frontier. Every [time] my elder brother levied soldiers and horses of the tribes to fight these thieves, shared intelligence and coordinated with the Han army to avoid foreign raiding and incursions into the frontiers. [Since] the elder brother of Puluo felt unworthy to receive repeatedly the divine beneficence and royal grace, he therefore sent Puluo to the court to stand on the steps of the royal palaces and to serve as a royal guard. I most earnestly desire to show my loyalty and sacrifice my life as a common male or female slave.

[However,] I was not well versed with the Han tradition upon [my] arrival. And the Honglu Temple proposed a careless memorial for granting official ranks without taking into consideration of the great or small prestige of a vassal and high or low ranking after the tradition. Humbly I noticed that the princes and chiefs of Chāch, Kucha and other small principalities were granted third-grade generals simply based on the prestige of vassals without taking account of their private contributions when they arrived at the court. Additionally, Puluo is a shiqin (tegin), which equals a prince in my country and surpasses the status of the various princes of the principalities. Nevertheless, I was only granted a fourth-grade commandant. The prince of Brahmin Gutama Vajra and the prince of Kucha Bai Xiaoshun had changed their ranks for several times and finally were [promoted and] granted the titles of (higher) guard generals.[[285]](#footnote-285) Only Puluo, despite from a great frontier nation, remains bearing the same title as commandant in the inferior branch of the Left Army Leader Guard under the instruction of the royal decree graciously issued in the first year of Shenlong (705 CE) and has born this humiliation for fourteen years up to now. I am wronged in such an extreme way that my requests of granting a (higher) title was not permitted. Please instruct the minister of the Honglu Temple to approve my request and stop the wrong."

(volume 999, p. 11723)

奴身罪逆不孝，慈父身被大食统押。应彻天聪，颂奉天可汗进旨云：“大食欺侵，我即与你气力。”奴身今被大食重税，欺苦实深。若不得天可汗救活，奴身自活不得，国土必遭破散，求防守天可汗西门不得。伏望天可汗慈悯，与奴身多少气力，使得活路。又承天可汗处分突厥施可汗云： “西头事委你，即须发兵除却大食。”其事若实，望天可汗却垂处分奴身。缘大食税急，不求得好物奉进，望天可汗炤之。所欲驱遣奴身，及须已西方物，并请处分奴身，一一头载，不敢怠慢。

In the fifteenth year (727 CE, of the Kaiyuan reign-period) the Yabghū of Ṭukhāristān sent a memorial through the hand of an envoy, which stated, "Your slave is sinful and not a filial son, [since] my father of affection is [still] detained by the Dashi (Tāzīks, the Arabs). The praised Tengri Khāqān, who is of heavenly wisdom, [used to] issue a decree, saying 'If the Dashi bullies [you], I will reinforce you.' Your slave now suffers terribly from the heavy taxation that the Dashi imposes [upon him]. If the Tengri Khāqān would not deliver [him], your slave surely will not survive; his territories will be lost. [If this happens,] he would not be able to guard the western gate for the Tengri Khāqān, despite his willingness. [He] respectfully hopes that the Tengri Khāqān will take pity upon him, and reinforce his slave more or less so that he would not perish. Furthermore, [he has heard that] the Tengri Khāqān instructed the Türgesh Khāqān, saying that I entrust you with the affairs in the western part, you must dispatch troops to annihilate the Dashi. If this is true, [he] hopes that the Tengri Khāqān could human himself to deal with your slave. Because of the heavy taxation [imposed by] the Dashi, he could not present valuable gifts. Hopefully, the Tengri Khāqān pardons the neglect. If you want to punish your slave for shortage of western articles, please punish your servant. He will bear the punishments item by item, and dare not to neglect [anything]."

### **V Tables**

Table : military campaigns of the Arabs in Khurasan between 651 and the 710s

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year | Event | Governor of Khurasan | Source |
| Year 31 (651-2) | Yazdegerd's murder |  | 2001, vol. 2, pp. 620-5; tr., vol. XV, pp. 78-90[[286]](#footnote-286) |
| Year 32 (652-3) | Al-Aḥnaf b. al-Qays conquered Marw al-Rūd, Tālaqān, Fāryāb, Gūzgūn, Herāt and Bādghīs, and made peace with Balkh under a tribute of 400,000 dirhams. | ʿAbdallāh ibn ʿĀmir (647-656) | 2001, vol. 2, pp. 630-2; tr., vol. XV, pp. 102-10[[287]](#footnote-287) |
| Year 33 (653-4) | Al-Aḥnaf was sent to Khurasan to crush rebellions in Nīshāpūr, Marw, and Marw al-Rūd. | ʿAbdallāh ibn ʿĀmir | 2001, vol. 2, p. 634; tr., vol. XV, pp. 111[[288]](#footnote-288) |
| Year 37 (657-8) | Khulayd b. Qurrah al-Yarbūʿī sent by ʿAlī to crush rebellion in Nīshāpūr and Marw. | Khulayd b. Qurrah al-Yarbū‘ī | 2001, vol. 3, p. 109; tr., vol. XVII, pp. 99-100[[289]](#footnote-289) |
| Year 39 (659-60) | Ziyād sent by ʿAlī to Fārs and Kirmān, and he subjugated those lands and restored order. |  | 2001, vol. 3, p. 151-2; tr., vol. XVII, pp. 203-205[[290]](#footnote-290) |
| Year 43 (663-4) | Ibn Khāzim led the Arabs to confront the army from Ṭukhāristān, and put them to flight. | ʿAbdallāh ibn ʿĀmir | 2001, vol. 3, p. 193; tr., vol. XVIII, pp. 68-70[[291]](#footnote-291) |
| Year 45 (664-5) | Ziyād b. Abī Sufyān, the governor of Basra, appointed al- Ḥakam as the governor of Khurasan and organized it into four parts. Al-Ḥakam b. ʿAmr raided Ṭukhāristān, taking great booty. | Al-Ḥakam b. ʿAmr (665-?) | 2001, vol. 3, p. 200; tr., vol. XVIII, pp. 85-87[[292]](#footnote-292) |
| Year 51 (671-2) | The new governor al-Rabīʿ b. Ziyād al-Ḥārithī settled with 50,000 soldiers and their family in Marw. He entered Balkh peacefully and took Quhistān by force. He killed some of the Turks in Quhistān, and put some including Nīzak Ṭarkhān to flight. | Al-Rabīʿ b. Ziyād al-Ḥārithī (671-3) | 2001, vol. 3, pp. 235-6; tr., vol. XVIII, pp. 163-164[[293]](#footnote-293) |
| Year 54 (673-4) | ʿUbaydallāh crossed the Oxus and campaigned against Bukhara and its environs. He encountered the Turks during the campaign. | ʿUbaydallāh b. Ziyād | 2001, vol. 3, pp. 242-4; tr., 1987, vol. XVIII, pp. 175-179[[294]](#footnote-294) |
| Year 56 (674-5) | Saʿīd b. ʿUthmān crossed the Oxus and campaigned against Samarkand. | Saʿīd b. ʿUthmān | 2001, vol. 3, pp. 249-50; tr., 1987, vol. XVIII, pp. 187-190[[295]](#footnote-295) |
| Year 59 (678-9) | ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ziyād stayed in Khurasan for two years and did not make a single raid. | ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ziyād (679-681) | 2001, vol. 3, p. 256; tr., 1987, vol. XVIII, p. 200[[296]](#footnote-296) |
| Year 61 (680-1) | Salm b. Ziyād campaigned against Khwarazm and Samarkand. | Salm b. Ziyād (681-683) | 2001, vol. 3, pp. 345-6; tr., 1990, vol. XIX, pp. 184-188[[297]](#footnote-297) |
| Year 64 (683-4) | ‘Abdallāh b. Khāzim was nominated to replace Salm. He fought Sulaymān b. Marthad in Marw al-Rūd, and ῾Amr b. Marthad in Tālaqān, and then moved to fight Bakr b. Wā᾿il in Herat for more than one year. In this year the Turks raided as far as Qaṣr Asfād to the east of Nīshāpūr. | ‘Abdallāh b. Khāzim (683/4-692) | 2001, vol. 3, pp. 386-90; tr., 1989, vol. XX, pp. 70-80[[298]](#footnote-298) |
| Year 65 (684-5) | ‘Abdallāh b. Khāzim maltreated Banū Tamīm, and they killed his son Muhammad in Herat as retaliation. Then ‘Abdallāh b. Khāzim fought Banū Tamīm led by al-Ḥarīsh for two years. | ‘Abdallāh b. Khāzim | 2001, vol. 3, pp. 430-2; tr., 1989, vol. XX, pp. 177-80[[299]](#footnote-299) |
| Year 66 (685-6) | ‘Abdallāh b. Khāzim fought Banū Tamīm in Marw al-Rūd. | ‘Abdallāh b. Khāzim | 2001, vol. 3, pp. 473-5; tr., 1990, vol. XXI, pp. 62-6[[300]](#footnote-300) |
| Year 72 (691-2) | ‘Abdallāh b. Khāzim refused to swear allegiance to ῾Abd al-Malik, when he was fighting a subdivision of Tamīm in Nīshāpūr. ῾Abd al-Malik appointed Bukayr b. Wishāḥ as governor, while ‘Abdallāh b. Khāzim was killed. ‘Abdallāh’s son Mūsā seized Tirmidh as his base. And the king of Tirmidh sought help from the Turks. | Bukayr b. Wishāḥ (691/2-693/4) | 2001, vol. 3, pp. 531-2; tr., 1990, vol. XXI, pp. 209-12[[301]](#footnote-301) |
| Year 74 (693-4) | Umayyah ibn ʿAbdallāh ibn Khālid replaced Bukayr b. Wishāḥ as the new governor. Bukayr chose to stay in Ṭukhāristān. The request was declined. | Umayyah ibn ʿAbdallāh (693/4-697/8) | 2001, vol. 3, pp. 545-6; tr., 1989, vol. XXII, pp. 7-11[[302]](#footnote-302) |
| Year 77 (696-7) | Bukayr b. Wishāḥ burned the boats in Oxus and seized Marw when Umayyah was campaigning against Bukhara. Bukayr was killed, although he had a truce with Umayyah. The governor’s military campaigns against Mūsā at Tirmidh failed. | Umayyah ibn ʿAbdallāh | 2001, vol. 3, pp. 607-10; tr., 1989, vol. XXII, pp. 165-75[[303]](#footnote-303) |
| Year 78 (697-8) | Al-Muhallab replaced Umayyah ibn ʿAbdallāh as governor of Khurasan. | Al-Muhallab (697/8-702/3) | 2001, vol. 3, pp. 612-3; tr., 1989, vol. XXII, pp. 178-80[[304]](#footnote-304) |
| Year 80 (699-700) | Al-Muhallab campaigned in Kish for two years. His son Yazīd led an expedition to al-Khuttal. When Baḥīr was murdered in year 81 (700-701), al-Muhallab was camping in Akharūn. | Al-Muhallab | 2001, vol. 3, pp. 616-7; tr., 1989, vol. XXII, pp. 188-90[[305]](#footnote-305) |
| Year 82 (701-2) | Al-Muhallab imposed tribute on Kish. On his way back to Marw, his son Yazīd met a band of Turks numbering 150 in the desert of Nasaf. Ḥurayth also met the same band of Turks on his way back to Marw. Al-Muhallab crossed the Oxus and stopped in Balkh for a certain period of time before continuing for Marw. | Al-Muhallab | 2001, vol. 3, pp. 631-4; tr., 1990, vol. XXIII, pp. 27-33[[306]](#footnote-306) |
| Year 83 (702-703) | Yazīd defeated part of ῾Abd al-Raḥmān’s army who seized Herat and sent the captives to al-Ḥajjāj. | Yazīd b. al-Muhallab (701/2-704) | 2001, vol. 3, pp. 642-4; tr., 1990, vol. XXIII, pp. 52-7[[307]](#footnote-307) |
| Year 84 (703-704) | Yazīd b. al-Muhallab took Nīzak’s fortress in Bādghīs by guile. | Yazīd b. al-Muhallab | 2001, vol. 3, pp. 650-1; tr., 1990, vol. XXIII, pp. 74-6[[308]](#footnote-308) |
| Year 85 (704-705) | Al-Mufaḍḍal replaced by his brother Yazīd as governor of Khurasan for nine months before the coming of Qutayba, and he conquered Bādghīs and campaigned in Akharūn and Shūmān (pp. 88-9). He called al-Sabal, king of Khuttal and Ṭarkhūn, king of Samarkand, namely both the Turks and the Sogdians to fight Mūsā in Tirmidh. | Al-Mufaḍḍal (704-705); Qutayba b. Muslim (705-715) | 2001, vol. 3, pp. 654-64; tr., 1990, vol. XXIII, pp. 83-108[[309]](#footnote-309) |
| Year 86 (705) | Qutayba crushed the revolt in Balkh, and restored the king of Chaghāniyān, who was expelled by the rulers of Akharūn and Shūmān. The dihqāns and dignitaries of Balkh met Qutayba in Tālaqān and traveled with him to Balkh. Additionally, he appointed Ṣāliḥ over Tirmidh. | Qutayba b. Muslim | 2001, vol. 3, pp. 670-1; tr., 1990, vol. XXIII, pp. 126-9[[310]](#footnote-310) |
| Year 87 (705-6) | Qutayba required Nīzak to set free the Muslim prisoners and signed a treaty with him, promising not to enter Bādghīs. Qutayba conquered Paykand. | Qutayba b. Muslim | 2001, vol. 3, pp. 673-5; tr., 1990, vol. XXIII, pp. 133-8[[311]](#footnote-311) |
| Year 88 (706-7) | Qutayba campaigned against Tūmushkath. The Arabs encountered the Turks and the Sogdians when leaving for Marw by Tirmidh and Balkh. | Qutayba b. Muslim | 2001, vol. 3, p. 677; tr., 1990, vol. XXIII, pp. 143-4[[312]](#footnote-312) |
| Year 89 (707-8) | Qutayba fought Wardān Khudhāh, king of Bukhara. | Qutayba b. Muslim | 2001, vol. 3, p. 679; tr., 1990, vol. XXIII, pp. 146-7[[313]](#footnote-313) |
| Year 90 (708-9) | Qutayba besieged Bukhara and defeated the Turks and the Sogdians who came for assistance, and renewed his treaty with Ṭarkhūn. The Khāqān of the Turks and his son were wounded. Nīzak called Marw al-Rūd, Tālaqān, Fāryāb, Gūzgān and Balkh to rebel against Qutayba. | Qutayba b. Muslim | 2001, vol. 3, pp. 681-4; tr., 1990, vol. XXIII, pp. 150-6[[314]](#footnote-314) |
| Year 91 (709-10) | Qutayba captured and crucified Nīzak, and subjugated Marw al-Rūd, Tālaqān, Fāryāb and Gūzgān. He then conquered Shūmān, Kish and Nasaf for a second time. The king of Shūmān threw out Qutayba's governor and withheld the tribute. Ṭarkhūn was replaced by Ghūrak as king of Samarkand. | Qutayba b. Muslim | 2001, vol. 4, pp. 3-8; tr., 1990, vol. XXIII, pp. 164-77[[315]](#footnote-315) |

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1. The historians include the 7th century Armenian historian Sebeos (1999, p. 135) and the Muslims such as al-Dīnawarī (d. 896 CE) (1888, p. 149; tr. 2010, p. 271: ذلك انقضى ملك فارس), al-Ṭabarī (d. 923 CE) (2001, volume 2, p. 624; tr., 1990, volume XV, p. 90: وكان اخر ملك ملك من ال اردشير بن بابك وصفا الملك بعده للعرب) and Gardīzī (active in the 11th century) (1984, p. 104: ومملكت عجم بروي ختم شد وپس مسلمانان ايرانشهر بگرفتند). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Bactria (Βακτριανή) is the Hellenized form of probably a local Iranian term, which was close to the Old Persian form *Bāxtrī* attested in the inscription of Darius the Great (522-486 BCE) at Behistun (Rawlinson, 1948, p. i, xi, xxvii, xxxiii; Lecoq, 1997, pp. 188, 201-2; Kuhrt, 2007, pp. 141-58). And *Bākhtarish*, the old transcription of the Old Persian word for Bactria given by Rawlinson (Rawlinson, 1948, pp. 85, 123) is updated as *Bāxtri/ī* according to Skjærvø (2016, pp. 170, 175). The Middle Persian geographical text *Šahrestānīhā ī Ērānšahr* attests that it had evolved as *Baxl* in Middle Persian (Daryaee, 2002, pp. 13, 17), from which its New Persian form Balkh (بلخ) as attested in the *Shāhnāmeh* is evolved (Ferdowsi, 1987, volume 2, p. 245; tr., 2006, pp. 230-1; volume 5, pp. 178, 184, 431; tr., pp.369, 420; volume 7, pp. 552, 579, 589, 609; tr., pp. 747, 757, 760, 767).

   As for Ṭukhāristān (τοχοαρστανο), a compound meaning the land of the *Tokharoi* (τοχοροι) in the local Bactrian language, it is first attested in the early 2nd century by the Bactrian inscription from the reign of the Kushan king Kanishka I (120-144 CE) (Sims-Williams, 2015, p. 257). A combination of the written sources and the archaeological discoveries show that the *Tokharoi* in the Greek sources (Strabo, 1928, volume 11.8.2, pp. 259-61; Ptolemy, 1845, p. 116; tr., 1991, p. 141) should be identified with the Yuezhi (月氏) mentioned in the Chinese sources (Bailey, 1970, pp. 121-2; Beckwith, 1987, p. 6; Sims-Williams, 2002, p. 229; Benjamin, 2007, p. 213; Grenet, 2012, p. 7; Haug, 2019, p. 11), who migrated from western China all the way to Bactria under the pressure of the Xiongnu (匈奴), a confederation of nomads established in the late 3rd century BCE in modern Mongolia (for primary sources, see Sima, 1996, volume 110, p. 2890, volume 123, p. 3157; Ban, 1995, volume 61, pp. 2687-8, 2692, volume 94a, pp. 3750, 3757, volume 96a, pp. 3890-1; for scholarly studies, see Benjamin, 2007, pp. 66-8, 71-4, 86-101, 136-68, 191-215). Clearly, Ṭukhāristān was the most popular geographical term for the region in the 7th and 8th centuries, while the Bactrian term βαχλο was attested in coins as an archaic form and was geographically limited to the region's capital city Balkh as it remains today (de la Vassière, 2010c, pp. 213-6). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Liu, 1995, volume 198, pp. 5312-3; tr., Appendix II. Ouyang & Song, 1995, p. 6259; tr., Appendix II. The capital of the Tang Empire (618-907 CE) was Chang’an (长安). For more information of the Empire, see the following historical background. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Among historians of the Arab conquests in general, Kennedy does not mention Yazdegerd's family in his monograph (2007, pp. 169-99); Hoyland (2015, pp. 87, 261), who puts emphasis on non-Arabic sources to reconstruct the history of the Arab conquests, incorporates an account of the last Sasanian princes based on Daryaee (2009, pp. 37-8) and others’ research. Gibb (1923, pp. 16, 27) and Shaban (1970, pp. 27-8), the two historians of the Arab conquests of Central Asia, incorporate Chavannes’s translation of the relevant records about the last Sasanian princes into their narratives of the Arab conquests of Central Asia.

   As for the historians of the Sasanian dynasty, Frye (1984, pp. 334-9) and Pourshariati (2008, pp. 161-285) do not touch the topic; Christensen presents but a brief account of Yazdegerd's descendants based on Marquart's *Ērānšahr* (1936, pp. 502-3). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Liang and Wen, 2003, pp. 44-51; Zhang, 2003, pp. 8-11. The Qianling Mausoleum is the tomb of the Gaozong Emperor (649-683 CE) and his wife Wu Zetian, who later ascended the throne for more than one decade (690-705 CE). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The surviving names of the escorting soldiers shows that the Persian army was actually a Chinese army labeled as Persian. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Jiang, 1994, pp. 37-50. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Xue, 1988, pp. 65-77. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Compareti, 2003, pp. 197-213. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Pashazanous and Sangari, 2018, pp. 1-17. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Agostini and Stark, 2016, pp. 17-38. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Haug, 2019, pp. 92-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Pashazanous and Afkande, 2014, pp. 144-6; Agostini and Stark, 2016, p. 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. The Arabic and Persian sources suffer from partiality, focusing on the Arab conquests and Islam. For the last Sasanian princes, they barely mention them because of the lack of interest in these claimants who would not threaten their rule of Khurasan, while the Chinese sources limit their interest to their relations with the Tang court such as paying tribute and arriving at the Tang court. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. See Gibb (1923, pp. 11-4), Barthold (1928, pp. 1-6) and Shaban (1970, pp. xvii-xxii). Shaban pays attention to al-Kūfī’s *Kitāb al-Futūḥ*, which both Gibb and Barthold do not refer to, and realizes its value as one of the oldest Arabic histories that survived largely intact. For al-Kūfī's chronology and historical composition, see Conrad (2015, pp. 87-125). [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Gibb, Barthold and Shaban do not mention Khalīfa ibn Khayyāṭ's *Tārīkh*, since its only survived copy was found as late as 1966 in Morocco.

    Al-Balādhurī’s *Futūḥ al-Buldān* is a history about the Arab conquests about different regions. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Although al-Dīnawarī’s *Kitāb al-akhbār al-ṭiwāl* is written in Arabic, it is a history from a Persian point of view.

    Al-Yaʿqūbī’s *Tārīkh* includes both the pre-Islamic and the Islamic periods (al-Yaʿqūbī, 2018, volume 1, pp. 4-6). However, despite its breadth, it contains much less details comparing to al-Ṭabarī’s annals. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. According to Barthold (1928, pp. 2-3), the chief source of Ibn ’Athīr’s history for the first three Islamic centureies is al-Ṭabarī’s annals. However, Ibn ’Athīr presents records with more thorough understanding. For dedicated discussions about Arabic historiography, see Rosenthal (1968, part one, pp. 1-193) and Duri (1983). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. The translation was done by the Samanid vizier in the second half of the 10th century. Although Peacock (2007, pp. 4-14) argues that it is more than a simple translation but reflects the political agenda of the Samanids. However, the records relevant to the present study are largely identical to al-Ṭabarī’s Arabic text, with some abridgements of narratives and the omission of the chain of informants. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. *Tārīkh-i Sīstān* is a local history of Sīstān, a region in modern eastern Iran and southern Afghanistan.

    Gardīzī's history, which is also called *Zayn-i ’Akhbār*, presents in a summary fashion the early history of Islam with the focus on Khurasan (Gardīzī, 2011, pp. 1-3). [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Azad, 2013, pp. 10-2, 22-7. However, this source only briefly reports Qutayba’s conquest of Balkh in 707 CE without mentioning the rebellion of Nīzak (Balkhī, 1971, p. 18). [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Agostini, 2016, pp. 26-30. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Traditionally, there are two opinions concerning the starting year of Xuanzang’s journey: one is 627 CE, and the other is 629 CE. De la Vassière studies the chronology and argues for 629 CE (2010b, pp. 157-68). [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. The *Zizhi tongjian* (资治通鉴), which was presented to the court by Sima Guang (司马光) in 1084 CE after compilation for almost two decades, is an important source to check the two dynastic histories of the Tang. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. The title of the encyclopedia can be translated as the *Model of Archives*. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. The Bactrian documents, which are edited and translated by Sims-Williams in three volumes (volume 1, 2000; volume 2, 2007; volume 3, 2012), are precious sociopolitical information of Ṭukhāristān in the local Bactrian language, one of the eastern Middle Iranian languages. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. The coins of Central Asia minted by the Hephthalites and the Western Turks are collected and studied by Vondrovec in two volumes (2014). [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Transoxiana is *mā warā’ al-nahr* in Arabic, meaning beyond the Oxus. It is found between the Oxus in the south and the Jaxertes in the north with Samarkand and Bukhara as the most important city-states. When the Arabs came to the region, it was a trading kingdom of the Sogdians that dominated international trades in the east. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. The Rouran fled to Europe through the Eurasian steppes after defeating by the Turks and was called the Avars in the Byzantine sources. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. See Litvinsky, 1996, pp. 143-4; Bregel, 2003, p. 14; Kurbanov, 2010, pp. 186-90; Vondrovec, 2014, pp. 404-5; Haug, 2019, pp. 64-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. For the Hephthalites in general, see: Ghirshman (1948), Kurbanov’s (2010) and Yu (2012); more specific studies, see: Kuwayama (2002, pp. 107-39) discusses several political, military and religious issues of the Hephthalites; de la Vassière (2003, pp. 119-32) studies their origin; Grenet (2002, pp. 209-224) pays attention to the contribution that the Hephthalites made to regional interaction in Central Asia; Rezakhani (2017, pp. 125-56) traces the relations between the Sasanians and the Hephthalites and so on. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. The Byzantine historians Menander (1985, pp. 111-27, 171-9) and Simocatta (1986, pp. 188-95) report several exchanges of emissaries between the Byzantine Empire and the Turks in the 2nd half of the 6th century. According to Menander (1985, pp. 111-7), the Sogdian Maniakh was sent by Ishtemi Khāqān (553-576 CE) of the Western Turks to Byzantium in 568 CE to establish trading relations with the Byzantine Empire after Khosrow I refused the request to trade. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. For Bahrām’s campaign, see al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 1, pp. 462-3; tr., 1999, volume V, pp. 298-303. See also Haug, 2019, pp. 64-9. Bahrām’s victory is reflected by Hormizd IV’s (579-590 CE) coins minted in Balkh (Vondrovec, 2014, volume I, pp. 369-70; Wang, 2017, pp. 111-2). For Smbat’s campaign, see Sebeos, 1999, pp. 49-53. According to the *Šahrestānīhā ī Ērānšahr*, both Sogdiana and Ṭukhāristān were within the domain of the Sasanians (Daryaee, 2002, tr., pp. 13, 17-8). Although both Daryaee and Geus argued that part of this source was composed as late as the early 7th century (Ibid., pp. 4. 7-8; Geus, 2017, pp. 131-43), its propagandist nature makes historical arguments based on the source slippery. Sogdiana, for example, was under the hegemony of the Turks instead of the Sasanians. In other words, even after the military victories, the Sasanians controlled mainly Ṭukhāristān. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Bregel, 2003, p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Sūyāb was one of the garrisons in the earlier stage, and was replaced by Karashahr (焉耆) in the early 8th century. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. The administration of the Tang is called the Ji-mi system (羁縻), under which the vasals were autonomous. Liu, 1995, volume 194b, p. 5187; Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 215b, p. 6063. For academic studies see Bregel, 2003, p. 16; Wang, 2017, pp. 125-32. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Wang, 2009, pp. 8-12; Haug, 2019, pp. 95-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Liu, 1995, volume 198, pp. 5312-3; Ouyang & Song, 1995, p. 6259. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Wei, 1996, volume 63, 83, pp. 1856-7. The Sasanian emissaries arrived at China in 455, 461, 468 and 517 CE during the Wei dynasty with a letter of Kavad I (484-496, 498-531 CE, 居和多) arriving at the court in 517 CE; the Wei sent Han Yangpi (韩羊皮) to the Sasanian court in the early 460s (Wei, 1995, volumes 5, 6, 9, 102, pp. 115, 128, 228, 2272). And during the Sui dynasty, the *Suishu* reports that the Sasanians always sent emissaries to the court, while the Sui sent Li Yu (李昱) to Khosrow II (590-628 CE) in the early 7th century (Wei, 1996, volume 83, pp. 1856-7). Although not all these Sasanian emissaries were necessarily sent by the court, with part of them being representatives of the *marzbāns* in eastern frontiers or even merchants who pretended to be official envoys, the Sasanian court clearly established diplomatic relations with Chinese dynasties. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. The Sasanians actively engaged in trading in the Indian Ocean from the early stage of their dynasty (Ghosh, 2003, pp. 132-42). In the 6th century, the Persian merchants met their Chinese counterparts in Sri Lanka for trading, which was a commercial hub for ships from India, Persia, Ethiopia, and China (Cosmas, 1897, pp. 365-8). In 671 CE, the Buddhist pilgrim Yijing boarded a Persian vessel in Guangzhou for India (Yijing, 2000, p. 152). Clearly, the Persian merchants arrived at China at an earlier stage. The archaeological discoveries such as the Sasanian silver coins found in the coastal regions of Guangdong show that direct maritime trade most probably started already in the 6th century (Sun, 2014, pp. 41-2; Pahazanous, Zohouri, 2020, pp. 547-58). The direct maritime trade between the Persian Gulf and China continued to develop and flourished in the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties (Geogre, 2015, pp. 579-624). [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Another direction of the Tibetan expansion is the upper streams of the Indus River (Dunlop, 1973, p. 302). However, this is bascailly irrelevant to the present study. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Nevertheless, the Tibetans were able to capture the four garrisons only at the end of the 8th century. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Beckwith, 1987, pp. 11-142; Bregel, 2003, p. 16; Wang, 2009, pp. 42-190. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Dunlop, 1973, pp. 301-12. The allies of the Tibetan Empire included the Karluks, who occupied the steppes around Sūyāb and Talas after the collapse of the Türgesh (699-766 CE), and the Kyrgyz (Beckwith, 1987, p. 157; Wang, 2009, pp. 193-4). Actually, the Tibetan Empire had made attempts to penetrate to Ṭukhāristān as early as 704 CE and to Farghānah in 715 CE though without much success (Dunlop, 1973, p. 304; Beckwith, 1987, pp. 69-70; Wang, 2009, pp. 130-1). [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. For the battles between the Uyghurs and the Tibetans, see Beckwith, 1987, pp. 151-6. For a general study of the Uyghur Khaganate, see Mackerras, 1972. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. For the tripartite relations between Nanzhao, the Tibetan Empire and the Tang, see Backus, 1981, 69-100; Marks, 1978, pp. 11-8, although mistakes are present in the study. For a general study of the Nanzhao kingdom, see Backus, 1981. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Beckwith, 1987, pp. 143-72; Wang, 2009, pp. 190-6. Li Mi (李泌) proposed in 785 CE to the Dezong Emperor (779-805 CE) to forge an alliance with the Uyghurs in the north, Nanzhao in the south and the Arabs in the west to confront the Tibetan Empire. Emissaries were sent to carry out the alliance, with Yang Liangyao (杨良瑶) sailed for Baghdad. The Uyghurs responded positively in 787 CE; Nanzhao defected to the Tang in 793 CE; after Yang Liangyao’s mission, the Abbasid emissaries to the Tang court in 798 CE, and the Abbasids did fight intensively with the Tibetans (Beckwith, 1987, pp. 151-2; Wang, 2009, pp. 190-3; Schottenhammer, 2015, pp. 177-204). However, because of defect of positivce evidence, it is still not conclusive that the Abbasids engaged the Tibetans as a direct result of its alliance with the Tang. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. After leaving Marw, Pērōz most probably went to the Yabghū’s court via Balkh. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Pērōz returned to Sīstān most probably by the route passing Balkh and Herat. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Both Pērōz and Narseh most probably left Ṭukhāristān from Badakhshān, which leads to the Wakhon Corridor and the Tarim Basin. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. The Muslim geographies mainly include *Kitāb al-Buldān* by al-Ya‘qūbī, *Kitāb al-Masālik va-Mamālik* by al-Istakhrī (d. after 952 CE), *Kitāb al-Masālik va-Mamālik* by Ibn al- Ḥawqal (d. after 978 CE), *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm fī maʿrifat al-aqālīm* by al-Muqaddasī (d. 991 CE), the anonymous Persian geography *Ḥudūd al-ʿĀlam* (published in 982 CE), and so on. These Muslim geographies keep detailed records of the subregions, cities and routes of Ṭukhāristān. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. For a detailed explanation of the geographical information contained in the Bactrian documents, see Sims-Williams’ study in 2018, pp. 11-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Huichao's travelogue *Hye Ch'o Diary: A Memoir of the Pilgrimage to the Five Regions of India* (慧超往五天竺国记) was lost until its recovery from Dunhuang in 1905 by Paul Pelliot.

    The geograhical information of the two dynastic histories of the Tang is found in the entries of the political entities in Ṭukhāristān and in the geographical monographs. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Xuanzang, 2000, pp. 100, 103; tr., Li, 1996, pp. 25-6; Huili & Yancong, 2000, p. 30; Barthold, 1928, p. 66; 1984, p. 18; Le Strange, 1930, pp. 426-7. Tirmidh was a famous crossing point of the Oxus with a journey of two days to Balkh (Ibn Ḥawqal, 1872, pp. 331-2; tr., 1800, p. 228: ومن بلخ الى شط جيحون في طريق الترمذ يومان). [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Akharūn and Shūmān are at the at the upper stream of Kafirnihān and close to modern Dushanbe. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Huili & Yancong, 2000, p. 31. Xuanzang, 2000, pp. 105-12; tr., Li, 1996, pp. 26-7. Xuanzang's itinerary mainly passed regions controlled by the Turks in his journey to India. Le Strange, 1930, p. 435-6; Barthold, 1928, p. 69; al-Istakhrī, 1927, p. 279: والختل بين نهر وخشاب و بين نهر بذخشان). Although there is a consensus among scholars to identify Huoguo as Warwālīz in the Muslim geographies (Le Strange, 1930, p. 428; Barthold, 1968, p. 67; 1984, p. 24; Harmatta & Litvinsky, 2002, p. 133), Kuwayama disagrees with the remaining scholars in identifying Warwālīz as m odern Kunduz, and suggests it should be modern Qal'a-ye Zal, where the Kunduz river joins the Oxus. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Xuanzang, 2000, pp. 127-9; tr., Li, 1996, pp. 30-1; Huili & Yancong, 2000, p. 33. Xuanzang did not leave Ṭukhāristān via Andarāb on the northern slope of the Hindukush, although this was the most frequent route for merchants and pilgrims (Barthold, 1928, p. 67; Le Strange, 1930, p. 427), but might have followed the route that was mentioned by Ibn Ḥawqal (1872, p. 335: ومن بلخ الى مذر ٤ مراحل ومن مذر الى كه مرحلة ومن كة الى الباميان ٣ مراحل). Namely, he proceeded upstream along the Balkh River (Kuwayama, 2005, p. 153). [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Xuanzang, 2000, pp. 125-7, 962; tr., Li, 1996, pp. 30, 317; Huili & Yancong, 2000, pp. 33, 116. On his way back to China in the 640s, Xuanzang arrived at Huoguo for a second time via Andarāb in southern Ṭukhāristān and stayed with the Yabghū Ishbara for a month before joining a trading caravan and continuing his journey for China (Xuanzang, 2000, p. 963; tr., Li, 1996, p. 318; Huili & Yancong, 2000, p. 116). [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Al-Balādhurī (1987, p. 573: tr., part II, p. 167: وهي مدينة طخارا) reports that Balkh was still the capital of the region. Haug also adopted this geographic definition of Ṭukhāristān in late antique and early medieval periods (2019, p. 11). [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Kuwayama, 2002, pp. 125-6; Hoyland, 2015, p. 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Haug, 2019, p. 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Xuanzang, 2000, pp. 961-74; tr., Li, 1996, pp. 317-21. Actually, almost all the mentioned regions that were found in eastern Ṭukhāristān on his journey back were noted explicitly as old territories of Ṭukhāristān. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. The ancient polity of Ṭukhāristān clearly refers to a political entity that had ceased to exist several centuries before Xuanzang’s time. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Barthold, 1928, p. 66; 1984, p. 18; Le Strange, 1930, pp. 426-7. Generally, Ṭukhāristān in the medieval Muslim geographies was of decreased territories. *Ḥudūd al-ʿĀlam* from late 10th century reports that Bādhghīs, Gūzgān, Balkh, Tirmidh, Chaghāniyān, Shūmān and so on did not belong to Ṭukhāristān (1937, pp. 102-9, 114-5). Al-Muqaddasī (d. 991 CE) clarifies that Ṭukhāristān was limited to regions between the Oxus in the north and Bāmyān in the south and between Balkh in the west and Badakhshān in the east (1906, pp. 295-6: فاما بلغ فانها اسم القصبة أيضا ومن مدنها اشغورقان سليم كركو جا مذر برواز ومن النواحي طخارستان وهى القصبة أيضا ومن مدنها ولوالج الطيقان خلم غربنك سمنجان اسكلكند روب بغلان السفلي بغلان العليا اسكيمشت راون آرهن اندراب خست سراي عاصم; p. 303: وبذخشان متاخمة لبلاد الترك فوق طخارستان), with Balkh not being part of the region as attested by al-Istakhrī (d. after 952 CE) (1927, p. 275: واما بلخ فان الذي يتصل بها طخيرستان والختل و بنجهير وبذخشان و عمل باميان وما يتصل بها). [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Al-Balādhurī's reports show that Ṭukhāristān extended all the way to the east bank of the Murghāb (Shaban, 1970, p. 10); al-Ṭabarī’s annals report Akharūn and Shūmān as part of Ṭukhāristān (2001, volume 3, p. 670; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, p. 128: اخرون وشومان – وهما من طخارستان. See also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 4, p. 241), though later medieval Muslim geographies such as *Ḥudūd al-ʿĀlam* excluded them from the region (1937, pp. 114-5). [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Barthold, 1928, p. 68; 1984, p. 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. De la Vaissière employs the term *Bactriane orientale*, namely eastern Bactria (2010a, p. 524). [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Gibb, 1923, pp. 15-7, 31-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Barthold, 1928, p. 68; Le Strange, 1930, pp. 426-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. This overland route to China through Sogdiana is also mentioned by medieval Muslim geographers such as al-Ya‘qūbī (2010, p. 227; tr., 2018, volume 2, p. 486:ومن أراد الصين على البر سار في نهر بلخ وقطع بلاد السغد وفرغانة والشاش والتبت حتى يصير اليها). Of course, it is important to realize that a route was subject to minor or major changes due to changing of the political situations. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Song and the Buddhist monk Huisheng (慧生) were dispatched to Uddiyana (modern Peshawar in Pakistan) and Gandhāra (modern Swat in Pakistan) by the Wei empress dowager in late 518 CE and returned to the Wei court in late 522 CE. They traveled through Khotan, principalities in the Wakhān Corridor and the Pamirs for Uddiyana instead of continuing eastward for Ṭukhāristān. See Yang, 2000, pp. 181-224.

    Wukong went to Central Asia in the 750s and stayed there for almost four decades. Another monk Yuanzhao met and interviewed him in 800 CE and kept a record of his travelogue. Wukong’s itinerary to Gandhāra was largely the same as Song Yun. On his journey back to China in the late 780s, he traveled through Ṭukhāristān before crossing the Wakhān Corridor. See Yuanzhao, 1987, pp. 122-5; Nie, 2007, pp. 161-7, 170-1.

    Faxian, the first Chinese Buddhist pilgrim with surviving travelogue, left Chang’an in 399 CE for India. After leaving the Tarim Basin, he crossed the Wakhon Corridor, turned southward and crossed the Karakoram mountains for the Indus valley instead of traveling eastward for Ṭukhāristān. See Faxian, 2008, pp. 2-22; tr., 1959, pp. 1-9; Yu, 2004, pp. 138-41.

    As for Huichao, he entered Ṭukhāristān from Bāmyān, and traveled through Balkh, Badakhshān and the Wakhān Corridor before arriving at Kashgar. See Huichao, 2000, pp. 96-153; tr., 1984, pp. 52-7.

    According to the medieval Muslim geographers such as Ibn al-Faqīh and al-Yaʿqūbī, after crossing the Wakhān Corridor, the route that turns southward leads to Tibet through Gilgit, Baltistan and Ladakh and so on (Dunlop, 1973, pp. 305-6). [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Barthold, 1928, pp. 79-80; 1984, pp. 35, 50; Le Strange, 1930, pp. 404, 423, 431-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Barthold, 1984, pp. 44, 47, 50, 64; Le Strange, 1930, pp. 408, 412, 431. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Al-Masʿūdī, 1863, volume II, p. 241: وخلف من الولد بهرام وفيروز ومن النساء ادرك وشهين ومرداوند. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Al- Balādhurī, 1987, p. 443; tr., part I, 1916, p. 493: ووقع فيروز بن يزدجرد فيما يزعمون الى الترك. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Both al-Ṭabarī (2001, volume 4, p. 272; tr., 1989, volume XXVI, p. 243: وامه ام ولد اسمها شاه آفريد بنت فيروز بن يزدجرد بن شهريار بن كسرى) and Ibn al-Faqīh (1996, p. 417) report on the authority of al-Kalbī (d. 819) that the Sasanian princess whom al-Walīd I took as concubine and who later mothered Yazīd III (744 CE) was a daughter of Pērōz. Ibn al-Faqīh even adds that she was captured by Qutayba when the Arab governor of Khurasan was engaging Pērōz in Khurasan. However, al-Kalbī’s report is impossible since Pērōz died in the late 670s and clearly could not fight Qutayba. Actually, al-Ṭabarī also reports on the authority of al-Madāʾinī (d. 843) that the captured Sasanian princess was by a posthumous son of Yazdegerd and captured in Sogdiana (2001, volume 2, p. 621; tr., 1990, volume XV, p. 79). It seems that al-Madāʾinī is more trustworthy than al-Kalbī. And the Umayyad Caliph Yazīd III’s claiming his ancestors being the Sasanian monarch and the Khāqān (al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 4, p. 272; tr., volume 26, p. 243: انا ابن كسرى وابي مروان وقيصر جدي وجدي خاقان) seems to be irrevant to Pērōz, since the ancestral Khāqān can refer to the grandfather of the Sasanian monarch Hormizd IV (579-590 CE), whose mother was a daughter of the Khāqān Ishtemi (al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 1, p. 461; tr., 1999, volume V, p. 295: وكانت امه ابنة خاقان الاكبر). Pērōz probably married a daughter of Irbis Duolu Khāqān (乙毗咄陆可汗, 638-642 CE), who fled to Ṭukhāristān after his deposition in 642 CE until death in 653 CE, or a daughter of the Yabghū. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. These include the Sasanian princess Shāh-i Āfrīd, who was captured by the Arab governor of Khurasan Qutayba ibn Muslim (705-715 CE) in Transoxiana and became the Umayyad Caliph al-Walīd’s (705-715 CE) concubine and Yazīd III’s (744 CE) mother (al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 2, p. 621; tr., 1990, volume XV, p. 79), the Sasanian prince Khosrow, who was campaigning together with the Türgesh Khāqān Suluk in Transoxiana in 728/9 CE against the Arabs (Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 4, p. 133; tr., 1989, volume XXV, pp. 55-6) and so on. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Liu, 1995, volume 198, pp. 5312-3; tr., Appendix II. Ouyang & Song, 1995, p. 6259; tr., Appendix II. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Al-Balādhurī, translation, part I, 1916, p. 493. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Haug, 2019, p, 92. Pashazanous and Afkande (2014, p. 142) even claim that the *Xin Tangshu* shows that his son Narseh instead of Pērōz was captured by the Turks. As for Khazaee (2015, p. 223), he states that the *Jiu Tangshu* records that Pērōz was captured by the Turks and made up the story that the Sasanian prince tried to outwit his Turkic guides in order to send an emissary to the Tang court. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Liu, 1995, volume 198, p. 5312; tr., Appendix II. Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 221b, p. 6259, tr., Appendix II. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Livtvinsky, 1996, pp. 138-40; Rezakhani, 2017, pp. 126-34. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 2, pp. 546-8; tr., 1994, volume XIV, pp. 54-8. According to al-Ṭabarī, the Turks and their vassal the Sogdians led by the Khāqān did come to assist him. However, the assistance should be after the battle of Nahāvand in 642 CE instead of during the caliphate of ‘Umar (632-644 CE). The campaign of the Western Turks in Ṭukhāristān led by Irbis Duolu Khāqān in the early 640s seems to support al-Ṭabarī’s report. However, the suggestion meets chronological difficulty. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 2, pp. 548-9; tr., 1994, volume XIV, pp. 59-62. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Liu, 1995, volume 198, p. 5312; tr., Appendix II. Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 221b, p. 6259, tr., Appendix II. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Sūyāb is identified as Ak-Beshim in modern Kyrgyzstan by Clausen (1961, pp. 1-13) and Zhang (1979, pp. 71-83). [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Liu, 1995, volume 194b, pp. 5179, 5182, 5184; Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 215b, pp. 6055-6, 6058-60. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Liu, 1995, volume 194b, p. 5182; Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 215b, pp. 6059-60. The Khāqān was greedy, and withdrew the booty from the tribes. One of the tribal chiefs took the booty by force and the Khāqān executed him. As a result, a general of the executed tribal chief attacked the Khāqān. The chaos led to his final flight to Ṭukhāristān. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Liu, 1995, volume 194b, p. 5184; Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 215b, p. 6062. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. The Ṭukhārā Yabghū dynasty was established when Tong Yabghū Khāqān (618-630 CE) conquered the region in the 620s and put his oldest son Tardu Shad (d. 630 CE) on its throne. Actually, this is not the first time that the Western Turks attempted to establish more efficient control in Ṭukhāristān. A Turkic prince was set up over the Hephthalites in the region probably during the last two decades of the 6th century. Yet his brief rule was terminated in the 1st decade of the 7th century (Wei, 1996, volume 83, p. 1854; tr., Yu, 2015, p. 236). As for the first Ṭukhārā Yabghū Tardu Shad, the sick ruler was poisoned by his elder son, who succeeded him as the Ishbara Yabghū in 630 CE. The transition of power took place when Xuanzang was in the Yabghū's court. Consequently, it is reported in his biography (Huili & Yancong, 2000, volume 3, p. 31; tr., Appendix III). [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. This is shown both by the Tang’s organization of administration in the early 660s (Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 43b, pp. 1135-6) and Puluo’s list of the Yabghū’s vassals in the late 710s (Wang & Yang, 1994, volume 999, pp. 11721-2; tr., Yu, 2015, p. 250, see also Appendix IV), which include not only the principalities in Ṭukhāristān, but also those in Sogdiana and to the south of the Hindukush. As for numismatics, the inscription *zabul* that appears on Types 265, 265A and 266 suggests that these coins of the Yabghū were minted in Zābulistān (Vondrovec, 2014, pp. 527-8, 544). In other words, Zābulistān was the Yabghū's vassal. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. This is more convincing if al-Ṭabarī’s report that Yazdegerd’s family had stayed in Farghānah with the Western Turks is true (2001, volume 2, p. 549; tr., 1994, volume XIV, p. 62: واقام يزدجرد وال كسرى بفرغانة معهم عهد من خاقان). [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. If Wahrām’s adventure is legendary, al-Dīnawarī’s historical records about the Sasanian princess Būmān, who came from Kabul to Nīshāpūr to participate an insurrection against the Arabs during Ali’s caliphate (al-Dīnawarī, 1888, p. 163), show that the Sasanian fugitives did flee to the regions to the south of the Hindukush. Haug (2019, p. 93) translates *bint likisra* as a daughter of Khursow II. However, a better translation is a daughter of an (unidentified) Sasanian monarch, since *kisra* is a term for any Sasanian monarch. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. See Daryaee, 2009, p. 38; Agostini and Stark, 2016, pp. 26-30; Rezakhani, 2017, p. 184. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. As for his attempts to restore the dynasty, if he made any, no historical sources shed light on them. Since Forte’s identifying A-luo-han as Wahrām, scholars such as Daryaee (2009, p. 38), Pashazanous (2014, pp. 148-9), and Rezakhani (2017, p. 184) follow the identification, which Rong suspects (2015, pp. 69-70). The identification seems out of the question in light of two points: firstly, A-luo-han was a Persian chief instead of a prince; secondly, he was born at about the same time with Yazdegerd III instead of being the latter’s son (al-Dīnawarī, 1888, p. 125; tr., 2010, p. 264: فاجتمعوا على يزدجرد بن شهربار ابن كسرى ابرويز فملكوه عليهم وهو يومئذ غلام ابن ست عشرة سنة; al- Masʿūdī, 1863, volume II, p. 241: وله خمس وثالثون سنة; Gardīzī, 1984, p. 103: وپانزده ساله بود بپادشاهي نشست). [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. The two brothers probably came to agreement in advance to separate from one another in order to avoid putting all the eggs in one basket. Or the adherents of both young princes were ambitious to put their supported prince on the throne and could not tolerate staying together. A third possibility is simply that Wahrām left his father in Sīstān and continued to regions to the south of the Hindukush. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 2, p. 624; tr., 1994, volume XV, p. 87: شارف مرو في زهاء أربعة الاف رجل. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. Liu, 1995, volume 198, p. 5313; tr., Appendix II. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. About the Yabghū Wu-shi-bo, the *Cefu yuangui* (Wang & Yang, 1994, volume 966, p. 11365) reports that he was appointed as the military governor of Ṭukhāristān in 652 CE. Both Xue (1992, 368-9) and Wang (2017, pp. 153-5) argue correctly that the report is problematic, since the Tang’s administrative organization is possible only after the Khāqān of the Western Turks Helu’s defeat in 657 CE. Wang (ibid., pp. 132-5) even suggests that Tardu Shad's successor Ishbara attested by coins should be Wu-shi-bo in the Chinese sources. However, this identification is unlikely, since the Turkic name is rendered as Sha-bo-la (沙钵罗or沙缽略) in Middle Chinese. A more probable solution is shown by the *Tang huiyao* (唐会要, the *Institutional History of Tang*), which reports that Wu-shi-bo’s memoire was presented to the Tang court in 652 CE to inform his enthronement and to seek confirmation from the court (Wang, 1998, volume 99, p. 1773). And the same Yabghū was later confirmed as governor of Ṭukhāristān in 657 CE. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. According to al-Ṭabarī (2001, volume 2, p. 625-6, 630-3; tr., 1994, volume XV, pp. 90-3, 102-10), western Ṭukhāristān was subjugated by the Arabs led by Aḥnaf, who was sent by the governor of Basra ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Āmir, either by force or under conditions all the way until Balkh. For the Arab expansion into the region, see also al-Balādhurī, 1987, pp. 567-75; tr., part II, pp. 159-68; al-Kūfī, 1975, volume 2, pp. 104-7. Al-Ṭabarī’s report (2001, volume 2, p. 546; tr., 1994, volume XIV, pp. 53-4) that Aḥnaf campaigned in Herat, Nīshāpūr, Marw, Sarakhs and Balkh during ‘Umar's reign is unlikely, since the eastern territories of the Sasanian Empire was still not subjugated in the early 640s. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Narseh was probably serving as a royal guard in the Tang capital, since foreign princes staying in the Tang court usually were royal guards and close to the Tang emperors. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Although the *Jiu Tangshu* records that Pērōz was escorted, the other sources, including Pei’s biography in both dynastic histories of the Tang and Pei’s epitaph, show that it is secure to conclude that Narseh instead of Pērōz was escorted (Liu, 1995, volume 84, pp. 2802-3; Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 108, pp. 4086-7; the *Quan Tangwen*, volume 228 for the epitaphs of Pei and Wang). Additional information about the campaign includes Pei’s deputy being Wang Fangyi (Liu, 1995, volume 185a, pp. 4802-3; Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 111, p. 4135). As for the Persian army, both Wang’s epitaph and the escorts’ names found in the Turfan manuscript show that the army were of Chinese soldiers. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. Liu, 1995, volume 198, p. 5313; tr., Appendix II. Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 221b, p. 6259; tr., Appendix II. Cen, 1958, pp. 58-9. Both Beckwith (1987, pp. 45-6) and Wang (2009, p. 76) follow Cen and argue that Pei undertook the mission in the year 679 CE. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Jiang, 1994, pp. 37-50. The Turfan manuscripts even record some of the names, ages and other information of the escorts. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. Liu, 1995, volume 198, p. 5313; tr., Appendix II; Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 221b, p. 6259; tr., Appendix II. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. When leaving Khurasan for Iraq in 683/4 CE, Salm b. Ziyād appointed governors over Marw al-Rūd, Fāryāb, Tālaqān, Jūzjān and Herat, which were all in Ṭukhāristān (2001, vol. 3, p. 387; tr., 1989, vol. XX, pp. 71-2; see also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 3, p. 484). [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. Liu, 1995, volume 198, p. 5313; tr., Appendix II. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. The Chinese sources include the *Jiu Tangshu* (Liu, 1995, volume 198, pp. 5312-3; tr., Appendix II), the *Xin Tangshu* (Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 221b, p. 6259; tr., Appendix II), and the *Zizhi tongjian* (Sima, 1964, volume 199, p. 6285). [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. Ibn al-Faqīh (1996, p. 417: ظفر قتيبة بن مسلم بفيروز بن كسرى يزدجرد) reports that Pērōz engaged the Arab governor of Khurasan Qutayba ibn Muslim in the early 8th century. However, this piece of information is impossible, since Pērōz died in the late 670s. Anyhow, this piece of information shows that the Arabs were not totally ignorant of this Sasanian claimant. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. Xuanzang, 2000, p. 100; tr., Li, 1996, p. 25. Xuanzang’s reports include rich information about the Turks in Ṭukhāristān and their relations with the Western Turks because of personal reasons. When he passed Gaochang (modern Turfan), its ruler showed respect to the Chinese pilgrim and introduced him to visit both his suzerain Tong Yabghū Khāqān in Sūyāb, and his brother-in-law the Turkic ruler of Ṭukhāristān established by his father Tong Yabghū Khāqān (Huili & Yancong, 2000, pp. 18-23, 27-9, 31; tr., Appendix III). [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Wang (2017, 132-5) attempts to present a list of the dynasty's rulers. However, there is no information at all about the ruler(s) between Wu-shi-bo, the Yabghū in the 650s, and Du-ni-li, the Yabghū in the 700s. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. Gibb, 1923; Barthold, 1928, pp. 180-91; Shaban, 1970. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. Sims-Williams, 2000, pp. 50-5, 94-5; 2007, pp. 116-26. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Although the documents were mainly about Rūb, Siminjān, Kadagistan, and Gūzgān (Sims-Williams & de Blois, 2018, pp. 11-3). However, the taxation of the other regions should be quite similar if not the same to the above-listed regions. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. Vondrovec (2014, volume I, pp. 401, 415-8) suggests that coins of Types 288 and 289 were found in great numbers in Uzbekistan and probably minted in Tirmidh. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. The ruler of Tirmidh went to the Turks when he was expelled by the governor of Khurasan ‘Abdallāh b. Khāzim al-Sulamī’s son Mūsā. However, Ṭarkhūn, the ruler of Samarkand, and Nīzak, the Hephthalite ruler of Bādghīs, were also involved in later fighting against Mūsā besides the Turks. The records are insufficient to clarify who the suzerain of Tirmidh was. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 3, pp. 657-8; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 90-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. According to Xuanzang, Akharān had two Buddhist monasteries and around 100 monks, while Shūmān had two monasteries and a few monks (2000, pp. 106-7; tr., 1996, p. 26). In Balkh, however, around 100 monasteries and 3,000 monks were found (2000, p. 115; tr., 1996, p. 28). [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. Xuanzang visited both Balkh and the other subregions where Buddhism was practiced (Huili & Yancong, 2000, pp. 31-3). The Buddhist texts found in the Bactrian documents (Sims-Williams, 2007, pp. 174-7) also attest the popularity of Buddhism in Ṭukhāristān. For the predominance of Buddhism in the region despite the presence of Christianity, Manicheanism and other religions, see Bosworth, 2008, p. 239; van Bladel, 2011, pp. 49-57. The case of the Turkic princess who worshipped the local god Kamird found in the Bactrian documents suggests that some of the Turks even worshiped local deities (Sims-Williams, 2000, pp. 98-105). And the archaeological findings in Balkh, Gūzgān, Bādghīs, Badakhshān attest the presence of Buddhism in these regions (Dhaka, 2017, p. 4). [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. Politically, Balkh was the old capital of Ṭukhāristān; economically, it had been a commercial hub that connects China, India and Iran (Van Bladel, 2011, pp. 47-8) that had been largely replaced by Sogdiana in the 7th and 8th centuries. Although coins were struck in Balkh probably even after the collapse of the Hephthalites in 560 CE (Vondrovec, 2014, pp. 399-401), Xuanzang (2000, p. 115; tr., 1996, p. 28) records that the residents in Balkh were sparse although the fortifications were strong. De la Vassière (2018, pp. 126-7) explains that the destruction resulted from it as the buffer zone between the Sasanians and later Arabs based in Marw and the Western Turks based in Kunduz. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. The etymology Nawbahār is the Sanskrit *nava vihara*, meaning new monastery (Azad, 2013, p. 82). Xuanzang (2000, pp. 117-21; tr., 1996, pp. 28-9) presented a detailed description of the Nawbahār monastery. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. According to Bosworth (2008, p. 239) and van Bladel (2011, pp. 61-74), Barmak was a title of Sanskrit origin *pramukha*, meaning chief or leader. The local source of Balkh *Faḍā‘il-i Balkh* reports that the Barmakids built and were responsible for the monastery (1971, pp. 19-20; tr., 2013, p. 78). However, the lost of pre-Islamic knowledge of the 11th century Muslim scholars is obvious, since it reports in mistake that the monastery was a temple for Zoroastrian priests. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Azad, 2013, pp. 77-83. For recent archaeological discoveries in the Nawbahār monastery and Balkh in general such as the irrigation network and the wall, see de la Vassière (2008, pp. 124-41). [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. The Western Turks were greatly weakened in their war with the Tang and did not organize any military campaign into Ṭukhāristān in the entire 2nd half of the 7th century (Hoyland, 2015, p. 134). [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. According to Xuanzang, the Ṭukhārā Yabghū Ishbara was a *tegin*, literally a prince, and claimed the *shad*, a high-ranking Turkic title, when he ascended the throne in 630 CE. However, he had claimed the title *yabghū* when Xuanzang revisited his court in Huoguo between 643 and 645 CE (Huili & Yancong, 2000, volume 3, p. 31; volume 5, p. 116; tr., Appendix III). Although de la Vaissière (2010c, p. 214) suggests that *zabul* inscribed on the coins of Types 265 and 266 shows that they were minted by the Turkic rulers of Zābulistān, who claimed them as the *yabghū* of the Bactrians, a greater possibility is that they were minted by the Yabghū in Zābulistān (Vondrovec, 2014, pp. 527, 630-2). [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. The title first appeared in the pre-Kushan period as the title of the tribal chiefs of the *Tokharoi* (Sims-Williams, 2002, pp. 229-30, 233). The Bactrian documents attest that the Hephthalite rulers of Ṭukhāristān bore the title *yabghū* (ιαβγο or a variant ββγο as attested in a seal) since late 5th century (Vondrovec, 2014, pp. 401-18; Rezakhani, 2017, pp. 134-5). [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. Wang (2017, p. 133) even suggests that the title Yabghū was adopted by Ishbara when Irbis Duolu Khāqān fled to Ṭukhāristān in 642 CE. Similarly, the supreme rulers of the Western Turks claimed the title Khāqān, when they became independent from the Eastern Turks (Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 215b, pp. 6055-6). [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. Liu, 1995, volume 194b, p. 5187; Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 215b, p. 6063. See also Wang, 2017, p. 125. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. Shaban, 1970, p. 10; Hoyland, 2015, pp. 119-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, vol. 3, p. 683; tr., 1990, vol. XXIII, pp. 154-5: وكان جبغويه ملك طخارستان ضعيفا. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. Wang & Yang, 1994, volume 999, pp. 11721-2; tr., Appendix IV. Puluo was probably a hostage sent by the Yabghū to the Tang court, although he served as an officer of the royal guards. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. An example of the Yabghū’s losing control of the vassals is Chaghāniyān’s conflict with its neighbors Akharūn and Shūmān, which lasted until 705 CE (al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 3, pp. 670; tr., 1990, vol. XXIII, pp. 127-8; see also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 4, p. 241; al-Balādhurī, 1987, p. 590; tr., part II, 1924, p. 186). Because of losing vassals, the Yabghū dynasty most probably experienced a military difficulty and a financial difficulty as well. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. Another reason for the financial difficulty is probably the interruption of the long-distance trade by the hostility between the big powers, since the tariff imposed on trading caravans is supposed to be an important source of income for the dynasty (Shaban, 1970, p. 8). The big powers competed for the hegemony of Central Asia include the Tang Empire, the Western Turks and the Tibetan Empire. Although the Tang claimed the suzerainty over Central Asia after its defeating the Western Turks in the late 650s, it failed to create a Pax Sinica as far as Ṭukhāristān. Since the 670s, the Tibetan Empire (618-842 CE) joined the competition to control Central Asia. When the two powers were fighting for the Tarim Basin during the 670s and the early 690s, the Western Turks allied with the Tibetans since the late 670s (Beckwith, 1987, pp. 28-83; Wang, 2009, pp. 62-131). Beckwith's argument (1987, pp. 34-54) that the Tibetans controlled the whole Tarim Basin from 670s up to 692 CE is revised by Wang (2009, pp. 63-4, 70) as a continuous competition between the two powers for the region. For the Tibetan-Western Turkic alliance in 677-8 CE, see the *Xin Tangshu*, 1995, volume 215b, p. 6064. Concerning the overland trading, as Azad explains (2021, p. 342), the goods from Iran, China, India and the steppes were exchanged through long-distance trade. However, this is achieved by a chain of transmissions instead of caravans traveling from the beginning to the end. Although the long-distance trade suffered severely from the political chaos, the routes were not totally blocked at all times during these decades. Both Puluo and Pērōz were able to travel to China. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. Al-Ṭabarī (2001, volume 3, p. 683; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 155, 171: وجبغويه ملك تخارستان ونيزك من عبيده) reports that the powerful Nīzak dynasty was a vassal of the Yabghū as late as the 700s. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 4, pp. 6; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 172: واطلق قتيبة جبغويه ومن علىه وبعث به الى الوليد فلم يزل بالشام حتى مات الوليد. See Shaban, 1970, p. 67. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. When the Western Turks migrated to Ṭukhāristān under Tardu Shad in the 620s, they dislodged the Hephthalites and seized their winter pasture close to Warwālīz and their summer pasture in Badakhshān (Kuwayama, 2002, pp. 125-6, 133, 138; Harmatta & Lintvinsky, 1996, pp. 370-1; Wang, 2017, pp. 113-5; Haug, 2019, pp. 11-2). According to Xuanzang (2000, pp. 106-7, 963; tr., Li, 1996, pp. 26, 318; Huili & Yancong, 2000, pp. 31, 116; tr., see Appendix III), the Turks only had direct control over Akharūn, Shūmān and Warwālīz. The influence of the dynasty extended to Balkh, Tālaqān, Khost and Andarāb (Kuwayama, 2002, pp. 132, 138; de la Vaissière, 2010a, p. 524). However, there is not a definite line to separate eastern from western Ṭukhāristān. Xuanzang’s report that the monks of Balkh visited the court when Tardu Shad passed away (Huili & Yancong, 2000, pp. 31-2) and by *Faḍā‘il-i Balkh*’s record that Qutayba executed the Turkic governor of Balkh (Balkhī, 1971, p. 18: وترک را که امیر بلخ بود در آنجا کشت) seem to show that Balkh was a vassal of the Yabghū. However, Balkh was not always the western limit of the influence of the Yabghū dynasty. For example, the Bactrian documents show that Gūzgān in western Ṭukhāristān was clearly a vassal of the Yabghū from 655 to 680 CE (Sims-Williams, 2020, pp. 242-3). As for the discussion of the Turkic immigrants into Transoxiana and Ṭukhāristān, see Stark, 2007, pp. 307-334. [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. Shaban, 1970, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. Al-Ṭabarī (2001, volume 3, p. 683; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 155, 171: وجبغويه ملك تخارستان ونيزك من عبيده) reports that the powerful Nīzak dynasty was a vassal of the Yabghū as late as the 700s. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 3, pp. 681-4; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 154-5. See also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 4, pp. 254-6; see also al-Kūfī for Nīzak’s rebellion and coalition against Qutayba (1975, volume 7, pp. 225-6). [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. Al-Ṭabarī (2001, volume 3, pp. 657-64; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 90-108.) reports that he fought Mūsā of Tirmidh and ranked only next to Ṭarkhūn, the ruler of Samarkand, among the allies, which included Khuttal, Bukhara, Chaghāniyān and others. See also Ibn al-‘Athīr, 1987, volume 4, pp. 229-34. [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
141. Nīzak Ṭarkhān (نيزك طرخان) was more often simply as Nīzak. Al-Balādhurī, 1987, pp. 441-2; tr., part I, 1916, pp. 491-2; al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 2, pp. 621-4; tr., 1990, volume XV, pp. 81-90. See also Ibn al-‘Athīr (1987, volume 3, pp. 15-8), whose annals clearly base on al-Ṭabarī with editing (Barthold, 1928, pp. -3). Al-Dīnawarī's Khāqān of the Turks instead of Nīzak in cooperation with the *marzbān* of Marw is a corruption (1888, pp. 148-9; tr., 2010, p. 271). Among modern scholars, Bosworth fails to realize that Nīzak was a title and suggests that he was active more than half a century (1968, p. 15), while Kennedy (2007, p. 189) mistakenly has Tarkhūn in his account of Yazdegerd III’s death in Marw. Lastly, Esin's proposed reading of Nīzak as Tirek is solely based on al-Kūfī’s history and far from convincing (1977, pp. 323-32). [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. Bosworth (1968, p. 15) identifies Nīzak who fought Yazdegerd as the same ruler who was active in the 690s and the 700s. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 3, pp. 683-4; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 150-6. See also Ibn al-‘Athīr, 1987, volume 4, pp. 254-5, 259-61. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. The rise of the Nīzak dynasty is lost in the mists of time. It was probably one of the Hephthalite principalities emerged in Ṭukhāristān after the collapse of the Hephthalite Empire in the 560s. Others were found in Bāghlān, Chaghāniyān, Khuttal, Himatala and so on. [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. The Muslim sources, for example al-Kūfī (1975, volume 7, p. 215), al-Balādhurī (1987, pp. 441-2; tr., part I, 1916, pp. 491-2), al-Ṭabarī (2001, volume 2, pp. 620-1; tr., 1990, volume XV, pp. 78-81; 2001, volume 4, p. 4; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 167), al-Yaʿqūbī (2010, volume 2, p. 208; tr., 2018, volume III, p. 994) and others, report that he was a ruler of the Turks. As for Khalīfa ibn Khayyāṭ’s annals, there is no information concerning Nīzak’s identity (1985, p. 300; tr., 2015, p. 171).

     Among modern scholars, Esin (1977, p. 324) believes that al-Barqashī found in al-Kūfī's *Kitāb al-Futūḥ* is a corruption of al-Tarqashī and argues that he was a Türgesh, while others such as Marquart (1901, p. 67), Gibb (1923, p. 26), Ghirshman (1948, p. 97), Bosworth (1968, p. 15), Shaban (1970, pp. 11-2), Litvinsky (1996, p. 456), Kuwayama (2002, p. 135), Pashazanous and Afkande (2014, p. 141), Rezakhani (2017, p. 144) and Azad (2021, p. 334) argue that Nīzak was a Hephthalite. [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. In 703 CE his fortress in Bādghīs was captured by the governor of Khurasan Yazīd b. al-Muhallab when he was absent (2001, volume 3, pp. 650-1; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 74-6: فتح يزيد بن المهلب قلعة نيزك بباذغيس; see also Ibn al-‘Athīr, 1987, volume 4, p. 224). However, he remained as the ruler of the region, and concluded a treaty with Qutayba in 706 CE in the condition that the latter would not enter his realm (2001, volume 3, pp. 673; tr., 1990, volume XXIII., p. 133: قدم نيزك على قتيبة وصالح قتيبة اهل باذغيس على الا يدخلها قتيبة; see also Ibn al-‘Athīr, 1987, volume 4, pp. 243-4). It is necessary to be aware that Bādghīs in medieval sources is different from modern Bādghīs as an administrative term, which refers to the whole northwestern part of modern Afghanistan (Le Strange, 1930, pp. 412-4; Barthold, 1984, pp. 47). [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. Al-Balādhurī (1987, p. 567; tr., part II, 1924, pp. 159-60) reports that the Arabs led by Aḥnaf b. al-Qays met the Hephthalites in Qūhistān. Al-Ṭabarī (2001, volume 2, p. 625; tr., 1990, volume XV, p. 91: وخرج الى ابرشهر فلقيه الهياطلة وهم اهل هراة; Bosworth, 2008, p. 240) records that the inhabitants of Herat, the main city of Bādghīs, were Hephthalites. Gardīzī (1984, P. 237; tr., 2011, p. 17: وربيع بخراسان آمد بمرو وهياطله را هزيمت كرد) reports that the Umayyad governor of Iraq Ziyād b. Abīhi sent his deputy Rabī‘ b. al-Ḥārithī to Marw in 670 CE, who routed the Hephthalites most probably in Bādghīs. Yāqūt clarifies in his *Kitāb Muʻjam al-Buldān* that Bādghīs as the residence of the Hephthalite kingdom (1906, volume 2, p. 31: وقيل انها كانت دار مملكة الهياطلة). [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. The distance from Herat, which was further to the south of Bādghīs, to Marw was twelve days’ journey for medieval travelers (Ibn al-Ḥawqal, 1872, p. 331; tr., 1800, p. 288). The Tang organized the Dahan military governate (大汗都督府) in 661 CE. On the one hand, Dahan is a phonetic translation of Ṭarkhān (Kuwayama, 2002, pp. 130-5); on the other hand, the governate ranked only after the Yabghū dynasty. Both linguistic and historical analyses seem to show that the Dahan governate could be identified as the Nīzak dynasty, with its capital Huolu (活路) most probably as Harē, the Middle Persian form of Herat. If the identification stands, the Nīzak dynasty was certainly Hephthalite, since the Dahan governate was a political entity of the Hephthalite tribes (Liu, 1995, volume 40, p. 1649; tr., Yu, 2015, pp. 238-9; Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 43b, p. 1136). The list of toponyms of the Dahan governate (Ouyang & Song, volume 43b, p. 1136) is decisive in the identification. However, both Chavannes (1903, p. 276) and Cen (1958, pp. 144-5) admithat the toponyms are impossible to identity. [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
149. Shaban, 1970, p. 14; Barthold, 1984, p. 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
150. Haug, 2019, pp. 87-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
151. De la Vassière, 2003, pp. 123-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
152. Nīzak Ṭarkhān are titles instead of private names (Esin, 1977, p. 323). [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
153. These coins were minted from the late 5th century to the late 7th or the early 8th century. Besides the Pahlavi legend *nyčky MLK῾* on the obverse, their unique features include a buffalo’s head on top of the crowns on the obverse, and a wheel above each of the two attendants of the fire altar on the reverse (Vondrovec, 2010, pp. 169-87). See also Inaba, 2010, pp. 191-200; Grenet, 2002, pp. 217-8. It is to Kabul Shāh, the ruler of this dynasty, that Nīzak sent his baggage and sought promise of refuge during his rebellion against Qutayba (Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 3, pp. 683; volume 4, p. 4; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 154, 166). [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
154. Kuwayama, 2002, p. 125.When Xuanzang paid homage to Tong Yabghū Khāqān, the Turkic ruler was accompanied by around 200 Ṭarkhāns (Huili & Yancong, 2000, p. 27). Al-Ṭabarī reports that this title was held by other subordinates of the Yabghū, such as his deputy Ṣūl Ṭarkhān and his police chief Khanas Ṭarkhān, who surrendered to Qutayba together with the Yabghū and Nīzak (2001, volume 4, p. 4; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 168: وصول طرخان خليفة جبغويه وخنس طرخان صاحب شرطه; see also Ibn al-‘Athīr, 1987, volume 4, p. 260). For the Turkic titles, see the *Xin Tangshu* (Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 215a, p. 6028), which lists *shad*, *yabghū*, *tegin*, *ṭarkhān* and other titles. See the Orkhon inscriptions too for some of the titles (Tekin, 1968, p. 275, 373, 380, 394); Bosworth & Clauson, 1965, pp. 6, 11-2. The title Ṭarkhān is also attested in the coins of Pangul (see coins Types 245 and 245C in Vondrovec, 2014, volume II, pp. 545-8). However, it is hard to conclude whether this Pangul was the ruler of the principality in Ṭukhāristān or Zābulistān and when these coins were minted. [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
155. Ghirshman (1948, p. 98) argues that the episode occurred in the 650s; Bosworth (2018, p. 240) dates it to the 700s. De la Vaissière discusses this issue in details and suggests that Nīzak’s execution of the Barmak was in the 670s (2010a, pp. 525-7). See also van Bladel, 2011, pp. 63, 65-6, 69. The story of Barmak, including his visiting Mecca and converting to Islam, is legendary to glorify the family. The Barmakids’ adherence to the Arabs and later conversion to Islam are more likely politically motivated. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
156. Al-Kūfī, 1975, volume 7, p. 215; Esin, 1977, p. 325; Bosworth, 2008, p. 240. Gardīzī (1984, P. 237; tr., 2011, p. 17: واندر سنه احدى وخمسين مردمان بادغيس وگنج روستا مرتد شدند) reports that the people of Bādghīs apostasized from Islam in 671 CE. Probably this refers to the Nīzak dynasty although not necessarily the Nīzak who was active in the 690s and the 700s. [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
157. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 3, p. 683; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, p. 154: فساروا سيرا شديدا حتى أتوا النوبهر فنزل يصلي فيه وتبرك به; Bosworth, 2008, p. 240. [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
158. Kuwayama, 2002, pp. 107-24. The Hephthalites went Bactrian in various aspects (de la Vassière, 2003, p. 123), which included religion and social customs such as polyandry, which the Bactrian documents show as pre-Hephthalite (Sims-Williams, 2000, pp. 32-3; de la Vassière, 2003, p. 119). [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
159. Different explanations are actually proposed to tackle this issue: the Muslim historians in the medieval period failed to distinguish the Hephthalites from the Turks; the Hephthalites were Turkified such as Xuanzang (2000, volume 12, p. 969; tr., Li, pp. 319-20) reporting that a region of the Hephthalites in the eastern part of Ṭukhāristān followed the custom of the Turks simply because they were neighbors, and therefore were called Turks. However, the Turkification is a process that took centuries and is not expected to accomplish at this stage. Two records of al-Balādhurī (1987, pp. 567, 588; tr., part II, 1924, pp. 160, 184: الهياطلة وهم اتراك; وخرج اليه من اهل الترمذ خلق من الهياطلة والترك), however, point to a third solution: the Hephthalites appeared together with their lord the Turks. The hegonomy of the Turks over the Hephthalites was supported by al-Kūfī (1975, volume 7, p. 219: خاقان ملك الترك والهياطلتهم), who reports in his *Kitāb al-Futūḥ* that the Khāqān who fought Qutayba to relieve Bukhara in 708/9 CE was the king of both the Turks and the Hephthalites. Consequently, the Arabs including historians such as al-Ṭabarī feel comfortable to call the Hephthalites the Turks, although they were able to distinguish the two groups (Gibb, 1923, p. 10; Frye, 1945, pp. 314-5; Ghirshman, 1948, p. 98). And it is interesting to know that the Turks entered into the Arabic poetry as early as the late 6th and the early 7th centuries as an obscure people living in the direction of Persia and Afghanistan (Kowalski, 2007, pp. 117-9). [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
160. As for *T‘etal* in Sebeos, it does derive from Hephthalite. However, the interpretation is slippery, since it actually refers to the Turks as well (Howard-Johnston, 1999, pp. 168, 265, 278). [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
161. De la Vassière, 2003, p. 122, 124. [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
162. Shaban (1970, p. 22) argued that Chaghāniyān was a Hephthalite principality, since it appeared in western Ṭukhāristān in 652/3 CE in order to fight the Arab invaders together with the other Hephthalite principalities such as Marw al-Rūd, Tālaqān, Fāryāb, Gūzgūn, Herāt and Bādghīs. Moreover, Bosworth (1981, p. 17) expounds that the word Tīsh is neither Iranian or Turkic. And it is reasonable to susgest that he was a Hephthalite prince. Haug (2019, p. 75) suggests Chaghāniyān as Hephthalite as well.

     Khuttal was a Hephthalite principality (Litvinsky & Zamir Safi, 1996, p. 177). [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
163. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, vol. 4, p. 5; tr., 1990, vol. XXIII, p. 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
164. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 3, p. 683; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 155: جبغويه ملك تخارستان...واسمه الشذ. [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
165. As Athamina (2008, pp. 141-55) states, the contradictory records in Arabic histories such as al-Ṭabarī are expected, since the historians were hardly critical about their sources. [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
166. Gibb (1923, p. 9) suggests that the supreme ruler of the Hephthalites, the Shadh, was the ruler of Chaghāniyān Tīsh, while Shaban (1970, p. 12) follows the identification. However, this suggestion is rather weak, since there is no textual evidence to support the suggestion. [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
167. Wang & Yang, 1994, volume 999, p. 11722; tr., see Appendix IV. [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
168. The dynasty was established after being dislodged by the Turks from their winter pasture in Warwālīz and summer pasture Badakhshān and can be traced back to the late 6th century as a legitimate successor of the collapsed Hephthalite Empire (Kuwayama, 2002, pp. 130-5; Grenet, 2002, pp. 216-7). However, both Kuwayama and Grenet identify the Dahan governate as the Hephthalite dynasty based in Bāghlān instead of the above-proposed Nīzak dynasty. [↑](#footnote-ref-168)
169. The Yida dynasty in Bāghlān clearly outlived the Nīzak dynasty. The*Cefu yuangui* records envoys of the Hephthalites arrived at the Tang court twice in 748 CE (Wang &Yang, 1994, volume 971, p. 11413; tr., Yu, 2015, p. 249, see Appendix IV; Ghirshman, 1948, pp. 103-4; Grenet, 2002, p. 221 and Kuwayama, 2002, p. 139). The first envoy arrived in the 6th month together with the envoy of Zābulistān, while the 8th month of the same year witnesses the arrival of another envoy. A tentative interpretation is that the first Hephthalite principality was found to the south of the Hindukush, while the second one from Ṭukhāristān, probably Baghlān. Unfortunately, so far, no coins are identified minted either by the Hephthalite dynasty in Bāghlān or by the Nīzak dynasty in Bādghīs. [↑](#footnote-ref-169)
170. See also Shaban, 1970, p. 22. The governor of Khurasan ‘Abdallāh b. Khāzim was fighting Bakr b. Wā᾿il in Herat in this year. [↑](#footnote-ref-170)
171. The report is found in al-Ṭabarī (2001, vol. 3, pp. 386-90; tr., 1989, vol. XX, pp. 70-80). See also Ibn al-’Athīr (1987, volume 3, pp. 483-6). Although al-Ṭabarī reports that they were the Turks, Shaban (1970, p. 43) and Haug (2019, pp. 105-6) argue that they were the Hephthalites. [↑](#footnote-ref-171)
172. One important social custom of the Hephthalites is polyandry, which the Bactrian documents show as pre-Hephthalite (Sims-Williams, 2000, pp. 32-3; de la Vassière, 2003, p. 119).

     The Hephthalites’ adherence to Buddhism can be traced back to the imperial period, when the rulers on both sides of the Hindukush had adopted the locally predominant Buddhism (Kuwayama, 2002, pp. 107-24). [↑](#footnote-ref-172)
173. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 3, p. 683; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 153-4. Praying in the monastery is far from the only thing that Nīzak did in regard to Buddhism. According to de la Vaissière (2010a, p. 527), the only survived son of the executed Barmak returned to Balkh and the hereditary post as the administrator of the Nawbahār monastery. His return was possible only with the permission of Nīzak. And it is reasonable to suggest that Nīzak sent messengers to Kashmir to invite the survived boy of the last Barmak to come back to Balkh in order to build a solidarity among the Hephthalite principalities by the religious tie. [↑](#footnote-ref-173)
174. The Hephthalite principalities seem to have allied with the Turks to raid the Sasanian territories when the Armenian general Smbat was dispatched to the east by Khosrow II (591-628) in the late 600s (Sebeos, 1999, pp. 51-3). However, the Nīzak dynasty was not committed to allying with the Turks and to fighting the Sasanians, but shifted sides for its own interest. Besides joint military actions, al-Dīnawarī reports that the Nīzak and the *marzbān* of Marw even intermarried (Haug, 2019, p. 87). See Kurbanov, 2010, pp. 190-1, 193. [↑](#footnote-ref-174)
175. Shaban, 1970, p. 66. [↑](#footnote-ref-175)
176. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 3, pp. 681-4; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 154-5. See also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 4, pp. 254-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-176)
177. Al-Kūfī, 1975, volume 7, p. 230: ليست هذه منطقة نيزك هذه منطقة رجل من عظماء الترك يقال له جيغويه. The word j-y-gh-y-h is obviously a corruption of j-b-gh-y-h, the Arabic form of *yabghū*. [↑](#footnote-ref-177)
178. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, vol. 4, p. 5; tr., 1990, vol. XXIII, p. 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-178)
179. The hostility probably could trace back to the first Turkic ruler over the Hephthalites, who ruled briefly at the end of the 6th century or the early 7th century (Wei, 1996, volume 83, p. 1854; tr., Yu, 2015, p. 236) and most probably deposed by a Hephthalite insurrection. When the Yabghū dynasty was established in the 620s, the Turks dislodged the Hephthalites from their pastures (Kuwayama, 2002, p. 132). This probably further intensified the Hephthalites’ hostility towards the Turks. [↑](#footnote-ref-179)
180. The financial difficulty of the principalities in Ṭukhāristān in the late 7th and the early 8th centuries was probably also related to the negative influence of the competition of the big powers in Central Asia on interreginal and international trading. The Arabs not only raided the region but also cut its economical connection with its western neighbors, while the competition for the Tarim Basin between the Tang and the Tibetan Empire interrupted its trading with the east. [↑](#footnote-ref-180)
181. According to al-Ṭabarī (2001, vol. 3, pp. 670-1; tr., 1990, vol. XXIII, pp. 127-8; see also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 4, p. 241), Tīsh, the Hephthalite ruler of Chaghāniyān (Livtinsky & Zamir Safi, 1996, pp. 176-7), was attacked and expelled by the Turkic rulers of neighboring Akharūn and Shūmān in 705 CE (Xuanzang, 2000, pp. 106-7; tr., 1996, p. 26). As a result, he turned to the Arab governor Qutayba for assistance, who restored Tīsh to his throne. [↑](#footnote-ref-181)
182. There were purely geopolitical instead of ethnic conflicts, such as that in Gūzgān. Among two or more rulers of the region in the late 7th century, one turned to the Arabs for assistance against his rivals (Sims-Williams, 2008, pp. 115-20, 122-3). [↑](#footnote-ref-182)
183. The rulers of Bāghlān and Khuttal decided to submit to Qutayba only after Nīzak's capture. This is shown by their coming to Qutayba when the later called them. [↑](#footnote-ref-183)
184. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 4, p. 3; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 165-6: الرؤب خان ملك الرؤب وسمنجان. [↑](#footnote-ref-184)
185. Gibb, 1923, p. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-185)
186. Gibb, 1923, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-186)
187. Gibb (1923), Barthold (1928, pp. 180-91) and Shaban (1970) predominantly use the term Arab conquests, while Kennedy (2007, p. 7) adopts Arab conquests and Muslim conquests interchangeably. [↑](#footnote-ref-187)
188. Hoyland, 2015, pp. 59-60, 162-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-188)
189. Webb, 2021, pp. 65-102. [↑](#footnote-ref-189)
190. The model is adopted by scholars such as Shaban (1970, pp. 16-24, 26-9). [↑](#footnote-ref-190)
191. Haug, 2019, pp. 73-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-191)
192. Barthold, 1928, pp. 182-3; Nölle-Karimi, 2008, pp. 9-19; Azad, 2021, pp. 332-45. Of course, even in the frontier regions, the Arabs asked more than booty and tribute from the locals. Levy-Rubin’s study of the surrender treaties shows that various obligations such as military assistance were stipulated for the convenience of further expansions (2021, pp. 205-7). [↑](#footnote-ref-192)
193. The bulk of the Arab expeditionary army would return for winter to Iraq in the 650s and the 660s, where their family stayed in the two major garrison towns Kufa and Basra (Shaban, 1970, pp. 23-4). The settling of the Arab families makes Marw a base for further eastward expansion (van Steenbergen, 2021, p. 63). As Shaban expounds, fighting for booty and tribute catered to the appetite of both the central government in Damascus and the Arab tribes in the eastern frontiers (1970, pp. 35-52). See also van Steenbergen, 2021, p. 63. [↑](#footnote-ref-193)
194. Wellhausen, 1927, pp. 434-5; van Steenbergen, 2021, p. 65. The campaigns that Qutayba and the governors preceding him such as Umayyah (693/4-697/8 CE) and al-Muhallab (697/8-702/3 CE) carried out mainly targeted at Transoxiana (al-Ṭabarī, 2001, vol. 3, pp. 607-8, 610, 616-7; tr., 1989, vol. XXII, pp. 166-7, 175, 188-90; Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 4, pp. 185-7, 192; Gardīzī, 1984, p. 245; tr., 2011, p. 20), since the region was famous for its richness and prosperity of trading, while Ṭukhāristān with a relatively weaker economy was a less attractive target. Al-Kūfī (1975, volume 2, pp. 104-7; volume 4, pp. 186-7, 190-6, 200-2; volume 7, pp. 78, 234-5, 237, 247, 250) understands well the objective of these military campaigns and pays great attention to the tribute laid down for a certain city and a governor’s dealing with the booty: to deliver a fifth to the governor in Iraq and/or to the caliph in Damascus and divide the rest among the Arabs. [↑](#footnote-ref-194)
195. For the Arab rule in the eastern frontiers, see Barthold, 1968, p. 186. Al-Aḥnaf b. al-Qays’ treaty with Marw al-Rūd, which included the condition of mutual military obligation (Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, vol. 2, pp. 630-1; tr., vol. XV, pp. 102-3), sheds light on the military aspect of the rule of the Muslims. And the Bactrian documents testify that the local principalities delivered taxation to the Arabs (Sims-Williams, 2000, pp. 116-7, 126-9). Another great concern of the Arab rule of the region is their control the trading routes (Nölle-Karimi, 2008, p. 18; Azad, 2021, p. 335). [↑](#footnote-ref-195)
196. Cases found in al-Ṭabarī’s annals, such as the Hephthalites from as far as Chaghāniyān assisted the cities raided by the Muslims, exemplify the Hephthalites and the Turks’ rule of the local principalities. As for the tribute and taxation that the local principalities paid the Hephthalites and the Turks, it is clarified by the Bactrian documents. [↑](#footnote-ref-196)
197. Haug (2019, pp. 88-9) argues that al-Ṭabarī’s (2001, vol. 2, p. 634; tr., vol. XV, pp. 111; see also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 3, p. 3) account of the campaigns in western Ṭukhāristān in the 650s exemplifies the competition for the local principalities between the Arabs and the Hephthalite Nīzak dynasty, which would retreat to the mountainous regions when the Arabs advanced, and appeared in the plains when the Aabs retreated. However, the allied principalities fighting the Arabs who returned to raid in 653/4 CE were at best supported by the Hephthalites (Shaban, 1970, p. 26) instead of being ruled by them as Haug suggests. As for the Turks, no sources show that they showed up. More probably, both Iranian and Hephthalite principalities joined in the alliance under the leadership the noble Persian Karin family (Hoyland, 2015, p. 122). [↑](#footnote-ref-197)
198. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, vol. 3, p. 683; tr., 1990, vol. XXIII, pp. 154-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-198)
199. With the trust from the governor of Iraq al-Ḥajjāj, Qutayba was able to unite the Arab tribes and non-Arab tribes under the banner of *jihād*, and tried to incorporate local troops for military campaigns (Gibb, 1923, pp. 29-30; Shaban, 1970, pp. 64-5). [↑](#footnote-ref-199)
200. To follow Crone’s theory (1994, p. 458), although the Arabs started as a confederation of tribes, the Umayyad government makes it possible to overcome the constant liability of fission and to coordinate the tribes in Central Asia for expansion. For example, the tribal factions of the Arabs in Khurasan continued until ‘Abd al-Malik's appointing a Quraysh Umayyah as governor of Khurasan in 693/4 CE (al-Ṭabarī, 2001, vol. 3, pp. 545-6; tr., 1989, vol. XXII, pp. 7-11; Gardīzī, 984, p. 243; tr., 2011, p. 19). [↑](#footnote-ref-200)
201. Shaban, 1970, pp. 50-2, 54-5, 64, 70. [↑](#footnote-ref-201)
202. An external power that could challenge the Arabs such as the Türgesh appeared in Ṭukhāristān only in the 720s and the 730s. [↑](#footnote-ref-202)
203. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 3, pp. 670; tr., 1990, vol. XXIII, pp. 127-8; see also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 4, p. 241. [↑](#footnote-ref-203)
204. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 4, p. 6; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 165-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-204)
205. When Qutayba was appointed as the Arab governor over Khurasan in 705 CE, Nīzak first tried to maintain independence by talk instead of fight. As for Qutayba, he was interested in the military prowess of the Hephthalites. Consequently, a treaty was concluded by the two, according to which Qutayba would not enter Nīzak’s territories, while the latter was obliged to join Qutayba in his campaigns. Nīzak did fight fiercely along with Qutayba (al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 3, p. 677, 683; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 143, 153. See also Ibn al-‘Athīr, 1987, volume 4, pp. 247). However, Nīzak decided to rebel, because the military obligation made him a vassal of the Arabs. Another possibility is that he was simply enraged because of the Arabs taking the lion’s share of the booty (Shaban, 1970, pp. 66, 71, 73). In 709 CE, Nīzak organized a general insurrection in western Ṭukhāristān against the Arabs (al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 3, pp. 683-4; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 153-6. See also Ibn al-‘Athīr, 1987, volume 4, pp. 254-5, 259-61). [↑](#footnote-ref-205)
206. When Nīzak broke the treaty that he signed with Qutayba earlier and organized a rebellion against the Arabs in 709 CE (al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 3, pp. 683-4; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 153-6. See also Ibn al-‘Athīr, 1987, volume 4, pp. 254-5, 259-61), Qutayba called on the local principalities, including Nishapur, Abīward, Sarakhs and Herat for assistance, and started his military actions in the late winter of 709 CE, when Nīzak and his allies were unprepared. He ruthlessly conquered and punished the rebels one by one until his capturing and executing Nīzak (al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 4, pp. 3-7; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 164-74. See also Ibn al-‘Athīr, 1987, volume 4, pp. 259-61). Al-Yaʿqūbī keeps a shorter account of Nīzak’s alliance with Qutayba and death after his failed rebellion (2010, volume 2, pp. 208-9; tr., 2018, volume 3, pp. 994-5). As for Qutayba’s allies, al-Ṭabarī’s list seems more sensible than that of al-Kūfī, which includes Bukhara, Marw, Tālaqān, Fāryāb, Balkh and Sarakhs (1975, volume 7, p. 226). It stands to reason that the dynasty terminated with Nīzak’s death. According to al-Madāʾinī (al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 4, p. 5; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 169-70), together with Nīzak, many others were executed by Qutayba, including the two sons of the Hephthalite ruler’ brother. [↑](#footnote-ref-206)
207. Among the principalities that submitted to the Arabs,Chaghāniyān is a good example*.* The *Cefu Yuangui* (Wang & Yang, 1994, volume 966, p. 11365; volume 971, p. 11406; tr., Appendix IV) records that the embassies of Tīsh arrived at the Tang court in 719 CE together with the Arabs, Samarkand and others. The record suggests that Chaghāniyān remained loyal to the Arabs since submitting to Qutayba in 705 CE. [↑](#footnote-ref-207)
208. Unfortunately, Huichao (2000, p. 96) did not tell when the Yabghū moved his court to Badakhshān. [↑](#footnote-ref-208)
209. Huichao (2000, p. 96; see also Shaban, 1979, pp. 106-13) attests that the dynasty was under the hegemony of the Arabs. And it had to pay heavy taxation to the Arabs (Huichao, 2000, pp. 96, 99-100; Wang & Yang, 1994, volume 999, p. 11723; tr., Appendix IV). However, the rulers were still from the Ashina family instead of being usurped by pro-Arab Tīsh of Chaghāniyān as Marquart suggested (1901, p. 70), whose suggestion solely bases on the record of his title as its Yabghū Tīsh in the *Tang huiyao*, and is far from convincing. The same piece of report found in the *Cefu yuangui* has Tīsh the ruler of Chaghāniyān of the state of Ṭukhāristān (volume 971, p. 11406; tr., Appendix IV). Clearly, Du-ni-li was succeeded by his son, who remained in the throne in 727 CE, when he sent a memoire to the Tang court (Wang & Yang, 1994, volume 999, p. 11723; tr., Appendix IV). What is more, the dynasty not only survived, but also maintained independent diplomatic relations such as with the Tang. In the memoires presented to the Tang court, it even expressed the aspiration to shake off the yoke of the Arabs when the later suffered from the Türgesh in the 720s and the 730s (Wang & Yang, 1994, volume 999, pp. 11721-3). [↑](#footnote-ref-209)
210. Huichao, 2000, pp. 96, 99-100; Wang & Yang, 1994, volume 999, p. 11723; tr., Appendix IV. The Arab governor of Khurasan Asad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Qasrī even moved the headquarter of Khurasan temporarily to Balkh in the 720s. [↑](#footnote-ref-210)
211. Evidence of Arab rule includes coins, taxation, and Arabic texts. Even the Bactrian documents mention the circulation of the Arab dirhams and taxation paid to the Arabs (Sims-Williams, 2000, pp. 116-7, 126-9). The Arabic documents found in Ṭukhāristān around mid-8th century, which are studied by Khan (2007), testify the rule of the Arabs. See also Azad, 2017, pp. 50-3; Azad and Kennedy, 2018, pp. 284-305. [↑](#footnote-ref-211)
212. The Chinese sources include the *Jiu Tangshu* (Liu, 1995, volume 198, pp. 5312-3; tr., Appendix II), the *Xin Tangshu* (Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 221b, p. 6259; tr., Appendix II), and the *Zizhi tongjian* (Sima, 1964, volume 199, p. 6285). [↑](#footnote-ref-212)
213. This refers to the Arab retreats from Khurasan during the First Fitna. Since the assassination of ʿUthmān to that of ʿAlī, there were continuous fighting among the Arabs, which include the Battle of Camel (656 CE) between ʿAlī and those who challenged him for the position of Caliph, the Battle of Siffin (657 CE) between ʿAlī and Muʿāwiyah, which was concluded by an arbitration, the fighting between ʿAlī and the Khawārij (658 CE), those who broke away from his camp, and so on. [↑](#footnote-ref-213)
214. Pashazanous and Afkande, 2014, pp. 144-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-214)
215. Liu, 1995, volume 198, pp. 5312-3; tr., Appendix II; Sima, 1964, volume 199, p. 6285. [↑](#footnote-ref-215)
216. Sima, 1964, volume 199, p. 6285. Although Wang (2009, p. 90) argued that the date was acceptable, it is clearly problematic, since Yazdegerd III’s death was also put in this year. [↑](#footnote-ref-216)
217. Al-Balādhurī, p. 556; tr., part II, 1924, p. 144. *Tārīkh-e Sīstān*, 2002, p. 115; tr., 1976, p. 67. As for the annual tribute of Sīstān, it was a million dirhams and a thousand slave boys, each with a golden cup in his hand, when it submitted to the Arabs in 650/651 CE (al-Balādhurī, 1987, pp. 554-5; tr., part II, 1924, pp. 143-4: فصالحه على الف وصيف مع كل وصيف جام من ذهب). *Tārīkh-e Sīstān* (2002, p. 113; tr., 1976, p. 65) agrees with al-Balādhurī except it records a thousand slave girls instead of boys. [↑](#footnote-ref-217)
218. Al-Balādhurī, 1987, pp. 556-8; tr., part II, 1924, pp. 144-6) reports that ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Samura was away from Sīstān and with Mu‘awiya until his returning after the Fitna in 661 CE, while *Tārīkh-e Sīstān* (2002, pp. 113, 119-20; tr., 1976, pp. 67-8, 71-3) records that the representative of Mu‘awiya returned to Sīstān in 657 CE and left the region soon for Syria. [↑](#footnote-ref-218)
219. Bosworth, 1968, p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-219)
220. As Shaban (1970, p. 28) argues, the fact that the Arab army marched to Sīstān instead of Khurasan after the Fitna shows that the center of agitation in the east was Sīstān. [↑](#footnote-ref-220)
221. Sima, 1964, volume 199, p. 6285. Although Wang (2009, p. 90) argues that the date was acceptable, it is clearly problematic, since Yazdegerd III’s death was also put in this year. [↑](#footnote-ref-221)
222. Bosworth, 2008, p. 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-222)
223. Al-Balādhurī (1987, pp. 554-5; tr., part II, 1924, pp. 142-3) reports that the *marzbān* of Zaranj negotiated the peace treaty with the Arabs. The local rulers probably also include the religious elite of the region, although their names are unknown. [↑](#footnote-ref-223)
224. The Yabghū was probably attempting to expand his suzerainty over Sīstān by imposing Pērōz to the region. Unfortunately, there is no numismatic evidence as the coins of the Turkic ruler of Kabul between the 680s and the 730s, who minted under the title Khurasan Tegin Shāh (Vondrovec, 2014, volume 2, Types 240, 208, pp. 537, 541-3), to confirm the suggestion. [↑](#footnote-ref-224)
225. To mint coins is not only of great significance to the Sasanians, but also to the local rulers in the eastern frontiers. Even the rulers Spur and Pangul from late 7th or early 8th century Zābulistān, who were entirely absent from historical records, minted their coins (Gyselen, 2010, p. 237). [↑](#footnote-ref-225)
226. Pashazanous & Afkande, 2014, p. 145; Khazaee, 2015, pp. 223-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-226)
227. Although the large number of coins bearing the year 20 of Yazdegerd III shows they were still minted after the monarch’s death, their diversity in style suggests that they were minted by various local Persian rulers with or without the permission of the Arabs (Tyler-Smith, 2000, pp. 139-40, 149; Nikitin & Roth, 1995, pp. 131-4).

     As for the brevity of Pērōz’s rule in Zaranj, the *Xin Tangshu* records that it was finished soon by the Arabs (Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 221b, p. 6259; tr., Appendix II), since the local ruler preferred to avoid a military confrontation with the Arabs, although he was unsatisfied with the heavy tribute (al-Balādhurī, 1987, p. 556; tr., part II, 1924, pp. 145: ثم أتوا زرنج وقد خافهم مرزبانها فصالحهم ودخلوها). [↑](#footnote-ref-227)
228. Kavad II ruled for half a year in 628, while Queen Būrān ruled twice, respectively in 630 CE and from 631 to 632 CE. Kavād II and Queen Būrān not only minted coins but also respectively in 16 and 14 mints (Tyler-Smith, 2000, p. 140). [↑](#footnote-ref-228)
229. Pērōz was in the Yabghū’s court as late as 671 CE. This is shown by the fact that their emissaries arrived at the Tang court together in this year. [↑](#footnote-ref-229)
230. The records in the *Xin Tangshu* seem to show that Pērōz sent an emissary to ask for the Tang assistance immediately after his father’s death. However, the account in the *Cefu yuangui* dated his envoy coming to the Tang court in 654 CE, when the Arabs invaded both the Sasanians and Maymurgh in southern Sogdiana (Wang & Yang, 1994, volume 995, p. 11686). The *Jiu Tangshu* dated his request of assistance even to 661 CE (Liu, 1995, volume 198, p. 5313). [↑](#footnote-ref-230)
231. The records in the *Xin Tangshu* seem to show that Pērōz sent an emissary to ask for the Tang assistance immediately after his father’s death. However, the account in the *Cefu yuangui* dated his envoy coming to the Tang court in 654 CE, when the Arabs invaded both the Sasanians and Maymurgh in southern Sogdiana (Wang & Yang, 1994, volume 995, p. 11686). The *Jiu Tangshu* dated his request of assistance even to 661 CE (Liu, 1995, volume 198, p. 5313). Although the chronology is disputed, there is no problem to accept that Pērōz sent emissaries to the Tang court before the Tang army’s defeating the Western Turks in 657 CE, since Yazdegerd clearly had sent emissaries to the Tang court in the 640s.

     As Agostini and Stark comment, the exact embassy sent by Pērōz was found in the Chinese sources (2016, p. 18). However, it is clear that the first embassy arrived after the Tang army’s defeating the Western Turks. [↑](#footnote-ref-231)
232. Haug, 2019, pp. 95-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-232)
233. Liu, 1995, volume 198, p. 5313; Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 221b, p. 6259; Wang & Yang, 1994, volume 964, p. 11341. Pērōz was first appointed as the military governor of Persia in 661 CE, and then as the king of Persia in 662 CE. [↑](#footnote-ref-233)
234. Actually, the Tang army would not appear in Ṭukhāristān in the entire 7th century. [↑](#footnote-ref-234)
235. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, vol. 3, pp. 235-6; tr., vol. XVIII, pp. 163-164; see also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 3, p. 338. [↑](#footnote-ref-235)
236. See the table of Appendix V for a list of the military campaigns of the Muslims. Al-Kalbī’s anecdote found in Ibn al-Faqīh’s *Kitāb al-Buldān* (1996, p. 417), which reports that Pērōz fought Qutayba, is impossible. [↑](#footnote-ref-236)
237. Xue, 1988, pp. 65-70. [↑](#footnote-ref-237)
238. When Yazdegerd fled from the Arabs and arrived at Khurasan, the Persian nobles asked him about his plan. They deserted and even fought him on hearing that he was going to join the Turks or the Chinese instead of staying in the Sasanian territories (al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 2, p. 548; tr., volume XIV, pp. 58-60). This episode shows that the majority of the Persian nobles were reluctant to leave their own lands. Therefore, it is expected that the number of Pērōz’s dependents was diminishing. [↑](#footnote-ref-238)
239. Although miscellaneous reports are found in the Muslim sources about the Sasanian members. However, it is impossible to construct a clear chronology of their scattering. [↑](#footnote-ref-239)
240. Pashazanous and Afkande, 2014, p. 146; Haug, 2019, p. 93. [↑](#footnote-ref-240)
241. Liu, 1995, volume 198, p. 5313; volume 5, p. 99; Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 221b, p. 6259. See Agostini and Stark, 2016, pp. 18-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-241)
242. Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 221b, p. 6259; Compareti, 2003, p. 211. Pērōz was granted the title general of the Right Courageous Guard (右武卫将军) upon his arrival. The title is confirmed by the inscription of his statute in the mausoleum. [↑](#footnote-ref-242)
243. Wei, 2006, p. 46. Leslie, 1981-3, pp. 282-3. Compareti (2003, pp. 207-8), Rong (2015, pp. 76-7), Khazaee (2015, p. 225) and Pashazanou and Sangari (2018, p. 500) favor the identification of the temple as a Nestorian one. [↑](#footnote-ref-243)
244. Liang & Wen (2003, pp. 44-51); Zhang (2003, pp. 8-11); Pashazanous & Sangari (2018, pp. 1-17). [↑](#footnote-ref-244)
245. Liu, 1995, volume 198, p. 5313; tr., Appendix II. Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 221b, p. 6259; tr., Appendix II. [↑](#footnote-ref-245)
246. Liu, 1995, volume 198, p. 5313; tr., Appendix II. Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 221b, p. 6259; tr., Appendix II. [↑](#footnote-ref-246)
247. When Umayyah came, the former governor Bukayr (691/2-693/4) chose Ṭukhāristān as his target for expansion and spent a lot of money on horses and weapons to prepare for a campaign (al-Ṭabarī, 2001, vol. 3, pp. 546, 607; tr., 1989, vol. XXII, pp. 11, 165). This piece of information shows that Ṭukhāristān, more precisely eastern Ṭukhāristān, was clearly not under the control of the Muslims in 693/4 CE. What is more, Umayyah and his successor al-Muhallab campaigned mainly in Transoxiana for booty. As for the list of targets of al-Muhallab’s campaigns given by al-Kūfī (1975, volume 7, p. 78), which including Samarkand, Bukhara, Balkh, Ṭukhāristān and Bost, it is exaggerated. However, this Arab historian from the first half of the 9th century preserved reports of tribal origin, which stated that these campaigns were raids for booty and explained that the fruitful raids won popularity for him among the Muslims. Anyhow, eastern Ṭukhāristān was not under the military pressure of the Arabs, although Balkh was controlled by them in 701/2 CE (al-Ṭabarī, 2001, vol. 3, pp. 607-8, 610, 616-7; tr., 1989, vol. XXII, pp. 166-7, 175, 188-90; Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 4, pp. 185-7, 192). [↑](#footnote-ref-247)
248. Gibb (1923, p. 26) even suggests that Narseh was involved in the plot organized by Thābit, a Persian client of the Arabs who was mistreated by al-Muhallab, to depose al-Muhallad’s son and successor Yazīd (702/3-704/5 CE) from the position as the governor of Khurasan and to replace him with Mūsā of Tirmidh in 702 CE. [↑](#footnote-ref-248)
249. Liu, 1995, volume 198, p. 5313; Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 221b, p. 6259. [↑](#footnote-ref-249)
250. Xue, 1988, pp. 70-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-250)
251. Ibn al-Faqīh (1996, p. 417) reports that Pērōz fought Qutayba in the early 8th century. It is possible that it was Narseh instead of Pērōz fought Qutayba. However, this suggestion is purely hypothetical and finds no further textual evidence to confirm it. [↑](#footnote-ref-251)
252. Liu, 1995, volume 198, p. 5313; tr., Appendix II. Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 221b, p. 6259; tr., Appendix II. However, no sources shed light on the process of the dispersion of Narseh’s dependents. [↑](#footnote-ref-252)
253. According to al-Dīnawarī (1888, p. 163), a daughter of the Sasanian monarch Būmān fled to Kabul, whence she came to Nīshāpūr to participate an insurrection against the Arabs during Ali’s caliphate. [↑](#footnote-ref-253)
254. Both the *Jiu Tangshu* (Liu, 1995, volume 198, p. 5313; tr., Appendix II) and the *Xin Tangshu* (Ouyang & Song, 1995, volume 221b, p. 6259; tr., Appendix II) report that Narseh’s adherents, which was numbered several thousand, dispersed when he was in Ṭukhāristān. [↑](#footnote-ref-254)
255. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 4, p. 133; tr., 1989, volume XXV, pp. 55-6. In 728/9 CE, Khosrow, a Sasanian prince, together with 30 of his men, failed to persuade the besieged Arab troops to surrender the fortress to the Türgesh Khāqān Suluk. Gibb (1923, p. 71) suggests that this Khosrow was Pērōz’s son although he has no textual evidence, while scholars such as Pashazanous (2014, p. 149; also see the article that he coauthors with Sangari, 2018, p. 501) identifies this Khosrow as Aluohan's son Juluo. The second identification is not compelling as well, since Khosrow was a Sasanian prince while Juluo's father being a Persian chief and not of a royal member. Besides this unidentifiable Sasanian prince, the Mount Mugh documents testify a Persian general in the vicinity of Panjikent in 722 CE (Rezakhani, 2017, p. 184). [↑](#footnote-ref-255)
256. Li Su and Su Liang were two examples respectively from the 1st and 2nd half of the 9th century. See Rong, 2001, pp. 238-57; Liu, 1990, pp. 295-305. [↑](#footnote-ref-256)
257. Pashazanous and Afkande (2014, pp. 149-50) study the relevant records found in the *Cefu yuangui* and suggest that the Sasanian claimants stayed in Ṭukhāristān after Narseh as late as early 730s. However, Agostini and Stark (2016, pp. 17-38) more carefully analyze the records and propose that the Persian embassies who presented themselves in the Tang court were dispatched by a Sasanian court-in-exile in regions to the south of the Hindukush. What is clear is that the Sasanian princes and nobles were scattered and found in various locations. [↑](#footnote-ref-257)
258. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 2, p. 621; tr., 1990, volume XV, p. 79. As discussed above, al-Madāʾinī is more trustworthy than al-Kalbī, the princess was a granddaughter of Yazdegerd, but not from Pērōz. Fowden suggests that the bathing beauty found in Quṣayr ‘Amra is possibly the captured Sasanian princess (2004, pp. 240-7). [↑](#footnote-ref-258)
259. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 4, p. 272; tr., 1989, volume XXVI, p. 243; 2001, volume 2, p. 621; tr., 1990, volume XV, p. 79. See note 216 for the discussion of the identity of the Sasanian princess. [↑](#footnote-ref-259)
260. The Samanids (819-999 CE) in Khurasasan claimed to be descendants of Bahrām Chūbīn, who revolted and ruled Persia for a brief duration at the end of the 6th century (Bosworth, 1973, pp. 58-9). This is reflected in the Bal‘amī’s Persian *Tārīkhnāma*, which includes an elaborated account of Bahrām in comparison to al-Ṭabarī, although it is claimed as an abridged translation of al-Ṭabarī’s history (Peacock, 2007, pp. 4-6, 90-1). It is interesting to notice that the last Sasanians were not welcomed by the local rulers of the eastern frontiers of the Empire, but later Persian dynasties in Central Asia claimed themselves as the Sasanian descendents. This reflects that their prestige and the legitimacy to rule among the Persians were useful to later dynasties. This is of course true for the local rulers in the eastern frontiers of the Sasanian Empire in the 7th century. However, the threat of the Sasanians to establish a central administration at the expenses of their independence makes the Sasanian monarch Yazdegerd and princes Pērōz and Narseh unwelcome.

     Another legacy of the Sasanians is the era of Yazdegerd, which was circulated among the Zoroastrians (al-Bīrūnī, 1923, p. 31; tr., 1879, p. 35-6), as attested by the epitaph of Suren’s wife (Liu, 1990, pp. 298-9, 301; Baghbidi, 2011, pp. 107, 109, 112-3). [↑](#footnote-ref-260)
261. The Indian world is found to the south of the Hindukush and different from modern India (Agostini and Stark, 2016, p. 30). [↑](#footnote-ref-261)
262. Daryaee, 2012, pp. 5-11; Compareti, 2003, pp. 205-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-262)
263. Pashazanous and Afkande, 2014, p. 143. [↑](#footnote-ref-263)
264. Rong, 2015, p. 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-264)
265. The account found in al-Ṭabarī (2001, volume 2, p. 549; tr., 1994, volume XIV, pp. 60-2) is problematic chronologically. Request for military assistance was declined by the Taizong Emperor (626-49 CE). [↑](#footnote-ref-265)
266. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 2, p. 548; tr., 1994, volume XIV, p. 59. Of course, the first option is the Turks. But it is noteworthy that China was a candidate for Yazdegerd even at this stage. [↑](#footnote-ref-266)
267. Pashazanous and Afkande, 2014, p. 144; Rong, 2015, p. 65; Agostini and Stark, 2016, p. 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-267)
268. Although it is hard to know the number of Persian merchants in late 7th and early 8th century, Chinese sources testify that both Guangzhou and Yangzhou had several thousands of Persian merchants in the middle of the 8th century (Rong, 2015, pp. 69, 72-5). Abū Zayd al-Sīrāfī from the 10th century reports that Huangchao massacred 120,000 Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians when he captured Guangzhou (2014, pp. 66-9). Although the number is most probably exaggerated, it reflects the prosperity of foreign trade and the great number of foreign traders including a large portion of Persians. [↑](#footnote-ref-268)
269. Nanmei, a Persian chief, whose statue was found along with that of Pērōz in the mausoleum of the Gaozong Emperor and the Empress Wu Zetian, probably came to China as a companion of Pērōz (Zhang, 2003, p. 9; Liang and Wen, 2003, p. 44; Compareti, 2003, p. 203; Rong, 2015, p. 70; Pashazanous and Sangari, 2018, p. 502). [↑](#footnote-ref-269)
270. A-luo-han was probably from a Parthian noble clan and a Nestorian monk instead of a Sasanian prince. Since Forte’s identifying A-luo-han as Wahrām, scholars such as Daryaee (2009, p. 38), Pashazanous (2014, pp. 148-9), and Rezakhani (2017, p. 184) follow the identification, which Rong suspects (2015, pp. 69-70). The identification seems out of the question in light of A-luo-han's age. He was born at about the same time with Yazdegerd III instead of being the latter’s son, since they were both born around 616 CE (al-Dīnawarī, 1888, p. 125; tr., 2010, p. 264; al- Masʿūdī, 1863, volume II, p. 241; Gardīzī, 1984, p. 103). [↑](#footnote-ref-270)
271. An unearthed epitaph from Xi’an testifies that a branch of the Suren family, one of the seven most influential Parthian houses, migrated to China as well, although the epitaph from the late 8th century does not tell when they migrated to China (Liu, 1990, pp. 295-304; Baghbidi, 2011, pp. 105-13; Rong, 2015, p. 71). [↑](#footnote-ref-271)
272. Leslie, 1981-3, pp. 295-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-272)
273. Leslie, 1981-3, pp. 275-84, 286-93; Rong, 2015, pp. 76-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-273)
274. Malekandathil, 2002, pp. 156-73. [↑](#footnote-ref-274)
275. The allowances were granted to foreign princes and emissaries, although some of them lingered in Chang’an more than four decades and did not return to their own countries (Sima, 1964, volume 232, p. 7493). [↑](#footnote-ref-275)
276. Compareti, 2003, p. 211. [↑](#footnote-ref-276)
277. Beckwith, 1987, pp. 34-54; Wang, 2009, pp. 63-4, 70. [↑](#footnote-ref-277)
278. For the Tibetan-Western Turkic alliance in 677-8 CE, see the *Xin Tangshu*, 1995, volume 215b, p. 6064. It is this Tibetan-Western Turkic alliance that Pei successfully frustrated. [↑](#footnote-ref-278)
279. Agostini and Stark, 2016, p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-279)
280. Al-Ṭabarī, 2001, volume 3, p. 660; tr., 1990, volume XXIII, pp. 97-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-280)
281. Wang & Yang, 1994, volume 999, p. 11722; tr., see Appendix IV. Both Beckwith (1987, pp. 66-9) and Wang (2009, pp. 129-30) argue for the Tibetan presence in Ṭukhāristān in 704 CE. [↑](#footnote-ref-281)
282. Beckwith, 1987, pp. 69-70; Wang, 2009, pp. 130-1. [↑](#footnote-ref-282)
283. Hoyland, 2015, pp. 119-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-283)
284. Bosworth, 2008, p. 237. Although Narseh had several thousands of adherents and his father Pērōz perhaps with a larger of companions, there was a large proportion of royal members and nobles instead of fighting forces. [↑](#footnote-ref-284)
285. For Puluo's position and its grade, see the *Tang Liudian*, Li, 2008, volume 24, pp. 622-4. See volumes 24-5 (pp. 610-53) for various guard generals of the imperial corps. [↑](#footnote-ref-285)
286. See also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 3, pp. 14-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-286)
287. Before al-Ḥakam b. ʿAmr, the governor of Basra was also in charge of Khurasan. Al-Balādhurī added that Chaghāniyān came to assist these allied principalities (1987, p. 572; tr., part II, 1924, p. 165). [↑](#footnote-ref-287)
288. See also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 3, p. 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-288)
289. Ibid., volume 3, p. 201. Al-Dīnawarī records that Būmān, a daughter of the Sasanian monarch, came to Nīshāpūr from Kabul to participate this insurrection against the Arabs (1888, p. 163). [↑](#footnote-ref-289)
290. See also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 3, p. 249. [↑](#footnote-ref-290)
291. Ibid., volume 3, pp. 296-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-291)
292. Ibid., volume 3, pp. 307-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-292)
293. Ibid., volume 3, p. 338. [↑](#footnote-ref-293)
294. See also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 3, p. 345. [↑](#footnote-ref-294)
295. Ibid., volume 3, pp. 355-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-295)
296. Ibid., volume 3, p. 363. [↑](#footnote-ref-296)
297. Ibid., volume 3, pp. 445-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-297)
298. Ibid., volume 3, pp. 483-6. Haug (2019, pp. 105-6) argues that the Turks were more probably the Hephthalites. [↑](#footnote-ref-298)
299. See also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 4, pp. 24-6. Gardīzī (1984, pp. 241-2; tr., 2011, p. 19) presents a briefer account of the tribal factions of the Arabs in Khurasan during ‘Abdallāh b. Khāzim's governate. [↑](#footnote-ref-299)
300. See also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 4, pp. 55-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-300)
301. Ibid., volume 4, pp. 119-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-301)
302. Ibid., volume 4, pp. 133-4. According to Haug (2019, p. 107), Bukayr's preparation of a military campaign into Ṭukhāristān shows that the region was lost by the Arabs during the Second Fitna. [↑](#footnote-ref-302)
303. See also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 4, pp. 185-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-303)
304. Ibid., volume 4, p. 188. [↑](#footnote-ref-304)
305. Ibid., volume 4, p. 192; see also al-Kūfī, 1975, volume 7, p. 78; Khalifa ibn Khayyat, 1985, p. 279, tr., 2015, p. 142. [↑](#footnote-ref-305)
306. See also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 4, pp. 206-8. According to Stark (2007, p. 313), this band of Turks were highly probably irrelevant to the Yabghū of Ṭukhāristān and the Khāqān and operating beyond tribal and state structures. [↑](#footnote-ref-306)
307. See also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 4, pp. 215-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-307)
308. Ibid., volume 4, pp. 224-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-308)
309. Ibid., volume 4, pp. 227-34. For Mūsā’s adventure, see also al-Balādhurī, 1987, pp. 587-90; tr., part II, 1924, pp. 183-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-309)
310. See also al-Balādhurī, 1987, p. 590; tr., part II, 1924, pp. 186-7; Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 4, p. 241. See also Khalifa ibn Khayyat for the surrender of Chaghāniyān and Balkh to Qutayba (1985, p. 291; tr., 2015, p. 159). [↑](#footnote-ref-310)
311. See also al-Balādhurī, 1987, p. 591; tr., part II, 1924, p. 187; Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 4, pp. 243-5; al-Kūfī (1975, volume 7, p. 215) reports briefly about Qutayba’s treaty with Nīzak on his country, and the later’s campaigning with him; Khalifa ibn Khayyat’s report is limited to Nīzak’s entering treaty with Qutayba (Arabic, 1985, p. 300; English, 2015, p. 171). [↑](#footnote-ref-311)
312. See also al-Balādhurī, 1987, p. 591; tr., part II, 1924, p. 187; Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 4, p. 247. For a briefer account of the campaign, see Khalifa ibn Khayyat, 1985, p. 301, tr., 2015, p. 172. [↑](#footnote-ref-312)
313. See also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 4, p. 249. Khalifa ibn Khayyat (1985, p. 302, tr., 2015, p. 173) mentioned the campaign as well. [↑](#footnote-ref-313)
314. See also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 4, pp. 254-6; see also al-Kūfī for Nīzak’s rebellion and coalition against Qutayba (1975, volume 7, pp. 225-6). Khalifa ibn Khayyat clarified that this campaign was to subjugate the Wardān Khudhāh (1985, p. 303; tr., 2015, p. 174). Balkhī (1971, p. 18) reorts that Qutayba came to Balkh in the hijri year 89. [↑](#footnote-ref-314)
315. See also Ibn-’Athīr, 1987, volume 4, pp. 259-62; for Qutayba’s capture and execution of Nīzak, see also al-Kūfī (1975, volume 7, pp. 226-7). Al-Balādhurī (1987, p. 591; tr., part II, 1924, p. 187: وقتل نيزك بطخارستان وصلبه) simply reports Nīzak’s execution without mentioning his rebellion. Interestingly, Gardīzī (1984, p. 248; tr., 2011, p. 21) does not mention Nīzak. [↑](#footnote-ref-315)