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## FRAGILE FRONTIERS: THE DIMINISHING DOMAINS OF QAJAR IRAN

Long before the French Revolution, an anonymous geographer of the 10th century had already imagined the “boundaries of the world”—(*hudūd al-‘ālam*)—as comprising distinct regions.<sup>1</sup> According to this unknown figure, each territory varied from another “First, by the difference of water, air, soil, and temperature (*garma-va-sarma*). Secondly, by the difference of religion, law (*shari‘at*) and beliefs (*kish*). Thirdly, by the difference of words (*lughāt*) and languages. Fourthly, by the difference of kingdoms (*padshā‘i-hā*).”<sup>2</sup> These criteria, as well as natural barriers—mountains, rivers, deserts—allowed the author of this work to divide the world into tracts much like nation-states today.<sup>3</sup>

*Hudūd al-‘ālam* was not the first work of Persian geography to attempt a mapping of the world. Earlier studies by Iranians displayed a similar interest in charting territories. Just as the Greeks had adopted a system of climes to explain the universe, the Persians, building on Zoroastrian and Ptolemaic concepts, had devised a world of seven *kishwars*, with “Iranshahr” at its center.<sup>4</sup> While inspiring Islamic scholars, this schema nurtured a bias among the residents of “Iranshahr.” In the 10th century, the geographer Abu Ishaq Ibrahim ibn Muhammad al-Farsi al-Istakhri completed his *Masālik al-Mamālik*, which aspired to map the world of Islam. As with other geographers of the Balkhi school, al-Istakhri’s observations had acquired an Islamic coloring, because by the 10th century the Qur’an served as a new source of geographical data. The lands of Islam gained a central position in the minds of Muslim geographers, with Mecca at its locus. Still, despite his Islamic inclinations, al-Istakhri expressed a particular fondness for “Iranshahr,” in which he situated his native province of Pars (Fars): “No land (*mulk*) is more prosperous, more complete, or more pleasant than the kingdoms (*mamālik*) of Iranshahr.”<sup>5</sup> Al-Istakhri’s practice of defining space not only offered an ordered understanding of the world, but served as a means of self-definition, an inclination familiar to other Persians of the 10th century.<sup>6</sup>

However imaginary or fluid, the notion of “Iranshahr” persisted well after al-Istakhri’s time. Scholars had reified this abstraction and justified the “truth” of its existence by connecting it to a concrete reality: a territory, albeit one with shifting populations and boundaries. It is therefore unsurprising that years later, Hamd Allah Mustawfi, even while writing under Mongol rule, would use the term “Iran-zamin”

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to identify a region that not only corresponded roughly to al-Istakhri's vision of "Iran-shahr" but that was inclusive of the territory of modern Iran.<sup>7</sup> Iran-zamin, as Mustawfi envisioned it, extended on the eastern frontier to

Sind, then by Kabul, Saghaniyan, Transoxiana, and Khwarizm to the frontier of Saqsin and Bulghar. The western frontier lies on the province of Niksar (Neo-Caesarea) and Sis, and thence to Syria. The northern frontier lies on the lands of the Ossetes and Russians, the Magyars and Circassians, the Bartas and along the Khazar desert . . . with the country of the Alans and Franks. . . . The southern frontier lies on the desert of Najd, across which the road passes to Mecca, and on the right of this desert the line goes up to the frontiers of Syria, while on the left hand it comes down to the Persian Gulf.<sup>8</sup>

These borders remained elastic, but many of the provinces they embraced fall within Iran's current boundaries. Modern Iran did not then haphazardly appear in its current location on the globe, nor did its appearance come about as a result of an entirely casual act of "imagination" or "invention."<sup>9</sup>

In sketching the frontiers of "Iran-zamin," Mustawfi, almost prophetically, anticipated controversy and strove to avoid ambiguity: "Now although of these outer lands some, at times, have been under the sway of the sovereign of Iran, and even in these parts some cities have been in fact founded by the sovereigns of Iran, yet, since it is our intention here merely, and in particular, to lay down the exact frontier of Iran, it is necessary to omit now any detailed mention of these outer lands."<sup>10</sup> Mustawfi's impulse to chart accurately attested to his awareness that in cases where natural boundaries did not exist, defining frontiers became a questionable but necessary undertaking. His disproportionate attention to the lands of Iran suggested a desire to set apart that which he represented—Iran-zamin—from the other peoples and territories of Islam.<sup>11</sup>

Just as texts preserved spatial concepts, so did maps. Maps assigned visual definitions to kingdoms and empires, promoting the differentiation of states. Visual representations converted the image of "Pars" or "Iran-zamin" into something concrete (or at least into something that corresponded to the geographer's reality).<sup>12</sup> Medieval maps did not mark the lands of Iran as Iranshahr. Rather, they depicted the provinces that together formed the general area known as Iran.<sup>13</sup> This tendency reflected the times, as Iran was not a political unity under the early Islamic dynasties. However, as one scholar has noted, "The Iranian bias also appears in the contents of the set of maps. The Iranian area is divided systematically into areas for mapping, whereas the areas the Arabs conquered from the Byzantines were treated in a much less systematic way."<sup>14</sup>

The province of Fars (Pars) maintained an exalted position as "the seat of empire of the Kings of Iran" in texts as well as on maps. As Hamd Allah Mustawfi noted, "while they [the Kings of Fars (Iran)] exercised sovereignty over the whole of the Land of Iran, they called themselves simply the Kings of Fars."<sup>15</sup> Citing the Prophet, Mustawfi explained this bias in the following terms: "*Verily God hath preferred amongst His creatures of the Arabs the Quraysh, and amongst the Persians the men of Fars: for which reason the people of this province . . . were known as 'the Best of the Persians.'*"<sup>16</sup> Herodotus alone was not responsible, then, for popularizing the term Pars (Fars) in referring collectively to Iranians and the Iranian lands, a custom that Europeans would continue until 1935. These medieval examples also illustrate that the Persian emphasis of modern Iranian nationalism was not without historical precedent.

The mapping of “Iran” reinforced the sense that something concrete sustained the idea. Land existed tangibly and with a measure of constancy that culture did not, and its reality was repeatedly supported by visual evidence. A series of European maps from the 17th and 18th centuries, for example, placed the Iranian lands generally between the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf. Breaking from the Ptolemaic tradition, these maps labeled the Iranian domains collectively as “Persia,” reflecting the political unity of Iran under the Safavids.<sup>17</sup> These designs in a sense helped to “legitimate” Iran’s claims to those provinces, despite the errors and self-serving motivations of the cartographers. Even if the boundaries of “Persia” remained fluid, as demonstrated in these maps, its heartland was fixed.

“Iran” thrived as much in the minds of its rivals as it did in the imagination of its residents. A rare map of Iran attributed to the famed printer Ibrahim Müteferrika gave pride of place to land by setting precise boundaries between two imperial adversaries.<sup>18</sup> Müteferrika’s design clearly marked the frontiers of Iran and the Ottoman Empire in 1729, no doubt with an eye to the border wars that had occurred between the two powers and which had come to a partial resolution in 1727. The Ottomans recognized the vulnerability of the declining Safavid state and successfully claimed Tabriz, Kermanshahan, Luristan, and Hamadan. Yet by 1729, Nadir Khan began to reassert Persian control, demanding a return of those territories and manifesting the persistence of frontier frictions.<sup>19</sup>

Müteferrika’s decision to print a map of this significant yet fleeting victory, especially at a time when the lands were up for grabs, revealed his desire to assert unequivocal Ottoman control of disputed borderlands. In light of the empire’s recent defeats, Müteferrika hoped to capture a moment of Ottoman glory, as the newly won territories would once again affirm Ottoman hegemony in Asia, if not in Europe. Müteferrika’s map was printed in 1729, the year in which the Ottoman printing press was inaugurated. His interest in devoting his earliest prints to an Ottoman boundary confirmed the relevance of land and frontiers in asserting regional power as well as the need to provide visual proof of territorial hegemony to affirm state and dynastic legitimacy. Müteferrika’s print is also notable for referring to the Iranian lands as *Mamālik-i Īrān*, or the domains of Iran, an expression that Iranians themselves used to speak of the region.<sup>20</sup>

“Iran” and its corresponding territory therefore were not 19th-century innovations, as J. H. Kramers claimed in 1936.<sup>21</sup> Nor did these ideas originate with the work of Orientalists, as one writer has recently suggested.<sup>22</sup> The impulse to set apart things Iranian—land and language, culture and civilization—had old roots and simply found a new application and context in nationalism. Modern Iran, like other nation-states, emerged from the fluctuations of fragile frontiers. Iran, the empire, had once embraced the lands extending from Asia Minor to India and from the Caucasus to parts of Arabia. Iran, the nation, comprised lands from the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulf. What the empire and the nation shared was a “heartland,” despite the illusory or “imaginary,” nature of the abstraction; where they differed geographically was in their boundaries.

Frontiers conjure up two images: a literal one to discuss the physical separation between lands, and a metaphorical one to address the tenuous cultural boundaries within societies. It counters the notion of permanently secured borders, and therefore the conception of seemingly immutable geographic entities. Even today’s boundaries,

which on account of international laws and treaties appear inviolable, are susceptible to change and transgression. Fragile frontiers led to frequent changes in the control of borderlands, allowing for new geographic creations. Empires crumbled into fiefdoms, provinces, or principalities; resurfaced as new dominions; and disintegrated yet again into nations. Focusing on the uniqueness of such phenomena, theorists of nationalism have tended to overlook their similarities and to gloss over geographic continuities, though there is no question that such impulses became far more politicized with the birth of nation-states.<sup>23</sup>

Recent debates have downplayed the centrality of land and frontiers in nationalism. Although Benedict Anderson has convincingly revised Ernest Gellner's assertions by explaining that "Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined," neither explores the reasons that these imaginings were not entirely random, either.<sup>24</sup> Theorists have minimized the importance of land and territorial space in national formation, offering instead social and anthropological explanations that ignore the historical continuity in territorial nomenclature. There is a reason that Zionists, for example, were not sanguine about building a homeland in Uganda but maintained an attachment to Palestine. Nor is it accidental that Iranian nationalists considered the land mass between the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf—not, say, Asia Minor—as the heartland of the Iranian state (or *Iran-zamin*), though they did often nurture expansionist fantasies of extending their boundaries to "Rum" and beyond. The historical precedent of defining certain regions as "Iranian," or "Kurdish," or "Armenian" endured and played an important role in the creation of nation-states, many of which correspond to regions existing on medieval and early-modern maps and texts. However invented these abstractions were in their inception, they are to be distinguished from those "imagined communities" not represented by territories.

Premodern efforts to delimit territory, as demonstrated by Mustawfi, Müteferrika, and others, confirm that attempts to differentiate among societies antedated nationalism. Rather, these historical precedents, combined with the changes brought on by modernity, paved the way for nation-states. To explain nationalism without tracing such continuities ignores the long-standing patterns within societies to distinguish between rivals and neighbors by delineating territorial and cultural boundaries.<sup>25</sup> Though premodern borders lacked the sacredness and political undertones of today's boundaries, they nonetheless represented a desire to assign separation of communities and states. In the Iranian context, the study of frontiers shifts the debate to the land-based origins of Iranian nationalism in the 19th century and traces the theme in the following decades when the Iranian nation, once recognized, grows aware of its vulnerable borders as it confronts separatist movements from within.<sup>26</sup> This paradigm regards the national process primarily as a geographical one, but a geographical operation with distinct cultural, political, and social proclivities. Moreover, this schema necessarily views frontiers as "precarious" or "frictional" because no border, whether cultural or territorial, is completely durable and because frontier zones are often areas of bitter contestation.

The process of limiting boundaries, whether through battles or treaties—an activity that acquired immense significance in the 19th century—raised sensibility to differences and impelled more and more groups to stake out their space. Lord Curzon,

an authority on imperial frontiers, noted “the overwhelming influence of Frontiers in the history of the modern world.”<sup>27</sup> Iran’s transition from a *mulk* to a *millat* occurred gradually in this milieu. It was, however, a transformation that would distinguish this brand of “Iranianness” from its earlier incarnations. Land played an important role in guiding this transition, especially in an age of empire, though it would become neither the sole cause of change nor the single barometer of national identity. At a time when imperial greatness was synonymous with imperial space, Iran grappled with its ambitious neighbors for its territorial share, but by the end of the 19th century, it would have to forgo its claims to the Caucasus, Herat, Central Asia, and the Persian Gulf. As the century drew to a close, the Iranian space could no longer be termed imperial, even if Iran’s imperial imaginings lingered.

#### MANIFEST DESTINY

The hunger for empire emerged vividly in Qajar narratives. Qajar historians interpreted Aqa Muhammad Khan’s campaigns as the rebirth of an Iranian empire symbolized by its sprawling territory. In a brief but telling account, Muhammad Hashim Asaf Rustam al-Hukama, showed the importance of land by centering his discussion of Aqa Muhammad Khan on the territorial consolidation of the Iranian domains. Rustam al-Hukama reduced the monarch’s reign to a chronicle of the regions brought under Aqa Muhammad Khan’s control.<sup>28</sup> There is little mention of familial relations or royal intrigue. Rather, the recovery of the Iranian provinces epitomized the monarch’s rule. Similarly, Hasan Fasa<sup>2</sup>i, the author of the *Fārsnāmah-i Nāširi*, saw Aqa Muhammad Khan’s campaigns to Armenia and Georgia as an attempt to follow in the footsteps of the Safavids.<sup>29</sup> According to Fasa<sup>2</sup>i, in hopes of subordinating Irakli, the “vali” of Georgia, Aqa Muhammad sent a letter to the Georgian stating his claims in the following terms:

Shah Esmā<sup>c</sup>il Šafavi ruled over the province of Georgia. When in the days of the deceased king we were engaged in conquering the provinces of Persia, we did not proceed to this region. As most of the provinces of Persia have come into our possession now, you must, according to ancient law, consider Georgia part of the empire. . . .<sup>30</sup>

Rida Quli Khan Hidayat, a prolific chronicler of the early Qajar reign, even forged a storied lineage tracing the dynasty back to the Safavids.<sup>31</sup> Decades later, the historian I<sup>c</sup>timad al-Saltanah inflamed the imagination of his fellow patriots in a fictitious account that brought together Iran’s gallant emperors. In this imaginary gathering, Aqa Muhammad Khan found himself in the august company of such heroes as Khusrau Anushirvan, Shah Isma<sup>c</sup>il Safavi, and other Iranian emperors, all hailed as capable “country conquerors” (*kishwar sitanān*).<sup>32</sup>

In a speech, Aqa Muhammad Khan pointed to the notable attributes—bravery, majesty, and conquest—that had made him a subject worthy of I<sup>c</sup>timad al-Saltanah’s historical fiction. Turning to Nadir Shah, Aqa Muhammad offered his views on the former’s reign. While regarding his counterpart as an oppressor (*zālim*), referring in particular to Nadir’s murder of Fath Ali Khan Qajar and to his own unfortunate castration, Aqa Muhammad nonetheless praised this brave commander (*sultān-i qah-hār*), the Alexander of Iran (*Iskandar-i Īrān*), for reversing the Afghan carnage. He

applauded Nadir's mastery in keeping the Russians and Ottomans at bay, and extolled his predecessor for squelching seditious movements. Noting his public cursing of Nadir, Aqa Muhammad confessed his admiration for the shah in private.<sup>33</sup>

Appraising his own rule, Aqa Muhammad admitted that the recovery of Iran's "natural boundaries" (*ḥudūd-i ṭabiʿi*)—from the mountains of the Caucasus to Punjab—remained his principal preoccupation, though this expansionist fantasy, like so many others, would fall short of becoming reality. Aqa Muhammad reflected on his hard-won victories, including the attainment of the Iranian throne, and wondered whether his epigones, in his absence, had attended to his territorial possessions (*muṣ-tamlikāt*)—an ironic ploy used by the author to adumbrate the abortive expansionist campaigns of the subsequent Qajar monarchs.<sup>34</sup>

The imperial mind set came through splendidly in the naming of kings. Aqa Muhammad Khan's (and Fath Ali Shah's) titles included such lofty epithets as *jahān panāh*, *jamshīd jāh*, *ʿālam arā*, *khāqān-i sāhibqarān*, *gīti sitan*, *shāh jahān*, and *jam jāh*, among others.<sup>35</sup> But the grandiosity did not end there. Rustam al-Hukama listed Aqa Muhammad Khan's historical heroes as Chinghiz Khan and Timur Gurgani, figures who had accumulated vast territories during their reigns.

Aqa Muhammad Khan's expansion alarmed Iran's neighbors as much as it awed its inhabitants. In 1795, Ibrahim Khalil Khan, the wali of Qarabagh, warned Sultan Selim III of Aqa Muhammad Khan's ambitions. Fearing for his independence, he informed the Sultan of Aqa Muhammad Khan's ability to subdue Azerbaijan and later Qarabagh, Erivan, and Georgia. In the same year, Muhammad Khan, the hakim of Erivan, also wrote the Sultan alerting him to Aqa Muhammad's "aggression" and seeking Ottoman protection.<sup>36</sup>

The Persian pretension to empire proved fallow despite Aqa Muhammad Khan's temporary subjugation of the eastern Caucasus. As Fath Ali and his crown prince, Abbas Mirza, soon learned, redeeming Safavid glory would not be. Despite their assertions that the provinces of the eastern Caucasus had formed a legitimate part of Iran, they would not succeed in regaining the region. Far from restoring the "natural boundaries" to which Iʿtimad al-Saltanah would refer, the Russo-Persian wars permanently altered Iran's northwestern frontier.

Russia's encroachment prompted the *jihādiya*, treatises that sanctioned the use of jihad for protection of the homeland. After the Treaty of Gulistan (1813) the ulama declared a general jihad—a proclamation that spawned a spate of *jihādiya* literature, much of which reached the shah's court. Mirza Buzurg Qaʿim Maqam himself authored two such treatises, the greater and lesser *jihādiya*, in which he discussed the essentials of jihad in order to protect the lands of Islam.<sup>37</sup> The lesser *jihādiya*, intended for the broad audience outside the ulama's exclusive circle and the shah's elite court, was published in Tabriz in 1815. It aimed to inspired mass involvement in the protection of Iran's Islamic domain. The *risālah* likened dying in the army of Abbas Mirza to perishing in the army of Islam to assure the martyrs of the *mulk* and the faith of the rewards of afterlife for their courageous sacrifice. "Where is the pride of Islam?" he asked, initiating a series of rhetorical questions aimed at inciting the reader to action. "Where are the *ahl-i nāmūs* [the people of honor] of the community?" he demanded, playing on the term *nāmūs* to associate the sanctity of the Islamic lands with the chastity of the Islamic woman.<sup>38</sup>

Russia's acquisition of neighboring Islamic lands only heightened Mirza Buzurg's fears. As he explained, "It is clear to all the Muslims and to the mature public that in the past few years the Russian infidels have seized upon the countries of the Muslims and are in the process of conquering the kingdoms of Islam."<sup>39</sup> He further stressed that the glory and propagation of the "din" depended on the independence of the government (*dawlat*) of Islam. Although the *jihādīya* defined Russia's threat in religious terms, Iran's specific circumstances were not ignored. As Mirza Buzurg commented, "On the whole of the Iranian public it is obligatory to obey that excellency [Fath Ali Shah], who is the king of Islam and [thus] the chief commander to obey in this regard, and to follow the *nā'ib al-salṭānah*, who is in charge of the matter of *jihad*."<sup>40</sup>

Despite the bold rhetoric and fighting spirit, the second round of the Russo-Persian wars not only cost Iran Georgia, Erivan, and Nakhjevan, but imposed a debilitating war indemnity on the country borne mostly by the province of Azerbaijan. In the Treaty of Turkomanчай (1828), Iran sought to salvage as much land as possible.<sup>41</sup> In 1827–28, Qa'im Maqam instructed the Iranian envoy, Nazar Ali Khan Afshar, to meet the Russian commander and determine Russia's territorial objectives. Primarily concerned about maximum Iranian control of borderlands, the minister advised Nazar Ali Khan to distribute the territories according to the status quo in the present. In painstaking detail he marked the rivers, the pasture lands, and the villages belonging to Iran, to insure that not a single inch more than necessary would fall into Russian hands. Where Russian evacuation did not depend on this convention, such as in Khoi and in Azerbaijan, Qa'im Maqam even agreed to monetary reimbursement of the victors in return for territory.<sup>42</sup>

How did Iranians view their loss to Russia? Other than historical narratives, few contemporary sources attempted to wrestle with the realities of the rout, perhaps because its dire consequences were so apparent, especially in diplomatic circles. Jahangir Mirza, one of 'Abbas Mirza's sons, offered a chronicle of the war in his *Tārikh-i Naw* but no meditations on the meaning of the loss. The famed minister Mirza Abu al-Qasim Qa'im Maqam Farahani, however, broke from this tradition and reflected on this misfortune with the rare insight of a seasoned statesman and man of letters.<sup>43</sup> As minister to 'Abbas Mirza, Qa'im Maqam understood his role in educating the prince on the art of statecraft. This intimate relationship explained Qa'im Maqam's staunch support for the *nā'ib al-salṭānah*, particularly during the prince's political travails, most of which resulted from the Russo-Persian conflict.<sup>44</sup> Qa'im Maqam's writings portray his interest in 'Abbas Mirza as well as his commitment to the state, despite his checkered experience with the Qajar kings. His observations attest to the personal rethinking that the loss forced on him and presumably on other Iranians.<sup>45</sup>

Qa'im Maqam's introductions to the printed editions of the *jihādīya* revealed his early impressions of the Russian threat. In his preface to the "lesser treatise of *jihādīya*," published in 1818, Qa'im Maqam saw the Qajar kings as the *shāhanshāh-i Islām panāh*, or as defenders of the shari'a against the "sedition" of the Russians.<sup>46</sup> He played on the country's official title by referring to the guarded domains not only as *mamālik-i mah'rūsih-i Irān*, but also as *mamālik-i mah'rūsih-i Islām* to emphasize the monarch's dual responsibility to the *mulk* and to the *din*.<sup>47</sup>

In 1822, Qa<sup>2</sup>im Maqam went into exile for his putative pro-Russian sentiments, a banishment that inspired a thoughtful *qaṣīda* on his misfortunes.<sup>48</sup> He did eventually win the good graces of the royal family (although this, too, would be ephemeral), and his writings reflected his newfound hawkish outlook on the next round of the Russo-Persian wars. Presumably, Qa<sup>2</sup>im Maqam adopted this posture because of the criticism surrounding the crown prince. In one of his letters, Qa<sup>2</sup>im Maqam noted ᶜAbbas Mirza's lack of interest in personal wealth, probably as a comparison with Fath Ali Shah, and highlighted the prince's willingness to seek "victory" (*fath va nuṣrat khāhad*) and shun "pleasure" (*ʿaysh va ʿishrat nā khāhad*) in defense of the *mulk-i maḥrūs*.<sup>49</sup>

As the conflict unfurled, Qa<sup>2</sup>im Maqam urged ᶜAbbas Mirza to pursue the enemy with zeal. Here, land is seen again as a symbol of greatness. In the eyes of the renowned minister, regaining lost territories would restore ᶜAbbas Mirza's honor as well as Iran's glory. In a *qaṣīda* written after Czar Alexander's death in 1825, Qa<sup>2</sup>im Maqam advised the prince to become like one of the great "possessors" of the world (*kaz jumlih jahān daran-i a<sup>2</sup>zam shaw*). To realize this imperial vision, Qa<sup>2</sup>im Maqam exhorted ᶜAbbas Mirza to seize Crimea and Moscow from the czar and proceed to conquer Russia and Rum.<sup>50</sup>

Unfortunately for the prince, Qa<sup>2</sup>im Maqam's quixotic fantasies did not flower into realities. Russian superiority on the battlefield eventually sobered the statesman to the dire circumstances facing his country. In a moving *qaṣīda* composed after Iran's defeat in 1828, Qa<sup>2</sup>im Maqam was forced to recognize that the tables had clearly turned and that it was no longer Iran that sent its "warlike" forces to Tiflis (*gāh bih Tiflis az Khurasān lashgari jarrār dārad*), but the Russians who dispatched their troops to Tabriz (*gāh bih Tabriz az Petersburg aspahi ghallāb rānad*).<sup>51</sup>

The Griboedov affair, like Qa<sup>2</sup>im Maqam's poetry, countered the reticence of Qajar sources. The murder spoke volumes on the disappointment the public attached to the loss. In an apologetic letter to the Russian court, Qa<sup>2</sup>im Maqam, writing on behalf of ᶜAbbas Mirza, noted profusely Iran's regret over the incident. He explained this "ugly deed" as nothing more than the "sedition of ignorants" and the "revolt of the common people," to appease the Russian government and to deny any official endorsement of the murder.<sup>52</sup> In his subsequent correspondence, Qa<sup>2</sup>im Maqam on behalf of ᶜAbbas Mirza described the murder as an act undertaken in defense of religion, because Griboedov's actions had gone against the shari<sup>c</sup>a and had thus promoted public rioting. In obedience to their religion, he claimed, the people had overlooked their respect to the government.<sup>53</sup>

The Iranian government walked a tightrope in the months after Griboedov's murder, particularly with the status of outstanding territorial issues still at stake. In Ramadan 1829, Qa<sup>2</sup>im Maqam voiced his anxieties over negotiations with the Russians to his brother, Mirza Musa Khan: "We are perplexed about how to deal with this neighbor."<sup>54</sup> It was clear to the minister that Iran desperately needed to revamp its army in order to protect the homeland from the intrusion of other powers, especially Russia. It was also apparent that as the Russians began another round of wars with the Ottomans, they would be less likely to look kindly on Iran's outstanding debts and territorial claims without Iran's agreement to support Russia in the conflict.<sup>55</sup> In a letter detailing plans to Amir Nizam, a member of the Iranian delegation traveling to Russia, Qa<sup>2</sup>im Maqam objected to Iran's involvement in the Russo-Ottoman war.



The letter also voiced concern about the status of Khoi, the northwestern frontier, the Ottoman boundary, and the remainder of the Russian troops in Azerbaijan.<sup>56</sup>

In advising Muhammad Khan Amir Nizam on the boundary question, Qa'im Maqam explained that in the region of Talish "hypothetical lines" (*khutūt-i mafrūzih*) separated the two kingdoms, noting the possibility of misrepresentation. He enumerated the borderlands still under negotiation, namely Khoi and Muqan, and other areas that under the treaty fell into Russian hands but were nonetheless being reconsidered by their government.<sup>57</sup> Though the regions in question were never returned to Iran, Qa'im Maqam's repeated efforts to retrieve those territories betrayed his profound regard for land and its function as the mainstay of the monarchy and the state.

If Iran's fate was sealed on its northwestern frontier, its other boundaries remained open to negotiation.<sup>58</sup> Since the rise of the Safavids, religious and territorial disputes had plagued Iran's relationship with the Ottomans. As one bystander had observed, "For many centuries the extensive frontier between Turkey and Persia has been in an unsettled state, continually changing its limits as the strength or influence of either Government for the time prevailed."<sup>59</sup> In 1639, both parties mitigated the conflict by signing the Treaty of Zuhab, which separated rather vaguely the lands of the sultan and the shah. Iran's troubles after the fall of the Safavids led to a temporary adjustment of this treaty, an episode well represented on Mütferrika's map, but the original agreement at Zuhab was once again confirmed at Kurdan in 1746.<sup>60</sup>

These treaties did not eliminate the skirmishes that erupted along the borders, nor did they do away with the rivalry. Though marked by spurts of intermittent peace, the Turko-Persian association remained riven by conflict even after the arrival of the Qajars. The friction, however, provided both states with a *casus belli*, and hence an opportunity to expand their dominions, especially in the aftermath of their recent territorial defeats.<sup>61</sup> In 1799, as the Ottomans and Persians prepared to confront Russia, their mutual enemy, they strove to maintain friendly relations with each other to avoid war on two fronts. In a letter written to Sayyid Khalil Pasha, the Ottoman minister, 'Abbas Mirza stressed the advantages of Perso-Ottoman cooperation. In 1800, Mirza 'Isa (Buzurg) Qa'im Maqam emphasized the amicable ties between the two Islamic states, especially as Iran hurtled toward war with Russia.<sup>62</sup>

Border brawls, however, threatened the tenuous friendship between the two states in the years following the Treaty of Gulistan (1813). Reports of Ottoman mistreatment of Iranian pilgrims and merchants compelled Fath 'Ali's sons, Muhammad 'Ali Mirza Dawlatshah and 'Abbas Mirza, to attack Baghdad and Armenia, respectively. The Treaty of Erzurum (1823) resolved the conflict and reaffirmed the vague frontiers of Iran and the Ottoman Empire originally outlined in 1639.<sup>63</sup> Despite the treaty, conflicts between the two powers escalated over Muhammarah, Baghdad, and the Shatt al-'Arab. In the 1840s, a boundary commission consisting of the Ottomans, Persians, Russians, and British, hoping to avert war between the two Eastern states, gathered to set precise frontiers. The records of this commission demonstrate the function of land in Iranian (and, for that matter, in Ottoman) self-definition and in justifying the existence of the state. Captain J. W. Brant, the British Consul at Erzurum, composed several reports from 1840–42 outlining the problem spots in the Kurdish region. Brant's account of the movement of Kurdish troops showed the ambiguity in over-seeing tribes that roamed undefined territories. In this regard, Brant related Ottoman

frustration as follows: “The pasha again repeated that some decided steps must be taken by Persia to retain their Koords when restored, for that Turkey could not undertake annually to employ troops to force the Persian tribes to quit the Turkish territory and return to Persia.”<sup>64</sup>

The Kurdish dilemma could not be solved, however, without an effort to define precise Ottoman and Persian jurisdiction over the borderlands. Rival claims over Muhammarah, Zuhab, Baghdad, and other regions once again brought matters to a head. In May 1843, the commission held its initial set of conferences aimed at resolving the Ottoman–Iranian frontier. The first meeting of the powers occurred on 15 May 1843, in which the Ottoman and Persian representatives advanced their conditions for peace. Other than vague discussions about the authority of the envoys, the May meetings achieved little of substance.<sup>65</sup>

In August 1843 the Ottoman delegation adduced two documents to legitimate the sultan’s claims to Muhammarah. The first, a firman of Sultan Mustafa II dated 1701, attempted to show Ottoman sovereignty over lands in the province of “Bussorah” (Basra) that were claimed to form a part of the district of Muhammarah. The second, a letter by Sultan Osman II dated circa 1757, concerned a land grant awarded by the Ottomans in the province of Basra. The Ottomans also transmitted a report containing statements by Osman Pasha, the late governor of Zuhab, and Shaykh Thamir, a chief of the Ka<sup>c</sup>abida tribe.<sup>66</sup>

To back the sultan’s claims, Osman Pasha maintained that the pashalik of Zuhab had “been in my family for seven generations.” He reviewed the recent history of the pashalik, which included an attack by Muhammad <sup>c</sup>Ali Mirza Dawlatshah in 1811, only to conclude that “in 1238 [A.D. 1822–23] Mehemet Hussein Mirza turned me out; I do not remember the month [in which this happened]. I never commanded under the Persians; they hate me because my name is Osman.”<sup>67</sup> The Perso-Ottoman enmity was no localized matter, embracing far more animus than mere land disputes. The hostility exposed the extent to which peoples were attuned to differences—regional, religious, and cultural—and the lengths to which they went to protect their identities, even in the absence of national boundaries.

If the testimony of Osman Pasha was any indication, relying on oral evidence complicated the commission’s task. Though the mediating powers attempted to find documentation when possible, they did nonetheless have to come to terms with local tradition. As Shaykh Thamir explained, “I have no papers; we do not understand such things.”<sup>68</sup> Still, Thamir managed to provide a description of his district of Goban as well as a definition of Muhammarah, so called “from the redness of the earth.” Mental images of the land—its boundaries and topography—proved just as powerful as history in fortifying arguments.

As the Ottomans inundated the commission with documentation, the mediators urged Persia to provide similar proof of its claims to Muhammarah. In September 1843, Colonel Justin Sheil, the British minister at Tehran, relying on information received from Captain Kemball, the resident at Bushire, summed up Iran’s rights to the district, though he acknowledged that “they do not contain decisive proofs of the territorial rights of either Persia or Turkey.”<sup>69</sup> Relating the Persian side of the argument, Sheil wrote that “since the reign of Kerim Khan Zand . . . the Persian flag has been used at Mohammerah, and by its vessels, and since the same period it is said to have

been considered, justly or not, as forming a portion of the Persian dominions.”<sup>70</sup> However, Captain Kemball in his original dispatch pointed out that although Muhammarah “hoists the Persian flag,” this could be “the particular consequence of their creed, and not an acknowledgment of subjection to Persia.”<sup>71</sup> Kemball’s observation suggested that tribal groups were not regarded as proprietors of the land, only as Ottoman or Iranian subjects. Moreover, tribal societies along the frontier, especially the Kurds and the Bani Ka<sup>c</sup>ab, had their particular ethnic concerns and had switched allegiances enough times in the past to complicate the cultural and territorial conundrum.<sup>72</sup>

The negotiations continued for four long years, but a treaty was eventually signed in Erzurum in 1847. However, as one British official observed, the commission had “not specified which is Turkish territory: we have merely declared that what is now Turkish is to remain so; but it will be the business of the commission to be appointed hereafter to settle the exact spot where Turkish property ends and Persian begins.”<sup>73</sup> In 1849, the new boundary commission, as specified in the 1847 treaty, convened in Baghdad to adjust the borders.

Mirza Sayyid Ja<sup>c</sup>far Khan Muhandis Bashi, Mushir al-Dawlah, a member of the new commission, completed the *Risālah-i tahqīqat-i sarḥaddīya* in 1856, which served as his official account of the boundary negotiations between the Persians and the Ottomans. Written at the height of Iran’s conflicts with Great Britain, one of the mediating powers, this work sought to set the Iranian record straight vis-à-vis the territorial disputes. As it became apparent that this commission, like its predecessor, would fail to settle final arbitration, Mushir al-Dawlah urged the “confidants of the government” (*mahramān-i asrār-i dawlat*) and the “well-wishers of the kingdom and the religion” (*nīk-khvāhān-i mulk va millat*) to refrain from revealing the contents of his treatise. Fearing the malice of foreigners, he counseled his successors to rely on this text, assembled from the “sincere and truthful . . . research” of the author, to delimit the boundary.<sup>74</sup> As another frontier began to close, Mushir al-Dawlah’s admonitions echoed the fears of a government on the verge of losing one of the pivotal pillars of its existence.

As spokesman for the “*din*” and the “*dawlat*,” Mushir al-Dawlah recognized the political significance of the negotiations. With diligence, he mined history and geography to build a convincing case for Iran’s territorial claims. When Muhammarah once again became a point of contention between the Persians and the Ottomans, Mushir al-Dawlah faulted Amir Kabir for originally misunderstanding the Ottomans’ “real intention” in “abandoning” the city to Iran. The wording, he claimed, erroneously implied that ownership of Muhammarah had historically rested with the Ottomans, not with Iran. Mushir al-Dawlah’s objections revealed his sensitivity to the so-called Iranian lands, which constituted certain indisputable regions in his mind—evidence that mental maps proved just as powerful as material ones in defining boundaries.<sup>75</sup>

Initial meetings of the boundary commission showed that the territorial disputes remained far from resolved. It did not help matters when shortly after the commissioners had gathered to map the borderlands, Dervish Pasha captured Qutur, a town near Khoi. The seizure fueled Iranian rancor and especially piqued Mushir al-Dawlah, who wrote that the Ottomans, going against “the clear text of the treaty,” had planned the confiscation all along, even though they lacked proper documentation to support their action.<sup>76</sup> As he indignantly remarked, “In the midst of a snowstorm and despite the presence of boundary commissioners, he [Dervish Pasha] and several Ottoman troops

entered Qutur and . . . threatened its inhabitants.”<sup>77</sup> But the incident seemed no more justifiable to the British, who observed that Dervish Pasha “appears in the most arbitrary manner to have taken possession of that district, has built boundary marks, and expelled the Persians residing there.”<sup>78</sup>

For every disputed territory, Mushir al-Dawlah provided what he considered irrefutable evidence of Iranian sovereignty, especially in light of the Qutur takeover. History and geography served as Mushir al-Dawlah’s reliable tools in asserting Iranian ownership. On Khuzistan, for example, he remarked that “based on the knowledge of geographers,” the province “in all ages and epochs and in conformity with treaties and pacts” had belonged to Iran. He even referred to the province’s prominence in the Keyan dynasty to justify Iran’s present ownership of the region.<sup>79</sup>

History alone could not resolve all ambiguities. As frontier tribes roamed the countryside to escape central governments, their irregular activities grew difficult to gauge. To insure their loyalty, Mushir al-Dawlah, relying on tenuous “research,” observed that “since the time of Karim Khan the Beloved [*maqfūr*] until the present [the Bani Ka<sup>c</sup>ab tribe] has been subject to and has served this [Iranian] government.” Although originally from Najd, the tribe had converted to Shi<sup>c</sup>ism—another indication of its “servitude” to Iran.<sup>80</sup>

A cholera epidemic, reluctant participation, and the outbreak of the Crimean War (1853) finally put the boundary negotiations in abeyance. The next few years saw little progress on that front, although in the interim the British and Russians conducted independent surveys to produce a map of the frontier.<sup>81</sup> Before long, however, one British officer observed that “the two maps differ so widely that they cannot be used indifferently for the purpose for which they were designed—in fact that a line of frontier might be drawn which would be admissible according to the one and inadmissible according to the other.”<sup>82</sup>

These discrepancies manifested the mediators’ unfamiliarity with the terrain, explaining occasional Ottoman and Persian reluctance to comply with the findings of the commission. The errors also confirmed the sometimes arbitrary rulings of the officials. Despite the growing interest in delimiting territory, the history of the Turco-Persian commission demonstrated that marking boundaries was no simple task. Lack of reliable data and obscurity of the lands made the commission prone to errors and bad judgments. Even the identical map drawn up in 1869 failed to resolve the boundary disputes. By then, the Perso-Ottoman rivalry had only intensified. As resources diminished and national consciousness took form in the adjacent states, competition over land, regulation of trade, and patrol of the frontiers grew more fierce. Punctilious attention to profits and marauding tribes in the borderlands—a harbinger of the Pahlavi years—replaced a freewheeling attitude toward frontier life. As for the commission, if it had not yet etched the actual boundary line in the ground, it had nonetheless attuned the two states to their differences and sharpened their awareness of the political and economic value of land, triggering the process of shaping national territory.

#### MANIFOLD DEFEAT

Qa<sup>2</sup>im Maqam had once described Iran as “a meager land” surrounded by Russia and Rum, a *mulk* whose protection required a “bellicose” ruler, not a “pleasure-seeking”

potentate.<sup>83</sup> Indeed, the danger of domination loomed large as imperial giants cast their sinister shadows over the Iranian lands and nibbled away at its fringes. This threat was just as visible to certain travelers visiting the country. While wandering through Persia, T. B. Armstrong, a member of the British embassy, was struck by “how easy it would be for Russia, or any other civilized power, to march an army through the country we have been travelling in.”<sup>84</sup>

This time, a new conflict brewed on the eastern front as the Iranians, the Afghans, and the British vied for control of Herat. In 1801, the British engraver John Cary had produced a map of Persia that sought to delineate Iran’s eastern boundary. Cary’s attention to frontiers bespoke the ambiguities that characterized territorial claims in the region. Using color, he indicated that Herat fell within the Persian domain.<sup>85</sup> Though his depiction lacked the precision of modern prints, Cary used color to differentiate between the Persian lands and the neighboring territories.

Geographical memoirs or dictionaries did not always clear up the ambiguities any better. In 1806, a polyglot dictionary of English, Arabic, and Persian defined “Iran” as the “Kingdom of Persia, comprehending all that track extending from the river Amou . . . to the Persian Sea on the south, and to the Tigris on the west.”<sup>86</sup> In 1815, John MacDonald Kinneir, while admitting that “it is not easy to define correctly the boundaries of the Persian Empire,” confined Iran to “*Fars and Irak, Lar, Kuzistan*, part of *Kurdistan, Azerbaijan, Ghilan, Mazanderaun*, the western parts of *Khorassan*, with the cities of *Meshed, Nishapour, and Turshish [sic]*, and the western division of *Kerman*, including the capital of that province.”<sup>87</sup> In 1834, only three years before the first Herat crisis, James B. Fraser, while describing Iran’s frontiers, conceded that “a like uncertainty prevails on the east, where the district of Herat and the provinces of Seistan and Beloochistan blend with the mountains of Afghanistan; but, in fact, the whole of Cabul is described by some geographers as belonging to Persia.”<sup>88</sup> If the eastern boundary seemed so vague even to the English, then the Persian claim to the region might not appear as fanciful as the British would later maintain.

Smarting from his loss to Russia, Fath Ali Shah anticipated territorial gains in the east. In 1831 he appointed ‘Abbas Mirza as the governor of Khurasan and further charged him with leading forays to Khiva and Afghanistan, which the prince willingly undertook partly to atone for his defeats to Russia. In a series of letters addressed to his son, ‘Abbas Mirza expressed high hopes of returning home a victor, noting rather humbly his long-standing commitment to the kingdom and its subjects.<sup>89</sup> ‘Abbas Mirza’s untimely death in 1833, however, brought an end to Fath Ali’s expansion to the east.

The new monarch, Muhammad Shah, seemed no less eager to extend his power in the direction of Herat, only to watch his plans become mired in the politics of the Great Game. In 1835, the British found it “unsatisfactory to know, that the Shah has very extended schemes of conquest in the direction of Affghanistan [*sic*], and, in common with all his subjects, conceives that the right of sovereignty over Herat and Kandahar is as complete now as in the reign of the Suffavean dynasty.”<sup>90</sup> The British worried that Persian expansion would mean Russian proximity to India. As Ellis cautioned, “I feel quite assured that the British Government cannot permit the extension of the Persian Monarchy in the direction of Affghanistan, with a due regard to the internal tranquillity of India; that extension will, at once, bring Russian influence to the very threshold of our empire.”<sup>91</sup> British fears did not discourage the king or his

entourage from professing, however, that “the Shah of Persia lays claim to the sovereignty of Affghanistan, as far as Ghizni.”<sup>92</sup>

In those days, Herat and its environs remained in the hands of Kamran Mirza, the son of Mahmud Shah, who had briefly controlled Kabul. Kamran Mirza paid regular sums of money to the Persian government whenever his domains faced threats from the governor of Khurasan, a Persian province coterminous with Herat. After scoring victories in the region, <sup>c</sup>Abbas Mirza had secured certain guarantees from Kamran Mirza, including “the razing of the fort of Ghorian, the return of certain families to their domicile in Persia, and the payment of a sum of 10,000 tomauns annually to the Shah.”<sup>93</sup> Although the British acknowledged Kamran Mirza’s failure to fulfill his promises and recognized the shah’s prerogative “to obtain redress by force of arms,” they maintained that “an attempt to annex Kandahar and Ghizni to the Persian dominions, upon pretensions derived from the time of Nadir Shah, has no such justification.”<sup>94</sup>

British attempts to impugn Iran’s territorial claims did not deter the shah. In 1837, freshly armed and inspired by the prospect of yet another jihad, the Persians surrounded Herat, but their sublime hopes quickly dissipated as they came into conflict with another imperial colossus.<sup>95</sup> Though the shah’s forces won early victories, they would not remain in command of the situation. It was not long before the British sent reinforcements from the Persian Gulf to disarm the Iranians in Herat—an effective maneuver that thwarted Persia’s expansion to the east.<sup>96</sup>

The Herat crisis would not fade away despite the momentary halt in hostilities. The allure of power and land drove the Persian monarchs eastward in search of imperial glory. In 1852, Nasir al-Din, Muhammad Shah’s successor, replayed the Herat scenario, though he reduced Iran’s territorial ambitions to regard Herat, not Afghanistan, as part of the province of Khurasan.<sup>97</sup> British intervention and threats to occupy the island of Kharg in the Persian Gulf, however, quickly humbled the shah into renouncing his position and promising “not to send troops on any account to the territory of Herat.” An agreement in 1853 further restricted Iran from “all interference whatsoever in the internal affairs of Herat.”<sup>98</sup>

Much to Great Britain’s displeasure, the accord did not dissuade Iran from trying to conquer Herat at a later date, particularly as relations between Iran and Great Britain worsened. The Persian government disputed Britain’s decision to give sanctuary to Farhad Mirza, and matters only grew more strained over the departure from Tehran of Charles Murray, the British minister. In 1856, Nasir al-Din made preparations to enter Herat. Like his predecessor, he attempted to cast the conflict as something more meaningful and garnered support for the cause by addressing a circular “to the clergy in the Provinces, calling upon them to prepare for a religious war (jehaud).”<sup>99</sup> When Nasir al-Din’s troops finally entered Herat, Qajar historians noted that the good news even compelled the shah to extend gifts to members of his victorious troops.<sup>100</sup> The celebrations, however, ended abruptly, as Britain’s swift response to the Iranian intrusion forced the shah to relinquish his gains as well as any future claims to the city.

The Herat debacle, like the Treaty of Turkomanchay, exposed the limits of Iranian power. Iran’s space could not intrude on the ever-expanding domains of its imperial rivals. Collision resulted only in Iran’s defeat. Not the jihad, not Safavid revivalism, not even diplomacy would assure Iranian victory, though they did succeed in keep-

ing the irredentist fire alive in the minds of Iranian statesman and intellectuals. Nasir al-Din, chastened by these failures, had finally learned his lesson. In the decade following the Herat fiasco, he unobtrusively inched his way deep into the southeastern territory, this time without resorting to arms. By the 1860s, as one observer commented, “ten years of unscrupulous and vigorous action pushed the boundary line of Persia nearly five degrees of longitude to the eastward, but south of Sistan.”<sup>101</sup>

This time, Iran’s expansion met with Afghan disapproval. Dost Muhammad Khan, the ruler of Kabul, threatened to invade Sistan in 1862, but Iran, respecting the sixth article of the Treaty of Paris (1857), refrained from escalating the hostilities, referring the matter instead to the British government.<sup>102</sup> In 1870, the Persians once again received information that Shir ‘Ali, the amir of Afghanistan, intended to attack Sistan. Though the Persians hoped to avoid war, it was nonetheless understood that Iran “was firmly resolved to resist all encroachment upon her territory” and considered Sistan “to form an integral part of the Shah’s dominions, the same as Khorassan or Kerman, and any attempt at aggression by the Afghans in that quarter would lead to open hostilities between the two powers.”<sup>103</sup>

In 1870, Major General Frederic Goldsmid led a commission to resolve the Sistan issue, aware that Iran “laid claim to Sistan by virtue of a more ancient sovereignty than that of Ahmad Shah; and justified recent conquest and annexation, within its limits, as the mere assertion of dormant rights.”<sup>104</sup> Unrest in Sistan, however, forced Goldsmid to delay arbitration on the province and begin negotiations over Baluchistan instead. The change in plans meant that the Persian authorities in the capital would not take upon themselves the responsibility of ordering to proceed with the Makran question in the absence of the shah, who was touring Europe at the time.<sup>105</sup>

Goldsmid was no stranger to his task. He discerned the animosity that estranged the Baluch from the Persian and cited an earlier traveler, Lieutenant Pottinger, to assert that in recent years there had been no “intercourse” between the Persians and the Baluchis. On visiting Gwatar in 1864, Goldsmid had further remarked that “there was an unmistakable dread and dislike of the Gajar in the place,” and that the villagers spoke “in a language which might have been idiomatic Persian but that there was something of Baluchi in the substitution of *khub hasti* for *khush amadi*.”<sup>106</sup> However, even then, because the Baluch regions had changed hands so often, Goldsmid had admitted to the difficulties in assigning territorial ownership.

A Persian traveler to Baluchistan, Firuz Mirza Farman Farma, who had visited the lands in 1872 shortly after the conclusion of Goldsmid’s visit, offered a more pacific portrait of the region—an indication that cultural boundaries were perhaps not as easy to demarcate as Goldsmid had implied. Curiously silent about the findings of the Perso-Afghan boundary commission, perhaps out of necessity and discretion, Farman Farma focused instead on the ways in which the government might improve its relations with the Baluchis and effectively integrate them with the center. The poverty and dilapidation of Baluchi areas did not escape Firuz Mirza. He frequently pointed to regions suitable for development, suggesting ways to increase the productivity of the crown lands.<sup>107</sup> He even appended geographic illustrations to supplement his commentary. These depictions painted a full picture of those largely ignored territories, offering visual proof of their potential for development. By highlighting the promise of these lands, Firuz Mirza hoped to arouse the monarch to action. In

addition, he assembled a list of grievances by the inhabitants, again as a way to pressure the central government to address its citizens' complaints.

By the time talks over Sistan began, the Iranians had already grown accustomed to British arbitration of their boundaries. Again, Iran attempted to put forth its "natural and universally-acknowledged right" to Sistan, drawing on ancient claims to verify Nasir al-Din's hereditary ownership of the region: "Jamshid married the daughter of the Prince of Sistan, and had a son named Ahut, whose son was Gurhasp, whose son was Nariman, whose son was Sam, the father of Zal, and grandfather of Rostam . . . Sistan claims to be the scene of battle between Kai Khusru and Afrasiab . . . [and] during the 425 years of the Sasani Kings . . . I find that Sistan was included with Khurasan and Karman."<sup>108</sup> Persian mytho-history served as another useful device for fortifying Iran's territorial claims. The *Shāhnāmah*, which was in general circulation at this time because of its frequent printing in India and Iran, became an essential geographical source for Persian irredentists, as the preceding passage suggests.<sup>109</sup> These texts embodied the lore of the land and supplied proof, despite their mythical character, of the Iranian right to ownership of disputed domains by focusing attention on Iran's formerly expansive possessions. The Sistan negotiations also recalled the mythical rivalry between Iran and Turan. If Zal and Rostam, Iran's greatest heroes, came from Sistan, could there be any doubt that Sistan was unquestionably Iranian? But to no avail. This time, there was no Rostam to come to the rescue, nor did there appear a master Bowman like Arash to swing an arrow delineating Iran's frontier at the Oxus River. In the end, even mythology would not sway British diplomats, leaving Iranian Sistan bereft of its pre-Islamic dominions.

If the boundary negotiations accomplished anything for the Iranians, it was in providing them with an excuse for mining myth and history to preserve Iran's precious domains. The proceedings unleashed ardent cultural sentiments among the Iranian negotiators, who struggled to protect their identity and the territory that embodied it. Their discussions showed that the ethnic diversity of the Iranian population was never denied by Qajar travelers and statesmen, but ethnicity alone did not deny certain populations Iranian citizenship. Rather, land itself defined "Iranian," and the inhabitants of the Iranian lands, regardless of their ethnic origin, were considered subjects of the Iranian state—or, more precisely, the *ra'īyat* of the shah's *mulk*.

These boundaries, though bearing the imprimatur of the great powers, were not immune to trespassing. Tribal unrest marked the political life of the borderlands for several decades, occasionally raising hopes that the boundaries might after all be stretched beyond defined limits. Though the eternal dream for empire lurked somewhere in the minds of Iranian statesmen, for the moment recognition of its collapse became inevitable. In 1868, even before the fate of Sistan had been decided, Mirza Fath Ali Akhundzadah already grieved for the destruction of empire. Describing, as Hamd Allah Mustawfi had once done, the frontiers of old Iran, bounded "in the north by the River Jayhun and the Aral Sea and the port of Darband, in the south by the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, in the east by the River Sutlej between Sind and Hindustan, and in the west by the Bosphorus," he went on to deplore the present condition of things: "Alas, oh Iran, what has become of that government, that grandeur, that might, that prosperity?"<sup>110</sup>



## GLIMPSES OF GLORY

Failing to fulfill its manifest destiny, Iran turned instead to promoting the territory it controlled. Already in 1842 the Russian Orientalist, N. Berezine, had drawn up a plan of Tehran, the Qajar capital. In 1857–58, Augustus Krziz, one of the instructors of the Dar al-Furun, designed a blueprint of Tehran. The proper use of public space could enhance the prominence of the capital as the seat of the monarchy and reinforce the resplendence of the sovereign gracing its throne. If the monarch could not control the universe, then the center of the universe would shift to enable him to remain in command of his realm. Nasir al-Din took the decision to tear down the old walls of Tehran in 1867.<sup>111</sup> Commenting on the change, Lord Curzon remarked that “after being twenty years upon the throne, it appears to have occurred to him [Nasir al-Din] that the ‘Point of Adoration (*Kibleh*) of the Universe’ was framed in a somewhat inadequate setting.”<sup>112</sup> The students of the Dar al-Funun worked out the details of the plan under the guidance of ‘Abd al-Ghaffar Najm al-Mulk, who published his map of Tehran in 1890. The depiction of ancient Iranian heroes became common in reenvisaging the capital. The feats of ancient heroes such as Rustam were portrayed alongside those of modern Persian warriors.<sup>113</sup>

Fascination with the land inspired the monarch himself. Nasir al-Din traveled to various regions of Iran during his reign, from Gilan and Mazandaran to Khurasan and Iraq-i ‘Ajam. These journeys exhibited Nasir al-Din’s personal interest in his domains. In fulfilling his kingly responsibilities, and in hopes of integrating the country, he recognized the necessity of acquiring firsthand knowledge about the *mamālik* he sought to protect. The trips took the monarch through familiar stomping grounds as well as through little-known locales. He made myriad observations about the physical geography of the land, its people, and their customs, and even sketched maps of his provinces. In reading the monarch’s travelogues, one gains an understanding of the elements that seemed to tie the population of the rustic villages to the denizens of the capital. During his trip to Iraq-i ‘Ajam, Nasir al-Din and his entourage observed the Nowruz and religious ceremonies in the month of Muharram, for example, even on the road.<sup>114</sup> Nature, it seemed, failed to fire the monarch’s imagination, even if it did capture his attention. Nasir al-Din’s narrative lacked a poetic flair, imbued more with insipid details regarding the physical geography of the land than with colorful portraits of the landscape. The wealth of information gleaned on the road, however, did much to abate the monotony of style. These chronicles served as textual sketches of the provinces, and the simplicity of language helped to disseminate the newly acquired information for public consumption.

Travel and the writing of travelogues, in response to the monarch’s interest, attained a new fervor in Nasir al-Din’s reign. Though often sanctioned by the government, these journeys nonetheless opened the eyes of the Iranian traveler to differences in cultures and to other social and political customs. The government’s endorsement of these journeys represented yet another effort to integrate the country. Realizing that lack of supervision in the periphery invited foreign intervention, which in turn resulted in loss of territory, the state made a concerted effort to learn about the borderlands and eventually to police them. In 1875, a Persian article translated by the

British on Baluchistan represented an effort to learn about the periphery. As the author, Mirza Mehdi Khan, commented: “this report is a great advance on those of old times. I do not remember having ever seen anything like it emanating from a Persian before.”<sup>115</sup> Though by no means comprehensive, this article was notable for its detail on the natural habitat as well as for identifying obscure villages. Despite the author’s claims, the article did not in any way supersede Farman Farma’s detailed narrative of his trip to the region three years earlier.

As Iranians journeyed within and outside Iran, they learned about the particularities of their country and culture. Even before the time of Nasir al-Din, Iranian migrants had become attuned to the cultural and social idiosyncrasies of others. When the grandson of Fath Ali Shah, Riza Quli Mirza, had traveled to Europe between the years 1834 and 1836, he had commented on the peculiar European custom he had encountered: the use of passports by everyone alike, whether prince or pauper, and the detainment of individuals lacking them.<sup>116</sup> Yet by mid-century, passports had become more common.

Instruction in geography at the Dar al-Funun, like travel, became another valuable way to disseminate knowledge about the land. The discipline, originally taught by the Austrian scholar Augustus Krziz, developed under the direction of Najm al-Mulk, himself a graduate of the Dar al-Funun.<sup>117</sup> In 1880, Zill al-Sultan, the governor of Isfahan, toured the Dar al-Funun. His stops included a visit to the school’s state library, which contained several geographical maps. As a token of respect, Jaʿfar Quli Khan, the brigadier general, offered him a map of Iran, “which is the latest map to be drawn in this age.”<sup>118</sup> Though no copies of the map were printed in local newspapers, the gift—the only one given the governor by the instructors—suggested that cartography, an outgrowth of geography, had matured into a thriving new discipline at the Dar al-Funun, and that efforts were made to refine Iranian cartography for cultural and diplomatic purposes.

Mastering geography had commercial purposes, as Najm al-Mulk discovered. When the commercial potential of the Karun River was under discussion, Nasir al-Din instructed Najm al-Mulk to take a trip to Khuzistan in 1881 to survey the region. Whatever its intended aims, his trip unearthed more than just technical data about the topography of the land, as Najm al-Mulk himself remarked in the opening of his travelogue.<sup>119</sup> His digressions about the residents of Khuzistan revealed the extent of Perso-Arab distrust. Interestingly, though he considered Khuzistan an indisputable part of Iran and its Arab inhabitants Iranian subjects, he showed a preference for the ʿ*ajam*. Indeed, he recommended that more ʿ*ajam* populate the province so that their numbers would exceed those of its Arab inhabitants. As he explained, “We and these Arabs are two tribes: Muslim and Shiʿi, *raʿiyat* and subject of the government of Iran, but even so [we] deeply loathe each other.”<sup>120</sup>

Observing that the ʿ*ajam*, out of fear, did not involve themselves in farming the province, Najm al-Mulk implored the government to address the situation. “Arabs,” he wrote, “did not possess agricultural science.”<sup>121</sup> Contending that agriculture would fail to flourish if remained in Arab hands, he invited ʿ*ajam* participation in the province’s cultivation. Moreover, because Najm al-Mulk recognized the potential prosperity and relative autonomy of Khuzistan, he warned the government to make an effort to explore the resources of the province and to watch over its intrepid shaykhs.<sup>122</sup>

Najm al-Mulk's contemporary, Muhammad Hasan Khan I<sup>c</sup>timad al-Saltanah, a prolific writer and a distinguished luminary of the shah's court, showed a similar interest in geography and Iranian space by undertaking his *Mir<sup>2</sup>āt al-Buldān*. Like other intellectuals of his generation Muhammad Hasan Khan had studied at the Dar al-Funun before launching his career. In 1863, he traveled to Paris to further his studies, an occasion that enabled him to master French and to engage in the cultural discourse of 19th-century Europe. In 1885, he joined the Asiatic societies of France, Britain, and Russia.<sup>123</sup>

Published in 1876, more than a decade after the author's visit to Paris, the *Mir<sup>2</sup>āt* provided an account of Nasir al-Din Shah's reign as well as a historical dictionary of "Iran-zamin," though the project remained unfinished because of the dearth of geographical information available.<sup>124</sup> Yaqut's *Mu<sup>c</sup>jam al-buldān*, Hamd Allah Mustawfi's *Nuzhat al-Qulūb*, travelogues, and other relevant Western works informed his study, which was motivated in part "because it is my country." As the title suggests, *Mir<sup>2</sup>āt* was a literary reflection of the land, and like all mirrors, it was intended to magnify the space represented in order to produce an image of an "Iran" that swelled beyond its actual borders. Revealing his biases like his medieval predecessor, al-Istakhri, I<sup>c</sup>timad al-Saltanah alleged that Iran surpassed all other ancient countries in privilege (*maziyyat*) and antiquity (*qidmat*).<sup>125</sup>

Geography, like other sciences, I<sup>c</sup>timad al-Saltanah believed, would bring progress. Semi-official journals that remained under his supervision, and therefore reflected his interests, began to feature articles on physical and political geography.<sup>126</sup> In a series of informative pieces in *I<sup>t</sup>tilā<sup>c</sup>*, the authors explained the relevance of the discipline while providing rudimentary geographic instruction. Deeming geography a science whose importance was self-evident, the article claimed that lack of geographical knowledge would hinder heads of states in their "political and land-related affairs." Similarly, merchants stood to benefit from geographical knowledge, as they could better market their goods in foreign lands with such information.<sup>127</sup>

Qajar intellectuals cultivated a passion not only for the contemporary geography of the land but for its ancient counterpart. Such reflections became the motivation behind I<sup>c</sup>timad al-Saltanah's *Durar al-tijān fi tārikh-i banī ashkān*. Imitating his British counterpart, George Rawlinson, I<sup>c</sup>timad al-Saltanah sought to compose a history that would rival Rawlinson's *Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, and it is not surprising that in the process he adopted Rawlinson's Western chronology.<sup>128</sup> Considered by some a translation of Rawlinson's work, *Durar* was nonetheless the first extensive Persian-language book on the subject and a reference guide for future historians such as Hasan Pirniya, who would contribute to the pre-Islamic revival of Reza Shah's reign.<sup>129</sup>

*Durar* came with a glossary of terms. Upon completing the tome, I<sup>c</sup>timad al-Saltanah realized that few would be able to associate the current names of territories with their previous appellations. He therefore appended a geographical dictionary to edify "the sons of his nation" by his findings. The history and culture of the land, as I<sup>c</sup>timad al-Saltanah intimated, were no longer topics consumed exclusively by the king. Rather, they took into account a broad, though by no means all-inclusive, audience that could be unified, enlightened, and made patriotic by absorbing this knowledge.

Drawing on the works of the French geographer Jean Baptiste Bourignon d'Anville and the German scholar Heinrich Kiepert, both of whom had tried to identify the geographical locations mentioned in classical Greek and Latin texts, I<sup>c</sup>timad al-Saltanah pursued a similar undertaking in hopes of determining the present location of the various regions of ancient Iran.<sup>130</sup> His was an impressive and unprecedented task, as I<sup>c</sup>timad al-Saltanah himself observed. That he had considered it so significant to propagate knowledge of the land, its past as well as its present, confirmed the purpose of territory in engendering love and pride in one's country or, literally, in one's historical space.

I<sup>c</sup>timad al-Saltanah's discussions of geography displayed familiarity with the discipline as it had evolved in the West but contained surprisingly sparse discussion of pre-Islamic, Indian, or Islamic contributions. The development of cartography also intrigued him, but again he made little effort to trace the progression of the discipline in Islamic lands, focusing on Greek contributions to cartography.<sup>131</sup> Toward the end of his explanation he did make a small effort to incorporate Persian notions of geography: for example, the belief that the three sons of Fereydu—Salm, Tur, and Iraj—ruled over Rum, Turan, and Iran.

I<sup>c</sup>timad al-Saltanah's writings forged a direct link between land and language. While composing his geographical history of the land, he grew conscious of the language he employed to convey his ideas—a *fārsī zabān* that in its current form had merged with foreign languages, giving rise to an unfortunate *mélange* that had literally “narrowed” the field of Persian words. Land could best be described in a language that represented it, in this case pure Persian, and I<sup>c</sup>timad al-Saltanah did much to encourage the press and the Translation Ministry to follow suit. He also regretted the absence of a language academy capable of addressing this problem, no doubt contemplating an establishment akin to the Académie Française.<sup>132</sup> Language, like geography and history, could also enhance the image of imperial Iran by manifesting the breadth of Iranian linguistic presence. I<sup>c</sup>timad al-Saltanah, for example, considered all Persian speakers in Turkistan, Hindustan, and other Asian countries the audience for his book, not simply their brethren in Iran.

Though I<sup>c</sup>timad al-Saltanah showed sensitivity to the use of non-Persian words, especially Arabic or Turkish ones, he made an exception for European terms. His veneration of European culture explained his efforts to infuse his works with Western concepts. He considered it a sign of erudition, not a mark of mediocrity, to lace his narrative with French or English expressions. When discussing a cholera epidemic, for instance, he employed the European term to refer to the disease but appended its Persian equivalent, *vabā*, to distinguish between the vocabulary of the elite and the “common” term used by the masses.<sup>133</sup>

Mirza Fath Ali Akhundzadah, who had for years attempted to sell the Iranian establishment on his ideas for language reform, also saw the connection between geography and language. Arguing that Iran had declined because of its inability to acquire technical and scientific knowledge, he proposed extensive revisions in the alphabet. As he explained, “how can one learn geography when the names of locales and places are impossible to specify with Islamic letters? Who can read Jam-i Jam and declare where the precise location of a place is?”<sup>134</sup> Though Akhundzadah concerned himself more with language than with land, he nonetheless understood that geography, like other disciplines, required an accessible language for its dissemination.

Archaeology, another field of growing interest, offered similar connection to the grandeur and history of the land. The 19th century witnessed the emergence of archaeological missions to Iran. The Gardane mission brought French explorers, among them Captain Truilhier, who surveyed the ancient Persian ruins.<sup>135</sup> A concession granting the French the rights to seek antiques and artifacts in 1897 also reflected the state's continued interest in reviving the past. Yet reports of the most newsworthy discoveries in Iran came from Sir Henry Rawlinson, who deciphered the Achaeminid inscriptions at Behistun.<sup>136</sup> Iʿtimad al-Saltanah ranked Rawlinson among the eminent scholars of his time, pointing out that among his many honors, Rawlinson had also received the medal of the Lion and the Sun from the shah for his accomplishments.

While Iranian intellectuals such as Iʿtimad al-Saltanah lauded such efforts, they did not always sit well with the local population. Following Rawlinson's example, William Kennett Loftus, a geologist, traveled to Iran to survey the Persian ruins at Susa (Shush) as a member of the Perso-Ottoman Boundary Commission. The villagers he encountered did not always encourage his archaeological endeavors. Fear of the unknown intensified their distrust of the foreigner. As Loftus explained, "The feeling of violent animosity excited against the Firengi, however, did not readily subside."<sup>137</sup> Loftus eventually received the shah's permission, but suspicions nonetheless surrounded him in Shush, where a rumor had spread that his excavations might unleash a cholera epidemic.<sup>138</sup> He did, however, acknowledge some support from the villagers once they understood the purpose of his diggings.

The marvels built on the land conferred a holiness upon the soil that had sired them, so that decades later, Iranians in search of new treasures would pursue what the Orientalists had begun. In 1883, an anonymous traveler to Fars recorded his admiration when visiting the "awe-inspiring" vestiges of the Takht-i Jamshid. As he confessed, "as soon as my eyes fell upon its columns and its ruined walls I was dumb-struck and astonished for several minutes as to the strength, tools, and money with which the builder of this edifice erected this structure."<sup>139</sup> This observer went on to describe in some detail the vast stairways, the human figures, and the damage wreaked upon the animal reliefs. He concluded by relating an anecdote about Alexander the Great, who in a drunken stupor had ordered that the edifice be burned. Although Alexander had supposedly changed his mind, he was not spared the curse of this visitor for the ensuing destruction: "May God sadden the soul of Alexander."<sup>140</sup>

Muhammad Nasir Fursat al-Dawlah Shirazi, who would participate in framing the cultural discourse of the Constitutional period, was another figure to show an interest in surveying the ruins of Fars. In the 1890s, he embarked on his journey and compiled the results of his research in a collection entitled, *Āsār-i ʿajam*. In his preface, Fursat al-Dawlah described Iran as a "vast kingdom" containing the provinces of Iraq, Khurasan, Tabaristan, Fars, Azerbaijan, and Kirman, among others. Showing familiarity with Persian mythology, Fursat al-Dawlah defined "Iran" as the name of Hushang, the ruler of the land. When Hushang, "the son or grandson or brother of Siamak," passed the scepter to his son, Pars, the provinces were collectively referred to as "Pars" in honor of the new sovereign.<sup>141</sup> Fursat al-Dawlah's explanations of terminology differed somewhat from Hamd Allah Mustawfi's, but the creative process of narration allowed for the conflation of myth and history, giving rise to new means of cultural analysis. What mattered was Fursat al-Dawlah's inventive blend of myth and history to strengthen the elusive ties between antiquity and modernity. Land, a

perennial feature of both the past and the present, helped to bridge the link between the empire and the nation.

*Āsār-i ʿajam* received a positive “review” in the newspaper *Habl al-Matin*. In 1900, the paper carried an article describing the work and its “refreshing” effect on the “hearts of Iranians.”<sup>142</sup> An organized and detailed study, *Āsār-i ʿajam* contained approximately “fifty pages of illustrations of ancient ruins belonging to the reigns of Keyan and Parthian, and Sasanian kings.” The article noted with sarcasm that little remained of these ruins, and that portions had been stolen by visitors to these sites. Still, the illustrations displayed the glorious past, offering palpable and public proof of Iran’s antiquity and former grandeur.

Historiography, like archaeology, contributed its share to this cultural revival. The interest in oral transmission of Iran’s history was already popular in the 1850s. While traveling in Iran, Count Gobineau had noticed that the Persians perceived their country as “very ancient, and as they say themselves, perhaps the most ancient in the world that had a regular government.”<sup>143</sup> He remarked further that the literate classes alone did not subscribe to this “truth,” but that “people from the lowest class . . . return to this [matter] voluntarily and make it the subject of their ordinary conversations.”<sup>144</sup> Gobineau’s observation of Iranians’ love for their past, as demonstrated by their twin loyalty to Anushirvan and ʿAli, persuaded this Frenchman, himself an offspring of the 1789 revolution (albeit a reluctant one), to refer to Iran as a “nation” as early as the 1850s.

If nationhood implied possessing a tradition of history and historiography, as Gobineau suggested, then Qajar Iran met that criterion. Qajar historians were captivated with ancient Persian emperors, if not always with their contemporary kings. Rather than composing panegyrics honoring their monarch, or inditing instructive accounts of their sovereign’s rule, later Qajar historians, represented in large part by Iʿtimad al-Saltanah, offered instead routine chronicles citing innocuous court activities. News briefs, it seemed, had supplanted the grand narrative. Perhaps this shift occurred partly in the interest of writing positivist history, which applied new scholarly standards to historiography. Still, one cannot ignore that the change also coincided with Iran’s economic and territorial troubles.

Because Qajar Iran, with its failed territorial intrigues, could not always boast of heroic feats, its historians vaunted the exploits of earlier royal heroes instead. Lengthy histories attempting to reach beyond the quotidian often concerned the far past. Examples of such accounts included Iʿtimad al-Saltanah’s *Durar al-tijān fi tārikh banī ashkān*, published in 1890–92; Muhammad Husayn Furughi’s *Tārikh-i salāṭīn-i sāāsāni*, produced in 1895–97; and Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani’s *Āyinah-i sikandari*, printed in 1906.<sup>145</sup> In his work, Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani explained that “a nation that does not know its history and the tools for its advancement and decline is like a child who does not know his father and ancestors.”<sup>146</sup> To historians lamenting the loss of empire, the present appeared especially grim. The memories of imperial Iran heartened those intellectuals, not the maladies of Qajar Iran.

## CONCLUSION

Qajar intellectuals evoked a memory of Iran embedded in the land. “Iranshahr” or “Iran-zamin”—the terms that defined the dominions of the Sasanians—were used in

their truncated form to refer once again to Qajar territory. Hopes of Iranian territorial expansion enthralled early Qajar writers, as the specter of Aqa Muhammad Khan haunted the capital. However, Tehran, though touting a *dār al-khilāfa*, failed to become the imperial capital that Isfahan had once been. Despite repeated efforts, the shattered frontiers of the old Persian empires could not be cobbled together. Fiercely contested by more powerful neighbors, Iran's frontier terrain gradually shrank as a result of this unequal rivalry. Shorn of its former borders, the new diminished territory no longer spanned Central Asia and the Caucasus down to the Persian Gulf. A more compact space, the new Iran had lost its imperial luster but had in the process given birth to another geographical identity: the nation. Modern empires, Iranian intellectuals suggest, grew out of strong, civilized nations. A powerful nation then might become the eventual path to empire.

Modern Iran, like other nation-states, took shape through the fluctuations of fragile frontiers. By regarding the national process primarily as a geographical activity, this schema affirms the centrality of land and frontiers in nation formation. While scholars have overlooked the long-standing tendency of societies to separate various communities through territorial delineation and to label territories as ethnic categories, the present study has built on historical and geographical precedents to explain the continuity between past and present forms of territorial and political demarcation. By doing so, it does not dispute the distinctly modern features, such as citizenship and the press, that distinguish nationalism from other forms of territorial delineation. Yet inquiries into questions of identity and space in the prenationalist era enhance understanding of similar patterns in the modern age, providing useful paradigms for framing the national debate. In the Iranian context, "fragile frontiers" observes nation formation through the shifts in Iran's territorial, political, and cultural boundaries.

The discipline of geography, because of its connection to the land, surfaced as a popular way to emphasize the cultural past of Iran and its inhabitants. Qajar works, drawing on advanced mapping techniques, forged a new image of Iran. This modern perception of the globe marked the progression from a cosmographic to a cartographic outlook, reinforcing the image of a diminished "national" Iran. Fear of disappearance from the world map led to a desire to protect and promote the guarded domains. A nationalist rhetoric based on land therefore emerged to emphasize the need to defend and define the frontiers of the homeland (*vaṭan*).<sup>147</sup>

The process of shaping boundaries focused attention on territory as the source of Iranian, as opposed to Persian, identity. It promoted land and geography as compelling criteria for Iranianhood.<sup>148</sup> The "closed" frontier assembled peoples from varying ethnic backgrounds under the unequivocal rule of one sovereign for the first time.<sup>149</sup> Whereas before, nature had limited the movement of peoples and local rulers had obscured matters of sovereignty, by the end of the century new treaties and great-power politics had led to a redefinition of geographical authority and, at times, an arbitrary delineation of cultural boundaries. The closing of the frontier went hand in hand with an attempt at centralization by the government. The imperial court had finally recognized that the center's survival depended on the cooperation of the periphery. As the monarch's domains diminished, Iranians voiced their calls for nationhood. No longer just a *mulk* belonging to the king, but rather a *millat* with invested citizens, Iran had recast itself.<sup>150</sup>

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup>In this translation of *Hudūd al-ʿālam*, V. Minorsky has used the terms "regions" for *hudūd* and "country" for *nāhiyat*. Although it would have served my purpose well to have borrowed Minorsky's choice of words, I have preferred instead to employ the terms "boundaries" for *hudūd* and "region" for *nāhiyat*, because they strike me as more precise equivalents of the concepts described. See *Hudūd al-ʿālam*, trans. V. Minorsky (London: Luzac & Co., 1937), 82.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, 82. Gerald R. Tibbetts makes the interesting observation that despite *Hudūd al-ʿālam*'s textual description of geography, "There was probably no attempt to include a set of maps, in spite of the numerous references to the Balkhi school geographers." See Gerald R. Tibbetts, "Later Cartographic Developments," in *The History of Cartography*, ed. J. B. Harley and David Woodward (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 2:139.

<sup>3</sup>Indeed, the criteria employed by this medieval scholar do not much differ from those used by modern thinkers to justify the existence of their nations. For example, Nicholas Ziadeh has asserted that "the Arabs are a nation which has been fashioned from three elements, namely race, habitat, and history." Similarly, Ziya Gökalp has claimed that "those who speak the same language are usually descendants of the same stock, and thus a nation also means an ethnic unity. . . . As language plays a part in deciding religious affiliation, so religion plays a part in determining membership in a nationality." Both excerpts can be found in *Nationalism in Asia and Africa*, ed. Elie Kedourie (New York and Cleveland: New American Library, 1970), 294, 200, respectively. Also, the Zionist Jacob Klatzkin described his views as such: "Jewish nationalism does not deny Jewish spiritual values—it only refuses to raise them to the level of a criterion by which the nation is defined. It refuses to define being a Jew as something subjective, as a faith, but prefers to base it on something objective: on land and language. These are the basic categories of national being." See *The Zionist Idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader*, ed. Arthur Hertzberg (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co. and Herzl Press, 1959), 318.

<sup>4</sup>S. Maqbul Ahmad, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new edition, s.v. "Djuhrāfiya." Also Henry Corbin, *Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth*, trans. Nancy Pearson (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977), 3–35.

<sup>5</sup>Abu Ishāq al-Fārsī al-Iṣṭakhrī, *Mamālik va Masālik*, ed. Īraj Afshār (Tehran: Bungāh-i Tarjumah va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1340/1961), 5. This is a Persian translation of the original Arabic. Al-Iṣṭakhrī specifies that *mamālik* refers to kingdoms, of which one is called a *mamlikat*.

<sup>6</sup>The 10th century saw a renewed interest in Persian history and culture. Firdausi worked on his famous epic, the *Shāhnamah*, and the Shu'ubiyah movement took off, as well. According to Tibbetts, it was also at this time that the Samanids sponsored al-Balkhi and al-Istakhrī. For more on this point, see Gerald R. Tibbetts, "The Balkhi School of Geographers," in *History of Cartography*, 2:115.

<sup>7</sup>Ḥamd Allāh Mustawfī, *Nuzhat al-qulūb*, ed. Muḥammad Dabir Siyāqī (Tehran, 1336/1957). For an English translation, see Guy Le Strange, *The Geographical Part of the Nuzhat al-qulūb* (London: Luzac & Co., 1919), 23. Mustawfī refers to *Masālik al-Mamālik* in several instances, which might explain his familiarity with the notion of "Iransahr." For one example, see Le Strange, *Geographical Part*, 34.

<sup>8</sup>Le Strange, *Geographical Part*, 23. For the Persian, see Mustawfī, *Nuzhat al-qulūb*, 22–23.

<sup>9</sup>Here I take issue with Benedict Anderson, who neglects to explore the continuity between medieval and modern attempts to define territories: cf. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1983; repr. 1991).

<sup>10</sup>Le Strange, *Geographical Part*, 23–24. In the Persian, see Mustawfī, *Nuzhat al-qulūb*, 23.



<sup>11</sup>As Le Strange observes in his preface to the *Geographical Part* (p. x), Sunnism was dominant in many parts of Iran as late as the 14th century, so Shi'ism was not a strong component of his identity.

<sup>12</sup>I view maps as essential texts and vital empirical data in my effort to trace the origins of Iranian nationalism. For a discussion of maps as texts, refer to J. B. Harley, "Historical Geography and the Cartographic Illusion," *Journal of Historical Geography*, 15, 1 (January 1989): 80–91. See also idem, "Deconstructing the Map," *Cartographia*, 26, 2 (1989): 1–20.

<sup>13</sup>Cyrus Ala'i notes that this convention is in accord with Ptolemaic ideas, because Ptolemy did not use the word "Persia" to refer to the whole area. "Instead, he limited himself to including the names of the provinces, or more accurately, the states which together formed Persia." See Cyrus Ala'i, "Persia or Iran? What Do the Maps Say?" *Map Collector* 70 (Spring 1995): 12.

<sup>14</sup>Tibbetts, "The Balkhi School of Geographers," 115. For more on the historical geography of Iran, see W. Barthold, *An Historical Geography of Iran* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984).

<sup>15</sup>Le Strange, *Geographical Part*, 111. For the Persian, see Mustawfi, *Nuzhat al-qulūb*, 135. In Persian, the expression used is *mulūk-i Furs*.

<sup>16</sup>Le Strange, *Geographical Part*, 111. For the Persian, see Mustawfi, *Nuzhat al-qulūb*, 135.

<sup>17</sup>Ala'i discusses the earliest versions of such maps in "Persia or Iran?" 14. Also, see an anonymous map ca. 1787 and F. de Wit's map of Persia, Armenia, Anatolia, and Arabia, ca. 1690, at Yale University Map Collection. Another map of Arabia and Persia by M. Sanlon, ca. 1693, brings together the Iranian lands and refers to the area as the "Kingdom of Persia." A ca. 1753 map of the Ottoman Empire, Persia and Uzbekistan labels the same provinces as Persia. This map was made by R. de Vaugondy; it is located, along with Sanlon's map, in Yale's Map Collection.

<sup>18</sup>Anderson's observation about Thai maps is not applicable to the following case, because Müteferrika's print did indeed mark the border between the Ottoman Empire and Iran: cf. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 170–73.

<sup>19</sup>For a discussion of this period in Ottoman–Iranian relations, see Robert W. Olson, *The Siege of Mosul and Ottoman–Persian Relations, 1718–1743* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975).

<sup>20</sup>A print of Müteferrika's map can be found at the Yale Map Collection.

<sup>21</sup>In the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 1st ed., s.v. "Persia," the Orientalist J. H. Kramers claimed that "the use of the word *Irān* for the modern kingdom of Persia is probably not older than the 19th century, when the Persians began to call themselves *Irāniyān*." Historical works from the medieval and Safavid periods, however, demonstrate that the term "Iran" was in use well before the 19th century. See Iskandar Beg Munshī, *Tārīkh-i 'ālam arā-yi 'abbāsī*, ed. İraj Afshār (Tehran: Chapkhānah-i Musavī, 1334/1955), 1:35, 2:712, 3:1020, as some examples.

<sup>22</sup>Mostafa Vaziri, *Iran as Imagined Nation* (New York: Paragon House, 1993).

<sup>23</sup>Cf. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archeology of Human Knowledge* (New York, Random House, 1970). Foucault argues that the "codes of a culture" determine the parameters within which each person functions. This process of encoding explains the order upon which knowledge was understood in society. Mapping, like other forms of cultural encoding, transmitted a particular order and perception of the world meant to reinforce the mapmaker's bias.

<sup>24</sup>See Ernest Gellner, *Thought and Change* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964), 169. Also, Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983), 47–49, and Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6. Also, Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), although Hobsbawm's introductory essay on inventing traditions is more relevant to my observations. See Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983). It is puzzling that Anderson, Hobsbawm, and Gellner have made such little use of geographical data to trace the birth of nation-states, which are, after all, geographic entities, though Anderson has highlighted the importance of cartography and the census in discussing nationalism. In addition, each neglects to address the importance of the academic discipline of geography in the rise of nationalism. Geography contributed just as much as, if not more than, history and historiography to whetting people's nationalist longings, yet it remains a discipline overlooked and understudied by theorists and historians of nationalism. Also, Peter Sahlins makes some comparable observations on the frontier issue, although our arguments diverge in several important ways because of the different geographical and historical perspectives we have on the subject. See Peter Sahlins, *Boundaries: The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989).

<sup>25</sup>“Frontier” refers both to a boundary line and to the periphery in the Persian context. The term *marz*, corresponding to the English word “frontier,” occurred less frequently in the 19th century, while *ḥudūd* or *sarḥad* were more common than *marz* when referring to borders. *Marz* gradually gains popularity as Iran’s boundaries grow politicized and as nationalization and an emphasis on the Persian language set in.

<sup>26</sup>For further discussion of my theoretical approach to frontiers and nationalism, as well as of research into cartography and geography in Iran, see my article, “The Frontier Phenomenon: Perceptions of the Land in Iranian Nationalism,” *Critique*, forthcoming.

<sup>27</sup>George Nathaniel Curzon, *Frontiers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907), 8. Curzon goes on to distinguish between natural and artificial frontiers, in particular “astronomical frontiers.” Noting again the centrality of frontiers, he states that in modern times “The primitive forms [of frontiers], except where resting upon indestructible natural features, have nearly everywhere been replaced by boundaries, the more scientific character of which, particularly where it rests upon treaty stipulations, and is sanctified by International Law, is undoubtedly a preventive of misunderstanding, a check to territorial cupidity, and an agency of peace” (p. 48). However, he reveals his usual biases by claiming that “in Asiatic countries it would be true to say that demarcation has never taken place except under European pressure and by the intervention of European agents” (p. 49). In addition, Curzon notes, the creation of the International Tribunal at Hague “will probably become in an increasing degree the referee and arbiter of the Frontier disputes of the future” (p. 53).

<sup>28</sup>Muḥammad Hāshim Aṣaf Rustam al-Ḥukamā, *Rustam al-Tavārikh* (Tehran: Chapkhānah-i Sipīhr, 1978), 454–55.

<sup>29</sup>Ḥasan Fasaʿi, *History of Persia Under Qajar Rule*, trans. H. Busse (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1972), 65. For the Persian, see Ḥasan Fasaʿi, *Fārsnāmah-i Nāširi*, ed. Maṣṣūr Rastigār Fasaʿi (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Amīr Kabīr, 1367/1988), 1:660–61. Busse’s translation is somewhat liberal here.

<sup>30</sup>Fasaʿi, *History of Persia*, 66. For the Persian, see Fasaʿi, *Fārsnāmah-i Nāširi*, 1:661. Busse rightly points out in his edition (p. 66, n. 261) that Irakli was referred to as wali “because he was considered as a vassal of Persia, which the rulers of Georgia had been in Safarid [sic] times.”

<sup>31</sup>Riẓā Qulī Khān Hidāyat, *Tārikh-i Rawzāt al-ṣafā-i Nāširi* (Qum, 1960), 9:4–5.

<sup>32</sup>Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān ʿIṭimād al-Salṭānah, *Khalṣah, mashhūr bi khwābnāmah*, ed. Maḥmūd Kāṭiraʿi (Tehran, 1357/1978), 23–33.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, 45–46.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 46–47. See also C. Amir-Mokri, “Redefining Iran’s Constitutional Revolution” (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1992), 25–28.

<sup>35</sup>It is interesting to note that this custom was not lost on foreigners. As George Fowler noticed, “The Persians have almost a sacred respect for their sovereign. . . . He is the Vicegerent of Omnipotence upon Earth . . . the Source of Majesty, of Grandeur, of Honour, and of Glory—whose Throne is the Stirrup of Heaven—Equal to the Sun, and Brother of the Moon and of the Stars—the King of Kings . . . Chief of the Most Excellent Seat of the Universe” and so on. George Fowler, *Three Years in Persia* (London: Henry Colburn, 1841), 2:12–13.

<sup>36</sup>Muḥammad Riẓā Naširi, *Asnād va Mukātabāt-i Tārikh-i (Qājāriya)* (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Kayhān, 1366/1987), 1:2–3, 7–8.

<sup>37</sup>Mirzā Buzurg (ʿĪsā) Qāʿim Maqām Farāhāni, *Jihādīya* (Tehran, 1974), 1–2, 9. See also the introduction by J. Qaʿim Maqami, 5–8.

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, 21. For more on the woman analogy, see p. 25.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, 24–25.

<sup>41</sup>For an English version of the treaty, see J. C. Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East: A Documentary Record, 1535–1914* (New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1956), 1:96–102. For discussions of the Russo-Persian Wars, see Muriel Atkin, *Russia and Iran, 1780–1828* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980); Hamid Algar, *Religion and State in Iran, 1785–1906: the Role of the ʿUlama in the Qajar Period* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969). For Persian accounts, see Jahāngīr Mirzā, *Tārikh-i naw* (Tehran, 1327/1948); Jamīl Quzanlu, *Jang-i dah ṣāliḥ yā jang-i avval-i Īrān va Rūs* (Tehran, 1315/1936); ʿAbd al-Razzāq Maftūn Dunbulī, *Maʿāthir Sulṭāniya*, ed. Ghulām Riẓā Ḥusayn Ṣadri Afshār, reprint edition (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Ibn Sina, 1972).

<sup>42</sup>Qāʿim Maqām Farāhāni, *Namihhā-yi siyāsi va tārikhī-yi sayyid al-uzarāʿ, Qāʿim Maqām Farāhāni* (Tehran: Dānishgāh-i Millī-yi Īrān, 1358/1979), p. 160.

<sup>43</sup>Abbas Amanat, "Russian Intrusion into the Guarded Domain: Reflections of a Qajar Statesman on European Expansion," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 113, 1 (1993): 35–56.

<sup>44</sup>See *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. "Abbas Mirza," in which Busse relates the competition 'Abbas Mirza faced from his brothers, who were rival claimants to the throne. 'Abbas Mirza expressed his frustration with his brothers explicitly in a letter addressed to Muhammad Mirza, urging his son to beware of familial rivalry. See Našir Najmī, *Īrān dar miyān-i tufān yā sharḥ-i zindagāni-yi 'Abbās Mirzā Nā'ib al-Saltānah va jang'hā-yi Īrān va Rūs* (Kanun-i Ma'rifat: n.p., n.d.), 330.

<sup>45</sup>For more on Qā'im Maqām, see Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān I'timād al-Saltānah, *Šadr al-tavāriḫh yā tāriḫh-i šudūr-i Qājār*, 2nd ed. (Tehran, 1978).

<sup>46</sup>Amanat, "Russian Intrusion," 38.

<sup>47</sup>Abū al-Qāsim Qā'im Maqām Farāhānī, *Munsha'āt-i Qā'im Maqām*, ed. J. Qā'im Maqāmī (Tehran, 1337/1958), 269–70.

<sup>48</sup>See Sayyid Badr al-Din Yaghmā'ī's introduction to *Divān-i Ash'ār-i Mirzā Abū al-Qāsim Qā'im Maqām Farāhānī*, ed. Sayyid Badr al-Din Yaghmā'ī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Sharq, 1366/1987), 6. For the *qasida*, see *ibid.*, 104–12. Also Amanat, "Russian Intrusion," 39.

<sup>49</sup>Qā'im Maqām Farāhānī, *Munsha'āt*, 71.

<sup>50</sup>Qā'im Maqām Farāhānī, *Divān*, vv. 1010–14. For a translation of these verses, see Amanat, "Russian Intrusion," 39. Also v. 999.

<sup>51</sup>Qā'im Maqām Farāhānī, *Divān*, 73. For a translation and further explanation of the *qasida*, see Amanat, "Russian Intrusion," 40–45.

<sup>52</sup>Mirzā Abū al-Qāsim Qā'im Maqām Farāhānī, *Namih'hā-yi parakandih-i Qā'im Maqām Farāhānī*, ed. Jahāngīr Qā'im Maqāmī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Bunyād-i Farhang-i Īrān, 1979), 2:55.

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, 73.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, 63. For more on Qā'im Maqām's writings regarding the situation after Griboedov's death, see *Munsha'āt*, 121–22, 127–28, 132–36.

<sup>55</sup>Qā'im Maqām, *Namih'hā-yi parakandah*, 19.

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*, 78–83, 84–90.

<sup>57</sup>*Ibid.*, 91–93.

<sup>58</sup>For a detailed description of Iran's frontier with Russia, see William Monteith, *Notes on Georgia and the New Russian Conquest beyond the Caucasus* (n.p., n.d.).

<sup>59</sup>William Kennett Loftus, *Travels and Researches in Chaldea and Susiana* (London: James Nisbet and Co., 1857), 1.

<sup>60</sup>For translations of the texts of the treaties, see Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East*, 21–23, 51–52, respectively.

<sup>61</sup>Cf. Peter Sahlins, *Boundaries: The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), 102. Sahlins's observations have helped me to construct some of my arguments for Iran.

<sup>62</sup>Naširī, *Asnād va Mukātabāt-i Tāriḫh-i (Qājāriya)*, 1:26, 43.

<sup>63</sup>Manūchehr Parsadust, *Zamīnih'hā-yi Ikhtilāfāt-i Īrān va 'Irāq, 1514–1980* (n.p.: Shirkat-i Sahamī-yi Intishār, 1364/1985), 57–59. For a Persian translation of the Treaty of 1823, see *ibid.*, 213–17. For the second treaty, see 218–24. Also, Ādamiyat, *Īrān va Amīr Kabīr* (Tehran: Chap-i Pirūz, 1334/1955).

<sup>64</sup>*The Iran–Iraq Border: 1840–1958*, ed. Richard Schofield (Buckinghamshire: Archive Editions, 1989), 1:84. See also Schofield's introduction, xxxix–xlvi.

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*, 1:101. For an overview of the May talks, see 1:93–103.

<sup>66</sup>*Ibid.*, 1:104–8.

<sup>67</sup>*Ibid.*, 1:108.

<sup>68</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup>*Ibid.*, 1:124.

<sup>70</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup>*Ibid.*, 1:125. The flag also became a point of contention between the Afghans and the Persians. See *Eastern Persia: An Account of the Journeys of the Persian Boundary Commission, 1870–72* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1876), 307.

<sup>72</sup>*Iran–Iraq Border*, 1:665.

<sup>73</sup>*Ibid.*, 1:661.

<sup>74</sup>Mirzā Sayyid Ja'far Khān, *Risālah-i taḥqīqāt-i sarḥaddīya*, ed. Muḥammad Mushīrī (Tehran: Bunyād-i Farhang-i Īrān, 1348/1969), 192.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., 38–40.<sup>76</sup>Ibid., 47–48.<sup>77</sup>Ibid., 48.<sup>78</sup>*Iran–Iraq Border*, 2:62.<sup>79</sup>Khān, *Risālah-i taḥqīqāt-i sarḥaddīya*, 50–51.<sup>80</sup>Ibid., 58–59.

<sup>81</sup>By 1865, the British worried about the prolongment of the negotiations and the additional expenses that the British government would have to incur as a result of the Perso-Ottoman boundary dispute. At that time, there was a suggestion to appoint “the diplomatic agents of the Two Powers at Constantinople, with the assistance of the two commissioners” to draw a frontier line “as nearly in conformity with the stipulations of the Treaty of Erzeroom as the existing knowledge of the country will admit.” See *Iran–Iraq Border*, 2:554–55.

<sup>82</sup>*Iran–Iraq Border*, 2:604. Many inaccuracies were detected in the maps, which further detracted from their utility: *ibid.*, 608.

<sup>83</sup>Qāʾim Maqām, *Munshaʾāt*, 71.<sup>84</sup>T. B. Armstrong, *Journal of Travel in the Seat of War* (London, 1831), 120.

<sup>85</sup>This map makes one sympathetic to the challenges facing the Perso-Ottoman Boundary Commission. Cary’s 1811 map is available in Yale’s Map Collection. Cary’s 1801 map is available in Princeton University’s Map Collection, Firestone Library.

<sup>86</sup>John Richardson, *A Persian, Arabic, English Dictionary* (London, 1806), 1:143.

<sup>87</sup>John MacDonald Kinneir, *A Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire* (London: 1813; reprint, Arno Press, 1973), 1–2.

<sup>88</sup>James B. Fraser, *Historical and Descriptive Account of Persia, from the Earliest Ages to the Present Time* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1834), 16.

<sup>89</sup>Najmī, *Īrān dar miyān-i tufān*, 329.

<sup>90</sup>Great Britain, Foreign Office, *Correspondence Relating to Persia and Afghanistan* (London: J. Harrison and Son, 1839), 4.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., 6. For more on British fears regarding Russia, see pp. 10–11.<sup>92</sup>Ibid., 6.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., 5. This passage is also cited in Captain George Henry Hunt’s *Outram and Havelock’s Persian Campaign* (London: Routledge & Co., 1858), 89.

<sup>94</sup>Great Britain, Foreign Office, *Correspondence*, 5.

<sup>95</sup>According to British sources, “Hajee Ibrahim, one of the great Ispahan Mooshtehids, (Doctors of Divinity), has been induced to declare from the pulpit, that an expedition against the Affghans is a holy war, and that all who fall in it are entitled to the privilege of martyrdom” (*ibid.*, 12).

<sup>96</sup>For more on the Herat expedition, see Muḥammad Taqī Khān, Lisān al-Mulk Sipīhr, *Nasikh al-Tavārikh*, ed. Bāqir Bihbūdī (Tehran, 1965), 2:302–30.

<sup>97</sup>Hunt, *Outram and Havelock’s Campaign*, 150.<sup>98</sup>Ibid., 155 and Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East*, 142.

<sup>99</sup>Kenneth Bourne and D. Cameron Watt, ed., *British Documents on Foreign Affairs: Part I, Series B, The Near and Middle East, Persia, 1856–1885* (Bethesda, Md.: University Publications of America, 1984), 10:136.

<sup>100</sup>ʿTīmād al-Salṭānah, *Tārikh-i Muṅṭazam-i Nāṣiri*, ed. Muḥammad Ismāʿil Rizvānī (Tehran, 1367/1988), 3:1793–94; Lisān al-Mulk, *Nasikh al-Tavārikh*, 4:205–7.

<sup>101</sup>Clements R. Markham, *A General Sketch of the History of Persia* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1874), 517. For more discussion of the Sistan boundary, see Rose L. Greaves, “Iranian Relations with Great Britain and British India, 1798–1921,” in *Cambridge History of Iran: From Nadir Shah to the Islamic Republic*, ed. Peter Avery, Gavin Hambly, and Charles Melville (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) 7:397. See also *idem*, “Sistan in British Indian Frontier Policy,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 49 (1986): 90–102.

<sup>102</sup>British Foreign Office, F.O. 60/325, 14 (7 January 1870).<sup>103</sup>Ibid., 12 (7 January 1870).<sup>104</sup>*Eastern Persia*, xiii.<sup>105</sup>Ibid., 149.<sup>106</sup>Ibid., xlv, xlvi.

<sup>107</sup>For example, see Firūz Mirzā Farmān Farmā, *Safarnāmah-i Kirmān va Balūchistān*, ed. Mansureh Nezām-Mafī (Tehran: Nashr-i Tārikh-i Irān, 1360/1981), 10–12, 18–19, 41–43, 58–59. There are countless other such recommendations in the text.

<sup>108</sup>*Eastern Persia*, 396, 399.

<sup>109</sup>The newspaper, *Vaqayi' Ittifaqiah* carried several notices between 1268/1851 and 1270/1853 that the *Shāhnāmah* was being regularly printed and was on sale at a local printer's. See also M. Tavakoli-Targhi, "Refashioning Iran: Language and Culture during the Constitutional Revolution," *Iranian Studies* 23 (1990): 80, for a discussion of the popularity of the *Shāhnāmah* in the 19th century and its printing in India. Also, see Īraj Afshār, *Kitābshināsi-yi Shāhnāmah* (Tehran, 1347/1968), for a list of 19th-century *Shāhnāmahs*. Also, in its sixth issue, *Rūznāmah-i millati* published a brief biography of Firdausi: *Rūznāmah-i Millati*, 6, 25 Ramadan 1283 A.H.

<sup>110</sup>Mirzā Faṭḥ ʿAlī Ākhundzādah, *Mukātabah-i Jalāl va Kamāl al-Dawla yā sah maktūb*, 1285/1868 (Manuscript at the Kitābkhānah-yi Melli-yi Irān, no. 1123), 20–21. I thank Mr. Zargari Nizhad for giving me a copy of this manuscript. Akhundzadah also laments the fact that Iran's current conditions have forced many of its inhabitants to live abroad (p. 22). Mirzā Āqā Khān Kirmāni also regrets the loss of empire in his *Sah Maktūb*, which is a pastiche of Akhundzadah's *Maktūbāt*. See *Sah Maktūb*, ed. Bahram Choubine (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Mard-i Imrūz, 1370/1991), 68, in which Kirmani makes the additional observation that Iran's territorial domination was even represented on the reliefs of the Behistun.

<sup>111</sup>John D. Gurney, "The Transformation of Tehran in the Later Nineteenth Century," in *Téhéran: capitale bicentenaire*, ed. Chahryar Adle and Bernard Hourcade (Paris and Tehran: Institut français de recherche en Iran, 1992), 51–52. Also Réza Moghtader, "Téhéran dans ses murailles (1553–1930)," in *Téhéran: capitale bicentenaire*, 39–49.

<sup>112</sup>George Nathaniel Lord Curzon, *Persia and the Persian Question* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1892), 1:305.

<sup>113</sup>*Ibid.*, 1:306.

<sup>114</sup>Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, *Safarnāmah-i ʿIrāq-i ʿajam* (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Tirāj, 1362/1983), 158–59.

<sup>115</sup>Mirza Mehdi Khan, "Notes on Persian Beluchistan," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 9 (1877): 154.

<sup>116</sup>Rizā Qulī Mirzā, *Safarnāmah-i Rizā Qulī Mirzā Navih-i Faṭḥ ʿAlī Shāh* (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Asatir, 1361/1982), 631–32.

<sup>117</sup>Muhammad Ḥasan Ganjī, *Jughrāfiya dar Irān: Az Dār al-Funūn tā Inqilāb-i Islāmī* (Mashhad: Intishārāt-i Astān-i Quds Raḡavī, 1367/1988), 26–29.

<sup>118</sup>*Farhang*, Isfahan, no. 41, 27 Rabiʿ al-Thani 1297/8 April 1880, 1.

<sup>119</sup>Hājī ʿAbd al-Ghaffār Najm al-Mulk, *Safarnāmah-i Khuzistān* (Tehran, 1341/1962), 1.

<sup>120</sup>*Ibid.*, 107.

<sup>121</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>122</sup>*Ibid.*, 108–12.

<sup>123</sup>ʿIṭimād al-Salṭānah, *Mirʿāt al-Buldān*, ed. ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Navāʿi (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Dānishgāh-i Tihirān, 1367/1988), 1:6. Afsaneh Najmabadi also discusses ʿIṭimād al-Salṭānah's geographical study in "Beloved and Mother: The Erotic *Vatan* [homeland]: To Love, To Possess, and To Protect," in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, forthcoming.

<sup>124</sup>See ʿIṭimād al-Salṭānah, *Tārikh-i Muntazam-i Nāṣiri*, 1:492. Also cited in introduction of *Mirʿāt* by ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Navāʿi, 1:34–35.

<sup>125</sup>ʿIṭimād al-Salṭānah, *Mirʿāt al-Buldān*, 1:3.

<sup>126</sup>Hyacinth Louis Rabino claims that *Iṭtilāʿ* was a semiofficial organ of the Iranian government and a twin brother of the official Iranian gazette. As head of the Press and Translation Ministry, ʿIṭimād al-Salṭānah oversaw the paper: H. L. Rabino, *Rūznāmah'hā-yi Irān*, trans. Jaʿfar Khumāmizādah (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Iṭtilāʿāt, 1373/1994), 64.

<sup>127</sup>*Iṭtilāʿ*, no. 10, 26 Rajab 1298/24 June 1881, 1–2. Also, see *Rūznāmah-i ʿilmiya-i dawlat-i Irān*, which devoted several of its articles to promoting the sciences, including astronomy, medicine, agriculture, and geography. The emphasis on science was hoped to bring about progress by substituting for traditional approaches new advances made in these fields in Europe. Articles from October through December 1869 in particular tended to have a geographical focus. In addition, the fourth issue discusses Iran's progress in the sciences.

<sup>128</sup>George Rawlinson, *Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy* (London, 1873).

<sup>129</sup>ʿTimād al-Salṭānah, *Durar al-Tijān fi Tārikh Banī Ashkān*, ed. Niʿmat Aḥmadī (Tehran: Atlas, 1371/1993), 26–27.

<sup>130</sup>ʿTimād al-Salṭānah, *Taṭbiq-i Lughat-i juḡhrāfiya-yi qadīm va jadid-i Īrān*, ed. Mir Hāshim Muḥaddis (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Amīr Kabīr, 1363/1984), 16. I am aware only of these works produced by d’Anville and Kiepert: Jean-Baptiste Bourignon d’Anville, *Traité des mesures itinéraires anciennes et modernes* (Paris, 1769); Heinrich Kiepert, *Itinerare auf der Insel Lesbos* (Berlin, 1890).

<sup>131</sup>ʿTimād al-Salṭānah, *Taṭbiq*, 23–29.

<sup>132</sup>Ibid., 18. Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi notes that a *majlis-i akadīmī* was finally formed in 1903. See M. Tavakoli-Targhi, “Refashioning Iran: Language and Culture During the Constitutional Revolution,” *Iranian Studies* 23 (1990): 93. Also, see M. Tavakoli-Targhi, “Tarikh pardazi va Iran ara-yi,” *Iran namah*, 12 (Fall, 1373/1994): 583–628, which contains engaging discussions of this passage as well as other cultural issues. It is worth noting, however, that Tavakoli-Targhi does not make the connection between land, geography, and frontiers, focusing instead on historiographical matters.

<sup>133</sup>ʿTimād al-Salṭānah, *Taṭbiq*, 16.

<sup>134</sup>Mīrzā Fath ʿAlī Ākhundzādah, *Maqālāt*, ed. Bāqir Muʿminī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Avā), 193. “Jam-i Jam” refers to the geographical work translated by Farhad Mirza, who had sent Fath ʿAlī a copy of the work.

<sup>135</sup>H. Déhéraïn, “Les reconnaissances géographiques et archéologiques du Capitaine Truilhier en Perse en 1807–1808,” in *Mélanges syriens offerts à M. René Dussaud* (Paris, 1939).

<sup>136</sup>For some of Rawlinson’s findings, see *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 10 (1847), for his published results.

<sup>137</sup>Loftus, *Travels and Researches*, 326.

<sup>138</sup>Ibid., 360.

<sup>139</sup>*Dar Sharḥ-i Takht-i Jamshīd* (Manuscript at Kitābkhānah-yi millī, no. 2156 F/6), 141. This is a short manuscript, approximately four pages long, and the author’s identity is nowhere cited.

<sup>140</sup>Ibid., 145.

<sup>141</sup>Muḥammad Nāshir Mīrzā Fursat Ḥusayni Shirāzī, *Āsār-i ʿajam* (Bombay, 1353/1934), 9.

<sup>142</sup>*Habl al-Matīn*, 5, 11 Rajab 1318/5 November 1900, 15.

<sup>143</sup>Arthur de Gobineau, *Trois ans en asie* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1905), 268. It was clearly not Gobineau who instilled this idea among Iranians; rather, it was the Iranians who gave him this impression.

<sup>144</sup>Gobineau, *Trois ans*, 268.

<sup>145</sup>In “Refashioning Iran,” Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi makes many interesting observations regarding historiography, though he does not place Iranians’ interest in reviving ancient history within the broader context of territorial issues and imperialism: Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi, “Refashioning Iran.”

<sup>146</sup>Mīrzā Āqā Khān Kirmānī, *Āyīnah-i Sikandari* (Tehran, 1324/1906), 12.

<sup>147</sup>See my forthcoming article, “The Frontier Phenomenon,” *Critique*, for more on the issue of geography and notions of the homeland (*vaṭan*).

<sup>148</sup>My analysis stands in contrast to several important works published on Iranian nationalism that have not examined the primacy of land, frontiers, and geography, including the following: Richard W. Cottam, *Nationalism in Iran* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1964); Homayoun Katouzian, “Nationalist Trends in Iran, 1921–1926,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 10 (1979): 533–51; M. Reza Ghods, “Iranian Nationalism and Reza Shah,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 27 (1991): 35–45; Tavakoli-Targhi, “Refashioning Iran,” 77–101; Afsaneh Najmabadi, “Zanha-yi Millat: Women or Wives of the Nation?” *Iranian Studies* 26 (1993): 51–71; Houchang E. Chehabi, “Staging the Emperor’s New Clothes: Dress Codes and Nation-Building under Reza Shah,” *Iranian Studies* 26 (1993): 209–33.

<sup>149</sup>I am using the term “closed” here in a figurative sense. Frontiers were as always susceptible to change, but for the time being the more powerful hands of Russia and Britain, which had helped to draw these frontiers, would not allow any immediate political shift in the boundary lines, though unmonitored tribes continued to breach these borders. The frontier then was closed only in the sense that the possibility of expansion at the end of the 19th century did not appear imminent. This situation would, of course, change at the end of World War I.

<sup>150</sup>In the 11 January 1864 issue of *Rūznāmah-i ʿIlmiya-i dawlat-i Īrān*, no. 1, which published its articles in the three languages of Persian, Arabic, and French, the Persian term *millat* was used in the context of the French word *nation*, indicating that by this time, the term *millat* no longer exclusively carried a religious meaning, although *millat* was still used in a religious context. An example of its religious use can be found in a discussion of the faiths of the world in a later issue of the *Rūznāmah-i ʿIlmiya*, no. 48, 8 September 1869.