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On the 23rd of Rabī' II (22 August) we came to Qā'en, said to be a distance of eighteen parasangs from Tun, although a caravaan can make it in four days, so the estimate must be too great.

Qā'en is a large fortified town, and all around the main city is a trench. The Friday mosque is also in the main city and has a huge arch where the meqare is located. This arch is much larger than any I have seen in Khorasan, but it is not in proportion to the mosque. All buildings in the city are domed.

Eighteen parasangs northeast of Qā'en is Zuzan. South to Herat is thirty parasangs.

In Qā'en I saw a man named Abu Mansur Mohammad son of Dost, who knew something of medicine, astronomy, and logic.

"Outside the celestial spheres and stars, what is there?" he asked me.

"Things that are inside the spheres have names," I said, "but nothing outside them."

"What say you then?" he asked, "Is there substance outside the spheres or not?"

"The universe must of necessity be finite," I said. "And its limit is the last sphere. Indeed, it is called 'limit' precisely because there is nothing on the other side. When this limit has been realized, it then becomes necessary that what is outside the spheres not be like what is inside them."

"Therefore," he continued, "that substance, which reason must hold to be existent, is finite and ends at that limit. If it then be finite, up to what point does it exist? If it is infinite and without end, how then can it ever pass out of existence?"

He went on in this manner and finally said, "I have suffered much perplexity over all this."

"Who hasn't?" I replied.

In short, because of the disturbances in Zuzan occasioned by 'Obayd of Nishapur and the rebellion of the head of Zuzan, I stayed one month in Qā'en after I had sent Prince Gilaki's enquiry back to him.

From Qā'en we came to Sarakhs on the 2nd of Jamālādī II (29 September 1052). From Bastra to Sarakhs I reckoned the distance to be 390 parasangs. From Sarakhs we went via the caravanserai of Jā'fari, 'Amravi, and Ne'mati, all three of which are close together on the road. On the 12th of Jamālādī II (19 Oc-to-ber] we reached Marv Rud. Two days later we left and passed through Abgarm. On the 19th we came to Bāryāb, a distance of 36 parasangs.

The prince of Khorasan, Chaghri Beg Abu SolaymaN Dā'ud son of Mīkā'il son of Saljuq was in Shoburghān, headed for Marv, his capital. Because of the unsafe road, we went toward Samangān and thence by way of Seh Darra toward Balkh. When we reached the caravanserai of Seh Darra, we heard that my brother Khwāja Abu'l-Fath 'Abd al-Jalil was in the entourage of the prince of Khorasan’s vizier, Abu Nasr. Now it had been seven years since I had left Khorasan. When we reached Dastgerd, I saw loads being taken toward Shoburghān. My brother, who was with me, asked who these goods belonged to and was told that they were the vizier's.

"Do you know Abu'l-Fath 'Abd al-Jalil?" he asked.

"One of his men is with us," they said. And immediately a man came to us and asked where we were coming from.

"From the Pilgrimage," we answered.

"My master, Abu'l-Fath 'Abd al-Jalil, had two brothers," he said, "who went on the Pilgrimage many years ago, and he still longs to see them, but no one he has questioned has had any news of them."

"We have a letter from Nāser," my brother said. "When your master comes, we will give it to him." A moment later, however, the caravans began to move, and we started to join it.

"My master is coming just now," said the fellow, "and if he misses you, he will be disappointed. Why don't you give me the letter so I can give it to him and make him happy?"

"Would you rather have Nāser's letter," asked my brother, "or Nāser himself — for here he is!" And the fellow was so overjoyed he did not know what to do. Thereupon we set out for Balkh by way of Miyān Rustā. Meanwhile, my brother Khwāja Abu'l-Fath had gone to Dastgerd by way of Dashi and was accompanying the prince of Khorasan's vizier. When he heard of us he returned from Dastgerd and waited for us at the Jamukān Bridge.

On Tuesday the 26th of Jamālādī II 144 (23 October 1052), after having had little or no hope and having at times fallen into perilous circumstances and having even despaired of our lives,
we were all together again and joyful to see each other. We thanked God for that, and on that same day we arrived in Balkh, wherefore I composed these lines of poetry:

"Though the toil and travail of the world be long
An end will doubtless come to good and bad.
The spheres travel for us day and night:
Whatever has once gone, another comes on its heels.
We are traveling through what can be passed
Until there comes that journey that cannot be bypassed.

The distance we traversed from Balkh to Egypt and thence to Mecca and then via Basra to Fars and finally back to Balkh, not counting excursions for visiting shrines and so on was 2,220 parasangs. I have recorded my adventures as I saw them. If some of what I heard narrated by others does not conform to the truth, I beg my readers to forgive me and not to reproach me. If God grants me success in making a journey to the East, what I may see will be appended hereeto, if God the One wills.
Praise be to God, the Lord of the Universe, and prayers be upon Mohammad and his House and Companions all!

Glossary of Persons

Abū Āliā b. ‘Abbaś (d. 680/686): known as the father of Koranic exegesis, one of the first to begin scholarly collections of Prophetic oral material and to engage in Koranic interpretation.
Abū Hurayra (d. ca. 58/678): originally from the Yemen, a contemporary of the Prophet who narrated copious hadith. He is especially renowned for his piety.
Abū Jahl: one of the Prophet’s most notorious rivals in Mecca, he was alleged even to have plotted an assassination attempt against the Prophet and later became proverbial as a godless opponent of righteousness.
Abū l’Ali al-Ma’arri (363–449/973–1057): Syrian poet and litterateur noted for his asceticism and pessimistic view of humanity. He remains one of the finest Arabic poets and thinkers.
Abū l-Fath Abū b. Ahmad: vizier to the king of Alhāwiz according to Nāṣer, who met him in retirement in Basra in 443/1051. He may have been a vizier to Abā Kālījār or to one of his sons, Abū Manṣūr Fuladotun or al-Malik al-Rahim KhosrauFeroz.
Abū Solaymān Chaghāri Bū Dāwūd (ca. 380–452/990–1060): brother of the Seljuq Toğhrīl Bēg, in charge of the Seljuq forces that took Marv in 423/1036 and, for a time, ruler of Khorasan. See EI², II, 4ff.
Abū Nasr, Abū l-Hasan, known as al-Hakim al-Mokhtasī: philosopher, mathematician and astronomer who was acquainted with both Avicenna and al-Birūni.
Abū ʿĀś al-Sahmī (ca. 570–426/663): military commander under whom the Muslim forces conquered Egypt.
Bahrām Gūr: historically the Sassanian emperor Varahruṇ V (r. 421–39), his feats of prowess connect him with the ancient cult of
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Héraclès. In legendary guise he is the hero of Nezâmi of Ganja’s romance *Hafiyeh.*

Bayazid Behşîni, Tayfur b. İsa (d. 261/874 or 264/877): great mystic noted especially for his ecstatic utterances.

Belâl the Abyssinian, Abu ’Abd Allâh b. Rehâb (d. 25/645): a Companion to the Prophet and known for being the first muzezin in Islam.

Daqîqi. Abu Mansûr Muhammad b. Ahmad (d. ca. 980): early Persian poet at the Samanid and Chaghaniyan courts.

Dhûr-Kell: said variously to have been the name of Job’s son or of a pious Israelite who resisted Satan’s temptations. He is mentioned in the Koran, 21:85 and 38:48.

Ebn Abî ‘Aqil: a Sunni qâdî (judge) whom Nâsir met in Tyre.

Fâṭema Zahra: sole surviving daughter of the Prophet and wife of ’Ali b. Abî Tâleb, revered by Shiites as the mother of the imams, the linage descendants of the Prophet through her. The Fatimid dynasty was named after her.


Hamza b. ’Abd al-Mottâleb (d. 625): paternal uncle of the Prophet who became a legendary figure renowned for fantastic exploits and great prowess. His adventures, which bear no relation to the historical person, are recorded in the popular Arabic Strat Amr Hammâ and in Persian romances under the name *Humaizan.*

Hud: a South Arabian prophet who was sent as an apostle to the tribe of ’Ad (see Koran 7:63).

Jostân b. ebn Abîrâbî, Abû Sâlekh: the sixth Mosafirid/Kangarid ruler of Daylam and Azerbaijan. He was reigning in 437/1045.

Lashkar Khan: according to Nâṣîr, ruler of Dashî. Neither the person nor the place has been identified.


Ma’mun, al-r. 198–218/813–35): Abbasid caliph.

Manûj, Abû'l-Ḥasan ’Ali Termendi: 10th-century poet at the Chaghaniyan court.

Maz’ud (r. 421–52/1030–42): Ghaznavid sultan.

Glossary of Persons


Mo’aiya b. Abî Sofyân (r. 41–666/661–80): the first Umayyad caliph.


Mawâla, Khwâja, Hebat Allâh b. Muhammad b. Hosayn: a member of the elie of Nishapûr. It was he who handed the city over to Toghril Bêg’s brother Yânâl at the Seljuk conquest. He was expelled from the city when it was reconquered by the Ghaznavids.


’Obâyîr Nishâpurî: according to Nâṣîr, the ruler of Zuzan at the time he passed through in 444/1052.

Owâs Qurant: a contemporary of the Prophet and native of the Yemen. A model of ascetic piety for later generations, he is said to have pulled out all his teeth in commemoration of a tooth lost by the Prophet at the Battle of Ohod.

Pesâr-e Shaddâl: according to Nâṣîr, a prince of Aden.

Qavarâ, Abu Mansûr, ’Adûdî Tâbrîzî (r. 465/1072): said to have been the first poet of Azerbaijan to compose in Dari Persian.

Sa’îb: a pre-Islamic prophet to the South Arabian tribe of Tlâmud. He is mentioned in the Koran, 7:71.

Sûrî, Abû’l-Fadl, b. al-Mu’tazz: governor of Khurasan from Nishapûr under the Ghaznavids Mahmund and Mas’ud’.


Glossary of Places

Anglicized names are given in italics; others are transliterated. The provinces in which the towns and cities are placed by medieval geographers are given in parentheses. Variants, mainly arabizations, are also given.

'Akhdān (Iraq): the modern Iranian town of Ahvaz. See Yaqūt, III, 597; Abu'l-Fadā, 308.

Ağgam: said by Nāser to be a village between Marv Rud and Fārāb; not located in the geographies. Ākhwār: said by Nāser to be a village between Dāmghān and Sennān. There is today a ruined village east of Dāmghān called Abhāwārān, undoubtedly the same. See Dabīr-Siyāqi, p. 193.

Acre, 'Akka (Syria): see Yaqūt, III, 704; Abu'l-Fadā, 242.

Aden, 'Adan (Yemen): the modern town and region on the south-western coast of the Arabian peninsula. See Yaqūt, III, 616; Abu'l-Fadā, 93.

Ahwāz (Khuzestān): the modern Iranian town. See Yaqūt, I, 410; Abu'l-Fadā, 316.

Akhlāt (Armenia): the Ahiat of modern Turkey. See Yaqūt, III, 457; Abu'l-Fadā, 391.

Akhnīm, Ekhnum (Upper Egypt): the ancient Panopolis. See Yaqūt, I, 165; Abu'l-Fadā, 110.

Aleppo, Halab (Syria): the modern city. See Yaqūt, II, 394; Abu'l-Fadā, 296.

Amēd (Mesopotamia, dependency of Diyar Bakr): ancient Āmida. See Yaqūt, I, 66; Abu'l-Fadā, 286. Āmēd is the modern city of Diyarbe- kir in Turkey.

Amol (Tabarestān): the modern Iranian city on the Caspian. See Yaqūt, I, 68; Abu'l-Fadā, 434.

Antioch, Antākya (Syria): see Yaqūt, I, 382; Abu'l-Fadā, 256.

'Ar'ar: a village said by Nāser to be three days distant from Jerusalem in the direction of Wādī al-Qārā. Yaqūt, III, 645, says that there are several places named 'Ar'ar and 'Urra'ar but does not locate them precisely. LeStrange, p. 58, suggests that this is probably Ar'or ('Ar'or) on the Arnon. Hūterrath and Abdullahath, 159, give a village named 'Ar'arā, but it is in the wrong direction from Jerusalem.

Arrağān, Arrafān (Khuzestān, on the Fars border): see Yaqūt, I, 193; Abu'l-Fadā, 518.

Arran (Armenia): a town three days distant from Akhlāt. See Yaqūt, I, 205; Abu'l-Fadā, 594.

Asalām, 'Asqalān (Palestine); a major town on the Mediterranean, not far from Gaza. See Yaqūt, III, 673; Abu'l-Fadā, 238.

Awān (Upper Egypt): same as modern town. See Yaqūt, I, 269; Abu'l-Fadā, 112.

Asyut (Upper Egypt, ancient Lycopolis): same as modern town. See Yaqūt, I, 272; Abu'l-Fadā, 112.

'Ātīr (Yemen): see Yaqūt, III, 615.

'Aydāb (Upper Egypt, Bāja region): see Yaqūt, III, 751; Abu'l-Fadā, 23, 120.

Bahār al-Na'am (Upper Egypt, Red Sea coast): not mentioned in the geographies.

Balāgib (Khorasan): see Yaqūt, I, 713; Abu'l-Fadā, 460.

Baraz al-Khayr (?): no such name listed by geographers. Dabīr-Siyāqi suggests that it is perhaps a scribal corruption of Barz-anjīr or Bard-anjīr. The town of Barzanj (Yaqūt, I, 562), twelve parasangs from Bardhā'a en route to Bāb al-Abwāb (Darband), is a likely possibility since Nāser mentions it as being between Quavin and Sha- mānā.

Bargū, Bāgī, Bargī (Armenia, modern Muradiye): see Abu'l-Fadā, 389.

Bārz, same as Fārāb, q.v.

Basra (Iraq, West Tigris and East Obodē): same as the modern Iraqi town. See Yaqūt, I, 636; Abu'l-Fadā, 308.

Bilās, Būrāt (Syria): same as the modern Lebanese city. See Yaqūt, I, 785; Abu'l-Fadā, 246.

Berta, al (Palestine): text has Bara, in error. The tombs of Esau and Simon are located here by Nāser. See Hūterrath and Abdullahath, 190.

Bēštān, Bāštān (Tabarestān, Qumes): see Yaqūt, I, 625; Abu'l-Fadā, 436.

Bakehlem, Bāyāt Lāhm (Palestine): see Yaqūt, I, 779; Abu'l-Fadā, 241.

Belis, Bedlis (Armenia): between Mayyāl-Faroqin and Akhlāt. See Yaqūt, I, 586; Abu'l-Fadā, 394.

Bil: Yaqūt, I, 798, gives two villages by this name, one near Rayy and the other near Sarahā. Nāser lists it near Quavin.

Bishā (Yemen): see Yaqūt, I, 791.

Būrāq (Arabia): area near Medina. See Yaqūt, I, 575.

Byblus, Jāḥiy Jūri (Syria): the modern Lebanese town of Jūbiel. See Yaqūt, II, 32.

Caucaura, Quaysāriyya (Palestine): see Yaqūt, IV, 214; Abu'l-Fadā, 238.

Cairo, al-Qāhira (Egypt): Old Cairo (Fostāt), see Yaqūt, III, 893) was the site of the earliest Muslim garrison, dating from the Muslim con-
 quests of Egypt; New Cairo (al-Qahera, see Yaqut, IV, 22) was founded in 308969 when the Fatimids conquered Egypt and established their capital there.

Chahshkhwârân (Qumes): a village between Domghân and Semnân; today it is a field in Semnân, seven miles from Aham. See Dahir-Siyâqi, 227.

Damascul, Damashq al-Shâm (Syria): the modern Syrian city. See Yaqut, II, 587; Abu'l-Fedâ, 252.

Dârgân (Tabarestân): chief town in the Qumes region. See Yaqut, II, 589; Abu'l-Fedâ, 436.

Damânîn (Palestine): Nâşer gives this as the name of a village between Tyre and Irbid. Hüttroth and Abdulâzîf, 193, gives a village named Dâmûn in the Acre region. See also Le Strange, 14, where it is also called Dâmûn.


Dasht: Nâşer mentions Dasht twice, once as a village near Dastgerd and again as a place remarkable for security under the rule of Lashkar Khan. Yaqut, II, 575f., gives several places named Dasht: (1) a village near Isfahan, (2) a small town in Jâhâl between Erbil (near Mosul) and Tabriz, (3) Dasht al-Arzan in Fârs, and (4) Dasht Bârân, a city in Fârs.

Dastgerd, Dastjâder (Khorasan): also known as Dastgerd Jomukiyân. See Yaqut, II, 573.

Dayqa, al- (Upper Egypt): a station ten parasangs from 'Aythâb. See Yaqut, III, 484.

Dîyâr Bâk (Eastern Anatolia): the upper Tigris region. See Yaqut, II, 636.

ElBîliin (?; Palestine): Nâşer says it is a village between Acre and Irbid. No further identification has been made.

Terga (Syria): a small town four parasangs east of Tripoli. See Yaqut, III, 653; Abu'l-Fedâ, 254.

Falaj, Falî, Affâj (Arabia): a place on the road between Basra and Yamâma. See Yaqut, III, 910.

Fâryâ'b, Bârâyâb (Khorasan, Juzjân): a district and town near Balkh. See Yaqut, III, 846; Abu'l-Fedâ, 460.

Gavân, Jovayn (Khorasan): a district between Beshtâm and Nishapur. See Yaqut, II, 162; Abu'l-Fedâ, 442.

Gonâbdeh, Jonâbedî (Khorasan): a dependency of Nishapur, the modern Gonbad in Khorasan. See Yaqut, II, 120.

Glossary of Places

Haifa, Hayfa (Palestine): see Yaqut, II, 381.
Hamâ (Syria): ancient Hamath, Epiphania. Same as the modern Syrian town. See Yaqut, II, 330; Abu'l-Fedâ, 262.
Hamadân, Hamadhân (Jabal): the modern Iranian city. See Yaqut, IV, 981; Abu'l-Fedâ, 416.
Harrân (Mesopotamia, Dîyâr Bâk): same as the modern Turkish town of Harran. See Yaqut, II, 231; Abu'l-Fedâ, 276.
Håwâ: Nâşer names this as a place in Upper Egypt. It has not been identified in the geographies.

Haythamîâbîd: a village outside of Isfahan. See Yaqut, IV, 998.
Hâzira: Nâşer places it between Tyre and Irbid; not further identified.

Hebron, Bayt HaBrûn, al-Khalîl (Palestine): see Yaqut, II, 194 and 468; Abu'l-Fedâ, 240.
Homs, Hemas (Syria): the modern Syrian town. See Yaqut, II, 334; Abu'l-Fedâ, 260.

Irrib, Errib, Arba (Syria, Jordan): the ancient Arbel. The text has Erbel, perhaps an alternative form. The modern town of Irrib is in Jordan near Tibérias. See Yaqut, I, 184, where Irrib is said to contain the tombs of Moses's mother and four of Jacob's sons, Dan, Issachar, Zebulun, and Gad. See also Hütroth and Abdulâzîf, 205.

Jâr, al- (Arabia, dependency of Medina): see Yaqut, II, 5; Abu'l-Fedâ, 82.
Jaz (Arabia, east of Tâ'îf): see Yaqut, II, 71.
Jîdâ, Jîdiha (Arabia, Hejaz): see Abu'l-Fedâ, 92.
Jîrân, al- (Arabia): see Yaqut, II, 85.
Johfa, al-: the miṣrî for Egyptian pilgrims. See Yaqut, II, 35; Abu'l-Fedâ, 80.
Juzjânî (Khorasan): see Yaqut, II, 149; Abu'l-Fedâ, 446.

Katif Kannâ (Palestine): a village near Tiberias. See Yaqut, IV, 290; Hütroth and Abdulâzîf, 187.
Katif Sâbâ (Palestine): a village in the Nablus district. See Yaqut, IV, 288; Hütroth and Abdulâzîf, 140.
Katif Samä (Palestine): a village between Caesarea and Nablus. See Yaqut, IV, 288.
Katif Tâb (Syria, Jund Hâmîj): a town between Aleppo and Ma'arrat al-No'mân. See Yaqut, IV, 289; Abu'l-Fedâ, 262. Text has "Kawāqîm," a scribal error.

Kânasa (?; Palestine): Nâşer places this village between Haifa and Caesarea; it has not been located in the Arabic geographies. Le
Strange, 20, says it is Konaysa or Tell Kanisa, a few miles north of Athlit, which the Crusaders considered the site of Copernum.

Kazaran (Fars): a town between Shiraz and the coast. See Yaqut, IV, 225; Abul-Feda, 324.

Khajab (Kermán): see Yaqut, II, 401; Abul-Feda, 442.

Khán Lanján (Isfahan): see Yaqut, II, 394; Abul-Feda, 410.

Khondán: as described by Nasir, this place corresponds to the modern Kharzavil. See Dabir-Siyyāq, 236.

Khuraziv: the place mentioned by Nasir corresponds to the modern Khurazan, of which his "Khondán" may be a corruption. See Dabir-Siyyāq, 235.

Khayyf (Arabía): see Yaqut, II, 508; Abul-Feda, 81.

Khoy, Khwāy, Khoway (Azerbaiján): see Yaqut, II, 502; Abul-Feda, 396.

Kish, Kis, Qis: an island in the Indian Ocean. See Abul-Feda, 372.

Laḥsā, al-Abā' (Arabía, dependency of Bahrain): see Abul-Feda, 98.

Lavasân: name given to Damavand according to Nasir. Lundagān, Lundagān (Ahwāz): see Yaqut, IV, 369.

Marcharat al-No'man (Syría, Jond Hema): see Yaqut, IV, 574; Abul-Feda, 264.

Mahdiyya, al- (Maghreb, Erifiyya): see Yaqut, IV, 693; Abul-Feda, 144.

Mahrūba (Khurastan on the Fars border): see Yaqut, IV, 699; Abul-Feda, 316.

Mandeb (Syría, Jund Qamsín): ancient Hieropolis. Same as the modern Syrian town of Membaj. See Yaqut, IV, 654; Abul-Feda, 270.

Marand (Azerbaiján): see Abul-Feda, 400.

Marv Rud, Marv al-Rudh (Khurasán): see Yaqut, IV, 506; Abul-Feda, 457.

Marv, Marv al-Shāhejān (Khurasán): see Yaqut, IV, 507; Abul-Feda, 446, 556.

Marwa: a mountain in Mecca. See Yaqut, IV, 513.

Mayyāfaretin (Mesopotamia, Divâr Bakr): see Yaqut, IV, 703; Abul-Feda, 278.

Mina, Menā (Arabía, Hejaz): a small town one farsang from Mecca. See Yaqut, IV, 642; Abul-Feda, 81.

Mohdānah (Mesopotamia, Divâr Bakr): a town north of Mayyafaretin, as described by Nasir. It is not mentioned in the geographies.

Mokran (Sind): the coastal region bounded by Kermán and Sejastān. See Yaqut, IV, 612; Abul-Feda, 548.

Mozdalafā, al- (Arabía, Hejaz): a place one farsang from Mina. See Yaqut, IV, 519.

Mután, Moltán (Hindí): same as the modern town in Pakistan. See Yaqut, IV, 629; Abul-Feda, 351.

Nā'īn (Fars): the modern Iranian town near Isfahan. See Yaqut, IV, 734.

Najrān (Arabía): see Yaqut, IV, 751; Abul-Feda, 92.

Nishapur, Neisabur (Khurasán): see Yaqut, IV, 857; Abul-Feda, 450.

Obolla (Iraq): see Yaqut, I, 96.

Panj Deh: a collection of five villages near Marv Rud. See Yaqut, I, 743.

Piyāda, Biyādhaq: one of three villages, known as Sch Deh, on the road between Isfahan and Nishapur; the other two are Jarmaq and Arāba. See Yaqut, II, 64.

Qī'ēn (Khurasán, Qohestān): see Yaqut, IV, 22; Abul-Feda, 452.

Qapān: according to Yaqut, IV, 26, a village near Tabriz. The one described by Nasir is likely to be another of the same name between Qazvin and Tārām.

Qurūq: no such name occurs in the geographies. From Nasir's description it is likely to be another of the same name between Q Evil and Taram.

Qus (Upper Egypt): see Yaqut, IV, 201; Abul-Feda, 110.
Ramla (Palestine): see Yaqut, II, 817; Abūl-Fedā, 240.
Raqqā (Qobestān): see Yaqut, II, 804.
Rostābād: according to Nasir, a village near Tābās. Dābir-Siyāqī suggests it may be the modern Dawlatābād east of Tābās.
Rumeš (?): the reading of this name is highly uncertain. The manuscripts seem to have “Rumesh” or “Hermes.” According to Abūl-Fedā, 39, the eastern branch of the Nile above the Tennis and Damietta lakes was known as Oshmun.
Sa’dā (Yemen): see Yaqut, III, 588.
Sa’dābād (Tabarestān): see Yaqut, III, 93.
Sālehīyā (Egypt): several towns by this name are given in Yaqut, III, 363, but none is in Egypt.
Samangān, Semenjān (Tokhārestān): a small town near Balkh. See Yaqut, III, 142; Abūl-Fedā, 472.
Sān’ā (Yemen): same as the modern Yemeni city. See Yaqut, III, 420.
Sarāb, Sarāv (Azerbaijan): a city between Ardabil and Tābriz. See Yaqut, III, 64.
Sarakha (Khorasan): a town between Nishapur and Merv. Same as the modern Iranian town. See Yaqut, III, 71; Abūl-Fedā, 494.
Sarbā (Arabia): Nasir locates this place between Jaz and Falaj. It is not listed in the geographies.
Sarmīn (Syria, dependency of Aleppo): see Yaqut, III, 83; Abūl-Fedā, 264.
Saruj (Mesopotamia, Jazira): the modern Turkish town of Sürūç. See Yaqut, III, 85; Abūl-Fedā, 276.
Sāva (Jabal): same as the modern Iranian town of Saveh. See Yaqut, III, 24; Abūl-Fedā, 418.
Sejelmāsā (Maghreb): same as the modern town. See Yaqut, III, 45; Abūl-Fedā, 136.
Semnān (Tabarestān, Qum): town between Rāy and Dāmghān. See Yaqut, III, 141; Abūl-Fedā, 456.
Shamīrān (Tārām): see Yaqut, III, 148.
Shūbighān, Shūbūgān (Balkh): see Yaqut, III, 254; Abūl-Fedā, 446.
Sīsān, Saydā (Syria): same as the modern Lebanese town. See Yaqut, III, 499; Abūl-Fedā, 248.
Tābās (Khorasan, Qobestān): same as the modern Iranian town. See Yaqut, III, 514; Abūl-Fedā, 449.
Tābīrīz, Tibrīz (Azerbaijan): same as the modern Iranian city. See Yaqut, II, 882; Abūl-Fedā, 400.
Ta‘īf (Arabia, Hejaz): same as the modern town. See Yaqut, III, 494; Abūl-Fedā, 94.
Glossary of Terms

Bâ: Nâser explains that towns on the Red Sea are called bâ. The
Bukhârî-e qâtî', I, 218, gives as one meaning of bâ: "the course of a
flood," which would be wâdî in Arabic. The word may have some
connection with the Persian bâh or hâd (ghâd); a toll or customs sta-
tion.
Khârîr: a donkey-load. See Appendix B.
Kashkâh: reconstituted dried milk curd, used for refreshment and me-
dicinal purposes.
Khân: a caravanserai.
Mâqâra: an enclosed portion of a mosque generally reserved for the
ruler. The enclosures are normally surrounded by latticed screens
and were originally designed to protect the ruler from assassina-
tion while in attendance at the mosque.
Mashhâd: A shrine to commemorate the martyrdom of Hosayn b. 'Ali b.
Abâ Tâleb, grandson of the Prophet; also used loosely for any
shrine devoted to a martyr.
Mekteb: a niche in a mosque to indicate the qêbâ, q.v.; also, especially in
the Dome of the Rock area in Jerusalem, used for oratory.
Mosâfer: a person who resides, temporarily or permanently, near a holy
place or shrine in order to receive the blessing attendant upon the
sacred spot.
Novruz (modern Persian Nowruz): the Persian New Year’s Day, which
occurs on the vernal equinox, from which the new year is reck-
oned.
Qêbâ: the direction of the Ka’ba in Mecca, toward which Muslims orient
themselves when they pray. Nâser often gives directions in terms of the
qêbâ, which could be any direction, depending upon where he is.
Rahmat: a “cycle” of liturgical prayer consisting of recitation, bowing,
kneeling and prostration. The canonical daily prayers have varying
numbers of râsâs prescribed for them.
Rehbat: a type of frontier post called caravanserai.
Sa’â: a portion of the Pilgrimage ritual wherein the pilgrim runs be-
tween Mount Safâ’ and Mount Marwa seven times in order to com-
memorate Hagar’s frantic search for water in the desert for her son
Ismael.
Sharif: “noble,” loosely used to designate any descendant of the Prophet
Mohammad.
Zayt hår: oil derived from vegetable seed and used for lamps.

APPENDIX A. Calendrical Systems

THE CALENDRICAL SYSTEMS USED
BY NÂSER-E KHOSRAW

The calendar adopted by Islam and by which daily life and all reli-
gious occasions were reckoned is the Arabian lunar calendar, which
consists of twelve lunar months of 29½ days each. Since the months are
based on the cycles of the moon, no easily calculable correspondence
exists between the lunar and the solar calendar, and the lunar year re-
cedes approximately eleven days every solar year. The names of the Is-
lamic lunar months, beginning with the first, are as follows:


Since a lunar calendar is impractical for fiscal purposes, the Old Per-
sian solar calendar was retained by the bureaucracy in the eastern Is-
lamic realms, as was the Syrian calendar in the eastern Mediterranean
lands. By the time of Nâser-e Khosrow, the Old Persian months, which
originally corresponded to the signs of the Zodiac, had “slipped” for-
ward by precession of the equinoxes almost twenty days. As later re-
formed by Omar Khayyâm, the modern Persian months are:

Farvardîn = Aries (21 March–20 April)
Ordibehest = Taurus (20 April–21 May)
Khordad = Gemini (22 May–21 June)
Tir = Cancer (22 June–22 July)
Mordad = Leo (23 July–22 August)
Shahrivar = Virgo (23 August–22 September)
Mehr = Libra (23 September–22 October)
Abân = Scorpio (23 October–21 November)
Adhar = Sagittarius (22 November–21 December)
Day = Capricorn (22 December–20 January)
Bahman = Aquarius (21 January–19 February)
Esfand = Pisces (20 February–20 March)

Since Nâser quotes from the unreformed Old Calendar, his dates are
approximately twenty days ahead of the reformed calendar.

In Islamic reckoning the day begins at sunset; therefore, what we
would call “Monday night” would be “Tuesday eve” to Nâser. Even tak-
ing into consideration the confusion that arises from this fact, it has not
been possible to reconcile all the days of the week as given in the Safr
nāma. Although the best conversion tables have been consulted and
variant readings in the extant manuscripts have been reviewed, quite
often his “Saturday the 5th” converts into a Wednesday when calcu-
lated in the Christian calendar. The days of the week have therefore been
left as they stand in the Persian text, only the Islamic date has been con-
verted into its Christian equivalent and added between square brackets.

APPENDIX B. Weights and Measures

UNITS OF LINEAR MEASURE

The “cubit” (aruḥ, also arš) is defined as the distance from the tip of
the middle finger to the elbow, which would be about 1½ feet. In prac-
tice, on the basis of measurements still available from the Dome of the
Rock in Jerusalem, the “cubit” would appear to be roughly equal to 2
feet. The “legal cubit” (šuṭrī) is usually defined as 49.875 cm.
(19.6”).

The “ell” (gūz) is defined as 24 fingers, or 1¾ feet, but it seems to be
used interchangeably by Nāṣer as equivalent to the “cubit” and should
therefore be reckoned from 1½ to 2 feet.

The “parasang” (farsang, farsh) is the distance traveled by a caravan
in one hour; it is 3 miles of 4000 gūz each, or 12,000 gūz, equal to a little
less than 3½ modern miles (6 km).

UNITS OF WEIGHT

Units of weight have been so varied in different locales and at differ-
ent periods of time in the Islamic world that it is only with trepidation
that the following approximations are offered. See Walther Hinz,
Islamische Masse und Gewichte (Leiden, 1955).

1 dang (dāneq, dānak) = 8 grains
4 dangs = 1 dirhem
6 dāngs = 1 mithqāl (approximately 1 ½ dram)
15 mithqāls = 1 seer
40 seers = 1 maund (roughly 3½ lbs.)
100 maunds = 1 kharba (roughly 350 lbs.)

CURRENCY

Nāṣer quotes prices in dinars, which, unless explicitly stated as the
Nishapur gold dinar, means the Fatimid “Magrebi dinar” struck in
Egypt. He gives the relative value of the two as 1 Magrebi dinar equal
to 1 ½ Nishapuri dinar.
## APPENDIX C. Nāṣer’s Itinerary

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