

IRANIAN RESISTANCE TO ARAB CONQUEST

Dr. Kersey Antia, May 19, 2019

E. Daftary reports that “the Bihafaridiyya, who continued to expect Bihafarid's return, survived in Khurasen until at least the end of the tenth century” and provides four references to support it. (*History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, Volume IV, (ed.) M. S. Asimov and C.E. Bosworthy UNESCO Publishing, Paris, 1998, p. 47). Daftary also reports that Babak's teachings “were allegedly anti-Arab and anti-Islamic,” and his followers were “awaiting Babak's return until after the tenth century.” (Ibid, p. 50). He also observes that “Even though Islam was already generally accepted as the state religion” in the ninth and tenth centuries, “there continued to exist, at the same time, vestigial communities of Zoroastrians.” (Ibid, p. 94). Moreover, Firdausi completed his *Shah-nama* in 994 and “apparently sought to arouse their (Iranians') sense of patriotism.” (Ibid, p. 92). All this evidence makes it difficult to contend that the Iranians readily surrendered to the Arab invaders. Even the Arab writers never reported such an uncanny event. Indeed, “Zoroastrianism (or Mazdaism) continued to survive and it was in the reign of al-Ma'mun that the most important Pahlavi work on Zoroastrian theology the *Denkard*, was composed” (Ibid, p. 367), as were many others till the tenth and eleventh centuries. C.E. Bosworth also provides an “interesting testimony to the presence.....in the open lands of Sistan (for) the survival there of Zoroastrianism” until December 1264. (*The History of the Saffarids of Sistan and the Maliks of Nimruz*, Mazda Publishers, California, p. 434).