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Framing the conquest: Bactrian local rulers and Arab muslim domination of Bactria (31-128 AH/651-746 CE)

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Chapter Five: Bactria Under the Umayyads' Control

Qutayba conducted executions, he ordered and scared [them]. He humiliated the Turks to the extent that no one had ever done that before him.⁸⁴⁵

Introduction

In the previous chapter, we looked at the Umayyads' expansion in Bactria through the process of military conquests. We saw that these allowed the Umayyads to oversee western parts of Bactria and the Balkh oasis. They implemented direct control by forceful military operations, eradicating any local rulers who resisted them, establishing military garrisons, and appointing Arab Muslim administrators over the conquered areas. However, the Umayyads followed a different policy in the northern, southern, and eastern parts of Bactria. They did not impose direct control over these areas, or systematically conquer these areas, but often attacked them to punish their local rulers who did not pay tribute. However, once they received payment, the Umayyads left those areas and allowed the local rulers in them to maintain their political position. This means the Umayyads simultaneously applied 'direct' and 'indirect' control over Bactria.

This chapter will discuss how and why the Umayyads implemented these different policies. It traces how changes in caliphal policy towards local rule eventually resulted in a new political power structure in the region. In terms of sources, this chapter follows the same approach undertaken in the previous chapters. It combines documentary and literary sources and reads them together so as to understand how the Umayyads established their control in Bactria. While this chapter focusses on political and military elements, the next and final chapter examines how this political shift affected local social relations.

5.1. The Areas under Umayyad's direct control

5.1.1 *Obtaining political influence in western Bactria*

As the Umayyad forces began to establish their domination over Bactria, they encountered many local rulers who had autonomy in their local affairs. These rulers controlled local economic resources, managed their administrations, and commanded local forces. However, none of them could unify the entire region under his personal control. Instead, they recognised

⁸⁴⁵ Ibn A'tham al-Kūfī, *Futūḥ*, 7: 153.

the overlordship of the *qaghān* of the Turks and paid him tributes. The *qaghān* did not impose direct control over Bactria, nor did he interfere in the Bactrian local rulers' internal affairs. Thus, Bactrian rulers remained in charge of their areas. In times of political upheavals, these local rulers' military-political alliances with each other and with more considerable regional political powers served one goal: to maintain their independence. This form of political order was in place in Bactria during the first fifty years of the Arab Muslim presence in the region. From 31–86/651–705, the Arab Muslim generals, like al-Aḥnaf b. Qays, and then the Umayyad governors like Yazīd b. al-Muhallab, respected this political order and did not impose direct control.⁸⁴⁶ They often negotiated with local rulers, received tributes, and left the region. However, in the year 90/710, Qutayba b. Muslim broke down this political order and imposed direct control over western parts of Bactria and the Balkh oasis. Nevertheless, he did not follow the same policy of imposing direct control over northern, southern, and eastern Bactria. The difference between respecting local political order earlier and breaking it down later creates several questions. Why did previous generals and governors like al-Aḥnaf and Yazīd not impose direct rule over Bactria while Qutayba later did?

To understand the Umayyad's different policies enforced in Bactria, we should go back in time and see why all the governors before Qutayba respected the local political order in Bactria and did not impose direct control over the region. Several reasons prevented the incorporation of Bactria before Qutayba's governorship. Internal division and strife preoccupied the Arab leadership: there was the breakout of civil war (*fitna*) in the western parts of the empire and tribal conflicts among the Arab Muslims in Khurasan. They were moreover focussed on raiding Sogdiana, which required a safe passage through Bactria, but not the complete occupation of the thoroughfare. These concerns that explain the absence of an Arab-Muslim initiative to bring Bactria under permanent and total control have already been discussed in chapter three (3.3). A final reason which was of crucial importance was the lack of a standing army in Khurasan.

From 31/651, when the Arab Muslim forces led by Ibn 'Āmir arrived in Sasanian Khurasan to help the *kanārang* of Tus, up to 51/671, when a large group of Arab Muslims settled in the Marw region, the Arab Muslims did not have a standing army in Khurasan. Only a small group of soldiers, no more than 4,000 troops, were stationed in Khurasan after the first engagement with Balkh.⁸⁴⁷ This small force was organised into tribal units. Arab Muslim

⁸⁴⁶ Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, 408; Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, 5: 2903.

⁸⁴⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, 5: 2907.

soldiers were all engaged as infantry. They carried swords and shields and used long spears to push back the horses to defend their lines from the enemy's cavalry.⁸⁴⁸ One of the tribal leaders led the war, but he had to cooperate with the other tribal leaders, who each led a unit to help him.⁸⁴⁹ A group of Sasanian horsemen formed the cavalry in the Arab Muslim army.⁸⁵⁰ The Arab Muslim troops did not even have a garrison, and so the local rulers of Inner Khurasan accommodated the Arab Muslim forces to shelter from the cold winter.⁸⁵¹ The tribal forces were able to raid various areas in western Bactria, but they were not in a position to bring the entire region under permanent control. Hence, the Bactrian rulers' power continued, and in some places like Marw al-Rūd and Balkh, the local rulers paid tributes to the Arabs but they could maintain their status.

The situation changed with the new forces coming from Iraq to Khurasan. In 51/671, many soldiers from the Basra and Kufa garrisons were sent to the Marw region. The newcomers provided fresh military forces to expand Arab Muslim authority in the east. By 77/697, the sources describe an Arab Muslim army in Khurasan of substantial force. The troops formed two parts: the advanced guard (*muqaddima*) and the rear guard (*sāqa*). The advanced guard consisted of several thousand soldiers. In 80/700, the advanced guard of the forces was led by al-Muhallab b. Abī Šufra and numbered 3,000 horsemen.⁸⁵² During the governorship of Yazīd b. al-Muhallab in Khurasan, the army increased to 10,000 soldiers.⁸⁵³ Although these numbers might not be reliable, they reflect an increase in number of troops. Despite having these forces, the Muhallabids did not initiate any systematic conquests in Bactria because they were not interested in war but invested more in infrastructures. The Muhallabids acted as overlords in western Bactria by requiring tribute from the king of Guzgan and the *nizak* of Badghis. However, they did not change any local rulers or build any garrisons in Badghis and Guzgan. Similarly, they did not interfere in local rulers' internal affairs. This form of overlordship was already known to Bactrian rulers, and they did not object to it. Except for capturing Tirmidh from the anti-Umayyad rebel Mūsā, the Muhallabids did not conduct military operations in

⁸⁴⁸ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 7: 495; The Arab Muslim forces went from Iraq to Khurasan, therefore the military organisation in Khurasan was similar to that in Iraq described by Hugh Kennedy (Hugh Kennedy, *The Armies of the Caliphs: Military and Society in the Early Islamic State* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 12, 21–22).

⁸⁴⁹ Al-Ṭabarī informs us that though al-Aḥnaf b. Qays was the commander of the forces (*amīr al-jaysh*) sent to Bactria. Still, he had to cooperate with other tribal leaders (al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 5: 2898–2902).

⁸⁵⁰ Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, 413–414.

⁸⁵¹ Qudāma b. Ja'far, *Al-kharāj*, 402; Ibn Fandūq, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaq*, 26; Gardīzī, *Zayn al-akhbār*, 229–230.

⁸⁵² Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 8:1023, 1035.

⁸⁵³ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 8:1107.

northern, southern, and eastern Bactria. The local rulers of these areas continued ruling and maintained their loyalty to the *qaghān* of the Turks.⁸⁵⁴ Hence, before Qutayba arrived in Bactria, the Umayyads had influence in western Bactria up to Balkh and Tirmidh, and the Turks had authority over the rest of Bactria. The expansion of Umayyad influence in western Bactria happened at the expense of limiting the *qaghān*'s overlordship; nevertheless, the *qaghān* did not clash with the Umayyads over control of Bactria in this period. Once the Umayyads attained a toehold in Bactria, the situation was ready for them to bring the region under their control. That happened after some reforms discussed in the next section.

5.1.2 Umayyad political and military reforms

Imposing direct control over western Bactria and the Balkh oasis resulted from the Umayyads' new political strategy in the first half of the eighth century. This imperial strategy was to expand the Umayyad empire in the east and incorporate Bactria and Sogdiana. This imperial agenda was directed by al-Ḥajjāj and implemented by Qutayba. This agenda began with a political and military reform that allowed the Umayyads to impose their control over Bactria.

Political reform was the first item in this imperial agenda. It was related to the Umayyads' understanding of Khurasan. To them, Khurasan was the empire's eastern frontier (*thaghr al-mashriq*).⁸⁵⁵ It was the region that could go out of control. According to al-Ṭabarī, the caliph 'Abd al-Malik understood Khurasan as a frontier region filled with evil (*Khurāsān thaghr al-mashriq wa qad kāna bihi min al-sharr*) that made it difficult to control. This expression is attributed to the caliph after he was challenged by 'Abd Allāh b. Khāzim, who formed his *de facto* rule in Khurasan and supported Ibn Zubayr against 'Abd al-Malik.⁸⁵⁶ Similarly, al-Ṭabarī attributes some words to 'Umar II, who said: "there is no greater frontier for me than Khurasan" (*lā a 'ẓama 'indī min thaghr Khurāsān*).⁸⁵⁷ Apparently, the caliph 'Umar said this after he found out about the Sogdian converts' resentment towards the Umayyad policy of taking poll tax from the converts, who eventually appealed to the Türgesh *qaghān* to help them against the Umayyads. The Umayyad caliphs followed two different models to

⁸⁵⁴ This issue is reflected in Bactrian documents no. Nn, O, P, Q, R, S, Ss, T, Tt in Sims-Williams, *BDI*, 74–79, 80–83, 84–87, 88–91, 92–93, 94–95, 96–97, 98–103, 104–105, and Bactrian documents no. jf, jg, ji in Sims-Williams, *BDII*, 132–135, 138–139.

⁸⁵⁵ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 9: 1366.

⁸⁵⁶ See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 8: 831–35, 860.

⁸⁵⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 9: 1366.

control such a challenging frontier region. The first was treating Khurasan as a *separate* province, and the second was treating it as a *dependent* province of Iraq.

The first model was enforced mainly in the first fifty years of Umayyad rule; Khurasan was treated as a separate province. The caliph directly appointed the governor (*amīr*), who was often a close relative to him.⁸⁵⁸ Other elements, such as personal friendship with the caliph;⁸⁵⁹ bribing the caliphal family;⁸⁶⁰ knowledge and experience;⁸⁶¹ or helping the caliph in his struggle for power against rivals, were important criteria for choosing the governor of Khurasan.⁸⁶² It seems that this model of direct caliphal involvement in Khurasan's governance, whereby the province fell under immediate caliphal control, was aimed at leading military operations more quickly in the east,⁸⁶³ maintaining the caliph's authority among Arab Muslims in Khurasan, and suppressing any anti-caliphal rebels amongst the ranks.⁸⁶⁴ In this model, the familial ties with the caliph or the investments they made to gain their position and which formed the basis of their suitability as governors paradoxically also gave the governors certain levels of autonomy. For instance, the governor of Khurasan had the right to appoint (*istakhlafa*) his successor on two occasions: before leaving Marw to lead the war in Sogdiana, and when he was on his deathbed. The caliph confirmed (*aqarra*) his appointee, often the governor's son or relative.⁸⁶⁵ The caliph expected his governor to inform him about the situation in the province by sending him letters and delegations (*sing.*, *wafd*).⁸⁶⁶ The caliph also expected the governor to send him the caliphal share (*khums*) from the provincial income. However, some governors kept all provincial revenue to be spent on their expenses and refused to deliver even the caliph's share.⁸⁶⁷ Some of them openly turned against the caliph.⁸⁶⁸

⁸⁵⁸ 'Abd Allāh b. 'Āmir, 'Abd Allāh b. Khāzim, Sa'īd b. 'Uthmān were either family members or relatives of 'Uthmān b. 'Affān. Other governors like 'Ubayd Allāh b. Ziyād, Salm b. Ziyād and Umayya b. 'Abd Allāh were the relatives of Umayyad caliphs Mu'āwiya and 'Abd al-Malik. Al-Ya'qūbī shows this issue clearly in his *Ta'rikh*, 167.

⁸⁵⁹ 'Abd al-Malik appointed Umayya b. 'Abd Allāh because he had family relation with the caliph (al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 8: 861).

⁸⁶⁰ Junayd b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān gained the position of governor of Khurasan after he gave expensive gifts to the caliph's wife (al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 9: 1529).

⁸⁶¹ Al-Ya'qūbī mentions that Naṣr b. Sayyār knew Khurasan (*lahū 'ilmun bi Khurāsān*) and that helped him to become the governor (al-Ya'qūbī, *Kitāb al-buldān*, 84).

⁸⁶² Al-Muḥallab b. Abī Ṣufra had an impressive career. Later, he shifted his loyalty from Ibn Zubayr to 'Abd al-Malik (al-Dīnāwārī, *Kitāb al-akhbār al-tiwāl*, 281–291); Sa'īd al-Ḥarashī was appointed as governor of Khurasan because he helped the caliph against Yazīd b. al-Muḥallab in the battle of *Yawm al-'aqar* (al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 9: 1438).

⁸⁶³ The case of 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ziyād can be mentioned.

⁸⁶⁴ The case of Bukayr b. Washshāh is a good example.

⁸⁶⁵ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 7: 161, and 8: 1035, 1083 and 8: 1023.

⁸⁶⁶ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 8: 1033.

⁸⁶⁷ Al-Ya'qūbī, *Kitāb al-buldān*, 78.

⁸⁶⁸ Al-Ya'qūbī, *Kitāb al-buldān*, 78.

The first model had certain limits. The geographical distance between Khurasan and Syria (almost 3,000 km) and the caliph's unfamiliarity with the complicated political situation in the east could cause problems. This is reflected in some Arabic reports. Al-Ya'qūbī mentions that al-Ḥajjāj argued to the caliph that one could not directly control Khurasan from Syria.⁸⁶⁹ Al-Sullāmī reports that al-Ḥajjāj resented the caliph's policy towards Khurasan and saw it as a great mistake.⁸⁷⁰ These arguments were given when al-Ḥajjāj was struggling to remove the powerful Muhallabids from Khurasan, who did not allow al-Ḥajjāj to interfere in Khurasan. Al-Ya'qūbī and al-Sullāmī do not discuss al-Ḥajjāj's counterargument, but they assert that those governors appointed directly by the caliph from Syria failed in Khurasan.⁸⁷¹ Al-Ḥajjāj's later attempt to bring Khurasan under his direct control shows that he wanted the caliph to leave Khurasan to him. In other words, he wanted to combine Iraq and Khurasan under one single command. That led to the development of the second model.

In the second model, Khurasan was treated as a dependent province. It was part of the administration in Iraq. The governor of Iraq, who acted as the implementor of the caliphal policies in the east, appointed the governor of Khurasan. It reduced the caliph's interference in Khurasan and allowed the governor of Iraq to decide about Khurasan.⁸⁷² This model was primarily applied to expand the empire in the east or to defend and protect it against an external enemy more effectively. We already saw in the previous chapter (4.1) that the expansion of the empire and incorporation of Bactria and Sogdiana happened precisely during the governorship of al-Ḥajjāj. The defense of Khurasan against the Türgesh *qaghān* and al-Ḥārith happened during the governorship of Khālīd al-Qasrī (4.3). In both cases, Khurasan was added to the administration in Iraq.

In this model, the governor of Khurasan was not necessarily the caliph's relative, but a capable commander who reported to the governor of Iraq,⁸⁷³ sent him gifts and caliphal shares,⁸⁷⁴ and benefitted from his political and military support.⁸⁷⁵ As opposed to the first model, in which the governor of Khurasan, who had some ties with the caliph, enjoyed some levels of autonomy by answering in a loose way to caliphal directions (as Umayyad governors

⁸⁶⁹ Al-Ya'qūbī, *Kitāb al-buldān*, 81.

⁸⁷⁰ Al-Sullāmī, *Akhbār Wulāt Khurāsān*, 97.

⁸⁷¹ Al-Ya'qūbī, *Kitāb al-buldān*, 84; Even more, al-Ṭabarī mentions that the tribal leaders in Khurasan complained about the governors sent directly from Syria, and called them "donkey riders" (*fajā'u 'ala al-ḥimārāt*) without the characteristics to be the governors (al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, 9: 1461).

⁸⁷² See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, 9: 1718.

⁸⁷³ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, 8: 1203.

⁸⁷⁴ Al-Sullāmī, *Akhbār Wulāt Khurāsān*, 109.

⁸⁷⁵ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, 9: 1186; Stark, "The Arab Conquest of Bukhārā," 367–400.

in general did), in the second model, the governor of Khurasan instead followed direct orders from the governor of Iraq. Combining Iraq and Khurasan under one leader was a significant political reform that led to the imposition of direct control in Bactria.

The second element of this imperial agenda, which had great repercussions for Bactria, was the military reform in Khurasan. Before al-Ḥajjāj sent Qutayba to Khurasan, the Umayyads had military forces, but the Muhallabids did not use them for forceful conquests in Bactria. Qutayba created the conquest army out of Arab Muslim populations in the Marw region, along with the forces provided by the local rulers of Inner Khurasan, and the troops given by the western Bactrian rulers, like the *nizak* of Badghis.

Qutayba's army of conquests was well-organised and had high military capability. It consisted of a central part and two flanks.⁸⁷⁶ It had cavalries (*al-khayl*), infantry (*al-rijāl*), and archers (*al-marāmiya*).⁸⁷⁷ In addition, there were officials called *al-ʿurafāʾ* (sing., *ʿarīf*) who recognised capable soldiers and introduced them to the governor.⁸⁷⁸ Another position was *al-taʿbiya*, the organiser, who arranged the military units before the war.⁸⁷⁹ At the time of Qutayba's rebellion and his death in 96/715, the army in Khurasan had 54,000 soldiers from different Arabian tribes and the non-Arab *mawālī*.⁸⁸⁰ This number is apart from the local forces often provided by local rulers to serve Qutayba. The army in Khurasan was continuously reinforced by fresh forces sent from Iraq and Syria. This pattern continued from 93/712 onwards. Even the Iraqi forces who served in Sindh were sent to Khurasan to serve Qutayba.⁸⁸¹ Later, the caliph Hishām sent a large army (*jaysh ʿazīm*) with war equipment to help his governor against al-Ḥārith b. Surayj and the Türgesh.⁸⁸² In times of emergency, the governor also recruited locals for the army.⁸⁸³

The existence of good horses in Bactria and Sogdiana provided excellent mounts for the cavalry. In 109/728, Ashras al-Sulamī, the governor of Khurasan, established *al-rābiṭa* or 'mobile frontier forces'. The *al-rābiṭa* had two main parts: the heavy cavalry (*al-mujawwafa*) and the light cavalry (*al-mujarrada*).⁸⁸⁴ The horses of *al-mujawwafa* had armour, but the horses

⁸⁷⁶ Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, 8: 1250.

⁸⁷⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, 8: 1195, 1202, 1242–1243.

⁸⁷⁸ Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, 8: 1243.

⁸⁷⁹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, 9: 1609.

⁸⁸⁰ Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, 8: 1291.

⁸⁸¹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, 8: 1267.

⁸⁸² Ibn Aʿtham al-Kūfī, *Futūḥ*, 7: 278.

⁸⁸³ Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, 9: 1545.

⁸⁸⁴ Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, 9: 1405.

of *al-mujarrada* did not. The horses had stirrups that increased the stability and ability to manoeuvre of the horsemen on the battlefields.⁸⁸⁵ Apart from that, the Umayyad army in Khurasan used catapults (*manjanīq*) to destroy the fortresses of the Bactrian rulers.⁸⁸⁶ They also rented local boats (*safā'in*) to cross the Amu Darya.⁸⁸⁷ All this means that the Umayyad army had different units that worked together. Enlarging the military forces allowed Qutayba to carry out the imperial expansion agenda towards the east. This military conquered and incorporated Bactria, Sogdiana, and Khwarazm into the Umayyad empire. Thereby, Qutayba challenged Bactrian rulers and brought them under his control. This control was directly imposed on western parts of Bactria and the Balkh oasis, which will be discussed next.

5.1.3 Imposing direct control over western Bactria

Qutayba's direct control was implemented only in western Bactria up to Balkh and Tirmidh. It was actualised through military conquests, removing local rulers who resisted him, stationing Arab Muslim soldiers in garrisons within or near main cities, appointing Arab Muslim administrators, and demanding tributes from the captured areas. Two reasons may have been behind imposing direct control over western Bactria. The first reason was western Bactria's strategic importance to reach Sogdiana. The second reason was the *nizak*'s revolt supported by the local rulers of western Bactria. During this rebellion, the rulers of western Bactria changed sides, ignored their peace treaties with Qutayba, and united with the *nizak* to remove the Umayyads from the region. Thus, Qutayba had to bring this region under his command to ensure access to Sogdiana and remove any local rulers who could challenge him. We will see later that Asad al-Qasrī almost repeated the same policy and re-established Umayyad's direct control over western Bactria, Balkh oasis, and Tirmidh (Figure 22). These reasons, however, did not apply to other parts of Bactria, and the Umayyads kept those areas under indirect control through their local rulers, which will be discussed later in this chapter (5.2).

The main instrument of direct control was the military garrisons established by Qutayba. They were first established in Balkh and Tirmidh, and then expanded to Marw al-Rūd, Talaqan, Faryab, Juzjan, and Khulm during and after the *nizak*'s rebellion.⁸⁸⁸ The exact location of these garrisons is unknown. However, it is reasonable to infer that they were within

⁸⁸⁵ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 9: 1505, 1517, 1542.

⁸⁸⁶ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 8: 1288. Also, see 9:1442–46, and 9: 1852.

⁸⁸⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 8: 1024.

⁸⁸⁸ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 8: 1206, 1218.

or near the main cities in the plain/oases areas and not in the mountains because our sources associate them with certain cities. The exact number of soldiers stationed in these garrisons is also not clear, but from al-Ṭabarī's narratives related to the rebellion of the *nizak*,⁸⁸⁹ and later al-Ḥārith b. Surayj,⁸⁹⁰ we learn that the garrison of Baruqan in Balkh had more than 10,000 soldiers. Other smaller garrisons, like the one in Andkhud, had about 4000 soldiers. Though these numbers are fixed and cannot be fully trusted, they reflect that the Umayyads sent many soldiers to western Bactria. The garrisons in these areas were linked by the *barīd* or post system that facilitated rapid communication between them.⁸⁹¹ The garrisons hosted not only the fighting soldiers (*muqātila*), but also a number of Arab Muslim administrators who managed the issues related to war (*al-ḥarb*), tributes (*al-kharāj*),⁸⁹² prayers (*al-ṣalāt*),⁸⁹³ and jurisprudence (*al-qadā*).⁸⁹⁴ The police (*al-shurṭa*) and bodyguards (*al-ḥaras*) kept law and order within the garrisons.⁸⁹⁵ The in-charges of these garrisons were appointed by the Umayyad governor of Khurasan and responded to him. Establishing the garrisons from Marw al-Rūd to Tirmidh means that these areas were brought under the direct control of the governor of Khurasan, who responded to the governor of Iraq, the main director of the caliphal policies in the east.

The imposition of direct control over western Bactria significantly impacted this region. It limited the autonomy of local rulers to a large extent. The Umayyads either annihilated the local rulers —like Badhān of Marw al-Rūd, the *nizak* of Badghis— or pushed them to the margins like the king of Guzgan who continued in the mountain areas in Guzgan. Once they were sent to the margins, these local rulers lost their main cities and primary economic resources. For instance, the coinage of the king of Guzgan was discontinued after 711, and instead, we see the Umayyads minting silver dirhams in the main cities like Amber and Balkh.⁸⁹⁶ The Umayyads' direct control should have removed or limited the Turkic

⁸⁸⁹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Tarīkh*, 8: 1207.

⁸⁹⁰ Al-Ṭabarī, *Tarīkh*, 9: 1567.

⁸⁹¹ It was an old Persian system in which a number of stations were made to facilitate rapid communication between different areas. A *barīd* station had building in which horses were kept ready for the couriers. The *barīd* staffs were well-trained riders, knew the roads, and changed horses in each station. See Edmund Clifford Bosworth, "Barīd," *Encyclopedia Iranica*, available online, www.iranicaonline.org/articles/barid (access online 21 December 2020); For recent discussion on origin and function of the *barīd* see Didier Gazagnadou, "The Origin of the word *barīd*," *Journal of the Persian Studies* 10 (2017): 49–56.

⁸⁹² Al-Ṭabarī, *Tarīkh*, 7: 178. The *āmīl al-kharāj* had the authority to take money from the treasury (*khazāna*) to pay the cheques (see al-Ṭabarī, *Tarīkh*, 9: 1307).

⁸⁹³ Al-Ṭabarī, *Tarīkh*, 9: 1307.

⁸⁹⁴ Al-Ṭabarī, *Tarīkh*, 9: 1485, and 9:1505.

⁸⁹⁵ There is no report showing that the office of *al-ḥaras* and the *al-shurṭa* overlapped each other. In 119/737, both *al-shurṭa* and *al-ḥaras* joined the army to fight the Türgesh in Guzgan (al-Ṭabarī, *Tarīkh*, 9: 1609).

⁸⁹⁶ See chapter four, section 4.2.2.

overlordship in western Bactria. This political change has been reflected in non-Arabic sources. There are some Bactrian documents produced after 700 in Guzgan, such as a Bactrian inscription from Bamiyan possibly dating after 714, and two Chinese reports from 718 and 725. These pieces of evidence require some explanation.

The first important change that our sources reflect is the apparent disappearance of Turkic overlordship from western Bactria. A Bactrian document produced in Guzgan in 659 refers to the Turkic *qaghān* and the tributes collected in his name.⁸⁹⁷ However, we no longer see any reference to the Turkic *qaghān* in later documents.⁸⁹⁸ It is unclear if the Turkic overlordship was totally removed or limited to the rulers who remained in the mountainous areas. Further information about the presence of Arab Muslims as an important political power is reflected in the Bactrian inscription of Tang-i Safidak, an area in the district of Yakawlang in Bamiyan. It was once placed on a small Buddhist stupa (2.5 x 2.5m) commissioned by Alkhis, son of Khuras, the lord of Gazan (*γαζαβο χοδδηοο*) around 714 (or later). It is unclear if Alkhis visited Bamiyan as a pilgrim or fled from the Arab Muslims who dominated Guzgan. According to the inscription, Alkhis commissioned this stupa when there was a Turkic ruler (*δορκο χαρο*) and an Arab ruler (*ταζιγο χαρο*).⁸⁹⁹ The inscription does not identify the Arab and Turkic rulers. However, using the title *khar* (*χαρο*) meaning “ruler”, for both Arabs and Turks reflects Alkhis’ understanding of the two powers. He likely viewed both as important political powers.

The establishment of Umayyad control over western Bactria is also reflected in Chinese reports. In a letter sent to the Chinese emperor in 718, the brother of the *yabghu* of Tukharistan claimed that the *yabghu* was the overlord of all Bactrian rulers, including Guzgan (*hou-che-kien*). He mentions that the Arabs (*ta-che*) attacked the region and put enormous pressure on

⁸⁹⁷ Bactrian documents no. Nn in Sims-Williams, *BDI*, 74–79.

⁸⁹⁸ See Bactrian documents no. O, R, Tt, Uu in Sims-Williams, *BDI*, 80–83, 92–93, 104–105, 112–115.

⁸⁹⁹ Jonathan Lee and Nicholas Sims-Williams, “The antiquities and Inscription of Tang-i Safidak,” *Silk Road Art and Archaeology* 9 (2003): 169–184; Sims-Williams identified Gazan with modern Ghazni. However, Frantz Grenet suggested that Gazan could have been the name of Yakawlang, where the inscription is found (Frantz Grenet, “The Antiquities and Inscription of Tang-i Safidak,” *Silk Roads Art and Archaeology* 9 (2003): 159–184). Minoru Inaba also suggests that Gazan mentioned in this inscription should be associated with Gaz, an area in Guzgan. He argues that the lord of Gazan here can be interpreted as “lord of the people of Gaz”, and the area of Gaz is known from the Bactrian documents (Minoru Inaba, “Between Zābulistān and Gūzgān: A Study of the Early Islamic History of Afghanistan,” *Journal of Inner Asian Art and Archaeology* 7 (2012): 209–225). Apart from these arguments, one can see that Gaz is a common name in the northern parts of the Hindukush. For instance, Gazan is the name of an area in the east of Baghlan. The area south of Balkh was also called Gaz in Xuanzang’s report and in several Bactrian documents. The name of Gaz is also preserved in the name of modern Darra-yi Gaz in the south of Balkh. There is an old route from Darra-yi Gaz to Bamiyan through Yakawlang, where the stupa of Tangi-Safidak is located. Therefore, it is difficult to identify Gazan with Ghazni (for Gaz in Bactrian documents, see documents no. R, S in Sims-Williams, *BDI*, 92–93, 94–97).

the *yabghu*.⁹⁰⁰ However, it is unclear if the Turkic overlordship was recognised in western Bactria when the *yabghu*'s brother contacted the emperor. The reason is that Qutayba already pacified western Bactria, the Balkh oasis, and Tirmidh before 715, sent the *yabghu* of Tukharistan to Iraq, and then appointed the *yabghu*'s son in Tukharistan. Hye Ch'o, the Korean Buddhist monk who visited Bactria in 725 we encountered earlier, provided further information that can clarify the situation. He reports: "At present, the place [Bactria] is guarded and oppressed by Arab forces. The original king was compelled to leave the capital, and he resides in Badakhshan...which is under the authority of the Arabs."⁹⁰¹ Hye Ch'o does not reveal the identity of the Arab ruler or the fleeing king. The Arabic narratives do not help to identify them either. What is important is that his report shows that the Umayyads were identified as victorious over the Turks, even by a Chinese outsider visiting the region. In other words, the Umayyads expanded their control over the region. The Umayyad's control over western Bactria was disrupted by al-Ḥārith b. Surajy, which forced the Umayyads to re-establish their control over this region again, and this time stronger. The following section will elaborate on this issue.

5.1.4 Re-establishing Umayyads' direct control over western Bactria

The Umayyads' direct control established over western Bactria in 90/710 continued until 116/734. However, the rebellion of al-Ḥārith b. Surayj and the Türgesh invasion of Bactria disrupted it. The previous chapter (4.3.1) explained that al-Ḥārith captured Balkh and interacted with the ruler of Guzgan, the *tarsul* (local chief) of Faryab, and the *shahrab* or ruler of Talaqan, and they all supported him.⁹⁰² The *tarsul* of Faryab and the *shahrab* of Talaqan were local elites who survived after they submitted to Qutayba, after he established military garrisons in Faryab and Talaqan. Qutayba also established a garrison in Guzgan. This report is important because it shows that for two decades (710–734), Umayyad control did not allow the *tarsul* of Faryab and the *shahrab* of Talaqan, or the king of Guzgan to make any move against the Umayyads, and only the rebellion allowed them to appear and fight the Umayyads. It is also important to note that al-Ḥārith's revolt did not remove the Umayyad garrisons from western Bactria, but he became their commander for a while. The Arab Muslim soldiers of these garrisons joined his revolt, but once Asad al-Qasrī, the Umayyad governor of Khurasan,

⁹⁰⁰ Chavannes, *Documents sur les Tou-kiue*, 200–201.

⁹⁰¹ *The Hye Ch'o Diary*, 52.

⁹⁰² Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 8: 1204–1206.

crushed the rebellion, they left al-Ḥārith and joined Asad. Hence, disturbing the Umayyads' direct control over western Bactria and the Balkh oasis was temporary. Asad re-established that control in 120/737.

The re-establishment of the Umayyads' direct control was publicly celebrated during the *mihragān* festival in the autumn of 120/738 in Balkh. That was a historical moment because it happened almost ninety years after Bactrian elites recognised the Arab Muslim overlordship for the first time in such a ceremony in Balkh. However, there was a sharp difference between the two events. When the Balkhi elites visited al-Aḥnaf b. Qays's cousin during the *mihragān* festival in 33/653, the Arab Muslims had not conquered Bactria but just raided it. They had not established garrisons or appointed Arab Muslims over the region. They received the gifts and tributes and then returned to Iraq. However, in 120/738, the Umayyads were an established empire that conquered and incorporated eastern Iranian regions and defeated a great rival like the Türgesh Turks. They had military garrisons and executed any resisting local rulers in western Bactria. Thus, the *mihragān* festival of 120/738 was a sign of Umayyad triumph in Bactria. Reading the report about this event clearly shows it.

Al-Ṭabarī is the only one who provides extensive information about this event. On the authority of al-Madā'inī, al-Ṭabarī depicts the ceremony as follows:

And then, the *mihragān* festival arrived, and he [Asad] was in Balkh. The commanders (*al-umarā'*) and local landed gentry (*al-dahāqīn*) came to him with gifts (*al-hadāyā*), and among those who visited him was Ibrāhīm b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥanafī his *āmīl* in Herat, [a particular] Khurasānī [?], and the *dihqān* of Herat..., and Asad was on a throne (*al-sarīr*), and the elites of Khurasan were on chairs (*al-kurrāsī*) Then, the *dihqān* rose and gave a speech saying: 'May God keeps the *amīr*'s behaviour correct! We Persians (*ma'shar al-'ajam*) ruled the world for 1,400 years and governed it with affability (*al-ḥilm*), reason (*al-'aql*) and dignity (*al-waqār*) ..., and all these qualities are gathered in you, and you completed the *katkhudāniyya*. You protected your family, your people and those who are related to you (*mawālik*) ... and you met the *qaghān* who was with 100,000 and accompanied by al-Ḥārith b. Surajy, [but you] defeated him'..., and the *dihqān* prostrated before Asad ...⁹⁰³

Though this report exaggerates Asad's army and leadership in the war against the *qaghān*, it reflects significant information about the political situation and Umayyad control in the region.

⁹⁰³ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 9: 1637–38.

The first issue to note is that the *mihragān* was organised for Asad. The *mihragān* was an important Zoroastrian autumn festival in which Persian elites visited their kings and offered them gifts. Organising the *mihragān* in Balkh shows that this pre-Islamic Iranian tradition continued and was now organised for Asad, an Arab Muslim governor. Asad found it a perfect moment to renew bonds of loyalty with the local elites who came under his control. However, as Haug has noticed, this ceremony was more complicated than it looked. He discussed it as an interplay of “complex interaction[s] between Iranian tradition and Arab Muslim rule.”⁹⁰⁴

The complexity of this issue is revealed if we review the report again through Haug’s analysis. The Arab Muslim commanders and local Iranian elites gathered under the leadership of an Umayyad governor to celebrate a non-Islamic tradition. In this ceremony, the Iranian elites presented gifts of gold and silver and other precious materials like silk fabrics. Then, a *dihqān* compared Asad to the ancient Iranian kings, thereby gently making him part of an old tradition. Subsequently, Asad distributed gifts among Arab Muslim commanders. Thus, the ceremony, as Haug argued, reflects two layers. On the one hand, Asad acted as an actual ruler by receiving gifts from local Iranian elites. However, on the other hand, he represented himself as a tribal *shaykh* who generously honoured his clients by giving them gifts to reward and simultaneously renew their loyalty. The Arabs who received the gifts were representatives of the Qays and Rabi‘a tribes, who rivalled the Yamani tribe from which Asad came.⁹⁰⁵ Hence, by celebrating a non-Islamic tradition, Asad represented his legitimate authority over local Iranian elites and simultaneously showed himself as a tribal *shaykh* who expected loyalty from the Arabs.

Al-Ṭabarī’s report about the set-up of this ceremony reveals crucial information about western Bactria that is not addressed in Haug’s analysis. Al-Ṭabarī mentions that Asad sat on a throne (*al-sarīr*) while the Arab Muslim commanders and local Iranian elites sat on chairs (*al-kurrāsī*) before him. That means the commanders and the local elites were received as equals. However, this report does not identify the local Iranian elites but generally calls them *al-dahāqīn*. The same word is used for the local elite of Herat who accompanied the *‘āmil* of Herat. This report does not refer to the *tarsul* of Faryab, or the *shahrab* of Talaqan, which means they were either removed or had been brought properly under Asad’s control. Whether the king of Guzgan was present is unknown. The *dihqān* who praised Asad and called him *katkhudā* “master of the house”, and prostrated before Asad is not identified. In any case,

⁹⁰⁴ Haug, “The Gifts of Mihragān,” 43.

⁹⁰⁵ Haug, “The Gifts of Mihragān,” 42.

organising the ceremony, sitting on a throne, receiving gifts from local elites, and being called *kathhudā* by the local elites who prostrated before him reflect one message: the region is under Umayyad control. Calling Asad *kathhudā* has political significance as it suggests that the local Iranian elites accepted Asad as their king. Before Asad, only Qutayba was called king (*malik*) by local Iranian elites, indicating a deep political change in the region.⁹⁰⁶

From 120/738 to the end of the Umayyad period, our sources do not discuss any local rulers in western Bactria. Only the king of Guzgan survived, and he served the Umayyads. Possibly, he retained some autonomy because he commanded his military forces and helped Naṣr b. Sayyār in Sogdiana.⁹⁰⁷ Which areas in Guzgan he controlled are unknown, but it is possible that he was in the mountain areas in Guzgan as the Arabs controlled the rest of the Guzgan. The situation in the mountainous area of Gharchistan also remains unknown. What is clear is that three major areas of political control in western Bactria, namely Marw al-Rūd, Badghis, and Guzgan, which had their local autonomous rulers before 90/710, were under Umayyad control in 120/738. Similarly, the Balkh oasis, Khulm, and Tirmidh were under the Umayyads' direct rule in 120/738. However, the Umayyads' level of control was not the same in other parts of Bactria, notably in northern, southern, and eastern Bactria. There, the Umayyads enforced indirect control through their local rulers. The next part will discuss the nature of this indirect control.

5.2. The Areas under Umayyads' indirect control

In contrast to western Bactrian, which the Umayyads systematically conquered and imposed direct control, the Umayyads enforced indirect rule over northern, southern, and eastern Bactria without conquest campaigns. The local rulers of these areas recognised Umayyad authority and continued controlling their areas while paying tribute to the Umayyads and providing military service. This form of indirect rule is known as overlordship, which has been discussed in chapter two (2.3). The Umayyad overlordship was naturalised in two different ways. The first was when a Bactrian local king, who was under pressure from his neighbouring rivals, voluntarily submitted to the Umayyads, and offered his kingdom to obtain Umayyad protection. In this situation, the Umayyads helped the local king to restore his position against his rivals. However, the local king became a servant of the Umayyads, paid tributes and

⁹⁰⁶ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 8: 1300.

⁹⁰⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 9: 1693.

provided his local forces when the Umayyads required it. The Umayyads did not interfere in the local king's internal affairs. They did not establish military garrisons or appoint Arab Muslim administrators in the submitted area but allowed the local king to control it.

The second method was different. It was implemented when the Umayyads faced a powerful ruler who could challenge the Umayyad governor. In this situation, the Umayyads utilised a specific mechanism called *fidya-rahn* (ransom-hostage) in the Arabic narratives. In this situation, the Umayyad governor and Bactrian ruler met each other, negotiated for some settlements, and the local ruler accepted to pay the *fidya*, which was certain tributes. This payment of tributes reflected recognition of Umayyad overlordship by the local ruler. Implementing such diverse policies in northern, southern, and eastern Bactria represents political complexity in these areas. This part discusses where and why these two different methods were enforced.

5.2.1 Offering areas to the Umayyads

The rulers of Chaghaniyan and Kaftan in northern Bactria and the *khar* of Rob in southern Bactria willingly offered their areas to the Umayyads. In 86/705, when Qutayba arrived in Khurasan, the king of Chaghaniyan was already at war with the kings of Shuman and Akhrun. When Qutayba went to Balkh, the king of Chaghaniyan personally visited Qutayba and paid valuable gifts (*hadāyā*), including golden keys symbolising offering his kingdom (*fasallama ilayhi bilādihi*). Similarly, the king of Kaftan invited Qutayba to the area of his administration (*fad'āhu ilā bilādihi*) and submitted to him.⁹⁰⁸ They became vassal kings and served the Umayyad governors of Khurasan when required. Our sources do not offer information about the king of Kaftan but give details about Chaghaniyan. For instance, in 106/724, the king of Chaghaniyan helped Naṣr b. Sayyār, the governor of Khurasan, when Arab Muslim soldiers rebelled in Balkh.⁹⁰⁹ Later, in 116/734, when al-Ḥārith revolted in Andkhud and captured Balkh, the king of Chaghaniyan did not join him. Instead, the king of Chaghaniyan supported Asad al-Qasrī against al-Ḥārith and the Türgesh Turks. His loyalty was to the extent that he lost his life defending Asad.⁹¹⁰ From 86/705 up to the end of the Umayyad period, the royal family of Chaghaniyan remained loyal to the Umayyads.

⁹⁰⁸ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 8: 1180.

⁹⁰⁹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 9: 1473–74.

⁹¹⁰ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 9: 1600–1601.

Possibly, being a loyal vassal king was the reason that the Umayyads did not see any reason to impose direct control over Chaghaniyan. They did not establish any military garrisons or Arab Muslim settlements in this area. They did not interfere in the king's local affairs as they did not appoint any Arab Muslim over Chaghaniyan. Interestingly, our sources do not refer to any tributes paid by the king of Chaghaniyan but only to the gifts and military service. These may have been counted as tribute. Hence, voluntary submission to the Umayyads not only restored the position of the king of Chaghaniyan against his neighbouring rival kings but also saved Chaghaniyan from the Umayyads' direct control. Though Chaghaniyan became a vassal to the Umayyads, its royal family retained some power while still under Umayyad overlordship.

The kingdom of Rob in southern Bactria had a similar situation. In 90/710, the *nizak* of Badghis rebelled against Qutayba, went to eastern Bactria, dismissed and imprisoned the *yabghu* of Tukharistan, and formed an anti-Umayyad regional alliance. In all these, the *khar* of Rob did not join the *nizak*. The presence of the *nizak* in Baghlan was a great threat to the *khar* of Rob, because the *nizak* disturbed the earlier political order by dismissing the *yabghu*, who was overlord in eastern Bactria. The *khar* of Rob willingly visited Qutayba in Khulm and made negotiations that are not explained in our sources. Only al-Ṭabarī mentions that Qutayba promised him what he asked for (*a 'tāhu mā sa'aluhū*) without disclosing what the *khar* requested.⁹¹¹ In any case, the *khar* submitted to Qutayba and supported him against the *nizak* by helping the Umayyad forces to cross the Khulm Pass, enter Samangan, and eventually defeat the *nizak*. Like Chaghaniyan, Qutayba did not see any reason to impose direct control over Rob. He did not establish military garrisons there or appoint Arab Muslim administrators in this area. Whether the *khar* of Rob paid any tributes is not mentioned, but the *khar* retained his position and continued his rule. This can be observed from some Bactrian documents produced in Rob.

The surviving Bactrian documents dating before 700 show that Rob was controlled by its local ruler, who recognised the overlordship of the Turkic *qaghān*. The documents dating to 669 and 671 refer to the *khar* of Rob as *tapaghliḡh iltäribir* of the *qaghān*. They also refer to the *ṭarkhān*, a Turkic military commander in Rob.⁹¹² However, we do not see the Turkic title

⁹¹¹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 8: 1219.

⁹¹² Bactrian documents no. P. Q in Sims-Williams, *BDI*, 84–87, 88–91; This Turkic title was already known for the king of Rob from 629, meaning Rob was under the *qaghān*'s overlordship at least from 629. See Bactrian document no. N in Sims-Williams, *BDI*, 80–83.

tapaghliḡ iltäribir for the *khar* of Rob after 671. The absence of this title is not understood. Similarly, the documents dating from 712 to 747 no longer refer to the *qaghān*. Most likely, the *qaghān* overlordship did not continue in Rob at this time; otherwise, it should have been mentioned. These documents show that the *khar* of Rob continued ruling his area and had his court, servants, and properties.⁹¹³ Rob was eventually brought under direct control in the early Abbasid period.

The case of Chaghaniyan, Kaftan, and Rob shows that the local rulers of these areas willingly recognised the Umayyad authority. It can be called a bottom-up model of overlordship, which is different from the direct control discussed in a previous section (5.1.3). In this model, the Umayyads did not go to Chaghaniyan, Kaftan, or Rob to conquer them -as they did in western Bactria, Balkh, and Tirmidh-, but the rulers of these areas approached the Umayyads as a result of internal pressure. Political competition among local rulers forced a weaker ruler (such as the king of Chaghaniyan and the *khar* of Rob) to ally with an external power (the Umayyads) to overcome his neighbouring rivals. The weaker ruler contacted the stronger power outside the region, sent embassies with letters and gifts, accepted an overlordship offer and invited the dominant force to his area. The weaker local ruler aimed to use the overlord's military power to restore his regional position. He hosted and welcomed the overlord, paid gifts symbolising his subordination, and served the overlord by providing military aid when it was required. Though the local king became a vassal, the stronger power did not impose direct control over the local king's area. The stronger power did not change the local ruler or establish military garrisons. The overlord left the region to the local ruler. The local ruler kept friendly relations with the overlord to ensure he had the latter's support. In this fashion, the kings of Chaghaniyan, Kaftan, and Rob maintained some level of autonomy in their local affairs.

5.2.2 *The fidya-rahn process*

The Umayyads applied the *fidya-rahn* mechanism to expand their authority in those areas in which local rulers had strong military power. They enforced this policy in Shuman and Khuttal in northern Bactria, and in Badghis and Guzgan in western Bactria before the *nizak*'s rebellion. They also implemented this policy in Sogdiana. The *fidya-rahn* mechanism has been discussed

⁹¹³ Bactrian documents no. U, V, W in Sims-Williams, *BDI*, 106–111, 116–125, 126–135.

by Qudāma b. Ja‘far,⁹¹⁴ Khalīfa b. Khayyāt,⁹¹⁵ al-Balādhurī,⁹¹⁶ and al-Ṭabarī as an effective vehicle to expand Umayyad rule in Khurasan and Sogdiana.⁹¹⁷ Describing this process and then analysing it helps us understand why and how the Umayyads enforced this policy.

The process was as follows. First, the Umayyads marched towards an area that had a powerful ruler. Without entering the territory of that local ruler or engaging in war, the Umayyads sent letters or embassies to the local ruler, threatened him, but also invited him to a meeting. During the discussion, they negotiated and settled some issues, and the local rulers agreed to pay the *fidya* in cash or kind, which was part of the negotiation. What exactly was agreed between them and how much was accepted to be paid to the Umayyads are not mentioned in our sources. Then, the Umayyad governors asked for the *rahā’in* (sig., *rahn*), who were family members of the local rulers. Preparing the *fidya* usually required an Arab Muslim person called the *‘āmil* “administrator”, who was appointed by the governor to receive the *fidya* from the representatives of the local rulers. The Arab Muslims kept the hostages until the local rulers delivered the promised payment. The hostages were freed once the payment was made. It is unknown if this was a one-time payment, or if the local ruler was obliged to pay it annually.

Al-Ṭabarī provides details about the enforcement of this policy in Bactria. According to him, in the year 86/705, Qutayba went to Chaghaniyan, where its local king submitted to Qutayba and offered his kingdom. The kings of Akhrun and Shuman had great military power and put pressure on the king of Chaghaniyan, which motivated him to ally with Qutayba. Al-Ṭabarī does not mention if the kings of Akhrun and Shuman personally met Qutayba, but he clarifies that Qutayba negotiated and received *fidya* and then left the region.⁹¹⁸ Before leaving Chaghaniyan, Qutayba sent letters to the *nizak* of Badghis and the king of Guzgan. The text of his letter is unknown, but al-Ṭabarī mentions that Qutayba threatened the *nizak* in it. Allegedly, the *nizak* told Qutayba’s embassy that no one writes to him like that (*lā yaktibu ilā mithli*) reflecting his resentment. In any case, Qutayba and these rulers met in Marw, negotiated for some settlements, and the *nizak* helped Qutayba in his conquest of Sogdiana. Al-Ṭabarī does not mention whether Qutayba received *fidya* from these rulers, but if we consider the case of Shuman, it is reasonable to infer, therefore, that they paid tribute too. Moreover, al-Ṭabarī

⁹¹⁴ Qudāma b. Ja‘far, *Al-kharāj*, 209, 406, 408.

⁹¹⁵ Khalīfa b. Khayyāt, *Ta’rīkh*, 224.

⁹¹⁶ Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, 411.

⁹¹⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 9: 1253.

⁹¹⁸ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 8: 1180.

mentions that the *nizak* accepted to help Qutayba only on the condition that no Arab Muslims should enter Badghis.⁹¹⁹ That means these rulers recognised Qutayba as a major political power, but he, in turn, also respected them as autonomous rulers. The Umayyads did not interfere in these rulers' internal local affairs; thus, they continued controlling their areas.

The *fidya-rahn* was a peaceful process as long as both parties kept their word. If they did not, then it led to war between them. For instance, the king of Shuman, who accepted to pay the *fidya*, refused to do that (*mana 'a al-fidya*). He killed Qutayba's *'amil*, who was supposed to receive the *fidya*, and later his soldiers killed the delegation sent by Qutayba to renegotiate with the king. As a result, Qutayba attacked Shuman and captured it by force (*'anwatan*). However, he did not kill the king but let the royal family continue under his overlordship. As overlordship required, the king of Shuman sent his local military forces to fight for the Umayyads in Sogdiana.⁹²⁰

The reports from Guzgan and Sogdiana show that breaking the treaty would cost the life of the hostages. To restore trust between the two parties, not only the local ruler but the Umayyad governor had to give hostages to the local ruler. In 91/712, Qutayba asked the king of Guzgan to meet him in Marw to renegotiate for peace that was broken after the *nizak*'s rebellion. Both parties exchanged some hostages. However, the king of Guzgan died after he returned from Marw. The Guzganis believed that their king was poisoned by Arabs and thus killed Qutayba's relatives, who had been given as hostages to the king of Guzgan. In retaliation, Qutayba executed the Guzgani hostages.⁹²¹ However, the royal family of Guzgan eventually accepted the Umayyad overlordship. They provided military forces to fight the Türgesh Turks and then supported the Umayyad's expansion in Sogdiana.⁹²² A similar situation happened in Samarkand. Tarkhūn, the king of Samarkand, killed the Arab Muslim hostages and threw their bodies into the river.⁹²³ Thus, distrust between the two parties would worsen the condition of the hostages and lead to their execution.

An especially violent episode in the *fidya-rahn* process happened during the war between the Umayyads and Türgesh. In 110/728, the Türgesh forces held some Arab Muslim hostages in Kamarja, an area near Samarkand. The Arab Muslim forces agreed to leave the region, but before that, the Türgesh Turks asked for some hostages to ensure the Arabs would

⁹¹⁹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 8: 1185.

⁹²⁰ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 8: 1225–29.

⁹²¹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 8: 1225.

⁹²² Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 9: 1609, 1693.

⁹²³ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 8: 1159.

abandon the region. The Umayyad forces moved out slowly, and that was interpreted by the Turks as a sign of reluctance towards their negotiation. They executed the Arab Muslim hostages. The Arab Muslims retaliated by killing 200 Sogdian hostages.⁹²⁴ The Türgesh then forced the Arab Muslims to evacuate Kamarja and made peace with them. They exchanged some hostages to guarantee the agreement. Al-Ṭabarī's report about these events contains a horrifying situation. Once the Türgesh hostages arrived, the Arab Muslim soldiers held their daggers to the throats of the Turkic hostages while they were walking. The hostages were disarmed and had some clothes to cover their bodies.⁹²⁵ These reports show that the hostages could be massacred if the relations deteriorated between the two parties. It also would prolong the conflict. Similarly, they reflect that making and especially maintaining a peace treaty was not always easy.

The violation of the *fidya-rahn* process allowed the Umayyad's military conquests in some areas, which was followed by the imposition of more conditions on the local rulers. This is not reported from Bactria, but from Sogdiana. Nevertheless, it helps to understand the *fidya-rahn*, particularly the issues related to the payment of the *fidya*. Both Ibn A'ṭham al-Kufī and al-Ṭabarī mention that Qutayba asked for the *fidya* to be paid right after the negotiation for peace in Samarkand.⁹²⁶ Ibn A'ṭham al-Kufī calls it money paid immediately (*dirham 'ājila*). Besides the *fidya* to be paid immediately, the king of Samarkand promised to pay an annual tribute (*dirham fī kulla 'ām*).⁹²⁷ Qutayba also made slaves an essential part of the *fidya* paid by local rulers. In Samarkand, he asked for 30,000 young slaves apart from the money promised to be paid by the king of Samarkand. In Khwarazm, the *fidya* included 10,000 slaves and golden objects.⁹²⁸ Qudāma b. Ja'far interpreted the conditions in Samarkand as violating diplomatic norms, and said that Qutayba betrayed (*ghadar*) local rulers and consciously committed violence in Sogdiana.⁹²⁹ Al-Ṭabarī has similar reports from the Persians, who believed that Qutayba betrayed the local rulers in Samarkand.⁹³⁰ Interestingly, our sources do not report if Qutayba ever asked Bactrian rulers who paid *fidya* to give the slaves. It is reasonable to infer that slaves were generally not part of the *fidya* in Bactria. The reasons for this are unknown.

⁹²⁴ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 9: 1520.

⁹²⁵ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 8: 1524.

⁹²⁶ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 8: 1180.

⁹²⁷ Ibn A'ṭham al-Kūfī, *Futūḥ*, 7: 161.

⁹²⁸ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 8: 1238, 1246.

⁹²⁹ Qudāma b. Ja'far, *Al-kharāj*, 408.

⁹³⁰ In Arabic: *inna al- 'ajam yu 'ayyirūna innahū ghadara* (al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 8: 1246).

The *fidya-rahn* process points to some crucial points. This process is not known from the Arabic narratives relating to the conquests of Iraq, Egypt, Nubia, North Africa, Iberia, Syria, and Palestine. It is related only to Khurasan and Sogdiana. Hill's survey of the Arabic reports relating to the conquests of the former regions shows that the Arabic term *ṣulḥ* is generally used for the peace process. The terms *‘ahd* (agreement), *amān* (protection), and *sharṭ* (condition) clarified the requirements of the process. The conquered people are often called *ahl al-dhimma*, “protected people”, who should pay *jizya* and *kharāj*.⁹³¹ Interestingly, the term *amān* is less mentioned in Khurasan than in Syria, and its meaning differs. The *amān* is often used when the Arab Muslim has superior military power and could impose their conditions on a weaker side. In Syria, it was to protect conquered areas from an external enemy, while in the east, it was not to harm local people.⁹³² That means the Arab Muslims were not yet powerful enough to protect the east from external enemies. No Arabic reports refer to the *fidya-rahn* process elsewhere in Muslim West Asia and North Africa.⁹³³ The Arabs did negotiate for peace, but they did not ask for hostages to guarantee the payment of *jizya* and *kharāj* in these regions.⁹³⁴ In other words, they could impose their terms and conditions over conquered areas. However, the situation was different in the east. If we remember that Khurasan is a frontier region between more considerable political powers, and its local rulers had their military forces, then the *fidya-rahn* process makes sense. The Arab Muslim authorities had to take hostages from local rulers to guarantee that they paid the tributes because the local rulers had their forces and could refuse payment. The local rulers also could ask other regional political powers to help them against the Arab Muslims. Thus, negotiations were part of the conquests everywhere,⁹³⁵ but the *fidya-rahn* process in Khurasan shows that the local

⁹³¹ His survey includes reports from Sayf b. ‘Umar, Abū Mikhnaḥ, al-Madā’inī, al-Baladhurī, Ibn A‘tham al-Kūfī, al-Wāqidī, al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya‘qūbī, al-Ṭabarī, and al-Ḥākim al-Nishābūrī (Hill, *Termination of Hostilities*, 34–41, 43–44, 54–55, 59–89, 123–126, 144–167). For further information on *ahl al-dhimma* and tax collection, see Robert Hoyland and Hannah Cotton, “The Earliest Attestation of the *Dhimma* of God and his Messenger and the Rediscovery of the P. Nessana 77 (60s AH/680 CE),” in *Islamic Cultures, Islamic Context: Essays in honor of Professor Patricia Crone*, ed. Asad Q. Ahmed, Behnam Sadeghi, Robert G. Hoyland and Adam Silverstein (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 51–71; Arietta Papaconstantinou, “Administering the Early Islamic Empire: Insights from the Papyri,” in *Money, Power and Politics in Early Islamic Syria: A Review of Current Debates*, ed. John Haldon (Ashgate, Farnham, 2011), 57–74; Sijpesteijn, *Shapping a Muslim State*, 173–193.

⁹³² Hill, *Termination of Hostilities*, 173.

⁹³³ That signifies the differences between the western and the eastern regions.

⁹³⁴ Only John of Nikion mentions that Cyrus, the Melkite Patriarch of Egypt who made a peace treaty with Arab Muslims in Babylon in 641, accepted to give 150 militaries and fifty civilians as a hostage (Mentioned by Hill, *Termination of Hostilities*, 41 (for the actual report, see John of Nikion, *Chronique de Jean Eveque de Nikion*, ed and trans. M. H. Zotenberg (Paris, 1883).

⁹³⁵ Malika Levy-Rubin has shown that the negotiation treaties that the Muslims concluded in the conquests are based on Sasanian patterns of conquest. See Levy-Rubin, *Non-Muslims in the Early Islamic Empire: From Surrender to Coexistence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

rulers were really quite powerful. The Arab Muslim authorities could not impose any conditions they wished, but they were held to local rulers by the additional element of hostages.

The above-mentioned reports show that the *fidya-rah*n mechanism was used in Shuman, Badghis, Guzgan, and Khuttal. We do not know if the Umayyads enforced it in other areas in Bactria because there is no further information. The local rulers of these areas paid certain tributes to the Umayyads and provided military help when the Umayyads required it. The Umayyads did not attack the local rulers who paid the *fidya*, except if the local rulers broke their promises and refused the payments. In that case, the Umayyads conducted military campaigns and brought the local rulers under their overlordship. The local kings then not only paid the *fidya*, but also provided local military forces to serve the Umayyads. In this case, the Umayyads did not establish military garrisons or appoint Arab Muslim administrators over the region, but allowed the local king or his family to continue under the Umayyads' overlordship. In other words, the Umayyads did not impose direct control in these areas. By the end of the Umayyad period, Bactria would look like the following chart shows:

Western Bactria		
Marw al-Rūd	The <i>marzbān</i> was executed, the military garrison was established, Arab-Muslim administrators were appointed	Under Umayyad's direct control
Badghis	The <i>nizak</i> was executed	Under Umayyad's direct control
Gharchistan	The king submitted and converted to Islam	Under Umayyad overlordship
Guzgan	The king fled to the mountain areas, the military garrison was established in Talaqan, Faryab, Juzjan and Andkhud. Arab-Muslim administrators were appointed on these areas	Umayyad direct control in the plain areas, overlordship in the mountain areas

Bactria Proper		
Balkh Oasis	The military garrison was established, Arab-Muslim administrators were appointed	Under Umayyad's direct control
Khulm	The military garrison was established	Under Umayyad's direct control
Gaz	Unknown	

Northern Bactria		
Tirmidh	The king was removed, the military garrison was established, Arab-Muslim administrators were appointed	Under Umayyad's direct control
Chaghaniyan	The king voluntarily submitted, no military garrison	Under Umayyad's overlordship
Shuman	The king was defeated, no military garrison	Under Umayyad's overlordship
Akhrun	The king submitted, no military garrison	Under Umayyad's overlordship
Qawadhiyan	No military garrison	Under Umayyad's overlordship
Khuttal	The king was executed, no military garrison	Under Umayyad's overlordship

Southern Bactria		
Rob	The king voluntarily submitted, no military garrison	Under Umayyad's overlordship

Eastern Bactria		
Kunduz	The <i>yabghu</i> was sent to Syria, no military garrison	Under Umayyad's overlordship
Baghlan	The Hephthalites were defeated, no military garrison	Under Umayyad's overlordship
Kadagstan	The Umayyads did not enter region	Under Turkic overlordship

Conclusion

As they had done for generations, local autonomous rulers, acknowledging the overlordship of a more significant regional political power, ruled Bactria upon the arrival of the Arab armies. The Arab Muslims began to carve out their niche of political presence in the region in these

circumstances. In the first fifty years, they established friendly relations with the rulers of western Bactria and used western Bactria as a safe passage to raid Sogdiana. However, in the second fifty years, the re-consolidation of the Umayyad empire under the Marwanids allowed them to enforce an imperial expansion agenda in the eastern Iranian regions that would break down the earlier political order in Bactria. It caused a great rebellion in Bactria. The Umayyad forces suppressed the rebels, conquered western Bactria, and imposed direct control over this region by establishing military garrisons, executing resisting local rulers, and appointing Arab Muslim administrators in these areas. The Umayyads' direct control over western Bactria was disrupted by al-Ḥārith's revolt and the Türgesh invasion, but the Umayyads then re-established their direct rule over it that lasted until the end of the Umayyad period.

The Umayyads established indirect rule over Chaghaniyan, Kaftan, and Akhrun in northern Bactria and Rob in southern Bactria. The political rivalries in northern and southern Bactria forced the local rulers of Chaghaniyan and Rob to willingly submit and recognise the Umayyad overlordship. They became subordinate kings who paid gifts and provided military forces for the Umayyads in times of need. The Umayyads did not interfere in the internal affairs of these local kings. They did not conquer these areas or establish military garrisons. These local kings retained some levels of autonomy in their respective areas of control.

The Umayyads applied the *fidya-rahm* mechanism in some other parts like Shuman, Guzgan, and Khuttal. The local rulers of these areas had great military power and could challenge the Umayyad governors. The Umayyad governors directly interacted with these rulers, negotiated for some settlements, and received the *fidya*, which took for the form of specific tribute. The local king gave some of his family members as hostages to the Arabs, and they released them once they received the *fidya*. The Umayyads did not enter these areas unless and until the local ruler refused to pay the *fidya*. Breaking the *fidya-rahm* procedure not only harmed the hostages but brought the Umayyads to these areas to punish the local ruler. It also served to solidify Umayyad overlordship in these areas. The local kings of these areas paid tributes and provided military forces to support the Umayyad war in Sogdiana. Like Chaghaniyan and Rob, the Umayyads did not impose direct control over Shuman and Khuttal. They allowed their local king or their families to retain local positions under Umayyad overlordship. Possibly, the Umayyads did the same in eastern Bactria after they exiled the *yabghu* of Tukharistan to Syria and appointed his son in eastern Bactria. Out of all areas in Bactria, only Kadagstan remained untouched by the Umayyads.

Now that the process of establishing the Umayyads' direct and indirect control in Bactria has been explained, it remains to be examined how this shift in local political orientation affected social conditions in the region. The next chapter will examine the social impacts of the conquests in Bactria that affected the population of Bactria beyond its elite members.

