

The Civilizational Interaction between the Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah and the Persian Empire: An Approach in Light of Oswald Spengler's Pseudomorphosis Theory

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ARTICLE INFO

Received: 13 Dec 2024

Revised: 18 Feb 2025

Accepted: 26 Feb 2025

ABSTRACT

This study explores the concept of "Pseudo or False Civilizational Formation" in the case of the Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah and its relationship with the Persian Empire, drawing upon the theory formulated by the German philosopher Oswald Spengler. According to this theory, some civilizations may adopt civilized manifestations without being intrinsically consistent with. The research aims to demonstrate how Al-Ḥīrah was influenced by the Sassanid civilization without losing its authentic Arab spirit—an aspect that later facilitated its full integration into the Islamic civilization and its genuine cultural transformation therein. The study also examines key aspects of this cultural influence and analyzes their impact on the structure of the Islamic state. The research adopts a historical-analytical methodology and concludes that Al-Ḥīrah represented a unique model of an Arabic entity that was influenced by the Persian civilization without losing its identity. Rather, it became a cultural bridge that contributed to the formation of the emerging Islamic state. The findings further indicated that this trajectory of cultural integration was not exclusive to Al-Ḥīrah; the Persians themselves became actively involved in the Islamic state and played a significant role in shaping its civilization.

Keywords: Pseudomorphism, Persian, Civilization, Al-Ḥīrah, Sassanid, Oswald Spengler

PREAMBLE

Civilizations do not arise in a vacuum, nor do they develop in isolation from their surroundings. Civilization, in its essence, is a complex, cumulative entity that forms over time through human interaction with the environment, struggles with challenges, and openness to internal and external influences. Because it is the product of a network of cultural, political, economic, and religious factors, understanding any civilization is incomplete without considering its historical and formative context, and studying its relationships and interactions with surrounding civilizational entities. Just as every civilization has its specificity, it simultaneously bears the imprints of mutual influence with preceding or contemporary civilizations. History does not create an entirely pure civilization, but rather civilizations that overlap, sometimes clash, and at other times blend. Hence, a civilization cannot be studied in isolation from the framework in which it arose, nor can its trajectory be analyzed without considering the forces that influenced it, or that it influenced. True understanding of any civilizational entity requires tracing moments of reception and influence, and distinguishing between what is authentic and internally derived, and what is acquired or imposed from the outside.

This dialectic between the self and the other, between independence and influence, remains a key to understanding the nature of civilizational transformations. It is essential for anyone who wishes to read history as a civilizational process that does not follow a straight line, but is shaped through a network of complex changes and interactions. When we contemplate the history of civilizations, we find that there are entities in their search for identity that wear a cloak unlike themselves, while others take a different path towards a formation where their appearance aligns with their depths. The Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah was a unique arena for this interaction. On one hand, under the authority of the Sasanian Persians, it was influenced by a number of Persian civilizational manifestations in dress, architecture, language, administration, and other areas. However, on the other hand, it preserved its authentic Arab spirit and did not completely assimilate into that politically imposed civilization. Therefore, it formed what we call a "false" civilizational formation. With the dawn of Islam, this cultural authenticity that Al-Ḥīrah maintained was the bridge through which it crossed into true civilizational formation with the Islamic Ummah. It was like a seed that absorbed elements of the Persian soil but blossomed in the climate of Islam, an Islamic-charactered, Arab-spirited flower.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

The problem of the study is embodied in the following main question: How did the false civilizational formation of the Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah, and its influence by Persian civilization, contribute to the flourishing of Islamic civilization? Several sub-questions fall under this main question:

- What is meant by false civilizational formation?
- How was the Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah influenced by Persian civilization without losing its Arab authenticity?
- Why did Al-Ḥīrah undergo a true civilizational formation with the Islamic state?
- How did this influence by Persian civilization contribute to the shaping of Islamic civilization?

STUDY OBJECTIVES

- To analyze the nature of the relationship between the Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah and the Persian Empire.
- To study the factors and manifestations of false civilizational formation in Al-Ḥīrah.
- To explore how Islam benefited from the Persian experiences that influenced the Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah.

STUDY SIGNIFICANCE

The importance of this study lies in its shedding light on a significant historical problematic, as it helps in understanding how Islamic civilization interacted with preceding civilizations. It also contributes to analyzing the factors of resilience of some political entities despite the influences of major neighboring civilizations.

STUDY METHODOLOGY

The study relies on the historical-analytical methodology, where historical sources related to the Sasanian Empire, the Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah, and the nascent Islamic state will be analyzed.

Theoretical Framework (False Civilizational Formation)

This study seeks to explain the relationship between the Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah and the Sasanian Empire by employing the concept of "false civilizational or historical formation," a civilizational philosophical concept formulated by the German thinker and philosopher Oswald Spengler within his major thesis on the rise and fall of civilizations in his book "The Decline of Western Civilization." This concept is used to understand the phenomenon of the interaction of young civilizations with ancient and dominant civilizations, and the resulting civilizational forms that do not necessarily express the cultural essence of the emerging societies.

The concept of "pseudomorphosis" is a term coined by Spengler in the context of his analysis of the life cycles and growth of civilizations. Spengler borrowed this concept from geology (or mineralogy), where it is also called "pseudomorphism." The geological dictionary defines this term as "the appearance of a mineral in a form other than its characteristic one due to special chemical conditions such as molecular exchange, for example." A "pseudomorph" is defined as "a characteristic of a crystal that has been completely replaced by a secondary

mineral but still possesses its external edges. Thus, a pseudomorphic mineral is a transformed mineral whose external crystalline form is like that of another known mineral" (Musharraf, 2013).

In the second part of Spengler's aforementioned book, specifically in the eighteenth chapter (Problems of Arab Civilization), Spengler presents a very precise analogy for what he termed "historical pseudomorphosis." It is a metaphorical expression derived from geology, describing how mineral crystals that were embedded within solid rocks are then washed away by water seeping through minute cracks, leaving behind small cavities known as vugs. Later, when volcanoes erupt and molten lava flows into these cracks, this new material does not form freely but is forced to fill these old vugs in their previous shapes. Thus, new crystals are formed whose exterior retains the shape of the original crystals, while their internal composition contradicts this external form. Mineralogists call this phenomenon "pseudomorphosis."

When Spengler used the term "historical pseudomorphosis," he referred to a similar situation, but one that occurs at the level of history and cultures. A young and fledgling civilization might be born on land dominated by an older, more established civilization, entrenched in time and place. In this case, the nascent civilization finds itself unable to express its essence freely. It not only fails to produce its own symbols and forms but is even incapable of forming an independent self-awareness. Everything it attempts to do is shaped within old molds imposed by the preceding civilization, appearing as if it is copying manifestations that do not express it from within. Thus, the young spirit freezes within inherited achievements it did not create. Instead of rising on the foundation of its creative energy, a state of growing aversion and rejection develops within it, akin to a suppressed resentment towards an external force that suffocates it and prevents it from being itself (Spengler, O., 1917).

Spengler asserts that every civilization has its unique historical path, as this history reflects the essence of the nation to which it belongs. He believes that two civilizations cannot completely coincide because each civilization enjoys its own independence and is not fundamentally affected by any other civilization. If influence occurs, it is superficial and does not touch its true essence, but rather appears in false external forms that contradict its authenticity. This formal representation is due to certain circumstances that limit the civilization's freedom to express itself. Nevertheless, the "primordial soul" of the civilization strives, even under these constraints, to represent the borrowed elements with its own character. Spengler gives the example of Arab civilization, which, despite its use of classical rules in architecture, was able to impose its unique character on Roman buildings since the reign of Emperor Hadrian (Spengler, O., 1917). That is, even when Arab civilization takes elements from other civilizations, it reshapes them in a way that aligns with its essence and identity, so that these elements become part of its unique expression. For example, in architecture, despite the Arabs' use of classical rules, they added new elements such as decorated arches and geometric patterns that became a distinctive feature of Islamic architecture. This reflects how the primordial soul of Arab civilization was able to transform borrowed elements into an authentic expression of itself.

Spengler also mentions a very interesting point, which is that all civilizations that arose in the Middle East region - with the exception of Pharaonic civilization - are essentially Arab civilizations. The "primordial soul" passes through phases, beginning in Arab civilization first with the Magian soul, then Jewish, Christian, Zoroastrian, and so on. He believes that everything established in the Middle East region, whose influence extended eastward to China and westward to North Africa, is in reality an extension of a branch of Arab civilization with a Magian soul. The concept of false civilizational formation is considered a theoretical framework for understanding how civilizations interact with each other, and how the influence of a dominant civilization on an emerging one can lead to the adoption of external manifestations without a true assimilation of these manifestations into the cultural core of the nascent civilization. Perhaps one of the clearest models through which the concept of "false civilizational formation" as proposed by Spengler can be understood is the model of the Kingdom of Al-Ḥirah in its relationship with the Sasanian civilization. The situation Spengler describes through his geological analogy - where molten masses rush into rock cavities left by past crystals, forming new crystals forced to adopt a form that does not express their internal composition - represents a civilizational state in which manifestations of forced or unconscious adoption of old civilizational molds are evident, without this adoption stemming from self-awareness or internal development of the nascent civilization.

Based on this conception, Al-Ḥirah can be understood as an emerging Arab society that found itself within the sphere of a deep-rooted Persian civilizational influence. Although it adopted a number of Sasanian manifestations

in administration, architecture, food, and even clothing, it did not thereby express its inner spirit but was, in fact, filling a civilizational vacuum with ready-made molds imposed by Sasanian hegemony. This is what makes Al-Ḥīrah an ideal model for studying false formation; the manifestations of the imposed civilization did not take root in Al-Ḥīrah's identity but may have, at times, somewhat contradicted its Arab cultural depth. Hence, this study seeks to analyze how this "false formation" in its relationship with Persia paved the way for a true civilizational formation later with the Islamic state, when Al-Ḥīrah was given the opportunity to express its authentic Arab spirit through a civilizational system consistent with its conscience, instead of dissolving into externally imposed models.

The Persian Empire and the Hegemony of the Powerful (559 B.C. – 651 A.D.)

The nature of civilizational interaction between the Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah and the Persian Empire cannot be understood without comprehending the historical, geographical, and cultural context represented by this great empire. Persia, through its various stages, formed one of the pillars of major civilizations in the ancient East, and its influence extended to most regions of the Near East, including Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula, where the Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah arose. Therefore, providing a comprehensive overview of the Persian Empire is a necessary prelude to analyzing the nature of the influence and interaction that later developed between this major regional power and the nascent Arab presence on its peripheries. Understanding the political, religious, administrative, and cultural structure of Persia, especially during the Sasanian era, illuminates the background that influenced the Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah and may help in exploring the factors that led to this interaction.

The designation "Persian Empire" refers to a group of ruling dynasties that centered on the current region of Iran, their rule continuing for many centuries, starting from the sixth century BC. At its zenith, specifically during the reign of Darius the Great, its geographical influence extended from the Balkan Peninsula in Europe – which currently includes parts of Bulgaria, Romania, and Ukraine – to the Indus River Valley in northwestern India, and south to Egyptian lands, making it one of the largest empires in ancient history (Al-Abd, 2021). It is considered one of the greatest and most powerful political entities that appeared in the region before the advent of Islam; indeed, it surpassed the Byzantine Empire in terms of influence in some periods (Hussein, 2024).

The empire is located to the east and north of the Arabian Peninsula. It was founded in 559 BC by King Cyrus the Great during the era of the Achaemenid kings who embraced Zoroastrianism, the first official religion of the Persian Empire and one of the oldest religions in the world. It is attributed to the Persian prophet "Zarathustra," who called his followers to worship one god, thereby contradicting the beliefs of ancient Indo-Iranian groups who believed in polytheism. It is narrated that Cyrus was a tolerant ruler who allowed his subjects the freedom to speak their native languages and practice their religions without restriction; he did not impose his religious beliefs on the peoples he incorporated into his state (Al-Abd, 2021). Most kings who succeeded him followed his approach, but Kavād was an exception; he imposed the deviant Mazdakite religion during the Sasanian dynasty. Later, his son Anushirvan restored the proper approach, repaired the damage caused by his father, built bridges and roads, and carefully selected workers and governors for his provinces (Ibn al-Athīr, 2010).

The Sasanian Empire (224-651 A.D.)

Layers of Persian kings succeeded each other in the Persian Empire over time, including the Pishdadian, Kayanian, Ashkanian (Parthian), and finally the Sasanian dynasty, whose first king was Ardashīr son of Bābak and the last was Yazdegerd son of Shahriyār son of Aparvīz (Ibn al-Athīr, 2010). The Sasanian Empire was founded by Ardashīr I, son of Bābak, a descendant of Sāsān, in 224 A.D., and lasted for nearly 400 years until 651 A.D. At its peak, the territories of the Sasanian Empire extended to what is known today as Iran, Iraq, Armenia, Afghanistan, eastern parts of Turkey, in addition to parts of Syria, Pakistan, the Caucasus region, and Central Asia. The Sasanian era is considered one of the most prominent and influential historical periods in Iran's history, due to the political, cultural, and religious developments it witnessed, which had a profound impact on the region (Mahmoud, 2020).

Ardashīr I, who ruled from 224 to 240 A.D., focused on three main axes: strengthening the centrality of governance, adopting Zoroastrianism as the state's official religion, and paying attention to the existing rivalry with the Roman Empire. This orientation resulted in radical reforms in the state's structure. Although

Zoroastrianism was present before then, it became closely linked to the organization of the empire's affairs during his reign and acquired a pivotal role in the Persian administrative system, especially since the legitimacy of Sasanian rule was based on the idea of the ruler's divine lineage (Cervantes, 2013). Ibn al-Athīr mentions in his book *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh* (The Complete History) that Ardashīr was of good conduct, victorious in his wars, his banner never turned back, he "urbanized cities, established districts (Kūras), arranged ranks, and developed the lands," and he built a number of cities, including the city of Sūq al-Ahwāz (Ibn al-Athīr, 2010).

As for Khosrow Anushirvan (Khosrow I), who ruled from 531 to 579 A.D., he was considered one of the greatest and most famous kings of the Sasanian state. His name became associated in Iranian memory with the image of the model king who combined military competence with administrative wisdom, to the extent that he became a symbol of justice and prosperity in Persian literature. He implemented fundamental reforms that included tax and administrative systems. It is believed that many of these reforms were an extension of his father Kavad I's projects, who sought in his later reign to reduce the influence of high nobles by supporting the Mazdakite religious movement. Among Anushirvan's most prominent reforms was the abolition of special privileges enjoyed by high nobles who controlled their regions like independent princes, imposing taxes on the population without being subject to them themselves. By reorganizing this system, he was able to establish a fixed tax for the state, which facilitated predicting revenue levels and enabled the court to manage finances more stably (Cervantes, 2013). Likewise, the military institution witnessed major reforms during his reign in response to the challenges of the empire's vast borders, which extended westward to the Romans, eastward to the Hephthalites, and southward to the Arab tribes. As a result of this constant threat, Khosrow divided the empire into four military zones, each headed by a general commander, to ensure a rapid response to any attack. This policy proved effective, as the Sasanian state maintained its military balance against the Romans, and then the Byzantines, who were preoccupied at that time with the invasions of Germanic tribes in Europe (Tārīkh al-Akāsirah, 2021). However, the most prominent and influential achievement in the civilizational legacy was Khosrow's patronage of science and scholars, and his great interest in the Academy of Gondishapur, which became one of the most important centers of knowledge in human history during his reign. This academy sought to collect texts from neighboring civilizations, and through it, works of Greek philosophers, Iranian religious texts, and Indian works were translated into Pahlavi (Middle Persian), Greek, and other languages (Cervantes, 2013). These translations formed an important knowledge base inherited by Muslims later in the early Islamic ages, then transmitted through them to Europe, serving as a knowledge bridge linking Persian, Indian, Greek, and Arab civilizations with Western civilization. These political, military, and cultural reforms led by Khosrow Anushirvan contributed to the continuation of the Sasanian Empire for more than a century later, enabling it to consolidate its position as one of the greatest empires in ancient history, and paving the way for civilizational overlap with the Islamic state later on.

When discussing the Persian civilizational influence on the Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah, the Sasanian Empire emerges as the most relevant and influential Persian phase for Al-Ḥīrah, whether politically, culturally, or militarily. While the empires preceding the Sasanians represent Persia's long historical legacy, it was the Sasanian era that witnessed direct interaction with the Lakhmids, rulers of Al-Ḥīrah, which served as a buffer state within the Sasanian defensive system. Thus, alongside military interaction, a kind of cultural, administrative, and commercial overlap extended between Al-Ḥīrah and the Khosrowite court.

The Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah on the Fringes of Persian Hegemony (268-631 A.D.)

Al-Ḥīrah, with the Persian civilizational manifestations it acquired, reflected in the fields of architecture, industry, agriculture, trade, and administration, was a model of a state of influence that did not touch its Arab essence. Instead, it paved the way for a true civilizational formation when it merged with the nascent Islamic state. Therefore, pausing at the emergence and development of Al-Ḥīrah under the Persians is a necessary step to understand the nature of the influence it was subjected to, and how it managed to maintain its cultural independence amidst a complex political dependency.

The city of Al-Ḥīrah is located in southern Iraq, specifically in the alluvial plain between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, northwest of the Samawah desert. It is about 15 kilometers from the city of Kufa, and approximately 10 kilometers southeast of the city of Najaf (Nadīm, 2020). It is likely that the name "Al-Ḥīrah" is derived from the

Syriac language, specifically from the word "Ḥirtā" meaning "camp," because the Tanūkh tribe initially lived in tents (Nāji, 1978).

Al-Ḥīrah first emerged in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, but it fell into ruin after its inhabitants migrated to Anbār, and remained so until it was re-established in the time of 'Amr ibn 'Adī, who made it a seat for Arab kingship during the reign of the Sasanian Emperor Ardashīr I. It lasted for about four centuries until the establishment of Kufa during the Rashidun Caliphate (Ibn al-Athīr, 2010). 'Amr's lineage goes back to Āl Naṣr, named after Rabī'a ibn Naṣr ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Namārah ibn Lakhm, who was one of the Himyarite Tubba' kings. It is said that Rabī'a had a dream that frightened him, resulting in him sending his household to Iraq. He wrote to one of the Persian kings named Sābūr ibn Kharzād, who received them and settled them in Al-Ḥīrah (Ibn Kathīr, 2012).

Relations between the Arabs and Persians extended to eras preceding the establishment of the Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah, but these ties reached their peak during the reign of the Lakhmids (Manādhīrah). The Sasanian Emperor Ardashīr ibn Bābak granted them autonomous rule under Persian suzerainty within the limits of an agreement. Thus, Ardashīr secured their flank and used them as a defensive bulwark on the borders of his country (Al-Miṣrī, 2001). The Sasanian Empire relied in its defensive policy on establishing buffer states on its borders, the most prominent of which was the Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah, ruled by twenty Lakhmid kings (Āl Lakhm or Āl Naṣr) in southern Iraq. The Lakhmids constituted a strategic tool in the hands of the Sasanians to repel attacks from the Byzantine Empire from the west, and attacks from Arab tribes from the south and east (Bosworth, 2012). Therefore, the kings of Al-Ḥīrah were exempted from paying tribute in return for protecting the borders of the Sasanian Empire. The kings of Al-Ḥīrah reached a degree of power that made them stand on equal footing with the Persians; at times they fought them, and at other times they allied with them and supported them in their wars against the Romans. The Persians also sought the help of the Arabs of Al-Ḥīrah in guarding and protecting their trade caravans heading to Arab markets, such as Sūq 'Ukāz, in exchange for a fee paid to them (Al-Ḥūfī, 1978). Evidence of the Persian kings' trust in the kings of Al-Ḥīrah is that they delegated to them the Arab lands, because they succeeded in subjugating them to Persian obedience, which contributed to expanding their influence until it reached central Arabia, and even beyond to regions in its south, as evidenced by military campaigns that reached the depths of Yemen (Al-Miṣrī, 2001). Despite Al-Ḥīrah's political subordination to the Sasanian state, the composition of the Ḥīran army differed from that of the Sasanian army. This difference resulted from Al-Ḥīrah's tribal nature, where the army was divided into five battalions, four main and one external. First; the Ashāhib battalion, mostly from Āl Lakhm, relatives of the king of Al-Ḥīrah. Second; the Dawsar battalion, said to be from all Arab tribes, it was the second in terms of armament and the most formidable, hence the proverb (more formidable than Dawsar). Third; the Rahā'in (hostages) battalion, consisting of five hundred men delegated by their tribal chiefs to the army of the king of Al-Ḥīrah, under his command, and replaced annually. Fourth; the Ṣanā'i' battalion, who were the royal guard troops, mostly men from Bakr ibn Wā'il, who never left the king's gate. The king of Al-Ḥīrah supported a battalion placed by the Persian king for his aid, consisting of a thousand Persian men, called the Waḍā'i' battalion (Al-Ḥaydarī, 2018).

Al-Ḥīrah witnessed great prosperity in the fields of agriculture, industry, construction, and trade. Its fertile soil and abundant water were reasons for its development in the agricultural field, to the extent that the lands between Al-Ḥīrah and Najaf were all cultivated with palm trees and gardens. Various archaeological excavation missions conducted at different time periods revealed a collection of finds that reflected Al-Ḥīrah's civilizational prosperity, including; coins, gold jewelry, pottery vessels and jars, some bearing the sign of the cross, bronze crosses, agate beads, glassware, and an آثار لأكيرة (traces of monasteries). Industry in Al-Ḥīrah reached a high level of skill and mastery, so much so that many industries were attributed to it, foremost among them weapon manufacturing, as Al-Ḥīrah was famous for its swords, arrows, and spearheads, which made its army strong and equipped with the best military gear. It also excelled in the manufacture of musical instruments, metal artifacts, jewelry, and gold and silver ornaments studded with jewels, in addition to the textile industry, especially silk, linen, and wool weaving, and embroidery with gold threads (Nadīm, 2020). This brings us to what Ibn Khaldūn mentioned in his Muqaddimah, that the Arabs are the furthest of people from crafts, because they are desert dwellers aided by camels, which prevented the emergence of a stable urban environment in the desert. But in Al-Ḥīrah, all elements of stability were available: fertile soil, abundant water, and a strong army, which created an environment conducive to true civilizational growth. Ibn Khaldūn considers crafts and industries as one of the indicators of a

state's development and stability, and believes they flourish when civilization reaches a stage of luxury and fulfillment of basic needs, allowing individuals to turn towards developing arts and crafts (Ibn Khaldūn, 2010).

Also, one of the signs of urbanization in the Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah, some of which still stand today, is what it left behind in terms of architectural landmarks that indicate progress in the arts of construction and engineering, foremost among them the palaces of al-Khawarnaq and al-Sadīr. Al-Khawarnaq is a name given to the council where the king sits to eat and drink, and it is believed that the word has a Persian origin, "khurankāh." As for al-Sadīr, it is an Arabized word, its origin in Persian being "sih dila," meaning a place containing a number of interconnected domes (Ibn Manẓūr, 1414 H). "Sih" expresses the number three in Persian, which fits the naming of al-Sadīr as the building with "the three domes."

Al-Khawarnaq was built by order of King al-Nu'mān ibn Imru' al-Qays, and it is said that its architect, "Sinimmār," was killed after completing its construction. Narrators differ on the reason for his killing, and this is one of the popular stories from which the proverb "the reward of Sinimmār" is derived for one who perfects his work. This palace was built to be a residence for the Sasanian crown prince, Yazdegerd the Sinner, son of Bahrām, son of Sābūr Dhū al-Aktāf, as none of his sons lived long. He was advised to have his son reside in a dwelling in the wilderness, in an environment with moderate air, which is characteristic of Al-Ḥīrah (Ibn al-Athīr, 2010). There are many poets who sang praises of al-Khawarnaq and al-Sadīr for their magnificent architecture, such as al-Munkhal al-Yashkurī from Tihāmah, who died in 607 A.D., who said:

**When I am drunk, then Lord am I Of al-Khawarnaq and al-Sadīr, reaching high!
But when I'm sober, clear and keen, O'er one small ewe and camel, then I reign.**

Meaning that when he is drunk, he feels like a king and is generous with what he owns (Al-Ma'arrī, 2008), and when he sobers up, he returns to his bitter reality.

During the Lakhmid era, Al-Ḥīrah witnessed an urban boom and was distinguished by clear development in the construction of palaces and monasteries. Architects excelled in the Ḥīran style, characterized by the presence of three adjacent domes. Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī indicated that the walls of Al-Ḥīrah's palaces were decorated with mosaics depicting tree leaves, grape clusters, and palm fronds. Archaeological excavations revealed an advanced level of construction techniques, represented by water heating and drainage systems, in addition to paving with gypsum and baked brick. Among the other known palaces in Al-Ḥīrah are; the White Palace, also called Abiyaḍ al-Nu'mān, Qaṣr al-Sindān, Qaṣr al-Zawra', Qaṣr al-'Adsiyyīn al-Kalbiyyīn, Qaṣr al-'Udhayb, and Qaṣr Banī Buqaylah, whose construction is attributed to 'Abd al-Masīḥ al-Ghassānī, alongside a number of other palaces built during the Islamic period. Al-Ḥīrah also housed more than thirty monasteries dedicated to Christian worship (Al-'Ānī, 2021), most notably Dayr Hind al-Kubrā (Monastery of Hind the Elder), and Dayr Hind al-Ṣuḡhrā (Monastery of Hind the Younger), where Hind bint al-Nu'mān ibn al-Mundhir lived until her death and was buried (Nadīm, 2020). It is said that the Mosque of Kufa was built by Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ with columns taken from the churches of Al-Ḥīrah (Najāī, 1978).

The kings of Al-Ḥīrah paid great attention to science and literature, including Al-Nu'mān ibn al-Mundhir, who was interested in codification and collecting pre-Islamic poetry, ordering poems to be written on scrolls (karārīs), which were among the finds of archaeologists and excavators at the palace site. It is said that Al-Nu'mān used to hold regular literary councils in the Khawarnaq Palace, known as the "Mu'tamar" (Conference), where writers and intellectuals gathered, making Al-Ḥīrah a literary destination frequented by poets and writers from all over the Arabian Peninsula (Nadīm, 2020). The poetry of the Arabs in the Jāhiliyyah (pre-Islamic era) is replete with mentions of the princes of Al-Ḥīrah, and the Diwan of al-Nābighah al-Dhubayānī is a testament to this, as it is full of poems he composed in praise of Al-Nu'mān ibn al-Mundhir (Najāī, 1978). Among the most famous of these is his saying:

**Dost thou not see Allah hath bestowed on thee A rank so high, a noble dignity, That other kings, beneath
its awesome ray, Unsteady stand, their powers fade away?
For thou art Sun, all other kings but stars, Whose lesser lights thy dawning glory bars; When thy great
radiance breaks upon the sight, No other star dare show its feeble light.**

The rule of Āl Naṣr continued in Al-Ḥīrah, sometimes subject to the Persians and at other times independent. Among those who successively ruled were figures like Imru' al-Qays ibn 'Amr, al-Nu'mān the Elder, and al-Mundhir ibn al-Mundhir, until their last and most famous king, al-Nu'mān ibn al-Mundhir (Abū Qābūs, nicknamed Ṣāhib al-Dhubyānī), whose end was tragic at the hands of Khosrow Aparviz ibn Hormizd due to a plot hatched by Zayd ibn 'Adī al-'Ibādī in revenge for al-Nu'mān having treacherously killed his father in prison (Ibn Khaldūn, 2020). In this regard, it is mentioned that the Persian kings had a habit of writing descriptions of women and sending them out to request those who matched these descriptions. Zayd ibn 'Adī seized this opportunity and told Khosrow that he knew more than twenty women among al-Nu'mān's daughters and his cousins who matched the desired descriptions, but that the Arabs prided themselves too much to give them to non-Arabs (A'ājim). So Khosrow sent 'Adī to al-Nu'mān with his request, accompanied by a Persian messenger who understood a little Arabic. 'Adī conveyed the description to al-Nu'mān, which distressed him, and he said: "There are not in the Sawād (fertile lands of Iraq) and Persia enough to satisfy your need!" The messenger asked 'Adī, "What is al-'ayn (eye/spring)?" He said: "Cows." 'Adī returned to Khosrow with the news and used the messenger as a witness, who stated that al-Nu'mān said there were not enough cows in the Sawād to satisfy him, let alone asking for what we have. This was a distortion of what al-Nu'mān said and meant. Khosrow became extremely angry and sent for al-Nu'mān months later. When the letter reached al-Nu'mān, he took his family, weapons, and what he could carry, seeking refuge among the Arabs, but none would grant him protection until he reached Dhū Qār. Hānī' ibn Mas'ūd al-Shaybānī accepted him, and al-Nu'mān knew that he would protect him as he protected his own family. So he entrusted his family and four hundred coats of mail (some say eight hundred) to him, then departed to Khosrow, submitting to his order (Ibn Kathīr, 2012).

The Persians subsequently weakened Arab influence in Al-Ḥīrah and appointed Iyās ibn Qabīṣah al-Ṭā'ī as a governor subordinate to them. However, this did not prevent the Arabs from fighting the Persians in one of their most prominent pre-Islamic battles, Dhū Qār, in which the Arab tribes triumphed over Khosrow's army. With the advent of Islam, the kings of Al-Ḥīrah ceased to exist, and it finally fell after the conquest of Iraq by the Muslims led by Khālīd ibn al-Walīd. Jizyah (poll tax) was imposed on its people, marking the end of direct Persian rule over the Arabs (Ibn Khaldūn, 2020). Thus, Al-Ḥīrah transformed from an Arab kingdom subordinate to the Persians into part of the then-rising Islamic state under the banner of the new message.

Persian Civilizational Influence

Al-Ḥīrah arose in a region predominantly urban in character, situated at the crossroads of trade routes between East and West. It was characterized by fertile soil and abundant water, in addition to its position as a buffer state between two important empires in the region, receiving military support from the Sasanian Empire against attacks by Arab tribes or the Byzantines. All these factors undoubtedly contributed to providing a kind of stability that made Al-Ḥīrah a center for civilizational interaction between Arabs and neighboring civilizations. The society of Al-Ḥīrah comprised various Arab tribes, including Lakhm, Ṭayyī', Kalb, Tamīm, Kindah, Ghassān, Azd, and others (Al-Maḥāsanaḥ, 2009).

Al-Ḥīrah represented a strategic bridge linking Persia and the Arabian Peninsula, and a meeting point for three of the most important trade routes in the Peninsula: first, the (Mecca-Al-Ḥīrah) route; second, the (Najrān-Al-Ḥīrah) route; and third, the (Al-Ḥīrah-Basra-Palmyra) route. Besides its vital commercial role, Al-Ḥīrah also played a pivotal cultural role in the region, contributing to the spread of Persian culture among the Arabs. The Arabs of Al-Ḥīrah practiced reading and writing, especially during their trade journeys, and they also worked to spread Christianity in parts of the Arabian Peninsula. With the advent of Islam, Al-Ḥīrah was the first city conquered by the Muslims, with the aim of securing the (Al-Ḥīrah-Medina-Mecca) route, which was considered a vital road linking the Peninsula and Iraq. Later, with the expansion of Islamic conquests, the road connecting the Peninsula and Mesopotamia shifted from the (Mecca-Al-Ḥīrah) route to the (Mecca-Kufa) route, making Kufa the new gateway to Mesopotamia, from which military campaigns were launched to conquer the northern parts of the Islamic state (Nājī, 1978).

Trade and markets played a leading role in cultural exchange between tribes. Ḥīran merchants and poets had an influence in transmitting some Persian civilizational aspects through seasonal markets held during the Hajj, such

as Sūq 'Ukāz, Dhū Majannah, al-Ḥijāz, and Dūmat al-Jandal (Al-Yāsiri, 2012). There was also a market in Al-Ḥīrah where merchants from Khosrow's domains, the Sawād (fertile lands of Iraq), and Arab tribes like Rabī'ah and Qudā'ah gathered, called Sūq al-Khanāfis (Ibn al-Athīr, 2010). Merchants of Al-Ḥīrah frequented Mecca for trade, and they had contracts and partnerships with a number of Meccan merchants. If one of them traveled to Mecca, he would stay with his ally, sell his goods, and buy desirable commodities he found there, then return with them to Al-Ḥīrah. Some of these merchants entered into joint commercial alliances with the people of Mecca, conducting trade between Al-Ḥīrah, Mecca, and other markets. The Ḥīran merchants would manage the business from their side, while their Meccan partners supervised their business in Mecca. After the commercial activity concluded, both parties would return to settle accounts and divide profits and losses according to what each had spent (Al-Yāsiri, 2012).

Among the material manifestations that show the extent of Arab influence by Persian civilization is that which is evident in the transfer of elements of daily life from the Persian kitchen to the Arab environment. This is clearly shown in the story of the introduction of fālūdhaj (a sweet pastry) to Mecca by 'Abdullāh ibn Jud'ān, one of Mecca's wealthiest men and prominent merchants. It is reported that he traded with Al-Ḥīrah, and it is mentioned that he learned it from the people of Iraq, and brought a special cook with him to prepare the food of Al-Ḥīrah and Persian dishes for him ('Alī, 1993). This sweet was initially a strange symbol; Arabs found its name and taste cumbersome, even disliking to pronounce it with a "j" or "q," reflecting a linguistic and cultural struggle with foreign influence. However, this reservation did not last long, as fālūdhaj became one of the most famous dishes of caliphs and notables in the Abbasid era. Cooks perfected it, and poets like Ibn al-Rūmī, Umayyah ibn Abī al-Ṣalt, and others sang its praises (Al-'Awlaqī, 2018). Among the anecdotes mentioned about fālūdhaj is Abū al-Ḥārith Jammīn's reply when asked what he thought of a fālūdhaj: "By Allah, if Moses had met Pharaoh with a fālūdhaj, he would have believed, but he met him with a staff" (Al-Ābī, 2004).

Literary and linguistic studies indicate that cultural interactions were mutual between Persians and Arabs in the pre-Islamic and early Islamic eras, clearly appearing in loanwords from Persian in early Arabic texts, and Arabic words in Persian texts. Also, the emergence of the Ḥīran script in Al-Ḥīrah set a precedent that was later reflected in the Islamic script ('Azzām, 1938). A number of Arab and Muslim researchers overlooked the importance of highlighting the Ḥīran script, even though material evidence and historical texts confirm that the Arabic script originated in Al-Ḥīrah, in terms of form and content. Evidence indicates that this script moved from Al-Ḥīrah to the deserts and cities of northern Arabia, such as Dūmat al-Jandal, Tabūk, Taymā', Yathrib, and Mecca, at the hands of Ḥīran merchants, priests, and monks. It also appears from the names of scribes who emerged in the late pre-Islamic era and during the Prophet's time that most of them were from Banū Umayyah in Mecca, who had visited the courts of the kings of Al-Ḥīrah or learned the script from those who had contact with its people. Al-Ḥīrah and Kufa, with their histories, testify to the precedence of the Ḥīran script, and it seems that the Kufic script was merely an extension and development of it (Shākir, 2023).

Literary exchanges, including contributions from Arab poets and writers at the Persian court, underscore a vibrant, two-way cultural dialogue. From the accounts of 'Adī ibn Zayd al-'Ibādī and his family, his father had learned Persian and held the position of postmaster in the service of Khosrow Aparviz. As for 'Adī, he was among the most eloquent and skilled in writing in both Arabic and Persian, and he worked as a scribe in Khosrow's diwan (through the intercession of al-Nu'mān ibn al-Mundhir as atonement for killing his father), thus succeeding his father in this administrative role. In the poetry of 'Adī ibn Zayd, many Persian words that had infiltrated Arabic are found, at a time when Arabic was beginning to absorb Persian vocabulary due to cultural contact ('Azzām, 1938). It was known that al-A'shā al-Kabīr praised Khosrow and mentioned aspects of Persian civilization and some of their words in his poetry. This was a result of his frequent travels to their lands, which he referred to in his poems (Al-Miṣrī, 2001), including his saying:

"I have journeyed between Bāniqiyā to Aden * And long in Persia were my travels and wanderings."**

Conversely, Arabic words also entered the Persian language at that time, paving the way for the large number of Arabic loanwords that entered Persian in Islamic eras. Through this exchange, Arabs became acquainted with Persian news and tales of their heroes, such as the story of Rustam and Isfandiyār, one of the most famous stories

in classical Persian literature ('Azzām, 1938). Among those who transmitted these stories was al-Naḍr ibn al-Ḥārith, who learned them during his stay in Al-Ḥīrah and began narrating them to Quraysh to annoy the Messenger of Allah. When the Prophet ﷺ finished speaking in a gathering in Mecca, al-Naḍr would follow him and say: "By Allah, I have better tales than him, come to me," then he would begin narrating those stories. Al-Naḍr also used to bring Persian female singers (qiyān), with whom Quraysh abounded in the Jāhiliyyah. Their influence reached the extent that Arabs had children with them, and those who married them were mentioned in a book (Fīman Tazawwaja Majūsiyyah - On Those Who Married Zoroastrian Women) written by 'Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Madā'inī. In pre-Islamic poetry, we find names of musical instruments in Persian such as the ṭunbūr (tambourine), barbat (lute), wanaj, and others (Al-Ḥūfī, 1978). Speaking of al-Naḍr, his father, al-Ḥārith ibn Kaladah, must be mentioned, who traveled to Persia, learned medicine in Gondishapur, and treated some of the prominent Persian figures. Khosrow rewarded him generously with money and gifted him a female slave. Al-Ḥārith then returned to the Arabian Peninsula and contributed to spreading medical sciences among the Arabs. It is mentioned that prominent Arab physicians had learned medicine in Persia (Al-Miṣrī, 2001).

With the expansion of the Islamic state after the conquests, Muslims found themselves facing a new reality that required building an organized administration to cope with this rapid expansion. Because the pre-Islamic Arab environment, by its tribal nature, did not need centralized institutions and lacked the experience to manage them, Muslims naturally turned to benefiting from existing administrative models in advanced civilizations they had encountered, foremost among them the Sasanian state. Persia possessed a centralized system of government that included specialized diwans (departments) for the army, post, and taxation, as well as an integrated system for organizing the kharāj (land tax) and managing state affairs. Arab-Persian relations before Islam played a preliminary role in this acquaintance, as there were commercial, political, and cultural links between Quraysh and the Persians. The emergence of Al-Ḥīrah as an Arab civilizational center under Persian influence formed a connecting link between the two sides. This was reflected in many administrative and intellectual terms that entered Arabic, as shown in the Muslims' later adoption of institutions such as the Diwan al-Kharāj, Diwan al-Jund (Army Department), and the postal system, which were directly inspired by the Sasanian model (Aḥmad, 2004).

Ibn Khaldūn explains in his Muqaddimah that buildings and constructions in the Islamic state were few in its early days compared to its capabilities. This was due to the Bedouin nature of the Arabs and their distance from crafts and luxury. Religion in the early Islamic era also acted as a barrier against extravagance in construction. This is reflected in the stance of Caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb when he was informed that the reeds with which Kufa was built had burned. He allowed them to build with stone, on the condition that no one exceed three abodes (buyūt), and said: "Adhere to the Sunnah, and the state will adhere to you." But with the passage of time, as people moved away from the initial spirit of religion, and the character of kingship and luxury prevailed, Arabs began to employ Persians and learned from them the arts of construction and industry. Under the influence of conditions of prosperity and ease, they began to erect large buildings and factories (Ibn Khaldūn, 2010), which shows the clear impact that Persians transmitted to Islamic civilization in the architectural aspect.

Among what 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb also adopted from the Persians was the use of Persian dirhams. He introduced modifications to them, including engraving phrases such as: "Al-ḥamdu Lillāh" (Praise be to Allah), "Lā ilāha illā Allāh" (There is no god but Allah), and "Muḥammad Rasūl Allāh" (Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah). It is also narrated that 'Umar was inspired by the Persian system of time calculation, known as "māh-rōz," to establish the Hijri calendar. This was the method they used to know their days and months, and it is said that the word "mu'arrikh" (historian) itself is an Arabization of "māh-rōz" (Al-Miṣrī, 2001).

Other manifestations reflecting the influence of Persian civilization on Islamic civilization include fundamental transformations in the system of governance. This is clearly evident since the era of Caliph Mu'āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān, who realized the Islamic state's need to adopt a new approach to governance, different from what prevailed in the Rashidun era based on the principle of shūrā (consultation). The first form of this transformation was the adoption of the system of succession by crown prince, turning the caliphate into a hereditary rule confined to the Umayyad house, similar to what was practiced in the Sasanian and Byzantine systems of rule. These influences reached their peak in the Abbasid era, where new concepts were introduced into the structure of governance, most notably the "theory of divine right," which made the caliph rule by divine mandate, an idea inspired by Persian

royal tradition. The rule of Abbasid caliphs was also characterized by sanctity, extravagance, and grandeur. They had special ceremonies, lavish palaces, and vast treasuries. They distanced themselves from the common people and imitated Persian kings in their reliance on astrologers and soothsayers in making state decisions. The Persians themselves, through their support for the Abbasid revolution, contributed to transferring these concepts and practices to Islamic rule, making their influence in this aspect one of the clearest forms of civilizational intermingling between Persians and Muslims ('Izzat & Ibrāhīm, 2019).

AL-ĤĪRAH BETWEEN FALSE AND TRUE FORMATION

Al-Ĥīrah, in its relationship with the Persian Empire, was closer to a civilizational model that formed superficially without taking root in depth. It borrowed some Persian manifestations in dress, food, administrative and military systems, and architecture, but it remained incapable of fully identifying with the Persian spirit. The "Arab spirit" within it remained stifled within foreign civilizational molds that did not express its true identity. Thus, Al-Ĥīrah lived in a state of false formation; its appearance seemed Persian, but its core remained vibrantly Arab. However, this situation changed with the advent of Islam. The new religion constituted a cultural and spiritual environment consistent with the Arab self. Al-Ĥīrah then unleashed its latent energies and rid itself of formal constraints, transforming from an imitative entity into an authentic element in the nucleus of Islamic civilization. Thus, for the first time, a true civilizational formation was achieved within it, sincere in its belonging, deep in its roots, and consistent with its cultural identity.

The stance of al-Nu'mān ibn al-Mundhir in refusing to marry his daughter to Khosrow is but a telling testament to this deep-rooted belonging. He refused to break this established Arab custom, which prohibits marrying Arab daughters to non-Arabs (A'ājim), in a dangerous confrontation with Khosrow's authority. This was not political stubbornness, but a cry of identity, affirming that Al-Ĥīrah, despite its nominal subjugation, did not dissolve into the Persian entity but maintained its independent Arab spirit. Another example of Al-Ĥīrah preserving its principles is the stance of al-Mundhir III (nicknamed Ibn Mā' al-Samā' - Son of the Sky's Water) regarding King Kavad I's call to embrace Mazdakism, a creed that advocated the communal sharing of wealth and women. Al-Nu'mān rejected these principles outright, viewing the communal sharing of women as contrary to dignity and honor in Arab customs, a stance that represented adherence to traditions and customs despite their political subordination to the Persians.

Through reviewing references, we also see that among the factors that helped the emergence of a true civilizational formation was the religious freedom and doctrinal independence enjoyed by Arab tribes, especially the Lakhmids in Al-Ĥīrah, during most periods of Sasanian rule. The Persian Empire, since the reign of Cyrus the Great, had adopted a policy based on respecting religious pluralism, refraining from imposing Zoroastrianism on its subordinate provinces. This provided the kings of Al-Ĥīrah with a stable climate that enabled them to build a cohesive political entity and allowed their rule to continue and expand under Persian protection, but without encroaching on their cultural specificity. Al-Ĥīrah and its surroundings were a unique religious complex, indicated by the fact that when Muslims conquered it, they found on the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates followers of a wide range of religions, including Christians, Zoroastrians, and followers of Manichaeism, in addition to remnants of older religions like the Sabaeans (Al-Ĥūfī, 1978). This pluralism is considered one of the most prominent manifestations of urbanization, as religious freedom is considered a sign of the maturity and development of societies because it is closely linked to the ability and confidence of the authority to manage diversity without suppression.

'Aṣabiyyah (tribal solidarity/esprit de corps) is also considered another factor that paved the way for a true civilizational formation between the Arabs and the Islamic state. The deep sense of belonging to the tribe and Arab blood remained alive and ingrained in the Arab conscience, even under political subservience to the Persians. This became most evident at the launch of the Islamic conquest movement, when the nascent state called upon the Arabs to stand against the Sasanian Empire. For example, in what was mentioned of the Battle of Buwayb, which took place between the Muslims and the Sasanian Persians, when the commander of the Muslim army, al-Muthannā ibn Ḥārithah, sent for the Arabs, a large crowd flocked to him, including Anas ibn Hilāl al-Namārī and a large contingent from Āl Namir who were Christians. They said: "We will fight with our people" (Ibn al-Athīr, 2010). Here, despite their different creed, they did not hesitate to stand with their brethren in Arabism.

THE ASSIMILATION OF PERSIANS INTO ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION

The major civilizational transformations witnessed by the Islamic world were not limited to the Arabs. Rather, one of its greatest features and truest manifestations was that the Persians themselves assimilated into the new Islamic entity, not as coerced individuals or imitators, but as genuine contributors to shaping the features of Islamic civilization. The intermingling between Arabs and Persians in the early Islamic cities led to the creation of a social fabric that combined different elements of society, causing the Persian to dissolve into the Islamic model and choose to be identified with the town where he was born. The features of this integration were manifested in the emergence of renowned scholars of Persian origin, such as al-Bukhārī, Muslim, al-Ṭabarī, al-Fārābī, al-Ghazālī, and others, who wrote in Arabic and were at the forefront of Islamic thought and culture. Thus, in the Abbasid era, Persians were partners in creating the "Islamic Renaissance," which some historians call the Golden Age, making Arabic the language of science and scholars at that time. This leads us to Spengler's principle of the "primordial soul," through which we can understand the phenomenon of the assimilation not only of the people of Al-Ḥīrah but also of the Persians into the fabric of Islamic civilization. Their integration was a reflection of their sharing with the Arabs a single civilizational spirit, not merely a political or military convergence.

Islam, in its major principles, was not far from the spirit of justice embodied in some Sasanian systems of governance, which explains the Persians' receptiveness to smooth integration into the Islamic system of rule. A number of Khosrows were known for their inclination towards justice and establishing equity among their subjects, which may explain the longevity of this empire for centuries. Foremost among them was Khosrow Anushirvan, who is considered a model of enlightened ruling thought in the history of the Persian Empire. We quote Khosrow's saying from Ibn al-Athīr's "Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh": "Gratitude and blessing are two counterweights like the two pans of a scale; whichever outweighs its companion, the lighter one needs to be increased until it equals its companion... I looked for the deeds most beloved to Allah and found it to be that by which He established the heavens and the earth, anchored the mountains, made the rivers flow, and created the creatures, which is truth and justice. So I adhered to it, and I saw the fruit of truth and justice to be the prosperity of lands, which is the sustenance of life for people, animals, birds, and all living beings." This conception of just rule was also reflected in the practices of his successors, as in the reign of King Peroz ibn Yazdegerd ibn Bahrām, who, when a severe drought afflicted the country, animals died, and famine spread, wrote to his subjects: "No kharāj (land tax) upon you, nor jizyah (poll tax), nor any burden." He ordered the rich to console the poor, threatening punishment to anyone proven to have left a hungry person to die without aid (Ibn al-Athīr, 2010).

Among the prominent indicators that reflected the Persians' readiness to integrate into the Islamic state was the observed rapid spread of Islam among them, a matter that puzzled many historians. Some explained this rapid integration by the existence of commonalities between Islam and Zoroastrianism in terms of principles, conceptions of the afterlife, the existence of angels and demons, reckoning, reward and punishment, resurrection after death, prayers, and a prophet sent from a single God. However, Dr. Hussein Mujib Al-Miṣrī believes that the main reason lies in the essence of Islam itself. It occupies a middle position among heavenly religions, as it combines in its belief system the affirmation of previous messengers, such as Moses and his Torah, Jesus and his Gospel, and then adds to it a special faith in the message of Muhammad ﷺ and the revelation he brought. This is because the final prophethood came in accordance with what was revealed before it, rejecting the deviations that had occurred, and seeking to unify the messages under one umbrella that removes contradiction and guides humanity to the right path. Thus, the hearts of the Persians inclined towards Islam to reform their condition and rise, thereby laying the foundations of a civilization that surpassed their previous one (Al-Miṣrī, 2001).

Among the Islamic practices and principles that were not foreign to the Persians is the sunnah (way/principle) of istibdāl (replacement/substitution). In this regard, we mention the saying of a Persian king, "Rustam," to his men when they settled in "al-Bars," having oppressed the people, stolen their wealth, drunk wine, and violated women. The people complained to Rustam, and he addressed them saying: "By Allah, the Arabs, with these [qualities] and being at war with them, are better in conduct than you. Allah used to grant you victory over the enemy and establish you in the land because of good conduct, refraining from oppression, and benevolence. If you change, I see nothing but that Allah will change what is with you, and I am not safe from Allah removing His authority from you." (Ibn al-Athīr, 2010). Allah Almighty mentioned in His Noble Book many verses and stories about the sunnah of istibdāl, among which we mention His saying: ﴿And if you turn away, He will replace you with another

people; then they will not be the likes of you. ﴿[Muhammad: 38], in a clear divine warning that change only occurs if people change, and that the sunnah of istibdāl is inevitably applied to those who turn away from the truth and abandon its purposes.

The concepts of justice and equality, and the recognition of the state's moral responsibility towards individuals, which were manifested during periods of Sasanian rule, show that the principles brought by Islam were not alien to the principles of the Persians. Consequently, the preparedness to receive the Islamic message was not exclusive to the Arabian Peninsula but extended to its peripheries, where the collective conscience was prepared to accept a call that carried in its essence values similar to what they had known in their noblest eras.

CONCLUSION

The most prominent findings reached by the research are as follows:

- A number of geographical and political factors helped the Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah adopt manifestations of urbanization. Among the most prominent were its strategic location between the Persian and Byzantine Empires, making it a vital commercial and cultural center, alongside the abundance of water and fertile soil in its vicinity, which provided an agricultural environment that helped Arab tribes settle there and become self-sufficient, no longer needing to search for pastures and water. Also, Al-Ḥīrah's alliance with the Sasanian Empire gave it political protection and military strength, increasing its prestige among Arab tribes and reducing external threats, which provided a suitable climate for civilizational growth.
- The Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah represented a model of false civilizational formation, adopting Persian manifestations without losing its essential Arab identity, which is consistent with Spengler's definition of this type of formation.
- The Lakhmids' adherence to tribal customs indicates deep-rooted Arab origins, which formed a barrier against complete assimilation into Persian culture.
- Arab tribal 'aṣabiyyah (solidarity/esprit de corps) played a pivotal role in Al-Ḥīrah's cultural independence in the face of Persian influence, and later paved the way for the involvement of the people of Al-Ḥīrah in the Islamic project, as Arab tribes responded to the call of Islam, considering it a continuation of their ethnic and cultural authenticity.
- The Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah was the civilizational bridge between the Arabs and the Persians, through which much knowledge, skills, and administrative and military systems were transmitted, which later benefited the Muslims in building their state.
- Cultural exchange was not unidirectional, as the Arabic language was influenced by a number of Persian words of an administrative and cultural nature, and conversely, Arabic words infiltrated Persian, reflecting a mutual civilizational overlap between the two sides.
- The openness of the Persians themselves to Islam, and their integration into the Islamic state after the conquest, was not a forced assimilation but a response to a shared civilizational spirit, indicating a prior cultural groundwork for Islam in the Persian environment.
- Spengler's theory of the "primordial soul" may offer a logical explanation for the speed of Persian integration into Islamic civilization, as it suggests the existence of a common spiritual and cultural ground between the two parties. This theory opens promising avenues for deeper studies to understand the emergence of civilizations and the relationship between them and preceding or subsequent civilizations.

In light of the foregoing, it becomes clear that the Kingdom of Al-Ḥīrah was not merely a political subordinate to the Sasanian Empire, but an entity that preserved its Arab essence amidst borrowed civilizational manifestations. According to the theory of "false civilizational formation," Al-Ḥīrah was superficially shaped by the Persian character but did not lose its Arab identity. Instead, it expressed it at the opportune moment, responded to the call of Islam, and formed a true civilizational bond with it. More importantly, this interaction was not exclusive to the Ḥīran model but also included the Persians themselves, who found in Islam an extension of a familiar civilizational spirit. They partnered with the Arabs in building a single civilization, in which the Arabic tongue united with the Persian mind, giving birth to the greatest renaissance in history, at a time when the world was mired in the depths of ignorance.

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