



## History of Religious Developments in Qazvin

### From the Beginning of the Muslim Arab's Conquests to the Rise of the Safavids

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#### Abstract

Among the provinces and cities of Iran, Qazvin has been very important in terms of the history of religious developments, and Zoroastrians, Mazdakians and followers of Judaism and Christianity have been there since a long time ago. The main issue of the present research is how Qazvin became Islamized. The ongoing research was conducted by a historical method and by a descriptive-analytical approach, and based on that, it becomes clear that the Zoroastrians in Qazvin, who first had professed Islam only because they refused to pay jizya, rebelled against the conquerors at the first possible opportunity; but then the city was conquered by the Arab Muslims for the second time and this time was opened by violence. However, many Zoroastrians were still following their religion there, as they were able to perform their religious ceremonies until the end of the third century of Hijri. In the Islamic period, up to the 6th century, along with the Shi'ite minority, the majority of Qazvin Muslims followed the Shafi'i cult. The occasional presences of the Isma'ilis as well as the 'Alevi and the Boyeh in Qazvin have also had some effects on the religious tendencies in Qazvin.

**Keywords:** Islam, Qazvin, Religions, Shi'ism, Sunni.

#### Introduction

Qazvin was conquered by Muslim invaders in 24 A.H. in the early years of the Islamic conquests. The authors of present article describe the history of the ups and downs of religions and special religious trends in Qazvin, from Zoroastrianism at the beginning of the conquests to Shi'ite conversion during the Safavid period, and try to explain the process of this religious and denominational transformation.



## Research Findings

1. Zoroastrianism: The first Arab General who opened Qazvin was Bara bin Azeb; he tasked the inhabitants, who were mostly Zoroastrians, to either convert to Islam or accept *jizya*. The Qazvinians were forced to submit to peace and accepted Islam. But this peace did not last long and the Qazvinians turned away from Islam again. After that, the Muslim Arabs recaptured this city by force. According to historical evidences, Zoroastrianism did not stop continuing in Qazvin and remained there for many years.

2. Mazdakians: For the first time, Hamdalallah Mostofi (d. 750 A.H.) mentioned the presence of Mazdakians. Golriz also says, "Maraghians" live in the villages of the Rudbar in Alamut region. This clan calls themselves "Maraghi".

3. Jews: The oldest information about the Jews of Qazvin belongs to the historical texts of the 7th century A.H. onwards; E.g. Zakaria Qazvini (d. 682 A.H.) refers to the Jewish cemetery and also Hamdalallah Mostofi (d. 750 AH) says: "There were a few Jews there."

4. Islam in Qazvin: About a decade after felling Qazvin into the hands of the Arabs, during the Caliphate of Hazrat Ali (36-40 A.H.), the commuting of Shia families to Iranian cities, including Qazvin, became the basis for the diffusion of Shi'ism in there.

During the caliphate of Abdul Malik bin Marwan (reigned 73-86 A.H.), the first mosque was built in Qazvin and the first Friday Prayer was held in that mosque.

Qazvin was very important for the Islamic caliphate system to deal with the invasion of Dilmians. This led to the settlement of Arab soldiers with their families there, most of whom were Sunni. The population of Sunnis with the majority of the Shafi'i religion in Qazvin was such that Qazvin became known as "Dar al-Sunnah" in the sixth century of Hijri. Hanafi followers, Zaidis, Isma'ilis and 'Alevi of Tabaristan were also present in Qazvin.

The era of Seljuks (429-590 A.H.) was the time of Isma'ilis rising in Alamut region. During this period, Qazvin was at the peak of religious differences, and the relations between the Sunni and Shi'a communities were affected by these conditions. However, when Nasser Khosrow entered Qazvin in 438 A.H., he considered the ruler of this city to be an 'Alevi Muslim. At the same time, the Isma'ilis invited people of Qazvin to the Isma'ili cult, and there were denominational disputes among the Sunnis themselves. In 538 A.H., during the reign of Mas'oud bin Muhammad bin Malek Shah of Seljuki, the actions against the Asha're became more intense.

The events of the following centuries showed the gradual dominance of the Shi'a population and the increase of their influence and power, which are as follows: A). Qazvinian's requesting help from Seyyed Fakhreddin, son of Seyyed Qavameddin Mar'ashi, the ruler of Rostamdar and one of the Marashi Shi'a Sadat of Mazandaran in 782 A.H. to deal with disturbances, B). permission Timur to Mar'ashi Sadat for the tutelage of Prince Hossein, and C). The dominance of the Sadat dynasty of the Al-Kia sect (769-1000 A.H.) over Qazvin and.



## Conclusion

1. In the Islamic period, a minority of Mazdakians, Zoroastrians and Jews lived in Qazvin.
2. Due to the strategic importance of Qazvin, Muslim troops entered Qazvin over and over again, which resulted in the complete dominance of the Sunnis with the majority of the Shafi'i cult; however, minorities of Hanafis and Shi'as have always lived in Qazvin.
3. The presence and influence of Shi'as in Qazvin was mostly during the Timurian period.

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