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The Political Battle for Local Languages Under the Arab Domination in the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphates

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Abstract

This study examines the political struggle for local languages under the Arab dominance during the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphates. It explores how the expansion of Arabic influence, driven by the spread of Islam, shaped the linguistic landscape in the territories of the Islamic Empire. The research analyzes the balance between the adoption of Arabic as a language of governance, religion, and science, while also examining the persistence and development of local languages. Through a historical approach, this study highlights the efforts to preserve and promote local languages in the face of Arabization, particularly in regions such as Khorasan, Persia, and the Maghreb. The study further investigates the role of local elites, including Persian and Berber rulers, in fostering a cultural and linguistic renaissance. It concludes that while Arabic became dominant in the political and religious spheres, local languages continued to thrive, contributing to a rich linguistic and cultural diversity that shaped the Islamic world. This enduring tension between Arabic and local languages underlines the complex dynamics of language, power, and identity during the early Islamic period.

Introduction

The vast conquests of Islam during the era of the Khulafa al-Rashidun were unprecedented and unimaginable. A barren desert managed to produce individuals of remarkable capability within a short period. The political challenges during the late Khulafa al-Rashidun period were indeed central but were largely resolved following the Amul Jama'ah (Year of Unity), marked by the transfer of leadership from Hasan ibn Ali to Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan (Gibb, 1993). This paper seeks to examine the role of language in the socio-political influence of the Umayyad dynasty and the strategic utilization of linguistic diversity in facilitating the Abbasid revolution. As Abu Hayyan al-Tawhidi, quoting al-Sirafi, stated, “It must be understood that no language can be equated with another in all aspects: its characteristics, structure, metaphors, vocabulary, verbs, and so on” (Anis, 1991).

The implementation of Islam across the futuhat (Islamic conquests) was far from straightforward and often fraught with sensitivities. An example is the policy of Caliph Umar ibn Abdul Aziz regarding the mawali (non-Arab members of the Muslim military). Initially, these soldiers were excluded from receiving the same shares of ghanimah (war booty), land, and salaries as their Arab Muslim counterparts. However, Umar’s policy extended equal treatment to all Muslim soldiers regardless of ethnicity, which eventually benefited the broader Muslim community (Blankinship, 1994). Simultaneously, the Umayyad administration institutionalized Arabic as the official state language. While Arabic became the dominant language of governance, administration, and religious discourse, its adoption and enforcement varied across regions. In some areas, such as the Levant and North Africa, Arabic quickly replaced pre-existing languages, while in others, particularly in Persia and Khurasan, local

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languages like Persian maintained strong cultural and intellectual relevance. These variations highlight the complex socio-political factors influencing linguistic shifts, rather than a monolithic process of Arabization.

From the perspective of opposition, linguistic differences presented a fertile ground for political dissent. For instance, Abu Muslim al-Khurasani, a mawali, successfully mobilized a cross-ethnic coalition while maintaining the principle that leadership must remain within the Quraysh lineage. His efforts led to the ousting of the Umayyad governor Nasr ibn Sayyar within a remarkably short period (Hawting, 2000). After ascending to power, the Abbasid Caliphate allowed significant authority to non-Arab figures, such as the Samanid dynasty, which revived Persian language and culture more prominently than the Buyids or Saffarids. Nevertheless, Arabic continued to dominate scientific and religious studies. The Samanid rulers even declared in a famous decree that “Here, in this land, the language is Persian, and the kings of this land are Persian kings” (Elton, 2001).

Modern historiography on this topic often reflects the interpretative biases of contemporary scholars, with some emphasizing the natural integration of Arabic, while others highlight coercion and cultural resistance. A more critical approach is needed to assess these perspectives and understand the underlying methodological assumptions. This study, therefore, adopts a historical-critical approach to reassess the linguistic policies of the Umayyads and Abbasids, considering both primary sources and diverse secondary interpretations. The implications of Arabic's adoption and the linguistic struggles of non-Arab populations in the former futuhat territories are evident. In the Eastern regions, from eastern Iraq to India, Arabic became a borrowed language rather than the primary medium of communication. In contrast, areas stretching from southern Iraq to the Maghreb (Tunisia to Morocco) witnessed Arabic becoming the dominant language, relegating Amazigh, Berber, Aramaic, Persian, and other local languages to secondary roles. Despite colonial pressures during the 19th century, Arabic retained its status as a unifying language across these regions.

Methods

This study employs a historical-critical method to analyze the dynamics of local language struggles under Arab authority during the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphates. This approach enables researchers to critically interpret historical sources, evaluate language policies and events, and comprehend their impacts on social and political movements (Lloyd, 1991).

Primary sources, including historical chronicles, literary works, and governmental policies of the era, are utilized alongside secondary sources, such as modern academic analyses. However, modern academic interpretations often carry inherent biases shaped by contemporary theoretical frameworks and historiographical trends. Recognizing this, the study critically assesses the methodologies, assumptions, and limitations of these secondary sources to avoid an over-reliance on a single perspective. By incorporating diverse viewpoints and contrasting differing interpretations, this research aims to provide a more balanced and nuanced understanding of linguistic and political developments in the early Islamic period (Lesnieski et al., 2024).

The historical-critical approach provides a robust framework to examine the continuity and transformation in the use of Arabic and the local language struggles as a response to Arab dominance. It allows for a comprehensive understanding of how linguistic dynamics shaped and were shaped by the socio-political context of the time.

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Results and Discussion

Political Coagulation of the Umayyad Caliphs in the East

The consolidation of political authority began after the *Amul Jama'ah* (Year of Unity), marked by Hasan ibn Ali relinquishing the caliphate to Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan (Gibb, 1993). While this resolution may have pacified the Arab elite, it did little to address tensions at the grassroots level. Succession controversies re-emerged when Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan appointed his son Yazid I (Yazid ibn Muawiyah) as caliph without the traditional *shura'* (consultative council). Yazid I faced severe opposition from Husayn ibn Ali, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad, who mobilized a following but was intercepted and defeated by the Umayyad loyalist Ibn Ziyad at Karbala (Kennedy, 2022). The succession crisis recurred with the brief and disputed rule of Yazid's son, Muawiyah II, whose reign lasted between 20 days and 4 months, though most accounts suggest no more than two months (Bosworth, 2024).

Amidst the political turmoil that weakened the Umayyad Caliphate, Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan (646–705) ascended to power and swiftly sought to consolidate the legitimacy of his rule. In August 686, Abd al-Malik's general, Ibn Ziyad (d. 686), led a force of 60,000 men but was decisively defeated at the Battle of Khazir. This smaller but highly motivated pro-Alid army, sponsored by al-Mukhtar ibn Abi Ubayd and commanded by Ibrahim ibn al-Ashtar, killed Ibn Ziyad and most of his deputies (Kennedy, 2022). Abd al-Malik identified internal dissent as a critical threat after learning of the defection of Umair ibn al-Hubab al-Sulami (d. 689), a commander from the Banu Sulaym tribe. Umair defected and attacked the Christian Taghlib tribe, only to be killed in battle in 689. The Taghlib delivered his severed head to Abd al-Malik (Wellhausen & Weir, 2016).

Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan took a direct role in military campaigns, leading the Syrian army into Iraq in 691 to reclaim the province (Kennedy, 2022). At the time, Iraq was governed by Mus'ab ibn Zubayr (d. 691) under the authority of his brother, Caliph Abdullah ibn Zubayr, based in the Hijaz. Abd al-Malik offered Mus'ab the governorship of Iraq or another province of his choosing in exchange for his surrender, but Mus'ab refused and was killed in battle (Ahma, 2017). Simultaneously, Abd al-Malik's staunch loyalist and military commander, Hajjaj ibn Yusuf al-Thaqafi (661–714), launched a campaign to besiege Abdullah ibn Zubayr's stronghold in Mecca using siege engines (*manjaniq*). Hajjaj offered amnesty to Ibn Zubayr's forces, sparing all but Ibn Zubayr and his closest supporters who remained entrenched in the Ka'bah. Ibn Zubayr's death marked the end of the civil war and the reunification of the caliphate under Abd al-Malik (Ahma, 2017).

Following this victory, Abd al-Malik was formally recognized as the sole leader (*khalifah*) of the Muslim community and the custodian of the two holy cities. Ghiyath ibn Ghawth ibn al-Salt ibn Tariqa al-Taghlibi (640–708), a prominent Christian Arab poet, composed a panegyric in honor of Caliph Abd al-Malik (Stetkevych, 2016).

Abd al-Malik is widely credited for replacing Greek with Arabic as the language of *diwan* (bureaucracy) in Syria (Hawting, 2000). To facilitate this transition, he appointed Sulayman ibn Sa'd al-Khushani (685–724) as head of the fiscal council. Sulayman, tasked with covering the costs of post-war transitions, requested and received the annual revenue of the Jund al-Urdun district, amounting to approximately 180,000 gold dinars (Sprengling, 1939). This decision was kept secret from Sarjun ibn Mansur (660–700), a Melkite Christian and chief administrator at the time. Within less than a year, Sulayman successfully completed the transition to Arabic in 700 (Sprengling, 1939). Rising from the caliph's private secretary to head of the fiscal council, Sulayman later proposed standardizing the bureaucracy's language in Arabic and introducing officially minted coins under the caliph's authority. However, this

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shift in distant provinces, such as Khurasan, was not fully realized until the 740s (Campbell, 2008).

Although Abd al-Malik successfully replaced Greek with Arabic as the administrative language, the implementation of this policy was not uniform across the caliphate. In power centers such as Damascus and the Levant, the transition to Arabic occurred more swiftly due to the support of political and administrative elites, most of whom were Arabs. However, in provinces such as Egypt, Persia, and al-Andalus, local languages persisted for a longer period. For instance, in Egypt, Coptic remained in everyday use and was still present in some administrative affairs, while in Persia, Pahlavi continued to play a crucial role in cultural and literary traditions.

The shift in administrative language also faced resistance in several regions. Many non-Arab administrators, who had previously used Greek or Persian in bureaucratic affairs, struggled to adapt to the Arabization policies. Some local governors even sought to delay the full implementation of these policies to maintain administrative stability. Additionally, this transition created social tensions between Arabs and non-Arabs, particularly in regions with significant mawali (non-Arab Muslim) populations. When power shifted to the Abbasids, language policies took a different approach. The Abbasids were more open to the use of local languages in administration and intellectual pursuits. This was evident in the revival of Persian under dynasties such as the Samanids and Buyids, which adopted the Abbasid governance model while maintaining Persian as a key language in many aspects of intellectual and cultural life. Thus, language policies under the Abbasids indicate that the transition to Arabic was not an absolute process but rather the result of complex interactions between politics, culture, and local resistance.

The interaction between Arabic and local languages did not always result in the suppression of native tongues; in many cases, it led to linguistic hybridization. One of the most notable examples is the emergence of New Persian, which developed during the Abbasid period as a result of extensive contact with Arabic. This variant of Persian incorporated a significant number of Arabic loanwords while maintaining its core grammatical structure. Over time, it became the standard literary and administrative language under the Samanid dynasty, illustrating how linguistic adaptation can coexist with cultural resilience. Similarly, in al-Andalus, the evolution of Andalusi Arabic showcased the fusion of Arabic with Romance language elements, particularly in phonetics and vocabulary. The Mozarabic dialects spoken by non-Arab communities also absorbed Arabic influences while retaining Latin-based grammatical features. These hybrid linguistic developments suggest that language struggles under Arab rule were not strictly about dominance versus resistance, but rather about complex socio-cultural negotiations that shaped new linguistic identities.

According to Sir Hamilton Alexander Rosskeen Gibb, a prominent Scottish historian, “this decision marked the first step towards reorganizing and unifying the diverse taxation systems across the provinces, and also signified a move toward a more definitive Muslim governance” (Gibb, 1993). Abd al-Malik sought to stabilize politics by appealing to tribal leaders and retaining the roles of Christians who previously held high positions. His ambitious projects were carried forward by his successor, al-Walid I (668–715), who focused on constructing mosques to unify the Muslim community. In 706, al-Walid instructed Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz to expand the Prophet’s Mosque in Medina. This project faced significant protests due to the dismantling of the burial sites of the Prophet’s wives. However, al-Walid dismissed the objections and proceeded with the project, spending lavishly on its reconstruction and employing Greek and Coptic mosaic artisans (Bacharach, 1996). Al-Walid continued advancing the Arabic language in business dealings involving non-Arabs.

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The phenomenon of mass conversion to Islam significantly influenced the lingua franca of subsequent generations, shifting it predominantly to Arabic. The roots of this shift can be traced to the policies of Caliph Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz, who extended equal rights to *mawali* (non-Arabs in the Muslim army), granting them war spoils (*ghanimah*), land, and salaries previously reserved for Arab Muslim soldiers. This policy was eventually applied to the broader Muslim society (Blankinship, 1994).

Nazeer Ahmed asserts, “The large-scale entry of non-Arabs into Islam shifted the caliphate's center of gravity from Medina and Damascus to Persia and Egypt” (Kovács, 2023). This demographic transformation became a driving force for linguistic and societal changes. Supporting this perspective, Prof. Hamka stated, “Although this approach was just, it inadvertently weakened the Umayyad government, which was founded on despotism. Consequently, underground efforts were made to organize propaganda for the establishment of the Abbasid dynasty” (Hamka, 2020).

The Nationalist Movement of Asy-Syu’ubiyyah

Following the end of the Sufyaniyyah regime and the transition to the era of the Marwanid family, Abdul Malik ibn Marwan successfully consolidated the authority of the Umayyads and strengthened the caliphate by defeating Ibn al-Zubayr. Among the key figures underpinning the Arab and non-Arab conflict was al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf, who famously resented the use of Persian as the court language in the eastern Islamic empire and mandated its replacement with Arabic (Frye, 1975). The early Persian response to Arab domination manifested in various sectarian movements against the Umayyad rule, including participation in Kharijite rebellions and Shiite movements (Encyclopedia Iranica). Despite these uprisings, the Umayyads managed to maintain their status as Arab rulers.

Resistance to linguistic assimilation took various forms, ranging from political opposition to cultural preservation efforts. The Asy-Syu’ubiyyah movement, which emerged in Persia, was not only a response to Arab political dominance but also a reaction against the cultural and linguistic hegemony of Arabic. Persian intellectuals and poets, such as Ferdowsi, actively sought to revive and elevate the Persian language through literature, particularly with works like *Shahnameh*, which reinforced Persian historical identity independent of Arab influence. Similarly, in al-Andalus, Mozarabic communities—non-Arab Christians under Muslim rule—continued to use Latin-derived vernaculars in religious and cultural contexts despite the widespread adoption of Arabic for legal and administrative purposes.

Another subtle form of resistance was bilingualism and code-switching, where local populations retained their native languages in domestic and communal settings while using Arabic in public or official spheres. This practice was particularly evident in administrative courts, where translators often played a crucial role in mediating between Arabic-speaking officials and local populations. The existence of translated documents and the continued use of Persian in the early Abbasid bureaucracy further demonstrate that linguistic resistance was often strategic rather than confrontational.

The triggers for the *asy-Syu’ubiyyah* movement can be observed in the poetry of Ibrahim ibn Mamsyad, as cited by Yaqut in *Irshad al-‘Arib ila Ma‘rifat al-Adib.* The poet declared: *"I am the son of noble Jam’s lineage, and the legacy of the Persian kings has fallen into my hands... I revive their glory, long lost and erased by time... Tell the entire Banu Hashim: return to your homeland in the Hijaz, to eat lizards and herd your sheep... for I shall ascend the throne of kings, with the aid of my sword and pen."* (Houtsma, 1913).

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The *asy-Syu'ubiyyah* movement gained momentum particularly after the death of Caliph Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz. The rise of nationalist movements in regions like Persia and Spain signified the breakdown of the social contract (*ba'iah*) with the Umayyad caliphate.

Equality Between Arabs and Non-Arabs

These movements advocated for equality, inspired by Islamic teachings and intellectual reasoning, and expressed their dissent through literary efforts.

Superiority of Arabs Challenged

Activists questioned Arab superiority, which aligned with the rise of the Abbasid dynasty.

Anti-Arab Sentiments

Movements ridiculed Arab values and beliefs, glorifying non-Arab civilizations, sciences, and cultural heritage, and sought to revive non-Arab traditions (Momtahen, 1992, 134).

In the western Umayyad domains, the *asy-Syu'ubiyyah* movement also took root. Umar ibn Hafsun, of African descent, rallied *Mozárabes* to rebel against Arab rule (Ryan-Ranson, 1993). By 883, he had emerged as the leader of rebel forces in the southern and western provinces of the Emirate of Córdoba. A year earlier, in 882, he reportedly fought Emirate forces in a battle that claimed the life of his ally, García Íñiguez of Pamplona (Houtsma, 1913). Despite pragmatic political tendencies—receiving offers from both the Umayyads and Christian kingdoms—Umar ibn Hafsun eventually converted to Christianity during the reign of Alfonso III of Asturias (van Donzel, 2022).

The racial superiority instilled by the Umayyads fueled widespread discontent, leading to the rise of *asy-Syu'ubiyyah* movements (Bacharach, 2011). Initially, these movements remained limited to minor actions or intellectual clubs. However, their persistence highlighted the relevance of Arabic as the language of political dominance and the power of Arab culture in suppressing the Umayyad regime. Ultimately, the alignment of *asy-Syu'ubiyyah*, Shiite, and Kharijite forces created the political strength necessary to overthrow the Umayyads.

The Abbasid Revolution and Non-Arab Loyalists

The uprising began as a reaction to Marwan II's decision to relocate the capital from Damascus to Harran, which led to the destruction of Homs in 746. Marwan II only managed to stabilize the provinces by 747, but the Abbasid Revolution erupted within months. Adding to this unrest was the Kharijite rebellion led by al-Dahhak ibn Qays al-Shaybani in 746, which spread into Iraq (Hawting, 2000).

To counter the revolution in the East, the Umayyad Caliphate appointed Nasr ibn Sayyar al-Laythi al-Kinani, a veteran of Khurasan jihad campaigns, as governor of Khurasan (Hawting, 2000). While Nasr successfully repelled the Türgesh, a confederation of Turkish tribes supported by China, he ultimately failed to suppress the revolutionary wave (Hawting, 2000).

The political unification of Arabs and Persians was facilitated by the Arab settlers in Khurasan abandoning their traditional lifestyles and integrating with the local Iranian population. Although intermarriage with non-Arabs elsewhere in the empire was discouraged or outright prohibited (Lévi-Provençal, 1950), it gradually became common in eastern Khurasan. Arabs adopted Persian attire, and the mutual influence of the two languages eroded ethnic barriers over time (Hawting, 2000).

The Abbasid revolutionaries remained discreet about their identity while rallying political forces against the Umayyads. They merely declared their desire for a ruler descended from Muhammad, whose selection as caliph would be endorsed by the Muslim community. This

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vague statement led many Shiites to assume that the intended ruler would be an Alid, a belief subtly encouraged by the Abbasids to garner Shiite support (Esposito, 1999).

Although native converts to Islam constituted about 10% of the population under Umayyad rule, this minority was significant given the relatively small number of Arabs. Over time, non-Arab Muslims outnumbered Arab Muslims, raising concerns among the Arab elite (Bulliet & Manos, 2000). Political Shiite movements in Iraq repeatedly failed, while communication networks flourished alongside the Berber revolt in Iberia and the Maghreb, the Ibadi uprising in Yemen and Hijaz, and Harith ibn Surayj's rebellion in Khurasan (van Donzel, 2022).

One of the most prominent generals of the Abbasid cause was Abu Muslim al-Khurasani, a mawla from Khurasan who played a pivotal role in establishing the Abbasid dynasty (al-Ḥamawī, 1923). Leading nearly 10,000 soldiers, Abu Muslim officially launched his campaign from Merv. On February 14, 748, he seized Merv, ousting the Umayyad governor Nasr ibn Sayyar (Hawting, 2000). Once Khurasan, predominantly non-Arab, was secured, the revolutionaries could focus their efforts on attacking the Umayyads and advancing toward the capital. The Abbasid victory not only reshaped the political landscape but also influenced linguistic interactions between Arabic and local languages. As the new rulers sought to integrate non-Arab elites into their administration, language played a crucial role in shaping this new cultural synthesis.

The interaction between Arabic and local languages did not always result in the suppression of native tongues; in many cases, it led to linguistic hybridization. One of the most notable examples is the emergence of New Persian, which developed during the Abbasid period as a result of extensive contact with Arabic. This variant of Persian incorporated a significant number of Arabic loanwords while maintaining its core grammatical structure. Over time, it became the standard literary and administrative language under the Samanid dynasty, illustrating how linguistic adaptation can coexist with cultural resilience.

Similarly, in al-Andalus, the evolution of Andalusi Arabic showcased the fusion of Arabic with Romance language elements, particularly in phonetics and vocabulary. The Mozarabic dialects spoken by non-Arab communities also absorbed Arabic influences while retaining Latin-based grammatical features. These hybrid linguistic developments suggest that language struggles under Arab rule were not strictly about dominance versus resistance, but rather about complex socio-cultural negotiations that shaped new linguistic identities. This linguistic evolution aligned with the Abbasid approach to governance, which was more inclusive toward non-Arabs compared to their Umayyad predecessors. By allowing greater cultural and administrative autonomy, the Abbasids inadvertently facilitated the preservation and transformation of local languages, rather than enforcing a strict Arabization policy. As this cultural and linguistic transformation unfolded, non-Arab communities also gained greater representation in the Abbasid administration, further solidifying the influence of Persian and other local languages in governmental and scholarly domains.

After the revolution, non-Arabs (*mawali*) gained strategic positions in government, exemplified by the Persian Barmakid family, including Khalid al-Barmaki, Yahya ibn Khalid al-Barmaki, and Ja‘far ibn Yahya al-Barmaki (Al-Baladzuri, 2015). This shift marked a gradual introduction of Persian in administrative contexts, though official correspondence remained in Arabic. The influence of Persian also extended to Qur'anic practices. Abu Hanifah an-Nu‘man (699–767), founder of the Hanafi school of jurisprudence, permitted Persian-speaking Muslims to recite the meaning of Surah al-Fatihah in Persian during prayers. A weaker narration attributes a similar allowance to Salman al-Farisi, a companion of the Prophet from Persia

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(Amah, 2007). These developments reflected the growing influence of non-Arabs as they embraced Islam.

The Federation Phase of the Abbasid Dynasty

The Abbasid government's openness to non-Arab languages in administration and scholarship became evident during the rise of the Samanid dynasty, the first Iranian dynasty within the Islamic governance framework.

Saman Khuda, originally a Zoroastrian, converted to Islam during the reign of the Umayyad Governor Asad ibn Abdallah al-Qasri in Khurasan (most of Transoxiana). He named his eldest son Asad ibn Saman in honor of the governor (Frye, 1975). With the strong military presence in Khurasan, the region was ripe for political upheaval, and many uprisings were triggered by the actions of Governor Ali ibn Isa ibn Mahan (780–811), who was directly appointed by Caliph Harun al-Rashid (766–809) as governor of Khurasan. Ali's harsh exploitation and fiscal policies led to widespread resentment among the local elites and eventually to uprisings (Kennedy, 2022).

The political atmosphere, charged with local revolutions against the Abbasids, led to the inevitable establishment of a middle ground between independent local governance and the caliphate. A breakthrough in local political history occurred when the uprising led by Rāfiʿ ibn al Layth ibn Naṣr ibn Sayyār (d. 809) was extinguished. In 819, the governor of Khurasan, Ghassan ibn Abbad, rewarded the four grandsons of Saman Khuda for their assistance in quelling the rebellion led by Rāfiʿ ibn al-Layth. (1) Nuh ibn Asad received Samarkand, (2) Ahmad ibn Asad received Farghana, (3) Yahya ibn Asad received Tashkent, and (4) Ilyas ibn Asad received Herat (Frye, 1975).

The descendants of Saman Khuda were the pioneers of Persian culture and the integration of Islamic scholarship with the Persian language. A prime example of this can be seen in the Persian poet Rudaki, who was both a Hafiz of the Quran and a renowned poet in Persian. He was often asked to demonstrate how to play the chang, a traditional Persian musical instrument, by the famous musician Abu'l-Abak Bakhtiar (Hillenbrand et al., 2013). Nasr ibn Ahmad bin Asad bin Saman (906–943), the ruler of the Samanid dynasty, played an active role in promoting Persian culture. Following the first complete translation of the Quran into Persian in the 9th century, the population under the Samanid rule began to embrace Islam in large numbers (Wellhausen & Weir, 2016).

Another testament to the flourishing Persian culture under the Abbasid federation of local rulers is the *Tārīkhnāma-yi Bozorg*, the earliest known prose work in Persian, written by Muhammad Bal'ami. This book became an authentic text celebrating the local language under the Samanid Dynasty (Aizid, 2016). Despite this, the revolts and the rule of the four brothers from the descendants of Saman Khuda, who used the local language, did not pass without challenges.

From this, it can be observed that the use of local languages in the East has flourished significantly compared to the Middle East and Morocco, where local languages have not been as widely adopted in governance.

Conclusion

The struggle to maintain the authority of local languages as the primary language in various regions is shaped by political and cultural dynamics. The influence of the Arabic language in the lands of conquest, particularly in religion, knowledge, and culture, is deeply rooted in Islamic teachings. Arabic became the official language in governance and scholarship,

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alongside the political stability that facilitated its use. However, the absorption of Arabic vocabulary into local languages was inevitable, given the depth of Islamic knowledge that was challenging to translate into local languages without altering its meaning. In this regard, the influence of Arabic on local languages is dominant, as seen in the adoption of Arabic words into Indonesian vocabulary, such as "masjid," "ilmu," and "salam."

On the other hand, rulers in the West, such as the Umayyads, effectively maintained Arabic as the language of governance and scholarship. In contrast, in the East, while Arabic dominated in intellectual fields, local languages for governance and literature continued to thrive. A notable example is the policy of the Abbasid Dynasty, which granted autonomy to the Samanid Dynasty. Under this influence, Persian culture flourished, and the Persian language gained more freedom in both administration and literature. As stated by Numan Negmatovich Negmatov, "It was inevitable that the local Samanid dynasty, seeking support from the literate class, had to develop and promote local cultural traditions, literacy, and literature."

These cases illustrate that linguistic policies under Islamic rule were not static but evolved according to shifting political priorities and socio-cultural dynamics. The Umayyads prioritized Arabization as part of their state-building efforts, while the Abbasids, ruling over a more diverse empire, adopted a more inclusive approach toward linguistic plurality. In later periods, such as under regional dynasties like the Buyids and Samanids, local languages gained even more prominence in governance and literature, showing how policies continued to change beyond the classical caliphate era.

Thus, while Arabic has a dominant role in many aspects of Islamic life, both in the West and the East, local cultures and languages have continued to evolve according to the political and social needs of the local societies. This demonstrates that the interaction between Arabic and local languages is a dynamic process influenced by political, cultural, and intellectual contexts in various regions. Further studies could focus on the socio-political dynamics of language development in post-conquest societies, particularly how local languages interacted with Arabic, and how this shaped both Islamic and indigenous cultural identities. Comparative analyses of language policies across different periods such as between the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates, or even into post-Abbasid regional powers could provide a clearer picture of how linguistic policies adapted to shifting political landscapes. Additionally, exploring the role of language in the evolution of governance and knowledge systems in both the Abbasid and Umayyad empires could provide deeper insights into the long-term influence of Arabic on local cultures.

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