THE RUSSIAN SEIZURE OF BARDHA'AH IN 943 A.D.

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IT appears from those who have written the history of Russia that neither native nor European authorities know anything about it before the latter half of the ninth century, and that the tenth century is nearing its end before anything like firm ground is reached. Their name is by this time quite familiar to the Arabic chroniclers, and Ibn al-Athir even takes the trouble to record the commencement of the conversion of the Russians to Christianity; according to him in the year 375, i.e. 985-6 A.D., the Byzantine emperors being besieged found it necessary to invoke the aid of the king of the Russians, and offered him their sister in marriage. She declined to marry one who was not of her religion, whence this Russian king adopted Christianity, and that was how the religion began to be propagated in his country. The date of the first conversion of a Russian king given by Morfill on the authority of a Russian chronicle is within two years of that assigned by Ibn al-Athir; the former 988, the latter apparently 986; and Ibn al-Athir is here following a contemporary record. The name *Rūs*, i.e. Russians, was already familiar to Ibn al-Athir's readers and indeed those of the authority whom he excerpts owing to their being mentioned by the popular poet Mutanabbi in his most celebrated poem, describing the victory won by the Hamdanide Saif al-daulah in 954 over a force mustered by the Byzantine general called the *Domesticus*, wherein according to the poet so many tribes and tongues were represented that a staff of interpreters was required. The only nation which he mentions besides *Rūm*, i.e. the Byzantine Greeks, is *Rūs*; and as he declares that he himself fought in the battle, mounted on a charger presented to him by his patron, Saif al-daulah, he probably deserves credit when he asserts that Russians took part in the fight. He doubtless singles them out for mention because some eleven years before they had attracted the attention of the Islamic world by that seizure of Bardha'ah in Adharbaijan with which this paper is to deal. But the name *Rūs* or *Russ* was already known to geographical students in Islamic countries by the accounts of the

people which the writers on this subject had given in works dating from the latter half of the third Islamic century. These accounts have been collected and translated into various European languages; the most detailed in some ways is that of one Ibn Fadlan, contemporary of the Caliph Muqtadir (908-32), preserved by the geographer Yaqut; it is a traveller's tale, and deals mainly with the funeral rites, which it describes elaborately; the value of this account appears to be very slight. One that is of somewhat greater interest is to be found in the geographical work of Ibn Rusteh, an author who may be roughly dated 900 A.D. Although this description has already been rendered into English in a work by Thomsen, it will be of use for our present purpose to paraphrase it afresh, in order to compare with it what those who mixed with the Russians some half a century later learned from them about their ways and the country whence they came.¹

He starts by saying that they live in an island surrounded by a lake and that this island takes three days to traverse. Its soil is so moist that if a man sets foot upon it the earth shakes. They have a king called the Khaqan of the Russians, and they raid the Slavs, sailing in ships until they come out to their territory, whence they take them captive, and bring them to the Khazars and Bulgars, to whom they sell them. They have no cultivated territory of their own; they live entirely on what they fetch from the lands of the Slavs. When a son is born to one of them, the father presents him with a drawn sword which he lays down in front of the child, saying, "You shall inherit no property from me; your sole possession is to be what you earn for yourself with this sword." They have no agriculture nor villages, their sole occupation is trading with various furs which they sell their customers, taking in exchange coin which they tie up in their sacks. They are very cleanly in their dress, and the men wear gold bracelets; they are kind to their slaves, and dainty in their apparel, as is suitable for merchants; they have large cities, are given to good living, and are liberal to their guests; they are indeed bountiful to all strangers who take refuge with them, and allow none of their guests to suffer harm or injustice; where any such attempt is made they take the guest's part and protect him. They have swords called after

¹ *Bibliotheca Geogr. Arab.*, vii, 145.

Solomon, and if any part of the nation appeal for aid they all respond, and unite in meeting the enemy until the enemy is defeated. If one citizen brings an action against another, the king acts as judge; if he can settle the dispute, well and good; if they cannot agree to his sentence the matter is referred to their swords, and whichever sword is the sharper wins; the families of the disputants thereupon come out armed and fight; whichever gains the upper hand has the right to settle what is to happen to the other party. They have native physicians, who exercise despotic power over their kings; if the physician orders the king to sacrifice to their Creator men, women, or cattle, the king is bound to obey, and the physician takes the human being or the beast, throws a rope round the neck of the victim, and hangs it on a beam until it dies, asserting that this is a sacrifice to God. They are of great valour, and if they invade the territory of any tribe they will not turn back until they have either destroyed the tribe, or carried their women into captivity and made slaves of the men. They have enormous frames, are goodly in appearance, and bold; their enterprises whether in war or trade are all conducted in ships, not on the backs of beasts. They wear trousers so ample that as much as a hundred yards goes to the material of a pair; they are gathered up and tied above the knee. They regularly go about armed and in groups owing to the insecurity of life and property which there is among them; for if a man have a little money it is likely to excite the cupidity of his intimate associate, who will when he gets the chance kill him in order to obtain possession of it. When a grandee among them dies, they dig for him a grave like a vast mansion, and bury in it with him his clothes, the gold bracelets which he wore in his lifetime, a quantity of food with jugs of wine, and coined money; in his grave they bury, too, his favourite wife, on whom the door of the grave is closed so that she dies there.

This account clearly verges on the fabulous; in that of Istakhri, for burial, burning is substituted; according to him, in the case of the wealthy their slave-girls voluntarily throw themselves on the pyre.

Burning is also mentioned in this context by Mas'udi, who gives the date 332 (943) for his account of the Russians in his work *The Golden Meadows*, which was finished in 336. He distinguishes the Russian from the Hindu practice, as being

obligatory, whereas in the case of the Hindus it is voluntary. He mentions it in connexion with the Russians who according to him shared the town of Itil on the Lower Volga with the Jews, whose creed had been adopted by the Khazar king, some Christians, and some Slavs, who, like the Russians, were pagans. What is surprising is that Mas'udi knows of an invasion of the Moslem countries on the south-west coast of the Caspian by a Russian fleet some time after the year 300 (912), but he cannot exactly remember when. According to him the Russians had in his time exclusive command of the navigation of the Black Sea, and possessed five hundred vessels, each with a crew of a hundred men; they got into the Caspian by sailing up that arm of the Volga which discharged into the Black Sea and then sailing down the arm which discharges into the Caspian; they had, on the occasion of which he could not fix the exact date, harassed the provinces Tabaristan and Jurjan, which border the Caspian, and advanced into Adharbaijan as far as Ardabil; they had landed at Baku in the country called Shirwan. After a successful raid they occupied some islands near Baku, and thence carried on war against the Moslem shipping. On their way home the Russians were attacked on the bank of the Volga, by a force of Moslems who were inhabitants of the Khazar country, who inflicted a severe defeat upon them. Since that time, he says, there had been no raids on the part of this nation. It is hard to explain how Mas'udi, who lived in Egypt, came to hear of this raid, whereas Miskawaihi, who was in close contact with the inhabitants and even princes of the raided regions, knows nothing of it, but introduces the Russians for the first time in 332. If Mas'udi had not dated his account of the matter in the very year wherein Miskawaihi places the expedition which is to be described, we might suppose that Mas'udi was referring to it. That supposition is excluded, and indeed a later chronicler of Tabaristan, of the seventh century, gives the date 297 = 910 as that of a Russian expedition. "This year sixteen ships filled with Russians came to Abasgun and the adjacent coasts, and carried off or slew many Moslems. The Governor of Sari sent news of this to the Samanid ruler of Khorasan. Next year (299 = 911) the Russians returned in greater force, burned Sari and Panjah-hazar and carried off many prisoners. Then they sailed to Chashma-Rud, in Dailaman; but while some of them were on land a number of the people of

Gilan descended to the seashore, burned their ships, and slew those who had landed. Shirwanshah, King of the Khazars, hearing of this, intercepted such of their ships as had escaped, and destroyed them and their crews; thenceforth the marauding raids of the Russians were stopped."¹

This account seems to be a careless extract from Mas'udi, since its author confuses the King of Shirwan, according to Mas'udi a Moslem named 'Ali b. al-Haitham, with the King of the Khazars, who was a Jew. He differs from Mas'udi in placing the expedition before 300; and according to him there was a yet earlier Russian invasion of these regions in the days of Hasan b. Zaid, a ruler of Tabaristan who died 270 = 884. If there is any truth in this statement this would be the first appearance of the Russians on any stage. Mas'udi, however, seems to regard the expedition which he describes as the first time they entered into relations with the Moslems, since he makes the inhabitants of the Caspian coasts absolutely unaccustomed to such piratical enterprises, the sea having previously been used only by merchant men and fishing vessels. The King of the Khazars, whose river they had to ascend, gave the Russians permission on condition of sharing their booty to the extent of one half. Of course there is no arm of the Volga which discharges into the Black Sea: possibly Mas'udi had heard of the Don, and supposed there was connexion between those rivers. His story cannot of course be mythical, yet it is surprising that Miskawaihi, who gives a fairly detailed account of the affairs of Adharbaijan and the adjoining provinces for the thirty-six years which preceded the expedition to which we are coming, and was in touch with the princes of those regions, should apparently know nothing of it. Ibn Isfandiyar's story of an expedition in the middle of the ninth century is much less plausible. In any case since Mas'udi's account is vague, whereas Miskawaihi's is detailed, we are justified in regarding the expedition which he describes as the first entry of the Russians into oriental politics.

In the year 332 of the Hijrah, beginning September 4, 943 A.D., a Russian fleet crossed the Caspian, and seized the city Bardha'ah in the province Adharbaijan. This province was for the time being in the power of the Salar Marzuban b. Mohammed b. Musafir, who had become possessed of it in 941

¹ E. G. Browne, *Ibn Isfendiyar*, p. 199.

after a complicated series of events which need not now concern us. We are told that this prince was an adherent of the sect called *Batiniyyah*, which is usually applied to some form of Shi'ism. The Caliphate was at this time undergoing the worst of the throes which resulted two years later, in the establishment of the Buwaihid empire; hence it was an opportune time for any external enemy to attack an outlying portion of the old dominion of the Caliphs. The expedition, of which, as will be seen, a fairly detailed account has been preserved, bears some resemblance to the first historical appearance of the Teutons in the time of Marius; we see for the first time on the scene a nation destined to play a part of tremendous importance later on. The account which I shall now translate is from a MS. which is on the eve of publication,¹ being the chronicle of Miskawaihi, who was contemporary with the events recorded and was in the service of the Buwaihid princes; it will be seen from the narrative, that he heard about it from persons who had actually witnessed the events. The excerpt which Ibn al-Athir, whose chronicle is here based on Miskawaihi, gives of the expedition is very meagre; and I fancy that much attention has not hitherto been called in Europe to this appearance of the Russians in a field where even in our time they were till recently struggling.

ACCOUNT OF THE EXPLOITS OF THE RUSSIANS AND THEIR ISSUE.

They are a mighty nation with vast frames and great courage. They know not defeat, nor does any of them turn his back till he slay or be slain. It is the practice of the individual among them to carry his armour, while bearing suspended upon his person an artisan's outfit, axe, saw, hammer and the like. He fights with spear and shield; he wears a sword, and has hung upon him a lance and an instrument resembling a poniard. They fight on foot, especially these invaders. For, indeed, after sailing the sea which washes their country² they crossed to a vast river called the Kur, which has its source in the mountains of Adharbaijan and Armenia, and flows into this sea. It is the river of Bardha'ah, which they compare to the Tigris. When they reached the Kur they were met by Marzuban's³ officer who served as his governor of

¹ i.e. the printed text. The Gibb Trust has already published the facsimile. See vi, p. 100 fol.

² The Caspian.

³ Marzuban b. Mohammed b. Musafir was supreme throughout Adharbaijan.

Bardha'ah at the head of three hundred Dailemites and about the same number of Su'luk and Kurds. He also summoned the people of the place to arms, and was joined by some 5,000 volunteers anxious to fight these invaders. They were, however, under a delusion, not knowing the strength of the Russians, whom they expected to behave like Greeks or Armenians. When they met them in battle not more than an hour elapsed before the Russians made a fierce onslaught which routed the army of Bardha'ah; the volunteers and the rest of the troops turned their backs with the exception of the Dailemites, who stood their ground, and were killed to a man, except such of them as were mounted. The Russians then pursued the fugitives to the town, whence every one, soldier or civilian, who had a mount to carry him fled, leaving the town to be entered and seized by the Russians.

I was informed by Abu'l-'Abbas Ibn Nudar and a number of careful inquirers how the Russians when they hurried into the town made a proclamation to the following effect to the citizens: "There is no dispute between us on the matter of religion; we only desire the sovereignty; it is our duty to treat you well and yours to be loyal to us." The armies, however, came against them from all sides, only to be routed by the Russians, who made sorties. When the Moslems charged the Russians, the people of Bardha'ah cried out *Allah Akbar*, and flung stones at the Russians. The latter had charged the people of Bardha'ah to restrain themselves and not interfere between them and the Sultan,¹ but though this advice was accepted by the respectable classes, the common people and the rabble, would not restrain themselves, but gave vent to their feelings by attacking the Russians when the followers of the Sultan charged them. After a time they issued a proclamation that none of the original inhabitants were to remain in the town, after three days from the day of the proclamation. All who had mounts to carry them, their womenfolk and their children, left the place. These, however, were a small minority; when the fourth day came the majority were still there; so the Russians put them to the sword, slaughtering countless numbers. After the massacre they bound over ten thousand men and lads with their womenfolk, their wives and their daughters; they proceeded to place the women and children in a fortress within the city called locally

¹ i.e. the Moslem government.

Shahristan, where they had taken up their quarters, lodged their troops and entrenched themselves. They then gathered the men into the Public Mosque, set guards at the doors and bade the men ransom themselves.

ACCOUNT OF A SOUND SCHEME SUGGESTED BY ONE OF THEM,
WHICH THEY DECLINED TO FOLLOW, IN CONSEQUENCE WHEREOF
THEY WERE MASSACRED AND THEIR GOODS AND FAMILIES
WERE PILLAGED.

There was in the place a Christian clerk of sound judgment named Ibn Sam'un, who acted as negotiator between the parties, and made an arrangement with the Russians, whereby each man should be ransomed for twenty dirhems. The wiser among the Moslems acceded to this arrangement, but the others disapproved, holding that it was Ibn Sam'un's purpose to equalize the Moslems with the Christians as payers of poll-tax.¹ Ibn Sam'un, therefore, broke off negotiations; the Russians delayed their massacre hoping to get this trifling amount from their intended victims. When it was not forthcoming they put them to the sword, and indeed slew them to the last man except a few who got away in a narrow conduit which conveyed water to the Mosque, and such as purchased their lives with hoards which they happened to possess. It happened in some cases that a Moslem arranged with a Russian to buy his life for a certain sum, and went with the Russian to his house or shop. When he produced his hoard, and it turned out to be more than the sum which he had covenanted to pay, the Russian would not let him keep it, not even if it were many times more than the amount, but kept raising his demands till he had ruined the man; only when the Russian was convinced that nothing remained to him, no gold, silver, bedding or clothing, would he let him go, giving him a piece of stamped clay to serve as a safe-conduct. Thus the Russians possessed themselves of a vast amount of property. They retained the females and lads, on whom they gratified their lusts, and whom they enslaved.

When the terrible nature of the calamity was realized, and the Moslems in the different countries heard about it, they called

¹ Probably this is corrupt for a word meaning "ransom", since a single payment could not well be called "poll-tax", and the Islamic law assesses at different rates the lives of different religious communities.

for a general expedition. Marzuban b. Mohammed mustered his troops, and called for a general enlistment. Volunteers joined him from all directions. He marched at the head of 30,000 men, but in spite of the numbers that he had gathered, he was unable to make head against the Russians or to produce any effect upon them. Morning and evening he used to attack them, and regularly retire defeated. The war continued to be waged in this style for many days, and the Moslems were always the vanquished.

When the Moslems found themselves unable to deal with the Russians, and Marzuban began to realize the situation, he had recourse to strategy. It so happened that when the Russians had got into Bardha'ah¹ they indulged excessively in the fruit of which there are numerous sorts there.² This produced an epidemic among them, as theirs is an exceedingly cold country, where no tree grows, and the little fruit which they have is imported from distant regions. When their numbers began thereby to be reduced, Marzuban, seeking for a stratagem, bethought him of laying an ambush for them at night. He, therefore, arranged with his army that they should make a hurried attack; when the Russians charged, he with his followers should let themselves be routed, thereby encouraging them to hope that they would be able to annihilate the Moslem army; when the Russians got beyond the place where the ambush lay, Marzuban with his followers should return to the charge and shout to the ambush a cry on which they had agreed; when the Russians had thus got between the two forces, the Moslems would have them in their power.

The morning after this scheme had been arranged, Marzuban, with his followers, advanced, and the Russians came out to meet them. Their commander was mounted on an ass, and his followers came out and ranged themselves in order of battle. The usual procedure occurred. Marzuban, with the Moslems, took to flight, and were pursued by the Russians till they had got beyond the place of the ambush. Only the Moslems continued their flight.

Marzuban afterwards narrated how, when he saw his followers

¹ The text has Maraghah, but it is not stated that they overran all Adharbaijan; this seems, therefore, to be a scribe's error.

² Moses of Khorene mentions olives and cucumbers.

act thus, and his earnest entreaties to them to renew the fight were unavailing, owing to the terror of the Russians which had seized their hearts, he recognized that if this went on the Russians on their return would not fail to notice the ambush, which would in consequence be destroyed. So, he said, I turned round myself with my personal attendants, my brother, my staff, and my retainers, having made up my mind to die a martyr's death. Thereupon most of the Dailemites were shamed into doing the like; we charged, cried out to the ambush, which issued forth behind the Russians, fought them in brave style, and killed seven hundred of them, including their commander; the remainder made their way into the fortress in the town where they had established their quarters and whither they had moved a quantity of food and stores, and where they housed their captives and their treasures.

While Marzuban was besieging them, with no other plan than to reduce them by protracted siege, news reached him that Abu 'Abdallah Husain b. Sa'id b. Hamdan¹ had entered Adharbaijan and reached Salmas, where he had united forces with Ja'far b. Shakkuyah, the Kurd who was at the head of the Hadayan² hordes. Marzuban was therefore compelled to leave one of his officers to fight the Russians with five hundred Dailemites, fifteen hundred Kurdish horsemen, and two thousand volunteers; he himself proceeded to Auran,³ where he met Abu 'Abdallah. An insignificant engagement ensued, when there was a heavy snowfall; the followers of Abu 'Abdallah, most of whom were Arabs, became disorderly, and deserted him; he, in consequence, made for one of the fortified cities, but was met on the way by a dispatch from his cousin Nasir al-daulah, informing him of the death of Tuzun, in Baghdad, and the desertion of Tuzun's troops to himself, and of his determination to descend with them to Baghdad, in order to fight Mu'izz al-daulah, who had entered and taken possession of the city after Tuzun's

¹ He had been Nasir al-daulah's minister of public security there in 326 (i, 404).

² In Ibn Hauqal, ed. de Goeje, p. 156, the name is spelt Hadnaniyyah. They are said (ibid. 239) to be quartered at Ushnub, near Urmiah. In the list of Kurdish tribes given by Sir Mark Sykes, *The Caliph's Last Heritage*, pp. 553-92, neither of these names figures; the nearest would appear to be Danan, but its location is very different.

³ This place is not mentioned by Yaqut. Azan, near Salmas, on the modern maps, seems likely to be meant.

departure upstream. He therefore ordered Abu 'Abdallah to evacuate Adharbajjan and rejoin him, which he did.

The followers of Marzuban continued to attack and besiege the Russians till the latter grew weary. The epidemic became severe in addition. When one of them died they buried with him his arms, clothes, and equipment, also his wife or some other of his womenfolk, and his slave, if he happened to be attached to him; this being their practice.¹ After their power had come to an end the Moslems disturbed their graves and brought out a number of swords, which are in great demand to this day for their sharpness and excellence. When their numbers were reduced they left by night, the fortress in which they had established their quarters, carrying on their backs all they could of their treasure, gems and fine raiment, and burning the rest. They dragged with them such women, boys, and girls as they wanted, and made for the Kur, where the ships in which they had issued from their homes were in readiness with their crews, and three hundred Russians whom they had been supporting with portions of their booty. They embarked and departed, and God saved the Moslems from them.

From persons who witnessed these Russians I heard wonderful stories of their prowess and contempt of the Moslem forces gathered against them. Thus there was a story current in the region which I heard from many persons how five Russians were assembled in a garden in Bardha'ah, one of them a beardless lad of fair countenance, the son of one of their chieftains, with some captive women. When the Moslems knew of their presence they surrounded the garden, and a large number of Dailemite and other troops came together to fight these five. They tried hard to get a single prisoner out of the number, but it was not possible, for none of them would capitulate, and they could not be killed before they had slain many times their number of the Moslems. The beardless lad was the last survivor. When he perceived that he was going to be captured he mounted a tree that was near him and kept slashing away at his vital parts with his scimitar till he fell dead.

It can obviously be no accident that this nation makes its appearance in the annals of the West and of the East at about

¹ This is recorded by the other authorities on the early Russians.

the same time; Mr. Morfill apparently quotes as the first example of the name *Russian* in a European author the form *Rosisti* used of a language which he quotes for one of the River Dnieper in a work by the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus dated 950; as we have seen the events recorded by Miskawaihi took place some seven years before that date. Like the geographers he is decidedly vague as to the place whence they came; it appears to have been somewhere on the northern shores of the Caspian. This, he thinks, and not the Black Sea bounded their country. Nor does he tell us whether this was a private venture on the part of the invaders, or whether it was organized by the national government; the nature of the enterprise suggests the latter rather than the former. The complete absence of names is especially vexing, since these would have given some linguistic clues; thus a great deal is made out from the name quoted by Constantine as Russian opposed to Slavonic: the word is said by Morfill to be Scandinavian, and this confirms the tradition of a Scandinavian invasion of the Russian territory near the end of the ninth century; Russian territory meaning Novgorod and the surrounding country, which is certainly far removed from the Caspian.

The summary which follows later in Miskawaihi's history states that the Russians had at the time no religion; the detailed account is less trenchant, merely saying that the invaders made no attempt at proselytizing, and only aimed at sovereignty; which last detail has the appearance of being etymological, since the word *Rus* in Arabic suggests a familiar group of words which signify headship. That resemblance cannot well be held to have suggested the form *Rus* in lieu of *Russ*, since we find the former in the geographies which are some decades of years earlier, and Constantine's form *Rosisti* has the long vowel, which perhaps may come from the tribal name mentioned in Ezekiel, which some have connected with the Russians. The account of Ibn Rusteh implies that they had a religion, involving human sacrifices; as the medicine men, who according to him were all-powerful in the country, were clearly priests.

The detail given by Miskawaihi that the Russian soldier besides his weapons habitually carried about with him various artisan's tools, is similar to what is stated by Ibn Fadlan; even

in our own time the carrying powers of the Russian soldier are said to be exceedingly great. When their accoutrements are compared in the summary to those of the Dailemites, the author appears to refer in the first place to their being infantry; at times we find that in spite of the incessant disputes between the Dailemites and the Turkish elements in the armies of the time, the Dailemites could not dispense with the Turks, who provided the cavalry. The Dailemites were also exceedingly hardy, and when battles had to be decided by a question of endurance of privation it was found that the Turks gave way long before the Dailemites. A contemporary who describes how he once passed himself off as a Dailemite at the court of Abu'l-Qasim Baridi, who for a time was in possession of Basrah, states that in order to do so he purchased a couple of mules and a set of javelins with armour and a soldier's kit; and that he arranged his hair in the style of the Jil and the Dailemites, which he does not further explain. The other details which this person gives of the mode wherein he passed for a Dailemite illustrate their manners rather than their equipment. One of the requisites was to consume quantities of garlic, taking nothing to mollify the consequences for the breath; the other was to catch and kill flies in the presence of the governor, which apparently was not in accordance with the usual etiquette.

The statement about the funeral ceremonies is similar to that of Ibn Rusteh, though it appears to imply rather less; Miskawaihi states from personal knowledge that the warrior's sword was buried with him, but as he says nothing of jewels or money being unearthed he can scarcely be cited as evidence for this practice; on the other hand, he agrees that the wife of the deceased warrior was buried with him, and the fact that the swords were unearthed afterwards shows that burial and not burning was the custom with this division of the nation. The custom is, of course, recorded of other primitive races; and indeed of the Scythians, who are thought to be remote ancestors of the Russians; Mr. Morfill quotes a description of the opening of a tomb in this region, which confirmed the account given by Herodotus of the practice.

It is characteristic of the objective and judicial attitude assumed by the historian Miskawaihi that he uses few or no harsh words about these invaders. It appears from his chronicle

that owing to the absence of any central authority, the province Adharbaijan had been the prey of a number of adventurers, and so little co-operation was there between the Islamic rulers, that while the person in possession of the province was endeavouring to recover the city from these powerful invaders, he found himself attacked in the rear by a Moslem prince. He holds that the citizens who took an active part against the invaders after they had accepted this foreign domination were the mob, not the educated class; and he attributes the failure of the Christian negotiator to obtain reasonable terms after the inhabitants had definitely sided with their former ruler against the Russians, to an unreasonable suspicion on the part of the Moslems. In what language this Christian clerk communicated with the Russian invaders is not stated; we may suspect that it was Greek.

It is not clear that Bardha'ah ever recovered from what it underwent during this period. The notices of the place which have been collected from Armenian historians are all earlier than the Russian invasion: they are not consistent with regard to the names either of the province to which it should be assigned or of the people who lived there: an attempt was made by a bishop to unite them (ecclesiastically) with the Armenians. In Yaqut's time, i.e. about 1200 A.D., it was a village of no consequence. If it was on the River Kur, as Miskawaihi states, that region appears to have entered Russian possession in the year 1813. At the beginning of the nineteenth century it is described as a wretched village, the inhabitants having been forced to emigrate by the constant wars of Georgians, Russians, and Persians.