

A NOTE TO THE READER

IN THE HOPES OF explaining the transformations of the slavery system in Iran not only to academic specialists in Iranian history, but also of reaching an audience unfamiliar with the history of Iran and literature on slavery in the Middle East, I have avoided the use of specialized jargon.

My aim is to maintain the spellings of names exactly as they appear in archival sources in the endnotes unless there is a major discrepancy, in which case I employ the correct modern spelling.

TRANSLITERATION

In this book, I have used the transliteration system of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* for Persian, Arabic, and Turkish words.

TRANSLATIONS

Translations of all foreign sources (Persian, Arabic, Turkish, and French) are mine.

DATES

Dates in this book are written in the Gregorian style. In endnotes, the dates of English sources are Gregorian, Persian documents of SAM and books are cited in *Hijri Shamsi* (modern Iranian or solar calendar), and Persian documents of VUK are *Hijri Qamari* (Islamic or lunar calendar) unless noted Sh. (*Hijri Shamsi*).

UNITS OF MEASURE

WEIGHTS

Man is an Iranian unit of weight equal to 3 kg.

Ray is an Iranian unit of weight equal to 11.87 kg.¹

CURRENCY

It is impossible to determine the exact value of coins used in Iran. The most common coin in circulation was the toman. Some coins were minted in Iran while others were foreign. The exchange in every province and city differed

considerably, and there was a constant fluctuation in the value of coins. The following rates have been determined based on information extracted from historical sources. In the book the value is given in the original currency converting into toman in parenthesis, but it should be noted that the rate of exchange is approximate.

- 1) The German crown (GC) was one of the most common coins circulating at Musqat, having been imported from Baghdad. In 1825, $GC_{100} = Br\ 217$.²
- 2) Bombay rupees (Br) were a currency imported from India in exchange for goods shipped from Bushehr. In 1842, $£1 = Br\ 10$.³ In 1917, 100 Rupees = 183 *Qran*.⁴
- 3) The toman (T) was an Iranian gold coin used chiefly in circulation with a fluctuating value. One toman consisted of ten silver *qran*.⁵ In the mid-nineteenth century, $T1 = \$5$.⁶ In the late nineteenth century, $T1 = \$1.6$.⁷
- 4) The *mahomedee* (M) was a copper coin. In 1825, $\$1 = Ma20$, or $T1 = Ma100$.⁸
- 5) The British pound (£). In 1883, $£1 = T2.5$.⁹
- 6) The Spanish dollar (\$). In 1840, $£1 = \$2.5$.¹⁰ In 1853, $£1 = \$4$.¹¹
- 7) The pence (Pe). In 1883, $T1 = Pe100$.¹²
- 8) *Shamees* (Sh) was a currency used in Basra. In 1847, $£1 = Sh13.3$.¹³
- 9) *Piastres* (PI) were silver coins minted in the Ottoman Empire. In 1840, $PI\ 15 = \$1$.¹⁴
- 10) *Manat* was a Russian currency. In 1910, 1 *manat* = 1.5 *qran*.¹⁵