

David Durand-Guédy. *Where did the Saljūqs live? A case study based on the reign of sultan Mas'ūd b. Muḥammad (1134-1152)*

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**Electronic version**

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/abstractairanica/41821>

DOI: [10.4000/abstractairanica.41821](https://doi.org/10.4000/abstractairanica.41821)

ISSN: 1961-960X

**Publisher:**

CNRS (UMR 7528 Mondes iraniens et indiens), Éditions de l'IFRI

**Electronic reference**

Jürgen Paul, « David Durand-Guédy. *Where did the Saljūqs live? A case study based on the reign of sultan Mas'ūd b. Muḥammad (1134-1152)* », *Abstracta Iranica* [Online], Volume 34-35-36 | 2017, document 7, Online since 30 December 2016, connection on 26 September 2020. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/abstractairanica/41821> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/abstractairanica.41821>

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## REFERENCES

David Durand-Guédy. « Where did the Saljūqs live? A case study based on the reign of sultan Mas'ūd b. Muḥammad (1134-1152) ». *St. Ir.*, 42, 2011, p. 211-258.

- 1 This can be read as a case study of “Ruling from the Outside” (see above, R4-1N4-6), and even if this text was published earlier, it certainly was written later than the more general one. The framework, including the three levels of analysis, is the same as in the previous article.
- 2 Sulṭān Mas'ūd b. Muḥammad b. Malikšāh (1134-52), the object of the case study, is presented as an itinerant king. Durand-Guédy's study of this itinerant king – and his itineraries – therefore is the earliest such case in Muslim Iran; later sultans include the Ilkhan Öljeitü, the Timurid Šāhruḥ, and the Safavid 'Abbās, all of them studied by Charles Melville. In this meticulously documented study, Durand-Guédy establishes that Mas'ūd went to Baghdad regularly in the winter, and to Hamadan in the summer; another important region was Āḍarbāyjān. All other regions, and in particular Iṣfahān and Fārs, were neglected – never did the sultan visit Fārs, however an important province. This is one argument for the conclusion that the sultan's mobility was not dictated by any kind of “nomad determinism”: he “could go almost anywhere when he wished” (223). The reasons for being mobile were political. A central point was that political control was hardly possible if the sultan did not show up in person, at least this was the case in Baghdad. Given that personal relationships counted more than

institutions and offices, this must have been the case in other provinces as well, and most of all in the sultan's dealings with his emirs.

- 3 Durand-Guédy continues with the second and third levels of investigation with the same degree of detail. All along, he also shows a keen interest in the Arabic and Persian vocabulary used for spatial relations and for built structures, so that we learn a lot about the outward appearance of a Seljuq royal encampment *en route*.
- 4 In the appendixes, Durand-Guédy furnishes a) the chronological and temporal data regarding Mas'ūd's travels – this is a summary of all the source information he could gather and makes his argument irrefutable that Mas'ūd never lived in a city, and b) a list of some unknown toponyms. This is highly interesting. We are not used to ask ourselves where a given pasture was located or where exactly a given battle took place. Once you take space seriously as a problem, such questions come up by themselves... and some authors who know the country very well are able to give answers.

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## AUTHORS

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