The Role of the Al-Buwayhids' Tolerance (Tasāhul) and Forbearance (Tasāmuḥ) in Islamic Culture and Civilization

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Abstract

The Al-Buwayhids (Āl Būya), who ruled vast areas of Iran and Iraq from the early fourth to the end of the fifth century Hijri (322–447 AH), played a critical role in the flourishing of Islamic culture and civilization. This study aims to investigate the role of the Buwayhid dynasty's tolerance (tasāhul) and forbearance (tasāmuḥ) in the development and prosperity of Islamic culture and civilization. Employing a descriptive-analytical approach and utilizing library resources, the research seeks to answer the fundamental question of how Buwayhid tolerance and forbearance contributed to Islamic cultural and civilizational advancement. Findings indicate that the Buwayhid rulers, through religious and political tolerance, establishment of numerous scientific and cultural centers, and creation of an open intellectual environment, facilitated the emergence of diverse scholarly ideas. This, in turn, led to dynamism, vitality, and the growth of Islamic culture and civilization during that era.

Keywords: *Tolerance (Tasāhul); Forbearance (Tasāmuḥ); Al-Buwayhids (Āl Būya); Islamic Culture and Civilization*

Introduction

One of the defining characteristics of the fourth century AH was the rulers' commitment to knowledge and scholarship in both independent and semi-independent states. Naturally, the promotion of knowledge was intertwined with the granting of social freedoms, particularly among the upper echelons of society, including scholars and the educated classes. The ruling states of the fourth century, recognizing this necessity, provided social liberties—albeit as a strategy for establishing their legitimacy and credibility—which facilitated the flourishing of various scientific disciplines. Among these, the Al-

Buwayhid state distinguished itself by its religious forbearance (tasāmuḥ) and leniency (tasāhul), becoming a gathering place for litterateurs, philosophers, and scholars from myriad schools and sects. This feature was not merely an attribution by modern scholars and historians; contemporary sources from the fourth and fifth centuries Hijri also attest explicitly to the notable atmosphere of tolerance within the Buwayhid polity. Many historians credit the Buwayhid inclination toward tolerance and religious forbearance as a factor amplifying the scientific activities of Shi'ites during this era. It is important to note that, given the present importance of tolerance and forbearance regarding other cultures and civilizations, understanding these factors can significantly contribute to the country's cultural and political progress.

Statement of the Problem

One of Islam's most significant contributions to human history was the foundation of a magnificent civilization that, for centuries, included the scientific, cultural, and artistic endeavors of Egyptians, Syrians, Iranians, Arabs, Indians, Mongols, and numerous other peoples and nationalities. Under the banner of Islam, they harmonized their efforts toward scientific and cultural advancement, producing some of the most remarkable cultural achievements of their times.

Islam regards all people as sharing a common origin, affirming their inherent human rights. Non-Muslims were, for example, allowed to continue their activities in peace and security by paying the jizya, and were not compelled to convert. Islam did not disregard the recognized customs (ʿurf) of other peoples, nor did it force them to adopt Islamic customs, rooted in the Islamic vision of accommodation and the diverse means through which Islam encourages its followers to practice cultural, scientific, and ethical forbearance.

The principle of tolerance and forbearance is one that Islam accepts in its precise and proper sense, consistently encouraging its followers to uphold it. The practical conduct (sīrah) of the Prophet (PBUH) and the infallible Imams (AS), as reflected in transmitted narrations, further substantiate this claim.

Definition of Tolerance (tasāhul) and Forbearance (tasāmuḥ)

According to Ma'īn's lexicon (Ma'īn, 1982, p. 138), forbearance is defined as leniency, accommodation, and the willingness to yield, while tolerance denotes indulgence towards one another, gentleness, and moderation—generally connoting compromise and coexistence. Typically, "tasāhul" is paired with "tasāmuḥ"; although there are both semantic and lexical differences, in practice, due to extensive usage, these terms are often used interchangeably (ibid.).

The Relationship Between Tolerance (tasāhul) and Freedom

Tolerance involves practicing patience and forbearance regarding opposing beliefs—namely, the tolerant individual, while not accepting the alternative view, refrains from suppressing it for the sake of greater interests, thus accepting the holders of opposing viewpoints within the same society. At this level, tolerance implies mere endurance. However, when the tolerant party allows even the dissemination and activity of opposing beliefs, the true meaning of tolerance is realized. Under such circumstances, nonconformist rights are recognized and freedom of thought is respected, aligning closely with contemporary understandings of liberty and human rights.

Research Background

To date, no comprehensive study has been conducted specifically on the subject of this article; most scholars and authors have only made brief references to this important topic. Nevertheless, several

articles related to certain aspects of this research have been published, of which a few notable examples are mentioned below.

In her article "The Al-Buwayhids, Abbasids, and Shiʻism," Dr. Parvin examines the political situation of the Abbasid caliphs during the Al-Buwayhid era, points to the dominance of the Al-Buwayhids over the lands of Iraq and Iran, and briefly mentions their forbearance in retaining the Abbasid caliph.

Additionally, in the article "A Comparative Study of the Policy of Tolerance and Forbearance in the Al-Buwayhid and Fatimid Governments," Mr. Nasrollah Pourmohammadi notes that these governments fostered the exchange of scientific knowledge among scholars with diverse religious and doctrinal tendencies through their politics of tolerance.

In their article entitled "Scientific and Cultural Gatherings during the Al-Buwayhid Era," Seyed Ahmad Reza Khasri and Maryam Shakeri state that the center of the Islamic caliphate in the Al-Buwayhid period (i.e., Baghdad) became a place for intellectual and sectarian exchange, laying the groundwork for the emergence of various ideas.

Al-Buwayhid Religious Tolerance

The Al-Buwayhid state came to power in the fourth century AH at a time when intense conflicts prevailed among various sects, schools, and political and intellectual movements—divisions that led to further separation among Muslims, especially regarding leadership and the caliphate (Ibn Nadīm, 1988, p. 170).

Due to religious and ethnic differences with other groups and rivals, the Al-Buwayhids adopted a policy of tolerance and forbearance. With this strategy, they managed to take control of the unstable situation and establish effective governance.

Tolerance and Forbearance of the Al-Buwayhids Toward the Abbasid Caliphs

From the Arab conquest and the fall of the Sassanids during the caliphate of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb until the rise of the Al-Buwayhids, the caliph maintained dominance, imposing its power over Iranians, and Sunni Islam was generally accepted by rulers and officials.

After the Al-Buwayhids, despite their Shiʻite identity, took control over Iraq and Iran, they recognized the authority of the Sunni Abbasid Caliphate rather than seeking its overthrow, and treated the Abbasids with tolerance and forbearance. With the Buwayhid regime's recognition by the Abbasid caliphs, their religious and political legitimacy among Sunnis—who recognized the Abbasid caliphate as legitimate—was further enhanced (Shabankarey, 1984, p. 51).

Ibn Khaldūn writes: "The Al-Buwayhids became possessors of a mighty state that Islam prides itself on among the nations" (Ibn Khaldūn, 1985, p. 420). Among the Al-Buwayhid rulers, to foster greater harmony, ʿAḍud al-Dawla even married his eldest daughter to the caliph al-Ṭāʾiʿ (Miskawayh, 1997, p. 414).

Al-Buwayhid Tolerance with the Egyptian Rulers in Political Affairs

The Fatimid dynasty, contemporaries of the Al-Buwayhids, maintained diplomatic communications with them through ambassadors and correspondence. Bardi al-Atabiki, in his book *al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk wa-Qāhirah*, notes that in 338 AH, during Anūjūr al-Ikhshīdī's rule over Egypt, precious gifts were sent to Muʿizz al-Dawla, ruler of the Al-Buwayhids, along with a request that his brother participate in governance and succession—a request granted (Ibn Taghrī Birdī, 2004, p. 298).

During the reign of ʿIzz al-Dawla, envoys from Byzantium arrived at the Buwayhid court, starting with an ambassador sent by Bardas, commander of the Byzantine army; ʿAḍud al-Dawla also maintained diplomatic relations with the Byzantine Empire, exchanging border regions, prisoners, and hostages, and in 371 AH his envoy was received in Constantinople. That same year, the judge Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Ṭayyib al-Ashʿarī, known as Ibn Bāqillānī, was sent to the Byzantine emperor's court and warmly welcomed (Ibn al-Jawzī, 1412, p. 265).

Al-Buwayhid Tolerance and Forbearance in Scientific and Cultural Arenas

Support for scholars, philosophers, scientists, literati, and artists was a hallmark of the Al-Buwayhid era; its rulers were notable promoters of learning. By inviting notable scholars like Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā) and Al-Bīrūnī, and by supporting their scientific and cultural endeavors, they played a pivotal role in the transmission and expansion of scientific knowledge. The author of *Mukhtaṣar al-Duwal* describes the period thus: "Thus, studies and intellectual activity, once dormant, were revived; seekers after knowledge, previously scattered, established renewed gatherings. The young were encouraged to study and learn, while elders were entrusted with guiding and training. The expanse of freedom widened and the marketplace of talent, previously neglected, flourished" (Ibn al-ʿIbrī, 1985, p. 243).

The Al-Buwayhids attracted scholars in all fields—including astronomy, philosophy, theology (kalām), jurisprudence (fiqh), medicine, and all beneficial sciences—who studied with them and were shown particular honor and respect. In a land where rulers and ministers value knowledge, society's scientific and cultural prosperity and happiness are assured.

Jurjī Zaydān notes that Al-Buwayhid rulers also appointed their learned scholars to positions of vizier and other high offices (Zaydān, 1988, p. 591).

Notable Al-Buwayhid patrons included Mughir al-Dawla, ʿAḍud al-Dawla, Bahāʾ al-Dawla, Tāj al-Dawla, and Majd al-Dawla; their renowned viziers and scholars included Ṣāḥib ibn ʿAbbād, Fakhr al-Mulk al-Wāsiṭī, Bahrām ibn Māqifa, Abū al-Faḍl ibn al-ʿAmīd, Ibn Sīnā, Ibn Saʿdān, and al-Muhallabī.

The Status of Al-Buwayhid Tolerance and Forbearance in the Spread of Shiʿi Culture

The history of the Al-Buwayhid dynasty constitutes an important chapter in the tumultuous history of Iran, playing a pivotal role in the official recognition of Shiʿism and the revival of its rituals within the Islamic world, especially in the ancient and Islamic lands of Iran. Among the most significant historical, religious, and cultural regions of Iran is the Daylaman area in Gilan, which has fostered influential figures politically, spiritually, and culturally, and sparked a movement within the Islamic world that, for all time, has indebted both Shiʿism and Islamic civilization to its legacy (Sufi Nejad, 2008, p. 113).

For example, in the fourth and fifth centuries AH, the city of Qom was the leading center of Shiʿi populations in Iran. Unique to Qom was its early adoption of Islam and Shiʿism; Rukn al-Dawla, one of the Al-Buwayhid sultans, and Ṣāḥib ibn ʿAbbād, a prominent Buwayhid statesman and vizier, paid careful attention to the conditions of this city and showed concern for its people. For example, Ḥassan ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥassan, in 387 AH, wrote the book *Tārīkh Qumm* at the request of Ṣāḥib ibn ʿAbbād, the Buwayhid vizier (Faqihi, 2014, p. 71).

Such support for Shiʿism and its scholars—exemplified by the incident where, upon conquering the library of Ṣāḥib ibn ʿAbbād (the Shiʿi vizier of Al-Buwayhids), Sultan Maḥmūd of Ghazna destroyed part of it, said to amount to as much as the load of four hundred camels (Zarrinkub, 2008, p. 41)—was significant. In addition to Iranian Shiʿi cities that enjoyed the support of the Al-Buwayhids, certain Shiʿite cities in Iraq, such as Karbala, Najaf, Kufa, Hillah, and Basra, also benefited from such favor. Notably, Basra, which previously had been a center for the followers of ʿUthmān, became a major Shiʿi center

during the Al-Buwayhid era, to the extent that thirteen shrines dedicated to ʿAlī were established there (Faqihi, 2014, p. 71).

Through the mutual support of the Buwayhid rulers, Shiʿis—after three centuries of deprivation and oppression—were able to gain access to the center of the caliphate and, for a considerable period, freely propagate and promote Shiʿism and observe their religious rituals, something unprecedented in that era (Khajavian, 1999, p. 128).

It must be acknowledged that, for certain expedient reasons, the Al-Buwayhids—although themselves followers of Shiʿism—continued to recognize the authority of the caliphate and did not alter the Friday sermon (khuṭbah). This was the only concession they made to the caliphate, while otherwise granting Shiʿis full religious and cultural freedom. For instance, Ḥassan Rukn al-Dawla allowed Qom to become a center for Shiʿi theology (Frye, 1988, p. 248).

The Al-Buwayhids played a fundamental role in the development of Shiʿi culture, and their policies foreshadowed those of later Shiʿi dynasties such as the Safavids. Apparently, before 352 AH, public mourning ceremonies on ʿĀshūrāʾ were not customary in the form they are now. For the first time, on ʿĀshūrāʾ in 352 AH, by decree of Muʿizz al-Dawla, people gathered to commemorate the tragedy: markets were closed, trade ceased, butchers refrained from slaughtering sheep, the customary porridge was not prepared, people refrained from drinking water, tents were set up in the markets displaying black banners, women struck their faces and mourned for Imam Ḥusayn. At that time, the Sunnis were unable to prevent these Shiʿi practices due to the large Shiʿi population and the support of Muʿizz al-Dawla (Faqihi, 2014, p. 31).

From 352 AH until the end of the Al-Buwayhid period, ʿĀshūrāʾ ceremonies were, with minor interruptions, held nearly every year. If ʿĀshūrāʾ coincided with Nowruz or Mehrgan festivals, the latter celebrations were postponed by a day. In years when public mourning was banned, Shiʿis continued the rituals in secret, as they had before 352 AH (Faqihi, 2014, pp. 31–32).

On the eighteenth of Dhū al-Ḥijjah, 352 AH, at the order of Muʿizz al-Dawla al-Daylamī, public celebrations for ʿEid al-Ghadīr began, marked by festivals, illumination, and decorations; this tradition continued in subsequent years. That night, fires were lit in the markets, shops stayed open all night in the festive atmosphere, drummers and trumpeters played, and in the morning Shiʿis visited the cemeteries of Quraysh in Kadhimayn and held congregational prayer (Faqihi, 2014, pp. 31–32).

One method of propagating Shiʿism during the Al-Buwayhid period was the use of manāqib-khwāns, who sang praises (manāqib) of Imam ʿAlī and his descendants in marketplaces and streets. This practice, which began during Al-Buwayhid times, continued in later eras, though performers would often migrate from one place to another to evade persecution, reciting odes in praise of the Shiʿi Imams (al-Dūrī, 1971, p. 194).

Shiʿi Doctrinal Poetry, Sectarian Counter-Responses, and Development of Shiʿi Scholarship under the Al-Buwayhids

In these poetic compositions (qaṣāʾid), foundational principles of Shiʿi theology were articulated, such as the transcendence and absolute exaltation of God (tanzīh taʿālī muṭlaq) in opposition to the anthropomorphists (mushabbihah); the justice of the Exalted Lord (Bārī Taʿālā) in critique of the Ashʿarite conceptions of absolute divine power; the impeccability (ʿiṣmah) and sanctity of the Imams the acknowledgment of their miracles (muʿjizāt); and other Shiʿi doctrinal points (Boyle, 1988, p. 280).

To counter the influence of the manāqib-khwānān—those who recited the virtues of Imām ʿAlī and the Ahl al-Bayt (as)—Sunnis deployed their own so-called faḍāʾil-khwānān who recited the virtues (faḍāʾil) of Abū Bakr and ʿUmar and cursed the Shiʿis. Their poetry imitated that of the Shiʿis, but

promoted dogmatic doctrines of predestination (jabr) and anthropomorphism (tashbīh), and devised fictitious heroic tales about figures like Rustam and Sohrab to rival the chivalric exploits of ʿAlī (Boyle, 1988, p. 280).

During this era, the phrase ḥayya ʿalā khayr al-ʿamal (come to the best of deeds) became a prominent Shiʿi slogan, such that it served as a marker to identify Shiʿi-dominant regions. While sometimes permitted and other times prohibited under the Al-Buwayhids, another distinctly Shiʿi practice formalized in this era was the inclusion of the testimony to ʿAlī's authority (shahādat bi-wilāyat ʿAlī) in the call to prayer (adhān) (Faqihi, 2014, pp. 71–72).

During Muʿizz al-Dawla's rule over Iraq, Shiʿism flourished in Baghdad and throughout Iraq, allowing Shiʿis to emerge from their previously abased circumstances. In particular, Muʿizz al-Dawla and his associates actively promoted the sect: it is related that the Dailamite emir ordered that curses against Muʿāwiyah and the usurpers of the rights of the People of ʿAlī be inscribed on the gates of the mosques in Baghdad (Eqbāl Āshtiyānī, 2004, p. 147).

Ibn al-Athīr records that the Daylamites were zealous Shiʿis who believed the Abbasids had seized the caliphate by force and usurped its rightful holders (Ibn al-Athīr, 2003, vol. 11, p. 94). As such, throughout the Al-Buwayhid period, especially under Muʿizz al-Dawla, conflicts between the Daylamites and the caliphs, and thereby between the Shiʿis and the Sunnis, were frequent.

Nevertheless, the Al-Buwayhids did not limit their service to Shiʿism to public displays of grief or joy at events such as Ghadīr and ʿĀshūrāʾ. From the inception of their rule, they paid special attention to the pilgrims of Karbala, providing for their comfort. ʿAḍud al-Dawla built a magnificent structure over the grave of ʿAlī in Najaf, endowed it, and arranged accommodations and stipends for the Shiʿi visitors to the holy shrines. As these sanctuaries became comfortable, migrants were drawn to them. The Al-Buwayhids also renovated the sanctuary of Imām Ḥusayn in Karbala and constructed its dome. During their reigns, they were frequent pilgrims to these noble tombs, and after death, their bodies would be interred beside them (Rezaʾi, 2008, p. 80).

Al-Buwayhid Patronage of Shiʿi Scholars and Hadith Transmitters

Presumably, never before in Islamic history had theological disputes and sectarian debates been as sharp as they were in the fourth and fifth centuries AH, nor had any city in Iran and Iraq (such as Rey) housed so many adherents of diverse sects. Doctrinal disputations between Sunnis and Shiʿis were especially intense, prompting Rukn al-Dawla, a pious supporter of Shiʿism, to invite Shaykh al-Ṣadūq from Qom to Ray, so that he could debate Sunni scholars at his court. Shaykh al-Ṣadūq accepted, and upon his arrival Rukn al-Dawla honored him greatly and posed questions regarding prophethood and the imamate. Thereafter, Rukn al-Dawla established regular gatherings for religious debate, in which Shaykh al-Ṣadūq would engage scholars of different faiths and schools—a portion of which he later recorded in his work *Ikmāl al-Dīn* (or *Kamāl al-Dīn*). Shaykh al-Ṣadūq arrived in Ray in 350 AH as a young man and died there in 381 AH (Faqihi, 2014, p. 394).

With the support of the Dailamite ruler and the efforts of prominent Shiʿi hadith scholars, Ray developed into a major center of Shiʿism, which later drew the attention of Sultan Maḥmūd of Ghazna. He executed many Qarmaṭians there, exiled several Muʿtazilites to Khurasan, and established a department of doctrines headed by Shaykh Abū Ḥātim ibn Khāmūsh (Furūzānī, 2012, p. 410). Maḥmūd's bigoted anti-Shiʿi policies went so far that he reproached the Shiʿi ruler of Ray, Majd al-Dawla, allegedly for playing chess—though the true motive was his determination to uproot the Buwayhid's Shiʿi government (Asbūler, 2012, vol. 2, p. 400). The Buwayhids, who followed Twelver Shiʿism, hosted great hadith scholars such as Shaykh al-Ṣadūq.

Moreover, the Al-Buwayhids promoted Shiʿi literature, which blossomed in the fifth century AH through an impressive corpus of writings. Major canonical Shiʿi hadith collections, such as al-Kāfī by al-Kulaynī, considered the most authoritative among Shiʿis, and the corpus of Ibn Bābiwayh, were compiled in this era. The most significant theological works foundational to Shiʿi doctrine were also authored in this period.

Among the most eminent Shiʿi scholars of the period was Sharīf al-Raḍī, who died in 406 AH. Bahāʾ al-Dawla al-Daylamī placed him under his particular patronage and care. Descended from ʿAlī, al-Raḍī was renowned for compiling the sermons, letters, and sayings of ʿAlī in the book *Nahj al-Balāghah*, which in the world of Shiʿism, after the Qurʾan and the sayings of the Prophet (ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth al-nabī), stands as the most fundamental text (Frye, 2011, p. 504). Bahāʾ al-Dawla bestowed upon Sharīf al-Raḍī the title "Raḍī Dhū al-Ḥasabayn" and upon his brother Sharīf al-Murtaḍā the title "Murtaḍā Dhū al-Majdayn" (Faqihi, 2014, p. 55).

Other renowned Shiʿi Imami transmitters and scholars included Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Nuʿmān al-ʿUkbarī al-Baghdādī, known as Shaykh al-Mufīd, who authored influential works in line with Shiʿi doctrine. Shaykh al-Mufīd enjoyed great respect among neighboring rulers and actively sought to incline them toward Shiʿism, holding leadership among Shiʿi theologians and excelling in dialectical arguments. He engaged in important debates with scholars of other sects; in one such debate with the Muʿtazilite judge ʿAbd al-Jabbār, their exchange reached the ears of ʿAḍud al-Dawla, who summoned both to discuss it. Impressed by Shaykh al-Mufīd's explanations, ʿAḍud al-Dawla highly esteemed him and would sometimes visit him in his own home and attend to him when ill (Faqihi, 2014, p. 57).

Many other scholars and hadith compilers benefited from Al-Buwayhid patronage, among them Mahyār al-Daylamī and Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī. Certain historians of this period, such as Abū ʿAlī Miskawayh, were not always favorably received by contemporaries such as Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī due to their Shiʿi sympathies (Zarrinkub, 2008, p. 495), while others, like Abū al-ʿAlāʾ Muḥammad ibn Ḥuṣūl, wrote polemical works against the Al-Buwayhids (Bosworth, 2011, vol. 1, p. 57).

Freedom as a Hallmark of Al-Buwayhid Tolerance (tasāhul)

The Al-Buwayhid state was not only patient and accepting with respect to the thoughts, beliefs, lifestyles, and cultural-religious interests of all opposing groups, but it did not regard mere toleration as sufficient. The Buwayhids actively supported people's rights, especially those of minorities, and assisted them in obtaining equal opportunities within society. Evidently, many of their actions—such as permitting public commemorations of ʿĀshūrāʾ for Shiʿis in Baghdad, allowing Sunnis to perform tarāwīḥ prayers in congregation, permitting three different Qurʾān reciters whose recitations differed from the mainstream, and supporting scholars from various intellectual schools with no discrimination—were all in service of this goal.

Moreover, the Al-Buwayhid state did not itself champion one religious doctrine to the extent of suppressing its opponents; this very trait places it among the genuinely tolerant governments in Islamic history.

Therefore, although various intellectual and religious currents in the Islamic society have experienced certain forms of freedom throughout different historical periods, the experience of religious tolerance during the Al-Buwayhid era was, up to that time, almost unique. The significance and effects of this period have attracted the attention of many scholars (cf. above).

Conclusion

The Al-Buwayhids were among the first founders of a Shiʿi state in the Islamic world, and the first Iranian polity to successfully revive Shiʿi and ʿĀshūrāʾ culture and rituals. Their sultans, such as Muʿizz al-Dawla and ʿAḍud al-Dawla, served as significant role models for later rulers. Through their patronage of Shiʿi jurists, they anchored Shiʿi theology such that it flourished, eventually reaching its zenith during the Safavid era.

Religious tolerance was a defining trait of the Al-Buwayhid government, setting them apart from other contemporaneous and non-contemporaneous Islamic polities. Their tolerant policies were not only rooted in personal and family disposition—such as their spirit of accommodation and passion for learning—but were also influenced by the historical conditions and cultural context of their time.

The city of Baghdad, as the Abbasid caliphal capital, was uniquely distinguished by the presence of multiple political and religious parties, residents of diverse faiths, and an abundance of theological and philosophical schools, as well as leading philosophers, theologians, scientists, and thinkers from across the Islamic world. Governing such a cosmopolitan center required particular qualities; the Buwayhid rulers, with insight and acumen, understood this necessity. By adopting policies of religious tolerance, they were able to maintain control over political and social affairs while receiving the support of various sects and parties.

It should be noted, however, that the Al-Buwayhids—because of their Shiʿi beliefs—lacked the backing of the Sunni majority and thus lacked some legitimacy and religious standing necessary for unchallenged rule.

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