

From Qādisiyyah to Nahāvand: An Analysis of Arab Wars with Sassanians Based on Clausewitz's Strategic Elements

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Abstract

This research aimed to identify and study the elements determining the fate of Sassanid wars with Muslims from Qādisiyyah to Nahāvand. The lack of theoretical studies in general and the lack of comparative studies of wars relying on contemporary warfare theories in particular required extra effort by the researcher to adapt historical reports based on one of the most important war theories to answer this question that what strategic factors Sassanians and the emerging Arab forces, as two major powers, used in their four battles that led to the victory of the Arabs. In response to this fundamental question, the data were analyzed and explicated using the fifteen key elements of Clausewitz's theory (in five main subjective, physical, mathematical, geographical and statistical domains). As a result, the present study found that the supremacy of the Muslim Arabs in subjective elements has played a decisive role in their victory, and that the influence of this superiority on other physical, mathematical, geographic and statistical elements has been manifested in the victory of the Muslims. Finally, referring to these strategic elements, the victory of the Muslims, instead of being merely attributed to supernatural and sacred factors, must have had to do with objective and historical factors that have to be taken into account.

Keywords: strategic elements, Clausewitz, Battle of al-Qādisiyyah, Madain, Jalawla, Nahāvand

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