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# The Persian Calendar

- Persian Letters - The Persian Calendar -

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Chardin had noted the use of two different calendars in Persia, lunar and solar. Montesquieu in this novel uses lunar months, no doubt because they "are the common months of all Muhammadams, for both spiritual and civil purposes" (Chardin, V, 116-118). But he makes them correspond to the months of the European solar calendar, as Robert Shackleton showed in a definitive article on the subject. [1] We therefore reproduce the table which Shackleton drew up, adding the names used by Chardin.

Designations of Persian Months

<b>Names in Persian Letters</b>		<b>Names as they appear in Chardin</b>
Zilcadé	January	Zirkadé
Zilhagé	February	Zilhajé
Maharram	March	Maharram
Saphar	April	Safar or Sefer
Rebiab I	May	Rebiah I
Rebiab II	June	Rebiah II
Gemmadi I	July	Gemadi I
Gemmadi II	August	Gemadi II
Rhegeb	September	Regeb or Rajeb
Chahban	October	Chahban
Rhamazan	November	Rhamazan
Chalval	December	Cheval

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[1] Robert Shackleton, "The Moslem chronology of the Lettres persanes", *French Studies*, no. 8, 1954, p. 17-27 ; reprinted in R. Shackleton, *Essays on Montesquieu and on the Enlightenment* (Oxford : Voltaire Foundation, 1988), p. 73-83.