

ZAYDĪ RULE IN GĪLĀN AND DAYLAMĀN UNDER ḤASAN-I ŠABBĀḤ

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Abstract:

The present paper seeks to shed light on the role of Zaydī imams in Gīlān and Daylamān on the eve of the foundation of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī state. Though being a very fragmented force divided by several splits and regional disputes, Zaydīs remained present at the very beginning of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī period before and after 1100 in Gīlān and Daylamān, and they were very much opposed to the emerging Nizārī Ismāʿīlī state. Being an early Šīʿī branch, Zaydīs had established themselves in Gīlān before 800 and remained there until the first half of the 16th century. This paper's aim is to give an overview of this highly complex Zaydī local political network of Northern Iran constituted of local nativist converts and imams of ʿAlid descent.

Keywords: Gīlān, Daylamān, Zaydīs, Ismāʿīlīs, Ḥasan-i ŠabbāḤ, Salġūqs

1 Zaydī Communities in Northern Iran after 1095

The present brief paper discusses the Zaydī component of Daylamān at the early Nizārī Ismāʿīlī period and the role the Zaydīs played during the formative years of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī state before 1124, the year when Ḥasan-i ŠabbāḤ, the founder of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī state, died.

Following the death in 1092 of Nizām al-Mulk and Malikšāh, the two key figures of the Salġūq administration, the relative unity of the mighty Salġūq empire immediately collapsed. The contending sons of Malikšāh – Maḥmūd, Barkiyāruq, Muḥammad and Sanjar – all attempted to seize the sultanate with other forces, with leading characters of the central administration becoming deeply involved in the strife between these Salġūq princes. The political strife of the Salġūq family clearly displayed the very tenuous and fragile situation of Malikšāh's legacy (Hillenbrand 1995:281–296).

In the Caspian provinces there emerged two local powers following the sudden end of Malikšāh's rule: the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī state in 1095 after the secession from the Egyptian Fāṭimid Ismāʿīlī caliphate of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī Šīʿī followers of Ḥasan-i

Šabbāh, directed from Alamūt in Rūdbār, and the Twelver Šīṭī nativist Bāwandid kingdom around Šāhriyār-kūh and Firīm in south-eastern Ṭabaristān. These two groups can be characterised as old-and-new formations as both the Ismāʿīlīs and the Bāwandids can hardly be termed newcomers in Northern Iran at the end of the 11th century. For example, in the case of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī -controlled area of Girdkūh the Ismāʿīlī *daʿwa* itself appeared as early as the 10th century, according to Daftary (2007: 112).

As regards other local powers in the Caspian provinces, one should mention the Zaydīs, another early branch of Šīṭī Islam, followers of which came to Northern Iran as early as the 8th century and flourished in Northern Iran in the 9th to 10th centuries¹. Here we can mention two major subgroups of the local Zaydī powers: the Bādūspānids, a nativist and somewhat obscure Iranian dynasty with their Zaydī religious background in Rūyān² (a border region between medieval Daylamān and Ṭabaristān), as well as the other various independent and very fragmented Zaydī rulers with their 'Alid descent (both Ḥasanid and Ḥusaynid) in Daylamān and Gīlān, ancestors of whom settled in the 8th to 9th centuries; these Zaydī rulers, albeit in a very fragmented way, were still the masters of much of Gīlān and Daylamān in much of the 11th century. It is very possible that the majority of the population in Daylamān, the future heartland of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs, belonged to the Zaydī community before 1095, though the political disintegration very much weakened the Zaydī resistance against the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs.

As for the Bādūspānids, they gradually gained power after 1170 at the expense of the weakening Bāwandids, but their pre-1170 history is very obscure and scarcely known. Besides the Bādūspānids, several other Zaydī clans also existed in Daylamān, but they failed to build a strong local unified kingdom in the late 11th century, and so remained an amalgam of petty and marginal kingdoms whose presence nevertheless could be felt as late as the early 16th century.³ A limited Zaydī military and political revival took place in the mid-12th century, which was mainly sponsored by the Twelver Šīṭī Bāwandids in order to counterbalance the growing Nizārī Ismāʿīlī influence in Northern Iran, but these later events are beyond the scope of the present paper.

¹ A very good and detailed modern work on the Zaydī movement of Northern Iran and their contacts with their neighbours was written by Ḥaḳīqat, whose focus is on the pre-Nizārī-Ismaʿīlī period; see Ḥaḳīqat 1383/2004.

² Bādūspānids claimed that they were descended from the Sasanians, but this may be a rather legendary claim, and the dynasty cannot be older than the 11th century according to Madelung. He states that Bādūspānids were adherents of the teaching of the Northern Iranian Zaydī imam Muʿayyad (d. 1020). See Madelung 1988.

³ As for the local nativist dynasties of Zaydī background, articles and genealogical studies produced by Rabino di Borgomale eight or nine decades ago are still considered seminal, indeed the best works. See Rabino di Borgomale 1918; 1920; 1927; 1936.

In Gīlān, on the Caspian littoral, Zaydī influence remained stronger and showed more resistance to Ismāʿīlī missionary activities. Regarding the Zaydī *daʿwa* in early Islamic Gīlān and Daylam, it was especially in the town of Hawsam (modern Rūdsar) where local Zaydī imams of ʿAlid descent established their centre of religious power. It was here that Nāšir Uṭrūš had been active converting local Gīlites in the 9th century.⁴ Hawsam became a centre of learning of the Nāširiyya branch of the Zaydīs and at the same time it was the capital of a local ʿAlid clan, one established around 932 by Abū l-Faḍl Ğaʿfar b. Muḥammad, himself a grandson of Nāšir Uṭrūš's brother Ḥusayn Šāʿir and, through his mother, a descendant of Nāšir himself. This family later embraced the regnal title aṭ-Ṭāʿir fi'llāh, though none of these Zaydīs founded their own Zaydī imamate.

In the 12th century Lāhīgān replaced Hawsam as the seat of Zaydī ʿAlid rulers, and the town — where the Daylamī Būyid dynasty had first appeared on the political scene — remained in the hands of different Zaydī clans for several centuries.

After 980 two towering figures of Zaydī scholarship and politics emerged in Gīlān: Abū l-Ḥusayn Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn al-Muʿayyad bi'llāh and his brother Abū Ṭālib Yaḥyā an-Nātiq bi-l-Ḥaqq, who were recognised as sources of Islamic jurisprudence; they belonged to the entourage of the renowned Būyid vizier aš-Šāhib b. ʿAbbād and his Muʿtazilite chief judge ʿAbd-al-Ġabbār in Rayy. At a later point Abū l-Ḥusayn Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn al-Muʿayyad bi'llāh attempted to claim the Zaydī imamate at Hawsam but he eventually failed to have his imamate acknowledged and retreated to Langā, the heartland of the areas of the Qāsimī Daylamīs, setting up his residence between Hawsam and Čālūs.

According to Madelung, one can see a sharp division among the Zaydīs of the Caspian province who evolved into two main branches in the early 11th century: the Qāsimī and the Nāširī Zaydīs. The Nāširīs, in eastern Gīlān and Daylamān, elected their imams from the descendants of an-Nāšir li-l-Ḥaqq and his brother Ḥusayn aš-Šāʿir al-Muḥaddiṭ, founders of Zaydī rule in Gīlān in the 9th century. Madelung notes that Nāširī Zaydīs had positions much closer to other Šīʿī groups such as the Ismāʿīlīs and Twelver Šīʿīs in terms of law, ritual traditions, and practices, than did other Zaydīs, who followed Qāsimī Zaydī religious law and who strongly opposed any contacts with the Ismāʿīlīs. This deep division very much helps explain the different attitudes of diverse local Zaydī rulers towards the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs in Daylamān (Madelung 2002:122–131).

It is important to note again that the Zaydī imams and, likewise, the Zaydī Bādūspānids did not represent a significant military force and were in a deeply fragmented state by the time of the establishment of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī state at the end of the 11th century. It appears that the once powerful Zaydīs (especially in the 9th to 10th centuries) in Daylamān and Gīlān were greatly divided politically, and this fact contributed notably to the success of the Ismāʿīlīs, led by Ḥasan-i ŠabbāḤ

⁴ His complete name was al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī Uṭrūš an-Nāšir li-l-Ḥaqq.

(Hodgson 1955:78; Madelung 1967:882–883). This Zaydī fragmentation was partly due to political strife among rival Zaydī clans, but it owes much to the concept of decentralised leadership of numerous Ḥasanid and Ḥusaynid Zaydī imams as well, preserving traces of an early Šīʿī non-imāmī idea of a broader ‘Alid kinship eligible for the imamate.

Among the minor political centres of the Zaydīs in Daylamān with Ismāʿīlī connections one need mention first Hawsam and its environs. During the first years of rule by Ḥasan-i Šabbāḥ, the town of Hawsam (modern Rūdsar) in Daylamān was disputed by two groups of Zaydīs, the descendants of a certain Nāšir and the descendants of another man called Ṭāhir, who had theological and political quarrels with each other.

According to our sources, around 1040–1 the Nāširī Zaydī scholars of Hawsam chose a Nāširī Zaydī prince, a certain Ḥusayn b. Ğaʿfar Nāšir as their imam (Madelung 1987:153–154, 323). His kingdom eventually came to extend from Ḥanakḡā on the Safīrūd River to the borders of Ṭabaristān, and Ḥusayn b. Ğaʿfar Nāšir was able to control the area of Rūyān and presumably the fortress of Alamūt too. Ḥusayn was married to a daughter of a Bāwandid *iṣfahbad*, perhaps Ḥusām ad-Dawla Šāhriyār, founder of the new *iṣfahbadiyya* branch of the Bāwandids in Ṭabaristān, who sent his daughter, rich gifts, and a slave girl. The fact that the Zaydīs tried to build up dynastic contacts with the Bāwandids has more serious ramifications in the decades of Ismāʿīlī dominance in Daylamān. Twelver Šīʿī-Zaydī dynastic marriages became very frequent in the 12th century, and various Zaydīs became vassals of the Bāwandids, who acted as their protectors. Although Ḥusayn b. Ğaʿfar Nāšir later came into military conflict with his Bāwandid father-in-law, Zaydī-Bāwandid contacts usually remained strong, and on different occasions one can detect very close cooperation between the *iṣfahbads* of Ṭabaristān and various Zaydī clans in Daylamān (Hodgson 1955:78; Madelung 1987:153–154, 323).

The years directly preceding the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī takeover of Alamūt thus saw a chaotic political situation in Daylamān. The above-mentioned Nāširī Zaydī imam, Ḥusayn b. Ğaʿfar Nāšir, died in 1079–80. After his death, a Qāsimī Zaydī ruler, Yaḥyā Hādī Ḥuqaynī, a son of Mahdī Ḥuqaynī, from the other main branch of the Zaydīs in the Caspian provinces, made a claim for the Zaydī imamate in western Ṭabaristān with the active backing of a group of Qāsimī Zaydī theologians. The city of Langā rejected his claim, and in the eastern parts of Gīlān a scion from the family of the renowned Nāšir Uṭrūš, called Abū r-Riḏā Kīsumī, was elected by local Zaydī communities as their imam. Owing to endless quarrels between their respective supporters, the two Zaydī imams eventually divided up their lands. Before 481/1088, however, the rule of Hādī Ḥuqaynī was seriously challenged from another direction — it was the Salḡūqs who attacked him and tried to suppress his imamate. Major financial problems forced the Zaydī Imam to expropriate some of his subjects’ estates, which pointed to the rapid decline of his influence in Hawsam (Madelung 1967:882–883).

2 The Nizārī Ismāʿīlī Response to the Zaydī Resistance

The Ismāʿīlīs led by Ḥasan-i ŠabbāḤ successfully exploited the fragmented political landscape of Daylamān after 481/1088. At the time of Ḥasan-i ŠabbāḤ's arrival from Egypt in Iran, in around 473/1081, the fortress of Alamūt was in the hands of an 'Alid, Ḥusayn Mahdī, who had it as a fiefdom from the Salḡūq sultan Malikšāh. A Zaydī according to our sources, Ḥusayn Mahdī was a descendant of Ḥasan b. 'Alī al-Uṭrūš (d. 304/916), the capable 'Alid ruler of Ṭabaristān, also known as an-Nāšir li-l-Ḥaqq. Ḥusayn Mahdī belonged to the Nāširī Zaydī line, who were more inclined to maintain friendly relations with the Ismāʿīlīs; and this fact perhaps helps to explain why Ḥusayn Mahdī and his entourage showed more sympathy towards Ismāʿīlī guests in his fortress. An Ismāʿīlī *dāʿī*, Ḥusayn Qā'inī, working under Ḥasan-i ŠabbāḤ, became a boon companion of the Zaydī commander of Alamūt, and this friendship proved to be decisive since it resulted in the mass arrival of other Ismāʿīlīs in Alamūt.

Ḥasan-i ŠabbāḤ directed his movements from Firīm, Ṭabaristān, i.e. from another stronghold of northern Iran which belonged to the age-old Bāwandid dynasty. He arrived in Alamūt on 6 Rajab 483/4 September 1090, and entered the fortress disguised as a man called Dihḥudā; he did not reveal his identity to Ḥusayn Mahdī, but as time passed, Ḥasan-i ŠabbāḤ became more and more confident in Alamūt as a large number of the soldiers serving in Alamūt began to show sympathy with the Ismāʿīlīs. Subsequently, the Ismāʿīlīs conquered the fortress of Alamūt in a relatively peaceful way (Rašīd ad-Dīn says that they came into the possession of the castle by bribery). It was Ḥasan-i ŠabbāḤ who, using the resources of the area of Girdkūh and with the help of Ra'īs Muẓaffar, commander of the castle at Girdkūh, succeeded in persuading Ḥusayn Mahdī to sell his stronghold to the Ismāʿīlīs.⁵

After the conquest of Alamūt in the Rūdbār area in Daylamān, some Zaydī resistance to the Ismāʿīlīs continued, albeit on a limited scale, but they apparently failed to halt the Ismāʿīlīs in Daylamān. Hādī Ḥuqaynī was among the fiercest Zaydī opponents of the Ismāʿīlīs in Daylamān (Madelung, 1987:145, 167, 325, 326). As a petty religious leader, he issued a legal decree prohibiting the Zaydīs from coming into contact with the Nizārīs, mocking the latter as heretics. He was later killed by Ismāʿīlīs in 490/1097. The family of Hādī Ḥuqaynī remained in Daylamān, however, and continued their resistance against the Ismāʿīlīs. The possible son of Hādī Ḥuqaynī, Kiyā Buzurg ad-Dā'ī ilā l-Ḥaqq Riḍā b. Hādī,⁶ maintained his influence around Hawsam and later joined the Bāwandids in their resistance to the Salḡūqs in 521/1127 (Ibn Isfandiyār, *Tārīḥ-i Ṭabaristān* II, 66, 69, 87–88, 96, 143). However, there seems to have been a continual quarrel among different factions of Qāsimī Zaydīs and other Nāširīs as after the death of Hādī Ḥuqaynī a Nāširī rose to power

⁵ For the Ismāʿīlī conquest of Zaydī-ruled areas of Daylamān, see Lewis, 1967:41–44.

⁶ Not to be confused with the Ismāʿīlī Kiyā Buzurg Ummīd, the second *dāʿī* of Alamūt.

in Hawsam, called Abū 'r-Riḍā Kīsumī; yet the extent of his rule in Gīlān and in Daylamān is not well-known.

Our Caspian sources from Tabaristan remain largely silent about the Zaydī rulers following the death of Abū 'r-Riḍā Kīsumī. More useful are the Zaydī sources, which provide us with some biographical details about the Zaydī imams, their doctrinal background and occasionally some historical facts pertaining to their rule. Thus, we know from these Zaydī sources of the 12th to 15th centuries (mainly preserved in Yemen)⁷ that in 1108–09 a great-grandson of a Qāsimī theologian, Mu'ayyad, a certain Abū Ṭālib Aḥīr Yaḥyā b. Aḥmad, rose up and claimed the imamate in the city of Ḥānakajā. The complexity and controversy of Zaydī history from the beginning of the 12th century are clearly seen in the fact that this Qāsimī Zaydī imam enjoyed the support of a respected descendant of Uṭrūš, a Nāširid called Nāšir Riḍā. Besides some attempts at reconciliation between the two groups of Zaydīs in Daylamān, the possible alliance of Nāširī and Qāsimī Zaydī forces in Daylamān might perhaps be seen as a sign of their weakening positions vis-à-vis the Ismā'īlīs.

Abū Ṭālib Aḥīr Yaḥyā b. Aḥmad quickly gained recognition in eastern Gīlān as far as Hawsam and also in the area of Daylamān, which had not yet been lost to the Ismā'īlīs. According to Zaydī sources, he led military campaigns against the Ismā'īlīs to reconquer former Zaydī areas in Daylamān. The *al-Ḥadā'iq al-wardiyya* of al-Maḥallī, an important Zaydī biographical work of the 13th century, refers to his campaigns against the Ismā'īlīs in Daylamān and attempts to glorify Abū Ṭālib Aḥīr Yaḥyā b. Aḥmad for attacking the Ismā'īlīs. The unconfirmed reports of the *al-Ḥadā'iq al-wardiyya* of al-Maḥallī⁸ claim that Abū Ṭālib Aḥīr Yaḥyā b. Aḥmad fought numerous 'wars' with the Ismā'īlīs, successfully retaking 38 fortresses and even besieging Alamūt, or else the valley of Alamūt, while building camps around the fortress. Abū Ṭālib Aḥīr Yaḥyā b. Aḥmad ordered the execution of captured Ismā'īlīs but he then greatly feared Ismā'īlī revenge — and for fourteen years he did not leave his house except to pray (Madelung 1987: 333–334).

It is not known exactly when, where, or how the fortresses were captured or how the Qāsimī Zaydī imam besieged Alamūt; and there is no hint in other sources of an independent Zaydī raid against Alamūt either. However, the beginning of his rule might have coincided with a Salḡūq attack on Alamūt. According to Rašīd al-Dīn, this attack was organised by a coalition of local princes, including the Bāwandids, and there were armies from 'Gīl and Daylam' as well as 'other servants' at the siege (Rašīd ad-Dīn, *Ġāmi' at-tawārīḥ* 124). Zaydī sources do not mention other forces participating in the attack against Alamūt in around 1109. The other possible date of

⁷ For the history of Zaydī studies see Schmidtke 2012:185–199 and Madelung 1987.

⁸ The *al-Ḥadā'iq al-wardiyya* ('Rosegardens') is indeed a very important collection of biographies of Northern Iranian Zaydī imams written in the 13th century by al-Maḥallī. This work was recently published in Yemen. As for the life of Abū Ṭālib Aḥīr Yaḥyā b. Aḥmad and his wars waged against the Ismā'īlīs see al-Maḥallī, *Ḥadā'iq* 203–218. These events are also mentioned by M. K. Raḥmatī in his *Zaydiyya dar Irān* (Tehran 1392/2013):56, 97.

his attack against Ismā'īlī areas was in the period of the Salġūq military leader Anūštigīn Šīrgīr's expeditions against Alamūt, which ended in 1118, but which lasted nearly seven years.⁹ It is clear from our sources that Šīrgīr for years systematically laid waste to extended areas inhabited or cultivated by the Ismā'īlīs and that he was on the verge of capturing Alamūt when his master the Salġūq sultan Muḥammad II (1105–1118) suddenly died, causing the immediate withdrawal of Salġūq forces from the walls of Alamūt (Bundārī, *Zubdat an-nuṣra* 123, 144–147). In our non-Zaydī sources there is no mention of any Zaydī participation in these raids. Given the high number of 'thirty-eight fortresses retaken' by Abū Ṭālib Aḥīr Yaḥyā b. Aḥmad, this may mean that his anti-Nizārī campaigns were very much linked to the intensive military activity led by Anūštigīn Šīrgīr — and that he recruited and despatched Zaydī Daylamī military forces to the aid of the Salġūqs during these years. Šīrgīr was indeed successful and he did recapture some fortresses in Rūyān from the Ismā'īlīs. Otherwise, there is no exact mention of the specific strongholds retaken by the Zaydīs from the Ismā'īlīs.

In 1118 Abū Ṭālib Aḥīr Yaḥyā b. Aḥmad and his anti-Ismā'īlī Zaydī movement came to an end after new dissent broke out within the Zaydī community of Gīlān and Daylamān in 1117. An 'Alid, Ḥasan Ġurġānī, appeared from Gurgān in the last years of Abū Ṭālib Aḥīr Yaḥyā b. Aḥmad's rule, challenged his power and easily conquered both Hawsam and Lāhīġān from him. With some Gilite military aid and using resources from the confiscated property of the local Zaydī population, Abū Ṭālib Aḥīr Yaḥyā b. Aḥmad succeeded in driving out his rival temporarily, but his quarrels with Ḥasan Ġurġānī seriously weakened his ability to resist the Ismā'īlīs. No doubt, the renewed conflicts within the fragmented Zaydī community greatly facilitated Ismā'īlī expansion in Daylamān. The shift of the Zaydī political centre from Hawsam to Lāhīġān is clearly linked to the weakening Zaydī position in Daylamān, though Hawsam may have remained under Zaydī influence until 1117, the start of the war between Ḥasan Ġurġānī¹⁰ and Abū Ṭālib Aḥīr Yaḥyā b. Aḥmad.

Despite the troubled and often chaotic political events created by different Zaydī clans, the area populated by the Zaydīs in Gīlān served as a basis for the more powerful Twelver Šī'ī Bāwandid rulers. We learn from Mar'ašī that the Bāwandid

⁹ Anūštigīn Šīrgīr was the Salġūq governor of Sāwa in Central Iran.

¹⁰ It is important to note that Ḥasan Ġurġānī was possibly also killed by the Ismā'īlīs. Zaydī sources, and Madelung, attribute his death to local people of Tanhīġān, who arrested him at the instigation of Gilite and Daylamite Zaydī religious authorities. See Madelung 1987: 156–157, 160. On the other hand, Rašīd ad-Dīn enlists a certain Ḥasan Girdkānī (or Gurdkānī), who was killed by the Nizārīs in Tamīġān (instead of Tanhīġān) in Ġumādā I 527/April 1133. Rašīd ad-Dīn, *Ġāmi' at-tawārīḥ* 143. The names of Gurdkānī and Tamīġān suggest some deterioration in the manuscripts used by Rawšan, the editor of the Rašīd ad-Dīn text I have in this context. In this case there is clear reference to the alleged Ismā'īlī perpetrators of the murder of Ḥasan Ġurġānī, which is further confirmed by Ġamāl ad-Dīn Abū l Qāsim 'Abdallāh b. 'Alī Kāšānī in his *Zubdat at-tawārīḥ* 182.

işfahbad, Ḥusām ad-Dawla Šāhriyār, spent his last years in Hawsam after 1110. When his sons, Nağm ad-Dawla Qārin and ‘Alā’ ad-Dawla ‘Alī, started waging war on each other, Ḥusām ad-Dawla retreated first to Āmul and then to Hawsam, the old Zaydī centre in Daylamān, where he built a *ḥānqā* for himself and engaged in pious devotion and farming (Mar‘ašī, *Tārīḥ-i Tabaristān* 99; Goto 2011: 76). The local Gilite and Daylamī aristocracy obeyed the ageing Bāwandid *işfahbad* and acknowledged his suzerainty over Hawsam, according to Ibn Isfandiyār (Ibn Isfandiyār *Tārīḥ-i Ṭabaristān* II, 37–38; Madelung 1984). Due to the Ismā‘īlī conquest of Hawsam in 503/1110 as well as the close dynastic and religious-political contacts of the Zaydī family of Mahdī Ḥuqaynī with the Twelver Šī‘ī Bāwandids (Madelung 1967: 882–883) one need not wonder why Ḥusām ad-Dawla Šāhriyār received a warm welcome from the Zaydīs of Gīlān.

Thus, in addition to Alamūt, the Zaydīs gradually had to give up many territories in neighbouring areas in Daylamān which had belonged to them before 1088. The Ismā‘īlīs succeeded in overrunning the fortress of Lamasar in 1101 or maybe slightly later, and also overran an important fortress located nearly 30 kilometres downriver from Alamūt and according to one of our principal sources, Rašīd al-Dīn, the Ismā‘īlīs swiftly attacked and apparently took it over with relative ease, defeating the Zaydī rulers Rasāmūğ and Lāmsālār and his relatives (Hourcade 1985).¹¹

3 Zaydī-Nizārī Ismā‘īlī Reconciliation and Coexistence

As for early Ismā‘īlī policy in Daylamān, despite tense relations and constant warfare, there are sporadic signs of a more reconciliatory approach as well on behalf of the Ismā‘īlīs and the Zaydīs towards each other (though more rarely from the latter). The general assumption is that the Ismā‘īlīs’ main aim was to extend their power — although due to the Salğūq threat they occasionally allied themselves with the Zaydīs. In order to strengthen their positions against the Salğūqs, the Ismā‘īlīs not only conquered local fortresses or ousted their former owners from such places, but they sometimes also supported these local kingdoms that had some inclinations to anti-Salğūq resistance.

Signs of this *Realpolitik* can be seen in the case of Lamasar before its conquest. According to Rašīd ad-Dīn, in 1093 (Rašīd ad-Dīn, *Ğāmi‘ at-tawārīḥ* 113–114), Rasāmūğ and Lāmsālār visited Ḥasan-i Šabbāḥ in Alamūt and forged an alliance with the Ismā‘īlīs. However, this alliance proved tenuous as only one year later the same Rasāmūğ broke the treaty. The content of this agreement between the Zaydī forces in Lamasar and the followers of Ḥasan-i Šabbāḥ in Alamūt is not known, but if there was some mutual consensus to build friendlier contacts this could only have been a sign of a local alliance being formed against the Salğūqs. We are not informed about the religious background of Rasāmūğ and Lāmsālār or whether they were

¹¹ See the next note as well.

Nāširī or Qāsimī Zaydīs, as their attitude towards the Ismāʿīlīs proved be contentious. Regarding the possible date of the conquest of Lamasar, Hodgson suggests it took place as early as 1096, based on Rašīd ad-Dīn's account. On the other hand, Ğuwaynī records the conquest as having occurred in 1101.¹²

Another sign of the more peaceful approach of the Zaydīs in relation to the Ismāʿīlīs was a gesture made by a local Zaydī *qāḍī* of Langā named Marwān, who was a Nāširī Zaydī according to our data as quoted by Madelung (1987: 145, 167; 1967: 882–883; Madelung 2004). He was in correspondence with the Ismāʿīlīs. Yet this Zaydī *qāḍī*, with his milder attitude, greatly enraged Hādī Ḥuqaynī, who ordered his execution. Soon after this incident, Hādī Ḥuqaynī, the belligerent local opponent of Ḥasan-i ŠabbāḤ, fell victim to a Nizārī Ismāʿīlī ambush (Madelung 2004).

In general, we can see that the Zaydīs were in a very fragmented state upon the arrival of the Ismāʿīlīs in the area of Rūdbār and other parts of Daylamān. The fractious nature of the Zaydī polity greatly facilitated the emergence of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī state at the end of the 11th century. But they were not the only new power who exploited the new political reality following the deaths of Niẓām al-Mulk and Malikšāh — for there then appeared a significant new neighbour on the eastern fringes of the Nizārī state: the Bāwandids. After 1124 we witness the division of the Zaydīs who had to choose between the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs and Bāwandid alliance, both of them being superior to the petty local Zaydī rulers. Most of the Zaydīs sided with the Twelver Šīʿī Bāwandids, but a branch of the local Bādūspānid princes became the vassal of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs.

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¹² According to Ğuwaynī, Lamasar was conquered by the Ismāʿīlīs in the night of 24 Dū 1-Qaʿda 495 (10 September 1102) see: Ğuwaynī, *Tārīḥ-i Ğahānguṣā* 208–209; Hodgson 78, n. 57.

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