



## ‘AṬṬĀŠ

‘AṬṬĀŠ (or EBN ‘AṬṬĀŠ), AḤMAD B. ‘ABD-AL-MALEK, Isma‘ili leader during the time of Sultan Barkīāroq (Berk-yaruq, d. 498/1104) and contemporary of Ḥasan Šabbāḥ. His father, a famous calligrapher and obviously a man of some scholarly reputation, had held the function of *dā‘ī al-‘Erāqayn* and had lived in Isfahan until forced to leave because of his Isma‘ili activity. He went to Ray, where in 464/1072 he introduced Ḥasan Šabbāḥ into the cadres of the *da‘wa* and sent him as his deputy to Egypt. He is also reported to have engaged Ra‘īs Moẓaffar of Gerdkūh, another famous leader of the Nezārī movement, for the Isma‘ili cause. His son managed to stay in Isfahan, obviously by feigning serious differences with his father’s ideas. He penetrated the garrison of a fortress about 30 km southwest of Isfahan called Šāhdez (or Qaḷ‘a-ye Jalālī), allegedly as a schoolteacher for the children of the soldiers. These were Daylamis and as such probably prepared for Shi‘ite ideas (the Fatimids used to recruit part of their troops in Daylam; cf. C. E. Bosworth in *Oriens* 18-19, 1967, pp. 158f.; Y. Lev in *Asian and African Studies* 14, 1980, p. 174 n. 32). They seem to have come to Isfahan only during the time of Sultan Malekšāh (465-85/1072-92), when the fortress was built. Ḥasan Šabbāḥ’s takeover of Alamūt (in Daylam) in 483/1090 may have facilitated ‘Aṭṭāš’s success; after having won over the entire garrison and parts of the surrounding population, he was able to retain independent control of the area for several years (twelve years according to Rašīd-al-dīn, i.e., from ca. 488/1095 onward). He managed to get hold of Kālanjān, another fortress in the neighborhood. ‘Obaydallāh b. ‘Alī Kaṭībī, the Hanafite *qāzī* and “mayor” of Isfahan (the *ra‘īs*, i.e., *ra‘īs al-maḍhab* or *ra‘īs al-balad*), had to make arrangements with him (cf. Bondārī, *Zobdat al-*



*noṣra*, ed. Houtsma, pp. 90ff., Cairo, 1318/1900-01, pp. 83ff.). Only when he started to levy taxes, as the Saljuq government had done before, did agitation start against him in the town. Barkīāroq, who had enough to do with the internal dissensions of the Saljuqs during this period, was rather lenient towards the Isma‘ilis, at least until the last years of his reign. The situation changed definitely under Moḥammad b. Malekšāh who, immediately after Barkīāroq’s death in 498/1104, started attacking the Isma‘ili strongholds. Šāhdez was besieged for almost one year. ‘Aṭṭāš tried to avoid the hopeless fight by pointing to the fact that his followers accepted the fundamental tenets of Islam and could therefore not be an object of war; they differed from Sunnite opinion only concerning the tenet of *emāma*, and here they were ready to recognize Saljuq suzerainty. This may already have been the legal basis of arrangement applied by Kaṭībī; it was obviously brought forth in a discussion which took place in Isfahan in the presence of the sultan (cf. Qazvīnī, *Ketāb al-naqz*, p. 48.16ff.). Moḥammad b. Malekšāh, however, did not agree with this interpretation. Šāhdez was conquered in 500/1107 and ‘Aṭṭāš was captured together with his son; his wife had precipitated herself from the walls of the fortress. He was paraded through the streets of Isfahan, ridiculed by a song which, antithetically, attested his former prestige. Finally he was skinned alive; his head and his son’s were sent to Baghdad. The victory was important enough to be reported to Damascus in an official letter (Ebn al-Qalānesī, *Dayl ta’rīk Demašq*, ed. Amedroz, Beirut, 1908, p. 151.13ff.; French tr. R. Le Tourneau, *Damas de 1075 à 1154*, Damascus, 1952, pp. 66ff.). The poet Nāṣeḥ -al-dīn Arrajānī (d. 544/1149; *GAL*<sup>2</sup> I, p. 254, S. I, p. 448) praised it in a panegyric on the conqueror, Moḥammad b. Malekšāh’s vizier Sa’d-al-molk Ābī (‘A. Eqbāl, *Wezārat*, p. 161). Kaṭībī was assassinated by an Isma‘ili shortly afterwards, in 502/1109 (Ebn Abu’l-Wafā’, *al-Jawāher al-mozi’a*, Hyderabad, 1332/1913, I, pp. 338f.). ‘Aṭṭāš, in contrast to his father, who had composed an Isma‘ili propaganda treatise called *al-‘Aqīqa*, is not known for any literary activity.

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On the fortress of Šāhdez see L. Honarfarr, *Ganjīna-ye āṭār-e tārikī-e Eşfahān*, Isfahan, 1350 Š./1971, pp. 63ff.

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For a picture see *Isfahan, City of Light. Catalogue of the Exhibition in the British Museum 6 May-11 July 1976*, pp. 21f.

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