



DĀ'Ī ELA'L-ḤAQQ, ABŪ 'ABD ALLĀH MOḤAMMAD

DĀ'Ī ELA'L-ḤAQQ, ABŪ 'ABD-ALLĀH MOḤAMMAD b. Zayd b. Moḥammad b. Esmā'īl b. Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭāleb (d. 287/900), brother and successor of Ḥasan b. Zayd, founder of Zaydī rule in Rūyān and Ṭabarestān. Nothing is known about the date of his birth and his youth. It seems likely, however, that the family lived in Iraq before coming to Ṭabarestān (Şafadī, XII, p. 21). Moḥammad appears to have arrived in Šalanba near Donbāvand (Damāvand) on his way to Ṭabarestān in 253/867, three years after his brother had established himself there. Ebn Esfandiār's reference (I, p. 233) to a Ḥosayn b. Zayd is most likely a mistake, for nowhere else is there any mention of such a brother of Ḥasan and Moḥammad. The earliest definite mention of Moḥammad was in connection with Ya'qūb b. Layṭ's invasion of Ṭabarestān in 260/874; he was described as a prisoner of the latter (Ebn Esfandiār, I, p. 246; Şafadī, XII, p. 21). He may well have been captured by Ya'qūb in Gorgān, which he later also governed for his brother. Ya'qūb released him, together with other 'Alids, after his retreat from Ṭabarestān. Moḥammad returned to his brother, then in Gorgān, in 263/876; went to Ṭabarestān to see his mother; and was again dispatched to Gorgān to aid Ḥasan's brother-in-law Moḥammad b. Ebrāhīm. In March-April 877 he was expelled from Gorgān by Eshāq Šārī, the Taherid deputy in Khorasan (Ebn Esfandiār, I, pp. 246-47). Ḥasan soon retook Gorgān and, in 266/880, sent Moḥammad from there against the rebellious Bavandid *espahbad* Rostam b. Qāren, ruler of the eastern mountain range of Ṭabarestān. After subduing the *espahbad*, the victorious Moḥammad returned



to Ḥasan in Ṭabarestān. The brothers then retook Gorgān, which for a brief period had been occupied by the rebel 'Alid Ḥasan b. Moḥammad 'Aqīqī. The latter was pursued by Moḥammad, captured in the desert, and executed by Ḥasan. As attested by numismatic evidence (Stern, p. 211 n. 1), Gorgān remained firmly in the hands of Ḥasan in the years 267-70/880-83 and was presumably governed by Moḥammad while Ḥasan resided in Āmol (Ebn Esfandiār, I, pp. 247-49).

After Ḥasan's death, on 3 Rajab 270/6 January 884, his brother-in-law, the 'Alid Abu'l-Ḥosayn Aḥmad b. Moḥammad, usurped the throne in Āmol while Moḥammad, the appointed successor, was still in Gorgān. Moḥammad set out to conquer Āmol but was deserted by some of his Deylamite supporters, who withdrew to Gorgān and then prevented him from reentering the town. Rāfe' b. Harṭama, a former Taherid commander then ruling in Khorasan, invited him to join him and then helped him to regain control of Gorgān. As the rule of Abu'l-Ḥosayn crumbled in Āmol, Moḥammad again set out for Ṭabarestān and this time seized his brother's former capital, in October 884 (Ebn Esfandiār, I, pp. 249-51). He then made war on the Bavandid Rostam, who had sided with Abu'l-Ḥosayn, and expelled him from his domain in the mountains. Rostam fled to the Saffarid 'Amr b. Layṭ in Nišāpūr. Upon the latter's intercession, the 'Alid Moḥammad b. Zayd allowed Rostam to return (Ebn Esfandiār, I, pp. 252). In August-September 885 Moḥammad, who continued to reside in Gorgān, set out to seize Ray, which was governed by a Turk called Asātegīn, but was defeated. As he fell back to Āmol, Rāfe' briefly occupied Gorgān. As soon as Rāfe' left for Nišāpūr, Moḥammad returned to Gorgān. In 275 or 276/888 or 889 Moḥammad once more expelled the Bavandid Rostam and stayed in his domain for seven months. Rostam found refuge with Rāfe', who then took the offensive against Moḥammad. He seized Gorgān, besieged Moḥammad in the fortress of Jūhīna for six months, and pursued him to Kojū in Rūyān, where he stayed until March 891. Moḥammad gained the support of the Jastanid Jastān b. Wahsūdān, king of the Dylamites. After prolonged fighting Rāfe' and Jastān agreed that the former would leave and Jastān would withdraw his aid from Moḥammad (Ebn Esfandiār, I, pp. 251-53). The latter thus was still unable to recover Ṭabarestān. Only when the caliph al-Mo'tazed (279-89/892-902) appointed the Saffarid 'Amr governor of Khorasan in place of Rāfe' in 279/892 did the latter send an envoy to the 'Alid, pledge allegiance to him, and restore Ṭabarestān to him, on the condition that Rāfe' be allowed to keep Gorgān. On 5 Rabī' II 280/24 June 893 Moḥammad finally reentered Āmol (Ebn Esfandiār, I, p. 254; *Tārīk-e-Sīstān*, p. 252). Some time later, when he failed to provide Rāfe'



with the military aid that the latter demanded in order to fight his rival ‘Amr and sought to wrest Sārī from him, Rāfe‘ hastened to save Sārī. After some inconclusive fighting between Moḥammad and Rāfe‘ a truce was concluded. In 283/896 Moḥammad b. Zayd sent some aid to Rāfe‘, who renewed his pledge of allegiance, briefly seized Nišāpūr, and introduced Moḥammad’s name in the Friday sermon (*koṭba*) there. But later the decisive defeat of Rāfe‘ by ‘Amr enabled Moḥammad to recover Gorgān. In 283/897 Bakr b. ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz b. Abī Dolaf ‘Ejlī, a scion of the house of the Dolafid amirs of Isfahan, came to Āmol as a refugee. Moḥammad received him with lavish hospitality, later gave him Čālūs and Rūyān to rule, but then had him poisoned in Nātel in 285/898 (Ebn Esfandiār, I, pp. 95, 254-55; for the date, see Ebn Ḥafṣ, fol. 107a). In 287/900 the Saffarid ‘Amr was defeated and killed by the Samanid Esmā‘īl b. Aḥmad, who then demanded that Moḥammad cede Gorgān to him and withdraw to Ṭabarestān. When Moḥammad refused, Esmā‘īl sent Moḥammad b. Hārūn Saraḳsī, a former associate of Rāfe‘, with a large army against him. In the battle at the gate of Gorgān Moḥammad was mortally wounded. He died a day later on 5 Šawwāl 287/3 October 900. His head was sent to Bukhara, and his body was buried at the gate of Gorgān. His son Zayd, whom he had appointed to the succession in 273/888-89, was carried off in captivity to Bukhara, where he spent the rest of his life. The leaders of the defeated army agreed in Ṭabarestān to set up Moḥammad’s minor grandson al-Mahdī b. Zayd as the successor. One of them, however, proclaimed allegiance to the ‘Abbasid caliph al-Mo‘taḏed (279-89/892-902) and carried out a massacre among the supporters of the ‘Alid dynasty (Ebn al-Faqīh, p. 313). As a result, Ṭabarestān fell under Samanid rule.

Like his brother Ḥasan, Moḥammad politically backed Zaydī Shi‘ite doctrine and Mu‘tazilite theology. Two of his personal secretaries, Abu’l-Qāsem Balḳī and Abū Moslem Moḥammad b. Baḥr Ešfahānī, were renowned Mu‘tazilite scholars. Sunnite resistance to this religious policy was countered with repression.

Shi‘ites praised Moḥammad in particular for providing for the restoration of the shrines of the imams ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭāleb and his son Ḥosayn in Iraq, which had been destroyed by the caliph al-Motawakkel (232-47/847-61), and for sending generous gifts to ‘Alids, Ṭālebids, and Shi‘ites outside his territories (Ebn Esfandiār, I, p. 95). The later Zaydīs, however, did not recognize either of the two brothers as imams (for a discussion of this issue, see Madelung, 1965, pp. 155-58). Moḥammad had a fine critical appreciation for Arabic poetry. A



few lines of his own poetry were recorded by Şūlī (Şafadī, III, p. 82).

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Ṭabarī, index, s.v. Moḥammad b. Zayd.

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