



DEYLAMĪ, ABU'L-FATH NĀŞER

DEYLAMĪ, ABU'L-FATH NĀŞER b. Ḥosayn b. Moḥammad b. 'Īsā b. Moḥammad b. 'Abd-Allāh b. Aḥmad b. 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Alī b. Ḥasan b. Zayd b. Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭāleb, Zaydī imam with the title Nāşer le-Dīn Allāh (d. 444/1052-53). According to Yemenite sources, he first sought support for his imamate in [Deylamān](#), where he was born and raised, or in Gilān. He is not mentioned in local Caspian sources, however. His ancestors had lived in [Abhar](#) (Ebn Ṭabāṭabā, pp. 8-9).

Between 430/1039 and 437/1046 he arrived in the Yemen and, in the latter year, gained allegiance among the tribe of Hamdān in the region of Bawn. In April he seized and pillaged Şa'da, killing many tribesmen of Ḳawlān. A month later he entered Şan'ā', where he was welcomed by Yaḥyā b. Abī Ḥāşed, chief of the Ḥāşed of Hamdān, who was in control of the town. Abu'l-Fath was recognized as imam and was able to appoint officials and gather the land tax and *zakāt*. He then returned to his permanent base at Ḍibīn, near which he fortified a mountain and built his residence; in 600/1204 it was restored, enlarged, and renamed Ḍafār by Imam Maşşūr 'Abd-Allāh b. Ḥamza. In 438/1046-47 Abu'l-Fath returned to the region of Şan'ā' and received the allegiance of Maşşūr b. Abi'l-Fotūḥ, chief of Ḳawlān 'Āliā, who built a palace for him at 'Alab, southwest of Şan'ā'. Ebn Abi'l-Fotūḥ also mediated the allegiance of some chiefs of the tribe of 'Ans and of Ja'far, son of the imam Maşşūr Qāsem 'Īnānī and leader of the Ḥosaynīya Zaydī sect, to Abu'l-Fath, who appointed Ja'far *amīr-al-omarā'* and conceded one fourth of the revenues to him. Ebn Abī Ḥāşed and Ja'far soon fell out with the imam, however, and,



when he also offended Ebn Abi'l-Fotūḥ by his conduct in Şan'ā', he was forced to abandon 'Alab. Ja'far brought Şan'ā' under his own control.

The imam returned to Dībīn and fought battles with Ja'far around Aṭāfet and 'Ajīb. The rapid expansion of the power of the Isma'ili leader 'Alī b. Moḥammad Şolayḥī from 439/1047 further reduced tribal support for the imam, and he was forced to move from place to place. Şolayḥī defeated and killed him and seventy of his followers at Najd-al-Jāḥ in Balad 'Ans in 444/1052-53, according to the best sources, though 446/1054-55 and other dates are also given. According to one Isma'ili source (see Hamdānī, p. 82), he had appealed to Najāḥ, ruler of Zabīd, for help against Şolayḥī. He was buried in Ofayq near Radmān. His descendants continued to live in Ḍamār until modern times.

Abu'l-Fath was the author of a large commentary on the Qur'ān, which is extant in manuscript in Yemen: *al-Borhān fī tafsīr ḡarīb al-Qor'ān*, in which he is said to have put forward many eccentric views. The manuscripts of a shorter koranic commentary, *al-'Ahd al-akīd fī tafsīr al-Qor'ān al-majīd*, and a collection of his answers to legal and theological questions of several of his disciples also survive. Abu'l-Fath's views clearly reflected his education among the Caspian Zaydīs but seem to have been rather independent of any particular doctrinal school. To some extent his teaching may have prepared the ground for the systematic introduction of Caspian Zaydī doctrine and literature in the Yemen under the imams Motawakkel Aḥmad b. Solaymān (d. 566/1170) and Maṣṣūr 'Abd-Allāh b. Ḥamza (d. 614/1217).

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