



MOḤAMMAD B. BOZORG-OMID

MOḤAMMAD B. BOZORG-OMID, the third lord of [Alamut](#) (r. 532-57/1138-62). He succeeded to the leadership of the Nezāri Ismaʿili state (see [ISMAʿILISM iii. ISMAʿILI HISTORY](#)), *daʿwa* (see [DAʿŪ](#)), and community on the death of his father, Kiā Bozorg-Omid (r. 518-32/1124-38), on 26 Jomādā I 532/9 February 1138. He had been designated as heir by his father only three days earlier. Moḥammad duly received the allegiance of all the Nezāri territories in Persia and Syria.

The Persian Nezāri Ismaʿilis of the Alamut period compiled chronicles according to the reigns of the successive lords of Alamut. The Nezāri chronicles of Moḥammad's reign, compiled by Dehḳodā ʿAbd-al-Malek b. ʿAli Fašandi and Raʿis Ḥasan Ṣalāḥ Monši, like other Nezāri histories of the period, have not survived. However, they were used by Rašid-al-Din Faḏl-Allāh (see [JĀMEʿ AL-TAWĀRIḲ](#)) and Abu'l-Qāsem Kāšāni in their own histories of the Persian Nezāri state (Rašid-al-Din, ed. Dānešpažuh, pp. 144, 153; ed. Rowšan, pp. 141, 151; Kāšāni, pp. 182, 190; Daftary, 1992, p. 96; idem, 2007, pp. 355-58), and, as such, they provide our primary sources on Moḥammad b. Bozorg-Omid.

The Nezāri-Saljuq stalemate that had already appeared in the final years of [Ḥasan Ṣabbāḥ](#) (d. 518/1124) as the first lord of Alamut continued during Moḥammad b. Bozorg-Omid's long reign (532–57/1138-62). However, in the early years of Moḥammad's rule, the area in Persia under the control of Alamut actually increased in [Rudbār](#) and [Gilān](#), where several new fortresses, such as Saʿādatkuh, were also acquired. The Persian Nezāris now extended their influence to new regions, such as [Georgia](#) (Gorjestān), where they also



conducted some *da'wa* activities (Rašid-al-Din, ed. Dānešpažuh, p. 147; ed. Rowšan, pp. 145; Kāšāni, pp. 184-85). In this connection, in 550/1155, for a brief period they also attempted unsuccessfully for a brief period to spread their activities to **Ġur**, to the east of Qohestān, in present-day Afghanistan (Jowzjāni, I, pp. 349, 350-51; tr. Raverty, I, pp. 363, 365; Bosworth, pp. 132-33).

As a territorial power, the Nezāri Isma'ilis of Moḥammad b. Bozorg-Omid's period were mainly involved in minor quarrels and border skirmishes with their immediate neighbors. The Nezāri chronicles of this period pay extraordinary attention to these local conflicts, especially the intermittent raids and counter-raids between Alamut and Qazvin (Rašid-al-Din, ed. Dānešpažuh, pp. 148-49, 153, 154-55, 158-59; ed. Rowšan, pp. 146-47, 150-51, 152, 154-55; Kāšāni, pp. 185-86, 190-91, 193, 194, 195-97). At the same time, the Nezāris of the Rudbār region in Moḥammad's reign were confronted by two persistent enemies in the persons of Šāh Ġāzi Rostam b. 'Alā'-al-Dawla 'Ali, the **Bāvandid** ruler of Ṭabarestān and Gilān; and a certain 'Abbās, the Saljuq governor of **Ray** (Rašid-al-Din, ed. Dānešpažuh, p. 155; ed. Rowšan, p. 152; Kāšāni, p. 192; Daftary, 2007, p. 357), while the Nezāris now apparently enjoyed another stint of quasi-truce with Sultan **Sanjar**.

Under the new political realities, the Nezāris targeted fewer prominent enemies, compared to the earlier decades of the Alamut period (for the list, see Rašid-al-Din, ed. Dānešpažuh, pp. 160-61; ed. Rowšan, pp. 156-58; Kāšāni, pp. 198-99). The first victim, and the most prominent one in Moḥammad's reign, was the 'Abbasid caliph al-Mostaršed's son and successor, al-Rāšed (r. 529-30/1135-36), who had become involved in Saljuq disputes and was deposed after a short caliphate in favor of his uncle, al-Moqtafi. Exiled from Iraq to Persia, al-Rāšed was killed by four Isma'ili *fedā'is* in **Isfahan** in Ramažān 532/June 1138; Alamut rejoiced over his death with a week of celebrations. In retaliation, a large number of people suspected of being Isma'ilis were gathered up and massacred by the townspeople of Isfahan (Rašid-al-Din, ed. Dānešpažuh, pp. 146-47; ed. Rowšan, pp. 144-45; Kāšāni, p. 184; Ḥamd-Allāh Mostawfi, pp. 360-61, 455; Ḥāfez-e Abri, p. 237; Ḥāfir-al-Din, ed. Afšār, p. 56; ed. Morton, pp. 75-76; Bondāri, p. 180; Rāvandi, pp. 228-29).

Moḥammad b. Bozorg-Omid was strict in observing the *šari'a*, like his two predecessors at Alamut, and led the Nezāri Isma'ili *da'wa* and community as the *hojja*, or chief representative, of the Nezāri imams (see **ISMA'ILISM xvii. THE IMAMATE IN ISMA'ILISM**), who had remained in hiding since 488/1095. Moḥammad died on 4 Rabi' I 557/21 February 1162, and was buried near



Alamut, next to Ḥasan Şabbāḥ and Kiā Bozorg-Omid; their mausoleum remained a pilgrimage site for the Nezāris until it, too, was destroyed by the Mongols in 654/1256.

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