



NUḤ (II) B. MANŞUR (I)

NUḤ (II) B. MANŞUR (I), ABU'L-QĀSEM, Samanid Amir (r. 365-87/976-97), initially in both Transoxania and Khorasan, latterly in Transoxania only, called after his death *Amir-e Rażi*, “The Well-Pleasing Amir,” or according to Naršaķi, *Amir-e Raşid*, “The Rightly-Guided Amir.”

Nuḥ was the last Samanid to enjoy a reign of significant length, but within it he had little freedom to act independently. Since he succeeded his father when he was just 13 years only (Ebn al-Aṭir, VIII, p. 673), at the outset the real power in the state lay with his mother and the Vizier Abu'l-Ḥosayn 'Abd-Allāh b. Aḥmad 'Otbi (appointed at the end of 366/977), who was ambitious to restore the power of the civilian officials *vis-à-vis* the great military commanders. Hence in 371/982, he managed to depose the all-powerful Abu'l-Ḥasan Moḥammad b. Ebrāhim Simjuri from his governorship of Khorasan; he replaced him with his own candidate, Tāš, a former *golām* (q.v.) of his father who had been given the honorific title of Ḥosām-al-Dawla. In this way Abu'l-Ḥasan was forced to retire to his family estates in Qohestān (Gardizi, ed. Nazim, pp. 49-50; ed. Ḥabibi, pp. 165-66). War was now renewed against the Buyids under their greatest ruler, 'Azod-al-Dawla Fannā-Ḳosrow b. Rokn-al-Dawla (q.v.). The war went badly for Fā'eḳ Ḳāşşā (q.v.), who was the *hājeb* (q.v.), and the army of Khorasan, but the death of 'Azod-al-Dawla in 372/983 prevented a Buyid invasion. The geographer Maqdesi (p. 338) considered 'Azod-al-Dawla's death and the subsequent decline of the Buyid dynasty as divine retribution for his presumptuousness in attacking the Samanids. The Vizier 'Otbi himself assembled an army at Merv and was about to lead it



against the Buyids when assassins in the pay of Fā'eq Kāşşa and Abu'l-Ḥasan Simjuri killed him; his kinsman, the historian 'Otbi (I, pp. 121-22), rightly considered him as the last vizier of the Samanids worthy of the name (Gardizi, ed. Nazim, pp. 50-51; ed. Ḥabibi, p. 166; Ebn al-Aṭir (Beirut), IX, pp. 10-13, 18; Barthold, *Turkestan*³, pp. 252-53; Frye, "The Sāmānids," p. 156).

The remaining years of his rule were filled with power struggles amongst the army commanders. Tāš lost his position as governor of Khorasan when a new vizier, one hostile to the 'Otbi family, 'Abd-Allāh b. Moḥammad b. 'Ozayr, was appointed, and Abu'l-Ḥasan Simjuri assumed command there. Tāš tried to combat Fā'eq Kāşşa and Simjuri with assistance from the Buyid Amir of Ray, Abu'l-Ḥasan Faḫr-al-Dawla and the Amir in Fārs and Ḳuzestān, Šaraf-al-Dawla Širzil, but he was defeated in 377/987 and driven out to Gorgān, where he died of plague a year later ('Otbi, I, pp. 145, 149; Gardizi, ed. Nazim, p. 52; ed. Ḥabibi, p. 167). When Abu'l-Ḥasan Simjuri died in 378/989, his equally ambitious son Abu 'Ali Moḥammad inherited his position as well as his estates. Abu 'Ali defeated in battle Fā'eq Kāşşa and declared his submission to Nuḥ, although in practice he treated him with every form of contempt; the luckless Amir had to bow to *force majeure* and appoint Abu 'Ali governor of Khorasan. The latter's prestige was now such that he assumed, on his own initiative, the lofty honorific of *Amir-al-omarā' al-mo'ayyad men al-samā'*, "The Supreme Commander, the Heavenly-Aided One" ('Otbi, I, p. 155; Gardizi, ed. Nazim, p. 53; ed. Ḥabibi, p. 168), and appropriated for himself all the revenues of Khorasan, including even those from the royal domains (Gardizi, loc. cit.; Barthold, op. cit., pp. 253-54; Frye, op. cit., pp. 156-57). Repulsed from Bukhara in 380/990, Fā'eq Kāşşa moved into northern Afghanistan and, from his base in Balkh, fought off an attack by the Fariḡunid Amir of Guzgān Abu'l-Ḥareṭ Aḥmad b. Moḥammad (see [ĀL-E FARĪĠŪN](#)), whom his suzerain Nuḥ had incited against the rebel.

A new factor now appeared in the politics and maneuverings in Transoxania, that of the Turkish Qarakhanids. Abu 'Ali Simjuri secretly connived with Boḡra Khan Hārun, then at Esfijāb (see [ASFĪJĀB](#)) in the middle Syr Darya valley, to partition the Samanid dominions, with Abu 'Ali to have all the lands south of the Oxus. Boḡra Khan seems also to have received an invitation from some of the local *dehqāns*, and to have enjoyed at least the passive acquiescence of the ulemawhen he invaded Transoxania. The Amir could only engage Fā'eq Kāşşa to defend his capital, but Fā'eq could not withstand the Turkish hordes, and Boḡra Khan entered Bukhara in 382/992; despite the financial crisis of the later



Samanid period, he is said to have found the state coffers full. Meanwhile, Nuḥ collected an army at Āmol and secured the reluctant co-operation of Abu ‘Ali Simjuri at the price of a grant to him of the title *Wali Amir-al-Mo’menin*, “Companion of the Commander of the Faithful,” hitherto exclusively a royal title. In the event, illness forced the Khan to retreat from Bokhara and he died shortly afterwards (‘Otbi, I, pp. 163-76; Gardizi, ed. Nazim, pp. 53-54; ed. Ḥabibi, p. 168; Barthold, *Turkestan*³, pp. 257-60). Nuḥ recovered some of his ancestral lands, but probably only those in the Zarafšān basin. He now found himself faced with an alliance of Fā’eq Kāşsa and Abu ‘Ali, and hence was obliged to seek the support of Sebüktegin from Ghazna, thus introducing a new player into the game. He met Sebüktegin at Kiş, and the latter swore allegiance to Nuḥ. Their forces, joined by those of the local rulers of Guzgān and Garčestān, and, on the battle field, by those of the Ziyarid Dārā b. Qābus, secured a decisive victory over the rebels in 383/993. For this victory, Sebüktegin and his son Maḥmud received resplendent honorific titles, and, in 386/996, the latter was made governor of Khorasan. Fā’eq Kāşsa and Abu ‘Ali returned to the fight but were again defeated; Abu ‘Ali was imprisoned in Bukhara and later died in Ghaznavid captivity (‘Otbi, I, pp. 189, 219-31; Gardizi, ed. Nazim, pp. 55-56; ed. Ḥabibi, p. 169; Barthold, pp. 260-63; Frye, “The Sāmānids,” pp. 157-58).

In this same year, a fresh Qarakhanid invasion of Transoxania took place. With few forces at his disposal, Nuḥ could only call on Sebüktegin again, but the latter, from his position of strength, imposed stringent conditions, and in the end made an agreement with the Ilig Naşr b. ‘Ali whereby the Qarakhanid could take over the entire Syr Darya basin. Sebüktegin and Maḥmud remained complete masters of Khorasan. Nuḥ died soon afterwards, on 14 Rajab 387/23 July 997 (‘Otbi, I, p. 255; Barthold, *op. cit.*, pp. 263-64; Frye, p. 158), to be succeeded by his son Manşur (II) (q.v.); but the end of the dynasty was now only two years away.

BIBLIOGRAPHY



Sources. Ebn al-Aṭir (Beirut), VIII-IX. Gardizi, ed. Nazim, pp. 48-58; ed. Ḥabibi, pp. 164-71.

Maqdesi (Moqaddasi), p. 338. Naršaḳi, p. 117; tr. Frye, pp. 99-100.

Abu'l-Ḥosayn 'Otbi, *al-Ta'riḳ-al-Yamini*, with commentary of Manini, Cairo, 1286/1869, I.

Studies. Barthold, *Turkestan*³, pp. 252-64.

C. Edmund Bosworth, "Nūḥ (II) b. Manşūr b. Nūḥ," *EI* VIII, p. 110.

Idem, *The New Islamic Dynasties*, Edinburgh, 1996, pp. 170-71 no. 83.

Richard N. Frye, "The Sāmānids," *Camb. Hist. Iran* IV, pp. 154-58.

Erdoğan Merçil, "Sîmcûriler. IV," *Bellesten* 49, no. 195, 1985, pp. 547-67.

Muhammad Nazim, *The Life and Times of Sulṭān Maḥmūd of Ghazna*, Cambridge, 1931, pp. 30-32.