



ŠĀH ḲALIL-ALLĀH

ŠĀH ḲALIL-ALLĀH, also known as Šāh Ḳalil-Allāh Maḥallāti, the forty-fifth imam of the Qāsemšāhi branch of Nezāri Isma‘īlis. He was the eldest son of Sayyed Abu’l-Ḥasan ‘Ali and succeeded his father to the Isma‘īli *imamate* in 1206/1792. Imam Abu’l-Ḥasan ‘Ali, also known as Sayyed Kahaki, was appointed to the governorship of the province of *Kermān* around 1170/1756 by *Karim Khan Zand*; earlier, he had been the *beglerbegi* (governor) of the city of Kerman for some time (Waziri, II, pp. 698 ff.; Širāzi, pp. 74-77; Perry, pp. 135-36; Daftary, 459-62). Sayyed Kahaki ruled independently over Kerman during the unsettled years when *Āgā Moḥammad Khan*, the future founder of the Qajar dynasty, was challenging Zand rule in Kerman and other regions of Persia.

On Sayyed Kahaki’s death in 1206/1792, Šāh Ḳalil-Allāh succeeded him in the Nezāri *imamate*. Soon after his accession, Šāh Ḳalil-Allāh transferred his seat from Kerman to *Kahak* and Maḥallāt, where he remained for about twenty years. Henceforth, the Nezāri imams acquired properties and deep roots in the Maḥallāt area. Šāh Ḳalil-Allāh maintained regular contacts also with his Nezāri Khoja followers in Sind, *Gujarat*, and other parts of India, who embarked on hazardous journeys to see their imam in Persia and deliver their religious dues to him.

Abu’l-Ḥasan ‘Ali had close relations with several leading Ne‘mat-Allāhi Sufis in Kerman, and it was during his time that the Ne‘mat-Allāhi Sufi order was revived in Persia. His successor Šāh Ḳalil-Allāh, too, maintained friendly relations with this Sufi order. However, despite his Ne‘mat-Allāhi Sufi name,



Šāh Ḳalil-Allāh was never initiated into this order. He married Bibi Sarkāra, daughter of Moḥammad-Šādeq Maḥallāti, who bore the next Nezāri imam, Ḥasan-‘Ališāh, *Āqā Khan I*, in 1219/1804 in Kahak. Moḥammad-Šādeq Maḥallāti (d. 1230/1815) was a Ne‘mat-Allāhi Sufi, initiated by Moḥammad-‘Ališāh; and his son, ‘Ezzat-‘Ališāh (d. ca. 1245/1829), was another prominent Ne‘mat-Allāhi dervish. Šāh Ḳalil-Allāh had friendly relations with his Ne‘mat-Allāhi relatives and other prominent dervishes of this order (Ma‘sum-‘Ališāh, III, pp. 190, 263-64, 290; Lewisohn, pp. 439-53).

In 1230/1815, Šāh Ḳalil-Allāh moved to Yazd, probably in order to be closer to the pilgrimage route of his Nezāri Khoja followers, who had continued to make the perilous journey to see their imam, and often had their possessions plundered by brigands along the way. It was at Yazd that two years later, in 1232/1817, the Nezāri imam became a victim of the intrigues of a Twelver Shi‘ite cleric and lost his life in the course of a dispute between some of his followers and the local shopkeepers (Hedāyat, IX, pp. 551-53; Lesān-al-Molk Sepehr, I, pp. 293-94; E‘temād-al-Saltāna, III, p. 1537; Nā‘ini, pp. 558-66; Algar, pp. 55-56). The Isma‘ili followers of Šāh Ḳalil-Allāh had evidently resorted to violence in settling their differences with the shopkeepers in the *bazaar*; and, subsequently, they took refuge in Šāh Ḳalil-Allāh’s house and refused to emerge. A certain Mollā Moḥammad-Ḥosayn Yazdi, who resented the spreading influence locally of the Nezāri Isma‘ili imam, collected a mob and attacked the imam’s house. In the ensuing melee, Šāh Ḳalil-Allāh and several of his followers, including a Khoja, were murdered, and the imam’s house was pillaged. Fath-‘Ali Shah Qājār, who had good relations with the Nezāri imam, ordered his governor in Yazd, Ḥāji Moḥammad-Zamān Khan, to send Mollā Moḥammad-Ḥosayn and his accomplices to Tehran for punishment. However, on the intercession of Moḥammad-Ḥosayn Khan Nezām-al-Dawla, the father of the governor, Mollā Moḥammad-Ḥosayn was merely bastinadoed and his beard was plucked, but no one was executed for the imam’s murder (Nā‘ini, pp. 558-66; Algar, pp. 55-56; Daftary, p. 463).

Šāh Ḳalil-Allāh, the last of the Qāsemšāhi Nezāri Isma‘ili imams to spend his entire imamate, some twenty-five years, in Persia, was taken for burial to Najaf in Iraq, where a mausoleum was constructed for him and some of his descendants. Šāh Ḳalil-Allāh had three sons, Moḥammad-Ḥasan, known also as Ḥasan-‘Ališāh, Sardār Abu’l-Ḥasan Khan, and Moḥammad-Bāqer Khan. He was succeeded in the imamate by his eldest son Ḥasan-‘Ališāh, who received the title of *Āqā Khan* from Fath-‘Ali Shah Qājār (for him, see Daftary, pp. 463



ff.).

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