

= Nasir al @-@ Dawla =

Abu Muhammad al @-@ Hasan ibn Abu 'l @-@ Hayja ' Abdallah ibn Hamdan Nasir al @-@ Dawla al @-@ Taghlibi ( Arabic : ??? ????? ????? ??? ??? ???????? ???????? ??? ????? ????? ???????? ; died 968 or 969 ) , more commonly known simply by his laqab ( honorific epithet ) of Nasir al @-@ Dawla ( " Defender of the [ Abbasid ] Dynasty " ) , was the second Hamdanid ruler of the Emirate of Mosul , encompassing most of the Jazira .

As the senior member of the Hamdanid dynasty , he inherited the family power base around Mosul from his father , and was able to secure it against challenges by his uncles . Hasan became involved in the court intrigues of the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad , and , between 942 and 943 , he , with the assistance of his brother Ali ( known as Sayf al @-@ Dawla ) , established himself as amir al @-@ umara , or de facto regent for the Abbasid caliph . He was driven back to Mosul by Turkish troops , however , and subsequent attempts to challenge the Buyids who seized control of Baghdad and lower Iraq ended in repeated failure . Twice , his capital Mosul was captured by Buyid forces , which were , however , unable to defeat local opposition to their rule . As a result of his failures to retain power , Nasir al @-@ Dawla declined in influence and prestige . He was eclipsed by the actions of his brother Ali , who established his rule more firmly over Aleppo and northern Syria . After 964 , Nasir al @-@ Dawla 's eldest son Abu Taghlib exercised de facto rule over his domains , and in 967 , Abu Taghlib and his brothers deposed and imprisoned their father , who died in captivity a year or two later .

= = Life = =

= = = Origin and family = = =

Nasir al @-@ Dawla was born al @-@ Hasan ibn Abdallah , the eldest son of Abu 'l @-@ Hayja Abdallah ibn Hamdan ( died 929 ) , son of Hamdan ibn Hamdun ibn al @-@ Harith , who gave his name to the Hamdanid dynasty . The Hamdanids were a branch of the Banu Taghlib , an Arab tribe resident in the area of the Jazira ( Upper Mesopotamia ) since pre @-@ Islamic times . The Taghlibs had traditionally controlled Mosul and its region until the late 9th century , when the Abbasid government tried to impose firmer control over the province . Hamdan ibn Hamdun was one of the most determined Taghlibi leaders in opposing this move . Notably , in his effort to fend off the Abbasids , he secured the alliance of the Kurds living in the mountains north of Mosul , a fact which would be of considerable importance in his family 's later fortunes . Family members intermarried with Kurds , who were also prominent in the Hamdanid military .

Hamdan 's possessions were captured in 895 by the Abbasid Caliph al @-@ Mu 'tadid , and Hamdan himself was forced to surrender near Mosul after a long chase . He was put in prison , but his son Husayn ibn Hamdan , who had surrendered the fortress of Ardamusht to the Caliph 's forces , managed to secure the family 's future . He raised troops among the Taghlib in exchange for tax remissions , and established a commanding influence in the Jazira by acting as a mediator between the Abbasid authorities and the Arab and Kurdish population . It was this strong local base which allowed the family to survive its often strained relationship with the central Abbasid government in Baghdad during the early 10th century . Husayn was a successful general , distinguishing himself against the Kharijites and the Tulunids , but was disgraced after supporting the failed usurpation of Ibn al @-@ Mu 'tazz in 908 . His younger brother Ibrahim was governor of Diyar Rabi 'a ( the province around Nasibin ) in 919 and after his death in the next year he was succeeded by another brother , Dawud . Hasan 's father Abdallah served as emir ( governor ) of Mosul in 905 / 6 ? 913 / 4 , was repeatedly disgraced and rehabilitated as the political situation changed in Baghdad , until re @-@ assuming control of Mosul in 925 / 6 . Enjoying firm relations with the powerful commander of the caliphal army , Mu 'nis al @-@ Khadim , in 929 he played a leading role in the short @-@ lived usurpation of Al @-@ Qahir ( who would later reign as caliph in 932 ? 934 ) against Al @-@ Muqtadir ( r . 908 ? 932 ) , and was killed during its suppression . According to the researcher

Marius Canard , Abdallah established himself as the most prominent member of the first generation of the Hamdanid dynasty , and was essentially the founder of the Hamdanid Emirate of Mosul .

= = = Consolidation of control over the Jazira = = =

During his absence in Baghdad in his final years from 920 / 921 on , Abdallah relegated authority over Mosul to Hasan . After Abdallah 's death , however , al @-@ Muqtadir took the opportunity to avenge himself upon the Hamdanids , and appointed an unrelated governor over Mosul , while Abdallah 's domains were divided among his surviving brothers . Faced with the claims of his uncles , Hasan was left in charge of a small portion , on the left bank of the Tigris . In 930 , after the caliph 's governor died , Hasan managed to regain control over Mosul , but his uncles Nasr and Sa 'id soon removed him from power and confined him to the western parts of the Diyar Rabi 'a . In 934 , Hasan again recovered Mosul , but Sa 'id , residing in Baghdad and supported by the caliphal government , evicted him again . Hasan fled to Armenia , from where he orchestrated Sa 'id 's murder . Only then did his troops occupy Mosul and establish him permanently as its ruler . Finally , after defeating caliphal forces under the wazir Ibn Muqla and the Banu Habib , his rivals among the Taghlib , in late 935 the Caliph al @-@ Radi was forced to formally recognize him as governor of Mosul and the entire Jazira , in exchange for an annual tribute of 70 @,@ 000 gold dinars and supplies of flour for the two caliphal capitals of Baghdad and Samarra .

Resistance to Hasan 's rule outside of his family 's core region around Mosul remained , however ? in Diyar Bakr , the governor of Mayyafariqin , Ali ibn Ja 'far , rebelled against Hasan , and in Diyar Mudar , the Qaysi tribes of the region around Saruj also revolted . Hasan subdued them and secured control over the entire Jazira by the end of 936 , due to the efforts of his brother Ali , who was given the governorship of the two provinces as a reward . In the meantime , the defeated Banu Habib , some 10 @,@ 000 strong and under the leadership of al @-@ Ala ibn al @-@ Mu 'ammar , left their lands and fled to territory controlled by the Byzantine Empire . This unprecedented move may be explained by the fact that a significant portion of the tribe still practised Christianity , or by pressure upon their grazing lands by tribes from the south , but the primary goal of the move was to escape from Hamdanid authority and taxation . Hasan also attempted to extend his control to Sajid @-@ ruled Azerbaijan in 934 and 938 , but his efforts failed .

= = = Struggle for control of the Caliphate = = =

While he tried to consolidate his rule over Mosul , Hasan showed himself conspicuously loyal to the Abbasid regime , and refused to support the revolt of Mu 'nis al @-@ Khadim against the Caliph al @-@ Muqtadir in 932 . Mu 'nis succeeded in overthrowing and killing al @-@ Muqtadir , but over the next few years the Abbasid government all but collapsed , until in 936 the powerful governor of Wasit , Muhammad ibn Ra 'iq , assumed the title of amir al @-@ umara ( " commander of commanders " ) and with it de facto control of the Abbasid government . The Caliph al @-@ Radi was reduced to a figurehead role , while the extensive civil bureaucracy was cut down dramatically both in size and power . Ibn Ra 'iq 's position was anything but secure , however , and soon a convoluted struggle for control of his office , and the Caliphate with it , broke out among the various local rulers and the Turkish and Daylamite military chiefs , which ended in 946 with the ultimate victory of the Buyids .

Thus , in the late 930s , Hasan , encouraged by his control over a large and rich domain , entered the intrigues of the Abbasid court , and became one of the main contenders for the title of amir al @-@ umara . At first , Hasan tried to exploit the weakness of the Abbasid government to withhold his payment of tribute , but the Turk Bajkam , who had ousted Ibn Ra 'iq in 938 , quickly forced him to back down . Hasan then supported Ibn Ra 'iq in the latter 's quest to regain his lost position . Bajkam tried to forcefully evict Hasan from his Jaziran domains , but in vain , and was eventually killed in a skirmish with Kurdish brigands in early 941 . Hasan 's great chance came in early 942 , when the Caliph al @-@ Muttaqi ( r . 940 ? 944 ) and his closest aides fled Baghdad to escape the city 's imminent fall to the Barids of Basra and sought refuge at Mosul . Hasan now made a direct

bid for power : he had Ibn Ra 'iq assassinated and succeeded him as amir al @-@ umara , receiving the honorific laqab of Nasir al @-@ Dawla ( " Defender of the Dynasty " ) . He then escorted the Caliph back to Baghdad , which they entered on 4 June 942 . To secure his position further , Nasir al @-@ Dawla married his daughter to the Caliph 's son . Along with their cousin , Husayn ibn Sa 'id , Nasir al @-@ Dawla 's brother Ali was instrumental in the Hamdanid enterprise , taking the field against the Baridis , who still controlled the rich province of Basra and were determined to regain Baghdad . After scoring a victory over them , Ali was awarded the laqab of Sayf al @-@ Dawla ( " Sword of the Dynasty " ) , by which he became famous . This double award marked the first time that a laqab incorporating the prestigious element al @-@ Dawla were granted to anyone other than the wazir , the Caliphate 's chief minister , and was a symbolic affirmation of the military 's predominance over the civil bureaucracy .

The Hamdanids ' success and rule over the Abbasid capital lasted for little more than a year . They lacked funds and were politically isolated , finding little support among the Caliphate 's most powerful vassals , the Samanids of Transoxiana and the Ikhshidids of Egypt . Consequently , when in late 943 a mutiny broke out among their troops ( mostly composed of Turks , Daylamites , Carmathians and only a few Arabs ) over pay issues , under the leadership of the Turkish general Tuzun , they were forced to quit Baghdad and return to their base , Mosul . Caliph al @-@ Muttaqi now appointed Tuzun as amir al @-@ umara , but the Turk 's overbearing manner induced al @-@ Muttaqi to once again seek refuge in the Hamdanid court . The Hamdanid forces under Sayf al @-@ Dawla took the field against Tuzun 's army , but were defeated . The Hamdanids now concluded an agreement with Tuzun which allowed them to keep the Jazira and even gave them nominal authority over northern Syria ( which at the time was not under Hamdanid control ) , in exchange for an annual tribute of 3 @. @ 6 million dirhams .

In the meantime , the Caliph was brought to al @-@ Raqqah for greater safety , while Husayn ibn Sa 'id tried to secure control over northern Syria and pre @-@ Egypt 's ruler Muhammad ibn Tughj al @-@ Ikhshid taking control of the region . The attempt failed , as al @-@ Ikhshid himself advanced into Syria , took Aleppo and marched to Raqqah , where he met the Caliph . Al @-@ Ikhshid tried to persuade al @-@ Muttaqi to come to Egypt under his protection , but the Caliph refused , and al @-@ Ikhshid returned to Egypt . Instead , al @-@ Muttaqi , persuaded by Tuzun 's assurances of loyalty and safety , returned to Baghdad , where Tuzun deposed and blinded him , replacing him with al @-@ Mustakfi ( r . 944 ? 946 ) . At the news of this crime , Nasir al @-@ Dawla again refused payment of tribute , but Tuzun marched against him and forced his compliance . Henceforth , Nasir al @-@ Dawla would be tributary to Baghdad , but he would find it difficult to resign himself to his loss of power over the city he once ruled , and the subsequent years would feature several attempts to regain it .

= = = Wars with the Buyids = = =

In late 945 , Tuzun died . His death weakened the Abbasid government 's ability to maintain its independence against the rising power of the Buyids , who under Ahmad ibn Buya had already consolidated control over Fars and Kerman , and secured the cooperation of the Barids . Al @-@ Mustakfi 's secretary , Ibn Shirzad , tried to confront the Buyids by calling upon Nasir al @-@ Dawla , but Ahmad advanced on Baghdad with his troops , and in January 946 he obtained his appointment as amir al @-@ umara with the honorific Mu 'izz al @-@ Dawla ( " Strengtheners of the State " ) . To secure their position , the Buyids immediately marched against the Hamdanids . Nasir al @-@ Dawla countered by marching down the eastern bank of the Tigris river and blockading Baghdad . In the end , however , the Buyids defeated the Hamdanids in battle and forced Nasir al @-@ Dawla to retire to Ukbara . From there , Nasir al @-@ Dawla began negotiations with the Buyids , aiming to secure recognition of Hamdanid control over the Jazira , Syria and even Egypt as tributaries of the Caliphate , with the boundary between Buyid and Hamdanid spheres placed at Tikrit . Negotiations were disrupted by a rebellion among the Hamdanids ' Turkish troops , but Mu 'izz al @-@ Dawla , who for the moment preferred a stable Hamdanid state to anarchy on his northern border , helped Nasir al @-@ Dawla suppress it . The peace was agreed on the terms

outlined above , and was affirmed by one of Nasir al @-@ Dawla 's sons being taken as a hostage to Baghdad .

Conflict between the two rivals was renewed in 948 , when Mu 'izz al @-@ Dawla again marched against Mosul , but was forced to cut off his campaign to assist his brother Rukn al @-@ Dawla , who was having trouble in Persia . In exchange , Nasir al @-@ Dawla agreed to recommence the payment of tribute for the Jazira and Syria , as well as to add the names of the three Buyid brothers after that of the Caliph in the Friday prayer . Another round of warfare erupted in 956 ? 958 . While the Buyids were preoccupied with the rebellion of their Daylamite troops under Rezbahan ibn Vindadh @-@ Khurshid in southern Iraq , Nasir al @-@ Dawla the opportunity to advance south and capture Baghdad . After the suppression of the Daylamite revolt , however , the Hamdanids were not able to maintain their position in the face of the Buyid counteroffensive , and abandoned the city . Peace was renewed in exchange for the recommencement of tribute and an additional indemnity , but when Nasir al @-@ Dawla refused to send the second year 's payment , the Buyid ruler advanced north . Unable to confront the Buyid army in the field , Nasir al @-@ Dawla abandoned Mosul and fled to Mayyafariqin and then to his brother Sayf al @-@ Dawla in Aleppo . The Buyids captured Mosul and Nasibin , but the Hamdanids and their supporters withdrew to their home territory in the mountains of the north , taking with them their treasures as well as all government records and tax registers . As a result , the Buyid army was unable to support itself in the conquered territory , all the more since the predominantly Daylamite troops were resented by the local people , who launched guerrilla attacks on them . Sayf al @-@ Dawla tried to mediate with Mu 'izz al @-@ Dawla , but his first approaches were rebuffed . Only when he agreed to assume the burden of paying his brother 's tribute for the entire Diyar Rabi 'a , did the Buyid ruler agree to peace . This agreement marks the reversal of roles between the two Hamdanid brothers , and the establishment of the predominance of the family 's Syrian branch .

In 964 , Nasir al @-@ Dawla tried to renegotiate the terms of the arrangement , but also to secure Buyid recognition for his eldest son , Fadl Allah Abu Taghlib al @-@ Ghadanfar , as his successor . Mu 'izz al @-@ Dawla refused Nasir al @-@ Dawla 's demands , and again invaded Hamdanid territory . Once again Mosul and Nasibin were captured , while the Hamdanids fled to the mountain fortresses . As in 958 , the Buyids were unable to maintain themselves for long in the Jazira , and soon an agreement was reached which allowed the Hamdanids to return to Mosul . This time , however , Abu Taghlib emerged as the effective leader in his father 's place : it was with him , rather than the aged Nasir al @-@ Dawla , that Mui 'zz al @-@ Dawla concluded a treaty . The end of Nasir al @-@ Dawla 's rule came in 967 , in the same year that saw the deaths of his brother Sayf al @-@ Dawla and his great rival Mu 'izz al @-@ Dawla . Nasir al @-@ Dawla was reportedly so much affected by his brother 's death that he lost interest in life and became remote and avaricious . In the end , Abu Taghlib , already the de facto governor of the emirate , deposed him with the aid of his Kurdish mother , Fatima bint Ahmad . Nasir al @-@ Dawla tried to counter them by turning to one of his other sons , Hamdan , but he was seized and imprisoned in the fortress of Ardumusht , where he died in 968 or 969 .

= = = Domestic policies = = =

Nasir al @-@ Dawla was heavily criticized by contemporaries for his oppressive fiscal policies and the suffering they caused among the population . The traveller Ibn Hawqal , who visited Nasir al @-@ Dawla 's domains , reports in length on his seizure of private land in the most fertile regions of the Jazira , on flimsy legal charges , until he became the greatest landowner in his province . This was linked with the practice of a monoculture of cereals , destined to feed the growing population of Baghdad , and coupled with heavy taxation , so that Sayf al @-@ Dawla and Nasir al @-@ Dawla are said to have become the wealthiest princes in the Muslim world . Nevertheless , the Hamdanid administrative machinery seems to have been fairly rudimentary , and the tribute paid to the Buyids ? estimated at somewhere between two and four million dirhams , when it was paid at all ? was a heavy burden on the treasury .