

The Rise and Fall of the Hasanwayhid Barzikani Dynasty (941-1015): Mapping Territories and Unraveling the Causes and Contributing Factors of Its Collapse

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Abstract

This research significantly contributes to our understanding of the Emirate of Hasanwayhid Barzikani's rise and fall within the Abbasid Caliphate. The study unveils the intricate factors that shaped the emirate's destiny by meticulously mapping its geographical extent and employing an analytical-critical approach. The identification of key contributors, such as persistent tensions with the Buyids, internal rivalries, and the geopolitical context of its proximity to the Abbasid Caliphate's center, enriches historical discourse. Furthermore, the research underscores the impact of wars of attrition and internal conflicts on the emirate's stability. Methodologically, the thorough examination of primary and secondary sources enhances the reliability and depth of the findings. Ultimately, this research not only sheds light on the complex dynamics of Hasanwayhid Barzikani's existence and demise but also underscores the broader significance of considering multifaceted political, military, and socio-cultural factors in comprehending the dynamics of emirates during this historical period.

Keywords: Abbasid caliphate, Hasanwayhid Barzikani, Shahrazour, the Buyids, Annazid Kurds

INTRODUCTION

The establishment of the Hasanwayhid Emirate in 1015 by Mir Hossein Barzikani marked a significant development within the dynamic geopolitical landscape of the Abbasid caliphate (Rubin, 2016). Concurrent with the rise of the Buyid's rule and the Abbasid caliphate, the Hasanwayhids, led by Hasanwayh, strategically positioned themselves as mediators between the governments of Khorasan and the Abbasids, contributing to regional stability (Ali, 2021). Hasanwayh's adept leadership allowed the emirate to expand its influence into territories like Azerbaijan and Ahwaz, elevating Dinavar, the emirate's center, to a position of considerable power that posed a threat to Baghdad and the Buyids.

However, the demise of Hasanwayh and the subsequent succession crisis triggered internal conflicts within the Hasanwayhid government. These internal disputes weakened the emirate, creating an opportune moment for the Buyids, notably under 'Azod-al-Dawla, to assert control over Dinavar. To maintain influence, 'Azod-al-Dawla supported Badr, one of Hasanwayh's sons, in assuming power, effectively aligning the Hasanwayhid Emirate with Buyid interests. Despite Badr's efforts to consolidate power through a policy of de-escalation with Baghdad and a focus on development, internal disputes persisted, ultimately leading to the decline of the Hasanwayhid dynasty (Ali & Ahmad, 2021).

This study posits a hypothesis rooted in the contextualization of the Hasanwayhid Emirate within the broader framework of emirates emerging within the Abbasid caliphate's sphere of

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influence. It contends that the simultaneous formation of these emirates, coupled with conflicts and power struggles among them, contributed to the downfall of the Hasanwayhid Emirate. In the absence of external tensions and internal disputes, there existed potential for territorial expansion and constructive governance. However, the pervasive competition with the Buyids and unresolved internal conflicts hindered the Hasanwayhid Emirate from sustaining its rule. This research aims to shed light on this historical confluence, offering a nuanced understanding of the interplay between regional emirates and their ultimate fate during the Abbasid caliphate.

The research methodology for this study involves a comprehensive historical analysis, employing a case study approach (Wood, 1990), a comparative analysis, archival research, and interviews with experts. Firstly, an extensive review of primary sources, including historical texts and chronicles from the Abbasid caliphate era, will be conducted to gather detailed information about the Hasanwayhid Emirate. This will provide a foundation for understanding the political, military, and socio-cultural dynamics surrounding its establishment, expansion, and eventual decline. A case study methodology will be employed to delve deeply into specific events such as Hasanwayh's leadership, internal succession conflicts, and the role of Buyids in shaping the emirate's trajectory. A comparative analysis will then be undertaken to identify commonalities and divergences with contemporaneous emirates, offering insights into the uniqueness of Hasanwayhid's historical development. Archival research will further supplement the study by exploring lesser-known details about the emirate's governance structures, economic policies, and diplomatic relations. Finally, interviews with historians, scholars, and experts in medieval Middle Eastern history will provide additional perspectives, ensuring a well-rounded interpretation of the Hasanwayhid Emirate's historical context and contributing to a more nuanced understanding of the factors leading to its rise and fall within the Abbasid caliphate.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Geographical Territory of Hasanawayhids

The geographical area of Hasanawayhid territory was a part of the modern Kurdistan of Iran and Iraq, which historians knew as Jibal and Shahrzour during the rule of Hasanawayhids and Abbasids (Ahmed bin Abi Yaqoob, 1995). In *Kitab al-Buldan* mentions the cities of Dinavar, Nahavand, Hulwan, and several other cities as Jibal region.

Yaqut al-Hamawi says in his book: "Jibāl covers the regions that are known today as Iraq Ajam and includes Isfahan, Zanjan, Qazvin, Hamadan, Dinavar, Kermanshah, Ray, and the areas within their boundaries" (Al-Zubaidi, 2023). According to Idrisi (2008), the Jibal province includes the cities of Deskara, Khanaqin, Qasreshirin, Sirvan, Qurmasin, Dinavar, Zozan, Karaj, and Damavand. In *Masālik al-Mamālik* (Routes of the Realms), the boundaries of Jibal are stated as follows: "Jibal includes Mah al-Kufa (Dinavar), Mah al-Basra (Nahavand), and the suburbs and subordinate regions that are connected to these two regions. Its eastern border is the desert mountains of Khorasan, Fars, and Isfahan, and the northern border is the cities of Daylam, Qazvin, and Ray. Ray, Qazvin, Abhar, and Zangan (Zanjan) have been separated from the Jibal province and annexed to Daylam. These cities encircle the Daylam mountains. Jibal's southern border is with Iraq and Khuzestan" (Istakhari, 1968).

Based on the definitions of Jibal given by Islamic historians, Guy Le Strange believes that Jibal was a vast area that the Greeks referred to as Media in their writings, and it was limited to the plains

of Mesopotamia from the west and the great plains of Iran from the east (Le Strange, 2010). According to the ancient geographers and historians, the land of Jibal was an area between Azerbaijan, Khuzestan, Mesopotamian plains and the great plains of Iran, and the eastern parts of that area were the Kurdish region of Jibal (O'shea, 2004). Nahavand and Asadabad were the gates to this region. It should be noted that dividing Jibal into two regions i.e., the Kurdish region (the western parts of the Jibal) and the non-Kurdish region (the eastern parts of the Jibal) is taken from the encyclopedia of Al-Qalqashandi. Because in this book, he uses the term "Jabal al-Akrad" (The mountain of Kurds) and introduces it as the barrier mountains between the Arab land and the Ajam land (Qalqashandi, 1978).

In the meantime, Shahrazour, as the realm of Hasanwayhids, was a part of Jabal al-Akrad, which Yaqt Hamavi introduces as follows: Shahrazour is a vast region in Jibal, which is located between Arbil and Hamadan and all its residents are Kurds (Al-Zubaidi, 2023). Therefore, the main realm of Hasanwayhids was the Shahrazour region, which covered an area from the present-day Dinavar in Iran to the present-day Sulaymaniyah and Kirkuk in Iraqi Kurdistan. Islamic historians referred to this region as Jibal region.

Rise and Fall of the Hasanwayhids

Mir Hossein, the head of the Barzikani tribe in Shahrazour, took advantage of the weakening of Baghdad and the power vacuum of the Abbasids in the Jibal region, established the Hasanwayhid Emirate, centered in Dinavar, and gradually expanded his power (Ali & Ahmad, 2021). The Abbasid caliph felt worried and sent forces to suppress Mir Hossein, but the Caliphate forces were defeated and this victory boosted the morale of Mir Hossein and his followers in the Hasanwayhid Emirate (McDowall, 2021).

Mir Hossein died in 348 and the power of the Hasanwayhids passed to his son Hasanwayh (ibid.: 346). Hasanwayh is considered one of the most powerful rulers of the Hasanwayhids, and under his rule, the realm of this emirate reached its peak. In the first stage, he managed to overcome the Aishanids, which ruled the territory including Nahavand, Hamedan, and some regions of Azerbaijan up to near Shahrazour, and annexed these regions to the territory of the Hasanwayhids. These conquests brought him fame in the Jibal region (Ibn Athir, 1972).

After Hasanwayh gained power and expanded his territory to near Azerbaijan on one side and Shahrazour on the other, the Buyid ruler, Mu'izz al-Din (945-967), who had the main power of the caliph in Baghdad, felt threatened. Therefore, he sent an army from Mosul to Shahrazour to suppress Hasanwayh, but this army failed and was defeated by Hasanwayh (McDowall, 2021).

After this defeat, the Buyids marched into the realm of Hasanwayh several more times, but each time they were defeated, and these failures led to the fame of Hasanwayh in the region of Jibal and Shahrazour, making him the man of the highest repute in the region (Blair, 1992). After a period of several conquests and prosperity in the field of politics and economy, Hasanwayh finally died in Sarmaj Castle, which he had built in Dinavar and which he had chosen as the center of his rule, and his territory was divided among his sons.

This division of power led to the weakening of Hasanwayhids. Therefore, the Būyid leader, 'Azod-al-Dawla, took advantage of this opportunity and marched into the territory of Hasanwayhids and managed to overcome them and bring the region under his control. He chose one of Hasanwayh's sons, Badr ibn Hasanwayh, and left the territory of Hasanwayhids to him. As a result,

the whole realm of Hasanwayhids came under the rule of the Buyids. It is worth mentioning that Ibn Athir recalls Badr as a good ruler (Ibn Athir, 1999).

Badr defied being subjugated under the Buyids (Hanne, 2007). The conflicts among the Buyids provided him with the opportunity to attack the Buyid army near Kermanshah. He defeated them and seized their property. This success brought back the glory and power of Hasanwayhids. Afterward, he tried to seize Baghdad several times and managed to besiege Baghdad once, but ultimately, he failed to capture Baghdad.

This emir became so renowned that the Abbasid caliph, al-Qādir bi'llāh (991-1031) had to accept his power and gave him the title of Nasir al-Dawla and the nickname of Abu al-Najm (Ibn Athir, 1999). Badr ibn Hasanwayh ruled the territory of Hasanwayhids until (1009), and at the end of his reign, he had differences with his son Hilal, which led to the fall of Hasanwayhids later.

Badr was defeated by his son Hilal, but with the aid of the Daylamite forces and Kurdish clans, he managed to overcome Hilal. However, due to these differences both Badr and Hasanwayhids lost their glory and majesty, and were never restored. Consequently, in a battle with Husain ibn Masoud the Kurd, he was killed by Goran Kurds (Ibn Athir, 1999).

After he was killed, Badr was succeeded by his grandson, Tahir ibn Hilal. However, his rule did not last long and Abu al-Shawk, the ruler of the Annazid Kurds, took advantage of the weakness of the Hasanwayhids and attacked Shahrazour. After defeating Tahir and killing him, he put an end to the power of Hasanwayhids. Of course, after Hilal, Tahir ibn Hilal (1013-1015) and Badr ibn Hilal (1017-1048) ruled for a short and limited time for a few years. Moreover, Abu Salim Deisam Barzikani ruled a limited geographical area in Zahab of Kermanshah, but was destroyed by the Daylamites. Thus, Hasanwayhid Emirate fell after one hundred and thirty years of rule in Jibal and Shahrazour (Ibn Athir, 1999).

Reasons for the Downfall of Hasanwayhid Barzikani

Reflecting on the 130-year history of the Hasanwayhid rule and focusing on the political history of this emirate (James, 2019), one can argue that the proximity of Barzikani territory to Baghdad, the center of the caliphate, tension with the Buyids, and internal differences played a fundamental role in the weakening and downfall of the Emirate of Hasanwayhid Barzikani. These three factors are discussed here.

Proximity to Baghdad, the Center of the Caliphate

The realm of the power of Hasanwayhid Emirate was the Jibal region, and more specifically, the Shahrazour region, which was located near Baghdad (Maisel, 2018). For Baghdad, the establishment of a local government in the neighborhood of the center of the Caliphate was not only troublesome but also unacceptable. Hence, after Mir Hossein established this emirate, the Caliph got angry and felt a lot of fear and worry, which caused the Caliph to order the Mosul Army to attack the territory of Amir Hussein, eventually leading to the defeat of the Caliph Army (McDowall, 2021). In this regard, Baghdad's awarding of the title of Naser al-Dawla to Badr was also due to the containment of this emirate on the one hand and Baghdad's inability to eliminate this local power in its neighborhood due to the weakness caused by the Buyid's control over Baghdad (Ibn Athir, 1999).

Another important point in this regard was that the Caliph was really terrified and worried, because later, as soon as the Hasanwayhids gained power during the Badr period, they attacked

Baghdad four times and even besieged Baghdad. Naturally, Baghdad did not abandon the idea of overthrowing this emirate, which was greedy for Baghdad. Therefore, the attack by the Annazids on the territory of this emirate could not have been carried out without Baghdad's coordination and encouragement.

Accordingly, it can be concluded that the proximity of Hasanwayhids' territory to Baghdad was one of the reasons for the fall of this emirate. In fact, Baghdad did not tolerate the existence of a powerful local ambitious government inclined to expand its territory.

Tension with the Buyids

The Buyids (934-1056) was a post-Islamic Shia dynasty of Daylamite origin in Iran that ruled the central, western, and southern parts of Iran and Iraq for about 120 years and originated from Daylaman in Lahijan and Gilan.

Ali, Hasan, and Ahmad, Daylamite sons, were the founders of the Daylamite dynasty. In the beginning, they were members of the Mardavij army but were promoted after him. Subsequent events proved them to be capable and energetic leaders. Ali, who had seized Isfahan, marched south and captured Fars, while Hasan captured Jibal and Ahmad conquered Kerman and Khuzestan. Hassan entered Baghdad by advancing towards the west in (945). A year later, he overthrew the Abbasid caliph, Mustakfi, and replaced him with al-Muti'. Hence, a period of one hundred and thirty years of Buyids' control over the caliphate began. The beginning of Hasanwayhids' rule coincided with the power of the Buyids in Baghdad and their domination over the caliphate and the rule of Rukn al-Dawla Daylami over the Jibal region (Moskviyeh, 1997).

At the beginning of the Hasanwayhids' rule over the Shahrazour region, the Buyids adopted the policy of silence and obtaining the consent of the Hasanwayhids. It is believed that on the one hand, it was due to the Buyids being trapped in Khorasan, and on the other hand, it was Mir Hossein's strict dealings with the Buyid ruler, Mu'izz al-Dawla, when, despite defeating Mu'izz al-Dawla, he imposed a heavy peace agreement on him (McDowall, 2021).

Accordingly, Rukn al-Dawla chose the policy of tolerance and forbearance with the Hasanwayhids (Donohue, 1973; Septiadi, 2023). Of course, this policy was temporary and out of necessity, as after the Samanid problem was resolved in Khorasan, he sent a force under the command of his vizier, Abul Fazl ibn Amed, to suppress Hasanwayh in Dinavar. The sudden death of the vizier resulted in a peace agreement and avoiding war (Ibn Athir, 1999).

This peace was temporary and did not last long, and after the death of Badr, his territory was divided among his seven sons, which sparked internal disputes. 'Azod-al-Dawla Daylami took advantage of this opportunity and marched towards the territory of the Hasanwayhids and managed to easily conquer the territory of the Buyids (McDowall, 2021). 'Azod-al-Dawla entrusted the territory of the Hasanwayhids to Badr, a vassal of the Buyids, and he chose him as his father's successor in the Hasanwayhid Emirate.

These conditions and circumstances did not last long and after the death of 'Azod-al-Dawla (Bagley, n.d.), the dispute over the succession began among his children. The intervention of the Caliph and the spread of the internal conflicts among the Buyids helped Badr to gain power and try to get out of the dominion of the Buyids. This led to a confrontation between the forces of the Buyids and the Hasanwayhids, and the war and confrontation ended in favor of Badr ibn Hasanwayh and the Hasanwayhids (Rouzvavari, 1915). This defeat forced the Buyids to take revenge; hence,

after the death of Sharaf al-Dawla, the Buyid Baha al-Dawla took control in Baghdad in 989 and ordered an attack on the territory of the Hasanwayhids. After learning about this command, Badr sent a message to the commander of their army writing in it: "You are not able to take back what Banu Uqayl (the Uqaylids) have captured from your northern lands, even though the distance between Baghdad and the Uqaylids is less than a mile and you had to make peace with them. So how can you take my possessions and castles?" (Ibn Athir, 1999). Therefore, Badr's power and dominance led to peace between the army commander of the Buyids and the Hasanwayhids (Ibn Athir, 1999).

All in all, from the beginning of the formation of the Hasanwayhid Emirate until the fall of this dynasty in the hands of the Daylamites, there has always been tension and hostility between these two powers, except for the period when the Buyids were engaged in the war on other fronts. This tension and wars of attrition have had huge financial costs for the Hasanwayhids, despite the occasional possession of the Buyids' property. From this point of view, it can be said that the constant tension with the Buyids and their intervention in the politics of the Hasanwayhids were the reasons for the weakening and eventual fall of the Hasanwayhid Barzikani.

Internal Disputes

Hilal's rebellion against his father was the beginning of the weakening and one of the factors in the downfall of the Hasanwayhid dynasty. Ibn Athir writes about this: "Hilal was from Shazanjian. After Hilal's birth, he left his mother, so Hilal grew up away from his father, and his father did not like him so much. Badr's fatherly blessing was granted to his other son Isa." Badr decided to banish Hilal due to his severity and gave him Samaghan. Hilal also saw his comfort in living separately from his father, and the first thing he did was misbehave and cause trouble to Ibn Māzi, the ruler of Shahrazour, his neighbor. Ibn Māzi was the ruler of Shahrazour and was in full agreement with Badr" (Ibn Athir, 1999). These movements caused Ibn Māzi to complain to Badr and Badr had to call his son to Dinavar. In Dinavar, Badr managed to make his children depend on him through his kindness and forgiveness, and they even asked him to kill his father (Ibn Athir, 1999). Finally, there was a war between Badr and Hilal forces. When Badr was arrested with the aid of Hilal supporters, instead of killing him, he was sent to Sarmaj Castle. This tension caused internal and family disputes, which ultimately led to the termination of Hasanwayhid's control over the land of Jibal, because these conflicts themselves paved the way for the weakening of the Hasanwayhids and gave rise to the Buyids' rule.

The beginning of the internal disputes among the Hasanwayhids and the continuation of these conflicts, regardless of the grounds for the intervention of the Buyids, as well as the weakening of the Hasanwayhid army and its division, resulted in the loss of the opportunity for unity and the emergence of another powerful emir in the Hasanwayhid family. It even caused the audacity of the neighbors of the Hasanwayhids to attack their territory. Hence, in 1015, Abu al-Shawk, the head of the Annazid tribe, managed to defeat Tahir ibn Hilal, the last emir of the Hasanwayhid Emirate (Ibn Athir, 1999), and by killing him, terminated the Hasanwayhid reign.

Based on the abovementioned, the internal disputes of the Hasanwayhids at the time of Badr, internal tension, the intervention of the Buyids, and the audacity of the neighbors to encroach on the territory of the Hasanwayhids provided the ground for the early fall of this powerful dynasty in the Jibal region by the Annazids.

CONCLUSION

The Hasanwayhid government, established during the weakened era of the Abbasid caliphate and the dominance of the Buyid family over Baghdad, played a pivotal role in shaping the political landscape of the Jibal region. Centered in the strategic city of Dinavar, the Hasanwayhids ruled for one hundred and thirty years, overseeing a vast territory and contributing to the development of the region. Despite their efforts to enhance the area's prosperity, conflicts arose due to their control over crucial trade routes, leading to resentment from the Baghdad government, caliphs, and the Buyids. The constant attrition attacks, conspiracies, geographic proximity to Baghdad, and internal power struggles eventually led to the downfall of the powerful Hasanwayhid dynasty. It is crucial to note that the establishment of this Kurdish Emirate in the Jibal region set the stage for the formation of subsequent Kurdish emirates during the Abbasid period and later under various governments in Iran and the Ottoman Empire. Consequently, until the decline of the Ottoman Empire, the presence of Kurdish emirates in the Jibal and Shahrazour region, known as Kurdistan, remained a distinctive political characteristic of the area.

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