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## **Nur al-Din Muhammad II (542-607 AH / 1148-1210 CE)**

Farhad Daftary

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Nur al-Din Muhammad II, Nizari Isma‘ili Imam and the fifth lord of Alamut (561-607 AH / 1166-1210 CE). Born in Shawwal 542 AH / March 1148 CE, he succeeded to the leadership of the Nizari community and state on the death of his father, Hasan II, on 6 Rabi‘ al-Awwal 561 AH / 9 January 1166. He devoted his long and peaceful reign of some forty-four years to managing the affairs of the Nizari *da‘wa* and community, especially in Persia, from the central headquarters of the Isma‘ilis at Alamut. Being a thinker and a prolific writer, he also contributed actively to the Nizari teachings of his time.

Nur al-Din Muhammad II affirmed the Nizari Fatimid genealogy of his father and, therefore, of himself. Henceforth, the lords of Alamut were acknowledged as *imams*, descendants of Nizar b. al-Mustansir, by the Nizari Isma‘ili community. In the doctrinal field, he systematically expounded and elaborated the important doctrine of the Qiyama, announced by his father in 559 AH / 1164 CE, and placed the current Nizari *imam* and his autonomous teaching authority at the very centre of that doctrine (see *Haft bab-i Baba Sayyidna*, ed. W. Ivanow, in *Two early Ismaili treatises*, Bombay 1933, pp. 4-42).

Aside from petty warfare, the history of the Nizari state in Persia was politically uneventful under Imam Nur al-Din Muhammad. However, the Syrian Nizaris were more involved at this time in their own local alliances and conflicts. There are also indications that a widening rift had developed between this Nizari *imam* and Rashid al-Din Sinan (d. 589 AH / 1193 CE), the contemporary leader of the Syrian Nizaris, although a complete break was avoided. Rashid al-Din and other Persian historians also report a detailed story about how the Nizaris of his time persuaded the famous Sunni theologian Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (d. 606 AH / 1209 CE) to refrain from denouncing them in public. Having ruled longer than any other lord of Alamut, Nur al-Din Muhammad II died, possibly of poison, on 10 Rabi‘ al-Awwal 607 AH / 1 September 1210 CE.



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