

A Study of the Intellectual and Cultural Nature of the Al Ziyar Government

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Abstract: Al Ziyar was one of the first Iranian Shiite dynasties of Dailami who were able to rule different areas from north to central Iran for nearly two centuries. This dynasty was established in the early fourth century AH with the special military and political tactics of Mardavij Ziyari. Al Ziyar after the period of glory and early glory, whose rule in some cases extended to the south and west of Iran; They suffered from weakness and early decline in power, so that sometimes the scope of their rule did not exceed the areas around Gorgan. After a while, they became completely puppets of the Seljuks. Due to the long wars with Al Buwayh and on the other hand due to excessive flexibility, intellectual, cultural and political tolerance with the Sunni states of Samani, Ghaznavid and Seljuk religions; Ziyaris could never take an important step in promoting the ideas of Shiism. Even in the matter of cultural and civilizational achievements for Shiism, their function is not considered much.

Keywords: Al Ziyar, Dilmian, Shiite religion, intellectual and cultural nature, Mardavij Ziyari.

Introduction

Statement of the problem

The history of post-Islamic Iran has witnessed the rise and fall of many independent and semi-independent dynasties, each of which in turn had different roles in the spread of Islamic civilization in different regions according to the ideas and political and cultural performance of their rulers. Some of these dynasties spread the Sunni religion and others propagated Shiism. Meanwhile, some of these governments were thinking of reviving the great empire of Iran like the Sassanids and Achaemenids, of course in its Islamic form, one of these dynasties was Al-Ziyar.

In terms of time and place, the Ziyari dynasty was formed between the Alawite government of Tabarestan, the Samanids of Khorasan, and the Buyid dynasty of central and southern and western Iran. From 315 to 471 AH, Ziyari ruled the northern and central regions of Iran such as Gorgan, Mazandaran, Gilan, Rey, Isfahan and Qazvin.

Al-Ziyar, who was at war with Al Buwayh and the Samanids during the height of his power, was forced to compromise with them after a while with the emergence of weakness in power in order to preserve his interests. The golden age of the rule of Al Ziyar was the period of Mardavij's life and after his death they gradually declined, so that in some cases the rulers of Ziyari also lost Gorgan and took refuge in the court of the Samani sultans and at the end of their rule completely Became puppets of the Seljuks; Hence, in most cases, their government cannot be considered more than a weak and turbulent local government.

Mardavij laid the foundations of a government whose rulers ruled parts of Gorgan, Qoms, Tabarestan, Deylam, Gilan, Qazvin, Rey, Isfahan and Khuzestan between 316 and 470 AH / 928 to 1077 AD. The Ziyaris, along with other Dailami branches in western and eastern Iran, ruled Iran for about two centuries with the help of a group of small and large local Iranian dynasties. Two centuries that, like a bridge, linked the era of Arab domination to the rule of the Turkic tribes. It should be borne in mind that in the history of Iran, the independence movements of these local governments have a special value.

In this article, we want to explore the intellectual and cultural characteristics of Ziyariyan and research their achievements in the field of culture and civilization of Islamic Iran. Mardavij Ziyari established an independent government from the north to some parts of southern and central Iran, which of course is among the Islamic and Shiite governments. The Ziyari dynasty, after a period of initial and short peak, their power decreases day by day, so that most of the time they became local rulers under the supervision of other governments, hence the points and contents mentioned about them in historical books; It is very low and scattered. According to what has been said, knowing the thoughts and ideas of the Ziyari dynasty is essential for knowing the history of Iran correctly.

This study intends to first study the cultural characteristics of the Al Ziyar government. To achieve this, it will be examined which religion the founders of the Al Ziyar government were inclined to at the time of its establishment and after the establishment of their government. And also which religion did they officially adopt? In addition, what was the relationship of the elders of the Al Ziyar government with the Shiite scholars, and also what efforts did the Ziyari dynasty make to promote and establish Shiism in their lands? In the next stage of this research, it seeks to discover the intellectual characteristics of the Al Ziyar government. At this stage the question arises that, To what extent have the government of the men of Al Ziyar accepted the ideas of the infallible Shiite Imams (as)? Also, did the Ziyari dynasty use the ideas of Shiite scholars to govern their territory?

Ziyari dynasty ID

The Ziyariyan family was a native of Gilan (one of the cities of northern Iran) who considered their roots and lineage to belong to "Aghash Vahadan", who was the ruler of Gilan during the reign of Kaykhosrow.¹ King Kikavus Ziyari quotes the Sassanid Anushirvan as saying to his son Gilanshah: "It is obligatory for us to listen to the words and advice of that king (the embrace of the Wahdans) because we are from the generation and children of that king."² Some people also consider "Vardanshah Gilani" as the ancestor of Ziyar.³ It is also said that Mardavij's mother, Ziyar's wife, was the daughter of "Tida Paduspan" and that his uncle was the standard of Herosandan, the head of the Gil Corps and the ruler of the Paduspan dynasty.⁴ The Ziyar himself was alive during the reign of Mardavij and Voshmgir until 337 AH. However, what is reflected in the historical news of the "Voshmgir" past can provide a picture of the past of Al-Ziyar's family. This picture shows Voshmgir and his brother Mardavij, the children of a poor family from Gilan, who, if they had served in the IRGC during the war, would have worked hard in peacetime around Gilan farms. They were engaged in agriculture and planting rice. And it is clear that such an occupation does not justify the claim that their ancestors belonged to the great noble families of ancient Iran. On the other hand, only three years before Mardavij's death, at his insistence, Vashmgir left his farm and rice cultivation in the swampy lands "around 320 AH" and took up government affairs.

Table 1 : The names of the Ziyari kings and the duration of the reign and the main policies and cultural activities of each, respectively:

N u m b e r	King's name	Duration of the kingdom AH	The main policy of the king	Political and cultural activities
1	Mardavij son of Ziyar	323 -316 AH	Expanding geographical territory	Holding and performing celebrations of ancient Iran

¹. Nawada Mahalab, *Al-mojmal Al-tawarikh wa Al-qeses*, p 302.

². Kikavous, *Qaboosnameh*, pp 5-4 and 50.

³. Mofrad, *Zohor wa soqote Al Ziyar*, pp 80-81.

⁴. Nazerzadeh Kermani, The Great Men Who Were Killed in the Bath, *Mehr Magazine*, No 8, p 837.

2	Voshmgir son of Ziyar	357 -323	Trying to maintain the boundaries of geographical territory	Gaining governmental legitimacy with the support of the Abbasid Caliphate and the Samanid government
3	Biston son of Voshmgir	366 -357	Quarrel with his brother Qaboos over succession	Peace and reconciliation with Al Buwayh to confront the Samanids
4	Qaboos son of Voshmgir	403 -366	Supporting Shiite scholars, promoting knowledge and science-friendliness	Adib, poet and calligrapher but at the same time violent and cruel
5	Manouche son of Qaboos	423 -403	Obedience to the Sultan of Ghaznavi to maintain the survival of his government	Shiite orientation and promotion of Shiite ideas, support of Shiites
6	Anoushir son of Manouche	435 -423	Tolerance with the Ghaznavids and then the Seljuks	Nominal emirate due to young age
7	Jastan son of Anoushirvan	- 435	Political passivity versus Seljuk	The political collapse of the Ziyari dynasty

Table 2: After this, Ziyari princes became puppets of Seljuks.

N u m b e r	King's name	Duration of the kingdom AH	The main policy of the king	Political and cultural activities
1	Alexander son of Qaboos	441 - 434	There is no significant performance	There is no significant performance
2	Kikavus son of Alexander	462 -441	Expand education, promote science and literature	Low power but genius and scientist, owner of Qaboosnameh
3	Jahanshah, son of Kikavus	471 -462	There is no significant performance	There is no significant performance

Mardavij was one of the chiefs of the Gil people of northern Iran, who had gradually gained a position in the Alawite and Samanid armies. Mardavij was first one of the Samani princes and rulers in the service of Qaratkin, then he joined Asfar, the son of Shirviyeh, and was appointed by him to rule Zanjan. Until 319 AH, Mardavij was the commander of Lashkar-e-Asfar. In the same year, Mardavij allied with Salar, Amir Shemiran and Tarom against Asfar after leaving for Asfar to capture Qazvin. Asfar became aware

of the conspiracy and was captured and killed by Mardavij while fleeing to Alamut Castle in Qazvin, where his family, reserves and property were located.⁵

Mardavij in the year 319 AH. AH did not return to Gorgan after the assassination of Asfar, but expanded his rule within the same limits and conquered the lands under Asfar's rule. Mardavij needed to pay more taxes to expand the borders of his government.⁶ Therefore, he settled Makan Ibn Kaki in Gorgan and moved west and southwest for conquests and conquered the cities of Hamedan, Balad Jabal, beyond Hamedan (Kermanshah, Lorestan, Kurdistan and Peshteh Kooch), Dinor and Halvan. He then captured Isfahan, which was in turmoil, and sent Muhammad ibn Wahban Fazili to Ahvaz with an army through Shushtar and Izeh, and conquered that area as well. The cities conquered by Mardavij were emptied of the armies of the Abbasid caliphate. After that, Mardavij sent a courier to Al-Muqtadar, the Abbasid Caliph, and undertook to pay a sum as a tax, and Al-Muqtadir handed over Hamedan and the month of Kufa to him.⁷ And this was the process of formation and formalization of the semi-independent government of Ziyariyan Deilami.

Mardavij's relations with the caliphate deteriorated in the last years of his life, and in one conflict he was able to break the powerful Abbasid army and establish the rule of the Iranian Ziyar dynasty from Tabarestan in the north to Khuzestan in the south. Mardavij was the founder of the Ziyari dynasty in all its dimensions, and the emergence of the Ziyari dynasty was by no means a movement or a revolution, and had no characteristics of a movement other than a powerful leadership.

In addition to the formation of power, the era of Mardavij was the era of consolidation and the peak of glory of this family, so that the rulers of Ziyari after Mardavij never achieved that authority and the greatness of his time. The Ziyari dynasty often ruled over small areas of the Caspian Sea coast under the banner of other Iranian dynasties. Although the Ziyari rulers other than Mardavij often did not have special power and glory; But the reign of this dynasty is relatively long. The founder of this dynasty was finally killed in 323 AH in his palace bath by several Turkish slaves.⁸ He was succeeded by his brother Vashmigir, who had previously served as governor of Rey. Vashmigir, after successive defeats, accepted the obedience of the Samanids and delivered a sermon in the name of Amir Samani.⁹ After the death of the Voshmgir, rule passed to his children and they ruled one after another.¹⁰ Since then, the Ziyari government has been limited to Gorgan and its environs, and this was the early beginning of the weakness and decline of the new Ziyari government.

After the Battle of Dandaghan in 431 AH, the power of the Ghaznavids was lost. Since then, the Ziyaris were forced to be under the influence of the Seljuks. They lost the Caspian Sea and since then they have never played a role outside their sphere of power and have not shown any power of their own. They were reduced to a local ruler under the Seljuks. Therefore, the points and materials that have been mentioned about Al Ziyar in public histories are very few and scattered.¹¹

However, Mardavij, in the early days of his reign, nurtured the religion of Zoroaster and the governments of ancient Iran. And wanted for himself a government like the government of Khosrow Parviz and Cyrus, And like Yaqub Laith Saffari, he took a few steps to overthrow the Abbasid Caliphate; But he never achieved his dreams, and the realm of his rule at the height of his power did not extend beyond the northern regions and to some extent the center of Iran. Mardavij also failed to promote his ideas, as one of Mardavij's contemporary poets puts it: "Mardavij's death extinguished the fire of the

⁵. Ameli, *Tarikh Royan*, p 82; Ibn Khaldun, *Tarikh Ibn Khaldun*, vol 4, p 558.

⁶. Ibn Athir, *Al-Kamil Fi Al-Tarikh*, vol 8, p 196.

⁷. Mas'udi, *morudj al-dhahab*, vol 4, p 280.

⁸. The reason for this assassination is considered to be Mardavij's mistreatment of Turkish troops. He despised the Turks and always treated the Turkish slaves harshly, but he was kind to his Dailami allies. Among the assassins are Bajkum and Tuzun, both of whom later became Amir al-Amra in Baghdad; Mas'udi, *morudj al-dhahab*, vol 5, p 271.

⁹. Hamedani, *Takmelieh Tarikh Al-Tabari*, p 120.

¹⁰. Mehrabadi, *Tarikh selselei Ziyari*, p 349.

¹¹. Bath worth, "A few points about the historical events related to Al Ziyar in Gorgan and Tabarestan", translated by Ahmad Ahmadi Birjandi, *Journal of Jostarhaye adabi*, No. 22, p 379.

Magi.¹² Mardavij gradually became influenced by the atmosphere of the people of Deylam as well as the Ismaili and Zaidi missionaries and became Muslims and became Ismaili or Zaidi Shiites.¹³

Vashmimir made a pact with Thaerullah Alavi and appointed a Shiite missionary to run his affairs in his capital. This Islamism and Shiism increased in the later Ziyari kings and reached its peak during the reign of Sultan Qaboos. Qaboos supported the Shiite scholars and literature of his time such as Ibn Sina and Biruni. Although Al Ziyar cannot be called a Shiite movement, the nature of this government changed in such a way that even Orientalists consider the Ziyari dynasty to be a Shiite state. Ziyariyan due to many conflicts and loss of his government territory, which in some cases even included the center of their government. As well as the political asylum of their rulers; As they should not have been able to play a special role in the promotion and expansion of Islamic and Shiite culture and civilization, and it can be boldly said that their period of rule, despite a considerable length of time, is devoid of cultural and civilizational works. The rule of Al Ziyar after Mardavij and Voshmimir due to the weakness of power, He often resorted to political and religious tolerance with other governments and ideas, and they failed to spread their Shiite ideas properly. However, a detailed study of the political and religious performance of the Ziyari dynasty is the main task of this article.

The intellectual and cultural nature of the Ziyari government

The more we refer to the early and contemporary historical sources and texts about the intellectual and cultural nature of Al Ziyar and its founder, nothing but the repetition of these words that Mardavij sought to overthrow the Caliphate of Baghdad and revive the Sassanid Empire; But whether Mardavij really hated Islam and religious sanctities throughout his life is unproven; First of all, there is no convincing evidence for this claim in historical sources, and Mardavij's excessive attention to overthrowing the caliphate and fighting against it dates back to the early years of his rule, and we see that after consolidating the foundations of his government, these issues are no longer relevant. On the other hand, other Iranian dynasties, such as Ziyariyan, emphasized Iranian traditions and the honors of ancient Iran. As well as the Nationalism movement, which was formed in Iran long before Al Ziyar came to power. It was always a reminder of the glory and Greatness of pre-Islamic Iran and the honors of Iranians And Mardavij was not the first to raise, repeat, and emphasize these issues.

Among these are the patriotic actions of Mardavij Ziyari, an example of which can be found in abundance among the kings of other independent and semi-independent Iranian states; We can not always be considered as an excuse to prove the irreligion and anti-Islam of Mardavij and other Ziyari kings. Even among the kings of Al-Buwayh, who throughout history have always been introduced as Shiite promoters in Iran, Examples of these behaviors can be seen. Some historians have summarized Mardavij's adaptation of the Sassanid kings in four areas:

- A) Preparing the throne of the kingdom adorned with all kinds of jewelry.
- B) Construction of palaces in the style of Sassanid architecture.
- C) Holding celebrations and ceremonies with a lot of luxury and expenses.
- D) Using the title of emperor.¹⁴

Ibn Athir's report that "After the conquest of Isfahan, they made a golden throne for Mardavij, who rode on the backs of the rulers, and whenever he sat on the throne, the pillars of the troops stood away from him." And no one spoke to him Except for special men who were trained to do so, "People were very afraid of him."¹⁵ It is an exaggeration. For it is not possible that in a time of crisis when every king has two days to rule, The man of Dilami, As powerful as it is, Can come from a distant and chaotic path And create such a possibility for himself.¹⁶ What can be proved about Mardavij before his conversion to Islam

¹². Suli, *Akhbar al-Radhi b-Allah wa Al-Mottagi aw akhbar dolat al-abasia men senate 322 ala 333 Hejjria*, pp 21-22.

¹³. Ravandi, *Tarikh Ejtemaei Iran*, vol 9, p 103.

¹⁴. Vakili et al, *Roykard farhangi - Ejtemaei Al Ziyar*, p 133.

¹⁵. Ibn Athir, *Al-Kamil Fi Al-Tarikh*, vol 8, p 270.

¹⁶. Rajabi, "Jaieqahe Mardavij dar Tarikh Iran", *Peyk Noor Magazine*, No 9, p 46.

and Shiism is that Mardavij was one of the Iranians who was interested in Iranian rituals and traditions and Zoroastrian religion and tried to strengthen national principles.¹⁷

The life-giving religion of Islam, brought about far-reaching changes in the beliefs of the Iranian people; However, in addition to choosing Islam, the Iranians practiced their customs and celebrations sporadically. Especially in the Ziyari period there was a great emphasis on the revival of ancient traditions; Therefore, it is said that during the celebration that Mardavij held in Isfahan, according to the ancient tradition, they lit fires and flames and rejoiced.¹⁸

Vashmigr is the second Ziyari ruler to come to power after his brother Mardavij was killed. He was the ruler of Ray on his behalf before Mardavij's death. Unlike Mardavij, Vashmagir was not very interested in history and did not seek to restore the greatness of the Sassanids. It seems that Iran-friendship was the only element for Ziyari to start working and gaining power, and after that Ziyari rulers did not pay attention to it. Vashmagir and his sons did not have the same ambitious ideas as Mardavij and realistically followed the caliphate system, thus gaining legitimacy for their rule from the Abbasid caliphs. Ever since Vashmigr struck a coin in the name of the caliphs of Baghdad and delivered a sermon, he had no power to achieve the same thoughts as his brother, so he abandoned Iran-friendliness and instead strengthened the nationalism that justified his rule over the people. Of course, as we have said before, Mardavij obeyed the Abbasid caliphs after consolidating his rule. And after capturing Isfahan, he handed over this city to the representative of the caliph "Muhammad ibn Yaqut" by the order of the caliph, To be able to receive the emirate's decree for other lands under his control by the caliph. According to some reports, during the life of his brother Mardavij, Voshmigr Blame him for obeying the Abbasid caliph.¹⁹

The kings of Al Ziyar sought to establish a strong and centralized local government and sought to distance themselves as much as possible from the obedience of the Abbasid caliphs. To achieve this goal, they pretended to value the Iranian nation, to have a special prejudice against the Iranian nation, and to praise them wholeheartedly. One of the manifestations of their tendency towards Iranian nationality was choosing Iranian names. However, some historians also believe that they had a special attachment to the ancient nation, culture and rituals of Iran and wanted to revive ancient Iran with its characteristics, which is unlikely to be proven by non-biased historical data and what has been said; Because from Mardavij and Voshmigr to other Ziyari kings, not a single case of insult to Islamic sanctities or any act that insults the religion of Islam has been reported.

1. The religious intellectual relationship of Al Ziyar with the Shiite religion

Regarding the first tendencies of the founder of the Ziyari dynasty to Shiism, it has been said that the method of the Ismaili Shiite preachers, including Abu Hatem Razi,²⁰ who had great theological influence, "and sent da'is from Ray to Tabarestan, And great people such as: Ahmad ibn Ali Amir Ray, and Asfar ibn Shirwiyah and Mardavij, turned to his religion.²¹ Mardavij was influenced for some time by the propaganda of Abu Hatem Razi and initially supported the Ismailis, but this support did not last long.²² When Mardavij went to Gorgan to fight Nasr bin Ahmad Samani, he became angry with the Ismailis and killed many of them, even their wives and children.²³ On the other hand, "Mohammad Ali Mofrad" says: "Voshmigr" criticism of "Mardavij" for following the Abbasid caliphs and the growing popularity of Shiism in Gilan in those days has created the possibility that the Al Ziyar were originally Zaidi Shiites.²⁴

¹⁷. Zamchi Asfzari, *Rawdat al-Janat fi ousaf mdine Herat*, vol 1, p 294.

¹⁸. Ibn Khaldun, *Tarikh Ibn Khaldun*, vol 4, p 562.

¹⁹. Ravandi, *Tarikh Ejtemaei Iran*, vol 2, p 223.

²⁰. According to Hamid al-Din Kermani (pp 2-4), an Ismaili writer, Abu Hatam Razi's debate with Muhammad ibn Zakaria Razi took place in Ray in the presence of Mardavij Ziyari done, Zakariya Razi, *Rasael Falsafiyah*, pp 291-292.

²¹. Ravandi, *Tarikh Ejtemaei Iran*, vol 9, p 103.

²². Hamedani, *jama Al-Tawarikh, Ismailis*, text, p 11; Abu Hayyan Tawhidi, *Al-amta 'wa Al-Mu'nsa*, vol. Kashani, *Zobdt al-Tawarikh*, p 22.

²³. Meghrizi, *eteaz al-Hanafa be-akhbar Aeemae Al-Fatemeiein Al-Khoulafa*, vol 1, p 247.

²⁴. Safa, *Tarikh adabiat der Iran*, Vol 1, p 244.

However, after attaining the throne, Voshmagir obeyed the caliph based on the facts ahead and even mentioned him in sermons and coins.

There are differences in the early historical sources about the religion of "Voshmgir" and there is no explicit information about his religion. "Bertels" considers him a Zoroastrian.²⁵ According to the anecdote, Ibn Ja'did first saw Vashmigir planting rice with farmers.²⁶ "Bertels," he says: "It was a Zoroastrian custom to dedicate one day each year to sowing seeds with farmers." Of course, Bertels' argument alone cannot prove anything, and by no means can it be a complete reason for Voshmagir to be a Zoroastrian. The most that can be deduced from this story is that Voshmgir had Iranian tendencies. Wilfred Madlung, on the other hand, points to the Dilamian adherence to Zaidi beliefs. The engraving of the testimonies²⁷ and verses of the Qur'an on the coin coins minted in 347 AH also shows Voshmgir Islamic beliefs.²⁸

Some believe that Qaboos was a follower of the Sunni religion. The first reason is his friendly relations with anti-Shiite and staunch Sunni figures such as Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni, and the second reason is Qaboos' praise of the caliphs in some of his treatises.²⁹ This argument is also not acceptable because; First, al Buwayh and other Shiite dynasties also had tolerant and friendly relations with some Sunni rulers, or vice versa, if the interests of their government required it, they would go to war with a Shiite state And secondly, we said that al Ziyar was most likely a Zaydi Shiite, and we know that the Zaydis accepted the first and second caliphs in terms of belief. Another strong proof of the Zaidi religion is the sultans of Al Ziyar and especially Sultan Qaboos It is a text left by Shams al-Ma'ali Qaboos who criticizes' Uthman by expressing his satisfaction with Abu Bakr and Umar, And this is the definite idea of the Zaidis.

Dr. Zarrinkoob writes about the Shiites Belief Al Ziyar: Although the government of Al Ziyar was more religious in the beginning and began to support the Shiites and oppose the Sunnis, especially the Caliph of Baghdad, But because of their political legitimacy, they were forced to change their religious nature after coming to power in order to remain in power, That is, they sacrificed their religious legitimacy for political legitimacy. Those who were far from in power did not like this change of position. "Vashmigir" criticized his brother for the apparent change of religious orientation and did not even intend to accept cooperation with his brother because of such difficulties. What is certain is that the Al-Ziyar needed the support of the Caliphate of Baghdad, so they had to be patient with the Abbasids; Although in some cases their esoteric intentions or heart inclinations are apparently revealed, Like Manouchehr Ibn Qaboos' tendency towards Shiism, which caused Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni to march on Gorgan, and Manouchehr left the city and fled.³⁰

2. The religious intellectual relationship of the Ziyari government with Shiite scholars

Discussing the political relationship of the Ziyari government with religious scholars and Shiite scholars, regarding the interest of some Ziyari kings in religious scholars and scholars, Investigating the extent to which the Ziyari kings benefited from the thoughts and opinions of these scholars in the administration And whether the Ziyari government in cases such as: Helping Shiite scholars to spread Shiite thought and jurisprudence in their own lands, Use of Shiite scientific texts in public education, Culture-building and civilization-building based on pure Shiite thought, Supporting the Shiites and helping them to fight the anti-Shiite currents and other similar case, It should be noted that all of this is a subset of the intellectual nature of a state, To what extent have they been able to play a role? In this particular case, it is safe to say that the Al ziyar could not play a significant role for Shiism. Although historical sources speak of the close connection of Sultan Qaboos and other Ziyari rulers with Shiite scholars and scientists; But how effective this relationship has been And what actions have been taken

²⁵. Madelung, Wilfred, *"The Minox Dynasties of Northern Iran" in The Cambridge History of Iran*, Vol 4W.

²⁶. Ibn Athir, *Al-Kamil Fi Al-Tarikh*, vol 8, p 246.

²⁷. ((I bear witness that there is no god but God and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of God)).

²⁸. Torabi and Vasegh, *seke-haie Islami Iran as agaz ta hamleie Mogol*, p 385.

²⁹. Ibn Esfandiari, *Tarikh Tabarestan*, vol 1, p 98; Yamini, *Tarikh Yamini*, pp 252-253.

³⁰. Zarrinkoob, *tarikh mardome Iran - az payane sasanian ta payane Al Buwayh*, p 393.

based on the thoughts of Shiite scholars in the Ziyari government, No specific information is mentioned in the sources.

3. Building a civilization based on Shiite thought

The greatest masterpiece of artistic architecture of the Al Ziyar government is the "Gonbad Kavous" building. This building was built during the reign of Kavous bin Vashmgir and in the city of Gonbad Kavous, which was the capital of the Ziyari kings. The architectural style of the building is Razi style. Will Durant writes about it: "Gorgan was one of the great provinces of Iran in the 10th century AD during the Ziyari period and was famous for its intellectual and literary emirs, such as Kavous bin Vashmgir who invited Ibn Sina to his court. "This city has a 52-meter dome." ³¹

No significant information has been reported about the actions of Ziyaryan to spread Shiite culture and civilization in the sources; Perhaps the main reason is the excessive tolerance of Al ziyar against Sunnis or even religious minorities, So that in some periods this religious tolerance is so deep and rooted, Which just makes it very difficult to realize and prove that the ruler of the ziyari time is a Shiite ruler. On the other hand, the reunion and the long alliance of the Ziyari rulers with the elders of the Sunni government of Samani, Ghaznavid and Seljuk can also be another reason; In such a way that Sultan Qaboos, despite the many scientific, artistic and moral virtues and virtues praised by Sahib Ibn Ibad, took refuge in the Samanid court in Khorasan for eighteen years of his youth.³² And Sultan Manouchehr, in order to maintain a small area of his rule, had to constantly send great and remarkable gifts to Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni and bow down before him;³³ Hence, the long-term weakness of military and political power, as well as the lack of expansion of Shiite culture and civilization by the government of Ziyari men, is obvious and undisputed.

4. Religious achievements for Shiism

Some of the kings of Al Ziyar helped to spread culture, science and literature, and not only encouraged poets and scientists, but also those such as Qaboos ibn Voshmgir and Kikavus ibn Iskandar themselves had works in science, literature and calligraphy. The poems and treatises left by Qaboos and the famous work of Kikavous "Qaboosnameh" have been considered by writers and researchers until today.

Qaboos bin Voshmgir deserved the title of "Shams al-Ma'ali" because of his unique knowledge and literature. Despite his natural violence, which even his grandchildren Kikavous did not deny, he was considered a writer, sage and artist poet in his time And during the Emirate in Khorasan, he gained more strength than the connection with the writers and scholars of Neishabour and Bukhara. His handwriting was so beautiful that when Sahib Ibn Ibad saw it, he wondered if this handwriting was Qaboos or full of peacocks.³⁴ Abu Tayyib al-Mubtani, an Arab poet, also wrote a poem; He referred to the beauty of Qaboos handwriting and he artistic taste. As Abu Mansour al-Thalabi in Yatimah al-Dahr, when he quotes examples of Qaboos' words with much praise, And his writings have been admired by Khorasan Arabic writers. Familiarity with the new teachings and the acquaintance of Sultan Qaboos with the Qur'an and his great interest in the religion of Islam and the protection of its field, at the age of 63, make him a wise old man and a wise prince. His life experience provides a clear picture of the situation and thoughts of different classes of society in a period of adventurous history of Iran.

5. Religious tolerance with opponents

Regarding religious tolerance with the opposition, as mentioned above, Mardavij was first propagated by Abu Hatem Razi (a famous Ismaili da'i) and initially became an Ismaili Shiite and supported the Ismailis, but this support did not last long. According to Maqrizi, when Mardavij went to Gorgan to fight Nasr ibn Ahmad, he became angry with the Ismailis and killed many of them, even their wives and children.³⁵ This shows that Mardavij, after becoming a Zaidi, did not even accept the views of the Ismailis

³¹. Durant, *History of Civilization*, vol 4, p 296.

³². Khand mir, *Tarikh Habib Al-Seeir*, vol 2, p 441.

³³. Pirnia and Iqbal Ashtiani, *Tarikh Iran az aqaz ta engeraze selseleie Qajar, detailed Tarikh mofasal*, p142.

³⁴. Yazdadi, *Kamal al-Balaghah*, pp. 107 and 37.

³⁵. Meghrizi, *eteaz al-Honafa be-akhbar Aeemae Al-Fatemeiein Al-Khoulafa*, vol 1, p 247.

and treated them as such; Therefore, it can be said about Mardavij's religious tolerance with the opposition that, Mardavij was not religiously tolerant of the opposition due to his violent spirit, and his obedience to the Sunni Abbasid caliph also had political reasons for Mardavij.

In the case of Voshmgir, it is said that before reaching the government, he was opposed to Mardavij's tolerance of the caliphate. And the main reason for this opposition was the Sunni religion of the Abbasids; However, Voshmgir himself, like Mardavij, as mentioned, After coming to power, he obediently and realistically obeyed the caliphate. In summary, these tolerances are more political tolerances to maintain power; But religious tolerance of the opposition and the acceptance of their views and ideas is not true, at least in the case of Mardavij and Voshmgir.

also, In the case of Manouchehr, the most fanatical Shah Ziyari to the ideas of the Shiite religion, it can be said that he, due to his extensive political tolerance with the powerful Sunni government of the Ghaznavid religion, He also had to have religious tolerance; Because in some cases religious tolerance with the opposition is necessary to maintain one's unity and to have good political relations with the opposition governments, So if we want to discuss the religious tolerance of a state with the opposition, we must first consider their political situation. And in a situation where a government is at the height of weakness and degeneration of power and is forced to political and religious tolerance, talking about the degree of freedom of thought and religious tolerance with the opposition seems ridiculous, by studying Manouchehr's story, this can be clearly understood.

Manouchehr officially came to power in 403 AH after Qaboos's death. He delivered a sermon and a coin in his name. Shortly afterwards, the Caliph of Baghdad sent him clothes, flags, and a charter of government in the lands under his father's control. And with the consolation of his father's death, he nicknamed him "Falak Al-Maealy".³⁶

6. The beginning of a period of weakness and decline

With the beginning of Manouchehr's rule, the period of decline of Al Ziyar rule began. Manouchehr and the emirs lost their independence after him and became dependent on the government of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni and other powerful sultans. Manouchehr first tried to attach himself to the powerful Abbasid Caliphate; In this way, it will give more strength and consistency to its government. And be able to resist possible opposition. In the next step, he sent a group of elders of Gorgan city with many gifts to Sultan Mahmud and approached him and introduced himself as ready to obey him. And it was decided to mention Mahmud's name on the pulpits of Gorgan, Tabarestan and Qoms and to pay fifty thousand dinars to Mahmud every year as a treasury tribute.³⁷ During Mahmud's campaign to conquer Nardin Castle in India, Manouchehr gave him Two thousand of his best soldiers.³⁸

Manouchehr, who had used his previous works as a prelude to getting closer to Mahmud Ghaznavi, Took the final step and Abu Saeed Shulki; The mayor of Gorgan and one of the great dignitaries of that city with the judge of Gorgan, Who was one of the great narrators of the time, He sent another group of elders to propose to the daughter of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni.³⁹

In 420 AH, when Mahmud's army was heading to the land of Ray, Manouchehr felt threatened and feared that his emirate would be of interest to Mahmud; In this regard, as a solution, during Mahmud's return trip to Ray, he sent about nine hundred thousand dinars to Mahmud and moved to the impassable mountains as a precaution. It is likely that Mahmud's campaign against Gorgan was more motivated by Manouchehr's support for the Shiites.⁴⁰ Manouchehr's alliance with the Ghaznavids can in no way be considered a reason for his inclination towards the Sunni religion, as Zarrinkub is of the same opinion and considers Manouchehr a fanatical Shiite.⁴¹ The main reason for Manouchehr's tolerance of a fanatical Sunni state, the excessive gaining of power by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni at the time, and Manouchehr's

³⁶. Ibn Athir, *Al-Kamil Fi Al-Tarikh*, vol 9, p 239.

³⁷. Marashi, *Tarikh Tabarestan wa Royan wa Mazandaran*, p 88.

³⁸. Jurfadqani, *Tarikh yamini Translation*, p 351.

³⁹. Sehmi, *Tarikh Jorjan*, p 228; Ibn Esfandiari, *Tarikh Tabarestan*, vol 2, p 14.

⁴⁰. Ibn Esfandiari, *Tarikh Tabarestan*, vol 1, p 101.

⁴¹. Zarrinkoob, *Tarikh mardome Iran - az payane sasanian ta payane Al Buwayh*, p 393.

fear of losing his territory, forced him to form an alliance to maintain his borders; Of course, this action could not stop Sultan Mahmud's campaign against Manouchehr.

Manouchehr died in 421 AH and was succeeded by his son Anoushirvan, nicknamed "Sharaf al-Ma'ali".⁴² His rule was confirmed by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni. Once when the Al Ziyar rose up against the Ghaznavids, Sultan Massoud marched to the shores of the Caspian Sea; However, because Sultan Massoud was defeated by Tughral Beyk Seljuk in 429 AH and the western part of the Ghaznavid countries fell to the Seljuks; In the end, Anoushirvan had no choice but to be under the subordination of the Seljuk Tughral and to accept the commitment of annual tribute and to remain in the nominal emirate under the command of the Seljuk sultan.⁴³ And this situation remained until the year 435 AH, which is the year of Anoushirvan's death, and until the time of his son Jestan. The year 433 AH, in which Tughral extended his domination over Gorgan and Tabarestan, should be considered the year of the extinction of the Al-Ziyar dynasty; Although the rulers of this class had long since lost their true independence and lived under the protection of the Ghaznavids; But until the conquest of Tughral, they only paid taxes to the Ghaznavids. From what has been said, it became clear that the main reason for the relatively long period of the Ziyari dynasty was tolerance of powerful states without regard to their religious differences.

7. Pathology of Al Ziyar government

Al Buwayh is a branch (separated) from Al Ziyar. Mardavij chose Ali ibn Buwayh, who was later nicknamed "Emad al-Dawlah", as the emirate of Karaj (an area in Karrud and Arak). But after coming to power, Emad al-Dawla refused to obey Mardavij and sought to strengthen his forces and establish a new dynasty. Mardavij sent his brother Vashmgir to confront Ali ibn Buwayh. In this war, Ali ibn Buwayh was forced to leave Isfahan and go to Arjan;⁴⁴ After that, many wars and casualties took place between these two Shiite dynasties. The early death of Mardavij was the end of Al Ziyar's authority rule, and after Mardavij's death the Ziyari rulers only thought that; Unity with any other dynasty can maintain their boundaries against the Buwayhid, which has now become a powerful and influential enemy.

Historical sources indicate the frequent exchanges of Gorgan and Tabarestan between Voshmagir and Al Buwayh and the successive asylum and seeking help from Samani rulers.⁴⁵ Al Ziyar often asked the Samanids for help so that they could resist the Buyids; But Voshmgir's successor, his son Biston, reconciled with his family's longtime enemy, Rukn al-Dawla Dailami, and declared obedience to the Buyids. By order of Al Buwayh, the charter of Jorjan and Tabarestan provinces was given to Biston by Al-Motie the Abbasid Caliph. With the support of the puppet caliph of Al Buwayh from the Emirate of Biston, these provinces came under the influence of Al Buwayh through intermediaries And this was the continuation of the increasing decline of power in the Al Ziyar dynasty.

After the death of Rukna al-Dawla Buwayhi, a dispute broke out between his children and Az-Dawla took over the government. Hence, Fakhr al-Dawla, the brother of Az-Dawla, took refuge in the court of Qaboos (Husband Aunt and father Spouse).⁴⁶ Az-Dawla sent an army to Gorgan and a battle broke out between Qaboos and Al Buwayh near Astarabad; Qaboos and Fakhr al-Dawla were defeated and took refuge in the Samanid court in Neishabour And the rule of Gorgan, Tabarestan and Gilan fell to the Buyid dynasty.⁴⁷ Finally, one of the commanders of Qaboos, named General Shahriar Ibn Dara Bavandi, defeated Shah Rukh Ibn Marzban (uncle of Majdal Doleh Buwayh) and ruled Shahriarkuh area And there he recited a sermon called Qaboos. The people of Gorgan called Qaboos to the city and finally Qaboos returned to Gorgan after eighteen years of exile.⁴⁸

Regarding the pathology of Al Ziyar government, it should be noted that; If we consider the war and the lack of alliance with the Shiite government of Al Buwayh as a policy and a weakness for Al Ziyar; It

⁴². Bayhaqi, *Tarikh Bayhaqi*, pp 7-162.

⁴³. Safa, *Tarikh adabiat der Iran*, Vol 2, p 46.

⁴⁴. Eshpoler, *History of Iran in the First Islamic Centuries*, Vol 1, p 160.

⁴⁵. Ibn Athir, *Al-Kamil Fi Al-Tarikh*, vol 8, p 542.

⁴⁶. Kikavous, *Qaboosnameh*, p 235.

⁴⁷. Al-Muskawiyah, *Tajareb Al-omam*, vol 7, p 24; Ibn Athir, *Al-Kamil Fi Al-Tarikh*, vol 9, pp 10-11.

⁴⁸. Marashi, *Tarikh Tabarestan*, p 209; Yamini, *Tarikh Yamini*, p 332.

should be said that there is evidence to suggest that the Buwayhids, like the Ziyar dynasty, attacked the Shiites of their territory or the rulers claiming to be Shiites, where the policy of border protection required it. Such as Az-Dawla Buwayhi, That the leader of the Alawites of Iraq, arrested Muhammad bin Umar bin Yahya Alavi Husseini and confiscated one million dinars from his property, and so is the war of Al Buwayhi with the Shiite Hamdanids.⁴⁹ History also shows that whenever the policy and interests of the government demanded, the fanatical Shiite Buwayhids allied themselves with the Sunni Samanids; As the seven thousand strong allied army of the Samanids and the Buyids, led by Abu Ali Chaghani, approached Ray, Makan, who had rushed to Vashmigr's aid, was killed in this campaign, and Vashmigr was defeated and fled to Amol. Abu Ali Buwayh recited a sermon in Ray called Amir Samani and sent Sir Makan to the Samani court with many prisoners.⁵⁰

It seems that all these interactions and confrontations with different states have had more of a political aspect and preservation of survival, and in the meantime, the tendency of the opposite government to any kind of religion, whether Shiite or Sunni, has not been raised and has not been considered. From what has been said, it is clear that Al Ziyar and Al Buwayh, despite the fact that both were a Shiite state; But instead of uniting to confront the Sunni states, they were constantly at war with each other, and even sought help from the Sunni states to suppress each other and this caused the weakening of Al Ziyar and Al Buwayh very quickly, which after a short period of peak and power, fell with rapid weakness. After this weakness and decline, powerful Sunni states were formed in Iran, such as the Ghaznavids and the Seljuks, which caused severe religious and political weakness of the Shiite people of Iran.

The most famous Shah Ziyari after Mardavij Sultan Qaboos, has been introduced in history with wisdom, virtue, literature and other good qualities; But the fact is that he was very fierce and violent, and did not tolerate the slightest negligence of his relatives, courtiers and soldiers, and responded to the slightest mistake from them with the most severe punishments.⁵¹ One of the most important cases was the trial of Naeem Hajib (guard) of Qaboos, who was slandered; But before he had a chance to prove his innocence, he was executed, and his murder increased the soldiers' hatred for Qaboos and his extremism.⁵²

A number of the same soldiers became angry when Qaboos left Gorgan and was traveling, attacked his residence and tried to kill him; But he was met with stubborn resistance from his bodyguards. The insurgents went to Gorgan and settled there. Then they wrote a letter to Manouchehr bin Qaboos and called him from Tabarestan to Gorgan to succeed his father. Rebel leaders threatened him that if he did not accept the offer, the government would be transferred to someone outside the Al Ziyar family. He was forced to remove his father and accept his accession to the throne.⁵³

In 433 AH, Tughral of Seljuk became aware of the disorder and dispute between Bakalijar and Anushirvan Ibn Qaboos and took the opportunity to march on that area and easily capture Gorgan and hand over the city to Mardavij Ibn Basu Dilami, who was in Tughral's army. It seems that Anoushirvan also ruled part or all of Tabarestan and came under the rule of Mardavij. Thus, the Ziyari dynasty was almost extinct by the Seljuk invasion, and only some members of this dynasty ruled over some mountain castles for a while in later periods, and their rule never reached the Gorgan and Hamun regions and they were not taken seriously by kings and princes.⁵⁴

Result

Regarding the religion of Ziyari, what seems logical and documented is that the religion of Mardavij Ziyari was Zoroastrian in the beginning or before his rule, and then the Ismaili Shia and later became Zaidi. According to most historians and Orientalists, the next Ziyari kings were all Zaidi Shiites. Attributing Sunni tendencies to the Ziyari kings is unacceptable due to their excessive tolerance of Sunni governments; Because the tolerance of one state with another can have various causes such as trying to

⁴⁹. Zahabi, *Tarikh Al-Islam*, vol 2, p 179.

⁵⁰. Al-Muskawiyah, *Tajareb Al-omam*, vol 6, p 33-34; Ibn Athir, *Al-Kamil Fi Al-Tarikh*, vol 8, pp 369-371.

⁵¹. Kikavous, *Qaboosnameh*, p 100-101.

⁵². Yamini, *Tarikh Yamini*, pp 364-365.

⁵³. Ibn Athir, *Al-Kamil Fi Al-Tarikh*, vol 9, pp 238-239.

⁵⁴. Kikavous, *Qaboosnameh*, p 95.

survive, political and military exploitation, alliance to confront a common enemy, and so on. It is natural that cooperation and tolerance can not be a complete reason for the existence of common religious beliefs and ideas between the two governments.

Al Ziyar Due to the long weakness of power after the early period of glory, could not play an important role in the cultural and civilizational history of Islamic Iran and often the scope of their rule was very small and limited and sometimes reduced to a local ruler under other government. In general, it can be said that the Ziyari family, after the period of its peak and glory in the era of Mardavij and the beginning of the Vashmgir rule, immediately suffered from significant weakness and decline. In the meantime, what blew away the glory and greatness of Al Ziyar was the conflict and war with the new and powerful government of Al Buwayh. It did not take long for the Ziyaris to become a local government under the control of larger governments such as the Samanids, Ghaznavids and Seljuks. After all, the Ziyari rulers in the last years of their rule were directly under the great Seljuk government and had no authority over themselves.

Given the long-term subjugation of Al Ziyar against the Sunni, Samanid, Ghaznavid and Seljuk states, they should not be expected to take an important step in promoting and disseminating Shiite culture and civilization; As if studying the history of this series proves this hypothesis well.

Ziyariyan's slogans of Iran-friendliness are only related to the early periods of the government, in order to gain political legitimacy and bring the masses of the people with him, and in later periods, there is no news of this extreme Iran-friendliness.

Mardavij's intellectual ingenuity and military power were able to establish this dynasty, and so after Mardavij, their glory was lost and they could never be a powerful dynasty with clear boundaries. Due to the instability of the pillars of power and government, the rulers of Al Ziyar did not have much of an impact on the growth and promotion of Shiite culture and thought in their government. Perhaps it can be said that, in the first stage, political asylum to the Sunni state of the Samanids and in the later stages of obedience and submission to the fanatical and anti-Shiite Ghaznavid and Seljuk states can be a sufficient reason for this.

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