Challenging narratives of 'Missionary' Ismaʿilism in Buyid Iran: Reconsidering the *Sira* of al-Muʾayyad fī al-Din al-Shirazi through socio-economic contextualisation

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Abstract

The *Sira* of al-Muʾayyad fi al-Din al-Shirazi (d. 1078 C.E. / 470 A.H.) offers a first-hand account of the politics of religion in South-West Iran in the 11th century. However, the limited studies of this text to date do not fully explore how al-Muʾayyad's activities related to the socio-economic situation of the localities they targeted. In light of the lack of information, both in the *Sira* and more generally, on the tactics and objectives of Iranian *duʿat* (s.g. *daʿi*) like al-Muʾayyad before the Ismaʿili succession struggle (i.e. pre-1094 / 487) and the common translation of this term as 'missionary' in much literature, this paper will use a range of textual and non-textual sources to set his activities in their proper historical context. It will thereby seek to show that this context closely guided his movements in targeting those people and places most important to maintaining temporal sovereignty.

Keywords

Introduction

The scholarship of pre-modern Islam can manifest an overriding focus on the high theological and technical doctrinal aspects, to the point of overlooking how different movements actually functioned within the historical socio-economic contexts in which they prevailed.

This discrepancy is particular noticeable in the peculiar historiography of medieval Ismaʿilism where a substantial proportion of the surviving source material from before the succession struggle (i.e. pre-1094 CE / 487 AH) was produced by Ismaʿili advocates, *daʿis*,[1] who operated outside of the Fatimid state. Before the first establishment of Fatimid sovereignty in the Maghreb in 909 / 297, the Ismaʿili movement had consisted entirely of networks of *daʿis* operating throughout the Islamic world. Even as the completion of the Fatimid conquest of Ikhsidid Egypt in 973 / 362 afforded Ismaʿilism the foundation of a stronger central *daʿwa* in Cairo to coordinate the movement, *daʿis* elsewhere continued to have an outsized intellectual impact, particularly with regards to Ismaʿilism's emerging Neoplatonic cosmology.

However, despite their contribution to the development of Ismaʿili thought, we lack the biographical information with which to understand their day-to-day activities and objectives, even in the case of the most prominent *daʿis* active in Iran such as Abu Hatim al-Razi (d. 933-4 / 322), Abu Yaʿqub al-Sijistani (fl. mid to later 10th century / 4th century), and Hamid al-Din al-Kirmani (d. after 1020-1 / 411).[2] In spite of the independent intellectual character of many Ismaʿili *daʿis* , as evidenced by the successive Qarmatian, Druze and Nizari schisms

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[1] Klemm translates this term as 'missionary-agent' while much scholarship is content with 'missionary' alone. See Klemm, *Memoirs of a Mission*, xiii. 'Caller' should also be considered as not only does it better reflect the etymology of the Arabic root (dal, ʿayn, waw/ya), commonly "to call" or "to summon", but it is also more suggestive of the targeted and exclusive nature of the Ismaʿili mission as described in this paper.

[2] For the above see respectively Walker, *Hamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī: Ismaili Muslim thought in the age of al-Hākim*, Ali, *Language and heresy in Ismaili thought*, and Walker, *Abū Yaʿqūb al-Sijistānī: intellectual missionary*.

from the authority of the central *da'wa* in Cairo, the best-documented and most commonly referenced mission is that of Nasir-i Khusraw (d. between 1072 – 1078 / 465 – 471) who demonstrably received both his instruction and direction in person in Cairo. His mission is therefore a less than satisfactory model for understanding the activities of his aforementioned predecessors in the Eastern *da'wa*, for whom the evidence of significant and effective Cairene oversight is less clear-cut.[3]

Consequently, whenever pre-Nizari Isma'ilism in Iran and Central Asia has been studied as a social movement, scholars have relied on anti-Isma'ili texts as their main sources, with all the troubling methodological considerations which this entails. Thus, Samuel Stern's 1980 article on Isma'ili 'missionaries', still the most comprehensive review of the different early *da'is* in Iran, is little more than a partial synthesis of several divergent anti-Isma'ili narrative sources with the few biographical details present in the Isma'ili sources.[4] While a more recent study by Patricia Crone and Luke Treadwell reviewing accounts of Isma'ili infiltration of the Samanid court demonstrates that some results can be achieved by close comparison of anti-Isma'ili texts, they are less useful for accurately understanding the strategies and objectives of individual *da'is* and the internal composition of their missions.[5] In a later article attempting to locate the original observations of the *da'i* Abu Tammam (fl. early 10th century / 4th century) amid a series of early heresiographies with confusing co-dependencies, Crone assumes he would have 'toured the countryside' proselytising as part of his mission but can only summon the example of Nizari *da'is* nearly two centuries later and the erratic anti-

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[3] Hamid al-Din al-Kirmani had already apparently been active in Kirman and Iraq and composed several works before coming to Egypt in the early 10th / 4th century. De Bruijn, "al-Kirmānī." The nature and extent of Fatimid oversight of *da'is* is an ongoing matter of scholarly debate but, if the regularity with which al-Muʿizz (d. 975 / 365) confronted *da'is* from the Mashriq advancing heterodox doctrines is anything to go by, it was sometimes ineffectual. See Stern "Heterodox Ismāʿīlism." Also Hamdani, *Between Revolution and State*, 101-4.
[4] Stern, "The Early Ismāʿīlī Missionaries."
[5] Crone and Treadwell, "A new text on Ismailism at the Samanid court," 37-67.

Ismaʿili accounts of al-Nasafi (d. c. 943 / 331) to support this.[6] These anti-Ismaʿili sources share an unresolved tension between their picture of the Fatimid period *daʿi* who targets rural people holding marginalised or syncretic beliefs (as inspired by the Nizari model), and their idea of the culturally refined missionary ingratiating himself with Sultans through disputations and feats of intellectual brilliance.[7]

As the only surviving first-person account of a Fatimid *daʿi* in Iran, other than Nasir-i Khusraw's, which actually details the activity of a *daʿi* and his social role, the *Sira* of al-Muʾayyad fi al-Din al-Shirazi (d. 1078 / 470) provides an opportunity to resolve these seemingly contradictory portrayals. After initially working as a *daʿi* in Fars, al-Muʾayyad went on to become one of the major political and intellectual figures in the Fatimid state, orchestrating the military campaign that temporarily evicted the Abbasid Caliph from Baghdad and becoming the head of the Fatimid *daʿwa,* both in 1058-9 / 450. Although the *Sira* was written by al-Muʾayyad while working for the Fatimids in Egypt, it records his actions and experiences as a *daʿi* in Western Iran from at least 1038 / 429 until his exile in 1044 / 435 – a period for which he gives little indication he received oversight from Cairo.

Not discussed by Stern and Crone, who both focussed on Northern Iran and Central Asia, the *Sira* has nevertheless received a certain amount of scholarly attention: Verena Klemm has published a book giving a chapter-by-chapter summary of the *Sira* and situating the work in its broader historical and literary context; Rachel Howes has tried to reconstruct the dynamics of the court of the Buyid ruler Abu Kalijar (r. 1024 to 1048 / 415 to 440) in Shiraz in which much of the *Sira* is situated; Elizabeth Alexandrin has studied how al-Muʾayyad tried to

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[6] Crone, 'Abū Tammām on the Mubayyiḍa', 173-4.

[7] For an example of this discordance see Crone's *Nativist Prophets* where she attempts to synthesise disparate rural references from the *Siyasatnamah* of Nizam al-Mulk (d. 1092 / 485), which sees "Ismaʿilis everywhere", and the *Farq bayn al-Firaq* of Abu Mansur al-Baghdadi (d. 1037 / 429) with her and Treadwell's previous work on Ismaʿilis at the Samanid court and Abu Tammam , coming to the uneasy conclusion that Ismaʿilism began as a movement of the rural semi-educated before attracting "higher social levels thereafter." Crone, *The Nativist Prophets,* 181, 491.

inculcate Abu Kalijar in Ismaʿili teachings.[8] The exceptional importance and productivity of al-Muʾayyad's later career, which included the authorship of some of the most influential Ismaʿili doctrinal works of the period, has naturally attracted significant scholarly attention. Aside from the *Sira*, Alexandrin has published a monograph demonstrating how the eight volumes of al-Muʾayyad's *Majalis* advanced Ismaʿili soteriology, and Tahera Qutbuddin and Mohammad Adra have separately translated parts of his *Diwan* associating certain poems with specific events in al-Muʾayyad's life.[9]

However, none of these studies have addressed in detail al-Muʾayyad's activity away from Shiraz in Ahwaz and Fasa during his early career, exactly the type of activity away from the person of the ruler which the anti-Ismaʿili sources mention *daʿis* undertaking but can provide little plausible justification for. While he briefly discusses his time in both towns in the *Sira* and references them in the *Diwan*, al-Muʾayyad gives very little away about what suited each to Ismaʿili activity and how this fitted in with his wider mission. Taking his account as a starting point, this paper will try and build a detailed socio-economic picture of these towns to see what his presence there could have potentially achieved. This will then be contrasted with the socio-economic situation of nearby Kazarun, where a near contemporary of al-Muʾayyad, the Sufi Sheikh Murshid Abu Ishaq al-Kazuruni (d. 1033 / 426), was active, to contextualise how al-Muʾayyad's Ismaʿilism likely differed from other contemporary movements. To conclude, this paper will argue that al-Muʾayyad was more than just aware of the socio-economic contexts of his activities, but that these contexts guided his movements

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[8] See Klemm, *Memoirs of a Mission*, Howes, 'The Qadi, the Wazir and the Daʿi', 875-894, and Alexandrin, 'Studying Ismaʿili Texts in Eleventh-Century Shiraz,' 99-115.

[9] Alexandrin, *Walāyah in the Fāṭimid Ismāʿīlī Tradition*, Tahera Qutbuddin, *Al-Muʾayyad Al-Shīrāzī and Fatimid Daʿwa Poetry*, and Al-Muʾayyad al-Shīrāzī, *Mount of knowledge, sword of eloquence,* tr. Mohammad Adra. There are also a number of other more minor treatises and translations for which al-Muʾayyad is the acknowledged author and several older studies of his work. All are listed in Klemm, *Memoirs of a Mission*

and his targeting of those people and places key to maintaining sovereignty in the Buyid Amirate of Fars.

The career of al-Muʾayyad in Fars according to the *Sira*

The main primary source for al-Muʾayyad's life is his autobiographical *Sira*, a text preserved alongside several other of his other works by the Ismaʿili communities that survived the fall of the Fatimid state in Yemen and later in India. In 1977, Ismail Poonawala identified a total of 13 manuscripts in various collections internationally, and 8 manuscripts are now held at the Institute for Ismaili Studies library in London.[10] Two edited versions of the *Sira* have been produced, one by Muhammad Kamil Husayn published in Cairo in 1949, and another by Arif Tamir published in Beirut in 1983. Kamil Husayn's edition used two manuscripts dated to 1938-9 / 1357 and 1895-6 / 1313 respectively.[11] In contrast, while Arif Tamir references Kamil Husayn's edition claiming that its editing is 'disordered' and incorrect, he fails to state which manuscripts, if any, his own significantly different edition is based on.[12] In the absence of a published, conclusive edition of the text which takes into account all manuscript variants, this paper will employ Kamil Husayn's edition which may at least be securely associated with a particular manuscript tradition.[13]

The *Sira*'s account of his career in Fars has been best summarised by Klemm in her 2003 book, and the specifics will not be repeated in full here. [14] Klemm argues that al-Muʾayyad wrote down the account of his mission in Fars sometime between the years 1052 and 1056 while out of favour at the Fatimid court so as to paint his previous activities in the best

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[10] Poonawala, *Biobibliography of Ismāʿīlī Literature*. The IIS catalogues do not always state the collections from where their manuscripts originated but 3 of their manuscripts clearly correlate to MSS on Poonawala's list.

[11] De Blois, *Arabic, Persian and Gujarati Manuscripts*, 69.

[12] Al-Muʾayyad al-Shirazi, *Mudhakkirāt dāʿī duʿāt al-dawlah al-Fāṭimīyah*, ed. Arif Tamir, 6.

[13] Most of the other secondary literature also references Kamil Husayn's edition with the exception of Howes, 'The Qadi, the Wazir and the Daʿi'.

[14] Klemm, *Memoirs of a Mission,* 19-44. Here she summaries the parts of the *Sira* which are covered in Al-Muʾayyad al-Shīrāzī, *Sīrat*, 3-125.

possible light.[15] Although she posits that al-Muʾayyad modelled the narrative of his own behaviour to accord with the moral standards set out for a *daʿi* by the Ismaʿili author Ahmad ibn Ibrahim al-Nayshaburi (d. early 11th Century / early 5th century), she concludes that it broadly accords with the historical context it is set in.[16]

Al-Muʾayyad's account is partly corroborated by other sources, notably the *Farsnama* of Ibn Balkhi (fl. early 12th century/ early 6th century), a work composed for the Seljuq court less than a century after al-Muʾayyad's mission by an otherwise anonymous official of the eponymous province.[17] Inserted into its discussion of the al-Fazari family of judges, is an account of the efforts of the chief jurist of Fars, Qadi Abdallah al-Fazari (fl. early 11th century / early 5th century), to prevent Abu Kalijar falling under the sway of a certain Abu Nasr ibn ʿImran, described as being a *daʿi* of the Batini (i.e. Ismaʿili) sect.[18] This Abu Nasr is labelled as being akin to a 'prophet' (*payghambar*) among the Daylamis. Qadi Abdallah al-Fazari succeeds in persuading Abu Kalijar of the evil intention of this *daʿi* who could command the army to depose him at any moment. The qadi and the ruler raise a force of a hundred Persian horsemen and a hundred Turkish slaves who carry the *daʿi* to the far side of the Euphrates and, thus exiled, he flees to Egypt. This account's source may plausibly have been the al-Fazari family themselves, whom Ibn Balkhi describes as retaining the chief judgeship of Fars down to his day – the episode serving to aggrandize the family's claim to legitimately hold this office. This narrative not only accords well with the *Sira* in several core elements, it also corroborates the idea that the judiciary were his primary organized opponents.

The other main corroboration for the *Sira* comes from the *al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh* of Ibn al-Athir (d. 1233 / 630). Although neither al-Muʾayyad nor, indeed, any Ismaʿili *daʿi* are

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[15] Klemm, *Memoirs of a Mission,* 75.
[16] Ibid, 107-9.
[17] Ibn Balkhī, *The Fārsnāma,* x-xi.
[18] Ibid, 119.

anywhere mentioned, the general picture of Abu Kalijar's reign is strikingly familiar. His rule is beset with unrest among the Daylami soldiery, and he spends much of his reign in Ahwaz.[19]

A final, notably weaker, corroboration comes from the *Shiraznama* of Zarkub Shirazi (d. 1431 / 834). This offers a problematic picture of Abu Kalijar's reign, confusing him with Samsam al-Dawla Abu Kalijar (r. 983 to 998 / 372 to 388) by misattributing certain information from the earlier *Farsnama*.[20] It has the Ismaʿilis as originating both before Islam and in the district of Isfahan, being driven out of there by Mahmud of Ghazna (r. 998 to 1030 / 388 to 421). They then settle in Darabjird (i.e. near Fasa), disturbing the local Shabankara Kurds whose dispersal then contributes to the fall of Abu Kalijar. Aside from this last detail, the *Shiraznama*'s additions to the original *Farsnama* account have little discernible link with historical fact.

While these various independent corroborations of the *Sira* strongly support the historicity of its account, they can do little to assess the extent that al-Muʾayyad may have obscured or exaggerated aspects of his activity in Fars for the sake of his status at the Fatimid court. Concerns in this regard can be partly mitigated by Qutbuddin's work on al-Muʾayyad's *Diwan*, who has used references to events in the *Sira* to date certain poems.[21] Not discounting the possibility of later editing and amendments, if al-Muʾayyad's *Diwan* was indeed produced piecemeal over his lifetime, it can offer qualified support for the accuracy of the *Sira* where their accounts overlap.

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[19] ʿIzz al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil fī al-Tarīkh*, Vol. 9, 337 and 339.

[20] The *Farsnama* has a *wazir* of Abu Kalijar instigate a raid on Istakhr by the Turkoman *amir* Qutlumush (d. 1064 / 456), whereas the *Shiraznama* places this episode as part of the succession struggles of Samsam al-Dawla Abu Kalijar. Compare Ibn Balkhī, *The Fārsnāma,* 127 with Zarkūb al-Shīrāzī, *Shīrāznāmeh*, 125.

[21] There is for example a panegyric for Abu Kalijar praising his support of the Fatimids, datable with relative confidence to 1039 – 1042 / 430 – 433 following his 'conversion'. Qutbuddin, *Al-Muʾayyad Al-Shīrāzī and Fatimid Daʿwa Poetry*, 27.

Contextual sources

In establishing the wider context of al-Muʾayyad's mission, a natural first port of call is the well-known Arabic geographies of al-Muqaddasi (d. c. 990 / 380), Yaqut al-Hamawi (d. 1229 / 626) and al-Istakhri (fl. 10th century / 4th century). The many problematic aspects of this geographical tradition have been well documented, namely an extreme conservatism with a tendency to borrow information from previous works without reference, a performative intellectual character, and subtly expressed cultural and political biases.[22] Analysis of these alongside the apparently independent tradition of the aforementioned *Farsnama* of Ibn Balkhi should expose any particularly egregious examples of the above and, in turn, mitigate the risks inherent to relying on Ibn Balkhi alone, for whom our lack of biographical information makes identifying political biases or performative intellectual passages more challenging.

For the Buyid period, the main chronicle is the *Tajarib al-ʾUmam* of Miskawayh (d. 1030 / 421), supported by the continuations of al-Rudhrawari (d. 1095 / 488) and Hilal al-Sabiʾ (d. 1056 / 448). However, the extant portion of the latter take us up only to 1003 and for the final forty years of Buyid rule we must rely on much later chroniclers such as Ibn al-Athir and Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 1200 / 597).

Focussing on contemporary sources, the Buyid period boasts an impressive quantity of *inshaʾ* material, including the letters of Abu Ishaq al-Sabiʾ (d. 994 / 384), Sahib ibn ʿAbbad (d. 995 / 385) and ʿAbd al-ʿAziz ibn Yusuf al-Shirazi (f. mid-10th century / 4th century), allowing us to understand towns, movements and people from the point of view of the various Buyid courts.[23] There are also several contemporary sources informative on the intellectual

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[22] For discussions of these issues, see Antrim, *Routes and Realms*, 67, 109 and 129-30. The relative independence of the *Farsnama* is evidenced by the number of toponyms and routes which have no parallel in the 10th century / 4th century works.

[23] *Inshaʾ* material is generally defined as collections of letters and official documentation, compiled for the purpose of teaching good prose style. See Paul, 'ENŠĀ''.

environment and composed by those linked to the region but with no definite ties to the main courts, such as the biographical dictionary of al-Firuzabadi al-Shirazi (d. 1083 / 476) and the grammar critique of al-Ghandijani (fl. mid-11th century / mid-5th century). By contrast, other commonly extant source groups are largely absent for the period in question, notably biographical dictionaries and court poetry. In the former case, the lack of a local historical tradition before the *Farsnama* means that only in cases where careers led to Iraq and elsewhere (al-Firuzabadi al-Shirazi being a case in point) do we normally have information on individuals from the region. In the latter, the dearth of relevant poetry forces a greater reliance on the *Sira* to identify the potential tensions and networks of patronage around the Buyid court.

For the comparative to al-Muʾayyad's mission, our key source is the *Kitab Firdaws al-Murshidiyya fi Asrar al-Samadiyya*, a hagiography of Sheikh Murshid Abu Ishaq al-Kazaruni. This is a Persian translation completed in 1327 / 728 by one Mahmud ibn ʿUthman of an original Arabic text by Abu Bakr Muhammad al-Khatib (d. 1109 / 502).[24] Sheikh Murshid was the founder of the Kazaruniyya Sufi order whose growth and expansion, both during his lifetime and long after his death, made the life of its 'saint' a focus for its adherents. Although the hagiographies produced by such orders naturally inflate the achievements of their subjects, the relatively early composition of the original Arabic text and the vivid detail of many of the stories, including passages of quoted speech in dialect, allows a good degree of confidence that the tales are grounded on factual events in Sheikh Murshid's career. The similarities with the *Sira* in terms of period and geography makes the *Kitab*

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[24] Although the original was in Arabic, it must have contained passages written in the Persian dialect of Kazarūn as there is no other way to account for the preservation of these fragments. See Mahmūd ibn Uthmān, *Die Vita des Scheich Abū Ishāq al-Kāzarūnī*, 399-410.

Firdaws a useful comparative, although one whose details and simplistic narrative arcs should be treated with caution.

Additionally, there is an impressive quantity of material from archaeological and numismatic evidence from the period to assist in establishing a broader socio-economic context which texts can only hint at. For archaeology, the various studies include the BIPS excavation reports from Siraf and Nanette Pyne's dissertation summarising a series of surveys on settlement patterns in Khuzestan.[25]

On numismatics, the data presented in Pyne's dissertation have been superseded by Luke Treadwell's work, best expressed in *Buyid coinage: a die corpus (322-445 A.H.)*, cataloguing the different dies used to mint Buyid coins, based on coins appearing at excavations, auctions and in public and private collections. Figure 5 below tables the extant dies with Abu Kalijar's name and has been produced using data from this work, approximating the date of coins where the exact inscription is unclear. When using Treadwell's data, we should also be mindful of his warning that certain trends, such as the much greater number of Buyid die variants extant from before the 11th century / 5th century, may be the result of modern collection patterns distorting a field of study still in an early stage of research.[26] Such data must thus be viewed with an appropriate level of caution, accepting that conclusions derived therewith are necessarily preliminary and in need of confirmation. Similarly, while the numismatic study of proximate places and periods has resulted in tentative theories that die variants and mint locations may be directly associated with military campaigns or *tiraz* factory activity, proving either in the case of late Buyid Fars is hampered by the limited data available.[27] Neither theory will consequently be employed.

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[25] Lowick, *Siraf XV*, and Pyne, *The impact of the Seljuq invasion on Khuzestan*
[26] Treadwell, *Buyid coinage: a die corpus (322-445 A.H.)*, xvii.
[27] For the former see Bacharach, *Islamic history through coins*, 64. For the latter Whitcomb, 'The Fārs Hoard: A Būyid hoard from Fārs, Iran', 183.

Mapping Fars

Figure 1 illustrates al-Muʾayyad's travel within the region based on his own account in the Sira. The approximate nature of its dates for his travel and its lack of information on his exact route reflects the Sira's limited account of his travel.

Figure 2 is a rough approximation of the political situation in the Central Middle East in the year 1035 / 426-7, immediately before the *Sira*'s narrative begins. This aims to accurately map the major areas and settlements under each polity's control at the time, rather than the exact location of frontiers about which the primary sources give little insight.[28]

The methodology for Figure 3 is more complex. Although Le Strange and Nicholson's edition of the *Farsnama* discussed in detail the location of the toponyms described in the text, using modern maps and the 19th century / 13th century *Farsnama-i Nasiri* as references, no accompanying map was published. Although unable to locate sixty-six of the toponyms given by Ibn Balkhi and only able to approximate locations for ten others listed in the itineraries, one hundred and thirty-five settlements were identified successfully. Figure 3 maps all one hundred and forty-five locations they identified or approximated, with the sole exception of Tawwaj, whose exact location was identified by archaeologists in 1970.[29]

For the purposes of clarity, Figure 3 also simplifies the divisions in the type of settlement into four: Village, Town, City and Fortification. Fortification refers to any castle not in a city and any fortified settlement smaller than a city. City refers to any settlement termed *shahr* in the original, even those Ibn Balkhi describes as being in a state of ruin. Village is used for settlements Ibn Balkhi terms a *dih* or *nahiyat*, while town is used for those he terms *shahrak*.

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[28] All data on each polity's borders comes from the corresponding article in either Bosworth, *The New Islamic Dynasties, The Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, eds. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs, or *The Cambridge History of Iran Vol. 4.*, ed. R. N. Frye., each being based on the main relevant chronicles as listed above.

[29] Whitcomb, 'Bushire and the Angali Canal', 333.

The roads of Figure 3 give no consideration to terrain and are only indicative straight lines drawn between the locations on Ibn Balkhi's itineraries that have proven identifiable. Similarly, the boundaries of the different *kurra-ha* (districts) are indicative rather than definite borders, occasionally following river courses but otherwise designed only to illustrate which *kurra* Ibn Balkhi states a settlement belonged to.

Figure 6 maps fifteen locations on a topographical map of Fars where Sheikh Murshid Abu Ishaq al-Kazaruni's Sufi order established a *khanaqah* and/or a *ribat* according to references in the *Kitab Firdaws*. The map excludes five locations where the order established such institutions outside of Fars and a further five locations which cannot be located from the toponyms given in the text. The road network based on the *Farsnama* from Figure 3 has been projected onto this map to help illustrate how this may have related to the spread of the order.
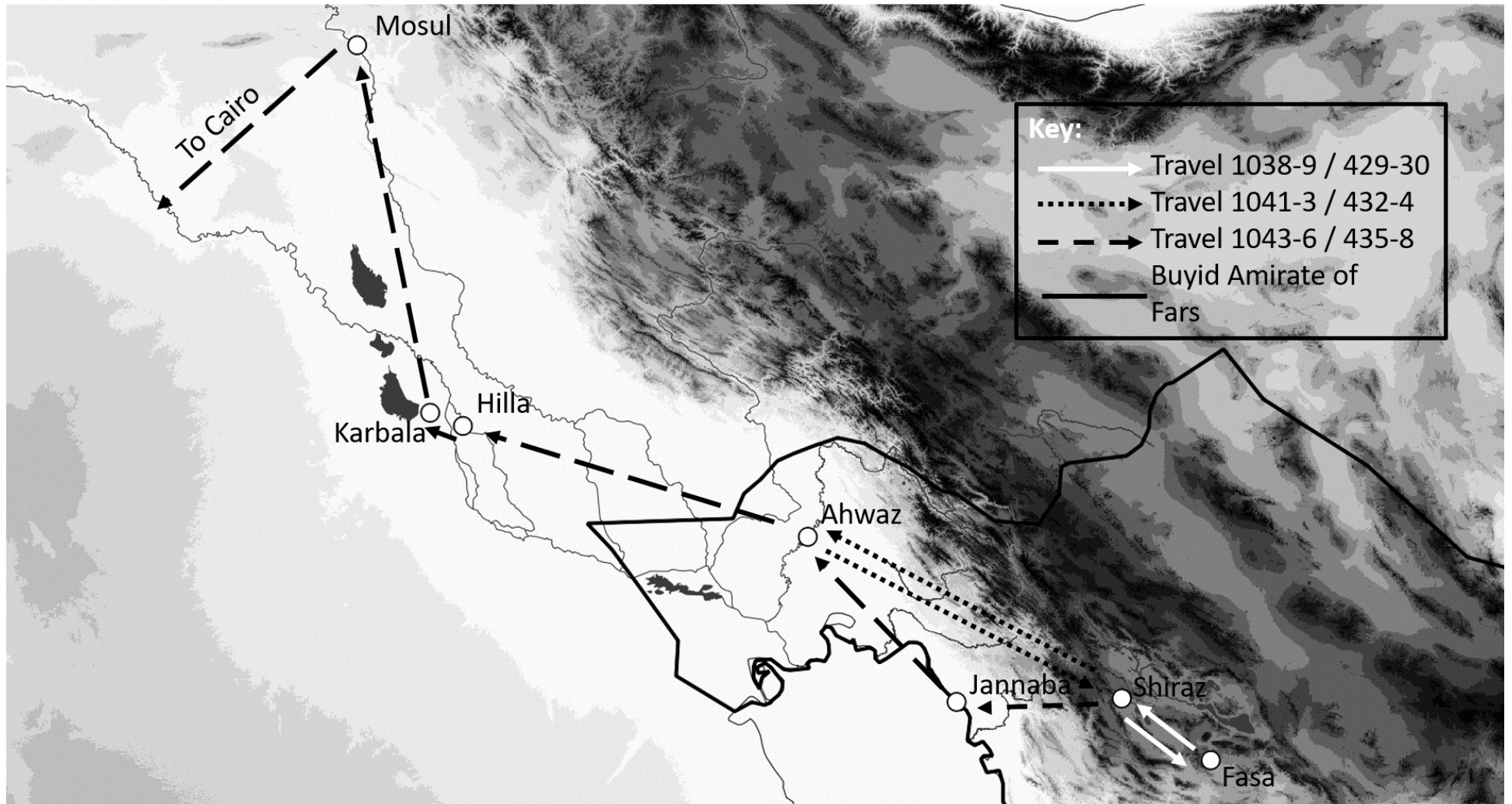
Figure 1. Map of al-Muʾayyad's movements based on the *Sira*. Dates are inclusive of earliest/latest possible dates for each journey.
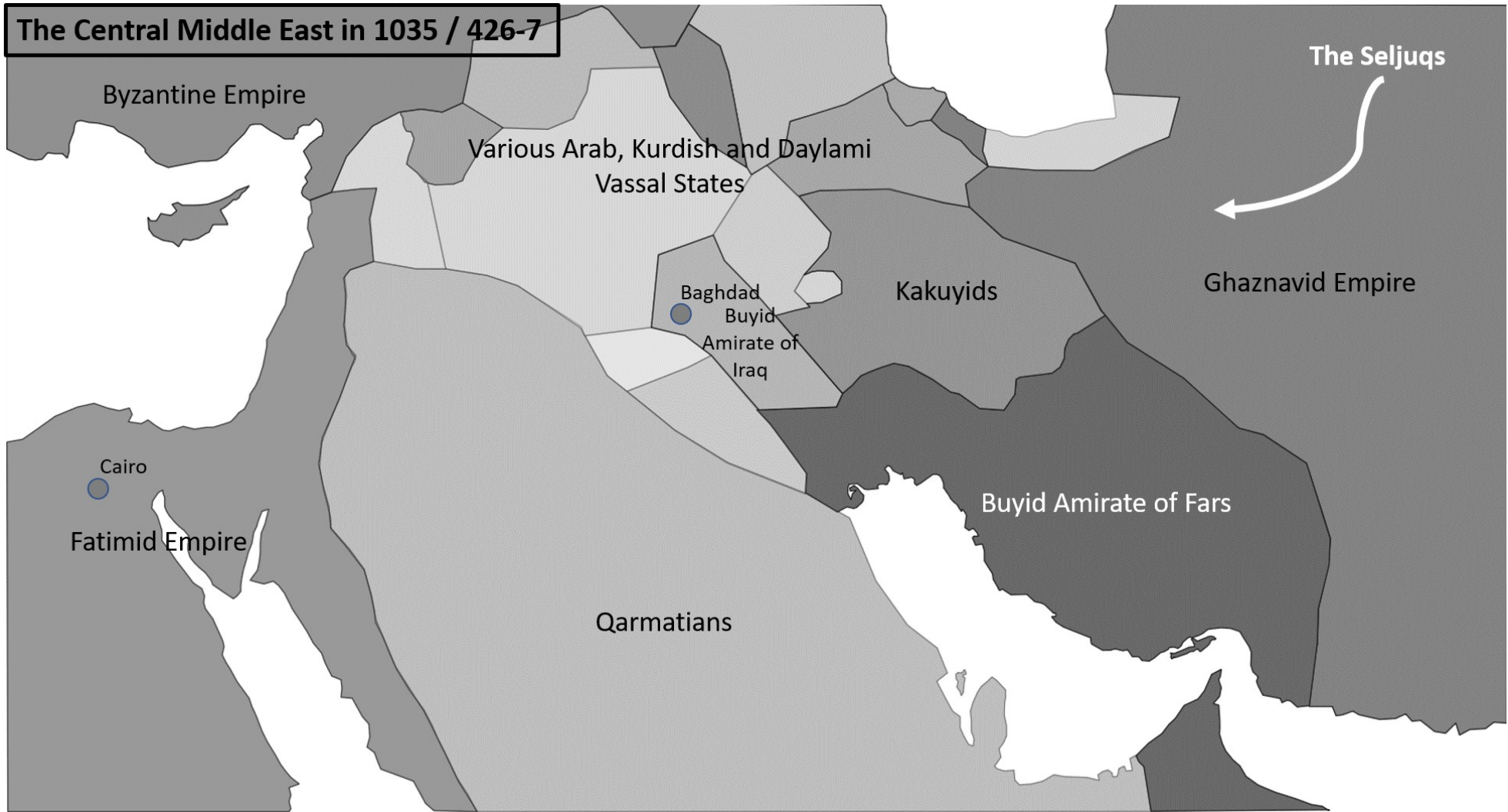
The Central Middle East in 1035 / 426-7

Byzantine Empire

Various Arab, Kurdish and Daylami
Vassal States

The Seljuqs

Ghaznavid Empire

Kakuyids

Baghdad
Buyid
Amirate of
Iraq

Cairo

Buyid Amirate of Fars

Fatimid Empire

Qarmatians

Figure 2. Approximation of the political situation in 1035 / 426-7

Shiraz

Of the places al-Muʾayyad operated in, he spent the greatest amount of time in Shiraz, and a review of its social situation is necessary to contextualise his efforts elsewhere. As the largest city in Fars, focal point of the province (see Figure 3), and the normal seat of the Buyid court it possessed a diverse set of religious movements and associated elites. Al-Muqaddasi notes in particular the many Zoroastrians and 'factious' Sufis in the city, and ascribes a presence to all the main law schools.[30] He further notes (writing in the late 10th century / 4th century) that the Dawudi or Zahiri school was the most dominant in terms of the positions they hold in the judiciary and the administration.[31] The *Sira* also makes passing reference to smaller minorities: the Daylami soldiers compare their freedom to practice their religion unfavourably to the freedoms of the Christians and Jews, while al-Muʾayyad debates a Zaydi Shia Imam.[32] However, neither of these references make clear where these communities and their elites were normally located and the absence of reference elsewhere suggests they were relatively unimportant.

On the basis of the reference in the *Sira* to a coalition forming against al-Muʾayyad made up of Sufis, popular preachers and storytellers (*qussas*), and traditionists (*ashab al-hadith*),[33] Howes has theorised the presence of a 'Sunni establishment' in Shiraz hostile to the usurpation of their respective functions which al-Muʾayyad's intimacy with Abu Kalijar represented.[34] However, other than referring to Qadi Abdallah al-Fazari's leadership of this 'establishment' on the basis of the *Farsnama*'s account, she does little to understand its composition and the exact nature of the shared interests it coalesced around.

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[30] Al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm fī maʿrifat al-aqālīm*, tr. Basil Anthony Collins, 380 and 387.
[31] Ibid, 387 and 389.
[32] Al-Muʾayyad al-Shīrāzī, *Sīrat*, 10 and 57.
[33] Ibid, 57.
[34] Howes, 'The Qadi, the Wazir and the Da'i', 887.

The picture of this establishment's judicial and traditionist component can be significantly improved through close reading of the *Ṭabaqat al-fuqahaʾ* of al-Firuzabadi al-Shirazi, this being a compendium of jurists (*fuqahaʾ*) of all legal schools written a generation after the period under study. The last generation (*tabaqa*) of jurists featured in the text come from the one previous to the author and are therefore contemporaries of al-Muʾayyad. However, as the leading Shafiʿi jurist of Baghdad (first moving there in 1024 / 415 after spells in Firuzabad and Shiraz),[35] his work is doubtless somewhat orientated toward his own school and jurists associated with Iraq. Nevertheless, it reveals a major network of Shafiʿi jurists in Fars, including three different individuals appointed to official positions overseeing Shiraz/Fars (see Figure 4).

Jurists of the Zahiri school appear as the main rival to Shafiʿis for official positions, supporting al-Muqaddasi's observations. Abu Saʿid Bashar ibn al-Hussayn was a student of two of the students of Ibn Dawud (d. 909 / 294), a son of the founder of the Zahiri madhhab, in Baghdad before moving to Fars and becoming 'Qadi al-Qudat' of all Fars and Iraq under the Buyid Sultan ʿAdud al-Dawla (r. 949 to 983 / 338 to 372) .[36] In Shiraz, he appears to have taught Abu al-Faraj al-Fami al-Shirazi, whom al-Firuzabadi al-Shirazi himself had seen in Shiraz in his youth and whose students kept the *madhhab* alive in Fars even as it died out in Iraq.[37] However, the tone of al-Firuzabadi al-Shirazi's description and the lack of later references in other sources suggest the *madhhab*'s influence in Fars went into rapid decline in favour of the Shafiʿis after a brief period of dominance in the late 10th century / 4th century. If his testimony can be taken as accurate and comprehensive, then none of the other *madhhabs* ever produced a jurist of note from the region, suggesting they only had a token presence.

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[35] Chaumont, "al-S̲h̲īrāzī."
[36] Al-Fīrūzābādī al-Shirāzī, *Ṭabaqāt al-fuqahāʾ*, 116 and 166.
[37] Ibid, 167.

As for the Sufis, our best source, the *Kitab Firdaws al-Murshidiyya*, would appear to tacitly confirm al-Muqaddasi's observations that relations between the different groupings were somewhat 'factious'. Although Sheikh Murshid al-Kazaruni, the subject of the *Kitab Firdaws*, is described therein as a follower of the pre-eminent Sufi of Shiraz at the time, Ibn Khafif (d. 982 / 371), his own order appears to have avoided establishing a *khanaqah* or a *ribat* in the capital (see Figure 6), in spite of the vibrant Sufi presence there.[38] However, the distinct harmonising tendency in Sufi literature of interlinking important figures to build impressive chains of authority (*silsila*) makes the task of trying to accurately reconstruct different factions from these later sources near impossible.

For the Ismaʿilis and Daylamis, useful references are similarly lacking. Al-Muʾayyad's father appears in only one other source, the epistles of the Ismaʿili *daʿi* Ḥamid al-Din al-Kirmani. In one epistle, al-Kirmani quotes a letter from the Fatimid Caliph to the 'districts of Fars' (*nawahi Fars*) for one Musa ibn Dawud, reprimanding him for appointing his two sons to his position.[39] Given the date, the mention of Fars and al-Muʾayyad's occasional self-reference in his poetry and *Sira* as 'Ibn Musa',[40] the addressee is likely al-Muʾayyad's father. Al-Kirmani's own background and his epistles to deputies in Jiruft and Kirman also suggest the existence of a separate *daʿwa* in Kirman province,[41] although this organisation's ultimate fate following al-Kirmani's death and the incorporation of Kirman into the Buyid Amirate of Fars in 1028 is unclear.[42] Apart from a possible reference in Ibn Sina (d. 1037 / 428) to a 'Kirmani' in the city learned in 'esoteric knowledge' (*ʿilm al-batin*),[43] we have no further

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[38] Mahmūd ibn Uthmān, *Die Vita des Scheich*, 17-9. The *Shiraznama* of Zarkub al-Shirazi and the *Shadd al-Izar* of Junayd al-Shirazi are the best sources for early 11th century Sufis in Fars, well summarised by Florian Sobieroj, "Mittelsleute zwischen Ibn Ḫafīf und Abū Isḥāq al-Kāzarūnī," 651-671.

[39] Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī, *Majmūʿat rasāʾil al-Kirmānī*, 125.

[40] Al-Muʾayyad al-Shīrāzī, *Mount of knowledge, sword of eloquence,* tr. Mohammad Adra, 48 and Al-Muʾayyad al-Shīrāzī, *Sīrat*, 16.

[41] Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī, *A distinguished dāʿī,* 43 and 58.

[42] Busse, "Iran under the Būyids," 298.

[43] Noted by Howes, 'The Qadi, the Wazir and the Daʿi,' 880. Ibn Sīnā, *The Life of Ibn Sina*, tr. William E. Gohlman, 76-7.

information about Ismaʿilis or their organisation in Shiraz, Fars or Southern Iran in the early 11th century. Information on the Daylami presence in Shiraz is also somewhat scarce, but al-Muʾayyad's fear of remaining in the city when Abu Kalijar and his entourage were absent suggests that they served mainly as retinues to the court, rather than as a permanent garrison or *iqtaʾ* holders. We should also note that Shiraz may have been a centre of opposition to Abu Kalijar's rule, as Ibn al-Athir states that its people hated him when he finally took full control of it.[44] In summary, while the idea of a coherent 'Sunni establishment' in Shiraz is perhaps overly simplistic, given the internal conflicts within the Sufi and judicial camps, Ismaʿilism there certainly had to contend with institutionally-dominant opponents whose power would have only increased when al-Muʾayyad's allies in the court and its retinue were absent.

Fasa

By contrast, Fasa, al-Muʾayyad's first destination outside of Shiraz, was plainly dominated by two groups, the Daylami soldiery and the Sunni population, according well with his account of the town.[45] We are relatively well informed on the position of the Daylamis in the town thanks to a reference in al-Rudhrawari on the fall of the ruler Samsam al-Dawla, explaining that in 998 / 388 he instituted an audit of the many so-called Daylamis *iqtaʾ* holders around Fasa, withdrawing grants from those unable to prove their Daylami origins and lineage. The dispossessed then banded together with Samsam al-Dawla's opponents and deposed him.[46] This wealth and power of these *iqtaʾ* holders was later to make them a target;

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[44] ʿIzz al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil fī al-Tarīkh*, Vol. 9, 339.

[45] The secondary literature has divergent interpretations of the few lines al-Muʾayyad devotes to his stay. Howes understands the phrase '*ahl-ha min al-nasb ala ghaya*' as meaning that the Daylamis there 'did not want him' Howes, 'The Qadi, the Wazir and the Daʿi', 881. *Nasb* or hostility Ali's leadership and Shias in general is a well-recognised concept (see Amir-Moezzi, *The spirituality of Shiʿi Islam*, 278-9.) but reading *ahl-ha* as a reference to the Sunni populace's hostility rather than the Daylamis' makes more sense contextually. Indeed, al-Muʾayyad states that under his leadership senior Daylamis constructed a *Mashhad* in the town. There appears to be no textual basis for Alexandrin's reading that a Shiʿi shrine was destroyed there. Alexandrin, *Walāyah in the Fāṭimid Ismāʿīlī Tradition*, 64.

[46] Ibn Miskawayh, al-Rūdhrāwarī, and al-Ṣābiʾ, *The eclipse of the ʿAbbasid Caliphate*, Vol. 3, trs. H. F. Amedroz and D. S. Margoliouth, 333-4.

Ibn al-Athir notes raids by Ghuzz Turks led by Alp Arslan in 1050-1 / 442 on Fasa which killed 'a thousand of the Daylamis' and took much wealth and many prisoners.[47] Surprisingly for such a military-orientated town, there is no mention of Fasa in the Buyid *inshaʾ* correspondence. However, the only Buyid ruler of Fars whose correspondence survives is ʿAdud al-Dawla and his extant material also fails to mention cities like Siraf and Kazarun as it mainly deals with his, mostly Iraq-focused, military campaigns.[48] The enduring Daylami presence in Fasa is also confirmed by the biography of the famous Sufi Sheikh Ruzbihan al-Baqli (d. 1209 / 606), the *Tuhfat al-ʿIrfan,* which states he was born there to a family of Daylami lineage.[49]

The logic in Fasa's status as a Daylami base can be seen by its position in the Amirate (see Figure 3), keeping them both ready for campaigns and defence against Kirman and at a useful distance from the political intrigues in Shiraz. Controlling its garrison was already understood as key to taking power in Fars well before al-Muʾayyad; Al-Rudhrawari states that Abu Nasr ibn Bakhtiyar, who ruled Kirman but claimed Fars, recruited an influential Daylami from Fasa as an agent and sent him there in 1000 / 390 to turn the Daylamis to his cause.[50] In fact, it was the Daylamis of Fasa who, in alliance with some of their compatriots in Shiraz, initially intrigued against Abu Kalijar coming to power in Fars in 1024-5 / 415 in favour of his uncle Abu al-Fawaris (d. 1028 / 419).[51]

The evidence for a powerful 'Sunni establishment' in Fasa is similarly compelling. From the Sufi side, we see references to the town both in the biographical tradition of Ruzbihan al-Baqli, who notes a local mystic as one of his early teachers, and in the *Kitab Firdaws al-*

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[47] ʿIzz al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil fī al-Tarīkh*, Vol. 9, 564-5.
[48] Bürgel, *Die Hofkorrespondenz 'Adud ad-Daulas,* 177-9.
[49] Papan-Matin, *The unveiling of secrets Kashf al-Asrār,* 5.
[50] The agent was however quickly arrested. See Ibn Miskawayh, al-Rūdhrāwarī, and al-Ṣābiʾ, *The eclipse of the Abbasid Caliphate*, Vol. 3, 377-80.
[51] ʿIzz al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil fī al-Tarīkh*, Vol. 9, 338-9.

Murshidiyya which has a follower of the Sheikh establishing a *khanaqah* there.[52] This latter event is undated but was certainly 11th century and may well have been proximal to al-Muʾayyad's residence. Al-Muqaddasi fails to observe any Shi'ism in his descriptions of the area, whereas al-Firuzabadi al-Shirazi lists two Shafiʿi jurists as coming from the town, one of whom was likely trained in the town by another Shafiʿi jurist who served as the town's qadi.[53] Interestingly, the *wazir* in the *Sira* whose appointment precipitated the end of al-Muʾayyad's influence at court bore the *nisba* al-Fasawi, perhaps hinting that al-Muʾayyad's activities there helped in the formation of the coalition in Shiraz against him, especially given his mention of a 'crime' (*dhanb*) he was accused of committing in Fasa in a poem protesting his blamelessness to Abu Kalijar.[54]

While the Daylamis and the Sunni elite were clearly the dominant groupings in Fasa, both had potential local allies. Daylami soldiers normally operated alongside Turkish troops who served as cavalrymen and personal retainers to elites. However, they were typically Sunni and frequently fought with Daylamis over access to state revenues.[55] Our knowledge of Turkish soldiers in Fasa is limited to a single individual, the famous general Arslan al-Basasiri (d. 1060 / 451), whose first master was from the town and lent his *nisba* to his slave. Al-Basasiri was of course an ally of al-Muʾayyad much later in the expulsion of the Abbasid Caliph from Baghdad in 1059 / 450, but there is no indication such sympathies were gained earlier or were typical among Turks in Fasa.

The other factor in the politics of Fasa were the Shabankara Kurds, the most complete account of whom we find in the *Farsnama*/*Shiraznama*. This tradition features a particular clan of these Kurds called the 'Ismaʿiliyan' who were 'Batini' and had held rank in Sasanian

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[52] Ibn Miskawayh, al-Rūdhrāwarī, and al-Ṣābiʾ, *The eclipse of the 'Abbasid Caliphate*, Vol. 3, 6 and Mahmūd ibn Uthmān, *Die Vita des Scheich*, 435.
[53] Al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm,* 1994, 382 and 389 and Figure 4.
[54] Al-Muʾayyad al-Shīrāzī, *Sīrat*, 50.
[55] Bosworth, "Military Organisation under the Būyids of Persia and Iraq," 153-5.

times. After the Islamic conquests they had become pastoralists and had been driven out from several pastures in Isfahan and Fars until they established themselves near Darabjird, close to Fasa. They grew particularly strong here as Buyid power declined after the death of Abu Kalijar in 1048 / 440, briefly taking control of Fars immediately prior to the Seljuq conquest and remaining powerful locally up to the time of Ibn Balkhi.[56] While the identification of this clan as 'Batini' could easily be a result of misassociating the clan name with the Ismaʿili presence in the area organised by al-Muʾayyad, the Kurds' power locally is corroborated in Ibn al-Athir.[57] Fasa's importance to the Shabankara is also evidenced by the *Daftar-i Dilkusha,* a 14th century / 10th century epic poem eulogising their history. Although this largely concerns itself with Kurdish figures of the preceding two centuries, Fasa nevertheless features prominently as a setting for the various power struggles.[58] While al-Muʾayyad's visit came slightly before the Shabankara entered the historical record proper with the fall of the Buyids, at the time he was in Fasa their strength must have been a growing and dangerous factor in local politics.

Fasa's economic situation

Discussion of the different groups present in Fasa gives little idea of the exact situation at the time of al-Muʾayyad's residence. Aside from the Sufis and Kurds whose arrival may have been more recent, the other groups had lived alongside each other in spite of any sectarian differences since at least the Buyid conquest in the mid-10th century / 4th century. The anecdote about Samsam al-Dawla's disastrous audit demonstrates that by acquiring an affiliation to a group like the Daylamis, individuals could access revenues reserved for that group. In turn, each local elite visibly asserted their powers of patronage, as shown by al-

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[56] Ibn Balkhī, *The Fārsnāma,* 164-70 and summarised xv-xix.
[57] ʿIzz al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil fī al-Tarīkh*, Vol. 10, 71-2.
[58] Ṣāḥib, *Daftar-i Dilkushā*, 35, 84-5.

Muʾayyad's construction of a *mashhad* in Fasa with Daylami assistance at roughly the same time as the construction of the Sufi *khanaqah*. Ultimately however, the power bases of both the *iqtaʾ* holders and the 'Sunni establishment' would have depended on Fasa's local economic situation.

The geographies well illustrate the produce Fasa relied upon for its prosperity. Al-Muqaddasi describes a textile-based export economy, with items of value produced including 'silk clothing', 'hangings', 'carpets' and 'tents'.[59] He names its people as both some of the greediest and refined, a possible allusion to the town's prominence in the textile trade, a fact commented on by al-Istakhri and other 10th century / 4th century geographers.[60] Indeed, by cross-examining a range of sources it is clear that Fasa was the site of a *tiraz* factory[61] - a site controlled by the ruler producing prestigious textile wares which emphasised his sovereignty. Fasa not only manufactured a wider range of textiles than most other cities in Fars, its products made of goat's hair and *susanjird*[62] were of superior quality and the carpets and cushions made of these were exported extremely widely.

Of the town itself, al-Muqaddasi describes an 'inner city' largely built of wood, a wooden market, a mosque built of brick bigger than the mosque of Shiraz and a citadel.[63] In the early 12th century / 6th century, Ibn Balkhi describes a large town with many dependent districts. It had been destroyed by the Shabankara but was recently rebuilt and had a strong castle. He also says that the whole district was dependent on man-made *kariz-ha* (underground water

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[59] Al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm,* 390.
[60] Ibid, 33 and 233. The other geographers are generally inferior in detail to al-Muqaddasi and are summarised well in Schwarz, *Jughrāfiyā-yi tārīkhī-i Fārs*, tr. Kaykavus Jahandari.
[61] Serjeant, "Material for a History of Islamic Textiles," 80-1.
[62] A precious Persian textile used in cushions which the Cairo Geniza documents show was exported as far as Egypt. See Olszowy-Schlanger, *Karaite marriage documents*, 234-5.
[63] Al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm,* 382 and 393.

channels) providing artificial irrigation, but it was nevertheless extremely verdant with walnut trees, oranges and figs all present.[64]

Fasa from the numismatic evidence

According to Treadwell's examination of Buyid dies, Fasa was one of only 8 different mints active during Abu Kalijar's 20-year reign. Its mint was, along with that at Suq al-Ahwaz, second in productivity only to Shiraz itself.[65] However, simple statistical analysis of die numbers is easily misleading, particularly as the later Buyid period (c. 1000 – 1054 / 390 – 445) has enjoyed much weaker collecting activity than the earlier period (c. 932 – 1000 / 320 – 390).[66] Interesting trends are, however, notable in Abu Kalijar's coinage which hint at wider economic challenges.

Whereas the vast majority of Buyid coinage across the dynasty's history stuck rigidly to the same basic textual layout and design, the mints in the Buyid Amirate of Fars in their later period, and especially in the reign of Abu Kalijar, were notable for their extraordinary diversity of designs featuring complex geometrical patterns.[67] Although his coinage always featured the name of the reigning Abbasid Caliph, the design influence of Fatimid coinage with its unique theologically-linked series of seven concentric circles is apparent. Indeed, a half-dinar struck in Abu Kalijar's name in Shiraz with the year 424 (1033) is a direct copy of the design, if not the text, of a contemporary Fatimid coin.[68] Although it is tempting to associate such developments with Fatimid Ismaʿili influence on Abu Kalijar, not only does this particular half-dinar come from before the date he came under al-Muʾayyad's influence, and indeed according to the *Sira* was still under the influence of an anti-Shia teacher, the

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[64] Ibn Balkhī, *The Fārsnāma,* 130.
[65] Treadwell, *Buyid coinage*, xxix-xxx and Figure 5
[66] Ibid, xvii
[67] Ibid, xii
[68] Ibid, 60, Sh424a

design appears to have been a one-off and not repeated at the Shiraz mint or elsewhere. If there was a Fatimid Ismaʿili influence on Abu Kalijar's coinage, it does not correlate well with al-Muʾayyad's known activities.

This said, Treadwell's own thesis for the underlying motives for design innovation in later Buyid coinage is highly relevant. Although no systematic testing of metal densities in silver or gold Buyid coins has been carried out, he suggests that the innovative and elaborate designs may have been an anti-forgery measure as the debasement of coinage (precipitated by a general silver shortage) had artificially inflated the value of the silver dirham, making forgery more attractive.[69] Indeed, in the only account of two coins from Abu Kalijar's reign found *in situ* in Iran, the silver coin uncovered had been clipped while the gold coin found had been cut into small pieces for use as change, both activities associable with a lack of silver coinage. [70] This theory is speculative and must necessarily be proven by testing, but it nevertheless accords well with the *Sira*'s account of the Daylami soldiers' readiness to support al-Muʾayyad if we understand them as also having been squeezed fiscally by inflation arising from the state's debasement of coinage. The continued activity of Fasa's mint throughout Abu Kalijar's reign, even as the lack of extant examples from most other mints in Fars' towns and minor cities like Arrajan and Siraf suggests inactivity elsewhere, is also indicative of a larger than average Daylami garrison in Fasa who were to be paid from its production.

Fasa from the archaeological evidence

In Fasa, only limited support for the geographical sources can be found in the archaeology. Work has primarily focused on Tall-i Zahhak, a mound 3km away from the modern town,

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[69] Treadwell, *Buyid coinage*, xiii. Note also the interesting results of metal-density testing for the coinage of the 10th century Egyptian Ikshidid dynasty. Bacharach, *Islamic history through coins*, 45-51.
[70] Lowick, *Siraf XV*, 5 and 42.

especially its Achaemenian and pre-Achaemenian remains. The dating of many Islamic-era surface ceramic fragments to the 12th and 13th centuries / 6th and 7th centuries, after which period few fragments exist, suggest this was also the site of Fasa's main settlement in our period.[71] Sir Aurel Stein's work brought to light several fine small Islamic-era metal items, hinting at the town's former wealth.[72] His observations of the landscape around the Tall are also of interest; he notes that the valley is still entirely serviced by water from man-made *qanat* sources (underground water channels) and that a major citadel nearby in the mountains is unlikely to be the one described in the *Farsnama* as it lacks post-Sasanian pottery shards.[73] Unfortunately, due to their fragile nature, none of the textiles mentioned in our sources have been uncovered in archaeological excavations.[74]

Summary of Fasa's socio-economic situation

Fasa's economic success was apparently based on a fragile coalition between its different groups. Production and export of textiles would have relied both on keeping the routes connecting the town passable and maintaining a good supply of raw materials, whether these were the goat's hair from pastoralists or fibres like cotton produced through sedentary farming. The land area under cultivation would have grown through the construction of new *qanat* systems and the expansion of flocks when this trade was successful. However, this economic model would have been vulnerable to environmental degradation caused by water-hungry cotton plantations and pastoral over-expansion, to a breakdown in long-distance trade caused by debasement of currency, and to the cutting off of trade routes caused by political instability and conflict among the Kurds.

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[71] Hansman, "FASĀ ii. Tall-e Żaḥḥāk,"
[72] Stein, "An Archaeological Tour in the Ancient Persis," 140.
[73] Ibid, 142 and 145.
[74] Hansman, "FASĀ ii. Tall-e Żaḥḥāk,"

Preventing this relied on co-operation between different stakeholders, and the tensions from al-Muʾayyad's visit may have damaged this sense of interdependency, particularly if revenue was already in decline due to one or more of the above factors. If the *iqtaʾ* system made the Daylamis both the producers of raw materials and security force in the textile export economy, then resentment against manufacturers and merchants brought about by a trade decline may have been nurtured by al-Muʾayyad's pro-Alid propaganda. The increased prominence and assertiveness of the Shabankara immediately after his visit may represent an exploitation of tensions within the area's sedentary community. Whether it be through its role as a major mint, a *tiraz* factory, or a military base, Fasa was integral to maintaining Abu Kalijar's sovereignty over Fars. All of this could be threatened in al-Muʾayyad's short stay by working within the pre-existing hierarchical structures of the Daylami community, a general proselytization effort being not only inefficient by comparison, but also far trickier given underlying social tensions.
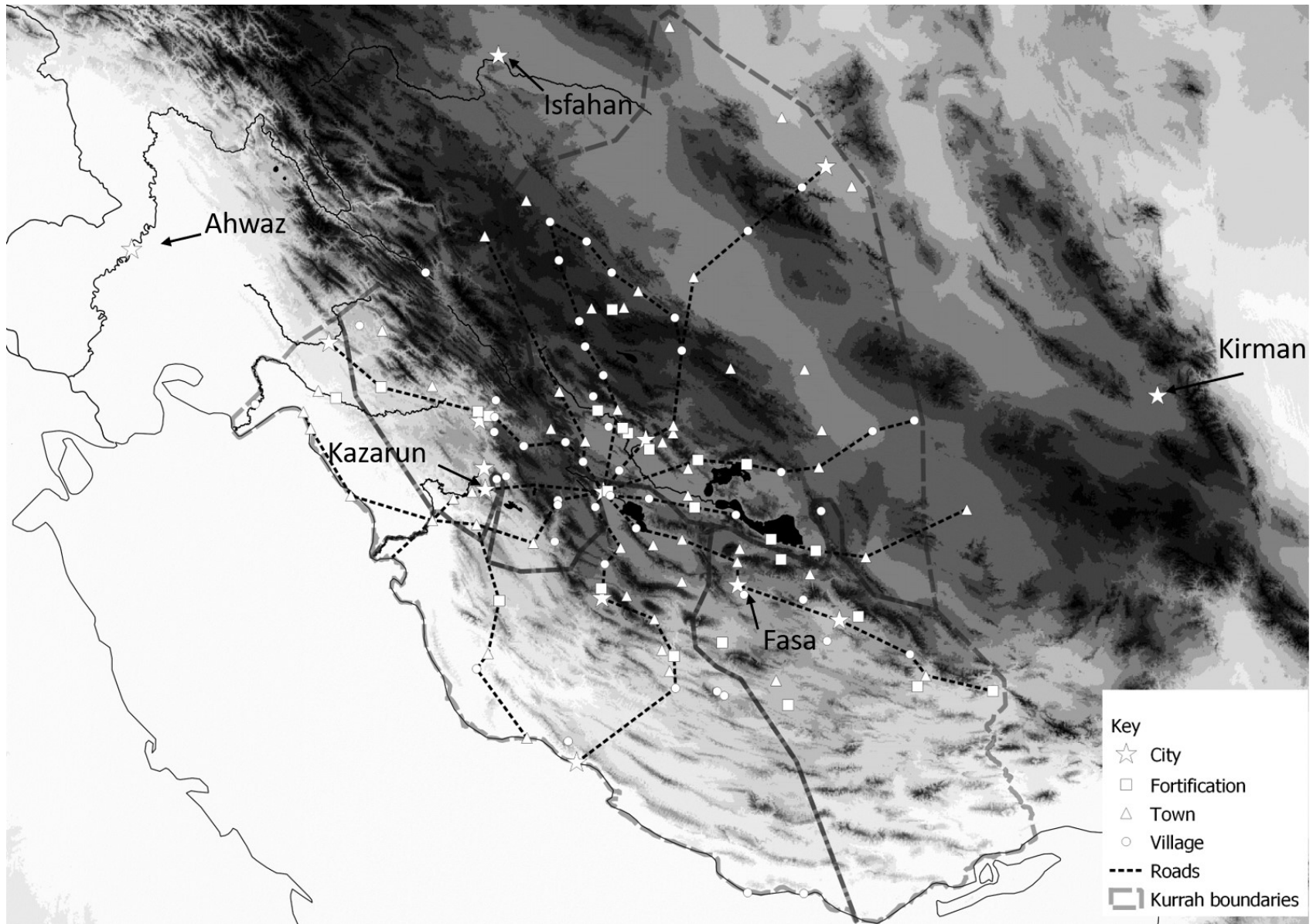
Figure 3. Map of 145 settlements identified in Le Strange and Nicholson's edition of the *Farsnama*, excluding 66 not located. Ahwaz, Isfahan and Kirman are not listed in the *Farsnama* and have been added for indicative purposes.
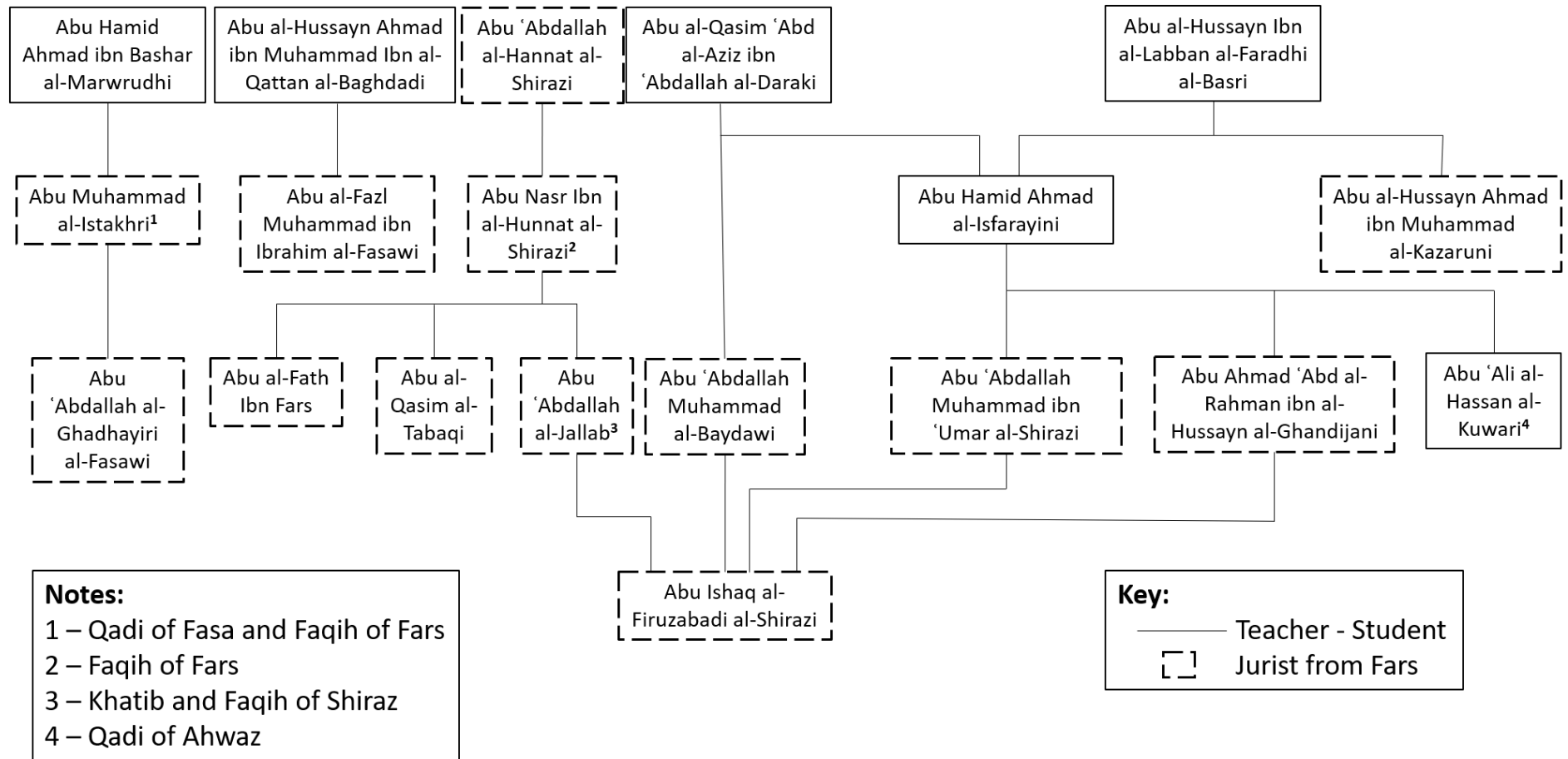
Figure 4. Shafiʻi jurists from Fars and their associates from the *Tabaqaat al-fuqaha'*. Other jurists not from Fars but who were associated with some of the non-Farsi jurists featured have not been added to the diagram for the purposes of clarity. Two other Shafiʻi jurists from Fars in the *Tabaqat al-fuqaha'*, Abu ʻAbdallah al-Buwayti al-Shirazi and Abu Saʻid al-Hassan ibn Ahmad al-Istakhri, have not been included in the diagram as no teachers or students associated with them are mentioned.

Ahwaz

Turning to the other town which al-Muʾayyad targeted, several similarities with Fasa are notable. The *Sira* names it 'a peripheral place in the kingdom and a gathering point for the Daylamis' (*min al-mamlaka taraf wa lil-daylam majmaʿ*), linking the Daylamis with the town multiple times.[75] Ahwaz had played a key role in the conflicts between Buyid rulers in Iraq and Fars for much of the dynasty's history, serving as both the site for battles and as a staging post to strike into either kingdom.[76] Furthermore, the chronicles have the Daylamis holding numerous *iqtaʿ* grants in the vicinity, the associated revenues of which were some of the highest in Buyid lands[77] - the location thus having the economic resources to permanently station large military forces. These apparently more commonly included Turkish soldiers than at Fasa. Indeed, in the year 974 / 323 Miskawayh notes rioting in the town between the Turks and Daylamis stationed there.[78]

For the town's non-military population al-Muqaddasi is again the best source. He divides the population evenly between Sunnis and Shias and states there is fighting between the former, who he terms 'Fadliyun', and the latter, termed 'Marushiyun' with inconsequential numbers of Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians also present.[79] In theology, he states that Muʿtazilism was dominant, while of the law schools Hanafis were most prevalent with a minority Maliki presence and Hanbalis dominant in some of the other towns of Khuzestan. Al-Firuzabadi al-Shirazi however confuses this picture by naming a Shafiʿi jurist as the town's qadi, Abu ʿAli al-Hassan al-Kuwari, and failing to associate any members of other law schools with the town.[80] Ibn al-Mushtari, the qadi of the town while al-Muʾayyad was there, was also a

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[75] Al-Muʾayyad al-Shīrāzī, *Sīrat*, 11, 12 and 55.
[76] E.g. Ibn Miskawayh, al-Rūdhrāwarī, and al-Ṣābiʾ, *The eclipse of the ʿAbbasid Caliphate*, Vol. 3, 272-3.
[77] Bosworth, "Military Organisation," 160.
[78] Ibn Miskawayh, al-Rūdhrāwarī, and al-Ṣābiʾ, *The eclipse of the ʿAbbasid Caliphate*, Vol. 2, 349-52.
[79] Al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm,* 368 and 370.
[80] Figure 4 and Al-Fīrūzābādī al-Shirāzī, *Ṭabaqāt al-fuqahāʾ*, 124.

Shafiʿi.[81] Louis Massignon's study on Ahwaz in the time of al-Hallaj (d. 922 / 309) creates further complications, naming several Malikis as qadis supported by a judicial council mainly composed of Hanbalis.[82]

Dealing with successive periods, these three sources are not necessarily contradictory if we understand them within the wider political context. In al-Hallaj's period, Ahwaz was the 'granary of the empire' under the close control of the Caliph in Baghdad who carefully allotted its revenues.[83] A close link to Baghdad continued in the Buyid period with the city a destination for many of the town's traditionists.[84] Indeed, *insha* documents show that the Caliph retained at least a symbolic role in Ahwaz's affairs, as he was still appointing individual officials to positions in the area in 967 / 356 – a power he apparently lacked for individual settlements in Fars.[85] By the later Buyid period however, with Ahwaz incorporated into the Buyid Amirate of Fars and cut off from Iraq, the appointment of a Shafiʿi qadi would have kept Ahwaz in sync with trends in Fars, although the sources state that Ibn al-Mushtari was also held in high esteem by the Caliph.[86]

The *Sira's* account of Ahwaz begins with al-Muʾayyad taking ownership of a mosque in disrepair in Ahwaz which 'Sufis and anti-Shias had taken shelter in, taking possession with a strange plan for it' (*Kana taʾawwiyu-hu al-sufiya wa ahl al-nasb, ahtawaʾ ʿala kasba ʿajiba*).[87] The Sufi presence in Ahwaz was longstanding. Even though Massignon identifies a strong anti-Sufi Hanbali grouping in al-Hallaj's time who colluded in his persecution, Ahwaz

[81] Klemm, *Memoirs of a Mission,* 134-5, note 15.
[82] Massignon, *The Passion of al-Hallaj*, Vol. 1, tr. Herbert Mason, 148-9.
[83] Ibid, 148.
[84] Al-Samʿānī, *Kitāb al-Ansāb*, Vol. 1, 395-7.
[85] Hachmeier, "The letters of Abu Ishaq Ibrahim al-Sabi," 121.
[86] Klemm, *Memoirs of a Mission*, 134-5, note 15
[87] Al-Muʾayyad al-Shīrāzī, *Sīrat*, 55. Alexandrin appears to mistranslate this passage, ignoring the reference to anti-Shias entirely and then having the Sufis repair the mosque rather than al-Muʾayyad. See Alexandrin, 'Studying Isma'ili Texts', and Alexandrin, *Walāyah in the Fāṭimid Ismāʿīlī Tradition,* 63.

was still able to attract Sufis even then such as Sahl ibn Tustari (d. 895 / 283).[88] By the late 10th century / 4th century, Sufis were so prominent in the region that al-Muqaddasi describes in detail his own encounter with a brotherhood in nearby Sus.[89] The appointment of a Shafiʿi qadi and apparent decline of the Hanbali position in the town may be further evidence that Sufism in the town had fully reconciled and integrated with the judicial authorities by the mid-11th century / 5th century.

Broader anti-Shia tendencies are also appreciable in works by authors associated with the town. An anecdote collection compiled in the 10th century / 4th century by one Abu al-Husayn Muhammad al-Ahwazi places sayings by Muʿawiya I (d. 680 / 60) alongside those by classical sources of knowledge like the Greek philosophers and Persian kings,[90] a less than diplomatic elevation given the town's sectarianism. Similarly, one Abu ʿAli al-Hassan al-Ahwazi (d. 1054-5 / 446), although residing mainly in Baghdad and Damascus, wrote an entire *hadith* collection containing only traditions transmitted through Muʿawiya I.[91] The extensive Shia and Daylami presence in the town may have motivated these assertive expressions of Sunni partisanship and helped form a coalition of anti-Shia forces.

As in Fasa, Kurdish groups constituted both an opportunity and a threat for Ahwaz. From the mountains immediately above Khuzestan, Kurdish forces could rapidly descend onto the plain to raid or to serve as auxiliaries to armies invading or defending Iraq. *Inshaʾ* documents show both the Kurd Abu al-Fawaris Hasanwayh (d. 979 / 369) fulfilling this function by supporting the forces of the Caliph al-Taʾiʿ in Ahwaz in 978 / 366-7, and his son Abu al-Najm ibn Hasanwayh (d. 1014 / 405) doing the same in an unsuccessful attack on Iraq in 989

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[88] Massignon, *The Passion of al-Hallaj*, 69.
[89] Al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm,* 368-9.
[90] On Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Ahwazī see Zakeri, *Persian wisdom in Arabic garb*, Vol. 1, 50-3.
[91] Abū Alī al-Ḥasan Al-Ahwazī, *Thalāth rasāʾil fī faḍāʾil Muʿāwiyah*, 20-30 and 87-145.

/ 379 coordinated by the Buyid *wazir* Ibn ʿAbbad.[92] Abu al-Najm even controlled several

districts of Khuzestan proper, demonstrating that giving pastoralists a stake in the sedentary

economy was understood as a way to bring security.[93]

Abu Kalijar's own relationship with the town should also be considered. Unlike Fasa which

had served as a base of opposition, Ahwaz had a long association with the ruler. According to

Ibn al-Athir, he was resident in Ahwaz when his father died, it was initially agreed that he

would rule only over Khuzestan and not Fars, and he returned there after concluding

negotiations with his uncle in Kirman.[94] Combined with the evidence of the three separate

visits he makes there in the *Sira*, Ahwaz appears to have functioned as an alternative capital

for Abu Kalijar, especially early in his reign.

Ahwaz's economic situation

Ahwaz's economic role has been discussed in greatest detail in Nanette Pyne's dissertation,

but her conclusions here differ little from R. B. Serjeant's earlier work. On the basis of the

geographical sources, most notably al-Muqaddasi, they each understand the town as a trade

entrepot rather than a production centre, providing a route to market for goods from the

highly productive towns of North Khuzestan like Sus and Tustar.[95] Ahwaz held this role as it

is the furthest point up the Karun river which boats could reach without having to portage, a

role further enhanced by the Buyid-era construction of a canal linking the Karun to the Tigris,

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[92] Hachmeier, "The letters of Abu Ishaq Ibrahim al-Sabi," 125 and Pomerantz, *Licit magic: the life and letters of al-Ṣāḥib b. ʿAbbād*, 64.

[93] Cahen, "Ḥasanwayh."

[94] ʿIzz al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil fī al-Tarīkh*, Vol. 9, 337, 339, and 350.

[95] Al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm,* 365-6 and 370. Compare Pyne, *The impact of the Seljuq invasion on Khuzestan*, 192-3 and Serjeant, "Material for a History," 71.

providing easy passage to Basra.[96] Land routes from Ahwaz also linked Khuzestan to

Baghdad via Wasit, to Esfahan and to Shiraz via Arrajan.[97]

As at Fasa, the textile trade constituted a major part of the wealth which passed through

Ahwaz. North Khuzestan had likely been a politically-important centre for *tiraz* factories

since Sasanian times, Tustar being particularly renowned as it had produced the covering for

the Kaaba for a period in the 10th century / 4th century.[98] The materials used to manufacture

advanced textile goods are better documented for Khuzestan than Fasa - silk, cotton and flax

were all farmed in quantity around the main settlements and then worked in water-powered

mills.[99] The proximity of towns like Tustar to the lower slopes of the Zagros mountains likely

also allowed for a ready supply of wool and goat hair from pastoralists, and the geographies

mention such products.[100] Other export goods traded through Ahwaz are what Pyne

characterises as 'cash crops', which she suggests may have also included rice and grains

alongside the lucrative main sugar crop.[101]

As with Fasa, which Ibn Balkhi states had been destroyed by the Shabankara and receives far

less mention after the Buyid period, Ahwaz falls out of mention in the main chronicles at

roughly the same time.[102] Nasir-i Khusraw deliberately avoided it when travelling through the

area in 1052 / 444 due to political instability caused by Abu Kalijar's death, but it is unclear

why Ahwaz, like Fasa, was apparently unable to recover from upheavals at this time. [103]

Ahwaz from the numismatic evidence

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[96] Pyne is sceptical of this canal's attribution to ʿAdud al-Dawla using numismatics but nevertheless concludes that it is Buyid. Pyne, *The impact of the Seljuq invasion*, 188 and 230.
[97] Ibid, 154-66.
[98] Serjeant, "Material for a History," 72-3.
[99] Pyne, *The impact of the Seljuq invasion*, 183 and 192.
[100] Ibid and Serjeant, "Material for a History," 74.
[101] Pyne, *The impact of the Seljuq invasion*, 188.
[102] Bosworth, "AHVĀZ i. History."
[103] Nāsir-i Khusraw, *Nasir-i Khusraw's `Book of travels'*, tr. W. M. Thackston , 123-4.

Much of the analysis for Fasa is also applicable to Ahwaz, but a few specific contextual points should be made. Khuzestan had a high concentration of different mints during the Buyid period and Ahwaz was unique in apparently having two, represented by the inscriptions Ahwaz and Suq al-Ahwaz respectively.[104] However, by the time of Abu Kalijar all coins bore the inscription Suq al-Ahwaz, although whether that merely represented a standardisation or the closure of a mint is difficult to determine. Furthermore, Treadwell does not provide plates of any of the Suq al-Ahwaz coins from Abu Kalijar's reign, three of which were recent accessions to the Tübingen collection at the time of publication, leaving us little information to explore stylistic influences in Ahwaz at this time.[105] Further collection work for the period of al-Muʾayyad's activity in Ahwaz would be of particular interest for the Caliph named on the coins. Bacharach has suggested that in Egypt and Syria/Palestine in the 9th to 10th centuries, the right of *sikka* (the right of ruler/caliph to have their name on coinage) was often understood as separate from the right of *khutba* (the right to have one's name mentioned in the sermon of mosques),[106] a division of the symbols of sovereignty replicated if al-Muʾayyad successfully controlled the *khutba* in Ahwaz but avoided interfering with the mint out of respect for the rights of Abu Kalijar.[107]

Pyne has noted the almost complete lack of 10th-11th century / 4th-5th century coinage found at Islamic-era sites in Khuzestan and suggested trade within the province may have been conducted using some non-metal currency, with trade centralised to only involve the exchange of hard currency at major commercial centres like Ahwaz.[108] Although this theory

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[104] Yaqut states that Suq al-Ahwaz was an alternative name for the same place., Yaqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, 284.
[105] Treadwell, *Buyid coinage,* 120.
[106] Bacharach, *Islamic history through coins,* 40.
[107] We should note here that Ismaʿili/Qarmatian missionary activity resulted in a change to coinage patterns on at least one previous occasion - in 10th century Azerbaijan. See Stern, "The Early Ismāʿīlī Missionaries," 72-4.
[108] Pyne, *The impact of the Seljuq invasion,* 263-4.

remains speculative at present, such a situation would have made effective control and stability in Ahwaz a prerequisite for management of the entire region's economy.

Ahwaz from the archaeological evidence

Few historical buildings survive in Ahwaz and no major archaeological survey of the city has been conducted.[109] However, considerable work has been undertaken at other sites around Khuzestan, mainly focussing on pre-Islamic history but with some relevance to our period. Pyne has combined this diffuse evidence together to argue that the Islamic period saw an increase in settlement density as state-directed production of cash-crops encouraged a focus on the most fertile settlements.[110]

She further argues, based on narrative sources and the confused archaeological pattern of settlement from the Buyid period onward, that a combination of political instability and the *iqtaʾ* land grant system resulted in economic decline and sedentary populations becoming pastoralists from the early 10th century / 4th century onward.[111] This contributed to an ecological disaster as large herds removed vegetation resulted in the flooding and salination of a fragile irrigation system starved of investment.[112] While this is largely an *e silentio* argument based on a confused archaeological picture which might easily be overturned by new evidence, increases in the size of herds caused by the demand for wool and goat's hair from the textile industry must have had an ecological impact. Dating this securely to the later Buyid period is however challenging.

Summary of Ahwaz's socio-economic situation

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109 Lerner, "AHVĀZ iii. Monuments."
110 Pyne, *The impact of the Seljuq invasion,* 245-7 and 264-5. For a more recent study see Verkinderen, *Waterways of Iraq and Iran*.
111 Pyne, *The impact of the Seljuq invasion,* 266-8.
112 Ibid, 270-1.

The overall situation in Ahwaz reproduces the fragility of Fasa in macrocosm. In Ahwaz, the division was not between military and populace but rather inside both groups between Sunni and Shia, Turk and Daylami. If the revenues on which Ahwaz's prosperity depended were under stress either in the manner Pyne theorises or from a currency shortage, then competition for the *iqtaʾ* grants least affected by these economic difficulties among the military, and the correspondent impact this must have had on the non-military population, would have proven fertile ground for the exploitation of sectarian differences. As for the town's population, there is some indication of an assertive Sunni tendency which al-Muʾayyad may have been able to characterise himself as reacting against. Abu Kalijar's repeated visits to the town and its infrequent appearance and marginal status in sources from the end of the Buyid period onward may suggest al-Muʾayyad was active just as socio-economic difficulties were coming to a head. In Ahwaz he not only directly threatened Abu Kalijar's right of *khutba*, but implicitly threatened his other sovereign rights of *tiraz* and *sikka* on which rulership in this period was based. This was again best achieved by carefully targeted preaching and staged provocations rather than through a broader missionary campaign.

									Hijri year written on coin													
Name of Mint	418	419	420	421	422	423	424	425	426	427	428	429	430	431	432	433	434	435	436	437	438	439	Total
Al-Basra			1						1	1													3
Fasa						1								1					2				4
Jiruft															1		1						2
Kazarun																1							1
Madinat al-Salam (Baghdad)											1								1				2
Shiraz	1	1				2	2		3	1		1	1	1		1		1		4	1	1	21
Suq al-Ahwaz																		2		1			4
Uman				1											1	1		1					3

Figure 5. Summary of relevant die variants listed in Luke Treadwell, *Buyid coinage: a die corpus (322-445 A.H.)*, (Oxford, 2001). Highlighted areas show the years and locations that al-Muʾayyad was active.
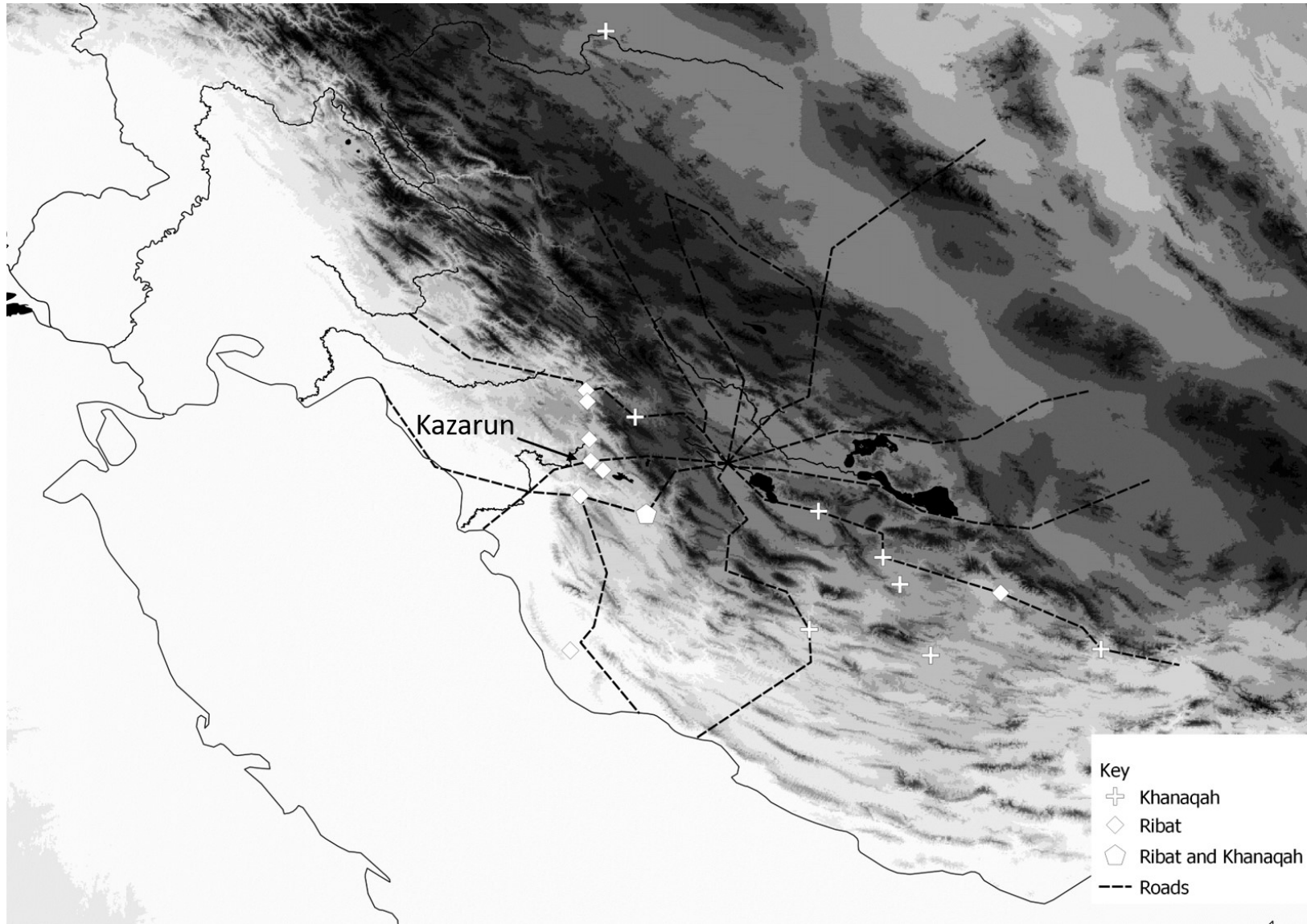
Figure 6. Locations of 15 Sufi establishments in Fars from the *Kitab Firdaws*.

Kazarun

Kazarun and the biography of Sheikh Murshid Abu Ishaq al-Kazaruni give a good idea of the challenges long-term missionary efforts faced. According to the *Kitab Firdaws's* narrative, Sheikh Murshid began preaching in Kazarun around the year 981 / 371 in the town's old mosque but was opposed there by popular preachers and storytellers (*qussas*). He then built his own mosque, but the Zoroastrian infidels (*gabran*) in the town came and destroyed this construction multiple times. However, the leader of the Zoroastrians eventually became fearful of the Sheikh's popularity with the Muslims, and he was allowed to complete the mosque with a benefactor from Ghandijan's support.[113]

Beyond this, the *Kitab*'s format makes securely dating or verifying many accounts challenging, but certain trends in its handling of different groups are discernible. The overseer (*shahna*) of Kazarun and head of the *gabran* was called 'Daylam Majusi', and at a Bacchic gathering of Daylamis in the town he supposedly plotted to kill the Sheikh.[114] It is then a Turk in attendance who warns the Sheikh and foils the plot.[115] This tale fits almost too well the paradigm of infidel Daylami versus Sunni Turk, indeed elsewhere it is explicitly stated that the Sheikh's followers include 'Turks, Daylamis and Persians',[116] but the tale nevertheless places Daylami commanders and their Turkish soldiers in local leadership positions in Kazarun.

Daylam Majusi then attempts to turn the ruler's *wazir* Fakhr al-Mulk in Shiraz against the Sheikh but, after a visit to Shiraz, the Sheikh is able to change the *wazir*'s opinion, have Daylam Majusi removed from his position and indeed have the *wazir* pay him a visit in return

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[113] Mahmūd ibn Uthmān, *Die Vita des Scheich*, 66-9.
[114] Ibid, 115-6.
[115] Ibid, 116.
[116] Ibid, 66.

when he needs to seek his blessing for a safe journey to Ahwaz.[117] In fact, the Sheikh usurps many of the prerogatives of the state. He founds numerous ribats in the area which serve as a food distribution network for the poor in times of drought, he intercedes with officials on behalf of plaintiffs, he incites his followers to holy war, and in the 13th-14th centuries / 7th-8th centuries the coinage of Kazarun was even customarily struck in his name.[118] The region where his influence was greatest was also on the strategically important road linking Shiraz to Ahwaz (the coast road being impassable to large forces due to heat and lack of water) with many easily-defensible mountainous castles.[119] While the *Kitab Firdaws*' has the Sheikh and his order wrest control of society around Kazarun, operating in parallel to the state and in collaboration with its major figures, this comes only after a lifetime of work and steady accumulation of institutional strength.

Corroborating the *Kitab Firdaws* from other sources is a difficult task. Abu Kalijar's *wazir* Bahram ibn Mafanna (d. 1041-2 / 433) was born in Kazarun, but aside from Bosworth's suspicion that he may have embarked on a secretarial career, presumably in Shiraz, we have little information on his early life, links to the region or how he came to attain his position.[120] Indeed, it was in Firuzabad rather than Kazarun that he founded a famous library.[121] He features in a single story in the *Kitab Firdaws*, visiting the Sheikh's *ribat* and disciplining those who dishonour the Sheikh, but there is little to distinguish this depiction from that of other high officials in the text.[122] The only other figure active in the Kazarun area who we have record of at the time is al-Hassan ibn Ahmad al-Ghandijani , a grammarian whose single extant text is dedicated to one Abu Saʿid Bundar ibn Jihishtayar, but who later accounts also

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[117] Mahmūd ibn Uthmān, *Die Vita des Scheich*, 121-2.
[118] Ibid, 168-9, 204 and 408-9, and Lowick, *Siraf XV,* 5.
[119] Compare Figure 3 and Figure 6. On the coast see Ibn Balkhī, *The Fārsnāma,* 140-1.
[120] Bosworth, "Ebn Mafana."
[121] Ibid
[122] Mahmūd ibn Uthmān, *Die Vita des Scheich*, 196, n. 1.

place in the literary circle of Bahram ibn Mafanna.[123] However, aside from his *nisba*, we having nothing to indicate that he operated in Ghandijan or Kazarun, and his association with Bahram ibn Mafanna makes it more plausible he worked in either Shiraz or Firuzabad.

Kazarun's economic situation

Kazarun's economic situation shows strong parallels to both Fasa and Ahwaz's. Al-Muqaddasi terms Kazarun the 'Damietta of the Persians' due to the embroidered linen cloth made there.[124] He notes that this textile alongside cotton cloth, embroidery and velvet scarves[125] helped fuel a thriving market, redeveloped by ʿAdud al-Dawla and filled with merchants and moneychangers. Like Fasa, the wider district was irrigated by wells and *qanat* sources as there were no above-ground waterways.[126] However, despite the existence of a textile-based export industry in the area, al-Istakhri specifically notes that the town did not possess a *tiraz* factory, and its manufactures appear less extensive than those of Fasa and Khuzestan.[127]

In the early 12th century / 6th century, Ibn al-Balkhi discusses the trade of Kazarun's cloth, describing a decline in the reputation of bales sealed with a Kazaruni signature (*khatt*), which in former times has been an irreproachable mark of quality such that foreigners would happily trade bales without opening them.[128] The production and export of cotton is also evident in various stories in the *Kitab Firdaws*; the Sheikh's own clothes were made from cotton from a nearby farm whose owner he had blessed, and the *Kitab Firdaws* features

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[123] Al-Ghandījānī, *Kitāb furḥat al-adīb*, 7-19 and 29.
[124] Al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm,* 383.
[125] Ibid, 390.
[126] Ibid, 383.
[127] Serjeant, "Material for a History," 82-3.
[128] Niewöhner-Eberhard, "Appendix 1: Ibn al-Balkhī on cloth-trading in Kazerun," 387-9.

Kazaruni merchants operating far afield on land or in the Gulf who tell stories about the Sheikh's miraculous guardianship.[129]

Kazarun from the numismatic evidence

Kazarun appears considerably less important as a mint than Ahwaz or Fasa with only a single design minted in the town extant from Abu Kalijar's reign and relatively fewer from other Buyid rulers.[130] While there are several possible reasons for this, (e.g. a lesser number of soldiers being deployed to the region, a smaller trading economy or more widespread use of alternative currencies in local trade), none can be decisively linked.

Kazarun from the archaeological evidence

In terms of archaeological study of its Islamic past, Kazarun has been largely neglected, with the nearby site of Bishapur monopolising attention. However, gravestones and column bases dated to the Buyid era have been found in the village of Davan, while in Bishapur a *madrasa* of the same period has been uncovered.[131]

Summary of Kazarun's socio-economic situation

Although similar in certain aspects to Fasa and Ahwaz, the somewhat limited information on Kazarun's social situation suggests it lacked key features common to Fasa and Ahwaz. Firstly, despite occasional references to Daylamis, we have no evidence of large-scale troop deployments, either temporarily or through *iqtaʾ* grants, near the town. Secondly, the Muslim community of the town seems to have been united by the struggle against Zoroastrian persecution, something we have no evidence for in the other towns. Thirdly, although a centre of textile production, Kazarun apparently lacked both a major mint and a *tiraz* factory,

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[129] Mahmūd ibn Uthmān, *Die Vita des Scheich*, 110-1 and 479-81.
[130] Treadwell, *Buyid coinage,* 31-3.
[131] Savagheb, *Jugrāfiyā-yi tārīkhī-i Bīshāpūr va Kāzirūn*, 131 and 144.

important symbols of sovereignty which al-Muʾayyad's actions elsewhere threatened. Kazarun only served the Buyid state as a source of revenue and staging post on the road to Iraq, a status wholly compatible with delegating so much local power to the Sufis.

While it is the strength of this local opposition which likely explains why al-Muʾayyad chose not to operate there, this should not however detract from how much more 'missionary' and rurally-focused the Sheikh and his order's tactics were and how different their objectives. In contrast, al-Muʾayyad never remained resident for long in Fasa or Ahwaz, never sought to build such a resilient or widespread network of institutions, nor aimed for the kind of limited and local hegemony capable of accommodating the central state which al-Kazaruni's order achieved.

Conclusion

To conclude, al-Muʾayyad's activities in Fasa and Ahwaz show that when forced to operate outside of Shiraz, he demonstrably did not go to towns with the largest Shia populations or with the greatest historic links to Ismaʿilism or to areas of the Amirate where the state had least control.[132] Instead, it was their shared capacity to undermine Abu Kalijar's rule which likely attracted him: both had substantial military garrisons due to their strategic positions and the suitability of their land for *iqtaʾ* grants, both had major mints active during his reign and both controlled the exportation of goods from the Amirate's two largest centres of *tiraz* manufacture. In addition, both had social vulnerabilities which a Shia partisanship could

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[132] Eva-Maria Lika has argued for the former based on Zaydi anti-Isma'ili sources. Her restricted focus on Ray and Tabaristan, areas where Shias dominated the local elites, may explain her finding that *da'is* targeted primarily Shia populations. Lika, *Proofs of prophecy and the refutation of the Ismāʿīliyya*, 19-20. Arrajan had the largest Shia population in Fars according to al-Muqaddasī, Jannaba and southern Iraq had associations with early Ismaʿilism and the Qarmatians, while Ibn Balkhī describes the coastal districts of Fars as those least amenable to state control. Ibn Balkhī, *The Fārsnāma,* 140-1.

target – the division between soldiery and populace in Fasa and the dual divisions within the soldiery and the populace in Ahwaz.

If al-Muʾayyad's objective was to cause unrest in places key to Abu Kalijar's sovereignty, implicitly threatening him with revolt unless he gave allegiance to the Fatimid Caliph, then he had no great need to proselytise to the wider community outside of the narrow Daylami military elite, the only allies the *Sira* explicitly records. Whereas in the case of Sheikh Murshid al-Kazaruni there is a systematic and gradual usurpation of power by means of close engagement with the local community, followed by a reconciliation with the state as its key officials came to pay homage, al-Muʾayyad fails to display any of the same 'missionary' attributes indicative of a desire to build a longer-term presence. Indeed, the two men's poetry gives a vivid display of their varying intentions; Sheikh Murshid's is mainly homiletic and either in Arabic or the local Kazaruni dialect of Persian while al-Muʾayyad's is refined and allusive, written in the Arabic of the Buyid court.[133]

While al-Muʾayyad and Sheikh Murshid might both be considered 'missionaries', this broad term is insensitive to the very different socio-cultural context of al-Muʾayyad's activities and societal impacts of his work. Studies of Ismaʿili teaching in Fatimid territory demonstrate a strict hierarchy of access to knowledge with different sessions for common people and for adepts of different ranks.[134] Given that Klemm has established that the *Sira* accords closely with the model of a *daʿi*'s behaviour set out by *Risala al-mujaza al-kafiya fi adab al-duʿat*, it would seem likely that in his teaching al-Muʾayyad carefully restricted access to esoteric knowledge in the manner such theoretical descriptions of a *daʿi*'s work describe.[135] Indeed, this text demonstrates an implicit expectation of the social class of a *daʿi* through its

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[133] Compare Al-Muʾayyad al-Shīrāzī, *Mount of knowledge, sword of eloquence,* tr. Mohammad Adra, 35-48 to Mahmūd ibn Uthmān, *Die Vita des Scheich*, 399-410. See also Qutbuddin, *Al-Muʾayyad Al-Shīrāzī and Fatimid Daʿwa Poetry*, 101.
[134] Halm, "The Ismaʿili oath of allegiance," 101.
[135] Klemm, *Memoirs of a Mission,* 107-8 and Klemm and Walker, A *Code of Conduct*, 60-1.

reference to the necessity of his good 'statesmanship' and the good character of his servants.[136]

The link between social status and *daʿis* has been previously noted. Ibn Sina mentions his own family's interactions with those influenced by Ismaʿilism, Stern argued that *daʿis* in Persia 'relied more on conversion of members of the ruling class', and Crone and Treadwell regard Ismaʿilism as mainly appealing to the 'Samanid elite'.[137] In fact, the only record of Ismaʿili 'communities' in Iran in the period before al-Muʾayyad comes from anti-Ismaʿili sources and their relatively frequent references to the persecution of Ismaʿilis[138] – potentially references to the suppression of small networks of individuals rather than genuine 'communities' systematically converted by *daʿis*. The abrupt disappearance of Ismaʿilism from the historical record in Fars following al-Muʾayyad's exile suggests that his following was more a fragile coalition of diverse elite interests than a fully-fledged religious community, united only by a shared opposition to an emerging 'Sunni establishment' whose institutional strength they ultimately proved unable to overcome.

Acknowledgements

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[136] Klemm and Walker, A *Code of Conduct*, 54 and 66-8.

[137] Ibn Sīnā, *The Life of Ibn Sina,* 19, Stern, "The Early Ismāʿīlī Missionaries," 81, and Crone and Treadwell, "A new text on Ismailism at the Samanid court," 247.

[138] E.g. after Mahmūd of Ghazna took Ray in 1030. Bosworth, "MAḤMUD B. SEBÜKTEGIN."

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