



## ‘ĀDEL SHAH AFŠĀR

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‘ĀDEL SHAH AFŠĀR, the royal title of ‘Alī-qolī Khan, r. 1160-61/1747-48, nephew and successor of *Nāder Shah*. The eldest son of Nāder’s brother, Ebrāhīm Khan, ‘Alī-qolī Khan was appointed governor of Mašhad in 1150/1737 and in the same year married Kethewan, daughter of the Georgian king Taymoraz (Tamaris). Three years later he was also married to a daughter of Abu’l-Fayẓ, ruler of recently subdued Bokhara. Physically strong and courageous, he led several punitive expeditions for Nāder, chastising the Yazīdis of Kurdistan in 1156/1743, and the Karakalpas and Uzbeks of K̄vārazm in 1158/1745. Early in 1160/1747 he was sent to Sīstān to quell one of the many uprisings provoked by Nāder’s increased rapacity, but on learning that his uncle had levied 100,000 tomans on him and appeared to suspect his loyalty, ‘Alī-qolī made common cause with the rebels and, in Rabī’ II/April, occupied Herat. The Kurds of K̄abūšān (Qūčān) also rose in his favor. Nāder, on his way to suppress them, was assassinated by a group of his Iranian officers, who offered the crown to ‘Alī-qolī. On arriving at Mašhad, ‘Alī Shah, as he now was called, sent a force to the fortress of Kalāt which killed all Nāder’s issue with the exception of his fourteen-year-old grandson Šāhroḳ. On 27 Jomādā II/6 July, he ascended the throne under the name of ‘Ādel Shah, “the Just King,” with much distribution of largesse and the proclamation of a three-year tax amnesty. Although urged to march on Isfahan to secure western Iran, the new ruler sent his brother Ebrāhīm Mīrzā to govern that province and himself remained in Mašhad, carousing with his unpopular Georgian favorite, Sohrāb Khan. In the autumn he crushed the Kurds of K̄abūšān, who had refused to supply grain for his famine-stricken army and capital, and on his return he



executed several of his chief supporters on suspicion of conspiracy. Toward the end of the year he at last marched westwards, spending a fruitless five months in Māzandarān attempting to subdue the Qajars under Moḥammad Ḥasan Khan. He captured the Qajar chief's four-year-old son (the future Āqā Moḥammad Khan) and had him castrated before continuing towards Isfahan. Meanwhile Ebrāhīm Mīrzā had consolidated his power in western Iran, murdered his brother's emissary, Sohrāb Khan, and was marching north to effect a junction with the forces of Amīr Aṣḡlān Khan, the *sardār* of Azarbaijan. ‘Ādel Shah marched from Gīlān and stationed his numerically superior army between the rebel forces, somewhere between Zanĵān and Solţānīya. Ebrāhīm advanced in Jomādā II, 1161/June, 1748; and at the first onslaught so many of ‘Ādel Shah's officers fled or went over to the enemy that Ebrāhīm gained a complete victory. ‘Ādel Shah fled to Tehran, but was handed over to his brother by the governor and blinded, after a reign of less than a year. Ebrāhīm was proclaimed shah in Tabrīz six months later; but in Mašhad Šāhroḡ had already been elevated to the throne by a military junta. Defeated near Semnān the following summer, Ebrāhīm was blinded and sent in chains to Mašhad, together with his brother and former prisoner; Ebrāhīm did not survive the journey, and on arrival ‘Ādel Shah was tortured to death. See [Afsharids](#).

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