



AKBAR FATHALLĀH

AKBAR SEPAHDĀR-E AʿẒAM, FATHALLĀH KHAN, prime minister of Iran from Ābān, 1299 Š./October, 1920 to Esfand, 1299 Š./February, 1921. At different times he was known by his successive titles as Bēglerbēgī, Sālār-e Afḵam, Sālār-e Aʿẓam, Sardār-e Maṣṣūr (from 1320/1902-03), and Sepahdār-e Aʿẓam (from 1333/1914-15). A rich notable of Gīlān, he was the son of Ḥājjī Khan Omšaʿī and the nephew of Akbar Khan Bēglerbēgī of Rašt. For many years Akbar Khan and he were the lessees of the customs administrations of Gīlān, Māzandarān, and Khorasan. After Akbar Khan's death in 1307/1889-90, Fathallāh Khan married his widow and took control of his wealth, since

Akbar Khan's only children were two daughters, and the inheritance of one of them, who died a little later, passed to her mother. In or around 1318/1900-01, the postal service was farmed out to Fathallāh Khan for 60,000 tomans yearly, and he was appointed minister of posts (M. Jamālzāda, *Ganĵ-e šāyagān*, Berlin, 1335/1916-17, p. 135). After the grant of parliamentary government, Fathallāh Khan supported the constitutionalist cause, and after Moḥammad-ʿAlī Shah's coup d'état, he was arrested and banished to Māzandarān on 17 Jomādā I 1326/17 June 1908, the day following his dismissal from office as minister of posts and telegraphs (Y. Dawlatābādī, *Tārīḵ-emoʿāser yā ḥayāt-e Yaḥyā II*, Tehran, 1328 Š./1949, p. 261; M. Malekzāda, *Tārīḵ-eenqelāb-e mašrūṭiyat-e Īrān II*, Tehran, 1329 Š./1950, p. 248). He again became minister of the post and telegraph after the constitutionalist victory and the deposition of Moḥammad-ʿAlī Shah, and he later held the same office three times more. He was also twice minister of justice. On 29 Šawwāl 1334/29 August 1916 he was appointed



minister of the interior in the first cabinet of Woṭūq-al-dawla (A. ‘A. Sepehr, *Īrān dar jaṅg-e bozorg*, Tehran, 1336 Š./1957, p. 378). In Woṭūq-al-dawla’s third cabinet, which negotiated the abortive Anglo-Iranian treaty of 1337/1919, he was minister of war, and in October, 1920, he became prime minister. After the coup d’état of February, 1921, he took refuge in the British legation and then went to his home at Rašt, where he lived quietly until his death around the beginning of 1317 Š./March, 1938 (Qazvīnī, *Yāddāsthā* VIII, p. 190). His remains were buried at the shrine of Ebn Bābūya in Ray. He has often been portrayed as stupid, but his career and actions suggest that probably much of his naïveté was calculated. An Englishman, Henry Savage Landor, found him intelligent, shrewd, and kind (M. Maḥmūd, *Tārīk-erawābeṭ-e sīāsī-e Īrān o Engelīs*, Tehran, 1328-33 Š./1949-54, VII, p. 1885).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

See also ‘A. Mostawfī, *Šarḥ-e zendegānī-e man*, Tehran, 1341-43 Š./1962-64, III, p. 210.

Bāmdād, *Rejāl* III, pp. 51-54.