



ĀL-E AFRĀSĪĀB (1)

ĀL-E AFRĀSĪĀB, a minor Iranian Shi'ite dynasty of Māzandarān in the Caspian coastlands that flourished in the late mediaeval, pre-Safavid period; it is also called (e.g. by Rabino) the Kīā dynasty of Čalāb or Čalāv (after the district [*bolūk*] of that name in Āmol, Māzandarān). In the tortuous politics and military maneuverings of the petty princes of the Caspian region, the Kīās or Āl-e Afrāsīāb rose to prominence as the ancient line of the [Baduspanid](#) Espahbads came towards its end in the 8th/14th century. The eponymous founder of the family, Kīā Afrāsīāb b. Kīā Ḥasan, was a commander in the service of his brother-in-law Faḡr-al-dawla Ḥasan b. Kayḡosrow. The occasion of Faḡr-al-dawla's execution of his vizier Kīā Jalāl-al-dīn Aḡmad b. Jalāl, a member of an influential Māzandarān family, the Kīā-ye Jalālīs, who were ancient rivals of the Āl-e Afrāsīāb, aroused such resentment that Faḡr-al-dawla was obliged vainly to try and conciliate the Āl-e Afrāsīāb in order to secure support; but in fact Kīā Afrāsīāb's two sons 'Alī and Moḡammad murdered Faḡr-al-dawla in 750/1349, thus bringing to an end a dynasty whose antecedents went back to pre-Islamic times.

Kīā Afrāsīāb now assumed power in Āmol and possibly in Sārī also. Lacking support amongst the local military leaders, he sought a rapprochement with a local 'Alid shaikh, Qewām-al-dīn b. 'Abdallāh Maḡ'ašī, called Mīr-e Bozorg, but was unable to achieve stable power; after ten years' rule, he and his three sons were killed by a coalition of military and religious elements under Qewām-al-dīn at Jalālakmār-paḡčīn near Āmol in 760/1359. Qewām-al-dīn now established the line of Maḡ'ašī Sayyeds (q.v.), of Husaynid descent, which was



to rule in Māzandarān for over two centuries.

The Āl-e Afrāsīāb attempted a revanche in this same year 760/1359, when one of its members, Kīā Faḡr-al-dīn Čalāvī, murdered Qewām-al-dīn's son Kamāl-al-dīn 'Abdallāh, but this provoked a retaliatory bloodbath of the Afrāsīābīs and of surviving members of the Bavandid family (see [Āl-e Bāvand](#)). The Āl-e Afrāsīāb only re-emerged as a force in the Caspian region with the eighth son of Kīā Afrāsīāb, Eskandar-e Šayḡī, who had fled to Herat and taken service under Tīmūr. When Tīmūr led an expedition into Māzandarān in 795/1393, he sacked Āmol and Sārī, deposed the Maḡ'ašī Sayyeds, and appointed Eskandar as his governor; Eskandar then proceeded to demolish the tomb at Sārī of Qewām-al-dīn Maḡ'ašī. However, during Tīmūr's campaign of 802/1399-1400 westwards into Iraq, Azarbaijan and Anatolia, Eskandar rebelled at Āmol against his master; Tīmūr marched into Māzandarān in 805/1402-03 and killed the rebel, but pardoned his two sons Kīā Ḥosayn and Kīā 'Alī.

The former son was left by Tīmūr as governor of the Alborz mountain fortress of Fīrūzkūh, and his son in turn, Lohrāsp, is mentioned as ruling over Ṭālaqān in western Māzandarān in 880/1475-76. A grandson (?) of Lohrāsp b. Ḥosayn, Kīā Ḥosayn or Ḥasan b. 'Alī, ruled over part of Rostamdār (i.e. western Māzandarān) and the inland mountain districts of Fīrūzkūh, Damāvand, and Harī-rūd. During the period of the disintegration of the Āq Qoyunlū confederation, Kīā Ḥosayn expanded southwards, seized Semnān and Ray, and defeated the Timurid governor of Astarābād, Moḡammad Ḥosayn Mīrzā. He opposed the rising power of Esmā'īl Šafawī, and it may be that he saw himself as Esmā'īl's rival for leadership of the Shi'ites in Iran. Esmā'īl invaded Māzandarān in 909/1504, captured the fortresses of Gol-e Ḳandān and Fīrūzkūh, and besieged Kīā Ḥosayn in Ostā and then captured him. The latter managed to commit suicide, but his body was burned publicly at Isfahan and his supporters in Māzandarān were massacred (see G. Sarwar, *History of Shāh Ismā'īl Šafawī*, Aligarh, 1939, pp. 45-49; R. M. Savory, "The Consolidation of Šafavid Power in Persia," *Islam* 41, 1965, pp. 73-74). In this way, the century-and-a-half rule of the Āl-e Afrāsīāb in the Caspian provinces came to an end.

Finally, there is mention in the sources of a last member of the family, one Sohrāb Čalāvī, who entered the service of the Safavids and was commander of the fortress of Ardahan in the district of Sāvaj Bolāḡ in southern Azarbaijan under Shah Esmā'īl.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

The chief primary source for the period up to the last years of the 9th/15th century is Zāhīr-al-dīn Maṣʿaṣī's *Tārīk-eṬabarestān o Rūyān o Māzandarān*, text in B. Dorn, *Muhammedanische Quellen zur Geschichte der südlichen Küstenländer des Kaspischen Meeres. i. Sehir-eddin's Geschichte . . .*, St. Petersburg, 1850, and editions Tehran, 1333 Š./1954 and 1345 Š./1966 (see Storey-Bregel, II, 1073-74), and thereafter, the sources for early Safavid history.

For secondary sources, see H. L. Rabino di Borgomale, "Les dynasties alaouides du Mazandéran," *JA* 210, 1927, pp. 266-68.

Idem, *Māzandarān and Astarābād*, London, 1928, pp. 141-02.

Idem, "L'histoire du Māzandarān," *JA* 234, 1943-45, pp. 236-40, with a genealogical table, p. 237.

For chronology, see Zambaur, p. 188; E. Sachau, "Ein Verzeichnis Muhammedanische Dynastien," *APAW*, Phil.-Hist. Kl., 1923, no. 1, p. 7, based on Münejjim-bashī, Turkish tr., II, 407.