



ĀL-E BĀVAND

ĀL-E BĀVAND (BAVANDIDS), a dynasty ruling Ṭabarestān (Māzandarān) from at least the 2nd/8th century until 750/1349. It claimed descent from Bāv, allegedly a grandson of Kā'ūs, son of the Sasanian king Kavāḍ. J. Markwart (*Ērānšahr*, p. 128) suggested that the family may rather be descended from a Zoroastrian priest of Ray at the turn of the 6th century. According to the legendary prehistory of the dynasty, Bāv came to Ṭabarestān at the time of the Arab conquest of Iran and was elected by the people as their ruler. He expelled the Arab intruders and reigned for fifteen years before being murdered. His son Sohrāb (Sorkāb) afterwards was crowned king in Perīm (later Ferīm) and built a palace nearby. Ferīm on Šahrīārkūh in the eastern mountain range of Ṭabarestān became the residential town of the early Bavandids. The dynasty is commonly divided into three successive branches.

1. *Until ca. 450/1058.* Documentable history of the dynasty begins only after the fall of the house of Dabuyid Espahbads of Ṭabarestān and the Muslim conquest of the lowlands (ca. (43/761) with Šarvīn, allegedly a great-grandson of Sorkāb. Together with Vendādhormozd of the rival Qarenid house, which held sway over the central and western mountain ranges and resided in Lafūr, Šarvīn now led the resistance to Muslim expansion. While the Qarenids claimed the succession to the Dabuyids and adopted their titles, Šarvīn was also addressed as Espahbad and assumed the title King of the Mountains. After Kāled b. Barmak departed from Ṭabarestān, where he had been governor ca. 151-55/768-72, Šarvīn destroyed the Muslim towns he had built in the highlands. In 166/782 Šarvīn joined with Vendādhormozd in an anti-Muslim



rebellion which led to a general massacre of Muslims in Ṭabarestān and the defeat of several caliphal armies before its suppression in 169/785. Thereafter relations with the Muslim governors remained fair for some time. The two kings, however, continued to restrict access to the highlands and prevented Muslim settlement there. When the caliph Hārūn al-Rašīd came to Ray in 189/905, they assured him of their loyalty and promised to pay the land tax. Šarvīn's grandson and successor Šahrīār b. Qāren (before 201 to 210/817 to 825-26) conspired to expel Māzīār b. Qāren, the grandson of Vendādhormozd, from his kingdom. Māzīār went to the court of the caliph Ma'mūn and returned to Ṭabarestān in 207/822-23 with his support. In 210/825-26 Māzīār captured and killed Šāpūr, son and successor of Šahrīār, and seized the Bavandid territories. When Māzīār became involved in war with 'Abdallāh b. Ṭāher, Šāpūr's brother Qāren gave aid to the latter and, after the overthrow of Māzīār in 224/839, was restored to his ancestral kingdom. He converted to Islam in 227/842.

The Bavandids were generally hostile to Zaydī 'Alid rule in Ṭabarestān. Qāren b. Šahrīār sided with the Taherid governor Solaymān b. Ṭāher against the rising of Ḥasan b. Zayd al-Dā'ī in 250/864. He was severely defeated, his brother Ja'far killed in battle, and his country devastated. Although he swore allegiance to the 'Alid under duress in 252/866 and sent his sons Sorqāb and Māzīār as hostages to his court, he soon defected. In 254/868 he was forced to flee to Qūmes. According to Ṭabarī (III, p. 1529) he did, however, establish outwardly friendly relations and even marriage ties with the 'Alid before his death in order to protect himself. His son or grandson Rostam (b. Sorqāb?) b. Qāren revolted in 266/879 against Ḥasan b. Zayd, seized Qūmes from his ally the 'Alid Qāsem b. 'Alī, and incited Aḥmad b. 'Abdallāh Ḳoḷestānī, then in control of Nīšāpūr, to invade Ṭabarestān. As Ḳoḷestānī occupied Gorgān, Rostam seized Astarābād. A sudden attack by Ḥasan b. Zayd caught him by surprise, and he barely escaped to the highlands. He was pursued by Ḥasan's brother Moḥammad and reduced to submission with the promise not to maintain an army in the future. After Ḥasan's death in 270/884, Rostam supported the Hasanid Abu'l-Ḥosayn Aḥmad b. Moḥammad in Āmol in his claim to the succession against Moḥammad b. Zayd. After the latter had overcome Abu'l-Ḥosayn ten months later, he immediately attacked Rostam in the highlands and drove him out of his kingdom. Rostam found refuge with the Saffarid 'Amr b. al-Layṭ, who interceded for him. Moḥammad b. Zayd pardoned him again on the condition that he would not maintain an army and would pay all tribute and taxes he had withheld. In 276/890 the 'Alid



dispossessed Rostam once more of his kingdom, and he fled to Rāfe' b. Harṭama, then in control of Khorasan, and cooperated in his invasion of Ṭabarestān in 277-79/891-93. When Rāfe', threatened by 'Amr b. al-Layṭ, made peace with the 'Alid and pledged allegiance to him, Rostam allied himself with 'Amr. Rāfe' lured him with a ruse to Astarābād where he put him in fetters, seized his land and property giving a share to Moḥammad b. Zayd, and tortured him to death in 282/895. Rostam's son Šarvīn may have been restored to his ancestral kingdom by the Samanids, who seized Ṭabarestān in 287/900 and whom he, together with the Qarenid Espahbad Šahrīār b. Bādūspān, loyally supported. In 290/903 he fought under the Samanid Abu'l-'Abbās 'Abdallāh b. Moḥammad when the latter repelled an attack of the 'Alid Nāṣer Oṭrūš on Āmol. In 297/909-10 he helped to prevent a revolt of Abu'l-'Abbās against his suzerain, the Samanid Aḥmad b. Esmā'īl. After the conquest of Ṭabarestān by Nāṣer Oṭrūš in 301/914, he incited the Samanid Naṣr b. Aḥmad to send an army under Elyās b. Alīsa' against him. Only after its defeat did he submit to the 'Alid. Nāṣer's successor Ḥasan b. Qāsem al-Dā'ī initially pursued a repressive policy against the two semi-independent Espahbads Šahrīār and Šarvīn. Although they agreed to pay their tribute, he sent Abu'l-Ḥosayn Aḥmad, son of Nāṣer, with an army against them; both were forced to make their submission to Ḥasan in Astarābād. He proposed to imprison them because of their persistent disloyalty to the 'Alids but, warned by Abu'l-Ḥosayn, they fled. Ḥasan now devastated their land and carried off their sons as hostages. In 314/926, however, Šarvīn is mentioned as accompanying Ḥasan into his exile in Gilān and returning with him to Āmol. Ḥasan's ally and supporter Mākān restored him to the rule of Šahrīār-kūh. Šarvīn is last mentioned accompanying Mākān in a campaign to conquer Khorasan in 318/930.

After the collapse of the Zaydī 'Alid reign the Bavandid Espahbads became involved in the conflict between the Buyids and the Ziarids for supremacy in Ṭabarestān. The Ziarid Vošmgīr was married to a daughter of Šarvīn and in 331/943, when expelled from Ray by the Buyid Rokn-al-dawla, sought refuge with his brother-in-law Šahrīār b. Šarvīn in Šahrīār-kūh. In 336/947-48 Rokn-al-dawla conquered Ṭabarestān, and Šahrīār was forced to make his submission in person. He evidently remained loyal to Vošmgīr and his Samanid overlords and thus later lost the reign to his brother Rostam. He is last mentioned in 357/968 as present in Gorgān with a Samanid army sent to attack Rokn-al-dawla. The reign of Rostam is attested by coins minted in Ferīm from 353/964 to 369/979 on which Buyid overlordship is acknowledged. The formula 'Alī



walīallāh on them testifies to his support of Shi'ism; thus he was attached to the Buyids in preference to the Samanids. Rostam is the father or grandfather of the Sayyeda, wife of the Buyid Faḡr-al-dawla, who after the latter's death in 387/997 reigned in Ray in the name of her minor son Maǰd-al-dawla. His son Marzobān is known as the author of the *Marzobān-nāma* (tr. R. Levy, PHS, New York, 1968), a collection of fables and anecdotes. Marzobān ruled in Ferīm in the years 371/981 and 374/984-85 according to coins on which the overlordship of the Buyid Faḡr-al-dawla is recognized. A coin minted in Ferīm in 375/985-86 mentions an Espahbad Šarvān (sic) b. Rostam as the ruler without recognizing Buyid suzerainty. He was probably another son of Rostam b. Šarvīn and may be identical with the Espahbad Šarvīn Bāvand mentioned by Ebn Esfandiār (II, p. 5) as ruling Ṭabarestān in 372/982. For the year 376/986-87 there is a coin minted in Ferīm in the name of Šahrīār b. Dārā (b. Rostam) acknowledging the overlordship of Faḡr-al-dawla. Šahrīār was later expelled by his uncle Marzobān and joined the Ziarid Qābūs in exile in Nišāpūr. After the death of Faḡr-al-dawla in 387/997 he was sent by Qābūs with an army to conquer Šahrīār-kūh from his uncle; having accomplished this, he proclaimed the suzerainty of Qābūs. Marzobān returned with Buyid backing but was expelled once more by Šahrīār. After the conclusion of a peace between Qābūs and Maǰd-al-dawla, under which the former's rule over Gorgān and Ṭabarestān was recognized, Šahrīār showed signs of independence. Marzobān attacked and seized him with Buyid support. Taking possession of Šahrīār-kūh, he changed his allegiance to Qābūs; he was in power when Bīrūnī visited him ca. 389/999. Šahrīār b. Dārā died in Ray ca. 390/1000 (Helāl al-Šābī in Margoliouth and Amedroz, *Eclipse III*, p. 449).

The accounts of the literary sources about the Bavandids in the Buyid, Ziarid, and early Saljuq age are fragmentary and highly confused. 'Otbī (*al-Yamīnī*, ed. A. Sprenger, Delhi, 1847, pp. 208-29), on whom the later accounts of the conflict between Marzobān b. Rostam and Šahrīār b. Dārā b. Rostam are dependent, inverted the name of the former into Rostam b. Marzobān and called the latter Šahrīār b. Rostam. Later authors confused the latter with Šahrīār b. Šarvīn, suggesting that he survived until the late 4th/10th century, and identified him with the Espahbad Šahrīār Bāvand, who according to Neẓāmī 'Arūzī received the poet Ferdowsī after he had left Maḡmūd of Ġazna. It is, however, chronologically impossible that Ferdowsī could have visited either Šahrīār b. Šarvīn or even Šahrīār b. Dārā. If Neẓāmī's story is reliable, a later Šahrīār must be meant. An inscription on a tomb tower at Lāǰīm mentions an otherwise unknown Kīā Abu'l-Fawāres Šahrīār b. al-'Abbās b.



Šahrīār who ordered its erection in 413/1022 (A. Godard, “Les tours de Ladjim et de Resgest (Māzandarān),” *Āthār-é Īrān* I, 1938, pp. 109-12). He may be a grandson of Šahrīār b. Dārā and could be the Šahrīār visited by Ferdowsī. He is not called Espahbad, however, and it is doubtful whether he ever ruled.

Ebn al-Aṭīr (IX, pp. 187, 251-52) mentions an anonymous Espahbad of Ferīm who sided the Buyid Maǧd-al-dawla against a rebel in 407/1016-17 and an Espahbad of Ṭabarestān who was captured together with two sons by the Kakuyid ‘Alā’-al-dawla in 418/1027 and died in his prison in the following year. The former, and perhaps also the latter, is likely to be identical with the Bavandid Espahbad Abū Ja’far Moḥammad b. Vandarīn who according to an inscription ordered the building of the mausoleum tower known as Mil-e Rādkān in 407/1016-17 and was still alive at its completion in 411/1020. It is thus evident that Bavandid Espahbads continued to rule in the first half of the 5th/11th century. But the later literary sources suggest that after Šahrīār b. Dārā their reign virtually lapsed, from the time of the late Ziarids until the sultanate of the Saljuq Alp Arslān (455-65/1063-73), when Qāren b. Sorḳāb regained control in the mountains. Qāren is said to have died in 466/1073-74 or in 486/1093 and was succeeded by his son Ḥosām-al-dawla Šahrīār, the first ruler of the second Bavandid dynasty. The late sources make Qāren’s father Sorḳāb a son of Šahrīār b. Dārā. This filiation of the second dynasty must be considered doubtful, though chronologically not impossible, since Ḥosām-al-dawla was born already ca. 430/1039.

2. *From ca. 450/1058 to 606/1210.* The Bavandids of the second branch were vassals of the Saljuq sultans and later, as the Saljuq sultanate declined, gained independence. They were addressed as Espahbads and kings of Māzandarān (“Esfahbaḍ-e Esfahbaḍān, Malek-e Māzandarān,” in two letters addressed to Šāh-Ġāzī Rostam written by Rašīd-al-dīn Vaṭvāṭ on behalf of the K̄vārazmšāh Atsız, *Nāmahā-ye Rašīd-al-dīn Vaṭvāṭ*, ed. Q. Tūyserkānī, Tehran, 1338 Š./1959, pp. 23, 119). They were Imami Shi’ites and acted as protectors of Imami Shi’ism and Zaydī ‘Alids. Ḥosām-al-dawla Šahrīār was the first to gain control of the town of Sārī, which became their capital. A coin minted in his name in Sārī on which the overlordship of Sultan Barkīāroq is acknowledged shows that he already held it under the latter’s reign (487-98/1094-1108). The power of the Bavandids was based, however, on the possession of various mountain fortresses. After conquering the Isma’ili fortress of Šāhdez in 500/1107, the Saljuq sultan Moḥammad Tapar ordered Ḥosām-al-dawla to join in his anti-Isma’ili campaign. Incensed by the threatening tone of the message, Ḥosām-al-



dawla refused. The sultan sent Sonqor Boḳārī with an army who besieged Ḥosām-al-dawla in Sārī but was routed by a sortie led by the Espahbad's eldest son Naǧm-al-dawla Qāren. The sultan now sent Ḥosām-al-dawla a conciliatory letter asking him to dispatch one of his sons to his court in Isfahan. Ḥosām-al-dawla sent 'Alā'-al-dawla 'Alī who impressed the sultan so favorably that he offered him his sister in marriage. 'Alā'-al-dawla persuaded him, however, that this honor should go to his brother Naǧm-al-dawla, the heir apparent. Naǧm-al-dawla came to Isfahan for the wedding and after his return to Sārī arrogated the rule to himself and mistreated his father and his servants. Ḥosām-al-dawla retreated first to Āmol and then to Hawsam, the old Zaydī center in Daylamān, where he built a *kānaqāh* for himself and engaged in religious devotion and farming. When he fell ill, Naǧm-al-dawla brought him back to Sārī and apologized. Naǧm-al-dawla's insubordination toward Sonqor, the atabeg of the sultan's son Jalāl-al-dīn Aḥmad residing in Ray, led the latter to offer the rule of Ṭabarestān to 'Alā'-al-dawla and to provide him with an army against his brother. Ḥosām-al-dawla took the side of Naǧm-al-dawla and persuaded 'Alā'-al-dawla to withdraw. As the quarrel continued and Naǧm-al-dawla complained to Sultan Moḥammad about 'Alā'-al-dawla, the latter went to Marv to join Sultan Sanǧar. Sanǧar prepared for a joint campaign to the west to bring Gorgān again under his control but then was forced to march east to the Jaxartes against Moḥammad Khan in 507/1113-14. Naǧm-al-dawla used the occasion to occupy Gorgān. Ḥosām-al-dawla stayed behind in Tamīša where he fell ill and died ca. 508/1114-15.

On his succession Naǧm-al-dawla Qāren removed and imprisoned some of the most trusted servants of his father, thus weakening the reign. He soon fell ill and died after having secured the oath of allegiance of the people of Šahrīār-kūh for his son Rostam. Upon learning of Naǧm-al-dawla's death, 'Alā'-al-dawla 'Alī took leave from Sanǧar in order to press his claim to the succession against his nephew. Sultan Moḥammad asked both to come to his court in Isfahan for a judgment on their rival claims. Rostam at first refused, and when he came, fell ill and died. It was said that he was poisoned by his stepmother, the sultan's sister, who desired to marry 'Alā'-al-dawla. The sultan held 'Alā'-al-dawla back in the hope of gaining direct control over his land and castles and later imprisoned him together with his younger brother Yazdegerd, while in Ṭabarestān his elder brother Bahrām and his nephew Farāmorz b. Rostam struggled for the reign. When Sultan Moḥammad died in 511/1117, his son Maḥmūd released 'Alā'-al-dawla, gave him his aunt in marriage, and permitted him to return to Ṭabarestān. Farāmorz submitted to



him but Bahrām resisted. After suffering defeat Bahrām sought refuge with Sultan Maḥmūd who gave him some support but soon withdrew it. Bahrām now vainly tried to incite the Isma‘ilis to murder ‘Alā’-al-dawla. When Sultan Sanjar invaded Jebāl in 513/1119 and forced Maḥmūd to surrender Ṭabarestān and other parts of western Iran to him, Bahrām joined him. ‘Alā’-al-dawla had earlier failed to respond to Sanjar’s summons and now again refused to present himself in person, sending his son and heir apparent Šāh-Ġāzī Rostam in his stead. Sanjar was highly dissatisfied with the latter and dismissed him after four months. When ‘Alā’-al-dawla parried his new summons with the demand that he first send Bahrām to him, Sanjar invested the latter with the reign of Ṭabarestān and provided him with an army. ‘Alā’-al-dawla was initially deserted by many of his vassals but eventually gained the upper hand. Expelled from Gorgān, Bahrām stayed with the amir Öner in Nišāpūr until the latter was assassinated by the Isma‘ilis (515/1121) and then joined the Saljuq Mas‘ūd b. Moḥammad, now lord of Gorgān, promising to conquer Ṭabarestān for him. Learning of his intrigues, ‘Alā’-al-dawla arranged to have him murdered in Gorgān. When Sanjar invaded western Iran again in 521/1127, ‘Alā’-al-dawla initially obeyed his summons but failed to join him on being informed of the serious opposition of the sultan’s nephews. After Sanjar’s return he declined another invitation pointing out his advanced age and offered to send one of his sons. Sanjar rejected the offer and sent the amir Arġaš to seize Šahriārkūh, but he was stopped before Tamīša; then Sanjar encouraged Čavlī, amir of Ray, to invade Ṭabarestān. He further granted Šahriārkūh to his nephew Mas‘ūd, lord of Gorgān, but he was twice defeated by ‘Alā’-al-dawla near Tamīša. Arġaš, amir of Dāmġān, was charged with avenging the defeat and vainly besieged the castle Rūhīn near Astarābād for eight months. The unsettled situation in Iraq after the death of Sultan Maḥmūd in 525/1131 and Mas‘ūd’s attempt to gain the sultanate then induced Sanjar to recall Arġaš and to summon ‘Alā’-al-dawla once more for a campaign to the west. ‘Alā’-al-dawla sent his son Šāh-Ġāzī who distinguished himself and was wounded in the great battle between Sanjar and Mas‘ūd near Dīnavar on 8 Raġab 526/25 May 1132. He was given leave to return to his father with highest honors. ‘Alā’-al-dawla’s relations with Sanjar remained poor, however. When his wife, Sanjar’s sister, died, the sultan demanded her extensive estates and property in Ṭabarestān—which she had left partly to her husband and partly as endowments—as his inheritance and sent the Espahsālār Moḥammad Kāšī to obtain it. ‘Alā’-al-dawla eventually bought the sultan’s share of the estate for 100,000 dinars. Later the sultan ordered ‘Abbās, amir of Ray (since 534/1139), to invade Ṭabarestān. He stayed in Āmol for some time



and then came to an amicable settlement with 'Alā'-al-dawla. When the K̅v̅ārazmšāh Atsız seized Gorgān and imprisoned its lord Rostam Kabūd̅jāma, Šāh-Ġāzī went without his father's permission to meet Atsız and successfully pleaded for Rostam's release. 'Alā'-al-dawla reproached him for his irregular conduct. This happened probably in 536/1142 when Atsız invaded Khorasan or in the previous year. 'Alā'-al-dawla in any case died shortly afterwards in Sārī.

Under his son and successor Noṣrat-al-dīn Šāh-Ġāzī Rostam Bavandid power reached its peak. His hostile brother Tāj-al-molūk Mardāvīj 'Alī had for some time been in Marv serving Sultan Sanjar, who conceived a great liking for him and gave him his sister (daughter?) in marriage. After the father's death he provided him with an army to press his claims against his brother. Mardāvīj seized Astarābād, Tamīša and the fortress of Johayna and continued to hold them after his further offensive and an eight months siege of Šāh-Ġāzī in Qal'a-ye Dārā ended in failure. Šāh-Ġāzī had been asked by Sanjar to send one of his sons for his service to replace Mardāvīj and dispatched his favorite and heir apparent Gerdbāzū to Marv with 1,000 men. Gerdbāzū was killed in 537/1142 by Isma'ili assassins in Saraḡs. Šāh-Ġāzī ever after blamed Sanjar for the murder, calling him a *molhed* and stopped all correspondence with him. Already during his father's reign he had actively fought the Isma'ilis and had twice been wounded by their assassins. He now became their implacable enemy and personally led numerous campaigns against their strongholds; Ebn al-Aṭīr (XI, p. 148) mentions a major successful raid of Alamūt in 552/1157. Probably years later he undertook a raid of Gerdkūh, but he was forced to raise his lengthy siege when Boḡrātegīn, lord of Jovayn, attacked him at the instigation of the Isma'ilis. The overthrow and capture of Sultan Sanjar by the Ġozz in 548/1153 gave Šāh-Ġāzī a chance to expand his sway beyond Ṭabarestān. A number of Sanjar's amirs sought refuge in Ṭabarestān. Sanjar's nephew Solaymānšāh, who was first set up by the amirs of Khorasan as sultan, in 549/1154 fled to Gorgān and then received the hospitality of Tāj-al-molūk Mardāvīj in Astarābād. Shortly afterwards Šāh-Ġāzī expelled his impoverished brother from Astarābād and Johayna and had him murdered in Kabūd̅jāma before he could escape to Khorasan. Šāh-Ġāzī now could extend his power to Gorgān and Jājarm. When Solaymānšāh, who in the meantime had been with the K̅v̅ārazmšāh Atsız, came to him (in 550/1155?), he entertained him for two months and then accompanied him to Ray, where the amirs of Jebāl and Azarbaijan gathered around the Saljuq. As Solaymānšāh moved on to Hamadān he granted Ray, Sāva, and Semnān to Šāh-Ġāzī. The latter was forced to return to Ṭabarestān as the Qarakhanid Maḡmūd Khan, who had been



proclaimed sultan in Khorasan after the flight of Solaymānšāh, and Mo'ayyed Ayaba invaded his country. After inflicting a defeat on them, Šāh-Ġāzī was able to negotiate their withdrawal to Gorgān. In Ray, which he held for twenty months, he patronized the 'Alids and Shi'ites and built and endowed a *madrasa*. Probably in 550/1153 he came to the aid of the K̄vārazmšāh Atsız and attacked the Ġozz in Dehestān, having spurned their offer of an alliance, but suffered a crushing defeat. As the Ġozz withdrew to Transoxania and Sanjar escaped from their captivity and returned to Marv (Ramazān, 551/October-November, 1156), Šāh-Ġāzī moved against the Isma'ili fortress of Mehrbon and Manšūr-kūh and took it after a lengthy siege. Bestām and Dāmġān fell into his hands and were given in fief to Sābeq-al-dawla Qazvīnī, a former champion of Sultan Mas'ūd. In 553/1158 Ṭabarestān was again invaded by Sultan Maḥmūd and Mo'ayyed Ayaba pursuing the amir Ītāq, an ally of Šāh-Ġāzī. The latter sued for peace and bought their withdrawal for a large sum and precious gifts. Toward the end of the year 555/1160 Ītāq involved Šāh-Ġāzī in another conflict with the Ġozz, who came to the aid of Yaġmorkān, chief of the Barziya Turks as he set out for a punitive attack on Iraq. Šāh-Ġāzī responded to Ītāq's request for help and was again heavily defeated in Dehestān. In 556/1161 he sent aid to the amir Sonqor Īnānġ enabling him to recover Ray, where the atabeg Eldigüz had established his son Moḥammad Pahlavān. In 557/1162 Mo'ayyed Ayaba, having killed Sultan Maḥmūd and holding sway over Nīšāpūr, Ṭūs, and Bayhaq, offered to name Šāh-Ġāzī in the *koṭba* if he would cooperate in his expansionist designs in the west. Šāh-Ġāzī did not trust him and concluded an alliance with Sonqor Īnānġ giving him his daughter in marriage and choosing him as his commander-in-chief for the prospective conquest of Jebāl and Khorasan. Ayaba took the offensive in 558/1163, seizing Bestām and Dāmġān, and named Arslān b. Toġrel, the Saljuq sultan set up by Eldigüz, in the *koṭba*. In 559/1164, however, Sābeq-al-dawla Qazvīnī, sent by Šāh-Ġāzī, reconquered Bestām and Dāmġān. On 8 Rabī' I 560/23 January 1165, Šāh-Ġāzī, who had been incapacitated for some time by gout, died. According to 'Abd-al-Jalīl Rāzī, the *koṭba* and coinage in his reign were in the name of the Maḥdī (Nūrallāh Šoštari, *Maġāles al-mo'menīn*, Tehran, 1353 Š./1974, II, p. 386); no coins of his reign have been found.

Šāh-Ġāzī's son and successor 'Alā'-al-dawla Šaraf-al-molūk Ḥasan had twice fallen into disgrace with his father because of his lack of military prowess. He now established a bloody reign, putting to death many of his father's closest supporters and vassals including his uncle Ḥosām-al-dawla Šahrīār and Sābeq-al-dawla Qazvīnī, lord of Bestām and Dāmġān. Sonqor Īnānġ, lord of Ray,



found refuge with him during his revolt against the atabeg Eldigüz. Šaraf al-molūk married his daughter ‘Ā’eša and helped him to recover Ray. Īnānj turned the civil administration of the town over to him. After the death of Īnānj and the seizure of Ray by Eldigüz, the latter attacked Fīrūzkūh, Dāmḡān, and Beṣṭām but then concluded a peace with Šaraf al-molūk conceding these territories to him while retaining Ray. In 568/1172 the K̲vārazmšāh Solṭānšāh, overthrown by his brother Tekeš, came to Dehestān with his mother and asked Šaraf-al-molūk for aid. The latter prepared a grand reception for him and his escort, but Mo’ayyed Ayaba, whom he had offended by refusing to surrender two towns belonging administratively to Khorasan and mistreating his envoy, interfered and persuaded Solṭānšāh to come to Nīšāpūr. Then both invaded Ṭabarestān, taking Tamiša after a siege of forty days. Ayaba moved on to Sārī, ravaging the town, and sent his brother Qoštom to pursue Šaraf al-molūk, who had fled to Ferīm. Qoštom suffered a defeat, however, and the invaders withdrew. Šaraf al-molūk sent an army to Khorasan with orders to burn and kill but was shortly afterwards, in 568/1173, murdered by his slave bodyguard who were exasperated by his vindictiveness.

Immediately after the succession of ‘Alā’-al-dawla’s son Ḥosām-al-dawla Ardašīr, Ayaba and Solṭānšāh invaded Ṭabarestān as far as Sārī. Ayaba returned to Nīšāpūr, putting his brother Qoštom in charge of Astarābād and some fortresses nearby. Ambushed by the lord of Gošvāra, however, Qoštom left for Nīšāpūr, and after Ayaba was killed by the K̲vārazmšāh Tekeš in 569/1174, Shah Ardašīr recovered the town and fortresses and also regained control of Beṣṭām and Dāmḡān. Very close relations developed now between him and Tekeš, who agreed to the engagement of his two-year-old daughter to marry him. Five or six years later (ca. 578/1183), when she was to be sent with her mother to Sārī, the Ġozz leader Malek Dīnār invaded and pillaged eastern Ṭabarestān. Tekeš moved to Gorgān and, as the Ġozz had departed, demanded that Shah Ardašīr cede the town to him and aid him in seizing it. Shah Ardašīr felt obliged to comply and then received Tekeš’s daughter for a splendid wedding. He was also obliged to send aid to Tekeš in the latter’s two campaigns to Nīšāpūr in 582/1186 and 583/1187. As Tekeš gained firm control over Khorasan, Shah Ardašīr was deserted by some of his vassals who sought the backing of the powerful K̲vārazmšāh. Ardašīr’s representations with him remained ineffective, and relations between them deteriorated rapidly. After Shah Ardašīr captured and killed one of his disloyal vassals, Tekeš invaded and devastated his eastern territories. While gradually moving toward a cautiously anti-Khwarazmian policy, Ardašīr strengthened his relations with



the atabeg Moḥammad Pahlavān, the Saljuq Toġrel, and the caliph Nāṣer. He had first provided military aid to the former two when the Salghurid Dakla (Takla) of Fārs attacked Jebāl (ca. 580/1184). When the rebel Ostandār Hazārasf of Rūyān sought refuge with them (ca. 581/1185) and requested their backing to regain his land, they cooperated with Shah Ardašīr. In 582/1186 Toġrel came into conflict with Pahlavān's brother Qızıl Arslān and was granted asylum and hospitality in Ṭabarestān. Again when Toġrel was released from captivity after the death of Qızıl Arslān in 587/1191, Ardašīr closely cooperated with him, warning him of the intrigues of his wife Īnānĵ Kātūn with Tekeš against him. Tekeš was at this time preparing for his invasion of western Iran. He occupied Shah Ardašīr's territories east of Tamīša and demanded the surrender of Beṣṭām and Dāmġān to him. Shah Ardašīr was forced to comply but immediately after Tekeš's return from his first campaign to western Iran in 588/1192 sent aid to Sultan Toġrel for his recapture of Ray. He asked for Toġrel's daughter to marry his eldest son Šaraf al-molūk and entered an alliance with Toġrel and Tekeš's brother Solṭānšāh in Marv under which the former was to seize Beṣṭām and Dāmġān, Solṭānšāh to take Nišāpūr and Shah Ardašīr to occupy Gorgān. As he raided Gorgān, his wider hopes came to naught because of the death of Solṭānšāh in Marv in Ramazān, 589/November, 1193. In the following year Tekeš again invaded western Iran, and Toġrel, who disregarded Shah Ardašīr's warning not to resist him, was killed (590/1194). Ardašīr tried to conciliate Tekeš by dispatching his youngest son Rokn-al-dawla Qāren with an army to Hamadān for his service, but Tekeš dismissed him after a few days and, after reaching Gorgān on his return, sent the amir Šūtāš to punish Shah Ardašīr. Šūtāš sacked and burnt Sārī and appointed a *šeḥna* for the territory east of Tamīša. Shah Ardašīr's hopes for escape from the Khwarazmian stranglehold were raised when the caliph Nāṣer's vizier Ebn al-Qaṣṣāb took Ray in 591/1195 and sent him gifts and caliphal robes of honor, but they were dashed by a new campaign of Tekeš to western Iran in 592/1196. On his last invasion of western Iran in 595/1199, Tekeš took the fortresses of Fīrūzkūh, Ostūnāvand, and Folūl from Shah Ardašīr, who was forced to send his son Šaraf-al-molūk for his service. A group of his vassals conspired with his second son Šams-al-molūk to revolt in the latter's favor, and Šūtāš used the occasion to move to Sārī while Arġoš, Khwarazmian lord of Folūl, occupied Āmol. Shah Ardašīr was able to suppress the conspiracy and to drive Arġoš out of Āmol. Relations with Tekeš reached their lowest level as the latter sent Šaraf-al-molūk back to his father and demanded that he return his daughter, Shah Ardašīr's wife, to K̄vārazm. Shah Ardašīr ignored the demand. Soon afterwards Tekeš died, in 596/1200. As



Khwarazmian rule in western Iran collapsed and Tekeš's son 'Alā'-al-dīn Moḥammad was preoccupied in the east, Shah Ardašīr was able to recover gradually much of his former territory including Dāmḡān, Fīrūzkūh, Folūl, and Ostūnāvand. When the Ghurid Šehāb-al-dīn of Ghazna invaded K̄vārazm in 600/1204, he sent envoys to Shah Ardašīr, who agreed to recognize his overlordship in the *koṭba* and on his coinage. This recognition remained without consequence as Šehāb-al-dīn was defeated by the K̄vārazmšāh in 601/1205. Shah Ardašīr died in 602/1205-6.

About the same time his heir apparent Šaraf-al-dawla also died. His second son Šams-al-molūk Rostam, who had been imprisoned in the fortress of Dārā since his abortive revolt, was now released and ascended the throne in Āmol. The youngest brother Rokn-al-dawla Qāren, however, claimed the inheritance of Šaraf-al-dawla's former possessions and went to K̄vārazm seeking the support of 'Alā'-al-dīn. The latter ordered his brother 'Alī-Šāh, who ruled Dāmḡān and Beṣṭām, to aid Qāren. As 'Alī-Šāh invaded Ṭabarestān, an amicable settlement was reached under which Qāren received the inheritance of Šaraf al-molūk, and friendly relations were established between 'Alī-Šāh and Šams-al-molūk. 'Alī-Šāh soon came into conflict with his brother 'Alā'-al-dīn and was killed (604/1207-8). Ṭabarestān now fell more and more under direct Khwarazmian control, while the power of the Isma'īlis expanded in the west. Qāren was assassinated by Isma'īlis, and Šams-al-molūk was treacherously murdered by the 'Alid Abū Reżā Ḥosayn b. Moḥammad Māmaṭīrī on 4 Šawwāl 606/1 April 1210 without leaving a son. Bavandid rule lapsed and Māzandarān came first under Khwarazmian and then under Mongol control.

3. *From ca. 635/1238 to 750/1349.* The dynasty was restored three decades later by a side line of the family. The rulers of this branch were vassals of the Ilkhans. Although they retained the title of kings of Māzandarān, their power and territories were much more restricted than under the Saljuqs. The capital was moved from Sārī to Āmol, which was less affected by the ravages of the Mongol invasions. They were closely allied through frequent marriage ties with the Ostandārs of Rūyān (see [Baduspanids](#)), who as rulers of the mountains afforded them shelter in times of danger and gradually gained ascendancy over them. The dates for the reigns of these rulers given in the sources appear generally unreliable, as those few dates which can be tested are mostly inaccurate. The first ruler Ḥosām-al-dawla Ardašīr b. Kink̄vāz b. Šahrīār was chosen by the men of power in Māzandarān as king. His grandmother was a sister of Šams-al-molūk, the last ruler of the previous



branch, and his mother was a daughter of the Nizari imam Jalāl-al-dīn Ḥasan (Now-mosolmān) of Alamūt. He is reported to have died after a rule of fifteen years in 647/1249. This date is probably too early. His eldest son and successor Šams-al-molūk Moḥammad was closely allied with the Ostandār Šahrāgīm b. Nāmvar, whose daughter he married. Under the Il-khan Abaqa (663-80/1265-82) Šams-al-molūk and Šahrāgīm were ordered to participate in the siege of the Ismaʿili fortress of Gerdkūh. Their sudden desertion provoked an invasion of Māzandarān and occupation of Āmol by Gāzān Bahādor. Both rulers were later forgiven. Šams-al-molūk then joined the army of the Il-khan but was soon arrested because of his rashness. When his ally, the Ostandār, revolted in Rūyān against a new Mongol intruder, Qotloḡboḡā, Šams-al-molūk was put to death. The date given, 663/1264-65, is too early, especially if this occurred after the fall of Gerdkūh (669/1270) as Awliāʾallāh Āmolī's account suggests.

Šams-al-molūk was first succeeded by his brother ʿAlāʾ-al-dawla, who died after four months, and then by a cousin, Tāj-al-dawla Yazdegerd b. Šahrīār b. Ardašīr, whose reign lasted three decades. Tāj-al-dawla ruled Māzandarān from Tamiša to Alīša-rūd with little Mongol interference, and the country enjoyed a period of relative safety and prosperity. Āmol is said to have housed seventy *madrasasin* in his time. After the accession of his son Nāṣer-al-dawla (ca. 700/1300), the amir Moʾmen came to Āmol as Il-khanid *šehna* and greatly reduced his authority. Bavandid power declined even more after his death (ca. 710/1310 ?; the date given in the sources, 714/1314-15, appears too late) because of quarrels among his brothers. Šams-al-molūk Moḥammad murdered his brother ʿAlāʾ-al-dawla ʿAlī. The third brother, Rokn-al-dawla Šāh-Kaykosrow, went to the Il-khanid court and gained official backing. Qotloḡšāh, son of Amir Moʾmen, was sent to Āmol, and Šams-al-molūk fled to Gilān. When he later returned, Rokn-al-dawla killed him with the support of Qotloḡšāh. He became himself involved in war with Qotloḡšāh and was forced to transfer his family and household from Āmol to a village in Kalār-rostāq where they enjoyed the protection of his brother-in-law, the Ostandār Našīr-al-dawla Šahrīār. Despite the support of the latter, who achieved some military successes against Qotloḡšāh, Rokn-al-dawla remained largely deprived of his reign, especially after Amir Moʾmen returned to Āmol. His situation changed only when the amir Tāleš Čübānī became governor of Khorasan (perhaps after Čübānī's appointment as *amīr-al-omarāʾ* by the Il-khan Abū Saʿīd in 717/1317) and was induced by Rokn-al-dawla to come to Māzandarān where he curbed the power of Amir Moʾmen.



Rokn-al-dawla is reported to have died in 728/1327-28 and was succeeded by his sons Šaraf al-molūk, who died in 734/1333-34, and Faḡr-al-molūk Ḥasan. Having been raised in Rostamdār, they were dependent on the power of the *ostandār*. After the death of the last Il-khan Abū Saʿīd (736/1335), the amir Ṭaḡaytīmūr was recognized in Māzandarān. His name occurs on coins minted in Āmol in the years 738-42/1337-41. Faḡr-al-dawla resisted overtures of Masʿūd Sarbadār as the latter set out to bring Māzandarān under his sway and cooperated with the Ostandār Jalāl-al-dawla Eskandar in defeating him after he had reached Āmol in 745/1344. He antagonized the powerful Kīā Jalālī family controlling Sārī, who were traditional allies of the Bavandids, by putting to death Kīā Jalāl b. Aḡmad Jāl. He was now forced to rely on the rival Kīā Čalābī family of Āmol, traditional opponents, and in particular on Kīā Afrāsīāb. The Kīā Jalālī family entered an alliance with the Ostandār Jalāl-al-dawla and attacked Āmol jointly with him. While Faḡr-al-dawla personally surrendered to Jalāl-al-dawla and was well received by him, the Kīā Čalābī family turned away from him in disaffection. Kīā Afrāsīāb, whose sister he had married, accused him of having seduced his stepdaughter and obtained a *fatwā* of the scholars of Āmol condemning him. Afrāsīāb's sons ʿAlī and Moḡammad treacherously murdered Faḡr-al-dawla on 27 Moḡarram 750/17 April 1349. As Afrāsīāb took over the rule in Āmol, Faḡr-al-dawla's minor sons found refuge with Jalāl-al-dawla. After they had grown up, the *ostandār* made some attempts to restore the Bavandid reign but to no avail.

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