



ĀL-E KAṬĪR

ĀL-E KAṬĪR, an Arab tribe of Kūzestān composed of two subtribes, Bayt Sa'd and Bayt Karīm and inhabiting two sectors of Šūs and Dezfūl. The origin of the name is unknown; they themselves claim that they are the descendants of Ja'far Barmakī, and because of their large population are known as Āl-e Kaṭīr. In the Arab genealogies we come across a family known as Banū Abī Kaṭīr (Abu'l-Fawz Moḥammad Amīn al-Sowaydī, *Sabā'ek al-dahab fī ma'refat al-qabā'el al-'arab*, Najaf, 1280/1863-64, pp. 101-02); if Āl-e Kaṭīr belong to this clan, they are descendants of the Lawāta tribe of the Berbers. A. H. Layard claims that they derive from the Nebān tribe of the Najd ("Description of the Province of Khuzistan," *JRGS* 16, 1846, p. 33). In any event, Āl-e Kaṭīr belong to those Arabs who came from Iraq to Kūzestān during the reign of the Moša'sa'īān, settling first in the western part of the province (Ḥowayza) and moving then to the region of Dezfūl and Šūs (A. Kasravī, *Moša'sa'īān*, Tehran, 1334 Š./1955, p. 96), perhaps during the reign of Shah 'Abbās I (996-1038/1588-1629) when the leadership of the clan was held by Shaikh Kēnayfar, the great grandfather of Shaikh Fāres (local investigation by the author). Shaikh Fāres is the first member of the tribe one encounters in the history of the Safavids; he was an important chief in Dezfūl in the year 1137/1724 during the uprising of Šafī Mīrzā the Pretender (Sayyed 'Abdallāh b. Nūr-al-dīn Jazāyerī, *Taḍkera ye Šūštar*, ed. Maula Bakhsh and M. Hidayet Husain, Calcutta, 1914-24, pp. 70-71; A. Kasravī, *Tārīk-epānšadsāla-ye Kūzestān*, Tehran, 1333 Š./1954, pp. 75-76). If we assume one hundred years for the lifetime of three generations, then Kēnayfar must have been alive in 1037/1587 or towards the end of Shah 'Abbās's reign. After Kēnayfar's death the Āl-e Kaṭīr



split into two groups following his two sons Sa'd and Nāṣer, and today the two subtribes are named after Sa'd and Nāṣer's son Karīm. The Bayt Sa'd tribe lives on the land south of Dezfūl, and Bayt Karīm on the right bank of the Dez river and in the area of Šūš (local research).

The Āl-e Kaṭīr were involved in most of the troubles and disturbances in Kūzestān; these took place either at their initiative or at the instigation of the Moša'sa'īān, who ruled in the western sector of Kūzestān (Ḥowayza). Among these troubles were those of Šafī Mīrzā in 1137/1724-25 (*Taḍkera-ye Šūštar*, pp. 70-88), those in 1142/1729-30 (Mīrzā Mahdī Khan Astarābādī, *Jahāngošā-ye Nāderī*, ed. 'A. Anwār, Tehran, 1341 Š./1962, p. 117), the revolt of Moḥammad Khan Balūč in 1144/1731-32 (*Tārīk-epānšadsāla-ye Kūzestān*, p. 78), the uprisings of the people of Šūštar and Dezfūl in 1160/1737 and in the reign of 'Adel Shah (*Taḍkera-ye Šūštar*, p. 99; *Moša'sa'īān*, p. 111) as well as other rebellions (*Taḍkera-ye Šūštar*, pp. 100-02, 113-14, 152-53).

In 1165/1751-52 a dispute over the leadership of the tribe of Bayt Karīm led to a revolt by the descendants of Karīm b. Nāṣer against Sa'd, the son of Fāres II, who was the chief of the tribe, and many people were killed on both sides. Shaikh Sa'd took refuge with the chiefs of Āl-e Kamīs in Rāmhormoz, and the leadership of the tribe went to Nāṣer b. Karīm (*Taḍkera-ye Šūštar*, pp. 152-53). His rule was full of conflicts between Āl-e Kaṭīr and the local government of Kūzestān (*Taḍkera-ye Šūštar*, pp. 158-59).

It was at this period that Karīm Khan Zand and 'Alīmardān Khan Baḳtīārī placed Shah Esmā'īl III on the throne. As regent, 'Alīmardān Khan gave the government of Šūštar and Dezfūl to Shaikh Nāṣer, an act which resulted in numerous rebellions and conflicts in both cities, where the local chiefs themselves claimed authority; the disturbances spread throughout Kūzestān, to the extent that the tribes of Banū Lām and Āl-e Kamīs invaded Dezfūl, Šūštar and Ḥowayza, causing extensive damage and coming into conflict with the Moša'sa'īān. Although the author of *Taḍkera-ye Šūštar* does not mention the clans of Āl-e Kaṭīr in connection with these events, it is hard to believe that they had no part in them, since they were supporters of the Moša'sa'īān (*Tārīk-epānšadsāla-ye Kūzestān*, p. 92; *Taḍkera-ye Šūštar*, p. 164). The relations between 'Alīmardān Khan Baḳtīārī and Karīm Khan Zand soon became strained, while the Āl-e Kaṭīr continued to lead a rebellious existence. By 1174/1760-61 Karīm Khan had gained the upper hand; he sent a force to suppress them, but nothing was achieved (Moḥammad Šādeq Nāmī, *Tārīk-egītīgošā*, ed. S. Nafisī, Tehran, 1317 Š./1938, pp. 109-10).



In 1176/1762-63 Zakī Khan Zand, Karīm Khan's cousin, revolted and went to Kūzestān, where he was warmly received by the Āl-e Kaṭīr. Karīm Khan sent Naẓar-ʿAlī Khan Zand, who succeeded in putting an end to the rebellion as well as the misbehavior of the Āl-e Kaṭīr and other tribes such as Banū Lām and Banū Kaʿb (*Tārīk-epānšadsāla-ye Kūzestān*, pp. 93-94; *Gītigošā*, pp. 118-19). After this date until 1264/1848—a period of 88 years—we have no information concerning the Āl-e Kaṭīr. In 1264/1848 at the accession of Nāṣer-al-dīn Shah, rebellions broke out in many parts of Iran; in Kūzestān, these were led by a certain Ḥaddād, one of the shaikhs of Bayt Saʿd. He took over Dezfūl and Šūštar and settled in the Salāsel citadel of Šūštar, the seat of the rulers of eastern Kūzestān. Calling himself Ḥaddād Shah, he minted coins in his own name (*Tārīk-epānšadsāla-ye Kūzestān*, p. 136). At this time the government of Kūzestān was in the hands of Mawlā ʿAbdallāh Khan Mošaʿšaʿī; with the help of a number of tribes of the Banū Sāla, the Bāwī, and the ʿAnāfeqa, he attacked Shaikh Ḥaddād and defeated him in the vicinity of Dezfūl. After a short period of imprisonment in Ḥowayza, Shaikh Ḥaddād was sent to Korramābād, but he managed to escape and return to Dezfūl, where he resumed his rebellion (J. Qāʿem-maqāmī, “Ḍayl-e tārik-e Mošaʿšaʿīān,” *Yādgār* 2/9, 1325 Š./1946, p. 9). Finally Ardašīr Mīrzā was made governor of Lorestān and Kūzestān; he managed to capture Shaikh Ḥaddād and send him to Tehran (Mīrzā Moḥammad-Taqī Sepehr, *Nāsek al-tawārīk* III, Tehran, 1337 Š./1958, p. 127; *Tārīk-epānšadsāla-ye Kūzestān*, p. 137).

After Shaikh Ḥaddād the leadership of the Bayt Saʿd passed to Shaikh Asad and then to his son Farḥān, who greatly increased the influence of the tribe. All the tribes settled between the Gulf and Dezfūl came under his sway. The tribe of Bayt Karīm was sometimes dominated by Bayt Saʿd and sometimes independent (local research).

In 1315/1897 the Āl-e Kaṭīr again seem to have caused trouble; they were quieted by the new governor of Kūzestān, Sardār Akram (*Rūz-nāma-ye Īrān* 920, 1315/1897-98). About this same time Shaikh Kaẓʿal of the Banū Kaʿb was increasing his influence in the region and instigating various tribes to leave Farḥān and join him. The Bayt Karīm came under his direct influence. In 1303/1924 Shaikh Kaẓʿal's power was brought to an end and all the tribes of Kūzestān came under the direct control of the central government. Thus ended the rebellious behavior of the Āl-e Kaṭīr (local research).

Bayt Karīm is made up of 400 families and includes the clans of Bayt Fārs, Bayt Mašʿal, Bayt Mosāʿed, Bayt Ṭaʿān, Bayt Farḥān, Ḥamzawī, Ḥayyāz, Ṣaʿābara,



Zahīriya, Nīs, Moṣāḥana, and Ḥūšiya. They inhabit the villages of Kālafābād, Bona-ṭāleb, Sobḥa, Ṣaḥīḥī, Āl-e Mo'allā, Daylam, Labībāt, Banī 'Aqīl, and Šarfa. Bayt Sa'd comprises 215 families divided into three clans: Bayt Sa'd (divided in turn into Bayt Farḥān, Bayt Solṭān, and Bayt 'Abd-al-Ḥosayn), Badwān (Bayt Rāšed and Bayt Ṭarbūš) and Ḥūšiya. In general they inhabit the villages of Šab Kāšš, Šāhwalī, 'Aqīrab, and Šam'un. The Āl-e Kaṭīr are sedentary farmers and herders.

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