



'ALĀ'-AL-DAWLA 'ALĪ

'ALĀ'-AL-DAWLA 'ALĪ B. ḤOSĀM-AL-DAWLA ŠAHRĪĀR B. QĀREN (511-34/1117-40), ruler of the Espahbadīya line of the local dynasty of the Bavandids (see [Āle Bāvand](#)) in the Caspian region of Māzandarān. Under his rule, the dynasty achieved an importance transcending the local Caspian scene, for at various times the weakness of the Great Saljuq dynasty and its internecine family succession disputes caused rival contenders to seek refuge at his court and military help from him. Ebn Esfandīār and other, later local historians of Māzandarān recount that 'Alā'-al-dawla 'Alī was a rival for power of his elder brother Najm-al-dawla Qāren during the latter years of their father Ḥosām-al-dawla Šahrīār's thirty-seven year reign. Najm-al-dawla Qāren (r. 503-11/1110-17) was in the end successful, despite 'Alā'-al-dawla's securing of help from the atabeg of the young Saljuq prince in Ray, Aḥmad b. Moḥammad b. Malekšāh. During Najm-al-dawla's reign, 'Alā'-al-dawla spent some time at the court of the Saljuq ruler in the east, Sultan Sanjar b. Malekšāh; he vainly made another bid for power when another member of the Bavandid family, Šams-al-molūk Rostam, followed Najm-al-dawla for a brief reign. Only after fighting off yet another claimant, his elder brother Bahrām, who was supported by troops sent from Sanjar's court, did 'Alā'-al-dawla return from his refuge at Sultan Moḥammad b. Malekšāh's court in Isfahan and at last succeed undisputed to the throne in Māzandarān.

The general chroniclers, such as Ebn al-Aṭīr, who do not normally take note of the internal politics of the Caspian principalities, mention 'Alā'-al-dawla because of his involvement with the succession disputes in the Great Saljuq



empire consequent on Maḥmūd b. Moḥammad’s death in 525/1131, when there were four contenders: Maḥmūd’s son Dāwūd, two of Maḥmūd’s brothers Mas‘ūd and Saljūqšāh, and a third brother ʿŪgrīl [II], protégé of Sanjar. ʿŪgrīl was unable to secure support for his rule in Jebāl, hence fled to Ray and then Māzandarān, where ‘Alā’-al-dawla sheltered him during the winter of 527/1132-33; with the Bavandid ruler’s support, he was able to make a revanche and secure Jebāl, till he suddenly died at the beginning of 529/1134. During these years, ‘Alā’-al-dawla’s court did in fact become an asylum for various other political refugees, including the Ghaznavid Šīrzād b. Mas‘ūd III after he had lost his throne to his brother Malek Arslān, two sons of the K̄vārazmšāh Qoṭb-al-dīn Moḥammad, and a member of the Arab Mazyadids of Ḥella in Iraq. The local historians, such as Ẓahīr-al-dīn Maṛ‘ašī, further mention, without giving exact dates, hostilities between ‘Alā’-al-dawla ‘Alī and the Isma‘ilis of Alamūt, the Bavandids’ western neighbors. When he had reached the advanced age of 75, ‘Alā’-al-dawla was forced to abdicate by his son Noṣrat-al-dīn Šāh-Ġāzī Rostam; he died three years later at Tamīša and was buried at Sārī. He had in the past married a Saljuq princess, the widow of his brother Naǰm-al-dīn Qāren and a sister of Sultan Moḥammad b. Malekšāh.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Apart from scattered mentions in the general Arabic chronicles, information has to be pieced together from the local Caspian coast histories, e.g., Ebn Esfandiār, *Tārīk-eṬabarestān*, abridged tr. E. G. Browne, GMS 2, Leiden, 1905, pp. 242-45.

Of secondary sources, see H. L. Rabino di Borgomale, “Les dynasties du Māzandarān. II. La dynastie des Bāwand,” *JA* 228, 1936, pp. 422-26 (genealogical table, p. 416).

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