



## 'ALĀ'-AL-DAWLA

'ALĀ'-AL-DAWLA, MOḤAMMAD RAḤĪM KHAN AMĪR-E NEẒĀM (d. 1299/1882), notable of the Qajar tribe and holder of high offices under Nāṣer-al-dīn Shah. He belonged to the Yoḵāribāš faction and Davallū clan of the Qajars of Gorgān, and was the son of Moḥammad Amīn Khan, who had held the post of *nasaqčibāšī* (chief disciplinary officer). He was appointed governor of Ḳoy in 1267/1851 (E'temād-al-salṭana, *Montaẓam-e Nāṣerī*, Tehran, 1298-1300/1881-83, III, p. 207) and governor of Nehāvand in 1276/1860, in which year his son 'Abdallāh Khan was put in charge of the cavalry from the Ḳazal region (*ibid.*, p. 642). In 1277/1861, while Moḥammad Raḥīm Khan held the post of *nasaqčibāšī* he was sent to Istanbul as a special envoy on the occasion of the death of Sultan 'Abd-al-Maǰīd and the accession of Sultan 'Abd-al-'Azīz. At this time he was honored with the title 'Alā'-al-dawla. Among the offices he held, some of them simultaneously, were governor of Tehran (1283/1866); head of the arsenal (1285/1868); member of the council of state (*dār-al-šawrā-ye kobrā*), head of the royal orderlies (*farrāšbāšī*), and governor of Hamadān (1288/1871); commander of the royal guard (*kašīk-ḵāna*, 1289/1872); minister of war (1291/1874); and minister of the court (1292/1875; *ibid.*, pp. 300, 309, 322, 334, 337). On the shah's first journey to Europe in 1290/1873, he was included in the royal retinue (*ibid.*, p. 328) with the temporary designation *išīk āqāsībāšī* (head chamberlain); on his return the administration of the *farrāš-ḵāna* and of the royal gardens and buildings was again conferred on him. In 1294/1877 he was commissioned to inspect the affairs of Ḳūzestān and Lorestān; his responsibilities then included not only the ministries of the court and of finance, but also the administration of Gīlān (*ibid.*, p. 344). In 1298/1881, when



he held the offices of court minister and guard commander (*sarkašīkčībāšī*), he was posted to Azarbaijan with the title of Amīr-e Neẓām and provided with full discretionary powers and an appropriate staff consisting of experienced civil servants (*ibid.*, p. 369). During the same year he recruited a new force of about 2,000 cavalry from 'Erāq-e 'Ajam and Azarbaijan, who were called Ġolāmān-e Maṣūr and placed under the command of his son Mīrzā Aḥmad Khan; later the shah issued an order for their number to be increased to 10,000. The crown prince, who was the titular governor of Azarbaijan, entrusted all the important business of the province to 'Alā'-al-dawla (*ibid.*, p. 379). In Šawwāl, 1299/July-August, 1882 he was appointed Amīr-e Tūmān (divisional commander). He died of a heart attack on the night of Saturday 30 Du'l-qa'da 1299/20 September 1882 (*ibid.*, p. 381). The supposition that he was poisoned by his son Mīrzā Aḥmad Khan at the shah's behest (*Kāṭerāt-e Ḥājj Sayyāḥ*, ed. Ḥ. Sayyāḥ, Tehran, 1346 Š./1967, p. 267) is certainly baseless. His title 'Alā'-al-dawla was later transferred to Mīrzā Aḥmad Khan, while the title Amīr-e Neẓām was given to Ḥasan 'Alī Khan Garrūsī (*ibid.*, p. 381).

'Alā'-al-dawla's personal qualities are praised by E'temād-al-saltāna (*Rūz-nāma-ye kāṭerāt*, ed. Ī. Afšār, Tehran, 1345 Š./1966, p. 4), though the members of his family were famous for their hardheartedness because of their occupation of *nasaqčībāšī*. They were said to carry "Šemr's dagger," all the more so since it was well-known that one of their ancestors, Moḥammad Ḥosayn Khan Qājār, had been ordered to kill Shah Ṭahmāsb II and his two small sons had performed the task with extreme cruelty (Moḥammad Ḳalīl Maṣ'āšī Šafawī, *Majma' al-tawārīḳ*, ed. 'A. Eqbāl, Tehran, 1328 Š./1949, p. 84; 'A. Eqbāl, *Tārīḳ-emofašsal-e Īrān*, Tehran, 1320 Š./1941, p. 319; 'A. Mostawfī, *Šarḥ-e zendegānī-e man*, Tehran, 1324-26 Š./1945-47, III, p. 134).

During his lifetime 'Alā'-al-dawla managed to raise his sons to high official positions: 'Abdallāh Khan to the command of the *kašīk-kāna*, Maḥmūd Khan to that of the *ḡolāmān-e kāšša* (royal pages), Aḥmad Khan to that of the *ḡard-e maḳšūš* (royal bodyguard), Moḥammad Ḥasan Khan to that of the *farrāš-kāna*, the *sarāydār-kāna* (palace maintenance), and the *nasaq-kāna*, and Ḥosayn 'Alī Khan to *ḡolām-e pīškedmatbāšī* (majordomo) in 1294/1877. 'Alā'-al-dawla sponsored one of the best editions of Rūmī's *Maṭnawī*; containing a concordance, it was printed in 1299/1882 under the supervision of Mīrzā Ṭāher Bašīr-al-molk Šaybānī.



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## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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