



ALEXANDER, PRINCE

ALEXANDER, PRINCE (known in Persian as ESKANDAR MĪRZĀ), pro-Persian member of the royal family of Georgia (b. 1770, d. after 1830). Following the death of his father, Heraclius (Iraklii) II, king of Georgia (1798), Alexander, suspecting that the Russian presence in his country would lead to eventual annexation, was lured by Fath-‘Alī Shah Qājār into leaving Tiflis and joining the pro-Persian forces under ‘Omar Khan of the Avars in Dāgestān (1799). During the next two years Alexander and his Persian allies invaded Kakhetia but were defeated. He then fled to the mountains of Qarābāg and finally Dāgestān (1800), where loyal tribesmen sheltered him for three years. In spite of a thorough Russian search, Alexander managed to safely reach Persia, where the shah gave him a pension and some villages in the Armenian-populated district of Salmās in Azarbaijan. In 1819, with the help of ‘Abbās Mīrzā, the heir apparent, and the Armenian Catholicos Efrem, Alexander married the daughter of Melik Sahak Aqamal, the secular chief of the Armenians of Erevan. Both Alexander and the Persians hoped that the alliance would secure Armenian aid against the Russians. From then until the signing of the Treaty of Torkamāñčāy (1828), Alexander and his loyal followers engaged in inciting rebellions against the Russians in the various Georgian provinces; but following the Second Russo-Persian War (1826-28) Transcaucasia was forever lost to stronger Tsarist forces. Alexander’s own fate is obscure.



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