



ALQĀS MĪRZA

ALQĀS (ALQĀSB, ALQĀŞ) **MĪRZĀ ŞAFAWĪ**, second of Shah Esmā'īl's four surviving sons (b. 10 Şafar 922/15 March 1516, d. 21 Rabī' I 957/9 April 1550) and leader of a revolt. Sām Mīrzā was probably his uterine brother, while Shah Ṭahmāsb and Bahrām Mīrzā were brothers by another mother (Navīdī, *Takmela*, s.a. 922, f. 251a; Ġaffārī, *Jahānārā*, p. 300; on the forms and origin of the name see Walsh, "Revolt," p. 66). At age twelve Alqās began his military career at the battle of Jām (Dickson, *Shah Ṭahmāsb*, p. 135). In 939/1532-33 he received the governorship of Astarābād with Badr Khan Ostājīlū as *lala* (regent). Over the next two years he accompanied Shah Ṭahmāsb, then embroiled in a civil war, to Herat; in 941/1534-35 he was sent to lead Safavid advance forces against the Ottoman invasion of Azarbaijan and Iraq. By 944/1537-38 Ṭahmāsb was able to quell both Qizilbāš factionalism and the revolt of Sām Mīrzā, whom the Ottoman Sultan Solaymān had recognized as a client on the urging of the Qizilbāš renegade Ġāzī Khan Takalū (Ġaffārī, *Jahānārā*, pp. 287-88, 290; Ḥasan Rūmlū, pp. 244-45; Bedlīsī, *Şaraf-nāma* II, p. 194, where Alqās is cited as governor of Šīrvān rather than Astarābād; Dickson, *Shah Ṭahmāsb*, pp. 238-39, 282-84). In Šawwāl, 944/March, 1538 Ṭahmāsb sent Alqās with Badr Khan Ostājīlū against the rebel Šīrvānšāh and six months later appointed him governor of Šīrvān, where he remained for the next eight years (Ġaffārī, *Jahānārā*, p. 293; Ḥasan Rūmlū, pp. 286, 290).

The origins of Alqās' revolt in early 953/ 1546 remain obscure. Qāzī Aḥmad (*Kolāşat al-tawārīk*, fol. 145a-b) states that Alqās had killed a certain Begoġlī Ostājīlū, whom Ṭahmāsb had given permission to marry Alqās' mother.



According to Ma'mūn Beg (*Memoirs*, fols. 12b-13a) Alqās' disaffection was fostered by followers of the renegade Ġāzī Khan Takalū, who had returned to Safavid service and whom Alqās had killed on Ṭahmāsb's orders in 950/1543-44. In Rabī' I-Rabī' II, 953/May-June, 1546 Alqās sent his mother and his eldest son, Solṭān Aḥmad, to Ṭahmāsb at Sahand to ask forgiveness and express loyalty. Ṭahmāsb sent them back with an escort of prominent amirs who swore Alqās to obedience and transmitted orders to attack the Circassians in the coming Georgian campaign (Ġaffārī, *Jahānārā*, p. 296; *Tadkera-ye Šāh Ṭahmāsb*, p. 612; Ḥasan Rūmlū, pp. 314-15; *Šaraf-nāma* II, p. 198; *Ḳolāṣat al-tawārīk*, fols. 144b-46a). Defeated by the Circassians, Alqās was appointed to hold Darband. There he openly revolted by minting coins and having the *koṭba* read in his own name. Ṭahmāsb abandoned his winter campaign in Georgia and crossed into Šīrvān; Alqās fled Darband, leaving his household in its fortress. By early spring 954/1547 Ṭahmāsb had taken Darband; Alqās, his forces decimated, fled to the Crimea with forty or sixty followers. Ṭahmāsb restored order in Šīrvān and returned to Tabrīz, where he purged the Qizilbāš of pro-Alqās elements. Now (Rabī' I-Rabī' II, 954) in Ottoman territory, Alqās went by sea to Istanbul (*Jahānārā*, pp. 296-97; *Tadkera*, pp. 612-13; Ḥasan Rūmlū, pp. 316-26; *Šaraf-nāma* II, p. 198; *Ḳolāṣat al-tawārīk*, fols. 148b-150a; Walsh, "Revolt," pp. 67-68, 70-71, where the fall of Darband is dated to early Šafar, 954, before the surrender of Golestān). From there he wrote to the Ottoman Sultan Solaymān, explaining his grievances and declaring his desire to return to Iran as an Ottoman client (Navā'ī, *Šāh Ṭahmāsb Šafawī*, pp. 170-72). Solaymān hurried from Edirne to meet Alqās, who promised strong Qizilbāš support for his claims and may have converted to Sunnism (Loṭfī Pāšā, *Tawārīk*, p. 435; Ramažānzāda, *Tārīk-eNešānjī*, p. 240; 'Alī, *Konh al-aḳbār*, fols. 66b-67b; *Tārīk-ePečevī* I, p. 277; *Tadkera*, p. 614).

A campaign was quickly mounted and Alqās was sent to the eastern border under the supervision of Ūlāma Pāšā Takalū, a former Qizilbāš and newly-appointed *beylerbeyi* of Erzerum. Solaymān's army joined them at Ḳoy, and on 20 Jomādā I 955/27 July 1548 the Ottomans occupied Tabrīz, which Ṭahmāsb had abandoned after destroying all food and water supplies. The defections promised by Alqās did not materialize and his veracity and responsibility were questioned. Four days later, plagued by supply problems and freakish weather, the Ottomans withdrew to Van (Loṭfī Pāšā, *Tawārīk*, pp. 435-38; 'Alī, *Konh*, fols. 67b-69a; *Jahānārā*, p.297; *Tadkera*, p. 614; Ḥasan Rūmlū, pp. 328-29; *Ḳolāṣat al-tawārīk*, fols. 150a-52b; Kırzıoğlu, *Osmanlıar'in*, pp. 182-88). In late September Solaymān camped in Dīār Bakr, where the grand vizier, Rostam



Pāšā, upbraided Alqās for his misleading promises. Alqās blamed the perfidy of his Qizilbāš allies and asked to lead an attack on ‘Erāq-e ‘Ajam. Solaymān granted Alqās funds, six hundred troops sent from Baghdad, and authority to raise levies. Though Safavid historians describe the expedition as a raid, Ottoman sources suggest that its aim was to establish a permanent base of operations within Safavid territory while Ṭahmāsb’s main force was occupied in Azarbaijan. Solaymān also wished to capitalize on the renegade’s tenuous allegiance while minimizing official involvement (Ma’mūn Beg, *Memoirs*, fols. 14b-17a; Navā’ī, *Šāh Ṭahmāsb*, pp. 184-87; ‘Alī, *Konh*, fols. 70a-70b). In early October, 1548, Alqās crossed from Kerkūk into Iran via Qaṣr-e Šīrīn and Dartang with about eight thousand tribal levies. At Hamadān he captured the household and son of his brother Bahrām Mīrzā (3 Šawwāl 955/5 November 1548). He next plundered Qom and Kāšān and unsuccessfully attacked Isfahan, where Ṭahmāsb had lodged his own household. The shah, now camped in Ūč Kelīsa, sent Bahrām Mīrzā after Alqās, who persuaded his now mutinous troops to move to Fārs and from there to Kūzestān. Having failed to take Šūštār and harassed by local Qizilbāš, Alqās’ forces retreated from Dezful into Ottoman territory (after 19 Du’l-ḥeǰǰa 955/19 January 1549) and dispersed (*Memoirs*, fols. 17b-19a, where Alqās’ itinerary is detailed; *Jahānārā*, pp. 298-99; *Kolāṣat al-tawārīk*, fols. 154b-56a; Navā’ī, *Šāh Ṭahmāsb*, pp. 184-87).

Solaymān, now wintering in Aleppo, was informed of Alqās’ failure and unexpected return; Alqās camped at Mandalī to assess his options (ca. Moḥarram, 956/February, 1549). Here Alqās simultaneously opened negotiations with Ṭahmāsb for reinstatement to Šīrvān and sent to Solaymān his *wakīl* Sayyed ‘Azīzallāh Šīrvānī and the royal treasures captured in Iran (*Memoirs*, fols. 20b-21a; Navā’ī, *Šāh Ṭahmāsb*, p. 187; *Taḍkera*, p. 628; Loṭfī Pāšā, *Tawārīk*, p. 422; ‘Alī, *Konh*, fol. 70b). Barred from entering Baghdad by the city’s commandant, the second vizier Meḥmed Pāšā, Alqās embarked on a pilgrimage to Kāzemayn, Naǰaf, and Karbalā. The story that he here reverted to Shi’ism reflects Ottoman awareness of his duplicity (*Memoirs*, fols. 21a-21b; *Tārīk-ePečevī* I, p. 277; *Kolāṣat al-tawārīk*, fol. 158a). In early spring Alqās fled to Šahrazūr, where the Kurdish Ottoman vassal Bīga Ardalān refused him refuge. Ṭahmāsb left his Qazvīn *qešlāq* and approached Šahrazūr; negotiations with Alqās resulted in the return of Bahrām’s son Badī’-al-zamān Mīrzā. Shortly thereafter Solaymān moved to Dīār Bakr, where at Rostam Pāšā’s urging he finally broke with Alqās and dispatched troops to the Šahrazūr area. Attacked by Meḥmed Pāšā’s forces (17 Ša’bān/10 September) and pursued by Qizilbāš under Bahrām Mīrzā, Alqās took shelter at Marīvān (Mehriān) with



Sorḳāb (Sohrāb) Ardalān, brother and rival of Bīga. Alqās became a central figure in the Ottoman-Safavid struggle for control of Kurdistan (*Memoirs*, fols. 22a-26a; Loṭfī Pāšā, *Tawārīk*, p. 443; *Tārīk-e Pečevī* I, p. 282; *Ḳolāṣat al-tawārīk*, fol. 158a-b; *Taḍkera*, p. 630; *Šaraf-nāma* II, pp. 201-02; Ḥasan Rūmlū, pp. 339-40; Farīdūn Aḥmed, *Monša'āt* I, pp. 605-06. Pečevī's statement that Solaymān's disavowal of Alqās resulted from the latter's refusal to obey a summons to court is simplistic and probably inaccurate; the other sources mention no specific summons, but cite Ottoman distrust and anti-Alqās intrigue at court, particularly on the part of Rostam Pāšā. Qāzī Aḥmad states that Alqās refused to deliver Badī'al-zamān Mīrzā and other prisoners to Solaymān).

Bahrām Mīrzā surrounded Marīvān and demanded Alqās' surrender. Sorḳāb, anxious for Safavid favor, suggested Alqās' brother-in-law, Shah Ne'matallāh Yazdī, as intermediary. On 9 Ramažān 956/1 October 1549 Alqās surrendered himself and twenty-one retainers to Bahrām Mīrzā, and the next day was taken to Ṭahmāsb's court (*Memoirs*, fol. 26a; *Taḍkera*, p. 630; *Jahānārā*, p. 299; *Šaraf-nāma* II, p. 202; *Ḳolāṣat al-tawārīk*, fol. 158a; Ḥasan Rūmlū, pp. 339-40; Walsh, "Revolt," p. 73, where the negotiations and surrender are dated precisely). Ṭahmāsb says that after several interviews he perceived that "Alqās does not trust me and is constantly calculating" (*Taḍkera*, p. 631). Bound by his oath to Alqās, Ṭahmāsb had his sister Solṭānem hand Alqās over to Ḥasan Beg Yūzbāšī and Ebrāhīm Khan Du'l-Qadr, who delivered him to the prison of Qahqaha (*Memoirs*, fols. 26b-27b; *Taḍkera*, p. 631; *Jahānārā*, p. 299; *Ḳolāṣat al-tawārīk*, fol. 158b; while most sources state that Alqās remained two days at court, Ṭahmāsb says "čand rūz" and Ma'mūn Beg dates his departure for Qahqaha to the night of Bahrām Mīrzā's death, 19 Ramažān/11 October). Alqās' sons, Solṭān Aḥmad and Farroḳ, were incarcerated with him (Tarbiāt, *Danešmandān*, p. 173). Six months later (21 Rabī' I 957/9 April 1550) Alqās was thrown from the ramparts of Qahqaha, perhaps with Ṭahmāsb's connivance, by several people "whose fathers he had killed" (*Taḍkera*, p. 631; Navīdī, *Takmelat al-aḳbār*, s.a. 956; *Ḳolāṣat al-tawārīk*, ms. Bayānī, fol. 205b; *Jahānārā*, p. 300; *Šaraf-nāma* II, p. 202; *Memoirs*, fol. 27b, where Alqās' killer is identified as Begōḡlī Ḥasan Beg, who is probably identical with Ḥasan Beg Yūzbāšī. Alqās' abortive rebellion demonstrated the success of Ṭahmāsb's centralization policies; the Ottomans made no further attempts to solve their Safavid problem by subversion.

Šādeq Beg Afšār quotes a "famous *robā'ī*" by Alqās and describes him as being



“of poetic temperament” (*Majma*, pp. 22-23). His interest in the visual arts is attested by two illuminated manuscripts probably completed for him in Šīrvān (F. E. Karatay, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi Farsca Yazmalar Kataloğu*, Istanbul, 1961, pp. 197-98; B. W. Robinson, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Persian Paintings in the Bodleian Library*, Oxford, 1958, p. 87; Z. V. Togan, *On the Miniatures in Istanbul Libraries*, Istanbul, 1963, p. 35). Alqās’ major cultural legacy went to the Ottomans; his tributary gift of royal Safavid treasures remained in Topkapi palace and provided models for the palace artisans. Alqās also left in Istanbul his *nešānjī*, Faṭḥallāh ‘Āref Čelebī, whom Solaymān appointed to be the first Ottoman *šāh-nāma-gūy*. ‘Āref was succeeded in this post by Alqās’ court poet and librarian, Aflātūn Šīrvānī. The literary and artistic *šāh-nāma-gūy* tradition, established by Alqās’ retainers, reached its height in the late 10th/16th century with the *Honar-nāma* of Sayyed Loqmān Ormavī (*Konhal-aḳbār*, fols. 169b, 190b-91b, 419b-22a; ‘Āšeḳ Čelebī, *Mašā’er al-šo’arā*, ed. G. M. Meredith-Owens, GMS N.S. 24, London, 1971, fols. 165a-66b; cf. ‘Āšem, “Osmānli tārīḥ-nüvisleri ve müverriḥleri: šehnāmejiler,” *Tārīḥ-e ‘Osmānli Enjümeni Mejmū’asī* 7, 1 Nisān 1327/1909, Istanbul, 1329/1911, pp. 425-35, and Babinger, *Die Geschichtsschreiber der Osmanen und ihre Werke*, Leipzig, 1927, pp. 87-88, 163-67).

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Qāzī Aḥmad Ġaffārī Qazvīnī, *Tārīḳ-e Jahānārā*, ed. Ḥ. Narāqī, Tehran, 1342 Š./1963, pp. 287-300 (particularly valuable for its careful dating of events, including Alqās’ birth and death).

‘Abdī Beg Navīdī, *Takmelat al-aḳbār*, Ketāb-kāna-ye Mellī-e Malek, ms. 3890, s.a. 922, 953-56.

Shah Ṭahmāsb Šafawī, *Tadkera-ye Šāh Ṭahmāsb*, ed.

P. Horn, “Die Denkwürdigkeiten des Šāh Ṭahmāsp I von Persien,” *ZDMG* 44, 1890, pp. 563-649 (on Alqās, pp. 596, 611-31).

Ḥasan Rūmlū provides the basic account of Alqās’ rebellion utilized by later



Safavid chroniclers, particularly Eskandar Beg and Šaraf-al-dīn Bedlīsī. Qāzī Aḥmad Qomī, *Ḳolāṣat al-tawārīḳ*, Deutsche Staatsbibliothek in Berlin, ms. 2°2202, s.a. 952-56; a slightly earlier manuscript was in the possession of M. Bayānī; cf. Hans Müller, *Die Chronik Ḥulāṣat at-Tawārīḥ des Qāzī Aḥmad Qumī, der Abschnitt über Schah ‘Abbās I*, Wiesbaden, 1964, pp. 13-18.

The Bayānī ms. lacks the account of Alqās’ murder of Begoḡlī Ostājlı found in the slightly later Berlin manuscript, but does relate Alqās’ death, a detail omitted in the latter (unless otherwise noted, references are to the Berlin ms.).

See also Monzavī, *Nosḳahā VI*, pp. 4318-19.

Šaraf-al-dīn Bedlīsī, *Šāh-nāma*, ed. V. Véliaminof-Zernof, *Scheref Nameh, ou Histoire des Kourdes par Scheref, Prince de Bidlis I-II*, St. Petersburg, 1860-62, I, pp. 85-86; II, pp. 194, 198-202.

Ottoman narrative sources: Loṭfī Pāšā, *Tawārīḳ-e Āl-e ‘Otmān*, ed. ‘Alī, Istanbul, 1341/1922-23, pp. 435-43 (provides a contemporary account of the Alqās affair which does not appear to have been used by later Ottoman chroniclers and which corroborates details found in the *Memoirs* and Safavid sources).

Ramažānzāda Meḥmed Pāšā (Küçük Nešānġi), *Tārīḳ-e Nešānġi*, Istanbul, 1290/1873, pp. 240-43.

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Moṣṭafā ‘Alī, *Konh al-aḳbār*, Nuruosmaniye Kütüphanesi, ms. 3409, fols. 66a-70b (the basic source for the later Ottoman historians Pečevī, Şolāqzāda, and Monaġġembāşī; it typifies their tendency to whitewash Solaymān and revile Alqās as a provocateur).

Pečevī Ebrāhīm Pāšā, *Tārīḳ-e Pečevī*, Istanbul, 1283/1866, I, pp. 267-79, 282-83.

Diplomatic sources: Ferīdūn Aḡmed, *Monša’āt al-salāṭīn*, 2nd ed., Istanbul, 1274-75/1858, I, pp. 605-06 (a *fath-nāma* sent to Henri II of France; Solaymān states that he sent troops against Alqās because he was fomenting rebellion in Ottoman Kurdistan).



‘A. Navā’ī, *Šāh Ṭahmāsb Šafawī*, Tehran, 1350 Š./1971, pp. 170-72, 175-87 (includes two letters from the *monša’āt* collection of Ḥaydar Beg İvōglī related to the Alqās affair).

J. R. Walsh, “The Revolt of Alqās Mirza,” *WZKM* 68, 1976, pp. 61-78 (includes three documents from the *enšā* work of Rūḥallāh Monšī addressed to the people of Shiraz).

Biographical sources: Şādeq Beg Afşār, *Maǰma‘ al-ḵawāşş*, ed. and Persian tr. ‘Abd-al-Rasūl Ḳayyāmpūr, Tabrīz, 1327 Š./1948-49 (the only near-contemporary notice of Alqās as a poet).

Tarbīat, *Dāneşmandān*, pp. 173-97 (valuable for its utilization of ‘Abdī Beg’s *Takmela*).

Other sources: M. B. Dickson, *Shāh Ṭahmāsb and the Ūzbeks (The Duel for Ḳhurāsān with ‘Ubayd Khān: 930-946/1524-1540)*, Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1958, pp. 135, 238-39, 282-84.

M. F. Kırzıoğlu, *Osmanlılar’ın Kafkas-Elleri’ni Fethi (1451-1590)*, Ankara, 1976, pp. 179-97 (quotes from the contemporary unpublished accounts of Jalālzāda, *Ṭabaqāt al-mamālek*, and Salmān, *Jāme‘ al-ǰawāher*).