



ANŌŠAZĀD

ANŌŠAZĀD (in the *Šāh-nāma*, Nōšzād; the name means “son of the immortal”), a son of Kōsrow I Anōšīravān and leader of a revolt in ca. 550 A.D. Information about him comes mainly from Dīnavarī (ed. ‘A.-M. ‘Āmer, Cairo, 1960, pp. 69-71), Ferdowsī’s *Šāh-nāma* (Moscow, VIII, p. 95, v. 730f.), and a short account by the Byzantine historian Procopius, who gives his name as Anasozados (*Gotenkriege*, ed. O. Veh, Munich, 1966, VIII, chap. 10, pars. 17f.). The notices in Ebn al-Aṭīr (repr. I, pp. 436-37), in the *Moǧmal* (p. 75), and in Mīrkvānd (Tehran, I, pp. 781-83) are summaries of Ferdowsī’s account. Among modern scholars, only Nöldeke has done comprehensive research on Anōšazād (*Geschichte der Perser*, pp. 467-74).

The sources concur in the main but differ in some important details. According to Ebn al-Aṭīr (p. 437), Anōšazād’s mother was the daughter of the “judge” (*dāvar*) of Ray (on whom see Nöldeke, *Geschichte*); Dīnavarī and Ferdowsī state that Anōšazād embraced her Christian religion and that Kōsrow was angered by this and imprisoned Anōšazād at Gondēšāpūr. Procopius, by contrast, alleges that he was imprisoned for seducing some of his father’s wives, while Ebn al-Aṭīr says that Anōšazād was suspected of being a *zendīq* (crypto-Manichaean).

During the war with the Romans, Kōsrow fell ill, at Emesa (Ḥemṣ) according to Dīnavarī, though in Nöldeke’s opinion (p. 474) Kōsrow never went there but instead returned from the Syrian campaign through northern Mesopotamia. Rumors of Kōsrow’s death or mortal sickness spread; according to Dīnavarī they were put into circulation by Anōšazād, according to Ferdowsī and



Procopius, by others. Anōšazād mustered an army, said by Ferdowsī and Dīnavarī to have consisted of prisoners and Christians from Ahvāz and Gondēšāpūr, and wrote a letter to the Roman caesar. After being proclaimed *mehtar* (elder, i.e., governor) at Gondēšāpūr (Ferdowsī), he seized Ahvāz and its treasuries and marched toward Iraq (Dīnavarī). In Ebn al-Aṭīr's account, Ɣosrow's vice-regent at Ctesiphon, after hearing of Anōšazād's revolt, sent troops to besiege Gondēšāpūr and then reported the matter to Ɣosrow. Ferdowsī (v. 775) puts the strength of Anōšazād's army at 30,000 men. Ɣosrow wrote to the vice-regent (in Ferdowsī's words, to the guardian of the frontier) at Ctesiphon ordering him to march against Anōšazād and if possible to procure his surrender or capture, but not to refrain from killing Anōšazād if he resisted. Ɣosrow also ordered the vice-regent to put to death all the Iranian *marzbāns* (margraves) and nobles who had collaborated with Anōšazād but not the common people who had joined him (Ferdowsī and Dīnavarī). According to Ferdowsī, the recipient of Ɣosrow's letter was named Borzīn, and it was he who led the expedition against Anōšazād.

The sources give different accounts of Anōšazād's fate. Procopius states that he was captured and brought before Ɣosrow, who caused his eyelids to be burned with a heated rod in such a way as not to blind him but to make him physically ineligible for the succession. The old Iranian rule that no person with a bodily defect could become king is mentioned by Procopius in both his book on the Gothic wars and that on the wars between Persia and Rome (I, chap. 11) and is confirmed by Ṭabarī (I, p. 833; Nöldeke, *Geschichte der Perser*, p. 45 and note 1). Nöldeke thinks that Anōšazād was in fact blinded, that Procopius's account is based on a misunderstanding, and that Ferdowsī's story of his death in battle is poetic fantasy. Nöldeke also thinks (pp. 472f.) that Anōšazād's alleged Christianity was not an important factor in his revolt. It is unlikely that a religious belief alone would have impelled an Iranian prince into rebellion against his father, and it is noteworthy that neither Procopius nor Ebn al-Aṭīr speak of Anōšazād as a Christian. Most probably Anōšazād, like other Iranian princes in the same situation, decided after hearing the rumor of his father's death to secure the throne for himself by prompt action; this is all the more likely because both Procopius and Ebn al-Aṭīr state that he was the eldest son. He may well have attempted to exploit the fact that his mother was Christian for the purpose of gaining support from the Nestorians, who were then numerous in Ɣūzestān and especially at Gondēšāpūr. Nöldeke doubts whether this attempt, if made, achieved much success, because if a large number of Christians had fought on Anōšazād's side, his defeat would certainly have been



followed by a persecution or massacre of Christians, and there is no report of such an event. In the opinion of J. Labourt (*Le christianisme dans l'empire perse sous la dynastie sassanide*, Paris, 1904, pp. 187f.), Kosrow released the Christian prelate Mār Bahā from prison so that he might turn his coreligionists against Anōšazād, and Mār Bahā's efforts to this end were not unsuccessful.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

See also Christensen, *Iran Sass.*