



‘AẒOD-AL-DAWLA, ABŪ ŠOJĀ’ FANNĀ KOSROW

‘AẒOD-AL-DAWLA, ABŪ ŠOJĀ’ FANNĀ (PANĀH) KOSROW (or Kosrah, as on his coins), the greatest Buyid monarch and the most powerful ruler in the Islamic East in the last years of his life. He was born in Isfahan on 5 Du’l-qa’da 324/24 September 936 to Rokn-al-dawla Ḥasan b. Būya, second oldest of the three Buyid brothers who established the original kingdoms of the Buyid dynasty.

The eldest of these brothers, ‘Emād-al-dawla ‘Alī b. Būya, the ruler of the Buyid kingdom of Fārs, who had no sons, chose as his heir to that province his nephew, Fannā Kosrow, the future ‘Aẓod-al-dawla, whom he summoned from the court of his brother Rokn-al-dawla at Rayy. ‘Emād-al-dawla knew that some of his own officers who were of noble Daylami descent believed that they themselves had a better claim to the throne of Fārs than did the Buyids (who were also Daylamis but of humble origin); therefore he arrested a group of these officers before his nephew’s arrival. When his nephew did arrive in Shiraz, the capital of Fārs, in 338/949 ‘Emād-al-dawla met him, seated him on the throne in his palace, and stood in his nephew’s presence to oblige the other members of the court to do likewise. His effort for his nephew were either hopeless or too late; rebellion against Fannā Kosrow followed shortly after ‘Emād-al-dawla’s death on Jomādā I, 338/November, 949 (Ebn Meskawayh [Meskūya], *Tajāreb* II, p. 121-22; Ebn al-Aṭīr, VIII, pp. 245-363).

Rokn-al-dawla hurried south in 338 to save his son and to secure Buyid rule in



southern Iran. He was met there by the vizier of Mo‘ezz-al-dawla, sent from Iraq for the same purpose; and together they returned Fannā Kosrow to the throne. After transferring the district of Arrajān from the kingdom of Shiraz to his own dominions, Rokn-al-dawla left (Meskawayh, *Tajāreb* I, pp. 130, 137). From this time on, Fannā Kosrow, who received the title ‘Azod-al-dawla from the ‘Abbasid caliph al-Moṭī in 351/962, ruled Fārs without any apparent difficulty. Fārs had been the most stable of the Buyid kingdoms and was to remain so until Buyid rule disappeared; among its other advantages, its non-Buyid neighbors were not of the military caliber of the rulers of northern Iraq or Khorasan. In 356/967 ‘Azod-al-dawla took advantage of the struggle between Abū ‘Alī Moḥammad b. Elyās/Alyās (see [ĀL-E ELYĀS](#)) and the latter’s sons in Kermān to conquer part of that province. He conquered the rest of Kerman in 357/968 and negotiated a peace with Abū Aḥmad Kālaf b. Aḥmad, the Saffarid ruler of Sīstān, who was then playing a vital role in weakening the perpetual enemies of the Buyids, the Samanids (Ebn Meskawayh, *Tajāreb* II, pp. 232, 249-53; Ebn al-Aṭīr, VIII, pp. 416-17; Hamadānī, *Takmila*, p. 176.)

The Samanids sent soldiers to support the attempt by Solaymān, the son of Moḥammad b. Elyās, to reconquer Kermān. But ‘Azod-al-dawla defeated him, and then on 10 Šafar 360/13 December 970 inflicted an even more important defeat on Solaymān’s allies, the Kūč-Balūč, who had helped the Elyasids and earlier local rulers keep any Islamic central government from gaining full control of Kermān. The army of ‘Azod-al-dawla now marched through Kermān into the province of Tīz and Makrān and ended their victorious progress at the Persian Gulf port of Hormoz. Many tribes offered both obedience and conversion to Islam for the first time. In Du‘l-qa‘da, 360/August-September, 971, ‘Azod-al-dawla led a successful punitive expedition to subdue the Baluch (Balūč) who had gone back on their word; and after their decisive defeat on 11 Rabī‘ I 361/8 January 972 he settled farmers in the area to change the complexion of the province. One of the legacies of Buyid rule would be the conversion and assimilation of parts of Kermān, Makrān, and even areas of southern Pārs near the Gulf that had remained nearly untouched by Islamic central governments until the 4th/10th century. The successes of ‘Azod-al-dawla and his father, Rokn-al-dawla, led to a formal peace in 361 by the Buyids with the Samanids in which the Buyids agreed to pay 150,000 dinars a year to the Samanids. An expedition sent by ‘Azod-al-dawla in 364/975 to Kermān recaptured Bam from a renegade Samanid officer, then defeated a son of Moḥammad b. Elyās at Jīroft, after which the border between the Samanids and Buyid Kermān seems to have remained undisturbed until ‘Azod-al-dawla’s



death (Ebn al-Aṭīr, VIII, p. 461; Ḥamaḍānī, *Takmela*, p. 210; Meskawayh, *Tajāreb* II, pp. 298-300, 311, 360-62; Rūḍrāvarī, *Dayl*, p. 189).

Mo'ezz-al-dawla, the uncle of 'Azod-al-dawla and the Buyid ruler of Iraq, gained control of Basra in Rabī' II, 336/November, 947, after which it became a natural objective of Buyid policy to control Oman, the rulers of which province could tax or hinder trade between the Gulf and the Indian Ocean. In 355/966 'Azod-al-dawla and Mo'ezz-al-dawla sent a joint expedition which imposed direct Buyid rule on Oman, but the representatives of the Buyids were expelled shortly afterwards. 'Azod-al-dawla, after clearing the land route to Hormoz, the Gulf port in Iran opposite Oman, in the campaign of 360-61/970-72 against the Baluch, sent an army from Kermān and captured Sohar, the capital of Oman, in 362. In the succeeding year 'Azod-al-dawla's commander conquered the mountains of Oman, which gave him fuller control of the provinces than any ruler had enjoyed in many years (Ebn al-Jawzī, *Montaẓam* II, p. 368; Ḥamaḍānī, *Takmela*, p. 187; Meskawayh, *Tajāreb* II, pp. 213, 217-18; Ebn al-Aṭīr, VII, p. 474).

On the death of Mo'ezz-al-dawla in 356/967 the province of Iraq passed to that ruler's eldest son, 'Ezz-al-dawla Baḳṭiār (q.v.), whose conflict with 'Azod-al-dawla, his first cousin was to destroy the system of family cooperation that had been such a remarkable feature of the first generation of Buyid rule. In 363/974 'Ezz-al-dawla was trapped in Wāseṭ by a rebellion of his troops in both Baghdad, his capital, and Kūzestān. 'Azod -al-dawla came from Fārs, defeated the rebels on 14 Jomādā I 364/30 January 975. But after reaching Baghdad he manipulated circumstances so that 'Ezz-al-dawla was forced to abdicate on 4 Jomādā II 364/12 March 975 in favor of his rescuer (Ebn Meskawayh, *Tajāreb* II, pp. 236, 246, 324, 326, 341, 343, 346; Ebn al-Aṭīr, VIII p. 450; Ḥamaḍānī, *Takmela*, p. 218).

Then Rokn-al-dawla, the last survivor of the three Buyid brothers who had founded the dynasty, by sheer exercise of parental authority made his son disgorge his conquests, restore 'Ezz-al-dawla, and retreat without compensation to Fārs. Rokn-al-dawla rewarded 'Azod-al-dawla at least in part for his obedience. When the two met in 365/976 in Isfahan in Rokn-al-dawla's territory 'Azod-al-dawla repeatedly kissed the ground before his father until permitted to kiss his hand. Then, at a banquet for all his sons and leading army officers Rokn-al-dawla declared his eldest son, 'Azod-al-dawla, his heir apparent as head of Buyid family, and a document that acknowledged the priority of 'Azod-al-dawla over his brothers was signed by the leading men of



the Buyid kingdoms of western Iran (Ebn Meskawayh, *Tajāreb* II, pp. 350-52, 362-64; Ebn al-Aṭīr, VIII p. 492).

On 18 Moḥarram 366/16 September 976, with the death of Rokn-al-dawla, the last Buyid ruler to understand the family system as a matter of genuine affection as well as of policy, this system of mutual support among states ruled by relations disappeared, although for another eighty years its ghost continued to haunt Buyid politics, especially in the continual quarrels as to who had priority among Buyid rulers. ‘Ezz-al-dawla prepared for a second round of fighting by forming an alliance with Fakr-al-dawla, a son of Rokn-al-dawla and his father’s successor to territories around Hamadān, with the Hamdanid dynasty of northern Iraq, the Kurdish ruler Ḥasanwayh (Ḥasanūya) Barzekānī, and ‘Emran b. Šāhīn the ruler of the marshes of southern Iraq. (Mo’ayyed-al-dawla, another son of Rokn-al-dawla, and his father’s successor to territories around Isfahan, remained loyal to his elder brother ‘Aẓod-al-dawla.) ‘Ezz-al-dawla then abandoned all pretext of recognizing his cousin’s precedence by stopping the mention of ‘Aẓod-al-dawla in the public prayer in Iraq. ‘Aẓod -al-dawla advanced into Kūzestān and easily defeated ‘Ezz-al-dawla on 11 Du’l-qa’da 366/1 July 977 at Ahvāz. ‘Ezz-al-dawla, an incompetent and irresolute ruler, after some vacillation asked and got ‘Aẓod-al-dawla’s permission to withdraw and established himself in Syria, a politically very fragmented province in the later 4th/10th century. But on the way to Syria the Hamdanid Abū Taġleb persuaded ‘Ezz-al-dawla to fight his cousin again, and on 18 Šawwāl 367/29 May 978 in the battle which followed at Qaṣr al-Jaṣṣ near Samarra ‘Ezz-al-dawla was defeated, captured, and sentenced to death by ‘Aẓod-al-dawla (Ebn Meskawayh, *Tajāreb* II, pp. 364-81; Hamadānī, *Takmila*, p. 232.)

‘Aẓod-al-dawla occupied the former Hamdanid stronghold of Mosul in 367/978 and, unlike former Buyid rulers who had occupied this city only temporarily, held onto it for the rest of his reign; the remainder of Hamdanid territory came directly under his control or was left in the hands of a Hamdanid ruler who offered his allegiance. ‘Aẓod-al-dawla’s armies then subjugated the Kurds of northern Iraq and western Iran, who had become semi-independent after the dissolution of ‘Abbasid power. It should be remembered that “Kurd” in the sources of the 4th-5th/10th-11th centuries refers to all the transhumants of the Zagros region including the Lors (Ebn Meskawayh, *Tajāreb* II, pp. 383, 392; Ebn al-Aṭīr, VIII, p. 521).

In Du’l-qa’da, 369/May-June, 979, ‘Aẓod-al-dawla advanced on the territory of



his brother, Faḡr-al-dawla who fled to Qazvīn and then to Nīšāpūr after many of his officers deserted. ‘Azod-al-dawla moved on to Kermānšāh where he installed Badr, a son of Ḥasanwayh, to rule the surrounding Kurdish territory as his representative. In Šafar, 370/August-September, 980, ‘Azod-al-dawla occupied Hamadān and soon subjugated the regions east and south of that city, which were now more fully under central control than they had been for at least half a century (Ebn Meskawayh, *Tajāreb* II, pp. 398, 414-15; Rūḡrāvarī, *Dayl*, pp. 9-10, 12; Ebn al-Jawzī, *Montaẓam* VII, p. 101).

Very shortly after ‘Azod-al-dawla’s conquest of Hamadān the great minister of Mo’ayyed-al-dawla, Esmā’īl b. ‘Abbād (q.v.), arrived from Rayy and stayed until Rabī‘ II, 370/October-November 980, to arrange the transfer of control of that city to his king. ‘Azod-al-dawla had other rewards for his younger brother’s loyalty: He gave him Faḡr-al-dawla’s troops and later gave him even more troops to help him campaign against the Samanids, whose ally, the Ziyarid king Qābūs b. Vošmgīr, had just seized Ṭabarestān in time to welcome the fleeing Faḡr-al-dawla. ‘Azod-al-dawla at first tried to get Qābūs to surrender Faḡr-al-dawla; apparently, ‘Azod-al-dawla had supported Qābūs in the struggle among the sons of the Ziyarid king Vošmgīr, and expected some cooperation in return. When Qābūs refused, in Moḥarram, 371/July-August, 981, ‘Azod-al-dawla arranged for Mo’ayyed-al-dawla to receive an official appointment by the ‘Abbasid caliph as governor of Ṭabarestān and Gorgān, which provinces Mo’ayyed-al-dawla proceeded to conquer (Rūḡrāvarī, *Dayl*, pp. 10, 15-18).

When ‘Azod-al-dawla died on 8 Šawwāl 372/26 March 983, he was not only the direct ruler of Fārs (the site of his capital, Shiraz), Iraq and parts of the Jazīra to the north of Iraq, but also controlled, through his brother, his sons, and vassals, territories from the border of Khorasan to the Byzantine border in Syria, and from Oman to the shores of the Caspian. He was, moreover, recognized by lesser kings as their overlord as far away as the Yemen and the shores of the Mediterranean. The Byzantines, who had for a period raided into Syria without fear of reprisals, had sought and gained a treaty in exchange for ‘Azod-al-dawla’s promise not to support Bardos Scleros, the Byzantine pretender who had escaped to Baghdad. Similarly the Fatimids, who had been hostile to earlier Buyids, had tried to gain his good favor in order to avoid any contest of strength with him. The Samanids had more direct reason to fear him, since his support for Mo’ayyed-al-dawla had laid Khorasan open to his brother. No other Buyid ruler had been, or would be, nearly as successful in military matters (Ebn Meskawayh, *Tajāreb* II, pp. 409-10; Rūḡrāvarī, *Dayl*, p.



29; Ebn al-Aṭīr, VIII, pp. 513, 515; IX, p. 13; Ebn al-Jawzī, *Montaẓam* VIII, p. 105).

‘Azod-al-dawla maintained as complete personal control over his administration as circumstances allowed. When his kingdom expanded he appointed a second vizier, Moṭahhar b. ‘Abdallāh, in addition to Naṣr b. Hārūn, a Christian whom he maintained in this office; and he also personally appointed a deputy vizier, who acted as the deputy of the king rather than of the viziers. He was punctilious about having government employees paid promptly at the beginning of each pay period, and staggered pay schedules so that such prompt payment would not be a burden on the treasury. Nevertheless, the fundamental changes in administration that had taken place at the end of the ‘Abbasid period, changes such as the introduction of the *eqṭā’* (q.v.), were not reversed by ‘Azod-al-dawla (Ebn Meskawayh, *Tajāreb* II, pp. 410, 412; Rūdrāvarī, *Dayl*, pp. 43, 45).

While following the policy of earlier Buyid rulers in maintaining the ‘Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad (which gave legitimacy to Buyid rule in the eyes of some of their Sunni subjects) ‘Azod-al-dawla showed more interest than previous Buyid rulers in evoking the pre-Islamic Iranian precedents for Buyid kingship. He visited Persepolis and left an inscription there that showed his consciousness of the association of Buyid kingship with pre-Islamic Iran; and he assumed the title Šāhanšāh on his coins and in public ceremonial, probably the first Moslem king to do so since the fall of the Sasanians with whom he claimed a genealogical link. ‘Azod-al-dawla celebrated the ancient Iranian festivals of Sada and Mehragān (and, doubtless, Nowrūz as well, which had been celebrated by numerous earlier Islamic rulers including the caliphs themselves). He also founded two festivals commemorating the foundation of Kard-e Fannā Kosrow (see below).

However, like most of the Buyids he patronized Arabic authors, and there is very little evidence of his interest in the new Persian poetry of his time. He was an assiduous student of Arabic, wrote Arabic verse, and was proud that one of his teachers was the celebrated grammarian of Arabic, Abū ‘Alī Fāresī (q.v.). He studied many of the sciences of the time in Arabic, including geometry and astronomy; and, thanks to his patronage, many Arabic books were dedicated to him, including books in the fields of *feqh*, *tafsīr*, *kalām*, *ḥadīth*, genealogy, poetry, grammar, prosody, medicine, astronomy, and geometry. The very large and complete library he established in Shiraz had a separate list for each subject it included (Moqaddasī, pp. 10, 258-59, 448, 449). In his interest in higher learning in Arabic (to the apparent exclusion of



Persian) ‘Azod-al-dawla followed the general pattern of intellectual life in his time in his home province, Fārs, where written culture was dominated by Arabic and Pahlavi (since the *mōbads* had no interest as yet in the “Islamic” idiom of new Persian).

Furthermore, like many of his Iranian contemporaries, he does not seem to have felt that his admiration for the pre-Islamic Iranian past contradicted his Islamic belief. He was probably a Shi‘ite of some undefined variety, as were the great majority of Buyid rulers, and according to some accounts he repaired the shrine of Ḥosayn b. ‘Alī at Karbalā’ and built the shrine over the grave of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭāleb at Najaf where he asked to be buried. He is said to have shown great generosity to the eminent Shi‘ite theologian, Shaikh Abū ‘Abdallāh Moḥammad Mofīd. However, his religious policy was far from uniformly Shi‘ite in character. He forced the ‘Abbasid caliph to marry his daughter, supposedly with the hope of uniting the claim of the Sunni ‘Abbasids and the Buyids in one line (a policy the caliph resisted by not consummating the marriage). In 369/979-80 he appointed a jurist in Fārs, Bešr b. Ḥosayn, chief judge in Baghdad, even though Bešr continued to reside in ‘Azod-al-dawla’s capital province of Fārs, presumably in an attempt to further integrate one important remaining institution of Sunni ‘Abbasid government into the Buyid state.

‘Azod-al-dawla was a great builder. In Iraq his most important building was a large hospital which remained in operation at least as late as the Mongol invasion. The beautiful bazaars he had built near the congregational mosque of Rāmhormoz were unmatched (Moqaddasī, p. 413). But most of his constructions were in Fārs where he built caravansarais, cisterns, and dams in addition to buildings, and his principal beneficiary was Shiraz. Near this city on the river Kor he built a famous dam, Band-e ‘Azodī (now called Band-e Amīr), which brought a large area into cultivation and is still in use (Moqaddasī, p. 444; Ebn Balkī, pp. 151-52). Within Shiraz he built a palace of three hundred and sixty rooms, with elaborate wind towers and water canals, and a hospital (Moqaddasī, p. 449). Shiraz became so crowded during his reign that he built a satellite city nearby for his army, the name of which, Kard-e Fannā Kōsrow (“Fannā Kōsrow made it”), consciously echoed the style of the names that Sasanian kings had given to the towns they founded (Moqaddasī, pp. 430-31; Ebn Balkī, pp. 132-33; *Nozhat al-qolūb*, tr., p. 113). According to Bīrūnī (*Chronology*, p. 217) two annual festivals were held in the town (Jašn-e Kard-e Fannā Kōsrow) on the day Serōš of the month of Farvardīn and the day



Hormoz of the month Ābān. The former commemorated the day the water of the aqueduct reached the town from a distance of four leagues and the latter the day the construction of the town started. These two festivals were founded by ‘Azod-al-dawla on the model of the festival of Nowrūz in Isfahan which he had seen in his childhood there (Mofaẓẓal b. Sa’d Māfarrūkī, *Ketāb maḥāsen Eṣfahān*, ed. S. J. Ḥosaynī Ṭehrānī, Tehran, n.d., p. 93.). By his building activity in Fārs he strengthened a revival of that province which was so dramatic that, according to Ebn al-Jawzī, the tax income of Fārs in the time of ‘Azod-al-dawla was triple what it had been at the beginning of the 4th/10th century (*Montaẓam* VIII, p. 116). Shiraz, a comparatively unimportant town until the Saffarid invasion of Fārs in the 3rd/9th century, achieved under ‘Azod-al-dawla the economic and cultural importance it was to maintain throughout succeeding centuries.

‘Azod-al-dawla’s achievement in building a strong, unified Buyid state was not sustained by his successors. His execution of his cousin destroyed the Buyid family system. Nevertheless, his success in exerting Buyid power against almost all the rivals of the Buyids in the second generation of that dynasty gave this family of humble origin a legitimacy that helped them to survive until the middle of the 5th/11th century. More importantly, he contributed to the growing prosperity of Fārs which was to be a comparatively safe and prosperous haven for Iranian culture during the troubled Saljuq and Mongol periods.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The only book on ‘Azod-al-dawla is ‘A. A. Faqīhī’s *Šāhanšāhī-e ‘Azod al-dawla*, Tehran, 1347 Š./1968, which uses a wide range of primary sources in Persian and Arabic and has a valuable bibliography of primary sources. The best survey of Buyid history, including a full treatment of the career of ‘Azod-al-dawla is H. Busse’s “Iran under the Buyids,” *Camb. Hist. Iran* IV, pp. 250-304 (with a good bibliography of secondary as well as primary sources).

W. Madelung’s magisterial article, “The Assumption of the Title Shahanshah by the Buyids,” *JNES* 28, 1969, pp. 84-108 and 168-83 is important for all



aspects of Buyid rule, in particular for the political circumstances surrounding this ruler's "Iranizing" policy.

It is complemented by the important article by L. Richter-Bernburg, "Amīr-Malik-Shāhānshāh: 'Aḏud ad-Daula's Titulature Reexamined," *Iran* 18, 1980, pp. 83-102.

J. C. Bürgel's *Die Hofkorrespondenz 'Aḏud ad-Daulas und ihr Verhältnis zu anderen historischen Quellen der frühen Buyiden*, Wiesbaden, 1965, analyzes 'Azod-al-dawla's personal and often very tendentious interpretations of his actions and intentions as propagated in his official letters and in contradiction to the more or less critical accounts in the extant chronicles, even though some of these were influenced by the official propaganda or even written under pressure, as was the case with the *Tājī*, composed by Ebrāhīm b. Helāl al-Šābe'.

Of the chronicles of the period, Ebn Meskawayh's *Tajāreb al-omam*, vol. II, Cairo, 1915 and Abū Šojā' Rūḏrāvarī's *Ḍayl Tajāreb al-omam*, Cairo, 1916, are by far the most important.

Ebn al-Aṭīr's *Kāmel*, vols. VIII and IX; Ebn al-Jawzī's *al-Montażam*, Hyderabad, 1358/1939; and Moḥammad b. 'Abd-al-Malek Hamaḏānī's *Takmelat Ta'rik al-Ṭabarī*, ed. A. Y. Kaṇ'ān, Beirut, 1960, are also important.

The numismatic evidence, which often provides the only accurate evidence as to who ruled when and where and under whose suzerainty, has never been properly drawn together except for Richter-Bernburg's careful examination of its bearing on titulature.

See also 'A. A. Faqīhī, *Āl-e Būya wa awzā'-e zamān-e īšān yā namūdār-ī az zendagī-e mardom-e ān 'ašr*, Tehran, 1357 Š./1978. For further bibliography see BUYDS.