



## DARYĀBEYGĪ

**DARYĀBEYGĪ** (sea lord), originally an Ottoman naval title dating from the 15th century (Lewis, p. 165). In Persia it was first adopted in the 18th century, when Nāder Shah Afšār (1148-60/1736-47) built his fleet. The naval commander in chief bore the title *daryābeygī* or occasionally *sardār* or *sardār-e banāder* (Estarābādī, p. 580; Eskandar Beg, II, p. 665; Lockhart, 1936, p. 11; Floor, 1987, pp. 40-49). Nāder Shah's choice, in 1146/1733, of **Būšeher** for his shipyards and the residence of the *daryābeygī* led to the eclipse of **Bandar-e 'Abbās** as the major Persian Gulf port (Floor, 1979, p. 169; Lockhart, 1938, pp. 92-93; idem, 1936, p. 12). Nevertheless, the commanders of the fleet at Bandar-e 'Abbās and of a group of two frigates and four smaller vessels on the Caspian Sea (Lockhart, 1936, pp. 7-17) also bore the rank of *daryābeygī*. Nāder Shah's naval project did not survive his assassination in 1160/1747, but the title *daryābeygī* was also used to designate the commander of the small fleet assembled under the Zands (Lockhart, 1936, p. 15; Perry, pp. 150-66).

In the early Qajar period *daryābeygī* was simply an honorific, as the state had no navy. Most often it was awarded by the governor of Fārs to the municipal governor of Būšeher and occasionally to other local dignitaries. For example, in 1238/1823 Ḥosayn-'Alī Mīrzā Farmānfarmā, bestowed it on the shaikh of Šārja and Ra's al-Ḳayma, Solṭān b. Ṣaqr, in order to enlist his help in capturing **Bahrain**. When the British navy threatened the Persian Gulf coast in 1256/1840, in response to the Persian siege of Herat, Moḥammad Shah (1250-64/1834-48) himself appointed as *daryābeygī* and governor of Būšeher Shaikh Nāṣer, whose family, of the Mataresh Arabs of Oman (Perry, p. 154),



had ruled the city since the mid-18th century (Kelly, pp. 42-43, 220, 347). In 1266/1850 Fīrūz Mīrzā Noṣrat-al-Dawla, governor of Fārs, appointed Mīrzā Ḥasan-ʿAlī Khan, son of Mīrzā ʿAlī-Akbar Qawām-al-Molk of Shiraz, governor of Būšeḥr and *daryābeygī* (Fasāʿī, I, p. 305). When he was captured by invading British forces during the [Anglo-Persian War](#) of 1273/1857 and sent to Bombay Aḥmad Khan Navāʿī ʿAmīd-al-Molk was appointed governor of Būšeḥr with the title *daryābeygī* (Fasāʿī, I, p. 318).

Despite repeated efforts, the state remained without a fleet until the commissioning of two small vessels from German shipyards, *Persepolis* and *Susa*, in 1300/1883 (Curzon, *Persian Question*, II, pp. 393-96; Rāʿīn, II, pp. 744-61; Ṣafāʿī, pp. 81-82; Lorimer, *Gazetteer* I/1, p. 294), which transformed the position of the *daryābeygī* and permitted the extension of the central authority over Arab tribes on the Persian Gulf coast, for example, the Jawāsem of Lenga (Sadīd-al-Salṭana, pp. 606-12; Šaybānī, pp. 345-52).

By the beginning of the 20th century the entire Persian coastal region was administered by the *daryābeygī* (Busch, pp. 41-47). The title was abandoned when Reżā Shah Pahlavī (1304-20/1925-41) expanded the Persian navy; it subsequently became a surname.

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