



DOLAFIDS

DOLAFIDS, family of Arab origin that became politically prominent in western Persia during the 9th century. Some members were also significant Arabic literary figures. The Dolafids belonged to the Arab tribe of 'Ejl b. Lojaym, among the first Muslim conquerors of central Iraq (cf. Donner, appendices; Caskel, s.v. 'Igl b. Lugaym; Ṭabarī, II, p. 994). The precise ancestry of the family within the tribe was the subject of dispute among various informants, however. The first member of the family mentioned in the surviving historical record was Edrīs b. Ma'qel, said to have dealt in perfumes and sheep at Kūfa (Balāḍorī, *Fotūḥ*, p. 314; Ebn Ḥazm, p. 313; Krenkow, p. *alef*). Edrīs and his brother 'Isā b. Ma'qel were reportedly imprisoned in Kūfa during the caliphate of Hešām b. 'Abd-al-Malek (105-25/724-43), but the reasons are unclear. Perhaps, as Balāḍorī claimed (*Fotūḥ* p. 314), Edrīs had assaulted a merchant. Other reports suggest that the brothers may have been suspected of revolutionary activity against the Omayyads; the future organizer of the 'Abbasid revolution in Khorasan, Abū Moslem, is said to have been their personal servant, purchased from them by the 'Abbasids during a visit in prison (Ṭabarī, II, pp. 1726-27, 1769; Ebn al-Aṭīr, V, pp. 191-92; Ebn Kallekān, II, p. 502; *Mojmal*, ed. Bahār, pp. 308, 315-16; Ya'qūbī, *Boldān*, p. 207). It is possible, however, that these claims were fabricated by the Dolafids at a later date, in order to enhance their standing with their 'Abbasid patrons.

Edrīs apparently became wealthy and moved with his family to the Zagros region, where he became an owner of estates and settled in the village of Mass near Hamadān. He may already have owned estates in the Isfahan area before



132/750 (Ebn al-Aṭīr, V, p. 191). Samʿānī noted simply that his son ʿĪsā, father of [Abū Dolaf](#), was an Arab of ʿEjl who came to the Isfahan area with his sons and engaged in brigandage; then, in the time of al-Mahdī (158-69/775-85), he repented and settled his family at Karaj between Isfahan and Hamadān, which he irrigated and began to develop, building up its fortresses (ed. Margoliouth, fol. 477b; Balāḍorī, *Fotūḥ*, p. 314). The fertile region around Karaj became the center of the Dolafid patrimony, particularly Āstāna near the modern village of Qadamgāh (cf. Luther). It flourished during the 9th century, as the Dolafids, especially ʿĪsā b. Edrīs and his son Abū Dolaf, extended its cultivated area and constructed palaces, fortresses, and other buildings for themselves and their followers.

The most prominent member of the Dolafid family was [Abū Dolaf Qāsem b. ʿĪsā](#) (for further details of his career), who was appointed governor of Jebāl province by Hārūn al-Rašīd (170-93/786-809) and seems to have been successful in suppressing turbulent Kurdish and Arab tribesmen. In the civil war between Hārūn's sons al-Amīn (193-93/809-13) and al-Ma'mūn (198-218/813-33) he sided with the former but was pardoned by the latter and reappointed governor of Jebāl; he was chosen as one of the caliph's boon companions and was well known as a poet. Abū Dolaf also served al-Ma'mūn's successor, al-Mo'taṣem (218-27/833-42), as boon companion, military commander, and possibly governor of Damascus. He died in Baghdad in 225/839-40. His brother Ma'qel b. ʿĪsā seems to have lived in his shadow but was also affiliated with the ʿAbbasid court, serving as a military commander; he was also known for his poetry (*Aḡānī*1, Cairo, XVIII, pp. 194-95; Ebn Qotayba, III, p. 10; Aštar, p. 123 n. 3; Krenkow, p. *waw-zay*).

After Abū Dolaf's death the main base of the family's power and activity remained Karaj and Isfahan. Two of his sons earned some historical mention. Hešām was a subordinate military commander in ʿAbbasid service in Iraq in 251/865-66 (Ṭabarī, III, pp. 1605, 1617, 1619, 1623-24), but leadership of the Dolafid family passed to ʿAbd-al-ʿAzīz, who was apparently recognized as his father's successor in Jebāl. He seems to have attempted to act independently of Samarra, for two punitive expeditions are recorded in 253/867, during one of which Karaj was ransacked (Ṭabarī, III, pp. 1685-87; Ebn Ḥazm, p. 313; Krenkow, p. *alef*; *Mojmal*, ed. Bahār, p. 363). Although ʿAbd-al-ʿAzīz's ultimate fate is unclear, his son Dolaf was recognized by the ʿAbbāsids as his successor in Jebāl; when Dolaf was killed by a rebel in Isfahan in 265/878-79 he was succeeded as head of the family by his brother Aḥmad (Ṭabarī, III, pp. 1916,



1929; Ebn al-Aṭīr, VII, p. 227), who was responsible for destroying the army of the Saffarid ‘Amr b. Layṭ in 273/886-87 (Ṭabarī, III, pp. 1937, 1940, 2024, 2112, 2122, 2135; Ebn al-Aṭīr, VII, pp. 226, 231, 233, 253, 259, 291, 317-18). The uneasy and shifting relationship between the Dolafids and the central ‘Abbasid government was reflected in a campaign by al-Mo‘tamed’s brother al-Mowaffeq against Karaj in 276/889-90 (Ṭabarī, III, pp. 2115-16; Ebn al-Aṭīr, VII, pp. 304-05). Aḥmad died in 280/894-95, and his brothers Bakr and ‘Omar openly disputed the leadership of the family. The ‘Abbasids exploited this split to reassert their power in Jebāl (Ṭabarī, III, pp. 2137, 2152, 2154-59; Ebn al-Aṭīr, VII, pp. 327-28, 332, 334).

Some of Abū Dolaf’s descendants were said to have become prominent in Qazvīn (*Tārīk-e gozīda*, ed. Browne, p. 847); a scholar from the family, a certain Moḥammad b. Ebrāhīm, in the eighth generation after Abū Dolaf, is also mentioned (Rāfe‘ī, I, p. 148).

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