



DŪ'L-RĪĀSATAYN

DŪ'L-RĪĀSATAYN, ḤĀJJ MĪRZĀ 'ABD-AL-ḤOSAYN MŪNES-'ALĪŠĀH (b. Shiraz, 1290/1873, d. Tehran, 25 Kordād 1332 Š./15 June 1953), for thirty years leader (*qoṭb*) of a principal branch of the Ne'matallāhī Sufi order. The title Dū'l-Rīāsātayn ("possessor of two kinds of supremacy") refers to his reportedly exceptional command of both the exoteric and esoteric sciences (Nurbakhsh, p. 117). He is said to have received this title from Aḥmad Shah (1327-44/1909-25), but his father and predecessor, Ḥājj 'Alī Āqā Wafā-'Alīšāh (d. 1336/1918) had also borne it, and it may well have come with the position of *qoṭb*. Owing to the length of Munes-'Alīšāh's tenure, the entire Ne'matallāhī line descended from his grandfather, Ḥājj Moḥammad Āqā Monawwar-'Alīšāh (d. 1301/1884), is often called the "line of Dū'l-Rīāsātayn."

Munes-'Alīšāh initially studied at home with such tutors as Sayyed Moḥammad-Nabī Karbalā'ī and is said to have mastered Arabic and the fundamentals of jurisprudence by the age of sixteen years. He then began an intensive study of all the traditional sciences, culminating in a reading of Ebn 'Arabī's *Foṣūṣ al-ḥekam* under the guidance of Shaikh Ḥosayn Sabzavarī and Shaikh-al-Moḥaqqaqīn Eṣṭahbānātī. Part of his spiritual training was supervised by Ayatollah Ja'far Maḥallātī, but it was his father who initiated him into the Ne'matallāhī order. The two went on a pilgrimage to Mecca in 1306/1889, a journey that resulted in the composition of one of Munes-'Alīšāh's earliest treatises, *Anīs al-mohājerīn*.

Both father and son were convinced adherents of the constitutional cause in Persia (see [CONSTITUTIONAL REVOLUTION](#)), and together they established at



Shiraz the Anjoman-e anšār to support it. Dū'l-Rīāsatayn's patriotic fervor manifested itself again during World War I, when he donned military garb with the aim of combating the British troops in Fārs and began drilling his father's disciples in the courtyard of the Masjed-e Now in Shiraz, where normally he delivered sermons. Also symptomatic of his political interests, which in his later years he totally abandoned, was his publication in Shiraz of the newspaper *Ehyā*.

When Wafā-'Alīšāh died in 1336/1918 his designated successor was not a member of his family but Sayyed Esmā'īl Ojāq Šādeq-'Alīšāh, presumably because Mūnes-'Alīšāh was still relatively young. Wafā-'Alīšāh is said to have made his choice of Šādeq-'Alīšāh conditional on his renouncing the right to name his own successor, however (Gramlich, p. 59). In any event, when he died in 1340/1922 the succession passed smoothly to Mūnes-'Alīšāh. In the same year Dū'l-Rīāsatayn made another pilgrimage to Mecca. Seven years later he moved from Shiraz to Tehran, where he established his headquarters in the Čahār Sūq *kānaqāh*, remaining there until his death; in accordance with his instructions, his body was taken to Kermānšāh for burial in a *kānaqāh* built there by Šādeq-'Alīšāh.

It is not clear that Dū'l-Rīāsatayn ever appointed a successor, which may help to explain the profusion of claimants to his mantle. It was Jawād Nūrbakš who took control of the Čahār Sūq *kānaqāh* and was best placed to assert his claims. According to one account, Nūrbakš was unable to produce an *ejāza-nāma* (letter of appointment) and drew up instead a protocol, witnessed by the shaikhs of the order, in which he pledged to act as interim leader until Dū'l-Rīāsatayn's grandson Moḥammad Āqā should come of age; subsequently, however, he broke this pledge (Modarresī Čahārdehī, 1360 Š./1981, pp. 227, 231). Nūrbakš himself claims to have been posthumously invested as *qoṭb* by Dū'l-Rīāsatayn on the very night of his death (Nurbakhsh, p. 157). [See [Addendum](#), below.]

Of Dū'l-Rīāsatayn's writings only his *Dīvān* (Tehran, 1345 Š./1966) and one treatise, *Yūnosīya* (said to be derived largely from *Kebrīt-e aḥmar* by Moẓaffar-'Alīšāh [d. 1315/1800] and printed by Nūrbakš under the title *Čerāg-e rāh*, Tehran, n.d.) have been published for general circulation; the pamphlet *Mūnes al-sālekīn* was distributed exclusively among neophytes (for unpublished works, see *Mūnes al-sālekīn*, pp. 8-9; Nurbakhsh, p. 125).



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Addendum (04 January 2013)

However, Dr. Jawād Nurbakṣ has supplied the author with photocopies of two documents: The first is a letter, dated 4 Dey 1331 Š./25 December 1952, from Ḍu'l-Riāsatayn to his followers in Kermān, Rafsanjān and Zāhedān to praising Dr. Nurbakṣ for his accomplishments, including the traversal of 1,001 stages of the spiritual path and instructing his devotee to accept whatever measures Dr. Nurbakṣ might recommend for improving the function of the ḳānaqāhs. The other is an undated letter affirming Ḍu'l-Riāsatayn to have appointed Nurbakṣ as his successor. It is signed by, among others, Ḥāj Mirzā 'Ali-Ašḡar, the son of Du'1-Riāsatayn.