Published: December 15, 1997
Last Updated: January 7, 2014

EBRĀHĪM KALĀNTAR ŠĪRĀZĪ

EBRĀHĪM KALĀNTAR ŠĪRĀZĪ, Ḥājī Mīrzā MOḤAMMAD Kalāntar and Eʿtemād-al-Dawla (b. 1158/1745, d. 1215/1800 or 1216/1801), lord mayor (*kalāntar*) of Shiraz during the late Zand era, the first grand vizier (*ṣadr-e aʿẓam*), and a major political figure of the Qajar period.

Background and early career. He was the third son of Moḥammad-Hāšem, the warden (*kadḵodā*) of the Bālākaft quarter and later chief warden (*kadḵodā-bāšī*) of the five Ḥaydarī quarters of Shiraz. His family, the Hāšemīya, was of mercantile origin, owned estates in the Fārs province, and was involved in the city administration. His maternal lineage reportedly goes back to Qewām-al-Dīn Ḥasan, the minister of the 14th-century Muzaffarid dynasty (after whom the influential house of Qawām[-al-Molk] was named), but his paternal Jewish ancestry cannot be established beyond doubt (Fasāʾī, ed. Rastgār, I, pp. 679-80; II, pp. 960-70; for his family tree, see Šarīf Šīrāzī, pp. 339, 342; Fasāʾī, tr. Busse, app. IV, pp. 430-31).

Mīrzā Ebrāhīm's training in urban administration and his introduction to the intricate politics of Shiraz began in earnest during the later years of Karīm Khan's reign (1163-93/1750-79), when the urban notables (*ʿayān*) of the Zand capital were curtailed by Karīm Khan, without their economic base being ruined and social network eroded. Moḥammad-Hāšem's loss of one eye, a punishment inflicted upon him by Nāder Shah in 1160/1747 for an alleged fiscal irregularity, must have been an apt reminder to his son, Ebrāhīm, of the notables' vulnerability to the ephemeral warlords of the post-Safavid period. Ebrāhīm inherited the chief wardenship of the Ḥaydarī quarters of Shiraz and

became a close ally of the lord mayor of the Zand capital, Mīrzā Moḥammad Kalāntar (d. 1200/1785), his mentor and an influential figure in shaping young Ebrāhīm's political outlook. He also witnessed the workings of the Zand administration under the aegis of remnants of the late Safavid bureaucratic elite such as Mīrzā Ḥosayn Wafā, the head of the Farāhānī family, which was later known as the Qāʾem-maqāms (Kalāntar, pp. *dāl*, 21, 91, 108-09; Jones, pp. cxxiii-cxxv; Malcolm, II, pp. 176-77).

In the transitory period following Karīm Khan's death (1193/1779), the weakening of the Zand rule was accelerated by a deadly struggle for the crown among the princes and chiefs of the Zand house as well as by Āqā Moḥammad Khan Qājār's relentless drive for control of southern provinces. For resilient city officials such as Ebrāhīm this was a new opportunity to exert greater autonomy. It also saddled them with the arduous task of defending the city, and their own vested interests, against a backdrop of intense urban factionalism and tribal warlords. Ebrāhīm's life and career were largely shaped by the complexities of this period (1779-94) and by a prevailing sense of Machiavellian expediency. Between 1193/1779 and 1196/1782 the notables of Shiraz, headed by the mayor of the city and his lieutenants, including Mīrzā Ebrāhīm, first faced the excesses of Zakī Khan. He was Karīm Khan's half-brother and held the power behind the shaky throne of Abu'l-Fatḥ Khan, Karīm Khan's son and successor. To counterbalance Zakī Khan's tyranny, the notables threw their lot behind Ṣādeq Khan Zand, Karīm Khan's other brother. With the help of Circassian guards, Ṣādeq Khan prevailed as the new regent to Abu'l-Fatḥ Khaṇ. Frustrated with Ṣādeq Khan's tyranny and incompetence and with the continuous cycle of bloodshed and anarchy, some notables then consented to the claim of yet another Zand chief, ʿAlī-Morād Khan, who captured the city in 1196/1782 after nine months of siege and carnage.

Mindful of Šīrāzī civil officers and their influence over the Zand capital, ʿAlī-Morād Khan (1193-99/1779-85) immediately ordered Mīrzā Moḥammad Kalāntar and his cohorts, among them Mīrzā Ebrāhīm, to accompany him to Isfahan, his new seat of power. Not much is known about this episode of Mīrzā Ebrāhīm's life. While in ʿAlī-Morād Khan's service he apparently made a pilgrimage to Mecca. He also maintained contact with the Shiraz *bāzār* and city quarters and managed in absentia his own family landholdings. After ʿAlī-Morād Khan's death in 1199/1785, upon Āqā Moḥammad Khan Qājār's approach to the city, Ḥājī Ebrāhīm and other exiles fled to Shiraz in the company of Ṣādeq Khan's son, the adventurous Jaʿfar Khan Zand. Mīrzā

Moḥammad Kalāntar, whose prospects in Shiraz were insecure, stayed in Isfahan only to become Āqā Moḥammad Khan's captive. In his memoirs he regrettted that he did not abide by the "plain argument" of his "revered son" (*farzand-e arjomand*) Ḥājī Moḥammad-Ebrāhīm, who had warned him that "waiting is dangerous; whatever happens to other people [notables] of Fārs will happen to you too; you are supposed to be the mayor" (Kalāntar, p. 91; for events of this period, see ibid., pp. 68-91; Fasāʾī, ed. Rastgār, I, pp. 618-33; tr., Busse, pp. 1-25; Nāmī, pp. 218-74).

Lord Mayorship of Shiraz. Upon his arrival in Shiraz Ḥājī Ebrāhīm was appointed the new *kalāntar* by Jaʿfar Khan Zand, whose transitory rule (1199-1202/1785-87) was marred by clashes with other Zand chiefs and princes and with Āqā Moḥammad Khan. Yet his rule lasted long enough for Ḥājī Ebrāhīm to consolidate his urban base in collaboration with city wardens, the *bāzār*, the city brigands (*lūṭī*s), and Qašqāʾī and other tribal chiefs of Fārs. In the internecine conflict with the ex-governor of the city, the unpopular Ṣayd Morād Khan Zand, and his brothers, Jaʿfar Khan was murdered. The Kalāntar was left with the unenviable tasks of recapturing Ṣayd Morād Khan and his followers and elevating Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan, the twenty-three year old son of Jaʿfar Khan, to the Zand throne. Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan, who at the time was campaigning in southern Fārs, was popular with the tribal troops and the city inhabitants for his gallantry and modesty. He entered the city in Šaʿbān 1203/May 1789 and, with the blessings of the mayor and other city and state officials, ascended the Zand throne after putting to death the hated Ṣayd Morād and his aides.

Soon, however, the symbiosis between the young king and the lord mayor came to an end. Facing an immediate threat from his Qajar rival in Šawwāl 1203/June 1789, when Āqā Moḥammad Khan staged his second sortie against Shiraz, Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan withdrew inside the city walls and allowed the Qajar khan to besiege the city until September. In Ramażān 1204/May 1790 the Qajar khan again reappeared before Shiraz walls, forcing the ill-equipped Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan to abandon the city and to retreat to southern Fārs. From there he embarked on a futile siege to capture Kermān. In his absence, Kalāntar, who was the master of the city and was appointed as the vizier and regent to Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan's young son, Ḵosrow, entered into a power struggle with the Zand chiefs for control of the citadel (*arg*). Upon Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan's return, his "confidence and respect" toward the Kalāntar changed, owing to charges of "treason and obstinacy," brought against the lord mayor by his opponents. Earlier on, acting on his mother's behest, Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan had ordered the

execution of one of the Kalāntar's allies, a certain Mīrzā Mahdī, who was the secretary of the army (*laškarnevīs*) and was charged with conspiring against Loṭf-ʿAlī's slain father. This execution, possibly a warning to the Kalāntar to provide funds necessary for Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan's future campaigns, alienated the notables wary of such costly undertakings. Yet Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan was well aware that the survival of his own throne depended on the mayor. Fasāʾī states that the "people of Shiraz had great respect for Hājī Ebrāhīm, that the governor of the districts and the chiefs of the tribes had a strong affection for him, and that most of the infantry of Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan were under the command of his brothers." Suspicious of the mayor's loyalty, Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan ordered Mīrzā Moḥammad, Hājī Ebrāhīm's eldest son, to accompany him as a hostage in his next campaign against the Qajars, who now controlled Isfahan. He also placed trusted Zand chiefs in charge of the Shiraz citadel (Fasāʾī, pp. 645-46; tr. Busse, pp. 40-42; Malcolm, II, p. 178).

Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan's failure to defend Shiraz and Hājī Ebrāhīm's fear for his own life encouraged him to break with the Zands and eventually switch to the Qajar side. Soon after Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan's departure late in 1205/1791 the Kalāntar staged a coup against the Zand ruler, which proved to be a turning point in the history of modern Persia. In a bloodless move he arrested the Zand chiefs and took over the citadel. He had the help of an urban militia force recruited from among the *lūṭī*s and *bāzār* commoners, who were under the command of his brother, Moḥammad-Ḥosayn. He then instructed his two other brothers, who were in Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan's camp, to incite a mutiny among the troops. Deserted by his chiefs and by most of his troops, Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan hurried back to Shiraz only to be stranded behind its closed gates. Escorted by a small detachment of loyal Tangestānī horsemen, he decided to starve his own capital into submission. To repulse Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan and his supporters, the Kalāntar then threatened the vacillating army chiefs with holding their families hostage inside the city. He also sought the assistance of a Qašqāʾī chief, Reżāqolī Khan Kāzerūnī, and organized Šahseven and other tribes in the vicinity of Shiraz into a united front. Shaikh Naṣr Khan, the semi-autonomous governor of Būšehr, too, was persuaded not to give shelter or other assistance to the deposed king. These efforts were checked by Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan's superior performance in the battlefield and by the escape of a number of Zand detainees to his camp. Distrustful of the Zands and unsuccessful in his initial plan to create a confederacy of southern towns, the Kalāntar then sent an emissary, Moḥammadqolī Khan Qašqāʾī, to Āqā Moḥammad Khan Qājār, offering him a gift of 3,000 mares from a Zand stud and requesting him, on

behalf of the people of Fārs, to be their new ruler. To this unexpected homage Āqā Moḥammad Khan responded positively and appointed the Kalāntar as the new governor (*beglarbeygī*) of Fārs, bestowing on him the title of khan.

While prevailing over his Qašqāʾī opponents and gaining control of the hinterlands around Shiraz, Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan once again laid siege to the city. Inside, the tribal levies loyal to the Zands also staged a mutiny. Employing another stratagem, the Kalāntar was able to disarm and expel the rebellious troops with the help of his *lūṭī* militia. He also refused to grant Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan's request to retire with his family, held captive by the mayor, to India or to Ottoman lands. Threatened by the vacillating Māfī and Nānkolī troops in the city, the Kalāntar then called upon the Qajar auxiliary detachments stationed in Ābāda to join his own horsemen from the Qašqāʾī and Šāhseven tribes. Once it became apparent that these forces were no match for Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan's troops, Āqā Moḥammad Khan himself set out for Shiraz. In spite of Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan's valor in the night attack of 14 Šawwāl 1206/5 June 1792, which nearly routed the Qajar forces, Āqā Moḥammad Khan finally prevailed. Entering Shiraz in Ḏu'l ḥejja 1207/21 July 1792, he reinstated the Kalāntar as the governor of Fārs and carried off to Tehran as war booty the surviving members of Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan's family. On his next visit to Shiraz in spring 1208/1793, although he rewarded the Kalāntar, his family, and his followers with favors, he committed more acts of violence against the inhabitants. He even forced the notables of Shiraz, including the Kalāntar himself, to surrender their women and children as hostages. He also ordered the destruction of the city's massive walls and its *arg* fortifications in order to deny the city notables the advantage they had used so effectively against previous rulers. By Jomādā II 1209/November 1794, when Āqā Moḥammad Khan returned to Shiraz, Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan had been captured in Bam and brutally tortured by the Qajar khan, who blinded the captive with this own hands before ordering his Torkman *ḡolām*s to rape him, then sending him off to Tehran to be executed. Bābā Khan, the future Fatḥ-ʿAlī Shah, who accompanied his uncle to Shiraz, was appointed as the new governor of the province.

It is likely that the Kalāntar's initial motive for abandoning Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan was not to replace him on the throne with a Qajar khan. Instead, he was hoping to forge a league of semi-autonomous cities and tribal regions in southern Persia. Harford Jones, a Zand sympathizer who viewed the Kalāntar's move as no more than an act of treason, nevertheless confirms his "confederacy scheme." It was the failure of this plan to "get rid of king" and then to create "a

federative government" with governors of Kermān, Būšehr, and other provinces, as well as with the chiefs of Daštestān and Garmsīr, that in the end obliged the Kalāntar to surrender the city to the Qajars and to secure his own safety (Jones, pp. cl, clxxxvi). The Ḵamsa tribal confederacy of the Fārs province, which was later organized and led by the Kalāntar's surviving son, Ḥājī ʿAlī-Akbar Khan Qewām-al-Molk, had its origins in this scheme envisioned by the Kalāntar. Years later the Kalāntar told Captain John Malcolm that it was his "desire to save his country from the continual petty wars" that persuaded him to turn to the Qajars. "None except some plundering soldiers cared whether a Zund or a Kujur was upon the throne; but all desired that Persia should be great and powerful, and enjoy internal tranquillity." Qualifying the Kalāntar's statement, Malcolm regards his chief motive for the act of treason as "self-preservation" (Malcolm, *History* II, p. 183; idem, *Sketches*, pp. 222-23). Yet the Kalāntar's statement, in tone and content, matches well with the anti-Zand and anti-Qajar sentiments of Ḥājī Ebrāhīm's mentor, Mīrzā Moḥammad Kalāntar (esp. pp. 89-94).

Grand vizierate. In his trip to Shiraz in November 1794 Āqā Moḥammad Khan appointed the Kalāntar the first grand vizier (*ṣadr-e aʿẓam*) of his reign and bestowed on him the title *Eʿtemād-al-Dawla* (the trustee of the state), the first such title to be granted since the demise of the Safavid state. His promotion to the highest administrative post, primarily because of his political savvy, shrewd maneuvering, and organizational talent, demonstrated the prominence of the Zand notables in shaping the early Qajar government (Malcolm, *History* II, p. 275). In Šaʿbān 1210/March 1795 in the new capital, Tehran, the grand vizier heading the state dignitaries, persuaded the apparently reluctant Āqā Moḥammad Khan to assume the title of shah, placing on his head the Kayānī crown. The grand vizier also tried to put together the rudiments of a central administration in Tehran by recruiting civil and army secretaries and accountants previously in the Zand service. He presided, as Malcolm states, over "every department of state," a fact which no doubt contributed to factional animosity within the bureaucracy (*History* II, p. 436 n.; for coronation episode, see Fasāʾī, ed. Rastgār, I, p. 662; Malcolm, *History* II, pp. 287-88; Sepehr, *Tārīḵ* I, pp. 78-79).

These efforts were curtailed, however, by the shah's priority of restoring the boundaries of the Safavid empire, which often required the grand vizier's presence in military campaigns. Āqā Moḥammad Khan's ambition to control the Caucasus were initially condoned by the grand vizier, who hoped to divert

the thrust of the Qajars' destructive campaigns away from the Persian interior. But engagement in the northern frontiers soon forced the young Qajar state to confront a growing Russian threat, especially after an inconclusive campaign in Gorjestān (Georgia) in 1210/1795 and the massacre of the population in Tbilisi. In the following years the grand vizier's position on the northern peripheries was characterized by prudence and accommodation of Russia, although he never fell short of asserting Persian sovereignty over Gorjestān. He remained unmoved, for instance, by the argument of envoys from the revolutionary French Republic, J.-G. Brugières and G.-A. Oliver, who in 1796 tried to persuade the shah to consolidate his hold over Georgia and attack the Ottoman Caucasus to gain access to the Black Sea, in exchange for French military assistance. Instead, he appealed to Āqā Moḥammad Khan's military tact and approved of his scorched earth strategy as the best way to deal with a superior power such as Russia, a strategy he later reaffirmed to Malcolm in 1801 (Malcolm, *History* II, pp. 297-98; *Camb. Hist. Iran* VII, pp. 129-30, 331, 375).

Control of the Caucasus, nevertheless, remained Āqā Moḥammad Khan's objective. Accompanied by his grand vizier, he was on his way to punish the khan of Qarabāḡò, Ebrāhīm Khan Javānšīr, for switching to the Russian side and to recapture Georgia, when in Šūšā he was murdered by servants of his household on 21 Ḏu'l-ḥejja 1211/16 June 1797. In the utter chaos that followed the shah's death and the breakup of the military camp, the grand vizier was able to muster the larger part of the Qajar army in Ādīna-bāzār camp, including some contingents from Fārs loyal to him, and to march toward Tehran via Ardabīl and Qazvīn. He was joined by the sons of the future king, Fatḥ-ʿAlī Shah. Loyal to Āqā Moḥammad's designated successor, he camped outside Tehran's closed gates and despatched a special emissary to Shiraz inviting Bābā Khan, who later became Fatḥ-ʿAlī Shah, to come to the capital. Aided by Moḥammad-Zamān, Ḥājī Ebrāhīm's brother and the *kalāntar* of Shiraz, the new shah arrived in Ṣafar 1212/August 1797 and confirmed the grand vizier in office prior to his coronation in Tehran in Šawwāl 1212/March 1798. Fatḥ-ʿAlī Shah's accession, which took place without a civil war, was relatively smooth largely because of Ḥājī Ebrāhīm's tact and foresight. After the accession, a disloyal uncle of the shah, ʿAlīqolī Khan, was captured and blinded; Moḥammad Khan, a Zand contestant in Isfahan, was vanquished and later killed; Nāder Mīrzā, an Afsharid prince in Mašhad, was temporarily overpowered; and Ṣādeq Khan Šaqāqī, a Kurdish contender in Azarbaijan, was defeated but pardoned in exchange for the safe return of royal jewels. But Fatḥ-ʿAlī Shah's most formidable contestant proved to be his own full-brother

Ḥosaynqolī Khan, the new governor of Fārs province. Extorting high taxes from Fārs and Isfahan, in 1213/1798 he gathered enough force to meet the shah's army in Sārūq in the Farāhān region. The grand vizier, who accompanied the shah, was anxious not to permit another succession war to destroy the southern provinces, even though members of his own family had fallen victim to the rebellious prince. (Earlier on Ḥosaynqolī had ordered Moḥammad-Zamān and a number of city officials to be blinded.) To undermine Ḥosaynqolī, he resorted to a stratagem. From the shah's camp he sent a courier to Ḥosaynqolī's camp with a number of false messages sewn inside the sole of one of his boots. Addressed to the enemy's army chiefs, many of whom were known to the grand vizier, the letters appeared to be favorable royal responses to the chiefs' petitions to abandon the rebellious prince and join the shah. Once the courtier was arrested and his messages discovered, as indeed they were meant to be, the demoralized Ḥosaynqolī, who was uncertain of his army's loyalty, lost hope and sought the shah's pardon, which was granted through the intercession of the queen mother, an ally and protector of the grand vizier (Fasāʾī, ed. Rastgār, II, pp. 672-73; tr. Busse, pp. 81-86).

The same concern for preserving the precarious tranquillity of the country at the uncertain start of the new reign prompted Ḥājī Ebrāhīm in 1214/1799 to resist the offer of Mahdī-ʿAlī Khan, the first envoy of the British East India Company, to commit Persia to a campaign against the ruler of Kabul, Zamān Shah. Hājī Ebrāhīm's answer to the British plea for defending the Shiʿites of Lahore against Sunni Afghans was communicated in December 1800 to Malcolm, then on his first mission to Persia. The political concerns of the Persian state, he stressed, are independent from its religious sentiments. Acting as Malcolm's official host (*mehmāndār*) and Persia's chief negotiator, Ḥājī Ebrāhīm's nevertheless was an advocate of friendly relations with the East India Company and concluded two treaties with England in Šaʿbān 1215/January 1801. (For the treaties, see C. U. Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sunnuds* XII, Calcutta, 1909; Fasāʾī, ed. Rastgār, II, p. 678; see also Hedāyat, IX, pp. 361-62; Maḥmūd, I; *Camb. Hist. Iran* VII, pp. 375-82.)

Downfall. Before Malcolm's departure in March 1801, Hājī Ebrāhīm confided to him a grave concern for his own security. The factional conflicts within the bureaucracy and the loss of a powerful ally, the queen mother (Mahd ʿOlyā), whom he had known since his days in Shiraz, weakened the grand vizier's

position. He also began to lose his awesome grip over the young shah. To Fatḥ-ʿAlī he was a painful reminder of Āqā Moḥammad Khan's era and an obstacle to the life of pleasure and opulence the new shah intended to lead and for which the shah needed new sources of income. On 1 Ḏu'l-ḥejja 1215/14 April 1801 Hājī Ebrāhīm was summoned to the shah's presence and was accused of conspiracy against the crown. Dismissed from his post and placed under arrest, he was blinded in both eyes by the order of the shah and his tongue was cut off, presumably because he dared to admonish the shah for ungratefulness toward him. In an orchestrated move, all adult male members of his family, too, were arrested. Hājī Ebrāhīm's three brothers: ʿAbd-al-Raḥīm, an aide to the grand vizier; Moḥammad-Zamān, the blind *kalāntar* of Shiraz; and Moḥammad-Ḥasan, governor of Kohgīlūya were executed. One of the grand vizier's sons, the *kalāntar* of Shiraz Moḥammad Khan, and one of his nephews met the same fate. His other son Asad-Allāh, who was the governor of Borūjerd, was blinded. Not long after, Ḥājī Ebrāhīm himself was sent to Qazvīn and then to Ṭāleqān, where he was put to death (F. Ḵāvarī, apud Fasāʾī, ed. Rastgār, I, pp. 679-81; tr. Busse, pp. 95-100; Donbolī, pp. 71-74; Jones, pp. 128-32; Eʿtemād-al-Salṭana, pp. 32-33).

There seems to be little truth in allegations of Ḥājī Ebrāhīm's conspiracy. The secret correspondence with the rebellious Ḥosaynqolī Mīrzā presented to Fatḥ-ʿAlī Shah by the grand vizier's opponents as evidence of his treason, so far as can be determined from mute references in the sources, bears little credibility. The grand vizier's fatal downfall was caused by other factors. He and his relatives controlled most southwestern provinces, including Fārs, Lorestān, and Ḵūzestān, and held vast estates in Fārs and elsewhere. Control of these ex-Zand territories by a powerful grand vizier was a threat to the Qajar's complete sovereignty in the south. The wealth accumulated by Ḥājī Ebrāhīm and by his family served as another motive for the shah. The grand vizier's inability to check rival factions in the administration was also responsible for his downfall. Two officials who were instrumental in arousing the shah's suspicion were Mīrzā Šafīʿ ʿAlīābādī, who replaced Ḥājī Ebrāhīm in office, and Mīrzā Reżāqolī Navāʾī, the chief secretary (*monšī-al-mamālek*). They belonged to the Māzandarānī faction and were long-time enemies of the Šīrāzī grand vizier in spite of Ḥājī Ebrāhīm's earlier favors toward Mīrzā Šafīʿ (Malcolm, *History* II, p. 305). Malcolm, whose very presence in the Tehran court sharpened the existing rivalries, claims that he tried to reconcile the grand vizier with his opponents. He also advised Ḥājī Ebrāhīm to treat the shah's "occasional fits of ill-humor and violence" with more temper. The grand

vizier replied that neither could he change his own “plain and downright” nature nor would a lenient course assuage his opponents or decelerate the approach of his fate. He again reiterated his commitment to a united country under a strong government: “I could easily save myself but Persia would again be plunged in warfare. My object has been to give my country one king; I cared not whether he was a Zand or a Kajir, [just] so that there was an end of internal destruction. I have seen enough of these scenes of blood; I will be concerned in no more of them” (Malcolm, *Sketches*, 2nd ed., pp. 222-23).

Suspicious of his grand vizier, Fatḥ-ʿAlī Shah apparently followed Āqā Moḥammad Khan’s earlier advice “not to allow the gray head of Haji Ibraheem, who had betrayed his first master, to go down in peace to grave” (Watson, p. 128). Even if apocryphal, this advice conformed to the ruthless Qajar practice of executing king-maker ministers. Two of Fatḥ-ʿAlī’s successors committed similar “viziercide” (*wazīr-košī*) at the outset of their reigns. Mīrzā Abu’l-Qāsem Qāʾem-maqām Farāhānī became a victim in 1836 and Mīrzā Taqī Khan Amīr Kabīr (q.v.) in 1852, both eliminated under identical pretexts of conspiracy against the shah.

A man of unassuming appearance and mercantile demeanor, Ḥājī Ebrāhīm was one of the most remarkable but least understood statesmen of modern Persian history. Malcolm, who was on intimate terms with him, praised him as a “truly a great man,” a genius, and one of the best statesmen Persia has ever had (Malcolm, *History* II, p. 275; *Sketches*, 2nd ed., p. 222). A somewhat romantic portrayal of Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan in historical accounts helped demonize Ḥājī Ebrāhīm as the chief perpetrator of the Zand demise and as an agent of Qajar hegemony. Harford Jones’s disparaging remarks about Kalāntar’s crafty manipulations and treason, in contrast to Loṭf-ʿAlī Khan’s dignified heroism, is one such account, but he, too, grudgingly acknowledges the “ability and resource” of the grand vizier (Jones, *Dynasty*, pp. cxliii-cxlv; *Camb. Hist. Iran* VII, pp. 378-79). Ethical scruples aside, there is enough credit in Ḥājī Ebrāhīm’s political career to redeem him as the architect of Persia’s unification and stability under the early Qajars. He aptly detected in Āqā Moḥammad Khan a strong and determined ruler capable of bringing to an end a civil war that had ravaged the country for a decade. In a broader sense he perceived the inevitability of Qajar monarchy as a solution to the crisis of legitimacy that had persisted ever since the fall of the Safavids. The prominence of local officials such as Ḥājī Ebrāhīm in the emerging body politics of the early Qajar period counterbalanced the power of the Qajar tribal nobility. Ḥājī Ebrāhīm

was also an advocate of state support for the Oṣūlī *mojtaheds* and an ally of Āqā Moḥammad-ʿAlī Behbahānī in his campaign against Neʿmat-Allāhī Sufi dissenters. His downfall, on the other hand, denoted the inherent fragility of the ministerial autonomy vis à vis the monarch's absolute authority, one of the recurring and often tragic themes in Qajar political history.

Of Ḥājī Ebrāhīm's immediate relatives, his young twin sons ʿAlī-Akbar and ʿAlī-Reżā were spared. Some years later ʿAlī-Akbar, entitled Qawām-al-Molk, retrieved the family's hereditary status in Fārs and became the patriarch of the Qawām(ī) house of Shiraz, one of the most prominent families of landed notables in Qajar Persia and which for generations played a highly active role in the politics of Fārs and in the central administration. ʿAlī-Reżā, who was castrated at the shah's order, became a eunuch in the royal harem. Among Ḥājī Ebrāhīm's other surviving relatives, the most prominent was his son-in-law, Ḥājī Moḥammad-Ḥosayn Khan Amīn-al-Dawla Ṣadr Eṣfahānī, later the grand vizier of Fatḥ-ʿAlī Shah. His term of office in many respects restored Ḥājī Ebrāhīm's politics. The celebrated Mīrzā Abu'l-Ḥasan Khan Īlčī, a nephew of Ḥājī Ebrāhīm who had taken refuge in the Hyderabad court, later returned to royal favor and was appointed as the Persian envoy to European courts.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

(For cited works not given in detail, see "Short References.")

Bāmdād, *Rejāl* I, pp. 21-28.

S. Dāneš, *Ebrāhīm Kalāntar*, Tehran, n.d.

ʿAbd-al-Razzāq Donbolī, *Maʾāṯer-e ṣolṭānīya*, Tabrīz, 1242/1826, new repr., Tehran, 1351 Š./1972, pp. 21-22, 72-74.

Moḥammad-Ḥasan Khan Eʿtemād-al-Salṭana, *Ṣadr al-tawārīḵ*, ed. M. Mošīrī, Tehran, 1349 Š./1970.

Fasāʾī, ed. Rastgār, I, pp. 667-81; II, pp. 960-70.

G. Hambly, “Aqa Mohammad Khan and the Establishment of the Qajar Dynasty,” *JRCAS* 50, 1963, pp. 161-74.

Hedāyat, *Rawżat al-ṣafā* IX, pp. 237, 261, 361, 367-70, 419, 458.

H. Jones Brydges, *The Dynasty of the Kajars*, London, 1833, pp. cxIiii-cIxxxix, pp. 128-32.

J. Malcolm, *A History of Persia*, 2 vols., London, 1829.

Idem, *Sketches of Persia*, 2 vols., London, 1815, chaps. xvii-xviii, 2nd ed., London, 1845, pp. 202-04, 222-24.

Mīrzā Moḥammad Kalāntar, *Rūz-nāma*, ed. ʿA. Eqbāl, Tehran, 1325 Š./1946, pp. 91, 107-08.

M. Maḥmūd, *Tārīḵ rawābeṭ-e sīāsī-e Īrān wa Eneglis*, 8 vols., Tehran, 4th repr., 1361Š./1982.

J. Morier, *A Journey through Persia, Armenia, etc*., London, 1812.

Mīrzā Moḥammad-Sādeq Nāmī, *Tārīḵ-e gītīgošā*, ed. S. Nafīsī, Tehran, n.d.

G.-A. Olivier, *Voyage dans l’empire ottomane, l’Egypte et la Perse*, 6 vols., Paris, 1807.

ʿAbd-al-Karīm Šarīf Šīrāzī, *Ḏayl-e tārīḵ-e gītīgošā*, Tehran, n.d., pp. 339, 342.

Moḥammad-Taqī Sepehr, *Tārīḵ-e qājārīya (Nāseḵ al-tawārīḵ)*, 4 vols., Tehran, 1344 Š./1965, I, pp. 110-13.

R. G. Watson, *A History of Persia*, London, 1866, pp. 124-25, 128-29.