



FARHĀD KHAN QARAMĀNLŪ, ROKN-AL-SALṬANA

FARHĀD KHAN QARAMĀNLŪ, ROKN-AL-SALṬANA, military commander of Shah ‘Abbās I (q.v.), executed at the Shah’s orders in 1007/1598. He was a descendent of Bayram Beg Qaramānlū, one of the great amirs under Shah Esmā‘īl, and son of Ḥosām Beg b. Bahrām Beg.

Originally Farhād Khan was a retainer of Ḥamza Mīrzā, son of Shah Moḥammad Ḳodā-banda and one of the pretenders to the Safavid throne in the turbulent period prior to the accession of Shah ‘Abbās. After Ḥamza Mīrzā’s murder in 994/1586, Farhād Khan became the object of jealousy and fled to Ottoman territory (Afušta‘ī, p. 605; Khan Aḥmad, p. 299). He returned to Persia after Shah ‘Abbās I had ascended to the throne and had ordered the execution of the *wakīl-e dīvān*, Moršedqolī Khan Ostājīlū.

Farhād Khan became a loyal follower of Shah ‘Abbās, faithfully executing his orders. His first act in the service of the ruler was the arrest and execution of the grand vizier Mīrzā Moḥammad in 998/1589-90 (Jalāl-al-Dīn Monajjem, p. 65; Afušta‘ī, pp. 319-21). Receiving the honorary title of Rokn-al-Salṭana, he also quickly became one of the shah’s favorites, acquiring the right to affix his seal to royal decrees (Qazī Aḥmad, 1363, p. 906; he is also referred to as Rokn-al-Dawla and Mo‘tamed-al-Dawla, see Jonābādī, fols. 289b, 302b, 303b).

Farhād Khan played an important role in Shah ‘Abbās’s “reconquest” of



Persian territory. In 998/1589-90, he persuaded the rebellious governor of Isfahan, the *golām* Yūlī Beg, who had taken refuge in a fortress, to surrender. The following year he was sent, with Ḥātem Beg, to Kermān with the task of returning the recalcitrant Afšār leader, Yūsof Khan, to the Shah's control (Eskandar Beg, pp. 426-28, 433, 436-37, tr. Savory, pp. 602-4, 607-8, 611; Jalāl-al-Dīn Monajjem, pp. 86-88, 95, 103-5; Afušta'ī, pp. 331-35, 361-65, 381-83).

Particularly prominent was Farhād Khan's role in the pacification of the Caspian provinces. In 1001/1592-93 Farhād Khan and his brother, Du'l-Faqār Khan, led a punitive campaign to Gīlān against its rebellious governor, Khan Aḥmad. Following this he was appointed *amīr al-omarā'* of Azarbaijan and warden (*motawallī*) of the shrine of Ardabīl (Eskandar Beg, pp. 448-51, 454, tr. Savory, p. 621-25, 628; Jalāl-al-Dīn Monajjem, pp. 115-16; Afušta'ī, pp. 399-402, 369-74).

The massacres that had accompanied the subjugation of Gīlān and the various new taxes imposed by the new regime almost immediately led to a new rebellion against Safavid domination. Shah 'Abbās reacted to this by dispatching Farhād Khan a second time to the province. Having occupied Lahījān in 1002/1593, Farhād Khan was appointed *amīr al-omarā'* of Bīa Piš, i.e., eastern Gīlān (Eskandar Beg, pp. 461-63, tr. Savory, pp. 634-37; Afušta'ī, pp. 540-46; Bellan, pp. 49-50). He also received the honor of being called dear son (*farzandī*) by the shah (Afušta'ī, p. 606; Bushev, pp. 211-12).

Still not content with the extent of his control over the region, Shah 'Abbās next ordered Farhād Khan to move against the western part of Gīlān (Bīa Pas) as well. After executing all remaining local leaders, he proceeded to annex Gīlān to his realm, leaving Farhād Khan as governor and *toyūldār* of Bīa Piš and appointing 'Alī Khan as governor of Bīa Pas (Eskandar Beg, p. 462, tr. Savory, II, p. 635).

In 1003/1594, 'Alī Khan, who had been appointed at Farhād Khan behest, revolted. Farhād Khan once again set out on a punitive expedition. In the aftermath, Darvīš Moḥammad Khan, a leader of the Rūmlū tribe, was made *amīr al-omarā'* of Gīlān. Farhād Khan received the important province of Fārs, from where he next joined Ḥātem Beg on a campaign against the provinces of Kūzestān and Kohgīlūya (Eskandar Beg, pp. 494-502, tr. Savory, II, pp. 673-78; Afušta'ī, pp. 540-46; Fūmanī, pp. 142-56). In 10004/1595-96, he added a string of districts adjacent to Khorasan, including Semnān and Dāmḡān, to his possession. In the same year, he lost Fārs to Allāhverdī Khan (q.v.) and was



appointed to western Gilān (Eskandar Beg, tr. Savory, II, pp. 681, 690).

In 1005/1596, the Shah took advantage of a lull in his wars against the Ottomans and Uzbeks to subjugate Māzandarān, at that point ruled by various local dynasties at war with each other (according to Jalāl-al-Dīn Monajjem, pp. 143-47, the expedition took place in 1004; Mar'ašī, pp. 339-47, gives 1003 as the date). He charged Farhād Khan with the task, appointing him governor of the region. Within a year, Farhād Khan managed to subdue Hezār Jarīb and to take the fortress of Āmol, following a two-month siege. The fall of Āmol and the subsequent death of Sayyed Moẓaffar, one of the region's local leaders, enabled Farhād Khan to bring the rest of Māzandarān under his control. He left the area, having put it under the control of his brother, Alvand Solṭān. The latter fell short of his task, and an uprising led by Malek Bahman, the ruler of Nūr and Kojūr, forced Farhād Khan to undertake a second expedition to Māzandarān. He took the fortress of Larījān, seized Nūr and Kojūr, and in the fall of 1006/1597 completed the incorporation of the region by subjugating Savādkūh (Eskandar Beg, pp. 518-22, tr. Savory, II, pp. 693-98; 'Alī Gilānī, pp. 95-97; Bellan, 70-73).

Farhād Khan in this period reached the pinnacle of his prestige and power. In the contemporary chronicles he is called the khan of the age (*kān-e zamān*). His status with the shah was unprecedented and unique; whenever he came to pay respects to the shah, the latter would personally come out to greet him (Afušta'ī, pp. 607-8). The Safavid realm had been divided into two halves, the same chronicles insists, one belonging to Farhād Khan, the other to the remaining amirs. Farhād Khan at this point indeed was in control of most of Persia's northern half, from the Caucasus to Khorasan. He stood at the head of a splendid court, surrounding himself with some of the finest artists of the day, people such as the calligraphers Mīr 'Emād Ḥasanī and 'Alī-Rezā 'Abbāsī Tabrīzī (qq.v.), who worked in his library at Semnān. The former dedicated a copy of *Golestān-e honar* to Farhād Khan (Qāẓī Aḥmad, tr. Minorsky, p. 37).

This excess of power and the arrogance that came with it was to be his downfall. Jealous of the grand vizier, Ḥātem Beg, Farhād Khan began to engage in intrigues that involved the governors of Šarvān and Tabrīz. He ignored the orders of Shah 'Abbās who, suspicious of his dealings, summoned him to court, and forced the ruler to come to see him (Sherley, pp. 53-54). Farhād Khan's end came in 1007/1598 (Fūmānī, p. 171, erroneously gives 1006 as the year of his death), during Shah 'Abbās's final campaign against the Uzbek leader Dīn-Moḥammad Khan and following the Safavid conquest of



Herat. Prior to this campaign Farhād Khan was given Estrābād and Gorgān, the region next to Uzbek territory whose governors often served as military commanders campaigning in Khorasan (Eskandar Beg, p. 565, tr. Savory, II, pp. 748-49; according to Afušta'ī, 450-51, this appointment took place much earlier). Sherley (pp. 58-61) claims that Farhād Khan committed treason by advising the Uzbeks of the impending attack. The accounts of Orūč Beg Bayāt/Don Juan of Persia (tr., pp. 224-26), Jalāl-al-Dīn Monajjem (pp. 183-84), and Jonābādī (fols. 304-7) omit this part of the story and instead claim that Farhād Khan fled the battlefield at Rebāt-e Parīān near Herat and was killed at Shah 'Abbās's order for cowardice. Eskandar Beg (pp. 571, 574-76, tr. Savory, II, p. 756) is more circumspect as well as more specific in stating that he retreated from the battle after being wounded, later to be accused by his peers of having fled. This chronicler's assertion that Farhād Khan was initially pardoned by the shah, who in addition offered him the governorship of Herat, is corroborated by Orūč Beg, who adds that he subsequently offended the shah by refusing the honor. Jalāl-al-Dīn Monajjem (pp. 184-85) mentions that Farhād's brother, Du'l-Faqār Khan, was in the same bathhouse at the exit of which Farhād Khan was killed by Allāhverdī Khan, not by his own brother as Reid claims (p. 204). Du'l-Faqār, pardoned by the shah, is said to have stated that he should have been charged with the execution). Eskandar Beg's wording, that Farhād Khan's arrogance and suspected treachery made Shah 'Abbās decide to put his powerful general to death, suggests that Farhād Khan had come to pose a threat to the shah's dominance. Naṣr-Allāh Falsafī (p. 1056) has argued that contemporaries were so shocked at the shah's execution of his beloved general that they could only find comfort in treachery as a pretext.

Whatever the immediate cause and circumstances of Farhād Khan's execution, his removal and replacement as commander-in-chief by Allāhverdī Khan, āgolām, as well as the fact that after his death Gilān and Māzandarān were turned into crown domain (*kāṣṣa*) are emblematic of the momentous changes taking place in the Safavid administration at the time, including the rise of the *golāms* at the expense of the traditional *qezelbāš* leaders.



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