



KĀKUYIDS

KĀKUYIDS [KAKWAYHIDS], a dynasty of [Deylamite](#) origin that ruled in western Persia, in Jebāl and Kurdistan about 1008-51 as independent princes, and thereafter locally as feudatories of the Great Saljuqs until the mid-12th century. They represent one of the hitherto submerged local powers of this region, Deylamite and Kurdish, who rose to prominence in what V. Minorsky called “the Daylamī interlude” of Persian history, when the power of the ‘Abbasid caliphs started to decline there in the second half of the 9th century.

The founder of the Kākuyid line in Isfahan, and the outstanding member of the dynasty, was Abu Ja‘far Moḥammad b. Došmanziyār, the son of a Deylamite soldier in the service of the Buyids of Ray and Jebāl. He is often referred to in the sources as Ebn Kākuya (in Beyhaqi, as Pesar-e Kāku), with the explanation given that *kākuya* is a term of endearment from *kāku* “maternal uncle” in the Deylamite dialect; this seems quite likely (see the discussion in Bosworth, “Dailamīs in Central Iran,” p. 74 n. 3).

After the death of the forceful Faḳ-r-al-Dawla in 997, the northern Buyid emirate passed to his much less effective son Majd-al-Dawla Rostam (r. 997-1029), who was in practice dominated by the queen mother Sayyida, actually a cousin of Moḥammad b. Došmanziyār (Ebn al-Aṭīr (Beirut) IX, pp. 131-32). The latter became governor of Isfahan for the Buyids at some point before 1007-08, and Buyid weakness enabled him to extend his power northwards and westwards into areas as yet not subdued by the Buyids and dominated by virtually independent Kurdish chiefs such as the [‘Annāzids](#). He also fought off the Deylamite chiefs who were harrying the northern fringes of



the Buyid emirate from the Alborz mountains. In 1020-21, ‘Alā’-al-Dawla (as he now was) Moḥammad intervened at Hamadān, where Majd-al-Dawla’s brother Abu Ṭāher Šams- al-Dawla had been unable to cope with a revolt of his Turkish soldiery. Šams-al-Dawla died in the next year, and Hamadān passed to his son Abu’l-Ḥasan Samā’-al-Dawla. An internal dispute gave Moḥammad a pretext for marching into Hamadān, ending Samā’- al-Dawla’s rule and adding Hamadān, Dinavar, and Šābur-Ḳvāst (probably the modern Ḳorramābād, q.v.) to his own dominions, whilst his nominal suzerain in Ray, Majd-al-Dawla, was unable to influence the course of events (1023). Moḥammad’s son Abu Kālijār Garšāsp now became governor of Hamadān for his father (Ebn al-Aṭir (Beirut) IX, pp. 320, 330-31; Bosworth, “Dailamīs,” p. 74).

Over the ensuing years, ‘Alā’-al-Dawla Moḥammad was occupied with consolidating his conquests and fighting off Kurdish rivals, his efforts culminating in 1028 with a great victory at Nehāvand over a grand coalition of Deylamite and Kurdish amirs, the Bāvandid Espabaḍ of the Ṭabarestān mountains (see [ĀL-E BĀVAND](#)) and the Ziyārid ruler of Ṭabarestān and Gorgān, Manučehr b. Qābus (see [ZIYARIDS](#); Ebn al-Aṭir (Beirut) IX, pp. 357-59). Moḥammad was now undoubtedly the most powerful figure of his age in western Persia. Although his coins continued to express dependence on, and deference towards, Majd-al-Dawla, in practice he behaved largely as an independent sovereign. Thus he dealt directly with the ‘Abbasid caliph Qāder, and in 1018-19 obtained an impressive array of four honorific titles, including the one by which he became best known, ‘Alā’-al-Dawla; similar titles were eventually gained for his son Abu Kālijār (*Moǰmal al-tavāriḳ*-, pp. 402-03; Bosworth, “Dailamīs,” pp. 75-76).

The whole political system of northern and western Persia was transformed when in 1029 Sultan Maḥmud of Ghazna (q.v.) marched westwards, deposed Majd-al-Dawla, and incorporated Ray and Jebāl into his already vast empire. Maḥmud deputed the conquest of Jebāl, with its various petty rulers and chiefs, to his son Mas‘ud (q.v.). The latter drove out the Kākuyid governor from Hamadān, and ‘Alā’-al-Dawla Moḥammad had to evacuate Isfahan and flee to Ḳuzestān, seeking help from the Buyid amir of Iraq, Jalāl-al-Dawla (Ebn al-Aṭir (Beirut) IX, pp. 371-72, 395; Nāẓim, *Sulṭān Maḥmūd of Ghazna*, pp. 80-85). A further upheaval occurred in the following year, 1030, when Maḥmud died and Mas‘ud had to hurry eastwards to secure the succession in Ghazna from his brother Moḥammad. Mas‘ud’s departure enabled Moḥammad to return to Isfahan on the basis of an agreement brokered by the ‘Abbasid caliph, by the



terms of which Moḥammad was recognized as the Sultan's deputy (*k-alifat*) in Isfahan in return for a tribute of twenty thousand dinars per annum plus rich presents. In Mas'ud's absence, Moḥammad's power grew again; he extended it as far east as Yazd and even temporarily occupied Ray and Damāvand before Ghaznavid forces ejected him (Ebn al-Aṭir (Beirut) IX, pp. 381, 398-400, 402-03; Bosworth, "Dailamīs," pp. 76-77).

Over the next few years, Moḥammad's loyalty to the Ghaznavids varied according to Sultan's Mas'ud's preoccupations away from western Persia, above all, from the middle-1030s onwards with his attempts to stem Turkmen incursions into Khorasan. Beyhaqī's narrative shows that "Pesar-e Kāku" was always regarded as an unreliable vassal, *nim-došmani* 'žsemi-rebellious' in that historian's phrase, a person who would always take advantage of any situation favorable to his interests (ed, Fayyāz, pp. 504-05, cited in Bosworth, "Dailamīs," pp. 80-81). Thus in winter 1032-33, when Mas'ud had to cope with a rebellion in northern India, Moḥammad seized Hamadān and several other towns of Jebāl, renouncing his allegiance to the Ghaznavids. In 1034 a further rebellion brought a Ghaznavid army to Isfahan; this also gave them the opportunity to carry off the library of Avicenna (who had ended his days at Moḥammad's court) to Ghazna. As was his wont, Moḥammad retreated into Buyid Kuzestān, and, after a failed attempt to recapture Isfahan, tried to find refuge in 1036 in Deylam (Ebn al-Aṭir (Beirut) IX, pp. 424-25, 435-36, 446-47; Bosworth, "Dailamīs," pp. 77-78).

But by now time was running out for the Ghaznavids in Persia. 'Alā'-al-Dawla Moḥammad's potential for troublemaking was considerably increased during these years by the fact that, with the rich financial resources of the towns of Jebāl, he could recruit into his army, in addition to its nucleus of Deylamites and Turkish *golāms*, Turkmen auxiliaries who had been driven westwards by the Ghaznavids (the so-called "Erāqi" Turkmens, i.e. those who now found themselves in western Persia, 'Erāq-e 'Ajam; see on this term, [JEBĀL](#)). Because of the depredations of the Saljuqs and other Turkmen bands, the Ghaznavid outposts of Ray and other places in northern Persia were coming under increased pressure, and by 1027 the Ghaznavid garrison of Ray was forced to abandon the city and return to Khorasan. Very soon afterwards, Moḥammad and his Turkmen auxiliaries occupied Ray, and he obtained from Sultan Mas'ud a formal grant for himself of the governorship of Ray, possibly as a potential bargaining counter with the Saljuqs, the enemy of the near future. The generally unsettled condition of northern Persia at this time led



Moḥammad to fortify his capital, Isfahan, with a strong ring of walls. This did, in fact, ensure that Isfahan was never sacked by the Turkmens, whereas in Hamadān, Abu Kālijār Garšāsp was twice attacked by Turkmens moving southwards from Azarbaijan, and on the second occasion, in 1038-39, the town suffered fearsome violence from them (Ebn al-Aṭir (Beirut) IX, pp. 379-84; Bosworth, “Dailamīs,” pp. 78-80).

‘Alā’-al-Dawla Moḥammad died in 433/1041, shortly after campaigning against the ‘Annāzids (Ebn al-Aṭir (Beirut) IX, pp. 495-96). He had passed some forty years in almost continuous activity, and his dominant position within western Persia at this time, maintained when surrounded by more powerful neighbors, is a tribute to his military and diplomatic skills (for fuller details of his career, see [‘ALĀ’-AL-DAWLA MOḤAMMAD](#)).

The Kākuyids had become a significant force because disturbed and fluid political conditions, and rivalries amongst greater powers, had allowed a vigorous war leader such as Moḥammad to build up his position. After his death, Persia eventually became united under a single authority, that of the Great Saljuqs (q.v.), so that Moḥammad’s descendants had to be content with a much more limited role as the lords of various towns of central Persia, feudatories of the Saljuq sultans. However, before this happened, his sons had still a decade or so of semi-independent existence, surviving by means of something like a balancing-act between the Saljuqs of Khorasan and Ray and the last Buyids in Kuzestān, Fārs, and Iraq, until an exasperated Ṭoḡrīl Beg finally extinguished independent Kākuyid rule in Isfahan in 1050-51 (Ebn al-Aṭir (Beirut) IX, pp. 562-63; Bosworth, “Dailamīs,” p. 84).

On Moḥammad’s death, his eldest son Abu Maṣṣur Farāmorz secured the allegiance of the Kākuyid troops in Isfahan and succeeded to his father’s position there, whilst his brother Abu Kālijār Garšāsp remained as his subordinate in western Jebāl at Hamadān, Borujerd, and Nehāvand. Abu Maṣṣur nevertheless had to secure his position in Isfahan against other ambitious members of the family, notably his younger brother Abu Ḥarb, who tried to involve the Buyid amir in Fārs, Abu Kālijār ‘Emād-al-Dīn, but who had finally to take a lesser role as governor in Naṭanz for Abu Maṣṣur (Ebn al-Aṭir (Beirut) IX, pp. 495-96; Bosworth, “Dailamīs,” p. 81).

The great threat to the continued existence of the Kākuyids was that of the Saljuqs, who had seized Ray in 1041-42. In the next year, Ṭoḡrīl Beg came to Ray and made it his capital for the next nine years. As soon as he arrived



there, he sent an expedition against Isfahan to secure Abu Maṣṣūr's allegiance as a Saljuq tributary, and the latter's coins minted at Isfahan in 1042-43 show Ṭoḡrīl as the suzerain (Miles, "The Coinage of the Kākwayhid Dynasty," pp. 97-99, 102), though his allegiance over the next years was to waver between that to the Saljuqs and that to the Buyid Abu Kālijār 'Emād-al-Din. He had already had a rather mysterious connection with Ṭoḡrīl, since the Ghaznavid historian Beyhaqī records that he was present with the Saljuq chiefs on the battlefield of [Dandānqān](#) in 1040 when the Ghaznavids suffered a disastrous defeat that lost them Khorasan; Ṭoḡrīl had commended Abu Maṣṣūr for having endured many troubles and had granted him Ray and Isfahan; the background of this event is unknown (Beyhaqī, ed. Fayyāz, pp. 842-43).

Hamadān still remained in Abu Kālijār Garšāsp's hands, and he tried to hold on there with support from the Buyids and an alliance with the 'Annāzids. But the Turkmens of Ebrāhim Ināl, Ṭoḡrīl's half-brother, were now raiding as far as Kurdistan and Lorestān, and Hamadān passed definitively under Saljuq control, with Abu Kālijār's last fortress, Kankāvar, surrendering to the Saljuqs in 1047 (Ebn al-Aṭir (Beirut) IX, pp. 526, 537-40). Abu Kālijār spent the last years of his life in exile amongst the Buyids and, unlike his brother, was never reconciled to the Saljuqs. At one point he was in touch with the Ghaznavid Sultan Mawdud b. Mas'ud, who was trying to organize an anti-Saljuq coalition in Persia, but until his death in 1052-52 he served as governor of Kuzestān for the Buyid Pulād Sotun (Ebn al-Aṭir (Beirut) IX, pp. 558, 580; Bosworth, "Dailamīs," pp. 82-83).

Abu Maṣṣūr Farāmorz was as restive under Saljuq supremacy as his brother, and like him, endeavored to play off the Saljuqs and Buyids against each other. When Ṭoḡrīl returned to Khorasan in 1045-46, he submitted to the now nearer ruler, Abu Kālijār 'Emād-al-Din, and, in the face of the Turkmen threat, a general peace was arranged between the Buyids and the local rulers of Jebāl, the Kākuyids and the 'Annāzids. But Ṭoḡrīl re-appeared in 1046-47 and besieged Isfahan; Abu Maṣṣūr had in the end to give in and resume his tributary status (Ebn al-Aṭir (Beirut) IX, p. 534). On the evidence of his coins, he seems to have remained generally faithful to this arrangement for the remaining five years of his rule (Miles, *loc. cit.*), but Ṭoḡrīl cannot have felt able to rely on him, and in 1050 he again besieged Isfahan. After a year, the city surrendered; its people were favorably treated by Ṭoḡrīl, who razed part of the walls and transferred his capital thither from Ray. His Turkmen troops were given land grants (*eqṭā*) in the region, but to compensate for the loss of



his ancestral territories, Abu Maṣṣur was granted the two towns of Abarquh and Yazd in northern Fārs (Ebn al-Aṭir (Beirut) IX, pp. 562-63; Bosworth, “Dailamīs,” pp. 83-84).

The final phase of Kākuyid history now begins, with their epigoni ruling as petty lords for some ninety years. Abarquh and Yazd may have passed under Kākuyid control as part of ‘Alā’-al-Dawla Moḥammad’s conquests of 1030, but we have hardly any information on subsequent Kākuyid rule in Abarquh, and it may be that at some subsequent point it was quietly resumed by the Saljuqs. Somewhat more is known about Yazd at this time, thanks to the lively tradition there of composing local histories, even though none of these dates from before Timurid times. The odd items of information in them about the later Kākuyids are of value given the dearth of information in the general chronicles of the period. Even so, it is not possible to construct a reliable chronology of the governors in Yazd. The date of Abu Maṣṣur’s death may have been shortly after 1063, but it is unrecorded. Coins are of no help, since the last extant coin of Abu Maṣṣur dates from 440/1048-49, and it is probable that the later governors did not enjoy the right of minting gold and silver coinage (Miles, loc. cit.).

The Kākuyids seem to have lived in Yazd quietly and peacefully, in amity with the Saljuqs. Abu Maṣṣur was part of the delegation sent by ʿŤoḡrīl to Baghdad to negotiate a marriage alliance for him with the caliph Qā’em’s daughter. His son and successor in Yazd, Mo’ayyed-al-Dawla or ‘Alā’-al-Dawla ‘Ali was high in the favor of Malek Šāh. The Kākuyids’ social status, as scions of a noble Deylamite house, was clearly high at the Saljuq court, and the family regularly intermarried with the Saljuqs: ‘Alā’-al-Dawla ‘Ali married Čaḡrī Beg’s daughter Arslān Kātun after her first husband, the caliph Qā’em, died in 1075.

This last Kākuyid is one of the very few later ones whose death date, 1095, is known with any certainty; he supported the claims of Tutuš b. Alp Arslān in his revolt against Sultan Berk-Yaruq, and was killed in battle at Ray. His son ‘Alā’-al-Dawla ‘Azod- al-Din Abu Kālijār Garšāsp (II) married the sister of Sultans Moḥammad b. Malek Šāh and Sanjar, and fought in Moḥammad’s army against the Mazyadids of Ḥella in Iraq. He incurred the suspicion of Maḥmud b. Moḥammad and was removed from his governorship by the sultan and imprisoned. However, he escaped and sought Sanjar’s protection, and was one of the five kings said to have fought in Sanjar’s army when the latter clashed with Maḥmud near Sāva in 1119; after this he was presumably restored to Yazd. The Kākuyids disappear as such from historical mention



after the death of Garšāsp II at Sanjar's side in the battle of the Qatvān steppe with the Qara Kītay in 1141, but one of Garšāsp II's daughters married Rokn-al-Din Sām, the Turkish Atabeg entrusted by the Saljuq sultan with their care, so that one may say that the Kākuyids were transformed into the ensuing line of Atabegs, which was to last until Il-khanid times (see [ATĀBAKĀN-E YAZD](#), and on the last decades of the Kākuyids in Yazd, Bosworth, "Dailamīs," pp. 84-92).

Even at the outset, the Kākuyids were by no means uncouth barbarians from the Deylam mountains. 'Alā'-al-Dawla Moḥammad gave shelter to Avicenna; it was for that amir that Avicenna composed his Persian Encyclopaedia of the Sciences, the *Dāneš-nāma-ye 'alā'i*, and it was on a journey from Isfahan to Hamadān with his patron that the great scientist died (see [AVICENNA. xi. Persian works](#)). The later Kākuyids had leisure to cultivate the arts of peace, and their little court at Yazd seems to have become a lively cultural center. The historian of Kerman, Afzal-al-Din, states that 'Alā'-al-Dawla 'Ali encouraged the most eminent men of Khorasan and Iraq to come to his court, and his patronage of the great Saljuq poet Mo'ezzi (d. ca. 1125-27) is the subject of an anecdote in Neẓāmi 'Aruzi's *Čahār maqāla*; certainly, Mo'ezzi's *Divān* contains three odes dedicated to the amir (Bosworth, "Dailamīs," pp. 81, 86-87). The local histories of Yazd make much mention of the buildings, irrigation works, and other charitable activities of the Kākuyids and their consorts there. *Qanat*âs were dug, so that, despite the town's proximity to the Great Desert, agriculture flourished, and mosques, madrasas, and mausoleums as well as stronger and more elaborate walls for the town, with their four gates, were constructed (*ibid.*, pp. 89-94, citing the *Tāriḳ-e jadid-e Yazd*).

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(C. Edmund Bosworth)

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