



MOSAFERIDS

MOSAFERIDS (also Sallarids or Kangarids; this last form is more probable than that of Langarids; see Kasravi, pp. 36-37), a dynasty of Deylamite origin that ruled in northwestern Iran in the 4th-5th/10th-11th centuries. Its original center of power was at Šamirān in the district of Ṭārom on the middle course of the [Safidrud river](#) in the region of Deylam, but it subsequently extended its authority over a large part of northwestern Iran, comprising parts of [Azarbaijan](#), [Arrān](#), and eastern [Armenia](#). Its rise and florescence during the 4th/10th century and the first sixty years or so of the 5th/11th century form part of what Vladimir Minorsky called the “Deylami interlude” of medieval Islamic Iranian history (see also [BUYIDS](#) and [JOSTANIDS](#)). The name of the father of the founder of the dynasty, Moḥammad b. Mosāfer, is probably an Arabcization of the Persian name Asfār or Asvār (cf. Mas‘udi, secs. 3587-89).

Moḥammad b. Mosāfer, the eponym of the dynasty, was connected by marriage with the Jostanids of Rudbār (he had married the daughter of Jostan III), and it seems to have been this close family connection that brought into Mosaferid usage characteristic names of the Jostanid dynasty, such as Jostān, Vahsudān, and Marzbān. In 307/919-20 Moḥammad (not Aḥmad as in Ebn al-Atīr, VIII, p. 103) killed the Jostanid ‘Ali b. Vahsudān in Qazvin, which thereafter reduced the Jostanids to the status of local lords in Rudbār. Moḥammad made his capital at Šamirān, whose fine buildings and flourishing state under his rule were admired by the traveler Abu Dolaf Mes‘ar Ḳazraji (p. 5; tr., pp. 34-35). But in 330/941 two of Moḥammad’s sons deposed him, after which the dynasty split into two branches (Kasravi, pp. 38-40; Monajjem-bāši,



in Minorsky, 1953, pp. 160-61).

The elder son, Vahsudān, retained the ancestral lands around Šamirān and Ṭārom, but both he and the other son, Marzbān (I), became embroiled with the rising power of the Buyids. In 335/946-47, Rokn-al-Dawla Ḥasan b. Buya (q.v.), the ruler in Jebāl, occupied Ray and founded the northern amirate of the family. He threatened to expand into northwestern Iran, and three years later he defeated and captured Marzbān near Qazvin, which enabled him to move into southern Azarbaijan. In 379/989-90, Rokn al-Dawla's son Fakr-al-Dawla 'Ali captured Šamirān from Vahsudān's branch of the Mosaferids, holding it till his death in 387/997, but under the weaker rule of Faḡr al-Dawla's son and successor Majd-al-Dawla Rostam, the Mosaferid Ebrāhim (II) b. Marzbān (II) regained control there and was able temporarily to expand southwards into Jebāl as far as Zanjān, Abhar, and Sohravard (Kasravi, pp. 40-46; Monajjem-bāši, in Minorsky, 1953, pp. 162-65).

However, the Mosaferids had now come under increasing pressure from the expansionist ambitions of a line of Kurdized Arabs, the Rawwadids of Tabriz in Azarbaijan. In 369/979 or shortly thereafter Ebrāhim (I) b. Marzbān (I) had lost most of the Mosaferid lands in Azarbaijan to the Rawwadid Abu'l-Hayjā' Ḥosayn b. Moḥammad, and soon afterwards the Rawwadid amir also took over the Mosaferid possessions in eastern Armenia (Kasravi, pp. 108-9).

The Mosaferids of Vahsudān's branch held on to Ṭārom, but the last decades of the dynasty are obscure. The Ghaznavid Sultan [Maḥmud b. Sebüktegin](#), after capturing Ray in 420/1029, sent against Ṭārom "a descendant of the King of Deylam," possibly a Jostanid, and then Maḥmud's son Mas'ud marched against Ṭārom in person and captured Ebrāhim (II) b. Marzbān (II) (Monajjem-bāši, in Minorsky, pp. 165-66; Nāẓim, pp. 83-84). However, Ṭārom was apparently soon back in Mosaferid hands. When the Saljuq Ṭoğrel Beg moved westwards through northern Iran in 434/1042-43, the "Sallār of Ṭārom" submitted to him and paid tribute of 100,000 dinars (Monajjem-bāši, in Minorsky, 1953, pp. 165-66; Ebn al-Aṭir, IX, pp. 508-9). The traveler Nāṣer-e Ḳosrow, who passed through Deylam in 438/1046 and visited Šamirān, praised the justice and security prevailing in the lands of Jostān Ebrāhim, who calls himself the "Marzbān of Deylam" (*Safar-nāma*, p. 5, tr. p. 4). In 454/1062, just before his death, Ṭoğrel again went to Šamirān and exacted tribute from its lord, Mosāfer b. Ebrāhim (Ebn al-Aṭir, X, p. 24), but thereafter the sources are silent on the Mosaferids, and it is likely that their line was extinguished by the rising power of the Isma'ilis of [Alamut](#). The Mosaferids do not seem ever to have minted



coins of their own.

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