



'ABD-AL-'AZĪZ B. NAḌR MOḤAMMAD

'ABD-AL-'AZĪZ B. NAḌR MOḤAMMAD, Toghay-Timurid (Janid) dynast of the Uzbeks, r. 1057-91/1647-80 in Bokhara. His father held Balk and Badaḵṣān, while Naḍr's elder brother, Emām-qolī, was khan at Bokhara (1020-51/1611-41). Together they maintained Uzbek independence against the advance of Safavid power in Khorasan under Shah 'Abbās I. Emām-qolī's diplomacy, and perhaps Naḍr's claim to descent from Imam 'Alī al-Reza (through his mother), helped alleviate Safavid-Uzbek hostility. The Persians were able to advance to the south, expelling the Mughals from Kandahār (1031/1622), and the Uzbeks also advanced to make an attempt on Kabul (1037/1628).

After Naḍr expelled his brother from Transoxania, his lack of political skill provoked reactions from K̄vārazm and the Mughals and internal rebellions as well. 'Abd-al-'Azīz was sent north of the Oxus to suppress rebellion, but instead he proclaimed himself khan of Bokhara and also seized Samarqand. Naḍr's other sons rebelled, and the father, in Balk, was obliged to request Mughal assistance. Shah Jahān ostensibly agreed; he had regained Kandahār in 1047/1638, and reconquest of the Timurid lands of Transoxania would be prestigious and further strengthen his position against the Safavids. The Mughal army, led by prince Morād, occupied Badaḵṣān and attacked Balk (1056/1646). Naḍr fled for refuge to Shah 'Abbās II, while the Uzbeks rallied under 'Abd-al-'Azīz. Morād withdrew from Balk before winter fell, and when



Prince Awrangzēb advanced in 1057/1647, he met stiff Uzbek resistance before regaining Balk. ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz crossed the Oxus with his forces and prevented any advance farther north. Naḍr had meanwhile secured Safavid support and returned, and Awrangzēb found it expedient to return Balk and Badaḵṣān to him. Naḍr’s rule was short; under pressure from ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz in Bokhara, he abdicated in favor of Sobḥān-qolī b. Naḍr. He set out for the holy cities but died en route (1060/1650).

The Mughal failure and the loss of Kandahār in 1059/1649 increased the importance of the Uzbeks, and the Mughals sought closer relations with ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz. Safavid Persia, in reply, encouraged Abu’l-Ġāzī (khan of Kīva and father-in-law of Sobḥān-qolī) to press ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz with border raids. ‘Abbās II skillfully weaned the Uzbeks away from support for either Mughals or Ottomans. Isolated and harassed, ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz abdicated in favor of Sobḥān-qolī (1091/1680). On pilgrimage he was hospitably received by ‘Abbās II; he died at the age of 74 and was buried near Naḍr and Emām-qolī at Medina.

A ruthless enemy and a skilled tactician and diplomatist, ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz was well respected in the major capitals of Istanbul, Isfahan, Kīva, and Delhi. Rough in appearance and of heavy frame, he was a cultured man with a fondness for devotional poetry. Chroniclers of the Toghay-Timurids record anecdotes of his generosity toward poets and other artists.

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