



## 'ABD-AL-LAṬĪF MĪRZĀ

'**ABD-AL-LAṬĪF MĪRZĀ**, SULTAN, Timurid ruler in Samarqand from Ramazān, 853/October, 1449 to 26 Rabī I 854/8 May 1450. He was the son of Uluḡ Beg (q.v.) and Roqyā Kātūn Arolat (*Mo'ezz al-ansāb*, fol. 140b.) but was raised at his grandfather Šāhroḡ's court in Herat according to Timurid custom. Rivalries with his cousin 'Alā'-al-dawla forced him to return to his father's court in Samarqand in 1442-42, but he was brought back to Herat by his grandmother **Gōhar Šād Āgā**. He accompanied Šāhroḡ on his last campaign in western Iran, and after the latter's death in Ray (850/1447) he was asked by Gōhar Šād to lead the army (*īl o olūs*) back to Khorasan. This appointment apparently was intended only to guarantee a safe return to Herat and did not imply the right or claim to central rule. 'Abd-al-Laṭīf quickly sent word to his father Uluḡ Beg as the legitimate successor to Šāhroḡ, while Gōhar Šād dispatched a messenger to her choice, 'Alā'-al-dawla in Herat. Another cousin, Abu'l-Qāsem Bābor (825-58/1422-54), left the army and advanced to Khorasan; his claim was supported by the powerful amir Hendūka (*Maṭla'-e sa'dayn* II, pp. 883f.; *Ḥabīb al-sīār* [Tehran] III, pp. 636-39).

'Abd-al-Laṭīf took Gōhar Šād and her relatives into custody on the march to join his father. Uluḡ Beg had left Samarqand in order to suppress several uprisings and was not in time to meet 'Abd-al-Laṭīf and the rest of the army in northern Khorasan. 'Alā'-al-dawla, hearing of Gōhar Šād's detention, sent a force against 'Abd-al-Laṭīf which defeated him near Nišāpūr (13 Šafar 851/20 April 1447). The old empress was freed, and 'Abd-al-Laṭīf was imprisoned. But 'Alā'-al-dawla sought an arrangement with the approaching Uluḡ Beg and set



‘Abd-al-Laṭīf free. Uluḡ Beg installed his son as governor of Balk and himself retreated towards Samarqand. Meanwhile Abu’l-Qāsem Bābor and ‘Alā’-al-dawla made peace, freeing ‘Alā’-al-dawla to defend his claim to paramount rule. He attacked ‘Abd-al-Laṭīf twice during the winter of 851-52/1447-48; Uluḡ Beg supported ‘Abd-al-Laṭīf, defeated ‘Alā’-al-dawla at Tarnāb, and occupied Herat and northern Khorasan. He sent ‘Abd-al-Laṭīf to Bestām, apparently against Abu’l-Qāsem Bābor, but his son was not able to stand against Bābor and fled back to Nišāpūr; he was then ordered to Mašhad due to an accusation of mutiny which proved unfounded. Uluḡ Beg returned to Herat to subdue the revolt of the Turkoman Mīrzā Yār ‘Alī in Ramaẓān, 852/November, 1448, and then proceeded to Transoxania. ‘Abd-al-Laṭīf could neither hold Mašhad nor suppress Yār ‘Alī, and he left Herat only a fortnight after his father. The Timurid dominion south of the Oxus remained independent from Samarqand until Abū Sa‘īd’s reconquest of Herat (863/1458).

‘Abd-al-Laṭīf was ordered to stay in his fief, Balk. The sources enumerate instances of his father’s neglect and humiliating treatment to explain ‘Abd-al-Laṭīf’s rebellion early in 853/spring, 1449. There seems to have been disagreement regarding the collection of custom duties (*tamḡā*) and regarding the ruler’s interference in the finances of the princes. Uluḡ Beg’s difficulties in his struggle for general recognition must have formed an added inducement. The Iranian sources, focusing on Herat, charge ‘Abd-al-Laṭīf with previous ethical lapses, when he was responsible for the retreat of Šāhroḡ’s army, and they accuse him of failure to wage the necessary struggle against centrifugal forces (*Ḥabīb al-sīār* III, p. 637, IV, pp. 27, 32, 42; *Rawẓat al-ṣafā* VI, p. 734). When Uluḡ Beg was concentrating his forces for subduing Khorasan, ‘Abd-al-Laṭīf abolished the custom taxes on the trade route to India, causing a serious loss of revenues, and gathered an army against Uluḡ Beg. The two armies met on the Oxus. There were many deserters on Uluḡ Beg’s side, and the news of unrest in Samarqand forced him to withdraw. After a final battle near Samarqand, Uluḡ Beg was refused shelter in the citadel of Samarqand or in Šāhroḡīya and had to submit to ‘Abd-al-Laṭīf, who had entered Samarqand (*Ḥabīb al-sīār* IV, pp. 30-34). ‘Abd-al-Laṭīf had his father sentenced to death (8 Ramaẓān 853/25 October 1449) and killed his own brother, ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz (actions condemned by most sources, except Ḥasan Rūmlū, pp. 294f.).

There seem to be no reports preserved on his six month’s rule in Samarqand, except for the remark that his rule was immediately contested by Abū Sa‘īd, till the conspiracy of notables and clan chiefs that led to his murder in the city on



26 Rabī I 854/8 May 1450 (*Ḥabīb al-sīār* IV, pp. 42-43; *Rawzat al-ṣafā* VI, p. 726). Two sons of his, Aḥmad and Moḥammad Jūkī, escaped in the disorders and were not persecuted by his successors, ‘Abdallāh b. Ebrāhīm and Abū Sa‘īd, until they opposed the latter near Balk in 861/1457, when Aḥmad was killed (*Maṭla‘-e sa‘dayn* II, p. 1146). Moḥammad Jūkī revolted again in Šāhroḳīya, where he was captured after a one year siege in 866-67/1462-63 or 867-68/1462-63 and kept as a prisoner in the fortress of Ektīār-al-dīn, where he later died (*Maṭla‘-e sa‘dayn* II, p. 1263-78; *Ḥabīb al-sīār* IV, p. 82; *Rawzat al-ṣafā* VI, pp. 816, 836).

‘Abd-al-Laṭīf is reported to have been educated in sciences and general learning in the same manner as his father Uluḡ Beg. But, since he was raised at the court of Herat, he may have retained fewer Mongol traditions than his father. A suggested depiction of this ruler is the figure of Ḳosrow in ‘Alī Šīr Navā‘ī’s poem “Farhād o Šīrīn” (E. E. Bertel’s, *Navoi i Dzhami*, pp. 154f.). There is a preserved letter by ‘Abd-al-Laṭīf dated Jomādā I, 849/August, 1445, addressed to the Ottoman Sultan Meḥmed II (Ferīdūn, *Monša‘āt*, Istanbul, 1274/1857-58, pp. 228f.; ‘A. Navā‘ī, *Asnād o mokātabāt-e tāriḳī*, Tehran, 1341 Š./1962, pp. 273-75).

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