



AḤMAD, NEZĀM-AL-DIN

AḤMAD, NEZĀM-AL-DIN b. Neẓām-al-Din Shaikh Maḥmud, vizier and amir under the Timurids (d. 912/1507). Both his maternal uncle, K̄vāja Šams-al-Din Moḥammad b. K̄vāja Sayyedi Aḥmad Širāzi, and his father, Mawlānā Neẓām-al-Din Shaikh Maḥmud, worked in the service of the Timurids. His father had served until his death as the vizier and counselor (*mošir*) of various governors in the province of Balḵ. When Badiʿ-al-Zamān b. Ḥosayn Mirzā Bayqara became governor of Balḵ, Aḥmad Neẓām-al-Din acquired the office of his vizier and deputy. In the year 903/1496, when Sultan Ḥosayn Mirzā put his rebellious son to flight at the battle of Pol-e čerāg, and then proceeded to Balḵ, Aḥmad Neẓām-al-Din was provided with a position at the Sultan's court. He accompanied him to Herat to take up his duties, but after only a few days he resigned and returned to Balḵ. In the year 904/1498, Badiʿ-al-Zamān was again appointed as governor of Balḵ, and once again he appointed Aḥmad as his vizier, before subsequently promoting him to the rank of emir.

Aḥmad therefore wielded considerable influence in Balḵ for about five years, during which time he collaborated with the famous amir, 'Omar Beg. In the argument between Badiʿ-al-Zamān Mirzā and his father Sultan Ḥosayn, 'Omar Beg often sided with the latter. The consequent clash between Badiʿ-al-Zamān and 'Omar Beg in 909/1503 resulted in his incarceration in the fortress of Šebarḡān (Širḡān). Since Aḥmad Neẓām al-Din was a close friend of Omar Beg, his position also began to come under threat. However, he continued to work in Badiʿ-al-Zamān's service, and was appointed governor of the province of Šebarḡān, where his just actions are reported to have earned him the respect



of the local population.

When the Uzbeks began to lay siege to the fortress of Šebarġān, Aḥmad managed at first to prevent a conquest by means of various ploys. However in the year 912/1506, he decided to give up Šebarġān and flee from the advancing Uzbek leader Šaybāni Khan. Once the whole of Khorasan was subsequently conquered by the Uzbeks, Aḥmad offered his services to the newly-appointed governor of Balk, Qanbar Beg. Unfortunately, the latter remembered the resistance that Aḥmad had put up against the Uzbeks at Šebarġān, and executed him.

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