



## 'ALĀ'-AL-DAWLA, ROKN-AL-DĪN MĪRZĀ

'ALĀ'-AL-DAWLA, ROKN-AL-DĪN MĪRZĀ B. BĀYSONQOR B. ŠĀHROḠ, Timurid prince (820-65/1417-60). A great-grandson of the conqueror Tīmūr, 'Alā'-al-dawla was born in Herat during the reign of ŠāhroḠ b. Tīmūr in 820/1417 to Jān Malek Āḡā, the daughter of a Timurid officer, Amīr Čolpān, and ŠāhroḠ's son Bāysonqor (Ḥāfez-e Abrū, *Zobdat al-tawāriḡ-e Bāysonqorī*, fols. 537a-538a; K̄vāfi, *Moǰmal-e Faṣiḡi* III, pp. 229-30; *Mo'ezz al-ansāb*, fols. 136b, 1436-44b). The care of the young prince was entrusted to his grandmother Gowhar Šād Āḡā, the influential wife of ŠāhroḠ. He soon became her favorite grandson (*Mo'ezz al-ansāb*, fol. 144b; Samarqandī, *Maṭla' al-sa'dayn*, p. 759). Upon the death of Bāysonqor in 837/1433, 'Alā'-al-dawla was awarded his father's post as *amīr-e dīvān* and allowed to collect the revenues of certain provinces assigned in *soyūrḡāl* (charitable trust) to Bāysonqor (*Yarlīḡāt va maktūbāt*, fols. 37a-40a; Samarqandī, p. 664; Tehrānī, *Ketāb-e dīārbakrīya*, p. 316). Between the years 837/1433 and 850/1466 'Alā'-al-dawla witnessed the births of two sons, Bāysonqor and Sultan Ebrāhīm in 838/1435 and 843/1440 respectively (Samarqandī, pp. 677, 727-28), and participated in ŠāhroḠ's third campaign to Azarbaijan in 838-40/1434-36 against the Qarā Qoyunlū Turkmans (Samarqandī, p. 691). Like many of his peers, he also indulged in banqueting and wining (Samarqandī, pp. 724, 728, 740), though it is open to question whether or not his ensuing political failures resulted from an excessive devotion to the pursuit of pleasure and a concomitant neglect of military affairs, as alleged by K̄vāndamīr (*Ḥabīb al-sīar* IV, p. 19). When ŠāhroḠ became



seriously ill in 848/1444-45, Gowhar Šād Āgā managed to convince a group of officers to swear allegiance to ‘Alā’-al-dawla (Samarqandī, p. 838). Two years later in 850/1446, as a recovered but aged Šāhroḳ prepared to take the field against his rebellious grandson Sultan Moḥammad b. Bāysonqor in Persian ‘Erāq, he appointed ‘Alā’-al-dawla his deputy in the capital, giving him control of the imperial treasury as well (Samarqandī, pp. 863, 882, 886). Thus, when Šāhroḳ died in Ray in Du’l-ḥejja, 850/March, 1447, ‘Alā’-al-dawla acquired both the necessary position and the material means to proclaim himself sultan in Herat. Arresting his closest rival, his cousin ‘Abd-al-Laṭīf b. Uluḡ Beg, ‘Alā’-al-dawla quickly concluded treaties with his uncle Uluḡ Beg, governor of Samarqand, and his half brother Abu’l-Qāsem Bābor in Māzandarān. Relations with his uncle rapidly deteriorated, however, and Uluḡ Beg crushed ‘Alā’-al-dawla in a battle at Tarnāb about 80 kilometers from Herat in early 852/spring, 1448, driving his nephew from Šāhroḳ’s capital after a reign of less than one year (Samarqandī, pp. 887ff.). Following this setback, ‘Alā’-al-dawla never really recovered his former preeminence and spent the next several years either in the humiliation of captivity or in continual search for allies to help him regain the kingdom. Despite such adverse circumstances, ‘Alā’-al-dawla profited from the succession struggles among the Timurid princes, especially those involving his half brothers Sultan Moḥammad and Abu’l-Qāsem Bābor; he was able to reoccupy Herat briefly on two separate occasions in 854/1450 and again in 862/1458 (Yazdī, *Jāme’ al-tawārīḳ-e Ḥasanī*, pp. 805-06; Samarqandī, pp. 1001-02, 1157-64; Aḥmad b. Ḥosayn b. ‘Alī, *Tārīḳ-ejadīd-e Yazd*, pp. 259-61). Encouraged by the Turkman ruler Jahānšāh Qarā Qoyunlū, ‘Alā’-al-dawla, together with his supporters, confronted the most formidable of the Timurid epigones, Abū Sa’īd, a grandson of Mīrānšāh b. Tīmūr, near Saraḳs in spring, 1459. Once again, however, he was decisively defeated and forced to abandon all claims to the patrimony of Tīmūr and Šāhroḳ (Samarqandī, pp. 1189ff.). He died a frustrated exile in the Caspian province of Rostamdār in 865/1460 and was buried in the tomb complex of his grandmother Gowhar Šād in Herat (Samarqandī, p. 1231).



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