



ĠĪĀṬ-AL-DĪN NAQQĀŠ

ĠĪĀṬ-AL-DĪN NAQQĀŠ, a painter (*naqqāš*) active in Herat in about 822-30/1419-30, where he was in the employ of the Timurid Bāysonġor b. Šāhroġ. No Timurid author provides any personal details about his life, nor are his other names recorded. His fame derives from a *rūz-nāma* (diary) that he kept during a trip to the Ming court in China as one of Bāysonġor's envoys in a group that numbered more than 400 people, including 200 representing Šāhroġ and 150 sponsored by Bāysonġor (Ḥāfez-e Abrū, II, p. 818-19; Maitre, p. 18). During the interval between the party's departure from Herat on 6 Du'l-qa'da 822/24 November 1419 and its return on 11 Ramažān 825/29 August 1422, ĠĪĀṬ-al-DĪn kept a record of points of interest along the route, the places and buildings they saw, the organization of cities, the power of rulers, and systems of government and administration that they encountered (Ḥāfez-e Abrū, pp. 817-64). His vivid and circumstantial discussion of the manner in which the Chinese authorities treated the Timurid envoys, providing them with food, lodging, transportation, and even clothing, supplements the more bureaucratic Chinese sources on exchanges with foreign envoys and merchants (Ḥāfez-e Abrū, pp. 822-31; Maitra, pp. 27-23; Serruys, pp. 373-75).

ĠĪĀṬ-al-DĪn's comments have been utilized both by art historians concerned with the relation of Timurid art to that of China and by historians studying foreign relations of the Ming dynasty, particularly the formal exchanges of envoys and gifts sponsored by the Ming emperors known as the "Tribute System," by which foreigners who brought horses or other exotic goods to China were both lavishly entertained and given gifts in return, primarily silks



and cash. Both official envoys and the merchants who often accompanied them were also permitted to engage in trade in China's otherwise restricted markets (Ḥāfeẓ-e Abrū, pp. 839-43; Maitra, pp. 59-65). Prior to the critical publication of Ḥāfeẓ-e Abrū's text in 1993, scholars had access to ĠĪĀṬ-AL-DĪN's report primarily through three excerpted editions or translations. The first, published at Paris in 1843, forms part of Étienne Marc Quatremère's edition and translation of 'Abd-al-Razzāq Samarqandī's *Maṭla'-e sa'dayn*. The second, published at Lahore in 1934 by K. M. Maitra, is an edition and translation of the version contained in one manuscript of Ḥāfeẓ-e Abrū's *Zobdat al-tawārīk*. The third, published in 1989, is a translation by Wheeler M. Thackston based on the versions contained in Mīrkvānd's *Rawzat al-ṣafā* and Kvāndamīr's *Ḥabīb al-sīar* (IV, pp. 634-47).

Some modern authors have confused this ĠĪĀṬ-AL-DĪN with another Timurid painter, namely ĠĪĀṬ-AL-DĪN PĪR AḤMAD ZARKŪB TABRĪZĪ, mentioned by the 16th century author DŪST MOḤAMMAD, but such an equation is impossible because PĪR AḤMAD is said to have arrived in Herat only after the death of BĀYSONĠOR (836/1433), i.e., more than a decade after ĠĪĀṬ-AL-DĪN NAQQĀŠ's trip to China (Stchoukine, pp. 14-17; Karīmzāda, I, pp. 415-17). More plausibly, ĠĪĀṬ-AL-DĪN has been linked to a painter of the same name mentioned in a document of about 833/1430, who is adding the finishing touches to paintings in two manuscripts being prepared in BĀYSONĠOR's library (Thackston, p. 323). Although it is possible that ĠĪĀṬ-AL-DĪN's experiences on his trip to China may have affected either the content or the manner of his painting, there is, at present, no way to document such a result, because no works signed by him appear to have survived.

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