



ĠĪĀṬ BEG, 'E'TEMĀD-AL-DAWLA

ĠĪĀṬ BEG (Ġiāt-al-Dīn Moḥammad Tehrānī), 'E'TEMĀD-AL-DAWLA, prime minister of the Mughal emperor Jahāngīr and father of the emperor's wife, Nūr Jahān. He was the younger of the two sons of K̄vāja Moḥammad-Šarīf Hejrī, a poet and minister of Šaraf-al-Dīn Moḥammad Khan and his son Tātār Solṭān, the governor (*beglarbegī*) of Khorasan. Moḥammad-Šarīf later joined the court of Shah Ṭahmāsb, where he was first made minister of Yazd, Abarqūh, and Biābānak for seven years and then minister of Isfahan, where he died in 984/1576-77. He belonged to a family of poets and high officials that included Amīn Rāzī, the author of *Haft eqlīm*. Ġiāt Beg's elder brother was the poet Moḥammad-Ṭāher Waṣlī (*Šafā, Adabīyāt V*, pp. 478-82).

After the death of his father, Ġiāt Beg lost favor in the court of Isfahan, and together with his family moved to India. After a difficult journey, during which his daughter Nūr Jahān was born, he was received by the emperor Akbar at Faṭḥpūr Sīkrī. He entered Akbar's service and, at the time of Akbar's death, had the rank of 700 and was in charge of the royal stores (*dīvān-e boyūtāt*). His wife, a daughter of a Safavid courtier, Mīrzā 'Alā'-al-Dawla Āqā Mollā, introduced into India the method of extracting rose perfume (*'aṭr-e jahāngīrī*; Janāngīr, pp. 153-54).

When Jahāngīr ascended the throne (20 Jomādā II 1014/2 November 1605), he raised Ġiāt Beg to the rank of 1,500 and appointed him vizier of half of the



empire, with the title of E'temād-al-Dawla (Jahāngīr, p. 14). A year later he was put in charge of Agra when Jahāngīr led a campaign against his rebellious son Ƙosrow. The struggle continued and in 1016/1607-8 Moḥammad-Šarīf, one of Ġiāt Beg's sons who had joined Ƙosrow, was put to death. This event coincided with the rebellion of Ġiāt Beg's son-in-law, Šīrafkan Khan 'Alīqolī Ostajlū, the husband of Nūr Jahān (Jahāngīr, pp. 65-66; *Ma'āṭer al-omarā'*, p. 129). Ġiāt Beg himself escaped serious suspicion, although for the next four years his status in court did not improve.

Ġiāt Beg's fortune changed when in 1020/1611 Jahāngīr married his daughter Nūr Jahān, who, in the later years of Jahāngīr's reign, became the *de facto* ruler of the empire (*Ma'āṭer al-omarā'*, p. 132). After the wedding, Ġiāt Beg was made the prime minister of the whole empire; he also received first the rank of 1,800, then 4,000 men and 3,000 horses, and in the Nowrūz of 1023/March-April 1614 of 5,000 men and 3,000 horses. A year later he had the rank of 6,000 men, when he was granted a standard and drums (*'alam wa naqqāra*), an honor reserved for high ranking princes (Jahāngīr, pp. 112, 114, 124, 148, 159).

Ġiāt Beg died near Kangra in 1031/1622 as the royal camp was moving towards its summer quarters in Kashmir. His body was taken back to Agra, where he was buried on the bank of Yamuna river.

Ġiāt Beg was known for his refined manners, his knowledge of literature, and his skill in calligraphy. In the words of *Ma'āṭer al-omarā'*, "he was always conscious of the future, self composed, and did not harbour grudges even against his enemies. He was not at all oppressive, and in his household there were no fetters, chains, and whips, nor words of abuse" (p. 131). His sons Ebrāhīm Khan Faṭḥ Jang, E'teqād Khan, and Abu'l-Ḥasan Āṣaf Khan achieved high ranks at the court of Shah Jahān, who was to marry Āṣaf Khan's daughter, Momtāz Maḥall, immortalized by her tomb, the Tāj Maḥall.

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