



PIR AḤMAD K̲vĀFI, ĠIĀṬ-AL-DIN

PIR AḤMAD K̲vĀFI, ĠIĀṬ-AL-DIN (d. 857/ 1453), Timurid vizier who served over thirty years under Šāhroḡ (r. 1409-47) and his successors until his death in 1453.

Pir Aḡmad K̲vĀfi b. Jalāl-al-Din Eshāq b. Majd-al-Din Moḡammad b. Fażl-Allāh came from K̲vāf, reportedly from a distinguished family, but we know nothing about his early career (Manz, p. 88; Sarafrāzi et al., p. 70). He was appointed to the *divān* (see [DIVĀN ii.](#)) in 1418, after the death of the chief vizier Faḡr-al-Din, who had brought the administration into chaos. The Timurid histories portray Pir Aḡmad K̲vĀfi as a responsible and competent vizier, in contrast to his predecessor (K̲vāndamir, pp. 347-54; ‘Aqili, pp. 336-43). His interest in correct procedure is shown by the production, on his orders, of an abridged manual of accounting to train finance officials (Subtelny, pp. 80-81).

Pir Aḡmad remained chief vizier for the rest of Šāhroḡ’s reign, serving along with a subordinate vizier. He was briefly dismissed in 1425-26 and in 1441 was threatened by a scandal over the taxes of *Jām* (q.v.), the site of an important shrine. A rising bureaucrat, Šams-al-Din Semnāni, implicated Pir Aḡmad’s subordinate vizier, ‘Ali Šaqāni, and brought to light mismanagement of taxes elsewhere. Šāhroḡ ordered an investigation by his *amir-al-omarā’* (q.v.), Firuzšāh, who was on bad terms with Pir Aḡmad; the investigation revealed further weaknesses in the *divān*. ‘Ali Šaqāni was dismissed and replaced by



Šams-al-Din, while Pir Aḥmad absented himself from the *divān* for several days. The same year, he is reported to have been punished at the instigation of troublemakers, perhaps a reference to this affair (Samarqandi, pp. 752-55; Faṣiḥ, III, p. 292).

When a succession struggle broke out at Šāhroḳ's death in 1447, Pir Aḥmad and Šams-al-Din went into the service of Uluḡ Beg's son 'Abd-al-Latif Mirzā (q.v.), but along with many emirs, soon left to serve 'Alā'-al Dawla b. Bāysonḡor (see 'ALĀ'-AL-DAWLA, ROKN-AL-DĪN MĪRZĀ) in Herat. In the spring of 1448, 'Alā'-al-Dawla appeared to be losing ground, and the viziers accompanied Šāhroḳ's widow Gowhar-Šād Āḡā (q.v.) and her relatives to join Solṭān Moḥammad b. Bāysonḡor (K̄vādamir, pp. 354-56; Samarqandi, pp. 883, 940). Pir Aḥmad became chief vizier under Solṭān Moḥammad, then left to perform the pilgrimage. On his return after the defeat and death of Solṭān Moḥammad, he offered his services to the victor, Abu'l Qāsem Bābur b. Bāysonḡor, but was imprisoned and tortured to extort money, which caused his death in 1453.

Pir Aḥmad's patronage shows his wealth and influence. He is known to have funded three buildings, one over the grave of Shaikh Zayn-al-Din K̄vāfi, where he was buried. Two buildings, built in 1444-45, have survived: a *madrassa* (q.v.) in K̄argerd, in K̄vāf, and a mausoleum for Shaikh Zayn-al-Din Tāybādi; both stand out for their size and the quality of design and workmanship (O'Kane, pp. 22, 86). He had an agent at the shrine of Aḥmad-e Jām (q.v.), and Yusof Ahl's collection of correspondence of the shaikhs of Jām, the *Farā'ed-e ḡiāṭi* is dedicated to him (Yusof Ahl, I, introd., p. 42; II, pp. 148-52).

Pir Aḥmad K̄vāfi did not bring his countrymen and relatives into the *divān*. The historian Faṣiḥ K̄vāfi was dismissed from the central *divān* shortly after Pir Aḥmad took over, and Pir Aḥmad's son, Majd-al-Din (q.v.), who served as chief vizier under Solṭān-Ḥosayn Bāyqarā (q.v.; 1469-1506), apparently began his career after Pir Aḥmad's death (Faṣiḥ, III, p. 235; K̄vādamir, p. 400).

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