



'ABD-AL-ḤAMĪD B. ABU'L-ḤADĪD

'ABD-AL-ḤAMĪD B. ABU'L-ḤADĪD, 'EZZ-AL-DĪN ABŪ ḤĀMED B. HEBATALLĀH B. MOḤAMMAD B. MOḤAMMAD B. AL-ḤOSAYN AL-MADĀ'ENĪ, Mu'tazilite scholar and man of letters. He was born in Madā'en on 1 Du'l-ḥeġġa 586/30 December 1190; his family was Shafe'ite, his father a judge. 'Abd-al-Ḥamīd came to Baghdad at an early age, for he mentions his presence as a boy (*ḡolām*) at a social gathering in the house of the librarian of the Neẓāmīya college there. This probably occurred while his elder brother, Abu'l-Barakāt Moḥammad (d. 598/1201), was scribe of the college endowments (*kāteb al-woqūf*). 'Abd-al-Ḥamīd evidently received his higher education in Baghdad. He studied language and grammar with Abu'l-Ḳayr Moṣaddeq b. Šabīb Vāseṭī (d. 605/1208), whom he mentions as teaching him in 603/1206-07. His teacher of speculative theology (*kalām*) was the Hanafite scholar Yūsuf b. Esmā'īl Lamḡānī (d. 606/1209), whom he describes as a staunch Mu'tazilite, preferring 'Alī over all other Companions of the Prophet (in accordance with the doctrine of the Baghdad Mu'tazilite school). An important figure in 'Abd-al-Ḥamīd's formation was Abū Ja'far Yaḥyā b. Moḥammad b. Abū Zayd, *naqīb* of Baṣra, an 'Alid with whom he read extensively and whose views he frequently mentions in his *Šarḥ nahj al-balāḡa*. Abū Ja'far is described as mildly pro-'Alid but no Imamite; he held unbiased views and did not repudiate the Companions. 'Abd-al-Ḥamīd mentions the years 605/1208-09, 610/1213-14, and 611/1214-15 for their reading together. He also refers to his acquaintance with many other 'Alids, including the prominent Imamite *šarīf*s FakĀ²kār b. Ma'add Mūsavī (d.



630/1233) and his brother Moḥammad, Sunnite scholars such as the Hanbalites Ḡolām Ebn al-Monā and Ebn ‘Ālīa and the Shafe‘ite traditionist and historian Ebn al-Najjār (d. 643/1241-42) and ‘Alī b. Yaḥyā b. Beṭrīq Ḥellī (d. 642/1244-45); ‘Abd-al-Ḥamīd refers to the latter as his friend (*ṣadīq*).

Nothing is known about ‘Abd-al-Ḥamīd’s early career. Though he addressed the caliph Nāṣer in *al-Qaṣā’ed al-sab‘ al-‘alawīyāt*, composed in 611/1214-15 in Madā’en, there is no evidence that he held any official position under him or under his successor, Zāher. Only under the caliph Mostanṣer (623-40/1226-42), on whose order he wrote the eulogies *al-Mostanṣerīyāt* and for whose library he produced *al-Falak al-dā’er*, did he rise to high public office. His brother, the Shafe‘ite Ash‘arite *qāzī* and ‘*adl* Movaffaq-al-dīn Abu’l-Ma‘ālī Qāsem, appears more prominently in the chronicles than he and at times acted as his sponsor in official circles. In 627/1230 ‘Abd-al-Ḥamīd addressed a congratulatory *qaṣīda* to the vizier Šaraf-al-dīn Šarābī. According to Ebn al-Fovaṭī, ‘Abd-al-Ḥamīd was first appointed secretary (*kāteb*) in the office of protocol (*dār al-tašrīfāt*), then in 629/1231-32 was transferred to the treasury (*maḳzan*), and then to the *dīwān al-ḳelāfa*. He was in this last office, according to his own testimony, in 632/1234-35 under the vizier Nāṣer-al-dīn Ebn al-Nāqed and in 633/1236, when he wrote *al-Falak al-dā’er*. Later he was dismissed, but in Šafar, 642/July, 1244, under the caliph Mosta‘sem, he was appointed auditor (*mošref*) of the province of Ḥella. Thereafter he held positions of intendant (*ḳvā’ja*) of the amir ‘Alā’-al-dīn Ṭabars, inspector (*nāzer*) of the ‘Azodī hospital, and an unspecified “positron of financial trust” (*amāna?*). Between 1 Raġab 644/12 November 1246 and 29 Šafar 649/23 May 1251, he composed his monumental *Šarḥ nahj al-balāġa*; he dedicated it to the Shi‘ite vizier Ebn al-‘Alqamī, to whom he and his brother had close ties. The two brothers survived the Mongol conquest of Baghdad in Moḥarram, 656/January, 1258, in the house of this vizier. Naṣer-al-dīn Ṭūsī then put ‘Abd-al-Ḥamīd, together with his brother, in charge of the libraries of Baghdad. According to another report, after the Mongol conquest ‘Abd-al-Ḥamīd was appointed secretary of the *salla* (the archives of the *dīwān al-zemām*). He died in Jomādā II, 656/January, 1258.

Of ‘Abd-al-Ḥamīd’s works, the following have been published or are known to be extant in manuscript. 1. *Šarḥ nahj al-balāġa* is a commentary in twenty volumes on *Nahj al-balāġa* (q.v.), the collection of speeches, letters, and sayings of ‘Alī made by the Šarīf Rāzī. It deals in great detail with grammatical, lexicographical, literary, theological, and historical topics and is particularly valuable for its extensive quotations from lost works, many of them



concerning the history of the early caliphate. 2. *Al-Falak al-dā'er* is a critical commentary on *al-Maṭal al-sā'er*, the famous work of literary criticism by Zīā' al-dīn Ebn al-Aṭīr, a contemporary of Ebn Abu'l-Ḥadīd. The latter received a copy of *al-Maṭal al-sā'er* on 1 Du'l-ḥejja 633/6 August 1236 and completed his commentary within fifteen days. Included in it is an analysis of Motanabbī's poems for Sayf-al-dawla, the *Sayfiyāt*, which 'Abd-al-Ḥamīd had previously begun writing as a separate book. 3. *Al-Qaṣā'ed al-sab' al-'alawīyāt* comprises seven poems in praise of 'Alī. Its description of the qualities and feats of 'Alī comes close, in some places, to the views of the *golāt*. These poems became popular among the Shi'ites, and several commentaries have been written on them. 4. A versification of Ṭa'lab's *K. Al-Faṣīḥ*, a work on linguistics; 'Abd-al-Ḥamīd completed his version in twenty-four hours. 5. A commentary on the *orjūza* of Ebn Sīnā. In O. Ergin, *Ibni Sina Bibliografyasi*, Istanbul, 1956, p. 97, the contents are described as on logic; Brockelmann, *GAL S. I*, p. 823, is evidently mistaken in listing the work as a commentary on Ebn Sīnā's medical poem, *al-Manzūma fi'l-ṭebb*. A commentary on Faḵr-al-dīn Rāzī's *al-Āyāt al-bayyenāt*, ascribed to 'Abd-al-Ḥamīd by Brockelmann (*ibid.*, I, p. 923), does not exist (see P. Voorhoeve, *Handlist of Arabic Manuscripts in the Library of the University of Leiden*, Leiden, 1957, p. 32).

In addition, the following titles are mentioned in the sources and in 'Abd-al-Ḥamīd's extant works. 6. *Al-'Abqarī al-ḥassān*, an anthology of poetry, theology, history, including selections from the compiler's own poetry and prose. 7. *Al-E'tebār*, a critical commentary on the *K. al-Darī'a fi oṣūl al-ṣarī'a* of the Imamite Šarīf Mortazā, on *oṣūl al-feqh*. 8. *Enteqād al-mostaṣfā*, a critical commentary on Ġazālī's *K. al-Mostaṣfā*, on *oṣūl al-feqh*. 9. *Naqz al-maḥṣūl*, a critical commentary of Faḵr-al-dīn Rāzī's *K. al-Maḥṣūl*, on *oṣūl al-feqh*. 10. *Šarḥ al-moḥaṣṣal*, a critical commentary on the *K. al-Moḥaṣṣal* of Rāzī on theological and philosophical doctrines. 11. *Šarḥ moškelāt al-ḡorar*, a commentary on the *K. Ḡorar al-adella* of the Mu'tazilite scholar Abu'l-Ḥosayn Bašrī on theology. 12. *Šarḥ al-Yāqūt*, a commentary on the *K. al-Yāqūt* of the Imamite Ebrāhīm b. Nawbakṭ, on theology. 13. *Naqz al-sofyānīya*, a refutation on the *K. al-Sofyānīya* of Jāḥeẓ, in which the latter sets forth the views of the supporters of Mo'āwīya. 14. Glosses (*ḥavāšī*) on the *K. al-Moḥaṣṣal* by Zamaḵšarī on grammar. 15. *Al-Wešāḥ fi'l-'elm al-abī*. 16. *Dīwān* of his poetry.

Because of his pro-'Alid leanings, Ebn Abu'l-Ḥadīd has often been considered a Shi'ite or a convert to Shi'ism. There is, however, no evidence that he ever belonged to any Shi'ite community. Brought up in a Shafe'ite family, he



evidently adopted Mu‘tazilite doctrine in his youth and upheld it in his writings throughout his life. His “Seven ‘Alid poems,” composed late in his youth, in which he extolled ‘Alī in extravagant terms, must be viewed as expressing temporary sentiments rather than firm convictions. In his *Šarḥ nahj al-balāġa* he expresses his support of the thesis of the Mu‘tazilite school of Baghdad that ‘Alī was the most excellent of the Companions of the Prophet. At the same time he rejects the Shi‘ite doctrine that ‘Alī was appointed by Moḥammad as his successor and refutes the Shi‘ite criticism of the conduct of the caliphs preceding ‘Alī. He has also been qualified as a “Jāḥeẓī Mu‘tazilite.” This description is justifiable only in respect to his literary talents and interests, which he shared with Jāḥeẓ. In theological doctrine he had no specific affinities with this early Mu‘tazilite scholar but evidently stood close to the school of Abu’l-Ḥosayn Baṣrī (d. 436/1044), which was, apart from the school of Abū Hāšem Jobbā‘ī, the only Mu‘tazilite *maḏhab* surviving in his time.

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