



‘ABD-AL-ḤAMID B. AḤMAD B. ‘ABD-AL-ŞAMAD ŞIRĀZI

‘**ABD-AL-ḤAMID b. AḤMAD b. ‘ABD-AL-ŞAMAD ŞIRĀZI**, long-serving vizier to the Ghaznavid sultans Ebrāhim b. Mas‘ud (r. 451-92/1059-99) and his son Mas‘ud III (r. 492-508/1199-1215). He stemmed from a family with long tradition of service to the sultans, being the son of the vizier of Mas‘ud (I) b. Maḥmud and the latter’s son Mawdud (see [AḤMAD ŞIRAZI](#)), and thus exemplifies the feeling of the age that the arcana of administrative expertise could be handed down within certain families.

There is a paucity of dates for his life, but he is said to have served Ebrāhim for twenty-two years until that sultan died, which, counting back from the death-date of 492/1099, would place the start of ‘Abd-al-Ḥamid’s ministry for Ebrāhim in 470/1077-78; he then went on to serve Mas‘ud for sixteen years, i.e., till 508/1114-15. Nāşer-al-Din Kermāni (pp. 46-47, also largely repeated in ‘Aqili, pp. 195-96; cf. Bosworth, pp. 71-72, 86) states that he died a martyr at the opening of Bahrām Shah’s reign, i.e., soon after 512/1118; it may be that he had been identified too closely with the brief reign of the previous sultan, Arslān Shah or Malek Arslān b. Mas‘ud III, and was killed in a purge of the latter’s former supporters, although he is not recorded as having served Arslān Shah as his vizier (Bosworth, pp. 91-92, 105).

The sources for the actual events of this period are sparse, and they have nothing specific about his career as a vizier. However, its very length surely



indicates more than average competence, and he was highly praised for this and for his learning by contemporary poets like Sayyed Ḥasan, *Abu'l-Faraj Runi*, and *Mas'ud-e Sa'd-e Salmān*; the latter addressed poems to him from prison seeking his intercession with the sultan. It also appears that the celebrated translator into elegant Persian prose of Ebn al-Moqaffa's Arabic version of *Kalila wa Demna*, Abu'l-Ma'ali Naṣr or Naṣr-Allāh b. Moḥammad b. 'Abd-al-Ḥamid Širāzi, later vizier to the penultimate Ghaznavid sultan Ḳosraw Shah b. Bahrām Shah, was his grandson (Bosworth, p. 72).

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