



'ABD-AL-ŞAMAD ҲAMADĀNĪ

'ABD-AL-ŞAMAD ҲAMADĀNĪ, FAḲR-AL-DĪN, (d. 1216/1801), *faqīh*, author, and well-known Sufi master of the Ne'matallāhī order. Sources do not give the date of his birth; they only mention that he was over sixty years of age when he died. In the holy cities of Najaf and Karbalā he studied the traditional religious sciences with the leading *mojtaheds* of the time, Moḥammad-Bāqer Behbahānī, Sayyed Mahdī Baḥr-al-'olūm, and Sayyed 'Alī Şāḥeb, and received the license of *ej̄tehād*. However, dissatisfied with what he and fellow Sufis in general termed exoteric knowledge of the religious law (*şarī'a*), as taught and practiced by the *mojtaheds*, he sought the spiritual guidance of the Ne'matallāhī masters Nūr-'Alīşāh and Sayyed Ma'şūm-'Alīşāh. Upon the latter's recommendation he continued his initiation with Ḥosayn-'Alīşāh in Isfahan. Having successfully completed all the required stages back in Karbalā, he attained high rank in the order, teaching and guiding his adepts and enjoying a large following. One of his most devote disciples was [Mīrzā Āqāsī](#), who was to become Moḥammad Shah Qajar's chief minister and who gave his master's name to one of the king's sons.

Sufis were periodically exposed to the persecuting policies of the '*olamā*', who considered themselves as the sole exponents and guardians of religion and religious laws. Generally the Sufis argued against the functions of *ej̄tehād* and *taqlīd* (following the religious directives by a *mojtahed*); the latter practice, by the second half of the 18th century was declared incumbent upon all believers regardless of their social standing. The battle between the Sufis and the '*olamā*' reached its climax in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, when Āqā



Moḥammad-Bāqer Behbahānī and his son Āqā Moḥammad-‘Alī Behbahānī ruthlessly implemented their view of orthodoxy. Prestigious Sufi leaders were constantly harassed; many were killed by mobs, who acted on their religious leaders’ instructions. ‘Abd-al-Şamad Hamadānī himself fell victim to persecution. Not only was he a well-established leader of the Ne‘matallāhī order, which figured at the top of the list of the ‘*olamā*’s black list, but he also in his writings and teachings continued the struggle against the institutionalized official form of Shi‘ism. Ironically, ‘Abd-al-Şamad lost his life at the hands of an even more merciless foe, the puritanical anti-Sufi and anti-Shi‘i Sunni Wahhābīs of Arabia. In 1798 they raided the Shi‘ite holy shrines in southern Iraq. ‘Abd-al-Şamad died in the sack of Karbalā.

‘Abd-al-Şamad is the author of a few works, of which *Baḥr al-ma‘āref* on mysticism is probably the best known.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Moḥammad-Ma‘şūm Şirāzī, *Ṭarā‘eq al-ḥaqā‘eq*, ed. M. J. Maḥjūb, Tehran, 1345 Š./1966, II, p. 332; III, pp. 199, 211, 212, 213.

Ḥājj Zayn-al-‘ābedīn Şīrvānī, *Riāz al-sīāḥa*, Tehran, 1339 Š./1960, pp. 721-22.

Rezā-qolī Hedāyat, *Riāz al-‘ārefīn*, Tehran, 1316 Š./1937, p. 465.

Mo‘allem Ḥabībābādī, *Makārem al-āṭār* II, Isfahan, 1342 Š./1953, pp. 600-03.