



'ABD-AL-ŞAMAD KHAN

'**ABD-AL-ŞAMAD KHAN** DELĪR JANG, SAYF-AL-DAWLA, 17th-18th century north Indian politician, administrator, and patron of the arts. His real name was K̄vāja 'Abd-al-Raḥīm b. 'Abd-al-Karīm. He belonged to a family from Samarqand which claimed descent from the illustrious 15th century Naqšbandī saint K̄vāja Aḥrār. Born in Agra during a short visit by his parents to India, he was taken back to Samarqand where he was educated and brought up. After joining the service of the Janid governor Sobḥān-qolī Khan, he rose to the position of Šayḵ-al-eslām. He left his native land, however, and came to India during the reign of Awrangzēb (*Asrār-e Şamadī*, intro.). He began his imperial career as *manşabdār* (salaried official) with the rank of commander of 400. A subsequent marriage to the sister of Moḥammad Amīn Khan, who belonged to the powerful Turanian faction at court, added to his prestige and partially helped him in his successful career. He was also a protégé of Du'l-faḡār Khan, the leader of the Iranian faction, and used both connections to his own advantage. After having held several earlier posts, he was appointed governor of Lahore under Farroḵ Sīar in 1125/1713, with a *manşab* of 5,000. He also received the honorific title of Delīr Jang, to which was added the further title Sayf-al-dawla at the time of his promotion to a *manşab* of 7,000 and 7,000 horse in 1127/1715. Ten years later he was appointed governor of Multan, a post he held during 1137-39/1724-26. He died on 28 Rabī' I 1150/26 July 1737 and was buried in Lahore (*Ma'āṭer al-omarā'* I, pp. 71-73).

'Abd-al-Şamad Khan was a shrewd politician, an efficient administrator, and a generous patron. As governor of Lahore (Panjab) and then Multan, he put



down revolts, especially those of the Sikh guru Banda (in 1127/1715) and the Afghan Ҳosayn Khan Qaşūrī (for details, see *Asrār-e Şamadī*, pp. 5-55). He was thus able to restore complete peace in the Panjab, Kashmir, and adjoining regions. He liberally patronized writers and artists at his court. He was devout yet intolerant, at once religious and secular in his outlook. During the reign of Moḥammad Shah, for instance, he opposed the reimposition of the *jezya* by Neẓām-al-molk.

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