



ABŪ BAKR ḤAŞĪRĪ

ABŪ BAKR ḤAŞĪRĪ (ḶĀJA ABŪ BAKR ‘ABDALLĀH B. YŪSOF SĪSTĀNĪ), Shafe‘ite *faqīh* (jurist) and Ghaznavid official, d. 424/1033. According to the poet Farroḳī he came from a well-reputed family in Sīstān, and his father was a man of learning. Abū Bakr strove to implement the religious policy of Sultan Maḥmūd, persecuting heretics, Qarmaṭīs, and the impious. Perhaps because of his religiosity, he was employed by Maḥmūd to deliver messages to the vizier Aḥmad b. Ḥasan Maymandī concerning the latter’s accumulation of wealth. After Maymandī’s dismissal and the confiscation of his fortune (416/1025-26), Maḥmūd chose Abū Bakr to administer a public oath in which Maymandī would swear he had retained nothing.

Sultan Maḥmūd granted special favors to Abū Bakr Ḥaṣīrī; one was the privilege of possessing an elephant and a howdah. His influence as sultan’s companion was such that Farroḳī could relate how one night a group of prisoners was released because of Abū Bakr’s mediation. He was assigned important political responsibilities; for example, when war broke out between Qadr Khan, the governor of Turkestan, and ‘Alī Tegīn, and the latter gained control of Samarqand, Qadr Khan asked for aid from Maḥmūd. Maḥmūd, however, was preoccupied with leading an army against Somnath in India. When he returned from Somnath in 417, he sent Abū Bakr Ḥaṣīrī with a large army to relieve Qadr Khan. ‘Alī Tegīn was defeated and forced to make peace. Farroḳī apparently refers to this event in one of his *qaṣīdas*, where he praises Abū Bakr as “both a man of the book and a man of the sword.”

At the end of his reign, when Maḥmūd turned against the crown prince,



Mas'ūd, and gave his preference to another son, Moḥammad, Abū Bakr Ḥaṣīrī adhered to Mas'ūd's party. At the time, this partisanship was disadvantageous and caused Abū Bakr many hardships; hence, after gaining power, Mas'ūd always kept Abū Bakr's loyalty in mind and considered him the most deserving of favor of all his father's companions.

After Maḥmūd's death in 421/1030, the nobles of the Ghaznavid court feared Mas'ūd's revenge; they removed Moḥammad from the throne after a brief reign and imprisoned him in the fortress Kūhtīz. When they wrote to Mas'ūd from Tegīnābād, asking forgiveness for having supported his brother and inviting him to Ğazna, they sent the letter by the hand of Abū Bakr, perhaps because Mas'ūd regarded him favorably. On 10 Šawwāl, Ḥaṣīrī and his companion, Mangītorāk, the brother of the *Ḥāḣeb-e Bozorg*, 'Alī Qarīb, were admitted into the presence of Mas'ūd at Herat; they congratulated him on his accession to the throne and presented the letter. Mas'ūd treated them kindly and presented Abū Bakr with a costly robe "such as those given to the kings' close companions." He mentioned Abū Bakr's previous services, and promised further benefits. During Mas'ūd's reign, Abū Bakr Ḥaṣīrī enjoyed the respect and special attention of the sultan. Ḥaṣīrī was able to maintain his position and reputation in a conflict with Maymandī (again vizier from 4 Šafar 422/31 January 1031) related by Bayhaqī, who lived near Ḥaṣīrī. Abū Bakr continued to be a respected companion in Mas'ūd's circle until his death at Bost on 7 Šafar 424/12 January 1033 (according to Bayhaqī).

Because of the honor that Abū Bakr commanded at the Ghaznavid court, and also, perhaps, because he came from the same province as Farroḣī, the poet praises him copiously in eleven *qaṣīdas* mentioning his learning and love of poetry, his munificence and generosity.

Abū Bakr's son, Abu'l-Qāsem Ebrāhīm Ḥaṣīrī, likewise rose in the Ghaznavid ranks and held high office during the reign of Maḥmūd. Bayhaqī, a friend of Abu'l-Qāsem, makes note of his wisdom. Abu'l-Qāsem was a supporter and a close companion of Mas'ūd. In 422/1030-31 he was sent on a mission to Kāšġar in Turkestan accompanied by the *qāzī* Abū Ṭāher 'Abdallāh b. Aḣmad Tabbānī. His object was to draw up a marriage contract between Qadr Khan's daughter (previously engaged to the sultan's brother, Moḥammad), and Mas'ūd. He also hoped to conclude a contract between a daughter of Boġra Tegīn and Abu'l-Faḣ Mawdūd, the son of Mas'ūd. Owing to the death of Qadr Khan, this mission took nearly four years. After Abu'l-Qāsem returned to court in 425/1033-34, he enjoyed Mas'ūd's kindness and generosity. Bayhaqī records the



happy conclusion of Abu'l-Qāsem Ḥaṣīrī's life: After he performed the pilgrimage, he retired from the government affairs, sought solitude, and devoted himself to works of charity.

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