



## BAHRĀM B. MARDĀNŠĀH

**BAHRĀM B. MARDĀNŠĀH**, a Zoroastrian priest (*mōbed*) of the town of Šāpūr in Fārs, mentioned in several Arabic and Persian sources as a translator of the *Xwadāy-nāmag* from Pahlavi into Arabic (Ḥamza, pp. 9, 23-24; Bīrūnī, *Āṭār-al-bāqīa*, p. 99; *Fehrest*, p. 245; “Moqaddama-ye qadīm-e Šāh-nāma,” in M. Qazvīnī, *Bīst maqāla* II, Tehran, 1332 Š./1953, pp. 55, 60; Baḷ’amī, *Tārīk*, 2nd ed., Tehran, 1353 Š./1974, p. 126; *Mojmal*, pp. 2, 21, 39, 58, 65, 83, 84).

Ḥamza gives the title of Bahrām’s translation as *Ketāb ta’rīk molūk Banī Sāsān* (History of the Sasanian kings). He states (p. 24) that Bahrām referred in it to the existence of numerous *Šāh-nāma* manuscripts and great differences between them, and consulted more than twenty manuscripts for his own translation. To judge from the quotations given by Ḥamza, Bīrūnī, and the compiler of the *Mojmal*, Bahrām’s translation differed greatly from Ebn al-Moqaffa’s lost Arabic version and from Ferdowsī’s *Šāh-nāma*. For example, in Bahrām’s book, Gayōmarṭ was the first man, not the first king. This suggests that Bahrām’s translation was based on the texts of the *Xwadāy-nāmag*, which, in some passages, closely followed the Avesta and must therefore have been compiled by Zoroastrian priests rather than court historians. The supposition is consistent with the report that Bahrām was himself a *mōbed*.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Given in the text. On the *Xwadāy-nāmag* see also M. Boyce, “Middle Persian Literature,” pp. 57-59.

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