



EBN MAFANA

EBN MAFANA, Abu Maṣṣur Bahrām b. Māfana (< *māh-panāh* “under the moon’s protection,” Justi, *Namenbuch*, p. 187), called in the sources al-ʿĀdel “the Just One,” vizier to the Buyid ruler of Fars and Khuzestan, ʿEmād-al-Din Abu Kālijār Marzobān (r. in Shiraz 415-40/1024-48; see [Buyids](#)).

Ebn Māfana was born at Kāzarun in 366/976-77 (Ebn al-Jawzi, VIII, p. 111; Ebn al-Aṭir, IX, p. 502). Details of his early life are lacking, but he presumably embarked on a secretarial career. He is mentioned as adviser to the vizier Ebn Makram during the succession struggle of 415/1024 when, after the death of Solṭān-al-Dawla b. Bahāʾ-al-Dawla, power at Shiraz was disputed between his son and eventual successor, Abu Kālijār, who had the support of the Deylami element of the Buyid forces there, and the latter’s uncle, Abu’l-Fawāres of Kermān, the preferred candidate of the Turks. During the conflict, Ebn Makram was killed, but Ebn Māfana escaped death and in 416/1025-26 became his successor in the vizierate to Abu Kālijār, acting thus till his death seventeen years later (Ebn al-Aṭir, IX, pp. 337-38).

During his tenure of office, Ebn Māfana showed skills as both an administrator and a military leader. The Ismaili *dāʿī* al-Moʿayyad fi’l-Din Širāzi (q.v.) was on good terms with him, and records Ebn Māfana’s concern for balancing the competing interests within Shiraz of the Deylamis and Turks and various religious groups, and his allowing especial freedom to Christians and Jews for the exercise of their faith (*Moḍakkarāt*, p. 26; Klemm, pp. 21-23); after Ebn Māfana’s death, conditions in Shiraz became more difficult and al-Moʿayyad had to leave the city (Klemm, p. 51). Ebn Māfana was also a highly competent



army commander. Thus in 421/1030 he was able to eject from Khuzestan Abu Kālījār's uncle Jalāl-al-Dawla of Baghdad after the latter had invaded and occupied the province (Ebn al-Aṭir, IX, p. 376). In 422/1031 he expelled from Kermān a Ghaznavid force which had temporarily occupied that province (Bayhaqi, ed. Fayyāz, pp. 554-57; Ebn al-Aṭir, IX, p. 414). In 429/1037-38 he intervened in Oman when a succession struggle arose amongst the local ruling family of Makramids, and then used the same army to occupy Baṣra in 431/1039-40 (Ebn al-Aṭir, IX, pp. 467-69).

Ebn Māfana died in 433/1041-42, leaving behind him a reputation for justice, probity and philanthropy; his death notices state that he founded a library at Firuzābād, stocking it with 7,000 volumes, including 4,000 folios (*waraqā*) in the hand of two of the sons of the celebrated 'Abbasid vizier and calligrapher, Ebn Moqla (Ebn al-Jawzi, VIII, p. 111; Ebn al-Aṭir, IX, p. 502).

Bibliography:

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