HIBATALLĀH MUḤAMMAD b. ‘Alī b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Muṭṭalib. Majd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī. Abū l-Ma‘ālī b. Abī Sa‘d, vizier, jurist and high dignitary during the reign of the ‘Abbāsid caliph al-Mustazhir bi‘l-lāh (487-512/1094-1118). According to most sources he was born in 440/1048-9 and died on 2 Shawwāl 503/24 April 1110. However, al-Dhahabi’s Ta’rikh features contradicting dates in its two entries for him. One indicates the above years but, according to the other notice Hibatallāh was born in 443/1051-2 and died confined to his house in 509/1115-6. Al-Dhahabi confirms this date in his Siyar. Hibatallāh’s nisba, al-Kirmānī, indicates that he came from a family of Iranian origins. He trained as a Shāfi‘ī jurist and was a respected memoriser of biographies, history and prophetic traditions, though not a prolific transmitter. Al-Ṣafadī quotes one of his aphorisms. He learned from ‘Abd al-Ṣamad b. al-Ma‘mūn, ʿĀlim b. Muḥammad b. al-Naqūr and Abū l-Ḥusayn Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. al-Muhtadī bi‘l-lāh. The latter taught also the prominent ṣaykh and Ṣūfī Abū Ya‘qūb al-Hamadānī. Described as generous, dutiful, clever, experienced and morally upright – hence his appellative majd al-dīn (glory of the faith) - it was thanks to the high ranking posts he occupied at the ‘Abbāsid court that he became renowned in Baghdād. As a skilful scribe, excelling in accountancy, administration and bookkeeping, he headed the office of control and audit during al-Muqtadī’s reign (467-78/1075-1094). Under al-Mustazhir, Hibatallāh continued in this role until he became vizier. Hibatallāh’s vizirate lasted somewhere between two and two and a half years. His position as vizier was conditioned by the power struggles that characterised al-Mustazhir’s reign. Under this caliph the office of vizier had remained the monopoly of the Banū Jahīr, with ‘Amīd al-Dawla b. Jahīr continuing in this role, having served two of al-Mustazhir’s predecessors. However, in Ramadān 493/July-August 1100 ‘Amīd al-Dawla was arrested and dismissed. In the meantime the Shī‘ī Mazyadid ruler of al-Ḥilla, Ṣadaqa (d.501/1107-8) rose to influence al-Mustazhir’s choice of viziers. Ṣadaqa had been involved in 500/1106-7 in the removal of al-Mustazhir’s vizier Zaʿīm al-Ru‘asā’ Abū l-Qāsim b. Jahīr, brother of ‘Amīd al-Dawla. It is at this junction that Hibatallāh became vizier in that same year. Ibn al-Athīr says in Muḥarram 501/August-September 1107 but lists the event in his entry for the year 500. He kept the post until Zaʿīm al-Ru‘asā’ was re-appointed to the vizirate by the caliph in 502/1108-9 to remain in office until his death in 507/1113-14. Though short, Hibatallāh’s vizirate was not uneventful. As a court insider, al-Bundārī mentions him as the source of an anecdote about an envoy of the Saljūq Sulṭān Muḥammad b. Malikshāh seeking information about Hārūn - al-Mustazhir’s brother - through the help of a court housekeeper. In Ramadān 501/April-May 1108 the caliph dismissed him following written instructions from the Saljūq Sulṭān. Hibatallāh was then re-appointed, again at the instigation of the Sulṭān, on condition that he would be just, would conduct himself properly and would not to employ dhimmīs. The discrimination against Christians and Jews during al-Mustazhir’s rule echoed policies already adopted during the reign of this caliph’s two predecessors. Upon being dismissed once and for all, according to some sources Hibatallāh fled the caliphal palace in secret with his children and sought refuge with Muḥammad b. Malikshāh. According to al-Ṣafadī, Hibatallāh’s daughter married Abū ‘Alī b. Ṣadaqa. It is possible that he was a member of Ṣadaqa’s Mazyadid family, in which case the twists in Hibatallāh’s career at the ‘Abbāsid court might have been also influenced by marriage.
alliance. Hibatallāh was buried in Baghdād in the Wardiyya cemetery by Bāb Abraz, the burial place of many persons of note.

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