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SONRA GELEN DOKÜMAN

al-Kundurī

Abū Naṣr Maṣṣūr b. Muḥammad **al-Kundurī** (d. Dhū l-Ḥijja 456/Nov.–Dec. 1064), also known by the honorific (*laqab*) ‘Amīd al-Mulk, was the most important vizier of the first Seljuk (Saljūq) sultan, Toghrīl Beg (r. 431–55/1040–63).

Al-Kundurī, born in around 415/1024, was from a family of *dihqāns* (landed gentry), possibly of Arab ancestry, from Kundur, a village east of Turshīz (modern Kāshmar), 165 kilometres south-west of Nīshāpūr. During his youth, he received an excellent education in Arabic and Persian and mastered the epistolary techniques (al-Bākhari, 2:145). In Nīshāpūr, he also heard *ḥadīths* from one of the greatest Shāfi‘ī traditionists, Abū Muḥammad al-Juwaynī (d. 448/1047), the father of Imām al-Ḥaramayn Abū l-Ma‘ālī al-Juwaynī (d. 478/1085) (al-Fārisī, 675).

When Nīshāpūr was definitively conquered by the Seljuk Turks in 431/1040, al-Kundurī was around sixteen years old and worked for the city *ra‘īs* (headman), Muwaffāq al-Baṣṭāmī (d. 440/1048–9), a Shāfi‘ī. After 434/1042–3, on al-Baṣṭāmī’s recommendation, al-Kundurī entered the

chancellery (*dīwān al-rasā’il*) of Toghrīl Beg, who needed “a secretary fluent in both Arabic and Persian” (al-Bundārī, 30; according to al-Bākhari, 2:142, al-Kundurī also knew Turkish). At an unknown date, he disobeyed an order during a mission to Khwārazm, which led to his castration. (The exact circumstances of this episode, for which several versions exist, are unclear; Halm, 211–2.) While Toghrīl Beg was busy conquering western and north-western Iran, al-Kundurī moved to Rayy, the de facto Seljuk capital. During that period, he became chancellor and was subsequently addressed as “*khwāja-yi ‘amīd*” (Halm, 213–4).

When al-Kundurī succeeded the vizier Nizām al-Mulk Dihistānī in Jumādā I 447/July–August 1055, the Seljuk state was at a turning point. Toghrīl Beg had established his supremacy over the Iranian plateau and was about to move on to do the same over central Iraq. Al-Kundurī accompanied him when he entered the ‘Abbāsīd capital, Baghdad, and deposed the last Būyīd king, al-Malik al-Raḥīm (r. 440–7/1048–55). Al-Kundurī took control of the administration of Iraq, appointing the former Būyīd vizier ‘Alā’