



‘ABD-AL-JABBĀR B. AḤMAD

‘**ABD-AL-JABBĀR** B. AḤMAD B. ‘**ABD-AL-JABBĀR** B. AḤMAD B. ḲALĪL B. ‘**ABDALLĀH** AL-HAMADĀNĪ AL-ASADĀBĀDĪ, ‘EMĀD-AL-DĪN ABU’L-ḤASAN, *qāzī al-qoḏāt* (chief judge) of Ray and the most prominent theologian of the late Mu‘tazilite school. He was born in Asadābād, southwest of Hamadān, probably between 320/932 and 325/937. His father was, according to Tawḥīdī, a peasant (*fallāḥ*; variant: *ḥallāḥ*, “cotton carder”). He heard Hadith in his home town from Zobayr b. ‘Abd-al-Vāḥed Asadābādī (d. 347/958-59), a renowned traditionist, and in Qazvīn from ‘Alī b. Ebrāhīm b. Salama al-Qaṭṭān (d. 345/956-57). With the latter he may also have studied Shafi‘ite *feqh*, in which, in any case he received a solid training. According to his own statements, he performed the pilgrimage to Mecca in 339/951 and in 340/951-52, heard Hadith in Hamadān and probably in Isfahan, where he also received traditions in 345/956-57 and 346/957-58. Later in 346 he went to Baṣra and heard Hadith from Abū Bakr Anbārī. His studies took a new direction as he joined the circle of the Mu‘tazilite theologian Abū Eshāq b. ‘Ayyāš, whom he may have met previously in ‘Askar Mokram. He stayed some time at that center of Mu‘tazilite learning, either shortly before or after coming to Baṣra, and he attended the lectures of the Mu‘tazilite scholar Abū Aḥmad b. Salama but disapproved of his strong bias against the school of Abū Hāšem Jobbā‘ī, to which Ebn ‘Ayyāš belonged. Statements in the sources that he previously had adhered to the Aṣḥ‘arite school must be viewed with reserve. More likely he was brought up on a traditionalist Shafi‘ite creed. At an unknown date he moved to Baghdad to continue his studies with Abū ‘Abdallāh Baṣrī, the most famous Mu‘tazilite scholar of the time. He was closely associated with Baṣrī for a long time and



later began to teach on his own and composed several works on theology and principles of jurisprudence (*oṣūl al-feqh*). In 360/970 he was in Rāmhormoz, another stronghold of Mu‘tazilism which he may have visited before, and began to dictate his monumental sum of theology, *al-Moġnī*, in the mosque of ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Abbās Rāmhormozī (a Mu‘tazilite magnate there). He mentions staying for some time in the *rebāṭ* built by Rāmhormozī, where he engaged in discussions with Mu‘tazilite colleagues. From Rāmhormoz he apparently went to Isfahan in order to join Ṣāḥeb b. ‘Abbād, then counselor of the Buyid Mo‘ayyed-al-dawla. Ebn ‘Abbād, himself an active champion of Mu‘tazilite doctrine, became a great admirer of ‘Abd-al-Jabbār. Shortly after Ebn ‘Abbād succeeded to the vizierate of Mo‘ayyed-al-dawla, he appointed ‘Abd-al-Jabbār, in Moḥarram, 667/August-September, 977, chief-judge of Ray with jurisdiction over northern Jebāl. Later his authority was extended over other provinces, including Gorgān, Ṭabarestān, and Hamadān. After the death of Ebn ‘Abbād in Ṣafar, 385/March, 995, ‘Abd-al-Jabbār, like most other protégés of the former vizier, was dismissed and his property confiscated. Hostile sources attribute his dismissal to his refusal to pray for Ebn ‘Abbād, as the latter had failed to display repentance before his death. ‘Abd-al-Jabbār remained in Ray and devoted the rest of his life fully to teaching. In 389/999 he passed through Baghdad on a pilgrimage to Mecca and was given a splendid reception by dignitaries and scholars. On his return he taught for some time in Baghdad and transmitted Hadith. In 409/1018-19 he taught in Qazvīn. He died in 415/1024-25 in Ray.

After the death of Abū ‘Abdallāh Baṣrī in 369/979, ‘Abd-al-Jabbār became the undisputed head of the Mo‘tazela. A prolific author and devoted teacher, he could count as his students virtually all the prominent Mu‘tazilite scholars of the following generation: Abū Rašīd Naysābūrī, Abu’l-Ḥosayn Baṣrī, Ebn Mattavayh, Abū Yūsuf Qazvīnī, the Imamite *ṣarīfs* Rażī and Mortazā, and the Caspian Zaydī imams Mo‘ayyad Boṭḥānī and Mahdī Ḥoqaynī. In the history of the Mu‘tazilite school he appears to be less an innovator than an elaborator of previous doctrine. Although he is considered a representative of the school of Abū Hāšem Jobbā’ī, his teaching generally appears to be a compromise between the doctrine of Abū Hāšem and that of his father, Abū ‘Alī Jobbā’ī. In his doctrine on the imamite he came to adopt, no doubt under Ebn ‘Abbād’s influence, progressively more pro-‘Alid views. While he had originally left the question of superior excellence undecided between Abū Bakr and ‘Alī, he later unconditionally affirmed the superiority of ‘Alī. In *al-Moġnī* he upheld the Mu‘tazilite requirements for the imamite against Shi‘ite doctrine and defended



the imamite of the four *rāšedūn* caliphs and the Omayyads ‘Omar b. ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz and Yazīd b. al-Valīd, traditionally recognized by Mu‘tazilite doctrine. But he also argued for the validity of the imamite of the ‘Alids Ḥasan, Ḥosayn, Zayd b. ‘Alī, Moḥammad al-Nafs al-Zakiya, and his brother Ebrāhīm, all recognized as imams by the Zaydīs.

The following of his works have been published: 1. *Motašābeh al-Qor’ān*, an exegetical work on the ambiguous (*motašābeh*) passages of the Qur’ān from the Mu‘tazilite point of view, composed between 360/970 and 380/990 (2 vols., ed. ‘Adnān Moḥammad Zarzūr, Cairo, 1969). 2. *Al-Moḡnī fī abwāb al-tawḥīd wa’l-‘adl*, a comprehensive exposition of Mu‘tazilite *kalām* begun in 360/970-71 and completed in 379-80. Of its twenty parts, fourteen have been recovered and edited (under the supervision of Ṭahā Ḥosayn, Cairo, 1960-65). 3. *Al-Moḡtaṣar fī oṣūl al-dīn*, written before 385/995 on the suggestion of Šāḥeb b. ‘Abbād as an introduction to *kalām* for an unnamed *šarīf*. It deals summarily with the same subjects as the *K. al-Moḡnī* and is similarly arranged (ed. Moḥammad ‘Emāra, *Rasā’el al-‘adl wa’l-tawḥīd*, Cairo, 1971, I, pp. 161-253). 4. *Tanzīh al-Qor’ān ‘an al-maṭā’en*, written after 380/990. In subject matter it is broader than his *Motašābeh al-Qor’ān*; it deals with all aspects of language, grammar, composition, and meaning in the Qur’ān which are subject to misunderstanding and detraction by critics (ed. Cairo, 1329/1911, and Beirut, 1967). 5. *Tatbīt dalā’el nobūwa nabīyenā Moḥammad*, written in 385/995. The book deals with the miraculous proofs of the prophethood of Moḥammad, especially his true prophecies, and contains polemical refutations of the claims of non-Muslim religion, Greek and Muslim philosophy, and Isma‘īli and Imamite Shi‘ism (ed. ‘Abd-al-Karīm ‘Oṭmān, Beirut, 1966). 6. *Faḏl al-e‘tezāl wa ṭabaqāt al-mo‘tazela*, composed at the request of K̄vārazmšāh Ma‘mūn (390-407/100-1017). The first part is a short apology for Mu‘tazilism and a refutation of its critics. The second part contains a history of Mu‘tazilite scholars in ten classes that formed the main source of the “Classes of the Mo‘tazela” of Ḥakīm Jošamī (d. 494/1101) and ultimately of those of Ebn al-Mortažā (d. 840/1437) (ed. Fo‘ād Sayyed, Tunis, 1393/1974).

Works based on works of ‘Abd-al-Jabbār are: 1. *Šarḥ al-oṣūl al-ḡamsa* by Aḥmad b. Abū Hāšem Ḥosaynī Qazvīnī, known as Mānakdīm (d. 425/1034), a Zaydī disciple of ‘Abd-al-Jabbār. The book is a commentary on a lost work of the same title which the *qāzī al-qoḏāt* had composed between 360/970 and 380/990. ‘Abd-al-Jabbār’s book was in turn a commentary on a brief explanation of the five principles of the Mo‘tazela entitled *al-oṣūl al-ḡamsa*



which is extant in manuscript (Vatican 989). Mānakdīm quotes ‘Abd-al-Jabbār’s *šarḥ* directly at times and generally appears to follow his text closely, though occasionally he criticizes him. In the section on the imamite he supports the Zaydī view against the Mu‘tazilite doctrine. The book has wrongly been published as ‘Abd-al-Jabbār’s work (ed. ‘Abd-al-Karīm ‘Oṭmān, Cairo, 1384/1965). 2. *Al-Majmū‘ fi’l-moḥiṭ be’l-taklīf* by Ḥasan b. Aḥmad b. Mattavayh (d. 469/1076), a student of ‘Abd-al-Jabbār. It is a commentary on the latter’s *al-Moḥiṭ be’l-taklīf*, a comprehensive sum of Mu‘tazilite theology composed after *al-Moḡnī* which appears to be lost. Ebn Mattavayh restates, discusses, and occasionally criticizes the argument of his teacher. The first part of the work has been edited (ed. J. J. Houben, Beirut, 1965; better text ed. ‘Omar al-Sayyed ‘Azmī, Cairo, 1965).

For other works of ‘Abd-al-Jabbār, see Sezgin, *GAS* I, pp. 624-26, and ‘Abd-al-Karīm ‘Oṭmān, *Qāzī al-qożāt ‘Abd-al-Jabbār*, Beirut, 1967, pp. 58-72.

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