



## ABŪ AḤMAD B. ABĪ BAKR KĀTEB

---

**ABŪ AḤMAD B. ABĪ BAKR B. ḤĀMED AL-KĀTEB**, poet and official of the Samanids, fl. first half of the 4th/10th century; his exact dates are unknown. His father, Abū Bakr, had been secretary to Amir Esmā'īl b. Aḥmad (279-95/892-907) and vizier to Aḥmad Esmā'īl (295-301/907-14) before the vizierate of Abū 'Abdallāh Jayhānī. Abū Aḥmad thought that the family traditions of official service plus his own accomplishments as a poet and stylist gave him a claim to the vizierate superior to Jayhānī's and Baḷ'amī's. He accordingly emulated the 'Abbasid poet Ebn Bassām 'Abartā'ī in satirizing all and sundry, including his own relations, but especially the two above-mentioned viziers. Bokhara accordingly became too hot for him, and he had to leave for Baghdad; but he subsequently returned and built up a circle of boon companions and literary men, including such well-known figures as the poets Abu'l-Ṭayyeb Ṭāherī and Abu'l-Ṭayyeb Moṣ'abī. He served as *'āmel* or local governor and tax collector of Herat, Pūšang, Bādġīs, and then of Nišāpūr before returning to Bokhara, where he apparently fell into straitened circumstances. He presumably died there. Ṭā'ālebī gives several specimens of his Arabic poetry; he states that he was a strong partisan of the modernist school of 'Abbasid poets (*al-šo'arā' al-moḥdaṭūn*), with a particularly strong partisanship for the poetry of the early 3rd/9th century 'Abbasid poet Moḥammad b. 'Abd-al-Raḥmān 'Aṭawī, to the point that Abū Aḥmad was given the nickname of 'Aṭawānī ("devotee of 'Aṭawī").



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

Ta'ālebī, *Yatīma* (Cairo) IV, pp. 64-69.

Idem., *Laṭā'ef al-ma'āref*, ed. I. Abyārī and H. K. Şayrafī, Cairo, 1960, pp. 50-53; tr. C. E. Bosworth, *The Book of Curious and Entertaining Information*, Edinburgh, 1968, pp. 65-66.

C. Barbier de Meynard, "Tableau littéraires du Khorassan et de la Transoxiane au IV<sup>e</sup> siècle de l'hégire," *JA* Ser. V, I, 1853, pp. 176-77.