



## ABŪ MOṬĪ' AL-BALĶĪ

**ABŪ MOṬĪ' AL-BALĶĪ**, AL-ḤAKAM B. 'ABDALLĀH B. SALAMA B. 'ABD-AL-RAḤMĀN, *faqīh*, judge, and traditionist, disciple of Abū Ḥanīfa, died 183/799 in Balk. Abū Moṭī' was a judge for sixteen years in his native Balk. He traveled to Baghdad several times and perhaps elsewhere, at least to Medina, Mecca, and Kūfa; for among the names of persons from whom he is said to have heard Traditions are those of three men who were to become eponyms of schools of Islamic law, Mālek b. Anas of Medina, Abū Ḥanīfa of Kūfa, and also Sofyān al-Tawrī of Kūfa (founder of a school of law, followed by Kufans and perhaps Iraqis in general, which endured several centuries). Abū Moṭī' was a man of unusual vigor and wide influence. His deep learning, perspicacious opinions, piety, and dignity drew to him many students and collectors of Hadith.

It appears that, as a disciple of Abū Ḥanīfa, Abū Moṭī' played a significant role in transmitting some of his teachings and opinions. Contemporary scholarship leans to the conclusion that, except for a letter Abū Ḥanīfa wrote to 'Oṭmān al-Baṭṭī, all the works attributed to Abū Ḥanīfa which do indeed contain his views were written by his followers. Abū Moṭī' probably transmitted a *Feqh al-akbar*, a discussion of theological views attributed to Abū Ḥanīfa which survives with a commentary wrongly attributed to Mātorīdī (printed as no. 1 in *Maǰmū' a šorūḥ al-Feqh al-akbar*, Hyderabad, 1321/1903). A *Feqh al-absaṭ* also exists, nearly identical in general content, stated to be the responses of Abū Ḥanīfa to questions on theology put to him by Abū Moṭī'.

The political and religious strife of his times are echoed in some negative opinions of his soundness as a relator of Traditions. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, for one,



is alleged to have said that Abū Moṭī' was a weak transmitter, because he used to say that paradise and hell were both created and would one day pass away, and he was therefore a Jahmī. He almost certainly did not hold such a heretical view, for the views of his group are explicitly opposed in the *Feqh al-absaṭ*. These hostile opinions, related by Kaṭīb Baḡdādī and Ḍahabī, represent the viewpoint of the Ahl al-Hadith. (A similar canard was told about Abū Ḥanīfa; see J. Schacht, "Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nu'mān," *EI* <sup>2</sup> I, pp. 123-24.) Others labeled Abū Moṭī' as one of the chief of the Morjē'a. This may have been close to the truth, since Abū Ḥanīfa was one of them (see *ibid.*, p. 123, for comment on the *Feqh al-absaṭ*). As a judge and *faqīh*, Abū Moṭī' is described as *baṣīr be'l-ra'y* (*Ta'riḡ Baḡdād* VIII, p. 223), apparently referring to his skill in reasoning and exercising *qīās* (analogy).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

See also Qoraṣī, *al-Jawāher al-moḏīya fī ṭabaqāt al-ḡanaḡīya* II, Hyderabad, 1332/1914, p. 266.

Ḍahabī, *Mīzān al-e'tedāl* I, Cairo, 1382/1963, pp. 574-75, no. 2181.

Sezgin, *GAS* I, p. 414.