



## ABŪ NAŞR MOSTAWFĪ

**ABŪ NAŞR MOSTAWFĪ EŞFAHĀNĪ** 'AZĪZ-AL-DĪN (or AL-'AZĪZ) AḤMAD B. AḤMAD B. MOḤAMMAD B. 'ABDALLĀH, 472-527/1079-80 to 1133, well-known official of the Saljuqs of Iraq. He began service in the central *dīvāns* late in the reign of Sultan Moḥammad (498-511/1105-18) as assistant to Kamāl-al-molk Somayramī who was *mošref-e mamālek* (chief financial inspector), then *mostawfī-e mamālek* (minister of finance), then vizier of Moḥammad's son Maḥmūd (511-25/1118-31). Abū Naşr, who had been young colleague of Somayramī in the *dīvān* of the Saljuq lady Gowhar Kātūn, reached real prominence as the new vizier's deputy. He was not averse to arranging his own further advancement and entered into an alliance with [Qewām-al-dīn Abu'l-Qāsem Dargazīnī](#), the *toḡrā'ī* (chancellor), whom he helped save when Somayramī planned to execute him.

When Somayramī was assassinated in 515/1121-22, Abū Naşr became *mostawfī* under the new vizier, Šams-al-molk 'Oṭmān b. Neẓām-al-molk. Although he exhibited great competence as *mostawfī*, he was involved in intrigues against Anūšervān b. Kāled, who was removed from the post of 'āreẓ (paymaster), and the vizier Šams-al-molk, whom he and Dargazīnī managed to have killed. His nephew 'Emād-al-dīn Eşfahānī (Bondārī, *Zobda*, p. 141) lays the blame on Dargazīnī for the vizier's death, but Ebn al-Aṭīr (X, p. 614) says that Abū Naşr made the suggestion to Maḥmūd (see Houtsma's preface to Bondārī, p. xxi, and 'A. Eqbāl, *Wezārat dar 'ahd-e salāṭīn-e bozorg-e saljūqī*, Tehran, 1338 Š./1959, pp. 265-70). Abū Naşr refused the offer of the vizierate itself; C. L. Klausner suggests this action marked the beginning of decline in the value of the office,



but S. Fairbanks disagrees (Klausner, p. 88; Fairbanks, p. 142; see bibliog.). Instead, Abū Naşr suggested his ally, Dargazīnī, and this proved his eventual undoing. Alarmed at the speculation and violence perpetrated by the new vizier, he went on the *ḥajj* in 517/1123-24 or 518/1124-25, then returned to resign his post as *mostawfī* and take charge of Maḥmūd's treasury and children at the latter's insistence. From that position over a period of three years he arranged Dargazīnī's dismissal and the subsequent installation of Anūšervān b. Kāled as vizier. Mild Anūšervān did not put Dargazīnī out of the way, however, and the latter was back in the vizierate in a year's time, probably with the support of his old benefactor, Sultan Sanjar. Abū Naşr held his own for a while, but Dargazīnī finally bribed Maḥmūd to arrest and imprison him at Takrīt (early 525/1131). After Maḥmūd's death and the installation of ʿOğrel by Sanjar, Dargazīnī used one of the signed blank orders which he had obtained from Sanjar (he had become vizier of both sultans) to order the death of Abū Naşr in 527/1132-33, according to 'Emād-al-dīn (Bondārī, *Zobda*, p. 168).

The fact that our major source, 'Emād-al-dīn, devotes so much space to the intrigues which brought his uncle down tends to obscure his positive achievements. He was greatly admired in his time for both his competence and his generosity (Ebn Kallekān [Beirut] I, pp. 188-90). He was regarded as vizier in fact if not in name, and his technical competence at the *mostawfī*'s craft is what set the envious Dargazīnī against him, according to Najm-al-dīn Qomī (anecdote in *Ta'riḳ al-wozarā'*, fols. 19a-20a; see Fairbanks, p. 112). He was responsible for training a generation of *mostawfīs*, as Fairbanks points out (pp. 113-18), and they dominated the position long after he was gone. 'Emād-al-dīn mentions his learning and his good works, such as a school for orphans and a field hospital.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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