



ABŪ RAŠĪD NĪSĀBŪRĪ

ABŪ RAŠĪD NĪSĀBŪRĪ, SA'ĪD B. MOḤAMMAD B. SA'ĪD B. ḤASAN B. ḤĀTEM, Mu'tazilite scholar. He is first mentioned as a theologian (*motakallem*) present at a literary disputation between Badī'-al-zamān Hamadānī and Abū Bakr Ḳvārazmī in Molqābād near Nīšāpūr in 383/993 (Yāqūt, *Odabā'* I, p. 105; Ebrāhīm Efendī Aḥdab, *Kašf al-ma'ānī wa'l-bayān 'an rasā'el Badī'-al-zamān*, Beirut, 1921, p. 69). Thus he was probably born not later than 360/970. At first he adhered to the Baghdad school of the Mo'tazela, i.e., the doctrine of Abu'l-Qāsem Ka'bī (d. 319/921), which was prevalent in Khorasan and Transoxania, and had a teaching circle in Nīšāpūr.

Abū Rašīd went to Ray, at a stage when he was already composing books, and studied with the Qāzī al-qozāt 'Abd-al-Jabbār (d. 415/1025), famous head of the Basran Mu'tazilite school. This was some time before the death of the vizier Šāḥeb b. 'Abbād in 385/995, since he is quoted as mentioning his own presence over a prolonged period at the receptions of the vizier, which were also attended by the Zaydī Imam Mo'ayyad Boḥḥānī (Moḥallī, *al-Ḥadā'eq al-wardīya*, mss., in the biography of Mo'ayyad). 'Abd-al-Jabbār honored him, evidently in recognition of his previous rank in scholarship, by addressing him, alone among his students, as "shaikh"; and he composed a book in answer to his numerous questions. Abū Rašīd now adopted the Basran doctrine of 'Abd-al-Jabbār. At the request of the latter, he wrote his *Dīvān al-oṣūl* as a general textbook on *kalām* to be read and commented upon in teaching sessions. Later he left for Nīšāpūr and on the way stayed some time in Gorgān. In the anti-Mu'tazilite atmosphere of Nīšāpūr under the reign of Maḥmūd of Ġazna, he



soon felt compelled to leave. He returned to Ray, probably still in the lifetime of ‘Abd-al-Jabbār, and was recognized there as his vicar and, after his death, as his successor as head of the Basran Mu‘tazilite school. He died in Ray at an unknown date.

Abū Rašīd is known to have written numerous theological works. His *Ketāb al-masā‘el fi’l-ḳelāf bayn al-Baṣrīyīn wa’l-Baġdādīyīn*, in which he supports Basran doctrine and refutes Abu’l-Qāsem Ka‘bī’s *Ketāb ‘oyūn al-masā‘el*, has been published (ed. M. Zīāda and R. al-Sayyed, Beirut, 1979; partial ed. and tr.: A. Biram, *Die atomistische Substanzlehre aus dem Buch der Streitfragen zwischen Basrensern und Bagdadensern*, Leiden, 1902; analysis of the whole work: M. Horten, *Die Philosophie des Abu Raschīd*, Bonn, 1910). In this book Abū Rašīd mentions the following titles of other works by him: *Ketāb al-joz’* on the atom; *Ketāb al-naqz ‘alā aṣḥāb al-ṭabā‘e’*, in which he defended the existence of the vacuum against the Aristotelian denial; *Ketāb al-taḍkera*; *Masā‘el al-ḳelāf baynanā wa bayn al-moṣabbaha wa’l-moḵbera wa’l-ḳawārej wa’l-morje’a*; *Zīādāt al-ṣarḥ*, a supercommentary to the commentary (*ṣarḥ*) of the Basran Mu‘tazilite Abū ‘Alī b. al-Ḳallād, completed by ‘Abd-al-Jabbār, on Ebn al-Ḳallād’s *Ketāb al-oṣūl*. A text edited by M. ‘A. Abū Rīda (*Fi’l-tawḥīd*, Cairo, 1969) and tentatively identified by him as part of Abū Rašīd’s *Dīwān al-masā‘el* is most likely a supercommentary of a later unknown author on Abū Rašīd’s *Zīādāt al-ṣarḥ*. Another section of the same work is preserved in ms. B.M. Or. 8613 (described by A. S. Tritton, “Some Mu‘tazilī Ideas about Religion,” *BSOAS* 14, 1952, pp. 612-22; for the identification see D. Gimaret, “Les *Uṣūl al-Ḥamsa* du Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Ġabbār et leur Commentaires,” *Annales Islamologiques* 15, 1979, pp. 72-73). A *Ketāb al-tanbīh* of Abū Rašīd is quoted by al-Ḥākem al-Joṣamī in his *Ketāb ṣarḥ ‘oyūn al-masā‘el*. The Šarīf al-Mortažā wrote a supplement to a book by him on the varieties of accidents (*Tatemma anwā‘ al-a‘rāz men jam‘ Abī Rašīd al-Nīsābūrī*; see Ebn Šahrāšūb, *Ma‘ālem al-‘olamā’*, ed. ‘A. Eqbāl, Tehran, 1353 Š./1934, p. 63). Abū Rašīd also transmitted Hadith. The renowned Mu‘tazilite traditionist Abū Sa‘d al-Sammām of Ray (d. 443-47/1051-56) related Traditions on his authority.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

Al-Ḥākem al-Jošamī, *Šarḥ al-‘oyūn*, in *Faḏl al-e‘tezāl wa ṭabaqāt al-Mo‘tazela*, ed. F. Sayyed, Tunis, 1974, pp. 368, 382f.

Ebn al-Mortažā, *Ṭabaqāt*, p. 116.

Lesān al-mīzān III, p. 42.

Sezgin, *GAS* I, pp. 626f.