



## ABŪ SAHL LAKŠAN

**ABŪ SAHL LAKŠAN**, full name K̄vĀJA ABŪ SAHL DABĪR ‘ABDALLĀH B. AĦMAD B. LAKŠAN, official under the Ghaznavid amirs Maĥmūd (388-421/998-1030) and Mas‘ūd (421-32/1031-41). The name Lakšan occurs with several variants in Bayhaqī, but the meter of Farroķī’s panegyrics establishes the vocalization (*Dīvān-e Farroķī Sīstānī*, ed. M. Dabīrsīāqī, 2nd ed., Tehran, 1349 Š./1969-70, pp. 247.2, 325.12). Cf. Sanskrit names with Lakṣana- as prior element in a compound.

Abū Sahl served as deputy (*kadkodā*) and agent (*pīškār*) of ‘Azod-al-dawla Amir Yūsuf b. Sabokteġīn, who was imprisoned in Mas‘ūd’s reign and died ca. 423/1032. Various fines were then imposed on Abū Sahl, but he emerged from his difficulties to be placed in charge of his native city, Bost (Bayhaqī, 2nd ed., p. 331). The poet Farroķī, who was also connected with Amir Yūsuf (Ğ. Ħ. Yūsufi, *Farroķī Sīstānī: baĥt-ī dar šarĥ-e aĥwāl va rūzgār va še‘r-e ū*, Mašhad, 1341 Š./1962, p. 91), praised Abū Sahl in six *qašīdas*—perhaps motivated by their common association with this amir. Abū Sahl’s learning and regard for culture are repeatedly mentioned (in agreement with Bayhaqī, op. cit.). Farroķī further describes him as devoted to science and the arts and widely read (*Dīvān*, p. 184.16-17), accomplished in calligraphy and poetry (p. 185.13) and epistolography (p. 325.17), eloquent (p. 247.13), generous (p. 184.5, 198.14), distinguished by asceticism (p. 184.18-19), good looks (p. 326.1), and restraint in drinking wine (p. 326.8), and well-known even as a youth (p. 313.24). His house, like his father’s, was a regular meeting place for poets (p. 313.13, 17); Amir Yūsuf depended heavily on his counsel (p. 247.5). Although such praise is



the stock-in-trade of panegyrists, it provides a view of the man from his friends' perspective. The mutual regard of Abū Sahl and Farroḳī is evident (ibid., p. 247.18).

Two of these *qaṣīdas* (ibid., pp. 183, 185) have been claimed to refer rather to **Abū Sahl Zūzanī** (*Dīvān*, ed. 'A. 'Abd-al-Rasūlī, Tehran, 1311 Š./1932-33, pp. 185, 187; see also, following 'Abd-al-Rasūlī, B. Forūzānfar, *Tārīḳ-e adabīyāt*, Tehran, 1316-17 Š./1937-38, p. 72; R. Yāsamī, *Aṣ'ār-e gozīda-ye Farroḳī Sīstānī*, Tehran, 1319 Š./1940-41, p. 36; Şafā, *Adabīyāt* I, p. 542). The two texts contain various parallels, justifying 'Abd-al-Rasūlī's assumption of a common subject. While in the first "Ḳvāja Sayyed Abū Sahl" is referred to in rather general terms—he is apparently a *kadḳodā* (ed. Dabīrsīāqī, p. 184.2) associated with an amir (ibid., p. 183.17), in the second it is "the unparalleled Sayyed and Ḳvāja, Abū Sahl Dabīr" (ibid., p. 185.11), who is explicitly linked with 'Azod-al-dawla. All six *qaṣīdas* may thus be taken as having a single subject. In one of the panegyrics (ibid., p. 326.14) Farroḳī wishes a happy New Year to Abū Sahl and Ḳvāja Ĥosayn, perhaps a son of the official (M. Dabīrsīāqī in *Farroḳī Sīstānī*, pp. 121-24).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Given in the text.