



ABŪ ṬĀHER ḲĀTŪNĪ

ABŪ ṬĀHER ḲĀTŪNĪ, MOWAFFAQ-AL-DAWLA, officer, famous poet, and author in the reign of the Saljuq Sultan Moḥammad b. Malekšāh (498-511/1105-18). He was the accountant (*mostawfi*) for Gowhar Ḳātūn, wife of Sultan Moḥammad; hence, probably, his epithet Ḳātūnī. The title (*laqab*) Kamāl-al-dīn (*Maǧmaʿ al-foṣaḥāʾ* I, p. 141) is discredited by the earlier evidence of Asadī Ṭūsī (*Loḡat-e fors* [Tehran], p. 41) and Bondārī (abridgement of ʿEmād-al-dīn Eṣfahānī, *Zobdat al-noṣra*, ed. M. T. Houtsma, Leiden, 1889, p. 107; cf. pp. 105, 106), who call him Mowaffaq-al-dawla. According to Qazvīnī (*Āṭār al-belād*, Leiden, 1849, p. 259) and Naṣīr-al-dīn (*al-Naqṣ*, Tehran, 1331 Š./1952, p. 12) Abū Ṭāher collected a reputable library in Sāva. This has led Moḥammad Qazvīnī to suggest that he was from that town, but the evidence is inconclusive.

In 504/1110 Sultan Moḥammad removed the vizier and various other officials. Abū Ṭāher, displeased with the new appointees, satirized them and was consequently sent in exile to Gorgān. But he continued writing satires about dignitaries of the court; he was summoned back, and all his property was confiscated. However, according to ʿEmād-al-dīn (ed. Houtsma, p. 106), he ranked as a noble until he died. Qazvīnī (intr. to *Lobāb* [Tehran], p. xiv, n.) points out that ʿEmād-al-dīn's note is in fact borrowed from *Fotūr zamān al-ṣodūr* by Anūšervān b. Ḳāled (d. 532/1137) and concludes that Abū Ṭāher's death was prior to 532/1137.

Dawlatšāh (ed. M. ʿAbbāsī, Tehran, 1337 Š./1958, p. 86) quotes a note from a certain *Tārīḵ-e Āl-e Saljūq* which he attributes to Abū Ṭāher. Since the note



concerns the reign of Sultan Mas'ūd b. Moḥammad (529-47/1134-52), it implies that Abū Ṭāher's death occurred after 529/1134. If Dawlatšāh's note is to be taken at face value, the date of Abū Ṭāher's death must be placed some time in the period 529-32/1134-37. However, Asadī in his *Loḡat al-fors* (after 458/1065) calls Abū Ṭāher a shaikh, which implies advancement in age. Aligning this with Dawlatšāh's note makes Abū Ṭāher a centenarian, which is unlikely, though not impossible (there is no reference to his longevity).

Abū Ṭāher's poetry is lost except for twenty lines of satire and complaints quoted in later works. Another fourteen lines are quoted in Arabic translation (*Zobdat al-nošra*, pp. 105-08, 113), some of which may be original. His works included: 1. *Tanzīr al-wazīr al-zīr al-kenzīr*, a short treatise in Arabic slandering the vizier Naṣīr-al-molk Moḥammad (ibid., p. 89). An eleven-page manuscript exists in the Majles Library, Tehran (see Nafīsī's introduction to 'Awfī). 2. *Šekār-nāma*, a lost book on Malekšāh's royal hunt (Rāvandī, *Rāḥat al-šodūr*, ed. M. Eqbāl, Leiden, 1921, p. 131). 3. *Manāqeb al-šo'arā'* (Dawlatšāh, pp. 66, 73, 86; *Majma' al-foṣaḥā'* I, p. 141). This book was apparently a collection of anecdotes and selections concerning poems vying on similar subjects (*Mahāzarāt va mošā'arāt*; see M. Qazvīnī, loc. cit.), or a book similar in theme to the second discourse in *Čahār maqāla*, on poetry and the poet.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

See also Ebn al-Aṭīr, X, s.a. 504, 506.

'Awfī, *Lobāb* (Tehran), pp. vi-vii, xiv-xv, 583, 585, 619, 626.

B. Forūzānfar, *Soḡan va soḡanvarān*, 2nd ed., Tehran, 1350 Š./1971, pp. 515-17.