



## ABU'L-'ALĀ' 'AṬĀ'

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**ABU'L-'ALĀ' 'AṬĀ'**, called NĀKŪK, secretary and poet of the Ghaznavid period, d. 491/1098. Little is known of his life, but 'Awfī, in a biographical notice in his *Lobāb al-albāb*, gives him the title of *'amīd* and *kāteb*. It seems that he filled high office under the Ghaznavid sultan Ebrāhīm b. Mas'ūd (450-92/1059-99). It is probable that he had some connection with the chief secretary, [Abū Sahl Zūzanī](#) (a contemporary of the historian Abu'l-Faẓl Bayhaqī and successor in office of Bayhaqī's master, Abū Naṣr Moškān); the literary biographer Bāqarzī quotes from a poem of Nākūk written in answer to one by Abū Sahl Zūzanī. Nākūk was in fact a distinguished poet, composing *dīvāns* in both Arabic and Persian. There is attributed to him an epic, one of the many poems cast in the mold of Ferdowsī's *Šāh-nāma*, called *Barzū-nāma*; but, apart from a few quotations of Arabic and Persian verses in the biographical works, nothing is now known of his literary works. Much of his official career was spent in India, but he seems to have fallen into disfavor, being deprived of his office by Ebrāhīm and imprisoned at Lahore for eight years. A common bond of suffering doubtless contributed to his friendship with another great Ghaznavid poet of the time, Mas'ūd-e Sa'd-e Salmān, who wrote an elegy on Nākūk's death, which occurred, according to 'Awfī, in 491/1098, but according to the *Maǰma' al-foṣaḥā'*, in 471/1078-79 (I, pt. 2, p. 873)



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