



ABU'L-'AMAYṬAL

ABU'L-'AMAYṬAL 'ABDALLĀH B. ḲOLAYD (or ḲĀLED or ḲOWAYLED) B. SA'D, Tahirid court poet. Abu'l-'Amayṭal boasted of being a client of the Hashimites; raised as a true Beduin in the tribe of Banu'l-Qayn b. Jasr, he fully mastered Arabic. He moved to Khorasan, probably about 193-202/808-17, when Ma'mūn was still there. The excellence of his poetry must have attracted the attention of that 'Abbasid prince and of his vizier, Faḏl b. Sahl. Ma'mūn suggested to 'Abdallāh b. Ṭāher (himself a poet) that he take Abu'l-'Amayṭal into his retinue. Two parallel traditions exist regarding the poet, one associating him with Ṭāher, the other connecting the same incidents with 'Abdallāh instead. It is likely that Abu'l-'Amayṭal came to know Ṭāher during the latter's rule in Khorasan (205-07/821-22) and continued in 'Abdallāh's service after Ṭāher's death. He accompanied 'Abdallāh during the Egyptian campaign (213/828). In imitation of Abū Nowās, he composed a poem describing the stages of the road from Iraq to Egypt. When 'Abdallāh (213-30/828-45) succeeded his brother Ṭalḥa as governor of Khorasan, Abu'l-'Amayṭal became poet-laureate and tutor to his sons.

Abu'l-'Amayṭal was a prolific writer; his *dīvān* covered "1,000 parchments" (*alf ḵeld*). The surviving fragments of his poetry reveal a vigorous Beduin style. They show an outstanding philologist who, even in casual conversation used only the purest Arabic. Abu'l-'Amayṭal's linguistic ability is well displayed in his book *al-Ma'tūr* (ed. Krenkow, London and Beirut, 1925). The other three works attributed to him by Ebn al-Nadīm (*Fehrest*, p. 48) are no longer extant.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Ebn Kallekān (Beirut) III, p. 89.

Şūlī, *Akbār Abī Tammām*, Cairo, 1937, pp. 223, 225.

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Brockelmann, *GAL S. I*, p. 195.