



ABU'L-FAẒL SĀVAJĪ

ABU'L-FAẒL B. FAẒLALLĀH MAJD-AL-DĪN MOḤAMMAD SĀVAJĪ (1248-1312/1832-95), a scholar, calligrapher, poet, and physician active in Qajar court circles. His father had moved to Tehran from Sāva, but his family was descended from Ḥasan Khan Šāmlū, the Safavid governor of Herat under Shah 'Abbās I and Shah Šafī. Abu'l-FaẒl was precocious, attaining renown as a poet, calligrapher, and physician by the age of twenty-three. In calligraphy he used the cursive styles popular in the period: *nasta'līq*, *ta'līq*, and *šekasta*. Extant examples of his work are dated between 1261/1845 and 1286/1869-70 (Bayānī, *K'vošnevīsān*, pp. 29-32).

His exact position at the Qajar court is uncertain, but Abu'l-FaẒl was associated with both MoḤammad Shah and Nāšer-al-dīn Shah. In 1261/1845 he copied a work written by MoḤammad Shah (*ibid.*, p. 31). During Nāšer-al-dīn's reign Abu'l-FaẒl belonged to the group of scholars compiling the *Nāma-ye dānešvarān-e Nāšerī*, published 1296-1323/1879-1905 (Browne, *Press and Poetry*, pp. 164-66). The former Imperial Library (Ketābkāna-ye Salṭanatī) contains a manuscript of that work's sixth volume copied by Abu'l-FaẒl in 1310/1883-84 (Bayānī, *op. cit.*, p. 30). Abu'l-FaẒl also designed inscriptions for projects sponsored by various Qajars in Tehran, Ray, and Qom, including the Bāb-e Homāyūn in Tehran and the Qanāt-e Nāšerī in Qom (*ibid.*, pp. 30-31).

A published example of his work, in *nasta'līq* script, shows that Abu'l-FaẒl followed traditions laid down by calligraphers active during the reign of Shah 'Abbās I, such as his ancestor Ḥasan Khan Šāmlū or the renowned Mīr 'Emād Ḥosaynī (Īrānī, *Kaṭṭ va kaṭṭātān*, p. 106; FaẒā'elī, *Aṭlas-e kaṭṭ*, pp. 531, 547).



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Bāmdād, *Rejāl* I, p. 54.

‘A. Īrānī, *Peydāyeš-e kaṭṭ va kaṭṭātān*, Tehran, 1346 Š./1966-67, p. 776.

Ḥ. Fażā’elī, *Aṭlas-e kaṭṭ*, Isfahan, 1391/1971-72.