



ABU'L-ḲAYR B. AL-ḲAMMĀR

ABU'L-ḲAYR B. AL-ḲAMMĀR, ḤASAN B. SOVĀR B. BĀBĀ B. BAHNĀM (or BAHRĀM), Nestorian Christian physician, philosopher, theologian, and translator, b. Rabī I, 331/November, 942 in Baghdad. In philosophy he was a student of Yaḥyā b. 'Adī (d. 364/974), head of the Aristotelian school then known as the logicians (*manṭeqīyūn*). It is unknown with whom he studied medicine. He is described, however, as an associate of the physician Ṭābet b. Senān (d. 363/973), who may have been his teacher in this art. Most likely he is identical with the Abu'l-Ḳayr mentioned by 'Obaydallāh b. Jebrā'īl as a surgeon (*jarā'eḥī*) at the great hospital (*bīmārestān*) of 'Azod-al-dawla in Baghdad after its inauguration in 372/982; Ebn al-Qeṭṭī appears to be mistaken in according a separate entry to an otherwise unknown Abu'l-Ḳayr Jarā'eḥī (*Ta'riḳ al-ḥokamā'*, p. 407). He was known at this time to Ebn al-Nadīm, who mentions meeting him in the presence of the logician and secretary Abu'l-Qāsem 'Īsā b. 'Alī b. 'Īsā and praises him as an outstanding logician.

Abu'l-Ḳayr held philosophical discussions with Abū Solaymān Sejestānī, whose view about the forms of the elements he refuted in a treatise, and associated with the logician Abū 'Alī b. al-Samḥ. Abū Ḥayyān Tawḥīdī also was acquainted with him and quotes him in his books; his judgment of Abu'l-Ḳayr is somewhat critical, perhaps on account of the rivalry between Abu'l-Ḳayr and Abū Solaymān Sejestānī, Tawḥīdī's admired teacher. Tawḥīdī mentions that the historian and philosopher Meskawayh found refuge (*laǰa'a*) with Abu'l-Ḳayr, evidently about the years 373-75/983-86. Both the Christian Abu'l-Faraǰ b. al-Ṭayyeb and the Muslim Abu'l-Faraǰ b. Hendū were his students,



probably while he still lived in Baghdad. Ebn Sīnā in one of his treatises spoke with admiration of him and expressed his hope of meeting him, a hope which apparently was never realized. It is unknown when and under what circumstances he left Baghdad. A treatise of his was addressed to the vizier Abū Sa'd Hamadānī. If the latter is identical with Abū Sa'd b. Moḥammad b. Esmā'īl of Hamadān, who is mentioned as vizier of the Buyid Maǧd-al-dawla in Ray in 392/1002, it may indicate that Abu'l-Ḳayr was present there about this time (Helāl al-Ṣābī, *Ta'rīk*, ed. H. Amedroz, Cairo, 1334/1916, pp. 452f.). It is certain that he lived in Ḳvārazm under the reign of Ḳvārazmšāh Abu'l-'Abbās Ma'mūn b. Ma'mūn (399-407/1009-17), to whom he dedicated his *Maqāla fī emteḥān al-aṭebbā'*. After the murder of Ma'mūn and the conquest of Ḳvārazm by the Ghaznavid Maḥmūd, he was taken, together with Bīrūnī and other scholars, to Gazna. Maḥmūd urged him to accept Islam, but he refused. Later, however, he did convert, reportedly after seeing the Prophet in a dream. He was killed in an accident, when he was called to attend Sultan Maḥmūd and his horse bolted. Thus he must have died not later than 421/1030.

Titles of his works, comprising books on philosophy, Christian theology, ethics, medicine, and translations from Syriac, are listed by Ebn al-Nadīm and Ebn Abī Oṣaybe'a. His comments on Aristotle's *Categories* have been published (Kh. Georr, *Les Catégories d'Aristote dans leurs versions Syro-Arabes*, Beirut, 1948, pp. 362ff. and index s.v. Ḥasan b. Siwār) and his treatise *Maqāla fī anna dalīl Yaḥyā 'alā ḥadaṭ al-'ālam awlā be'l-qabūl men dalīl al-motakallemīn aṣlan* has been edited (A. Badawī, *Neoplatonici apud Arabes*, Cairo, 1955, pp. 243-48) and analyzed and translated into French (B. Lewin, "La notion de muḥdath dans le kalam et dans la philosophie," in *Donum Natalicum H. S. Nyberg oblatum*, Uppsala, 1954, pp. 84-93). The following treatises are known to be extant in manuscript: 1. *Ketāb al-tawfīq bayn āra' al-falāsefa wa'l-naṣārā*. 2. *Maqāla fī'l-tawḥīd wa'l-taṭlīt*. 3. *Maqāla fī'l-ṣadīq wa'l-ṣadāqa*. 4. *Maqāla fī'l-sa'āda*. 5. *Maqāla fī'l-aḳlāq*. 6. *Maqāla fī'l-ṣar'* (see P. S bath, *al-Fehres*, Cairo, 1938-40, I, p. 42). 7. *Al-Āṭār allatī tazhar fī'l-ḵaww wa 'elalohā men al-hāla wa qaws qozah wa amtāl dālek* (see M. T. Dānešpažūh, *Fehrest-e mīkrofilmhā-ye ketābkāna-ye Markazī-e Dānešgāh-e Tehrān*, Tehran, 1348 Š./1969, p. 683). 8. *Fī ṣefat al-raǧol al-faylasūf* (see H. Ritter, "Philologica III," *Der Islam* 18, 1929, p. 46). Numerous quotations of his *Ketāb al-aǧdīa* and of his notes (*ḥawā š ī*) to the eighth book of Paul of Aegina devoted to pharmaceuticals are contained in Bīrūnī' *Ketāb al-ṣaydana* (*Izbrannye proizvedeniya IV*, Tashkent, 1974, pp. 103f. and index, s.v. Abu'l-Ḳayr). In his *Ketāb al-ǧamāher fī ma'refat al-ǧawāher* (Hyderabad, 1355/1936-37, p. 100), Bīrūnī refers to a translation of the mineralogy of Aetios



(Aṭyūs al-Āmedī) by Abu'l-Ḳayr. His book on the medical profession, *Ketāb emteḥān* (or *meḥnat*) *al-aṭebbā'*, is quoted expressly, and probably often without reference, by Ḍahīr-al-dīn Bayhaqī in his *Tatemala ṣewān al-ḥekma*.

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