



ABU'L-QĀSEM 'ABDALLĀH KĀŠĀNĪ

ABU'L-QĀSEM 'ABDALLĀH KĀŠĀNĪ, historian of the reign of the Il-khan Oljāytū (r. 703-16/1304-16) and member of the *Abū Ṭāher* family of potters. He was apparently associated with two rivals of the period, the viziers Faẓlallāh Rašīd-al-dīn and Tāj-al-dīn 'Alīšāh. The first (and probably original) preface to his earliest work (no. 3, below) is dedicated to Rašīd-al-dīn, the second to Tāj-al-dīn. The first preface gives the author's name as 'Abdallāh b. 'Alī b. Moḥammad b. Abī Ṭāher al-Qāšānī al-Mowarrek al-Ḥāseb ("the chronicler, the mathematician"). The epithets suggest a role in Mongol administration, and his preferences to gem prices (no. 3, below) and to other prices and income (no. 2) suggest his interest in economic affairs. Perhaps, as a chronicler, he recorded daily court activities in addition to writing historical narratives; his chronicle of Oljāytū's reign seems to derive from such day-to-day records (J. A. Boyle, "The Significance of the *Jām' al-Tawārīkh* as a Source on Mongol History," *Īrān-šenāsī* 2, 1970, pp. 1-8).

Works. 1. *Zobdat al-tawārīk*, a general history of the Islamic world down to the fall of Baghdad, dedicated to Oljāytū. Only a small portion of the text has been published, and its significance remains uncertain (see Blochet, *Introduction*, pp. 144-57; Jahn, "Study," pp. 201-02).

2. *Tārīk-e Oljāytū*, an account of the ruler's reign up to his death (27 Ramaẓān 716/13 December 1316). The work also presents a detailed account of the



quarrel between Tāj-al-dīn and Rašīd-al-dīn, lavishly praising Tāj-al-dīn and expressing hostility toward Rašīd-al-dīn. The author alleges that he intends to provide a more complete picture of the reign than that given in Rašīd-al-dīn's *Jāme' al-tawārīk* (*Tārīk-e Oljāytū*, ed. M. Hambly, Tehran, 1348 Š./1969, pp. 2-6). He in fact claims to have written that portion of the *Jāme'* presented to Oljāytū by Rašīd-al-dīn (ed., pp. 4-5, 54-55, 240-41), and apparently resented the bestowal of lucrative properties on Rašīd-al-dīn as a reward, while he received nothing. The account of Oljāytū's reign in the *Jāme'* has not yet been found. Abu'l-Qāsem probably transferred his allegiance to Tāj-al-dīn, who became vizier in 711/1312. It was apparently after that date that Abu'l-Qāsem rededicated his earliest work (see no. 3) to Tāj-al-dīn, described as vizier in the preface. The earliest extant manuscript of the *Tārīk-e Oljāytū* is dated 29 Rabī'ā II 725/14 April 1325 (ibid., intro., pp. 17-18, text, p. 241).

3. *'Arā'es al-ĵawāher wa nafā'es al-aṭā'eb*, a treatise on minerals, gems, and perfumes. It was apparently written in 700/1300-01, the date occurring in the text and in the colophon of a copy which may be author's autograph (ed. Ī. Afšār, Tehran, 1345 Š./1966, preface, pp. 13, 16-17). That colophon, since it contains the dedication to Tāj-al-dīn, may have been added to an earlier manuscript, or colophon and text may have been recopied after 711/1312. Most of the text is taken, often verbatim, from the *Tansūk-nāma-ye ilkānī* of K̄vāja Našīr-al-dīn Ṭūsī, which itself is heavily indebted to Bīrūnī's *Ketāb al-ĵamāher fī ma'refat al-ĵawāher* (ibid., preface, pp. 17-18, text, pp. 360-68; *Tansūk-nāma*, ed. Modarres Rażawī, Tehran, 1347 Š./1968, intro., pp. 12-14). But Abu'l-Qāsem adds valuable information on the Mongol period—e.g., prices of various gems (pp. 45-48 passim, 78, 119, 120, 122) and formulas for manufacturing imitations of turquoise and lapis lazuli (pp. 71-72, 137). He mentions gold mines in Dāmḡān and Kermān, silver mines in Anatolia, and copper mines in Azarbaijan (pp. 215-16, 224, 229). These last provided metal for Ġāzān Khan's coins. A short appendix on ceramic production provides valuable insight into the materials and techniques of Iranian potters (Ritter, *Steinbücher*, pp. 16-48; J. W. Allan, "Abu'l Qasim's Treatise on Ceramics," *Iran* 11, 1976, pp. 111-20). Rašīd-al-dīn may have borrowed from Abu'l-Qāsem in his own compendium of practical information, *al-Āṭār wa'l-aḥyā'*, which contained information on minerals and gems and their uses. However, only portions of the vizier's treatise have survived (Quatremère, ed., *Histoire*, p. CLVIII; K. Jahn, "The Still Missing Works of Rašīd Al-dīn," *Central Asiatic Journal* 9, 1964, p. 118).



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