



EBN BAQIYA

EBN BAQIYA, MOḤAMMAD b. MOḤAMMAD b. BAQIYA, ABU ṬĀHER, called Naṣir-al-Dawla and Nāṣeḥ “Counselor,” vizier of the Buyids in Iraq, b. 314/926, d. 367/978.

He was born at ‘Awāna to the north of Baghdad of peasant stock; later in his career, detractors would accuse him of promoting base men to high positions. He is first heard of farming the tolls over the Tigris crossings at Takrit, and when the Buyid Mo‘ezz-al-Dawla Aḥmad b. Buya seized control of Iraq in 334/945, he succeeded in retaining control of this lucrative job and also became overseer of the Amir’s kitchens at Baghdad. He cultivated the favor of the Amir’s vizier Abu’l-Faḥl ‘Abbās Širāzi, and then, when ‘Ezz-al-Dawla Baḳtiār succeeded his father Mo‘ezz-al-Dawla in 356/967, he eventually, in 362/973, became his vizier (Meskawayh, II, p. 313, tr. V, p. 336).

Ebn Baqiya soon secured an ascendancy in Baghdad, but whilst remaining loyal to his ineffectual master, he was also aware of the growing might of the Amir’s cousin, the Amir of Fārs and Khuzestan, ‘Azod-al-Dawla b. Rokn-al-Dawla (q.v.), and endeavored to conciliate him. At the time of the latter’s first invasion of Iraq in 364/975, he received from ‘Azod-al-Dawla and Abu’l-Faḥl *Ebn al-‘Amid*, vizier to the Amir in Ray and Jebāl, Rokn-al-Dawla, the *eqṭā’* of Wāseṭ (for ‘Azod-al-Dawla’s campaigns and warfare against ‘Ezz-al-Dawla within Iraq, see ‘Azod-al-Dawla). ‘Ezz-al-Dawla’s suspicion of Ebn Baqiya grew (Meskawayh, II, pp. 354ff, tr. V, pp. 386ff), and when he was defeated in battle at Ahvāz by ‘Azod-al-Dawla, he dismissed Ebn Baqiya from office and had him blinded (366/977) (Meskawayh, II, pp. 377, tr. V, pp. 413-14). Ebn Baqiya had,



however, also offended 'Azod-al-Dawla by unfavorable remarks about him, and when the Amir came again to Iraq in 367/978, he had Ebn Baqiya trampled to death at Baghdad by elephants and his body gibbeted, the corpse not being buried till after 'Azod-al-Dawla's death five years later (Meskawayh, II, p. 380, tr. V, p. 417; Ebn Kallekân, V, p. 120, tr. III, pp. 272-73). A poet of Baghdad, Abu'l-Ḥasan Moḥammad Anbâri, wrote a celebrated *marṭia* or elegy on Ebn Baqiya, praising his liberality (Ebn Kallekân, V, pp. 120-21, tr. III, p. 274; also tr. in Bürgel, pp. 105-06).

Meskawayh was hostile to Ebn Baqiya, but other sources give a fairer assessment of his vizierate and emphasize his generosity and popularity amongst many sections of the Baghdad citizenry (see Donohue, pp. 155-59).

Bibliography:

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