



EBN DĀROST, TĀJ-AL-MOLK ABU'L-ĠANĀ'EM MARZBĀN

EBN DĀROST, TĀJ-AL-MOLK ABU'L-ĠANĀ'EM MARZBĀN b. Ƙosrow-Firūz Širāzī (438-86/1046-93), last vizier of the Great Saljuq Sultan Malekšāh (r. 465-85/1072-92). Born of a secretarial family in Fārs, he served the Saljuq slave amir Qoṭb-al-Dīn Sāvteġīn in southern Persia and Iraq during the early part of Malekšāh's reign. Sāvteġīn commended him to the sultan, who first made him intendant of the harems and private property of various of his sons, then treasurer and overseer of the palace buildings, and finally, when his capabilities had been amply demonstrated, head of the chancery (*Dīvān al-enšā' wa'l-ṭoġrā*) in succession to Kamāl-al-Molk Abu'l-Moḳtār Zawzanī. In the struggle for power in the administration (*dīvāns*) and at court (*dargāh*) that characterized much of Malekšāh's reign, Ebn Dārost was ranged against the great vizier Neẓām-al-Molk and his family and was allied with such figures as Majd-al-Dawla Qomī, *mostawfī* or head of the accounts department, Sadīd-al-Molk Abu'l-Ma'ālī Mofaẓẓal, *'ārezu* or head of the war department, and Sayyed-al-Ro'asā' Abu'l-Maḥāsen Moḥammad. Since Neẓām-al-Molk's assassination in Ramaẓān 485/October 1092, ostensibly at the hands of an Isma'īli *fedā'ī*, favored the interests of the anti-Neẓām-al-Molk party, and also possibly the interests of the sultan himself, contemporaries (whose views are reflected in the historical sources) widely believed that Ebn Dārost and Malekšāh had plotted the vizier's death (Rippe, pp. 423-35).

Immediately after Neẓām-al-Molk's murder, Ebn Dārost succeeded him as



vizier at Baghdad, where the court was then established; but his triumph was immediately placed in jeopardy by Malekšāh's own death (mid-Šawwāl 485/mid-November 1092). Toward the end of the Sultan's reign, Ebn Dārost had become allied with Malekšāh's wife, the Qarakhanid princess Jalāliya or Terken (Torkān) Kātūn, whom the Saljuq monarch had married in 456/1064; the two had built up a strong party among Neẓām-al-Molk's enemies in the administration and at court. At Malekšāh's death, they immediately proclaimed the succession in Baghdad of Terken Kātūn's four-year-old son Maḥmūd, to whom the 'Abbasid caliph granted the honorific title of Nāṣer-al-Donyā wa'l-Dīn. However, the rival party of Neẓām-al-Molk's sons and partisans, the Neẓāmīya, proclaimed at Ray the succession of Barkiāroq (Berk-yaruq), Malekšāh's eldest son and the one approaching nearest to manhood. Ebn Dārost and Terken Kātūn marched out with their forces from Isfahan but were defeated at the battle of Borūjerd at the end of Դu'l-ḥejja 485/late January 1093; Ebn Dārost was captured by Barkiāroq. The latter, mindful of the vizier's administrative skill, was disposed to make him his own vizier, but the Neẓāmīya were thirsting for vengeance. They procured his execution on 12 Moḥarram/12 February; and by the next year, both Terken Kātūn and Maḥmūd were dead also.

Ebn Dārost was naturally the object of praise of several contemporary poets (Mo'ezzī, d. ca. 520/1126, addressed four *qaṣīdas* to him; *Dīvān*, ed. N. Nayyerī, Tehran, 1362 Š./1983, pp. 371-73, 376-77, 425-27, 577-78); but his ambitions and controversial policies also made him a target for satires (cf. Bondārī, p. 61). Like Neẓām-al-Molk and other great men in the Saljuq state, he participated in the wave of *madrassa* building and other charitable works that characterized this period of Sunni revival. In 480/1087 construction began in Baghdad of his Tājīya *madrassa*, a Shafī'ite college intended to rival the Neẓāmīya; the famous scholars Abū Bakr Šāšī and Abu'l-Fotūḥ al-Ġazālī, brother of Abū Ḥāmed, taught there.

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