



GOWHAR KĀTUN

GOWHAR KĀTUN, a Saljuq princess who became the second wife of the Ghaznavid Sultan Mas'ud III (r. 492-508/1099-1115). Because the Saljuq Sultan Malekšāh (q.v.) sent her from Ray to Ġazna with a lavish wedding cortège, on which his vizier Neẓām-al-Molk had expended 100,000 dinars, she is known in the sources for Ghaznavid history as the *Mahd-e Erāq* “bride from ‘Erāq[-e ‘Ajami or Western Persia]” (Ḥo-sayni, pp. 16, 58; Ebn al-Aṭir, ed. Tornberg, X, p. 111, ed. Beirut, X, p. 168).

All the historical sources which mention her (Ḥosayni, Ebn al-Aṭir, Juzjāni) describe her as a daughter of Malekšāh's and sister of Sanjar, married to the Ghaznavid prince at an unknown date; the liaison was probably part of the policy of détente between the two empires in the later part of Malekšāh's and Ebrāhim's reigns. When Mas'ud III died and was succeeded by his son Malek Arslān or Arslānšāh (q.v.), the latter treated his stepmother Gowhar Kātun with indignity, provoking Sanjar into sending military aid to his rival for the succession, his half-brother Bahrāmšāh (q.v.; Juzjāni, *Ṭabaqāt* I, pp. 240-41, tr. Raverty, I, p. 107). The historical sources also mention that Prince Mas'ud had first married a daughter of Alp Arslān (q.v.); this may be the source of the information in Faḡr-e Modabber Mobā-rakšāh's *Ādāb al-ḥarb wa'l-šajā'a* (pp. 154-55) that Mas'ud's bride was actually a daughter of Čaġri Beg Dāwud (q.v., d. 452/1060), which seems chronologically less likely.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

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