



JĀĠMINI, MAḤMUD

JĀĠMINI (or Čaġmini), **MAḤMUD** b. Moḥammad b. ‘Omar, an astronomer from Jaġmin, a village in K̄vārazm (d. 745/1344). He is mentioned as the author of a brief Arabic survey of mathematical astronomy under the title *al-Molaḳkaṣ fi’l-hay’a* (purportedly written in K̄vārazm in 618/1220) and of an Arabic extract of Avicenna’s *al-Qānun fi’l-ṭebb*, named *al-Qānunja* (i.e., Pers. *Qānunča* “the little *Qānun*”).

Nothing specific is known about his life, but it would seem plausible (but no more) to speculate that the author of *al-Qānunja* was a linear descendent of his earlier namesake, considering conservative family traditions in passing on forefathers’ names to subsequent generations. In any case, the early date of the astronomical treatise is attested by two manuscripts, the later of the two being dated to 644/1246-47, whereas the medical author’s death-note is owed to a reader’s gloss. It does bear mention, however, that a more intensive study of either text, as reflected in the existent commentaries, did not begin much before the turn of the 9th/15th century, only to last well into the 13th/19th century. Their wide dissemination attests to their practical usefulness rather than to any outstanding scientific merit.

The astronomical treatise, *al-Molaḳkaṣ fi’l-hay’a*, elicited interest in Ulugh Beg’s circle of specialists. It became the subject of an Arabic commentary (comp. 814/1411) by the mathematician and astronomer Ṣalāḥ-al-Din Musā b. Moḥammad b. Maḥmud, known as Qāzizāda Rumi (d. after 1440). Another member of Ulugh Beg’s entourage, Ḥosayn b. Ḥosayn (?) K̄vārazmi (d. ca. 839/1436-37), dedicated a Persian commentary to him. Another Persian



commentary was compiled in India as late as the early 12th/18th century.

Qānunja's conciseness was a major cause of the great popularity it enjoyed, demonstrated by its numerous Arabic copies and the string of translations from the Timurid period onward in Iran and India. It was commented upon in a book called *Mofarreḥ al-qolub* by the medical author Moḥammad-Akbar Arzāni (d. Delhi, 1722), who alternated between Safavid Iran and Mughal India. His commentary went through several Indian editions during the 19th century (e.g., Lucknow, 1886). Another commentary, anonymous, was prepared in India as late as 1822-23, and an English version of one of the Persian translations was published in Calcutta in 1782.

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