



## KOJESTĀNI, AḤMAD B. 'ABD-ALLĀH

---

**KOJESTĀNI, Aḥmad b. 'Abd-Allāh, Abu Šojā'** (d. 882) commander of the Taherids in Khorasan, and after the Šaffarid occupation of Nishapur in 873, a contender for power.

His *nesba* Kojestāni establishes a connection with Kojestān, a district of Bādāgis, lying to the northeast of Herat. In the 9th century, the region was considered a major hotbed of Kharijite dissidence, and centuries later Neẓāmi 'Aruzi Samarqandi (Persian text p. 42) included an anecdote about Kojestāni in *Čahār maqāla* (written ca. 1156). He mentions that Kojestāni was stimulated to embark on a military career by the stirring verses of Ḥanzala Bādḡisi, a local poet in New Persian. Be this as it may, in historical sources (Neẓāmi, Persian commentary, p. 69) Kojestāni is mentioned as commander in the army of Moḥammad b. Ṭāher (r. 873-81 and 882), the last Taherid governor in Nishapur, or as commander of local 'ayyārs. In any case, after the downfall of the Taherids at the hands of Ya'qub b. Layṭ b. Mo'addal (r. 861-79;) in 873, Kojestāni effectively made a bid for independent power, taking advantage of the extremely confused political and military situation in Khorasan. Kojestāni had at first submitted to Ya'qub after the Saffarid capture of Nishapur (*Tāriḳ-e Sistān*, p. 225, tr. p. 178; Ebn al-Atir, VII, p. 296). But once Ya'qub had to leave the province for business elsewhere, Kojestāni became a major factor in the local power struggle. Until his death in 882, he apparently continued to attract local Kharijite elements as well as unemployed Turkish *ḡolams* and other



mercenaries.

[Ebn al-Aṭir](#) (1160-1233) included a detailed account of Kojestāni's rebellion in *Kamel fi 'l-ta'riḳ*, drawing on a lost chronicle about the governors of Khorasan by Sallāmi (fl. mid-10th century). Kojestāni first disposed of rivals like Ya'qub's commander Ebrāhim b. Šarkab, and then seized control of Nishapur from the Saffarid representative, temporarily restoring the Taherid Ḥosayn b. Ṭāher b. 'Abdallāh to power in 876. From a base at Herat, Kojestāni was involved in struggles with rival generals, including Abu Ṭalḥa Maṣur b. Šarkab and Rāfe' b. Harṭama. He returned to Nishapur between 878 and 879 (Ebn al-Aṭir, VII, pp. 297), and pursued the 'Alid Ḥasan b. Zayd to [Gorgān](#).

Ya'qub died in 879, and during the next years his successor [Amr b. Layṭ](#) (r. 879-900) was preoccupied with consolidating his power in southern Persia and planning attacks on Iraq. At the outset, however, 'Amr tried to recover the lost Saffarid position in Khorasan. In 880, he marched to take Nishapur, but was defeated by Kojestāni's forces (Ṭabari, III, p. 1941; Ebn al-Aṭir, VII, p. 335). Kojestāni followed this success with an attack on Sistan, and between 880 and 881 he met with strenuous resistance at the capital Zarang (Gardizi, p. 142; *Tārik-e Sistān*, pp. 237-38, tr. 187-88). At the places that he controlled, the *koṭba* no longer mentioned Taherids, who had been replaced by the Abbasid caliph Mo'tamed (r. 870-92) and himself. At Nishapur and Herat, he issued his own coins (Ṭabari, III, p. 2009; Bosworth, 1994, p. 198), taking for himself the honorific *al-wāfi* (the trustworthy servant). He was now at the peak of his power. He fought off Abu Ṭalḥa Maṣur, 'Amr's ally and his governor for Khorasan, defeating him twice in battle. 'Amr's position in Khorasan was only slightly improved, when one of his Turkish *golāms* murdered Kojestāni at the beginning of July 882 at Šādyāḳ (Ṭabari, III, p. 2025; *Tārik-e Sistān*, p. 239, tr. p. 189; Ebn al-Aṭir, VII, pp. 303-304). His troops transferred their allegiance to Rāfe' b. Harṭama (d. 896), who was recognized by the Abbasid caliph as the representative of his Taherid governor in Khorasan. It was not until 896, when Rāfe' was finally defeated and killed, that 'Amr's control of Khorasan was fully restored.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

### Sources.

Abu Sa‘id ‘Abd-al-Ḥayy Gardizi, *Zayn al-akbār*, ed. by A.-Ḥ. Ḥabibi, Tehran, 1968, p. 142.

Ebn al-Aṭir, *Al-Kamel fī ‘l-ta’rik*, ed. by C. J. Tornberg, repr., 13 vols., Beirut, 1965-67, VII, pp. 296-373, passim.

Neẓāmi ‘Aruzi Samarqandi, *Čahār maqāla*, ed. by M. Qazvini, rev. by M. Mo‘in, Tehran, 1955-57, p. 42 in text, p. 69 in commentary; rev. tr. as *Four Discourses*, by E. G. Browne, London, 1921, pp. 27-29.

Ṭabari, *Ketāb ta’rik al-rosul wa’l-moluk*, ed. by M. J. de Goeje et al., 15 vols., repr., Leiden, 1964, III, pp. 1931, 1941, 2009, 2025; tr. as *The ‘Abbāsīd Recovery*, by P. M. Fields, History of al-Ṭabarī 37, Albany, N.Y., 1987, index.

*Tārik-e Sistān*, ed. by M.-T. Bahār, Tehran, 1935, pp. 225-27, 236-39; tr. as *The Tārikh-e Sistān*, by M. Gold, Rome, 1976, pp. 178-80, 187-89.

### Studies.

C. E. Bosworth, “Khudjistān,” *EI*<sup>2</sup> V, p. 47.

Idem, “Ṭāhirids. 1,” *EI*<sup>2</sup> X, pp. 104-105 Idem, *The History of the Saffarids of Sistan and the Maliks of Nimruz (247/861 to 949/1542-3)*, Costa Mesa, Calif., 1994, pp. 127-34, 193-202.

C. Defrémery, “Mémoire sur un personnage appelé Ahmed, fils d’Abd-Allah,” *JA* 4th ser., 6, 1845, pp. 345-62.

B. Śladanek, “Khujistānī’s Uprising in Khurāsān (860-869): The Anatomy of an Unsuccessful Rebellion,” *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* 46, 1989, pp. 63-77.

R. Vasmer, “Über die Münzen der Šaffāriden und ihrer Gegner in Fārs und Óurāsān,” *Numismatische Zeitschrift* NS 63, 1930, pp. 131-62.



July 20, 2009