

Q

al-Qabṭūrnūh, Banū

The name **Banū l-Qabṭūrnūh** refers to three brothers from the Andalūsī city of Badajoz (Ar. Baṭalyaws) famous for their Arabic prose and poetry. The lives of Abū Bakr ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, Abū Muḥammad Ṭalḥa, and Abū l-Ḥasan Muḥammad spanned the late fifth/eleventh century to the first half of the sixth/twelfth. All three brothers—sons of Sa‘īd b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz who shared the *nisba* al-Baṭalyawsī—held high official positions at the court of the petty kingdom of the Banū l-Afṭas in Badajoz. After the Almoravid takeover of the entire territory of al-Andalus, which effectively started in 483/1090 and was completed in the first quarter of the sixth/twelfth century, the brothers ended up working as secretaries for the new rulers.

The name Qabṭūrnūh, the spelling of which differs slightly in the Arabic sources, strongly suggests a Hispanic origin, although the exact meaning of it remains obscure. The available references to their lives are scarce and allow only a very sketchy picture. As to their life dates, the only concrete piece of information in

this regard is provided by Ibn al-Abbār (d. 658/1260), who states that Abū Bakr ‘Abd al-‘Azīz died after 520/1126; according to the same author, his brother Abū Muḥammad Ṭalḥa died when Abū Bakr ‘Abd al-‘Azīz was still alive.

None of the Banū l-Qabṭūrnūh brothers are reported to have authored independent works. The only sources that dedicate substantial passages to the three brothers are *al-Dhakhīra fī maḥāsīn ahl al-jazīra* (“The treasure of samples showing the excellent literary prowess of the inhabitants of the peninsula [of al-Andalus]”) of Ibn Bassām al-Shantarīnī (d. 542/1147–8) and the *Qalā‘id al-‘iqyān* (“The necklaces of native gold”) of al-Faṭḥ b. Khāqān (d. 528/1134). However, due to the purpose of their composition and the nature of the data they offer, these two sources contain a minimal amount of factual information about the Banū l-Qabṭūrnūh and focus mainly on their literary accomplishments. Ibn Bassām and al-Faṭḥ were contemporaries of the Banū l-Qabṭūrnūh and were in contact with them. The least that can be said is that Abū Bakr recited his own and his brothers’ verses to the