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A Critique of the Article "Abu al-Hasan Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Tabari Toranji; the Famous Iranian Physician"

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ABSTRACT

Abu al-Hasan Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Tabari Toranji, the author of the book "al-mu'alaja al-buqratiya", is one of the greatest physicians of Tabaristan and Iran in the fourth century AH. For this purpose, in the tenth issue (Volume 20, October 2018) of the Journal of Babol University of Medical Sciences, an article entitled "Abu al-Hasan Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Tabari Toranji; the famous Iranian physician" has been published on pages 72-75 about the biography of this valuable scientist, which seems to have some problems and shortcomings in terms of historical geography. Therefore, the purpose of publishing this article is to critique the published article and draw appropriate conclusions in scientific studies.

Keywords: *Abu Al-Hassan Tabari, Toranje, Medical History, Physician, Tabaristan*.

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In the tenth issue (Volume 20, October 2018) of the Journal of Babol University of Medical Sciences, an article entitled "Abu al-Hasan Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Tabari Toranji; the famous Iranian physician" has been published on pages 72-75 (1), which seems to have some shortcomings. The following content is announced in order to modify and complete the published article.

Location of the historical city of Toranje: The author states that Abu al-Hasan al-Tabari was born in Toranje, Tabaristan. He mentions that the geographical location of Toranje city is in the south of Babol county in Mazandaran province, but was Abu al-Hasan al-Tabari really born in the south of Babol county? Was the historical city of Toranje located in Abul Hassan Kola village in Babol or was it located in another geographical location? In the past, the city of Toranje was one of the important cities of Tabaristan and was a buffer zone between the cities of Mamatir, Mileh and Sari, and had a military function during the Abbasid caliphate. "Toranje" is located between the cities of Mamatir (present-day Babol) in the south, Mileh in the west and Saruyeh (Sari) in the eastern plains. In the historical texts, this city has been mentioned with various names such as "Toranjeh, Tarji, Toji, Taranji, Tariji and Torjih" (2). The oldest source that mentions Toranje as a city in Tabaristan is al-Alaq al-nafisa (compiled in 290 AH) by Ibn Rusta (3). The author of Hudud al-'Alam (compiled in 372 AH) called it Tarji while mentioning Toranje and wrote in this regard: "A prosperous city and the oldest city in Tabaristan" (4).

Using archaeological research and written data, and combining and studying historical texts, Safari et al. in a study entitled “reflections on the name and location of the historic city of Toranje” studied the "Abul Hassan Kola" region of Babol, which according to written sources is known as the location of the historical city of Toranje. The results of this study showed that the archaeological data of this research are in contradiction with what was mentioned in written and historical sources about the location of Toranje city in Abul Hassan Kola village and finally stated that the available archaeological evidence cannot prove the existence of a historical city at this region (5).

Islami Saravi, a Mazandaran scholar in his book "Mazandaran in History" believes that the city of Toranje is around the village of Beshel on the road from Ghaemshahr to Shirgah. He says: "In the north of Shirgah city, one of the branches of the Talar river, which flows into the Talar river in the north of Beshel village, is the Toji river. Parallel to it and at the same height and size in the south of Toji River, there is another river called Tijun, which flows from the south of Beshel village to Talar river. Therefore, it can be guessed that the city of Toji was in the middle of the road from Shirgah to Ghaemshahr or in the vicinity of Beshel village” (2).

Rabinio, the author of the book "Mazandaran and Astarabad", mentions the location of the city of Toranje near the village of Tajri Asb Shorpey or Kardgar Namavar in southern Jalal Arzak (central part of Babol), near which Mashhad-Sar is located three parasang away. In this area, there are walls and houses covered with grass and bushes, which is a sign of the city of Tajri, the length of which is one parasang (6). In fact, the large village of Jalal Azrak extends from the east of Dabudasht in Amol to Moziraj in Babol. Moreover, Zahir al-Din Mar'ashi in his book on the history of Tabaristan, Royan and Mazandaran considers "Toji" as one of the areas in Sari province: "This Toji is a tomb from Sari province" (7).

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It seems that according to the evidence and research, accepting that Abu al-Hasan al-Tabari, the famous physician of Mazandaran, was born in the fourth century AH in the south of Babol and in the village of Abul Hassan Kola requires further research.

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