



## EBN AL-FOWAṬĪ, KAMĀL-AL-DĪN 'ABD-AL-RAZZĀQ

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**EBN AL-FOWAṬĪ, KAMĀL-AL-DĪN 'ABD-AL-RAZZĀQ** b. Aḥmad, librarian and historian (b. 642/1244; d. Baghdad, 723/1323). His family originated in Marv-al-Rūd in Khorasan; the name Fowaṭī derives from the occupation either of his or his father's mother as a seller of waist wraps (Ar. *fūṭa*, pl. *fowaṭ*). He was enslaved by the Mongols at the siege of Baghdad (656/1258) and taken to Azarbaijan. Two years later Naṣīr-al-Dīn Ṭūsī appointed him librarian of the Marāḡa observatory. There he wrote the now lost *Taḍkerat man qaṣada'l-raṣad* (a biographical dictionary of astronomers; the notices it contained were probably incorporated into the *Talkīṣ*; see Modares Rażawī, esp. pp. 126-330). Ebn al-Fowaṭī remained at Marāḡa with Ṭūsī's son and successor, Aṣīl-al-Dīn. In 679/1281 Ebn al-Fowaṭī returned to Baghdad at the request of 'Aṭā Malek Jovaynī, and was appointed librarian of the Mostanṣeriya (*Talkīṣ* IV/2, p. 1035). Between 704/1304 and 716/1316 he visited Azarbaijan at least three times (*Talkīṣ* IV/1, p. 336, IV/2, pp. 706, 1212; M. Jawād, introd. , pp. 30-38). He had retired to Baghdad by the time Rašīd-al-Dīn Fażl-Allāh fell from power and was put to death (718/1318); some of his works may have been lost in the ensuing destruction of the Rašīdiya quarter. In keeping with the times, his personal religious affiliations defy strict categorization, and he is variously claimed as a Hanbalite, Shafi'ite, Shi'ite, and Sufi. He drank wine (Ḍahabī, IV, p. 1494) and was well known for his calligraphy (Ebn Šāker, II, p. 320).

Ebn al-Fowaṭī wrote a number of works of history and biography. His most



important surviving work is the *Talkīṣ* (written in 712-21/1312-21), a biographical dictionary arranged by nickname (*laqab*). Some doubt exists as to whether the *Majmaʿ al-ādāb fī moʿjam al-alqāb*, of which the *Talkīṣ* is presumed to be an abridgment, ever existed; if so, it seems never to have been completed. The *Talkīṣ* itself is clearly a work in progress, with many entries blank or unfinished. It is an unusual amalgam of snippets of information about all sorts of people whose names Ebn al-Fōwaṭī had come across. The scope of the work is not clearly defined, but most of his subjects are from Iraq and western and central Persia, notably Isfahan. Though it contains biographies of earlier persons, the *Talkīṣ* is most valuable for the 7th/13th century. His association with two main centers of learning in his day, Marāḡa and Baghdad, and his connection with the Mongol court equipped him to write the biographies of the leading men of the period, many of whom he mentions meeting in person. The *Talkīṣ* is a mine of information about the intellectual and cultural life of the Il-khanate, containing accounts of many jurists, scholars, scribes, astronomers, poets, *kaṭībs*, calligraphers, and Sufis. Among many other items of interest is his notice of the poet Saʿdī of Shiraz (under his *laqab* Moṣleḡ-al-Dīn; V, pp. 551-52). Only the portions covering ʿEzz through *mīm* have survived (in autograph manuscripts) in Damascus and Lahore.

Apart from the *Talkīṣ*, a valuable annalistic history of Iraq entitled *al-Hawādet al-jāmeʿa*, covering the period 626-700/1229-1300, has been published under Ebn al-Fowaṭī's name (ed. Jawād, Baghdad, 1351/1932), but this attribution is now recognized to be false (Rosenthal; Jawād, introd., pp. 64-66). He wrote several other works, which are mentioned in the *Talkīṣ* (Jawād, 1960, p. 440; Raḡimlū, pp. 425-26).

He evidently studied Mongolian and Persian; although he wrote no books in Persian, he did have a commonplace book (*majmūʿa*) for Persian poetry and occasionally quotes Persian poetry in the *Talkīṣ*.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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(For cited works not given in detail, see "Short References.")



Most of the information about his life can be gleaned from the *Talkīš majmaʿ al-ādāb fī moʿjam al-alqāb* Oriental College Magazine (Lahore), Suppl., 1956, and vol. 34, 1958; V, ed. M. ʿA. Qāsemī, *Oriental College Magazine* (Lahore), Suppl., 1939, and vols. 16-24, 1940-47.

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Modern accounts include Y. Raḥīmlū, “Ebn-e Fowaṭī” in *DMBE* IV, pp. 422-27; F. Rosenthal, “Ibn al-Fuwaṭī” in *EI* <sup>2</sup> III, pp. 425-26; M.-T. Modarres Rażawī, *Aḥwāl wa ātār-e Naṣīr-al-Dīn*, Tehran, 1354 Š./1975, pp. 252-57 and passim *M. R. Šabībī, Moʿarrek al-ʿErāq, Ebn al-Fūaṭī, 2 vols., Baghdad, 1370-78/1950-58.*