



## EBN KĀLAWAYH, ABŪ 'ABD- ALLĀH ḤOSAYN

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**EBN KĀLAWAYH** (Kālūya), **ABŪ 'ABD-ALLĀH ḤOSAYN** b. Aḥmad b. Ḥamdān Hamadānī, philologist and Qur'ān scholar. He was born in Hamadān and traveled in 314/926 to Baghdad while still a young man, where he studied the linguistic sciences under both Basran and Kufan masters, principally the Basrans Ebn Dorayd and Abū Sa'īd Sīrāfi, the Kufans Abū Bakr Anbārī and Abū 'Omar Zāhed Ḡolām Ṭa'lab, and Neftawayh of the mixed school. He also received instruction in *qerā'āt* from Ebn Mojāhed and in Hadith from Moḥammad b. Maḳlad 'Aṭṭār and Abū Bakr Nīšābūrī. After moving to Aleppo and crossing swords with Motanabbī and Abū 'Alī Fāresī, he acquired great prestige as a teacher, enjoying the special favor of Sayf-al-Dawla Ḥamdānī, the amir of Aleppo, and tutoring his sons. When Sayf-al-Dawla died in 350/967, Ebn Kālawayh probably remained in Aleppo until his own death in 370/980, though a visit to the Yemen is mentioned. Sources differ on his religious allegiance, some calling him a Shafi'ite and others claiming he was a covert Imami (Krenkow's postscript in Ebn Kālawayh, *Ketāb e'rāb*, pp. 245-48; Spitaler, p. 824; Sezgin, VIII, pp. 178-80).

Ebn Kālawayh was a considerable figure in literature, philology, and Koranic scholarship; at least a dozen of his works survive in manuscript, and many others are attested through quotations or subsequent refutations. Of those published, the best known are his recension of the *Dīvān* of Abū Ferās, a grammatical analysis of thirty suras of the Qur'ān (*E'rāb ṭalāṭīn sūra*), and a



list of rare words and anomalies, generally called the *Ketāb laysa* because almost every chapter begins with the formula “there is not” (*laysa*) in the speech of the Arabs anything of the form ‘x’ other than ...” This may have been a special preoccupation of his, since he occasionally invokes the same phrase in his Koranic commentary; regarding its originality, note that a similar expression, *laysa fī l-kalām*, is already attributed to Farrā’ (d. 200/822) by Ebn al-Sekkīt (d. 243/867; see [Abū 'Alī Fāresī](#), p. 121).

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