



## 'ERĀQĪ, FAḲR-AL-DĪN EBRĀHĪM

'ERĀQĪ, FAḲR-AL-DĪN EBRĀHĪM b. Bozorgmehr Javāleqī Hamadānī (b. Komjān, a village near Hamadān, ca. 610/1213-14, d. Damascus 688/1289), Sufi poet and author. A biography that may be as late as the beginning of the 9th/15th century provides most of what is known about his life (publ. in *Kollīyāt*, pp. 46-65); many of the anecdotes supply context for his *ġazals* and have little historical significance, though they do suggest that 'Erāqī, like Aḥmad Ġazālī and Awḥad-al-Dīn Kermānī (qq.v.), was known as a *šāhedbāz*, i.e., one who gazed upon the image of the divine witness in the faces of boys (e.g., *Kollīyāt*, pp. 49-50, 63). 'Erāqī was well-educated; he had memorized the Qur'ān by the time he was six years old and was already lecturing at a school in Hamadān at the age of seventeen. As a young man he joined a group of wandering *qalandars* (designation of a class of dervishes known for their unconventional dress and way of life), eventually ending up in Multan, where he became a disciple of the Sohrawardī shaikh Bahā'-al-Dīn Zakarīyā' and married his daughter (*Kollīyāt*, pp. 50-52). 'Erāqī remained in Multan as a disciple of Shaikh Bahā'-al-Dīn for twenty-five years. After Bahā'-al-Dīn died in 661/1262 or 666/1267-68 'Erāqī left for Mecca, eventually reaching Konya in Anatolia, where he met Jalāl-al-Dīn Moḥammad Balkī Rūmī and studied with Ebn al-'Arabī's chief disciple, Ṣadr-al-Dīn Qūnavī (d. 673/1274; *Kollīyāt*, pp. 53-55), whose students included Sufi authors Sa'īd-al-Dīn Farġānī, Mo'ayyed-al-Dīn Jandī, and 'Afif-al-Dīn Telemsānī. He attended Rūmī's sessions of *samā'* and is said to have been present at his funeral (Chittick and Wilson's introd. to *Lama'āt*, p. 43). The Mongols' administrator, Mo'īn-al-Dīn Parvāna (for him see *Kollīyāt*, pp. 28-29; Cahen, index, s.v.), who had frequented Rūmī's gatherings,



became ‘Erāqī’s devotee and built a *kānaqāh* for him in Dūqāt (Tokat). ‘Erāqī became acquainted with the Il-khan Abaqa’s vizier, Šams-al-Dīn Moḥammad Jovaynī, who helped him escape when he was suspected of having assisted the disgraced Parvāna (*Kollīyāt*, pp. 59-61). He then went to Sinope, where Mo‘īn-al-Dīn Moḥammad, a son of Parvāna, was the ruler and a patron of Sufis (Chittick and Wilson’s introd. to *Lama‘āt*, pp. 65-66). From there he went to Cairo, where he spent some years, and finally to Damascus, where his son Ḳabīr-al-Dīn joined him. ‘Erāqī died and was buried in the Šāleḥīya cemetery in Damascus next to Ebn al-‘Arabī. No trace of his tomb exists (Nafīsī’s introd. to *Kollīyāt*, pp. 43-44).

‘Erāqī’s *dīvān* comprises about 5800 *bayts*, mainly *ġazals*. Many of the poems date from his time in India; only a few are clearly influenced by the teachings of Ebn al-‘Arabī and thus can be confidently dated to the period after he met Qūnavī, though many others may well have been written during this period (for a detailed study, see Baldick, 1980). Scholars of Persian literature have generally accorded ‘Erāqī a high place among poets of love on the basis of his *ġazals* and *tarjī‘āt*. Nafīsī, for example, considers his bold exposition of love mysteries to be unparalleled in all Persian poetry (*Kollīyāt*, p. 38).

‘Erāqī’s short mixed prose and poetry classic, *Lama‘āt*, was inspired by Qūnavī’s lectures on Ebn al-‘Arabī’s works. In modern editions, it has twenty-seven chapters, but early manuscripts suggest that one of the chapters is in fact two, which would give it twenty-eight chapters, like Ebn al-‘Arabī’s *Foṣūṣ al-ḥekam* (Baldick, 1981, p. 99). There are few other formal resemblances with the *Foṣūṣ al-ḥekam*, even though the text is obviously based on Qūnavī’s interpretations of Ebn al-‘Arabī’s teachings (see Chittick and Wilson’s introd.). Some have questioned this judgment because ‘Erāqī begins the *Lama‘āt* by saying that he is following in the traditions (*sonan*) of Aḥmad Ġazālī’s *Sawānehá*; this, however, refers to the focus upon love rather than to the doctrinal underpinnings of the work. Naṣr-Allāh Pūrjawādī (p. 75) goes too far when he suggests that, by writing the *Lama‘āt* in the tradition of the *Sawānehá*, ‘Erāqī meant to bring Ebn al-‘Arabī’s teachings into harmony with those of Aḥmad Ġazālī. This ignores the fact that Ebn al-‘Arabī himself has a metaphysics of love that Qūnavī developed in great detail through his lectures on Ebn al-Fārez’s *Naẓm al-solūk*, also known as *al-Tā‘īyaal-kobrā* (recorded in Sa‘īd-al-Dīn Farġānī’s *Mašāreq al-darārī*, but see Pūrjawādī’s more nuanced remarks in Ġazālī, pp. 9-10; Chittick and Wilson’s introd. to *Lama‘āt*, p. 5). One of the earliest of commentaries on the *Lama‘āt*, *al-Lamaḥātfi šarḥ al-Lama‘āt*



by the 8th/14th century Sufi Yār-‘Alī Šīrāzī, is correct to explain ‘Erāqī’s meaning mainly by reference to the works of Qūnavī, Farḡānī, and Mo’ayyed-al-Dīn Jandī. The most famous of the commentaries, Jāmī’s *Aše‘at al-lama‘āt* (q.v.), also sees the work mainly in terms of the teachings of Qūnavī and his school (for other commentaries, see Nafīsī’s introd. to *Kollīyāt*, pp. 38-39, and ‘Erāqī, 1984, p. 18).

A short treatise on Sufī terminology, often called *Eṣṭelāḥāt*, has been published in ‘Erāqī’s name (*Kollīyāt*, pp. 410-27; *Lama‘āt*, ed. Nūrbakš, p. 53-72), but it is more likely a version of *Rašf al-alḥāz fī kašf al-alfāzā* by the 8th/14th century Sufi Šaraf-al-Dīn Ḥosayn b. Olfatī Tabrīzī (ed. N. Māyel Heravī, Tehran, 1362 Š./1983). *‘Oššāq-nāma*, also known as *Dah nāma*, a mixture of *maṭnawīs* and *ḡazals*, has been attributed to ‘Erāqī and translated into English (A. J. Arberry, *The Song of Lovers*, Oxford, 1939), but Baldick has argued convincingly that it is in fact authored by an admirer of ‘Erāqī called ‘Aṭā‘ī (1983, pp. 49-60).

‘Erāqī’s only other known prose work is a letter to Šadr-al-Dīn Qūnavī (tr. in Chittick and Wilson’s introd. to *Lama‘āt*, pp. 46-49). Written in the style of the *Lama‘āt*, it has some historical importance because it mentions that Ebn al-‘Arabī (long since dead) had called ‘Erāqī to Damascus, from whence ‘Erāqī went to Jerusalem and then to Medina, where he wrote the letter. In it he complains of separation from Qūnavī. Presumably he returned to Konya after writing it, though perhaps not before Qūnavī’s death in 673/1274.

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