



‘EŞĀMĪ, ‘ABD-AL-MALEK

‘EŞĀMĪ, ‘ABD-AL-MALEK (fl. 751/1350), Indo-Muslim poet writing in Persian. Since he gives his age as forty when he composed his *Fotūḥ al-salāṭīn* (p. 616), he must have been born around 711/1311-12. He tells us nothing about his father. No other source corroborates his claim that an ancestor, Faḵr-al-Molk ‘Eşāmī, had been vizier at Baghdad and had arrived at Delhi during the reign of Šams-al-Dīn Eltotmeš (607-33/1211-36; q.v.), who had entrusted him with the vizierate (*Fotūḥā*, pp. 127-28). Faḵr-al-Molk’s son, who allegedly served Sultan Nāṣer-al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Eltotmeš (d. 664/1266) and Sultan Ġiāṭ-al-Dīn Balaban (664-86/1266-87) as controller of the royal household (*wakīl-e dar*; pp. 147-48, 448), is a little less obscure, since the chronicler Baranī (p. 36) mentions the privy chamberlain (*kāṣṣ-ḥājeb*) ‘Eşāmī under Balaban’s reign. His son, ‘Eşāmī’s grandfather, the military commander (*sepāhsālār*) ‘Ezz-al-Dīn, was obliged to leave his home in Delhi when Sultan Moḥammad b. Toḡloq ordered the principal Muslim families to move to Dēvgīr (later Dawlatābād) in the Deccan in about 727/1327, and died en route, aged ninety, at Tilpat, a few miles south of the capital (*Fotūḥā*, pp. 447-48). The poet, who began the journey in the old man’s company, is consequently a hostile witness with regard to the reign of Moḥammad. After the Deccan seceded under the Bahmanids (q.v.) in 748/1347, ‘Eşāmī dedicated his *Fotūḥ al-salāṭīn* to the founder of the new dynasty, ‘Alā’-al-Dīn Bahman Shah (r. 748-59/1347-58). This work, completed on 6 Rabī’ I 751/14 May 1350 (*Fotūḥā*, p. 618), is an epic containing the *res gestae* of the Muslims in India from the time of the Ghaznavid Sultan Maḥmūd, consisting of 11, 693 verses and modelled on the *Šāh-nāma* of Ferdowsī. His authorities are never named but referred to as “old men of Indian stock (*pīrān-e Hendī-*



nežād), “old men of Hindustan,” or simply “old and reliable witnesses.” ‘Eṣāmī’s work is nevertheless a useful supplement to Baranī’s *Tārīk-e firūzshāhī*, the principal source for the history of the Delhi sultanate after 662/1264, and furnishes a particularly detailed account of events in southern India in the era of Moḥammad b. Toḡloq. It was used by later historians (e.g., Badā’ūnī, Ferešta). There are hints in the *Fotūḥ* that ‘Eṣāmī had composed other works which had not won him the distinction he sought; but these have not survived. He probably left for Mecca soon after finishing his book and died there.

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