Encyclopædia Iranica

Article by **Dimitri Gutas**

Published: December 15, 1999
Last Updated: October 12, 2012

FĀRĀBĪ I. BIOGRAPHY

FĀRĀBĪ

i. Biography

The sources for the life of Fārābī are such as to make the reconstruction of his biography beyond a mere outline nearly impossible. The earliest and more reliable sources, i. e., those composed before the 6th/12th century, that are extant today are so few as to indicate that no one among Fārābī's successors and their followers, or even unrelated scholars, undertook to write his full biography, a neglect that has to be taken into consideration in assessing his immediate impact. His fame, however, began to grow, apparently in association with and as a result of the renown of Avicenna (q.v.) who, through his explicit recommendation and endorsement of Fārābī in his writings, presented himself as Fārābī's successor in philosophy. When major Arabic biographers came to write comprehensive entries on Fārābī in the 6th-7th/12th-13th centuries, the period of the greatest expansion of philosophical studies in Islamic lands, there was very little specific information on hand; this allowed for their acceptance of invented stories about his life which range from benign extrapolation on the basis of some known details to tendentious reconstructions and legends. Most modern biographies of the philosopher present various combinations of elements drawn at will from this concocted material.

The extant original sources are of two basic kinds, documentary and narrative. The documentary sources consist of notations and other incidental

information in manuscripts of Fārābī's works relating to his biography; few though these may be, they are our most reliable sources. The narrative sources also fall into two major categories, those written before the 6th/12th century and those after. The sources prior to the 6th/12th century consist of: (1) an autobiographical passage by Fārābī, preserved by Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa (II, pp. 134-35), tracing the transmission of the instruction of logic and philosophy from antiquity to his days. Fārābī situates himself also in this process at the very end of it, which would appear to be the purpose behind his otherwise quite tendentious account (Gutas, 1999), but there is little reason to doubt the specific statements about his immediate predecessors and himself. (2) Reports by Masʿūdī (*Tanbīh*, p. 122), Ebn al-Nadīm (ed. Flügel, p. 263, ll. 8-14), and Ebn Ḥawqal (pp. 510-11), all younger contemporaries of Fārābī, as well as by Ṣāʿed Andalosī (d. 462/1070), the first biographer to have devoted an entry to him (pp. 53-54). These reports are implicitly reliable though of limited extent. This is significant in the case of the Andalusian tradition represented by Ṣāʿed, for it can be assumed that it would contain all accessible information on Fārābī because of its almost exclusive adherence to his philosophy. Ṣāʿed, however, though he summarizes a number of Fārābī's books, knows nothing more about his life than the preceding sources other than the mere fact of his association with the Hamdanid Sayf-al-Dawla (r. 333-56/944-67).

The sources from the 6th/12th century and later consist essentially of three biographical entries, all other extant reports on Fārābī being either dependent on them or even later fabrications: (1) the Syrian tradition or collection of biographical narratives on Fārābī represented by the entry by Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa (II, pp. 134-40), and to a lesser extent by Ebn al-Qefṭī (pp. 277-80); (2) the pro-Turkish tradition, compiled and composed as a continuous narrative by Ebn Ḵallekān with the purpose of documenting a Turkish ethnic origin for Fārābī (ed. ʿAbbās, V, pp. 153-57; tr. de Slane, III, pp. 307-11); and (c) the scanty and legendary Eastern tradition, represented by Ẓahīr-al-Dīn Bayhaqī (pp. 16-20, no. 17). Of these, the Eastern tradition of Bayhaqī (q.v.; d. 565/1169) can be discounted: the few accurate data derive from the earlier sources, whereas the added material is obviously fabricated. Ebn al-Qefṭī (or the extant epitome of Zawzanī, compiled in 647/1249) actually offers a combination of the Andalusian and Syrian traditions, for he copies Ṣāʿed for the most part and has additional material only on Fārābī's association with Sayf-al-Dawla. This leaves the Syrian and pro-Turkish traditions of the biographical entries in Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa's *ʿOyūn* (final recension completed in 667/1268) and in Ebn Ḵallekān's *Wafayāt* (completed in 669/1271) respectively. These present

themselves as our most extensive and detailed sources though they date a good three centuries after Fārābī's death. Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa's entry, which is the earlier one, consists of a collection and patching together of all the diverse pieces of information that were available to him in Syria at that time. It includes much legendary material, but Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa also quotes Fārābī where he can. Ebn Ḵallekān's entry, by contrast, is a response to that of Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa: the latter had mentioned at the beginning of his entry, and for the first time by any extant biographer, that Fārābī's father was of Persian descent; Ebn Ḵallekān's entry is completely animated by the effort to prove that Fārābī was ethnically Turkish. To this end, Ebn Ḵallekān first gave Fārābī an additional *nesba*, one he never had, al-Torkī. Abu'l-Fedāʾ, who copied Ebn Ḵallekān, corrected this, and changed the word, *al-Torkī* "the Turk," which reads like a *nesba*, to the descriptive statement, *wa-kāna rajolan torkīyan* "he was a Turkish man" (*Moḵtaṣar* II, p. 104). Second, at the end of his entry, Ebn Ḵallekān spent considerable time giving the correct spelling and vocalization of all the names which he says are Turkish and are associated with Fārābī: the names of his alleged grand- and great-grandfather, Ṭarḵān and Awzalaḡ (adding explicitly, *wa-homā men asmāʾ al-tork*, "these are Turkish names"), and the toponymics of his origins, Fārāb, Oṭrār, Balāsaḡūn, and Kāšḡar (the information on the toponymics is derived from Samʿānī, under the *nesba* al-Fārābī, though Samʿānī does not refer to the philosopher). In between, Ebn Ḵallekān offers a continuous narrative of Fārābī's life as reconstructed by him.

LIFE

Since almost every detail of Fārābī's life found in one source is contradicted by that in another, it will be helpful to list first those items from the documentary and earlier narrative sources which are certain and to present the dubious and legendary material on the later sources in the next section. His name was Abū Naṣr Moḥammad b. Moḥammad Fārābī, as all sources, and especially the earliest and most reliable, Masʿūdī, agree. In the famous passage about the appearance of philosophy preserved and reported by Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa (II, p. 135 ll. 20-21), he is quoted as having said that he had studied logic with Yūḥannā b. Ḥaylān up to and including Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*, i.e., according to the order of the books studied in the curriculum, Fārābī said that he studied Porphyry's *Eisagoge* and Aristotle's *Categories, De Interpretatione, Prior* and *Posterior Analytics*. His teacher, Yūḥannā b. Ḥaylān, was a Christian cleric who abandoned lay interests and engaged in his ecclesiastical duties, as Fārābī reports. His studies of Aristotelian logic with Yūḥannā in all probability

took place in Baghdad, where Masʿūdī tells us Yūḥannā died during the caliphate of al-Moqtader (295-320/908-32). This is further indicated by the entire approach and contents of his logical work, which is imbued with the thought world of Alexandrian Aristotelianism as resuscitated in Baghdad by Abū Bešr Mattā and his teachers (Zimmermann, pp. lxviii-cxxxix; see also below, section on Fārābī and Greek philosophy). Fārābī apparently stayed on and worked in Baghdad. Yaḥyā b. ʿAdī, a resident of Baghdad according to Ebn al-Qefṭī (p. 361 ll. 9-10), was among his students, and he composed at least two of his works for Baghdad personalities: a treatise on the validity of astrology for the Christian scholar and translator Abū Esḥāq Ebrāhīm b. ʿAbd-Allāh Bāḡdādī (Mahdi, 1975-76, p. 265) and his great book on music for the vizier of the caliph al-Rāżī, Abū Jaʿfar Moḥammad b. Qāsem Karḵī (*Ketāb al-mūsīqī al-kabīr*, pp. 30 and 35, n.1). We know that he was definitely in Baghdad until the end of the year 330/September 942. As we learn from notes in some manuscripts of his *Mabādeʾ ārāʾ ahl al-madīna al-fāżela*, he had started to compose the book in Baghdad at that time and then left and went to Syria. He took the book with him, and he finished it in Damascus the following year (331), i.e., by September 943 (cited in Fārābī's *Ketāb al-mella*, p. 79 and by Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa II, pp. 138-39; tr. in Mahdi 1990, pp. 721-22). In Syria Fārābī also lived and taught for some time in Aleppo; Ebn al-Qefṭī mentions that he went to Aleppo to Sayf-al-Dawla, a report that is corroborated by another manuscript note, copied by Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa (II, p. 139 ll. 19-20), which says that he had dictated a commentary on the *Posterior Analytics* to Ebrāhīm b. ʿAdī, a student of his in Aleppo (and Yaḥyā's brother). Later on Fārābī visited Egypt; the note in the manuscripts of the *Mabādeʾ* also informs us that he wrote the six sections (*foṣūl*) summarizing the book in Egypt in 337/July 948-June 949. He must have returned to Syria, however, soon thereafter, for we are certain of his place and date of death: Masʿūdī, writing barely five years after the fact (955-6, the date of the composition of the *Tanbīh*), says that he died in Damascus in Rajab 339 (between 14 December 950 and 12 January 951). His stay in Syria was somehow associated with Sayf-al-Dawla, though we do not know precisely how, how long, and in what capacity. Sāʿed al-Andalosī, the first to report this connection, simply says (p. 54 l. 19) that Fārābī "died in Damascus in 339 under the protection (*fī kanaf*)" of Sayf-al-Dawla. Later biographers greatly embellish this association.

STORIES AND LEGENDS

The above is all that can be said with certainty about Fārābī's biography. The

remaining reports in the later sources are dubious at best and legendary at worst, beginning with his pedigree and origins. There is confusion and uncertainty, first of all, about the names of his grandfather and great-grandfather, which are given variously by the sources. The consensus in secondary literature is to list Ṭarḵān as the grandfather's name, but this is not supported by the sources, some of which do not have it at all (most of the earliest sources), while others have it as the name of the great-grandfather (*Fehrest*; Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa), and Ebn Ḵallekān has it as the name of the father (a discrepancy which was remarked upon by the careful Ṣafadī, I, p. 106).

Actually, it would seem none of them is right. In some manuscripts of Fārābī's works, which must reflect the reading of their ultimate archetypes from his time, his full name appears as Abū Naṣr Moḥammad b. Moḥammad al-Ṭarḵānī, i.e., the element Ṭarḵān appears in a *nesba* (Fārābī, *Ketāb al-mūsīqī* p. 35, note 1; *Aḥkām al-nojūm*, p. 46). This indicates that Ṭarḵān was not necessarily the name of Fārābī's grandfather but rather that of a more distant relative from whom his family claimed descent (cf. Samʿānī, ed. Yamānī, IX, p. 63, s.v. the *nesba* al-Ṭarḵānī). Moreover, if the name of Fārābī's grandfather was not known among his contemporaries and immediately succeeding generations, it is all the more surprising to see in the later sources the appearance of yet another name from his pedigree, Awzalaḡ. This appears as the name of the grandfather in Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa and of the great-grandfather in Ebn Ḵallekān. Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa is the first source to list this name which, as Ebn Ḵallekān explicitly specifies later, is so to be pronounced. In modern Turkish scholarship the pronunciation is given as Uzluḡ (*İA* V, p. 451), without any explanation. The first appearance of this distinctly Turkish sounding name in the later sources in the context of attempts to claim a Turkish ethnic background for Fārābī is accordingly questionable.

The *nesba*, universally given as al-Fārābī, would indicate a place of ultimate origin in the district of Fārāb (the older Persian form Pārāb is given in *Ḥodūd al-ʿālam*) on the middle Syr Darya (Jaxartes). This is corroborated by the geographer Ebn Ḥawqal, a younger contemporary of Fārābī who was also somehow associated, like Fārābī later in his life, with the Hamdanid Sayf-al-Dawla, since the first edition of his famous *Ṣūrat al-arz*µ was dedicated to that prince. Ebn Ḥawqal notes from his travels in Transoxania that Fārābī was "from" (*men*) the town of Vasīj in Fārāb (Esṭak@òrī does not mention Fārābī in association with Vasīj). This has been taken to mean that Fārābī himself was born there, but this need not be necessarily the case. Ebn Ḥawqal is

contradicted by no less an authority than Ebn al-Nadīm, who was also a younger contemporary of Fārābī and had close personal contacts with Yaḥyā b. ʿAdī, Fārābī's most successful student, from whom he received a significant amount of his information about philosophical studies for his *Fehrest*. Ebn al-Nadīm states (ed. Flügel p. 263 l. 9) that Fārābī's origins (*aṣloho*) lie in Fāryāb in Khorasan (*men al-Fāryāb men arż Ḵorāsān*), that is, the town half way down the road from Marv-al-rūḏ to Balḵ. Bayhaqī in his *Tatemmat Ṣewān al-ḥekma* (p. 16.7) conflates the two traditions and says that Fārābī was "from Fāryāb in Turkestan."

These variants in the basic facts about Fārābī's origins and pedigree indicate that they were not recorded during his lifetime or soon thereafter by anyone with concrete information, but were rather based on hearsay or probable guesses. When in the 7th/13th century Fārābī's ethnic origin was made into an issue by the biographers, dogmatic statements without acknowledgment of source begin to appear. We thus hear for the first time, from Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa, that Fārābī's father was a commander of the army and of Persian (*fāresī*) descent, to which Ebn Ḵallekān responded as described above. Ultimately pointless as the quest for Fārābī's ethnic origins might be, the fact remains that we do not have sufficient evidence to decide the matter.

There was also no information about Fārābī's early life and studies, other than the mere fact that he had studied logic with Yūḥannā b. Ḥaylān. The fabricated stories accordingly proliferated. In this case, as perhaps in others, these stories may have started as plausible extensions of the little that was known about him or as well-intentioned elaborations of elements in his works. Since, as his *nesba* indicated, he was supposed to be from the East, he was said to have come to Baghdad as a young man and to have studied there. Almost every source mentions Yūḥannā b. Ḥaylān as his teacher, except that Ebn Ḵallekān adds Abū Bešr Mattā, plausibly because by Ebn Ḵallekān's time Abū Bešr had gained the reputation of having been the master logician before Fārābī himself, and Fārābī could not but have studied with the best. Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa (II, p. 136 ll. 23-24) also mentions, citing an otherwise unidentified *History* (*Taʾrīḵ*), that Fārābī used to take grammar lessons from the famous Baghdadi grammarian Ebn al-Sarrāj (d. 316/928) in exchange for logic lessons, a report which would appear to be based on the numerous references to grammar in Fārābī's works as well as on Ebn al-Sarrāj's reputation of having introduced logic in his grammatical analyses (cf. the discussion and references in Zimmermann, pp. cxviii-cxxii).

A similar basis in Fārābī's works would seem to lie also behind the legends of Fārābī's talent for languages. As is well known, in his incessant efforts to differentiate between universal logical structures of thought and particular grammatical structures, Fārābī has in a number of his works references and glosses in Persian, Sogdian, and Greek (but no Turkish; cf. Walzer, 1985, p. 3), and this apparently gave rise to his reputation as a polyglot (Zimmermann, p. lxxvii n. 2). There are variations on this theme, depending on the purposes of the author using it. Ebn Ḳallekān, in line with his pro-Turkish bias, makes the outlandish claim that Fārābī knew no Arabic when he came to Baghdad but only "Turkish and numerous other languages," and that he mastered Arabic only afterwards. Later on, in his story about Fārābī at the court of Sayf-al-Dawla (see further below), he has Fārābī say that he knew more than seventy languages. Related to this would appear to be an interpolated statement in a manuscript of Fārābī's account of the appearance of philosophy preserved in Kabul (Library of the Ministry of Information, Arabic MS 217, fol. 154r; cf. S. De Laugier de Beaurecueil, *Manuscrits d'Afghanistan,* Cairo, 1964, p. 293, no. 40). The Arabic text from this manuscript remains unpublished, but according to Mahdi (1971, pp. 523-24), after the report that Fārābī studied with Yūḥannā b. Ḥaylān (i.e., after what corresponds to the end of the passage quoted by Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa, II, p. 135 l. 24), the Kabul manuscript adds, "After this, he traveled to the land of the Greeks and stayed in their land for eight years until he completed [the study of the] science[s] and learned the entire philosophic syllabus." If this is accurate, it would be another instance of the legend of the polyglot Fārābī, this time also based on his reputation as expert of the Greek syllabus. This is further corroborated by a statement reported by Ṣafadī (I, p. 106) which presents the gist of the legend of the polyglot Fārābī: "It is said that he learned philosophy from the Greek language because he knew it as well as other languages." Qazvīnī (d. 682/1283), a later representative of the Eastern tradition, invents yet another accomplishment; he says that Fārābī *translated* Aristotle into Arabic from Greek (*Āṯār*, p. 548).

From the Syrian tradition, Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa reports two romantic stories about Fārābī's youth. The first, reported personally to Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa (*ḥaddaṯanī*) by the famous theologian Āmedī (d. 631/1233), says that Fārābī was a warden in a Damascus orchard in his early life and that he used to read philosophy at night by the light of the watchman's lamp. The other story, apparently a variant of the first and reported anonymously by Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa ("from the manuscript notes of some shaikh"), has it that Fārābī was a judge (*qāżī*) in early life but gave it all up for philosophy, which he would

study by the light of watchmen's lamps. The same anonymous source also adds that Fārābī took up philosophy when he accidentally read some books by Aristotle left with him for safekeeping. As is Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa's wont, he does not try to harmonize these stories with the others about his education in Baghdad.

With regard to Fārābī's education and early life, Ebn Ḵallekān makes up yet another story on the basis of what he read in the available literature. In the parallel account by Masʿūdī of the transmission of philosophical instruction from Alexandria to Baghdad (*Tanbīh*, pp. 121-22; cf. Stern; Gutas, 1999), Masʿūdī says that the teaching of philosophy was transferred "in the days of al-Motawakkel to Ḥarrān and then in the days of al-Moʿtażed it eventually got to Qowayrā and Yūḥannā b. Ḥaylān, who died in Baghdad during the reign of al-Moqtader. . ." From the context, Ebn Ḵallekān apparently inferred that Yūḥannā was still in Ḥarrān when he taught Fārābī—since Masʿūdī does not explicitly mention that the *teaching* was transferred to Baghdad but only that Yūḥannā had died there—and thus has Fārābī take a side trip from Baghdad to Ḥarrān to study with Yūḥannā and then return to Baghdad.

Fārābī's association with Sayf-al-Dawla, understandably, figures prominently in the Syrian tradition. Ebn al-Qefṭī first mentions that Sayf-al-Dawla honored Fārābī and offered him protection. The anonymous source (*šayḵ*) of Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa adds that he would accept as stipend no more than four silver dirhams per day—a paltry sum, in contrast with the notorious liberality of Sayf-al-Dawla—and that upon his death funeral services were led by Sayf-al-Dawla himself. Ebn Ḵallekān repeats these stories and adds that he was buried outside the Bāb al-Ṣaḡīr in the south of Damascus. Ebn Ḵallekān is also the only source to mention that Fārābī was eighty years old when he died. Bayhaqī finally, has the romantic story of Fārābī being killed by highway robbers on his way from Damascus to Ascalon. As A. Adnan Adıvar suggests (*İA* V, 453a), this would appear to be in imitation of the story of the death of the poet Motanabbī.

The personal qualities which these stories in the later sources are designed to convey are single-minded devotion to study accompanied by frugality bordering on asceticism, or what was then regarded as the ideal philosophical way of life. He is said to have had no care for possessions or gainful employment and to have subsisted on little more than soup and wine. Ebn al-Qefṭī adds that he would go around in "Sufi garb" (*be-zeyy ahl al-taṣawwof*). Understandably, as already discussed, this detail in Ebn Ḵallekān becomes

"Turkish garb" (*be-zeyy al-atrāk*). Ebn Ḵallekān also adds that Fārābī liked solitude, and that he would compose his works and meet with students in parks by the pond. As for his accomplishments, other than his alleged knowledge of languages mentioned above, and universal praise as philosopher, mention is also made of his musical talent, obviously deriving from his massive work on musical theory and practice. This occurs most prominently in the story told by Ebn Ḵallekān about how Fārābī entered the court of Sayf-al-Dawla unannounced and unrecognized and, after exhibiting an astounding knowledge of languages, made people laugh, reduced them to tears, and put them to sleep by playing on his lute that he would tune differently for each purpose. Interestingly, a similar story about Fārābī is reported by Bayhaqī from an unidentified work "Morals of the Philosophers" (*Aḵlāq al-ḥokamā'*), only this time it occurs in the court of the Ṣāḥeb b. ʿAbbād (q.v.) in Ray. Bayhaqī appears to be oblivious to the anachronism: the Ṣāḥeb was about twelve when Fārābī died and, as far as we know, Fārābī never went to Ray. Qazvīnī repeats the story about Fārābī and the Ṣāḥeb, and adds another one of his own: Fārābī would go from city to city in disguise because the kings were looking for him, and in each city that he liked he would buy a house and orchards and slaves and slavegirls. When he tired of them, he would marry off the girls to the slaves, give them the real estate as a present, and leave and never come back. One can see how with each retelling, here as in the previous stories, the legendary material snowballs with more colorful additions.

As for the real Fārābī, beyond the idealized image of abstemious philosopher of the later biographers and of the Turkish philosopher of Ebn Ḵallekān, we have no direct means of knowing. Indirectly, it can be observed that Fārābī went through life unnoticed (epitomizing the Epicurean precept *láthe biōsas*), which would explain the lack of general information about him. Even his senior colleague in Baghdad, Abū Bešr Mattā, engaged in social activity and debated the grammarian Sīrāfī, but there are no such reports about Fārābī, not even by Tawḥīdī, the great gossip of philosophical gatherings. After all those years of teaching and writing, we hear only of two disciples, the brothers Ebn ʿAdī, Yaḥyā and Ebrāhīm. Yaḥyā eventually headed the Aristotelian school in Baghdad, and Ebrāhīm apparently accompanied his teacher to Aleppo. These, and the few patrons for whom he wrote some works, are the only traces of Fārābī's social life. Indirectly also, we are left with his works, but they reveal very little, if anything, of his personal circumstances. There have been attempts to read into his philosophical works his life and religious

beliefs—like Walzer's suggestion (1975, p. 5) that he was an Imami Shiʿi on the basis of his statements in the *Mabādeʾ*, or Mahdi's conjecture (1971, p. 524a) that he studied in Constantinople (!) in order to explain his allegedly particular brand of Plat onism—but these are speculative in the extreme and are best avoided. We must be content with Fārābī's philosophical legacy in his works.

WORKS

Fārābī's works have been listed in a conventional and uncritical way a number of times (see the Bibliography). There is no critical inventory on the basis of the manuscripts that will identify double listings under different titles and eliminate misattributions, much less are there historical and philological studies of the transmission of individual works. These are tasks for the future. A first attempt at analyzing the transmission of the *Mabāde'* was made by Mahdi 1990.

The narrative biographies present some interesting information in this regard that should be kept in mind. Ebn al-Nadīm, first of all, knows surprisingly few titles of Fārābī's works—essentially, some commentaries and paraphrases of Aristotle. This fact needs to be explained in studying the transmission of his works. The report by Bayhaqī, whose credulity for legends is compensated for by his bibliographic acumen, complements that of Ebn al-Nadīm. He says that in his time, i.e., the middle of the 6th/12th century, few of Fārābī's books were available in Khorasan; most of them were to be found in Syria. In addition, he says that he saw in the library of the chief Shiʿite leader (*naqīb al-noqabāʾ*) in Ray autograph manuscripts by Fārābī as well as works of his copied by his student Yaḥyā b. ʿAdī (who was, incidentally, a scribe by profession). The availability of Fārābī's books in Syria is to be expected; some of these would be the redactions, or clean copies, prepared by the other brother, Ebrāhīm b. ʿAdī who was, according to Bayhaqī again, Fārābī's redactor or editor (*modawwen*). On the other hand, the copies in Ray were by the hand of the other brother, Yāḥyā, and these would have come there from Baghdad. The detail about the Shiʿite leader's library also needs to be taken into consideration in studying the dissemination of Fārābī's works among Shiʿites. Furthermore, this report indicates two additional things: first, that there was no interest in his works in Khorasan, and perhaps in the East generally, right after his death and until the appearance of Avicenna; and second, that when Avicenna's work made philosophy a popular subject in the East, Fārābī's works were overshadowed by those of Avicenna, at least until Bayhaqī's time. This is to be contrasted with Ebn Ḵallekān who, writing in Syria and Egypt about a century after Bayhaqī

says that most of Fārābī's works were transmitted in the form of disconnected paragraphs and notes, and that some of them were found incomplete and dispersed because he used to compose on loose pieces of paper and not in (bound) quires. Though the reason adduced by Ebn Ḵallekān is apparently fictitious (it proves Fārābī's frugality and lack of interest in worldly matters), the state of preservation of Fārābī's works that he describes for his time and place has to be verified against extant manuscripts.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

(for cited works not given in detail, see "Short References"): Sources (texts of all the Arabic sources reporting on the life and activities of Fārābī and known to the editor have ben collected in one volume by Ḥ. ʿA. Maḥfūẓ, *Al-Fārābī fī marājeʿ al-ʿarabīya*, Baghdad, 1975).

Abū'l-Fedāʾ, *Al-Moḵtaṣar fī taʾrīḵ al-bašar*, Istanbul, 1286/1869-70.

Ṣāʿed Andalosī, *Ketāb ṭabaqāt al-omam*, ed. L. Cheikho, Beirut, 1912.

Z@áahīr-al-Dīn Bayhaqī, *Tatemmat Ṣewān al-ḥekma*, ed. M. Šafīʿ, Lahore 1351/1932.

Ebn Abī Oṣaybeʿa, *ʿOyūn al-anbāʾ fī ṭabaqāt al-aṭebbāʾ*, ed. A. Müller, Cairo, 1299/1882.

Ebn al-Qefṭī, *Taʾrīḵ al-ḥokamāʾ*, ed. J. Lippert, Leipzig, 1903.

Abū Naṣr Fārābī, *Aḥkām al-nojūm* in J. Āl Yāsīn, ed., *al-Fārābī: Resalatānī falsafīyatānī*, Beirut, 1407/1987.

Idem, *Ketāb al-Mella wa noṣūṣ oḵrā*, ed. M. Mahdi, Beirut, 1968.

Idem, *Ketāb al-mūsīqī al-kabīr*, ed. Ḡ. Ḵašaba and M. Ḥefnī, Cairo, 1967.

Zakarīyāʾ b. Moḥammad Qazvīnī, *Āṯār al-belād wa-aḵbār al-ʿebād*, ed. Beirut, 1380/1960.

Ḵalīl b. Aybak Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfī be'l-wafayāt* I, ed. H. Ritter, Istanbul and Leipzig, 1931.

Secondary literature. A. Adnan [Adıvar], "Fārābī," *İA* V, pp. 451-69.

D. Gutas, "The Alexandria to Baghdad Complex of Narratives," *Documenti e Studi sulla Tradizione Filosofica Medievale* 10 (forthcoming).

I. Madkour, *La place d'al-Fārābī dans l'école philosophique musulmane*, Paris 1934.

M. Mahdi, "Al-Fārābī," in C. C. Gillispie, ed., *Dictionary of Scientific Biography* IV, New York, 1971, pp. 523-26.

Idem, "al-Taʿālīm wa'l-tajreba fi'l-tanjīm wa'l-mūsīqā" in *al-Fārābī wa'l-ḥażāra al-ensānīya* (Mehrajān al-Fārābī, 1975), Baghdad, 1975-76, pp. 260-80.

Idem, "Al-Fārābī's Imperfect State," *JAOS* 110, 1990, pp. 691-726.

M. Steinschneider, *al-Farabi (Alpharabius) des arabischen Philosophen Leben und Schriften*, St. Petersberg, 1869, pp. 1-11 (the first critical discussion of Fārābī's biography; although Steinschneider had only the later sources at his disposal, his analysis is still valuable).

S. M. Stern, "Al-Masʿūdī and the Philosopher al-Fārābī," in S. M. Ahmad and A. Rahman, eds., *Al-Masʿūdī Millenary Commemoration Volume*, Aligarh, 1960, pp. 28-41.

R. Walzer, *Al-Farabi on the Perfect State*, Oxford, 1985.

Idem, "Al-Fārābī," in *EI2* II, pp. 778-81.

F. W. Zimmermann, *Al-Farabi's Commentary and Short Treatise on Aristotle's "De Interpretatione,"* London, 1981.

Fārābī's works (bibliographies listed in chronological sequence).

A. Ateş, "Fārābī'nin eserlerinin bibliyografyasi," *Belleten* 15, 1951, pp. 175-92 (apparently a [revised?] reprint of the author's bibliography which first appeared in *Fārābī tetkikleri,* Istanbul, 1950, pp. 111-26).

K. ʿAwwād and M. ʿAwwād, "Moʾallafāt al-Fārābī," *al-Mawred* 4/3, 1975, pp.

223-68.

M. Cunbur, İ. Binark, and N. Sefercioğlu, *Fārābī Bibliyografyası*, Ankara, 1973.

Ḥ. ʿA. Maḥfūẓ and J. Āl Yāsīn, *Moʾallafāt al-Fārābī*, Baghdad, 1395/1975.

J. Jāwušī, "Āṭār Abū [*sic*] Naṣr al-Fārābī," in *Abū Naṣr al-Fārābī: faylasūf al-Eslām wa'l-moʿallem al-ṯānī*, Damascus, 1409/1989, pp. 117-55.

N. Rescher, *Al-Fārābī: An Annotated* , Pittsburgh, 1962.

In addition to these bibliographies which deal with all the works of Fārābī, inventories of his logical work alone were drawn in two other publications by N. Rescher, *al-Fārābī's Short Commentary on Aristotle's "Prior Analytics,"* Pittsburgh 1963, pp. 12-17, and *The Development of Arabic Logic*, Pittsburgh, 1964, pp. 122-28, no. 26. None of these bibliographical surveys is completely reliable, and each should be used with caution.