



## QOṬB-AL-DIN ŠIRĀZI

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**QOṬB-AL-DIN ŠIRĀZI**, **Maḥmud** b. **Žiā'**-al-Din **Mas'ud** b. **Moṣleḥ**, known also as 'Allāma Širāzi, al-Šāreḥ al-'Allāma, and Mollā Qoṭb and nicknamed Abu'l-Tanā', a Persian polymath, Sufi, and poet (b. Shiraz, October 1236; d. Tabriz, 7 February 1311; see Ebn Ḥajar, IV, p. 339; Qāšāni, p. 118). His father, Žiā'-al-Din Mas'ud Kāzeruni, was a well-known physician and a leading Sufi, who had received his *kerqa* (Sufi robe) from Šehāb-al-Din 'Omar Sohravardi, and who, in turn, as a blessing, garbed his son, the young Qoṭb-al-Din, in a Sufi robe at the age of ten. Nevertheless, Qoṭb-al-Din later received his own robe from the hands of Najib-al-Din 'Ali b. Bozḡoš Širāzi, a noted Sufi shaikh of the time (*Dorrat al-tāj*, p. 263).

Qoṭb al-Din began studying medicine, first under his father, who taught and practiced medicine at the Moẓaffari hospital in Shiraz, and, after his father's death, with his uncle and other masters of the period. He studied *Avicenna's Qānun* (the *Canon*) and its commentaries, including the famous commentary of Faḡr-al-Din Rāzi, with which the young Qoṭb-al-Din raised many issues, and which led to his decision to write his own commentary, where he discussed those issues and resolved many of them subsequently in the company of Naṣir-al-Din Ṭusi.

Qoṭb-al-Din lost his father at the age of fourteen. He replaced his father as an ophthalmologist at the Moẓaffari hospital and, at the same time, continued his education under his uncle Kamāl-al-Din Abu'l-Ḳayr and then Šaraf-al-Din Zaki Buškāni and Šams-al-Din Moḥammad Kiši, all of whom were expert teachers of the *Qānun* (Minovi, p. 346; Barkašavi, in Ebn Ḥajar (Rokšāni in Wiedemann,



1986, p. 547). Ten years later, he quit his medical practice to devote all his time to his education, and when Naṣir-al-Din Ṭusi, the renowned scholar-vizier of the Mongol Holāgu Khan (q.v.), established the observatory of Marāḡa, the young Qoṭb-al-Din was among the many scholars who were attracted to that city from all over country; he left Shiraz for Marāḡa some time after 1260 and reached Marāḡa some time about 1262 (see Qoṭb-al-Din, *al-Toḥfa al-sa'diya*, MS, introduction; according to Minovi 1988, p. 347).

In Marāḡa, Qoṭb-al-Din resumed his education under Naṣir-al-Din Ṭusi, with whom he studied the *al-Eṣārāt wa'l-tanbihāt* of Avicenna, discussed the difficulties he had had in understanding the first book (*Kolliyāt*) of the *Qānun*, and, while working in the new observatory, studied astronomy under him. According to Kṽāndamir (III, pp. 116-17), on one occasion he accompanied his master, Naṣir-al-Din, to an audience with Holāgu, in which the latter said that the only reason for not killing Naṣir-al-Din was that his death would leave the astronomical table (*zij*) he was working on unfinished; Qoṭb-al-Din replied that he would complete the task; and, when asked by Naṣir-al-Din after leaving the audience whether he was serious about what he had said, the young pupil had no hesitation in giving his master the same assurance. In spite of his considerable work at the observatory, it is worth noting that neither Raṣid-al-Din Faẓl-Allāh (p. 63), nor Šehāb-al-Din Waṣṣāf (pp. 51-52) makes any reference to Qoṭb-al-Din in this connection. More noteworthy, perhaps, is the absence of Qoṭb-al-Din's name among the list of the names that Naṣir-al-Din has mentioned as his assistants in the introduction to his *Zij (Kaṣf al-ẓonun* II, p. 967; cf. Minovi, 1988, pp. 347-48). Nevertheless, in his testament (*waṣiya*), Naṣir-al-Din advises that his son A ṣil-al-Din should work with Qoṭb-al-Din on the completion of the *zij*.

Qoṭb-al-Din's stay in Marāḡa did not last very long. He traveled to Khorasan in the company of Naṣir-al-Din, where he decided to stay on to study under Najm-al-Din Kātebi Qazvini in Jovayn and work as his assistant. Some time after 1268, he set out on a journey which took him to Qazvin, Isfahan, and Baghdad, and later Konya in Anatolia, just at the time when Jalāl-al-Din Moḡammad Balki Rumi (q.v.) was gaining fame there, and whom he reportedly met (Ebn Abi'l-Wafā', II, p. 124; Ḥāfeẓ Ḥosayn, I, pp. 326-27; Minovi, 1988, p. 349). In Konya he studied *Jāme' al-oṣul men aḡādiṯ al-rasul* of Majd-al-Din Mobārak Ebn al-Aṯir with Ṣadr-al-Din Qunawi (d. 1274), who had had a well-known correspondence with Naṣir-al-Din Ṭusi; subsequently, the governor of Konya, Mo'in-al-Din Solaymān Parvāna (see *Ebn Bibi*, p. 272-332), appointed Ṣadr-al-



Din as judge (*qāzi*) of Sivas and Malatya, where he compiled *Meftāḥ al-meftāḥ*, *Eḳtiārāt al-mozaffariya*, and his commentary on Sakkāki (Minovi, 1988, p. 350). In 1282, he was sent by the Mongol *Il-khan Aḥmad Takudār* (r. 1282-84) as an envoy to Sayf-al-Din Qalāwun (r. 1279-90), the Mamluk ruler of Egypt (Abu'l-Fedā', IV, p.17; Ebn Kaldun, V, p. 546; Ebn al-'Emād, V, p. 370). In his letter to Qalāwun, Takudār referred to Qoṭb-al-Din as the chief judge (*aqza'l-qozāt*; see Waṣṣāf, I, pp.113-18; Ebn al-'Ebri, p. 506-18). Later, Qoṭb-al-Din collected various critiques of and commentaries on the *Qānun* and used them in his commentary on the *Kolliyāt* (Minovi, pp. 350-51; Wiedemann, 1986, p. 547).

The last part of Qoṭb al-Din's active career was spent in Syria, where he taught the two celebrated works of Avicenna, the *Qānun* on medicine and the *Šefā'* on philosophy. He soon left for Tabriz, where he spent the rest of his life. He died on 7 February 1311 and was buried in the Čarandāb Cemetery, close to the tomb of Qāzi Bayzāwi (q.v.). The date of his death was commemorated in chronograms and poems (Qāšāni, pp. 118-19; Ḥāfez Ḥosayn, I, pp. 324, 331; Faṣiḥ Kṯāfi, III, p. 18). Qoṭb-al-Din had an insatiable passion for learning, evidenced by the twenty-four years that he spent collecting material and studying with masters of the time in order to write his commentary on the *Kolliyāt*; he was deservedly distinguished and remembered for his extensive breadth of knowledge as well as for his clever sense of humor and indiscriminate generosity. He was also a master chess player and played the *rabāb*, a kind of viol (Minovi, 1988, pp. 351, 355-59; Eqbāl; Wiedemann, 1986, p. 547).

*Works* (arranged by title in alphabetical order). (1) *Dorrat al-tāj fi ḡorrat al-dabbāj*, also known as *Anmuzaj al-'olum* and traditionally referred to by students as *Anbān-e Mollā Qoṭb* or *Hemyān-e Qoṭb*, an encyclopedic work on philosophy (comp. 21 June 1306), written for Rostam Dabbāj, one of the Eshāqvand rulers of *Gilān*, during his stay with the latter (Šafā, *Adabiyāt* III, pp. 240-41, 1229-30; Minovi, 1988, pp. 369-70). The parts on natural sciences, theology (*elāhiyāt*), logic, public affairs and the introduction were edited by Sayyed Moḥammad Meškāt (5 vols. in one, Tehran, 1938; repr., Tehran, 1986). From its part on mathematics, the treatises on astronomy, arithmetic, and music were edited by Šādeq Sotuda (Tehran, 1945), and the section on ethics and mysticism, that is, the third and fourth sections, were edited by Māhdokt Bānu Homā'i (as *Dorrat al-tāj, baḳš-eḥekmat-e 'amali wa sayr o soluk*, Tehran, 1990). (2) *Eḳtiārāt-e mozaffari*, a treatise on astronomy in Persian in four chapters, extracted from his *Nehāyat al-edrāk* and dedicated to Mozaḳfar-al-



Din Bulaq Arslān (*Kašf al-ẓonun* I, p. 35; Minovi, 1988, p. 352). (3) *Al-Enteşāf*, a gloss in Arabic on Jār-Allāh Maḥmud Zamaḵšari’s Qur’an commentary, *al-Kaššāf ‘an al-ḥaḳā’eq al-tanzil wa ‘oyun al-aqāwil* (Zerekli, VIII, p. 66). (4) *Faḥḥ al-mannān fī tafsir al-Qor’ān*, a comprehensive commentary on the Qur’an in forty volumes, written in Arabic and also known by the title *Tafsir ‘allāmi* (*Kašf al-ẓonun* II, p. 1235; Zerekli, VIII, p. 66). (5) *Fi ḥarakāt al-dahraja wa’l-nesba bayn al-mostawi wa’l-monḥani*, written as an appendix to *Nehāyat al-edrāk* (Wiedemann, 1986, p. 548). (6) *Hāšia bar Ḥekmat al-‘ayn*, on theology; as indicated by the title, it is a commentary of *Ḥekmat al-‘ayn* of Najm-al-Din ‘Ali Dabirān Kātebi; Moḥammad b. Mobārakšāh Boḳāri, in his own commentary on Kātebi’s book, refers also to Qoṭb-al-Din’s remarks and comments on the same work by the expression “in the Qoṭb’s comments” (*fi’l-ḥawāši al-qoṭbiya*; see *Kašf al-ẓonun* I, p. 685). (7) *Ketāb fa’alta wa lā talom fi’l-hay’a*, an Arabic work on astronomy, written for Aşil-al-Din, son of Naşir-al-Din Ṭusi (8) *Moşkelāt al-e’rāb* on Arabic syntax (Minovi, 1988, p. 353). (9) *Moşkelāt al-tafāsir* or *Moşkelāt al-Qor’ān*, on rhetoric; both Zerekli and Hāji Kālifā have ascribed this to Qoṭb-al-Din, although one can deduct from Hāji Kālifā’s comments that he had not actually seen it (*Kašf al-ẓonun* II, p. 1695; Zerekli, VIII, p. 66). (10) *Meftāḥ al-meftāhā*, a commentary on the third section of the *Meftāḥ al-‘olum*, a book on Arabic grammar and rhetoric by Abu Ya’qub Serāj-al-Din Yusof Sakkāki K̄vārazmi (Modarres, IV, p. 471). According to Hāji Kālifā (*Kašf al-ẓonun*, II, p. 1763), Qoṭb-al-Din’s work was the first commentary ever written on this book. According to [Dawlatşāh Samarqandi](#) (pp. 218-19), Qoṭb-al-Din wrote this work at the request of the poet Homām Tabrizi. A manuscript of it exists in the library of the Sepahsālār Madrasa (MS 299). (11) *Nehāyat al-edrāk fī derāyat al-aflāk*, on astronomy, in Arabic, divided into four chapters, written for Bahā’-al-Din Moḥammad Jovayni, governor of Isfahan and son of Şams-al-Din Jovayni. Senān Pasha wrote a commentary on it (see *Kašf al-ẓonun* II, p. 1985; Minovi, 1988, pp. 378-79). (12) *Resāla fi’l-baraş*, a medical treatise on leprosy in Arabic (Zerekli, *A’lām*, VIII, p. 66). (13) *Resāla fī bayān al-ḥājat ela’l-ṭebb wa ādāb al-aṭebbā’ wa waşāyā-hom* (Zerekli, VIII, p. 66; *Fehrest al-kotob al-‘arabiya al-moḥfuza be’l-Kotobkāna al-ḳediwiya* VI, p. 35). (14) *Şarḥ Taḳkera naşiriya*, on astronomy. Hāji Kālifā attributed this commentary on Naşir-al-Din Ṭusi to Qoṭb-al-Din on the authority of others (*Kašf al-ẓonun* I, p. 35; Şafā, *Adabiyāt*, III, p. 270). (15) *Şarḥ Ḥekmat al-eşrāq Şayḳ Şehāb-al-Din Sohravardi*, on philosophy and mysticism, in Arabic. To this commentary ‘Abd-al-Karim (d. ca. 1494) devoted a gloss in Persian (*Kašf al-ẓonun* I, p. 684; Minovi, 1988, pp. 371-72). A lithographed edition of this commentary was published in 1897 in Tehran (new ed. by ‘Abd-Allāh Nurāni and Mahdi Moḥaqqeḳ, Tehran, 2001).



(16) *Šarḥ Moḳtaṣar al-oṣul Ebn Ḥājeb*, a commentary on Ebn Ḥājeb’s *Montaha’l-so’āl wa’l-amal fi ‘elmay al-oṣul wa’l-jadwal*, a book on the sources of law according to the Malikite school of thought (*Kašf al-ẓonun* II, p. 1853). (17) *Sazāvār-e Efteḳār*, Moḥammad-‘Ali Modarres (IV, p. 471) attributes a book by this title to Qoṭb-al-Din, without providing any information about its content (see also Dehḳodā, s.v. Qoṭb-al-Din). (18) *Tarjoma-ye Tahrir-e Oqlides* [Euclid], a work on geometry in Persian in fifteen chapters, completed in Ša‘bān 681/November 1282 and dedicated to Mo‘in-al-Din Solaymān Parvāna (Minovi, 1988, pp. 352, 368-69; Qorbāni, p. 430; Modarres, IV, p. 471). (19) *Al-Toḥfa al-sa’diya*, also called *Nozhat al-ḥokamā’ wa rawzat al-aṭebbā’*, on medicine, a comprehensive commentary in five volumes on the *Kolliyāt* of the *Qānun* of Avicenna, written in Arabic. It is one of the most important works of its kind; it is dedicated to Sa’d-al-Din Moḥammad Sāvaji, the vizier of the Mongol ruler [Ġazān Khan](#) (r. 1295-1304, hence the book’s title). The author died before he could complete this work. A manuscript is preserved in the Sepahsālār Library (Ketāb-kāna-ye Madrasa-ye Sepahsālār) in Tehran (Minovi, 1988, pp. 351, 361-62, 374-75). (20) *Al-Toḥfa al-šāhiya fi’l-hay’a*, an Arabic book on astronomy, comprised of four chapters, written for Moḥammad b. Šadr-al-Sa’id, known as Tāj-al-Eslām Amiršāh. Mollā ‘Ali Qušji and Sayyed Šarif Jorjāni have written commentaries on this book (Šafā, *Adabiyāt* III, p. 271; Minovi, 1988, p. 368). (20-21) Zerekli (VIII, p. 66) has credited Qoṭb-al-din with the authorship of two books, *Tāj al-‘olum* and *al-Tabṣera*, which are not mentioned in other sources. Qoṭb-al-Din is also credited with the authorship of a book on ethics in Persian, written for Malek ‘Ezz-al-Din, the ruler of Shiraz, and a book on astronomy, titled *Ḥall moškelāt al-Majestī*, of none of which an existing manuscript has been reported. He also wrote poetry, but apparently did not leave a *divān* (Minovi, 1988, pp. 352, 363-64).

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August 29, 2005