



AMĪN AḤMAD RĀZĪ

AMĪN AḤMAD RĀZĪ, better known as **AMĪN RĀZĪ**, 10th-11th/16th-17th century author of the *Haft eqlīm*, a famous geographical and biographical encyclopedia. A native of Ray, he came from a family known for its literary taste and erudition; many of his relatives held prominent official positions. His father, K̄vāja Mīrzā Aḥmad, was appointed mayor (*kalāntar*) of Ray by Shah Ṭahmāsb Ṣafawī; his paternal uncle, K̄vāja Moḥammad Šarīf, was a poet and minister to Moḥammad Khan Šaraf Oḡlī Taklū, governor of Khorasan, to the latter's son, and subsequently to Shah Ṭahmāsb at Yazd, Abarqūh, and Isfahan. K̄vāja Gīāt Beg, Amīn Rāzī's first cousin and father of the Mughal queen Nūr Jahān, was influential at the court of Akbar and later became the powerful minister of Jahāngīr, with the title E'temād-al-dawla. Rāzī states (I, p. 4) that he completed his encyclopedia in 1002/1593-94 (although part of the work was written later); the dates of his birth and death are unknown. He may have visited India during the reign of the Mughal emperor Akbar (see Storey, I, p. 1169; *Haft eqlīm* I, preface, p. iii; Sayyed 'Alī-Rezā Naqawī, *Tadkera-nevīsī-e fārsī dar Hend o Pākestān*, Tehran, 1343 Š./1964, p. 117, n. 1). The *Haft eqlīm* ("Seven climes") took Rāzī six years to complete (I, p. 2). In the style of other Persian *tadkeras*, it provides extensive topographical, historical, and biographical information grouped according to the "climes" or divisions of the world. There is a preponderance of biographies, which number 1560; these are generally more comprehensive and precise than those found in some earlier sources, such as 'Awfī's *Lobāb al-albāb* and Dawlatšāh's *Tadkerat al-šo'arā*. The work contains citations of poetry not attested elsewhere, as well as prose passages by poets, e.g., the satirist 'Obayd Zākānī. The narrative is based



upon authentic sources, thirty-nine of which have been identified by Naqawī (*Tadkera-nevīsī*, pp. 118-19). Ethé provides a table of the contents of the work, arranged by clime (*Cat. Ind. Off.* I, pp. 380-499, no. 724). Although many manuscripts of the *Haft eqlīm* exist, the only complete printed edition is that of Jawād Fāẓel (3 vols., Tehran, 1340 Š./1961). The Calcutta edition is more carefully edited, but it omits the fourth clime, which constitutes more than half the work.

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