

Lārī: Muṣliḥ al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ṣalāḥ ibn Jalāl al-Sa‘dī al-‘Ibādī al-Anṣārī al-Lārī

Sonja Brentjes

Born Lār (Iran), circa 1510

Died Āmid, Diyār Bakr (Turkey), 1572

Muṣliḥ al-Dīn al-Lārī was an eagerly sought after scholar and teacher who worked and wrote in the fields of logic, mathematics, astronomy, law, Qur’ān-exegesis (*tafsīr*), and rational theology (*kalām*). He was born in the south-Iranian city of Lār and studied with Ghiyāth al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (died: 1542), a scholar with profound interests in astronomy. Ghiyāth al-Dīn wrote, among other things, a commentary on the *Almagest* and a commentary on the astronomical handbook by **Ulugh Beg** and his collaborators. The first commentary claims to complete **Ptolemy’s** book, while the second maintains that it will deliver keys to the astronomers (for carrying out their profession). Thus, it may well be that Lārī studied these works as well as the entire scope of problems dealt with by *‘ilm al-hay’a* (astronomy) with Shīrāzī. From Iran, Lārī moved to India and worked some time between 1530 and 1556 at the Moghul court of Humāyūn (1508-1556). In 1556 he traveled to the Ottoman Empire, first to Aleppo, then to Istanbul, and finally to Diyār Bakr. In Diyār Bakr, Lārī worked for Governor Iskandar Pasha. In 1559, he was appointed head teacher at the Hüsrev Pasha school in Diyār Bakr and the city’s Muftī (a type of legal magistrate).

One mathematical work and three astronomical treatises are known to be extant today. The mathematical work discusses geometrical problems. The astronomical treatises are: a commentary, dedicated to Humāyūn, on **‘Alī Qūshjī’s** introductory Persian text on astronomy, a text on dawn and twilight, and an astronomical treatise composed in the form of questions and answers. His most influential astronomical text, judged on the basis of the extant copies, was his commentary on Qūshjī’s introductory text. Except for this work, none of Lārī’s astronomical and mathematical writings have been studied so far.

Selected References

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