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IBN KHALDŪN'S LEGACY AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

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THE INFLUENCE OF IBN KHALDŪN'S POLITICAL THOUGHT ON IBN AL-AZRAQ: A COMPARATIVE EXPOSITION OF THE *MUQADDIMAH AND BADĀ'I' AL-SILK FĪ ṬABĀ'I' AL-MULK*

Aldila Isahak

Introduction

The impact Ibn Khaldūn brought successive generations of scholars from 15th century till the present day 21st century showed his ingenuity in finding an answer to the causes of human development which have withstood the test of time. It has been claimed that his thought was first discovered by Western academia hence, his fame transcends the cultural and religious boundaries which otherwise would have been identified only with the Muslim world. However, the emergence of the study of Ibn al-Azraq since 1967 in Arabian academia, has shed light upon an Andalusian Muslim scholar of the 15th century, and disproves this thesis. With the publication of an article entitled "Ibn al-Azraq Shāriḥ Ibn Khaldūn" by Ḥassan al-Sā'ih,¹ other writings on Ibn al-Azraq have started to emerge.

The study of Ibn al-Azraq further expanded when 'Abdul Hādī al-Tāzī published an article entitled "Ma'a Ibn al-Azraq fī Makḥṭūṭātih: Badā'i' al-Sulūk fī Ṭabā'i' al-Mulūk wa Ḥadīthih 'an al-Safārah wa al-Sufarā'"² in 1975. And the study of Ibn al-Azraq further received impetus when two scholars, Muḥammad 'Abdul Karīm³ and 'Alī Samī al-Nashshār,⁴ edited and published his political treatise *Badā'i' al-Silk fī Ṭabā'i' al-Mulk*⁵ or *The Nature of Governance*,⁶ separately in 1977. In an article entitled "Ibn al-Azraq: Bayna Badā'i' al-Silk fī Ṭabā'i' al-Mulk wa Rawḍah al-'I'lām"⁷ written by Muḥammad Murād, he affirmed that Ibn al-Azraq can be considered the first scholar to have studied Ibn Khaldūn's thought. Hence, it can be deduced that Ibn al-Azraq was the first, thus far, to have discovered the significance of Ibn Khaldūn's thought and foresaw the impact of the theory of *'aṣabiyyah*.

¹ Ḥassan al-Sā'ih. Ibn al-Azraq Shāriḥ Ibn Khaldūn. *Da'wah al-Haqq*. Morocco (1967) pp. 102 – 107.

² 'Abdul Hādī al-Tāzī. "Ma'a Ibn al-Azraq fī Makḥṭūṭātih: Badā'i' al-Sulūk fī Ṭabā'i' al-Mulūk wa Ḥadīthih 'an al-Safārah wa al-Sufarā'". *Majallah Majma' al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah* (50) Damascus (1975) p.116-142.

³ Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn al-Azraq. *Badā'i' al-Silk fī Ṭabā'i' al-Mulk*, edited by Muḥammad 'Abdul Karīm. 2 volumes (Tūnis : al-Dār al-'Arabiyyah lil-Kitāb; 1977).

⁴ Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn al-Azraq. *Badā'i' al-Silk fī Ṭabā'i' al-Mulk*, edited by 'Alī Samī al-Nashshār. 2 volumes (Baghdād: Manshūrāt Wizārāt al-'I'lām; 1977, 1978).

⁵ Henceforth cited as *Ṭabā'i' al-Mulk*.

⁶ The translation of the title of the book into English is mine.

⁷ Barakāt Muḥammad Murād. Ibn al-Azraq: *Bayna Badā'i' al-Silk fī Ṭabā'i' al-Mulk wa Rawḍah al-'I'lām*", *al-'Arabi* (Kuwait Ministry of Information: Kuwait) no. 520, March 2002.