

Very few manuscripts of *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, all of which are partial, survive. The first incomplete edition of Ibn Sa'd's *Ṭabaqāt* was published in Leiden from 1904-40 under the direction of Edward Sachau. The most complete edition was edited and published by 'Alī Muḥammad 'Umar in Cairo in 2001, in ten volumes, plus an index volume.

Finally, care must be exercised not to conflate or confuse the author of *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr* with Muḥammad b. Sa'd al-'Awfi (d. 276/889), whose family *isnād* that traces back to Ibn 'Abbās is cited frequently in the Qur'ān commentaries of al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Abī Ḥātim.

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#### Ibn Sayyid al-Nās

**Ibn Sayyid al-Nās** (671-734/1273-1334)—whose full name was Faṭḥ al-Dīn Abū l-Faṭḥ Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ya'murī—was a biographer of the Prophet, *ḥadīth* transmitter, Shāfi'ī jurist, *rijāl* expert, composer and collector of panegyric poetry (*madhīh*, *madhī*) about the Prophet, and bon vivant. A scion of a learned family from Seville, he was born in Cairo about three decades after his ancestors had left al-Andalus for North Africa. Ibn Sayyid al-Nās's early biography bears witness to the preeminence in classical *ḥadīth* science of the conception of elevated transmission (*al-isnād al-'alī*) comprising a few transmitters separated by exorbitant chronological gaps. Less than one year old, Ibn Sayyid al-Nās was reportedly taken by his father to the famous *shaykh* 'Abd al-Laṭīf b. 'Abd al-Mun'im al-Harrānī (d. 672/1273-4), who granted him an *yāza* (license) to transmit on his authority. At the age of four, he attended the *ḥadīth* sessions of another renowned teacher, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. 'Abd al-Wāḥid al-Muqaddasī (d. 676/1277), and while fourteen years old he recorded *ḥadīth* from Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Qasṭallānī (d. 686/1287). Thus, Ibn Sayyid al-Nās secured for himself high *isnāds* from the last year in life of each of his *shaykhs*, a suspicious coincidence which suggests that his biography was attuned to the requirements of elevated transmission. Later on, he studied in Egypt, Syria, and the Ḥijāz and obtained licences from numerous transmitters in Iraq and North Africa, so that the number of his authorities reached almost one thousand. He enjoyed the patronage of Mamlūk

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