



ABŪ ‘ABDALLĀH B. AL-BAYYE’

ABŪ ‘ABDALLĀH B. AL-BAYYE’ (EBN AL-BAYYE’), a noted traditionist and local historian, b. 321/933, d. 405/1014; full name: ABŪ ‘ABDALLĀH MOḤAMMAD B. ‘ABDALLĀH B. MOḤAMMAD B. MOḤAMMAD B. ḤAMDŪYA B. NO‘AYM B. AL-ḤAKAM AL-ḌABBĪ AL-ṬAHMĀNĪ; he was commonly known as AL-ḤĀKEM AL-NĪSĀBŪRĪ because of his once having held a post as judge (*qāḏī*). Ebn al-Bayye’ was an immensely learned Hadith scholar and one of the first to write systematic treatments of the science of Hadith study. Although he traveled on pilgrimage and for purposes of study both to Iraq and Transoxania, his life was spent mostly in Nīšāpūr, where he was one of the central figures in the development of that city into a major intellectual center. His history of Nīšāpūr, which consisted of over 2,500 biographies of ‘*olamā*’ who lived in or passed through the city, along with an account of its topography and pre-Islamic and early Islamic history, is preserved only in a severely truncated version and in excerpts in other works; but in its original form it was a monument of biographical compilation.

Later Hadith scholars occasionally criticized Ebn al-Bayye’s accuracy and scrupulousness in transmitting and validating traditions, but their criticisms were rebutted by his supporters and are far outweighed by his contributions to the systematization of the science as a whole. He was also criticized for harboring Shi’ite sympathies. His defenders point out that the evidence for this is tenuous, while his credentials as an Aṣḥ‘arite are sound. The charge of Shi’ism may have its root in accusations made by the *Karrāmīs*, who at one point destroyed his *menbar* and barred him from leaving his house. The



Karrāmīs are known to have used false accusations of Shi‘ism as a political weapon against their opponents, among whom were numbered the Ash‘arites. Of Ebn al-Bayye’s numerous works, four have been printed: *al-Mostadrak ‘ala’l-ṣaḥīḥayn fi’l-ḥadīth*, Hyderabad, 1334-42/1917-24; *Ma’refat ‘olūm al-ḥadīth*, ed. Mo‘azzam Ḥosayn, Cairo, 1937; *al-Madkāl elā ma’refat al-eklīl*, ed. and tr. J. Robson, London, 1953; *Ta’rīk ‘olamā’ ahl Nayšābūr*, much abridged version reproduced as *Ketāb aḥwāl Nayšābūr* in *The Histories of Nishapur*, ed. R. N. Frye, The Hague, 1965.

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Ebn al-Jawzī, *al-Montazam* VII, Hyderabad, 1938-40, pp. 274ff.

*EI*² III, p. 82.

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