



ABU'L-'ALĀ' HAMADĀNĪ

ABU'L-'ALĀ' HAMADĀNĪ, ḤASAN B. AḤMAD B. ḤASAN B. MOḤAMMAD B. SAHL B. SALAMA AL-'AṬṬĀR, saintly specialist in the science of Qur'ān readings (*qerā'āt*) and Tradition, born in Hamadān in 488/1090 and died in 569/1173. Abu'l-'Alā' pursued his education in Hamadān, Isfahan, Khorasan, Baghdad, and Wāseṭ, hearing eminent traditionists of his time and mastering grammar, Koranic sciences, literature, genealogy, and history. He was regarded as the leading scholar of Hamadān, and was famed not only for his learning but for his ascetic life and piety. He made it a practice to guard his spiritual life from possible corruption by avoiding all entanglements which might put him under a pecuniary obligation to anyone. Thus he sought no patronage or support from the rulers of his time, nor did he accept gifts offered to him, even an appointment to the staff of a *madrassa* or *rebāṭ*. Though he insisted on working in his own house, his reputation spread all about the Islamic East and apparently students flocked to him. The caliph Moqtafī wrote asking his prayers and addressing him as “the saintly father.” In this context Yāqūt states that he was known and honored among all ranks of society and became the spiritual guide of the leading men of his age. Stories of his deeds and miracles are told, and poems were composed in his honor (see especially Yāqūt).

In scholarship he concentrated his mature work on the sciences of Tradition and Qur'ān reading. A number of his works survive (Brockelmann, *GAL* S. I, p. 724; Sezgin, *GAS* I, p. 12 notes his commentary on the Qur'ān readings of Ya'qūb b. Eṣḥāq; Sezgin's work has not yet reached the century of Abu'l-'Alā').



In his time he was considered the greatest authority on Qur'ān readings in Iraq. Ebn al-Jazarī says that he was to the easterners what al-Dānī was to the Maġrebīs (*Ṭabaqāt al-qorrā'* I, Cairo, 1351/1932-33, pp. 204-06). Descriptions of two manuscript works of his on this subject, *Ġāyat al-eḳteṣār fi'l-qerā'āt al-'ašr le-a'emmat al-amṣār* and *al-Hādī elā ma'refat al-maqāte' wa'l-mabāde'*, and indications of his place in this field may be found in O. Pretzl, "Die Wissenschaft der Koranlesung," *Islamica* 6, 1933-34, pp. 1-47, 230-46. For a description of a MS of the commentary (above) and a MS of his *Ketāb al-tamhīd fi ma'refat al-taǧwīd* bearing an *eǧāza* in Abu'l-'Alā's hand, see Ahmet Ateş, *Oriens* 5, 1952, pp. 36-37 and Plate I.

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