



BAYHAQĪ, EBRĀHĪM

BAYHAQĪ, EBRĀHĪM B. MOḤAMMAD, Arabic littérateur, known solely through his one book, the *Ketāb al-maḥāsen wa'l-masāwī*. Nothing is known of him except for what can be gleaned from this, though his forebears presumably had some connection with [Bayhaq](#) in Khorasan; he apparently wrote in the caliphate of al-Moqtader (295-320/909-12), and Brockelmann surmised that he may have belonged to the circle of Ebn al-Mo'tazz (d. 296/908; *GAL*, S. I, p. 249). His *adab* book deals with the good and bad aspects of historical events, moral characteristics, ways of behavior, etc., juxtaposing them antithetically and illustrating his argument with numerous literary and historical anecdotes, some with Iranian settings, e.g., on such Sasanian emperors as Anōšīravān and Ḳosrow Parvēz and on the [Barmakids](#). From the general tendencies of much of the material chosen by him and from his personal attitudes, Bayhaqī emerges as a moderate Shi'ite, perhaps a Zaydī (Geries, pp. 74-79). He drew extensively on the work of his predecessor [Jāḥeẓ](#), and especially from the *Ketāb al-ḥayawān*, and was in turn much utilized by the unknown author of the *Ketāb al-maḥāsen wa'l-aẓdād*, who, in Geries' opinion and *pace* van Vloten's tentative opting for a common source, drew directly from Bayhaqī's work (G. van Vloten, *Le livre des beautés et des antithèses*, Leiden, 1898, preface, pp. IX-XI; Geries, pp. 102-10). Otherwise, Bayhaqī's book seems to have been little known after his own time, with the author barely mentioned by later sources.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

See also Ibrahim Gerjes, *Un genre littéraire arabe: al-Maḥâsin wa-l-masâwî*, Paris, 1977, pp. 71-101.

Editions: Dr. Friedrich Schwally, ed., *Kitāb al-Maḥâsin wal-Masāwī*, Giessen, 1900-02, 3 pts. (index in O. Rescher, *Index und Stellennachweise zu Fr. Schwally's Baihaqî-Ausgabe*, Stuttgart, 1923); Moḥammad Abu'l-Faẓl Ebrāhīm, ed., Cairo, 1386/1961, 2 vols. (both based on the two extant mss, of Leiden and Calcutta).

Search terms:

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