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Nayrīzī: Abū al-‘Abbās al-Faḍl ibn Ḥātīm al-Nayrīzī

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Flourished **Baghdad, (Iraq), last half of the 9th century**

Nayrīzī is reputed to have been among the best mathematicians and astronomers of his day, though not much biographical information is known. In astronomy, his best-known work, a commentary on the *Almagest* of **Ptolemy**, is no longer extant. This must have been one of the earliest commentaries to be written in Arabic, because the *Almagest* had been first translated into Arabic only a century earlier. He is also credited with the composition of two *zīj*es (astronomical tables used for predicting planetary motions). The longer was said, by the bio-bibliographer Ibn al-Qiftī, to have been based on the *Sindhind*, an Indian classic in astronomy. The shorter was, presumably, based upon the *Almagest*. These works were cited by several astronomers from the ‘Abbāsīd period, although they are no longer extant. Three shorter, more specialized treatises survive: (1) on the spherical astrolabe; (2) on finding the *qibla* direction (the direction toward Mecca, toward which pious Muslims pray five times a day); and (3) on constructing hour lines in a hemispherical sundial. **Ibn Yūnus**, in his own *zīj*, criticized some elements of Nayrīzī's astronomical work while praising him as a renowned mathematician.

Selected References

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