

become the world's servant." All in all, the poem is not proposing a dogmatic clinging to an outdated way of life. Rather, it advocates the safeguarding of the immutable principles and values of Islam, of living a Pure Life of virtue and piety in accordance with the teachings of the Prophet, 'Alī, Imams, and Dā'īs, while embracing positive aspects of modernism that are compatible with those principles and values.

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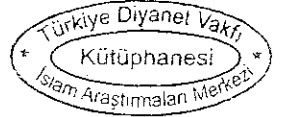
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An Outline of a Plagiarism Controversy from the Abbasid Era: Al-Sarī l-Raffā' vs. the Khālīdī Brothers

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Abstract

One of the bitterest plagiarism controversies recorded in the medieval Arabic sources concerned the poet al-Sarī l-Raffā' and the two poets known as the Khālīdī brothers. Based on the surviving evidence, this article examines closely the dispute between both parties in Iraq and Syria of the fourth/tenth century and the various ways in which it engaged others, including very prominent figures of the Abbasid era. Attention is paid to the development of the dispute and to the steps taken by each side to prevail over the other. The present article shows how the victory of the Khālīdī brothers was structurally facilitated by the absence of formal legal mechanisms and procedures to address plagiarism allegations in the Abbasid period.

Keywords

Al-Sarī l-Raffā' – the Khālīdī brothers – Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm al-Şābī' – Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan al-Muhallabī – plagiarism

1 Introduction

It was a plagiarism controversy that reverberated across the literary world of Iraq and Syria of the fourth/tenth century. As the close contemporary anthologist al-Tha'ālibī puts it, it split the very learned into two camps, each