

**ELI'EZER BEN NATAN OF MAINZ** (c.1090–1170), rabbinic scholar, tosafist, and legal authority; known by the acronym **Raban**. He studied in Mainz in the period just after the First Crusade (on which he wrote a booklet). In 1150, together with R. Ya'aqov ben Me'ir Tam and R. Shemu'el ben Me'ir, he promulgated the so-called Troyes ordinances, \**taqqanot* in various fields of Jewish law.

Rabbi Eli'ezer's major work, called *Sefer Raban* or *Eveni ha-'Ezer* (Prague, 1610), contains halakhic rulings and *responsa* following the order of the Talmudic tractates. It includes much information about the scholars and practices of France, Germany, and Babylonia. Another work attributed to Raban, *Tsafnat Pa'neah*, has not survived, although it appears to have been related to *Sefer Raban*. Rabbi Eli'ezer commented extensively on *piyyutim* and other aspects of the liturgy. Subsequent Ashkenazi commentators on the prayers often added their remarks to the commentary of Raban. *Sefer Raban* was published with a commentary by Solomon Z. Ehrenreich in 1926.

• Victor Aptowitz, *Mavo le-Sefer Rabiya'el* (Jerusalem, 1938), pp. 49–57.  
Efraim E. Urbach, *Ba'alei ha-Tosafot* (Jerusalem, 1980), vol. 1, pp. 173–184.  
—EPHRAIM KANARFOGEL

### ELI'EZER BEN YO'EL HA-LEVI OF BONN

(c.1140–1225), rabbinic scholar, tosafist, and legal authority; known by the acronym **Rabiah** or **Ravyah**. He was the grandson of R. \*Eli'ezer ben Nathan of Mainz, the leading halakhist of twelfth-century Germany. His father, R. Yo'el ha-Levi of Bonn, was venerated by tosafists in both Germany and northern France. Eli'ezer traveled throughout Germany, studying with such masters as Rabbi Eli'ezer of Metz, R. Yehuda ben Shemu'el he-Hasid, and R. Yehuda ben Kalonimos of Speyer. He established his academy in Bonn and moved to Cologne toward the end of his life.

The bulk of his major work of Jewish law, known as *Sefer Rabiya'el* (vols. 1–3 [1933–1935]) or *Avi ha-'Ezri*, was published by Victor Aptowitz in three volumes, along with an introductory volume containing biographical descriptions of Eli'ezer and his family, teachers, and students (vol. 4 was edited by M. H. Fischel [1965]; additional volumes have been published by David Dablitsky [1976–1989]). This work is a collection of legal decisions, *responsa*, *tosafot*, and other extracts arranged according to the order of the tractates of the Talmud. Eli'ezer also wrote a separate work on the orders of Nashim and Neziqin entitled *Avi'asaf*, which was cited in Ashkenazi rabbinic works of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries but is no longer extant. The beginning of Eli'ezer's treatise, entitled *Seder Bayit Sheni*, has survived.

He refused compensation for teaching Torah and turned down formal rabbinic office. He was a leading proponent of the Ashkenazi practice of adhering to the view of the majority in matters of communal government, defending this position against challenges from rabbinic scholars of northern France.

• Efraim E. Urbach, *Ba'alei ha-Tosafot* (Jerusalem, 1980), vol. 1, pp. 378–388 and index.  
—EPHRAIM KANARFOGEL

**ELI'EZER BEN YOSEI HA-GALILI** (2d cent.), tanna; pupil of R. \*Aqiva' ben Yosef, he was one of those who established the academy at \*Yavneh (*Ber.* 63b) and then in Usha'. A noted aggadist, he is credited with having laid down thirty-two hermeneutical rules for the interpretation of the \**aggadah* (see HERMENEUTICS). These were preserved in a special *baraiyta'*, which is printed in some Talmud editions after the tractate *Berakhot*. It was also discovered in a manuscript entitled *The Mishnah of Rabbi Eli'ezer*, to which was appended another longer *midrash* attributed to him, but probably of a much later date, also known as *Midrash Aggur*. He is only mentioned once in the Mishnah (*Sot.* 5.3) but frequently in *baraiyot*. His halakhic dicta are few, and most of his extant statements are of an aggadic nature.

• Gershom Bader, *The Encyclopedia of Talmudic Sages*, translated from the Yiddish by Solomon Katz (Northvale, N.J., and London, 1988). Hyman Gerson Enelow, ed., *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer o Midrash Shelosim u-Shetayim Midot* (New York, 1933). Aaron Hymen, *Toledot Tanna'im ve-Amora'im* (1910; Jerusalem, 1987). Menachem, Mendel Kasher and Jacob Ber Mandelbaum, eds. and trans., *Sarei ha-'Elof*, rev. and corr. ed. (Jerusalem, 1978), vol. 1, pp. 38–39. Mordecai Margalit, ed., *Entsingsiddiyah le-Halkhei ha-Talmud veha-Ge'onim* (Jerusalem, 1946).

—DANIEL SPERBER

### ELI'EZER OF BEAUGENCY (late 12th cent.),

biblical exegete. Eli'ezer represents the final phase of the northern French school of Jewish bible exegesis pioneered by \*Rashi, which endeavored to interpret Scripture according to its plain sense (see PESHAT). Three of Eli'ezer's full commentaries have been published: on *Isaiah* (published by Nutt [1879]), on *Ezekiel*, and on the Twelve Minor Prophets (published by Poznanski [1913]). Fragments of his *Job* commentary are extant and it seems that he also wrote commentaries on the Torah, *Jeremiah*, *Psalms*, *Ecclesiastes* and *Daniel*. Heavily influenced by the great *peshat* commentator \*Rashbam (Rashi's grandson), Eli'ezer focused attention on the poetic features of the Hebrew Bible (e.g., parallelism), as well as the redaction process of the prophetic books. He also placed particular emphasis on the historical allusions in the Bible, aiming to place them within their ancient context. Eli'ezer's commentaries provide a window into the broader cultural life of northern French Jews. He frequently provided Old French glosses on Hebrew words (see LA'AZ). He also knew Latin, and cites the Vulgate in his commentaries in order to refute Christological interpretations of the prophetic literature. His commentaries focus on the themes of martyrdom and exile, in an effort to provide spiritual sustenance to Jews of his generation, who had endured the Crusades and other, less-violent, forms of Christian evangelization.

• Robert A. Harris, "The Literary Hermeneutic of Rabbi Eliezer of Beaugency" (Ph.D. Dissertation, The Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, 1997). Samuel Poznanski (ed.), *Perush 'al Yelqezel u-Terai 'Asar* (Warsaw, 1913). John W. Nutt (ed.), *Commentaries on the Later Prophets: Isaiah* (London, 1879).

—MICHAEL A. SIGNER, REVISED BY MORDECHAI Z. COHEN