

New Readings in Arabic Historiography from Late Medieval Egypt and Syria

*Proceedings of the Themed Day
of the Fifth Conference of the
School of Mamluk Studies*



ISLAMIC HISTORY AND CIVILIZATION. STUDIES AND TEXTS

EDITED BY

JO VAN STEENBERGEN AND MAYA TERMONIA

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Maya Termonia

Jo Van Steenberghe

Antwerp, June 2020

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Notes on Contributors

Rasmus Bech Olsen

holds a MA in Arabic literature and a PhD in history from the University of London. During his doctoral studies he specialized in the history and historiography of 13th- and 14th-century Syria with a focus on urban politics and practices of protest. He has since worked with Arabic manuscripts from Ethiopia as a postdoc in the ERC-project Islamic Literature in the Horn of Africa (Islhornaf). He is currently employed as a curator of Islamic art at the David Collection in Copenhagen.

Víctor de Castro León

(Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Department III) received his PhD in Arabic and Islamic Studies from the University of Salamanca in 2015. He is currently researcher in the Project “Mediterranean Nautical Cartography in Arabic and Ottoman Turkish: Islands or Gateways of Knowledge in the Sea of Transcultural and Translinguistic Translation Processes?” (PI S. Brentjes). He has also been a researcher in the project “Practicing Knowledge in Islamic Societies and their Neighbours” (funded by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, PI M. Fierro, Anneliese Maier Award 2014) and a team member of the Research Project “Local Contexts and Global Dynamics: Al-Andalus and the Maghreb in the Islamic East” (FF12016-78878-R AEI / FEDER UE) at the CSIC, Spain. His research focuses on Andalusi historiography, the history of the Naşrid kingdom of Granada (13th–15th centuries), and the intellectual production of the Islamic West. Among his recent publications is “Ibn al-Khaṭīb, official chronicler of the Naşrid dynasty: Theory and political practice.”

Mohammad Gharaibeh

is a professor of Islamic Intellectual History at the Institute for Islamic Theology of the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. Prior to this he was the coordinator of two international research projects, the Annemarie Schimmel Kolleg “History and Society of the Mamluk Period” and the Alexander von Humboldt Kolleg for “Islamicate Intellectual History” at the University of Bonn. His research focuses on Arabic historiography, hadith studies, and Islamic theology, as well as Islam and Muslims in European societies.

Kenneth A. Goudie

received his PhD in 2016 from the University of St Andrews for a thesis entitled “The reinvention of jihād in twelfth-century al-Shām.” His research interests lie

in the historiography of medieval Islam, particularly the formation and maintenance of group identities and the development of jihad ideology. His current research focuses on the historical writings of the fifteenth-century Quran exegete and historian Burhān al-Dīn al-Biqā'ī.

Christian Mauder

(PhD 2017, University of Göttingen, Germany) is Associate Professor in the Study of Religions with specialization in Islam at the University of Bergen, Norway. Before coming to Bergen, he completed a membership in the School of Historical Studies at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, and a postdoctoral fellowship in the Department of Religious Studies at Yale University. In his research, he focuses on the Islamic world in the late middle and early modern periods. His forthcoming monograph *In the sultan's salon: Learning, religion and rulership at the Mamluk court of Qāniṣawh al-Ghawrī (r. 1501–1516)* constitutes the first in-depth analysis of an Egyptian court as a transregional center of intellectual, religious, and political culture at the turn from the late middle to the early modern period. It is based on his dissertation, which won the 2018 Malcom H. Kerr Dissertation Award (Humanities) of the Middle East Studies Association of North America and the 2018 Christian Gottlob Heyne Award of the University of Göttingen.

Evan Metzger

is a PhD Candidate in Islamic Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. His dissertation, entitled “Orphans, guardianship and legal interdiction: Legality and legal process in medieval Islam,” details the history of a specific, relatively unknown legal institution, the *mawda' al-ḥukm*, which was developed by Muslim jurists between the late Fatimid and Mamluk periods in Egypt in order to supervise and invest the property of legal orphans and absent merchants.

Zacharie Mochtari de Pierrepont

obtained his PhD at the University of Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne (Paris), studying the history of Rasūlid Yemen (1229–1454) and the role of sacred and blessed lineages in Yemeni medieval history and historiography. His work as a postdoctoral research fellow at Ghent University is currently dedicated to the study of the famous jurist and scholar Ibn Hajar al-ʿAsqalānī (1372–1449), and particularly his main historiographical works, through an examination of their narratological structures and contextualization. Zacharie Mochtari de Pierrepont is a member of *Humanistica*, the French association for Digital Humanities, member of *The Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations*. He

is also a member of the *SEMOMM*, the Society for the study of Middle-East and Muslim worlds.

Clément Onimus

is Associate Professor at Paris 8 University (Vincennes—Saint Denis). He has defended a PhD at Ghent University and the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* on the conflicts between the amirs under Sultans Barqūq and Faraj, published under the title *Les Maîtres du jeu* (Paris, 2019). His research deals with the socioeconomic and political history of the Cairo Sultanate, including questions of wheat or money speculation as well as military careers, peace, and warfare among the amirs. He is now undertaking a deep study of the *qāḍī* Badr al-Dīn al-ʿAynī and 15th-century Egyptian historiography.

Tarek Sabraa

is a scholar of the Islamicate world, mainly of the later middle and early modern periods with a focus on the Cairo Sultanate. He completed his PhD at Sapienza—Università di Roma, Italy in 2017. Besides his expertise in studying Arabic manuscripts, which led to a profound knowledge of the world of the Cairo Sultanate's elites, he specializes in editing their so far unedited remains and providing them with contextualizing studies on authors and their oeuvre. Tarek Sabraa's research interests comprise environmental history, biographical studies, the social history of al-Shām and Egypt, and intellectual history.

Iria Santás de Arcos

(Ecclesiastical University San Dámaso, Madrid) received her PhD in Arabic and Islamic Studies from the University of Salamanca in 2014. She is currently Associate Professor of Arabic Language in the Ecclesiastical University San Dámaso, Madrid. She is also member of the Research Project "Local Contexts and Global Dynamics: Al-Andalus and the Maghreb in the Islamic East" (FF12016-78878-RAEI / FEDER UE) CSIC, Spain. Her research focuses on Andalusi *adab*, Christian Arabic literature, and the intellectual production of the early Islamic West. Among her recent publications is "Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi. Legitimador de la dinastía omega? Cuestiones de poder en al-ʿIqd al-farīd" (2019).

Gowaart Van Den Bossche

is a post-doctoral research fellow with the *KITAB* project at the Aga Khan University Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations. He obtained his PhD in history at Ghent University in January 2019 for a dissertation entitled "The past, panegyric, and the performance of penmanship: Sultanic biography and social practice in late medieval Egypt and Syria," a detailed textual analysis and con-

textualization of six sultans' biographies written by two Egyptian authors from the later 13th and early 14th century, Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir (d. 1293) and Shāfi' b. 'Alī (d. 1330).

Jo Van Steenbergen

(PhD 2003, KU Leuven, Belgium) is Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies in the Department of Languages and Cultures and the Henri Pirenne Institute for Medieval Studies at Ghent University. His publications include: *Order out of chaos. Patronage, conflict, and Mamluk socio-political culture. 741–784/1341–1382* (Brill, 2006); *Caliphate and kingship in a fifteenth-century literary history of Muslim leadership and pilgrimage* (Brill, 2016); *Trajectories of state formation across fifteenth-century Islamic West-Asia* (ed.) (Brill, 2020); *A history of the Islamic world, 600–1800. Empire, dynastic formations, and heterogeneities in pre-modern Islamic West-Asia* (Routledge, 2020); and various chapters and articles on late medieval Syro-Egyptian social and cultural history. He is supervisor and principal investigator of several research projects and digital initiatives related to the history of late medieval Egypt and Syria.

Koby Yosef

(PhD 2011, Tel Aviv University) is a lecturer in the department of Arabic at the Bar-Ilan University. His research interests include the history and historiography of the Cairo Sultanate. Currently, he is working on a monograph on the transformation of the families of *mamlūk* amirs and sultans at the time of the Cairo Sultanate. He published several articles on social ties and ethnic identities of *mamlūks*, among them most recently "Usages of kinship terminology during the Mamluk Sultanate and the notion of the 'Mamlūk family,'" in Y. Ben-Bassat (ed.), *Developing perspectives in Mamluk history: Essays in honor of Amalia Levanoni*, Leiden 2017, 16–75; and "Cross-boundary hatred: (Changing) attitudes towards Mongol and 'Christian' *mamlūks* in the Mamluk Sultanate," in R. Amitai and S. Conermann (eds.), *The Mamluk Sultanate from the perspective of regional and world history: Economic, social and cultural development in an era of increasing international interaction and competition*, Goettingen and Bonn 2019, 149–214.

History Writing, *Adab*, and Intertextuality in Late Medieval Egypt and Syria: Old and New Readings

Jo Van Steenbergen

Fifty years ago, in 1969, the Islamicist, historian, and pioneer of so-called Mamluk studies Ulrich Haarmann (1942–99) submitted his PhD dissertation on history writing in Egypt and Syria in the period 1260–1340 CE.¹ Haarmann transformed the text of his dissertation almost immediately into a monograph, which was published in 1970 and entitled *Source studies for the early Mamluk period (Quellenstudien zur frühen Mamlukenzeit)*.² Its main findings were soon also communicated in the summarized format of an article that was published in 1971.³ In the same period, almost simultaneously with the young Haarmann's *Quellenstudien*, another dissertation on exactly the same topic was published in monograph format. This was the work of the American historian and “Mamlukist” Donald Little (1932–2017), entitled *Introduction to Mamlūk historiography: Analysis of Arabic annalistic and biographical sources for the reign of al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāʾūn*.⁴ Both Haarmann's and Little's dissertations were published in two newly established German series, *Islamkundliche Untersuchungen* and *Freiburger Islamstudien* respectively, each closely related to the invigorating scholarship and academic leadership of Haarmann's PhD supervisor in Freiburg, Hans Robert Roemer (1915–97). Ever since the early 1970s, these publications of Haarmann and Little have had a substantial impact on the relatively small field of the study of late medieval Arabic historiography. With that field's relative growth from the late 1990s onwards, they have continued to retain referential status, even when some of the methods and assumptions that had informed Haarmann's and Little's PhD research in the 1960s came under increasing scrutiny. In fact, as will be further detailed in this introduction, the work they began and the insights they brought to the field have continued to inspire, and even define, the study of Arabic history writing in Egypt and Syria between the 13th and 16th centuries.

1 See Glassen, Gedenken.

2 Haarmann, *Quellenstudien*.

3 Haarmann, *Auflösung*.

4 Little, *Introduction*; see Massoud, Donald.

Haarmann's thesis on 14th-century Arabic history writing's increased tendency to integrate elements from the distinct literary genres of *adab* and *sīra*—that is, belles lettres and popular epics—and Little's method of collating 14th- and 15th-century historiographical texts word for word to reconstruct intertextualities and historiographical practice have certainly also inspired the 13 contributions that make up this volume. These all began as papers that were presented at the fifth meeting of the School of Mamluk Studies (Ghent, July 5–7, 2018). They originated in particular as contributions either to this meeting's first day, which was dedicated to the theme of historiography, or to two related historiography sessions that were organized during the next two days. How these chapters tie in with their wider contexts of late medieval Arabic history writing and its study in recent decades, and how many of them actually represent within those contexts not just related but also new readings, will be sketched in this introduction.

Haarmann's intention in his *Quellenstudien* was not just to highlight and illustrate a trend of "Literarisierung" of history writing. He also insisted on the need to ask questions of social import and impact to explain, or at least better understand, the manifestation of this phenomenon of change and fluidity in a literary and intellectual genre whose parameters and boundaries were long thought to have been canonized in the 9th and 10th centuries. Haarmann, therefore, brought to attention the need to consider wider contextual issues of audience and authorship, as well as the effects of their substantial transformations in exactly the same period. In this context, he referred to the following statement by the French Orientalist Edgard Blochet (1870–1937), from the introduction to Blochet's edition and translation of the chronicle by the Egyptian Christian historian al-Mufaḍḍal b. Abī l-Faḍā'il (d. 1358): "At the time of the Mamluk sultans, everyone in Egypt was more or less marked by the urge to write texts of history, grand texts of history in particular, as voluminous as possible. [This was true] especially for people who had no business with [text writing], and whose functions in live were of a totally different order."⁵ For Blochet, this popularity and interest from the expanding ranks of what he called "amateurs" helped to explain late medieval changes in Arabic text writing as typical exponents of "post-Classical" decay and decline. Haarmann, and to a much lesser extent also Little, at least attempted to start thinking beyond the latter Orientalist stereotypes and to understand these substantial transformations more in

5 "A l'époque des sultans mamlouks, en Egypte, tout le monde fut plus ou moins atteint de la manie d'écrire des histoires, de grosses histoires principalement, les plus volumineuses que l'on pouvait, surtout les gens dont ce n'était point l'affaire, et dont les fonctions dans la vie étaient tout autres." Blochet, *Moufazzal* 365 (23); Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 130n2.

their own right. For them, they were manifestations of a late medieval Syro-Egyptian particularity, related to—as Little nevertheless only summarily dared to suggest—“variations [of] the historian’s originality.”⁶ The three modes in which these transformations presented themselves, and have so far been studied, will be surveyed below. This will then be followed by an appreciation of how more recent research has been moving beyond questions of originality to understand these manifold transformations in the quantity, context, and genre of history writing between the 13th and early 16th centuries.

1 The Booming Business of Late Medieval Arabic History Writing

First among these transformations was the simple and well-established fact that, as Blochet also implied, between the 13th and early 16th centuries more Arabic historiographical texts were written in Egypt and Syria (as well as in the strongly interconnected Arabian region of the Hijaz) than ever before or after in premodern Islamic history. Konrad Hirschler, in his survey chapter on the study of late medieval Syro-Egyptian historiography in the early 21st century, speaks of an “explosion of historical writing” that for him already had begun with “some first inklings of change towards the end of the twelfth century in the early Ayyubid period.”⁷

Haarmann and Little saw the late 13th and early 14th century as a first major moment in this acceleration of history writing, coinciding with the three successive reigns of Sultan al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalāwūn (r. 1293–4; 1299–1309; 1310–41). Both, therefore, chose to focus their research on this long moment of dynastic sovereignty and cultural efflorescence. Haarmann estimated that for this half century of Syro-Egyptian history, more than a dozen contemporary chronicles have been preserved and that at least a similar number of contemporary texts of history have only left—in the late 1960s—minor traces at best.⁸ Little confirmed that the narrative sources for this period “are among the richest to be found for any phase of Islamic history.”⁹ He, therefore, made a selection of chronicle and biographical texts that were available to him, written by seventeen contemporary and eight later historians, and compared how all of them reported the same events or the same biography from the late 1290s and mid-1300s in related or differentiated ways.

6 Little, *Introduction* 2.

7 Hirschler, *Studying* 162.

8 Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 130.

9 Little, *Introduction* 94.

In the early 2000s, one of Little's graduate students, Sami Massoud, engaged in similar dissertation research on the entanglement of the historiographical production that was concerned with the late 1370s to the early 1400s and the reigns of the sultans al-Malik al-Zāhir Barqūq (r. 1382–9; 1390–9) and his son al-Malik al-Nāṣir Faraj (r. 1399–1405; 1405–12). His analysis identified a dozen chronicles by nine Syrian and Egyptian authors as contemporary with this eventful turn of the 14th to 15th centuries, and it considered six texts by later authors as equally relevant for comparison and collation.¹⁰

More recent research has furthermore established that the biggest moment—in quantitative if not in qualitative terms—in the history of late medieval Arabic history writing was the subsequent period, between the 1410s and the 1460s, when especially a series of formerly *mamlūk* sultans and their distinct courts succeeded each other, from the violent constitution of the reign of Sultan al-Malik al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh (r. 1412–21) to the equally violent dissolution of the entourage of Sultan al-Malik al-Zāhir Khushqadam (r. 1461–7). Described by Little in a later survey publication as a period in which history writing was “culminating in the Mamlūk ‘imperial bureaucratic chronicle,’”¹¹ this particular half century witnessed a historiographical quantum leap that was realized by some 30 Egyptian, Syrian, and Hijazi authors. Together, they penned an impressive corpus of more than 80 texts, ranging from voluminous chronicles and biographical dictionaries to single-volume historical monographs and treatises and often integrating texts from 14th, 13th, and earlier centuries with contemporary materials and observations.¹²

In the final half century of the late medieval period, dominated by the reigns, entourages, and extensive social and cultural patronage of the sultans al-Malik al-Ashraf Qāyitbāy (r. 1468–96) and Qāniṣawh al-Ghawrī (r. 1501–16), this remarkable early to mid-15th-century acceleration in historiographical production seems to have slowed down again. For this period, the writerly activities of a dozen Egyptian, Syrian, and Hijazi authors are currently known to have jointly produced some 20 works of history.¹³

In general, for the entire late medieval period between the end of the 12th and the beginning of the 16th century, some 150 Arabic texts of history are thus currently known to have been written in the closely interconnected regions of Egypt, Syria, and the Hijaz. They represent an important share in the output of up to about 70 authors. These approximate numbers were moreover

10 Massoud, *Chronicles*; Notes.

11 Little, *Historiography* 413; quoting from Khalidi, *Arabic* 183.

12 See Van Steenbergen et al, *Fifteenth-Century*.

13 Petry, *Protectors* 5–9; Meloy, *Imperial* 29–30.

not equally spread over these three long centuries, but they rather witnessed a substantial accumulation in the 15th century. No less than half of these many tens of authors were active in the period's closing century, and they produced two-thirds of all the era's historiographical texts. Especially the middle of this century stood out as decades of extremely intense and widely appreciated historiographical practice, when the likes of al-Maqrīzī (ca. 1363–1442), Ibn Ḥajar (1372–1449), al-'Aynī (1361–1451), Ibn Taghribirdī (1411–70), and al-Sakhāwī (ca. 1427–97) left their marks on the booming business of Arabic history writing for centuries to come.

2 The Expanding and Diversifying Ranks of Authors and Audiences

As Blochet already surmised, the unprecedented quantitative leap in Arabic historiographical production coincided with equally substantial changes in the historian's profile. Basically, not only did the historians' ranks expand, they also diversified. Whereas scholars-traditionists, such as the likes of early Arabic historiography's champion al-Ṭabarī (d. 923), continued to appear as predominant, they were joined in the practice and appreciation of history writing by courtiers-bureaucrats of varying backgrounds and specializations. Furthermore, "the two groups were certainly not mutually exclusive," Little rightly observed, explaining how most of the latter "would have had some exposure in the course of their education to the art and science of *ḥadīth* and its transmitters, which continued to influence scholarly historiography from its inception to the time in question." For the scholars-traditionists, Little also remarked that "many of the *ʿulamāʾ* served in some official capacity or another associated with judicial institutions."¹⁴ In a programmatic publication on so-called¹⁵ Mamluk literature, Thomas Bauer identified this blurring of boundaries as a more general aspect of the late medieval era's cultural and intellectual history. He graphically described it as "the process of 'ulamaization of *adab*' [that] was counterbalanced by a process of '*adab*ization of the *ulama*,' who in the meantime made the *adab* discourse of the *kuttāb* their own."¹⁶ Eventually, informed by the work of Konrad Hirschler on reading practices in this period, Bauer concluded that "even this description does not do justice to the increasing par-

14 Little, *Historiography* 413.

15 For a critique of the habit of identifying social and cultural phenomena such as late medieval Arabic literature with the qualifier "Mamluk," see Van Steenberg, "Mamlukisation" 2–6.

16 Bauer, *Misunderstandings* 108; repeated in, *Ayna* 6.

ticipation of traders and craftsmen in literary life to such a degree that there was even a gradual blurring of the boundaries between ‘high’ and ‘popular’ literature.”¹⁷

Even though no traders or craftsmen are (currently) known to have produced any work of history proper,¹⁸ the latter qualification certainly captures well the fluid as well as intense—even very popular—context of literary authorships within which the writing of history also thrived.¹⁹ Haarmann, in his *Quellenstudien*, had already pointed to this process as one of deep social transformation and even described it as no less than a “radical popularization of the field” of history writing.²⁰ Building on an impressionistic typology of profiles of early 13th-century historians, first devised in the 1950s by Hans Gottschalk, Haarmann had actually already tried to get a closer grip on those fluid and expanding ranks of historians, suggesting that they could usefully be divided up in four overlapping categories. A first group in this more detailed Gottschalk-Haarmann typology were historians who pertained to the diverse ranks of late medieval Syro-Egyptian powerholders, such as the historian, geographer, and Ayyubid sultan of Hama Abu l-Fidā’ (1273–1331) or the leading *mamlūk* amir in Egypt, Baybars al-Manṣūrī (ca. 1245–1325). Second came the ranks of courtiers, which in many ways overlapped with the preceding category, but importantly, also included leading experts of court communication such as the royal secretaries Ibn ‘Abd al-Zāhir (1223–92) and his nephew Shāfi’ b. ‘Alī (1252–1330). A third important group of historians were all scholars, mostly specialists of *ḥadīth*, that is, traditionists, and ranging from the likes of ‘Izz al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr (1160–1233) in Mosul to those of al-Dhahabī (1274–1348) in Damascus. A fourth category of historians was then added to Gottschalk’s typology by Haarmann to account for his identification of a “radical popularization.” These concerned the less high profile military, courtly, and scholarly peers, followers, and supporters of the first three categories, from the rather obscure likes of the military men Ibn al-Dawādārī (fl. early 14th century) and al-Yūsufī (d. 1358) to the scholars of *ḥadīth* and notary witnesses al-Jazarī (1260–1338) in Damascus and Ibn al-Furāt (ca. 1334–1405) in Cairo.

This particular typology was first and foremost devised as a tool to better describe and represent the fluid diversity of historiographical authorship in 13th- and early 14th-century Syria and Egypt. It is therefore not only rather

17 Bauer, *Mamluk literature* 23.

18 But see the Yemeni historian al-Khazrajī (d. 1409), described as originally a craftsman (Sadek, *Notes*); I am grateful to Daniel Mahoney for this suggestion.

19 See also Hirschler, *Islam* 279–81.

20 Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 131.

specific for the first of this late medieval period's three centuries, it was also externally imposed by modern scholarship and merely offered a useful starting point for Haarmann in the late 1960s to describe the authorial diversity that was responsible for the era's explosion of historiographical texts, at least during its opening century. As Li Guo summarized in another survey article on the study of history writing in late medieval Syria and Egypt, published in 1998, another typology that has been somewhat more in vogue for some time among modern scholars distinguishes between historians related to the sultan's court in Cairo and those that were active members of the traditionalist community of scholars of *ḥadīth* and related knowledge practices in Damascus.²¹ This imagination of a sociocultural dichotomy is again specific for the late 13th and early 14th centuries, best known through the studies of Haarmann and Little, and of others, including Li Guo, in their wake. As a result, not only its actual reality—following Little, often considered referring to distinct Syrian and Egyptian schools of historiographical practice²²—but also its wider representativity remain even more debated than has ever been the case for the Gottschalk-Haarmann typology. Just as the latter, also this Damascus-Cairo typology—and Little's abovementioned more general model of scholars-traditionists and courtiers-bureaucrats that has been derived from it—may nevertheless be considered useful. It enables, above all, a general appreciation of both the different but defining sociocultural contexts of history writing (panegyrist courtship and traditionalist/traditionalist scholarship) that existed in the 13th and early 14th centuries, and the many changes of the 14th and 15th centuries. These included the blurring of boundaries between Syrian and Egyptian historiography and between traditionalists and courtiers. They also involved the increasing numerical preponderance of religious scholars with elitist and courtly, as well as more popular and local, profiles and especially of strongly interconnected networks of *ḥadīth* specialists. This can arguably be understood as another, specific, process of the '*ulamā*'-ization of the literary genre of Arabic history writing, in the course of which the historiographical achievements of powerholders, courtiers, and any others who were not also '*ulamā*' were dwarfed by those of traditionalists and traditionists.

The impact of traditionalist scholarship on the formation of late medieval Arabic historiographical practices was enormous. Damascus at the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries in particular appears as a thriving environment for both this scholarship and these practices. As Li Guo summarizes,

21 Guo, Mamluk 31–2. For traditionalism, see now Holtzman, *Anthropomorphism*.

22 Little, *Introduction* 98.

this environment—organized around the writings of al-Jazarī (1260–1338), al-Yunīnī (d. 1326), and al-Birzālī (1267–1339)—is therefore considered to have recalibrated the parameters of Arabic history writing as a genre in ways that remained determinant into the 16th century:

Al-Jazarī, al-Yunīnī, and al-Birzālī's contribution to medieval Islamic historiography was that they perfected and reformulated the *mode* started by Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, a mode wherein the two basic sections of each year's record, namely the *ḥawādith* (events) and *wafayāt* (obituaries), were evenly presented, and in which the latter was also effectively enhanced by adding to it the *ḥadīths* transmitted on the authority of, and *adab* output by, the *a'yān* of the era, namely the '*ulamā*', and, less frequently, some ... statesmen. History as recorded by these Syrian historians is not only a record of events, but a register of Muslim religious learning, as well as a selective anthology of the cultural and literary heritage of the time.²³

This integration of events, obituaries, and concerns for learning and heritage in historiography was actually also noted and studied, mainly as an expansion of historiography's literary interests, however, by Ulrich Haarmann. In his *Quellenstudien* he explained this "litarization" as a consequence of historiography's growing popularity, which involved diversifying audiences, tastes, and readership expectations. Haarmann actually saw a direct causal relationship between this growing popularity on the one hand and the 13th-century formation of the sultanate in Egypt and Syria and the stabilization of urban social formations and infrastructures in its wake on the other. More specifically, he explained the change and expansion of historiography's interests with readers and writers alike that ensued from this in the early 14th century: "An audience of long-standing and entrenched interest in and orientation towards literary *Adab* turned to the literarised Chronicle, which was manifestly also informed, or at least intrigued, by the folk romances that were popular in these circles. The growing demand for *Adab*-History encourages in its turn ever more writers of mostly lower status and for mostly material reasons to try their luck in historiography, without however having subjected themselves to the strict training of traditionist scholarship."²⁴ This particular interpretation of the interacting

23 Guo, *Mamluk* 38.

24 Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 134; "ein bislang weitgehend am literarischen *Adab* interessiertes und orientiertes Publikum wendet sich der literarisierenden Chronik zu, offensichtlich auch disponiert oder doch wenigstens angeregt durch die in diesen Kreisen

popularization of late medieval writing and reading practices in Egypt and Syria was eventually studied more thoroughly by Thomas Bauer and Konrad Hirschler. Bauer pursued this above all in a chapter that refined his interpretation of the aforementioned *adabization*–*‘ulamā’-ization* process, also engaging with what he identified as Hirschler’s thorough analysis of “the background of this process.” Bauer actually usefully summarizes that “Hirschler describes two interrelated developments—*textualization* (increased use of the written word) and *popularization* (increased participation of non-scholarly groups in cultural activities)—during the [late medieval] period that led to the rise of a ‘literate mentality.’”²⁵ Late medieval Arabic historiography’s involvement in this much wider process of the “popularization” of reading practices still requires much more research. In the meantime, Konrad Hirschler has already been leading the way with the publication, in 2016 and 2020, of two detailed monograph studies of particular instances of textual reception. These concerned, respectively, a local endowed library in Damascus and its catalog, written in the 1270s and listing more than 2,000 titles, and a private library collection from a Damascene *ḥadīth* scholar and the book register that was drawn up for its endowment in 1492, listing some 600 manuscripts. They illustrate how, in the 13th century, traditionalist scholarship in this particular corner of Damascus was *adabizing* in pluralistic and diverse ways—or was perhaps intrinsically as *adabized* as Haarmann in the above quote from his *Quellenstudien* had already assumed for readerships in general—and how in 15th-century Damascus that complex intellectual fold of traditionalist scholarship was radically reconfigured. What is relevant in the present context, however, is the fact that these two studies also illustrate how, in the 13th as well as the 15th century, history writing only represented a small fraction of the textual materials that made up these collections, which were oriented heavily toward the genres of prose and poetry in the former and *ḥadīth* studies in the latter case. Both, therefore, also suggest that textual practices other than historiography interested readers much more, even when history writing seems to have integrated many aspects of those other textual practices, from *ḥadīth* studies to *adab*.²⁶

populären Volksromane. Die steigende Nachfrage nach Adab-Historie wiederum ermutigt immer mehr, vor allem auch niedrigeren Ständen angehörigen Literaten, aus wohl vorwiegend materiellen Gründen ihr Glück in der Historiographie zu versuchen, ohne daß sie sich dem Rigorosum einer traditionswissenschaftlichen Ausbildung zu unterziehen hatten.”

25 Bauer, ‘Ayna 6; referring to Hirschler, *Written* esp. 197.

26 Hirschler, *Medieval Damascus; Monument*.

3 The Expanding and Diversifying Genre of History Writing

A third major change that Haarmann identified for late medieval Syro-Egyptian historiography, next to an explosion of texts and the changing profiles of their authors and audiences, concerned this integration of other textual practices into the set frames of, especially, Arabic chronicle writing. This, as it were textual blurring of boundaries, was at one point identified by Haarmann in his *Quellenstudien* as the “literarization of historiography” and the “historization of *adab*” and at another point as “the legendarization of historical texts.” Basically, Haarmann argued that the serious business of history writing proper (*tārīkh*) became directly related to the amusing textual performance of popular epics (*sīra*) via the mediation of *adab*, understood by him in this context as “a mixed genre, that combines poetry and rhymed prose, anecdotes and epigrams, edification, and entertainment.”²⁷

Haarmann argued in particular that a divergence occurred between the external features and the internal characteristics of many late medieval Arabic history texts. While the former continued to abide by the annalistic and biographical formal schemes that had been set for the genre of Arabic history writing (*tārīkh*) between the 10th and 12th centuries, he saw the latter opening up to the integration of textual practices from both *adab* and *sīra*. The inclusion of a substantial number of poems and related textual specimens of *adab* “literarized,” or “*adabized*,” history writing. The enrichment of reports of historical events and people’s scholarly or political careers with anecdotes and wondrous and remarkable stories (*‘ajā’ib wa-gharā’ib*) and with dreams and related occult phenomena enhanced the entertainment value of the genre. It was further popularized by the appearance of vernacular forms from the spoken registers of Arabic in the written text, as well as by creative rewritings of history. Haarmann even went as far as to define these internal changes as involving a process of “de-historization” (*Enthistorisierung*), explaining this as “giving up historical method and accuracy for the benefit of aesthetic-literary values in situations in which both are incompatible.”²⁸ Finally, these modifications in the textual

27 Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 137 (“Literarisierung der Geschichtsschreibung ... Historisierung des Adab”), 165 (“die Legendarisierung der Historischen Texte”), 160 (“ein Mischgenre, das Poesie und Kunstprosa, Anekdoten und Sinnsprüche, Erbauung und Unterhaltung in sich vereinigt”). Haarmann actually synthesized, applied, and furthered insights on the “literarization” of late medieval Syro-Egyptian history writing that had already been formulated by predecessors in German “Orientalist” scholarship, such as Pauliny (Anekdoten), Schregle (*Sultanin*), von Grunebaum (*Medieval* 250–7), and Richter (*Geschichtsbild*).

28 Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 180.

practices of history writing itself were considered by Haarmann to be a historical and, as seen above, socially determined process. He saw these trends of “literarization” and “*adab*ization,” of “legendarization” and “de-historization,” and of popularization developing over time and across the expanding historiographical field, appearing first in history texts from the later 13th and early 14th centuries—by al-Jazarī in Damascus and especially Ibn al-Dawādārī in Cairo—and culminating in the early 16th century in the chronicle of Ibn Iyās (d. 1524).²⁹

Haarmann’s particular vision of a growing divergence in historiographical practice between the external stability and inner transformations of Arabic chronicles came to be referred to (somewhat reductively perhaps) as his “Literarization” (*Literarisierung*) thesis. Formulated along a highly complex and nuanced argumentation in the late 1960s and early 1970s, this thesis was engaged with in diverse ways between the 1970s and early 2000s. It was (mostly implicitly) embraced and expanded to also include the chronicle’s major historiographical partner, the biographical dictionary, in Hartmut Fähndrich’s almost simultaneously pursued study of a seminal late medieval specimen of this genre: the *Wafayāt al-A’yān* (The obituaries of celebrities) of the Syrian legal scholar Ibn Khallikān (1211–82). Written in Cairo between 1256 and 1274 and consisting of a collection of substantial obituaries-biographies of 855 different individuals who were considered exemplary by the author, “Ibn Khallikān’s *Wafayāt*,” Fähndrich argued, “represents a certain literarization of the genre of ‘biographical dictionary’ in that for the presentation of a great part of the material the literarizing approach of *adab* is employed.”³⁰ Haarmann’s “literarization” thesis was most directly criticized in the work of Bernd Radtke, published between the early 1980s and 1990s.³¹ Radtke basically argued that “literarization” was not a general nor a new late medieval phenomenon and that elements of *adab* and *sīra*, including especially poetry and *mirabilia*, had been an integral component of historiographical practice since at least the 10th century. He also was very critical of Haarmann’s notion of “de-historization,” explaining that historiography’s truth claims operated differently from what Haarmann had assumed. In fact, Radtke rather stressed long-term continu-

29 See, e.g., for “legendarization” Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 165: “The legendarization of historical texts reached a new culmination point in the fifteenth century—that is, from Ibn al-Furāt, Ibn Duqmāq and al-Maqrīzī onwards—, and especially at the beginning of the sixteenth century in the work of Ibn Iyās.”

30 Fähndrich, *The Wafayāt* 439–40 (for a summary acknowledgment of Haarmann’s work, remarkably represented only as “a study of *topoi* in Mamlūk historiography,” see 435n11). See also Fähndrich, *Man*; Fähndrich, *Compromising*.

31 See the useful summary of this debate between Radtke and Haarmann in Guo, *Mamluk* 33–6.

ities, especially as dictated by the salvationist and globalizing ambitions of Islamic history's major chronicles, including some from the later medieval period. Whereas history writing in this context serves the purpose of presenting and conforming to a salvationist and revealed truth of universalist dimensions (a purpose that was equaled by Radtke with the notion of *taṣdīq*), in other textual contexts, it may also serve more specific cultural, practical, and entertaining purposes (*ta'ajjub*). In fact, "from the thirteenth century onwards," Radtke explains, "a mixture of salvationist, cultural, and world history as entertainment became the norm."³² For Radtke, these were therefore not increasingly lesser forms of history writing but rather represented different discursive registers that historians could employ to pursue their multivalent textual ambitions.

Haarmann, in his review of Radtke's *Weltgeschichte und Welbeschreibung im mittelalterlichen Islam*, was happy to accept the latter correction but fiercely argued for the validity of his thesis of "literarizing" changes and against Radtke's notion of static continuity. "What is decisive," Haarmann insisted, "is the *quantitative* change, the sharp increase of literary insertions in the writing of those few historians who, as a corollary, met the criticism of their more traditionally minded peers."³³ This qualification of Haarmann's original "literarization" thesis as a diverse range of textual practices that complemented rather than replaced more traditional historiographical trends and that meant a break with the past, especially in quantitative terms, was further confirmed and refined by others. These include above all Thomas Herzog for the integration of *sīra* materials, Otfried Weintritt for a particular late 14th- and early 15th-century set of textual examples of the fusion of *adab* and *tārīkh*, and Li Guo for the history writing of early 14th-century Damascene traditionalists.³⁴ As suggested in his quote above on the traditionalists/traditionists al-Jazarī, al-Yūnīnī, and al-Birzālī and their role in the integration into the historiographical practice of descriptions of events, obituaries, and concerns for learning and heritage, Guo definitely saw a distinctive model of history writing emerging amid their collaborative network of colleagues and texts, with a substantial impact on historiographical practice from the later 14th century onwards. "This method of *ta'rikh* writing," Guo explains, "was started by the Ḥanbalī Ibn al-Jawzī of Baghdad, transmitted through his grandson Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī of Damascus, and was eventually polished in the hands of the Ḥanbalīs al-Yūnīnī, of Ba'labakk, and al-Jazarī, of Dam-

32 Radtke, *Weltgeschichte* 204–5; translated quote from Guo, *Mamluk* 35.

33 Haarmann, *Review* 135 (italics in the original).

34 Herzog, *Geschichte* esp. 391–2; Weintritt, *Formen*; Guo, *Early* esp. 81–96 (Chapter Four: "The *Dhayl* and early Mamluk Syrian historiography: The making of a model").

ascus.”³⁵ This particular method of traditionalist historiography, as Guo reconstructed it, is one of annalistic chronicle writing in which factual descriptions of a year’s events and obituaries for a year’s important deceased are presented as distinct parts of an annal. At the same time, obituaries-biographies in this model display a clear bias toward *ḥadīth* transmitters, giving priority to traditionists and their scholarly track record and including also many specimens of their *adab*-related output, especially poetry.³⁶ In al-Yūnīnī’s continuation (*dhayl*) of Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī’s (1185–1256) universal chronicle, the famous *Mir’āt al-Zamān*, Guo counted some 2,200 poems, spread over the text’s rather limited whole of 58 annals (for the *hijrī* years from 654/1256 to 711/1312) and serving, in Guo’s reading, the double purpose of entertainment and recording what was popular in al-Yūnīnī’s and his peers’ time.³⁷

Interestingly, Guo also noted—contra Haarmann—the extent to which this particular model was different from that of early 14th-century Egyptian history writing, including even Ibn al-Dawādārī’s “literarizing” chronicle. “[A]ll of these [Egyptian texts of history] evidently followed,” Guo suggests, “what may be called ‘the Ibn al-Athīr model,’ i.e., basically an annalistic form following that of al-Ṭabarī, with a few obituaries of rulers or statesmen attached at the end of the text for each year.”³⁸ Basically, obituary notes in this model were brief, and certainly not biased toward traditionists, and quoted poetry consisted primarily of panegyrics (*madīḥ*) for sultans rather than any representative *adab* anthology. Guo, therefore, concludes also that “while the heroes of the Egyptian chronicles and manuals were the [...] sultans and statesmen, the attention of Syrian historians was focused on their fellow *a’yān*, the notable learned men, especially those prominent *ḥadīth* scholars.”³⁹ As historiographical practice continued, however, and traditionalist scholars increasingly led the way, the rich Syrian textual tradition of al-Jazarī, al-Yūnīnī, and al-Birzālī became an important source of historical information, not only for later Syrian historians but also for the growing numbers of their Egyptian counterparts. In this process of confrontation, integration, expansion, and transformation of practices of history writing, these Syrian and Egyptian models fused and became an intrinsic component of the creative context within which so much history was written in the long 15th century. The exact nature of that era’s creative historiographical context, however—as with the late 13th and early 14th centuries undoubtedly

35 Guo, *Early* 86.

36 Guo, *Early* 82–6.

37 *Ibid.* 87–93.

38 *Ibid.* 93.

39 *Ibid.* 94.

of much greater complexity than Haarmann's "literarization" thesis had first suggested—remains largely unstudied.⁴⁰

As indicated at the beginning of this introductory chapter, unlike this creative context, the process of the Syrian and Egyptian historiographical traditions' confrontation and integration has been given much more attention, especially as a result of Donald Little's pioneering work. Little's method was one of collating 14th- and 15th-century historiographical texts word for word to reconstruct intertextualities and historiographical practice. His driving force was a search for historical originality and textual accuracy and reliability. As a result, Little considered what Haarmann identified as trends of "literarization" in his own negative way as a form of "de-historization." For Little, anecdotes, wondrous stories, and their like were an aberration from the annalistic historiographical norm, which, above all, added to the modern historian's workload in "the admittedly laborious process of collation and analysis to compensate for the sins and errors of his sources."⁴¹ The outcome of his own laborious process of collation and analysis reconstructed particular textual interdependencies for Syro-Egyptian history at the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries and established the centrality within those networks of texts and the historical data of particular chronicles.⁴² The latter included the Syrian textual cluster of al-Jazarī, al-Yūnīnī, and al-Birzālī but also the Egyptian chronicles of Baybars al-Manṣūrī and al-Yūsufī. Little also fleetingly identified the multivolume encyclopedic work of the Egyptian court administrator al-Nuwayrī (1279–ca. 1332) and then later the universal chronicle of the traditionist-scholar Ibn al-Furāt (d. 1405) as important textual conduits that remoulded this earlier material and thus prepared it to be reused in the creative context of the 15th century.⁴³

In the early 2000s, Little's aforementioned graduate student Sami Massoud used his teacher's method of a word-for-word collation of sample annals to study the textual practices of another comprehensive corpus of Arabic chronicles. Massoud's purpose was to reconstruct the networks of historical reports that connected, and informed about, historiographical texts, authors and prac-

40 But see the following relevant studies: Bauden, Maqriziana (see also below); Perho, Al-Maqrīzī; *Ibn Taghribirdī's portrayal*; Ibn Taghribirdī's voice; Tadayoshi, Analysis of 'Abd al-Bāsit; Wasserstein, L'oeuvre d'Ibn Iyās; 'Izz al-Dīn, 'Abd al-Bāsit; *Ibn Ḥajar*; *al-Maqrīzī*; *Arba'at Mu'arrikhūn*.

41 Little, *Introduction* 98.

42 But see Cahen's review of Little's *Introduction*, noting that Little's method of sampling data from three randomly chosen annals and neglecting explicit and implicit intertextual references made elsewhere in his text corpus generates very partial and inconclusive results only; Cahen, Review 224.

43 Little, *Introduction* 96.

tices for the period from the late 1370s to the early 1400s. Driven by concerns for originality in both historical and more literary terms, he not only identified “the five most copied and used original sources” for the history of this period but also “the systemic interrelation between al-Maqrīzī’s *Kitāb al-Sulūk* and Ibn al-Furāt’s *Tārīkh al-Duwal*” among these big five.⁴⁴ He simultaneously concluded, as both an implicit reiteration of Haarmann’s qualified “literarization” thesis and a call to move beyond Little’s quest for originality, that these texts need to be considered as: “more than simple repositories of facts that help modern-day historians in their attempt to reconstruct the past: they also need to be approached as literary constructs that reflect the social configuration of the environment in which they were written and ‘the cultural norms and conceptual assumptions’ that played a role in their production.”⁴⁵

4 New Readings in Late Medieval Arabic Historiography

To date, especially the central historiographical practices of al-Maqrīzī and, to a lesser extent, of Ibn al-Furāt have been the object of studies that are pursued along what Massoud also identified as the way forward in present-day historiographical studies. These studies all focus in different ways on the constructed-ness of al-Maqrīzī’s and Ibn al-Furāt’s texts of history. In the case of the former, since the early 2000s, the work of Frédéric Bauden in particular has substantially deepened understandings of al-Maqrīzī’s working methods as a prolific historian in the early 15th century. This continues to be achieved by combining Little’s method of collation and intertextual reconstruction with a material turn to manuscript studies and, thus, by integrating into the analysis the detailed and painstaking codicological study of extant fair copies, drafts, notebooks, and marginal notes.⁴⁶ In the case of Ibn al-Furāt, the recent monograph by Fozia Bora has taken Little’s method, Bauden’s material turn, and the question of Ibn al-Furāt’s universal history’s interconnectedness and constructed-ness to another level by relating understandings of its intertextuality to interpretive turns that have been made in archival studies. Bora actually attempted to return, in a more nuanced sense, to Little’s quest for originality. She developed an interesting argument for a consideration of Ibn al-Furāt’s

44 Massoud, *Chronicles* 191.

45 Massoud, *Chronicles* 195–6, quoting also from Shoshan, *Poetics* ix.

46 See Bauden, *Maqriziana* i–xi; *Al-Maqrīzī’s collection of opuscles*. See also Bauden’s *Bibliotheca Maqriziana*; Van Steenberg, *Caliphate and kingship*: Part 1: Study—the cultural biography of a fifteenth-century literary text.

chronicle—presented by Bora as a representative specimen of late medieval Arabic chronicle writing in general—as a form of documentation and as the materialization of a specific archival practice; in Bora’s reading, via that practice, an author pursued both “knowledge-making” and its “conservation” in order to “‘eternalize’ the past,” meet the moral-didactic and sociocultural needs of contemporary and future readerships, and circumvent the era’s highly volatile conditions of life.⁴⁷

In new readings such as Bauden’s and Bora’s, then, not just the complex constructed-ness of texts of history is being studied but also the social, intellectual, and practical agencies of historians. This links up with another line of research that remains prominent and promising, that has arguably developed more autonomously from the Haarmann-Little tradition, and that has taken the changing nature of historiographical authorship in late medieval Egypt and Syria as its main object of research. Already in the 1950s and 1960s, Franz Rosenthal (1914–2003), in the first and second editions of his pioneering *History of Muslim historiography*, almost heedlessly captured a trend toward a more explicit and self-conscious understanding of historiographical practices that marked, especially, the field of Arabic history writing in its highly prolific 15th century. Rosenthal famously presented, in the second part of his *History*, translations of three theoretical discussions on the methodology of history writing that were authored in the early 1380s, the early 1460s, and the early 1480s. They included a short text by the traditionalist scholar al-Kāfiyājī (d. 1474), entitled *The short work on the science of history writing (al-Mukhtaṣar fī ‘ilm al-tārīkh)* and identified by Rosenthal as “being the oldest Muslim *monograph* on the theory of historiography known to us.”⁴⁸ They also included a much longer text by the Egyptian traditionalist scholar, historian, and biographer al-Sakhāwī (1427–97), *The open denunciation of the adverse critics of the historians (al-‘lān bi-Tawbīkh li-man dhamma ahl al-ta’rīkh)*, which, as a theorizing survey of Arabic history writing, greatly informed the organization and argument of Rosenthal’s own *History*. Its apologetic title is actually directly related to the traditionalist

47 Bora, *Writing*. This archival approach was arguably also implicitly present, or at least announced already, in Elias Muhanna’s study of encyclopedism and compilation in al-Nuwayrī’s *Nihāyat al-Arab*, in which he also pursues better understanding of “the ways that the ... compilers position themselves vis-à-vis the archive they were compiling.” Muhanna, *World*; based on the author’s doctoral dissertation (Harvard University, 2012). The “archival turn” was most explicitly called for as a promising approach for the study of late medieval Arabic historiography, and of biographical collections in particular, by Konrad Hirschler (Studying 175–80); it was further inspired by Hirschler’s work on archival practice (From archive).

48 Rosenthal, *History* 245.

agenda of this as well as the other two texts. History writing along a specific methodology was presented by these authors as a constituent component of traditionalist Islamic scholarly practice, which conformed to the traditionalist profiles of al-Kāfiyājī and al-Sakhāwī and, as explained before, the majority of historians in the long 15th century. For all of them, this practice was rooted in longstanding precedents that included early and contemporary *ḥadīth* scholarship but also the aforementioned examples of the traditionalist scholars, historians, and men of influence Ibn al-Jawzī (1126–1200) in Baghdad and al-Dhababī (1274–1348) in Damascus.⁴⁹

This more conscious appearance of historiographical authorship has been studied in recent years not so much, however, from the theoretical perspective of traditionalist scholarship and its practice, as had been only superficially touched upon many decades ago by Franz Rosenthal.⁵⁰ Rather, this aspect in the changes affecting authorship has been understood and researched especially from a more textual perspective, from the acknowledgment of authors' growing presence in and meddling with their texts of history. Most conspicuous in this respect is undoubtedly the growing phenomenon of the author's self-referencing. The latter is epitomized by the occasional presence of autobiographical notes and, especially, by a number of autobiographical texts.⁵¹ One of these texts is the closing part of Ibn Khaldūn's (1332–1406) historiographical trilogy, tellingly entitled *Biographical sketch on Ibn Khaldūn and the account of his travels in the west and in the east (al-Taʿrīf bi-Ibn Khaldūn wa-riḥlatihi gharban wa-sharqan)*.⁵² Another one, which has attracted substantial scholarly interest in recent years, is the partly preserved personal diary of the Damascene notary witness Ibn Ṭawq (ca. 1430–ca. 1510).⁵³

Next to this study of a growing authorial presence in texts of history, attention in present-day scholarship has also been increasingly directed toward the authors' construction of their texts as acts that were not only intellectually and culturally but also socially and therefore historically meaningful in the unfolding of events and life stories. The work of George Makdisi in the early 1960s and Fedwa Malti-Douglas in the late 1970s, rather than that of Rosenthal, somewhat inadvertently paved the way here. The former did so in a study on the history of Ashʿarī speculative theology, in which he reinterpreted the famous biographical dictionary of Shafīʿī scholars by Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī (ca. 1327–70), the mul-

49 Ibid. 204, 265.

50 See also Hirschler, *Islam*.

51 See Reynolds, *Interpreting*.

52 See Martínez-Gros, *Ibn Khaldūn*.

53 Wollina, *Zwanzig*; Shoshan, *Damascus*.

tivolume *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʿiyya al-Kubrā*, as a programmatic historiographical construct that attempted to redefine the boundaries of the Shafiʿī community in both text and context, against the by the mid-14th century dominant exclusivity of Shafiʿī traditionalism and in favor of Shafiʿī Ashʿarism and its tenets and champions.⁵⁴ Malti-Douglas did so in her semiotic reading of a biographical dictionary of the blind, the *Nakt al-Himyān fī Nukat al-ʿUmyān*, by Khalīl ibn Ayybak al-Ṣafadī (d. 1363), in which she demonstrated how the literary reading of the biographical note as sign, its sociohistorical reading as signified, and the contextual reading of linguistic, cultural, and social codes informing the relationship between sign and signified cannot and should not be separated.⁵⁵

Konrad Hirschler's PhD research, first published as a monograph in 2006 with the highly meaningful subtitle *Authors as actors*, eventually took these, many of the preceding, and some other overtures—especially also Tarif Khalidi's suggestion of the preponderance of a presentist and political (or *sý-āsa*) orientation in late medieval Arabic historiography—many steps further.⁵⁶ Hirschler's *Authors as actors* explains how two very different historians from the 13th century reported in their texts of history about similar events in very different ways, which made any questions of originality, authenticity, or veracity irrelevant. As Hirschler demonstrates, by employing different “modes of emplotment,” these authors actively and purposefully used their authorial agency to make their texts meaningful in a direct dialogue—the one pursued from an “accommodationist” perspective, the other from a strongly “reformist” and even militantly traditionalist one—with the intellectual and social contexts in which they operated.⁵⁷ Hirschler's approach in *Authors as actors* is one that therefore reconsidered textual constructed-ness with, as it were, Haarmann's qualified “literarization” as well as Little's intertextuality-originality as a complex whole of social and intellectual strategies that not only made texts of history but also history itself, or at least its individual or even collective ima-

54 Makdisi, Ashʿarī and the Ashʿarites.

55 Malti-Douglas, *Dreams*.

56 Hirschler, *Authors*; Khalidi, *Arabic* 182–231 (Chapter 5: History and *siyasa*). Apart from Khalidi, Hirschler also took explicit inspiration from the aforementioned Fāhndrich and Malti-Douglas, as well as from al-Azmeh (*al-Kitāba*; *L'annalistique*; *Histoire*), from post-humously published work by Haarmann (*Al-Maqrīzī*), and from Conermann (*Einige*); Hirschler, *Authors* 128n13.

57 Hirschler, *Authors* 122–3; even though it has to be admitted that for Hirschler traditionalism was interpreted as a more limited, for mainly conservative, descriptive category, given that he argued that “it was therefore—paradoxically?—in the field of religious sciences that [Abū Shāma] could develop an outlook which was opposed to the traditionalist vision of society (p. 62).”

ginations. This very promising focus on the performative nexus of authorial agencies and sociocultural strategies has so far only haphazardly been re-employed in current research on late medieval Syro-Egyptian history writing, whether for Hirschler's mid-13th century, Haarmann's, Little's, and Guo's early 14th century, or the exploding mass of authors and texts of the long 15th century.⁵⁸

These more recent considerations of the changing constructed-ness of texts of history and the transformative authorial relationships with those texts and their late medieval Syro-Egyptian contexts have in different ways inspired the 13 contributions to this volume. These all represent therefore new readings in late medieval Arabic historiography. They do so not in the least because they stand for original contributions to modern scholarship by a new generation of junior scholars. They have been grouped in this volume in three parts of five or four chapters, each representing a different aspect of these new readings as well as its indebtedness to, especially, the Haarmann-Little tradition. Part one looks at concrete instances of intertextuality, from the perspectives of "literarized" historiographical practice as well as of "historicized" *adab* practices. Part two focuses on the creativity of authorial agencies and especially the performative textual strategies that were used—in forms often qualified as functions of "literarization"—to respond to changing intellectual and social contexts. Part three continues this line of enquiry but zooms in more precisely on the relationships between texts and social practice, in particular the textual performance of claims to identity and community membership.

In part one, Literarization as adabization: Intertextual agencies, Koby Yosef brings into focus and expands upon many of the issues at stake in this volume. In the chapter entitled "Al-Maqrīzī's *Sulūk*, *Muqaffá*, and *Durar al-'Uqūd*," he engages directly with Haarmann's notion of "literarization," noting how in engagements with that historiographical model so far trends of "literarization" during the 15th century have received less attention. In fact, Haarmann only summarily stated that al-Maqrīzī's writing shows a "conservative anti-literary historiographical ethos." This chapter, however, argues that as a 15th-century Egyptian historian and Shāfi'ī religious scholar, al-Maqrīzī combined Egyptian and (Shāfi'ī) scholarly historiographical trends in a more conscious and varied manner than Haarmann would allow. In his drawing on a Shāfi'ī scholarly historiographic tradition, al-Maqrīzī did not incorporate entertaining story-like

58 For the 12th and early 13th centuries, see Hirschler, Jerusalem; for the 13th and early 14th centuries, see Van den Bossche, Performance; for the 14th and 15th centuries, see Van Steenbergen, Qalawunid; *Caliphate*; Van Steenbergen and Van Nieuwenhuyse, Truth.

reports with dialogues in accounts of contemporary events. In contrast, past events and biographies of notables of the past could be used to some degree for entertainment purposes, drawing in standardizing ways on the earlier achievements of Egyptian chroniclers related to the military institution and on an anecdotal tradition of biographical dictionaries.

Koby Yosef's second chapter, "Language and style in Mamluk historiography," continues this engagement with the notion of the "literarization" of late medieval Arabic history writing from the particular perspective of the uses of linguistic registers in historiography. The increasing use of nonstandard Arabic has been considered one of the most noticeable characteristics of "literarization," which went hand in hand with the increasing use of stylistic elements drawn from the literature of *adab*. To date, however, there have not been too many attempts at an overall survey of different trends of language use covering all major historians throughout the late medieval period. This paper offers such an overall survey and suggests that a differentiation should be made between subgroups of historians who were religious scholars. It is argued that usages of nonstandard Arabic are typical of historians related to the military institution and non-Shāfi'i religious scholars. On the other hand, Shāfi'i religious scholars refrained from using nonstandard Arabic and standardized nonstandard usages in their quoted sources because of the importance of the Arabic language in their ethos. The trends of language use are examined in tandem with one stylistic element: the incorporation of story-like reports with dialogues and direct speech in accounts of contemporary events in the historical narrative in chronicles. This allows a more nuanced differentiation between trends of language use and style. It is argued that in terms of language use and style, non-Shāfi'i religious scholars take a middle ground between historians related to the military institution and historians who were Shāfi'i religious scholars.

Victor De Castro León's "Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his Mamluk reception" focuses on the figure of one of the most important polymaths and viziers in the history of al-Andalus and of 14th-century Granada in particular, Lisān al-Dīn Ibn al-Khaṭīb (1313–74). Ibn al-Khaṭīb was very interested in spreading his intellectual production in the West and East and employing, for this purpose, all the means that were at his disposal. The latter included his high political position as well as his important intellectual network of peers and students. Two other Maghrebi authors who had settled in Cairo contributed substantially to his success in the East: Ibn Khaldūn and Ibn Abī Ḥajala. This chapter studies the role of this triple relationship through the testimonies from these three authors that demonstrate how this network operated and how Ibn al-Khaṭīb's works were received and used, not only by these two Maghrebi authors but also by other

Syro-Egyptian authors who knew and employed the works of the Granadian vizier in the 14th and 15th centuries.

Tarek Sabraa's "Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba (1377–1448): His life and historical work" presents an in-depth investigation of the life, family history, and historical work of one of the most important historians of the history of al-Shām in the late medieval period: Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba (1377–1448). This author is mainly known for his works on *fiqh*, but the chapter reveals that his historical works are far more numerous and represent a rare source for the history of al-Shām at his time. This reconstruction of the family history of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba aims to shed light on two different aspects. The first one involves the establishment in this period of substantial numbers of scholarly families and their accession to influential positions in society. The second issue concerns the origins of the author's family and how they might be key to explaining his particular approach to history writing and revealing the underlying motives that influenced his work. The intensive study of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's family history, therefore, not only serves as a perfect example of how the scholarly environment during this period developed and was consolidated; it can also help us to understand the personal prefiguration that informed this author's perspective on history.

Iria Santas's "Andalusi *adab* in the Mamluk period" focuses on one of the first and most important Andalusi *adab* authors, the Cordovan Ibn 'Abd Rabbīhi (860–940), who was an important figure during the splendor of the 10th-century Umayyad Cordovan Caliphate of 'Abd al-Rahmān III. This chapter tries to reconstruct the reception process in the Islamic East of his most important work, the well-known *al-Iqd al-farīd*. Despite the importance of this *adab* encyclopedia as one of the first dated Arabic texts that was produced in al-Andalus, its full impact inside and outside al-Andalus remains to be investigated. This chapter uses the testimonies of Andalusi, Maghrebi, and Eastern—mainly Syro-Egyptian—authors who employed this work to study the transmission of Ibn 'Abd Rabbīhi's main work to the Islamic East and its reception and influence in later Eastern *adab* works.

In this volume's part two, Literarization as creative authorship: Contextual agencies, Mohammad Gharaibeh identifies some of the complex social and intellectual stakes that have to be taken into account in any consideration of historiographical practice. The case study presented in his chapter "Social and intellectual rivalries and their narrative representations" considers the stakes involved in the construction of one of the most important sources of knowledge on premodern Muslim individuals: biographical dictionaries. Against the common approach in modern research to treat biographical dictionaries as archives of (neutral) information about individuals, this article looks at them as producers of (biased) knowledge that conveys the intention and (hidden)

agenda of the authors. This case study zooms in on the biographical entries on the Damascene scholar Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ (d. 1245) in the biographical dictionaries of three authors of this period. These are al-Dhahabī (d. 1348) with his works *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'*, *Tārīḥ al-islām*, and *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*, Ibn Kathīr (d. 1373) with his work *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'īyya*, and Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 1370) with his work *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'īyya al-kubrā*. An analysis of their narrative strategies reveals the different images they created of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ and the different messages they communicated. In addition, a contextualization of the authors within the social and intellectual contexts of Damascus, especially of its traditionalist and rationalist communities of scholars, allows for the identification of the authors' motivations that stood behind their narrative strategies.

Zacharie Mochtari de Pierrepont's chapter "Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī's texts and contexts" aims to raise a number of questions related to historiographical discourses about scholars and ascetics specifically identified as Sufis by Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī in the annalistic chronicle *Inbā' al-ghumr bī-abnā' al-'umr*. It draws attention to the different discursive strata Ibn Ḥajar elaborated to create a particular view on contemporary Sufi characters. Furthermore, it documents part of the Sufi environment of the Cairo sultanate as it is introduced in the *Inbā'*. Doing so, Ibn Ḥajar shaped a specific social, cultural, and political order in which Sufism and Sufi characters were presented as part of the dynamics of power that were crafted in the chronicle. They were presented as participating in these dynamics by way of the normative production and legitimation of power relationships, as these were understood in the chronicle's own discursive contextual framework. From this example, this chapter thus argues that the *Inbā'* participated in building a new perspective for Ibn Ḥajar's own historiographical positions and assertive opinions, shaping new memories that crafted new historical narratives.

Rasmus Ollsen's chapter "If a governor falls in Damascus" examines how four Damascene scholar-chroniclers and two Egyptian soldier-chroniclers narrate the demise of Amir Sayf al-Dīn Karāy al-Manṣūrī, the sultan's viceroy of Damascus, in 1311. Karāy was arrested and exiled to Karak in present-day Jordan only four months into his governorship. His dramatic departure from Damascus is attributed to both local protests against his taxation methods and his alleged participation in a military coup d'état against Sultan al-Nāṣir Muhammad b. Qalāwūn (r. 1293–4, 1299–1309, 1310–41). This overlap between a local and a regional political context has ensured the arrest of Karāy a place in several Syrian and Egyptian chronicles, which makes it an excellent case for a comparative historiographic analysis that considers both collective and personal authorial agendas. Firstly, this chapter shows how the social and geographic backgrounds as well as the shared values and interests of the Syrian and Egypt-

tian authors, respectively, influence their choice of focus when narrating the story of Karāy's arrest. Secondly, by demonstrating how personal, ideological, and doctrinal disagreements also permeate the individual portrayals of Karāy, the chapter argues that each author must also be regarded as an actor with a personal agenda in addition to being a member of a geographically and socially defined group.

Clément Onimus's chapter "Al-'Aynī and his fellow historians" aims to define the social position of the 15th-century scholar al-'Aynī through the historiographical writings of his contemporaries and students. It first considers his biographies by his peers and rivals, al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, as well as the auto-documentary notes in his own chronicles. These sources create a polyphonic representation of this historian and judge. All three authors emphasize the same events and topics, given that al-'Aynī answers in his own works to the criticisms he is submitted to by his colleagues: his competence in the performance of offices, his relationships of dependence and interdependence with the military milieu, and his literary skills. On the whole, history writing appears as a means of communication that creates a dialogue between prominent scholars. In this dialogue, the social position of al-'Aynī cannot be understood separate from this narrative; what appears is rather a persona on the stage of historical writing. Later historians relied on the works of their predecessors and the evolution of al-'Aynī's situation. As he became one of the highest dignitaries of the sultanate and one of the teachers of several later scholars (notably Ibn Taghrī Birdī and al-Sakhāwī), he is acclaimed by most of them, although no one conceals the conflicts he had with his colleagues. Out of these rivalries, in their biographies they elaborate a consensual memory where al-'Aynī becomes a key figure in the competitive world of Islamic scholarship.

In part three, Literarization as social practice: Textual agencies, Kenneth Goudie introduces the characteristic of authorial self-representation and its interconnecting of textual performance and intellectual as well as social stakes. His chapter "Al-Biqā'ī's self-reflection" engages with the historiography of Burhān al-Dīn al-Biqā'ī (1406–80), a 15th-century Quran exegete and historian. When discussing the life of al-Biqā'ī, modern scholarship has primarily focused on his later career and the controversies in which he became embroiled. But comparatively little has been written about his formative years. This is despite the fact that, at the age of 32, he wrote an autobiography of his early life, which is contained within his *Unwān al-zamān bi-tarājīm al-shuyūkh wa-l-aqrān*. Taking inspiration from the Geertzian concept of "thick description," this chapter moves beyond a brief and positivist reconstruction of al-Biqā'ī's life and treats his autobiography not merely as an innocent record of his early life through which we can reconstruct the chronology of his formative years but also as a

carefully crafted literary work in its own right. The contention of this chapter is that al-Biqā'ī's autobiography can be read in two ways: one simple and textual; the other complex and subtextual. On the one hand, it can be read in a positivist fashion as a straightforward account of his formative years; on the other hand, it can be read as an attempt to give deeper meaning to those years. The chapter takes a twofold approach to the autobiography, dealing firstly with what al-Biqā'ī tells us about his formative years before moving on to explore how al-Biqā'ī sought to give them social and cultural meaning. It argues that the autobiography was meant to justify his membership among the sultanate's intellectual elite, while simultaneously framing his life as fundamentally guided by God.

Christian Mauder's chapter "And they read in that night books of history" engages with the accounts of the *majālis* or learned gatherings convened by the penultimate sultan of Cairo Qāniṣawh al-Ghawrī (r. 1501–16) at the Cairo Citadel. These accounts provide deep insight into the dynamics of the consumption, performative presentation, and production of texts about the past at al-Ghawrī's court. Moreover, they indicate that members of the sultan's court invested considerable time, effort, and cultural capital into engaging with historiographical material. The chapter argues that this engagement was part of a dense web of social practices that served multiple purposes, including but not limited to, the representation and legitimation of al-Ghawrī's rule, the exchange and acquisition of cultural capital, the performative enactment and reaffirmation of the courtiers' membership in a refined elite of *udabā'* (i.e., persons possessing *adab*), the social construction of a shared reality, the commemoration of events central to the identity of members of the court, and the enjoyment of aesthetic pleasure. These findings highlight the importance of courts of the Islamic late middle period in the production and consumption of Arabic literature and underscore that the concept of *adab* functioned as an overarching frame of reference that members of the sultanic court in Cairo used to imagine and construct their own place in the world.

Ivan Metzger's chapter "Historical representation as resurrection" presents an analysis of *al-Tāli' al-Sa'īd* by al-Udfuwī (d. 1347), looking in particular into the *tamḥīd*, or laudatory prelude, of this biographical dictionary of Upper Egypt. The *tamḥīd* is a ubiquitous element of classical Arabic writing. Arabic literary critics indicated its close relationship to the subject matter of the entire literary composition. This paper shows how form and content intertwine in al-Udfuwī's biographical history of Upper Egypt to produce a symbolic imitation of God's creation. As indicated in his *tamḥīd*, history, like the Resurrection, revives the memories of past lives, both good and bad. Faithful to this metaphor of his own creation, al-Udfuwī revives a range of characters, not just those

who reflect positively on his beloved Upper Egypt. The result is a polyphony of voices, from the irreverent or heretical to the pious and orthodox. Yet, far from allowing the reader to form a neutral judgment of this carnival of resurrected lives, al-Udfuwī, through selective editorializations and omissions, pushes his reader to view Upper Egypt as a bastion of Sunnism that has cast aside its previous heterodoxy.

Finally, Gowaart Van Den Bossche's chapter "Literarisierung reconsidered in the context of sultanic biography" aptly closes this part and this volume of new readings in Arabic historiography. It revisits Haarmann's "literarization" thesis and the related debates on the historiographical practice of knowledge- and truth-making, challenging Haarmann's conceptualization and reconsidering the relationship between literary forms and historiography. This reconceptualization is illustrated by discussing a hitherto unpublished and understudied text belonging to the regnal biography genre and found in the manuscript Arabe 1705 of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. This undated manuscript can be identified as part of a biography of Sultan al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (r. 1293–4, 1299–1309, 1310–41) by the Egyptian chancery scribe and man of letters Shāfi' b. 'Alī (d. 1330). Containing alternate accounts of a crucial phase in al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's career, especially the period leading up to his third ascent to the throne during the short-lived sultanate of al-Muẓaffar Baybars (r. 1309–10), this surviving part is of great interest to historians studying this period. Similar to Shāfi's better-known biographies of the sultans Qalāwūn (r. 1279–90) and Baybars (r. 1260–77), the text also offers much material for the study of the fruitful intersection of *adab*, especially as it was cultivated in the chancery and historiography. The majority of the text is written in *saj'* (rhymed prose), frequently includes (self-written) poems, correspondence, and official documents and is replete with panegyric passages. Furthermore, a large part of the surviving text transcends chronography and integrates historical happenings into a powerful and recognizable heroic narrative of the loss and reclaiming of power.

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PART 1

*Literarization as Adabization:
Intertextual Agencies*



Al-Maqrīzī's *Sulūk*, *Muqaffā*, and *Durar al-'Uqūd*: Trends of “Literarization” in the Historical Corpus of a 9th/15th-Century Egyptian Shāfi‘ī Religious Scholar

Koby Yosef

1 Introduction: Trends of “Literarization” (“*adabization*”) in Mamluk Historiography*

Speaking of a “literarization” of history writing during the Mamluk period, Ulrich Haarmann referred mainly to the increasing use of elements drawn from the literature of *adab* and folk romance (*Volksroman*), such as anecdotes or story-like reports, dialogues with direct speech, colloquial language, digressions, popular motifs, occult materials, and other *adab*-like elements (such as *mirabilia*—marvels or exotic stories [*‘ajā’ib wa-gharā’ib*]) in the historical narrative (*hawādith*) in chronicles written mostly by Egyptian chroniclers related to the military institution (Ibn al-Dawādārī [d. after 736/1335] being the most notable example) but to a lesser degree also found in the chronicle of the Syrian religious scholar al-Jazarī (d. 739/1338). This process was underlied by a desire to entertain the readers and “popularize” historical writing.¹ The more popular elements, and especially those drawn from the *Volksroman*, may be seen as elements of *adab* “in its ‘lower’ form,”² thus the process of “literarization” described by Haarmann may be seen as a process of “*adabization*.” After Haarmann, much attention has been given to Egyptian historians related to the military institution considered to have written “highly literarized” (or

* I would like to thank my friend and colleague Almog Kasher for reading a draft of this paper and making some very useful comments on issues related to Arabic grammar.

1 For a convenient summary of Haarmann’s ideas, see Haarmann, Review of *Weltgeschichte* 134–5; *Auflösung* 55–7; Guo, *Mamluk* 33–6; Hirschler, *Studying* 168; Rabbat, *Perception* 164–5; Mauder, *Gelehrte* 23–5; Irwin, *Ibn Zunbul* 6; Parry, *Review* 148; Little, *al-Şafadī* 194. For a detailed discussion, see Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 119–83 (esp. 159–83). On the process of the “popularization” of reading practices, see Hirschler, *Written*.

2 Guo, *Mamluk* 39.

“popularized” and entertaining) chronicles and who were active mainly during the first half of the 8th/14th century, notably Ibn al-Dawādārī, al-Yūsufī (d. 759/1358), and Qaraṭāy (d. after 708/1308)—Ibn Iyās (d. ca. 930/1524), active during the late Mamluk period, being the exception (see table 1.1 below). The main elements typical of this group of historians, that is, anecdotes or story-like reports, dialogues with direct speech, and colloquial language incorporated in the historical narrative of contemporary events, can be easily found also in the chronicles of other 9th/15th-century historians related to the military institution. Except for Ibn Iyās, three other historians related to the military institution were active during the Circassian period of the sultanate (784–923/1382–1517), all of them *mamlūks*’ descendants: Ibn Duqmāq (d. 809/1407),³ Ibn Taghribirdī (d. 874/1470),⁴ and ‘Abd al-Bāsiṭ b. Khalīl b. Shāhīn al-Zāhirī al-Malaṭī (d. 920/1514).⁵

3 Thomas Bauer noted that in the part dealing with the beginning of the Mamluk Sultanate in his chronicle *Nuzhat al-anām*, Ibn Duqmāq shows a “predilection for literature” and that his chronicle is a “combination of political and cultural history with a conspicuous focus on *adab*.” Ibn Duqmāq shows great interest in poetry written in classical Arabic and gives judgment on the poems he quotes. On the other hand, there are no vernacular verses and he hardly shows interest in *mirabilia*. Bauer concludes that the role of poetry cannot be sufficiently explained by considering it as part of the “process of popularization,” which, according to Haarmann, underlies the process of “literarization” and can be explained better by what Bauer labeled as the process of “*adabization of the ‘ulamā’*” (see more on that below) and by the desire of the author to prove his professionalism and to make up for his incomplete linguistic training; see Bauer, Review 261–2; and see also Literarische 105–6. However, a quick survey of the parts dealing with Ibn Duqmāq’s own time in his *al-Nafḥa al-miskīyya* reveals that there is hardly any mention of poetry verses. On the other hand, it is possible to find in the historical narrative story-like reports with dialogues or direct speech containing non-standard usages of Arabic, elements that are typical of other Egyptian historians related to the military institution; see, for example, Ibn Duqmāq, *al-Nafḥa* 212, 224. For similar elements in reports on earlier periods of the sultanate in *al-Nafḥa al-miskīyya*, see, for example, *ibid.* 90–1, 94, 102–3, 143–4, 155–6, 161; and see also at footnotes 54–8 below. On nonstandard usages of Arabic in *al-Nafḥa al-miskīyya* and *Nuzhat al-anām*, see chapter 2 appendix A group A (*mamlūks*’ descendants no. 2—footnote 175, and no. 3—footnote 178) and appendix A group B (no. 2—footnote 189); and see chapter 2 table 2.1. In order to check these tentative findings there is a need to examine Ibn Duqmāq’s *Nuzhat al-anām* (*al-Nafḥa* being only its summary), the relevant parts of which are still in manuscript form and have not been consulted by the author of the present article.

4 According to Peter Thorau, the “literarization” of history writing that is already noticeable in the writing of al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442) and Ibn Taghribirdī became much stronger in the historical writing of Ibn Iyās; however, he does not elaborate on the nature of this “literarization”; see Thorau, *Geschichte* 230. According to Donald Little, like Ibn al-Dawādārī and Ibn Iyās, Ibn Taghribirdī wrote a “popularized history” in a “style influenced by the Egyptian vernacular and various literary devices.” However, Little does not go into details; see Little, *Historiography* 440. In the introduction to his edition of *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, Muḥammad Ḥusayn Shams al-Dīn notes that in the parts that deal with the history of Egypt before Mamluk rule, Ibn

There was not, however, only a single form of “literarization” (or “*adabization*”).⁶ Li Guo focused on a different trend of “literarization” current in chronicles written by Syrian *ḥadīth* scholars, some of Ḥanbali background, active in the first half of the 8th/14th century, notably al-Yūnīnī (d. 726/1326) and al-Jazarī (see table 1.1 below).⁷ While using in the historical narrative some story-like reports or anecdotes containing dialogues, direct speech, and colloquial

Taghrībirdī shows a penchant for digressions (*istitṛādāt*) and for “strange,” extraordinary, and wondrous stories or coincidences (*gharā'ib/ittiḥāqāt 'ajiba*); see Shams al-Dīn, *Nujūm* i, 27. Sami Massoud noted that “[i]n addition to the tightly knit narrative and the concern for clarity, there is another aspect peculiar to *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*: the frequent use of proverbial expressions ... to exhort or to lament a certain state of affairs,” and that *al-Nujūm al-zāhira* “was to serve primarily a specific function, namely, the edification and entertainment of a particular group,” which helps account for the “melodramatic tone,” Ibn Taghrībirdī imparts to some of his reports; see Massoud, *Chronicles* 64–5. There are reports that are peculiar to *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, and these are accounts from people who had lived through this period, namely his father’s associates and acquaintances, and information he garnered from his first-hand knowledge of the Mamluk military personnel of his own era; see *ibid.* 63. Because Ibn Taghrībirdī refers many times to his father and his reports, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira* is one of the most “personal histories” written during the Circassian period; see *ibid.* 172–3. It may be added that a survey of *al-Nujūm al-zāhira* easily reveals that it contains many anecdotes or story-like reports, mainly from Ibn Taghrībirdī’s father and his associates, his relatives, and other contemporaries, or Ibn Taghrībirdī’s own reports. The transmission of such reports is sometimes connected to the verb *ḥakā* and its derivatives. Such reports normally contain dialogues or direct speech and sometimes nonstandard usages of Arabic; see, for example, Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm* xi, 378–9; xii, 60–1, 88, 182–4; xiii, 83–4, 86–7, 91–4, 111–2, 130–2, 138–40; xiv, 14–5, 111–3, 193–4, 233–4, 259, 356; xv, 46, 56, 236–7, 281–2, 401, 443–4; xvi, 234, 361. Such elements can also easily be found in reports on the Turkish period of the sultanate (648–784/1250–1382) quoted from earlier history books; see, for example, *ibid.* vii, 87–9; viii, 45, 250; ix, 106. On “storytelling” in *al-Nujūm al-zāhira* in accounts of the Turkish period, see Guo, *Songs*. On nonstandard usages of Arabic in *al-Nujūm al-zāhira* and *al-Manhal al-ṣāfi*, see chapter 2 appendix A group A (*mamlūks’* descendants no. 3—footnote 178) and appendix A group D (no. 2—footnote 203); and see also chapter 2 table 2.1.

5 As far as I know, trends of “literarization” in al-Malaṭī’s chronicles did not receive any attention. Still, it may be noted here that by a cursory survey of the historical narrative in *al-Rawḍ al-bāsim*, a chronicle dedicated to the years covering al-Malaṭī’s lifetime, it is possible to find story-like reports (some transmitted from al-Malaṭī’s father, and some defined by al-Malaṭī as *ḥikāya*) containing dialogues or direct speech and nonstandard usages of Arabic, or “strange” stories, see for example al-Malaṭī, *Rawḍ* i, 168–71, 323, 341–2, 364; ii, 69–70, 102–5, 146–7, 168–9, 174–5, 219, 229–31, 233–4, 236, 239, 293–5, 375; iii, 29–30, 102, 106–7, 116–7, 182–3, 190, 192–4, 200–1, 207–12, 291–6, 336–41; iv, 43–9, 56, 95–8 (esp. 97). On nonstandard usages of Arabic in *al-Rawḍ al-bāsim*, see chapter 2 appendix A group A (*mamlūks’* descendants no. 4—footnote 180).

6 Guo, *Mamluk* 36; and see also Irwin, *Mamluk literature* 16.

7 Guo, *Introduction* 81–96; *Mamluk* 38–9. On their Ḥanbali background, see for example, *Introduction* 86; Irwin, *Mamluk history* 160–1.

language, and also other *adab*-like materials (notably *‘ajā’ib wa-gharā’ib*) typical of their Egyptian counterparts related to the military institution⁸ (indeed some of these elements appear in story-like reports received from Egyptian military men),⁹ the “literarization” in the chronicles of the early Syrian writers takes a different form and is much more conspicuous in the obituary notes (*wafayāt*). These chronicles are, in fact, a combination of history, biographical dictionary, and literary anthology. The obituary notes, most of them dedicated to learned men, record their *adab* product, mainly “high *adab* materials,” and more specifically their high-quality poetry in classical form (and sometimes poetry written on them),¹⁰ a phenomenon that can be related to the more general trend referred to by Thomas Bauer as the “*adab*ization of the *‘ulamā’*” and the growing usage of poetry for communicative purposes.¹¹ Much less commonly, however, it records also other *adab*-like materials, such as “strange,” edifying, or entertaining stories (some of them obscene) told by the scholars (or about them), which normally contain dialogues with direct speech and colloquial language,¹² and even more rarely, it records scholars’ riddles (*alghāz*, sing.

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- 8 Guo, Introduction 81–96 (esp. 82, 93–6); and see also the editor’s introduction in al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl* i, 39 (on the use of *‘ajā’ib* and the description of foreign lands in the historical narrative for the purpose of digression [*istiṭrād*]).
- 9 Such reports normally open with *ḥakā/ḥakā lī*, suggesting that it is justified to see them as belonging to the genre of “*ḥikāya*” (i.e., a “story” or a “tale”), labeled in this article for the sake of convenience as “story-like reports”; see, for example, al-Jazarī, *Ta’rikh* i, 45, 58, 109, 192–3; al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl* i, 93–4, 202; ii, 715–7. On Syrian historians’ knowledge of events in Egypt, see Guo, History 451; Little, Historiography 427–8.
- 10 Guo, Introduction 81–96 (esp. 82, 85, 87–90, 96).
- 11 Bauer, Misunderstandings 108–11 (esp. 108); and see also, Communication 23–6.
- 12 Such reports normally open with *ḥakā/ḥakā lī/ḥakā lī ‘anhu*, or are referred to as a *ḥikāya*; see, for example, al-Jazarī, *Ta’rikh* i, 80–1, 145, 165–7, 184–7; al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl* i, 226, 384–6, 491–2; ii, 757–8; and see also *ibid.* i, 41; Guo, Introduction 85, 94–6. Among the “strange” or extraordinary stories one may find prophesying dreams; see al-Jazarī, *Ta’rikh* i, 14. Literary trends in *al-Muqtafi*, the chronicle of al-Birzālī (d. 739/1339), the colleague of al-Jazarī and al-Yūnīnī, have received less attention; see Guo, Introduction 81–96. Guo noted that al-Birzālī did not incorporate in his chronicle the literary product (most notably poetry) of the deceased scholars; see *ibid.* 85. It may be added that al-Birzālī sometimes mentions that a deceased scholar wrote poetry (sometimes transmitted to al-Birzālī) but still does not quote actual verses; see, for example, al-Birzālī, *al-Muqtafi* iii, 15–6, 20, 41, 90, 102, 254. For rare cases in which al-Birzālī incorporates poetry in obituaries, see *ibid.* iv, 291, 314–5. It may also be added that al-Birzālī generally does not incorporate anecdotes or story-like reports in the historical narrative (or obituaries), and thus his chronicle practically contains almost no dialogues including direct speech or colloquial language. This observation is based on a survey of the third volume of *al-Muqtafi*. For what may be considered minor anecdotes incorporated in obituaries of deceased scholars, see *ibid.* iii, 143, 170. Relatively rarely, however, one finds in the historical narrative reports on unusual weather phenom-

lughz) or useful general knowledge (*fawā'id*, sing. *fā'ida*) such as supplications (*ad'īya*, sing. *du'ā'*) used by them.¹³

Some attention has also been given to the literary characteristics of works pertaining to history written mostly in the 7th/13th and 8th/14th centuries by authors with *kuttāb-udabā'* backgrounds or such that were more related to the tradition of the *kuttāb-udabā'* than to that of historiography (and, more specifically, Mamluk historiography). In general, these authors did not produce "proper" chronicles, and their works were less subjugated to chronology and more specifically to the annalistic form. At least some of these works have been deemed works of *adab* rather than historiography.¹⁴

ena, or extraordinary phenomena in general (*'ajā'ib*); see, for example, *ibid.* iii, 213–4, 230. On usages of nonstandard Arabic in the chronicle of al-Birzālī, see chapter 2 appendix A group C (exception—footnote 200).

13 See al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl* i, 321–2; al-Jazarī, *Tārīkh* i, 183.

14 For some notes on general trends of language use and style in works pertaining to history written by *kuttāb-udabā'*, see chapter 2 section 6.1. The works of *kuttāb-udabā'* pertaining to history (not including biographical dictionaries) may be divided into several categories: (1) Most attention has been given to al-Nuwayrī al-Iskandarānī's (d. after 775/1373) *Kitāb al-Ilmām* and Ibn Ṣaṣrā's (d. after 799/1397) *al-Durra al-muḍ'ra*—two works that are very remote from "traditional" Mamluk historiography and have sometimes been considered works of *adab* rather than historiography. Al-Nuwayrī al-Iskandarānī was a manuscript copyist and his *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, which purports to be a history of the Crusader attack on Alexandria in 767/1365, contains very little factual historical information and employs nonhistoriographic *adab* genres in the *istitrād* (digressional) framework in the nature of a literary compendium. Among other things it contains marvels, legends, anecdotes and tales (*hikāya*), "witty replies" (*ajwiba muskita*), fictitious speeches and dialogues, prophesying dreams, and typology and magic of figures (*jafr*); see Holt, Review 131; Guo, Mamluk 36–7; Irwin, Mamluk history 165; Mamluk literature 16. Ibn Ṣaṣrā probably hailed from a family of religious scholars. *Al-Durra al-muḍ'ra* is basically an account of events during the reign of al-Zāhir Barqūq (784–801/1382–99). However, it is not strictly bound to a chronological sequence and does not conform with contemporary norms of history writing. It is written in an unconventional style and format. It draws more on literary nonhistoriographical materials than on history books and makes almost no use of Mamluk history books. It makes use of stories, anecdotes, direct speech, hortatory passages, rhymed prose, fables, proverbs, poetry, moralizing advice, and colloquial language. It is a didactic work, "history as a morality play"; see Brinner, *Chronicle*, xii–xvii, xxv; Mas-soud, *Chronicles* 119–21; Irwin, Mamluk history 165; Ibn Zunbul 6; Mamluk literature 17; and see also chapter 2 section 6.1 at footnote 160. (2) Although much more related to "traditional" Mamluk historiography, the "literarization" in the chronological-historical sections of the (*adab*) encyclopedias or manuals for Mamluk clerks produced by the bureaucrats Shihāb al-Dīn al-Nuwayrī (d. 733/1333) and Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-'Umārī (d. 749/1349) has received relatively little attention (in the case of al-Nuwayrī's *Nihāyat al-arab*) or almost no attention at all (in the case of al-'Umārī's *Masālik al-abṣār*). On the categorization and character of the works and the authors' backgrounds, see, for example, Herzog, Compos-

Trends of “literarization” in history writing during the 9th/15th century, a period dominated by Egyptian historians who were mostly religious scholars (many of them Shāfi‘īs), have received less attention. In fact, according to Haarmann, some historians who were religious scholars active in the 9th/15th century, among them al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442), show a “conservative anti-literary

ition 107; Irwin, Mamluk literature 8; Mamluk history 166; Guo, Introduction 93; Mamluk 16, 30–2; Little, Historiography 430–1; Muhanna, *Encyclopaedism* 190; Why was 346–7. On “literarization” in al-Nuwayrī, see Guo, Introduction 93; Mamluk 36, 39; Amitai, Chinggis 702; Muhanna, *Encyclopaedism* 190; and see also chapter 2 section 6.1 at footnote 161. On “literarization” in al-‘Umarī, see Lohlker, Al-‘Umarī’s 342. (3) Attention has also been given to royal biographies written by “court historians” working in the chancery (*dōwān al-inshā’*), produced mainly during the early Mamluk period by authors such as Ibn ‘Abd al-Ẓāhir (d. 692/1292) and his nephew Shāfi‘ b. ‘Alī (d. 730/1330). The treatises written by them are normally seen as “official biographies” written under patronage and supervision of sultans that are designed to be presented at court and legitimize their rule by praising them and, therefore, are only partially subjugated to the annalistic form, see, for example, Irwin, Mamluk history 162–3; Little, Historiography 421–3; Guo, Mamluk 30. According to Muhsin al-Musawi, royal biography is a genre that “sits at the very centre of the tradition of belles-lettres”; see al-Musawi, Pre-modern 123. It has been noted that such treatises are written in a florid and ornamented language and contain poetry, “boastful rhymed prose,” and documents drafted by the authors, some of which are written in “bombastic rhymed prose,” see Irwin, Mamluk history 162–3; Mamluk literature 7; and see also Hirschler, Islam 269. The rhymed prose and florid and impeccable Arabic employed in these treatises were probably considered powerful stylistic tools that are suitable for the function of these treatises, i.e., praising the rulers and their military achievements against the enemies of Islam, and legitimizing their rule; see al-Musawi, Pre-modern 107. While it is still not entirely clear to what extent the classical rhetorical device of rhymed prose had found its way into the historical writing in the Mamluk period (see Guo, Mamluk 43), it would seem that in part its usage was dictated by genre (royal biographies) and background of the author (*kuttāb-udabā’* and more specifically the *inshā’* tradition). On *inshā’* and rhymed prose, see, for example, Bauer, Misunderstandings 125–6; on court officials or secretaries and rhymed prose, see Hirschler, Islam 269; Şen, Ottoman 335–6. Normally, however, literary aspects of these treatises have not been discussed in the context of the discourse on the “literarization” of Mamluk historiography. This must be due to the fact that the literary elements in these treatises (most notably rhymed prose) are considered “traditional,” “high,” or “pragmatic”; see Bauer, Misunderstandings 125–6. On documents as literary texts, see Northrup, Documents 121–36. For a detailed discussion on “literarization” in these treatises, see chapter 13, the article of Gowaart Van Den Bossche in this volume. For later “royal biographies” considered by some to be “essentially literary works,” “pseudo-historical texts,” or “literary panegyrics” (or “literary offerings”) containing sparse historical data, “a conglomeration of insignificant facts which are not held together by any attempt of biographical or historical characterization,” and contrasted to the aforementioned earlier biographies deemed as “historical biographies,” see Holt, Review 131–2; Irwin, Mamluk literature 16; Holt, Literary 3–16; Van Steenbergen, Qalāwūnid 6–7.

TABLE 1.1 Trends of “literarization” (“*adabization*”) in Mamluk chronicles and the chroniclers that received the most attention**A. Egyptian chroniclers related to the military institution**

(Conspicuous mainly in the **historical narrative** [*ḥawādith*]: in general, mainly involves **anecdotes or story-like reports containing dialogues, direct speech, and colloquial language** but also popular motifs, occult materials, digressions, and other *adab*-like materials [notably *ʿajāʾib wa-gharāʾib*])

- | | | |
|----|---|--|
| 1. | Qaraṭāy (d. after 708/1308) ^a | |
| 2. | Ibn al-Dawādārī (d. after 736/1335) ^b | all active during the first half |
| 3. | [less attention] al-Shujāʿī (d. after 756/1356) ^c | of the 8th/14th century |
| 4. | al-Yūsufī (d. 759/1358) ^d | |
| 5. | Ibn Iyās (d. ca. 930/1524) ^e | active during the late 9th/15th century |

B. Syrian *ḥadīth* scholars (Ḥanbalīs or Ḥanbalī milieu)

(Conspicuous mainly in the **obituary notes** [*wafayāt*]: in general, a record of *adab* product, mainly **high-quality poetry**)

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| 1. | al-Yūnīnī (d. 726/1326) ^f | all active during the first half |
| 2. | al-Jazarī (d. 739/1338) ^g | of the 8th/14th century |

a Irwin, *Image* 236–40; Mamluk history 164–5; Ibn Zunbul 6; Eddé, *Qaraṭāy* 51.

b Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 167–81; *Auflösung* 55; Turkish 105–6; and see also Irwin, Mamluk history 164; Little, *Historiography* 425, 440; Guo, *History* 452; Mamluk 34–7; Robinson, *Islamic* 167.

c Haarmann, *Auflösung* 55; Schäfer, *Chronik* 9–14. Because the literary trends in the chronicle of al-Shujāʿī received relatively little attention, it is perhaps appropriate to make clear that it is easy to find in the historical narrative in his chronicle anecdotes or story-like reports containing dialogues with direct speech and nonstandard usages of Arabic; see, for example, al-Shujāʿī, *Taʾrīkh* 48–9, 52, 98–101, 126–7. On nonstandard usages of Arabic in the chronicle of al-Shujāʿī, see chapter 2 appendix A group A (*mamlūks* no. 3—footnote 170) and appendix A group E (no. 4—footnote 211); and most importantly, see chapter 2 appendix C.

d Little, *Recovery* 48, 53–4; *Historiography* 426–7; Guo, *History* 452; and see also Little, *Introduction* 81–4.

e Haarmann, *Auflösung* 55; and see also Little, *Historiography* 440; Massoud, *Chronicles* 71–6 (esp. 75–6), 138, 195–7; Beaumont, *Literary* 1 (referring to the [historical?] work of Ibn Iyās as “anecdotal work”); Irwin, Mamluk history 164; Guo, *History* 452; Thorau, *Geschichte* 230–1; Havemann, *The chronicle of Ibn Iyās* 89; al-Musawī, *Pre-modern* 121.

f Guo, *Introduction* 81–96; and see also Irwin, Mamluk history 160.

g Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 167–81; *Auflösung* 54–5; Guo, *Introduction* 81–96; and see also Irwin, Mamluk history 161; Little, *Historiography* 428–9; Eychenne, *al-Jazarī* 131.

historiographical ethos,¹⁵ preferring a more serious, solemn, and learned outlook.¹⁶ Muhsin al-Musawi, however, noted that al-Maqrīzī incorporated in his *Khīṭaṭ* (an archeological and monumental history of Cairo) and other works “entertaining accounts and pleasing maxims” in order to appeal to readers and achieve entertainment and edification “in line with traditional forms of biography and historiography.”¹⁷ Martin Smith noted that al-Maqrīzī incorporated in his *Khīṭaṭ* poetry, some of which he personally collected, thus “participating in what has been called the ‘literarization’ of history writing in the Mamluk period,”¹⁸ and Guy Ron-Gilboa noted that he combined anecdotes or stories of a “belles-lettres character” in his universal chronicle (or history of humanity) *al-Khabar ‘an al-bashar* in a chapter on pre-Islamic brigands, which “reflects the historiographical conventions of its time”¹⁹ and is “emblematic of the ‘literarization’ of Mamlūk historiography.”²⁰ According to Ron-Gilboa, al-Maqrīzī was a historiographer endowed with “a keen literary awareness,” a “clear authorial voice,”²¹ and “editorial discretion”²² who was “constantly engaged in a double dialogue: with Arabic belles-lettres and historiographical tradition on the one hand and with popular literature on the other.”²³ Haarmann referred to the existence of some “literarized” materials in the writing of “conservative” authors such as al-Maqrīzī as a “literarization against will,”²⁴ that is, as an unconscious borrowing of already “literarized” material existing in earlier chronicles.²⁵ According to Haarmann, these 9th/15th-century “compilers” lacked a sense of critique of the historiographical sources they used and, therefore, did not realize that the materials in it were already “literarized.”

15 Haarmann, *Auflösung* 54; and see also Ron-Gilboa, *Pre-Islamic* 13 (footnote 23).

16 Haarmann, *al-Maqrīzī* 151 (*al-Maqrīzī* is described as a “serious” historian), and see also 163–4; Rabbat, *Perception* 165 (relying on Haarmann’s research, Rabbat writes that *al-Maqrīzī* “preferred a more serious, solemn, and learned outlook”).

17 Al-Musawi, *Pre-modern* 121; on the *Khīṭaṭ*, see Bauden, *Taqī al-Dīn* 171–3.

18 Smith, *Finding* 143–4.

19 Ron-Gilboa, *Pre-Islamic* 12–4. On *al-Khabar ‘an al-bashar*, see Bauden, *Taqī al-Dīn* 196–8.

20 Ron-Gilboa, *Pre-Islamic* 26.

21 *Ibid.* 11–2.

22 *Ibid.* 26.

23 *Ibid.* 29; and see also Beaumont, *Literary* 1 (referring to the [historical?] work of *al-Maqrīzī* as “anecdotal work”); Thorau, *Geschichte* 230 (refers to a “literarization” of history writing that is noticeable in the writing of *al-Maqrīzī*, however, he does not elaborate about the nature of this “literarization”); Herzog, *What they saw* 32–3 (on “scenic dramatization” as a narrative strategy in the narration of the death of Shajarāt al-Durr in Mamluk chronicles, among them *al-Maqrīzī*’s *Sulūk*).

24 Haarmann, *Auflösung* 54; and see also Ron-Gilboa, *Pre-Islamic* 13 (footnote 23).

25 See Haarmann, *Auflösung* 54.

In what follows, it will be argued that as a 9th/15th-century Egyptian historian and Shāfi'ī religious scholar, al-Maqrīzī combined Egyptian and (Shāfi'ī) scholarly historiographical trends in a much more conscious and varied manner than Haarmann would allow. The trends of "literarization" in al-Maqrīzī's historical works were dependent on genre (chronicle/biographical dictionary), the time of events or persons described (past/his own time), and sometimes also their background (military men/scholars). This will be exemplified by an examination of al-Maqrīzī's chronicle *al-Sulūk li-ma'rifat duwal al-mulūk* (section 2 below), his biographical dictionary *al-Muqaffā l-kabīr*, dedicated mainly to notables of the past (section 3 below), and his biographical dictionary *Durar al-'uqūd al-farīda fī tarājim al-a'yān al-mufīda*, dedicated to his contemporaries (section 4 below). It will be shown that when describing past events or persons, al-Maqrīzī chose to rely heavily on "highly literarized" sources, which suggests that it is very unlikely that the "literarization" in his historiographical works was against his will. Moreover, it will be demonstrated that although in such cases al-Maqrīzī omitted, condensed, restructured, or paraphrased some "literarized" material, he did leave room for plenty of "literarized" material. In fact, the omitting, condensing, restructuring, and paraphrasing actually prove that al-Maqrīzī knew very well to recognize the "literarized" material and hence that, when he chose to include such materials, it was a conscious decision. Al-Maqrīzī's consistent standardization of nonstandard usages of Arabic in his quoted sources is another indication that he was well aware of issues of language and style. Even more importantly, al-Maqrīzī's biographical dictionary of his contemporaries contains plenty of "literarized" material, which must have been collected by al-Maqrīzī himself and consciously incorporated into this work. The fact that in some cases it is clear that al-Maqrīzī was aware of "literarized" materials related to his contemporaries, but still decided not to include them in his work, is another indication that he totally controlled the process of the incorporation of "literarized" material.

More specifically, it will be shown that when reporting on events in the first half of the 8th/14th century in his chronicle *al-Sulūk*, al-Maqrīzī relied heavily on *Nuzhat al-nāzir fī sirat al-Malik al-Nāsir*, the "highly literarized" chronicle of the Egyptian military man al-Yūsufī that contains countless anecdotes or story-like reports with dialogues, direct speech, and nonstandard usages of Arabic, but he transformed al-Yūsufī's usages into standard Arabic. When describing contemporary events, however, al-Maqrīzī's chronicle is relatively "de-literarized," at least with respect to story-like reports with dialogues and direct speech (section 2 below). In biographical entries dedicated to amirs or religious scholars of the first half of the 8th/14th century in *al-Muqaffā*, a biographical dictionary dedicated to Egyptians who left their mark on history,

al-Maqrīzī combined anecdotes from al-Yūsufī's *Nuzhat al-nāzir* and al-Ṣafadī's (d. 764/1363) *al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt* but tried to arrange them in chronological order as much as possible, and again got rid of nonstandard usages of Arabic (section 3 below). In al-Maqrīzī's *Durar al-ʿuqūd*, a biographical dictionary dedicated to al-Maqrīzī's contemporaries, the *mamlūk* amirs' biographies are "dry" and contain no anecdotes on them or *adab*-like reports from them. In contrast, biographies of scholars or civilians contain their poetry, but to a much larger extent than in early 8th/14th-century chronicles written by Syrian religious scholars, also other "*adab* product" such as "strange," entertaining, exotic, or fantastic stories, useful knowledge, medical prescriptions, prayers and supplications, popular beliefs, and popular wisdom sayings, sometimes in a clear *istitrād* style (section 4 below).

It would seem that for al-Maqrīzī, contemporary history was seen as a "serious" thing, or at least, drawing on a (Shāfiʿī) scholarly historiographic tradition, he did not consider accounts of contemporary events as the suitable place for entertaining story-like reports with dialogues and direct speech. In contrast, past events and biographies of past amirs and religious scholars could be used to some degree for entertainment purposes, drawing on the tradition of Egyptian chronicles written by historians related to the military institution, and on a more general anecdotal tradition of biographical dictionaries. Still, drawing on a Shāfiʿī scholarly historiographic tradition, al-Maqrīzī standardized all the nonstandard usages of Arabic in his quoted sources. Biographies of contemporary scholars or civilians contain their "*adab* product." In the tradition of historical works written by scholars, the *adab* product includes poetry verses. However, drawing on general popularizing trends in Mamluk literature and historiography, and possibly also on popularizing literary trends in Egyptian chronicles written by historians related to the military institution, the "*adab* product" also contains to a much greater extent "popular lore" that now becomes part of the scholars' cultural heritage; however, typical for Shāfiʿī scholars, it is transmitted in standard Arabic. Also typical for historians who were (Shāfiʿī) scholars, contemporary *mamlūk* amirs, it seems, are mentioned in a functional way and are not considered "interesting" or able to contribute to the cultural heritage of the community.

In fact, as will be argued, the trend of "literarization" in biographies of contemporary scholars in al-Maqrīzī's *Durar al-ʿuqūd* and the incorporation of such varied *adab*-like, many times popular, elements in the framework of biographical entries or obituaries in a mainstream work of history has no real precedent. While chronicles written by Egyptian historians related to the military institution are filled with story-like reports, and while the obituaries in the chronicles of scholars such as al-Yūnīnī and al-Jazarī resemble an anthology

of poetry, *Durar al-'uqūd* resembles a (popularized) *adab* anthology. Therefore, if we envisage “literarization” as “*adabization*” (i.e., incorporation of *adab* elements, including elements of *adab* “in its ‘lower’ form”) and take into consideration that “many-sidedness” is central to any definition of *adab*, it may be argued that *Durar al-'uqūd* is, in fact, the most complete example of “literarization” in Mamluk traditional historiography.

2 *Al-Sulūk li-ma'rifat duwal al-mulūk: Trends of Literarization in al-Maqrīzī's Chronicle*

Al-Maqrīzī's *Sulūk* is a chronicle covering the Ayyubid and Mamluk eras in Egypt until the days of al-Maqrīzī (567–844/1171–1441; the work ends a few years before al-Maqrīzī's death in Ramaḍān 845/February 1442), which is the last part of a trilogy covering the history of Egypt since the Muslim conquest.²⁶ As has been shown by Donald Little, and is by now well known, one of the most important sources used by al-Maqrīzī in his *Sulūk* for the reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (693–4/1293–4, 698–708/1299–1309, and 709–41/1310–41) is al-Yūsufī's “highly literarized” chronicle *Nuzhat al-nāẓir fī sirat al-Malik al-Nāṣir*. At least for some years during al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's third reign, it is even almost an exclusive source. As Little showed, although al-Maqrīzī does not mention his sources in the *Sulūk* and never acknowledges his indebtedness to al-Yūsufī, a collation of al-Maqrīzī's and al-Yūsufī's annals for the *hijrī* years 734–7 (1333–8)—the only years extant *in toto* from *Nuzhat al-nāẓir*—reveals that al-Maqrīzī based the entire annals on al-Yūsufī, adding only a few reports, obituaries, and dates.²⁷ The mere fact that al-Maqrīzī chose to rely so heavily on a “highly literarized” chronicle suggests that it is very unlikely that the literarization in the *Sulūk*, exemplified below, was against his will.

As noted by Little, al-Maqrīzī's version of materials from *Nuzhat al-nāẓir* is condensed, and in the process of summarizing al-Yūsufī's reports, he transforms al-Yūsufī's language and recasts the passages into his own language.²⁸

26 On the *Sulūk*, see Bauden, Taqī al-Dīn 171, 176, 181–5 (esp. 181).

27 Little, Recovery 44–6; and see also, *Introduction* 81–5 (esp. 83–5), 95; Analysis 252–61 (esp. 252–3, 260–1). Little established the reliance of al-Maqrīzī on al-Yūsufī for some years during the early reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad through a collation of materials from the *Sulūk* with materials from al-'Aynī's (d. 855/1451) *Taqd al-jumān*, in which materials from al-Yūsufī's *Nuzhat al-nāẓir* are quoted extensively. Little noted that it may be assumed that al-Maqrīzī relied on *Nuzhat al-nāẓir* extensively, also in years that he did not check. On al-'Aynī's reliance on *Nuzhat al-nāẓir*, see also Nakamachi, al-'Aynī's 152–3.

28 Little, Recovery 45; Analysis 260–1.

However, although al-Maqrīzī omits many of the story-like reports that contain dialogues with direct speech in *Nuzhat al-nāzīr*, and condenses and paraphrases the rest, a few story-like reports with lively dialogues and direct speech do appear in the *Sulūk*. In fact, the omitting, condensing, and paraphrasing actually prove that al-Maqrīzī knew very well to recognize the “literarized” material in *Nuzhat al-nāzīr* and hence that, when he chose to include such materials in the *Sulūk*, it was a conscious decision. This is probably also attested by the fact that al-Maqrīzī, almost with no exception, standardizes the non-standard usages of Arabic that appear in *Nuzhat al-nāzīr* (occasional usages of *ēsh* in the *Sulūk* may be found).²⁹ This shows a deliberate decision by al-Maqrīzī not to include nonstandard Arabic in his writing, which shows that he was well aware of issues of language and style.

I will discuss only one example in detail. In the course of the narrative of the year 736/1335–6, al-Maqrīzī recasts a story-like report from *Nuzhat al-nāzīr* on a petition addressed to sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad by a merchant claiming that the *wazīr* al-Nashū forced the merchant’s slave girl to buy a piece of cloth at a high price (*tarḥ*). Table 1.2 below presents a line-by-line collation of the reports from the *Sulūk* and the *Nuzha*. The text in black is the *Sulūk*, and the text in red is the *Nuzha*. The parts of the report relevant for the discussion on language that were omitted, directly standardized, or paraphrased and standardized by al-Maqrīzī are in orange color in both texts and are preceded by green numerals in brackets. In green brackets, after the relevant passages, it is mentioned if al-Yūsufī’s text was omitted, directly standardized, or paraphrased and thus standardized. If al-Yūsufī’s text was omitted or not directly standardized by al-Maqrīzī, the standard form appears in green brackets after the nonstandard form in al-Yūsufī’s text. It should be emphasized that my intention is not to offer a detailed linguistic analysis of the texts or linguistic usages in Mamluk historiographical texts. I leave that to scholars better qualified to do it than me. My intention is to show a general trend of standardization in al-Maqrīzī’s text. Therefore, I restrict myself to the most conspicuous and clear instances of usages of nonstandard Arabic and standardization thereof. It should also be

29 See, for example, al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* ii, 365 (compare with al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 147); and see also al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* ii, 393–4 (compare with al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 294). Note that *ēsh* (or *ayy shayʿ*) has superseded *mā* as interrogative pronoun starting from a very early period, and it is attested in historiographical texts already in the days of al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923); see Blau, *Handbook* 36 (no. 30); and see on that also the linguistic introduction in Zetterstéén, *Beiträge* 27; and see also Schen, Usama Ibn Munqidh (Part II) 65–6; Guo, Introduction 94–5. On *ēsh* in the writing of Mamluk literati normally writing only in classical Arabic, see Rabbat, Representing 69. On al-Maqrīzī’s efforts to restrict himself to classical Arabic, see also Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 179.

TABLE 1.2 A collation of texts in al-Maqrīzī's *Sulūk* and al-Yūsufī's *Nuzhat al-nāzir*³⁰

وَقَالَ السُّلْطَانُ لَهُ مُبْرَجًا:	وَمَا حَضَرَ النَّشْوُ قَدَامَ السُّلْطَانِ رَأَهُ (1) وَأَقِفَ (standard وَأَقِفًا) ³¹
فَاسْتَدَعَ السُّلْطَانُ النَّشْوُ	(1) مُحْضُورِ النَّاجِرِ (paraphrased/standardized) وَقَالَ لَهُ:
"(2) قَوْلُ (standard قُلْ) ³² كَمْ (3) يَشْتَكُوا" ³³	النَّاسِ مِنْكَ
(omitted 2)"	كَمْ (3) تَشْكُو (standardized) النَّاسِ مِنْكَ
اسْمَعْ (4) اِشْ ³⁴	يَقُولُ هَذَا عَنْكَ أَنْكَ تَرِي عَلَيْهِ الْقَمَاشَ بِالْغَالِي
اسْمَعْ (4) مَا (standardized) يَقُولُ هَذَا عَنْكَ مِنْ طَرَحِ الْقَمَاشِ عَلَيْهِ بِأَعْلَى الْأَثْمَانِ	
(5) وَتَرِيدُ تُكْسِرُ النَّاسَ (standard وَتُرِيدُ أَنْ تُكْسِرَ) ³⁵	
"(omitted 5)	
فَالْتَفَتَتْ بِسُرْعَةٍ وَقَالَ: "يَا خُونَدَ هَذَا مَا يَشْتَكِي مِنْ أَمْرِ الْقَمَاشِ	
فَقَالَ: "يَا خُونَدَ هَذَا مَا يَشْتَكِي مِنْ أَمْرِ الْقَمَاشِ"	
وَأَمَّا هَذَا لِلْسُّلْطَانِ عَلَيْهِ (6) ثَلَاثِينَ (standard ثَلَاثُونَ) ³⁶	أَلْفَ دِينَارٍ
لَكِنَّهُ عَلَيْهِ لِلْسُّلْطَانِ مَبْلَغُ (6) ثَلَاثِينَ (paraphrased/standardized) أَلْفَ دِينَارٍ	

30 Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* ii, 390–1; al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 284–5.

31 On the absence of the accusative *alif* in Middle Arabic in cases where in standard Arabic it appears (here in the case of a circumstantial adverb), see Blau, *Handbook* 44 (no. 74). For the phenomenon in Mamluk historiographical texts, see the introductions in Haarmann, *Kanz* 37; Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 20.

32 On long vowels occurring in final closed syllables (in the imperative and jussive) in Middle Arabic, see Blau, *Handbook* 30 (no. 6); Lentin, *Levant* 186. For Mamluk historiographical texts, see Brinner, *Chronicle*, xxiv; Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 28; Haarmann, *Kanz* 36.

33 Due to the disappearance of the mood endings in Middle Arabic, imperfect forms in all moods may terminate with and without the ending *n*; see Blau, *Handbook* 45 (no. 77). Verbs preceding subjects that designate several persons stand in the plural, see *ibid.* 45 (no. 79). On these phenomena in Mamluk historiographical texts, see Brinner, *Chronicle*, xxiv; Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 31; Haarmann, *Kanz* 36.

34 Note that *ēsh* is normally used in Middle Arabic as an interrogative pronoun, see Schen, *Usama Ibn Munqidh* (part 11) 65–6; however, here it may be seen as a relative pronoun.

35 On subordinate asyndetic clauses in Middle Arabic, see Blau, *Handbook* 52–3 (no. 128). For the phenomenon in Mamluk historiographical texts, see Haarmann, *Kanz* 37.

36 On the supersession of the *casus rectus* by the *obliquus* in the sound masculine plural in Middle Arabic, see Blau, *Handbook* 44 (no. 74). For the phenomenon in Mamluk historiographical texts, see Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 21; Haarmann, *Kanz* 36.

TABLE 1.2 A collation of texts in al-Maqrīzī's *Sulūk* and al-Yūsufī's *Nuzhat al-nāzir* (cont.)

	وهو هارب مني وأنا أطلبه ³⁷ (7) مَا يَقَعُ لِي (standard) [هُوَ] مَا يَقَعُ لِي ³⁷
	وقد هرب مني وأنا أطلبه ³⁷ (omitted 7)
	(8) قَالَ السُّلْطَانُ: "مِنْ جِهَةِ إِيشَ لَكَ مَعَهُ؟"
	(omitted 8)
	قَالَ: "يَا خُونَدَ هَذَا تَزَوَّجَ (9) وَاحِدَةً جَارِيَةً ³⁸
	وهذا المبلغ من إرث جَارِيَةً (standardized) تَزَوَّجَهَا التَّاجِرُ (9)
	وهي من جوار ³⁹ (10) الشَّهِيدِ (11) أَخُوكَ (standard) أَخِيكَ ⁴⁰ الْمَلِكِ الْأَشْرَفِ
	وهي من جَوَارِي (10) (standardized) الشَّهِيدِ (11) (omitted 11) الْمَلِكِ الْأَشْرَفِ خَلِيلِ
	وكان معها جهاز يساوي مائة ألف دينار من فصوص ولؤلؤ وجوهر وزركش وماتت
	ماتت عنده وخلفت نحو مائة ألف دينار وما بين جواهر وغيرها
	فأخذ كل شيء لها ولم يظهر السلطان على شيء
	فأخذ الجميع ولم يظهر السلطان على شيء
	والتفت للرجل وقال له:
	ثم التفت النسوة إلى التاجر وقال له:
	"بِحياة رأس السلطان ما كنت (12) مُزَوَّجًا ⁴¹ فَلَانَةَ؟"
	"بِحياة رأس السلطان ما كنت (12) مُزَوَّجًا (standardized) بِفُلَانَةَ؟" - يعني الجارية المذكورة

37 On subordinate asyndetic clauses in Middle Arabic, see Blau, *Handbook* 52–3 (no. 128).

38 On the word *wāhid* preceding a noun and used as indefinite article in Middle Arabic, see Blau *Dictionary* 754; for the phenomenon in a 9th/15th-century Mamluk literary text, see Vrolijk, *Bringing* 152.

39 On the shortening of a long vowel in an unstressed syllable in Middle Arabic, see Khan, *Judaeo-Arabic* 155. On *jawār(i)* in the definite form instead of the standard *jawārī*, see Smith, *Language* 334; in Mamluk historiographical texts, see Haarmann's introduction in al-Maqrīzī, *Duwal* 32; and see also chapter 2 footnote 38.

40 On the disappearance of cases and on the prevalence of the ending *-ū* in *abū* in Middle Arabic, see Blau, *Handbook* 44 (no. 74); on *akhū* instead of *akhī* in Mamluk historiographical texts, see Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 22; Brinner, *Chronicle*, xxiii.

41 On the absence of the accusative *alif* in Middle Arabic (here in the case of *khavar kāna*), see Blau, *Handbook* 44 (no. 74).

TABLE 1.2 A collation of texts in al-Maqrīzī's *Sulūk* and al-Yūsufī's *Nuzhat al-nāzīr* (cont.)

فَقَالَ: "نَعَمْ"
فَقَالَ: "نَعَمْ"

noted that I have only used printed editions and reproduced the orthography as it appears in the editions. Therefore, orthographical issues are not discussed at all in this article, and the discussion is limited to morphological, syntactical, and lexical elements.⁴² It should also be noted that whenever possible, I have vocalized al-Yūsufī's text as if it is in standard Arabic, although, at least in dialogues, a colloquial reading is more appropriate.

Here is a translation of al-Maqrīzī's report with addition of relevant parts from al-Yūsufī in red brackets:

The sultan summoned al-Nashū in the presence of the merchant and told al-Nashū (in anger): "(tell me!) how many complaints do the people have on you? Listen what he has to say on you, that you were forcing him to buy this cloth in a high price (and that you want to break the people)."

So al-Nashū (quickly turned [to the sultan] and) said: "your highness, he is not complaining because of the cloth, but rather because he owes the sultan thirty thousand dinars, but he ran away from me and I am trying to get a hold of him (but he does not fall in my hands." The sultan said: "why is it that [you think] he owes [us] money?" So al-Nashū said: "). The amount that he owes you comes from the estate of a slave girl that he married which had been one of the slave girls of the martyr al-Ashraf

42 In the absence of a historical dictionary of Arabic, a dictionary of Mamluk Arabic, and clear definitions of what are "classical" or "post-classical" lexical usages, it is many times difficult to judge if lexical usages were considered "standard." There is reason to believe, for example, that al-Yūsufī's usages of *bi-ḥaraj* (in anger), *muzawwaj* (married), and *bi-l-ghālī* (for a high price) are "non-classical" (i.e., they do not appear in dictionaries of Arabic language at least until *Lisān al-'arab*, including *Lisān al-'arab*, and normally also not in texts written during the first four centuries of Islam that are generally considered to have been written in standard Arabic). Seemingly, *muzawwaj* and *bi-l-ghālī* were standardized by al-Maqrīzī with *mutazawwij* and *bi-aghilā al-athmān*, respectively, and *bi-ḥaraj* was omitted. These cases, however, are not in orange color in table 1.2. In another place, al-Maqrīzī replaces *bi-ḥaraj* in al-Yūsufī's text with derivatives of *ghadība*, suggesting that he was not very fond of the expression; see al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* ii, 361–2 (compare with al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 132).

Khalīl, who died under him and left behind her about one hundred thousand dinars, jewels, and other property. He took it all and did not tell the sultan about the existence of none of it.”

Then al-Nashū turned to the merchant and told him: “swear to me on the life of the sultan [and answer me], were not you married to her?”—that is, to the aforementioned slave girl.

So the merchant told al-Nashū: “yes [I was].”

As can be seen, al-Maqrīzī omits one part of the dialogue in direct speech by al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (no. 8 in table 1.2) and therefore has to conflate two different sentences in direct speech by al-Nashū into one long utterance. In addition, al-Maqrīzī omits the emotive expression “in anger” and the fact that after hearing al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, al-Nashū “quickly” replied, which adds a dramatic quality to al-Yūsufī’s text. Other parts of the text omitted by al-Maqrīzī such as “you want to break the people” and “but he does not fall in my hands” (nos. 5 and 7) are meant to enhance the image of al-Nashū as an archvillain; thus, they also have a dramatic quality in al-Yūsufī’s text. Another part of the text omitted by al-Maqrīzī is “tell me!” (no. 2), which opens an utterance by al-Nāṣir Muḥammad in al-Yūsufī’s text and has a mimetic quality. It imitates a spoken discourse, enlivens the text, and brings it closer to the audience. Notwithstanding this, the text of al-Maqrīzī still contains a lively dialogue comprised of four parts given in direct speech, three participants, and three changes of speaker, and still reads like a drama.⁴³

As for language, there is no doubt that al-Maqrīzī put in a great effort to avoid nonstandard usages of Arabic in his text. Sometimes he avoids the nonstandard usages in al-Yūsufī’s text simply by omitting them (nos. 2, 5, 7, 8, 11). At other times he bypasses the nonstandard usages by paraphrasing al-Yūsufī’s wording and totally changing its syntactic structure (nos. 1, 6). At other times, al-Maqrīzī directly standardizes al-Yūsufī’s usages (nos. 3, 4, 9, 10, 12). The existence of a text that employs nonstandard usages of Arabic and a parallel text that seems to consistently standardize it may give us a clearer perception of what was considered “standard” by al-Maqrīzī and (some of) his contemporaries. The cases of direct standardization are normally straightforward. It is the more complicated instances of paraphrasing that are perhaps more significant in this respect since they have to do with perceptions of what were considered “standard” syntactic structures, and more importantly, “standard” lexical items.⁴⁴

43 On the dramatic quality of al-Yūsufī’s *Nuzhat al-nāzir*, see Little, *Historiography* 426–7.

44 See footnote 42 above.

All this, however, awaits detailed research, which, as mentioned, is not the purpose of the present article.

In the annals covering al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's third reign, it is relatively easy to find in the *Sulūk* story-like reports with dialogues or direct speech. When it is possible to compare them to al-Yūsufi's *Nuzhat al-nāẓir*, it is relatively easy to see that al-Maqrīzī omits parts of the report, condenses or paraphrases the rest, and standardizes the language but still retains parts of its dialogues in direct speech and its dramatic character.⁴⁵ In some cases, it seems that except for standardizing the language, al-Maqrīzī also cleans up the bad language from al-Yūsufi's text.⁴⁶

This situation changes, starting from the description of the post-al-Nāṣir Muḥammad period in the *Sulūk* and, more conspicuously, starting from about 760/1359, the time when al-Yūsufi's *Nuzhat al-nāẓir* ended. Starting from that period, there is a decrease in the number of story-like reports with dialogues in direct speech that can be found in the *Sulūk*. As has been shown by Massoud, at least regarding the accounts of events of the last quarter of the 8th/14th century in the *Sulūk*, the most important source is Ibn al-Furāt's (d. 807/1405) chronicle *Ta'riḫ al-duwal wa-l-mulūk*. Almost all the reports that appear in *Ta'riḫ al-duwal wa-l-mulūk* also appear in the *Sulūk*. However, al-Maqrīzī invested a lot of effort into condensing and rewriting the reports and recasting them in his own words.⁴⁷ It should be added that in the process of reword-

45 For conspicuous examples, see al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* ii, 361–2 (compare with al-Yūsufi, *Nuzhat* 132—note that al-Yūsufi uses the verb *ḥakā* to describe the act of the transmission of the report from his informant); al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* ii, 384–5 (compare with al-Yūsufi, *Nuzhat* 261–3); al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* ii, 386 (compare with al-Yūsufi, *Nuzhat* 269–71); al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* ii, 393–4 (compare with al-Yūsufi, *Nuzhat* 293–4); al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* ii, 395 (compare with al-Yūsufi, *Nuzhat* 298–9); al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* ii, 399–400 (compare with al-Yūsufi, *Nuzhat* 308); al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* ii, 412–3 (compare with al-Yūsufi, *Nuzhat* 350–3).

46 Al-Maqrīzī omits the word *qawwād* (pimp), see al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* ii, 382 (compare with al-Yūsufi, *Nuzhat* 249); al-Maqrīzī replaces *al-walad al-zinā* (the son of a bitch; note the nonstandard genitive construct) with the less vulgar *kadhdhāb* (liar), see al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* ii, 386 (compare with al-Yūsufi, *Nuzhat* 270); al-Maqrīzī replaces an accusation that some people are the enemies of Muslims with the general “he spoke very bad words” (*bālagha ft l-sabb*); see al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* ii, 387 (compare with al-Yūsufi, *Nuzhat* 271); and see also al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* ii, 398–9 (compare with al-Yūsufi, *Nuzhat* 305–6).

47 Massoud, *Chronicles* 49, 99, 112–3. This has been specifically established for the years 778/1376–7 and 793/1390–1. However, it is reasonable to assume that this was also the case in accounts of other years in the last quarter of the 8th/14th century, and possibly also in accounts of the third quarter of the 8th/14th century. Note that al-Maqrīzī is known to have extensively relied in the *Sulūk* on *Ta'riḫ al-duwal wa-l-mulūk* also in accounts of events from the second half of the 7th/13th century and the early 8th/14th century; see Massoud, *Chronicles* 5 (footnote 29).

ing, al-Maqrīzī consistently standardized Ibn al-Furāt's reports, which are full of nonstandard usages of Arabic.⁴⁸

Massoud has also established Ibn al-Furāt's extensive reliance on Ibn Duqmāq's *Nuzhat al-anām*, at least in accounts of events of the last quarter of the 8th/14th century.⁴⁹ Specifically, Massoud showed that *Nuzhat al-anām* forms the backbone of *Ta'rikh al-duwal wa-l-mulūk*'s narrative for the year 778/1376–7 and that *Ta'rikh al-duwal wa-l-mulūk* contains almost all the reports from *Nuzhat al-anām*, sometimes quoting them almost word for word.⁵⁰ While it was not possible to compare the accounts of the later years of the 8th/14th

48 At least in the parts dealing with Ibn al-Furāt's time, practically every page of *Ta'rikh al-duwal wa-l-mulūk* contains numerous usages of nonstandard Arabic. In what follows I will give only a few examples of al-Maqrīzī's standardization of Ibn al-Furāt's reports, which happens almost on every page in the *Sulūk* relying on Ibn al-Furāt: 1) Absence of accusative *alif*, compare Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rikh* ix, 33 (line 5: *nufiya ilā Ṣafad battāl*) with al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 581 (line 13: *nafāhu ilā Ṣafad*); and compare Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rikh* ix, 37 (line 9: *'ishrīn sayf*) with al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 585 (line 1: *'ishrīn sayfan*); and compare Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rikh* ix, 120–1 (page 120 line 22: *nakūnu shay' wāhid*; line 25: *lam yu'tīnī shay'*; page 121 line 2: *yuqīmu sultān*) with al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 644 (lines 8–9: *nakūnu shay'an wāhidan*; lines 10–11: *lam yu'tīnī shay'an*; line 13: *yuqīmu sultānan*). 2) Usage of the *obliquus* in the sound masculine plural instead of the *casus rectus*, compare Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rikh* ix, 38 (line 8: *ḥaḍara al-mubashshirīn*) with al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 585 (line 16: *qadīma mubashshirū al-ḥajj*). 3) Usage of the fourth verbal theme instead of the first verbal theme (on this phenomenon in Middle Arabic, see Blau, *Handbook* 38 [no. 40]; on the phenomenon in Mamluk historiographical texts, see Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 2), compare Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rikh* ix, 49 (lines 3 and 6: *ukhlī'a*) with al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 589 (lines 6 and 8: *khalā'a*); and compare Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rikh* ix, 56 (line 3: *'araḍa*) with al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 593 (line 4: *'araḍa*); for the opposite phenomenon (seemingly a hypercorrection), compare Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rikh* ix, 75 (line 22: *nafaqa*) with al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 607 (line 10: *anfaqa*). 4) Disappearance of the mood endings (imperfect forms in all moods may terminate with and without the ending *n*), compare Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rikh* ix, 52 (lines 1–2: *bi-annahumā yaṣṭalīhā*) with al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 591 (line 2: *an yaṣṭalīhā*). 5) Accusative *alif* in nouns in singular form that should have been in the nominative (on this phenomenon, see Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 19), compare Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rikh* ix, 75 (lines 18–9: *an lā yata'akhhara ... aḥadan*) with al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 607 (line 8: *an lā yata'akhhara aḥadun*). 6) The active participles of *tertiaē yā'* verbs appear with final *yā'* also in indefinite forms of the nominative/genitive (on this phenomenon in Middle Arabic, see Blau, *Handbook* 41 [no. 57]; in Mamluk historiographical texts, see Brinner, *Chronicle* xxiv), compare Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rikh* ix, 112 (line 12: *māḍī*) with al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 637 (line 7: *māḍīn*). 7) The last (radical) vowel of the suffixless forms of the jussive of verbs III *w/y* is lengthened (see on that Blau, *Handbook* 41 [no. 54]; and see also Haarmann, *Kanz* 36), compare Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rikh* ix, 120 (line 25: *lam yu'tīnī*) with al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 644 (line 10: *lam yu'tīnī*).

49 On Ibn al-Furāt's extensive reliance on Ibn Duqmāq's *Nuzhat al-anām*, see Massoud, *Chronicles* 5 (footnote 36), 34.

50 *Ibid.* 29, 36.

century in *Taʿrīkh al-duwal wa-l-mulūk* and *Nuzhat al-anām*,⁵¹ Massoud found in the account of the events of the year 793/1390–1 in *Taʿrīkh al-duwal wa-l-mulūk* several quotations with explicit references to Ibn Duqmāq that bear a resemblance to materials in Ibn Duqmāq's *al-Nafḥa al-miskīyya* (which is normally a summary of events reported in *Nuzhat al-anām*).⁵² Therefore, a continuing reliance of Ibn al-Furāt on Ibn Duqmāq is very probable, at least for the entire last quarter of the 8th/14th century, and possibly for earlier periods as well. The heavy reliance of al-Maqrīzī on Ibn al-Furāt in that period accounts for the fact that "*al-Sulūk* ultimately bears the mark of Ibn Duqmāq."⁵³

In accounts of contemporary events, Ibn al-Furāt's chronicle generally does not contain many story-like reports with dialogues employing direct speech.⁵⁴ Still, in some of the cases where Ibn Duqmāq is quoted, one does find long story-like reports with dialogues or utterances in direct speech (and nonstandard Arabic).⁵⁵ Sometimes such dialogues are omitted altogether in al-Maqrīzī's

51 The extant parts of *Nuzhat al-anām* dealing with events in the second half of the 8th/14th century cover only the years 768–79/1366–78 and are still in manuscript form, see Massoud, *Chronicles* 30. The relevant extant parts of *Taʿrīkh al-duwal wa-l-mulūk* cover only the years 789–99/1387–97, thus a comparison between the accounts of the year 778/1376–7 in the *Sulūk*, *Nuzhat al-anām*, and *Taʿrīkh al-duwal wa-l-mulūk* was made possible only by consulting *al-Muntaqā min Taʿrīkh Ibn al-Furāt* by Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba (d. 851/1448), also still in manuscript form, which covers the years 773–93/1371–91, see Massoud, *Chronicles* 19 (footnote 32), 28–38; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba 65.

52 Ibid., *Chronicles* 104–6, 110. In fact, references to Ibn Duqmāq appear in *Taʿrīkh al-duwal wa-l-mulūk* already in 789/1386–7, i.e., the first year in the relevant extant part of the chronicle, and continue to appear until 799/1396–7, i.e., the last year in the relevant extant part; see Ibn al-Furāt, *Taʿrīkh* ix, 10, 457–8; and see references to Ibn Duqmāq in the index, ibid. ix, 481. At other times, Ibn al-Furāt says that he quotes from one of "our brothers the historians that are well familiar with the ruling elite" (*baʿḍ al-ikhwān min ʿulamāʾ al-taʿrīkh mimman la-hu iṭṭilāʾ ʿalā aḥwāl arbāb al-dawla*), a reference to Ibn Duqmāq who is sometimes referred to as "our colleague the amir Šārim al-Dīn Ibrāhīm Ibn Duqmāq one of the historians who was well familiar with the ruling elite" (*šāhibunā al-amīr Šārim al-Dīn Ibrāhīm Ibn Duqmāq aḥad ʿulamāʾ al-taʿrīkh wa-kāna la-hu iṭṭilāʾ ʿalā aḥwāl al-dawla*), see for example, ibid. ix, 52, 125.

53 Massoud, *Chronicles* 29 (footnote 77).

54 In fact, Haarmann listed him among the conservative historians and specifically labeled him as a "purist"; see Haarmann, *Auflösung* 54. Given the fact that his chronicle is filled with nonstandard usages of Arabic, it is perhaps better not to regard him as a purist.

55 See, for example, Ibn al-Furāt, *Taʿrīkh* ix, 52–3, 104–5, 140, 193, 255, 347–8, 457–8. For example, in all the historical narratives of the year 793/1390–1 in Ibn al-Furāt's chronicle (almost 30 pages), there is only one report with a dialogue in direct speech, and it is taken from Ibn Duqmāq; see ibid. ix, 255. Except for this, one finds one utterance in direct speech, which is actually presented as a quote from a letter, see ibid. ix, 271 (lines 8–9).

report,⁵⁶ however, at other times, al-Maqrīzī preserves in his report at least an utterance in direct speech.⁵⁷ At other times, the fact that reports with dialogues and direct speech in Ibn al-Furāt that find their way into the *Sulūk* originate in fact from Ibn Duqmāq can be corroborated by a comparison of the materials in Ibn al-Furāt with materials in *al-Nafḥa al-miskiyya*.⁵⁸

So, through the filter of Ibn al-Furāt, generally, not many dialogues or utterances in direct speech are left in the *Sulūk* in accounts of events of the last part of the 8th/14th century. In accounts of events that occurred in the 9th/15th century and after the death of Ibn al-Furāt, when the reports of al-Maqrīzī are generally his own, the number of dialogues or utterances in direct speech decreases even further. I have checked in detail the years 825–7/1421–4, and not even a single dialogue or case of direct speech is found in the *Sulūk*. However, in these years the *Sulūk* is not totally “de-literarized.” One finds four verses of poetry incorporated in the historical narrative,⁵⁹ reports with a moral lesson (*nādira fī-hā ‘ibra/maw‘iza*),⁶⁰ and mainly reports on “strange” or extraordinary, mostly weather-related or natural, phenomena (some defined as *nawādir*, or phenomena that cause wonder [*ta‘ajjub/‘ajab*]).⁶¹

56 See, for example, *ibid.* ix, 255 (compare with al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 741); and see Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta‘riḫ* ix, 457–8 (compare with al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 873).

57 See, for example, Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta‘riḫ* ix, 52–3 (compare with al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 591–2 [esp. 592 line 1]); and see Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta‘riḫ* ix, 104–5 (compare with al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 629–30 [esp. 630 line 5]).

58 Compare, for example, Ibn al-Furāt ix, 86–7 (esp. 86 line 22) with al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 614 (esp. line 16), and with Ibn Duqmāq, *al-Nafḥa* 252 (the utterance in direct speech, which in all likelihood originated in *Nuzhat al-anām*, is omitted, but the resemblance is clear enough). For material of Duqmāqian origin containing an utterance in direct speech that found its way into the *Sulūk*, see also chapter 2 table 2.1 (no. 2). This is not to say that all cases of dialogues or utterances in direct speech that appear in reports in Ibn al-Furāt originated in Ibn Duqmāq. Few reports are transmitted from authorities other than Ibn Duqmāq; see, for example, Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta‘riḫ* ix, 73–4. Other reports are transmitted without mentioning a source, and its origin could not be ascertained (of course it is quite possible that these reports also originate in Ibn Duqmāq). Some of these utterances in direct speech found their way into the *Sulūk*. Compare, for example, Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta‘riḫ* ix, 112 with al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 637 (esp. lines 7–8); and compare Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta‘riḫ* ix, 120–1 with al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 644; and compare Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta‘riḫ* ix, 121–2 with al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 645. There are also cases of dialogues with direct speech in the *Sulūk* whose origin is not necessarily Ibn al-Furāt.

59 Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iv, 616, 643.

60 *Ibid.* iv, 607, 618, 624.

61 *Ibid.* iv, 602, 616–8, 625, 632, 634, 639, 647. On “strange” events and weather-related or natural phenomena in the *Sulūk*, see Wijntjes, *Daily* 543–56. On accounts of earthquakes in the *Sulūk* (which occurred, however, during the Turkish period of the sultanate), see Hirschler, *Erdbebenberichte* 134–9.

One may legitimately wonder at this point if all this does not, in fact, support Ulrich Haarmaan's thesis of "literarization" against will. After all, when the reports in al-Maqrīzī's *Sulūk* become his own, we hardly find reports with dialogues or utterances in direct speech, and only as long as al-Maqrīzī relied on earlier sources, did he combine such reports in a significant manner. However, as already argued, al-Maqrīzī controlled the process of omission or incorporation of story-like reports into his chronicle. He chose deliberately to rely on a highly literarized chronicle such as *Nuzhat al-nāzīr* as the main and almost exclusive source for events in the first half of the 8th/14th century. He continued to incorporate such reports (apparently mainly of Duqmāqian origin) also in accounts of events of the second half of the 8th/14th century, however, in a gradually decreasing manner. More importantly, as we will see in section 4 below, in his biographical dictionary of his contemporaries, al-Maqrīzī consciously incorporated "literarized" material. All this suggests that al-Maqrīzī did not object to "literarization" in principle but rather, as an Egyptian historian with a scholarly background, he simply chose his own trend of "literarization." It seems that for al-Maqrīzī, contemporary history was seen as a serious thing, or at least, drawing on a Shāfi'ī scholarly historiographic tradition (see section 2.1 below), he considered accounts of contemporary events as a less suitable place for a certain kind of literarized materials (i.e., story-like reports with dialogues and direct speech). This is in contrast to 9th/15th-century Egyptian historians related to the military institution, who gladly incorporated story-like reports with dialogues and direct speech as an integral part of their account of contemporary events.

2.1 *A Note on Language and Style in Mamluk Chronicles*

Before moving on to discuss trends of "literarization" in al-Maqrīzī's biographical dictionaries, I would like to make some general notes on language and style in Mamluk chronicles.⁶² In order to check usages of Arabic in detail, it is necessary to consult manuscripts and autographs when they exist; however, as already mentioned, this is not the intention here. The intention is to show a trend of standardization in the works of al-Maqrīzī and situate it in more general trends of language use in Mamluk historiography. Using the existing printed editions should allow a preliminary investigation of such trends. The observations in section 2 on the language of al-Maqrīzī are based on printed

62 The issue of language and style in Mamluk historiography is discussed in detail in chapter 2. Here, I only summarize some relevant points for the discussion of trends of "literarization" in the works of al-Maqrīzī as a Shāfi'ī religious scholar and situate it in more general trends. For references, see chapter 2.

editions that are not based on autographs (there are no autographs of the relevant parts of the *Sulūk*).⁶³ Regarding al-Maqrīzī, however, we have Frédéric Bauden's research on the language in an autograph manuscript of al-Maqrīzī's notebook, materials from which were incorporated into al-Maqrīzī's historical works.⁶⁴ Bauden found some minor deviations from standard Arabic (mainly related to orthography), probably due to lack of attention and the speed of writing that are typical of drafts (*musawwadāt*, sing. *musawwada*) and notebooks.⁶⁵ It shows, as Bauden noted, that in contrast to historians related to the military institution that did not hesitate to include nonstandard usages of Arabic in their historical works, "scholars who wrote history, were very careful not to allow themselves such deviations" from standard Arabic.⁶⁶ I would qualify Bauden's observation and restrict it mainly to Shāfi'ī religious scholars.

As discussed in detail in chapter 2, in order to better understand trends of language use in Mamluk historiography, a differentiation should be made between subgroups of historians who were religious scholars. Usages of nonstandard Arabic are typical of historians related to the military institution and non-Shāfi'ī religious scholars. On the other hand, because of the importance of "Arabness" and the Arabic language in their ethos, Shāfi'ī religious scholars refrained from using nonstandard Arabic and standardized nonstandard usages in their quoted sources. Examining language use in tandem with the stylistic element of the incorporation of story-like reports with dialogues and direct speech in accounts of contemporary events in the historical narratives in chronicles allows a more nuanced differentiation between trends of language use and style prevalent among chroniclers of the three aforementioned major groups of historians. It seems that in terms of the tendency to incorporate story-like reports in accounts of contemporary events, the non-Shāfi'ī religious scholars took a middle ground between historians related to the military institution, who gladly incorporated such reports, and historians who were Shāfi'ī religious scholars, who did not tend to incorporate such reports.

It should be emphasized that the discussion here does not concern historians who were officially affiliated with the Shāfi'ī school of law; however, they specialized as *udabā'-kuttāb*. Naturally, *udabā'-kuttāb* were strongly related to the *adab* tradition; thus, they were more willing to incorporate *adab* elements into their historical writing. However, authors with such backgrounds did not

63 Bauden, *Taqī al-Dīn* 182.

64 On the notebooks, see *ibid.*, *Maqriziana I* 21–68 (esp. 21–4); *Maqriziana II* 51–118 (esp. 76–86).

65 *Ibid.*, *Maqriziana VIII* 21–36; and see also *Maqriziana II* 84–6.

66 *Ibid.*, *Maqriziana VIII* 36–7.

tend to produce “proper” chronicles, and their works were less subjugated to chronology, and more specifically to the annalistic form.⁶⁷ The tendency of *udabā'-kuttāb* to incorporate *adab* elements in their writing is conspicuous in their biographical dictionaries, a genre that, in any case, tends to be anecdotal. Biographical dictionaries written by *udabā'-kuttāb*, such as al-Ṣafadī's *al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt* and *A'yān al-'aṣr* and al-Kutubī's (d. 764/1363) *Fawāt al-wafayāt*, are full of anecdotes or story-like reports containing dialogues with direct speech. Moreover, in the frame of the anecdotes or story-like reports that appear in their biographical dictionaries, one finds many usages of nonstandard Arabic, although the two were officially affiliated with the Shāfi'ī school. In fact, al-Ṣafadī's biographical dictionaries are probably the most anecdotal of all Mamluk biographical dictionaries. His *al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt* was one of the most important sources used by al-Maqrīzī in his *Muqaffā*, which brings us to a discussion of trends of “literarization” in al-Maqrīzī's biographical dictionaries.

3 *Al-Muqaffā l-Kabīr*: Trends of Literarization in al-Maqrīzī's Biographical Dictionary of Prominent Egyptians in History

In comparison to Mamluk chronicles, much less attention has been given to Mamluk biographical dictionaries with respect to the examination of sources used by their authors, the arrangement of materials in them, and trends of “literarization” within them.⁶⁸ A still very important work in this respect is Little's *An introduction to Mamluk historiography*, published in 1970.⁶⁹ Little has made several general observations, based mainly on an examination of the biographical entries of the amir Qarāsunqur al-Manṣūrī (d. 728/1327) in the biographical dictionaries of al-Ṣafadī (*al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt* and *A'yān al-'aṣr*), Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (*al-Durar al-kāmina*), and Ibn Taghrībirdī (*al-Manhal al-ṣāfi*).⁷⁰ Little noted that: 1) Biography constitutes “a distinct literary-historical genre with its own requirements and characteristics which result in the presentation of material not found in annals and a new organization.”⁷¹ According to Little, “a

67 See footnote 14 above.

68 And see Mauder's remark regarding the almost exclusive focus of scholars on “literarization” in Mamluk chronicles, Mauder, *Gelehrte* 23 (footnote 60); and see also Gharaibeh, Narrative 51–2. More generally, as noted by Fedwa Malti-Douglas, collections of biographies of scholars have been considered for a long time as lacking any “literary ambitions,” Malti-Douglas, *Dreams* 138.

69 Massoud's monograph is of course restricted to chronicles, see Massoud, *Chronicles*.

70 Little, *Introduction* 102–9.

71 *Ibid.* 101.

compiler of biographical dictionaries did not rely heavily on annals as a source for his biographies, probably for reasons of convenience. It would have been a cumbersome, laborious process for an author faced with writing a thousand or more biographies to sift through the bulky information provided by annals.” Thus, “the biographer main source for information ... seems to have been not annals, but other biographies whose authors had received reports from informants.”⁷² Little concluded that “though biography and annals overlap, the former is not based on the latter but on original information ... [f]or this reason ... identical material is rarely found in both.”⁷³ 2) Biographies have a penchant for anecdotal style and are, in fact, dominated by isolated anecdotes.⁷⁴ This last observation is based mainly on the biographical entries of Qarāsunqur in al-Şafadī’s *al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt* and *A’yān al-‘aşr*, in which after short introductory data comes a “succession of anecdotes ... arranged more or less chronologically.”⁷⁵

The literary (and anecdotal) character of al-Şafadī’s biographical writing (specifically his *A’yān al-‘aşr*) and the literary devices that al-Şafadī used in it were further explored by Stephan Conermann⁷⁶ and also noted by Yoni Brack⁷⁷ and Christian Mauder. The latter referred to al-Şafadī as “a typical representative of the literarized history-writing of his time.”⁷⁸ Scholars have emphasized the central role played by al-Şafadī in formulating the pattern of Mamluk bio-

72 Ibid. 134. On al-Şafadī’s sources and informants, see *ibid.* 103–4; al-Şafadī 199–206; and see also Abu-‘Uksa, *Lives* 84–5.

73 Little, *Introduction* 135. More generally, Stephen Humphreys noted that chronicles and biographical dictionaries “are very distinct genres as to sources, methods, and subject matter, and they convey very different kinds of information”; see al-Qāḍī, *Biographical dictionaries* 26. Wadād al-Qāḍī added that “[t]he element of chronology or time [...] is crucial for chronicles while it is irrelevant to biographical dictionaries in principle”; see *ibid.*

74 Little, *Introduction* 135. On the “anecdotal nature” of biographies, see also Van Steenbergen, *Yalbughā* 428.

75 Little, *Introduction*, 102–6 (esp. 104). On this pattern in other biographical entries in *A’yān al-‘aşr*, see Brack, *Mongol* 333; and see also *ibid.* 342.

76 See Conermann, *Tankiz*. On anecdotes and dialogues, see *ibid.* 16–9.

77 Brack referred to al-Şafadī’s “passion for lively and exciting anecdotes,” and his incorporation of “colorful stories” and “colorful anecdotes” in biographies; see Brack, *Mongol* 357. Brack suggested that in some cases the stories incorporated by al-Şafadī may have drawn on popular genres and were meant to entertain and satisfy the demands of his audience, see *ibid.* 355–8.

78 Mauder, *Gelehrte* 44–5. On “introductory lines of rhymed prose” at the openings of biographical entries in *A’yān al-‘aşr*, see Little, al-Şafadī 197; *Introduction* 105–6. On poetry product of the deceased incorporated in the biographical entries, see Bauer, *Communication* 109; Abu-‘Uksa, *Lives* 85.

graphical entries (short résumé followed by anecdotes)⁷⁹ and established the reliance of Circassian-period historians on his biographical dictionaries.⁸⁰

Al-Maqrīzī's *Muqaffā* is a biographical dictionary dedicated to Egyptians who left their mark on history. Only parts of it are extant.⁸¹ Bauden suggested that "the aim of the dictionary was to list the maximum number of biographical notices of persons who had had links—sometimes firm, sometimes tenuous—with the land of Egypt."⁸² However, al-Maqrīzī was not able to complete this project until his death.⁸³ While trends of "literarization" in the *Muqaffā* so far have not received attention, the sources used by al-Maqrīzī in the *Muqaffā* and the arrangement of material in it have been partially explored. As mentioned by Bauden, in the *Muqaffā*, al-Maqrīzī normally does not mention his sources, which may be discovered only by comparison to other extant works. Many times, however, one is left to speculate about the *Muqaffā*'s sources without the possibility of corroboration.⁸⁴ Based on a detailed examination of the biographies of the amir Ulmās al-Nāširī (d. 733/1333) in al-Maqrīzī's works, the *Muqaffā* included, Bauden observed that al-Maqrīzī used al-Šafadī's (résumé of the) *Wāfi* as a model for the structure of the biography of Ulmās and added only in rare cases additional materials from al-Šafadī's *A'yān al-'ašr* and al-Yūsufī's *Nuzhat al-nāzir*. The added materials, however, did not consist of new structural units of the biography but were rather incorporated into the already existing pattern of the *Wāfi*.⁸⁵ The heavy reliance of al-Maqrīzī in the *Muqaffā* on al-Šafadī's biographical dictionaries was also noted by Mauder.⁸⁶

79 Khalidi, *Islamic* 63–4; "[m]ost biographers followed al-Šafadī's plan of presentation ... according to al-Šafadī's formula ... a short résumé of ... career, with a few anecdotes to illustrate ... virtues"; and see Abu-'Uksa, *Lives* 85.

80 Little, *Introduction* 112. On the reliance of Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī and Ibn Taghribirdī on al-Šafadī, see *ibid.* 106–9 (esp. 107—regarding Ibn Ḥajar: "the use of al-Šafadī's pattern of episodes is ... obvious"; and 108—regarding Ibn Taghribirdī: "[h]aving made a generous use of al-Šafadī's biography"). On the reliance of Ibn Ḥajar on al-Šafadī, see also Brack, *Mongol* 358.

81 Bauden, *Taqī al-Dīn* 192: "the letters *alif*, *bā*, *tā*, *thā*, *jīm*, *hā*, and *khā*, part of the letters *ṭā* and *'ayn*, a tiny part of the letters *kāf* and *lām*, and finally the letter *mīm*."

82 *Ibid.* 194.

83 *Ibid.* 192.

84 *Ibid.* 194–5.

85 Bauden, *Maqriziana* XI 126–31 (esp. 131).

86 Mauder, *Gelehrte* 61. Mauder mentions that only further research will determine if the materials were taken from the *Wāfi* or *A'yān al-'ašr*, see *ibid.* 61–2. Still, based on Bauden's research and my findings (see below, footnote 105), the default assumption should be that materials were taken from the *Wāfi*.

It seems that in the *Muqaffā*, al-Maqrīzī relied on al-Yūsufī's *Nuzhat al-nāzīr* to a much larger extent than Bauden would allow. This point will be exemplified in detail in what follows by an examination of the biographical entry of the *mamlūk* amir Aqūsh al-Ashrafī (d. 736/1335). First, however, it is possible to make some remarks of a more general nature concerning this issue. Except for one, all the *mamlūk* amirs who have biographical entries in the extant parts of al-Yūsufī's *Nuzhat al-nāzīr*, and should have appeared in the extant parts of the *Muqaffā*, actually have biographical entries in the *Muqaffā*. In most of these biographical entries, at least some resemblance to *Nuzhat al-nāzīr* may be observed,⁸⁷ and some do not appear in the *Wāfi*.⁸⁸ In addition, it is possible to find in the *Muqaffā* only one biographical entry of a *mamlūk* amir who died between 733–7/1333–7 (the years with obituary notes in the extant parts of *Nuzhat al-nāzīr*) that does not have an obituary in *Nuzhat al-nāzīr*.⁸⁹ This suggests that at least with respect to biographies of *mamlūk* amirs, al-Yūsufī's *Nuzhat al-nāzīr* served as some basic framework for biographical entries in the *Muqaffā*. The reliance of al-Maqrīzī in the *Muqaffā* on *Nuzhat al-nāzīr* was clearly not restricted to the extant parts of *Nuzhat al-nāzīr*. This may be corroborated by a comparison of materials in the *Muqaffā* with materials from the *Iqd al-jumān* of al-ʿAynī who is known to have extensively relied on *Nuzhat al-nāzīr*. For example, some information regarding the Mongol origin of some *mamlūk* amirs is found only in the *Muqaffā* and *Iqd al-jumān*,⁹⁰ and it is known that al-Yūsufī had Mongol informants and that he took an interest in Mongol affairs.⁹¹ A comparison between quotations from *Nuzhat al-nāzīr* in Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī's *al-Durar al-kāmina* and material in the *Muqaffā* suggests

87 For example, in the biographical entry of Baktamur al-Sāqī (d. 733/1333) in the *Muqaffā*, al-Maqrīzī refers to him as *mamlūk Qaramān* as in *Nuzhat al-nāzīr*, and this appellation does not appear in the *Wāfi*; see al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 468; al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 148. Compare also the biography of Aytamush al-Muḥammadī (d. 736/1336) in al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 335–42 (esp. 342) with al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 329–34 (esp. 329–30, 332).

88 See the biographical entry of Aydamur (Duqmāq), al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 370 (no. 892); al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 215–6. See also the biographical entry of Tuḡhluq al-Ashrafī (d. 735/1335), al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* iv, 26 (no. 1417); al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 277. And see also the biographical entry of Balabān al-Baysarī (d. 736/1335–6), al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 491 (no. 968); al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 337.

89 The biographical entry of Balabān al-Ḥusāmī (d. 736/1336), see al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 490.

90 For example, the information regarding the Mongol origin of Baydarā al-Manṣūrī (d. 693/1293) and Karatāy (d. 698/1298–9), see al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 562; iv, 31; al-ʿAynī, *Iqd* iii, 216–7, 486.

91 Little, *Recovery* 49, 52.

the same.⁹² Untypically for al-Maqrīzī in the *Muqaffā*, he even explicitly mentions (at least) once al-Yūsufī's chronicle as a source.⁹³

Moreover, according to my count, the extant parts of the *Muqaffā* contain just over 200 biographical entries of *mamlūk* amirs; however, only 16 of them died after the year 755/1354–5, in which *Nuzhat al-nāzīr* allegedly ended,⁹⁴ and only eight of them died after 764/1363, the year of al-Şafadī's death (five died in the years 770–5/1368–74 and three in 802/1399–1400). This is, of course, a very uneven spread, suggesting that al-Maqrīzī did not collect for the *Muqaffā* much material on amirs who died after ca. 760/1358–9.⁹⁵ It cannot be determined,

92 Little (following Rosenthal) mentions five references to the work of al-Yūsufī in Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī's *al-Durar al-kāmina* (one in the biographical entry of al-Yūsufī and four quotations), see *ibid.* 43, 45. In fact, there are ten references (one in the biographical entry of al-Yūsufī and nine quotations). For the quotations, see Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 270, 367, 544; ii, 52, 161, 248, 404; iv, 5, 76. Four persons, whose biographical entries in *al-Durar al-kāmina* contain a quotation from al-Yūsufī, have also a biographical entry in the *Muqaffā*. Materials in three of these biographical entries in the *Muqaffā* show resemblance to the quoted materials from al-Yūsufī. Significantly, al-Şafadī, one of the most important sources in *al-Durar al-kāmina* and the *Muqaffā*, could not have been the source in any of these three cases. Compare the biography of the religious scholar Ibn al-Zamalkānī in al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* vi, 316 (lines 3–10, esp. lines 7–8) with Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* iv, 76 (lines 10–6, esp. lines 13–4); significantly, Ibn al-Zamalkānī has no biographical entry in al-Şafadī's *Wāfi*, and the biography in *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr* does not seem to have been the source; see al-Şafadī, *Aʿyān* iv, 632 (lines 1–4). Compare also the biography of Ismāʿīl al-Kurdī in al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 87 (lines 12–7, esp. 12–5) with Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 367 (lines 14–9, esp. 16–8); significantly, Ismāʿīl al-Kurdī has no biographical entry in al-Şafadī's *Wāfi*, and the biography in *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr* does not seem to have been the source; see al-Şafadī, *Aʿyān* i, 499. And compare the short biography of Jawhar al-Ṭawāshī in al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* iii, 112 with Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 544 (no. 1471); significantly, Jawhar al-Ṭawāshī has no biographical entries in al-Şafadī's biographical dictionaries.

93 Al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* vii, 130. Al-Maqrīzī refers to information mentioned by the author of the biography of al-Nāşīr (*jāmiʿ al-Sira al-Nāşīriyya*), and the information is actually found in *Nuzhat al-nāzīr*, see al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 221. So far, explicit references to al-Yūsufī's chronicle in al-Maqrīzī's works were found only in the *Khiṭaṭ* where al-Maqrīzī often mentions his sources; see Little, Analysis 261. In the *Khiṭaṭ*, al-Maqrīzī refers to al-Yūsufī as *jāmiʿ al-Sira al-Nāşīriyya* or as *jāmiʿ Sirat al-Nāşīr Muḥammad b. Qalāwūn*, see al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ* i, 92, 166; ii, 240; iii, 255, 289, 348. Once, he refers to him by name: *muʿallif al-Sira al-Nāşīriyya Mūsā b. Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā aḥad muqaddamī al-ḥalqa*; see *ibid.* iv, 60. It may be added that in *Durar al-ʿuqūd*, al-Maqrīzī mentions that he found some information regarding an event that happened in 702/1302–3 in *al-Sira al-Nāşīriyya Muḥammad b. Qalāwūn*, see al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-ʿuqūd* iii, 45–6. All these references should also make clear that references in *Iqd al-jumān* to *Sirat al-Nāşīr* are in fact references to *Nuzhat al-nāzīr*; see Little, Introduction 81 (footnote 5); Recovery 43. In fact, Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī refers to *al-Sira al-Nāşīriyya* written by al-Yūsufī (*al-Sira al-Nāşīriyya lil-Yūsufī*); see Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* ii, 52.

94 Little, Recovery 47.

95 It should be mentioned here that I was working with the printed edition of the *Muqaffā*.

however, if this is a result of him using al-Yūsufi's *Nuzhat al-nāzīr*, al-Şafadī's *Wāfi*, or both, as some basic framework for the collection of material (at least with respect to *mamlūk* amirs), or a result of a decision, made in advance or as he moved on in his work, not to include in the *Muqaffā* notables of his own lifetime (that is, persons who died or were born after the beginning of the decade of al-Maqrīzī's birth, i.e., after 760/1358–9),⁹⁶ whose biographical entries would be incorporated in *Durar al-ʿuqūd*. Importantly, however, in the extant parts of the *Muqaffā*, there are only two biographical entries of amirs who died before 678/1279–80 (clearly taken from the *Wāfi*).⁹⁷ In comparison, there are seven biographical entries of amirs who died in 678/1279–80, so, clearly, al-Maqrīzī collected materials for biographical entries of *mamlūk* amirs in an extensive manner only starting from that year. Interestingly, this is the year in which al-Yūsufi's *Nuzhat al-nāzīr* allegedly began. Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī writes that *Nuzhat al-nāzīr fī sirat al-Malik al-Nāşir* began with the reign of al-Manşūr Qalāwūn (r. 678–89/1279–90).⁹⁸ In fact, when al-ʿAynī first referred to al-Yūsufi's chronicle in *Iqd al-jumān*, he named it *Nuzhat al-nāzīr fī dawlatay al-Manşūr wa-l-Nāşir*.⁹⁹ This even more strongly hints that al-Yūsufi's *Nuzhat al-nāzīr* served as some basic framework for biographical entries (at least of *mamlūk* amirs) in the *Muqaffā*, perhaps together with al-Şafadī's *Wāfi*.

Be that as it may, it is clear that the two most important sources for biographical entries of *mamlūk* amirs (and probably Mamluk notables in general) in the *Muqaffā* are al-Yūsufi's *Nuzhat al-nāzīr* and al-Şafadī's *Wāfi*.¹⁰⁰ Whether

Bauden noted that the editor of the *Muqaffā* did not realize that dozens of notices were added in the autograph manuscript of the work, probably after the death of al-Maqrīzī, by his colleague Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī; see Bauden, Taqī al-Dīn 193–4. Since I did not consult the manuscript I do not know if some of the biographical entries of amirs who died after ca. 760/1358–9 were in fact added by Ibn Ḥajar.

96 See *ibid.* 171, 191.

97 The biographical entry of Aydamur al-Ḥillī (d. 667/1269), see al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 352 (no. 878); al-Şafadī, *Wāfi* x, 5 (no. 4457); and the biographical entry of Aydamur al-ʿAlāī (d. 676/1277–8), see al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 361–2 (no. 883); al-Şafadī, *Wāfi* x, 6 (no. 4458).

98 Little, Recovery 47.

99 Al-ʿAynī, *Iqd* iii, 29. As far as I know, this has gone unnoticed so far. In fact, Little thought that the first reference to *Nuzhat al-nāzīr* in *Iqd al-jumān* was in the year 690/1291; see Little, Recovery 50. The reference to *Nuzhat al-nāzīr fī dawlatay al-Manşūr wa-l-Nāşir* in *Iqd al-jumān* was in the year 689/1290.

100 In the extant parts of *Nuzhat al-nāzīr* there are fewer obituaries of religious scholars than of amirs, and not many of them appear in the extant parts of the *Muqaffā*. Still, the biographical entry of the religious scholar Ibn Sayyid al-Nās (d. 734/1334) in the *Muqaffā* relies heavily on his obituary in *Nuzhat al-nāzīr*; see al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* vii, 130–1; al-Yūsufi,

al-Maqrīzī planned in advance not to include notables of his own time in this biographical dictionary is not entirely clear,¹⁰¹ but the *Muqaffā* did not include many such persons and took the form of a biographical dictionary of notables of the past.¹⁰² Except for al-Yūsufī's *Nuzhat al-nāẓir* and al-Şafadī's *Wāfi*, it seems that al-Maqrīzī relied in the *Muqaffā* to some degree also on obituaries from Ibn al-Furāt's chronicle, especially (and possibly only) in biographical entries of persons who died in the 7th/13th century.¹⁰³ This seems to confirm

Nuzhat 217–24. The reliance of the *Muqaffā* on *Nuzhat al-nāẓir* in biographical entries of religious scholars is also suggested by a comparison between quotations of *Nuzhat al-nāẓir* in *al-Durar al-kāmina* and material in the *Muqaffā*; see footnote 92 above. For examples of biographical entries of amirs in the *Muqaffā* that rely on the *Wāfi*, see the biographical entry of Baktūt al-Muḥammadi (d. 686/1287–8), al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 479 (no. 947); al-Şafadī, *Wāfi* x, 201 (no. 4682). See also the biographical entry of Baktamur al-Sāqī, al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 468–74 (no. 939); al-Şafadī, *Wāfi* x, 193–7 (no. 4677). For examples of biographical entries of civilians in the *Muqaffā* that rely on the *Wāfi*, see the biographical entry of the *kātib* Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Hibat Allāh al-Shirāzī (d. 682/1283–4), al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* vii, 98–9 (no. 3182); al-Şafadī, *Wāfi* i, 201–2 (no. 126). See also the biographical entry of the *wazīr* Ibn Ḥannā (d. 707/1307), al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* vii, 111–7 (no. 3202); al-Şafadī, *Wāfi* i, 217–28 (no. 146). See also the biographical entry of the religious scholar Ibn Daqīq al-ʿĪd (d. 718/1318–9), al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* vii, 123–4 (no. 3212); al-Şafadī, *Wāfi* i, 247–8 (no. 160). And see the biographical entry of the religious scholar Ibn al-Qawbaʿ (d. 738/1338), al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* vii, 38–42 (no. 3108); al-Şafadī, *Wāfi* i, 238–47 (no. 159).

- 101 Al-Maqrīzī mentions in the *Sulūk* that in the *Muqaffā* one may find a biographical entry of the amir Ashaqtamur al-Māridānī (d. 791/1389); see al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 238. However, it is not to be found there, although the extant parts of the *Muqaffā* contain names that start with *alif-shīn*. On the other hand, *Durar al-ʿuqūd* contains a biographical entry of Ashaqtamur al-Māridānī; see al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* i, 426–7 (no. 347). This perhaps suggests that at first, al-Maqrīzī planned to include in the *Muqaffā* also biographical entries of notables who lived during his lifetime but eventually moved them to *Durar al-ʿuqūd*.
- 102 The number and percentage of Mamluk civilians who died after ca. 760/1358–9 is also relatively low; however, their percentage is perhaps somewhat higher than that of *mamlūk* amirs. According to my count, in the index of the first volume of the *Muqaffā* (notably containing the names Aḥmad and Ibrāhīm) there are about 240 biographical entries of civilians who died during the Mamluk period. Among them, 22 died after 764/1363 (one in 773/1371–2, one in 775/1373–4, 15 in the years 790–806/1388–1404, and five in 815/1412–3 or after). The spread is somewhat different than that of amirs. Whereas about nine percent of Mamluk civilians died after 764/1363, only about four percent of *mamlūk* amirs died after that year.
- 103 For example, compare the biography of Aqūsh al-Shihābī (d. 678/1279–80) in al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 235 (no. 809) with Ibn al-Furāt, *Tārīkh* vii, 164; the biography in al-Şafadī's *Wāfi* could not have been the source; see al-Şafadī, *Wāfi* ix, 324 (no. 4259). Compare also the biography of Altūnbā/Altūnbughā al-Ḥimşī (d. 678/1280) in al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 283 (no. 834) with Ibn al-Furāt, *Tārīkh* vii, 164; note that Altūnbā/Altūnbughā has no biographical entry in the *Wāfi*. Compare also the biography of Aybak al-Shaykh (d. 678/1280) in al-

Bauden's general remark that al-Maqrīzī's sources in the *Muqaffā* "are often the same as those he used for his chronographical works."¹⁰⁴

The obituaries in Ibn al-Furāt's chronicle are normally short and "dry" and so are, naturally, the biographical entries in the *Muqaffā* that rely on Ibn al-Furāt. However, Ibn al-Furāt is a relatively marginal source in the *Muqaffā* in comparison to al-Yūsufī's *Nuzhat al-nāzīr*, whose section of obituaries is the most anecdotal (i.e., "literarized") of all Mamluk chronicles, and al-Ṣafadī's *Wāfi*, which is the most anecdotal of all Mamluk biographical dictionaries. As in the *Sulūk*, the mere fact that al-Maqrīzī chose to rely so heavily on "highly literarized" sources strongly suggests that it is very unlikely that the "literarization" in the *Muqaffā*, to be exemplified in what follows, was against his will. The heavy reliance on *Nuzhat al-nāzīr* and the *Wāfi* and trends of "literarization" in the *Muqaffā* will be exemplified by a detailed examination of the biographical entry of the amir Aqūsh al-Ashrafī.¹⁰⁵ Appendix A contains a survey of the sections and units of information that constitute his biography in one obituary

Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 326 (no. 858) with Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'riḥ* vii, 164; note that Aybak has no biographical entry in the *Wāfi*. Compare also the biographical entry of Balabān al-Nawfalī (d. 678/1279–80) in al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 484 (no. 952) with Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'riḥ* vii, 164; the biography in al-Ṣafadī's *Wāfi* could not have been the source, see al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* x, 281 (no. 4785). Compare also the biographical entry of Balabān al-Mushrifī (d. 678/1279–80) in al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 484 (no. 951) with Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'riḥ* vii, 165; the biography in al-Ṣafadī's *Wāfi* could not have been the source, see al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* x, 281 (no. 4786). Compare also the biographical entry of al-Ḥājj Azdamur (d. 680/1281) in al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 34–5 (no. 707: esp. 34 line 9 and 35 lines 1–4) with Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'riḥ* vii, 236–7 (esp. 236 lines 11–2, 15 and 237 lines 1–3); the biography in al-Ṣafadī's *Wāfi* could not have been the source, see al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* viii, 370 (no. 3803). And compare also the biographical entry of Baybars al-Rashīdī (d. 680/1281) in al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 530 (no. 1000) with Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'riḥ* vii, 237; note that Baybars has no biographical entry in the *Wāfi*. And compare also the biographical entry of Baktūt al-Khazandār (d. 680/1281) in al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 475 (no. 941) with Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'riḥ* vii, 237; note that Baktūt has no biographical entry in the *Wāfi*.

104 Bauden, *Taqī al-Dīn* 194.

105 There are not too many signs for a reliance on *A'yān al-'aṣr* in the biographical entry of Aqūsh al-Ashrafī in the *Muqaffā*. There are no anecdotes in *A'yān al-'aṣr* that do not appear in the *Wāfi*. On the other hand, there is one anecdote in the *Wāfi* (appendix A, the *Wāfi* section C11) that appears in the *Muqaffā* (appendix A, the *Muqaffā* section D12) but does not appear in *A'yān al-'aṣr*. In a few cases there is a variance in the wording in *A'yān al-'aṣr* and the *Wāfi*, and the *Muqaffā* has the versions from the *Wāfi*; see al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* ix, 338 (line 20); *A'yān* i, 581 (lines 7–8); al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 254 (lines 19–20); and see al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* ix, 336 (lines 9–10); *A'yān* i, 578 (lines 16–7); al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 256 (lines 7–8); and see al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* ix, 336 (line 12); *A'yān* i, 579 (line 2); al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 256 (line 9); and see al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* ix, 336 (line 17); *A'yān* i, 579 (lines 6–7); al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 256 (line 12); and see al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* ix, 338 (line 19); *A'yān* i, 581 (line 7); al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 254 (line 17). It is possible, however, that in two cases, the *Muqaffā*

note in a chronicle (al-Yūsufi's *Nuzhat al-nāzīr*) and four biographical entries in biographical dictionaries (al-Şafadī's *Wāfi*, al-Maqrīzī's *Muqaffā*, Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī's *al-Durar al-kāmīna*, and Ibn Taghribirdī's *al-Manhal al-şāfi*). In the case of biographical dictionaries written in the 9th/15th century, there is a mention of the source for each unit of information. First, the focus will be on the *Nuzha*, the *Wāfi*, and the *Muqaffā* in order to exemplify the *Muqaffā*'s heavy reliance on the *Nuzha* and explore the arrangement of material in the *Muqaffā*, the structure of the biography in it, and trends of "literarization" within it. Then, the biography in the *Muqaffā* will be compared to biographies in *al-Durar al-kāmīna* and the *Manhal* in order to examine the general structural and literary trends in biographical dictionaries of the 9th/15th century.

The beginning of the biographical entry of Aqūsh in the *Muqaffā* clearly relies on al-Yūsufi's *Nuzhat al-nāzīr*. This is evident already from the name and appellations of Aqūsh that appear in the title of the entry: "Aqūsh al-Ashrafī al-Amīr Jamāl al-Dīn known as Nā'ib al-Karak (*al-ma'rūf bi-Nā'ib al-Karak*) and called (*yulaqqabu*) also al-Burnāq because of his big nose (*li-kibar anfihi*)."¹⁰⁶ The expression "known as Nā'ib al-Karak" was clearly taken from al-Yūsufi and does not appear as such in the title of the biographical entry of Aqūsh in al-Şafadī's *Wāfi* (see appendix A, section A in *Muqaffā*, *Nuzha*, and *Wāfi*). Moreover, as far as I know, except for al-Yūsufi, no other Turkish-period historian mentions that Aqūsh was called al-Burnāq (because of his big nose). The only Circassian-period biographical dictionaries that mention this appellation in the biographical entry of Aqūsh are the *Muqaffā* and *al-Durar al-kāmīna*, which, as will be argued below, relies on the *Muqaffā* in this case.¹⁰⁶ Only the *Muqaffā* also reproduced the explanation for the appellation, that is, "because of his big nose" (*li-kibar anfihi*). It should be mentioned, however, that the appellation al-Burnāq (and its explanation) does not appear in *Nuzhat al-nāzīr* as part of the title of the entry (section A) but rather in the section dedicated to a general description of Aqūsh (section D in *Nuzha*).¹⁰⁷ The moving of the appellation al-Burnāq from the section of general description to the section of the name is part of al-Maqrīzī's attempt in the *Muqaffā* to arrange the material in as orderly a fashion as possible.

was following *A'yān al-'aṣr*, see al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 251 (line 17); al-Şafadī, *Wāfi* ix, 337 (line 14); *A'yān* i, 579 (line 16); and see also al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 257 (lines 5–6); al-Şafadī, *Wāfi* ix, 338 (lines 10–1); *A'yān* i, 580 (line 15).

106 In *Iqd al-jumān* the name of Aqūsh appears as Aqūsh Burnāq in a list of amirs upon the ascendance to the throne of al-Manşūr Qalāwūn in 678/1279, but it does not appear in an obituary; see al-'Aynī, *Iqd*, iii, 228. Of course, it is very likely that al-'Aynī took this appellation from al-Yūsufi.

107 See al-Yūsufi, *Nuzhat* 342 (line 2: *wa-kāna yulaqqabu ... bi-l-Burnāq li-kibar anfihi*).

This characteristic of al-Maqrīzī's *Muqaffā* is mainly conspicuous in section B of the entry, which is a long and comprehensive life résumé ordered chronologically. Al-Şafadī and al-Yūsufī give a very short and partial chronological life résumé of Aqūsh, pertaining only to the early stages of his career (four lines and eight lines respectively—section B in *Wāfi* and section C in *Nuzha*), and al-Yūsufī adds a short general description of Aqūsh, including his origin (section D in *Nuzha*). Then, both move on to funny anecdotes and stories on Aqūsh (*ḥikāyāt/nukat żarīfa*) and “peculiarities” (*ashyā' mu'jiba*) related to him, which comprise about 90 percent of the entry and are not arranged chronologically, or at least have a seemingly very loose chronological order (section C in *Wāfi* and section E in *Nuzha*).¹⁰⁸ In fact, after giving the name of Aqūsh, and before mentioning his short life résumé, al-Yūsufī incorporates two anecdotes pertaining to his death and his arrest shortly before he died (section B in *Nuzha*), exemplifying how central anecdotes were in obituaries in the *Nuzha* and how chronology was deemed much less important. In contrast, after mentioning the name of Aqūsh, al-Maqrīzī dedicates a few pages to a chronological life résumé normally fixed in dates (section B in the *Muqaffā*). Then, following the structure and content in the *Nuzha*, he gives a short description of Aqūsh, including his origin (section C) and only then gives room for a few pages of nonchronological anecdotes and stories (section D), taken equally from the *Nuzha* and the *Wāfi*.

The beginning of the chronological life résumé in the *Muqaffā* (section B1) is clearly based on the *Nuzha* and could not have been taken from the *Wāfi*. However, al-Maqrīzī added information taken from the *Sulūk* regarding the promotion of Aqūsh to the amirate in 685/1286–7, which is absent in the obituary in the *Nuzha*.¹⁰⁹ This shows that al-Maqrīzī wanted to create a chronological life résumé as comprehensive as possible. He preferred the *Nuzha* here over the *Wāfi* (as in the case of the name of Aqūsh and his general description—sections A and C in the *Muqaffā*), not because of any a priori preference to the *Nuzha* but rather because the obituary in the *Nuzha* provided much more information regarding the early career of Aqūsh than the *Wāfi*.¹¹⁰ Thus, the

108 Some of the anecdotes are connected to events in the life of Aqūsh, so it is possible to date them (in appendix A the date is mentioned in brackets in such cases); however, the date is normally not mentioned by al-Yūsufī or al-Şafadī.

109 Compare al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 248 (line 17)–249 (line 1) with *Sulūk* ii, 193 (lines 13–4).

110 Another example for this may be found in the biographical entry of Baktamur al-Sāqī in the *Muqaffā*. Right after mentioning his name and the fact that he was originally a slave of al-Muẓaffar Baybars, al-Maqrīzī refers to the fact that he was known at that period as *mamlūk Qaramān*; see al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 468. This information appears only in al-Yūsufī's *Nuzhat al-nāẓir*; see al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 148. So, clearly, al-Maqrīzī opened the biographical entry of Baktamur with information from *Nuzhat al-nāẓir* because he could find there

pattern or framework of the structural units in biographical entries in the *Muqaffā* were not necessarily dictated by the pattern of the *Wāfi*,¹¹¹ and the *Nuzha* played in this respect at least as important of a role as the *Wāfi*. It seems, thus, that the influence of al-Ṣafadī's pattern has been somewhat overstated. Still, in cases when information was lacking in the obituary in the *Nuzha* or the biographical entry in the *Wāfi*, al-Maqrīzī's desire to be as comprehensive as possible in the section of the chronological life résumé led him to look for information in other places, including in the historical narrative of chronicles. For example, the obituary in the *Nuzha* and the entry in the *Wāfi* do not offer much chronological information about the later stages of the career of Aqūsh. In such cases, the most important source is al-Maqrīzī's chronicle the *Sulūk* (see sections B₁, B₃, B_{5–11}, and B₁₃ in the *Muqaffā*).¹¹² Even more interestingly, it may be demonstrated that, in two cases, al-Maqrīzī took materials from the historical narrative of the *Nuzha* (sections B₁₄ and B₁₅ in the *Muqaffā*). These materials from the *Nuzha* take the form of story-like reports and are different from the more banal and informational reports taken from the *Sulūk* (see below). This shows that at least some Circassian-period historians were incorporating into biographies materials from the historical narrative of chronicles to a much larger extent than Little would allow¹¹³ as part of their attempt to create a comprehensive and chronological life résumé.¹¹⁴

Al-Maqrīzī's attempt to arrange the material chronologically in the *Muqaffā* also accounted for the incorporation in the life résumé of some anecdotes from the nonchronological section of anecdotes and stories in the obituary of Aqūsh

information concerning the earliest period of Baktmaur in the Mamluk Sultanate that does not appear in any other source.

111 See at footnote 85 above.

112 In two instances I could not identify the source for the information in the *Muqaffā* (B₂ and B₄).

113 According to Little, anecdotal material from the historical narrative of chronicles was incorporated in biographies only in very rare and untypical cases; see Little, *Introduction* 134. The incorporation of story-like reports from the historical narrative of the *Nuzha* in the biographical entry of Aqūsh in the *Muqaffā* proves otherwise. Little also mentioned that in biographies of rulers, a certain fusion of the annalistic and biographic forms may be found, "when not just a chronological sequence of the important events in the ruler's life is given but an annual—annalistic—résumé of the important events which occurred during his reign is recorded"; see *ibid.* 100. The incorporation of chronologically arranged material from the historical narrative of the *Sulūk* in the biographical entry of Aqūsh in the *Muqaffā* shows that the phenomenon was much more common and, more importantly, proves that the biographies and annals have some common materials. For the phenomenon in other Circassian-period biographies, see below.

114 This will be discussed below in more detail.

in the *Nuzha* and his entry in the *Wāfi*. Al-Maqrīzī dated the events related to the anecdotes or stories and incorporated them in the life résumé according to their dates (see sections B12 and B14–6 in the *Muqaffā*).¹¹⁵ Now, the incorporation of banal and chronologically arranged informational material from annals in the biography, and the subordination of anecdotes to chronology, may be seen as acts of “de-literarization”;¹¹⁶ however, two points should be observed. Firstly, the chronological section in the biography in the *Muqaffā* may be divided into two parts. First come approximately three pages of “dry” and matter-of-fact information, mostly taken from the *Sulūk* (sections B1–11), and then come approximately three pages of mainly anecdotal and story-like reports from the *Nuzha* and *Wāfi*, arranged chronologically (sections B12–6, section B13 being dry information; the anecdotal or story-like material is in green color). While somewhat shorter than the original, the reports in the *Muqaffā* retain their anecdotal or story-like quality. The story-like reports are very long, and although some of the dialogues and utterances in direct speech were omitted or condensed, the reports in the *Muqaffā* retain several utterances in direct speech (which, of course, were also standardized).¹¹⁷ Secondly, at the end of the biographical entry, al-Maqrīzī gives room for approximately three pages of nonchronological anecdotes, stories, “peculiarities,” and witticisms taken from the *Nuzha* and the *Wāfi* (section D). While some of the anecdotes and stories were omitted and others were condensed, and two are so truncated that they became statements (the parts in red color in sections D4 and D7), the *Muqaffā* contains a lot of anecdotes and stories, and most of them

115 An interesting case is a bare statement of fact about the building of a mosque by Aqūsh (“he had built a mosque”) that appears in the *Muqaffā* in the section of anecdotes before an anecdote about his charity and generosity during Ramaḍān, and at first glance, it seems out of place. However, it was originally the opening of an anecdote about generosity in the *Nuzha* which was truncated by al-Maqrīzī. Apparently, he could not fix the date of the building of the mosque, so he left the statement about its building in the anecdotal section (see *Muqaffā* D4). As far as I know, no historian mentions the date of the building of the mosque. Moreover, in his *Khiṭaṭ*, al-Maqrīzī has only a very short entry for this mosque, with no details regarding the date of its construction, and it is mentioned that the mosque was in ruins already in 806/1403–4, so it is quite possible that the date of its construction was lost, see al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ* iv, 115.

116 On al-Maqrīzī’s “chronological arrangement of his stories wherever the available material allowed for such a set-up” in his *al-Dhahab al-masbūk*, a practice that “prioritises chronography over literary aesthetics as a guiding principle,” see Van Steenberg, al-Maqrīzī’s 195, 197.

117 For examples of standardized utterances in direct speech, compare al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 252 (lines 8–9) with al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 192 (lines 9–12); and compare al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 253 (lines 17–8) with al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 238 (lines 24–5). As in the *Sulūk*, the occasional slip of an *ēsh* may be found, see al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 254 (line 20).

retain their original quality. Some of the stories or anecdotes contain utterances in direct speech, and one has a dialogue (sections D₁, D₈, D₉, and D₁₂). Most of the anecdotes or stories in the *Muqaffā* that contain dialogue or utterances in direct speech are read as funny stories (D₁, D₈, and D₉), and specifically the anecdotes on the harsh or whimsical character of Aqūsh, depicting him as a somewhat odd personality who made “peculiar decisions,” are reminiscent of stories in the style of *ḥukm Qarāqūsh* (D₁ and D₉).¹¹⁸

All this shows that while subordinating some anecdotes and stories to chronology, al-Maqrīzī left plenty of room for “literarized” material in the biographical entry. As the biographical entry progresses, the “literarized” material becomes more conspicuous. After three pages of relatively banal chronological information come three pages of stories arranged chronologically, followed by a three-page, nonchronological anecdotal section. All in all, about two-thirds of the entry consists of “literarized” material. The trend of “literarization” in the *Muqaffā* draws on an anecdotal tradition of Egyptian historians related to the military institution (the *Nuzha*) and, more importantly, on a more general anecdotal tradition of biographical dictionaries (the *Wāfi*); however, al-Maqrīzī gave the biographical entry a new structure. The restructuring of the biographical entries in the *Nuzha* and the *Wāfi* and the transferring of anecdotes to the chronological section actually prove that al-Maqrīzī knew very well to recognize the “literarized” material in the *Nuzha* and the *Wāfi* and that like in the *Sulūk*, the incorporation of “literarized” material in the *Muqaffā* was a conscious and deliberate decision of al-Maqrīzī. This trend of “literarization” and restructuring in the *Muqaffā* was apparently not restricted to the biographical entries of amirs. This, however, cannot be examined in detail in the scope of this article.¹¹⁹ It may be mentioned here, however, that in biographies of religious scholars or *kuttāb-udabā'*, one finds some verses of their poetry, thus, in

118 For a truly magnificent story in the style of *ḥukm Qarāqūsh*, however, one should go to the *Nuzha*, (section E₂ in the *Nuzha*). On collections of stories on the high-ranking Ayyūbid officer Bahā' al-Dīn Qarāqūsh (d. 597/1201), and his image as an “odd personality” whose “extraordinary decisions” exemplified “peculiarity” and sometimes even injustice; see, for example, Shoshan, *Popular* 356–7. On the comic nature of these stories or “jokes,” see *ibid.*, *Jokes*. On the attribution of such decisions to *mamlūk* amirs, see *ibid.*, *Popular* 357–8.

119 As mentioned, in the extant parts of *Nuzhat al-nāzir* there are fewer obituaries of religious scholars than of amirs, and not many of them appear in the extant parts of the *Muqaffā*. Therefore, the pattern of restructuring and “literarization” in biographical entries of civilians in the *Muqaffā* may be examined mainly by a comparison with biographical entries in the *Wāfi*. For an example of a biographical entry of a Mamluk civilian in the *Muqaffā* relying on the *Wāfi*, however, structured in chronological order, subordinating some anecdotes to chronology and leaving at the end room for nonchronological anecdotes, see al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* i, 260–2 (no. 306); al-Ṣafādī, *Wāfi* vi, 97–8 (no. 2527).

biographical entries of civilians, al-Maqrīzī was also drawing on a scholarly tradition of “literarization.”¹²⁰ Still, the number of biographical entries containing verses and, more importantly, the number of poetry verses presented in the biography are far less numerous than in obituaries in the chronicles of al-Jazarī and al-Yūnīnī or the biographical dictionaries of al-Ṣafadī.¹²¹

In order to get a clearer perception of the structural and literary trends in the *Muqaffā*, it is necessary to compare the trends detected in the *Muqaffā* to other biographical dictionaries written by al-Maqrīzī’s contemporaries. The two most obvious candidates for comparison are Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī’s *al-Durar al-kāmina* and Ibn Taghrībirdī’s *Manhal* because they are the most conspicuous examples of biographical dictionaries that are either dedicated to notables of the past from different social backgrounds (amirs and civilians) or contain many biographical entries of notables of the past from different backgrounds.¹²²

The biographical entry of Aqūsh in *al-Durar al-kāmina* is basically divided into three parts: (A) title/name, (B) life résumé, and (C) anecdotes, stories, and peculiarities (see appendix A *al-Durar al-kāmina*). It is clear that many of the units of information are taken from al-Ṣafadī,¹²³ however, apparently not from the *Wāfi* but rather from *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr*.¹²⁴ It is also clear that Ibn Ḥajar generally

120 See, for example, al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* i, 99–100 (no. 49), 120–1 (no. 83), 242–3 (no. 277); vii, 52–3 (no. 3123), 54–5 (no. 3128), 58–61 (no. 3135). In some of the cases, the biographical entry in the *Muqaffā* relies on the *Wāfi*, including in the quotation of poetry, compare for example al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* i, 117–8 (no. 78) with al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* v, 338 (no. 2406); and compare al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* i, 165–6 (no. 152) with al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* v, 356–8 (no. 2436); and compare al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* i, 260–2 (no. 306) with al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* vi, 97–8 (no. 2527); and compare al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* vii, 26–7 (no. 3092) with al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* i, 203 (no. 127); and compare al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* vii, 30–1 (no. 3098) with al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* i, 204–5 (no. 129); and compare al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* vii, 64–6 (no. 3141) with al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* i, 249–58 (no. 162); and compare al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* vii, 111–7 (no. 3202) with al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* i, 217–28 (no. 146).

121 On poetry in al-Ṣafadī’s biographical dictionaries, see Bauer, Communication 109; Conermann, Tankiz 19.

122 Normally, biographical dictionaries written during the Circassian period focus mainly on contemporary notables from different social backgrounds (for example, Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī’s *Dhayl al-Durar al-kāmina*, al-Sakhāwī’s *al-Daw’ al-lāmi’*, and al-Malaṭī’s *al-Majma’ al-mufannan*), or restricted to a specific social group, normally religious scholars (for example, Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī’s *Raf’ al-iṣr* and Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba’s *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʿiyya*).

123 See especially appendix A sections B3, B5, and C3 in *al-Durar al-kāmina*.

124 Because of the condensed nature of the biography in *al-Durar al-kāmina*, and because of the resemblance of material in the *Wāfi* and *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr*, most of the times it is difficult to know if Ibn Ḥajar relied on the *Wāfi* or *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr*, see Little, Introduction 107 (footnote

condensed the anecdotes from al-Şafadī and turned them into bare statements of fact concerning events in the life of Aqūsh or his character. Most of the anecdotes are so truncated that they are hardly recognizable.¹²⁵ There is nothing new about the observation that Ibn Ḥajar relied on al-Şafadī and condensed his material. Little noted that “the main part of the biography [of Qarāsunqur] in *al-Durar al-kāmīna* is a summary of that in *al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt* or *A'yān al-'aṣr* ... the use of al-Şafadī's pattern of episodes is ... obvious ... Ibn Ḥajar has transformed it in the process of condensation. By stripping it of the long anecdotes, and reducing them to bare statements of fact, he produced what amounts to an outline of Qarāsunqur's career ... this in itself lends a factual air to the biography.”¹²⁶ Still, about half the information in the biographical entry of Aqūsh in *al-Durar al-kāmīna* does not seem to have come from al-Şafadī, and at least some of the information could not have come from him. It would seem that the source for all this information was the *Muqaffā*.

As mentioned, the title of the entry in *al-Durar al-kāmīna* containing the name and appellations of Aqūsh has information that appears only in the *Nuzha* and the *Muqaffā* and not in al-Şafadī (*al-ma'rūf bi-Nā'ib al-Karak/al-Burnāq*). The title resembles only the title of the entry in the *Muqaffā* because al-Maqrīzī collected the information from different sections of the obituary in the *Nuzha*. It is unlikely that Ibn Ḥajar took the information directly from two sections of the *Nuzha* and incorporated it in the same fashion as al-Maqrīzī

2). However, in the biography of Aqūsh there is one case of a significant variance in the order of presentation of anecdotes in the *Wāfi* and *A'yān al-'aṣr*. Whereas in the *Wāfi* anecdotes about generosity appear in the fourth place out of eleven anecdotes, in *A'yān al-'aṣr* they appear last, right at the end of the biographical entry. Moreover, there is also variance between the *Wāfi* and *A'yān al-'aṣr* concerning the internal order of the presentation of the anecdotes on generosity. *Al-Durar al-kāmīna* follows the internal order of anecdotes about generosity in *A'yān al-'aṣr*, and more broadly, the general order of presentation of anecdotes in *A'yān al-'aṣr* (see appendix A, section C3 in *al-Durar al-kāmīna* and compare to section C4 in the *Wāfi*). For a possible reliance of *al-Durar al-kāmīna* on *A'yān al-'aṣr* in another biographical entry, see chapter 2 table 2.1 (no. 1). On the reliance of *al-Durar al-kāmīna* on *A'yān al-'aṣr*, see also Gharaibeh, Narrative. It should be mentioned that in the introduction of *al-Durar al-kāmīna*, Ibn Ḥajar mentions *A'yān al-'aṣr* as a source but does not mention the *Wāfi*; see *ibid.* 55–6. In appendix A, the source for units of information taken from al-Şafadī is assumed to be *A'yān al-'aṣr* also in other cases, although a reliance on the *Wāfi* cannot be unequivocally ruled out. In any case, I have also mentioned in the appendix the parallel unit in the *Wāfi* and other relevant differences between *A'yān al-'aṣr* and the *Wāfi*.

125 See especially appendix A sections B2, B4, B5, and C2 in *al-Durar al-kāmīna*. The truncated anecdotes turned into statements are in red color.

126 Little, *Introduction* 107. Brack noted the same phenomenon in another biographical entry in *al-Durar al-kāmīna*; see Brack, Mongol 358.

did in the *Muqaffā*. It is more likely that he used the *Muqaffā* (see section A in *al-Durar al-kāmina*). The beginning of the life résumé of Aqūsh and its end contain chronologically arranged information that appears in the *Muqaffā* but not in al-Şafadī (see sections B1, B6, and B8 in *al-Durar al-kāmina*). While one piece of information that appears in the *Muqaffā* also appears in the obituary in the *Nuzha* and, theoretically, could have been easily collected by Ibn Ḥajar from there (section B1 in *al-Durar al-kāmina*), the rest of the information was collected by al-Maqrīzī from different places in the historical narrative of the *Sulūk* (sections B1 and B6 in *al-Durar al-kāmina*) or from the historical narrative in the *Nuzha* (section B8 in *al-Durar al-kāmina*). It is practically inconceivable that Ibn Ḥajar collected the information from different places in the historical narrative of the *Sulūk* and the *Nuzha* and incorporated it chronologically in the same fashion and exactly in the same place as al-Maqrīzī did in the *Muqaffā*. Some of the truncated anecdotes in the entry in *al-Durar al-kāmina* also seem to have been taken from the *Muqaffā*. A statement about the generosity of Aqūsh in *al-Durar al-kāmina* is found only in the *Muqaffā* and the *Nuzha* and is not found in al-Şafadī (section C5 in *al-Durar al-kāmina*). Since there is no unequivocal evidence of reliance on the *Nuzha* in the biographical entry of Aqūsh in *al-Durar al-kāmina*, it was in all likelihood taken from the *Muqaffā*. More significantly, another statement about his generosity (section C6 in *al-Durar al-kāmina*) in fact repeats a statement mentioned earlier in the biography in *al-Durar al-kāmina* (section C3). The first appearance (C3) draws on the wording of al-Şafadī; however, the second appearance (C6) reproduces the wording of the *Muqaffā*, which rephrased the wording in al-Şafadī. The repetition of the statement in different versions proves beyond doubt that Ibn Ḥajar used both al-Şafadī and the *Muqaffā*. In fact, all the information in the entry in *al-Durar al-kāmina* that is absent from al-Şafadī may have been taken from the *Muqaffā*, and it would seem that Ibn Ḥajar did not use other sources for the entry of Aqūsh. It has been noted that Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī had access to the autograph manuscript of the *Muqaffā* and even added entries to it (for his own use).¹²⁷ In fact, most of the entries in the *Muqaffā* are of persons who died in the 8th/14th century, so it would have been a perfect source for *al-Durar al-kāmina*, which is dedicated to persons who died in that century.

In general, it seems that most of the time, Ibn Ḥajar followed the order of presentation in the *Muqaffā* and al-Şafadī, while turning some anecdotes in al-Şafadī into statements and combining them in the chronological framework

127 Bauden, Taqī al-Dīn 193–4; Gardiner, Esotericism 250–1.

of the life résumé, basically based on the *Muqaffā*.¹²⁸ As mentioned, the life résumé begins and ends with chronologically arranged information from the *Muqaffā*. It again seems, thus, that the influence of al-Ṣafadī's pattern has been somewhat overstated. At least in the 9th/15th century, authors of biographical dictionaries were constructing a much more comprehensive chronological life résumé in biographical entries than al-Ṣafadī and were subordinating anecdotes to chronology.

In terms of "literarization," the biography of Aqūsh in *al-Durar al-kāmina* is an example of a truly "de-literarized" biographical entry, and it seems to represent the general trend of *al-Durar al-kāmina*. As mentioned, the anecdotes or stories are so truncated that they are hardly recognizable.¹²⁹ There is not even one dialogue or an utterance in direct speech in the entry.¹³⁰ The *Muqaffā* is definitely more "literarized" than *al-Durar al-kāmina*. In fact, Haarmann counted Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī among the historians who show a "conservative anti-literary historiographical ethos."¹³¹ Before making any general statements about Ibn Ḥajar, however, it is advised to look at some of his other biographical dictionaries.¹³²

As for the biographical entry of Aqūsh in Ibn Taghrībirdī's *Manhal*, it is clearly based on the entry in al-Ṣafadī's *Wāfi* (see appendix A the *Manhal*).¹³³

128 He does not seem to have jumped back and forth much between different sections, and even within sections. See the comments in sections B4, C2, and C4 in *al-Durar al-kāmina*.

129 A two-page story-like report taken from the *Muqaffā*, which is based on a much more detailed story-like report from the *Nuzha*, is reduced to a six-line report. It is, in fact, the only report in *al-Durar al-kāmina* that perhaps retains some qualities of a story (see section B8 in *al-Durar al-kāmina*).

130 This is not to say that such elements do not appear in *al-Durar al-kāmina* at all. For an example of a long dialogue that appears in a quotation from the *Nuzha*, see Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 270–1.

131 Haarmann, *Auflösung* 54. Bauer noted also that in *al-Durar al-kāmina*, Ibn Ḥajar did not incorporate much poetry written by scholars; see Bauer, *Literarische* 108.

132 In *Raf' al-iṣr*, dedicated to Egyptian judges throughout the Islamic period, it is possible to find long biographical entries that contain long and comprehensive life résumés basically arranged chronologically. However, because Ibn Ḥajar brings information from several sources, there are at times repetitions, and general assessments are incorporated within the chronological life résumé. Ibn Ḥajar incorporates chronologically many anecdotes or story-like reports in the life résumé and less often leaves room at the end of the entry for nonchronological anecdotes or story-like reports. Sometimes he mentions at the end poetry verses composed by the judges. This is true for entries of judges of the past and his contemporaries, see for example Ibn Ḥajar, *Raf'* 27–31 (no. 3), 41–2 (no. 11), 81–3 (no. 36), 169–71 (no. 81), 233–7 (no. 115), 241–3 (no. 119), 339–41 (no. 176).

133 In the case of *al-Manhal al-ṣāfi* it is possible to demonstrate that his source was the *Wāfi* and not *A'yān al-'aṣr*. In cases of variance between the *Wāfi* and *A'yān al-'aṣr* the *Man-*

Practically all the information in the *Manhal* comes from the *Wāfi*.¹³⁴ Moreover, while omitting four anecdotes (see section C in the *Manhal* and the *Wāfi*), Ibn Taghrībirdī strictly follows al-Ṣafadī's order of presentation. Two of the anecdotes in the *Wāfi* turned into statements of fact (sections C4–5 in the *Manhal* in red color). The fact that Ibn Taghrībirdī does not subordinate anecdotes to chronology may be considered as a more "literarized" method of presentation than that in the *Muqaffā*. However, it may also be the result of simple laziness on the part of Ibn Taghrībirdī, who followed al-Ṣafadī's pattern blindly. As we shall see, in the biographical entries of his contemporaries, Ibn Taghrībirdī's pattern in the *Manhal* is reminiscent of the trends detected in the *Muqaffā*. The biography of Aqūsh in the *Muqaffā* contains more anecdotes or story-like reports and utterances in direct speech than his biography in the *Manhal*.¹³⁵ Therefore, it may be argued that at least some biographical entries in the *Muqaffā* are more "literarized" than some biographical entries of past notables in the *Manhal*. Thus, in terms of "literarization," the *Muqaffā* also seems to fare well in comparison to biographical entries of past notables in biographical dictionaries written by authors who are not considered "conservative."

In biographical entries of Circassian-period notables (civilians and amirs) in the *Manhal*, one finds many anecdotes or story-like reports with dialogues or utterances in direct speech that are mostly based on reports from informants. Still, the trend of constructing a long and comprehensive, chronological life résumé is also apparent here. The anecdotes or story-like reports are most of the times incorporated chronologically within a comprehensive life résumé, and some appear at the end of the biography next to the general description

hal follows the *Wāfi*, see al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* ix, 336 (lines 9–10); *A'yān* i, 578 (lines 16–7); Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Manhal* iii, 28 (lines 3–4); and see al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* ix, 336 (line 17); *A'yān* i, 579 (lines 6–7); Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Manhal* iii, 28 (line 11). Most importantly, as mentioned, there is one significant difference in the order of the presentation of anecdotes in the *Wāfi* and *A'yān al-'aṣr*. Whereas in the *Wāfi*, the anecdotes about generosity appear in the fourth place out of eleven anecdotes (see appendix A *Wāfi* C4), in *A'yān al-'aṣr*, they appear last, right at the end of the biographical entry; see al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān* i, 581 (line 13)–582 (line 1). In addition, in the *Wāfi*, the internal order of anecdotes on generosity is "he always paid for the expenses of his servants in expeditions," and then "his *simāt* in Ramaḍān." In *A'yān al-'aṣr*, it is the opposite. The *Manhal* follows the general order of the presentation of anecdotes in the *Wāfi* and also the internal order of the presentation of anecdotes regarding generosity in the *Wāfi* (see section C3 in the *Manhal*).

134 See, however, the footnotes in sections B and C4 in the *Manhal*.

135 The *Muqaffā* has one dialogue and five utterances in direct speech, and the *Manhal* has one dialogue and only two utterances in direct speech.

and assessment.¹³⁶ Moreover, materials in biographical entries of Circassian-period notables in the *Manhal* resemble materials in the historical narrative (*ḥawādith*) in Ibn Taghribirdī's chronicle *al-Nujūm*.¹³⁷ Again it becomes clear that Circassian-period biographers were using chronologically arranged material that also served them in their chronicles. And again, it would seem that the reliance of biographers on al-Ṣafadī's pattern was overstated. Although in biographies of past notables in the *Manhal*, Ibn Taghribirdī was imitating the pattern of al-Ṣafadī blindly, when constructing biographies of Circassian-period notables, he adhered to structural and chronologizing trends current among Circassian-period biographers. Such trends, thus, were not restricted to authors that are sometimes considered "conservative." Similar trends are also found in *al-Majma' al-mufannan*, al-Malaṭī's biographical dictionary of contemporary notables,¹³⁸ and in *al-Ḍaw' al-lāmi'*, al-Sakhāwī's biographical dictionary of notables of the 9th/15th century.¹³⁹ The chronologizing trend in biographical entries in al-Sakhāwī's *Ḍaw'* is most conspicuous in biographical entries of contemporary amirs, some very long, which are normally devoid of anecdotes.¹⁴⁰ In order to situate this trait in the *Ḍaw'* within more general trends of biographical dictionaries dedicated to contemporary notables writ-

136 See, for example, Ibn Taghribirdī, *Manhal* iii, 279–82 (no. 654), 375–80 (no. 671); iv, 313–24 (no. 850). For a similar trend in obituary notes in *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, see, for example, *ibid.*, *Nujūm* xv, 478–9 (the biography of Sūdūn al-Maghribī); xv, 530–2 (the biography of Taghribirmish al-Jalālī).

137 For a representative example, compare *ibid.*, *Manhal* iii, 376 (line 12)–378 (line 13) with *Nujūm* xi, 373 (line 9)–375 (line 19). Of course, the sources of the chronologically arranged material in the *Manhal* should be further explored in a detailed manner.

138 For an example of a biographical entry of amir that incorporates anecdotes or story-like reports chronologically within a comprehensive life résumé, see al-Malaṭī, *Majma'* 576–7 (no. 776). For a similar pattern in a biography of a religious scholar, see *ibid.* 185–7 (no. 197). For a similar pattern in obituary notes in *al-Rawḍ al-bāsim*, see *ibid.*, *Rawḍ* ii, 117–9 (no. 133), 185–7 (no. 172).

139 Biographical entries of religious scholars sometimes contain long and comprehensive life résumés basically arranged chronologically but incorporating anecdotes. Like in *Raf' al-iṣr*, however, because al-Sakhāwī normally brings information from several sources, there are at times repetitions, and general assessments are incorporated within the chronological life résumé (see footnote 132 above). Sometimes, al-Sakhāwī leaves room at the end of the entry for anecdotes or story-like reports next to the general assessment or general description and next to poetry verses composed by the scholars; see, for example, al-Sakhāwī, *Ḍaw'* i, 17 (line 24)–20 (line 17), 24 (line 3)–25 (line 9), 37 (line 7)–39 (line 12).

140 See, for example, the biographical entries of the amirs named Sūdūn, al-Sakhāwī, *Ḍaw'* iii, 275–87 (nos. 1047–91, esp. nos. 1052, 1064, 1066). Numbers 1055 and 1084 contain story-like materials, however, with no utterances in direct speech. Anyway, they are not al-Sakhāwī's contemporaries.

ten during the Circassian period, it is time to move to a discussion of *Durar al-ʿuqūd*, al-Maqrīzī's biographical dictionary dedicated to his contemporaries.

4 *Durar al-ʿUqūd al-Farīda Fī Tarājīm al-Aʿyān al-Mufīda: Trends of Literarization in al-Maqrīzī's Biographical Dictionary of His Contemporaries*

In *Durar al-ʿuqūd al-farīda fī tarājīm al-aʿyān al-mufīda*, a biographical dictionary dedicated to al-Maqrīzī's contemporaries (or people who lived during his lifetime), different trends of literarization can be detected. The trends in *Durar al-ʿuqūd* may be divided in two: one concerning biographies of *mamlūk* amirs and another concerning scholars (and, more generally, civilians), which, as we shall see, is the most unique and exciting trend of literarization in al-Maqrīzī's historical writing.

The biographical entries of *mamlūk* amirs in *Durar al-ʿuqūd* are totally "dry." The information is mostly banal and matter-of-fact and consists of a life résumé that is strictly arranged chronologically and normally fixed in dates. Some of these entries are relatively long but still normally do not contain even a single anecdote or story-like report on the *mamlūk* amirs with utterances in direct speech, not to mention dialogues.¹⁴¹ It is very likely that much of the information in the entries of *mamlūk* amirs comes from chronicles and, more specifically, from the *Sulūk*. For example, most of the material in the biographical entry of the amir Ashaqtamur al-Māridānī (d. 791/1389) in *Durar al-ʿuqūd*, which is two pages long and is dotted with dates,¹⁴² must have been taken from the *Sulūk*. There are no biographical entries or obituaries of Ashaqtamur, which could have served al-Maqrīzī as a source for the entry (at least for some material in it).¹⁴³ On the other hand, it is possible to find in the *Sulūk* bits of

141 See al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* i, 426–7 (no. 437), 491–2 (no. 373), 493–5 (no. 375), 573–4 (no. 383), 574–80 (no. 384); ii, 103–5 (no. 492), 198–9 (no. 530), 498–500 (no. 812); iii, 24–5 (no. 911), 420–6 (no. 1365), 513–8 (no. 1426), 534–5 (no. 1440). Joseph Drory noted that in the biography of Timur Leng in *Durar al-ʿuqūd*, al-Maqrīzī relied on Ibn ʿArabshāh (d. 854/1450) but omitted all the flowery rhymed prose "inserting instead an ordinary, mundane description replete with dates, places and informative details"; see Drory, Maqrīzī 394.

142 Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* i, 426–7 (no. 437).

143 Ashaqtamur has a four-line obituary in Ibn al-Furāt, see *Taʾrikh* ix, 176 (lines 4–7). Ashaqtamur also has a one-line obituary in *Inbāʾ al-ghumr*, see Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʾ* i, 357. He has a biographical entry in *al-Durar al-kāmina* and an obituary in the chronicle of Ibn Qāḍī

banal information that resemble the material in *Durar al-'uqūd*.¹⁴⁴ A reliance on chronicles is also to be expected in biographical entries of sultans containing much banal chronologically arranged material and that are a few dozen pages long.¹⁴⁵

The lack of anecdotes or story-like reports in biographical entries of *mamlūk* amirs cannot be the result of al-Maqrīzī's withdrawal from public life circa 815/1412 and his seclusion at home, and the fact that from that time, his contact with the Mamluk elite became rare.¹⁴⁶ *Durar al-'uqūd* also contains no anecdotes or story-like reports in entries of *mamlūk* amirs who died before 815/1412. Moreover, sometimes al-Maqrīzī mentions in entries of *mamlūk* amirs who died after 815/1412 that they were his companions, but he still does not mention anecdotes or story-like reports about them.¹⁴⁷ In one case, al-Maqrīzī notes that people used to tell stories about a certain amir he knew (*ṣaḥibtuḥu*) that are reminiscent of the stories told about Qarāqūsh (*tuḥkā 'anhu ḥikāyāt ka-ḥikāyāt Qarāqūsh*), but he still does not mention the stories themselves.¹⁴⁸ In another case, al-Maqrīzī mentions that people told wondrous stories about the gluttony of an amir (*kāna ... akūlan ... yuḥkā 'anhu fī dhālika mā yuta'ajjabu minhu*) but does not give the actual stories.¹⁴⁹ In another case, al-Maqrīzī mentions that people told stories about the miserliness of an amir (*wa-lahu fī l-bukhl akhbār*)

Shuhba that are shorter than the entry in *Durar al-'uqūd* and could not have been the source for all the material in it. On the other hand, it is quite possible that *Durar al-'uqūd* served them as a source (to be further examined); see Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ta'rikh* i, 306–7; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 389.

144 Compare al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* i, 426 (lines 3–4) with *Sulūk* iii, 84 (lines 8–9); and compare *Durar* i, 426 (lines 5–6) with *Sulūk* iii, 96 (lines 8–9); and compare *Durar* i, 426 (lines 7–8) with *Sulūk* iii, 120 (lines 3–4); and compare *Durar* i, 426 (lines 13–5) with *Sulūk* iii, 195 (lines 2–3); and compare *Durar* i, 426 (line 18)–427 (line 4) with *Sulūk* iii, 237 (line 17)–238 (line 5); and compare *Durar* i, 427 (lines 5–7) with *Sulūk* iii, 331 (lines 1–3); and compare *Durar* i, 427 (lines 8–10) with *Sulūk* iii, 358 (lines 8–14); and compare *Durar* i, 427 (lines 10–1) with *Sulūk* iii, 389 (lines 15–6); and compare *Durar* i, 427 (lines 11–2) with *Sulūk* iii, 466 (lines 12–4). Of course, most of the material in the *Sulūk* was probably taken from the chronicle of Ibn al-Furāt.

145 For example, the biographical entry of al-Ashraf Barsbāy (d. 841/1438); see al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* i, 456–82 (no. 364). In fact, at the end of the entry al-Maqrīzī directs the reader to the *Sulūk* for a more detailed account, see *ibid.* i, 482. On a certain fusion of the annalistic and biographic forms in biographies of rulers, see Little, *Introduction* 100. On exceptionally long biographical entries in *Durar al-'uqūd*, including that of al-Ashraf Barsbāy, see Drory, Maqrīzī 393.

146 Bauden, Taqī al-Dīn 166, 182.

147 See for example al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* i, 488 (no. 369).

148 *Ibid.* ii, 100–1 (no. 490).

149 *Ibid.* iii, 24–5 (no. 911).

but does not give the stories.¹⁵⁰ All this suggests that al-Maqrīzī deliberately decided not to include “literarized” material related to *mamlūk* amirs in *Durar al-‘uqūd*.

This trend in *Durar al-‘uqūd* is typical in general of biographical dictionaries that contain entries of contemporary amirs and were written during the 9th/15th century by Shāfi‘ī religious scholars. Al-Sakhāwī’s *al-Ḍaw’ al-lāmi‘* was already mentioned.¹⁵¹ It seems that Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī’s *Dhayl al-Durar al-kāmina* also adheres to this trend;¹⁵² however, it should be taken into consideration that the biographies in it are relatively short and “dry” in general. It is not possible to determine if this trend is typical of all historians who were religious scholars because non-Shāfi‘ī religious scholars did not produce significant biographical dictionaries containing biographies of amirs; however, obituaries in their chronicles should be examined. In any case, it is clear that the trend regarding biographies of contemporary *mamlūk* amirs in biographical dictionaries written by (Shāfi‘ī) religious scholars is different from the trend in biographical dictionaries authored by historians related to the military institution during the 9th/15th century. It is relatively easy to find anecdotes or story-like reports with dialogues or utterances in direct speech in biographies of contemporary *mamlūk* amirs in Ibn Taghribirdī’s *Manhal* and al-Malaṭī’s *al-Majma‘ al-mufannan*.¹⁵³ It would seem that (Shāfi‘ī) religious scholars of the 9th/15th century did not consider contemporary *mamlūk* amirs “interesting” enough to incorporate anecdotes or story-like reports about them in their biographical entries.

In biographical entries of scholars (and, more generally, civilians, some of a humble background) in *Durar al-‘uqūd* we find a unique and most exciting trend of literarization. One finds anecdotes or story-like reports on the scholars that were incorporated chronologically in the life résumé or at the end of their biographical entries.¹⁵⁴ In this respect, *Durar al-‘uqūd* is not different from al-Sakhāwī’s *Ḍaw’*, in which anecdotes or story-like reports on contempor-

150 Ibid. iii, 534–5 (no. 1440).

151 See at footnote 140 above.

152 For a rare short story-like report on a *mamlūk* amir that contains no utterances in direct speech, see Ibn Ḥajar, *Dhayl* 68.

153 See footnotes 136 and 138 above.

154 See, for example, al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* i, 79–80 (no. 23), 85–91 (no. 31), 106–9 (no. 36), 166 (no. 96), 167 (no. 97), 169–70 (no. 100), 183 (no. 117), 254–5 (no. 162); ii, 48 (no. 428), 82 (no. 457), 237 (no. 563), 252–3 (no. 580), 320 (no. 627), 351–2 (no. 681), 438–9 (no. 741), 498 (no. 811), 528–9 (no. 845); iii, 34–5 (no. 915), 41 (no. 918), 63 (no. 940), 89 (no. 969), 111–2 (no. 999), 126 (no. 1012), 260 (no. 1157), 291–2 (no. 1233), 321–3 (no. 1248), 336 (no. 1273), 372 (no. 1323), 526–7 (no. 1437).

ary scholars containing dialogues or utterances in direct speech are common enough,¹⁵⁵ or from Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī's biographical dictionaries.¹⁵⁶ Such elements are also found in biographical entries of contemporary scholars in biographical dictionaries authored by historians related to the military institution.¹⁵⁷ Still, in general, the content of most of the anecdotes about scholars in *Durar al-ʿuqūd* is untypical of anecdotes on scholars in other contemporary biographical dictionaries. For example, it is possible to find in *Durar al-ʿuqūd* anecdotes about scholars that involve funny and entertaining stories about their beloved women¹⁵⁸ or about their stupidity (*khiffat ʿaql/sukhf*);¹⁵⁹ about strange, extraordinary, wondrous, or bizarre happenings and coincidences (*gharīb*);¹⁶⁰ about divinations¹⁶¹ and dreams that other people (including al-Maqrīzī) dreamed about them that predict the future¹⁶² or bring a lesson,¹⁶³ or dreams dreamed about them after their death,¹⁶⁴ some involving the Prophet¹⁶⁵ and some containing advice or admonition.¹⁶⁶ Other anecdotes have to do with the astonishing and unique (or supernatural) capabilities of

155 See at footnote 139 above.

156 Such elements may occasionally be found in *Dhayl al-Durar al-kāmina*; see, for example, Ibn Ḥajar, *Dhayl* 64, 73, 80 (no direct speech), 85 (no direct speech), 88 (no direct speech), 94. They are very common, however, in Ibn Ḥajar's *Rafʿ al-iṣr*, see at footnote 132 above.

157 See, for example, footnote 138 above.

158 Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* ii, 48 (no. 428).

159 Ibid. ii, 320 (no. 627).

160 Ibid. i, 183 (no. 117); ii, 237 (no. 563).

161 For a story-like report on a religious scholar incorporated chronologically in his life résumé involving a prediction of the future with Quranic bibliomancy (*al-fāʾl fī l-Qurʾān*), see *ibid.* i, 79–80 (no. 23; “*fataḥa al-muṣḥaf li-akhdh al-fāʾl*”); on bibliomancy in the Islamic world, see Melvin-Koushki, *Defense* 356. For an anecdote on a religious scholar appearing at the end of his entry and involving predictions on the date of his death (including al-Maqrīzī's prediction) based on astrology/astronomy (*al-naẓar fī l-nujūm*) and popular beliefs (based in part on Prophetic sayings), see al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* i, 99 (no. 32). For an anecdote on a religious scholar appearing at the end of his entry and involving predictions (which were fulfilled) about his life and death in drowning based on his astrological birth chart (*mawlid raṣādī*), see *ibid.* iii, 32 (no. 914).

162 Ibid. ii, 98–9 (no. 488). In this case al-Maqrīzī dreamt several dreams, not about a religious scholar but about his wife, which predicted her death. One cannot but recall al-Biqāʿī's dreams in his chronicle (see chapter 2 footnotes 143–5). Al-Maqrīzī had also a dream that was interpreted for him by experts, which predicted the birth of his son, see *ibid.* iii, 132 (no. 1021).

163 Ibid. ii, 252–3 (no. 580).

164 Ibid. ii, 99 (no. 488); iii, 63 (no. 940).

165 Ibid. i, 166 (no. 96); ii, 252–3 (no. 580). On dream accounts in Mamluk chronicles (sometimes related to the Prophet and sometimes related to divination), see Frenkel, *Dream*.

166 Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* ii, 82 (no. 457); iii, 89 (no. 969), 260 (no. 1157).

the scholars¹⁶⁷ or miracles (*karāmāt*) performed by them.¹⁶⁸ Yet, this is not the most unique thing about the trends of “literarization” in *Durar al-‘uqūd*.¹⁶⁹

The most unique thing about *Durar al-‘uqūd* is that most of the “literarized” material in biographical entries of scholars (and civilians in general) comes in the form of reports about what may be very loosely defined as their “*adab* product” or, more properly, as their general knowledge accumulated through the generations or from their own experience, and their contribution to the cultural heritage of the community in a very broad sense.¹⁷⁰ In general, such

167 For example, al-Maqrīzī mentions a scholar who had an astonishing capability (*kānat fī-hi uḥūba*)—when told a story or recited a poem, he could immediately tell the number of the letters that comprised it, see *ibid.* i, 169 (no. 100); or a scholar who could read poetry verses handed to him on a paper without looking at them but only by feeling the paper with his fingers, see *ibid.* i, 167 (no. 97); or a scholar who had the ability to perform “metamorphosis” (*tatawwur*), so people could not recognize him, see *ibid.* ii, 528–9 (no. 845); or a scholar who is said to have been able to make his mule march according to the rhythm of music, see *ibid.* iii, 126 (no. 1012).

168 *Ibid.* i, 169–70 (no. 100); ii, 351–2 (no. 681); iii, 291–2 (no. 1233), 526–7 (no. 1437).

169 At least anecdotes or stories on *karāmāt* (“wonder-working,” “miracle-working,” or “manipulation of metaphysical power”) or dreams dreamt about scholars may occasionally be found in Mamluk biographical dictionaries, especially those dedicated to religious scholars. While such anecdotes were normally connected to Sufis and while “Muslim sainthood has been studied almost exclusively in Sufi contexts,” it has been noted that starting from the 4th/10th century, and more conspicuously during the Ayyūbid and Mamluk periods, “the notion of sainthood and the feasibility of *karāmāt* became widely acknowledged well beyond the Sufi milieu”; see Talmon-Heller, *‘Ilm* 29–30; and see also *ibid.* 25–6. Talmon-Heller observed that as a result “[g]eneral (as opposed to Sufi) biographical dictionaries, and the *wafayāt* sections of chronicles” contain “anecdotes that relate the wondrous doings of learned men”; see *ibid.* 32, 40. In Ibn Rajab’s (d. 795/1393) *al-Dhayl ‘alā Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila*, Talmon found that *karāmāt* are ascribed to 27 out of 613 biographees (about five percent), and in Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī’s (d. 771/1370) *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyya al-kubrā* “[s]lightly more than six percent of the entries relate wondrous doings or occurrences”; see *ibid.* 33–4. Some of the anecdotes involve dreams; see *ibid.* 42–3. And see, for example, al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt* x, 45, 80, 131–2, 210–6, 267, 316. On (posthumous) dreams dreamt about Ḥanbalī shaykhs or local saints, some predicting the future, that appear in Ibn Rajab’s *al-Dhayl ‘alā Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila*, see Romanov, *Dreaming* 31–2, 38–41, 44–5. The incorporation of anecdotes on *karāmāt* and dreams in Mamluk biographical dictionaries must be related to what may be called the “*ṣūfīzation* of Muslim society” or “popularization of Sufism in Ayyūbid and Mamluk Egypt”; see Hofer, *Popularization*; Mazor, *Topos* 104. On “*ṣūfīzation*” and trends of “literarization” in Mamluk historiography, see also below at footnotes 246–63. Still, it seems to me that anecdotes on *karāmāt* and dreams are more conspicuous in *Durar al-‘uqūd* than in Mamluk biographical dictionaries dedicated to religious scholars. It is certainly more conspicuous in *Durar al-‘uqūd* in comparison to other Mamluk general biographical dictionaries dedicated to amirs and scholars (and other civilians).

170 *‘Ilm*, (expert) knowledge or learning (or rather religious learning), and *adab* are to some extent interchangeable terms; see Hämeen-Anttila, *Adab*. *Adab* may generally be defined

reports appear at the end of the biographical entry after the life résumé, but many times they constitute the bulk of the entry. Most of the times, al-Maqrīzī received the knowledge directly from scholars (or on their authority through informants) or witnessed it in person. Many times he makes comments and contributions of his own knowledge. Sometimes his associations lead him to digressions; thus, some of the entries are structured in a way that is reminiscent of discussions in a social gathering (*majlis*).¹⁷¹ Al-Maqrīzī mentions poetry verses composed by the scholars.¹⁷² In that, he follows an established scholarly historiographic tradition. However, in *Durar al-'uqūd*, the poetry product is relatively less conspicuous in comparison to other *adab*-like materials.¹⁷³ For example, poetry product is much more common in al-Sakhāwī's *Daw'*.¹⁷⁴ More importantly, in other biographical dictionaries written by religious scholars who were al-Maqrīzī's contemporaries, the *adab* product is practically limited to high-quality poetry verses (or *inshā'* product).¹⁷⁵ On the other hand, the "*adab* product" or knowledge mentioned by al-Maqrīzī in the biographical entries of scholars (and civilians in general) in *Durar al-'uqūd* is mostly of a different quality. It consists in great part of the scholars' "popular lore"; however, as usual with al-Maqrīzī, it is presented in standard Arabic. The material covers a broad range of topics and is of a most disparate kind. The knowledge covers the useful and the entertaining, the scholarly and the trivial. There is a clear

as "suitable things to know and to act upon." The term denotes primarily "general knowledge" and was used in the meaning of "the accumulation of the wisdom and learning of the past nations and generations"; see *ibid.*

- 171 For example, see al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* i, 150–1 (no. 87), 192 (no. 121), 207 (no. 127), 247–8 (no. 159); iii, 205 (no. 110), 379 (no. 1327), 415–6 (no. 1358).
- 172 See, for example, *ibid.* i, 73 (no. 14), 85 (no. 30), 129 (no. 50), 143 (no. 74), 152 (no. 88), 153 (no. 89), 180 (no. 115), 305–6 (no. 215), 422–4 (no. 344); ii, 514–6 (no. 825). Some poetry verses are said to have been given to the scholars in dreams; see, for example, *ibid.* iii, 58–9 (no. 933).
- 173 At times, after mentioning *adab*-like material related to the scholar, al-Maqrīzī mentions that he also composed poetry (*wa-lahu shi'r*) but does not mention the actual verses; see, for example, *ibid.* i, 81 (no. 26).
- 174 See footnote 139 above. And see also al-Sakhāwī, *Daw'* i, 21, 28–9, 31, 34–6. It seems to me that *al-Daw' al-lāmi'* contains much more poetry product than Bauer would allow; see Bauer, *Literarische* 108. Poetry product is occasionally found in Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī's *Dhayl al-Durar al-kāmina*, see for example Ibn Ḥajar, *Dhayl* 162, 165, 195, 197. For poetry in biographical entries of contemporary judges in *Raf' al-iṣr*, see footnote 132 above.
- 175 But see footnote 305 below. Some biographical dictionaries dedicated to religious scholars that were written during the 8th/14th century, most notably al-Subkī's *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'īyya*, contain also scholars' knowledge in *ḥadīth* or other religious sciences and occasionally also linguistic knowledge (defined as useful knowledge—*fawā'id*), see for example al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt* x, 34–8, 45, 53–61, 82–4, 86–7, 90.

penchant for the marvelous and incredible, and even the supernatural, popular occult practices, popular wisdom, and popular beliefs.¹⁷⁶ Just to be clear, the biographical entries of *mamlūk* amirs do not contain such information.¹⁷⁷ It would seem that al-Maqrīzī did not perceive *mamlūk* amirs as being able to contribute to the cultural heritage of the community.

In what follows, the *adab*-like materials (*adab* product) in the biographical entries of scholars and civilians will be briefly surveyed. There are many tales and stories (*ḥikāyāt*) told by the scholars and civilians. Many of the stories are about themselves or things they experienced in person. Most of the stories are about “strange,” wondrous, or astonishing happenings or phenomena of all sorts (*akhbār ‘ajība/‘ajīb al-akhbār/‘ajā’ib/gharā’ib*).¹⁷⁸ Some stories are patterned as stories of adventures (typically in faraway lands such as India) that

176 Robert Irwin drew attention to al-Maqrīzī’s interest in the wondrous, divination, and occult matters in general; see Irwin, al-Maqrīzī 225–30; Mamluk literature 18, 26; and see also Melvin-Koushki, *Defense* 370. Irwin also noted that the stress that modern scholars put on al-Maqrīzī’s interest in history “has been at the expense of al-Maqrīzī’s wider literary and intellectual interests.” He wrote, for example, a treatise on secret letters and talismans; see Irwin, al-Maqrīzī 229. Rabbat, however, gets the credit for drawing attention to the fact that specifically in *Durar al-‘uqūd*, al-Maqrīzī combined in biographical entries of his teachers (most notably Ibn Khaldūn), family members, and other acquaintances, stories filled with “popular wisdom, vernacular beliefs, and incredible happenings,” which reveal his interest in the supernatural, “especially when transmitted via prophecies, visions, and dreams”; see Rabbat, al-Maqrīzī’s 121, 128; see also, *The historian* 12–3. On the supernatural in the biographical entry of Ibn Khaldūn in *Durar al-‘uqūd*, see also the editor’s introduction in al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* i, 41. The occult materials in *Durar al-‘uqūd* normally do not appear in the framework of a learned discussion on the occult sciences but as a presentation of apparently “popular” practices (for example, even the slave girl of al-Maqrīzī is reported to have practiced geomancy; see *ibid.* ii, 114). In any case, although “[m]odern scholarship sometimes distinguishes the occult sciences from ‘folk’ traditions of magic and divination on the grounds that the former were learned discourses often engaged in by literate actors of relatively high social status,” the distinction “should be taken with a grain of salt, as relationships between folk and learned discourses typically are quite fluid”; see Gardiner, *Occult* 81.

177 Specifically in biographical entries of eunuchs, however, it is possible to find stories told by them to al-Maqrīzī, among them exotic stories on their country of origin; see, for example, al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* i, 455 (no. 361); ii 97–8 (no. 487); and see also *ibid.* iii, 416–8 (no. 1362), 419 (no. 1363). In biographical entries of non-*mamlūk* amirs it is possible to find medical prescriptions recommended by them, their apparently popular beliefs based on their experience, supplications, spells, witticisms and wisdom sayings, historical anecdotes, and wondrous reports told by them, see *ibid.* ii, 5–6 (no. 389), 8 (no. 392); iii, 438–9 (no. 1378).

178 *Ibid.* i, 158–60 (no. 91), 170–1 (no. 101), 173 (no. 103), 276 (no. 190); ii, 336–7 (no. 655), 407–10 (no. 720); iii, 45 (no. 920), 59–60 (no. 934), 198 (no. 1107), 205 (no. 1110), 378–9 (no. 1327), 380–1 (no. 1329), 440 (no. 1379).

begin with a journey in the sea that brings troubles (fear of water and sea travel is a recurrent theme in the stories), which eventually, however, brings fortune (i.e., the stories are patterned as stories from the genre of *al-faraj ba'da al-shidda*).¹⁷⁹ Some are about miracles (*mu'jizāt*) that happened to the Muslims¹⁸⁰ or miracles in general.¹⁸¹ Some are about saints and miracles performed by them,¹⁸² and some are about magic spells.¹⁸³ Some are about sorcery or magic (*sihr*) and "witches."¹⁸⁴ Some stories involve divination; for example, the prediction of the future with the help of spirits (*jānn*);¹⁸⁵ in some cases, the spirits are using Quran verses to predict the future.¹⁸⁶ Some are stories about solving mysteries that are patterned as a detective story.¹⁸⁷ Some are edifying stories with admonitions, exhortations (*maw'iza*), or moral lessons (morality tales/cautionary tales),¹⁸⁸ which sometimes involve occult matters and the supernatural.¹⁸⁹ Some stories involve dreams;¹⁹⁰ some of the dreams involve the Prophet, and some contain a lesson or admonition.¹⁹¹ Some are patterned as stories about a reward or punishment (desert) for pious or unreligious actions.¹⁹² There are also anecdotes (*nawādir*),¹⁹³ among which are historical anecdotes.¹⁹⁴ Some of the historical anecdotes relate to wondrous information,¹⁹⁵ and some are again presented as edifying stories with admonitions or moral lessons¹⁹⁶ or have the pattern of stories from the genre of *al-faraj ba'da al-shidda*.¹⁹⁷ Some contain

179 Ibid. iii, 95–7 (no. 982), 145–6 (no. 1029).

180 Ibid. ii, 405 (no. 720).

181 Ibid. iii, 197 (no. 1107).

182 Ibid. i, 207 (no. 127); iii, 77 (no. 954), 198–9 (no. 1107).

183 Ibid. ii, 404 (no. 720).

184 Ibid. ii, 410 (no. 720); iii, 15–6 (no. 899; in this case in a biographical entry of a Jewish doctor).

185 Ibid. iii, 134 (no. 1022).

186 Ibid. ii, 422 (no. 726); iii, 45 (no. 920).

187 Ibid. ii, 440–1 (no. 744).

188 Ibid. iii, 56 (no. 929), 71 (no. 948).

189 Ibid. i, 188–9 (no. 120).

190 Ibid. ii, 530 (no. 846); iii, 35 (no. 915), 101 (no. 987), 145 (no. 1029), 147 (no. 1030), 437 (no. 1376).

191 Ibid. ii, 41 (no. 414), 517 (no. 825), 520 (no. 830); iii, 78 (no. 955), 537 (no. 1442).

192 Ibid. i, 159–60 (no. 91), 173 (no. 103), 192 (no. 121); iii, 78 (no. 955).

193 Ibid. ii, 297 (no. 612).

194 Ibid. i, 184–5 (no. 119), 296–7 (no. 213); ii, 297 (no. 612); iii, 35 (no. 915), 152 (no. 1038), 153–4 (no. 1039).

195 Ibid. i, 99–100 (no. 32), 188 (no. 120); ii, 297 (no. 612), 406 (no. 720); iii, 198 (no. 1107).

196 Ibid. i, 187–8 (no. 120); iii, 198 (no. 1107), 415–6 (no. 1358).

197 Ibid. i, 184–5 (no. 119); iii, 203–4 (no. 1110).

lamentations of contemporary situations.¹⁹⁸ Some of the anecdotes are about “insane” people (*mamrūrūn*),¹⁹⁹ some are philological, and some contain witty replies.²⁰⁰

Other materials are more directly connected to the knowledge of the scholars and civilians. On a more scholarly level, one finds some religious, theological, or legal discussions.²⁰¹ There is also historical/genealogical knowledge.²⁰² However, there are scholarly contributions of a more literary nature, such as a historical survey of the development of poetry until contemporary genres (such as *zajal*).²⁰³ There is also knowledge in “geography” or “natural history” that focuses mostly on the astonishing (*‘ajīb*), extraordinary, wondrous, exotic, folkloristic, or fantastic and magical descriptions of foreign lands, including flora and fauna, the customs of their inhabitants, and their peculiarities (thus, it overlaps to some degree with wondrous stories in general).²⁰⁴ There are some references to talismanic objects²⁰⁵ and knowledge in magic spells and astral magic or magical practices in general.²⁰⁶ We also have prayers and supplications (*ad‘iya*, sing. *du‘ā*)²⁰⁷ or verses that, if cited, protect from evil.²⁰⁸ Some materials involve knowledge of occult matters, such as omen interpretation or divinations and predictions of the future.²⁰⁹ There is also knowledge of the interpretation of dreams (*‘ilm ‘ibārat/ta‘bīr al-ru’yā*), sometimes related to knowledge in gematria and/or prediction of the future.²¹⁰ More generally,

198 Ibid. i, 247–8 (no. 159).

199 Ibid. iii, 357–8 (no. 1299), 440 (no. 1379).

200 Ibid. iii, 155 (no. 1041).

201 Ibid. i, 207 (no. 127). At times the theological knowledge of the scholar is transmitted by him to al-Maqrīzī in a dream after his death, see *ibid.* iii, 63 (no. 940).

202 Ibid. iii, 148–9 (no. 1033).

203 Ibid. i, 151–2 (no. 88).

204 Ibid. ii, 336–7 (no. 655), 406–10 (no. 720); iii, 59 (no. 934), 74 (no. 952), 135 (no. 1024), 346 (no. 1281). As noted by Syrinx von Hees, reports on *‘ajā‘ib* in geographical texts or in encyclopedias of natural history (some of these texts conceived as belonging to a so-called genre of “*‘ajā‘ib* literature”), relate most of the times to extraordinary, outstanding, and astonishing phenomena or information in the realm of reality and not necessarily to the fantastic and supernatural (“wondrous”); see Hees, *Astonishing* 104–5. In *Durar al-‘uqūd*, however, it would seem that while definitely not all reports may be considered fantastic, there is a penchant for the fantastic and supernatural.

205 Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* iii, 63 (no. 940).

206 Ibid. iii, 134 (no. 1022), 148–9 (no. 1033); and see also *ibid.* iii, 438 (no. 1378).

207 Ibid. i, 207 (no. 127); iii, 135 (no. 1024), 136–7 (no. 1025), 147 (no. 1030), 159 (no. 1047); and see also *ibid.* iii, 438 (no. 1378).

208 Ibid. iii, 358 (no. 1299).

209 Ibid. ii, 358 (no. 689); iii, 74 (no. 952), 196–7 (no. 1107).

210 Ibid. ii, 409–10 (no. 720); iii, 70 (no. 947), 132 (no. 1021).

knowledge concerning gematria or numerology is sometimes related to predictions of the future or strange coincidences (*gharīb al-ittifāq*).²¹¹ Much related knowledge about eschatology is connected to a contemporary setting.²¹² There is also knowledge concerning medicine (*tibb*) and prescriptions (medical and magic advice).²¹³ We also find popular wisdom in the form of wise sayings,²¹⁴ maxims,²¹⁵ witticisms,²¹⁶ witty replies,²¹⁷ or advice (sometimes in the form of a testament, *waṣīyya*).²¹⁸

A recurring theme is practical or useful knowledge (*fawā'id*, sing. *fā'ida*) transmitted to al-Maqrīzī by the scholars and civilians, some based on their experiences or the experiences of their community (*jurriba/min al-mujarrab/min al-mujarrab 'indanā/tajārib*) and transmitted from generation to generation. Clearly, some of the practical knowledge reflects occult practices, popular beliefs, or superstitions.²¹⁹

In order to exemplify how varied and unique are the materials incorporated in the biographical entries of civilians in *Durar al-'uqūd*, and how these entries are structured, I will survey in detail the materials in three biographical entries. The first is the biographical entry of the religious scholar Abū Bakr b. 'Alī b. Sālīm b. Aḥmad al-Kinānī al-'Āmirī (d. 815/1412).²²⁰ After a short life résumé (eight lines), al-Maqrīzī surveys his knowledge product (three and a half pages). Al-Maqrīzī starts with a story (or historical anecdote) that al-'Āmirī told him (*akhbaranā*) about his captivity during the occupation of Damascus by Timur. The man who captured al-'Āmirī was surprised the people of Damascus did not know Timur's army was coming. According to the captor, there are several bad omens for troubles (*dalīl al-fitan*) that could have helped the people of Damas-

211 Ibid. i, 81 (no. 26); iii, 132 (no. 1021).

212 Ibid. i, 150–1 (no. 87).

213 Ibid. ii, 468–9 (no. 788: “*adwīya yuta'ajjabu minhā*”—strange/extraordinary prescriptions); iii, 15–6 (no. 899; in this case in a biographical entry of a Jewish doctor), 56 (no. 929), 136–7 (no. 1025), 152 (no. 1038), 205 (no. 1110); for prescriptions given by a non-*mamlūk* amir to al-Maqrīzī that involve magical use of parts of the body and excrements of animals, see *ibid.* ii, 8 (no. 392). On magic and medical advice, see de Somogyi, *Magic* 265–6.

214 Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* i, 406 (no. 330); iii, 84 (no. 963); and see also iii, 439 (no. 1378).

215 Ibid. iii, 377–8 (no. 1327).

216 Ibid. i, 341 (no. 247).

217 Ibid. i, 166 (no. 96); iii, 56 (no. 929).

218 Ibid. i, 132 (no. 57), 192 (no. 121).

219 Ibid. i, 192 (no. 121), 313 (no. 222), 406 (no. 330); ii, 404–9 (no. 720), 463 (no. 782); iii, 134 (no. 1022), 197 (no. 1107), 205 (no. 1110); for a popular belief of a non-*mamlūk* amir, see *ibid.* ii, 8 (no. 392), 336 (no. 655). In the introduction of *Durar al-'uqūd* al-Maqrīzī mentions that he wanted to collect useful knowledge (*fawā'id 'ilm*), see *ibid.* i, 62.

220 Ibid. i, 154–8 (no. 90).

cus in predicting the attack. Among the signs given is the crowing of roosters at the beginning of the night. At this point, al-Maqrīzī interferes in the report and says that in 791/1389, someone who was with him at the beginning of the night told him that the roosters were crowing, and it is known from experience (*jurriba*) that if the roosters crow at the beginning of the night, it is a sign for troubles. Shortly afterwards, al-Ẓāhir Barqūq was deposed. Since then, al-Maqrīzī started following this sign, and every time the roosters crowed at the beginning of the night, shortly afterwards the troubles came. Al-Maqrīzī adds that a trustworthy person from the countryside told him that old women in the countryside (clearly a popular belief) expect the dismissal of the inspector if they hear the roosters' crow at the beginning of the night.²²¹ Such digressions and interferences by al-Maqrīzī give some of the biographical entries in *Durar al-ʿuqūd* the structure of discussions in a social gathering (*majlis*). Then al-Maqrīzī moves on to a verse of poetry that al-ʿĀmirī recited to him (*anshadani*), which is, in fact, a mnemonic device that helps to calculate the day in which every month of the *hijrī* year starts according to the gematrical value (*ḥisāb al-jummal*) of the first letter in each word of the verse. Al-Maqrīzī labels it as very important, useful knowledge (*min ajall al-fawāʿid*).²²² Then al-Maqrīzī mentions a strange thing that he experienced with al-ʿĀmirī (*min gharīb mā shāhadtuhu*), which is actually some sort of an, apparently, popular magical practice.²²³ People were sitting around al-ʿĀmirī with a finger below a man that was lying on the ground. After saying several magic words, they could lift him above their heads as if he had no weight. Everyone felt astonishment (*ʿajab*). Al-ʿĀmirī added that the condition for success is that no one would laugh. Indeed, when they tried again, someone laughed, and the man fell on the floor.²²⁴ The reports about the knowledge of al-ʿĀmirī started with roosters and elegantly ended with chickens. Al-ʿĀmirī told al-Maqrīzī (*akhbarani*) of a way to make an extraordinary yellow powder (*taṣfira ʿajība*) based on experience (*jarraba*). You take seven chickens and feed them bran (*nukhāl*) mixed with the blood of a goat for two weeks. You close the yolks of the eggs that they lay in a bottle of glass. The yolks will grow worms. Then you feed the worms with the splendid mixture of bran and blood of a goat until one worm eats the rest and becomes huge. Then you put the worm in the sun to die and dry, preferably in the constellation of Cancer. Then it is possible to make a yellow powder out of the worm.²²⁵

221 Ibid. i, 155 (lines 3–19).

222 Ibid. i, 155 (line 20)–156 (line 11).

223 And see footnote 300 below.

224 Ibid. i, 156 (line 12)–157 (line 16).

225 Ibid. i, 157 (line 17)–158 (line 6).

Two relatively long biographical entries in *Durar al-'uqūd* that contain much-varied *adab* product are the entries of al-Maqrīzī's mother Asmā' and the maternal uncle of his mother, Ismā'īl b. Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb (d. 803/1400), who was a religious scholar.²²⁶ In the biographical entry of his mother's uncle, after a very short life résumé, al-Maqrīzī mentions that he had a lot of useful knowledge (*'indahū fawā'id kathīra*).²²⁷ First comes a piece of advice that he gave al-Maqrīzī, which he received as a testament (*waṣīyya*) from his experienced father (*qāla lī 'an abīhi*) and followed rigorously: "My little boy (*yā bunayya*), you will not find someone that will give you better advice than me (*anṣah*), and you will not find someone more experienced in life than me (*jar-raba al-dahr*). I advise you (*aūṣika*): never get married!"²²⁸ Then comes a story that he told al-Maqrīzī (*akhbaranī*) about a verse of poetry he received in a dream, in which he found a bad omen (*taṭayyartu*), and indeed, a woman he loved died. This report is followed by another verse of poetry that he received in a dream.²²⁹ Then comes a report (*akhbaranī*) about a prescription for a cyst in his hand, which he received in a dream (*manām*), and it unsurprisingly worked quickly.²³⁰ Then al-Maqrīzī returns to wisdom sayings and edifying advice (*min kalāmihī allādhī kāna yu'addibunā bi-hī*), for example: "Be like a crow that pecks and flies."²³¹ Then come two verses of poetry that he transmitted to al-Maqrīzī (*anshadanī*),²³² followed by another wise saying and a piece of advice told to al-Maqrīzī (*qāla lī ... yā ibn ukhtī*) upon his buying a slave girl (in a free translation keeping a rhyme): "A slave girl is a high dower, an empty shower, and a son with no uncle from the side of the mother" (in Arabic it sounds better: *al-jāriya mahr ghālīn wa-farsh khālīn wa-ibn bi-lā khālīn*).²³³ Then comes a story with a lesson (*'ibra*)²³⁴ and two astonishing stories or anecdotes that he told to al-Maqrīzī (*akhbaranī*).²³⁵ Then comes a story about how his father became

226 In the biographical entry of al-Maqrīzī's father we find the latter's report on a dream he had, see *ibid.* ii, 516–7 (no. 827). In the biographical entry of al-Maqrīzī's maternal grandfather we find many verses of his poetry, see *ibid.* iii, 255–60 (no. 1157). In the biographical entry of Sūl al-Maqrīzī's slave girl we find a few of her poetry verses that allude to her knowledge in geomancy; see *ibid.* ii, 114–5 (no. 507).

227 *Ibid.* i, 415 (no. 341, line 9).

228 *Ibid.* i, 415 (line 10–3).

229 *Ibid.* i, 415 (line 14–20).

230 *Ibid.* i, 415 (line 21)–416 (line 2).

231 *Ibid.* i, 416 (lines 3–12).

232 *Ibid.* i, 416 (lines 13–6).

233 *Ibid.* i, 416 (lines 17–9).

234 *Ibid.* i, 416 (line 20)–417 (line 6).

235 *Ibid.* i, 417 (lines 7–18).

rich trading in musk.²³⁶ And finally, a story that the uncle told al-Maqrīzī (*akhbaranī*) about a thief that was caught and punished.²³⁷

In the biographical entry of his mother,²³⁸ after a short life résumé, al-Maqrīzī reports on her beliefs, which probably reflect popular beliefs (she used to visit the grave of her father with a veil because, as she used to say, the spirits of the dead are present in the vicinity of the graves [*taqūlu al-arwāḥ bi-izā' al-qubūr*]).²³⁹ Then we are told that she suffered from a migraine (*ṣudā'*) but received in a dream a prescription (given in detail) that solved the problem. Al-Maqrīzī adds that he prescribed it many times, and it always worked.²⁴⁰ Then come four verses of poetry she recited to al-Maqrīzī on the authority of her father (*anshadatnī*).²⁴¹ Then come some of her wisdom sayings or aphorisms (after her son died, as a reply for consolation, she said: "Forbearance would have been wonderful if it had not consumed life" [*qālat mā aḥsan al-ṣabr lawlā yufnī l-umr*]).²⁴² Then comes a report about a story she told al-Maqrīzī (*akhbaratnī*) that she had heard from one of her female friends. The friend saw a woman on the shore of the Nile in Būlāq crying and praying (*du'ā'*): "He who brought you back to me before will bring you back to me again." When asked about this supplication, the women pointed to a ship on the Nile and said that her son was on it and that she had an astonishing story (*khobar 'ajīb*) about it. The woman related that when she was pregnant with this son, she traveled by sea to India together with his father. The ship sank and everyone drowned except for her. She gave birth to her son on a piece of wood in the middle of the sea. The two reached an island and eventually were saved by a ship and taken to India. There she found out that the locals use monkeys as servants, so she bought a monkey. One day, as they were near the sea, the monkey saw some men diving and taking pearls out of the sea. Without anyone noticing, the monkey dove and took out several large pearls, which the woman hid. She came back to Cairo and gave her son the pearls. He sold the pearls and bought merchandise and became a rich merchant traveling by sea.²⁴³ Among other things, this wondrous story contains adventures, sea travel that brings trouble but eventu-

236 Ibid. i, 417 (lines 19)–418 (line 3).

237 Ibid. i, 418 (lines 4–22).

238 On this biographical entry and materials in it, see Rabbat, Nisā'. I am presenting here also the material that appears in Rabbat's article.

239 Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* i, 394 (no. 319, lines 20–1).

240 Ibid. i, 395 (lines 3–8). Rabbat mentions that she transmitted to al-Maqrīzī popular medical prescriptions (*waṣafāt ṭibbiyya sha'biyya*); see Rabbat, Nisā'.

241 Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* i, 395 (lines 9–14).

242 Ibid. i, 395 (lines 15–7).

243 Ibid. i, 395 (line 18)–396 (line 11).

ally fortune (*al-faraj baʿda al-shidda*), a supplication, and an exotic or fantastic description of a faraway land. After this story, al-Maqrīzī reports another story that his mother had told him (*akhbaratnī*). The second story is about a mystery. A young woman died shortly after getting married, and her mother accused the husband of killing her while trying to take her virginity away. The chief of police tortured the husband, who, being unable to suffer the pains, admitted that he killed the virgin. The chief of police decreed that he would be executed in front of the coffin of the virgin. Just before he was executed, a snake crawled out of the coffin, and it became clear that she was killed by the snake.²⁴⁴ After the stories, al-Maqrīzī mentions that she transmitted to him also some of her knowledge based on experience (*akhbaratnī anna min al-mujarrab*), most of which clearly reflected popular beliefs and superstitions (if you put a cloth on a dead person it soon gets torn; if a circumcision and a wedding are held together, the bride and the groom will soon divorce—because circumcision involves separation).²⁴⁵ At the end of the entry, al-Maqrīzī mentions three verses of poetry that she had recited to him (*anshadatnī*).²⁴⁶

We cannot explore in detail in the scope of this article all the potential influences on the trend of “literarization” that are manifested in biographical entries of scholars (or civilians) in al-Maqrīzī’s *Durar al-ʿuqūd*. This issue deserves a special study. Still, it seems that the trend of “literarization” in *Durar al-ʿuqūd* is greatly connected to what has been called the “*ṣūfīzation* of Muslim society” or the “popularization of Sufism in Ayyubid and Mamluk Egypt.”²⁴⁷ The Mamluk period experienced an increase in the number of people who would identify themselves in some way as “*ṣūfīs*,” and Sufism became popular with the common people and the *ʿulamāʾ*. Sufi masters, typically from a humble background, claimed authority based on the miracles they performed and their access to religious knowledge via dreams or visions which sometimes predicted the future.²⁴⁸ Sufi masters were also considered authorities in dream interpretation.²⁴⁹ More generally, there is evidence that “Sufism became a channel for embracing magic and the occult,”²⁵⁰ and starting from the mid-8th/14th cen-

244 Ibid. i, 396 (lines 12–20).

245 Ibid. i, 396 (lines 21–4). Rabbat refers to popular beliefs (*ʿitqādāt sāʿida*) that she transmitted to al-Maqrīzī, see Rabbat, *Nisāʾ*.

246 Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* i, 396 (line 25)–397 (line 3).

247 See footnote 169 above.

248 Berkey, *Popular* 142–3; and see Mazor, *Topos* 104–5; Romanov, *Dreaming* 31; Talmon-Heller, *ʿIlm* 40–1. On Sufi shaykhs of common origin that start appearing in increasing numbers in Mamluk historical works in the 9th/15th century, see Behrens-Abouseif, *Craftsmen*.

249 Frenkel, *Dream* 216; Niyazioğlu, *Dream*.

250 Berkey, *Popular* 143. The science of letters was considered as “the ‘science of the saints,’

ture, the occult sciences (lettrism, astrology, and geomancy) were sanctified through association with Sufism.²⁵¹ “Sufi doctrines increasingly informed the production and use of amulets.”²⁵² Also, “the tradition of popular preaching and storytelling became [...] increasingly intertwined with Sufism,” and Sufi popular preachers of the Mamluk period composed collections of sermons (*mawāʿiẓ*) and edifying pious tales (*raqāʿiq*).²⁵³ Sufis also became involved in the composition of invocations, supplications, and prayers (*adʿiya*),²⁵⁴ and Sufi saints were said to have received from the Prophet Muḥammad, through a mystic vision, petitionary prayers that were assembled in “supererogatory petitionary prayer compositions” (*duʿāʾ*, *ḥizb*, *wird*).²⁵⁵ Some of these compositions written during the Mamluk period dedicated a chapter for a supererogatory petitionary prayer of the sea (*ḥizb al-baḥr*), including “miraculous stories of the power of this prayer, which include passengers on the Nile and the Indian Ocean being saved from storms, and travelers being saved from bandits.” In addition, the sea prayer was said to “divert the stings of scorpions.”²⁵⁶ It would also seem that edifying wisdom sayings are typical of Sufis and very common in Sufi literature, and more specifically, Sufi biographical literature.²⁵⁷ Therefore, the “*ṣūfī*zation of Mamluk society” may account for much of the *adab* product (knowledge) in *Durar al-ʿuqūd*: stories on miracles performed by saints, edifying stories, stories on sea travel and fear of water, exhortations,

and thus a secret teaching at the heart of Sufism,” see Gardiner, *Forbidden* 110; and see also 114–5.

251 Burak, Section 342.

252 Ibid; and see Shoshan, *Social* 53.

253 Berkey, *Popular* 18, 20.

254 Burak, Section 342–3.

255 McGregor, *Notes* 201, 204.

256 Ibid. 208.

257 Such sayings normally open with *min kalām/min kalāmihi*, and some appear in the form of a testament, see just for example (such sayings are abundant) Ibn al-Mulaqqin, *Ṭabaqāt* 7, 13–4, 17, 22–3, 25, 27, 29, 32, 37, 43, 46, 49, 51, 54, 57, 70–1. Wisdom sayings or advices (some in the form of a testament) are also typical of doctors and *udabāʾ*, thus they may be found in Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿa’s (d. 668/1269–70) biographical dictionary dedicated to doctors (*ʿUyūn al-anbāʾ fi ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbāʾ*) and Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī’s (d. 626/1229) biographical dictionary dedicated to *udabāʾ* (*Muʿjam al-udabāʾ*); see, for example, Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿa, *ʿUyūn* 50–1, 288, 298, 359, 390, 445, 516, 564, 691, 693, 742; Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam* i, 185, 271; v, 2107; vi, 2802, 2809. Wise sayings (*ḥikam*), or edifying sayings (*mawāʿiẓ*), are also typical of (Mamluk) *manāqib* literature of the great imams, such as al-Shāfiʿī (d. 204/820); see, for example, Ibn Kathīr, *Manāqib* 231–4, 238–40; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Manāqib* 82–6. They are not common at all in general biographical dictionaries of religious scholars, and when they do appear there it is normally in entries of persons who were *ṣūfīs* or doctors (and philosophers).

dreams and their interpretation, divinations, occult matters and magic, magic spells and talismans, prayers and supplications,²⁵⁸ medical prescriptions,²⁵⁹ and wise sayings or advice.²⁶⁰ Indeed, some of these materials appear in biographical entries of Sufis in *Durar al-'uqūd* as part of their knowledge²⁶¹ (even the maternal uncle of al-Maqrīzī's mother is said to have had connections to Sufism).²⁶² The “*ṣūfīzation* of Mamluk society,” however, meant that scholars who were not defined as Sufis were also looking for such materials and circulating them.²⁶³ Al-Maqrīzī and his informants (or rather biographees) could have been inspired by Sufi literature, perhaps most easily by Sufi texts that had the quality of a literary anthology and were meant to edify and entertain;²⁶⁴ however, they were more likely using contemporary popular materials related to Sufis that were circulating in Cairo (some of which resemble in their themes and motifs the materials in Sufi texts, and some of which must have found their way into such texts).

At least some of the themes and motifs in stories transmitted by the scholars and civilians in *Durar al-'uqūd* seem to resemble materials in popular compilations of tales and stories, among them materials compiled in *Alf layla wa-layla*.²⁶⁵ Nasser Rabbat noted that the story of al-Maqrīzī's mother on a mother waiting for her son to return from sea travel²⁶⁶ has the “flavor” of the stories of *Alf layla wa-layla* and was perhaps a popular tale (*wāḥida min tilka*

258 Supplications are also typical of medical literature as part of the treatment. *ʿUyūn al-anbāʾ fi ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbāʾ* mentions several supplications recommended by doctors, see Ibn Abī Uṣaybīʿa, *ʿUyūn* 467, 606, 644, 693.

259 Prescriptions are of course typical of medical literature. Knowledge in medicine and medical advice are also ascribed in (Mamluk) *manāqib* literature to Imam al-Shāfiʿī, see for example Ibn Kathīr, *Manāqib* 236–8.

260 See footnote 257 above.

261 See for example al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* i, 206–7, 404–6; ii, 351–2, 509–10; iii, 70, 132–4, 158–9, 200–5, 355–6, 436–9.

262 *Ibid.* i, 415.

263 See for example *ibid.* ii, 39–41; iii, 77–8, 101, 196–9.

264 On such texts, see Bauer, *Literarische* 109–10. A good example for such a text (though one that postdates al-Maqrīzī) is *Nuzhat al-majālis wa-muntakhab al-naḥās*, composed in Mecca in 884/1479 by the Syrian Sufi ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAbd al-Salām al-Ṣaffūrī. In the introduction of the text, al-Ṣaffūrī writes that he assembled in the book, among other things, pious tales (*akhbār ahl al-ṣalāh/hikāyāt al-ṣāliḥīn*), stories (*qiṣaṣ*), exhortations (*zawājir/mawāʾiẓ*), witticisms (*laṭāʾif*), useful knowledge (*ḥawāʾid*), and medical prescriptions (*manāfiʿ ṭibbiyya*), see al-Ṣaffūrī, *Nuzhat* i, 3.

265 This, however, should be explored in detail. What is still missing is a comprehensive survey of themes and motives of “literarized” materials in Mamluk historiography, *Durar al-'uqūd* included, in comparison to Mamluk works of *adab* or Mamluk literature in general.

266 See footnote 243 above.

al-marwiyyāt al-shaʿbiyya) that did not find its way into the compilation.²⁶⁷ Rabbat, however, did not elaborate on the themes or motifs in the story that had the “flavor” of *Alf layla wa-layla*. The *Arabian nights encyclopedia* offers a comprehensive survey of themes and motifs in *Alf layla wa-layla* that allows an initial comparison with themes and motifs in some of the stories in *Durar al-ʿuqūd*. Some of the most relevant themes are merchants, money, sea travel, and wondrous lands. It has been noted that most of the stories in *Alf layla wa-layla* involve merchants or sons of merchants, and “are imbued with a distinct ‘moral code’ that reflects the attitude of the urban merchant class.”²⁶⁸ A “clear indication of the main interest of the merchant class is the fact that intrigues are often related to questions of money (loans, deposits, theft, loss of money, profits, inheritance).”²⁶⁹ Money and its loss or gain (or both—many times whoever becomes impoverished will receive money) is a recurrent theme. Money also appears in the form of treasures. Beggary, impoverishment, debt, and theft or fraud, are recurrent themes.²⁷⁰ A number of stories “begin with the son of a merchant squandering his inheritance ... becoming impoverished” but then a slave girl brings him salvation.²⁷¹ The “spirit of enterprise” is reflected in the best manner in stories on overseas long-distance trade.²⁷² In many stories, journeys and, more specifically, sea voyages, serve to initiate the hero (normally a traveling merchant) into the secrets of the world, and in some stories, unknown lands and magic domains are explored.²⁷³ In many cases “seas constitute the setting of specific episodes that change the direction of the narrative,” and shipwreck is a recurring motif. Seas are gates to strange and miraculous worlds and “are also part of the geographical lore that is used by the narrators to enhance the adventurous character of the tales.”²⁷⁴ Monkeys are frequently mentioned as magical creatures and as sexual partners of women.²⁷⁵

Durar al-ʿuqūd contains several biographies of merchants or stories involving merchants.²⁷⁶ Some of these stories involve theft,²⁷⁷ and in some,

267 Rabbat, Nisāʾ.

268 Marzolph, Van Leeuwen, and Wassouf, *Arabian* ii, 643.

269 Ibid.

270 Ibid. 648–9.

271 Ibid. 644, 649.

272 Ibid. 643–4.

273 Ibid. 645, 650.

274 Ibid. 697.

275 Ibid. 649.

276 Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* i, 132, 188–90, 396; ii, 440–1; iii, 95, 153.

277 Ibid. i, 188–90; ii, 440–1.

the merchant is the thief who gets caught.²⁷⁸ Some stories about theft do not involve merchants; one such story was transmitted to al-Maqrīzī by the uncle of his mother.²⁷⁹ Interestingly, according to al-Maqrīzī, the uncle of his mother lost his money but then gained a fortune, and the uncle told al-Maqrīzī how his father gained a fortune trading in musk.²⁸⁰ *Durar al-'uqūd* also contains a story of a man who lost his money (inheritance?) but then was saved by his slave girl.²⁸¹ Other stories involve sea travel and merchants from India that were robbed on the ship, but then, their luck turned again.²⁸² Some involve people whose ship drowned but then reached the shore and found a treasure.²⁸³ Some involve adventures and miraculous things or creatures.²⁸⁴ Among the magical creatures appear monkeys who behave like human beings and even have sex with women.²⁸⁵ And finally, the abovementioned story of al-Maqrīzī's mother referred to by Rabbat contains sea travel to India, which serves to initiate the hero into unknown and miraculous worlds, a shipwreck, a fantastic description of a faraway land involving monkeys that behave like men, and finally, the finding of a sort of treasure and the making of a fortune by trade (it is inferred that it happened after impoverishment).²⁸⁶

It should be emphasized, however, that the popular stories of *Alf layla wa-layla* are also strongly connected to Sufis (or Sufi-like materials). Many stories involve Sufis, popular beliefs, magic and sorcery, occult matters, demons (*jānn*, sing. *jinn*), amulets, and talismans, all connected to a Sufi milieu or beggars (who were associated with Sufis). The beggars are sometimes involved in theft and eat *hashīsh*.²⁸⁷ Interestingly, some stories in *Durar al-'uqūd* involve merchants and Sufis/beggars. In one of these stories (told by a Sufi) a beggar that saved money to release his son from prison complained that a merchant stole his money. Eventually, however, it turned out that a *hashīsh* eater was the thief.²⁸⁸ In another story, a thief who was a merchant was caught by a Sufi shaykh with the help of demons (*jānn*).²⁸⁹ Therefore, it is not possible or

278 Ibid. i, 188–90.

279 See *ibid.* i, 418; and see footnote 237 above.

280 See *ibid.* i, 415, 417–8; and see footnote 236 above.

281 Ibid. i, 218–9.

282 Ibid. iii, 95–6. And see at footnote 179 above.

283 Ibid. iii, 145–6.

284 Ibid. ii, 207–8. And see footnote 204 above.

285 Ibid. iii, 345–6.

286 See at footnote 243 above.

287 Shoshan, *Social* 51–4.

288 Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* ii, 440–1.

289 Ibid. i, 188–90.

necessary to differentiate in a clear-cut manner between “*ṣūfī* materials” and “*Alf layla wa-layla* materials.”²⁹⁰ Al-Maqrīzī and his informants were drawing on general popular materials circulating in Cairo.

Durar al-‘uqūd also has some points of resemblance with al-Nuwayrī al-Iskandarānī’s (d. after 775/1373) *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, a work pertaining to history that is, however, very remote from traditional Mamluk historiography and has sometimes been considered a work of *adab* containing popular elements. There is some resemblance in the kind of materials presented (marvels, legends, tales, prophesying dreams, and typology and magic of figures) and the tendency toward digressions.²⁹¹

The collection of such a varied *adab* product in biographical entries in *Durar al-‘uqūd*, however, perhaps most resembles *adab* anthologies.²⁹² More specifically, in subject matter, *Durar al-‘uqūd* resembles popular *adab* anthologies written by, and for, members of “the new rising class of semi-instructed bourgeoisie.”²⁹³ Indeed, some of the *adab* materials in *Durar al-‘uqūd* are the product of members of “intermediate classes.”²⁹⁴ There is some resemblance

290 In fact, even stories on persons squandering their inheritance but then being saved by a slave girl appear in texts with a Sufi bent; see, for example, Ibn ‘Uthmān, *Murshid* 263–4. The same is true of stories on adventurous or miraculous sea travels; see, for example, *ibid.* 341–2, 405–6, 434, 474 (the story involves the drowning of a ship that leads the hero to a miraculous island with a monkey that behaves like a human being and gives the hero a magic spell that protects him); and see also al-Yāfi‘ī, *Mir‘āt* iii, 318–9. As mentioned, *ṣūfī* chapters on the petitionary prayer of the sea (*ḥizb al-baḥr*) included miraculous stories on passengers on the Nile and the Indian Ocean being saved from storms; see footnote 256 above. Sufis were asked for help in cases of the drowning of a ship; see, for example, Ibn Taghribirdī, *Manhal* iii, 264.

291 See footnote 14 above (1).

292 On the anthological quality of biographical dictionaries, see Bauer, *Literarische* 108 (“Besonders stark ist das anthologistische und literarische Element in den Biographiensammlungen”).

293 Herzog, *Composition* 107; and see Bauer, *Anthologies* (“literate and semi-literate middle class”; “written for a middle-class public”); *Literarische* 98 (“Anthologien für den ‘kleinen Mann’”); and see Hirschler, *Written* 150–1 (“[s]cholars had little use for some of these compilations and their readers and owners were rather traders and craftsmen who could acquire with them basic knowledge, obtain convenient advice and acquaint themselves with learned topics of conversation”); and see 187 (“their writers did not compose them for a learned readership, which would not have had much use for such eclectic works that hardly discussed any topic in detail”).

294 We find the poetry of a *mamlūk*’s descendant who was a tailor (‘*ānā ṣinā‘at al-khiyāta*’); see al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* i, 63 (no. 1). We find also a supplication, a historical anecdote, and a medical prescription of another tailor; see *ibid.* iii, 136 (no. 1025). There is also a story about a dream by the famous al-Damīrī who started as a tailor; see *ibid.* iii, 436 (no. 1437). There is advice from a *mamlūk*’s descendant who was a cloth merchant (*tājir/simsār* *fi*

in the topics covered in the popular *adab* anthologies and *Durar al-'uqūd* (but normally not in content or form).²⁹⁵ The popular anthologies “assembled a broad mixture of what the author thought was of interest to his readership ... [a] broad mixture of poetry and prose, of the useful and the entertaining, the pious and the playful as well as the scholarly and the trivial was intertwined.”²⁹⁶ It is possible to find in these anthologies “famous poems from pre-Islamic *qaṣīdas* to contemporary *zajal* poems, medical and magic advice, prayers ... enigmas and arithmetical tests, and astonishing facts from all realms of life and nature.”²⁹⁷

Specifically, the anthology of Yūnus al-Mālikī (fl. late 8th/14th century) contains material ranging from “legal and theological problems, *ḥadīths*, prayers, philology, historical anecdotes, geography, riddles, prescriptions, aphrodisiacs to talismans,”²⁹⁸ and also wise sayings (*ḥikam*) and supplications (*ad'īya*).²⁹⁹ Thomas Herzog noted that the central idea behind every subject that the book touches on is that “the information should be *useful* in a practical sense, and many of the subjects are in fact introduced by the word '*fā'ida*.’”³⁰⁰ The usefulness of the information, as mentioned, is also a recurring theme in *Durar al-'uqūd*.³⁰¹ Herzog suggested that Yūnus al-Mālikī's work was in fact “an open ongoing collection of various materials,” resembling in subject matter the late medieval European *housebooks*—works containing practical knowledge about a variety of fields collected in households of upstarts through several

l-bazz); see *ibid.* i, 132 (no. 57). An anecdote about the gematria of an artisan (*yutqīnu 'amal 'iddat ṣanā'ī' bi-yadihi*), see *ibid.* i, 81 (no. 26). A supplication, lamentation, and a story about a saint of a washer of cloths (*qaṣṣār*), who became a *ṣūfī* but did not leave his occupation and continued to wear the outfit of the commoners (*wa-lam yatrūk ṣinā'at qīṣarat al-thiyāb bi-yadihi wa-lā ḡhayyara zīyy al-'amma*), see *ibid.* i, 206 (no. 127). We have strange and wondrous stories that took place in the bathhouse told by a keeper of a bathhouse (*ḥāris ḡammām*) and a worker in the bathhouse; see *ibid.* ii, 440 (no. 744); iii, 380 (no. 1329). We have interpretations of dreams by a practitioner of the craft of weight measurement (*ṣinā'at al-qabbān*); see *ibid.* iii, 132 (no. 1021). On craftsmen and upstarts appearing in increasing numbers in Mamluk historical works in the 9th/15th century, see Behrens-Abouseif, *Craftsmen*.

295 For an example of a case with similar content, see footnote 300 below.

296 Hirschler, *Written* 151, 187.

297 Bauer, *Anthologies*; and see also, *Literarische* 102–3.

298 Hirschler, *Written* 188; and see Bauer, *Literarische* 102–3.

299 Herzog, *Composition* 114.

300 *Ibid.* 115. Interestingly, a popular magical practice labeled as *fā'ida* that appears in the anthology of Yūnus al-Mālikī appears also in a biographical entry of a scholar in *Durar al-'uqūd* as part of his knowledge that was transmitted to al-Maqrīzī; see Yūnus al-Mālikī, *al-Kanz* 350; and see at footnotes 223 and 295 above.

301 See footnote 219 above.

generations—“that has expanded over time to such an extent that it eventually became a petit-bourgeois encyclopedic *adab*-compendium.”³⁰² *Durar al-‘uqūd* is, of course, no such thing. Notwithstanding this, as mentioned, two relatively long entries in *Durar al-‘uqūd* that resemble Yūnus al-Mālikī’s work a lot in terms of subject matter are entries of al-Maqrīzī’s close family members. It perhaps gives us a glimpse of how useful, practical knowledge was also collected through generations in households of highly educated scholars as part of the familial heritage. In *Durar al-‘uqūd*, al-Maqrīzī’s familial heritage is incorporated into the collective cultural heritage of the community.

While al-Maqrīzī drew on general popularizing trends in Mamluk literature (and society), the incorporation of such varied *adab*-like, often popular, elements in the framework of biographical entries or obituaries in a traditional work of history has no real precedent. On rare occasions, al-Yūnīnī and al-Jazarī incorporated in obituaries of scholars some entertaining, edifying, or wondrous stories told by the scholars, and even more rarely riddles or useful general knowledge transmitted by them; however, such elements are marginal in their chronicles.³⁰³ Possibly, al-Maqrīzī could have been inspired by chronicles written by Egyptian historians related to the military institution that incorporated in their chronicles some popular motifs and occult matters, and many wondrous stories.³⁰⁴ However, such elements are normally incorporated in these chronicles in the narrative line and are not presented as a contribution of specific persons to a general heritage. In any case, the dominant elements in these chronicles are anecdotes or story-like reports with dialogues incorporated in the account of events, which have no connection to occult matters or popular motifs. Therefore, al-Maqrīzī’s *Durar al-‘uqūd* is unique.³⁰⁵ While chronicles

302 Herzog, Composition 118, 120.

303 See above, at footnotes 12–3. Such elements are also not common in biographical entries of religious scholars in biographical dictionaries, see at footnote 175 above.

304 See above, at footnote 1. On anecdotes concerning the prediction of the future in Mamluk chronicles, see Mazor, *Topos* (esp. 104). The prediction is most of the times made by *ṣūfī* shaykhs or saints as part of the miracles (*karāmāt*) performed by them, or by experts in astrology or geomancy. Many times, the future is predicted by a dream; see *ibid.* 104–8.

305 As far as I know, the only Mamluk traditional biographical dictionary containing similar materials postdates *Durar al-‘uqūd*. It is al-Biqā’ī’s *Unwān al-zamān bi-tarājim al-shuyūkh wa-l-aqrān*. At this point of the article, I can only recommend to read and enjoy. It may be mentioned, however, that al-Biqā’ī appended to his chronicle medical prescriptions that he labeled as useful knowledge (*fawā’id*); see al-Biqā’ī, *Tārīkh* i, 46. The fact that in the biographical entry of his wife in *Durar al-‘uqūd*, al-Maqrīzī mentions several dreams he dreamt about her, which predicted her death, makes the influence that al-Maqrīzī’s historiographical work had on al-Biqā’ī worth exploring; see footnote 162 above; and see also chapter 2 footnotes 140 and 143.

written by Egyptian historians related to the military institution and biographical dictionaries in general are full of anecdotes or story-like reports, and while the obituaries in the chronicles of the scholars al-Yūnīnī and al-Jazarī resemble an anthology of poetry, *Durar al-'uqūd* resembles a (popularized) *adab* anthology.

Far from being “literarized” against his will, al-Maqrīzī consciously and skillfully chose his own trend of “literarization” according to the genre in which he was writing.³⁰⁶ If we envisage “literarization” as “*adabization*” (i.e., incorporation of *adab* elements, including elements of *adab* “in its ‘lower’ form”), as we did in this article, *Durar al-'uqūd* is, in fact, a fine example of “literarization.” Truly, the literature of *adab* is strongly connected to anecdotal writing and high-quality poetry,³⁰⁷ but a central element in any definition of *adab* is its many-sidedness and the inclusion of a wide variety of materials.³⁰⁸ From this perspective, *Durar al-'uqūd* is probably the most complete example of “literarization” in Mamluk traditional historiography.

Appendix A: Structure and Literarization in Biographies—A Case Study: The Biography of Aqūsh al-Ashrafī (d. 736/1335)

*Al-Yūsufī, Nuzhat al-nāzir*³⁰⁹

(seven out of eight pages = anecdotes and stories)

[A] Title/name

Jamāl al-Dīn Aqūsh al-Ashrafī known as Nā'ib al-Karak (*al-ma'rūf bi-Nā'ib al-Karak*) [P322L2]

[B] Opening anecdotes [PP322–3]:

[1] Death in the prison of Alexandria (736/1335) [P322LL3–4] [2] Arrest in Alexandria and complaint to al-Nāšir Muḥammad (735/1335) [P322L15–P323L1]

306 See above at section 1 (introduction: pages 41–3).

307 Gabrieli, *Adab* 176; Hamori, *Anthologies*. On poetry and anecdotes in Mamluk *adab* anthologies/encyclopedias, see Ghersetti, *Mamluk* 81; Herzog, *Composition* 107–8. On anthologies of poetry during the Mamluk period, see, for example, Bauer, *Anthologies*.

308 Hämeen-Anttila, *Adab*. In fact, “many-sidedness differentiates *adab* from poetry ... exclusively poetical works, such as individual *dīwāns*, fall more or less outside the concept of *adab* ... [q]uoting verses belongs to *adab*, but specializing in poetry does not”; see *ibid*.

309 Al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 322–9. The page [P] and line [L] of each unit of information in the biographical entry are mentioned in square brackets at the end of each unit.

[C] Short and partial **life résumé** (career until ca. 708/1309) [P323LL2–9]

[D] Short **description**: looks, origin, and character [P324LL1–4]

[E] (Apparently) nonchronological (funny) **anecdotes, stories, and “peculiarities”** (*ashyā’ muǧjiba/hikāyāt/nukat ẓarīfa*)³¹⁰ testifying to his character, some of them in the style of *ḥukm Qarāqūsh* [PP324–9]:

[1] Worship place under *al-Jabal al-Aḥmar* [P324LL7–11] [2] An incident with the *wazīr* concerning construction works in Bāb al-Naṣr (722/1322 or after) [P324L12–P325L18] [3] Bad administration of the *māristān* (723/1323 or after) [P325L19–P326L8] [4] Anecdotes about his generosity (generosity toward a soldier he met near the mosque he had built in the Ḥusayniyya; his charity and generosity during Ramaḍān—he never sold wheat from his granaries but just gave it away) [P326L9–P327L8] [5] He was never sick [P327LL8–9] [6] He always paid the expenses of his soldiers from his own money [P327LL9–11] [7] Incident with Aqbughā ‘Abd al-Wāḥid [P327LL12–22] [8] Incident with Mūsā al-Ṣayrafi [P327L22–P328L19] [9] Inspection of the *māristān* (ca. 726/1326) [P328L20–P329L12]

*Al-Ṣafadī, al-Wāfi*³¹¹

(three and a half out of four pages = anecdotes and stories)

[A] **Title/name**

Aqūsh al-Amīr Jamāl al-Dīn al-Ashrafi Nā’ib al-Karak [P336L2]

[B] Very short and partial **life résumé** (career until ca. 715/1315) [P336LL2–5]

[C] **Anecdotes, stories, and peculiarities** (*ashyā’ gharība*) with a seemingly very loose chronological order [PP336–9]:

[1] His dress and manners in the bathhouse [P336LL6–10] [2] Anecdote about his whimsical character (generosity toward a soldier he met near the mosque he had built in the Ḥusayniyya; compared to harsh treatment of another soldier) [P336LL11–9] [3] Worship place under *al-Jabal al-Aḥmar* [P336L19–P337L5] [4] Anecdotes about his generosity (if a horse died to one of his soldiers or slaves he compensated him; he always paid for the expenses of his servants in

310 On peculiarities (*ashyā’ muǧjiba*), see *ibid.* 324 (line 6); on funny anecdotes and stories (*hikāyāt/nukat ẓarīfa*), see *ibid.* 325 (line 18), 327 (line 12).

311 *Al-Ṣafadī, Wāfi* ix, 336–9.

expeditions; his *simāt* in Ramaḍān [P337LL6–10] [5] Appointment to the position of inspector of the *māristān* (723/1323); and an anecdote about its inspection (ca. 726/1326) [P337LL10–5] [6] Appointed governor of Tripoli in 734/1334, requested to move to Jerusalem, arrested in Damascus, and transferred to Şafad (735/1335); and an anecdote about his arrest in Şafad [P337L16–P338L3] [7] Peculiarities (*ashyā' gharība*) and witticisms related to him during his days in al-Karak (690–708/1291–1309) and Damascus (711–2/1311–2) [P338LL4–10] [8] His warning to Tankiz upon his arrest in Damascus (735/1335) [P338LL11–3] [9] Death in the prison of Alexandria in 736/1335 [P338LL13–6] [10] Two anecdotes about his harsh character [P338L17–P339L2] [11] His advice to Tankiz upon the latter's appointment as governor of Damascus (712/1312) [P339LL2–16]

*Al-Maqrīzī, al-Muqaffā*³¹²

(six out of nine pages = anecdotes and stories)

[A] Title/name

Aqūsh al-Ashrafī al-Amīr Jamāl al-Dīn known as Nā'ib al-Karak (*al-ma'rūf bi-Nā'ib al-Karak*) and called (*yulaqqabu*) also al-Burnāq because of his big nose (*li-kibar anfhi*) (*Nuzha* A + D) [P248LL15–6]

[B] A long and comprehensive (six pages) life résumé ordered chronologically, incorporating according to chronology few anecdotes or stories [PP248–54]:

[1] Career until 708/1309 (*Nuzha* C + *Sulūk* ii, 193 [lines 13–4]) [P248L17–P249L7] [2] Career 708–11/1309–11 (source not identified) [P249LL7–11] [3] Appointed governor of Damascus in 711/1311 (*Sulūk* ii, 105 [lines 6–8, 12–3]) [P249LL12–4] [4] Return to Egypt in 712/1312 (source not identified) [P249L15–P250L1] [5] Arrest in 712/1312 (*Sulūk* ii, 117 [lines 11–5], 118 [lines 8–9]) [P250LL2–5] [6] Release and *iqṭā'* in 715/1315 (*Sulūk* ii, 144 [lines 16–8]) [P250LL5–7] [7] Respected according to protocol in 719/1319 (*Sulūk* ii, 193 [lines 8–16]) [P250LL8–14] [8] Leading an expedition to Sis in 721/1321 (*Sulūk* ii, 229 [lines 6–11]) [P250LL15–20] [9] Leading an expedition to Sīs in 722/1322 (*Sulūk* ii, 235 [line 15]–236 [line 2], 237 [lines 1–2, 5–6]) [P251LL1–5] [10] Appointed *nāzīr al-māristān* in 723/1323 (*Sulūk* ii, 247 [lines 15–7]) [P251LL6–8] [11] The renovation of the *māristān* (726/1326) (*Sulūk* ii, 273 [line 19]–274 [line 3]) [P251LL8–14] [12] An anecdote about the inspection of the *māristān*

312 Al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 248–57. The source for the units of information in the biographical entry is mentioned in brackets and bold font.

(ca. 726/1326) (*Wāfi* C5) [P251LL14–8] [13] Appointed *amīr al-hajj* in 727/1327 and returned to Egypt in 728/1327 (*Sulūk* ii, 290 [line 4], 291 [line 17]) [P251LL19–20] [14] A story-like report about his appointment as governor of Tripoli in 734/1334 (taken from the **historical narrative of the *Nuzha***)³¹³ [P251L21–P252L17] [15] A very long story-like report on an incident he had in Tripoli with the Franks which led to his arrest in 735/1335 (taken from the **historical narrative of the *Nuzha***)³¹⁴ [P252L17–P254L9] [16] Anecdote about his death in the prison of Alexandria in 736/1335 (*Nuzha* B1) [P254LL10–4]

[C] Short **description**: looks, origin, and character (*Nuzha* D) [P254LL15–6]

[D] Nonchronological **anecdotes, stories, and peculiarities** [PP254–7]:

[1] Two anecdotes about his harsh character (*Wāfi* C10) [P254LL16–22] [2] Worship place under *al-Jabal al-Aḥmar* (*Nuzha* E1) [P255LL1–5] [3] A truncated anecdote about an incident with the *wazīr* (*Nuzha* E2) [P255LL6–11] [4] Anecdote about his generosity (“**he had built a mosque**”—**an anecdote about a generosity toward a soldier he met near the mosque he had built in the Ḥusayniyya, which turned into a bare statement of fact**; his charity and generosity during Ramaḍān—he never sold wheat from his granaries but just gave it away) (*Nuzha* E4) [P255LL12–7] [5] He was never sick (*Nuzha* E5) [P255LL18–9] [6] He always paid the expenses of his soldiers in expeditions from his own money (*Nuzha* E6) [P255L20–P256L1] [7] **A very truncated and hardly recognizable anecdote about an incident with Mūsā al-Ṣayrafī** (*Nuzha* E8) [P256LL2–3] [8] His dress and manners in the bathhouse (*Wāfi* C1) [P256LL4–8] [9] Anecdote about his whimsical character (*Wāfi* C2) [P256LL9–15] [10] If a horse died to one of his soldiers or slaves, he compensated him (part of *Wāfi* C4) [P256L16]

313 See al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 191 (line 11)–193 (line 13). In al-Yūsufī’s *Nuzhat al-nāzīr*, the story-like report is entitled “the mentioning of the moving of Nā’ib al-Karak [to Tripoli].” While the *Sulūk* has a very condensed version of this report, it could not have been the source for the *Muqaffā*; see al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* ii, 371 (lines 10–7). The version in the *Sulūk* does not have all the information contained in the *Muqaffā*; the wording of the *Muqaffā* clearly draws on the *Nuzha* and not on the *Sulūk*; and utterances in direct speech that appear in the *Muqaffā* are paraphrased and standardized versions of a dialogue in the *Nuzha*, and are absent in the *Sulūk*; see, for example, al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 252 (lines 8–9); and compare with al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 192 (lines 9–12).

314 See *ibid.* 236 (line 7)–240 (line 14). In al-Yūsufī’s *Nuzhat al-nāzīr*, the story-like report is entitled “the arrest of the amir Jamāl al-Dīn Nā’ib al-Karak.” The *Sulūk* has a shorter version, which could not have been the source for the *Muqaffā*; see al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* ii, 379 (line 11)–380 (line 11). For an utterance in direct speech in the *Muqaffā* that is absent in the *Sulūk*, see al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 253 (lines 17–8); and compare with al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 238 (lines 24–5).

[11] Peculiarities and witticisms (*Wāfi* C7) [P256L17–P257L6] [12] His advice to Tankiz upon the latter's appointment as governor of Damascus (*Wāfi* C11) [P257LL7–21]

*Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, al-Durar al-kāmina*³¹⁵

(about half a page out of one and a half pages = truncated anecdotes and stories)

[A] Title/name

Aqūsh al-Ashrafī Jamāl al-Dīn al-Burnāq known as Nāʿib al-Karak (*al-maʿrūf bi-Nāʿib al-Karak*) (*Muqaḥḥā* A) [P395L12]³¹⁶

[B] Life résumé basically ordered chronologically, incorporating remnants of anecdotes or stories, which in most of the cases were turned into statements about events in the life of Aqūsh or his character [PP395–6]:

[1] Career until 715/1315 (in all likelihood collected and summarized from *Muqaḥḥā* B1–6) [P395LL12–5]³¹⁷ [2] “He had built a mosque”—an anecdote about a soldier he met near the mosque he had built in the Ḥusayniyya, which turned into a bare statement of fact (*Aʿyān* = *Wāfi* C2) [P395L15]³¹⁸ [3] Career—*raʿs maymana* (ca. 715/1315) (*Aʿyān* = *Wāfi* B) [P395LL15–6]³¹⁹ [4] His

315 Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 395–6.

316 The appellation al-Burnāq and the expression “known as Nāʿib al-Karak” appear in the *Muqaḥḥā* in one section (section A) and in two different sections in the *Nuzha* (sections A and D) but not in al-Ṣafadī (see section A in the *Wāfi*).

317 In *al-Durar al-kāmina* it is mentioned that Aqūsh was one of the *mamlūks* of al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn (*min mamālīk al-Manṣūr*), information that appears in the *Muqaḥḥā* and the obituary in the *Nuzha* but not in al-Ṣafadī, see Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 395 (line 13: *min mamālīk al-Manṣūr*); al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 323 (line 2: *min akābir al-mamālīk al-Manṣūriyya*); al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaḥḥā* ii, 248 (line 16: *aḥad al-mamālīk al-Manṣūriyya*). In *al-Durar al-kāmina* it is mentioned that Aqūsh was arrested in Egypt, and then released, information that appears in the biographical entry in the *Muqaḥḥā* (and was taken from different places in the historical narrative of the *Sulūk*), and not in the obituary in the *Nuzha* or the entry in the *Wāfi*, see al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaḥḥā* ii, 250 (lines 2–6). It is highly unlikely that Ibn Ḥajar took the information directly from the *Nuzha* or the *Sulūk* and incorporated it in the same fashion as al-Maqrīzī did in the *Muqaḥḥā*. However, in this specific case, Ibn Ḥajar may have relied on *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr*, see al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān* i, 578 (lines 9–11).

318 Ibid. i, 579 (line 1).

319 While the *Muqaḥḥā* has a report on Aqūsh being *raʿs al-maymana*, the wording in *al-Durar al-kāmina* is similar to al-Ṣafadī; see Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 395 (line 16: *yajlisu raʿs al-maymana wa-yaqūmu la-hu al-sultān*); al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* ix, 336 (line 5: *yajlisu raʿs al-maymana wa-yaqūmu la-hu al-sultān*); *Aʿyān* i, 578 (line 12: *yajlisu raʿs al-maymana wa-yaqūmu la-hu al-sultān*); and compare with al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaḥḥā* ii, 250 (lines 7–9).

dress and manners in the bathhouse—an anecdote turned into a statement about his character (*Aʿyān* = *Wāfi* C1) [P395LL16–7]³²⁰ [5] He had a worship place under *al-Jabal al-Aḥmar*—an anecdote turned into a statement (*Aʿyān* = *Wāfi* C3) [P395LL17–8]³²¹ [6] Appointed *nāzīr al-māristān* (723/1323) and renovated it (726/1326) (*Muqaffā* B10–1) [P395LL18–9]³²² [7] Appointed governor of Tripoli (734/1334)—a story-like report turned into a statement of fact (*Wāfi* C6 or *Muqaffā* B14) [P395L19–P396L1] [8] A very truncated (originally two pages which turned into six lines) story-like report about an incident he had in Tripoli with the Franks which led to his arrest (*Muqaffā* B15) [P396LL1–6]³²³

[C] Nonchronological truncated anecdotes, stories, and peculiarities:

[1] Peculiarities and witticisms (*Aʿyān* = *Wāfi* C7) [P396LL6–10]³²⁴ [2] Death in the prison of Alexandria (736/1335)—an anecdote turned into a statement

320 Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān* i, 578 (lines 13–7). The manners and the statement about building the mosque (sections B2 and B4 in *al-Durar al-kāmina*) could have been theoretically taken from the *Muqaffā* (sections D4 and D8). In al-Ṣafadī, however, references to the manners and the mosque appear one next to the other, and next to the references to Aqūsh as *raʾs al-maymana* and the worship place (see sections B3 and B5 in *al-Durar al-kāmina*). Moreover, before and after the references to the manners and the mosque, Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī was using the chronological life résumé in the *Muqaffā* (sections B1 and B6–8 in *al-Durar al-kāmina* relying on sections B1–6, 10–1, and 14–5 in the *Muqaffā*), and references to the manners and the mosque appear in the *Muqaffā* in the section of anecdotes (D4 and D8 in the *Muqaffā*). It is highly unlikely that Ibn Ḥajar jumped back and forth from the chronological life résumé in the *Muqaffā* to its anecdotal section.

321 *Al-Durar al-kāmina*, following al-Ṣafadī, refers to the worship place as *maʿbad*, whereas the *Muqaffā*, following the *Nuzha*, refers to it as a cave (*maghāra*), see Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 395 (line 17); al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* ix, 336 (line 19); *Aʿyān* i, 579 (line 9); al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 255 (line 1); al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 324 (line 8).

322 The biographical entry in al-Ṣafadī lacks some of the information and could not have been the source, see al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* ix, 337 (lines 10–1); *Aʿyān* i, 579 (line 12). The information in the *Muqaffā* was collected from different places in the historical narrative of the *Sulūk* (see *Muqaffā* B10–1). It is highly unlikely that Ibn Ḥajar took the information directly from the historical narrative of the *Sulūk*.

323 This report was taken by al-Maqrīzī from the historical narrative of the *Nuzha* (see *Muqaffā* B15) and incorporated chronologically in the life résumé of Aqūsh. In *al-Durar al-kāmina* it is incorporated exactly in the same fashion. It is highly unlikely that Ibn Ḥajar took the information directly from the *Nuzha* (or from the *Sulūk* where it also appears) and then integrated it in *al-Durar al-kāmina* exactly in the same fashion as al-Maqrīzī did in the *Muqaffā*. The information in the entry in *al-Durar al-kāmina* is very basic and dry and the incident with the Franks seems a marginal event, and its description in the *Durar* is the only case of information that perhaps keeps some of its story-like nature within the life résumé. Ibn Ḥajar must have taken it from the *Muqaffā*.

324 Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān* i, 580 (lines 8–16).

(*A'yān* = *Wāfi* C9) [P396LL10–1]³²⁵ [3] Statements about his generosity (he always paid for the expenses of his servants in expeditions; if a horse died to one of his soldiers or slaves he compensated him) (*A'yān* [last anecdote] = *Wāfi* C4) [P396LL11–3]³²⁶ [4] He had a harsh character—**anecdotes turned into a statement about his character** (*Muqaffā* D1) [P396LL13–4]³²⁷ [5] Statement about his generosity: “He never sold wheat from his granaries but just gave it away”—**anecdote turned into a statement about his character** (*Muqaffā* D4) [P396LL15–6]³²⁸ [6] He always paid the expenses of his soldiers in expeditions from his own money (*Muqaffā* D6) [P396LL16–7]³²⁹

*Ibn Taghrībirdī, al-Manhal*³³⁰

(three out of four pages = anecdotes and stories)

[A] Title/name

Aqūsh b. 'Abdallāh al-Amīr al-Ashrafī Jamāl al-Dīn Nā'ib al-Karak (*Wāfi* A) [P27L3]

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- 325 Ibid. i, 581 (lines 2–4). The peculiarities and witticisms, and the statement about his death, could have been theoretically taken from the *Muqaffā*; however, in al-Ṣafadī, the report on the death (and the anecdote related) appears in the section of anecdotes right after the peculiarities and witticisms. In the *Muqaffā*, the report on the death (and the related anecdote) was incorporated in the chronological section and was not located near the peculiarities and witticisms (see sections B16 and D11 in the *Muqaffā*).
- 326 Compare especially al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* ix, 337 (lines 7–8: *idhā jurrida*) and *A'yān* i, 581 (line 14: *idhā jurrida*) with Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 396 (line 11: *idhā jurrida*); and see C6 below. Whereas in the *Wāfi* the anecdotes about the generosity appear in the fourth place out of eleven anecdotes, in *A'yān al-'aṣr* they appear last, right at the end of the biographical entry; see al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān* i, 581 (line 13)–582 (line 1). Moreover, whereas in the *Wāfi* the order of the anecdotes is: “If a horse died to one of his soldiers or slaves he compensated him,” and then “he always paid for the expenses of his servants in expeditions,” in *A'yān al-'aṣr* it is the opposite. *Al-Durar al-kāmīna* follows the internal order of the anecdotes about generosity in *A'yān al-'aṣr*, and more broadly the general order of presentation of anecdotes in it.
- 327 Theoretically, Ibn Ḥajar may have relied here on al-Ṣafadī (*Wāfi* C10); however, it is very unlikely.
- 328 The information is found only in the *Muqaffā* and the *Nuzha* and is not found in al-Ṣafadī. In all likelihood, it was taken from the *Muqaffā*.
- 329 This is, in fact, a repetition of a statement taken from al-Ṣafadī (section C3 in *al-Durar al-kāmīna* based on *A'yān* [last anecdote] = *Wāfi* C4) but the wording here is taken from the *Muqaffā*; see al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 255 (line 20: *wa-mā kharaja qattfi tajrida illā wa-qāma li-jamī' man yurāfiquhu bi-jirāyatīhi wa-'aliq khaylihi*); Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 396 (lines 16–7: *mā kharaja fi tajrida illā wa-qāma bi-jirāyat man yurāfiquhu wa-'aliqīhi*); and compare with al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* ix, 337 (lines 7–8: *idhā jurrida ilā makān lā yazālu ṭulbuhu jamī'an ya'kulūna 'alā simāṭīhi*); and with *A'yān* i, 581 (lines 14–5).
- 330 Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Manhal* iii, 27–30.

[B] Very short and partial **life résumé** (career until ca. 715/1315) (**Wāfi B**) [P27LL4–8]³³¹

[C] **Anecdotes, stories, and peculiarities** presented in an order that follows the *Wāfi* [PP27–30]:

- [1] His dress and manners in the bathhouse (**Wāfi C1**) [P27L8–P28L4] [2] Anecdote about his whimsical character (generosity toward a soldier he met near the mosque he had built in the Ḥusayniyya; compared to a harsh treatment of another soldier) (**Wāfi C2**) [P28LL5–13] [3] Anecdotes about his generosity (he always paid for the expenses of his servants in expeditions; his *simāt* in Ramaḍān—part of **Wāfi C4**) [P28L14–P29L1] [4] **Appointment to the position of inspector of the *māristān* (723/1323) without the anecdote on its inspection** (an anecdote in **Wāfi C5** that turned into a bare statement of fact) [P29L2]³³² [5] **Appointed as governor of Tripoli in 734/1334, requested to move to Jerusalem, arrested in Damascus; without the anecdote about his arrest in Şafad** (an anecdote in **Wāfi C6** that turned into a sequence of chronological information) [P29LL7–11] [6] Peculiarities and witticisms (parts of **Wāfi C7**) [P29L12–P30L2] [7] Death in the prison of Alexandria in 736/1335 (**Wāfi C9**) [P30LL3–5] [8] Two anecdotes (one of them truncated) about his harsh character (**Wāfi C10**) [P30LL6–10]

331 Ibn Taghrībirdī mentions at the beginning of the life résumé that Aqūsh was originally one of the *mamlūks* of al-Ashraf Khalil (*aşluhu min mamālik al-Ashraf Khalil*), see *ibid.* iii, 27 (line 4). This information does not appear in the *Wāfi* (the master of Aqūsh is not even mentioned) and was in all likelihood deduced by Ibn Taghrībirdī from the *nisba* of Aqūsh. In fact, in the obituary of Aqūsh in the *Nuzha* he is mentioned as one of the *mamlūks* of al-Manşūr Qalāwūn (*min akābir al-mamālik al-Manşūriyya*), see al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 323 (line 2). He appears as one of the *mamlūks* of al-Manşūr Qalāwūn also in his biographical entry in the *Muqaffā*, which relies in this case on the *Nuzha*, and in his biographical entry in *al-Durar al-kāmina*, which apparently relies in this case on the *Muqaffā*; see al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* ii, 248 (line 16: *aḥad al-mamālik al-Manşūriyya*); Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 395 (line 13: *min mamālik al-Manşūr*). Because the rest of the biographical entry in *al-Manhal* uses only the *Wāfi* and strictly follows its structure and order of presentation, there is no reason to believe that Ibn Taghrībirdī used in this specific case material from other sources.

332 At this point in the entry, Ibn Taghrībirdī makes a short comment regarding the fact that since the appointment of Aqūsh, it became a custom that *ra's al-maymana* was also the inspector of the *māristān* and adds a more general note regarding the position of *ra's al-maymana*, see Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Manhal* iii, 29 (lines 2–6).

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Language and Style in Mamluk Historiography

Koby Yosef

1 Introduction*

The increasing use of nonstandard Arabic by Mamluk historians in the historical narrative (*hawādith*) of chronicles has been considered as one of the most noticeable characteristics of the process of “literarization,” or the popularization of Mamluk historiography,¹ which went hand in hand with the increasing use of stylistic elements drawn from the literature of *adab*, perhaps most notably anecdotes or story-like reports with dialogues or utterances in direct speech.²

While some, mainly editors of Mamluk historical works, made notes and observations on the language of specific works or historians, to date, there have not been too many attempts at an overall survey of different general trends of language use in Mamluk historical texts. Notwithstanding this, it has been suggested that usages of nonstandard Arabic are more typical of the 9th/15th century,³ and more specifically of Egypt in the second half of the 9th/15th century (the so-called “Cairo narrative style”).⁴ This chronological/geographical perspective, however, downplays the facts that many Mamluk historians used nonstandard Arabic before the 9th/15th century and that some Syrian historians also used nonstandard Arabic.

Alternatively, it has been suggested that differences in background and life experience of the historians affected their language and style. Ulrich Haarmann perhaps did not state explicitly that usages of nonstandard Arabic are typical of historians related to the military institution; however, he highlighted the fact that many of the historians who wrote “literarized” histories employ-

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1 See, for example, Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 175–6; *Auflösung* 56; Review of *Weltgeschichte* 134–5; Guo, Introduction 94; Parry, Review 148; Mauder, *Gelehrte* 24.

2 See, for example, Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 178–9; and see also Guo, Introduction 95–6; Little, *Historiography* 420.

3 See most recently, Elbendary, *Crowds* 82.

4 Ibn al-Ṣayrafī, *Inbāʾ* 17–21 (esp. 20); Petry, *Protectors* 6. And see in detail in section 5 below.

ing nonstandard Arabic were soldiers⁵ and labeled as “conservative” several historians who were religious scholars.⁶ Donald Little noted that the lack of rigorous academic training of “historians closely associated with the Mamluk military institution either as fully-fledged soldiers or as sons of Mamluks” is betrayed by their Arabic prose, which is “permeated with colloquialisms.”⁷ Frédéric Bauden noted that in contrast to historians related to the military institution who did not hesitate to include nonstandard usages of Arabic in their historical works, religious scholars who wrote history were very careful not to allow themselves such deviations from standard Arabic.⁸ In what is probably the most elaborate discussion of language and style in Mamluk historiography examining “Mamluk historians as groups ... who were associated with particular settings ... or who shared ideological and professional bonds,”⁹ Li Guo noted that differences in career paths and social, ethnic, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds of historians must have had some influence on the language and style of their writings.¹⁰ Like other scholars, Guo noted that the tendency to use nonstandard Arabic characterizes historians related to the military institution, particularly those of non-Arab origin.¹¹ This social/cultural/professional perspective, however, downplays the fact that some religious scholars who wrote historical works were employing nonstandard usages of Arabic. This is not to say that the latter were totally ignored. Haarmann was, of course, well-aware that the Syrian religious scholar al-Jazarī (d. 739/1338) incorporated *adab*-like elements and nonstandard Arabic in his chronicle; however, he highlighted the fact that this trend was best exemplified in the chronicle of Ibn al-Dawādārī (d. after 736/1335), the Egyptian historian who was a *mamlūk*'s descendant.¹² Guo noted that not only al-Jazarī but also the Syrian religious scholar al-Yūnīnī (d. 726/1326) was incorporating anecdotes, stories, and nonstandard usages of Arabic in his chronicle;¹³ however, he concluded that “the introduction of entertaining stories in a *taʾrīkh* work and the use of colloquial language in its narrative were, to be sure, still

5 Haarmann, *Auflösung* 59; and see also Mauder, *Gelehrte* 25.

6 Haarmann, *Auflösung* 54.

7 Little, *Historiography* 420.

8 Bauden, *Maqriziana* VIII 36–7.

9 Guo, *Mamluk* 29.

10 *Ibid.* 29–32; and see also *ibid.* 41–3.

11 *Ibid.* 30, 43.

12 Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 176–9; *Auflösung* 55; *Review of Weltgeschichte* 134–5; Parry, *Review* 148; and see also Guo, *Introduction* 96.

13 Guo, *Introduction* 94–5.

far from being fully developed in al-Yūnīnī's and al-Jazarī's works, compared to later Egyptian chronicles ... such as those of Ibn al-Dawādārī ... wherein such a 'litararized' trend ... appears to be quite overwhelming."¹⁴ Guo emphasized the dissimilarities between the trends of "litararization" in the chronicles of historians related to the military institution and those who were religious scholars. Whereas the trend in Ibn al-Dawādārī and historians related to the military institution is typified by the incorporation of elements of *adab* "in its 'lower' form" (perhaps most notably anecdotes, stories, and nonstandard Arabic) in the historical narrative, the trend in al-Yūnīnī and al-Jazarī is typified by the incorporation of "high *adab* elements" (mainly poetry in a classical form) in the obituaries (*waḥyāt*).¹⁵ According to Guo, it is thus not surprising to see in the works of the latter a struggle "with regard to language and style."¹⁶

Some have made a connection between the different backgrounds of historians, which affected their language and style, and their different geographical settings. As noted by Guo, who focused on the Turkish period of the Mamluk Sultanate (648–784/1250–1382), practically all chroniclers related to the military institution were Egyptian, whereas practically all Syrian chroniclers were religious scholars. In fact, during the Turkish period "none of the major Egyptian chronicles" were written by religious scholars.¹⁷ Thus, "it is undeniable that there are certain traits that ought to be seen as characterizing Mamluk Egyptian authors."¹⁸ This combined perspective, however, downplays the fact that during the Circassian period of the sultanate (784–923/1382–1517), many Egyptian historians were religious scholars.

So, to date, there is no general survey of trends of language use that covers all major historians throughout the Mamluk period. In addition, to date, it has not been properly explained why some Mamluk historians who were religious scholars were willing to employ nonstandard usages of Arabic while others refrained from doing so. In what follows I will offer such a survey and suggest that in order to better understand trends of language use in Mamluk historiography, a further differentiation should be made between subgroups of historians who were religious scholars.

In order to check in detail usages of Arabic, it is necessary, of course, to consult manuscripts and autographs when they exist; however, it is better to

14 Ibid. 96.

15 Guo, Mamluk 39; Introduction 96.

16 Ibid., Introduction 96.

17 Ibid., Mamluk 29–32.

18 Ibid. 41.

emphasize in advance this is not the intention here. The intention is to survey general trends of usages of nonstandard Arabic and standardization thereof. Using the existing printed editions (some based on autographs) and relying on observations mainly made by editors of Mamluk historical works (some based on autographs) should allow a preliminary survey of such general trends (standardization by copyists and the occasional standardizing of a text by the editor without indication should be considered).

Appendix A includes a survey of observations regarding usages of Arabic in the works of Mamluk historians, mainly in chronicles but also in biographical dictionaries. As mentioned, the observations were often made by editors of historiographical texts, some of which are based on autographs (this fact is indicated in the appendix). To these observations, I have added my own observations, which are based on printed editions, some, again, are based on autographs (this is also indicated in the appendix). My observations also include cases of standardization made by some Mamluk historians of nonstandard usages employed in earlier historical works that were incorporated into their own works.

I have divided the appendix into five groups of historians. The first group (group A) is historians related to the military institution (*mamlūks* and soldiers, and descendants of *mamlūks*). The four other groups are historians of civilian background, that is, religious scholars related to three schools of law, the Ḥanafī, Ḥanbalī, and Shāfi'ī (groups B, C, and E), and *udabā'-kuttāb* (group D). It will be shown that usages of nonstandard Arabic are typical of historians related to the military institution (section 2 below) and non-Shāfi'ī religious scholars (section 3 below). On the other hand, Shāfi'ī religious scholars refrained from using nonstandard Arabic (section 4 below) because of the importance of "Arabness" and the Arabic language in their ethos (section 4.2 below). The trends of language use will be examined in tandem with one stylistic element—the incorporation of story-like reports with dialogues and direct speech in accounts of contemporary events¹⁹ in the historical narrative in chronicles. This will allow a more nuanced differentiation between trends of language use and style prevalent among chroniclers of the three aforementioned major groups of historians: those related to the military institution, non-Shāfi'ī religious scholars, and Shāfi'ī religious scholars (section 5 below). Finally, the survey will allow a reevaluation of Nasser Rabbat's observation that conversations between *mamlūks* are reported in colloquial Arabic

19 By that I mean historians' reports on their own time and not reports on past events taken from earlier sources.

as part of a deliberate negative representation of the *mamlūks* by Mamluk historians (section 6 below). It will also allow some general observations concerning language and style in works pertaining to history that were written by *udabāʾ-kuttāb* and language use in biographical dictionaries (section 6.1 below).

2 Historians Related to the Military Institution (*Mamlūks* and Soldiers, and Descendants of *Mamlūks*)

There should be no doubt that almost all historians related to the military institution (group A in appendix A) allowed themselves to employ usages of nonstandard Arabic in a significant manner when describing contemporary events.²⁰ In fact, the only historian in this category that did not employ nonstandard Arabic (at least not in any significant manner) is Baybars al-Manṣūrī (d. 725/1325), who, as a *dawādār* and chief of the chancery, was related to the *inshāʾ* tradition, which favors ornamented language, poetry, and rhymed prose in impeccable Arabic.²¹ The nonstandard usages in the writings of members of this group appear in quoted dialogues or utterances in direct speech (mainly in the frame of story-like reports), as well as in the narrative line itself. Of course, some were more inclined toward such usages and some less. Roughly (and in an impressionistic manner) it is possible to divide the members of this group into three subgroups:

1. Al-Yūsufī (d. 759/1358) and Ibn al-Dawādārī, whose chronicles contain an abundance of story-like reports with dialogues in the description of contemporary events (in al-Yūsufī's chronicle it is hard to find what may be called a formal informative narrative line), are also, as a result, the most inclined to employ nonstandard Arabic, quantitatively and qualitatively.
2. Qaraṭāy (d. after 708/1308), Baktāsh al-Fākhirī (d. 745/1344), al-Shujāʿī (d. after 756/1356), Ibn Duqmāq (d. 809/1407), al-Malaṭī (d. 920/1514), and Ibn Iyās (d. ca. 930/1524) employ nonstandard usages extensively in the formal informative narrative line. Their chronicles, however, contain less story-like reports with dialogues or direct speech than the chronicles of

20 See appendix A group A.

21 See appendix A group A (exception); and see Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 179; Irwin, *Mamluk history* 163; Little, *Historiography* 423–4. On the *inshāʾ* tradition, see chapter 1, footnote 14 (3).

al-Yūsufī and Ibn al-Dawādārī.²² As a result, it would seem that nonstandard usages in their writing are more restricted (especially qualitatively).

3. Ibn Taghrībirdī (d. 874/1470) restricts nonstandard usages mainly to dialogues or utterances in direct speech in story-like reports.

It may be added that it would seem that Ibn Taghrībirdī and Ibn al-Dawādārī were less inclined to employ nonstandard usages of Arabic in the formal narrative line,²³ and Qaraṭāy was possibly less inclined to employ nonstandard usages of Arabic in quoted dialogues.²⁴

3 Historians Who Were Religious Scholars: Ḥanbalis and Ḥanafis

Among the historians related to Ḥanbalī circles (group C in appendix A), it is clear that al-Yūnīnī and al-Jazarī were willing to employ nonstandard usages of Arabic in a significant manner when describing contemporary events,²⁵ whether in dialogue quotations in the frame of story-like reports or in the more formal narrative line.²⁶ As for al-Birzālī (d. 739/1339), his chronicle is almost totally “deliterarized” and contains almost no story-like reports. This perhaps

22 The chronicles of al-Shujāʿī and Qaraṭāy seem to contain more dialogues or utterances in direct speech than the chronicles of Ibn Iyās and Ibn Duqmāq, which, in their turn, seem to contain more dialogues or direct speech than the chronicle of al-Malaṭī. The chronicle of Baktāsh al-Fākhīrī does not seem to contain many dialogues or utterances in direct speech.

23 On Ibn Taghrībirdī, see appendix A group A (*mamlūks*' descendants no. 3—footnote 178). On a vernacular poem incorporated in a story-like report, see Guo, Songs 189–90. As for Ibn al-Dawādārī, in comparison to members of subgroup 2 it would seem that he was less inclined to employ nonstandard Arabic in the more formal informative narrative line; see also Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 177–8. In contrast to Ibn Taghrībirdī, however, he seems to be more inclined to employ nonstandard Arabic in story-like reports also outside of dialogues; see, for example, Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz* ix, 195–204 (195–7: informative accounts that are relatively clean of nonstandard usages. 198–204: a story-like report about the arrest of an amir which includes many dialogues with nonstandard usages of Arabic; however, some nonstandard usages are found outside the dialogues. See especially 200 line 15—colloquial usages in dialogue [*b*-imperfect], line 17—*annahum yabītū* [standard, *yabītūna*] not in the dialogue but still in the frame of the story-like report); and see also *ibid.* ix, 210–6 (210–1: informative accounts in the beginning of the year 711/1311–2 that are relatively clean of nonstandard usages. 212–6: a story-like report with dialogues employing many nonstandard usages, mainly in dialogues but at times not [see 216 line 4—a double usage of the *b*-imperfect not in the frame of a dialogue]).

24 Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 179; Irwin, *Mamluk History* 164–5; and see appendix A group A (*mamlūks* no. 1—footnote 168).

25 See appendix A group C nos. 1–2.

26 Guo, Introduction 95.

partially accounts for the fact that there are hardly any usages of nonstandard Arabic in his chronicle. There is evidence, however, that he perhaps did not object to such usages in principle. In the rare cases in which his chronicle does contain story-like reports, we find within the reports some usages of nonstandard Arabic.²⁷

As for historians who were Ḥanafī religious scholars (group B in appendix A), it is clear that Ibn al-Furāt (d. 807/1405) and Ibn al-Ṣayrafī (d. 900/1495) were willing to employ nonstandard usages of Arabic extensively when describing contemporary events, whether in dialogue quotations or in the more formal narrative line.²⁸ In accounts of his own time, Ibn al-Furāt's chronicle *Ta'riḫ al-duwal wa-l-mulūk* is full of usages of nonstandard Arabic. However, these accounts generally do not contain many story-like reports with dialogues or utterances in direct speech; thus, the usages of nonstandard Arabic are mainly found in the narrative line.²⁹ This seems to be the case also with *Inbā' al-ḥaṣr bi-abnā' al-ʿaṣr*, Ibn al-Ṣayrafī's chronicle dedicated to his own time. However, Ibn al-Ṣayrafī apparently incorporated a few more story-like reports with dialogues or utterances in direct speech than Ibn al-Furāt did.³⁰ Typically, the nonstandard usages in the narrative line of Ibn al-Furāt's and Ibn al-Ṣayrafī's chronicles are related to morphology or morphosyntax (i.e., case endings, mood endings, concord, genitive constructs, etc.) and not to vocabulary (words or expressions drawing on colloquial language).

As for Ibn Ṭūlūn (d. 953/1546), it is clear that he allowed himself to employ some nonstandard usages of Arabic in his chronicle *Mufākahat al-khillān fī ḥawādith al-zamān*.³¹ Richard Hartmann concluded that "vulgar forms" are not uncommon in the autograph manuscript of a fragment of *Mufākahat al-khillān* and mentioned that, because of that, Ibn Ṭūlūn was criticized by his contemporaries. Except for orthography- or numeral-related usages, Hartmann mentioned that the absence of the accusative *alif* is very common and added that many of the usages described by Zetterstéen in the introduction to his *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Mamlükensultane* are occasionally also found in *Mufākahat al-khillān*.³² It would seem, however, that Ibn Ṭūlūn incorporated,

27 See appendix A group C (exception: footnote 200); and see chapter 1 footnote 12.

28 See appendix A group B nos. 1, 3.

29 See chapter 1 at footnotes 48, 54.

30 For examples of story-like reports with dialogues (some containing usages of nonstandard Arabic), see Ibn al-Ṣayrafī, *Inbā'* 34 (especially at footnote 3), 130, 141–2, 146, 154–5. Note that normally, the editor of *Inbā' al-ḥaṣr* gives standardized versions in the body of the text and mentions the original nonstandard wording only in footnotes.

31 See appendix A group B no. 4.

32 Hartmann, *Tübinger* 103–4 (esp. 103 footnote 2).

in his chronicle, nonstandard usages of Arabic in a less conspicuous manner than the aforementioned Ḥanafī historians. Muḥammad Muṣṭafā, who edited the autograph manuscript examined by Hartmann, noted that the language of Ibn Ṭūlūn in *Mufākahat al-khillān* is in general standard (*salīm al-ibāra bi-ṣifa ʿamma*), but sometimes colloquial expressions (*taʿbīrāt ʿammīyya/muṣṭalahāt Dimashqīyya aṣīla*) infiltrate his text.³³ Indeed, in Muṣṭafā's edition of *Mufākahat al-khillān*, nonstandard usages related to morphology or morphosyntax in the narrative line are not as numerous as in the chronicles of Ibn al-Furāt and Ibn al-Ṣayrafī.³⁴ On the other hand, in comparison with the chronicles of Ibn al-Furāt and Ibn al-Ṣayrafī, expressions that seem to draw on colloquial vocabulary are more common in the narrative line.³⁵ Indeed, except for Hartmann,

33 Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, ed. M. Muṣṭafā ii, 20; and see also İbīsh, *Taʾrīkh* 73.

34 This is not to say that they are rare: 1) For the absence of the accusative *alif*, see, for example, Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, ed. M. Muṣṭafā i, 6 (see the editor's note in line 5). On the phenomenon in Middle Arabic, see Blau, *Handbook* 44 (no. 74); on the phenomenon in Mamluk historiographical texts, see Haarmann, *Kanz* 37; Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 20. 2) For active participles of *tertiæ yāʿ* verbs appearing with a final *yāʿ* in indefinite forms of the nominative/genitive, see Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, ed. M. Muṣṭafā i, 7 (editor's note in line 21). On this phenomenon in Middle Arabic, see Blau, *Handbook* 41 (no. 57); in Mamluk historiographical texts, see Brinner, *Chronicle*, xxiv. 3) For the *-n* of the sound masculine plural ending preserved in the construct, see Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, ed. M. Muṣṭafā i, 13 (editor's note in line 9), 31 (editor's note in line 8). On the phenomenon in Middle Arabic see Blau, *Handbook* 42 (no. 61); in Mamluk historiographical texts, see Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 21. 4) Imperfect forms in all moods may terminate with and without the ending *n*, see Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, ed. M. Muṣṭafā i, 29 (editor's note in line 12), 31 (line 11). On the phenomenon in Middle Arabic, see Blau, *Handbook* 45 (no. 77). Such usages are found (perhaps somewhat more often) also in the narrative line in *Iʿlām al-warā*. For the absence of the accusative *alif*, see Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Iʿlām* 111 (line 14—as a *khabar kāna*, the adjectives *khafif*, *thaqīl*, *qarīb*, and *baʿīd* appear without accusative *alif*), 113 (line 6—as a direct object, the noun *māl* appears without accusative *alif*). For sound masculine plurals in the *obliquus* instead of the *casus rectus*, see *ibid.* 108 (line 5—*mukhtalifīna* instead of *mukhtalifūna*). On the phenomenon in Middle Arabic, see Blau, *Handbook* 44 (no. 74); in Mamluk historiographical texts, see Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 21; Haarmann, *Kanz* 36. On the other hand, one finds nouns in the nominative when in standard Arabic they should have been in the accusative, see Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Iʿlām* 109 (line 9—*muntazīrūna* as a circumstantial adverb instead of *muntazīrīna*).

35 See, for example, Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, ed. K. al-Manṣūr 115, 134 (employs the nonclassical verb *ghawwasha ʿalā* in the meaning of “reprimanded in shouting,” see Dozy, *Takmilat* vii, 441); and see Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, ed. K. al-Manṣūr 159, 223, 375 (the nonclassical verb *ittaqaʿa*, apparently in the meaning of “clashed”); and see *ibid.* 179–80, 267–8 (the nonclassical and colloquial *azʿar* in the meaning of “a brigand,” and see Dozy, *Takmilat* v, 327; ʿAbd al-Raḥīm, *Mawsūʿat* i, 136; for *azʿar*, see also Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Iʿlām* 118); and see Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, ed. K. al-Manṣūr 373 (the colloquial *khashākhīsh*, sing. *khishkhāsh* for “grave houses,” see ʿAbd al-Raḥīm, *Mawsūʿat* i, 850).

scholars who have made observations regarding the language of Ibn Ṭūlūn seem to have focused on his vocabulary that draws on colloquial language.³⁶ This also seems to have been the emphasis of Ibn Ṭūlūn's contemporaries, who criticized him for incorporating colloquial expressions (*alfāz*) in his writing.³⁷ Be that as it may, Ibn Ṭūlūn seems to be more inclined to employ nonstandard usages in the frame of quoted dialogues or utterances in direct speech that appear in story-like reports or anecdotes in *Mufākahat al-khillān*.³⁸ Such reports with dialogues or utterances in direct speech are more common in *Mufākahat al-khillān*³⁹ than in the chronicles written by Ibn al-Furāt and Ibn al-Ṣayrafī (at least in accounts of contemporary events).

As for al-ʿAynī (d. 855/1451), in his own reports on contemporary events in his chronicle *ʿIqd al-jumān fī taʾrīkh ahl al-zamān*, he refrained from using nonstandard Arabic.⁴⁰ It may be added that in this part of his chronicle, story-like reports with dialogues are almost totally absent.⁴¹ There is evidence, however,

36 The remarks made by Muṣṭafā were mentioned above. Similar remarks were made by Muḥammad Aḥmad Dahmān in his introduction to *lʿlām al-warā* regarding Ibn Ṭūlūn's language in general. Dahmān mentions that colloquial words or words that draw on colloquial language (*kalimāt ʿammīyya aw qarība min al-ʿammīyya*) sometimes infiltrate into his texts, see Ibn Ṭūlūn, *lʿlām* 16; and see also Fück, *Arabīyya* 571 ("influenced by the local dialect, especially in vocabulary"). On the "peculiar language" in *Mufākahat al-khillān*, see Tritton, Review 54–5.

37 İbīsh, *Taʾrīkh* 78 (*salaka fi mā awradahu ʿalā ṭarīqat al-ʿawāmm wa-alfāzihim*).

38 See, for example, Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, ed. K. al-Manṣūr 15–16 (15 line 2: absence of a conjunction, *khudh-hā* instead of *fa-khudh-hā*; 15 lines 4–5: *ēsh* and "broken" syntax that are typical of colloquial language; 15 line 21: absence of interrogative, which is typical of colloquial language. For absence of interrogative see also *ibid.* 330 line 23); and see *ibid.* 24 (lines 4–5: *ēsh* and a derivative of the verb *rāḥa* in the meaning of "went [at any hour of the day]," which is typical of colloquial language, see Haarmann, *Kanz* 37); and see Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, ed. K. al-Manṣūr 87 (line 19: *fi ayna* in the meaning of "where?" which is not typical of standard Arabic and perhaps reflects the colloquial *fēn*; line 20: absence of interrogative); *ibid.* 145 (line 5: *innā kunnā dhahabnā*—repetition of pronouns typical of colloquial language; line 6: the colloquial *azʿar* in the meaning of "a brigand"; line 7: asyndetic subordinate object clause and/or imperfect plural masculine form in the indicative without the ending *n*—*arādū yajraḥūnī* instead of *arādū an yajraḥūnī*); *ibid.* 162 (line 22: imperfect masculine plural form in the indicative without the ending *n*—*yuqātilūnā* instead of *yuqātilūnanā*); *ibid.* 232 (lines 22–3: shortening of a long vowel in an unstressed syllable—*jawāri al-nāʿib*, "the governor's slave girls," instead of *jawāri al-nāʿib*, and see chapter 1 footnote 39).

39 For examples, see also Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, ed. K. al-Manṣūr 31, 50, 106, 115, 218, 242–3, 288, 292, 376–7, 392, 394, 406, 411.

40 See appendix A group B no. 2 (footnote 189).

41 In the historical narrative of the years 824–7/1421–4, I came across two short dialogues; see al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd*, ed. al-Qarmūṭ 152, 177.

that when describing past events, al-ʿAynī may have allowed himself to preserve some nonstandard usages employed by his quoted sources. Little observed that al-ʿAynī transformed al-Yūsufī's colloquial usages into standard Arabic.⁴² However, at least in a few cases, he preserved some of al-Yūsufī's nonstandard usages, mainly in the frame of quoted dialogues in story-like reports.⁴³ More importantly, al-ʿAynī was accused by the Shāfiʿī religious scholar Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 852/1449) of quoting Ibn Duqmāq without correcting his linguistic mistakes, and this was perhaps not merely propaganda, because there is evidence that al-ʿAynī actually preserved in the narrative line of *ʿIqd al-jumān* some nonstandard usages of Ibn Duqmāq's *Nuzhat al-anām*.⁴⁴ Only further research will be able to determine if Ibn Ḥajar's accusations are correct and to what degree al-ʿAynī was willing to employ nonstandard usages of Arabic, and if such usages were the result of lack of attention. At this point, however, it seems reasonable to assume that at least in accounts of past events, al-ʿAynī did not totally refrain from employing nonstandard usages of Arabic.

4 Historians Who Were Religious Scholars: Shāfiʿīs

As for historians who were Shāfiʿī religious scholars (group E in appendix A), the trend is quite different.⁴⁵ Almost all Shāfiʿī historians seem to have been trying consciously and systematically to refrain from nonstandard usages of Arabic. As far as I know, no modern scholar has observed that the Shāfiʿī historians surveyed in appendix A employed nonstandard usages of Arabic, at least not in any significant manner (one exception will be mentioned below). Of course, every effort has its limits and sometimes, due to lack of attention, such nonstandard usages slipped into their writing.⁴⁶ How important it was

42 Little, *Recovery* 44; *Analysis* 260.

43 See appendix A group B no. 2 (footnote 188).

44 See appendix A group B no. 2 (footnote 189).

45 It should be emphasized that the discussion here does not concern historians who were officially affiliated with the Shāfiʿī school of law but specialized as *udabāʾ-kuttāb*. I discuss this group (group D in appendix A) in section 6.1 below.

46 For some minor deviations from standard Arabic (mainly related to orthography) in al-Maqrīzī's (d. 845/1442) draft notebooks, probably due to lack of attention and the speed of writing that are typical of drafts and notebooks, see Bauden, *Maqriziana* VIII 21–36; and see also, *Maqriziana* II 84–6; and see appendix B (no. 2 at footnote 225) for an example of a deviation (lack of standardization of a quoted source) in al-Dhahabī's (d. 748/1348) *Taʾrīkh al-Islām*; and see also appendix C (footnote 247) for an example of a deviation (lack of standardization of a quoted source) in Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's (d. 851/1448) chronicle.

for Shāfiʿī historians to keep their language as clean as possible from non-standard usages of Arabic, and how much effort they put into achieving this goal, becomes clear when comparing Shāfiʿī historians' quotations of earlier sources with the original texts. It soon becomes clear that Shāfiʿī historians consistently standardized nonstandard usages of Arabic that were employed by the historians they quote, whether related to the military institution, to the Ḥanbalī or Ḥanafī schools of law, or to the *kuttāb-udabā'* tradition (see especially appendixes B and C).⁴⁷ The importance that Shāfiʿīs ascribed to standard Arabic becomes clear also when realizing that accusations regarding improper usages of Arabic were always headed by Shāfiʿīs against historians of military, Ḥanbalī, or Ḥanafī background, and never the other way around.⁴⁸ Of course, accusations may be mere propaganda. However, even if only propaganda, it shows that the Shāfiʿīs aimed at constructing their image as guardians of the Arabic language. As far as we can tell at this point, however, the historians accused by the Shāfiʿīs of employing nonstandard usages of Arabic, in fact, really did so (the case of al-ʿAynī should be further examined). Moreover, it seems that Shāfiʿīs were making great efforts to keep their own theoretical standard also in practice.

At times it is possible to see how Shāfiʿī historians standardize nonstandard usages in sources used by them, whereas Ibn Taghribirdī, (a Ḥanafī) related to the military institution, preserves some of these usages (see table 2.1 below). The first example in table 2.1 is straightforward. It exemplifies how the Shāfiʿī

47 The Shāfiʿī al-Dhababī standardizes al-Jazarī related to Ḥanbalī circles (see appendix A group E no. 1; for a detailed comparison and discussion, see appendix B). The Shāfiʿī Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373) standardizes al-Birzālī related to Ḥanbalī circles (see appendix A group E no. 2; and see appendix A group C footnote 200). The Shāfiʿī al-Maqrīzī standardizes the military man al-Yūsufī and the Ḥanafī Ibn al-Furāt (see appendix A group E no. 3; and see chapter 1 table 1.2 and footnote 48). The Shāfiʿīs Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba/al-ʿAjlūnī standardize the military man al-Shujāʿī (see appendix A group E no. 4 and footnote 212; for a detailed comparison, see appendix C). The Shāfiʿī Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī standardizes the *adīb* al-Ṣafadī [d. 764/1363] (see appendix A group E no. 5; and see appendix A group D no. 2 footnote 203; and see table 2.1 below).

48 The Shāfiʿī al-Dhababī accuses al-Jazarī related to Ḥanbalī circles (see appendix A group E no. 1; and see appendix A group C no. 2). The Shāfiʿī Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī criticizes al-Yūsufī and (the Ḥanafī) Ibn Duqmāq related to the military institution and the Ḥanafī al-ʿAynī (appendix A group E no. 5; appendix A group A [soldiers] no. 4; appendix A group A [*mamlūks'* descendants] no. 2; appendix A group B no. 2). The Shāfiʿī al-Sakhāwī (d. 902/1497) criticizes (the Ḥanafis) Ibn Duqmāq and Ibn Taghribirdī related to the military institution and the Ḥanafis Ibn al-Furāt and Ibn al-Ṣayrafi (see appendix A group E no. 7; appendix A group A [*mamlūks'* descendants] nos. 2, 3; appendix A group B nos. 1, 3). The Shāfiʿī Mūsā b. Yūsuf al-Ayyūbī al-Anṣārī (d. 1000/1592) criticizes the Ḥanafī Ibn Ṭūlūn (see appendix A group B no. 4).

TABLE 2.1 Trends of standardization

1. Ibn Ḥajar—al-Ṣafadī versus Ibn Taghrībirdī—al-Ṣafadī^aal-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfi*al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān al-ʿaṣr*

يَقُولُ: رُوحٌ إِلَى الْأَمِيرِ بُوَسْ يَدُهُ

يَقُولُ لَهُ: رُوحٌ إِلَى الْأَمِيرِ وَبُوَسْ يَدُهُ

Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Manhal al-ṣāfi*Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-kāmina*

يَقُولُ: رُوحٌ إِلَى الْأَمِيرِ بُوَسْ يَدُهُ

يَقُولُ لَهُ: رُوحٌ إِلَى الْأَمِيرِ وَبُسْ يَدُهُ

2. al-Maqrīzī—(Ibn al-Furāt?)—Ibn Duqmāq; versus Ibn Taghrībirdī—Ibn Duqmāq; and versus Abū Ḥāmid al-Maḡdisī—Ibn Duqmāq

Ibn Duqmāq, *al-Nafha al-miskiyya*^b

فَقَالَ: أَنَا أُرُوحُ بِشَرَطٍ أَنْ تَكُونَ سَائِرَ مَمَالِكِي وَقُشَائِي وَكُلَّ مَا لِي مَعِي

Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Manhal al-ṣāfi* / *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*^c

فَقَالَ: أَنَا أُرُوحُ بِشَرَطٍ أَنْ يَكُونَ كُلُّ مَا أَمْلِكُهُ وَجَمِيعَ مَمَالِكِي مَعِي

Abū Ḥāmid al-Maḡdisī, *Kitāb Duwal al-Islām*^d

فَقَالَ: أُرُوحُ بِشَرَطٍ أَنْ يَكُونَ مَمَالِكِي وَسَائِرَ مَا أَمْلِكُهُ مَعِي

al-Maqrīzī, *al-Sulūk/al-Khiṭaṭ*فَقَالَ: لَا أَتَوَجَّهُ لِذَلِكَ إِلَّا وَمَعِي جَمِيعَ مَمَالِكِي وَقُشَائِي وَكُلَّ مَا أَمْلِكُهُ^eفَقَالَ: لَا أَتَوَجَّهُ لِذَلِكَ إِلَّا وَمَعِي مَمَالِكِي كُلُّهُمْ وَقُشَائِي وَجَمِيعَ أَمْوَالِي^f

a For references, see appendix A group D no. 2 (footnote 203).

b Ibn Duqmāq, *Nafha* 212.c Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm* xi, 60; *Manhal* iii, 42.d Al-Maḡdisī, *Duwal* 75.e Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 213.f Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ* iv, 257–8.

Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī standardizes al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1363), whereas Ibn Taghrībirdī preserves al-Ṣafadī's nonstandard usages (for details, see appendix A, group D, no. 2, footnote 203).

The second example in table 2.1 is somewhat speculative; however, there is no doubt that the origin of the material is Duqmāqian. Considering what

we know about the sources of Ibn Taghrībirdī and al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442) for events of the last quarter of the 8th/14th century (the utterance in direct speech in the table is taken from a report on an event that took place in 775/1373), it is relatively safe to assume that Ibn Taghrībirdī took the materials from *Nuzhat al-anām*⁴⁹ and that al-Maqrīzī's text is of Duqmāqian origin (*Nuzhat al-anām*); however, he probably took it from Ibn al-Furāt.⁵⁰ In Ibn Duqmāq's text we find the expression “*anā arūhu*” (I will go), which employs the verb *rāha* and repeats the pronoun, which are typical of colloquial language. Apparently, there is also a lack of concord between the subject *sā'ir mamālīkī* and the verb *takūna*.⁵¹ Ibn Taghrībirdī preserves “*anā arūhu*” but bypasses the lack of gender concord by paraphrasing the sentence. Al-Maqrīzī on the other hand gets rid of all the nonstandard usages in Ibn Duqmāq's text.⁵² The Shāfi'ī historian and religious scholar Abū Ḥāmid al-Maqdisī (d. 888/1483) undoubtedly took the text directly from Ibn Duqmāq's *al-Nafha al-miskiyya*.⁵³ Al-Maqdisī drops the repetition of the pronoun and bypasses the lack of gender concord; however, he preserves the verb *rāha*. Al-Maqdisī's language is in fact an exception to the general trend

49 See Massoud, *Chronicles* 62.

50 See chapter 1 footnotes 47–53.

51 On lack of gender concord in Middle Arabic, see Blau, *Handbook* 46 (no. 82).

52 It has been generally noted (without giving examples) that in the *Khīṭaṭ* al-Maqrīzī employed nonstandard usages of Arabic, see Rizq Salīm, *al-Adab* 21. However, here we see that in the *Khīṭaṭ* al-Maqrīzī standardizes materials of apparently Duqmāqian origin. There is also evidence that al-Maqrīzī standardized in the *Khīṭaṭ* materials from al-Yūsufī: compare the report on *qanātir al-sibā'* in al-Maqrīzī, *Khīṭaṭ* iii, 260–1 with al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 264–5. Trends of standardization in the *Khīṭaṭ*, however, should be further examined.

53 Compare Ibn Duqmāq, *Nafha* 212 (lines 1–7) with al-Maqdisī, *Duwal* 75 (lines 5–11). Al-Maqdisī standardizes most of the nonstandard usages in *al-Nafha al-miskiyya* (see footnotes 1–2 in Ibn Duqmāq, *Nafha* 212, where the editor mentions what the standard form should have been, and compare with al-Maqrīzī's text). However, he preserves some of the nonstandard usages. Haarmann thought that in the account of events of the Mamluk period in *Kitāb Duwal al-Islām*, al-Maqdisī relied heavily on al-Maqrīzī, who was his teacher (and on Ibn Taghrībirdī); see Haarmann's introduction in al-Maqdisī, *Duwal* 45–53. Moreover, according to Haarmann, al-Maqdisī allowed himself to transform the language of al-Maqrīzī into colloquial language—“al-Maqrīzī's correct Arabic is elegantly transformed into colloquial Arabic”; see Haarmann, al-Maqrīzī 158. I cannot elaborate on it in the scope of this paper, however, most of the accounts of events of the Turkish period of the Mamluk Sultanate in *Kitāb Duwal al-Islām* are in fact word-for-word quotations of *al-Nafha al-miskiyya*, which makes up the backbone of extensive parts of *Kitāb Duwal al-Islām*. Al-Maqdisī standardizes many of the nonstandard usages in *al-Nafha al-miskiyya* but keeps many other nonstandard usages. He is by no means turning al-Maqrīzī's standard Arabic into colloquial language.

of standardization exhibited by historians who were Shāfiʿī religious scholars.⁵⁴ As Haarmann has argued, however, al-Maqdisī was far from being a typical religious scholar and historian. After being ridiculed by his colleagues who did not consider him intelligent enough, he wrote a treatise, praising the Mamluk rulers and criticizing his fellow *ʿulamāʾ*. His case is perhaps more a matter for the psychologist than the linguist.⁵⁵

4.1 *Some Notes on Language Use in Drafts and Diaries/Journals, and on the Level of Religious Education of the Historians*

Before concluding that the trend of standardization was specifically typical of Shāfiʿīs, three factors should be taken into consideration: the status of the manuscripts upon which the linguistic observations are based, the genre of the treatises, and the level of the authors. One would expect more usages of nonstandard Arabic in drafts or unedited diary-like records written on a daily basis without much revision.⁵⁶ Among the historians who were Ḥanafī religious scholars, Ibn al-Furāt's chronicle is, in fact, a draft manuscript,⁵⁷ and Ibn Ṭūlūn's *Mufākahat al-khillān* consists mainly of diary entries.⁵⁸ There is no evidence that Ibn Ṭūlūn edited or revised the diary-like material.⁵⁹ However, it has been suggested that the diary material in *Mufākahat al-khillān* starts, in fact, in 921/1515,⁶⁰ and nonstandard usages are found in this work also before that year. As for drafts of Shāfiʿī religious scholars, in the autograph draft notebooks of al-Maqrīzī, Bauden found only some minor deviations from standard Arabic (mainly related to orthography), probably due to lack of attention and the speed of writing that are typical of drafts and notebooks.⁶¹ In the autograph draft of *Izhār al-ʿaṣr*, the chronicle of al-Biqāʿī (d. 885/1480), which has diary- or journal-like qualities, no conspicuous usages of nonstandard Arabic have been observed.⁶² This seems to be the case also with the autograph draft of

54 See appendix A group E (exception - footnote 219).

55 Haarmann, *Rather* 61–77 (esp. 71–2). It may also be noted that his historical works are only partially subjugated to the annalistic traditional form.

56 On unedited diary records, see Wollina, *Ibn Ṭawq* 343–7 (esp. 345); and see also Conermann and Seidensticker, *Remarks* 121–7.

57 See appendix A group B no. 1.

58 Conermann, *Ibn Ṭūlūn* 131; Hirschler, *Islam* 283.

59 Conermann, *Ibn Ṭūlūn* 131.

60 *Ibid.* On Ibn Ṭūlūn's revision of materials prior to this date, see the editor's introduction in *Ibn Ṭūlūn, Mufākahat*, ed. M. Muṣṭafā ii, 16–8.

61 Bauden, *Maqriziana* VIII 21–36; and see also, *Maqriziana* II 84–6.

62 See appendix A group E no. 6. On the diary-like qualities of *Izhār al-ʿaṣr*, see Guo, *al-Biqāʿī's* 132; *Tales* 119; but see Wollina, *Ibn Ṭawq* 345 (at footnote 48).

Inbāʾ al-ghumr, the chronicle of Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī dedicated to his lifetime.⁶³ In contrast, a substantial number of nonstandard usages of Arabic may be found in the autograph draft of the chronicle of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba (d. 851/1448). These, however, were in all likelihood parts of word-for-word quotations of selected sources used by Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, which he intended to standardize in the fair copy, and they were eventually standardized by his student under his supervision.⁶⁴ Similarly, we find in al-Dhahabī's (d. 748/1348) autograph manuscript of a selection of reports from al-Jazarī's chronicle (*al-Mukhtār min Taʾrīkh Ibn al-Jazarī*) almost word-for-word quotations, which preserve some nonstandard usages of al-Jazarī. These reports were used by al-Dhahabī as raw material, some of which were later incorporated into his historical works, however, not before being standardized (see appendix B, especially at footnotes 226–8). In comparison to the abovementioned drafts of Shāfiʿī historians, in the draft of the chronicle of the Ḥanafī Ibn al-Furāt, the nonstandard usages are far more numerous and seem to reflect the language of Ibn al-Furāt himself and not necessarily the language of the sources he is quoting.

And what about the level of religious scholars? Perhaps the Shāfiʿī religious scholars refrained from employing nonstandard usages of Arabic because they were highly educated, and not specifically because they were Shāfiʿīs?⁶⁵ After all, al-Maqdisī, the only Shāfiʿī religious scholar employing nonstandard usages of Arabic in a conspicuous manner, cannot be considered a high-level religious scholar. Among the Ḥanafī religious scholars, Ibn al-Furāt and Ibn al-Ṣayrafī perhaps cannot be considered high-level religious scholars. Notwithstanding this, the fact that the relatively highly educated Ḥanbalī al-Yūnīnī and Ḥanafī Ibn Ṭūlūn, and possibly also the highly educated Ḥanafī al-ʿAynī, allowed themselves to employ nonstandard usages of Arabic suggests that specifically Shāfiʿīs

63 On the draft, see the editor's introduction in Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Inbāʾ* i, 23. Nonstandard usages seem to be rare. Interestingly, in one of the manuscripts of this work in the possession of his student al-Biqāʿī, one such usage was remarked and corrected in the margins, suggesting that the aim of Shāfiʿīs was to avoid such usages as much as possible; see *ibid.* iv, 22 (footnote 4).

64 See appendix A group E no. 4 (footnote 212); and see appendix C. Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba is known to have gathered a selection (*muntaqā*) of reports from the chronicles of Ibn al-Furāt and Ibn Duqmāq, some of which were later incorporated in his historical works; see Massoud, *Chronicles* 35, 83.

65 And see the remarks of Thomas Bauer and Thomas Herzog that “highly educated” or “high-brow” *ʿulamāʾ* (they are not referring to historians specifically) avoided colloquial genres in order to not endanger their reputation and saw in the flawless mastering of Arabic grammar a means to differentiate themselves from lesser-educated aspirants; see Bauer, *Misunderstandings* 110; Herzog, *Mamluk* 145.

refrained from nonstandard usages of Arabic as a mechanism of social distinction and as a way to emphasize their “Arabness,” mainly in opposition to foreign Ḥanafī scholars.⁶⁶

4.2 *The Importance of Arabness and the Arabic Language for the Shāfi'īs*

In Mamluk biographical dictionaries dedicated to prominent contemporary persons, roughly 30–40% of religious scholars identified as Shāfi'īs have an Arab tribal *nisba* or (less commonly) a *nisba* that traces their origin to a prominent Arab historical figure.⁶⁷ The percentage is similar in most Mamluk biographical dictionaries dedicated exclusively to Shāfi'ī scholars. R.K. Jaques has noted that in Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's biographical dictionary dedicated to Shāfi'ī scholars (*Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'īyya*), tribal affiliation is mentioned in 31% of the biographical entries.⁶⁸ However, according to my count, in biographical entries of Shāfi'īs, who died in the 7th/13th and 8th/14th centuries, an Arab *nisba* is mentioned in roughly 40% of the biographical entries. In Ibn Kathīr's (d. 774/1373) *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'īyya*, in biographical entries of Shāfi'īs who died in the years 651–710/1253–1311, an Arab *nisba* is mentioned in roughly 45% of the entries. In Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī's (d. 771/1370) *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'īyya al-kubrā*, in biographical entries of Shāfi'īs who died in the 7th/13th and 8th/14th centuries, an Arab *nisba* is mentioned in roughly 25% of the biographical entries.⁶⁹

66 In this context, see also Levanoni, Who were 74–6; Supplementary 155–6.

67 In al-Ṣafādī's *A'yān al-ʿaṣr* and in Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī's *al-Durar al-kāmina* almost 30% of the Shāfi'īs have a *nisba* indicating an Arab origin. In the first seven volumes of Ibn Taghribirdī's *al-Manhal al-ṣāfi*, almost 40% of the Shāfi'īs have a *nisba* indicating an Arab origin. It should be made clear that the actual percentage of Shāfi'īs who had (or at least claimed to have) Arab origin was probably somewhat higher. I have restricted myself to counting *nisbas* in specific sources and did not combine information from all sources, nor did I thoroughly examine the origin of scholars mentioned in biographical dictionaries. Some prominent Shāfi'ī scholars are mentioned in some sources with an Arab *nisba* and in other sources without that *nisba*. It is quite possible that in their cases, it was sufficient to mention only their lineage and “family name,” which were known to have been connected to an Arab origin. For example, members of the Subkī family are sometimes identified as Khazrajīs or Anṣārīs but at other times simply as Subkīs. In his *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'īyya al-kubrā*, Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī himself identifies his family members simply as Subkīs; however, in the biographical entry of his grandfather, he mentions that he found in his writings that the tribes in the area of al-Subkiyya (*ma'āshir al-Subkiyya*) are Anṣārīs; see al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt* x, 91.

68 Jaques, *Authority* 263.

69 Al-Subkī, as mentioned, does not mention a tribal *nisba* in biographical entries of his family members. According to Jaques, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's interest in tribal affiliation seems to be untypical for Shāfi'ī *Ṭabaqāt* texts and is more typical of history works; see *ibid.* 263–

In contrast, only roughly 10–15% of religious scholars identified as Ḥanafīs in Mamluk biographical dictionaries dedicated to prominent contemporary persons have an Arab *nisba*.⁷⁰ On the other hand, in these dictionaries about 30–40% of the Ḥanafīs have a non-Arab ethnic *nisba*, or geographical *nisba*, suggesting an origin in Iran and its contiguous areas, Transoxiana, the Indian subcontinent, Central Asia, and Anatolia.⁷¹ Only roughly 15% of religious scholars identified as Ḥanbalīs in Mamluk biographical dictionaries dedicated to prominent contemporary persons have an Arab *nisba*,⁷² although only approximately 7% of them have a non-Arab ethnic *nisba* or geographical *nisba*, suggesting an origin in the aforementioned areas.⁷³ Thus, it would seem that

4. Among the Mamluk Shāfiʿī *Ṭabaqāt* works, Jaques mentions the works of al-Subkī and al-Isnawī (d. 772/1370) but does not mention Ibn Kathīr's work. According to Jaques, al-Isnawī mentions tribal affiliation in only 6% of biographical entries and al-Subkī in less than 10% of the biographical entries. According to my count, however, al-Subkī mentions Arab *nisba* in roughly 20% of the biographical entries and, as mentioned, in roughly 25% of biographical entries of Shāfiʿīs who died in the 7th/13th and 8th/14th centuries. It thus seems that, at least with respect to Mamluk Shāfiʿī *Ṭabaqāt* works, the exception is not Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba but rather al-Isnawī, who does not tend to mention tribal *nisbas* and focuses on geographical *nisbas*.

70 In al-Ṣafadī's *A'yān al-ʿaṣr* about 10% of the Ḥanafīs have a *nisba* indicating an Arab origin; in Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī's *al-Durar al-kāmīna* about 15%; in the first seven volumes of Ibn Taghrībirdī's *al-Manhal al-ṣāfi* about 12%.

71 In al-Ṣafadī's *A'yān al-ʿaṣr* and in Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī's *al-Durar al-kāmīna* about 30%. In the first seven volumes of Ibn Taghrībirdī's *al-Manhal al-ṣāfi* about 40%. In comparison, in these dictionaries only 10–15% of Shāfiʿīs have a non-Arab ethnic *nisba* or geographical *nisba* suggesting an origin in the aforementioned areas. Moreover, among the Shāfiʿīs with foreign geographical *nisbas*, some scholars are also, at times, identified by an Arab tribal *nisba*, or are known to have been Arab, and/or are known to have been born in the territories of the Mamluk Sultanate. On foreign scholars who migrated to Cairo during the Mamluk period, many of them Ḥanafīs, see Petry, *Civilian* 61–77, 154–7.

72 In al-Ṣafadī's *A'yān al-ʿaṣr* and in the first seven volumes of Ibn Taghrībirdī's *al-Manhal al-ṣāfi* about 15%. In Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī's *al-Durar al-kāmīna* about 12%. The percentage is similar in Mamluk biographical dictionaries dedicated exclusively to Ḥanbalīs. In Ibn Rajab's (d. 795/1393) *al-Dhayl ʿalā Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila* tribal affiliation is mentioned in about 15% of the biographical entries of Ḥanbalīs who died in the 7th/13th and 8th/14th centuries. It should be noted that biographical dictionaries dedicated exclusively to Ḥanbalīs give much more room for Iraqi scholars that are not mentioned in Mamluk biographical dictionaries dedicated to contemporary prominent persons, which normally focus on Mamluk scholars.

73 In al-Ṣafadī's *A'yān al-ʿaṣr* about 6%. In Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī's *al-Durar al-kāmīna* about 7%. In the first seven volumes of Ibn Taghrībirdī's *al-Manhal al-ṣāfi* about 8%. Such *nisbas* are mentioned in about 7% of the biographical entries of Ḥanbalīs who died in the 7th/13th and 8th/14th centuries in Ibn Rajab's *al-Dhayl ʿalā Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila*.

Shāfi'īs emphasized their "Arabness" and considered it an important element of their collective identity.⁷⁴

Shāfi'īs took pride in their eponym's Arab descent, and more specifically his Qurashī, and even Hāshimī-Muṭallibī, descent. As has been shown by Ella Landau-Tasseron, starting from the 3rd/9th century, Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī's (d. 204/820) followers emphasized his meritorious descent as part of their efforts to construct his legitimacy and authority as a jurist, whereas his opponents tried to deny this descent in order to defame him.⁷⁵ Importantly, Shāfi'ī religious scholars of the Mamluk period, among them historians, were actively participating in this discourse. In *Manāqib al-Shāfi'ī* literature or biographies dedicated to al-Shāfi'ī during the Mamluk period, Shāfi'ī religious scholars preserve the image of their eponym as a Qurashī and Muṭallibī and "a cousin of the Prophet" (*ibn 'amm Rasūl Allāh*).⁷⁶ His affiliation with the Prophet's clan and his noble descent (*sharaf nasabihi*) is considered as one of his merits (*faḍā'il*).⁷⁷ He is said to have had the intelligence of the Qurashīs (*Qurashī al-'aql*).⁷⁸ He is described as a leading religious scholar from Quraysh (*imām ālim min Quraysh/imām Qurashī*), and this descent is used to claim his superiority over other religious scholars.⁷⁹ Thus, it is not surprising that Shāfi'īs took pride in Qurashī descent⁸⁰ and even used it to construct their authority. As has been noted by Jaques, in his *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya*, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba was arguing that his meritorious Qurashī descent is an important part of his authority as a jurist.⁸¹

Al-Shāfi'ī, who, according to some traditions, was born in Yemen, is said to have been sent to Mecca by his mother because she wanted him to be like his family and was afraid that living in Yemen would blur the quality of his descent (*ilḥaq bi-ahlīka fa-takūna mithlahum fa-innī akhāfu an yughlaba 'alā*

74 Among the Ḥanafīs, the non-Arab element was strong. The fact that Ḥanbalīs normally do not have a non-Arab *nisba* but are still represented by Arab *nisbas* much less than Shāfi'īs suggests that using an Arab *nisba* was not necessarily a matter of social background but a matter of ideology. However, one should consider also a regional factor: Most Mamluk Shāfi'ī religious scholars in biographical dictionaries are Egyptians whereas most Mamluk Ḥanbalīs are Syrian.

75 Landau-Tasseron, Cyclical 100–2; and see also Ali, *Imam* 68.

76 Ibn Kathīr, *Manāqib* 60–1; *Ṭabaqāt* i, 18–9 (his mother is said to have been of the Azd tribe, which is the "source" of all Arabs [*jurthūmat al-'Arab*]); and see also Ibn Qudāma al-Maqdisī, *Manāqib* 104 (*shaqiḳ Rasūl Allāh fi nasabihi wa-sharikuhu fi ḥasabihi*).

77 Ibn Kathīr, *Manāqib* 126; Ibn Ḥajar, *Manāqib* 29, 102.

78 Ibn Kathīr, *Manāqib* 148; Ibn Ḥajar, *Manāqib* 83, 95.

79 Ibn Kathīr, *Manāqib* 138; Ibn Ḥajar, *Manāqib* 39; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Manāqib* 64–5.

80 See for example Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-'Umarī, *Masālik* 156.

81 Jaques, *Authority* 258–66.

nasabika).⁸² Al-Shāfi'ī is said to have stayed with Arab (Bedouin) tribes from childhood and to have learned their poetry and language for 20 years. According to several traditions, al-Shāfi'ī stayed with the tribe of Hudhayl, considered to be the most eloquent among the Arab tribes (*afṣaḥ al-'Arab*).⁸³ His descent from the Prophet's clan (*bayt al-nubuwwa*) and his upbringing among the Arab tribes explains why he was the most knowledgeable in the Arab science of physiognomy (*firāsa*), poetry (*shī'r*), the battles of the Arabs (*ayyām al-'Arab*), and the genealogy of the Arabs (*ansāb*).⁸⁴ During the Mamluk period, the focus that Shāfi'īs put on Arab genealogy is also illustrated by the dominant role they played (at least in Egypt) in the production of treatises on the genealogy of Arab tribes. Probably the most conspicuous examples are *Nihāyat al-arab fī ma'rifat qabā'il al-'Arab* and *Qalā'id al-jumān fī l-ta'rīf bi-qabā'il 'Arab al-zamān*, written by Abū l-'Abbās al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418),⁸⁵ and *al-Bayān wa-l-i'rāb 'amman fī Arḍ Miṣr min qabā'il al-A'rāb*, written by al-Maqrīzī.⁸⁶ Interestingly, in the introduction, al-Maqrīzī dedicates the treatise to his Arab kinsmen (*abnā' jinsī*).⁸⁷

82 Ibn Kathīr, *Ṭabaqāt* i, 19.

83 Ibid., *Manāqib* 72–3; *Ṭabaqāt* i, 21; and see also Ibn Qudāma al-Maqdisī, *Manāqib* 122.

84 Ibn Ḥajar, *Manāqib* 97 (he knew the genealogy of men and women), 104, 105 (experts of poetry came to consult him); Ibn Kathīr, *Ṭabaqāt* i, 52–3; *Manāqib* 203–4, 208, and see also 169; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Manāqib* 52–3, 60, 70, 73, 81–2; Ibn Qudāma al-Maqdisī, *Manāqib* 119–20. On poetry written by al-Shāfi'ī, see for example Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Manāqib* 49–51.

85 See Bauden, Like 200–3; Brockelmann, *History* 142–3.

86 See al-Maqrīzī, *Rasā'il* 123–54. Note that al-Maqrīzī authored a general history of humanity that dedicated an important place to the genealogy of the Prophet and the Arabs (*Kitāb al-Khabar 'an al-bashar fī ansāb al-'Arab wa-nasab sayyid al-bashar*). In this treatise, al-Maqrīzī puts emphasis on the importance of the Arabs (and their language), extolls their superiority, and in fact, suggests that the Arabs (and Quraysh in particular) are the only ones entitled to power in Islam; see Ghersetti, *Language* 145–6. To these may be added *Nihāyat al-arab fī ma'rifat ansāb al-'Arab*, the work of the Shāfi'ī Najm al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Qalqashandī (d. 876/1471), the son of Abū l-'Abbās al-Qalqashandī, which is an imitation (in fact, an appropriation) of his father's work; see Bauden, Like 200–3, 214; Brockelmann, *History* 143; and *Qabā'il al-Khazraj* and *Qabā'il al-Aws* attributed to the Shāfi'ī 'Abd al-Mu'min b. Khalaf al-Dumyāṭī (d. 705/1306); see al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān* iii, 180; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Manhal* vii, 372; al-Zarkalī, *A'lām* iv, 169–70; al-Bābānī, *Hadīyyat* i, 631. According to al-Bābānī, the Shāfi'ī Egyptian scholar Badr al-Dīn Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. Ayyūb (d. 866/1461), known as *al-sharīf al-nassāba*, composed a treatise on the genealogy of Arab tribes entitled *al-Jawhar al-maknūn fī l-qabā'il wa-l-buṭūn*; see ibid. i, 286. This, however, seems to be a mistake stemming from the fact that a treatise by that name was written by Muḥammad b. As'ad al-Jawwānī (d. 588/1192), also known as *al-sharīf al-nassāba*; see al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ* iv, 351–2.

87 Al-Maqrīzī, *Rasā'il* 125.

Most important to the discussion at hand, the Shāfiʿī tradition puts emphasis on al-Shāfiʿī's superior competence in the Arabic language. Before surveying the Shāfiʿī tradition, it should be mentioned that in his *Risāla*, al-Shāfiʿī himself was arguing that "God had sent down His Quran in Arabic, the mother-tongue of His Prophet" and "granted Muḥammad—alone among humans—a comprehensive and perfect command of the language."⁸⁸ Arabic is perceived as a "sacral" and superior linguistic medium.⁸⁹ Part of the genius of the Arabic language is that it is frequently ambiguous.⁹⁰ This ambiguity "ensures a role for interpreters steeped in Arabic" and accounts for al-Shāfiʿī's insistence on "the centrality of linguistic expertise for interpretation," his concern for nuances of the Arabic language, and his deep interest in words and language.⁹¹ Possibly, al-Shāfiʿī even claimed that Arabs are superior to non-Arabs when he offered a theory of "divinely sanctioned ethno-linguistic superiority" and asserted that "[t]he people most entitled to superiority in regard to language are those whose language is the language of the Prophet,"⁹² implying that "all Muslims have an unconditional obligation to learn Arabic at the level of a native speaker" and that "non-Arabic speakers were not directly addressed by the Quran." Such assertions were rejected by Ḥanafī (non-Arab) jurists.⁹³

Manāqib al-Shāfiʿī and Shāfiʿī biographical literature written during the Mamluk period give a prominent place to al-Shāfiʿī's competence in the Arabic language (*al-mahāra fī lughat al-ʿArab*), which is linked to his noble descent and him being a relative of the Prophet (*sharaf al-nasab/nasīb Rasūl Allāh/qarābatihī min Rasūl Allāh*).⁹⁴ Al-Shāfiʿī is said to have been of Arab character and to have spoken an Arabic mother tongue (*ʿArabī al-naḥs ʿArabī al-lisān*).⁹⁵ Al-Shāfiʿī is said to have been acknowledged as the most eloquent person (*faṣīḥ/aḥṣaḥ/aḥṣaḥ lisān*) by his contemporaries.⁹⁶ He is also said to have been the most knowledgeable in the Arabic language (*lisān al-ʿArab*).⁹⁷ The level of his Arabic was so high that when he wrote his books, he had to lower it

88 Burton, *Abū Ubaid* 21.

89 Lowry, Preliminary 509 (footnote 7); and see also Ali, *Imam* 67.

90 Burton, *Abū Ubaid* 22.

91 Ali, *Imam* 67–8; and see Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Manāqib* 52–3.

92 Ali, *Imam* 67–8.

93 Lowry, Preliminary 517.

94 Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Manāqib* 29, 101; Ibn Kathīr, *Manāqib* 165; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Manāqib* 20; and see Ali, *Imam* 68.

95 Ibn Kathīr, *Manāqib* 207; *Ṭabaqāt* i, 53; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Manāqib* 96.

96 Ibn Kathīr, *Manāqib* 143, 146, 205, 207; *Ṭabaqāt* i, 22, 37, 52–3; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Manāqib* 78–9, 86, 90, 97, 101; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Manāqib* 32, 72–3.

97 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Manāqib* 70, and see also 66.

down so that the people would understand him.⁹⁸ His contemporaries, among them experts of the Arabic language, agreed that he was a master (*faylasūf*) of language (*lugha*) and an authority in linguistic matters (*kalām al-Shāfiʿī fī l-lugha ḥujja/mimman tu'khadhu 'anhu al-lugha/imām fī l-lugha/ḥujja fī l-naḥw*).⁹⁹ Experts in the Arabic language (*ahl al-ʿArabiyya*) came to consult him in matters related to the Arabic language.¹⁰⁰ Experts of the Arabic language who spent a long time with him are said to have reported that he never spoke ungrammatical Arabic (*laḥna*).¹⁰¹ It is said that when someone read to al-Shāfiʿī and made a mistake in Arabic (*laḥana*), al-Shāfiʿī became troubled.¹⁰² Al-Shāfiʿī is reported to have said that the people became ignorant only because they moved away from the language of the Arabs (*kalām al-ʿArab/lisān al-ʿArab*).¹⁰³ And one last anecdote: It is reported that al-Shāfiʿī related that when he was still a young boy, he saw the Prophet in a dream. The Prophet asked him who he was, and al-Shāfiʿī replied that he was a member of the Prophet's family (*min raḥṭika*). The Prophet asked al-Shāfiʿī to approach him and then took his saliva and rubbed it over al-Shāfiʿī's tongue, mouth, and lips and told him that he may leave and that now he was blessed. Since that day, al-Shāfiʿī never made another mistake in Arabic (*fa-mā adhkuru annī laḥantu*).¹⁰⁴ It has been noted by Jaques that the Shāfiʿī *Manāqib* literature constructed a hagiographic vision of al-Shāfiʿī that mimics the story of Muḥammad's life.¹⁰⁵ This anecdote is perhaps a reminder of the opening and purification of Muḥammad's heart and his initiation into Prophethood. The changing of bodily fluids suggests, in fact, that the two became one. After his speech organs were rubbed by the Prophet's saliva, al-Shāfiʿī acquired the Prophet's perfect command of the Arabic language.¹⁰⁶ Given this Shāfiʿī mythos and ethos, and given the fact that Shāfiʿī

98 Ibid. 51; Ibn Qudāma al-Maqdisī, *Manāqib* 119.

99 Ibn Kathīr, *Manāqib* 154, 207; *Ṭabaqāt* i, 40; Ibn Ḥajar, *Manāqib* 85, 96, and see also 102–3; Ibn Qudāma al-Maqdisī, *Manāqib* 119, 131; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Manāqib* 32, 51, 60, 81.

100 Ibn Ḥajar, *Manāqib* 105; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Manāqib* 60.

101 Ibn Kathīr, *Manāqib* 206; *Ṭabaqāt* i, 53; Ibn Ḥajar, *Manāqib* 96; Ibn Qudāma al-Maqdisī, *Manāqib* 116; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Manāqib* 32, 73.

102 Ibn Kathīr, *Manāqib* 208; Ibn Ḥajar, *Manāqib* 115.

103 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Manāqib* 51–2.

104 Ibid. 60.

105 For example, al-Shāfiʿī is described as member of the tribe of Quraysh and the Prophet's clan, and his father is said to have died when he was young, see Jaques, *Other* 159; and see also Ali, *Imam* 110–1.

106 In another anecdote (if I understand it correctly), it is said that whoever meets al-Shāfiʿī will think that the Quran was sent down in his (i.e., al-Shāfiʿī's) language, see Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Manāqib* 71–2.

historians were actively participating in its preservation, it is hardly surprising that Shāfi'ī historians would refrain as much as possible from nonstandard usages of Arabic.¹⁰⁷

Manāqib, or biographical literature, of other schools of law do not put emphasis on their eponyms' competence in Arabic (at least not in the manner or intensity of the Shāfi'ī tradition). The Shāfi'ī tradition polemicizes with other schools when it has their eponyms acknowledge al-Shāfi'ī's authority and eloquence in the Arabic language.¹⁰⁸ A special place, however, is reserved for the non-Arab Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 150/767) and his followers. The Shāfi'ī tradition claims that al-Shāfi'ī was an expert in Arabic because he was an Arab (*tawaḥḥada al-Shāfi'ī bi-l-lughā li-annahu min ahlihā*), whereas Abū Ḥanīfa could not be blamed for any mistakes he made in Arabic because he was not an Arab (*kāna khārijan min al-lughā*).¹⁰⁹ It is reported that when someone claimed that the followers of Abū Ḥanīfa were eloquent, al-Shāfi'ī started reciting poetry verses, boasting of his eloquence and degrading his opponents.¹¹⁰ In Ḥanafī *Manāqib* (or biographical) literature written during the Mamluk period, one senses a defensive or apologetic tone. Al-Kardārī (d. 827/1424), for example, rejects the Shāfi'ī claim that because al-Shāfi'ī was a Qurashī from the Prophet's family and because he was more knowledgeable in the Arabic language he had greater authority as a scholar. Al-Kardārī mentioned that even the Qurashīs benefited from the knowledge of non-Arabs (*mawālī*).¹¹¹ Some tried to claim that Abū Ḥanīfa was of Arab origin; however, even Ḥanafīs did not accept this view.¹¹² Normally, the Ḥanafī tradition maintained that Abū Ḥanīfa was a descendant of a freed slave; however, some claimed that he was of non-Arab free origin, and others have ascribed to him a noble Persian descent.¹¹³ Most importantly, the Ḥanafī tradition claims that the accusations that Abū Ḥanīfa did not master the grammar of the Arabic language were not correct.¹¹⁴ Still, in chapters enumer-

107 It may be mentioned here that Mamluk Shāfi'ī religious scholars, among them historians, were dominant in the field of *taṣḥīf* (misreading). All treatises on this subject written during the Mamluk period that were surveyed by Konrad Hirschler were written by Shāfi'īs, see Hirschler, *Written* 92.

108 On Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855), see for example Ibn Kathīr, *Manāqib* 154, 207; Ibn Ḥajar, *Manāqib* 85–6; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Manāqib* 66; on Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/795), see for example Ibn Kathīr, *Manāqib* 207–8. Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 150/767), who died in the same year al-Shāfi'ī was born, could not have met him.

109 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Manāqib* 81.

110 Ibid. 49–50.

111 Al-Kardārī, *Manāqib* 56.

112 Al-Dimashqī, *Uqūd* 56–7.

113 See Ibid. 53–7; Ibn Abī l-Wafā' al-Qurashī, *al-Jawāhīr* i, 49–53.

114 Al-Dimashqī, *Uqūd* 167.

ating his merits in general (*jumal min makārim akhlāqihī*), knowledge of the Arabic language is not mentioned. On the other hand, knowledge of Persian is mentioned.¹¹⁵ Therefore, it is not surprising that non-Shāfiʿī religious scholars who were historians, and more specifically Ḥanafīs, felt less restricted by the norms of standard Arabic.

5 Language and Style in Mamluk Chronicles

At this point, it is possible to make two more general remarks regarding language and style in Mamluk chronicles. Ḥasan Ḥabashī (followed by Carl Petry) has posited a so-called “Cairo narrative style,” which may be characterized as “a blending of colloquial and formal language unique to the second half of the 9th/15th century” and represented by Ibn Iyās.¹¹⁶ According to Ḥabashī and Petry, the first representative of this style was Ibn al-Ṣayrafī.¹¹⁷ As noted by Haarmann, however, the term “Cairo narrative style,” as specifically characteristic of the second half of the 9th/15th century, is not appropriate, because “many sources of earlier times employ this amalgamation of the vernacular and *fushḥā*.”¹¹⁸ Guo mentioned Ibn al-Dawādārī as “just another example of this phenomenon”¹¹⁹ and noted that it is typical of Egyptian historians related to the military institution in general.¹²⁰ Guo concluded that “the enterprise of Ibn Iyās ... may better be placed within this long list of non-Arab Mamluk intelligentsia” whose linguistic and ethnic background must have had some influence on their language and style.¹²¹ As our survey has shown, not only is “the blending of colloquial and formal language” not specifically characteristic of the second part of the 9th/15th century, it is also not specifically characteristic of Egyptian historians, or even historians related to the military institution. We have seen that usages of nonstandard Arabic are typical of Egyptian historians related to the military institution (Baybars al-Manṣūrī being the exception), and of non-Shāfiʿī religious scholars in general (al-Birzālī and al-ʿAynī possibly being the

115 Ibid. 275.

116 Guo, *Mamluk* 41; and see also, Introduction 96 (footnote 60).

117 Ibn al-Ṣayrafī, *Inbāʾ* 17–21 (esp. 20); Petry, *Protectors* 6.

118 Haarmann, Review of *Twilight* 637 (footnote 2).

119 Guo, *Mamluk* 41.

120 Ibid. 43.

121 Ibid. And see Guo’s remarks concerning the debate about the existence of a so-called “Egyptian School,” and his emphasis on differences in background and life experience and on the complex background of Egyptian historians in contrast to the more homogenous background of their Syrian counterparts, *ibid.* 29–30, 37–41.

exceptions),¹²² but untypical of Shāfiʿī religious scholars in general (al-Maḡdisī being the exception).¹²³ Therefore, language by itself cannot be a differentiating criterion of an “Egyptian style,”¹²⁴ not even of a “military-related Egyptian style.”¹²⁵

Adding to usages of nonstandard Arabic the criterion of the incorporation of story-like reports with dialogues and direct speech in accounts of contemporary events in the historical narrative (*ḥawādith*) in chronicles perhaps may allow us a more nuanced differentiation between groups of historians. As already noted, the combination of nonstandard usages of Arabic and story-like reports with dialogues is typical of Egyptian historians related to the military institution.¹²⁶ In general, it is untypical of Shāfiʿī religious scholars, and not only because they refrained from employing nonstandard Arabic. Al-Maḡrīzī’s *Sulūk* has proven to be “dry” of story-like reports with dialogues containing direct speech in accounts of his own time.¹²⁷ It would seem that *Inbāʾ al-ghumr* and *Wajīz al-kalām*, the chronicles of the Egyptian Shāfiʿī historians Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī and al-Sakhāwī (d. 902/1497), are also “dry” of story-like reports with dialogues containing direct speech in accounts of contemporary events.¹²⁸ Apparently, this holds true also regarding chronicles of Syrian Shāfiʿī historians. The last parts of al-Dhahabī’s chronicle *Duwal al-Islam* contain no story-like reports with dialogues or utterances in direct speech. However, it should be remembered that it is only a summary of important events in the history of

122 Ibn al-Furāt and Ibn al-Ṣayrafi are Egyptian. Al-Yūnīnī, al-Jazarī, and Ibn Ṭūlūn are Syrian.

123 Al-Maḡrīzī, Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, al-Biqāʿī, and al-Sakhāwī are Egyptian. Al-Dhahabī, Ibn Kathīr, and Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba are Syrian.

124 Therefore, it is not advised to consider Ibn al-Furāt as an “earlier exponent” of the “so-called ‘Cairo narrative style’” only based on his usages of the Arabic language, see Bora, *Mamluk* 121–2 (footnote 7).

125 And see Nelly Hanna’s remarks regarding usages of nonstandard Arabic in chronicles written in Ottoman Egypt by “civilians,” see Hanna, *Chronicles* 248–9. See also footnote 153 below.

126 See section 2 above; and see chapter 1 section 1 footnotes 1–5; and see chapter 1 table 1.1.

127 For a detailed discussion, see chapter 1 section 2 at footnotes 59–61.

128 This element seems to be almost totally absent from *Wajīz al-kalām*. I have checked the years 881–4/1476–80 and did not find even one story-like report with dialogues, see al-Sakhāwī, *Wajīz* 871–903. In *Inbāʾ al-ghumr* it seems to be relatively rare. I have checked the years 839–41/1435–8 in *Inbāʾ al-ghumr* and located two cases of what may be considered as a dialogue, which are actually cases of a combination of utterances in direct speech (one of them, in fact, is a combination of two consecutive utterances of the same person in the course of a legal discussion with not much “story” around); see Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʾ* iv, 44, 49–50. In a few other cases there are short utterances in direct speech (sometimes they consist of only two words). Normally, there is not much “story” around them, see *ibid.* iv, 13, 48, 70.

Muslim dynasties.¹²⁹ Al-Dhahabī's *Ta'rikh al-Islām* is less relevant for the discussion because it ends in the year 700/1300–1 and normally contains material taken from earlier sources. Still, it may be mentioned that in the historical narrative of the last ten years in *Ta'rikh al-Islām* (691–700/1291–1301), one finds only two short dialogues and a few short utterances in direct speech.¹³⁰ Importantly, however, it can be demonstrated that al-Dhahabī transferred long story-like reports with dialogues or many utterances in direct speech taken from the historical narrative (*ḥawādith*) of al-Jazarī's chronicle to the section of obituaries in *Ta'rikh al-Islām*.¹³¹ This suggests that al-Dhahabī found the section of obituaries a more appropriate place for the incorporation of story-like reports with dialogues or many utterances in direct speech. As for Ibn Kathīr, in the account of events of the years 750–67/1349–66 in his *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, I came across seven relatively long story-like reports with dialogues,¹³² and five other utterances in direct speech.¹³³ The number in itself is not that high, but not insignificant. However, most of the dialogues and utterances in direct speech do not appear in reports that are an integral part of the description of events but rather in disconnected stories that appear as digressions to the narrative line and are normally labeled as “strange” or extraordinary stories (*amr gharīb/u'jūba/nādira min al-gharā'ib*).¹³⁴ For example, three out of the seven dialogues appear in “strange” stories: one is taking place in a “strange” dream (*manām gharīb*) that Ibn Kathīr dreamed,¹³⁵ one is about a woman who suddenly grew a penis, which was questioned by Ibn Kathīr,¹³⁶ and another is about a Shi'i who cursed the oppressors of 'Alī and was questioned by Ibn Kathīr.¹³⁷ Another dialogue appears in a story about the *khalīf* al-Ma'mūn (r. 198–218/813–33), integrated by Ibn Kathīr into the narrative, clearly as a digres-

129 The last 15 years of the chronicle (730–44/1329–44) have been checked and not even a single story-like report containing utterances in direct speech was found; see al-Dhahabī, *Duwal* ii, 273–92.

130 Al-Dhahabī, *Ta'rikh* lii, 12, 28, 51, 61, 72, 75, 79–80, 101.

131 See, for example, a story-like report on the murder of sultan al-Ashraf Khalīl that appears in the historical narrative in al-Jazarī's chronicle (al-Jazarī, *Ta'rikh* i, 191–3) that was transferred by al-Dhahabī to the obituary of al-Ashraf Khalīl (al-Dhahabī, *Ta'rikh* lii, 181–3). See also the story-like report on the fall of Ibn al-Sal'ūs in the historical narrative in al-Jazarī's chronicle (al-Jazarī, *Ta'rikh* i, 193–4) that was transferred by al-Dhahabī to his obituary (al-Dhahabī, *Ta'rikh* lii, 200).

132 Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya* xiv, 285, 287, 297, 319, 332, 355, 359.

133 Ibid. xiv, 269, 275, 324, 336, 354.

134 Ibid. xiv, 285, 287, 332, 336; and see also xiv, 269.

135 Ibid. xiv, 332.

136 Ibid. xiv, 285.

137 Ibid. xiv, 287.

sion.¹³⁸ Therefore, while the penchant of Ibn Kathīr for “strange” stories cannot be denied,¹³⁹ formalistically, the incorporation of story-like reports with dialogues as an integral part of the accounts of contemporary events in his chronicle (and not as marginal “strange” stories) is relatively rare. The Egyptian al-Biqā’ī, on the other hand, is a true exception to the trend exhibited by Shāfi’īs in general regarding the incorporation of story-like reports with dialogues in the historical narrative of contemporary events. In general, reading through al-Biqā’ī’s chronicle one feels that he is being told story after story. It is relatively easy to find in his chronicle story-like reports with dialogues, some of them long, or utterances in direct speech, incorporated as an integral part in the account of contemporary events.¹⁴⁰ Indeed, Guo has noted that his chronicle is a “deviation, in many ways, from mainstream historiography”¹⁴¹ and labeled it as a remarkable and “somewhat odd” work that has an “extraordinarily intimate nature.”¹⁴² The narrative combines traditional narration, Quranic exegesis, and dream interpretation.¹⁴³ Al-Biqā’ī’s reports are not terse and matter-of-fact, and he puts emphasis on people’s stories.¹⁴⁴ His chronicle is full of anecdotes and dramatized “juicy stories” with gossip and sex scandals and bears a general mark of sensationalism.¹⁴⁵ Perhaps it is noteworthy that he had some kind of military career; thus, his background was also somewhat odd.¹⁴⁶

As for historians who were non-Shāfi’ī religious scholars, while it seems that, in general, they incorporated less story-like reports with dialogues in accounts of contemporary events in comparison to historians related to the military institution, they generally incorporated such elements more than their Shāfi’ī peers (however, never forget al-Biqā’ī!). The incorporation of these elements is common enough in the chronicles of the Ḥanbalīs al-Yūnīnī and al-Jazarī¹⁴⁷

138 Ibid. xiv, 319.

139 Indeed, his chronicle has been labeled “popular” history by Guo; see Guo, *History* 451.

140 I have checked in detail the year 863/1458–9. For story-like reports with dialogues, see al-Biqā’ī, *Ta’rīkh* iii, 17, 67, 72, 93. For utterances in direct speech, see *ibid.* iii, 6, 12, 14, 21, 53, 59, 68, 79, 92. For story-like reports with no dialogues or utterances in direct speech, see for example *ibid.* 70, 78. For story-like reports labeled as “strange” or extraordinary stories that contain utterances in direct speech, see, for example, *ibid.* iii, 86. For a report on a dream containing a dialogue, see *ibid.* 61.

141 Guo, al-Biqā’ī’s 121.

142 *Ibid.*, *Tales* 102.

143 *Ibid.*

144 Guo, al-Biqā’ī’s 127.

145 *Ibid.* 131, 140. On “bizarre stories,” miracles or wondrous stories, or dream-related stories, see Guo, *Tales* 110–2.

146 *Ibid.*, al-Biqā’ī’s 122.

147 See chapter 1 footnotes 8–9; and see also chapter 1 at footnote 1.

and the Ḥanafī Ibn Ṭūlūn.¹⁴⁸ While it is less common in the chronicle of Ibn al-Ṣayrafī,¹⁴⁹ and even less in the chronicle of Ibn al-Furāt,¹⁵⁰ the two apparently incorporated more such elements than most of their Shāfiʿī peers. For example, the chronicle of Ibn al-Furāt contains more such elements than the *Sulūk*, the chronicle of the Shāfiʿī al-Maqrīzī.¹⁵¹ The two exceptions to this general trend exhibited by non-Shāfiʿī religious scholars are the Ḥanbalī al-Birzālī and the Ḥanafī al-ʿAynī, in whose chronicles story-like reports with dialogues or utterances in direct speech are almost totally absent in the account of contemporary events.¹⁵²

To conclude the first remark, at least with respect to the two formalistic aspects that we have singled out here (i.e., usages of standard versus nonstandard Arabic and incorporation of story-like reports with dialogues and direct speech in accounts of contemporary events in the historical narrative in chronicles), the primary differentiation is not necessarily between Egyptian and Syrian writers but rather between historians related to the military institution (all Egyptian), Shāfiʿī religious scholars, and non-Shāfiʿī religious scholars.¹⁵³ Non-Shāfiʿī religious scholars seem to take a middle ground between historians related to the military institution and historians who were Shāfiʿī religious scholars. Still, just to remind us that things are not that simple, a secondary differentiation based on an Egyptian-Syrian dichotomy is perhaps useful. In general, Syrian Shāfiʿī religious scholars (most notably Ibn Kathīr) perhaps incorporated more story-like reports with dialogues than their Egyptian Shāfiʿī counterparts, and Syrian non-Shāfiʿī religious scholars (al-Yūnīnī, al-Jazarī, and Ibn Ṭūlūn) definitely incorporated more story-like reports with dialogues than their Egyptian counterparts (Ibn al-Furāt, al-ʿAynī, and Ibn al-Ṣayrafī). In addition, one may note that at least during the Circassian period, in general, it seems that Syrian non-Shāfiʿī religious scholars (Ibn Ṭūlūn) were more inclined than their Egyptian counterparts (Ibn al-Furāt and Ibn al-Ṣayrafī) to incorporate

148 See above at footnotes 38–9.

149 See above at footnote 30.

150 See above at footnote 29.

151 See chapter 1 footnotes 54–9; and see at footnote 127 above.

152 See chapter 1 footnote 12; and see above at footnotes 27, 41.

153 It has been noted that in chronicles written during the 17th and 18th centuries in Ottoman Egypt, employment of nonstandard Arabic, direct speech, and story-telling style was not restricted to authors of a military background (so-called “military chronicles”) but was prevalent also in the works of artisans and traders (“civilian chronicles”); see Hanna, *Chronicles* 248–9. At least during the Mamluk period, such elements were employed also by (non-Shāfiʿī) religious scholars, however, in general, apparently less than in chronicles written by authors related to the military institution.

vocabulary (words or expressions) drawing on colloquial usages. On the other hand, in general, Egyptian non-Shāfiʿī religious scholars (Ibn al-Furāt and Ibn al-Ṣayrafi) employed in the more formal narrative line some typical nonstandard usages of Arabic (mainly related to morphology or morphosyntax) more extensively than their Syrian counterparts (Ibn Ṭūlūn).¹⁵⁴

6 The Representation of *Mamlūks* by Mamluk Historians: A Reevaluation

The second remark has to do with Nasser Rabbat's theory regarding the representation of *mamlūks* by Mamluk historians. Our survey casts doubts on Rabbat's observation that numerous conversations between *mamlūks* are reported in colloquial Arabic as part of a deliberate negative (mis)representation of the *mamlūks* as uncouth and uncultured, and not only as a way to give the accounts an appearance of authenticity and immediacy, and make the accounts more entertaining and "popular" in order to attract a wider audience.¹⁵⁵ After all, the historians related to the military institution and Ḥanafī religious scholars who were closest to the Mamluk regime employ nonstandard Arabic in dialogues (and not necessarily in ones involving *mamlūks*),¹⁵⁶ whereas the Shāfiʿī religious scholars, who were the fiercest critics of the Mamluk regime, use standard Arabic when representing the *mamlūks*' speech in dialogues. This is not to say that representing a *mamlūk* as speaking colloquial Arabic could not have been used to construct a negative image in specific cases¹⁵⁷ but only to argue that Rabbat's observation cannot be generalized. Rabbat gave, as a specific example for the representation of *mamlūks* as speaking colloquial Arabic, a conversation between the amirs Bashtāk al-Nāṣiri (d. 742/1341) and Qawṣūn al-Nāṣiri (d. 742/1342) found in al-Ṣafadī's *al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt*.¹⁵⁸ It may be mentioned here that these two amirs were Mongols, and there is ample evidence that dur-

154 See above at footnotes 30–7.

155 Rabbat, *Representing* 70–5.

156 It would suffice it here to mention that, as Guo noted, in al-Yūnīnī's *Dhayl Mūr'āt al-zamān* even the Prophet Muḥammad occasionally utters colloquial words, see Guo, Introduction 95. According to Rabbat, whereas *mamlūks* are represented as speaking colloquial Arabic, the Arab amir Muḥannā is represented as speaking grammatically correct Arabic; see Rabbat, *Representing* 74. However, in the reference given by Rabbat to prove his assertion, it is possible to find several nonstandard usages of Arabic in Muḥannā's speech; see al-Yūsufi, *Nuzhat* 199–207.

157 See Rabbat, *Representing* 74 (footnote 46).

158 *Ibid.* 72–4.

ing the Turkish period, in contrast to Qipchaqs, Mongols tended not to know Arabic, which contributed to negative attitudes toward them.¹⁵⁹ More important to the discussion at hand, however, are issues of genre and professional background.

6.1 *Language and Style in the Historical Works of Udabā'-Kuttāb and Language Use in Biographical Dictionaries*

While al-Şafadī was a *mamlūk's* descendant, what seems to be a more important factor is his background as an *adīb* and *kātib*. Naturally, *udabā'-kuttāb* were strongly related to the *adab* tradition. Thus, it would not be surprising to find that historians of such a background were more easily willing to incorporate *adab* elements in their historical writing. Those of them who produced works pertaining to history that are practically *adab* works incorporated in these works in a very conspicuous manner nonstandard usages of Arabic and story-like reports or anecdotes with dialogues and direct speech.¹⁶⁰ In the chronological-historical section of the (*adab*) encyclopedia *Nihāyat al-arab*, which is much more related to "traditional" Mamluk chronicles, Shihāb al-Dīn al-Nuwayrī (d. 733/1333) incorporated in the account of contemporary events relatively many story-like reports (some very long) with dialogues and direct speech,¹⁶¹ although, at least officially, he was affiliated with the Shāfi'ī school. Still, it seems that al-Nuwayrī refrained as much as possible from employing nonstandard usages of Arabic (see appendix A group D no. 1), and it may be demonstrated that he systematically standardized nonstandard usages employed in his quoted sources (see appendix B). Biographical dictionaries written by *udabā'-kuttāb*, such as al-Şafadī's *al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt* and *A'yān al-ʿaṣr* and al-Kutubī's (d. 764/1363) *Fawāt al-wafayāt*, are full of anecdotes or story-like reports containing dialogues with direct speech. Moreover, in the

159 Yosef, Cross-boundary 170–3.

160 Among these works one may mention Ibn Şaṣrā's (d. after 799/1397) *al-Durra al-muḍī'a* (see Brinner, *Chronicle*, xix–xxv; and see also Blau, *State* 192; Irwin, *Mamluk history* 165; and see chapter 1 footnote 14 [(1)]); and al-Nuwayrī al-Iskandarānī's (d. after 775/1373) *Kitāb al-Ilmām* (see the editor's introduction in al-Nuwayrī al-Iskandarānī, *Ilmām* iii, 3; and see chapter 1 footnote 14 [(1)]); and al-ʿAbbāsī al-Şafadī's (d. ca. 717/1317) *Nuzhat al-mālik wa-l-mamlūk* (see the editor's introduction in al-ʿAbbāsī, *Nuzhat* 8–14; on al-ʿAbbāsī al-Şafadī's background and on the work's anecdotal nature, see also Krenkow and Little, al-Şafadī 759). On the different categories of works pertaining to history written by *udabā'-kuttāb*, see in general chapter 1 footnote 14. On royal biographies written in impeccable Arabic by "court historians" working in the chancery (*dīwān al-inshā'*) and on typical stylistic elements in these works, see chapter 1 footnote 14 (3).

161 See, for example, al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat* xxxiii, 4, 9–15, 33–5, 38, 48, 140, 150–1.

frame of the anecdotes or story-like reports that appear in the biographical dictionaries written by al-Kutubī and al-Şafadī, one finds many usages of non-standard Arabic, mostly in dialogues but also outside of dialogues, although the two were officially affiliated to the Şāfi'ī school.¹⁶² This is in contrast to Şāfi'ī religious scholars, who produced biographical dictionaries but refrained from nonstandard usages of Arabic also in this genre.¹⁶³ However, it is in line with the usages of Ibn Taghrībirdī, the most notable representative of historians related to the military institution, who produced a biographical dictionary.¹⁶⁴

According to Rabbat, “[t]he puzzling question is why did al-Şafadī use ... street vernacular in reporting a conversation between two amirs when his standard conversation language was a more classicizing one?”¹⁶⁵ Rabbat, however, is underestimating the amount of nonstandard usages of Arabic in al-Şafadī's biographical dictionaries. In the realm of biography, the kingdom of anecdotes and stories, al-Şafadī the *adīb* employed nonstandard usages of Arabic much more than Rabbat would allow.¹⁶⁶ He did not only employ it when representing the speech of *mamlūks*, and even not exclusively in dialogues, but still only in the frame of anecdotes or story-like reports.¹⁶⁷

Appendix A: Usages of Nonstandard Arabic by Mamluk Historians and Standardization Thereof

A. Historians related to the **military institution** (including *mamlūks*' descendants) employing nonstandard usages of Arabic in a notable degree in their historical writing

162 See appendix A group D nos. 2–3.

163 See for example appendix A group D no. 2 (footnote 203); table 2.1 above; and see chapter 1 footnotes 117, 175–6, and 313.

164 See appendix A group A (*mamlūks*' descendants no. 3, footnote 178); appendix A group D no. 2 (footnote 203); and see table 2.1 above.

165 Rabbat, Representing 74.

166 On style and “literarization” in Mamluk biographical dictionaries, see chapter 1 sections 3 and 4.

167 See appendix A group D no. 2 (footnote 203). While al-Şafadī (and other highly educated *udabā'*) perhaps had a compunction about quoting purely colloquial genres such as colloquial poetry (see Bauer, Communication 110; Ökzan, Drug 214), he certainly did not mind incorporating in story-like reports some nonstandard usages that draw on colloquial language.

Mamlūks and Soldiers

1. Qaraṭāy (d. after 708/1308)¹⁶⁸
2. Baktāsh al-Fākhirī (d. 745/1344)¹⁶⁹
3. al-Shujā'ī (d. after 756/1356)¹⁷⁰
4. al-Yūsufī (d. 759/1358)¹⁷¹ [note that al-Ṣafadī (followed by the Shāfi'ī Ibn Ḥajar) mentioned that he used colloquial Arabic]¹⁷²

Mamlūks' Descendants (Ignoring al-Ṣafadī Who Belongs More to the adab Tradition)

1. Ibn al-Dawādārī (d. after 736/1335)¹⁷³—based on an **autograph**¹⁷⁴
2. Ibn Duqmāq (d. 809/1407)¹⁷⁵ [Ḥanafī—criticized by the Shāfi'ī Ibn Ḥajar (followed by the Shāfi'ī al-Sakhāwī) for using colloquial Arabic];¹⁷⁶ based on (an edition of) an **autograph**¹⁷⁷
3. Ibn Taghribirdī (d. 874/1470)¹⁷⁸ [Ḥanafī—criticized by the Shāfi'ī al-Sakhāwī for his less than perfect Arabic (*lahnuhu al-wāḍiḥ*)]¹⁷⁹

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- 168 See the editor's introduction in Qaraṭāy al-'Izzī al-Khaznadārī, *Ta'riḫ* 11–2; but see Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 179; Irwin, Mamluk history 164–5.
- 169 See the linguistic introduction in Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 1–33; al-Fākhirī, *Tā'riḫ* 42; and see also Brinner, *Chronicle*, xx; Blau, *State* 192; Fück, *Arabīyya* 571.
- 170 Schäfer, *Beiträge* 110–5; *Chronik* 9–14. See also chapter 1 table 1.1 (footnote c); appendix A group E (no. 4, footnotes 211–2); and most importantly see appendix C.
- 171 Little, *Recovery* 48; *Historiography* 426; and see the editor's introduction in al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat* 55.
- 172 Little, *Recovery* 48.
- 173 See the introductions in Haarmann, *Kanz* 29–38; Roemer, *Kanz* 21–4; and see also Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 176–7, 180; Irwin, Mamluk history 165; Little, *Historiography* 425, 440; Guo, *Introduction* 94.
- 174 Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 176.
- 175 See the editor's introduction in Ibn Duqmāq, *Nuzhat* 17–8; and see also Haarmann, Joseph's 81; Bauer, *Review* 260–2. For examples of usages of nonstandard Arabic in *al-Nafḥa al-miskīyya* (indicated by the editor in footnotes), see Ibn Duqmāq, *Nafḥa* 90 (footnote 9), 91 (footnotes 2, 10), 94 (footnotes 3, 5, 7, 9), 102 (footnote 5), 103 (footnotes 3–4), 144 (footnotes 1–2, 5, 7, 10), 155 (footnote 8), 156 (footnotes 2–7), 161 (footnotes 1, 2, 4, 6–9, 13, 16), 212 (footnotes 1–2), 218 (footnotes 7–8, 10), 219 (footnote 1), 223 (footnotes 1–2), 224 (footnotes 3, 6, 8, 11–2, 15–6); and see also chapter 1 footnote no. 3; and see table 2.1 above.
- 176 Massoud, *Chronicles* 28–9; Bauer, *Search* 153; *Review* 260–2; *Literarische* 105; Ibn Duqmāq, *Nafḥa* 9–10.
- 177 An autograph of *Nuzhat al-anām* (Bauer, *Review* 260; Ibn Duqmāq, *Nuzhat* 15), and probably an autograph of *al-Nafḥa al-miskīyya* (Ibn Duqmāq, *Nafḥa* 19).
- 178 See the introduction in al-Biqā'ī, *Tā'riḫ* 1, 47; and see Muhannā, *Ādāb* 9; Little, *Historiography* 440. For examples of usages of nonstandard Arabic in *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, which normally appear in dialogues or utterances in direct speech in the course of story-like reports or anecdotes (not including references to usages of *esh* as interrogative, which

4. ‘Abd al-Bāsiṭ b. Khalil b. Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī al-Malaṭī (d. 920/1514)¹⁸⁰ [Ḥanafi]; based on (an edition of) an autograph (draft?)¹⁸¹

appear in many dialogues and seem to function as a marker of discourse in the spoken language), see Ibn Taghribirdī, *Nujūm* xii, 88 (as *jawāb al-amr*, the verb *tastariḥu* appears in the indicative instead of the jussive, or alternatively *tastariḥ* with a long vowel in the final closed syllable; see on that Blau, *Handbook* 30 [no. 6]; Lentin, *Levant* 186; Brinner, *Chronicle*, xxiv; Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 28; Haarmann, *Kanz* 36); and see Ibn Taghribirdī, *Nujūm* xiii, 83 (“*anā mā qultu laka anā a’rifu Shaykh?*”; Did not I told you I know Shaykh?: asyndetic object clause and repetition of pronouns, which is typical of colloquial language; see Blau, *Handbook* 52–3 [no. 128]; Haarmann, *Kanz* 36); and see Ibn Taghribirdī, *Nujūm* xiii, 140; xv, 413 (verbs in the indicative in plural masculine form end without *n* [*yatawajjahū* and not *yatawajjahūna*; *yaḥḍurū* and not *yaḥḍurūna*], and see Blau, *Handbook* 45 [no. 77]); and see Ibn Taghribirdī, *Nujūm* xiv, 193; xv, 46, 237 (colloquial *biyif’al*, *bitut’ib*, *biyirkab*—usages of the *b*-imperfect; see on that Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 28; Haarmann, *Kanz* 38; Brinner, *Chronicle*, xx [footnote 44]; Vrolijk, *Bringing* 155–6; Lentin, *Levant* 187–91); and see Ibn Taghribirdī, *Nujūm* xv, 56 (line 11: *lā* in the meaning of “lest” instead of the standard *li-allā*; such a *lā* is attested in Middle Arabic, see Blau, *Dictionary* 619; and in Mamluk historiographical texts, see Haarmann, *Kanz* 37); and see Ibn Taghribirdī, *Nujūm* xv, 531 (“*ya’ī wāhid min hā’ulā’i al-jahala yamsiku kitāb fi l-fiqh*,” one of these ignorants comes [and] takes a book of law: omission of the conjunction and absence of the accusative *alif* in the object *kitāb*; on the absence of the accusative *alif* in Middle Arabic, see Blau, *Handbook* 44 [no. 74]; on the omission of conjunctions in Mamluk historiographical texts, see Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 32; Haarmann, *Kanz* 37). And see also chapter 1 footnote 4. It is noteworthy that in *al-Manhal al-ṣāfi*, Ibn Taghribirdī preserves some of the nonstandard usages in reports he is quoting from al-Ṣafadī; see appendix A group D, no. 2, footnote 203 below; and see table 2.1 above. Apparently, he also keeps nonstandard usages from Ibn Duqmāq’s *Nuzhat al-anām*; see table 2.1 above. For another example of a usage of nonstandard Arabic in a dialogue in *al-Manhal al-ṣāfi*, see Ibn Taghribirdī, *Manhal* iii, 380 (absence of accusative *alif*: “*lā takun ṣabi*”).

179 Al-Sakhāwī, *Daw’x*, 307; and see also Haarmann, *Arabic* 113; and see Rabbat, *Representing* 70 (footnote 32).

180 As far as I know, the language in al-Malaṭī’s historical works did not receive attention; however, the editor’s footnotes in the edition of *al-Rawḍ al-bāsim* often refer to nonstandard usages of Arabic. For conspicuous examples of usages of nonstandard Arabic in *al-Rawḍ al-bāsim*, many times found in personal reports or story-like reports containing dialogues and direct speech, see al-Malaṭī, *Rawḍ* i, 168 (footnote 3), 169 (footnote 3), 181 (footnote 2), 199 (footnotes 4–5), 230 (footnote 6), 288 (footnote 2), 319 (footnote 2), 323 (footnote 3), 347 (footnote 4), 382 (footnote 2); ii, 69 (footnotes 3–4), 71 (footnotes 4–5), 87 (footnotes 2–3), 104 (footnotes 1, 4, 6, 8), 114 (footnote 9), 119 (footnote 1), 147 (footnote 2), 153 (footnote 3), 177 (footnote 1), 183 (footnote 2), 186 (footnote 3), 187 (footnotes 1, 5), 223 (footnotes 1–2), 229 (footnote 5), 230 (footnotes 1, 4–5, 7), 233 (footnote 1), 234 (footnotes 1–2), 238 (footnote 5), 239 (footnote 2), 262 (footnote 1), 264 (footnote 2), 265 (footnote 3), 267 (footnote 2), 268 (footnote 3), 276 (footnotes 3, 5), 287 (footnote 10), 292 (footnotes 7–8), 293 (footnotes 1–6, 8), 294 (footnotes 1, 3), 295 (footnotes 1–2), 300 (footnote 9), 315 (footnotes 5, 8), 324 (footnote 2), 335 (footnote 1), 336 (footnote 2), 341 (footnote 4), 342 (footnotes 3, 4, 6), 343 (footnote 3), 350 (footnotes 3, 5), 368 (footnote 5), 372 (footnotes 2, 6, 7), 375 (footnote 1), 376 (footnotes 1, 4); iii, 30 (footnotes 3, 7), 102 (footnote 6), 117

5. **Ibn Iyās** (d. ca. 930/1524)¹⁸² [**Ḥanafī**]; based on an **autograph**¹⁸³

*****Exception: Baybars al-Manṣūrī al-Dawādār** (d. 725/1325)¹⁸⁴

B. Ḥanafī religious scholars employing nonstandard usages of Arabic in a notable degree in their historical writing

1. **Ibn al-Furāt** (d. 807/1405)¹⁸⁵ [criticized by the **Shāfiʿī** al-Sakhāwī for his colloquial style and lack of knowledge of Arabic grammar];¹⁸⁶ based on (an edition of) an **autograph draft**¹⁸⁷
2. [much less conspicuously] **al-ʿAynī** (d. 855/1451) [while normally transforming al-Yūsufī's colloquial usages into standard Arabic,¹⁸⁸ accused by the **Shāfiʿī** Ibn Ḥajar of quoting Ibn Duqmāq without correcting his linguistic mistakes];¹⁸⁹ partially based on (an edition of) an **autograph**

(footnotes 1–4), 193 (footnote 1), 201 (footnote 1), 207 (footnote 6), 209 (footnote 1), 210 (footnotes 1–2), 211 (footnote 3), 212 (footnote 2), 291 (footnote 5), 292 (footnote 1), 293 (footnotes 1–2), 296 (footnote 2), 336 (footnote 3), 337 (footnote 2), 338 (footnotes 1, 3, 5), 340 (footnotes 4, 6); iv, 44 (footnotes 1–2), 45 (footnote 1), 48 (footnotes 4, 6), 96 (footnotes 2, 4), 97 (footnotes 1–2). And see also footnote 4 above; and see chapter 1 footnote 5.

181 Petry, *Protectors* 7; al-Malaṭī, *Rawḍ* i, 79–83 (esp. 82).

182 Kahle, Einleitung 26–8; Guo, Mamluk 41–3; and see also Blau, State 192; Rizq Salīm, *Adab* 21; ʿĀṭif et al., *Adabīyyāt* 26; Fück, *ʿArabīyya* 571; Havemann, Chronicle of Ibn Iyās 89; Muhannā, *Ādāb* 9; Little, *Historiography* 440; Massoud, *Chronicles* 75–6.

183 Kahle, Einleitung 3.

184 As a *dawādār* and chief of the chancery, he was related to the *inshāʿ* tradition, which favors ornamented language, poetry, and rhymed prose in impeccable Arabic. On Baybars al-Manṣūrī al-Dawādār, see for example Irwin, Mamluk history 163; Little, *Historiography* 423–4.

185 Brinner, *Chronicle*, xx; and see also Bora, Mamluk 119. Brinner and Bora make a general assessment of Ibn al-Furāt's language without going into detail (Brinner gives one example for a usage of nonstandard Arabic, and Bora gives no examples). For examples of usages of nonstandard Arabic in Ibn al-Furāt's chronicle, which were standardized by al-Maqrīzī, see chapter 1 footnote 48.

186 Irwin, Mamluk history 166; Cahen, Ibn al-Furāt 768–9; Bora, Mamluk 121–2.

187 *Ibid.* 124–5.

188 Little, *Recovery* 44; An analysis 260; see, however, al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd*, ed. Amīn iv, 67 (in a story-like report with dialogues in direct speech quoted from al-Yūsufī and labeled as a “strange” occurrence [*min al-ʿajāʾib*], al-ʿAynī employs the colloquial *jāba* in the meaning of “brought”; on *jāba*, see Guo, *Commerce* 132). In another story-like report quoted from al-Yūsufī, al-ʿAynī employs an asyndetic subordinate clause (“*esh aqdiru aʿmalu*,” what can I do?) and omits a conjunction (“*taqaddam ughīru anā wa-anta*,” step forward and you and I will fight—note also the peculiar usage of the verb *aghāra*); see al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd*, ed. Amīn iv, 68. For an asyndetic object clause, see also *ibid.* iv, 125 (“*tastahūna* [...] *tataḥaddathūna*”).

189 Bauer, *Review* 260. According to ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṭanṭāwī al-Qarmūt, who edited the years 824–50/1421–47 in *ʿIqd al-jumān* based on an autograph, except for minor and mainly

3. **Ibn al-Ṣayrafī** (d. 900/1495)¹⁹⁰ [the **Shāfiʿī** al-Sakhāwī hinted in criticism that he used colloquial Arabic];¹⁹¹ partially based on an **autograph**¹⁹²

hamza-related orthographical deviations that became the norm by the Mamluk period, al-ʿAynī refrained from using “vulgar expressions” (*alfāz khāshīna*); however, due to lack of attention, one may find few such expressions in his autograph; see al-ʿAynī, *Iqd*, ed. al-Qarmūṭ 46, 54. Imān ʿUmar Shukrī who edited the years 784–801/1382–98 in *Iqd al-jumān*, in which al-ʿAynī may have relied on *Nuzhat al-anām* (see Massoud, *Chronicles* 40, 109–10 [note that the relevant parts from *Nuzhat al-anām* are not extant]), mentions that al-ʿAynī constantly uses the verb *akhlaʿa* (ʿalā) in the fourth verbal theme in the meaning of “bestowed” instead of the standard *khalaʿa* in the first verbal theme; see al-ʿAynī, *Sultān Barqūq* 136 (footnote 105). Al-ʿAynī also sometimes employs the plural instead of the dual; see *ibid.* 149, 157 (footnote 43). Al-ʿAynī sometimes omits the accusative *alif* in proper nouns; see *ibid.* 162, 167 (footnote 9). Alternatively, he adds accusative *alif* in cases in which in standard Arabic the accusative *alif* would not have been added; see *ibid.* 214, 218 (footnote 8). Al-ʿAynī sometimes employs the ending—ū in *abū* where the ending—ī should have been used in standard Arabic; see *ibid.* 226, 230 (footnote 24). On usages of the fourth verbal theme instead of the first verbal theme in Middle Arabic, see Blau, *Handbook* 38 (no. 40); on the phenomenon in Mamluk historiographical texts and specifically on *akhlaʿa* instead of *khalaʿa*, see Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 2. On plural forms superseding dual forms in Middle Arabic, see Blau, *Handbook* 42 (no. 59). On the absence of the accusative *alif* or its improper addition, and on the prevalence of the ending—ū in *abū* in Middle Arabic, see *ibid.* 44 (no. 74). Only further research, especially on earlier years in *Iqd al-jumān* where reliance on Ibn Duqmāq’s *Nuzhat al-anām* has been established (see Massoud, *Chronicles* 40), will enable us to determine if Ibn Ḥajar’s accusations are correct and to what degree al-ʿAynī was willing to employ non-standard usages of Arabic and if such usages were the result of lack of attention. The relevant parts of *Iqd al-jumān* and *Nuzhat al-anām* (the extant years are 768–79/1366–78) are still in manuscript form and have not been consulted by the author of this article. Interestingly, however, according to Massoud, who compared the accounts of the year 778/1376–7 in *Nuzhat al-anām* and *Iqd al-jumān*, “[f]or the year 778 ... *Iqd al-jumān* ... is but a mere replica of *Nuzhat al-anām*. Sometimes al-ʿAynī takes liberty with the text, as he moves, adds and/or changes generally small narrative elements within given reports. More often than not, however, he simply copies word-for-word, adds or removes words here and there, or introduces very slight changes”; see Massoud, *Chronicles* 40. Moreover, in the two short passages (three and four lines, respectively) from *Nuzhat al-anām*, which Massoud gives word-for-word in order to exemplify al-ʿAynī’s reliance on it, al-ʿAynī’s text preserves a nonstandard usage that appears in *Nuzhat al-anām*: “*fa-sāra ilayhim jamāʿa*” (lack of gender concord, standard: *fa-sārat*) and adds a nonstandard usage (a mistake?) of his own: “*kāna qarīb*” (standard: *kāna qarīban*); see *ibid.* 40, 44–5. On the lack of gender concord in Middle Arabic, see Blau, *Handbook* 46 (no. 82).

190 See the editor’s introductions in Ibn al-Ṣayrafī, *Nuzhat* i, 6–7; *Inbāʿ* 19–20; and see also Petry, *Scholastic* 334; *Protectors* 6; Massoud, *Chronicles* 134.

191 Massoud, *Chronicles* 134.

192 Ibn al-Ṣayrafī, *Nuzhat* i, 9–10.

4. **Ibn Ṭūlūn** (d. 953/1546)¹⁹³ [criticized by the **Shāfiʿī** Mūsā b. Yūsuf al-Ayyūbī al-Anṣārī (d. 1000/1592) for incorporating colloquial expressions in his writing];¹⁹⁴ based on an **autograph**¹⁹⁵

C. Ḥanbalī (-milieu) religious scholars employing nonstandard usages of Arabic in a notable degree in their historical writing

1. **al-Yūnīnī** (d. 726/1326)¹⁹⁶
 2. **al-Jazarī** (d. 739/1338)¹⁹⁷ [criticized by the **Shāfiʿī** al-Dhahabī for using colloquial Arabic];¹⁹⁸ based on an **autograph**¹⁹⁹

*****Exception?:** [much less conspicuously, if at all] **al-Birzālī** (d. 739/1339)²⁰⁰

193 See Hartmann, *Tübingen* 103–4; and see also Fück, *ʿArabiyya* 571; and see the editor's introduction in Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Iʿlām* 16.

194 See Ībish, *Taʾrīkh* 78; and see also Hartmann, *Tübingen* 103.

195 Ībish, *Taʾrīkh* 70.

196 Guo, Introduction 94–6.

197 Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 176–7, 180; Guo, Introduction 94–6; Little, *Historiography* 428–9; Lentin, *Levant* 179, 183, 186–7, 189, 197; and see appendix B.

198 Haarmann, *Kanz* 27.

199 *Ibid.*, *Quellenstudien* 176.

200 Guo suggested that it is worthwhile considering that the trend of the “increasing use of colloquial in the historical narrative during the Mamluk period” has actually started in Syria at the hands of al-Jazarī, al-Yūnīnī, and al-Birzālī; see Guo, Introduction 94; however, while usages of nonstandard Arabic by al-Jazarī (Haarmann) and al-Yūnīnī (Guo) has been noted and partially documented (see appendix A group C nos. 1–2), usages of nonstandard Arabic in the chronicle of al-Birzālī have not received much attention. Tadmurī, the editor of al-Birzālī's chronicle, noted that its language is generally clean of deviations from standard Arabic (*ammā lughat al-makhtūt fa-hiya salīma ilā ḥadd kabīr*), and he mentions only deviations related to orthography and morphology of numerals that, according to Tadmurī, are typical of historical works during the Mamluk period; see al-Birzālī, *Muqtafī* i, 119. While it is clear that the deviations in al-Birzālī's chronicle are much less conspicuous and more minor in comparison to his Syrian Ḥanbalī colleagues, there are some deviations that are not restricted to orthography or related to numerals. This observation is based on a survey of remarks of Tadmurī in footnotes in the third and fourth volumes of *al-Muqtafī* regarding al-Birzālī's deviations from standard Arabic (the standard form is given by Tadmurī in the footnotes); see, for example, al-Birzālī, *Muqtafī* iii, 213 (footnote 4), 214 (footnote 2); iv, 21 (footnote 3), 30 (footnote 6), 66 (footnotes 1, 3), 85 (footnote 7), 202 (footnote 3), 239 (footnote 5), 247 (footnote 2), 305 (footnote 3), 306 (footnote 7), 322 (footnote 2), 360 (footnote 1), 379 (footnote 1), 436 (footnote 2), 439 (footnote 2), 440 (footnotes 2, 7–8), 455 (footnote 2). While it is possible that the deviations from standard Arabic in al-Birzālī are more conspicuous than the deviations that can be found in chronicles written by Shāfiʿī religious scholars, it may well be argued that in al-Birzālī's case, the relatively minor deviations are also the result of lack of attention. Still, the relatively low

D. Historians related to the *udabāʾ-kuttāb* tradition

It seems that at least those of them who wrote biographical dictionaries did not refrain from employing nonstandard Arabic, notably within anecdotes or story-like reports combining dialogues with direct speech.²⁰¹ The ones checked are all officially Shāfiʿīs:

1. **al-Nuwayrī** (d. 733/1333)²⁰²

number of deviations in al-Birzālī's chronicle may be partially explained by its "dry" nature and almost total absence of *ʿajāib* and story-like reports with dialogues employing direct speech; see chapter 1 footnote 12. In fact, in the rare cases that al-Birzālī mentions strange phenomena or story-like reports, the number of deviations from standard Arabic seems to be higher, and they are not restricted to orthography. For example, in a description of a weird animal that appeared in the Nile, al-Birzālī refers to its ears that look like the ears of a camel in the plural (*wa-ādhānuhā ka-ādhān al-jamal*) instead of the grammatically correct form of the dual (*udhnāhā*). He mentions that it had four fangs and refers to their length in the plural form (*tūluhum*) instead of the grammatically correct form of the feminine (*tūluhā*). He also mentions that the animal had three stomachs, using the masculine numeral (*thalāth*) instead of the grammatically correct feminine numeral (*thalātha*), see al-Birzālī, *Muqtafī* iii, 213–4. On plural forms superseding dual forms in Middle Arabic, see Blau, *Handbook* 42 (no. 59). On plurals/nouns not denoting persons referred to as plurals in Middle Arabic, see *ibid.* 45 (no. 80). Interestingly, the Shāfiʿī religious scholar Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373), who quotes al-Birzālī's report, standardizes all the abovementioned deviations from standard Arabic; see Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya* xiv, 26. Another story-like report in the chronicle of al-Birzālī about a strong wind that devastated a settlement of Turks employs direct speech with the nonstandard *ēsh* and the nonstandard plural *ajmāl* instead of the standard *jimāl* for "camels"; see al-Birzālī, *Muqtafī* iv, 306. On the plural *afʿāl* in Middle Arabic instead of the standard *fiʿāl*, see Blau, *Handbook* 42 (no. 64); on *ajmāl* in Mamluk texts, see al-Abbāsī, *Nuzhat* 14. The Shāfiʿī Ibn Kathīr condenses the report and omits the direct speech with the nonstandard *ēsh* and employs the standard plural *jimāl*; see Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya* xiv, 99. This would seem to suggest that although not much inclined to deviate from standard Arabic, al-Birzālī, in contrast to his Shāfiʿī peers, did not object to that in principle. For another story-like report in al-Birzālī with three deviations from standard Arabic, see al-Birzālī, *Muqtafī* iv, 353 (footnotes 1–3); and see perhaps also *ibid.* iv, 440 (footnotes 2, 7, 8), 441 (footnotes 1–2).

201 I do not include here authors who produced works pertaining to history that are practically *adab* works, which employ nonstandard Arabic in a conspicuous manner; see at footnote 160 above.

202 Nonstandard usages in *Nihāyat al-arab* are apparently very rare. As mentioned, al-Birzālī uses in a report the nonstandard plural *ajmāl* instead of the standard *jimāl* for "camels." The Shāfiʿī religious scholar Ibn Kathīr, who quotes al-Birzālī, employs the standard plural *jimāl*; see footnote 200 above. In al-Nuwayrī's report, the nonstandard plural *ajmāl* is employed; see al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat* xxxii, 219–20. Al-Nuwayrī does not quote his source, but he is known to have relied on al-Jazarī; see Little, *Introduction* 30–2. For another rare example of usages of nonstandard Arabic, see al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat* xxix, 307–8 (in the course of a *ḥikāya* with dialogues and direct speech, quoted from al-Yūnīnī). More commonly we find cases in which al-Nuwayrī consistently standardized nonstandard usages of Arabic in al-Jazarī's reports; see appendix B. It would seem that al-Nuwayrī was much

2. **al-Şafadī** (d. 764/1363)²⁰³—based on (an edition of) manuscripts, parts of which are **autograph**²⁰⁴

less inclined (if at all) to incorporate nonstandard usages of Arabic in his writing than the two next representatives of the *udabāʾ-kuttāb*. This, however, should be examined further.

203 Just for example, in the biographical entry of the shaykh ‘Abd al-Ghanī b. ‘Urwa al-Ra’s ‘Aynī (d. 718/1318), after a short life résumé and a general description of about six lines, al-Şafadī dedicates the rest of the entry (about two and a half pages) to entertaining stories, which ‘Abd al-Ghanī used to tell (*kāna kathīran mā yaḥki*) about his happenings with members of the elite, that are full of dialogues in direct speech and bear unmistakable marks of colloquial language. In the anecdotes, we find the nonclassical or colloquial verb *darwaza* in the meaning of “begged for money;” the colloquial *walī* in the meaning of “woe unto me!” instead of the standard *wayl li*, and the conjunction *wa-illā* in the meaning of “or,” reflecting the colloquial *wallā* instead of the standard *am*. Except for the customary *ēsh*, we also find *lēsh* (why?) instead of the standard *li-mādhā*. In addition, we find the nonstandard imperative *rūḥ* (go!) instead of the standard *ruḥ* (or rather *idhhab*—while the verb *rāḥa* is found in dictionaries of Classical Arabic, it is much more common in the colloquial language). There is also a verbal temporal clause that appears after the word *ayyām* (“*ayyām ishtarā*,” in the days when he bought); see al-Şafadī, *A’yān* iii, 115–8. On the verb *darwaza*, see Taymūr, *Muʿjam* iii, 262; on *walī*, see ‘Abd al-Raḥīm, *Mawsūʿat* iii, 2603; on *wallā* in modern Egyptian, see Badawi and Hinds, *Dictionary* 956; on *wallā* used alongside *willā* in a 9th/15th-century Mamluk literary text, see Vrolijk, *Bringing* 155; on *lēsh* in Middle Arabic, see Blau, *Dictionary* 644; in a 9th/15th-century literary text, see Vrolijk, *Bringing* 154. On *yawm* opening a verbal temporal clause, see Haarmann, *Kanz* 37. In the biographical entry of the merchant Tawba b. ‘Alī al-Takritī, al-Şafadī incorporates an entertaining story with a dialogue in direct speech involving a drugged person (*maṣṭūl*—a “post-classical” word) that employs bad language. In this story it is possible to find the word *wāḥid* used as an indefinite article, the Egyptian colloquial *ablām* in the meaning of “stupid,” and of course the customary *ēsh*, see al-Şafadī, *Wāfi* x, 439; *A’yān* ii, 140. On *maṣṭūl* and *ablām*, see Taymūr, *Muʿjam* ii, 225; iii, 112; on *wāḥid* as an indefinite article in Middle Arabic, see Blau, *Dictionary* 754; for another example of such a usage of *wāḥid* in *A’yān al-aṣr*, see al-Şafadī, *A’yān* ii, 122. In the biographical entry of Baktamur al-Sāqī (d. 733/ 1333) in al-Şafadī’s biographical dictionaries there are many anecdotes or story-like reports that employ direct speech and nonstandard language. We find *ēsh* and *lēsh*, the colloquial *bass* (stop), and the nonstandard imperatives *rūḥ* and *būs* (kiss!); see, *Wāfi* x, 195–6; *A’yān* i, 712–4. On *bass* see, Haarmann, *Kanz* 38; and see also Vrolijk, *Bringing* 155. For further examples, see Lentin, *Levant* 189. In his biographical dictionary *al-Durar al-kāmīna* dedicated to important people who died in the 8th/14th century, Ibn Ḥajar relies heavily on al-Şafadī; see Little, *Introduction* 106–8. It is noteworthy that Ibn Ḥajar gets rid of practically all the nonstandard usages of al-Şafadī. Normally he does this by omitting or heavily condensing the anecdotes, turning them into bare statements of fact (on the condensing of reports, see *ibid.* 107). For example, the biographical entry of ‘Abd al-Ghanī b. ‘Urwa al-Ra’s ‘Aynī is reduced in *al-Durar al-kāmīna* to four lines of a short life résumé and general description, clearly based on that of al-Şafadī. Ibn Ḥajar omits the two and a half pages of anecdotes with dialogues, including direct speech and nonstandard Arabic that appear in al-Şafadī; see Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* ii, 388. In another biographical entry, al-Şafadī gives a story-like report told to him by the subject of the biographical entry (*ḥakā*), which employs the nonstandard imperative *qūl* in direct speech (see al-Şafadī, *A’yān* v, 563). Ibn Ḥajar transforms the anecdote into a statement of

3. **al-Kutubī** (d. 764/1363)²⁰⁵E. **Shāfiʿī religious scholars** that refrained from using nonstandard Arabic (at least in any significant manner)1. **al-Dhahabī** (d. 748/1348)—standardized al-Jazarī, for example²⁰⁶ [criticized al-Jazarī's non-standard usages];²⁰⁷ based on (an edition of) an **autograph**²⁰⁸

fact in reported speech and totally changes the wording; see Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* iv, 416–7. In other cases, Ibn Ḥajar does not include in his dictionary the biographical entry (such is the case with Tawba b. ʿAlī al-Takrītī). In relatively few cases, however, Ibn Ḥajar preserves sentences in direct speech, and in such cases one may find direct standardizing of al-Ṣafadī's text. For example, in the biographical entry of Baktamur al-Sāqī, Ibn Ḥajar omits almost all anecdotes and story-like reports or heavily transforms their wording. Still, one may find a few short sentences in direct speech taken from the anecdotes in al-Ṣafadī. Al-Ṣafadī's text has “*rūḥ ilā al-amīr [wa-]būs yadahu*” (go to the amir [and] kiss his hand); see al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* x, 195 (no conjunctive); *Aʿyān* i, 714 (with conjunctive). Ibn Ḥajar standardizes the imperative forms and follows the version with the conjunctive from *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr*—“*rūḥ ilā al-amīr wa-bus yadahu*”; see Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 486; and see table 2.1 above. It is also worthwhile to compare the practice of Ibn Ḥajar with that of Ibn Taghribirdī in *al-Manhal al-ṣāfi*, who preserves many more anecdotes from al-Ṣafadī and does not omit all nonstandard usages. For example, in the biographical entry of the abovementioned Tawba b. ʿAlī al-Takrītī, while Ibn Taghribirdī omits the word *ablam* (perhaps because he wanted to keep a clean language), he preserves the word *maṣṭūl*, the *ēsh*, and the nonstandard usage of *wāhid* as an indefinite article; see Ibn Taghribirdī, *Manhal* iv, 180. In the biographical entry of Baktamur al-Sāqī, Ibn Taghribirdī preserves many of the sentences in direct speech that appear in al-Ṣafadī. The *lēsh* in al-Ṣafadī's report becomes an *ēsh*; however, Ibn Taghribirdī preserves the colloquial *bass*, and has “*rūḥ ilā al-amīr būs yadahu*” with no conjunctive (i.e., the version from *al-Wāfi*); see *ibid.* iii, 393–6 (esp. 393); and see table 2.1 above. On Ibn Taghribirdī's reliance in *al-Manhal al-ṣāfi* on al-Ṣafadī, see Little, *Introduction* 108; and see chapter 1 at footnote 133 and chapter 1 appendix A.

204 See the editors' introductions in al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* i, i–iii; *Aʿyān* i, 25–6.

205 Just for example, in the biographical entry of the abovementioned Tawba b. ʿAlī al-Takrītī (see footnote 203 above), al-Kutubī uses the vulgar *qawwād* (pimp) instead of *ablam* that appears in al-Ṣafadī and employs the word *maṣṭūl* and the *ēsh*. He also employs in the anecdote the nonstandard form of the imperative *qūl* instead of the standard *qul*. Al-Kutubī also gives in the biographical entry an entertaining anecdote with a dialogue full of sentences in direct speech, which does not appear in al-Ṣafadī. In this anecdote, we find nonstandard imperatives such as *qūl* and *rūḥ*, circumstantial adverbs with no accusative *alif* (*bāki* instead of the standard *bākiyan*), and asyndetic object clauses whose object appears without accusative *alif* (“*taʿrifu taʿkulu aruzz?*”; [do] you know how to eat rice?, instead of the standard “[*hal*] *taʿrifu an taʿkula aruzzan?*”); see al-Kutubī, *Fawāt* i, 261–2. For further examples, see Lentin, *Levant* 184, 189.

206 See appendix B. On al-Dhahabī's reliance on al-Jazarī, see Little, *Introduction* 63.

207 See footnote 198 above.

208 See the editor's introduction in al-Dhahabī, *Taʿrikh* i, 7–8.

2. **Ibn Kathīr** (d. 774/1373)—standardized al-Birzālī, for example²⁰⁹
3. **al-Maqrīzī** (d. 845/1442)—standardized al-Yūsufī and Ibn al-Furāt, for example;²¹⁰ partially based on (editions of) **autographs**
4. **Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba** (d. 851/1448)—standardized al-Shujā'ī, for example;²¹¹ based on an edition of a manuscript copied by Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's student, but probably corrected and approved by Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba²¹²
5. **Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī** (d. 852/1449)—standardized al-Ṣafadī, for example²¹³ [criticized al-Yūsufī, Ibn Duqmāq, and al-ʿAynī];²¹⁴ based on (an edition) of a manuscript in the hand of al-Sakhāwī that was corrected by Ibn Ḥajar²¹⁵
6. **al-Biqā'ī** (d. 885/1480)²¹⁶—based on an **autograph draft**²¹⁷
7. **al-Sakhāwī** (d. 902/1497) [criticized Ibn al-Furāt, Ibn Duqmāq, Ibn Taghrī-birdī, and Ibn al-Ṣayrafī]²¹⁸

*****Exception: Abū Ḥamid al-Maqdisī** (d. 888/1483)²¹⁹

209 See footnote 200 above.

210 See chapter 1 table 1.2 and footnote 48; and see also table 2.1 above.

211 See appendix C. On Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's reliance on al-Shujā'ī, see Schäfer, *Chronik* 3–4.

212 See the editor's introduction in Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ta'rikh* ii, 57–61, 69–73. It should be noted that when it is possible to compare the student's copy (al-ʿAjlūnī) with an autograph manuscript of the chronicle covering the years 781–808/1379–1406, it is possible to find many instances in which al-ʿAjlūnī standardized the language of the autograph manuscript. However, such cases are found only in parts of the manuscript that were clearly still a draft. These parts of the autograph draft were written quickly and probably contained word-for-word quotations of sources used by Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, including its original nonstandard usages of Arabic. Given the fact that Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba corrected his student's copy and approved it, it is very reasonable to assume that his student actually participated in the process of transforming Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's draft into a fair copy.

213 See footnote 203 above; and see table 2.1 above.

214 See footnotes 172, 176, 189 above.

215 Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 3.

216 On the language in his autograph draft, see al-Biqā'ī, *Ta'rikh* i, 47.

217 Guo, al-Biqā'ī's 126; al-Biqā'ī, *Ta'rikh* i, 45.

218 See footnotes 176, 179, 186, 191 above.

219 On nonstandard usages of Arabic in his *Kitāb Duwal al-Islām al-sharīfa al-bahīyya*, see Haarmann's introduction in al-Maqdisī, *Duwal* 32–3; on nonstandard usages of Arabic in his *Ta'rikh al-Malik al-Ashraf Qāyṭbāy*, see Tadmurī's introduction in al-Maqdisī, *Ta'rikh* 10; and see also Haarmann, al-Maqrīzī 156–7.

Appendix B: Standardization of al-Jazarī by al-Nuwayrī and al-Dhahabī (the Story of the Murder of al-Ashraf Khalīl)²²⁰

The text in black is al-Jazarī's *Ḥawādith al-zamān*,²²¹ the text in purple is al-Dhahabī's *al-Mukhtār min Ta'rikh Ibn al-Jazarī*,²²² the text in green is al-Dhahabī's *Ta'rikh al-Islām*,²²³ and the text in red is al-Nuwayrī's *Nihāyat al-arab*.²²⁴ The instances of nonstandard usages of Arabic and its standardization are in orange color and preceded by blue numerals in brackets. The standardization in *Ta'rikh al-Islām* or *Nihāyat al-arab* is sometimes direct (see nos. 2, 3, 5, 7, 9–11, 13–7); however, at other times the nonstandard usage of al-Jazarī is avoided by its omission (see nos. 1, 12–3, 17), or by paraphrasing the author's text (see nos. 3, 7–8, 14). Because al-Nuwayrī's standardization is sometimes very different from that of al-Dhahabī, it is relatively clear that al-Nuwayrī's text is not dependent on that of al-Dhahabī (see nos. 3, 6–7, 13–4). This is also suggested by cases in which al-Nuwayrī's text reproduces al-Jazarī's wording, whereas al-Dhahabī omits parts of it (see before nos. 12–4, after no. 14, and before no. 15). Note that only the most conspicuous instances of usages of nonstandard Arabic were marked in orange color (and see the editor's footnotes in al-Jazarī's text regarding nonstandard usages of Arabic in this text and its standard form). I have reproduced the orthography of the printed editions, and orthographical deviations from standard Arabic are ignored. In addition, only the relevant parts are vocalized, and the text is not translated. I have only made brief comments in footnotes on the nonstandard usages because the purpose of this appendix is to illustrate a process of standardization and not analyze the linguistic peculiarities of al-Jazarī's text. Note that there is one case in which al-Dhahabī fails to standardize al-Jazarī's text (no. 2). This must be due to lack of attention since it is clear in this text, and in other cases where it is possible to compare between *Ta'rikh al-Islām* and *Ḥawādith al-zamān*, that al-Dhahabī put great efforts in standardizing al-Jazarī's text.²²⁵

220 The historians refer to the report as a "story" (*ḥikāya*), use the verb *ḥakā* in relation to the act of the transmission of the report by the informant, and call the informant *al-ḥākī*; see al-Jazarī, *Ta'rikh* i, 209 (line 7); al-Dhahabī, *al-Mukhtār* 361 (line 12); al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat* xxxi, 164 (lines 3, 19–20).

221 Al-Jazarī, *Ta'rikh* i, 209–10.

222 Al-Dhahabī, *al-Mukhtār* 362.

223 Ibid., *Ta'rikh* lii, 183. Al-Dhahabī mentions al-Jazarī as the source of his report, see lii, 182.

224 Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat* xxxi, 164. Al-Nuwayrī does not mention the name of al-Jazarī as a source, however, he is known to have relied on al-Jazarī; see Little, *Introduction* 30–2. Note that al-Nuwayrī cuts the end of al-Jazarī's report.

225 Compare, for example, al-Jazarī, *Ta'rikh* i, 192 (line 13)–193 (line 15) (and see the editor's

Al-Mukhtār min Taʾrīkh Ibn al-Jazarī is a selection of reports from al-Jazarī's chronicle collected by al-Dhahabī. It is extant in an autograph manuscript.²²⁶ Such collections were used by the authors as raw material and were not meant to be published. Many times, the reports selected were copied almost word-for-word. Some of the material in the selections was later incorporated into the historical works, however, only after additional revision (at least in the case of some authors). As can be seen, although the process of transforming the wording of al-Jazarī's text and standardizing it is already noticeable in *al-Mukhtār*, it is clear that al-Dhahabī did not aim at totally standardizing al-Jazarī's reports in the initial stage of collecting them. In some cases, the original wording of al-Jazarī is preserved, including nonstandard usages of Arabic (see nos. 2, 3, 7, 13).²²⁷ Such nonstandard usages in *al-Mukhtār* were later standardized in *Taʾrīkh al-Islām* (except for no. 2).²²⁸ In other cases, it is clear that the wording of *al-Mukhtār* is closer to al-Jazarī's original text than *Taʾrīkh al-Islām*; however, nonstandard usages of Arabic are not involved. Such instances are written in bold font (see between nos. 1 and 2, before no. 10, after no. 13, before nos. 14 and 15, and after no. 17).

قال: (1) لَا شَكَّ 229 بعد رحيل الدهليز والعسكر جاء إليه الخبير أن بتروجة (2) طَيْرٌ كَثِيرٌ 230

قال: (1) (omitted) بعد رحيل الدهليز والعسكر جاء إليه الخبير أن بتروجة (2) طَيْرٌ كَثِيرٌ

footnotes regarding nonstandard usages of Arabic and its standard form), with al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh* lii, 182 (line 9)–183 (line 9), and with *al-Mukhtār* 361 (line 12)–362 (line 9), and also with al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat* xxxi, 166 (all the page). Compare also al-Jazarī, *Taʾrīkh* i, 191 (line 7)–192 (line 12) (and see the editor's footnotes regarding nonstandard usages of Arabic and its standard form), with al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh* lii, 181 (line 11)–182 (line 8), and with *al-Mukhtār* 360 (line 12)–361 (line 11). For comparison of texts that appear only in *Nihāyat al-arab* and *Ḥawāḍith al-zamān*, see, for example, al-Jazarī, *Taʾrīkh* i, 279–80 (esp. 280 footnote 1), and compare with al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat* xxxi, 186–7 (esp. 187 line 4).

226 See the editor's introduction in al-Dhahabī, *al-Mukhtār* 52–3.

227 And see the editor's remark that *al-Mukhtār* contains nonstandard usages of Arabic (*al-alfāz wa-l-mufradāt al-ʾammīyya*), see *ibid.* 53.

228 For other examples of nonstandard usages of Arabic in al-Jazarī's chronicle, which found their way into *al-Mukhtār* but later on were standardized in *Taʾrīkh al-Islām*, see al-Jazarī, *Taʾrīkh* i, 44 (line 16: "*lā takūn sabab halāk al-Muslimīna*")—a long vowel in a final closed syllable), and compare with al-Dhahabī, *al-Mukhtār* 339 (lines 1–2: "*lā takūn sabab halāk al-Muslimīna*") and *Taʾrīkh* ii, 45 (lines 15–6: "*lā takūn sabab halāk al-Muslimīna*"). See also al-Jazarī, *Taʾrīkh* i, 194 (line 16: "*ḍarabahu alf wa-mī'a miqra'a*")—absence of accusative *alif*), and compare with al-Dhahabī, *al-Mukhtār* 363 (line 10: "*ḍarabahu alf wa-mī'a miqra'a*") and *Taʾrīkh* iii, 200 (line 17: "*ḍarabahu alfa wa-mī'a miqra'a*").

229 Subordinate asyndetic clause comes after *lā shakka*; and see Blau, *Handbook* 52 (no. 128); Haarmann, *Kanz* 37.

230 Absence of the accusative *alif* (here in the case of *ism anna*); and see Blau, *Handbook* 44 (no. 74); Zetterstéén, *Beiträge* 20.

قال: (omitted 1) جاء إليه بعد رحيل الدهليز الخبر أن بتروجة (2) طَيْرَ كَثِيرًا
قال: (omitted 1) لما رحل الدهليز والعسكر جاء الخبر إلى السلطان أن بتروجة (2) طَيْرًا كَثِيرًا

فقال: (3) إِمْشِي²³¹ بنا حتى نسبق الخاصكية
فقال لي: (3) إِمْشِي بنا حتى نسبق الخاصكية
فقال لي: (3) إِمْش بنا حتى نسبق الخاصكية
فساق (3) وَأَمْرِي أَنْ أَسُوقَ فِي خِدْمَتِهِ فَسَقْتُ مَعَهُ. وقال لي: عجل بنا حتى نسبق الخاصكية

فركبنا وسرنا فرأينا (4) طَيْرَ كَثِيرًا²³² فرما بالبندق (5) وَأَصْرَعَ²³³ شيئا كثيرا
فركبنا وسرنا فرأينا (4) طَيْرًا كَثِيرًا فرمى بالبندق (5) وَصَرَغَ كثيرا
فركبنا وسرنا فرأينا (4) طَيْرًا كَثِيرًا فرمى بالبندق (5) وَصَرَغَ كثيرا
فسقنا فرأينا (4) طَيْرًا كَثِيرًا (5) فَصَرَغَ مِنْهُ بِالْبَنْدُقِ

ثم (6) إِنَّهُ التَّقَّتَ²³⁴ إِلَيَّ وقال: أنا جيعان فهل معك (7) شَيْئًا²³⁵ تُطْعِمُنِي؟...
ثم (omitted 6) قال: أنا جوعان فهل معك (7) شَيْئًا تُطْعِمُنِي؟...
ثم (omitted 6) قال: أنا جيعان فهل معك (7) شَيْءٌ تُطْعِمُنِي؟...
ثم (6) التَّقَّتَ إِلَيَّ وقال لي: أنا جيعان فهل معك (7) مَا أَسْكُلُ؟...

ثم قال لي: أمسك فرسي (8) حَتَّىٰ إِنِّي أُرِيقُ مَاءً²³⁶
ثم قال: أمسك فرسي (8) حَتَّىٰ أَبُولَ

- 231 Long vowel in a final closed syllable (here in the imperative); and see Blau, *Handbook* 30 (no. 6); Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 28; Haarmann, *Kanz* 36.
232 Absence of the accusative *alif* (here in the case of a direct object).
233 Usage of the fourth verbal theme instead of the first verbal theme; and see Blau, *Handbook* 38 (no. 40); Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 2.
234 Superfluous repetition of pronouns; and see Haarmann, *Kanz* 36.
235 Accusative *alif* in a noun in singular form that should have been in the nominative according to the rules of standard Arabic; and see Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 19; Blau, *Handbook* 44 (no. 74).
236 Superfluous usage of *inna* and repetition of a pronoun. In addition, the expression *arāqa mā'* in the meaning of "urinated" is apparently "post-classical," see Dozy, *Takmilat* v, 253.

ثم قال: امسك فرسي (8) حَتَّى أُبُولَ
ثم قال لي: امسك فرسي (8) حَتَّى أَنْزِلَ أُبُولُ

فقلت له: ما فيها حيلة أنت راكب حصان وأنا راكب حجرة وما (9) يَتَفَقَّأ...²³⁷
فقلت: ما فيها حيلة أنت راكب حصان وأنا راكب حجرة وما (9) يَتَفَقَّأ...
قال: فقلت: ما فيها حيلة أنت راكب حصان وأنا راكب حجرة وما (9) يَتَفَقَّأ...
وكنت كثير البسط معه فقلت: ما فيها حيلة السلطان راكب حصان وأنا راكب حجر وما (9) يَتَفَقَّأ...

قال: فنزلت وناولته لجام الحجره ثم (10) إِنِّي رَكِبْتُ²³⁸ خلفه...
قال: فنزلت وناولته اللجام ثم (10) رَكِبْتُ خلفه...
فنزلت وناولته للجامها (10) وَرَكِبْتُ خلفه...
قال: فنزلت وناولته عنان فرسي فأمسكه (10) وَرَكِبْتُ خلفه...

ثم قام وركب حصانه ومسك لي الحجره (11) حَتَّى إِنِّي رَكِبْتُ²³⁹
ثم قام وركب حصانه ومسك لي الحجره (11) حَتَّى رَكِبْتُ
ثم قام وركب حصانه ومسك لي الحجره (11) حَتَّى رَكِبْتُ
ثم قام وركب حصانه ومسك فرسي (11) حَتَّى رَكِبْتُ

فبينما أنا وهو نتحدث وإذا بغبار عظيم قد ثار وهو (12) جَآي²⁴⁰ إلى نحونا
ثم إذا بغبار عظيم (omitted 12)
وإذا بغبار عظيم (omitted 12)
فبينما أنا وهو نتحدث وإذا بغبار عظيم قد ثار نحونا (omitted 12)

237 Employment of the plural instead of the dual; see Blau, *Handbook* 42 (no. 59). Also note that the verb in the indicative terminates without the ending *n*; see *ibid.* 45 (no. 77).

238 Superfluous usage of *inna* and repetition of a pronoun.

239 Superfluous usage of *inna* and repetition of a pronoun.

240 While the nonstandard usage in this case is perhaps related to orthography, it seems to reflect the pronunciation of the word in the spoken language (the *yā'* represents a glide); and see Bauden, *Maqriziana* VIII 33.

فقال لي السلطان: (13) **سُوقٌ** 241 واكشف لنا خبر هذا الغبار
 فقال لي: (13) **سُوقٌ** واكشف خبر هذا الغبار
 فقال لي: (13) **سُقٌ** واكشف الخبر
 فقال لي السلطان: (omitted 13) **اُكشِفُ** لي خبر هذا الغبار ما هو

قال: فسقت فإذا بالأمير بدر الدين بيدرا والأمراء معه فسألتهم عن سبب مجيئهم (14) **فَلَمْ يَرُدُّوا عَلَيَّ**
جَوَابٌ 242 ولا التفتوا على كلامي
 فسقت فإذا بالامير بيدرا والأمراء فسألتهم عن سبب مجيئهم (14) **فَلَمْ يَرُدُّوا عَلَيَّ**
 فسقت فإذا بيدرا والأمراء فسألتهم عن سبب مجيئهم (14) **فَلَمْ يَرُدُّوا عَلَيَّ**
 قال: فسقت وإذا أنا بالأمير بدر الدين بيدرا والأمراء معه فسألتهم عن سبب مجيئهم (14) **فَلَمْ يُكَلِّمُونِي وَلَا**
 التفتوا إليَّ

وساقوا على حالهم حتى قربوا من السلطان فكان أول من ابتدره بيدرا بالضربة (15) **قَطَعَ بِهَا**
يَدَهُ 243
 وساقوا حتى قربوا من السلطان ثم ابتدره بيدرا بالضربة (15) **فَقَطَعَ يَدَهُ**
 وساقوا إلى السلطان فبدأه بيدرا بالضربة (15) **فَقَطَعَ يَدَهُ**
 وساقوا على حالهم حتى قربوا من السلطان فابتدره الأمير بدر الدين بيدرا وضربه بالسيف (15) **فَقَطَعَ يَدَهُ**

(16) **وَتَمَّعُوا** 244 قتله الباقي من الأمراء كما تقدم
 (16) **وَتَمَّعَهُ الْبَاقُونَ**
 (16) **وَتَمَّعَهُ الْبَاقُونَ**

241 Long vowel in a final closed syllable (here in the imperative).

242 Absence of the accusative *alif* (here in the case of a direct object).

243 Absence of a conjunction; see Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 32; Haarmann, *Kanz* 37.

244 The verb preceding a subject, which designates several persons, stands in the plural (however, the subject itself appears in the singular form); see Blau, *Handbook* 45 (no. 79); Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 31.

ومن بعد قتله بيومين (17) طَلَعَ والي تروجه وأهلها أَخَذُوا السلطانَ غَسَلُوهُ ²⁴⁵ وكفنوه وتركوه في تابوت		
ثم بعد يومين (17) طَلَعَ والي تروجه	وَوَغَسَلُوهُ	وكفنوه وتركوه في تابوت
ثم بعد يومين (17) طَلَعَ والي تروجة	وَوَغَسَلُوهُ	وكفنوه ووضعوه في تابوت

Appendix C: Standardization of al-Shujā'ī by Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba

The text in black is al-Shujā'ī, and the text in green is Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba.²⁴⁶ It is just a small part of a much larger report (about three pages) quoted from al-Shujā'ī by Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba and standardized systematically.²⁴⁷ The instances of nonstandard usages of Arabic and its standardization are marked in orange color and preceded by blue numerals in brackets. I have reproduced the orthography of the printed editions, and orthographical deviations from standard Arabic are ignored. Only the relevant parts are vocalized, and the text is not translated. I have only made brief comments in footnotes on the nonstandard usages.

وكان (1) هَذَا²⁴⁸ صلغان شیر بن جووان (2) حَاضِرٌ²⁴⁹

وكان (1) omitted صلغان شیر ابن جووان (2) حَاضِرًا

فما هان عليه ان يكون الشيخ حسن بن (3) أَخُوهُ²⁵⁰ (4) حَاكِمٌ²⁵¹ عليه

فما هان عليه أن ابن (3) أَخِيهِ الشيخ حسن بن دمر داش يكون (4) حَاكِمًا عليه

245 Absence of conjunctions.

246 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ta'rikh* ii, 131 (line 20)–132 (line 1); al-Shujā'ī, *Ta'rikh* 100 (lines 8–11).

247 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ta'rikh* ii, 130 (line 5)–132 (line 16); al-Shujā'ī, *Ta'rikh* 98 (line 12)–101 (line 12). There are a few dozen cases of standardization in the report. In one case, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba reproduces the wording of al-Shujā'ī and fails to standardize it, see Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ta'rikh* ii, 132 (lines 5–6); al-Shujā'ī, *Ta'rikh* 100 (lines 17–8). It is clearly due to lack of attention. For other examples of standardization, see Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ta'rikh* ii, 159 (lines 2–17); al-Shujā'ī, *Ta'rikh* 122 (line 16)–123 (line 16). Apparently, in one case Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba reproduces the wording of al-Shujā'ī and fails to standardize, see Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ta'rikh* ii, 159 (line 14); al-Shujā'ī, *Ta'rikh* 122 (line 10).

248 The demonstrative pronoun precedes a noun that is not determined by the definite article; see Blau, *Emergence* 112.

249 Absence of the accusative *alif* (here in the case of *khavar kāna*); and see Blau, *Handbook* 44 (no. 74); Zetterstéén, *Beiträge* 20.

250 On *akhū* instead of *akhī*, see Zetterstéén, *Beiträge* 22; Brinner, *Chronicle*, xxiii.

251 Absence of the accusative *alif* (here in the case of *khavar kāna*).

وخلاه (5) **وَرَأَحَ** 252 الى بغداد (6) **وَأَتَّفَقَ** 253 مع الشيخ حسن بن حسين بن اقبغا الكبير وراسلوا طغاي بن سوتاي

(5) **جَاءَ** الى بغداد (6) **وَأَتَّفَقَ** مع الشيخ حسن الكبير وراسلوا طغاي بن

سوتاي

على انهم (7) **يُرْسَلُوا** للسلطان الملك الناصر (8) **وَيَتَّفِقُوا** 254 معه على اولاد دمرداش
على أنهم (7) **يُرْسَلُونَ** السلطان الملك الناصر (8) **وَيَتَّفِقُونَ** معه على اولاد دمرداش

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253 Absence of a conjunction; see Zetterstéen, *Beiträge* 32; Haarmann, *Kanz* 37.

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Ibn al-Khaṭīb and His Mamluk Reception

Victor de Castro León

1 Ibn al-Khaṭīb and His Context*

Every scholar working on the history of the Islamic West is familiar with the life and works of the Granadian polymath Ibn al-Khaṭīb (714–76/1313–74), while maybe that is not the case with those working on other regions, mainly the Islamic East. For this reason, it is important to briefly introduce this famous Western scholar. He was born in Loja (Granada) in November 714/1313. Educated in all the subjects and knowledge of his time, he became the famous secretary and head of the chancellery and a powerful vizier of the Naṣrid kingdom of Granada during the period of its greatest splendor: the reigns of Sultan Yūsuf I (r. 733–54/1333–54) and his son Muḥammad V (754–60/1354–9, 763–93/1362–91). In the year 772/1371, tired of the courtly work and worn out by a lifetime full of power, ambitions, conspiracies, intrigues, and personal misfortunes, he decided to escape from the kingdom of Granada toward the Merinid kingdom of Fez of the Sultan ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (r. 768–74/1366–72). Ibn al-Khaṭīb spent the last years of his life under the latter’s protection, and subsequently under that of his minor son Muḥammad al-Sa‘īd IV (r. 774–6/1372–4) and his powerful vizier Ibn Gāzī, while he was accused in Granada of treason, disloyalty, and heresy. In the year 776/1374, a series of adverse events finally led his adversaries from Granada, and also from the Maghreb, to get Ibn al-Khaṭīb imprisoned and murdered in prison.

From a historical point of view, Ibn al-Khaṭīb¹ is the most important Naṣrid polymath, the author of many books on different topics (Sufism, law, poetry,

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1 There are many studies in relation to the life and work of Ibn al-Khaṭīb. For a general perspective, see Lirola Delgado, Ibn al-Jaṭīb; Robinson, Lisān al-Dīn; Vidal Castro, Ibn al-Khaṭīb; Ballan, Scribe.

history, medicine, astronomy, and geography), and a man who also played a crucial political role in the development of the Naṣrid kingdom. In his time and after his death, his fame went beyond the Maghreb, and he became renowned, especially in Mamluk Egypt, for reasons that I will try to explain in this paper.

In a general context,² it is important to have in mind the situation of al-Andalus, especially after 608/1212, with the defeat of the Almohads in the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa, and consequently the unstoppable advance of the Christian conquest of the Andalusian territory. So, the 13th-century progressive territorial Muslim loss in the Iberian Peninsula increased the wave of Andalusī emigration to North Africa and the East. This had already begun in previous centuries, but now those who emigrated not only went in search of knowledge or pilgrimage but also a new life. The diplomatic and political relationships between al-Andalus and North Africa with the Islamic states of the East also increased. The feeling of loss and the end of Western Islam caused a growing concern among the Andalusī emigrants about the preservation of their culture, which explains not only the diffusion of Maghrebi works in the East but also the increase in the composition of anthologies of every kind in order to gather all this intellectual Andalusī heritage. This regret was maintained until after the expulsion of the Moriscos of Spain (1019/1611),³ as attested by the scholar Tlemcen al-Maqqarī (d. 1041/1632), who composed his famous anthology *Nafh al-ṭīb* in memory of al-Andalus's past and at the request of the Damascus 'ulamā' desiring to know the glories of al-Andalus.⁴

At the same time, in this period of territorial regression and ideological exaltation of Islam that took place in the Western Muslim kingdoms, caused in part by the Christian threat, authors of written works had become increasingly concerned about issues of authorship, plagiarism, and fame. This was the case with the Granadian historian Ibn al-Khaṭīb but also with other authors, like Ibn Sa'īd al-Maghribī, Ibn al-Abbār, Ibn Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, Ibn Marzūq, Ibn Khaldūn, and many others. This involved not just Westerners, but also Easterners, including Mamluk scholars such as al-Suyūṭī, al-Maqrīzī, and al-Sakhāwī, some of whom were accused of plagiarism (we know that al-Suyūṭī wrote a small treatise criticizing plagiarism entitled *al-Fāriq bayna al-muṣannif wa-l-sāriq*).⁵

Ibn al-Khaṭīb can be said to have been "obsessed" with the ambition to make his works known to an audience beyond al-Andalus and the Maghreb.

2 For a general view of the Naṣrid kingdom, see Viguera Molíns, *El reino*.

3 Velázquez Basanta, *Relación*, 481–554.

4 Elger, *Adab*, 289–306.

5 Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Fāriq*, 27–9; Bauden, *Should*, 159–232.

His privileged position in the court as secretary and vizier of the Naṣrid kingdom, especially with Sultan Muḥammad v, allowed him to establish an extended network of personal and diplomatic relationships that contributed to the spread of his work. Recent studies⁶ have shown the importance of the network of “intellectual kinship” that united scholars across the political divisions of the Islamic world. This cultural network—established mainly through the teaching method of the *ijāzas*—was fundamental in the intellectual, cultural, and political development of the Islamic world, especially in the 14th and 15th centuries.⁷ In this study, I will try to situate Ibn al-Khaṭīb in such a network by putting together hitherto scattered or ignored data in order to recover the ways in which he succeeded in making some of his works travel beyond the limits of the Maghreb, especially in Mamluk Egypt. For this purpose, we will focus mainly on two Maghrebi personalities from Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s network who settled in Cairo. One is well known for his relationship with the Granadian vizier, the Tunisian Ibn Khaldūn. On the other hand, hardly anything is known about the Tlemecene Ibn Abī Ḥajala’s relationship with Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his fundamental role in the dissemination of his works. For the study of this triple relationship, we will present testimonies that show us how this network took place and the reception and use of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s works by these two authors in Mamluk Cairo. Finally, we will mention other Mamluk authors who knew and used the works of the Granadian polymath, with special reference to the Tlemecene author of the 17th century, al-Maqqarī.

In a general way, we can say that Ibn al-Khaṭīb employed some means at his disposal to make his works known. We are aware that he participated in many diplomatic embassies to the Maghreb and North Africa,⁸ sent letters to Mamluk sultans and Medina and Mecca amirs,⁹ and also had an attorney in Egypt, Abū ‘Amr b. al-Ḥājj al-Numayrī, who was his trusted person in those territories.¹⁰

6 See Fromherz, Ibn Khaldūn, 288–305; Binbas, *Intellectual*, 1–75.

7 In the case of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, the diffusion through the *ijāzas* was very important, but Lisan’s contemporaries, such as Ibn al-Ḥājj al-Numayrī, Ibn Ḥizb Allah, and some others spread across the Maghreb and with them their works. See Ženka, 306–39.

8 Jreis Navarro, *El extraño*, 81–100.

9 Ibn al-Khaṭīb recognizes in one of his works that due to the great pressure of the Christian kingdoms, it was important to do everything possible to get the help of the Muslim kingdoms of the East, especially once relations with the North African kingdoms got colder at the end of the reign of Muḥammad v. In this sense, we can also understand the diffusion of his works from a political point of view. See Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Kitāb* i, 320.

10 In relation to his famous brother, the poet of the Naṣrid court; see Lirola Delgado and López, Ibn al-Ḥāyḡ iii, 642–3.

2 Ibn Abī Ḥajala's Role

Ibn Abī Ḥajala (1325–75),¹¹ a scholar from Tlemcen who settled in Egypt¹² and who was always aware of the situation in the Maghreb and al-Andalus, maintained a fluid correspondence with Ibn al-Khaṭīb and was the main recipient of his work in Cairo. It all started when Ibn Abī Ḥajala sent Sultan Muḥammad v in Granada a copy of his celebrated work *Dīwān al-ṣabāba*, approximately around 767/1365. The book was well received and much talked about, leading to Ibn al-Khaṭīb being challenged to reply with another work.¹³ Ibn al-Khaṭīb accepted the challenge and composed his work *Rawḍat al-ta'rif*, based on divine love in opposition to the carnal and passionate love of the *Dīwān al-ṣabāba*, as Ibn al-Khaṭīb himself explains in the prologue of his *Rawḍa*:¹⁴

اما بعد، فإنه لما ورد على هذه البلاد الاندلسية ... ديوان الصبابة، وهو الموضوع الذي اشتمل من ابطال العشاق على الكثير، واستوعب من اقوالهم الحديثه والقديمة كل نظم ونثر ... و سما به الجد صعدا إلى المجلس السلطاني ... نخصته عين استحسانه - ابقاه الله - بلحظة لحظ ... و صدرت إلى منه الإشارة الكريمة بإملاء في فنّه، والمنادمة على بنت دنة ... ومتى قورن المثرى بالمترب، او وزن المشرق بالمغرب؟ شتان بين من تُجلى الشمس منة فوق منصتها، و بين من يشره أفته المغربي لإبتلاع قرصتها ... عن لي أن أذهب بهذا الحب المذهب المتأدي إلى البقاء، الموصل إلى ذروة السعادة في معارج الإرتقاء ... حب الله الموصل إلى قربه.

When he came to al-Andalus ... the *Dīwān al-ṣabāba*, which is a work that collects a lot of prominent men who felt a passionate love, and includes [in it] his modern and ancient words, both in verse and in prose ... [the *Dīwān al-ṣabāba*] was discussed in the *majlis* of the sultan [Muḥammad v] ... who paid attention to it—May God keep him—and found it good ... and he suggested me to compose [a similar work] on [passionate love] and wine ... but, how could the earth touch the sky, or compare East with

11 For the biography of Ibn Abī Ḥajala, see Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā' i*, 107–10; Ibn al-Imād, *Shadharāt* vi, 444–5; Gruendler, *Ibn Abī Ḥajala (1325–75)*, 118–26.

12 For a general perspective of the political events of this Mamluk period, see Irwin, *Middle*, 125–51; Van Steenbergen, *Order*.

13 As we shall see, Ibn al-Khaṭīb, in his introduction to his work *al-Rawḍat al-ta'rif*, 80–7, tells us that he was encouraged to write this work by Sultan Muḥammad v, while in a letter sent to Ibn Khaldūn in the year 768/1367, he tells us that it was his friends and colleagues who encouraged him to this task.

14 Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rawḍa*, 80–3.

the West? What a difference there is between an Oriental and a Western! ... [I]t occurred to me to take this love along the path that leads to eternity, the one that leads to the summit of happiness through the ascension stairs ... [that is] the love of God, the one that takes [you] near him.

Ibn al-Khaṭīb repeats this idea in some verses he dedicated to Ibn Abī Ḥajala:¹⁵

وجعلتُ الإملاء على حمل مؤازرته ... وقلتُ أخطب مؤلف كتاب الصبابة:
يا من أدار من الصبابة بيننا قدحاً ينمُّ المسكُ من رياه
وأنتى بریحان الحديث فكلمها سمح النديم براحه حياه
أنا لا أهمم بذكر من قتل الهوى لكن أهمم بذكر من أحياه

I started writing to answer [*Dīwān al-ṣabāba*] ... and I said when I wrote to its author:

- 1) Oh who with his [*Dīwān*] *al-ṣabāba* made the cups circulate between us,
while the fragrance of his musk expands.
- 2) He brought the myrtle (*al-rayḥān*) of the conversation, and each time
allows the diner to rest, vivifies it.
- 3) I am not willing to mention those whom passion killed,
But I want to remember those who [the passion] resurrected.

As soon as Ibn al-Khaṭīb completed his *Rawḍat al-taʿrīf*, he sent a letter dated December 25, 1367 to Ibn Khaldūn, who was at that time in Tlemcen, in which he informed his friend that he had sent a copy of the *Rawḍat* to the Sufi Khanqah of Saʿīd al-Suʿadā¹⁶ in Cairo that was led by Ibn Abī Ḥajala. He actually explained that he had sent it together with a copy of another of his works, his biographical dictionary of famous Granadian notables and scholars (*al-Iḥāṭa fī akhbār Gharnāṭa*) as well as with other works of his, the titles of which remain unspecified.¹⁷ According to the letter, Ibn al-Khaṭīb already knew that his works were having some impact:

¹⁵ Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rawḍa*, 86.

¹⁶ About this hermitage, see al-Maqrīzī, *al-Mawāʿiẓ* 282–5.

¹⁷ The letter was preserved by Ibn al-Khaldūn, *Riḥlat* 111–2.

وأما ما يرجع إلى ما يتشوف إليه ذلك الكمال من شغل الوقت، فصدرت تقايد وتصانيف ... منها: أنّ كتاباً رفع إلى السلطان في المحبة، من تصنيف ابن أبي بجلة من المشاركة، أشار الأصحاب بمعارضته، فعارضته. وجعلتُ الموضوع أشرف، وهو محبة الله، بقاءً كتاباً ادعى الأصحاب غرابته. وقد وجه إلى إلى المشرق صحة كتاب تاريخ غرناطة وغيره من تأليفي، و تعرّف تجيبه بخناقاه سعيد السعداء من مصر. واثال الناس عليه وهو في لطافة الأغراض يتكلف أغراض المشاركة ... والله يزرق الإعانة في انتساخه وتوجيهه.

And as regards what you [perfection] would like [to know] about my occupations during my [free] time: some notes and works have arrived ... among them: a book about love has been sent to the sultan [Muḥammad v], composed of Ibn Abī Ḥajala, an oriental. Some colleagues have suggested that I give him a reply and that's what I did. I made the subject nobler, the love of God. It is a work that colleagues have considered strange. It has been sent to the East together with the [*Kitāb*] *Tāriḫ Gharnāṭa* and other of my works. When it became known that [those books] were available as an endowment in the Khanqah of Sa'īd al-Su'adā' in Egypt, the people have gone in great numbers [to consult it], since [it contains] subtleties that resemble those of the Orientals ... may God help me to make a copy and send [it to you].

The availability of such works in the Khanqah¹⁸ was decisive for their diffusion among Mamluk scholars. Ibn Abī Ḥajala, moreover, had been very positive in his reception of the *Rawḍat al-ta'rif*, especially because he found in that work strong criticism of a group of Sufis who professed the doctrine of the unity of being (*waḥdat al-wujūd*), such as al-Shushtarī, Ibn Sab'īn, Ibn Hūd, Ibn Aḥlā, Ibn al-Fāriḍ, and Ibn 'Arabī—all of whom Ibn Abī Ḥajala considered to be heretics.¹⁹ Thus, Ibn Abī Ḥajala mentions Ibn al-Khaṭīb in his work *Ṣarā'ih al-naṣā'ih*,²⁰ a compendium of accusatory *fatwās* that formed the final part of his *Dīwān Ghayth al-'arīḍ fī mu'araḍat Ibn al-Fāriḍ*, specifically in the advice n° 14 where he says:

18 See, for the Khānqāh institution in the Mamluk Period, Homerin, Saving 59–83; Fernandes, *Evolution* 96–113; Fernandes, Mamluk 87–98; Hofer, Popularization.

19 In relation to this orthodox criticism in Ibn al-Khaṭīb's works and its use by Ibn Abī Ḥajala, see Knysh, *Ibn 'Arabi* 172–84.

20 Ibn Abī Ḥajala, *Ṣarā'ih* 41.

قال الشيخ العلامة المفتن ذو الوزارتين لسان الدين أبو عبد الله محمد بن الخطيب ... في كتابه "روضة التعريف بالحب الشريف" الذي عارض به كتابي "لما وصل إليه إلى الغرب وأرسله إليّ من مدينة غرناطة المحروسة".

The shaykh, the imam, the erudite, the ingenious, and the possessor of the double vizierate, Lisān al-Dīn Abū ‘Abdallāh Muḥammad b. al-Khaṭīb ... said in his work *Rawḍat al-ta’rīf bi-l-ḥubb al-sharīf*, with which he gave a reply to my work *al-Dīwān al-ṣabāba*, when it came to the West and then he sent me [his work] from the protected city of Granada.

And later on in the same work,²¹ Ibn Abī Ḥajala says in relation to Ibn Sab‘īn:

وقد تقدّم في كلام لسان الدين أبي عبد الله بن الخطيب في رأي أهل الوحدة المطلقة من المتوغلين أنّ ابن سبعين كبيرهم الذي علمهم السحر، وحكى عنه أيضاً في كتابه "الإحاطة بتاريخ غرناطة" الذي أرسله إليّ من الاندلس.

And we have already mentioned the words of Lisān al-Dīn Abī ‘Abdallāh b. al-Khaṭīb about his opinion of those who have entered into the doctrine of absolute unity, [and that is] that Ibn Sab‘īn is the worst of them, the one who taught them magic, and spoke of him [Ibn al-Khaṭīb] also in his book *al-Iḥāṭa bi-ta’rīkh Gharnāṭa*, which he sent me from al-Andalus.

From this testimony, it seems that Ibn al-Khaṭīb possibly sent a personal copy of his works to Ibn Abī Ḥajala, in addition to those he sent as a pious legacy to Sa‘īd al-Su‘adā’, but we still do not have proof of this.

When Ibn Abī Ḥajala received the work of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, it is likely, as suggested by Emil Homerin, that he composed some verses in gratitude and praise of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s work in response to the verses that his Granadian colleague had included in the *Rawḍa*: “I sincerely love every Sufi, / and I am attuned to every lover / Yet I knew no station in love /until Instruction on noble Love (*al-Ta’rīf bi-l-ḥubb al-sharīf*) arrived.”²²

21 Ibn Abī Ḥajala, *Ṣarā’ih al-naṣā’ih* 72.

22 See the complete translation in Homerin, Ibn Abī Ḥajalah 25–6; Ibn Abī Ḥajala, *Dīwān* 188.

Similarly, in the *Dīwān* of Ibn Abī Ḥajala, another poem is collected in honor of Ibn al-Khaṭīb.²³

Another important work of Ibn Abī Ḥajala that testifies to this relationship between the two scholars is his *Manṭiq al-ṭayr*,²⁴ in which Ibn Abī Ḥajala quotes Ibn al-Khaṭīb several times. In one of the *maqāmas* (*al-Maqāma al-Kutubīyya*), recently studied by Maurice A. Pomerantz,²⁵ Ibn Abī Ḥajala laments the decline of the Cairo book market and how this problem needed to be solved. According to him, important books such as *Kunāsat al-dukkān* or *al-Lamḥa al-badriyya fī-l-dawla al-naṣriyya*, both by Ibn al-Khaṭīb, were necessary for an adequate intellectual formation.²⁶

In the same work,²⁷ Ibn Abī Ḥajala describes his own work *Ṣarāʾih al-naṣāʾih*, commenting that after the 19 advices, it ends with the biography of nine characters who “spread corruption through Earth and were not virtuous.” He is referring among them to al-Shushtarī, a disciple of Ibn Sabʿīn, whom Ibn al-Khaṭīb, in the words of Ibn Abī Ḥajala, biographed without any reprehensible comment in the *Iḥāta* while criticizing him more openly in the *Rawḍat*:

ثم ختمت التسعة عشر نصيحة المشار إليها، بتسعة رهط ... منهم الششتري المنسوب إلى ششتري
المعتدي الأكبر، أنحس من شيخه ابن سبعين وأكثر ... والعجب كل العجب من لسان
الدين، كيف كَفَّ عنه لسانه، وثني عن الإشارة بنانه، حيث ترجمه في كتابه “الإحاطة”، و
عذره الجري على عادته في السترة على المجرم، وسلامة الباطن التي هي من صفات المسلم، على
أنه عَرَّض في “روضة التعريف” بآثامه وسوء اعتقاده.

And then I concluded the 19 referred advices with the [reference] to nine characters [“that spread corruption through Earth and were not virtuous”], among them was al-Shushtarī, originally from Shushtar, the greatest of the transgressors, most fatal and more apostate than his master Ibn Sabʿīn ... and the most surprising thing about Lisān al-Dīn [Ibn al-Khaṭīb], is how he avoided speaking bad of him and did not point him with the finger when he presented his biography in his work *al-Iḥāta*, and his fault, according to his custom, is the fact to cover up the criminal and

23 Ibn Abī Ḥajala, *Dīwān* 74–5.

24 This work has recently been edited by Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Mashhadānī.

25 Pomerantz, *Maqāmah* 179–207.

26 Ibn Abī Ḥajala, *Manṭiq* 264.

27 Ibn Abī Ḥajala, *Manṭiq* 302. The letter is also collected by professor Hayat Qara on page 4 of her edition of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's work entitled *Muqniʿa al-sāʾil ʿan al-maraḍ al-hāʾil*.

preserve the esoteric, which is one of the characteristics of the Muslim; however, he criticized him in his [work] *Rawḍat al-taʿrīf* due to his unicity and his wrong judgment.

As we have seen, despite the admiration that the Tlemecene felt for Ibn al-Khaṭīb, Ibn Abī Ḥajala did not hesitate to criticize him for his permissive and condescending attitude toward some of these heterodox Sufis in his famous work *al-Iḥāta bi-akhbār Gharnāta*.

Finally, in *Mantiq al-ṭayr*, Ibn Abī Ḥajala inserted an important fragment of a letter sent to Ibn al-Khaṭīb:²⁸

ومن رسالة إلى الوزير أبي عبد الله بن الخطيب وزير صاحب الاندلس: ووصل قرينه ما تصدق به من الذهب الذي لاح كالشمس في الميزان، وجمع بين خفة الروح وثقالة الجثمان، فاستغنى بصوته عن المطرب، و كاد يُفتن بطلوع شمس من المغرب، فحلّ من داره محلّ الشمس من دائرة الحمل، وطاب به الوقت واعتدل، ودخل جنة إحسانه على ما كان من عمل، وحسن رياشه ولا ينكر حسن الرياش للحجل.

From a letter sent to the vizier Abū ʿAbdallāh b. al-Khaṭīb, vizier of the lord of al-Andalus: And has reached to his partner the gold that justify [his fame], which shines like the sun when it is in the constellation of Libra and which gather sympathy and seriousness. He has to resign himself to dispense with the charm of his voice and is about to get excited when his sun rises in the west. He occupies in his country the same place that occupies the sun of the constellation of Aries. With him the time has been good and righteous, he entered the garden of goodness for his works, and he enjoyed a comfortable life [in the same way that] one cannot deny the beauty of the feathers of the partridge (*ḥajala*).

There was reciprocity in the admiration between these two scholars. In the first part of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's work, entitled *Kitāb Aʿmāl al-aʿlām*, dedicated to the Muslim dynasties of the East, the Granadian scholar used various works by Mamluk authors as sources of information, especially from the Fatimid, Ayyubid, and Mamluk periods. Besides mentioning the works of Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-islām*, Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-aʿyān*, and Abū Shāma, *Kitāb al-Rawḍatayn*—we do not yet know if Ibn al-

28 Ibn Abī Ḥajala, *Mantiq* 341.

Khaṭīb handled these sources directly—the most mentioned work is *Sukkar-dān al-sultān* by Ibn Abī Ḥajala, which Ibn al-Khaṭīb considered the best source from the Mamluk period, especially during the three reigns of the Mamluk sultan al-Malik al-Nāṣir.²⁹ It seems that Ibn al-Khaṭīb received his copy of the *Sukkar-dān al-sultān* directly from Ibn Abī Ḥajala because when he mentions the reign of the first Ayyubid ruler of Egypt, Asad al-Dīn Shirkūh, he says:³⁰

كذا نسبه أبو العباس بن أبي حجلة فيما كتب إليّ به

And thus was recorded his nasab by Abū l-ʿAbbās b. Abī Ḥajala according to what he wrote to me.

3 Taking Advantage of Diplomatic Relations

In the first part of *Kitāb Aʿmāl al-aʿlām*, Ibn al-Khaṭīb informs us of another important channel for the spread of his works: In addition to the direct delivery of his works to fellow scholars such as Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406), Ibn Riḍwān (d. 781/1380 or 783/1382), Ibn Khātima (d. 770/1369), and al-Sharīf al-Tilimsānī (d. 770/1369 or 771/1370), Ibn al-Khaṭīb sent copies of his works to Muslim rulers, regents, and viziers due to his intense diplomatic activity. This we know through four letters in which the sending of such books is mentioned:

1. One letter, undated, was sent to Yalbulghā al-Khāṣṣakī (d. 767/1366),³¹ regent of the Mamluk sultan minor Shaʿbān b. Ḥusayn (r. 764–78/1363–76)³² in which the Granadian author refers to the sending of some of his works without specifying which ones.
2. Another letter,³³ undated, was sent to the supreme *qādī* of Egypt, Abū l-Baqāʾ al-Subkī, which specifies that the Andalusī vizier sent some of his works to the Mamluk sultan. Ibn al-Khaṭīb included the response letter³⁴

29 The explicit references to the work of Ibn Abī Ḥajala are a total of 16. See Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Aʿmāl* 96, 203, 228, 239, 259, 279, 283, 288, 290, 291, 292, 296, 309, 311, 312, 313, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319.

30 Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Aʿmāl* 259.

31 In relation to this Mamluk political figure, see Van Steenberg, Brink 117–52; Van Steenberg, Amir 423–43.

32 Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Aʿmāl* 321; *Rayḥānat* i, 587; Al-Qalqashandī, *Subḥ* i, 64–7.

33 Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Aʿmāl* 323; *Rayḥānat* ii, 164–7.

34 This letter was written by the secretary (*kātib*) Šāliḥ b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Amawī on Muḥarram 23, 768/September 29, 1366. Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Aʿmāl* 326.

in which the *qāḍī* refers to the fact that the sultan read Ibn al-Khaṭīb's *Kitāb al-Iḥāṭa fī tārikh Gharnāṭa* and:

ووقف المملوك أيضاً من تصانيفه الشريفة على "كتاب الإحاطة في تاريخ غرناطة"، فوجده المملوك تصنيفاً ليس له مثال، وتاريخاً لم ينسج له على منوال.

The humble servant (*mamlūk*) read from his noble works the *Kitāb al-Iḥāṭa fī tārikh Gharnāṭa*, and found it a work without equal and an inimitable chronicle.

3. A letter sent to the amir of Mecca.³⁵
4. A letter sent to the amir of Medina³⁶ in which Ibn al-Khaṭīb says that he has sent to this amir, in addition to the letter, a treatise (*risāla*) and a *qasīda* in honor of the tomb of the Prophet.

4 The Impact of the Availability of a Copy: The Manuscript of the *Iḥāṭa* in Cairo

As we have said, Ibn al-Khaṭīb also sent in his life a copy of his biographical dictionary *al-Iḥāṭa fī akhbār Gharnāṭa* to the Khanqah Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ. This copy was used by many Mamluk scholars as well as Maghrebis who traveled to the East.

The manuscript was described by ʿAbdallāh ʿInān in his introduction to his edition of the *Iḥāṭa*,³⁷ where he tells us:

ويجد بمكتبة رواق المغاربة بالأزهار، مجموعة خطية، من اوراق متناثرة من كتاب الإحاطة، تتكون من مائة وسبعين ورقة من القطع المتوسط، ومكتوبة بخط مغربي قديم، وبهامشها تعليقات واستدراكات بخط المقرئ وتوقيعه، وإلى جانب التوقيع سنة 1029هـ. والمظنون أن هذه الاوراق إنما هي بقايا النسخة التي أرسلها ابن الخطيب إلى خانقاه سعيد السعداء بالقاهرة وفقاً على طلبه العلم.

35 Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Aʿmāl* 343; *Rayḥānat* i, 206–12; al-Qalqashandī, *Subḥ* vii, 47–53.

36 Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Aʿmāl*, 344; *Rayḥānat* i, 213–5.

37 Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa* i, 15–6.

In the Library of the *Riwāq al-Maghāribā* (The Gallery of the Maghreb), in the Al-Azhar Mosque, there is a collection of scattered and handwritten sheets of the *Iḥāṭa*: There are 170 medium-sized folios written in an ancient Maghrebi handwriting, on whose margins are notes and signed comments by al-Maqqarī dated in 1029/1620. It is thought that these sheets are the remains of the manuscript copy that Ibn al-Khaṭīb sent to the hermitage of Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ in Cairo as a pious endowment for the students.

To date, we do not know the whereabouts of this copy. We only have information that the Library of the *Riwāq al-Maghāribā* holds a recent copy of the *Iḥāṭa* (manuscript n° 36146, date 1314/1898) from the 19th century that was made directly from the handwritten copy of Ibn al-Khaṭīb in order to preserve the original manuscript from further deterioration.

Although authors like Ibn Ḥajar, al-Sakhawī, and al-Suyuṭī used this copy extensively,³⁸ the famous scholar of Tlemecen, al-Maqqarī, is the main figure to know this manuscript and the use made by the contemporary and later Mamluk authors of Ibn al-Khaṭīb.

Al-Maqqarī (984–1041/1577–1632) records³⁹ that the eldest son of Ibn al-Khaṭīb handled this copy in Cairo:⁴⁰

أما علي بن لسان الدين ... وقد رحل رحمه الله تعالى إلى مصر، ولم يحضرنني الآن من احواله بعد دخوله مصر ما أعولّ عليه، وقد كان وقف بالقاهرة على نسخة الأحاطة التي وجهها أبوه إلى مصر ووقفها بخانقاه سعيد السعداء كما أشرنا إليه فيما مر، فكتب بالحواشي كتابات مفيدة.

ʿAlī b. Lisān al-Dīn ... traveled—God the highest have mercy on him—to Egypt, and I do not find now accurate information about his situation after entering Egypt. He handled and read in Cairo the copy of the *Iḥāṭa* that his father had sent to Egypt as an endowment (*waqf*) in the Khanqah of Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ, as we have indicated above. He wrote useful annotations in its margins.

38 See Rosenthal, *History* 472.

39 Some of the passages that we will see below have been studied by Velázquez Basanta, *Nota* 264–85.

40 Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh* vii, 301.

Previously he had explained that:⁴¹

و كان لسان الدين ابن الخطيب - رحمه الله تعالى - أرسل في حياته نسخة من الأحاطة إلى مصر، و وقفها على أهل العلم، و جعل مقرها بخانقاه سعيد السعداء، وقد رأيتُ منها المجلد الرابع ... و وقف الفقير إلى رحمة الله تعالى الشيخ ابو عمرو ابن عبد الله بن الحاج (القميري) الاندلسي جميع هذا الكتاب تاريخ غرناطة، و هو ثمانية أجزاء ... و قفاً شرعياً على جميع المسلمين ينتفعون به قراءةً و نسخاً و مطالعةً، و جعل مقره بالخانقاه الصالحية سعيد السعداء ... و جعل النظر في ذلك للشيخ العلامة شهاب الدين ابي العباس أحمد بن حجة.

Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb-God the highest have mercy on him-sent a copy of the *Ihāṭa* to Egypt in life to be deposited as pious endowment for the people of science, at the Khanqah of Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ, and I have seen the fourth volume ... and this pious endowment was established by the Shaykh who asks for the mercy of God the highest, Abū ʿAmr b. ʿAbdallāh b. al-Ḥājj (al-Numayrī) al-Andalusī of all this book [entitled] *History of Granada* which has eight parts ... as a legal pious endowment for all Muslims to take advantage of it for reading, copying or studying, and deposited it in the pious Khanqah of Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ ... and gave its supervision to the wise Sheikh Shihāb al-Dīn b. al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad b. Ḥajala.

Ibn Khaldūn,⁴² who had settled in Cairo in the year 784/1382, made ample use of this copy and was also influential in making Ibn al-Khaṭīb's works known. Through the correspondence between the two, we know that Ibn al-Khaṭīb had sent several copies of his works to the Tunisian when the latter was in the Maghreb.⁴³ Ibn Khaldūn seems to have taken them with him to Cairo and used them in his teachings in this city where he had among his students al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Ḥajar.⁴⁴ Al-Maqqarī furthermore records that al-Baʿūnī (d. 868/1464), a Syrian disciple of Ibn Khaldūn, studied with him the works of Ibn al-Khaṭīb:⁴⁵

41 Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh* vii, 105–6.

42 For a general approach to the life and works of Ibn Khaldūn, see Manzano Rodríguez, Ibn Jaldūn 578–97; Fischel, *Ibn Khaldūn*; Talbi, *Ibn Ḥaldūn* 6–25.

43 See Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla* 111–2, 116–8.

44 Despite the numerous studies dedicated to the personal and professional relationship between Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Khaldūn, a deeper analysis of the possible influence of the work of the Granada vizier in the *Kitāb al-ʿibar* of the Tunisian author is still pending.

45 Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh* vi, 192.

لقد رأيت بخط العالم الشهير الشيخ ابراهيم الباعوني الشامي فيما يتعلق بابن خلدون ... في سنة 803 عند قدومه إلى الشام صحبة الملك الناصر فرج ابن الملك الظاهر برقوق في فتنة تمرلنك ... و اكرمه تمرلنك غاية الإكرام، واعاده إلى الديار المصرية، و كنت أكثر الأتباع به بالقاهرة المحروسة للمودة الحاصلة بيني وبينه، و كان يكثر من ذكر لسان الدين ابن الخطيب، ويورد من نظمه و نثره ما يشنف به الأسماع و ينعقد على استحسانه الأجماع.

And I saw (al-Maqqarī is speaking) written by the hand of the famous and wise Syrian Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Baʿūnī, in relation to Ibn Khaldūn ... in the year 803/1400, when he arrived in Syria accompanied by al-Malik al-Nāṣir Faraj b. al-Malik al-Zāhir Barqūq during the troubles of Timur Lank ... Timur Lank greatly honored [Ibn Khaldūn] and allowed him to return to Egypt. Then I used to meet him in the protected city of Cairo thanks to the great affection that existed between us two. He often mentioned Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb (in his classes), and quoted from his poetry and his prose what ecstatic the ears and everyone likes about it.

Among many of the Mamluk scholars who made use of the copy of the *Iḥāṭa* available in Cairo, Badr al-Dīn al-Bishtakī⁴⁶ (d. 830/1426–7), a student of Ibn Khaldūn, Ibn Ḥajar, and Ibn Abī Ḥajala, made a compendium entitled *Markaz al-Iḥāṭa bi-udabāʾ Gharnāṭa*, of which there are currently five manuscripts: Berlin, Paris, Manchester, Leipzig, and Cambridge.⁴⁷ Al-Maqqarī knew of this compendium⁴⁸ and told us about it:

أما كتاب الأحاطة فهو الطائر الصيت بالمشرق والمغرب، والمشاركة أشد إعجاباً به من المغاربة، وأكثر لهجاً بذكره، مع قلته في هذه البلاد المشرقة، وقد اعتنى باختصاره الأديب الشهير البدر البشتكي، و سماه مركز الإحاطة في أدباء غرناطة وهو في مجلدين بخطه، رأيت الأخير منهما بمصر، وقال في أخيره ما نصّه: هذا آخر ما أردت إرادته، و فوّت أبراده، من كل طرفه و تحفة وفائدة أدبية و نادرة تاريخية، في كتاب الإحاطة بتاريخ غرناطة، و لما كان المعول عليه، و الباعث الداعي إليه، ذكر أدبائه، و ما أثر علمائه، سمّيته مركز الإحاطة بأدباء غرناطة ...

46 See Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʾ* iii, 392–3; Ibn al-ʿImād, *Shadharāt* ix, 282–3; Al-Sakhāwī, *al-Ḍawʿ* v, 277–9.

47 See Bourhalla, *El Markaz* 17–25.

48 Al-Maqqarī, *Naḥḥ* vi, 88.

وقد جعل كل أربعة أجزاء من الأصل في مجلد، إذ هو في مجلدين كما سبق، ونسخة الأصل في ثمانية مجلدات، فنقص من الأصل ثلاثة أرباع أو أكثر.

As regards the book of the *Ihāta*, it is the bird whose fame is known in both the East and the West, and the Orientals admire it more than Westerners, and cite it to a greater extent, despite the scarcity [of information it contains] about the East. And the famous literary man al-Badr al-Bishtakī summarized it and called it *Markaz al-Ihāta bi-udabā' Gharnāta*, in two volumes in his own handwriting, the second of which I have seen in Egypt, and he said at the end of the same: This is the end of what I wanted to record, listing their robes with every novelty, gift and literary usefulness, [with every] historical anecdote that exists in the book *al-Ihāta bi-ta'rikh Gharnāta*, and since its purpose and main intention is the mention of its literari and the deeds of its sages, I have called it *Markaz al-Ihāta bi udabā' Gharnāta ...*

And he made one volume out of the four volumes of the original, and it consists of two volumes, as has been said, since the original copy was eight volumes, thus reducing the original in three quarters or more.

The manuscript of the *Markaz* that exists in Paris (Arabe 3347) includes part of the *ijāza* that Ibn al-Khaldūn granted to al-Bishtakī and in which the transmission of a celebrated epistle of Ibn al-Khaṭīb entitled *Iftirās al-iṣāba ilā iftirāsh al-ināba*⁴⁹ addressed to the Hafsid sultan of Tunisia is mentioned:⁵⁰

باسم الله الرحمن الرحيم وبه ثقتي، سمعتُ هذا الكتاب من لفظ الأمام المهمام الأروع الاعلم قاضي المسلمين أبي زيد عبد الرحمن بن خلدون بمنزله بالقاهرة رابع شهر رجب سنة 793 قال: قرأني هذا الكتاب منشييه الإمام أبو عبد الله لسان الدين بن الخطيب وزير ابن الأحمر بغرناطة وكتب به إلى السلطان جواباً عن كتاب وهدية.

In the name of God, Compasive and Merciful, my trust is placed in him, I heard this letter from the magnanimous splendid and wise Imam, the *qāḍī* of the Muslims Abū Zayd 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Khaldūn in his house in Cairo on the fourth day of the month of *rajab* in the year 793/1390 and said: This letter was read to me by its author, the Imam Abu 'Abdallāh

49 See Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat* i, 179–202; *al-Ihāta* iv, 561–88; Ibn Khaldūn, *Rihla* 135–74; Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥī* vi, 536–58.

50 The text is at the end of the manuscript, on sheet 276.

Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb, vizier of Ibn al-Aḥmar in Granada and wrote it to the sultan [of Tunisia], in response to a letter from him and a gift [previous].

On his part, al-Maqqarī used the copy of the *Iḥāṭa* available in Cairo to write his works *Nafḥ al-ṭīb* and *Azhār al-riyād*. He also made additions and commentaries to the manuscript,⁵¹ as those who had handled it before had also done, among them ‘Alī b. al-Khaṭīb and the Maghrebi Ibn Marzūq. Ibn Marzūq made additions to his own biography included in the *Iḥāṭa*, additions that were collected by Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalanī⁵² and al-Sakhawī⁵³ in their respective biographies dedicated to Ibn Marzūq.

Finally, al-Maqqarī informs us⁵⁴ of the handling of this work by several Mamluk and Western authors who traveled to Cairo, some of whom left their signature on the manuscript when they consulted it in the hermitage of Sa‘īd al-Su‘adā’:⁵⁵

وقد رأيت بظهر أول ورقة من هذه النسخة خطوط جماعة من العلماء، فن ذلك ما كتبه الحافظ المقرئ المؤرخ، ونصه: انتقى منه داعياً لمؤلفه أحمد ابن علي المقرئ في شهر ربيع سنة ثمان وثمانمائة.

وما رقه السيوطي ونصه: الحمد لله وحده، وطالعه على طبقات النحاة وللغويين، وكتبه عبد الرحمن بن أبي بكر السيوطي سنة ثمان وستين وثمانمائة.
وبعد هذين ما صورته: انتقى منه داعياً لمؤلفه محمد بن محمد القوصوني سنة أربع وخمسين تسعمائة.

وبعد ما صورته: أنهاه نظراً وانتقاء علي الحموي الحنفي، لطف الله به. وبخط مولانا العارف الرباني علامة الزمان وبركة الالوان سيدي الشيخ محمد البكري الصديقي ما نصه: طالعه مبهجاً برياضه الموقفة، وازهار معانيه المشرقة، مرتقياً في درج كلماته العذاب سماء الاقباس، مقتنياً من لطائفه درراً وجواهر بل أحاشيا بذلك القياس، كتبه محمد الصديقي غفر الله له؛ إنتهى.

51 The study of all these additions and annotations is being analyzed in my current research carried out within the AMOI project (Local contexts and global dynamics: al-Andalus and the Maghreb in the East), directed by Maribel Fierro and Mayte Penelas.

52 Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar* v, 93–7.

53 Al-Sakhawī, *al-Tuḥfa* iii, 506.

54 Al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ* vii, 106.

55 Velázquez, Basanta, Nota 279–80.

And I have seen on the back of the first page of this copy, the texts of a group of scholars, such as what the *hāfiẓ* and historian al-Maqrīzī wrote, whose text is: he selected from it, asking [from God] by its author, Aḥmad b. ‘Alī al-Maqrīzī in the month of *rabīʿ* of the year 808/August 27 to October 24, 1405.

And what the *hāfiẓ* al-Suyūṭī wrote, whose text is: Praise be to God, the One! I read the categories of grammarians and philologists, and it was written by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr al-Suyūṭī, the year 868/1463–4. End.

And after these two, there comes something that would be: He selected from it, begging [God] for his author, Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Qawṣūnī, the year 954/1547–8.

And then, something that would be: He finished the examination and selection of it ‘Alī al-Ḥamawī al-Ḥanafī, God’s goodness be with him!

And from the hand of our lord, the wise master of the era and blessing of time, my lord Shaykh Muhammad al-Bakrī al-Ṣadiqī, whose text is: I read it excited for its elegant gardens and flowers of bright meanings, ascending by the steps of his sweet words to the sky of the literary loan and acquiring of his kindness pearls and precious stones that he cannot avoid imitating. Muḥammad al-Ṣiddīqī wrote it, God forgive him! End.

Al-Maqqarī also mentioned that he saw:

ورأيت بهامش هذه النسخة كتابة جماعة من أهل المشرق والمغرب كابن دقاق والحافظ ابن حجر وغيرهما من أهل مصر، ومن المغاربة ابن المؤلف أبي الحسن علي بن الخطيب، والخطيب الكبير سيدي أبي عبد الله ابن مرزوق، والعلامة أبي الفضل ابن الإمام التلمساني، والنحوي الراعي، والشيخ الفهامة الشهير يحيى العجيسي شارح ألفية وصاحب التأليف، وغير هؤلاء ممن يطول تعدادهم، رحم الله تعالى جميعهم.

And I have seen in a note on the margin of this copy the signature of a group of Orientals and Westerners, such as Ibn Duqmāq; the *hāfiẓ* Ibn Ḥajar, and others of the people of Egypt; and among Westerners, the author’s son, Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. al-Khaṭīb, the great preacher and my lord Abū ‘Abdallāh b. Marzūq; the sage Abū l-Faḍl Ibn al-Imam al-Tilimsānī; the grammarian [Abū ‘Abdallāh Muḥammad] al-Rāʿī, the famous and smart Shaykh Yaḥya al-‘Ayīsī, commentator of the *Alfiyya* and author of [other] works, as well as others that would be lengthy to tell, mercy on them all!

In the absence of a more in-depth study of the exact use that Mamluk authors gave to the works of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, not only the *Iḥāṭa*, we can see in the following list a general overview of the Mamluk authors who directly handled the copy of the Cairo *Iḥāṭa* by Ibn al-Khaṭīb (and in some cases also two other works, the *Rayḥānat al-kuttāb* and the *Rawḍat al-taʿrīf*):

1. Ibn Abī Ḥajala (d. 776/1375): *Manṭiq al-tayr* and *Ṣarāʾiḥ al-naṣāʾiḥ*⁵⁶
2. Ibn Farḥūn (d. 799/1397): *Dībāj al-mudhab*⁵⁷
3. Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 852/1449): *al-Durar al-Kāmina*,⁵⁸ *Inbāʿ al-Ghumr*,⁵⁹ and *al-Majmaʿ al-muʿassis*⁶⁰
4. Ibn Duqmāq⁶¹ (d. 809/1407): ?
5. Ibn Ḥijja al-Ḥamawī (d. 837/1434): *Jizānat al-adab*,⁶² *Thamarāt al-awrāq*,⁶³ *Qahwat al-inshāʾ*,⁶⁴ and *Kashf al-lithām*⁶⁵
6. al-Qalqashandī (d. 820/1418): *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshā*⁶⁶
7. al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442): *al-Muqaffā l-kabīr*,⁶⁷ *Durar al-ʿuqūd*,⁶⁸ and *al-Sulūk li-maʿrifat duwal al-mulūk*⁶⁹
8. Badr al-Dīn al-Bishtakī (d. 829/1426–7): *Markaz al-Iḥāṭa bi udabāʾ Ghar-nāṭa*⁷⁰
9. Ibn Tagrībirdī (d. 874/1470): *al-Manhal al-ṣāfi*⁷¹
10. al-Baʿūnī⁷² (d. 868/1464): ?
11. al-Sakhawī (d. 901/1496): *al-Tuḥfa al-laṭīfa*, *al-Ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ*, and *Wajīz al-kalām fī dhayl ʿalā duwal al-islām*⁷³

56 We can see the use of the Ibn al-Khaṭīb's works by this author in the texts quoted above.

57 See Ibn Farḥūn, *Dībāj* i, 187, 188, 398; ii, 57, 71, 111, 119, 121, 264.

58 See, for instance, Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar* i, 94–5; v, 219.

59 See Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʿ* i, 91–3, 206–7.

60 See Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Majmaʿ* ii, 436, 628, 636–7; iii, 160, 310.

61 We know, as we have seen thanks to al-Maqrīzī, that this author used the manuscript of the *Iḥāṭa* located in Cairo in his works, but we still do not know in which of them he made this use. Probably it was in his, now lost, history.

62 See Ibn Ḥijja, *Jizānat* i, 33, 35, 81, 112; ii, 241.

63 See Ibn Ḥijja, *Thamarāt* ii, 127, 130.

64 See Ibn Ḥijja, *Qahwat* 347–8, 406–8.

65 See Ibn Ḥijja, *Kashf* 153.

66 See, for instance, al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ* i, 129; vi, 458, 535; vii, 50, 61, 64, 67, 70, 74.

67 See al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā* ii, 66.

68 See al-Maqrīzī, *Durar* iii, 443–8.

69 See al-Maqrīzī, *al-Sulūk* iv, 264; vi, 280.

70 See what we have said above about al-Bishtakī's work, a resume of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's *al-Iḥāṭa*.

71 Ibn Tagrībirdī, *al-Manhal* iv, 10; v, 336–7.

72 Like Ibn Duqmāq we do not yet know in which work/s he made use of the works of Ibn al-Khaṭīb.

73 See the use of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's works by al-Sakhawī in Rosenthal, *History* 457–501.

12. Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba (d. 851/1448): *Tārīkh Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba*⁷⁴
13. al-Suyūṭī (d. 910/1505): *Bughyat al-wu'āt*⁷⁵
14. Ḥ Ibn Shāhīn (d. 919/1514): *Ḥ Nayl al-amal fī dhayl al-duwal?*⁷⁶

5 Conclusion

In view of the above, we can extract two main ideas. The first is that the ambition and concern of the Granada vizier to make his works known in the East had the success that his author wanted. In my opinion, he had more success than he was aware of in his life because after his death in 776/1374, the diffusion of his works increased until the second half of the 18th century. This need of Ibn al-Khaṭīb to “internationalize” his intellectual production in those eastern territories was not accidental. To his personal and intellectual concerns to achieve this goal, two very important factors were added. The first was the high position he reached in the Naṣrid court, first as secretary of Sultan Yūsuf I and his son Muḥammad v, and then reaching full power as grand vizier of the latter. This circumstance evidently facilitated his international relations and contributed greatly to the sending of his works to the East. The second factor, closely linked to the first, is related to the political situation of the Naṣrid kingdom. During the first century of the life of the Granada kingdom (from the second half of the 12th century until the first half of the 13th century), the latter had its sights set on the Western kingdoms, both Christian and North African, in such a way that one can speak in cultural terms of a “Westernization.” However, from the second half of the 14th century until the end of the Islamic presence in the peninsula, which happened in 897/1492 with the delivery of the city of Granada, the growing and unstoppable Christian threat caused a withdrawal of the Naṣrid amirate, which from that time put its sights on the East as a point of reference on which to rely. This led to a process of “Orientalization” and rejecting any Western influence, although in practice it could not avoid it completely.⁷⁷ So, this preference for the Islamic kingdoms of the East, which were seen both politically and economically safer and more powerful, inevitably favored the spread of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s works to those eastern territories.

74 See Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tārīkh* ii, 178, 439, 497–8, 701–3.

75 See in the text above al-Suyūṭī’s signature in the *al-Iḥāṭa* copy of Cairo.

76 The use of the work of Ibn al-Khaṭīb by this author requires further analysis. For this reason it appears between question marks.

77 See the recent study about the relationship of the kingdom of Granada with the Mamluk sultanate of Egypt, coordinated by Calvo Capilla, *Las artes*.

What I have presented here is part of a work in progress in which my aim is to document all the channels through which Ibn al-Khaṭīb's work became known in the East. This is part of a larger project, of which I am a member, that studies how knowledge about the Maghreb became integrated into historical and other works by Mashriqī scholars (AMO1). Obviously, this is a very complex issue that requires the study and analysis of other ways of diffusion of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's work, such as the transmission through his numerous disciples, both in al-Andalus and in the Maghreb, who, when emigrating to the East, either to make the pilgrimage or because of their desire to settle there, took with them their *iyāzas* and fragments of the works of Ibn al-Khaṭīb. An example of this is the wise Meccan Taqī al-Dīn al-Fāsī (d. 832/1429) who made use in his *Iḍāḥ bughyat alh al-baṣāra fī dhayl al-Ishāra*⁷⁸ of the texts brought to the East by a disciple of Ibn al-Khaṭīb named al-Qāsim b. 'Alī al-Fāsī al-Tinmālī (743–811/1342–1408),⁷⁹ who was born in Malaga.

In the specific case that I have presented here, Cairo and the presence of two Maghrebis—Ibn Abī Hajala and Ibn Khaldūn—who had settled there played a decisive role in constructing Ibn al-Khaṭīb's fame. Their training and their interests made them continue to look to the West. They corresponded with Maghrebis, including Ibn al-Khaṭīb himself, and wanted to be kept informed of what was going on in the lands they had left. Ibn al-Khaṭīb's role was nevertheless decisive: He took care of sending copies to Egypt through different channels and was undoubtedly aware that his works would provide scholars in the Mashriq with information that was needed on the history of al-Andalus. But he was also convinced of the high quality of his own production, an appraisal that appears to have been shared by those who read him.

Finally, we can say that the case of Ibn al-Khaṭīb is not an isolated one. The information provided by the Granadian vizier and many other Western authors about the history of the Western territories, through the diffusion of their works in the East, mainly during the 14th and 15th centuries, contributed to the molding of the imagination of the Western history produced by Eastern, mainly Mamluk, authors, who obtained their information by consulting all these Western works. A significant example is the aforementioned al-Maqqarī who supplied a Syrian audience, eager for news about the past of the West,

78 Al-Fāsī, *Iḍāḥ* 352, 353, 399, 425. I want to highlight here that Professor J. Zenka will soon publish a study about this scholar.

79 I am currently carrying out a study on the diffusion in the East of the work of Ibn al-Khaṭīb through his disciples whose results I hope to publish soon.

with all the Andalusian and Maghrebi legacy that he could carry with him on his trip to Egypt and Syria. The extent of this contribution is still difficult to measure. In the case of our author Ibn al-Khaṭīb, it is necessary to know what texts from his works were adopted by the eastern authors who used his works as sources. This is a very interesting issue that will be the focus of our future research.

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Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba (1377–1448): His Life and Historical Work

Tarek Sabraa

1 Introduction

The Mamluk period witnessed a substantial number of scholarly families that appeared as dominant in many places in Egypt and Syria. This is due to several factors, such as the interest of sultans and amirs in promoting scholarship through the construction of madrasas and related infrastructures and the bestowal of money and gifts on scholars.¹ One of the most important factors that played a role in securing the prominence of scholarly families is the inheritance of religious positions among the family members, in which some of them inherited their fathers' positions while they were still younger than eight or nine years of age.² This played an important role in encouraging scholars to direct their children and grandchildren to study the Islamic sciences (e.g., jurisprudence, *ḥadīth*, theology, literature, etc.) in order to take over their positions after them. Among the families that were famous during the Mamluk era is the family of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, which had a significant role and impact on the political and scientific life during the Ayyubid and Mamluk eras. Taqī al-Dīn Abū Bakr b. Qāḍī Shuhba (1377–1448) is probably the most famous person in this family, and perhaps he is the one who played the most prominent role in its fame. Since, to my knowledge, this scholar has not received much attention in modern academia, this paper is meant to be the first of several ones to follow that will shed light on Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, his significance as a scholar, and his work as a historian.³ In the current paper, I will give an overview of his historical

1 Al-Ṣafaḍī reminds us of how the sultan, the amirs, and their wives bestowed money on the head of the doctor Jamāl al-Dīn b. al-Maghribī and describes him as the saint of the century, al-Ṣafaḍī, *A'yān* i, 55.

2 See Berkey, formation 150–1. There are several examples, like Yūnus b. 'Alā' al-Dīn al-Subkī, who took over his father's post after his death at the age of eight. Yūnus died as a young man at the age of twelve, and his stepfather Ibn Hījī inherited his functions after his death. Ibn Hījī, *Tārīkh* ii, 976.

3 There are no studies on Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba in Arabic and only a handful of smaller studies in English that touch upon Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba and even less on his work. One work that focuses

works as well as his life and family background. I believe that it is important to focus on his family's origins for several reasons, not just merely because he descends from a scholarly family, as I have mentioned above. It is also necessary to go back to his family's origin because it will help us to further understand Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's historiographical approaches, since my main argument in this paper is that his particular background had an impact on his equally particular writing and understanding of history. Hence, the paper consists of two major parts: The first deals with the origins of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's family and their history until his lifetime. The second part addresses his life and his scholarly work, focusing on his history writings.

2 The Origins of the Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba Family

The roots of the family of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba can be traced back to the tribe of Banū Asad⁴ from the branch of Banū Ghāḍira,⁵ which settled in Iraq during the era of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (634–44).⁶ In fact, many Arab tribes migrated from the Arabian Peninsula to Iraq and Syria during the reign of 'Umar (especially after the battle of Qādisiyya).⁷ Banū Ghāḍira was one of these tribes, as they migrated from Najd to Iraq and settled near Kufa and Karbala⁸ (and the place where they settled—al-Ghāḍiriyya—was named after them).⁹ The historian Muṣṭafā Jawād mentions that the village of al-Ghāḍiriyya was established in the early days of Islam after the migration of Banū Asad to it.¹⁰ Certainly, those

on his work as a faqih: Jaques, *Authority*; the superficial and at times incorrect introduction to the hitherto edited parts of the *Tarīkh Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba* by 'Adnān Darwīsh, published at the Ma'had al-'Ilmī al-Faransī li-l-Dirāsāt al-'Arabiyya; Reisman, in his article Holograph, studied some of the author's notes available at the Chester Beatty Library; and Massoud in his monograph *Chronicles*.

4 The tribe of Banū Asad is attributed to Asad b. Khuzayma b. Madraka b. Ilyās b. Muḍar al-'Adnānī and Asad b. Khuzayma, who had five children, namely Dūdān b. Asad, Kāhel b. Asad, 'Amr b. Asad, Sa'b b. Asad, and Ḥulma b. Asad. Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's family belongs to Dūdān b. Asad. See al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb* xi, 153.

5 It is attributed to Ghāḍirab Mālik b. Tha'laba b. Dūdān b. Asad. See al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb* xi, 84.

6 Al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān* v, 42; Jawād, *Mawsū'at* viii, 31.

7 Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh* iii, 487.

8 Ibn Ḥabīb mentions that there are three different branches called al-Ghāḍiriyya in the tribes of Banū Khuzā'a, Banū Asad, and Banū Qays. The family of the Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba is from al-Ghāḍiriyya of Banū Asad. Ibn Ḥabīb, *Mukhtalaf* 35.

9 Al-Ḥamawī, *Mu'jam* iv, 183.

10 Jawād, *Mawsū'at* viii, 31.

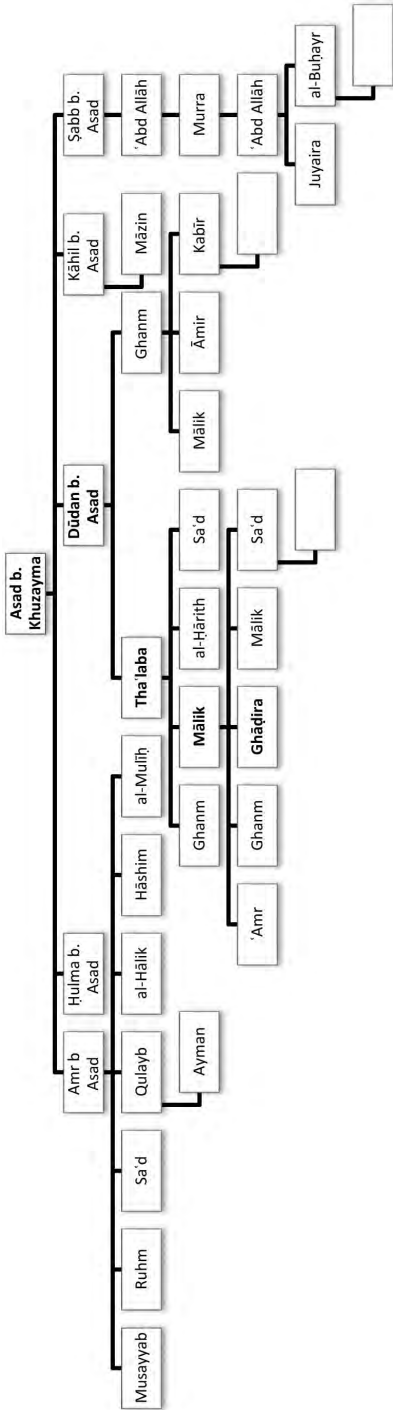


FIGURE 4.1 The tribe of Ibn Qaḍī Shuhba

who settled there (or at least a significant number of them) were from the al-Ghāḍiriyya branch. Otherwise, the area would probably have been named after the main tribe (i.e., Banū Asad).

2.1 *The Intellectual and Political Doctrines of Banū Ghāḍira*

Arab tribes were split into two camps during the wars between ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and his opponents (656–61), in which some of them supported ‘Alī while the others went against him.¹¹ Broadly speaking, most of the tribes that settled in Iraq are said to have supported ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, while the tribes that settled in Greater Syria supported his main contender for the caliphate, Mu‘āwiya b. Abī Sufyān. This is probably why many of the people who were inclined to accept the legitimacy of Mu‘āwiya migrated from Iraq to Syria.¹² Among the tribes that supported ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib was the tribe of Banū Asad, particularly the branch of al-Ghāḍiriyya, which supported him and his son al-Ḥusayn intellectually and militarily. By intellectually I mean that the well-known scholars from al-Ghāḍiriyya (re)produced the texts/chronicles that supported and praised ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, and at the same time, they transmitted the chronicles that criticized Mu‘āwiya and delegitimized his rule.

A good example is that of Zirr b. Ḥubaysh al-Ghāḍirī al-Asadī,¹³ the famous scholar and companion of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, and perhaps also one of his most fanatical supporters. This can be simply deduced from the fact that some historians gave Zirr b. Ḥubaysh the epithet of al-‘Alawī.¹⁴ More importantly, he also supported ‘Alī intellectually by transmitting narratives that praised ‘Alī or demeaned Mu‘āwiya b. Abī Sufyān. Al-Balādhurī, for instance, mentioned in his book *Ansāb al-Ashrāf a ḥadīth* transmitted by Zirr b. Ḥubaysh that ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib has said, “No one loves me except [a true] believer, and no one hates me except a hypocrite.”¹⁵ Furthermore, al-Balādhurī stated that Zirr b. Ḥubaysh added after this narrative that “[‘Alī] is the most knowledgeable judge among the Muslims.”¹⁶ Ibn al-Maghāzilī also reported in his book *Manāqib ‘Alī* (The virtues of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib) two prophetic traditions transmitted by ‘Āṣim b.

11 The most famous battle that took place between ‘Alī and his opponents (‘Ā’isha, Ṭalḥa, al-Zubayr, Mu‘āwiya b. Abī Sufyān, and ‘Amr b. al-‘Ās) is the war of Ṣiffin.

12 Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Waq’it* 146.

13 Zirr b. Ḥubaysh is a well-known scholar and a disciple of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, which explains his hostility towards Mu‘āwiya b. Abī Sufyān. Anyway, his scholarship was highly regarded in both Sunni and Shi’ite circles.

14 The historians who described him as al-‘Alawī are: Ibn ‘Asākir, *Tārīkh* xix, 29; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh* ii, 935; al-Mazzī, *Tahdhīb* ix, 338; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba* ii, 633.

15 Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb* ii, 97.

16 Ibid.

Abī l-Nujūd al-Ghādirī al-Asadī¹⁷ (who is one of the most prominent transmitters of the Quranic readings) from *Zirr b. Ḥubaysh* and *ʿAbdallāh b. Masʿūd*. In the former, the Prophet tells ʿAlī, “your position to me is similar to Aaron’s position to Moses”;¹⁸ in the latter, the *ḥadīth* says, “Fāṭima has guarded her chastity therefore God forbade hellfire to accept her offspring.”¹⁹

On the other hand, *Zirr b. Ḥubaysh* transmitted narratives that attacked and criticized Muʿāwiya. For example, al-Balādhurī and Nasr b. Muzāḥim mentioned a *ḥadīth* narrated by *Zirr b. Ḥubaysh* (who heard it from ʿAbdallāh b. Masʿūd) that states: “If anyone sees Muʿāwiya b. Abī Sufyān orating on a pulpit, [he must] beat his neck [with a sword].”²⁰ These types of narratives were transmitted not only by *Zirr b. Ḥubaysh* from the al-Ghādiriyya tribe but also ʿĀṣim b. Abī l-Nujūd al-Ghādirī al-Asadī, a student of *Zirr b. Ḥubaysh*, who transmitted the abovementioned *ḥadīth* calling for people to kill Muʿāwiya b. Abī Sufyān.

These texts show the tenacity of the remembrance of an unwavering stance of the scholars of Banū Ghādirain supporting ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib and criticizing Muʿāwiya b. Abī Sufyān. Thus, we can say with certainty that Banū Ghādira is remembered as having a clear affiliation with ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib’s camp. This particular relation, which is imagined to have bound Banū Ghādira with ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, can also be seen in the story that ʿĀṣim b. Abī l-Nujūd taught—exclusively—to his stepson and student, Ḥafṣ b. Sulaymān al-Ghādirī al-Asadī. While they were taught the Quranic reading of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, his other students learned about a different Quranic reading, which had been transmitted by ʿAbdallāh b. Masʿūd.

During the early Islamic era, many scholars from Banū Ghādira are remembered as having engaged themselves in defending and supporting claims of Shiʿi leadership. These include the likes of Abū ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad b. ʿAbbās al-Ghādirī²¹ and his father Abū Muḥammad ʿAbbās b. ʿIsā al-Ghādirī.²²

Militarily, Banū Asad in general and Banū Ghādira in particular are traditionally portrayed as having supported ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib and his son al-Ḥusayn in their wars against their opponents. In the battle of Ṣiffin (and the other battles fought by ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib), for instance, most of Banū Asad are mentioned

17 ʿĀṣim b. Abī l-Nujūd al-Ghādirī al-Asadī, one of the famous narrators of the Quran, died in 127/745.

18 Ibn al-Maghāzili, *Manāqib* 83.

19 Ibid. 417.

20 Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb* v, 130; Nasr b. Muzāḥim, *Waqʿit* 216.

21 He is the *muhaddith* and Quranic interpreter Abū ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad b. ʿAbbās b. ʿIsā al-Ghādirī, died in the year 300/913. Al-Najāshī, *Rijāl* 326.

22 He is the *ḥadīth* specialist Abū Muḥammad b. ʿAbbās b. ʿIsā al-Ghādirī. Al-Najāshī, *Rijāl* 270.

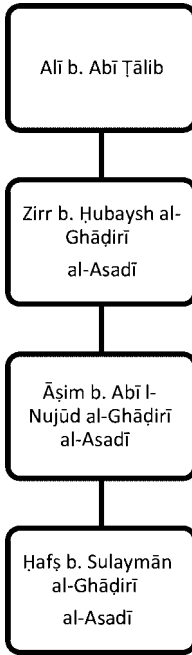


FIGURE 4.2
Transmission of the Quranic reading of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib

among his army, except Sammāk b. Makhrama al-Asadī²³ and a small group of Banū Asad (consisting of almost 100 people) who fled from Kufa to al-Raqqā—the stronghold of Mu'āwiya's supporters to join the camp of Mu'āwiya.²⁴

However, Banū Ghāḍira is not generally believed to have participated in al-Ḥusayn's army in his battle against Yazīd b. Mu'āwiya. This was most probably due to their limited number since the battle of Karbala (61/680) occurred eleven years after the plague struck Kufa in the year 49/669.²⁵ This plague had a quite high mortality rate, especially among Banū Ghāḍira, as most of the tribe is reported to have vanished a few years before the battle.²⁶ Nonetheless, al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī must have been aware of the relation between his father and Banū Ghāḍira as this may well be why he chose the area of the village of al-

23 Sammāk b. Makhrama al-Asadī, one of the chiefs of Banū Asad. He had a major role in converting many persons of his tribe from supporting 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib to Mu'āwiya b. Abī Sufyān's camp. Some historians mention that 700 persons from Banū Asad moved from 'Alī's army to Mu'āwiya's army because of the incitement of Sammāk. Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Waq'it* 146; Ibn 'Asākir, *Tārīkh* xxii, 294.

24 Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Waq'it* 146.

25 Ibn al-Jawzī, *Muntaẓim* v, 224.

26 Al-Mazzī, *Tahdhīb* v, 53.

Ghādiriyya as a battleground for his war against the army of Yazīd.²⁷ Noticeably, Banū Ghāḍira are remembered as the ones who buried the body of Ḥusayn and his companions after their death in the battle.²⁸ Examining these texts makes it clear that the members of Banū Ghāḍira were so-called proto-Shi‘ites and supporters of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and the leadership of his family.²⁹

2.2 *The Migration of Members from the Tribe of Banū Ghāḍira to Greater Syria*³⁰

There are several reasons behind the migration of Banū Ghāḍira from Kufa to Greater Syria during the first and second Islamic centuries, such as ideological factors, natural disasters, economic factors, and exile. Here I will briefly discuss these reasons.

27 Al-Dīnūrī, *Akhbār* 263.

28 Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh* v, 455.

29 Here we must discuss what Shi‘ism meant throughout Islamic history, and the difference between the terms “rāfiḍa” and “shī‘a.” The latter term (*shī‘a*) was used in the early Islamic era to describe those who supported ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib against his opponents. In this sense, using this term was not quite problematic in Sunni circles. For instance, many Sunni scholars (from early Islamic history till the Ayyubid era) were described as *shī‘a*, like Ismā‘īl al-A‘mash (d. 148/765), Abī Ishāq al-Subay‘ī (d. 127/745), al-Ḥākim al-Naysabūrī (d. 349/960), and many others. Noticeably, being Shi‘ites (or described as ones) did not negatively influence the status of those scholars during this era. On the other hand, at the beginning of the Ayyubid era, the term *shī‘a* acquired a more political connotation, especially after the abolition of the Fatimid Caliphate in Egypt. The accusation of being Shi‘ite then had a serious repercussion since it implicitly meant that the person was affiliated with the Fatimids in some way or another, and in many cases those persons who were accused of being Shi‘ites ended up in jail. (See Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrīj* ii, 276). In the Mamluk period, being described as Shi‘ites, was not to some extent problematic as we can see that al-Ṣafādī and Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba mentioned some Shi‘ite scholars in their books in a respectful manner (see al-Ṣafādī, *A‘yān* i, 107; iv, 355; iv, 572; and Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tārīkh* i, 594; iii, 484; iv, 211). As for the term “rāfiḍa,” it always held a negative connotation in Sunni circles throughout Islamic history. This term was mainly used to describe persons who refused to accept the legitimacy of the first two caliphs, Abū Bakr and ‘Umar. Therefore, any person accused of *rafīḍ* was regarded as a heretic, and there were many cases during the Mamluk period in which people who were accused of being *rāfiḍīs* were put on trial and executed (Ibn Kathīr, Ibn Ḥijjī, and Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba mentioned examples of this. See Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya*, xviii, 965; Ibn Hijji, *Tārīkh* i, 254; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tārīkh* i, 358; ii, 60).

30 The Ghādiriyya members who settled in Syria were from the branches of Banū Asad (whose members settled in al-Raqqā, Ḥūrān, and Damascus) and Banū Qays (whose members settled in Hums). Ibn Mandah, *Mustakhraj* ii, 231; ii, 254, 551; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba* ii, 257.

2.2.1 The Ideological Factors

The majority of the members from Banū Ghāḍira who migrated from Kufa to al-Raqqā may have held different ideologies than their fellow tribesmen. In general, Banū Ghāḍira were loyal to 'Alī, as I have discussed above. Nonetheless, some of them, led by Sammāk b. Makhrama al-Asadī,³¹ appear to have been more inclined to support Mu'āwiya, which prompted them to migrate from Kufa, the stronghold of the loyalists of 'Alī in 36/656, to al-Raqqā, which was predominantly inhabited by Mu'āwiya's supporters at the time.

We can actually confirm that some members from Banū Ghāḍira or Banū Asad indeed migrated to al-Raqqā by checking their *nisba*. For instance, the *nisba* of one of the teachers of al-Balādhurī was al-Ghāḍirī al-Raqqī.³² Also, al-Qushayrī, in his history of al-Raqqā, mentions many scholars and poets from Banū Asad or Banū Ghāḍira who were from al-Raqqā.³³

2.2.2 Natural Disasters

As mentioned, in the year 49/669, a major epidemic of plague³⁴ broke out in Kufa and is reported to have caused the death of many people from Banū Ghāḍira. Therefore, some of them are said to have migrated from Kufa to the Levant to flee the plague. Among those who migrated from Kufa to Damascus seems to have been the aforementioned Zirr b. Ḥubaysh.³⁵

2.2.3 Economic Factors

Trading opportunities clearly were another motive behind the migration from Kufa to Damascus for some of the members from Banū Ghāḍira. Of course, Damascus was the capital of the Umayyad Caliphate and the center of commerce until the second half of the second Islamic century. This made it the mecca of merchants at this period; the famous merchant 'Abada b. Abī Lubāba al-Asadī al-Ghāḍirī,³⁶ like many other members of his tribe, reportedly moved there from Kufa.

31 Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Waq'it* 146.

32 Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb* ii, 97.

33 Al-Qushayrī, *Tārīkh* 158, 173, 122, 110 67.

34 Ibn al-Jawzī, *Muntaẓẓim* v, 224.

35 Al-Mazzī, *Tahdhīb* v, 53.

36 He is the merchant 'Abada b. Abī Lubāba al-Asadī al-Ghāḍirī (d. ca. 127AH). See al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh* iii, 459.

2.2.4 Exile

Exile seems to have been another reason that led some of the members of al-Ghāḍiriyya's tribe to leave their homeland. An example of this is the poet al-Ḥakam b. 'Abadal al-Asadī al-Ghāḍirī,³⁷ who was forced to leave Kufa and settled in Damascus because of his exile by the anti-Umayyad ruler 'Abdallāh b. al-Zubayr in the course of the second civil war (680–92).³⁸

2.3 *The Family of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba and How They Reached and Settled in the City of Shuhba*

It is not known exactly when the family of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba settled in the village of Shuhba, in the region of Ḥawrān, close to today's Jordan border. One possible hypothesis is that they migrated from Kufa to Shuhba in two stages. The first stage must have been their migration from Kufa to al-Raqqā along with Sammāk b. Makhrama al-Asadī, who left due to his ideological disagreement with the rest of the tribe, as discussed above. The second stage represented their migration from al-Raqqā to the village of Shuhba, in which, meanwhile, the Banū Asad had centered. The migration of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's predecessors to Shuhba might be explained by their feeling of weakness in al-Raqqā where they must have settled far away from the rest of their tribe. As al-Qushayrī explains, until the Abbasid period, the Ghāḍiriyya branches who lived in al-Raqqā far from the rest of the tribe in the vicinities of Shuhba were unable to protect themselves from any aggression and they had to seek protection from the chiefs of some other tribes.³⁹

The weakness of al-Ghāḍiriyya and Banū Asad probably had a major impact on their decision to travel to the village of Shuhba, especially since they used to be a quite strong and influential tribe. Their choice of the village of Shuhba was perhaps also due to the presence of some of the branches of Banū Asad in this region, even before the emergence of Islam. The French historian René Dussaud has shown that there were some Arab tribes, including Banū Asad, in the village of Shuhba and its surroundings even before the emergence of Islam, as we can infer from the inscription found on the tombstone of the king of al-Ḥīra, Imru' al-Qays (d. 328).⁴⁰ Noticeably, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba in 759/1358 also affirms that Banū Asad lived in this area, as he mentions that war had erupted

37 He is the poet al-Ḥakam b. 'Abadal al-Asadī al-Ghāḍirī. He died in Damascus during the reign of 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān (686–705). See Ibn 'Asākir, *Tārīkh* xxvi, 15.

38 Ibn 'Asākir, *Tārīkh* xxvi, 15.

39 Al-Qushayrī, *Tārīkh*, 68, 96, 105, 169, 174.

40 Dussaud, Arabes 34–5.

between Banū Hilāl and Banū Asad near Shuhba and that there were many fatalities among the Banū Asad.⁴¹ This also suggests that some branches from Banū Asad lived in this area from (at least) 300 years before the emergence of Islam till the time of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba.

2.4 *Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's Family in the Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras*

The family of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba is regarded as one of the most important families who played an important role in intellectual life during the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods. During the Ayyubid period, their role was confined to the area of Shuhba and its surroundings. Their great grandfather, Jamāl al-Dīn, was a well-known and influential shaykh in Ḥawrān.⁴² He was the first person in the family to pursue a scholarly career and be appointed as a judge. This allegedly happened after his travel to Baghdad in order to ask the Abbasid caliph to be assigned as the judge of the town of Shuhba.^{43,44} Thereafter, this position became hereditary among his family, as it was occupied by his son Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad⁴⁵ and later his grandson Najm al-Dīn 'Umar. Here, I will briefly speak about the role of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's family during the period in which they lived.

2.5 *The Family of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba and Their Role in the Town of Shuhba and the Surrounding Areas*

The role of the family of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba was confined to the town of Shuhba and Ḥawrān during the Ayyubid era and the beginning of the Mamluk era. For instance, Jamāl al-Dīn was a judge in his hometown of Shuhba, and according to al-Jazarī, he was quite influential among his students and followers within

41 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tārīkh* ii, 130.

42 Ibn al-Jazarī, *Tārīkh* ii, 244.

43 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *I'lām* (Yeni Cami manuscript) 101^a.

44 During the Mamluk and Ayyubid periods, every village or town used to have an imam to lead the prayers and to work as a judge as well. The person who used to occupy the two positions did not used to be a well-known scholar but rather someone who memorized the Quran and had a knowledge of *fiqh* rulings.

45 There is not much information about him in the sources, but we can roughly estimate that he probably was a judge during the reign of Baybars (r. 1260–77), and we can say with certainty that he was a judge during the reign of al-Manṣūr Qalawūn until his death in 687. We can deduce this piece of information from Ibn al-Jazarī's biography of Sharaf al-Dīn's son Najm al-Dīn 'Umar as he mentions that the latter remained a judge for 40 years, which means that he inherited his father's position around the year 687 (since Najm al-Dīn died in 727), and probably this is the year in which his father died.

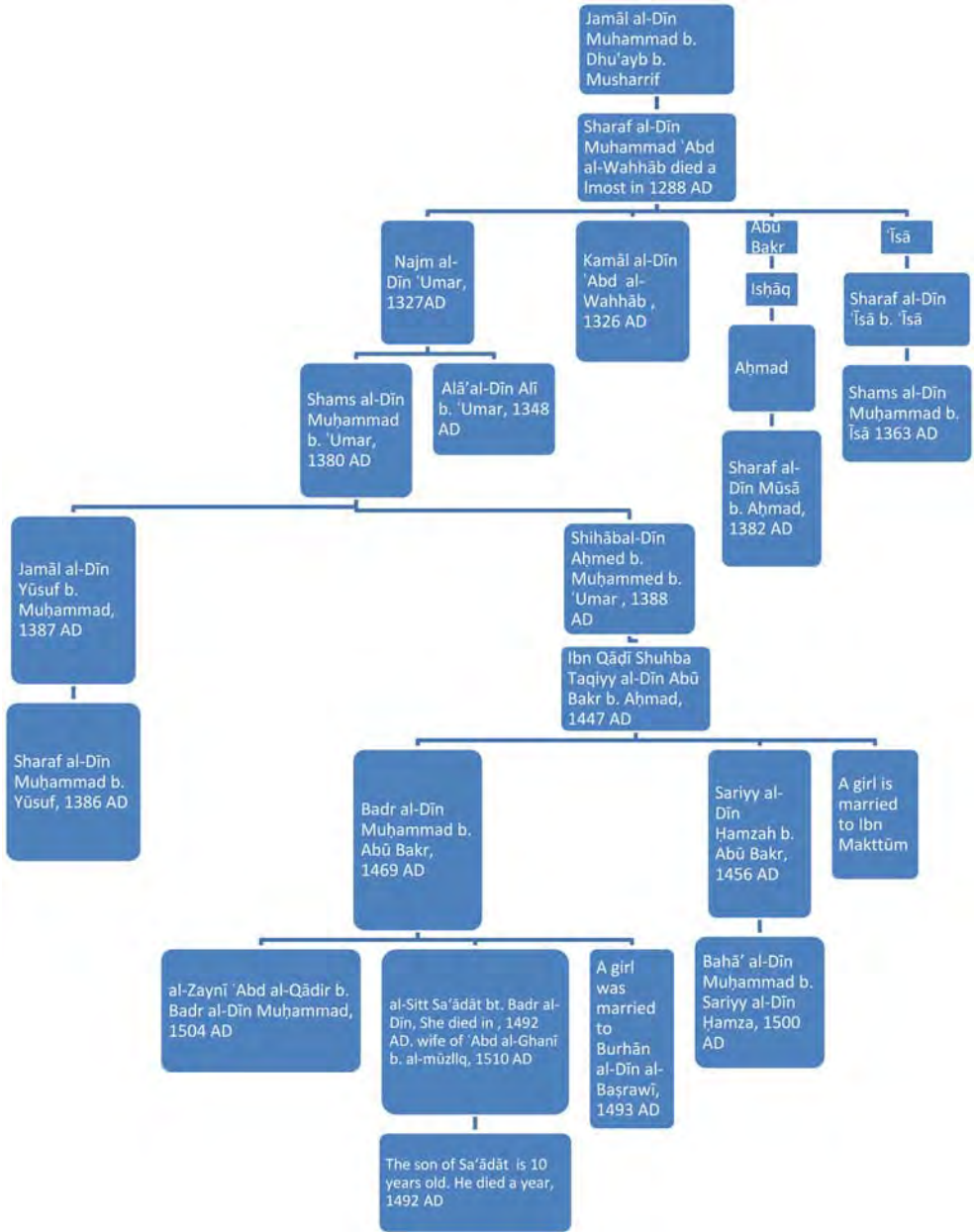


FIGURE 4.3 The extended family of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba

the area of Ḥawrān.⁴⁶ As for his son, Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, he inherited his father’s position as a judge after his father’s death, and he remained in this position until his death sometime around the year 687/1288. It is not known exactly when his father Jamāl al-Dīn died, but it was most probably at the beginning of the Mamluk era.⁴⁷

All branches of the family of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba actually descended from the abovementioned Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad, judge of Shuhba in the Ḥawrān. He had four children, two of whom were to some extent well-known scholars, while the other two did not pursue scholarly careers (yet their descendants did).

Najm al-Dīn ‘Umar is probably the eldest son of Sharaf al-Dīn. We can deduce this from the fact that he inherited the position of a judge after the death of his father since, as we already know, it was custom that the eldest son inherit his father’s positions. Furthermore, he was named as one of his brother Kamāl al-Dīn’s (born in 653/1255)⁴⁸ teachers, which suggests that he was indeed the eldest, since it would not make sense that the younger brother taught the elder one.

Najm al-Dīn ‘Umar had two sons who pursued scholarly careers. The first one was ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ‘Alī who became the judge of Shuhba in 727/1327 after the death of his father and remained in this position for 22 years until his death by the plague in 749/1348. The second one was Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad (born in 694/1295). Shams al-Dīn was the grandfather of Taqī al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba. He was sent to Damascus by his father who encouraged him to pursue a scholarly career in Damascus, which provided many more opportunities for a young scholar than the small town of Shuhba.⁴⁹

Shams al-Dīn had two sons, who also pursued scholarly careers, and a daughter who married ‘Alā’ al-Dīn b. Ḥijjī. Their son, Shihāb al-Dīn b. Ḥijjī, also became a famous historian.⁵⁰ The first one was Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf b.

46 Ibn al-Jazarī, *Tārīkh* ii, 244. The source of al-Jazarī’s detailed information about the family of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba in his work *Tārīkh ḥawādith al-zamān* is Jamal al-Dīn’s close friend Kamāl al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, as they allegedly used to have long discussions about personal and scholarly issues (Ibn al-Jazarī, *Tārīkh* ii, 172). Interestingly, Taqī al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba had no knowledge of the information al-Jazarī mentioned except the part about his grandfather’s travel to Baghdad, as he states in his book *al-ʿIlām bi-Tārīkh al-Islām* (Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *al-ʿIlām bi-tārīkh al-islām* f. 101^a).

47 See note 44.

48 Ibn al-Jazarī, *Tārīkh* ii, 172.

49 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tārīkh* iii, 51.

50 Al-Ghazzī, *Bahjat* 71. For more information on Shihāb al-Dīn b. Ḥijjī, see Massoud, Ibn Ḥijjī.

Muḥammad (720–89/1320–87).⁵¹ Jamāl al-Dīn had one son,⁵² Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Yūsuf,⁵³ who was a judge in al-Zabadānī and died in Damascus in 788/1386. As for Shams al-Dīn's second son, Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad, who died in Damascus in 737–90/1337–88,⁵⁴ only one of his sons, Taqī al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba, showed interest in pursuing a scholarly career. Taqī al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba had three sons who pursued scholarly careers and a daughter. The first son was Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr (d. 874/1469),⁵⁵ who had two daughters and a son. The first daughter was Sa'ādāt bt. Badr al-Dīn (d. 897/1492),⁵⁶ who was married to al-Khawāja 'Abd al-Ghanī b. al-Muzalliq,⁵⁷ and they had one son, who died shortly after the death of his mother at the age of ten.⁵⁸ The second daughter (whose name is unknown) was married to Burhān al-Buṣrawī,⁵⁹ and the son was al-Zaynī 'Abd al-Qādir, who was killed in 909/1504.⁶⁰ Sarī al-Dīn Ḥamza b. Abī Bakr (d. 861/1457), the second son of Taqī al-Dīn,⁶¹ had only one son, whose name was Bahā' al-Dīn b. Sarī al-Dīn (905/1500).⁶² The third son was Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf b. Abī Bakr whom we have no information about, but his name was mentioned in the work that his brother Badr al-Dīn wrote about the biography of their father.⁶³

The second son of the judge of Shuhba, Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad, was Kamāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Wahhāb b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb. Born in Shuhba in 653/1255, he was a student of his brother in Shuhba before his migration to Damascus. He was the first person from the family to have the epithet of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba. The migration of Kamāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Wahhāb to Damascus actually marked the appearance of the family of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba on the scholarly scene in al-Sham. Kamāl al-Dīn was sent to Damascus by

51 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tārīkh* iii, 237.

52 Ibid. 208.

53 Ibid. 207.

54 Ibid. 252.

55 Al-Baṣrawī, *Tārīkh* 44.

56 Ibn Ṭawq, *Ta'liq* iii, 1128.

57 He is al-Khawāja Zayn al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ghanī b. al-Muzalliq (d. 916/1510), the administrator of the religious endowment of Ibn Shams al-Dīn b. al-Muzalliq. See Ibn al-Ḥimṣī, *Ḥawādith* 457.

58 Ibn Ṭawq, *Ta'liq* iii, 1131.

59 Burhān al-Dīn al-Buṣrawī was killed in 899/1493. Ibn al-Ḥimṣī, *Ḥawādith* 240.

60 Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Muḥākahat* 221.

61 Ibn al-Ḥimṣī, *Ḥawādith* 79.

62 Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mut'at*, ii 761.

63 Badr al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tarjamat* 475.

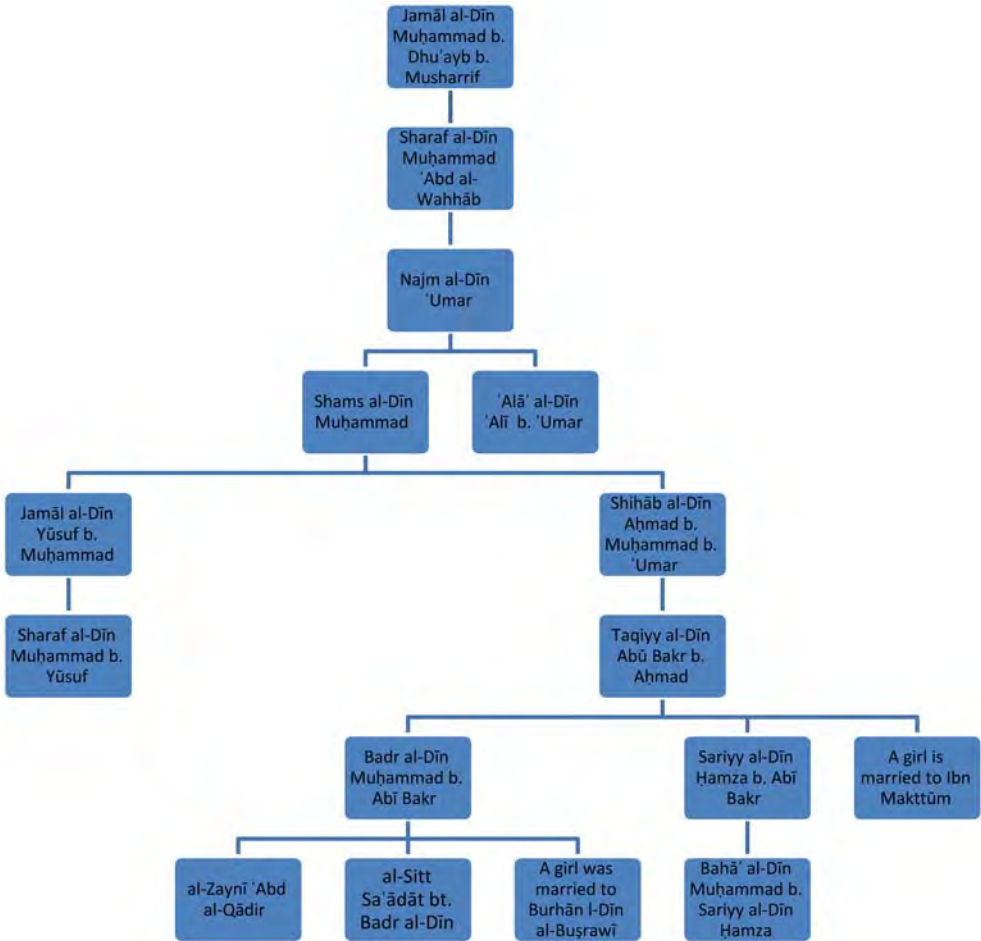


FIGURE 4.4 The first branch of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's family

his father Sharaf al-Dīn in order to pursue a scholarly career there. Most probably, this was because there were no available scholarly posts in the small town of Shuhba in this period since the judgeship position was reserved for his brother, Najm al-Dīn 'Umar. Therefore, Kamāl al-Dīn moved to Damascus and worked as a tutor for the sons of amirs and elites, while his brother inherited their father's position as a judge and started to prepare his eldest son 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Alī to inherit the post after him. However, as mentioned above, Najm al-Dīn 'Umar's other son, Shams al-Dīn (who is the grandfather of the protagonist of this paper, Taqī al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba) was sent to Damascus to follow in the footsteps of his uncle Kamāl al-Dīn, who had been sent to Damascus for the very same reason (i.e., the lack of available posts



FIGURE 4.5
The second branch of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's family

in Shuhba). Kamāl al-Dīn did not get married, and he had no children. He died in 726/1326.⁶⁴

The third son of Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad was 'Īsā b. Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad. We have very little information about him, probably because, as far as we know, he did not pursue a scholarly career. 'Īsā's son, Sharaf al-Dīn 'Īsā, was a scholar whom we know very little about as well. However, the latter's son, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad, was the chief of the chancellery (*kātib al-inshā'*) in Damascus and Gaza,⁶⁵ and he had quite a good relationship with the famous scholar al-Ṣafadī, as suggested by the many literary correspondences that the latter mentions in his work *al-Tadhkira*.⁶⁶ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad died in Gaza in 764/1363.⁶⁷

The fourth son of Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad was Abū Bakr b. Sharaf al-Dīn. We know almost nothing about him except that his grandson Sharaf al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Mūsā b. Ishāq b. Abū Bakr (d. 785/1383) pursued a scholarly career.⁶⁸

64 Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya* xviii, 275.

65 Ibn Ḥabīb, *Durrat*, f. 204^b; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tārīkh* ii, 197.

66 Al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān* v, 42.

67 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba mistakenly mentions him in the obituaries of the year 762.

68 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tārīkh* iii, 102.

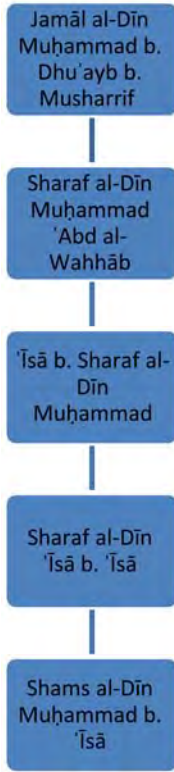


FIGURE 4.6
The third branch of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's family



FIGURE 4.7
The fourth branch of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's family

3 The Life and Works of Taqī al-Dīn Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad b. Qāḍī Shuhba al-Asadī

After the discussion of the origins and whereabouts of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's family in the previous parts of this paper, I will now discuss in the next parts the life and works of Taqī al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba. I will focus in particular on examining his historiographical works, but I will not discuss his *Fiqhī* works.

3.1 *His Early Life*

His full name is Abū l-Ṣidq Taqī al-Dīn Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. 'Umar b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb b. Muḥammad b. Dhu'ayb b. Mushar-

raf b. Qāḍī Shuhba al-Shāfi‘ī al-Ash‘arī. He was born in Damascus in 779/1377. He learned the Quran and summaries of *fiqh* and principles of religious works while he was eight years old. His father also gave him special attention, as he seems to have hoped that his son would inherit his religious positions. Tellingly, Taqī al-Dīn’s father reportedly already made him the imam of the prayers during the holy month of Ramadan when he was only nine years old, and he continued this for three years until his father’s death.⁶⁹

3.2 *His Education and Main Teachers*

Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba studied under many scholars of his time, especially jurists, as he was interested mainly in studying Shāfi‘ī jurisprudence. Therefore, he was more famous for being a jurist than a historian. Almost all the historians who discuss the biography of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba in their works described him as a jurist and not a historian. The only exception is al-Suyūṭī, who describes him in his work as “naẓm al-‘uqyān” or “the historian of al-Sham.”⁷⁰ Some of Taqī al-Dīn’s teachers influenced his personality and life substantially. Among other teachers he benefited from, his most important influencers were Sharaf al-Dīn al-Ghazzī,⁷¹ Sirāj al-Dīn al-Bulqīnī, who taught him jurisprudence and influenced his style, his father-in-law,⁷² Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Maktūm,⁷³ who taught him jurisprudence and Arabic, and his cousin the historian, Shihāb al-Dīn b. Ḥijji, who taught him history and was one of the reasons why Taqī al-Dīn became a historian.

3.3 *His Career*

Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba assumed no less than 13 posts during his reign. His jobs were not limited to one particular specialty, as he worked as a judge, teacher, and orator. He occupied some of these posts until his death, such as teaching in schools and mosques, while he was deposed from other posts, such as the judiciary and oratorship. In this part, I will discuss briefly each of the different posts he occupied.

Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba started his career at the young age of twelve after he inherited his father’s posts and while he remained under the guardianship of his

69 Badr al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tarjamat* 476.

70 Al-Suyūṭī, *Naẓm* 49.

71 He is the jurisprudence scholar Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Īsā b. ‘Uthmān b. ‘Īsā al-Ghazzī (d. 799/1397). Al-Zarkalī, *A‘lām* v, 105.

72 See Badr al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tarjamat* 464. He is the judge of Greater Syria, Sirāj al-Dīn ‘Umar b. Raslān al-Bulqīnī (d. 805/1403). Al-Zarkalī, *A‘lām* v, 46.

73 Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Maktūm al-Suwaydī (d. 797/1395). Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* i, 502.

father's friend, Sarī al-Dīn al-Maslātī.⁷⁴ Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba assumed his father's jobs after he reached puberty, sometime between 793/1391 and 798/1396, in a ceremony that was attended by his guardian Sarī al-Dīn al-Maslātī and many scholars and judges.⁷⁵ However, he only assumed his first real job, other than the ones he inherited from his father, after 800/1398, when he became a teacher in the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus. Hereafter, he occupied many other jobs.

Regarding his work in the judiciary, he at first worked as an assistant judge (ca. 820/1417).⁷⁶ Then, he officially became a judge in 842/1438 when Burhān al-Dīn al-Bā'ūnī⁷⁷ resigned from this position.⁷⁸ Regarding his career as a teacher in the mosques and schools, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba taught in several schools and mosques in Damascus. However, it appears that he did not officially teach in most of them. Rather, he is reported to have had to pay huge sums of money to the teachers so they would give their positions to him. According to his biographer, this is why he went through financial difficulties, as he had a lot of debts.⁷⁹ Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba made sure his sons would occupy some of his positions, so he gave some of them to his sons Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad, Sarī al-Dīn Ḥamza, and Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf.⁸⁰

3.4 *Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba and the Science of History*

There are several factors that helped draw Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's attention to historiography, the most important of which were social ones, such as his kinship relation with the famous Damascene historian Ibn 'Asākir. His grandmother was allegedly related to Ibn 'Asākir's brother through marriage and was hence his descendant.⁸¹ This relationship probably motivated him to study history. For instance, many other Muslim scholars throughout Islamic history tried to link their genealogy to the Prophet Muḥammad, one of his companions, or one of the prominent scholars, since this was a matter of pride, as many biographical works clearly show. Anyway, the following chart shows the kinship relationship between Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba and the Damascene historian Ibn 'Asākir.

74 He is the judge Sarī al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Maslātī (d. 799/1397). Ibn Taghrī-birdī, *Niḡm* xii, 160.

75 Badr al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tarjamat* 486.

76 Badr al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tarjamat* 489.

77 He is the judge Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm b. Aḥmad b. Nāṣir al-Bā'ūnī (d. 870/1465). Al-Zarkālī, *A'lām* i, 30.

78 Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* vii, 391.

79 Badr al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tarjamat* 473.

80 Ibid. 475.

81 Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Thaghr* 168.

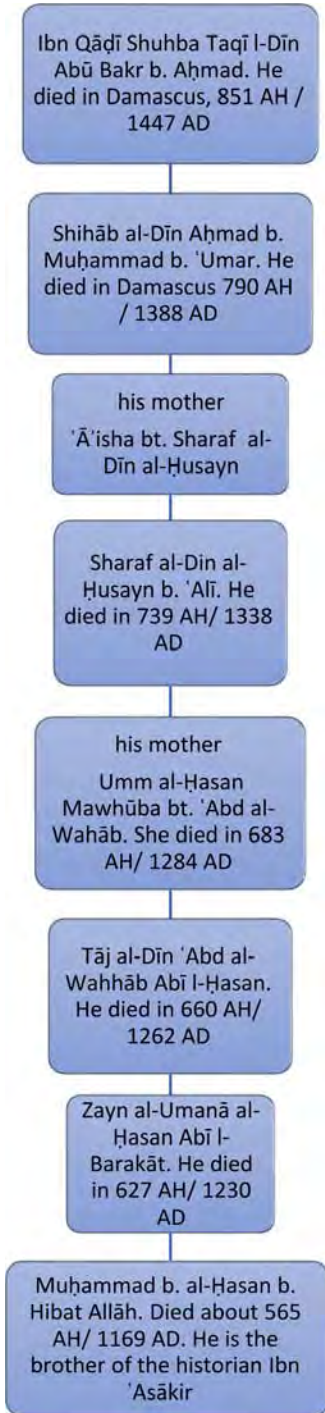


FIGURE 4.8
The lineage of the mother of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba

Furthermore, there was his growing up in a house that probably contained a lot of historiographical books since his grandfather, Shams al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba, was interested in studying history and owned many history and *sīra* works. Ibn al-ʿĀqūlī, who was one of the students of Shams al-Dīn, mentioned that the latter was interested in history and had good knowledge of it.⁸² Naturally, people would obtain historical knowledge through reading, and this would suggest, from my point of view, that Shams al-Dīn, like most other scholars, had quite a large collection of historiographical works in his library. Most probably, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba inherited this collection through his father, as both were the only heirs, and he then read historiographical and biographical dictionaries, which motivated him to study history.

Finally, there also was the fact that Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba was a disciple of his cousin, the historian Shihāb al-Dīn b. Ḥijjī, who seems to have been the main reason behind Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's decision to become a historian. Ibn Ḥijjī himself studied under many influential historians, like Ibn Kathīr⁸³ and Ibn Rāfiʿ al-Sallāmī,⁸⁴ who in turn had studied under other influential historians, such as al-Dhahabī⁸⁵ and al-Birzālī.⁸⁶ This influenced his style of historiographical writing, since it combined the styles of the aforementioned historians. Ibn Kathīr, for instance, was mainly interested in recording political and social events, while he was less interested in biographies, as he borrowed the style and approach of his teacher al-Birzālī (except when it came to the scholars' biographies as al-Birzālī, unlike Ibn Kathīr, was interested in them as well). Ibn Rāfiʿ al-Sallāmī,⁸⁷ on the other hand, was more interested in the biographies of scholars and some amirs and was less interested in recording political and social events. In this regard, Ibn Rāfiʿ followed in the footsteps of his teacher al-Dhahabī, who was broadly interested in the biographies of Muslim scholars, focusing especially on the biographies of *ḥadīth* scholars, as we can infer from his two works *Kitāb Tārīkh al-Islām* and *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalā*. Moreover, one of al-Dhahabī's notebooks shows his interest in mainly *ḥadīth* scholars.

82 Ibn al-ʿĀqūlī, *Dirāya* 378.

83 He is the historian ʿImād al-Dīn Ismāʿīl b. ʿUmar b. Kathīr (d. 774/1373). Al-Zarkālī, *Aʿlām* i, 320.

84 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt* iv, 13.

85 He is the historian Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dhahabī (d. 748/1339). Al-Zarkālī, *Aʿlām* v, 326.

86 He is the historian ʿAlam al-Dīn al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad al-Barzālī (d. 739/1339). Al-Zarkālī, *Aʿlām* v, 182.

87 He is the historian Taqī al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Rāfiʿ b. Hajras al-Sallāmī (d. 774/1372). Al-Zarkālī, *Aʿlām* vi, 124.

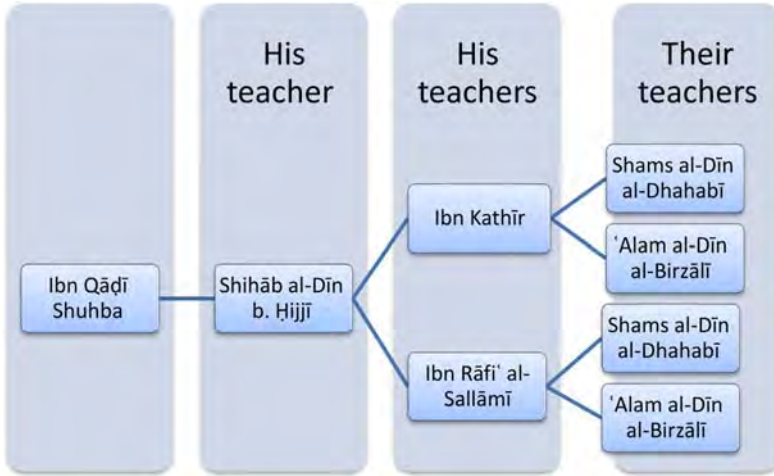


FIGURE 4.9 The chain of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's teachers of history

In his summary of Ibn al-Dubaythī's history work, *Dhayl tārikh Baghdād*,⁸⁸ al-Dhahabī chose to include the biographies of *ḥadīth* scholars, or people who had a broad interest in *ḥadīth*, instead of including significant poets, doctors, or authors.⁸⁹ Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, however, combined both approaches as he started by mentioning the political and social events in a certain year, then proceeded with mentioning the biographies of the people who died during that year.

I will further expatiate on Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's methodology when I discuss his historiographical works below.

3.5 *His Death*

Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba died in Damascus in the year 851/1448 in his house in the neighborhood of al-'Uqayba, outside the walls of Damascus, near the mosque of *al-Tawba* (in which he used to teach after *al-Fajr* prayer till *al-Ẓuhr* prayer). He apparently died quite suddenly, yet he had a major funeral. Also, when the news that he had died reached his friend Ibn Ḥajar, the latter is reported to have prayed *Ṣalāt al-Ghā'ib* (a prayer for the person who dies in a faraway land). Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba was buried in his family's grave at the Bāb Ṣaghīr cemetery, as established by Kamāl al-Dīn b. Qadi Shuhba, the first person from the family who migrated to Damascus. The burial was allegedly located near the graves of the martyrs of Karbala and the sons of al-Ḥusayn and 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.

88 Al-Dhahabī, *Mukhtaṣar* i, 223.

89 Ibn al-Dubaythī, *Muqaddimat* i, 127.

3.6 *His Works and Drafts*

Ibn Qadi Shuhba was a prolific author despite the many positions he held. This was most probably a result of his excellent time management, as, according to his biography, he used to teach during the time between *al-Fajr* and *al-Zuhr* prayers, and from *al-Zuhr* till *al-'Ishā'* prayers, he used to write and prepare for his coming classes.⁹⁰

All the works and drafts⁹¹ Ibn Qadi Shuhba wrote were either juristic or historiographical. It is noteworthy that most of these works were historiographical ones, and that he, nonetheless, was mostly known as a jurist, as I discussed above. In this paper, I will discuss his historiographical works and drafts, which will be divided into two categories: the works he wrote for the public and the works he wrote for his personal use.

3.6.1 His Nonhistoriographical Works

The following is a brief list of his nonhistoriographical works and drafts, which are mainly *fiqhī* ones:

1. *Kifāyat al-muḥtāj ilā sharḥ al-minhāj (al-Sharḥ al-kabīr)*:⁹² This work is a commentary on the work of *Minhāj al-ṭālibīn* of al-Nawawī. However, he did not finish it, as he stopped at the *Bāb al-Khul'*.⁹³
2. *Iqnā' al-muḥtāj ilā sharḥ al-minhāj (al-Sharḥ al-ṣaghīr)*: Another work he did not finish, as he stopped at the *Bāb al-Sullam*.⁹⁴
3. *Nukat kubrā 'alā al-tanbīh (al-Sharḥ al-kabīr)*: This work is a commentary on the work *al-Tanbīh fī l-fiqh* of Abū Ishāq al-Shīrāzī. He commented on the part from *Bāb al-Ṣiyām* to *Bāb al-Nikāḥ* (but he did not finish it).⁹⁵
4. *Kāfī al-nabīh fī nukat al-tanbīh (al-Sharḥ al-ṣaghīr)*.⁹⁶
5. *Fatawā Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba*:⁹⁷ This work is a collection of his legal rulings. However, we are not sure if he compiled the work himself or if one of his students carried out this task.

90 Badr al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tarjamat* 480.

91 By drafts I mean the notes he wrote for his personal use.

92 This work is still a manuscript in Maktabat al-Asad in Damascus. It is written in two volumes, which have the shelf marks 9185 and 17635.

93 Badr al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tarjamat* 477.

94 Ibid.

95 Ibid.

96 This work is still a manuscript in Maktabat al-Asad in Damascus. Its title is *Kāfī al-nabīh fī taḥrīr al-tanbīh*, which has the shelf mark 16878.

97 This work is still a manuscript in Maktabat the Mufti of Damascus, Abū l-Yusr 'Ābdīn, under the shelf mark 33.

6. *Nukat ‘alā l-muhimmāt*:⁹⁸ Most probably, this work was compiled/written by one of his students as his son presages in his writing about his father.
7. *Tafsīr al-qur’ān*:⁹⁹ This is an unknown work, which has not been mentioned by either the contemporaries of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba or the people who are familiar with his works. It was only mentioned by Ḥājjī Khalīfa in his early modern bio-bibliographical work *Kashf al-ẓunūn*. Probably, Ḥājjī Khalīfa was mistaken since even Badr al-Dīn, the son of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, did not mention any *tafsīr* work in his list of his father’s works. So, perhaps Ḥājjī Khalīfa had seen a *tafsīr* text in the hand of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba and mistakenly thought that Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba was the author, given that the latter used to copy many other scholars’ works.¹⁰⁰ What we are sure about is that Ḥājjī Khalīfa was familiar with Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba’s handwriting, as the former had consulted the latter’s works in his two works *Kashf al-ẓunūn*¹⁰¹ and *Sullam al-wuṣūl*.¹⁰²
8. *Sanad fī l-ḥadīth*:¹⁰³ This small treatise consists of ten folios in which he mentions the *ḥadīth* works he heard and for which he obtained *ijāzāt* (permissions).

3.6.2 His Historiographical Works

As suggested, this section will be divided into two categories: the works he wrote for the public and the works he wrote for his personal use.

3.6.2.1 *The Works He Wrote for the Public*

Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba wrote several historiographical works. The perspectives, forms, and authorship of these books varied. Some of them dealt with universal history, like his book *al-I’lām bi-tārīkh ahl al-islām*, in which he wrote about the history of Islam in general. Some other works were more specialized, like *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi’iyya*, in which he focused on the prosopography of Shāfi’ī scholars. Also, some of these works have remained just drafts, while others have been edited and formally published. Regarding the authorship, some of these works were written by Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba alone while he coauthored others:

98 Ḥājjī Khalīfa, *Kashf* i, 438.

99 Ḥājjī Khalīfa, *Kashf* ii, 1914.

100 Badr al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tarjamat* 476.

101 Ḥājjī Khalīfa copied many works of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba.

102 Ḥājjī Khalīfa, *Sullam* i, 62.

103 This treatise is still a manuscript and exists in the library of Princeton University under shelf mark 795H.

3.6.2.1.1 *Takmil tārīkh ibn Ḥijjī*

This is Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's first historiographical work, and his starting point for many others to come. Furthermore, he trained and practiced writing history while conducting this work, which he wrote after his teacher Ibn Ḥijjī—just before his death—asked him to complete his unfinished work. Ibn Ḥijjī wrote a historiographical work that deals with the history of the years between 741/1340 and 815/1412. However, he died before completing his work, as he did not write anything about the events that occurred between the years 748/1347 and 768/1367.¹⁰⁴ Therefore, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba coauthored this work and completed it following the same style and approach of Ibn Ḥijjī in doing so.¹⁰⁵ Ibn Ḥijjī surely would not have asked Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba to complete his work if he did not believe the latter was qualified enough to carry out this task, since Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba showed great interest in history during the many years in which he was a student of Ibn Ḥijjī.

3.6.2.1.2 *Dhayl 'alā tārīkh ibn Kathīr*¹⁰⁶

This seven-volume work was originally based on Ibn Ḥijjī's history, which they coauthored.¹⁰⁷ However, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba added to his teacher's work many

¹⁰⁴ The reason behind Ibn Ḥijjī's decision to not record the events of that year is that he wanted to write a *dhayl* for Ibn Kathīr's work. However, there are two versions of Ibn Kathīr's history. The first version, which was widely circulated during the time of Ibn Ḥijjī, ends after dealing with events of the year 740, while the second version, where each year was listed separately, ends with the events of the year 768. I would suggest that Ibn Ḥijjī probably started writing a *dhayl* for the first version of Ibn Kathīr's work, then he discovered the second version of the work after writing about the events of the year 748. Therefore, he continued writing starting from 769 and did not deal with the period between 748 and 768. I came to this conclusion because I do not believe that it was a coincidence that Ibn Kathīr's second version of his history work ends with the year 768 and Ibn Ḥijjī's work starts with the year 769. The similarities in style and organization between the two works (except that Ibn Kathīr tended to neglect many biographies) further suggests that Ibn Ḥijjī aimed to write a *dhayl* of Ibn Kathīr's work.

¹⁰⁵ Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt iv*, 13.

¹⁰⁶ This work was mentioned by Badr al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba. Three manuscripts of this work were found, all written by Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba: 1. The first one is located in Chester Beatty Library in Dublin under shelf mark 5527. This volume covers 14 years (the period between 797 and 810), and David C. Reisman wrote an article about it in the *MSR* (1998). 2. The second volume is located in Gotha Library under shelf mark 1574 and covers eleven years (between 824 and 834). (I am currently working on the edition of this manuscript.) 3. The third manuscript (which I have edited as well) is located in the collection of the India Office Library (Arab manuscripts) under shelf mark 3805. This volume covers three separate years (841, 842, and 846).

¹⁰⁷ Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt iv*, 13.

events that occurred in al-Shām and elsewhere as well as biographies, which he collected from the works of, among many other historians, al-‘Irāqī, al-Ṣafadī, Ibn Ḥabīb, Ibn Shākir al-Kutubī, Ibn Kathīr, Ibn al-Furāt, and Ibn Duqmāq. This *Dhayl* covers the period from 741/1340 to 840/1437. However, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba kept recording the events that occurred after the year 840/1437, as I have found an autograph manuscript of his in which he records the events of several scattered years (i.e., 841, 842, and 846).¹⁰⁸ I have also noticed that some later historians quoted events from Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba’s history that occurred in the year 851.¹⁰⁹ Therefore, it has become clear to me that Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba continued writing his historiographical work until just before his death because it covered a period of around 110 *hijri* years.

When it comes to the methodology and organization of this work, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, as he mentions in his introduction to the work, followed the same methodology of his shaykh Ibn Ḥijjī in his work.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, probably under the influence of earlier historians, such as Ibn Aybak al-Dimyāṭī¹¹¹ and Ibn al-Misallātī,¹¹² gave special attention to the history of scholarly families.¹¹³ For instance, whenever he wrote a biography of a person from a scholarly family, he continued to mention other members of his/her family who also pursued a scholarly career.

3.6.2.1.3 *Mukhtaṣar dhayl tāriḫ Ibn Kathīr*

This book is an abridgment of his book *Dhayl ‘alā tāriḫ Ibn kathīr*, which, as just mentioned, was in turn built on the historiographical work of his teacher Ibn Ḥijjī. The size of this abridgment is almost one-third of the original work.¹¹⁴ As for the methodology and organization of this abridgment, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba followed a different organization method than the original work. He followed the organization method of his shaykh Ibn Ḥijjī in the original, whereas, in the abridgment, he decided to follow al-Dhahabī’s organization of his *Tāriḫ al-Islām*, especially when it came to the biographical entries, which al-Dhahabī arranged alphabetically for each year in order to facilitate the search for a spe-

108 This manuscript, which I have recently edited, is in the holdings of the India Office Library (Arab manuscripts) under the shelf mark 3805.

109 See, for example, al-Nu‘aymī, *Dāris* ii, 20; Ibn Ṭūlun, *Thaḡhr* 258.

110 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭāriḫ* i, 111.

111 He is Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Aybak al-Dimyāṭī (d. 749/1348). See al-Zarkalī, *A‘lām* i, 102.

112 He is Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-Misallātī (d. 771/1370). See Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar*.

113 See, for example, Ibn Aybak, *Tarājim* i, 243; Ibn al-Misallātī’s manuscript of *Wafayāt* f. 246.

114 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭāriḫ* i, 111.

cific person in it.¹¹⁵ Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba also followed al-Dhahabī's organization in the way he detailed the works of each author he included in his biographical entries. This specific organization, in addition to Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's explicit documentation of the sources for each piece of information he included in this work, was the reason behind Ḥājjī Khālifa's dependency on this work.¹¹⁶

Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba only dealt with selected years from the original history, which are the 67 years from 741/1340 to 808/1406. Most of the information in this book was taken from the works of earlier historians, like al-Ṣafadī, Ibn Ḥabīb, al-ʿIrāqī, Ibn Shākir al-Kutubī, al-Ḥusaynī, and Ibn Sanad. Anyway, I cannot discuss here the full list of sources used in this work as this would probably require an entire article in itself.

3.6.2.1.4 *al-Iʿlām bi-tārīkh al-Islām al-muntaqā min tārīkh al-Islām li-l-dhahabī wa-mā uḍḍifa ilayhi min tārīkh ibn Kathīr wa-l-Kutubī wa ghayrihim*¹¹⁷

This book is the biggest and most comprehensive work of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba. As we can infer from the title, the historical materials in this work were collected from earlier sources such as, among many others, *Tārīkh al-Islām* of al-Dhahabī, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya* of Ibn Kathīr, and *ʿUyūn al-tawārīkh* of Ibn Shākir al-Kutubī. *Al-Iʿlām bi-tārīkh al-islām* covers the period between 200 and 799.¹¹⁸

I must note that Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's choice of the first year that this work covers (i.e., 200) is quite odd and unprecedented, since most of the historians who dealt with early Islamic history either started their works by dealing with the creation of the world up to their own eras (e.g., al-Balkhī in *Kitāb al-Badʿ wa-l-taʿrīkh*, al-Ṭabarī in *Tārīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*, and Ibn al-Jawzī in *al-Muntaẓam fī tārīkh al-mulūk wa-l-umam*) or with the beginning of Islam up to their own eras (e.g., al-Dhahabī in *Tārīkh al-Islām* and Ibn Shākir al-Kutubī in *ʿUyūn al-tawārīkh*). It is quite peculiar as well that the starting point of the three works that were Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's main sources in writing his

115 Ibid.

116 See, for example, Ibid., 196–9, 213, etc.

117 This work has several surviving manuscripts all of which are autographs of the author. These manuscripts exist in different libraries: 1. Two volumes are held in Morocco in *al-Khizāna al-ʿamma bi-l-Rabāt* under classmark (94), in which the first volume covers 109 years (from 451–560) and the second volume covers 69 years (561–630). 2. One volume is held in Sulaymanyeh library in Istanbul under classmark (1403), which covers 70 years (600–670). 3. One volume from the collection of Yeni Cami also in the Sulaymanyeh library under classmark (864) covers the period from 701–40 (though the last 20 folios of this volume are not written by Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba).

118 Badr al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tarjamat* 479.

work was the beginning of Islam, while *al-Iʿlām bi-tārīkh al-Islām* started by dealing with the year 200. One might speculate that Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba tried to avoid dealing with the problematic period of early Islam (mainly starting from ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān's reign until the early Abbasid era), especially when his tribe had a prominent role in the political turmoil in this era. As I have mentioned above, the branch of Banū Ghāḍira, from which Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba is descended, is remembered to have supported ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib against his opponents and his son Ḥusayn in his battle against Yazīd b. Muʿawiy and adopted Shiʿism after the formation/crystallization of the Islamic sects. Had Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba dealt with the first 150 years of Islamic history in this book, he would have been obliged to mention that the members of his tribe supported ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib and later on became Twelver Shiʿites. Furthermore, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba concealed that he was from Shiʿite origins, as he mentions that he descended from Banū Asad without specifying whether he was from the Shiʿite or Sunni branches. This is also quite clear in his discussion of the biography of his relative Muḥammad b. ʿĪsā b. Qāḍī Shuhba, as he was keen to hide that he was from Banū Ghāḍira, despite this piece of information being mentioned by al-Ṣafadī, who was Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's source for Muḥammad b. ʿĪsā's biography.¹¹⁹

As for the organization of this book, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba again followed al-Dhahabī's organization of *Tārīkh al-islām*, as he mentions the historical events in a specific year followed by the obituaries.

However, unlike al-Dhahabī, he did not organize these obituaries alphabetically.

3.6.2.1.5 *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʿiyya*

This book was extensively copied during the author's lifetime, and we found his handwriting on most of its surviving manuscripts. Anyhow, I will not discuss this book in detail here since ʿAbd al-ʿAlīm Khān made a very good study of it in his introduction to his edition of the work.¹²⁰

119 Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān* v, 42. Al-Ṣafadī actually claims to have been a close friend of Muḥammad b. ʿĪsā.

120 The manuscript of this work is held in al-Maktaba al-Zāhiriyya under classmark (438). There is manuscript in Chester Beatty library that has the title *Ṭabaqāt al-nuḥāh li-ibn Qāḍī Shuhba*. However, after examining the manuscript, it turns out that it is rather a manuscript of al-Fīrūzābādī's work *al-Bulgha fī tarājīm aʿimmat al-naḥw wa-l-luḡa*.

3.6.2.1.6 *al-Tabyīn fī ṭabaqāt al-nuḥāh wa-l-lughawīyyīn*¹²¹

This book was written twice. At first, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba arranged it by annals. Then, he rearranged it alphabetically to ease the access to the biographies of specific persons. This book was written after *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya* since we find many references in *al-Tabyīn* to the *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya*.¹²²

3.6.2.1.7 *Manāqib al-Imām al-Shāfi'ī wa-ṭabaqāt aṣḥābihi min tārikh al-Islām*

It is a selection of the biographies of Shāfi'ī scholars in al-Dhahabī's work *Tārikh al-Islām*.

3.6.2.1.8 *Lubāb al-tahdhīb*

In this work, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba summarizes and combines two different works: *Tahdhīb al-kamāl* of al-Mizzī and *Tadhhib tahdhīb al-kamāl* of al-Dhahabī.

3.6.2.1.9 *Tārikh binā' madīnat Dimashq*

This is a summary of the first volume of Ibn 'Asākir's work *Tārikh Dimashq*, which deals with the urban history of the city of Damascus.¹²³

3.6.2.2 *Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's Selections* (Muntaqayāt)

The literary genre of "selections" constitutes the majority of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's works. Nonetheless, most of the studies of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's life or works rarely discuss these works. I will start here by briefly discussing historians' perceptions of the difference between the genres of selections (*muntaqayāt*) and summaries/abridgments (*mukhtṣarāt*). When historians speak of an abridgment, it means that this work maintained the original work's structure, but it was shortened. In other words, if the original contained 200 biographical entries, the abridgment should also contain 200 entries but each entry would have less information. For instance, Ibn Ḥajar's abridgment of al-Ṣafadī's *al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt* contains 14,195 biographical entries, which is exactly as many as the original work.¹²⁴ Selections are quite different from abridgments in the sense that a work of the former genre consists of the information the author deems important for his personal use without being restricted by the original work's number of entries, chapters, etc. Many historians wrote selective works to use as a reference while writing their original work, like al-Dhahabī and

121 Badr al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tarjamat* 479.

122 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt al-nuḥāh* 61.

123 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tārikh* (manuscript) 2^a.

124 Fayḍullah Effendi Library in Istanbul, shelfmark 1413. I have consulted the manuscript in Istanbul.



FIGURE 4.10 Selections by Ibn Khaṭīb al-Nāṣiriyya that informed his *al-Durr al-muntakhab*

many others. This working method (of producing selections) was adopted by many 15th-century historians, like Ibn Khaṭīb al-Nāṣiriyya, who made selections from historiographical works about the history of Aleppo and its elite in order to write his work *al-Durr al-muntakhab fi takmilat tāriḫ Ḥalab*. These selections were taken from several works, some of which have reached us as: 1. *Durrat al-aslāk fi dawlat al-Atrāk* of Ibn Ḥabīb al-Ḥalabī from which Ibn Khaṭīb al-Nāṣiriyya selected some biographies and records of historical events;¹²⁵ 2. *Tāriḫ Miṣr* of Quṭb al-Dīn al-Ḥalabī¹²⁶ from which some of the biographies and records of historical events were selected as well;¹²⁷ 3. *al-Wafayāt* of al-‘Irāqī from which Ibn Khaṭīb al-Nāṣiriyya selected some biographies of the scholars of Aleppo.¹²⁸ These three holographs were used by Ibn Khaṭīb al-Nāṣiriyya to write his work *al-Durr al-muntakhab* (see figure 4.10).

On the other hand, we can see that al-Maqrīzī used his selections from Ibn Muṣayyir’s work *Akhbār Miṣr* to write several works, such as *Itti‘āz al-ḥunafā’*

125 This work (titled *Durrat al-aslāk*) is still a manuscript in Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin under classmark (9724). However, after examining it, it turned out that this is rather a manuscript of Ibn Khaṭīb al-Nāṣiriyya’s selections.

126 He is the historian Quṭb al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Karīm b. ‘Abd al-Nūr al-Ḥalabī (d. 735/1335). See al-Zarkalī, *A‘lām* iv, 53.

127 The manuscript of this work is held in the Library of Khalidi in Jerusalem under classmark (31).

128 Ibid.

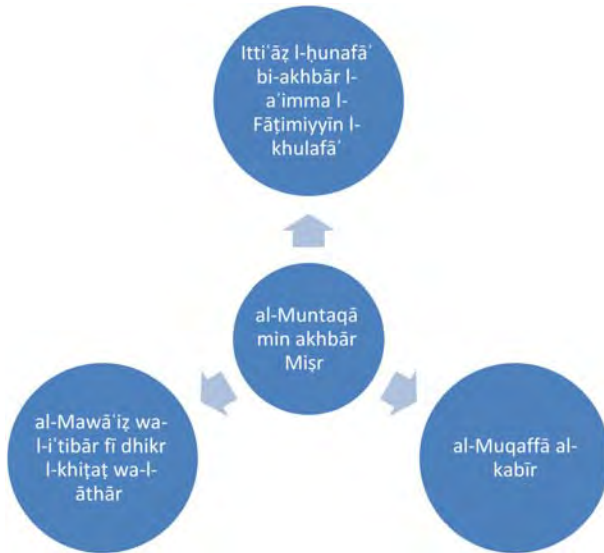


FIGURE 4.11 *Muntaqā* al-Maqrīzī used to inform his three mentioned works

bi-akhbār al-a'imma al-Fātimiyyīn al-khulafā',¹²⁹ *al-Muqaffā l-kabīr*,¹³⁰ and *al-Mawā'iz wa-l-i'tibār fī dhikr l-khiṭaṭ wa-l-āthār* (see figure 4.11).¹³¹

Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba also wrote several selections that varied in size. Some of them were in several volumes, like his selections from *Tārīkh al-Islām* and *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, and others were written in just one volume. Noticeably, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba had a specific method of making these selections. For instance, when he wanted to write his book *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya*, he made several notebooks of selections of biographies of Shāfi'ī scholars from *Durrat al-aslāk*, *Dhayl al-rawḍatayn* of Ibn Abī Shāma, *Tārīkh al-Islām* of al-Dhahabī, and *Ṭabaqāt fuqahā' al-Yaman* of Ibn al-Ja'dī.

Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba also used to make selections from voluminous works he did not seem to have a copy of in his personal library, like *Tārīkh al-Islām*, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, *Tārīkh Ibn al-Furāt*, and *Tārīkh Ibn Duqmāq*. Sometimes he made selections from the small works he did not need very often, like the biographies

129 The selections from Ibn Muyyasir that have been used in *Itti'āz al-ḥunafā'* are in al-Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz* ii, 296; iii, 69, 71, 86.

130 The selections from Ibn Muyyasir that have been used in *Itti'āz al-ḥunafā'* are in al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā* v, 89, 140, 300, 395, 431, 476, 505, 538, 684, 711; vi, 309.

131 The selections from Ibn Muyyasir that have been used in *Itti'āz al-ḥunafā'* are in al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ* i, 159, 222, 254, 269; ii, 386, 405, 422, 450, 452, 495, 529, 589, 600; iii, 51, 545, 727. With regard to the analysis of these working methods, I refer to F. Bauden's extensive and excellent work, who studied them in detail within the framework of the Maqrīziana.

of the Shāfiʿī scholars from *Ṭabaqāt fuqahāʾ al-Yaman*¹³² and *Dhayl al-ʿibar*¹³³ of al-Ḥusaynī. However, if a book was small or medium-sized and he needed it very often, he would rather copy it in full, like *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʿiyya al-wuṣṭā*¹³⁴ of al-Subkī and *Kitāb al-Wafayāt*¹³⁵ of Jamāl al-Dīn al-Misallātī. On the other hand, if Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba had the book he needed as a reference in his library, he used to just make comments in its margins, without copying any part of it, as he did with *Ṭabaqāt al-fuqahāʾ al-kubrā*¹³⁶ of al-ʿUthmānī and *Durar al-ʿuqūd al-farīda*¹³⁷ of al-Maqrīzī.

Noticeably, when Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba wrote the selections for his work *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʿiyya*, he wrote each set of selections from each work in a separate notebook. However, this was not the case when he made a selection for his other works, as he used to combine selections from several works in one volume as he did with *Tārīkh Ibn Duqmāq* and *Tārīkh Ibn al-Furāt*. Anyhow, in the following part, I will briefly discuss these selections and for which book he wrote them:

3.6.2.2.1 *al-Muntaqā min al-ansāb*¹³⁸

This work consists of selections from *Kitāb al-Ansāb of al-Samʿānī*. He used the selections from this book to write several works, such as *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʿiyya*,¹³⁹ *al-Iʿlām bi-tārīkh al-islām*,¹⁴⁰ and *Kitāb Ṭabaqāt al-nuḥāt*.¹⁴¹

3.6.2.2.2 *al-Muntaqā min tārīkh al-Iskandariyya*¹⁴²

This work consists of selections from al-Nuwayrī's book *al-Ilmām bi-l-iʿlām fī mā jarat bihi al-aḥkām wa-l-umūr al-maqḍiyyāt fī wāqīʿat al-Iskandariyya*. This *Muntaqā* was used in writing Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's work *Mukhtaṣar al-dhayl*.¹⁴³

132 The manuscript of this work is held in Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin under classmark (258).

133 The manuscript of this work is held in Chester Beatty Library under classmark (3151) (80–97).

134 The manuscript of this work is held in Chester Beatty Library under classmark (4922).

135 The manuscript of this work is held in Bibliothèque nationale de France (BNF) under classmark (172) (263–9).

136 The manuscript of this work is held in Sulaymanyeh library in Istanbul under classmark (159). There is an ownership statement of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba on this manuscript, and there are many comments of his in its margins.

137 The manuscript of this work is held in the collection of Gotha Research Library under classmark (1771). Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba also commented in its margins.

138 Badr al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tarjamat* 478.

139 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt* i, 79, 121, 163.

140 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *al-Iʿlām* (Morocco manuscript) i 24^b, 42^b; ii 3^b, 6^b.

141 See for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt al-nuḥāt* 72, 105, 129, 145, 188, 212–3, 250.

142 Badr al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tarjamat* 478.

143 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tārīkh* i, 136; ii, 77, 292, 309.



FIGURE 4.12 *al-Muntaqā* that informed Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's three mentioned works

3.6.2.2.3 *al-Muntaqā min tārīkh dimashq*¹⁴⁴

This work consists of selections from Ibn 'Asākir's work *Tārīkh dimashq*. I must note that this *muntaqā* is different from his other work *Tārīkh binā' madinat dimashq*, as the former work consists of two volumes while the latter work is less than one volume. This *muntaqā* was used in writing Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's works *al-'lām bi tārīkh al-islām*¹⁴⁵ and *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'īyya*.¹⁴⁶

3.6.2.2.4 *al-Muntaqā min durrat al-aslāk*

This work consists of selections from *Kitāb Durrat al-aslāk fī dawlat al-atrāk*. To my knowledge, this work has never been mentioned in any of the studies of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's career. However, I found an autograph manuscript of it in the library of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.¹⁴⁷ He used the selections from this book when he wrote several works, such as *Mukhtaṣar al-dhayl*,¹⁴⁸ *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'īyya*,¹⁴⁹ *al-'lām bi-tārīkh al-Islām*,¹⁵⁰ and *Kitāb Ṭabaqāt al-nuhā*.¹⁵¹ He probably also used this *muntaqā* to write his books *Dhayl al-tārīkh* and *Takmilat tārīkh Ibn Hījī*.

144 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Hayāt* 479.

145 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *al-'lām* (Morocco manuscript) i, 15^a, 48^b, 49^b.

146 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt* i, 114, 128, 140, 171, 217.

147 Under classmark (1721).

148 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tārīkh* ii, 69, 71, 73, 90, 137.

149 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt* ii, 172–3, 182, 199.

150 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *'lām* (Turkey manuscript) 2^b, 11^b, 14^b, 18^a.

151 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt al-nuhāh* 95.



FIGURE 4.13 *al-Muntaqā* that informed Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's *al-l'ām* and *Ṭabaqāt*



FIGURE 4.14 *al-Muntaqā* that informed Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's four mentioned works



FIGURE 4.15 *al-Muntaqā* that informed Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's three mentioned works

3.6.2.2.5 *al-Muntaqā min 'uyūn al-tawārīkh*

Ibn Shākir al-Kutubī's book *'Uyūn al-tawārīkh* was quite important for Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, who used information from it in most of his historiographical writings. Most probably, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba had some volumes of this work in his library, as I found his comments in the margins of a manuscript, which clearly indicate that he owned at least this manuscript.¹⁵² He also wrote a *muntaqā* from the volumes he did not own, which was then used by Ibn Ḥajar as a source for his work *al-Durar al-kāmina*¹⁵³ and by Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba himself in writing several works, such as *al-I'lām bi-tārīkh al-Islām*,¹⁵⁴ *Mukhtaṣar al-dhayl*,¹⁵⁵ and *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya*.¹⁵⁶ He probably also used this *muntaqā* when writing his books *Dhayl al-tārīkh* and *Takmilat tārīkh Ibn Ḥijjī*.

152 This manuscript is held in the Library of the British Museum under classmark (OR. 3005). I am grateful to Benedikt Reier, who informed me of this manuscript.

153 Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* ii, 158.

154 I did not mention the places where Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba uses information from *al-Muntaqā min 'uyūn al-tawārīkh* in his work *al-I'lām*, since the latter work is primarily based on the former work in addition to the histories of al-Dhahabī and Ibn Kathīr.

155 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tārīkh* ii, 23, 39, 57, 95.

156 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt* ii, 80, 173, 215, 239, 263.

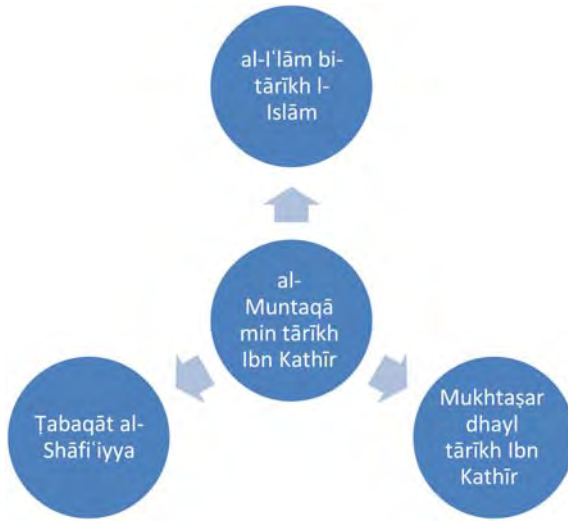


FIGURE 4.16 *al-Muntaqā* that informed Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's three mentioned works

3.6.2.2.6 *al-Muntaqā min muʿjam shuyūkh Ibn Rajab*¹⁵⁷

This book is a *muntaqā* from the book *Muʿjam shuyūkh Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī*. He used this book as a source for his work *Mukhtaṣar al-dhayl*¹⁵⁸ and probably for his works *Dhayl al-tārīkh* and *Takmilat tārīkh Ibn Ḥijjī*.

3.6.2.2.7 *al-Muntaqā min tārīkh Ibn Kathīr*

Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba wrote this *muntaqā* from Ibn Kathīr's work *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*. To my knowledge, this *muntaqā* has not been mentioned in any work about Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba. I found the manuscript of this work in the Library of Chester Beatty. It had no title, but after examining it, I found out that it was an autograph manuscript of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, which contains a selection from *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*. This *muntaqā* is probably one of many. Anyhow, the info in this selection was used in his works *al-I'lām bi tārīkh al-Islām*,¹⁵⁹ *Mukhtaṣar*

157 This work was edited and printed in Kuwait, but attributed to a different author. However, after examining it, I found out through his handwriting that it was actually written by Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba. The manuscript of this work is held in Yale University under classmark (292).

158 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, ii 23, 90, 252, 255, 280–1.

159 I did not mention the places where Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba uses information from the history of Ibn Kathīr in his work *al-I'lām* since the latter work is primarily based on the former work in addition to the histories of al-Dhahabī and Ibn Kutubī.

al-dhayl,¹⁶⁰ and *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'īyya*¹⁶¹ (and probably in *Dhayl al-tāriḫ* and *Takmilat tāriḫ Ibn Ḥijjī* as well).

3.6.2.2.8 *al-Muntaqā min tāriḫ al-Islām*

Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba was quite interested in al-Dhahabī's working methodology and approach, as we can infer from Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's very frequent use of al-Dhahabī's works as sources for his historiographical writings. Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's interest was not limited to al-Dhahabī's fair copies (*mubayyaḍāt*), but he was also interested in al-Dhahabī's drafts and *muntaqayāt*; the latter was often used as a source for his works. I would actually suggest that Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba adopted al-Dhahabī's working method of using *muntaqayāt* as a source for his work, which further suggests Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's interest in al-Dhahabī's works¹⁶² since when the former (in his work *Mukhtaṣar al-dhayl*) mentions the latter's works, almost 75 percent are historiographical works. Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba probably read these works, as he gave quite extensive descriptions of them in addition to a detailed description of al-Dhahabī's abridgements, such as *Mukhtaṣar dhayl tāriḫ Baghdād*¹⁶³ of Ibn al-Dubaythī and *Mukhtaṣar tāriḫ Nisābūr*¹⁶⁴ of al-Ḥākim al-Nisābūrī, which Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba probably used as sources for his works as well. Anyhow, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's *muntaqā* from *tāriḫ al-Islām* was used as a source for his works *al-I'lām bi-tāriḫ al-Islām*,¹⁶⁵ *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'īyya*,¹⁶⁶ and *Ṭabaqāt al-nuḥāh*.¹⁶⁷

3.6.2.2.9 *al-Muntaqā min mu'jam al-mukhtaṣṣ*¹⁶⁸

This book is a *muntaqā* from al-Dhahabī's work *Mu'jam al-mukhtaṣṣ*. Most probably, he wrote this work to use in his work *Dhayl al-tāriḫ* as he referred to it in more than 100 places in *Mukhtaṣar al-tāriḫ*.¹⁶⁹ On the other hand, he also used this *muntaqā* in other historiographical works, such as *al-I'lām*

160 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tāriḫ* i, 122, 126, 140, 155.

161 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt* ii, 6, 52, 75, 105.

162 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tāriḫ* 534.

163 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt* ii, 25, 40, 46, 48; *Ṭabaqāt al-nuḥāh* 36, 46, 59.

164 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt* i, 63, 71, 91, 99; *Ṭabaqāt al-nuḥāh* 181, 288.

165 I did not mention the places where Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba uses information from *Tāriḫ al-Islām* in his work *al-I'lām* since the latter work is primarily based on the former work (in addition to the histories of Ibn Kathīr and al-Kutubī).

166 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt* i, 63–5, 70, 73.

167 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt al-nuḥāh* 23, 49, 53, 55, 77.

168 The manuscript of this work is held in Maktabat al-awqāf al-'amma fi Baghdād under classmark 2841.

169 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tāriḫ* i, 141–2, 164, 171, 197.



FIGURE 4.17 *al-Muntaqā* that informed Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's three mentioned works



FIGURE 4.18 *al-Muntaqā* that informed Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's four mentioned works

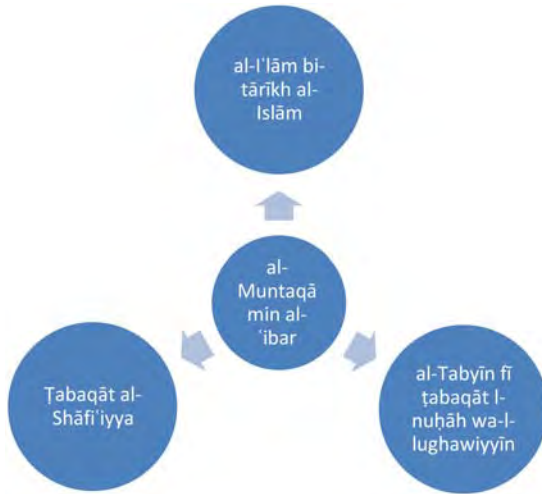


FIGURE 4.19 *al-Muntaqā* that informed Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's three mentioned works

bi-tārīkh al-Islām,¹⁷⁰ *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya*, and *Ṭabaqāt al-nuḥā*,¹⁷¹ and most likely in *Takmilat tārīkh Ibn Ḥijjī* as well.

3.6.2.2.10 *al-Muntaqā min al-ībar*¹⁷²

This book is a *muntaqā* from the book of al-Dhahabī's work *Kitāb al-ībar*. He used this *muntaqā* in other historiographical works, like *al-I'lām bi-tārīkh al-Islām*,¹⁷³ *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya*,¹⁷⁴ and *Ṭabaqāt al-nuḥā*.¹⁷⁵

3.6.2.2.11 *al-Muntaqā min tārīkh Ibn Duqmāq*¹⁷⁶

This notebook is a *muntaqā* from Ibn Duqmāq's work *Nuzhat al-anām fī tārīkh al-Islām*. Most probably, the last volume of this work was sent to Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba by Ibn Ḥajar. However, I can say with certainty that this *muntaqā* was written specifically for *Dhayl al-tārīkh* as he used it neither in *al-I'lām*

170 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *I'lām* (Suleymaniye Library manuscript) 3^a, 3^b, 5^b, 7^a, 134^a, 140^b.

171 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt al-nuḥāh* 289.

172 The manuscript of this work is held in the British Museum under classmark (Or. 3006).

173 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *I'lām* (Suleymaniye Library manuscript) 23^b, 35^b, 36^a, 38^b, 39^a.

174 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt* i, 283; ii, 136, 214, 260.

175 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt al-nuḥāh* 89.

176 The manuscript of this work is held in the Chester Beatty Library under classmark (4125).



FIGURE 4.20
al-Muntaqā that informed Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya* and
Mukhtaṣar al-dhayl

bi-tāriḫ al-islām or *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya*, but it was extensively used in *Mukhtaṣar al-dhayl*.¹⁷⁷

3.6.2.2.12 *al-Muntaqā min tāriḫ Ibn al-Furāt*¹⁷⁸

This notebook contains selections from *Tāriḫ b. al-Furāt* of historical events and biographies from the 8th/14th century. The original work is in four volumes that were sent to Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba by Ibn Ḥajar one by one (i.e., once Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba finished taking the selections from one of the volumes, he would send it back to Ibn Ḥajar and receive the following volume).¹⁷⁹ Most probably, this *muntaqā* was originally in four notebooks, which were written to be used for his work *Dhayl al-tāriḫ*, but they were also used in *Mukhtaṣar al-dhayl*¹⁸⁰ and *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya*.¹⁸¹

3.6.2.2.13 *al-Muntaqā min al-mudhayyal 'alā-l-rawḍatayn*¹⁸²

This notebook contains selections of the biographies of Shāfi'ī scholars from Ibn Abī Shāma's work *al-Mudhayyal 'alā-l-rawḍatayn*. Certainly, this *muntaqā*

177 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tāriḫ* ii, 486; iii, 130, 162, 366, 554, 556.

178 The manuscript of this work is held in the Chester Beatty Library under classmark (4125).

179 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tāriḫ* iv, 455.

180 Ibid., *Tāriḫ* ii, 235, 332.

181 Ibid., *Ṭabaqāt* iv, 5. With regard to the notes of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, see Reisman, Holograph.

182 The manuscript of this work is held in the Amirton University under classmark (203H).



FIGURE 4.21

al-*Muntaqā* that informed Ibn Qāḍi Shuhba's *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya* and *al-I'lām bi-tārīkh al-Islām*

was meant to be used in his work *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya*.¹⁸³ However, it was also used in his book *al-I'lām bi-tārīkh al-Islām*.¹⁸⁴

3.6.2.2.14 *al-Muntaqā min ṭabaqāt fuqahā' al-Yaman*¹⁸⁵

This notebook is a *muntaqā* from Ibn al-Ja'dī al-Yamanī's work *Ṭabaqāt fuqahā' al-Yaman*. Ibn Qāḍi Shuhba mainly selected the biographies of Shāfi'ī scholars in order to use them in his work *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya*.¹⁸⁶

3.6.2.2.15 *al-Muntaqā min mu'jam shuyūkh Ibn Rajab*

This notebook contains selections from *Mu'jam shuyūkh Shihāb al-Dīn b. Rajab*. Ibn Qāḍi Shuhba, however, rearranged the entries of the *Mu'jam* by annals instead of listing them alphabetically, as tends to be the case for most of the works of *Ma'ājam al-Shuyūkh*. I can say with certainty that this *muntaqā* was written to be used to write his work *Dhayl al-tārīkh* since both works started with the year 741 and that the information from *al-Muntaqā* was referred to more than 100 times in his book *Mukhtaṣar dhayl tārīkh Ibn Kathīr*.¹⁸⁷ In con-

183 Ibn Qāḍi Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt* ii, 55, 57, 66, 68, 70.

184 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍi Shuhba, *al-I'lām* (Suleymaniye Library manuscript) 2^b, 3^a, 4^a, 4^b, 5^a.

185 The manuscript of this work is held in Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin under classmark (258).

186 Ibn Qāḍi Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt* i, 282, 305.

187 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍi Shuhba, *Tārīkh* 141, 160, 169, 176, 177.



FIGURE 4.22
al-Muntaqā that informed Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya* and
Mukhtaṣar al-dhayl

trast, this *muntaqā* was used just once in his other work, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya*,¹⁸⁸ which clearly shows that he made these selections for writing his work *Dhayl al-tāriḫ*, and he also might have used them in his writing of *Takmilat tāriḫ Ibn Ḥijjī*.

3.6.2.2.16 *al-Muntaqā min ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanaḥfiyya*

Badr al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba mentioned that his father wrote a biographical dictionary of Ḥanaḥfi scholars arranged by generation (*Ṭabaqāt*). However, I find this very unlikely, although he might have written a *muntaqā* from the Ḥanaḥfi work *Ṭabaqāt* to use as a source for his historiographical works. In fact, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba frequently quoted the unnamed Ḥanaḥfi *Ṭabaqāt* in his work *al-I'lām bi-tāriḫ al-Islām*. After examining these quotes, I found out that they were taken from al-Qurashī's work *al-Jawāhir al-muḍ'ra fī ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanaḥfiyya*.¹⁸⁹

3.6.2.2.17 *al-Muntaqā min nukhbat al-dahr fī 'ajā'ib al-barr wa-l-baḥr*¹⁹⁰

This notebook is a *muntaqā* from Ibn Shaykh Ḥiṭṭīn's work *Nukhbat al-dahr fī 'ajā'ib al-barr wa-l-baḥr*. I am not sure exactly in which book this *muntaqā* was used, but it was most likely used in *al-I'lām bi-tāriḫ al-Islām*.

188 Ibid., *Ṭabaqāt* iii, 14.

189 See, for example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *I'lām* (Suleymaniye Library manuscript) 30^a.

190 Badr al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ḥayāt* 478.

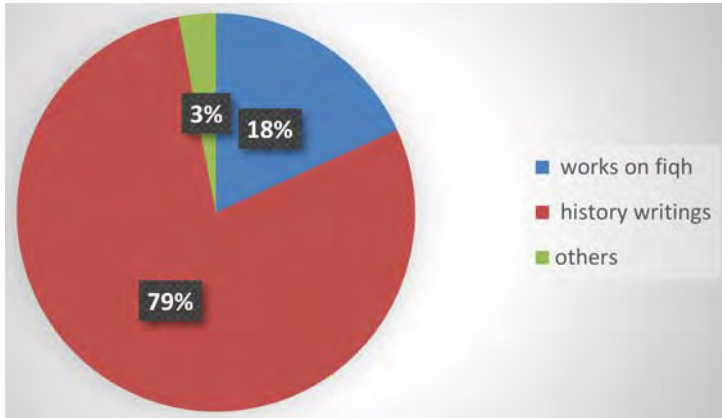


FIGURE 4.23 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's works

4 Epilogue

We can clearly notice that Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba spent much of his career actively engaging with and writing historiographical works, which, as I will further clarify below, constituted a considerable portion of his total scholarly production. This shows that he was as much a historian as he was a *faqīh*. However, in scholarly circles, he was generally regarded as a *faqīh* because most of his historiographical works remained drafts circulating between the limited circles of his students, Damascene colleagues, and the students of his son Badr al-Dīn.¹⁹¹

The pie chart shows that 79% of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's total literary production are historiographic works.

A closer look at his only work that deals with the history of Islam (i.e., *al-I'lām bi-tārīkh al-Islām*) reveals a striking peculiarity: his work avoids dealing with an important section of Islamic history, which witnessed the formation of the Shi'ites sects. Neglecting such a significant era in Islamic history sheds light on his approach to Islamic history and the underlying motives that influenced his historiographical works.

Also, he seems to have tried to conceal or obscure his Shi'ite family origin. As mentioned above, one of his older relatives, the chief of the Syrian chancery Shams al-Dīn, was actually the one who informed al-Ṣafaḍī that the Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba family descended from Banū Ghāḍira. Interestingly, Taqī al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba copied most of the information about the roots of his family from

¹⁹¹ Only two works of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba were made fair copies (*mubayyḍdāt*) of *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya* and *Mukhtaṣar dhayl al-tārīkh*.

al-Şafađı and Ibn Ḥabīb,¹⁹² but he omitted the part that links his family to the al-Ghāđiriyya, without giving any justification for his choice. I would suggest that Taqı al-Dın probably tried to obscure that his ancestors were Shi'ites. I believe his reluctance to reveal this fact was due to his fear that this might have negative consequences for his sons, who took over his position as *qāđıs*. I must mention that during Ibn Qāđı Shuhba's era, the status of Shi'ites in Syro-Egyptian society was ambivalent since they did not suffer from systemized oppression. However, I cannot find any evidence to suggest that Shi'ites were appointed in governmental positions.¹⁹³ Of course, these initial thoughts and assumptions need further research. But I hope that I have shown in this introductory article that Ibn Qāđı Shuhba is certainly an important figure and significant historian in the intellectual history of the Mamluk period who needs further attention and study.

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Andalusi *Adab* in the Mamluk Period

Iria Santás de Arcos

1 Introduction*

We currently know a lot about the enormous cultural transfer from the Islamic East that reached al-Andalus, particularly in the course of the 3th/9th century when Andalusi scholars started to visit the main Eastern centers of knowledge, resulting, as Isabel Toral-Niehoff stated, in “a creative incorporation of knowledge, textual material, cultural models and attitudes of Abbasid Baghdad in Umayyad Córdoba.”¹ We know less about the reception process, influence, and impact in the Islamic East of the vast amount of knowledge produced in al-Andalus, particularly when it comes to works belonging to the literary genre of *adab*. Compilations of this genre of *adab*, normally thematically arranged and presented in different chapters or books, gathered all the knowledge that an educated man was expected to possess. The first manifestations of this type of Arabic prose writing corresponded to the 8th century and happened especially in the Islamic East. *Adab*, however, reached a Golden Age during the 9th and 10th centuries due to the important work also carried out in al-Andalus.²

This paper intends to reconstruct the reception process in the Islamic East of the most important *adab* works of al-Andalus. It wishes to do so specifically for *al-ʿIqd al-farīd*, the excellent *adab* compilation of the 10th-century Andalusi

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1 See Toral-Niehoff, History 78; Ramírez del Río, *Orientalización*; Chalmeta, *Historiografía* 353–404; Chafic, *Introducción* 51–7; Marín, *Transmisión* 87–108; Dū n-Nūn Taha, *Importance* 39–44.

2 See López, *¿Autor* 169–93; Cheikh-Moussa, *Considérations* 25–62; Sadan, *Ornate* 339–55; Peña Martín and Vega Martín, *El ideal* 464–502; Veglison, *El collar*.

author Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi (246–328/860–940).³ This *adab* encyclopedia⁴ was one of the first dated texts produced in al-Andalus that has been preserved, and its full impact inside and outside al-Andalus remains to be investigated.⁵ For this reason, after presenting a brief context for the author and his *Iqd al-farīd*, we will study the possible ways of transmission of Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s main work to the Islamic East and its reception and influence in later Eastern *adab* works. Firstly, we will point out the first Andalusī sources that not only mention but also provide relevant information on Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi and his compilation. Secondly, we will analyze the presence and influence of the *Iqd al-farīd* in important Eastern sources, particularly during the Mamluk period.

2 *Al-Iqd al-farīd: Authorship and Brief Context*

Al-Iqd al-farīd, “The unique necklace,” was composed by the Andalusī author Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi (246–328/860–940) during the Cordovan Umayyad Caliphate (929–1031) and is one of the earliest and most representative examples of *adab* compilations. Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi came from a local family of clients (*mawālī*) of the Umayyads. He had a long and successful career at the court of the Caliph ‘Abd al-Raḥmān III (912–61)⁶ under whose reign he wrote this sophisticated and well-organized *adab* compilation.

Al-Iqd al-farīd, the only preserved work of the author, was composed with two main purposes: on the one hand, to spread the knowledge produced in the Islamic East in al-Andalus and, in doing so, train officials of the new Umayyad state; and on the other hand, to show the Andalusī literary capacity to the East. With this compendium of *adab*, Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi managed to seal the process of “orientalization” in al-Andalus by treating the main historical, philological, and sociological aspects of Arab culture. As a result, his work soon became the most widely read work in al-Andalus.⁷

3 See Brockelmann, Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih, 676–7; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt* 92–4; Werkmeister, *Quellenuntersuchungen* 42–3; Haremska, Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi i, 620–9; Veglisson, *El Collar* 120–3; Boullata, *Unique*.

4 For more on the *adab* genre in al-Andalus, see López ĩAutor 169–93; Soravia, Ibn Qutayba 539–65; Fierro, *El saber* 83–104.

5 For further information see, for instance, the articles of Toral-Niehoff, Book 134–51; History 61–85. See also Bray, *Abassid* 1–54; and Kilpatrick, *Classical* 2–26.

6 For more information about this caliph and the Umayyad Caliphate in al-Andalus, see Lévi-Provençal and García Gómez *España* 261–368; Fierro *Abd al-Rahman*.

7 For an extensive study on this, see Werkmeister, *Quellenuntersuchungen*; Guillén Monje, Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih 306–13.

The Cordovan author divided his *adab* anthology into 25 books, and each of them is named after a gem pearl. As a result, the whole multivolume work appears as a perfect necklace of 25 precious pearls of very varied subject matter.

The way Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi chose to compose each book is common to other *adab* works; that is, it includes a large volume of *akhbār*, interspersed with prophetic traditions (*ḥadīths*), Quranic verses, proverbs, and poems.⁸ Despite the fact that this work was composed in the 10th-century Cordovan Caliphate, most of the *akhbār* came from Eastern sources, such as the *‘Uyūn al-Akhbār* of the 9th-century Iraqi polygraph Ibn Qutayba. And although the *‘Iqd al-Farīd* itself was composed and produced in writing, the reception and circulation of the collected *akhbār* would have been carried out in its majority, as Werkmeister states,⁹ by oral transmission.

Whereas the *akhbār* he collected were all oriental in origin, throughout the entire work of *al-‘Iqd al-farīd* Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi enriched all this material with the inclusion of comments, explanations, and criticisms, and with his own verses. Undoubtedly, the most important contribution of the author was his *urjūza*, a poetic composition in *rajaz* meter, dedicated to the Caliph ‘Abd al-Raḥmān III al-Nāṣir, with which he participated, in a significant way, in the legitimation of his caliphate.¹⁰

The Andalusī author dedicated an important space, particularly in the first books, to what we could call “serious issues,” the majority of them abstract concepts such as government, war, power, authorities, or embassies, showing the importance these issues had for Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi. On the contrary, the Andalusī compiler relegated to the last books those subjects he considered less serious and more concrete matters, such as food or jokes.¹¹

3 The Importance of the *‘Iqd* in al-Andalus: Andalusī Texts on Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi

Before studying the arrival and the impact of Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s work in the Islamic East, it is important to introduce the first Andalusī sources that mentioned the author and his *adab* encyclopedia. Quite soon after his death, later

8 For instance, Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s main source, the 10th-century Iraqi *adab* author Ibn Qutayba, see Ibn Qutayba, *‘Uyūn*.

9 Werkmeister, *Quellenuntersuchungen* 46.

10 See Fierro, *La legitimidad* 147–84; Pompa 125–52; *Abderramán*; Toral-Niehoff, *History* 61–85; Martínez-Gros, *L’idéologie*; Monroe, *Historical* 67–95.

11 See Veglison, *El collar*; Boullata, *Unique*.

Andalusi sources started providing relevant data on Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi and his work, especially between the 11th and 12th centuries. Authors like Ibn al-Faraḍī (d. 403/1013) and Ibn Ṣā‘id al-Andalusī (d. 462/1069) recorded many fragments of his poetry, calling him “the Andalusī poet” but also praising Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s skills as an *adīb*. Thus, Ibn al-Faraḍī remarked that people from al-Andalus learned not only from Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s poetry but also from his prose.¹² Ibn Khāqān (d. 535/1140), for instance, stated:

وشهر بالأندلس حتى سار إلى المشرق ذكره

He was very famous in al-Andalus and his fame flew to the East.¹³

He also defended that it was not possible to criticize the *‘Iqd* because of its perfect and beautiful Arabic and that due to Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s talent and literary skills, his fame reached the Islamic East quite soon. But without any doubt, the most important Andalusī author who wrote on Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi was al-Ḥumaydī (d. 488/1095), a disciple of Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr and Ibn Ḥazm who left al-Andalus and settled in Baghdad, where he became an important source for the spread of materials dealing with al-Andalus.¹⁴ In his *Jadhwat al-Muqtabis fi ta’riḫ ṣalamā’ al-Andalus*, al-Ḥumaydī recorded Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s full biography and much data on his life and his poetry. The information collected by al-Ḥumaydī was used by both Andalusī and Eastern sources in their own works. Among other relevant information, he pointed out that Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s *dīwān*, today not preserved, was in Caliph al-Ḥakam II’s library.

Later, in the 13th century, al-Shaḡundī wrote his famous *risāla* in praise of al-Andalus named *Risāla fi fadl al-Andalus*, where Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi is mentioned as the greatest author of *adab* in al-Andalus.¹⁵

4 Eastern Reception of Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s *al-‘Iqd al-farīd*

Although it is not easy to specify the exact date that Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s work became known in the East, we will try to give an approximate answer to the following questions: How and when did Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s work become known

12 Ibn al-Faraḍī, *Ta’riḫ* 81.

13 Ibn Khāqān, *Matmah* 270.

14 Al-Humaydī, *Jadhwat* 151.

15 See the study and Spanish translation made by García Gómez, *Andalucía contra Berbería*, 43–141.

in the East? In what way was his work transmitted? And what kind of influence did it have in later Eastern *adab* compilations? Firstly, it is important to highlight that Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi composed, as he stated in his *Iqd*, poetry that could be easily remembered so that the *udabā’* and poets from al-Andalus who traveled to the East in search of knowledge (in addition to carrying out their religious obligations) could bring it with them. Against the background of Andalusis’ general sense that their merits were not being acknowledged in the East,¹⁶ this would allow them to prove to the Eastern scholars the literary level that al-Andalus had achieved:

وجعلت المقطعات رقيقة غزلة، ليسهل حفظها على السنة الرواة ... لتقوم به الحجة لمن روى
هذه المقطعات واحتج بها.

And I made sweet and delicate poems in order to facilitate their memorization to the poets ... to bring it as a sample to whom transmits these poems and made the pilgrimage with them.¹⁷

Contrary to other cases, in which the descendants and friends of an Andalusī scholar were instrumental in spreading their work,¹⁸ in the case of Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi, his offspring does not seem to have played any role in spreading Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s *Iqd*. He never left al-Andalus, and neither did his nephew, the physician Abū ‘Uthmān b. ‘Abd Rabbihi (d. 342/953 or 356/966–7). A scholar from the 12th century named Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Rabbihi al-Hafid¹⁹ is considered a descendant of Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi but does not quote his ancestor in his *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*.²⁰ A disciple named al-Aydi is also known, but no information is extant about how he may have transmitted his teacher’s work.²¹ The most reliable hypothesis, therefore, is that it was through Andalusī travelers to the East, not directly related to Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi, that his work traveled outside al-Andalus.

16 For instance, the Buyid vizier al-Ṣāhib b. ‘Abbād (326–85/938–95) remarked that the *Iqd* of Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi was only “our merchandise brought back to us.” See Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Irshād*, i, 463.

17 Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi, *al-Iqd*, vii, 270.

18 See, for instance, in this volume, the article of Víctor de Castro about the diffusion of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s work through his intellectual network. See also Fromherz, *Ibn Khaldūn* 288–305; Molina, *The reception* 663–80.

19 Puerta Vilchez and Rodríguez Figuerola, *Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi* 609–19.

20 *Ibid.* 614–18; Ibn Sharīfa, *Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi*.

21 Al-Faraḍī, *Ta’rīkh* i, 82.

Regarding the moment when the reception of the work took place, we know that only a few decades after Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s death, an anthologist from Nishapur in the East, al-Tha‘ālibī²² (d. 429/1039) quoted in his geographically arranged literary compilation *Yatīmat al-dahr* a substantial amount of material that was taken from Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s work, especially from his poetry. He started writing his anthology in 994 to assemble the best literary production until his day, and he included a total of 470 poets and prose writers from different parts of the Islamic world. The fact that Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi was one of these *udabā’* that were mentioned in the *Yatīma*, and the quantity of material al-Tha‘ālibī quoted from him, indicates that the *‘Iqd* was already well known in the East at a relatively early stage.²³

As Bilal Orfali stated in *The anthologist’s art*, orality played a crucial role in the transmission of poetry and *akhbār* in al-Tha‘ālibī’s work. Much of the *Yatīma*’s information comes from 10th-century transmitters al-Tha‘ālibī met during their travels or their visits to Nishapur. The majority of these transmitters, as Orfali insists, came from the East and transmitted the poetry and *akhbār* of their own regions, as well as that of the regions they visited. The main transmitter of Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s poetry for the *Yatīma* was an *adīb* from Nishapur and close friend of al-Tha‘ālibī named Abu Ṣā‘id ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Dust.²⁴ Apparently, the main source of Ibn Dust when transmitting poetry by Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi was the Andalusī *faqīh* al-Walīd b. Bakr who had access both to Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s *‘Iqd* and his *dīwān*.²⁵ The information on Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi is introduced in the *Yatīma* with expressions such as: أنشدت (*unshidtu*), that is, “it was recited to me,” or prefaced with a brief *isnād* or chain of transmitters. For instance, “(عن/’an) from Muḥammad b. Dust, from al-Walīd b. Bakr al-Faqīh al-Andalusī.” As it is well known, the *Yatīma* became widely known, and consequently, with its diffusion, the information included on Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s work also spread.²⁶

As for Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (d. 626/1229), he states that he received the *ijāza* (authorization) to transmit the *‘Iqd* from Ibn Diḥya (d. 633/1235), a famous Maghrebi author, who wrote, for example, a poetic compilation named *al-Muṭrib min ash‘ār ahl al-Maghrib* and who settled in the East:

22 See Orfali, *Anthologist’s*; Sources 1–47; Works 273–318.

23 See al-Tha‘ālibī, *Yatīmat* ii, 85–144.

24 See Orfali, Sources 45.

25 As noted before, al-Ḥumaydī states that Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi composed a 20 volume *dīwān* kept in the library of al-Ḥakam II.

26 See Orfali, Works 273–318.

وقد أجاز لي رواية كتابه الموسوم بـ «العقد» الحافظ ذو النسبين، بني دحية والحسين، أبو الخطاب عمر بن الحسن المعروف بابن دحية المغربي

I received the *ijāza* of his book, known as the “*Iqd*” from the reciter, owner of two genealogies, Banī Dihya and al-Ḥusayn. Abū l-Khatāb ‘Umar b. al-Ḥasan, known as Ibn Dihya al-Maghribī.²⁷

Unfortunately, Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s *Iqd* did not make a good impression in other quarters. There is the famous anecdote according to which the Buyid vizier al-Ṣāhib b. ‘Abbād (326–85/938–95) remarked when he read the book, “This is our merchandise brought back to us! We do not need it!” This reaction was recorded by Yāqūt in his *Irshād*²⁸ and confirms that Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s *adab* compilation was known in the East very soon, probably even during Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s lifetime.

In contrast, the *risāla* of the 10th-century author al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad al-Qayrawānī addressed to Abū l-Mughīra b. Ḥazm (a relative of Abū Muḥammad b. Ḥazm, the famous author of the *Ṭawq al-ḥamama*), which was recorded in al-Maqqarī’s work from the 16th century, insisted on the idea of the good reception that the *Iqd* received in the East.²⁹

5 Encyclopedism: The Reception Process of Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s Work during the Mamluk Period

In the Ayyubid and early Mamluk periods, there was a literary renaissance that has been studied by many scholars, such as Robert Irwin, Th. Emil Homerin, Hilary Kilpatrick, Ulrich Haarmann, and Elias Muhanna, to mention only a few.³⁰ Andalusī materials were taken into consideration as by then al-Andalus was associated with poetry (suffice it to mention the impact the *muwashshahat* had). The presence of many Maghrebi and Andalusī scholars who had settled,

27 Yāqūt, *Irshād* ii, 219–20.

28 *Ibid.*, 214–5.

29 See al-Maqqarī, *Nafh* iv, 138–40.

30 For a general perspective of this period, see Homerin, *Reflections* 63–85; Franssen, *What* 311–32; Ghersetti, *al-Suyuti*; Haarmann, *Mamluk* 329–47; Irwin, *Mamluk* 1–29; Kilpatrick, *Beyond* 71–80.

especially in Egypt and Syria, also helped in spreading information about the Andalusī literary production.³¹

The Mamluk period was particularly famous for its encyclopedism. The impulse for anthologizing and compiling previous knowledge was carried out not only “because of the writers’ fear that all knowledge would be lost as a result of invasions or destruction of libraries,”³² as Elias Muhanna has remarked in *Encyclopaedism in the Mamluk period: The composition of Shihāb al-Dīn al-Nuwayrī*, but also because of the vast amount of literature that circulated.³³ Scholars began to select and summarize the materials of their predecessors that they considered of great quality or relevance in order to pass it on to future generations. For instance, the Egyptian Ibn Mammātī summarized the anthology *al-Dhakhīra fī maḥāsīn ahl al-jazīra* (Book of the Treasure-house concerning the elegant aspects of the people of the [Iberian] peninsula) written by the Andalusī author Ibn Bassām al-Shantarīnī (d. 543/1147) and named the resulting work *Laṭā’if al-Dhakhīra wa-ṭarā’iq al-jazīra*, detailing the organization of the Andalusī work. Another important example is that of the distinguished author of the *Lisān al-‘Arab*, Ibn Manẓūr (d. 711/1311),³⁴ who summarized important voluminous compendia written by earlier authors, such as *al-Iqd al-farīd* of Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi. Both cases are evidence that the Andalusī contribution to Arabic literature was known and appreciated by Eastern scholars.

Relevant information is also found in the Ashrafiyya library’s catalog that was studied by Konrad Hirschler in his *Medieval Damascus: Plurality and diversity in an Arabic library. The Ashrafiyya library catalogue*. The Ashrafiyya library, as Konrad Hirschler explains, is an important example of the book revolution initiated in the 9th and 10th centuries and of the popularization of libraries in the medieval Middle East. Founded in the 13th century in Damascus by the Ayyubid ruler al-Malik al-Ashraf, the Ashrafiyya library was a minor institution with a remarkable collection of more than 2,000 books, many of them multivolume works composed in the late Ayyubid and early Mamluk periods. Thanks to the preservation of the Ashrafiyya’s catalog, we know that one of the books it held was Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s *al-Iqd al-farīd* and also the later summary of the *Iqd* carried out by Ibn Manẓūr. Therefore, contrary to what al-Ṣāhib b.

31 See Pouzet, Maghrébins 167–93.

32 As, for instance, happened with the Ayyubid library in the citadel, destroyed by a fire in 1292. Irwin, *Mamluk* 1–29.

33 See Muhanna, *Encyclopaedism*.

34 He also epitomizes other earlier voluminous works, such as Ibn ‘Asākir’s *Ta’rīkh Dimashq* or Sam‘ānī’s *Dhayl Ta’rīkh Baghdād*. See Brockelmann, Ibn Manẓūr, 864.

‘Abbād had stated in the 10th century, three centuries later in the Mashriq, the need for Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s *al-‘Iqd al-farīd* continued to be felt.³⁵

In addition to Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s work, there are other examples of Andalusī *adab* held in the Ashrafiyya library, for example, the *Bahjat al-Majālis* by Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr and later summaries of the *Bahja* and the *Dhakhīra* by Ibn Bassām al-Shantarīnī, although it is not clear if the Ashrafiyya also held the summary of this work made by Ibn Mammātī or if the title is mistaken and it is an anonymous collection.

6 Presence and Influence of Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s Work in Mamluk Compilations

Adab compilations are extraordinary examples of the uninterrupted dialogue between oral and written sources and the juxtaposition of prose and poetry. Even though their structure, purpose, and organization differ from one to the other, the common idea was to collect the finest literary material and to preserve and ensure their circulation for future generations.

In the 12th and 13th centuries, *adab* works gained importance among the Mamluk elite, and this trend continued in later periods. The most popular *adab* compilation of this time was the *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab* (*The ultimate ambition in the branches of erudition*) by al-Nuwayrī (667–732/1279–1332).³⁶

In his work, al-Nuwayrī relied basically on his contemporary, the Egyptian Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Yahyā b. ‘Alī al-Anṣārī al-Kutubī al-Waṭwaṭ (632–718/1235–1318), on the tradition of his Eastern forerunners, such as Ibn Qutayba, and also on Andalusī authors whose works served as model examples, such as that of Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi.³⁷ Al-Nuwayrī’s *Nihāyat al-arab* combined prose, verses, or anecdotes. Just as Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi did, it omitted long chains of transmitters so that the reader could focus their attention on the content. The *Nihāyat* is divided into five books by which the author tried to create a comprehensive guide of the whole universe. In the first three books, the *‘Iqd* is one of the sources that was quoted by al-Nuwayrī and the *Dhakhīra* by Ibn Bassām is also used in book one.³⁸ The popularity of these Andalusī works is corroborated with quotations included by al-Qalqashandī (756–821/1355–1418) in his

35 See Hirschler, *Medieval*.

36 See Muhanna, *World*.

37 See al-Nuwayrī’s *Nihāyat* ii, 7–9, 22, 219–20; iii, 205–6, 219; iv, 2–4; vi, 5–6, 191–2, 211, 222; vii, 8, 186–8; x, 40.

38 Muhanna, *Encyclopaedism* 125–8, 180–5.

Ṣubḥ al-A'shā fī šinā'at al-inshā', considered by Hillary Kilpatrick “more a specialized administration manual than an *adab* encyclopedia.”³⁹

The texts that undoubtedly require the most attention in this context, however, are those by Ibn Abī Hajala⁴⁰ (725–76/1325–75), a poet and anthologist born in Tlemcen. In his work, we find evidence of his excellent knowledge of Andalusī literature. For instance, in his *Mujtabā l-udabā'* (The literateurs' pick), not preserved but mentioned in his *risāla Maghnātis al-durr al-naḥīs*, he relied on Ibn Bassām's *Dhakhīra* (conceived as a sequel to the *Yatīma*). Apart from this, in his much admired anthology on profane love, named *Dīwān al-ṣabāba*, Ibn Abī Hajala included poetry on this subject written by Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi.⁴¹ In his compilation *Ṣawwat al-hazīn fī mawt al-banīn*, dealing with those who suffer the loss of a child, he added Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi's verses dedicated to his deceased son, for instance:

وقال ابن عبد ربه في ولده: [الطويل].
قطعت رجائي منك يا قطعة مني ذهب عن الدنيا أذهبها عني

And Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi said about his son:

I lost my hope, oh piece of me, leaving this world, you took it away of me.⁴²

Ibn Abī Hajala⁴³ also composed *maqāmāt*, and in his *Maqāma al-Kutubiyya*, he portrayed the decline of the 14th century's book market in Cairo, the reactions on the part of the elites to the rise of popular literary forms, and the circulation of books. He also provided data on which were the “must read” Andalusī works for achieving an adequate intellectual formation. These are *al-Iqd al-farīd* by Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, *Qalā'id al-'iqyān* by Ibn Khāqān, the *Dhakhīra* by Ibn Bassām, and Ibn Ṣā'id al-Andalusī's *Kitāb Ṭabaqāt al-Umam*.⁴⁴

Finally, the secretary of the chanceries of Syria and Egypt, Ibn Ḥijja al-Ḥamawī (767–837/1366–1434) wrote the *Qahwat al-inshā'*, a valuable source for Mamluk literature and history. This epistolary collection includes Ibn Ḥijja's own letters and documents written by his contemporaries or coming from

39 Kilpatrick, *Adab* i, 175–6; Genre 34–42.

40 See the studies carried out by Papoutsakis, *Anthologist's* 417–36 and Pomerantz, *Maqāmah* 179–207.

41 Ibn Abī Ḥajala, *Dīwān* 29, 75.

42 Ibn Abī Ḥajala, *Ṣawwat* 82.

43 For the political events of this period, see Irwin, *Middle* 125–51; Van Steenberghe, *Order*.

44 Pomerantz, *Maqāmah* 188–96.

foreign governments to which he responded. One of these letters mentioned the importance and fame of Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s work, acknowledging it as one of the most valued of its genre.⁴⁵

Later, in the 16th and 17th centuries, authors like al-Maqqarī in his *Nafh al-ṭīb*, or Ibn al-‘Imād in his *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, again revealed the Eastern success of the *‘Iqd al-farīd*.⁴⁶

7 Conclusion

Further research needs to be carried out in order to detail, for example, which parts of the *‘Iqd* enjoyed greater impact, as shown in the summaries that were written on the work. Also, the manuscript transmission of this *adab* work needs to be studied. The evidence provided here demonstrates how Andalusis’ travels to the East in search of knowledge were the channels through which the reception of the Andalusian production took place and that the personalities and skills of those travelers were decisive in determining the success of such production, or lack thereof, regardless of the quality of the work. Al-Ṣāhib b. ‘Abbād’s dismissive remark on the *‘Iqd* as providing nothing new (in fact, it does contain very little Maghrebi materials) and as being a recycling of knowledge of Eastern provenance made sense in a 10th-century context in which the sources used by Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi (and on which we have the excellent study by Werkmeister) were still available. Three centuries later, the *‘Iqd* would be appreciated by the Mamluk scholars precisely for such “recycling” of older materials, because by collecting it, Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi not only preserved important previous works but gave them form and meaning.

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45 See Ibn Ḥijja al-Ḥamawī, *Qahwat* 315–9.

46 See al-Maqqarī, *Nafh* ii, 118–9, 511; iii, 158–9, 186–94; vi, 22–7, 145–6, 509–13; vii, 49–52, 69–73; Ibn al-‘Imād, *Shadharāt* iii, 12–13.

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PART 2

*Literarization as Creative
Authorship: Contextual Agencies*



Social and Intellectual Rivalries and Their Narrative Representations in Biographical Dictionaries: The Representation of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ—A Case Study

Mohammad Gharaibeh

1 Introduction

Biographical dictionaries are important sources for the study of the social, cultural, and intellectual history of the premodern Islamicate world. And although documentary sources (including archeological artifacts, architecture, endowment deeds, numismatic evidence, manuscripts, and certificates of transmission [*samāʿ*]) have been used with increased regularity since the 1970s, the long-lasting mainstays for social and intellectual historians still remain biographical dictionaries in addition to other narrative sources.¹ Especially the rich material of the Mamluk period provides the researcher with a wide variety of information about individuals, their social contacts, and their education. Biographical dictionaries also allow conclusions about larger trends regarding society or mobility, for example, if analyzed quantitatively.²

However, as tempting as the information provided by biographical dictionaries is for the study of social and intellectual history, it has certain limits due to the selection of material that the compiler needs to make from the sources he has at his disposal. These processes of selection, (re)arrangement, and altering of the materials result in a narrative framing of the past that is shaped by the worldview of the compiler and that is often described as authorial agency. While a growing number of studies analyze narrative strategies and authorial agency in chronicles,³ there are comparatively few studies that approach biographical dictionaries in the same manner.⁴ However, scholars such as Makdisi,

1 See Hirschler, *Studying* 160–2.

2 See for example the studies of Petry, *Civilian*; Bulliet, *Quantitative*; Age; and *Conversion*; Mauder, *Gelehrte*; Romanov, *Computational*; as well as his website *al-Raḡmiyyāt. Digital Islamic history* (<https://alraqmiyyat.github.io/>). They all use mostly biographical dictionaries quantitatively to reach broader conclusions about different aspects of Islamicate societies.

3 See for examples Hirschler, *Medieval*; Franz, *Kompilation*; or the contributions in Conermann (ed.), *Innovation*.

4 Exceptions are Malti-Douglas, *Texts*; and Keshk, *How to frame*; *The historian's*, who uses both

Little, Cooperson, and Mujaddedi have already stated since the early 1960s that the information in biographical dictionaries is influenced by the author's hidden agenda. Opwis has similarly highlighted that authors of biographical dictionaries of certain schools of thought (*ṭabaqāt*) are "not merely compilers of pre-existing information. Instead, they have an important impact on shaping the identity, the doctrine, and the authority structures of groups and individuals."⁵

The purpose of this paper is to add to the growing literature on biographical dictionaries as providers of (biased) *knowledge*, as opposed to archives of neutral *information*,⁶ by presenting a case study. Moreover, the paper wishes to draw attention to the possibility that the narrative framing of certain biographies may serve a very specific purpose in the life of the author besides being part of a larger frame of shaping the identity of groups. Hence, a significant part of this paper will deal with the context and the intellectual orientation of the authors as well as certain events that might have influenced the chosen narrative strategies. Central to this paper are the three Damascene Shāfi'ī scholars al-Dhahabī (d. 748/1348), with three of his biographical dictionaries, Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373), and Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 771/1370), each with their *ṭabaqāt* works. The biographical entries for Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ al-Shahrazūrī (d. 643/1245) in each of these dictionaries are compared with each other.

Before going into further detail, though, a methodological remark needs to be made. In this paper, the biographical entries of one individual will be compared in all used dictionaries to outline the different narrative strategies and reconstruct the hidden agendas behind them. However, one could always oppose to this very narrow sample of examples, because from the perspective of quantitative methods, it is not representative enough to draw larger conclusions regarding the author's ideological, political, or intellectual agenda(s) that supposedly influence(s) the narrative strategies. This is, of course, a valid objection. And for the example of the *Tārīkh al-islām* of al-Dhahabī, which includes over 30,000 biographies, focusing on one single biography seems very insufficient.

The idea behind this approach, though, is that not all biographies included in a biographical dictionary are equally important to the author and his political and intellectual ideology. In addition, the content of the entries also varies

chronicles and biographical dictionaries; see also Gharaibeh, Narrative.

5 Opwis, Role 32.

6 While *information* can be defined as neutral data, *knowledge* is the information that has been selected according to its relevance and semantic content in regard to a certain idea or the agenda of the author. Lahn and Meister, *Erzähltextanalyse* 157.

significantly from one to another. While some biographies only contain basic *information*, not sufficient enough to tell any story of the individual, others contain more detailed accounts forming *knowledge* that contains clear or subtle statements. From the perspective of a mere quantitative analysis, these variations in length and content might occur somehow arbitrarily. However, it is one of the main hypotheses underlying the present paper that a close analysis of the content against the backdrop of the intellectual and social setting of the author reveals the importance and significance of the biographical entry and, therefore, the *knowledge* included in it.

This also means that biographies can be significant for certain aspects of the author's intellectual and political ideologies or for situations, events, and rivalries in the life of the author. While some biographies and the *knowledge* contained in them may be crucial for the construction of a certain image of the author's school of law, or a more traditionalist or rationalist orientation of it, other biographies may have the function to justify specific actions and events or support a particular party within the struggle over resources. For a comprehensive understanding of the narrative strategies within a biographical entry, hence, a proper contextualization and an analysis of the author's social, intellectual, and political context is key.

It is for this reason that the biography of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ is put at the center of the analysis and comparison, for it is considered here as crucial to all three authors that were examined. At least this is the hypothesis of the present paper, which will be proven throughout what follows, and the reason why it has been chosen among the other biographies. Certainly, there are more biographies that could have been chosen to support the argument of the paper. However, considering the significance of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, this case study demonstrates the close relation between *knowledge* included in biographical dictionaries and the political and intellectual agendas of the authors.

The article is structured as follows: section two describes the life and intellectual orientation of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ. A special interest lies in the network of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ and that of his students and the institutions where he and his students taught to demonstrate the impact of his teachings and his role in Shāfi'ite traditionalism. The next sections (three to five) deal with the lives and works of al-Dhahabī and Ibn Kathīr as representatives of the traditionalist movement and al-Subkī as representative of the rationalist movement. The analysis of their entries on Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ is put in the context of their intellectual orientations and social networks. The article ends with a conclusion (section six), in which the findings of the article are summarized and discussed.

2 Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ: His Life, Work, and Role in the Emergence of Shāfi'ite Traditionalism in Damascus

Recent scholarship has highlighted the struggle between Shāfi'ī traditionalists and Shāfi'ī rationalists in Damascus during the 8th/14th century.⁷ Those studies usually put the network of the traditionalist Shāfi'īs in the context of the Ḥanbalī reform thinker Ibn Taymiyya and focus on individuals such as Ibn Kathīr, al-Dhahabī, al-Birzālī, and al-Mizzī. While there is no denial of the importance of the influence of Ibn Taymiyya—and probably the circle of his (Ḥanbalī) adherents, such as Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya⁸—one cannot but observe a tendency for Shāfi'ī scholars to call for stronger integration of the scripture (Quran and *ḥadīth*) into legal reasoning, as opposed to the *uṣūl al-fiqh* being based on rational science (such as logic), during the 7th century. One of the more prominent representatives of this early traditionalism is Abū Shāma al-Maqdisī. The increasing interest to integrate *ḥadīth*, in particular, within legal debates is documented in *Mukhtaṣar al-Mu'ammal*, in which Abū Shāma rejects *ra'y*-based jurisprudence, blaming the *fuqahā'* for taking the *aḥādīth*, if ever, from books without *isnād* and not evaluating the authenticity of them. He cites a number of Shāfi'ī scholars, among them al-Shīrāzī (d. 476/1083), al-Māwardī (d. 450/1058), and Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh (d. 477/1084), and some examples where the authors used unreliable material or even contradict prophetic statements.⁹

A no less popular scholar, but usually less known for his traditionalist tendencies and whose role within the traditionalist movement of Damascus is undoubtedly underestimated, is Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ. The present paper argues that an analysis of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's role in the Damascene scholarly scene, his own writings, especially his *Muqaddima*, and the network of his students, supports our understanding of the history of traditionalism in Damascus. The noticeable conflict between traditionalists and rationalists in the 8th/14th century was only the tip of the iceberg of a broader development that had already taken place in Damascus in the 7th/13th century. Moreover, the different narrative framings of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's biography by authors of the 8th/14th century can, therefore, be seen as a result of the rivalry between those two camps. Also, they are strategies to dominate in the struggle about (intellectual) dominance, resources, and (teaching) institutions in Damascus. Taking a look at Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's life, work, and students is necessary to explain all of this.

7 See, in particular, the studies of Younus Mirza on Ibn Kathīr and of Nahyan Fancy on Ibn al-Nafīs (see bibliography).

8 See, for Ibn Taymiyya's closer circle of students, Bori, Ibn Taymiyya.

9 Abū Shāma did in his *Mukhtaṣar* 42–53.

Taqī al-Dīn Abū ‘Amr ‘Uthmān b. al-Muftī Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Uthmān b. Mūsā l-Kurdī l-Shahrazūrī l-Shāfi‘ī, commonly known as Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, was born in 577/1181 in Sharakhān, a village in the Shahrazūr region in Kurdish northern Iraq.¹⁰ As a son of a local scholar and mufti, he received his early education from his father in Irbil, the capital of one of the minor principalities between the Khwārazmians in the East and Ayyubids in the West.¹¹

After his basic education, Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ left Irbil for Mosul, where he continued his studies. He deepened his legal training there with at least three scholars. First to mention is ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Samīn (d. 588/1192), with whom Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ read the legal manual of Abū Ishāq al-Shīrāzī, *al-Muḥadhdhab fī l-furū‘*.¹² The second scholar was ‘Imād al-Dīn Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad b. Yūnus b. Min‘a al-Irbalī al-Mūsili (d. 608/1211), with whom he entertained close relations¹³ and with whom Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ studied the law-related works of al-Ghazālī (i.e., the *Wasīṭ fī l-madhhab* and the *Wajīz fī fiqh al-Shāfi‘ī*).¹⁴ The third and probably most influential Shāfi‘ī scholar Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ studied with in Mosul was al-Kamāl Mūsā b. Yūnus (551–637/1156–1240), the brother of al-‘Imād. Al-Kamāl was known for his wide knowledge and expertise in many fields of the Islamic disciplines, including the so-called rational disciplines.¹⁵ According to Ibn Khallikān, Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ even wanted to study logic with al-Kamāl b. Yūnus but gave up after some fruitless attempts. Al-Kamāl recommended Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ not to invest any more time in studying this discipline because of his lack of talent and the bad reputation logic had among religious scholars, who would eventually harm the reputation of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ.¹⁶

By the time Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ ended his study in Mosul, he had acquired extensive legal knowledge and expertise in the two *ṭarīqas* (communities of interpreta-

10 The most elaborated biography of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ in the secondary literature is still the one provided by Dickinson in the introduction of his translation of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's *Muqaddima*. The biographical notes provided here follow mostly his outlines in Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Ma‘rifat* xiv–xxiii.

11 See Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Ma‘rifat* xv.

12 See Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Ma‘rifat* xvi.

13 Which can be seen by the fact that Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ became the *mu‘īd* of al-‘Imād b. ‘Yūnus. See al-Dhahabī, *Tadhkirat* iv, 1430.

14 Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt* iv, 253.

15 This includes, e.g., knowledge in *fann al-ḥikma*, logic (*al-mantiq*), *al-ṭabī‘ī*, *al-ilāhī*, also medicine, *iqtidās*, *al-ḥay‘a*, *al-makhrū‘āt*, and *al-majisī‘ī*; math with all its subdisciplines (such as *al-jabr*, *al-muqābala*, *al-arithmā‘īqī*), *ṭariq al-khaṭa‘ayn*; music, grammar—he had read *Kitāb Sibawayh* and *al-Īdāḥ* and of Abū ‘Alī l-Fārisī, *al-Faṣl* of al-Zamakhsharī—history, *ayyām al-‘arab wa-l-waqā‘ī‘*, and poetry. See, for this and for a lengthy biography of al-Kamāl in general, Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt* v, 311–7.

16 Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt* v, 314.

tion) of the Shāfiʿī school of law, which was represented by the legal manual of Abū Ishāq al-Shīrāzī, *al-Muhadhdhab fī l-furūʿ* as part of the Iraqi *ṭarīqa*, on the one hand, and the works of al-Ghazālī, who was the representative of the Khurasanian *ṭarīqa* of the Shāfiʿī school of law, on the other.¹⁷ Together with the anecdote of his lack of success in the field of logic, these snippets of information were crucial for his later career in the Ayyubid territory, especially in Damascus.

From Mosul, Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ performed a longer journey that seemed to be dedicated to the collection of *ḥadīth* material, to build *samāʿ* connections, and to achieve some valuable *isnāds*. His travel took him to cities such as Bagdad, Dunaysar, Hamadhān, Nishapur, Marw, Damascus, Aleppo, and Hawran.¹⁸ The interest of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ in *ḥadīth* studies must be seen as rather exceptional, in his time, for scholars of jurisprudence (*fuqahāʾ*). As the works of al-Shīrāzī and al-Ghazālī indicate, jurists of this period and region did not seem to have extensive training in the evaluation of the authenticity of *ḥadīth*. Since they built their legal reasoning on the rulings of previous jurists, which were based on a well-defined corpus of prophetic traditions (and Quranic verses), there was no need for them to search for additional traditions or to evaluate other material. Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, with his rather unusual engagement in the study and transmission of *ḥadīth* and his broad legal training, was probably among the first Shāfiʿī scholars who combined the study of law and *ḥadīth*.

It is somehow an enigma how, and also when, exactly Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ settled in Ayyubid territory. At some point, Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ took over the teaching position in the Asadiyya school in Aleppo, then in the Ṣalāḥiyya school in Jerusalem around 615/1218, before he entered Damascus around 619/1222.¹⁹ In Damascus, Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ could not easily take root in the scholarly landscape during the reign of al-Malik al-Muʿazzam ʿIsā (r. 615–24/1218–27). This was due to the latter's promotion of the *ancient sciences* (philosophy and logic) and his suppression of traditionalism, in particular the rising influence of the Ḥanbalī community that had settled in the Ṣalāḥiyya region in 551/1156.²⁰ Eventually, Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ managed to achieve the teaching position and the supervision (*tadrīs wa-nazar*) of the Rawḥiyya school in Damascus in 622/1225.²¹ But his career in

17 See, for a description of the two *Communities of Interpretation* of the Shāfiʿī school of law, Halim, *Legal* 53–79.

18 See, for a more detailed list of individuals Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ heard from during his years of traveling, al-Dhahabī, *Tadhkirat* iv, 1430; *Tārīkh* xiv, 455; and *Siyar*, 2659.

19 Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Maʿrifat* xvi–xvii.

20 See, for the history of migration of the Ḥanbalī al-Maqdisī family, Leder, *Charismatic* esp. 283–4.

21 Al-Nuʿaymī, *Dāris* i, 199–200.

Damascus took a peak after al-Ashraf Mūsā (r. in Damascus 626–35/1229–37) gained control over Damascus in 626/1229.²² Unlike his brother al-Mu‘azzam ‘Īsā, al-Ashraf Mūsā had no business with the *rational sciences* and aimed for their banishment from Damascus.²³ Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ provided him with the legal justification for this with two *fatwās*, which he issued on the questions: “Is it permissible to read the works of Ibn Sīnā?” and “Is it permissible to engage in logic and philosophy?”²⁴ Ibn Kathīr even called Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ the Imam of the Sultan, which indicated the close relationship he must have maintained with him.²⁵ In addition, Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ was appointed in 628/1231, also the year of his pilgrimage to Mecca, to the teaching position of the Shāmiyya school.²⁶ Eventually, Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ was given the *mashyakha*, the teaching position, in the *Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya* that opened in 630/1233. Al-Ashraf Mūsā erected a similar Dār in the Ṣālihiyya region exclusively for Ḥanbalī scholars, the *Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya al-Barrāniyya*,²⁷ which shows his support of traditionalism in general and Ḥanbalism in particular. Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ also held this position for about 13 years, until his death in 643/1245, and it became the institution he was associated with the most. During his teaching there, Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ compiled his famous treatise on the *ḥadīth* science, known as *Muqaddimat Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ*, together with some other writings. He died in Damascus in 643/1245 and was buried at the Ṣūfiyya cemetery.

In contrast to his early academic career, in which Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ had shown some interest in the *rational sciences*, his later career, especially in Damascus, was almost exclusively dominated by a traditionalist orientation. This is also expressed in his writings,²⁸ which show a clear focus on the two main subjects of his interest, i.e., the fields of jurisprudence (*fiqh* and *uṣūl fiqh*) and *ḥadīth*.

Especially his jurisprudence-related works demonstrate his broad legal education in the two Shāfi‘ī *ṭarīqas* on the one hand but also his interest in the

22 See Humphreys, *Saladin* 193–208.

23 See *Ibid.* 208–14.

24 See Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Fatāwā* i, 208–12. See also for a description of al-Ashraf’s religious policy, his tendency to promote traditionalism, and the resulting struggle over curricula among the scholarly elite, especially between Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī and Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, the unpublished MA thesis of al-Azem, *Traditionalism*.

25 Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya* xvii, 112.

26 See al-Nu‘aymī, *Dāris* i, 208–9.

27 This school is also known in the sources as the Shāmiyya al-Barrāniyya and the Shāmiyya al-Ḥusāmiyya as well as the Ḥusāmiyya school. See al-Nu‘aymī, *Dāris* i, 36–42.

28 The editors of his works have invested good efforts to collect the titles of his writings from the various sources. The given list here is based on the overview provided by the editor of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Adab*, 17–9.

ḥadīth sciences and his desire to include *ḥadīth* in legal reasoning. His works, e.g., *Sharḥ mushkil al-Wasīṭ* (the original *al-Wasīṭ* was written by al-Ghazālī [d. 505/1111]), provide a reference to the sources of each *ḥadīth* used in the original and evaluate the authenticity of each *ḥadīth*.²⁹

Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ also compiled a biographical dictionary, i.e., his *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʿiyya*, which is probably the first *Ṭabaqāt* work dedicated to the Shāfiʿī school written in Damascus. It is interesting to note that the Damascene authors of the other *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʿiyya* works have all taught in the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya, like Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, who seems to have compiled his work there. This includes the works of al-Nawawī, Ibn Kathīr, and Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī.³⁰

His *Muqaddima* and his commentary on the “introduction” of Muslim’s *Ṣaḥīḥ* work³¹ deal primarily with the categorization of many *ḥadīth* and *isnād* variations. Although it is tempting to perceive these works as entirely dedicated to the discipline of *ḥadīth* studies, one needs to keep in mind that Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ called for a stronger integration of *ḥadīth* into legal reasoning. His *Muqaddima* might have been an attempted implementation of this endeavor. For a stronger integration of *ḥadīth* in legal reasoning, the authenticity of narrations was given crucial importance to distinguish valid from invalid *ḥadīth* to justify legal rulings. Providing future Shāfiʿī jurists with a manual to help them categorize narrations and to determine their authenticity, especially the *Muqaddima* was probably a crucial (teaching) tool.

2.1 *Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ and His Importance for the Shāfiʿī Scholarly Elite in Damascus and the Division of the Shāfiʿī Community into Traditionalists and Rationalists*

From what has been stated above, Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ can be described as one of the first Shāfiʿī (migrated) scholars of Damascus who called for a stronger integration of *ḥadīth* in legal reasoning and a refutation of the *rational sciences*, particularly logic and philosophy. This becomes particularly obvious considering the fact that during the 6th/12th and early 7th/13th centuries, Damascus was dominated by local Damascene Shāfiʿī scholarly families who were adherents of the Ashʿarī school.³² The influx of Shāfiʿī scholars from the East, especially

29 See Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Sharḥ* 62–3.

30 See, for an overview of the teachers of the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya, al-Nuʿaymī, *Dāris* i, 15–36.

31 This work is entitled *Ṣiyānat Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim min al-ikhlāl wa-l-ghalaṭ wa-ḥimāyatuhu min al-isqāṭ wa-s-saqāṭ*. See Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Ṣiyānat*.

32 This includes the al-Khushūʿī family, the Ibn ʿAsākir family, the Ḥubūbī family, the Ibn al-Zakī family, as well as the Ibn Ṣaṣra family. See for this the comprehensive study of Ibn

from Iraq, seemed to have challenged the standing of the local families, particularly since they found new patrons under late Ayyubid rule and replaced the locals in many teaching institutions. Since Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ was one of those early Shāfi'īs who had a significant impact on later generations through his appointment at the Dār al-Ashrafiyya school, it can be assumed that authors of biographical dictionaries would have had a special interest in him. Moreover, the image an author of a biographical dictionary would draw of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ would certainly depend on his own intellectual orientation, i.e., whether or not he shared the latter's *ḥadīth*-oriented theological and legal approach.

To better understand the stance of the biographers al-Dhahabī, Ibn Kathīr, and al-Subkī toward Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, it is helpful to analyze how they relate to Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ socially and intellectually and to compare the findings with the content of their dictionaries. Since all authors were born after Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's death and none of them could have met him personally, it is necessary to take a closer look into Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's impact on the Shāfi'ī scholarly community. An entire analysis of this, however, is nearly impossible and would go beyond the scope of this paper. Instead, Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's impact will be measured by an analysis of the social network of his closer students, their control over teaching institutions, and the reception of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's writings. If we take his most significant work, the *Muqaddima*, as an example to trace back its reception, it turns out that the social network of students, the control over teaching institutions, and the reception are closely related to each other.³³

2.1.1 The Network of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's Students

Among the closest students of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ are the Shāfi'ī scholars Shams al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Nūḥ al-Turkmānī l-Maqdisī (d. 654/1256),³⁴ Kamāl al-Dīn Salār (d. 670/1272),³⁵ Kamāl al-Dīn Ishāq (d. 650/1252),³⁶ Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Razīn

'Azzūz, *Buyūtāt*. See, for the relation of the Ibn 'Asākir family with the Ayyūbid sultan Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn and the foundation of the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Nūriyya, Mourad and Lindsay, *Intensification*.

33 See, for the larger argument of the replacement of local Damascene families by migrated Shāfi'īs, the change in the appointment strategies, the spread of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's students, as well as the close relation between the reception of his *Muqaddima* and the emerge of traditionalism in Damascus, Gharaibeh, *Sociology*. Most of the findings presented here were drawn from this Habilitation Thesis.

34 See, for his biography, al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt* viii, 188; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh* xiv, 758; Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya* xvii, 346.

35 See, for his biography, al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt* viii, 149; al-Dhahabī, *Sīyar* 1860–1; Ibn Kathīr, *Ṭabaqāt* ii, 807–8.

36 See, for his biography, al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh* xiv, 635; Ibn Kathīr, *Ṭabaqāt* ii, 777; see also Abū Shāma, *Tarājim* 187, who referred to him as al-Muqri'.

(d. 680/1281),³⁷ who later was the judge of Egypt (*qāḍī l-diyār al-miṣriyya*), Shihāb al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ismā‘īl Abū Shāma al-Maqdisī (d. 665/1267), and Shams al-Dīn Ibn Khallikān (d. 681/1282), who was appointed as judge over Syria (*qāḍī l-shām*), as well as al-Fakhr ‘Umar b. Yaḥyā l-Karjī (d. 690/1291),³⁸ al-Majd Yūsuf b. al-Mihtār (d. 686/1287)³⁹ and his son Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. al-Mihtār (d. 715/1315),⁴⁰ and al-Jamāl Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Sharīshī (d. 685/1286).⁴¹

These individuals played a major role in the transmission of the *Muqaddima*. Ibn Razīn, for example, is the social link to the transmission of the text to Cairo, where individuals such as al-Badr b. Jamā‘a (d. 733/1333),⁴² one of the later commentators on the *Muqaddima*, studied it with him. Also, scholars such as Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī (d. 852/1448) narrated the *Muqaddima* through an *isnād* that led through Ibn Razīn to Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ.⁴³ Al-Faḥr al-Karjī (d. 690/1291) and al-Majd al-Mihtār (d. 686/1287), together with his son Muḥammad al-Mihtār (d. 715/1315), witnessed the teaching of the *Muqaddima*, either as a scribe of the *ṭibāq* (al-Fakhr al-Mihtār) during the reading session, as a reader (al-Karjī), or as a listener (Muḥammad al-Mihtār). Moreover, they also took over the teaching positions in several schools and *Dūr al-Ḥadīth*, so it can be assumed that the *Muqaddima* was taught there as well. Among the most important ones for the scope of the present paper are the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya, the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Nūriyya, and the Rawḥiyya school. The list of individuals reveals that most of them had social ties to either Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ directly or to his students and that they had studied the *Muqaddima* of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ and, assumingly, had

37 See, for his biography, al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt* viii, 46–8.

38 See, for his biography, Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya* xvii, 644; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh* xv, 669–70.

39 See, for his biography, al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh* xv, 563.

40 See, for his biography, Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* iv, 313.

41 He is al-Jamāl Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abdallāh b. Sujmān al-Bakrī al-Wā‘ilī al-Andalusī al-Sharīshī al-Mālikī, who was born in 601/1205 in Sharīsh. He heard in Alexandria, Bagdad, Irbal, and Damascus. For some time, he taught in Cairo in the Ribāṭ al-Nāṣirī and at the Faḍiliyya school. After that he went to Damascus where he assumed the teaching post in the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Nūriyya, the reading circle in the Umayyad Mosque, the *mashyakha* of the Ribāṭ and the teaching in the Umm al-Ṣalīḥ. He heard from Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ the *Muqaddima*. Among his students or those who narrated from him were Ibn Taymiyya, al-Mizzī, Ibn al-‘Aṭṭār, al-Birzālī al-Ṣayrafi, Ibn al-Khabbāz, and others. Al-Dhahabī received an *ijāza* for his *marwiyyāt*, among them the *Muqaddima*, in 674/1275. See for his biography al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh* xv, 549–52.

The most helpful and complete list of students of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ is given by al-Dhahabī in his *Tārīkh*, where he differentiated between those who studied law with Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ and those who took *ḥadīth* from him. See al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh* xiv, 457.

42 See for this Ibn al-‘Imād, *Shadharāt* viii, 185; and Ibn Jamā‘a, *Mashyakha* ii, 489.

43 See for this Ibn Ḥajar, *Mujma‘* ii, 75–6; 289.

also taught it during their appointment at the Dār or the school. Interestingly, in all institutions, a shift from traditionalist to rationalist scholars that coincided with the peak of the conflict between the traditionalist and rationalist Shāfiʿī scholars was noticeable during the 8th /14th century.

2.1.1.1 *The Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya*

Among the individuals who taught in the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya were al-Nawawī (d. 676/1277),⁴⁴ Zayn al-Dīn ʿAbdallāh b. Marwān al-Fāriqī (d. 703/1303),⁴⁵ Muḥammad b. ʿUmar b. al-Wakīl (d. 716/1316),⁴⁶ Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Zamlakānī (d. 727/1327),⁴⁷ Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Sharīshī (d. 718/1318), and Abū l-Hajjāj Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf al-Mizzī (d. 742/1341).⁴⁸ All of them had studied the *Muqaddima*, either with Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ directly or with one of his students, and can be characterized as having a notion toward traditionalism. After the death of al-Mizzī in 742/1341, however, al-Taqī al-Subkī (d. 756/1355) was appointed in the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya. Taqī al-Dīn ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Kāfi al-Subkī was sent by the Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalāwūn from Cairo, specifically to exercise the post of Shāfiʿī chief judge in Damascus.⁴⁹ With him, a clear shift can be seen from the more traditionalist orientation of a teacher with the pos-

44 See, for his biography, for example, al-Dhahabī, *Tadhkirat al-huffāz*, iv, 1470–4; al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, viii, 395–400; and more extensively the three biographies on al-Nawawī by Ibn al-ʿAṭṭār, *Tuḥfat al-tālibīn*; al-Sakhāwī, *al-Manhal al-adhib*; and al-Suyūṭī, *al-Minhāj al-sawī*. Al-Nawawī studied with Shams al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Maḥdī, Kamāl al-Dīn Iṣḥāq, and al-Imām Kamāl al-Dīn Salār. Moreover, al-Nawawī lived in the Rawāḥiyya school during his entire stay in Damascus and authored three commentaries on the *Muqaddima* of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ.

45 See, for his biography, Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* ii, 304–5. He heard from Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ directly.

46 See, for his biography, al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt* ix, 253–67. His orientation is not quite clear. Although al-Subkī described Ibn al-Wakīl as being close to Ibn Taymiyya and like him (*mā huwa baʿīd ʿanhu*), he also stated that his father, al-Taqī al-Subkī, said that Ibn al-Wakīl had a good creed and knew *kalām* in the way of the Ashʿarī school (*ḥusn al-ʿaqīda wa-maʿrifat al-kalām ʿalā madhhab al-ashʿarī*). See *ibid.*, 254. Of course, there is always the possibility that the description of al-Subkī also serves his hidden agenda.

47 See, for al-Zamlakānī's biography, Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya* xviii, 286–8; and Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* iv, 74–6. He studied with some of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's students, such as al-Tāj ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Fazārī.

48 See, for a comprehensive biography of al-Mizzī, Mirza, *Ibn Kathīr*, 32–6. He studied with and heard from al-Tāj al-Fazārī, al-Shihāb al-Khuwayy, al-Majd b. al-Miḥtār (d. 686/1287), al-Jamāl al-Sharīshī (d. 685/1286), and from al-Fakhr al-Baʿlabakkī l-Ḥanbalī (d. 688). See, for an overview of teachers in the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya, al-Ḥāfiẓ, *Dūr al-Ḥadīth* 59–60.

49 See, for his biography, Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* iii, 63–71; see, for al-Subkī's career in Damascus, Leder, *Damaskus*, 244–9.

sibility of having taught the *Muqaddima* in the Dār toward a more rationalist orientation.

After al-Taqī, his son, al-Tāj ‘Abd al-Wahhāb b. ‘Alī (d. 771/1370), took over the teaching position of the Ashrafiyya.⁵⁰ After his death and for a short period of about three years only, Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373) seemed to be the next teacher of the Dār. The individuals who followed him had only little contact with transmitters of the *Muqaddima* in particular or traditionalists in general. They are ‘Umar b. ‘Uthmān b. Hibat Allāh al-Ma‘arrī l-Ḥalabī (d. 783/1381),⁵¹ al-Bahā’ Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Barr al-Subkī (d. 777/1375),⁵² Abū Dharr ‘Abdallāh b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Barr al-Subkī (son of the former) (d. 785/1383),⁵³ al-Burhān Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Ibn Jamā’a (d. 790/1388),⁵⁴ Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-Sulamī l-Ma‘arrī (d. 799/1397),⁵⁵ and Aḥmad b. ‘Umar b. Muslim b. Sa‘īd al-Milḥī al-Dimashqī (d. 793/1391).⁵⁶

2.1.1.2 *The Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Nūriyya*

Among the individuals who taught in the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Nūriyya were al-Tāj al-Fazārī (d. 690/1291) (student of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ), Yūsuf b. al-Ḥasan b. Badr al-Nābulṣī l-Dimashqī (d. 671/1272), al-Jamāl Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Maḥmūd b. al-Ṣābūnī (d. 680/1281), al-Majd b. al-Mihtār (d. 686/1287) (scribe of the Ashrafiyya, transmitter of the *Muqaddima*, and student of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ), al-Fakhr al-Ba‘labakkī (d. 688/1286) (student of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ), al-Sharaf Aḥmad b. Aḥmad b. Nī‘ma al-Maqdisī l-Shāfi‘ī (d. 694/1295), al-‘Alā’ ‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm b. Dāwūd al-‘Atṭār (d. 724/1324) (student of al-Nawawī), al-‘Alam al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Birzālī (d. 739/1338) (heard from al-Fazārī and Ibn al-Mihtār), Jamāl ad-Dīn Abū l-Hajjāj Yūsuf al-Mizzī (d. 742/1341) (heard from al-Fazārī and Ibn al-Mihtār), and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Yūsuf al-Mizzī, son of Abū

50 Al-Ḥāfiẓ, *Dūr al-Ḥadīth* 60. And for his biography, Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* ii, 245–8.

51 See, for his biography, Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* iii, 177, who did not mention any educational ties that indicate he had read the *Muqaddima*.

52 See, for his biography, Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* iii, 490–1, who mentioned relations to al-Mizzī and al-Birzālī. But given him belonging to the Subkī family, he probably was a rationalist, too, and rather opposed traditionalism, so that his ties to al-Mizzī and al-Birzālī could have been of a technical nature.

53 See, for his biography, Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* ii, 290. Abū Dharr also heard from al-Mizzī.

54 See, for his biography, Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 38–9. Among his *samā’* relations, al-Mizzī and al-Dhahabī are listed.

55 Could not be identified.

56 See, for his biography, Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 232. No indications of any contact with transmitters of the *Muqaddima* are given. For the overview of the teachers in the Ashrafiyya, see al-Ḥāfiẓ, *Dūr al-Ḥadīth* 60.

l-Hajjāj (749/1348).⁵⁷ Those individuals can almost exclusively be counted as Shāfi'ī traditionalists (with the exception of al-Fakhr al-Ba'labakkī, who was a Ḥanbalī scholar) and had either direct contact with Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ or with one of his students.

For the individuals after 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mizzī, quite the opposite seems to be the case. They can either be identified as Shāfi'ī rationalists and/or as having had little or no contact with Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ or his students. They were Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Khaṭīb Ibn Nubāta,⁵⁸ Muḥammad b. Rāfi' b. Hajras al-Shallāmī (d. 774/1372),⁵⁹ and Muḥammad b. Mūsā b. Muḥammad al-Lakhmī l-Dimashqī (aka Ibn Sanad) (d. 792/1390).⁶⁰ All three scholars migrated from Cairo to Damascus and were close associates of al-Tāj al-Subkī and, therefore, represent a rather rationalist orientation.

2.1.1.3 *The Rawāḥiyya School*

The Rawāḥiyya school, together with the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya, was one of the two institutions in which Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ could spread his knowledge the most. After a long period in which his students were teaching there, interestingly, a change of intellectual orientation can be identified with the appointment of Abū l-Thana' Maḥmūd b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Abū Bakr b. 'Alī b. al-Iṣfahānī (d. 749/1348), at the latest.⁶¹ After al-Iṣfahānī, 'Abdallāh b. al-Majd or al-Shihāb Aḥmad b. al-Majd 'Abdallāh was appointed for only one year in 733/1333.⁶² He was replaced by al-Fakhr Abū l-Faḍā'il Muḥammad al-Miṣrī (d. 751/1350) in 734/1334.⁶³ After him, three members of

57 Al-Ḥāfiẓ, *Dūr al-Ḥadīth* 13–4.

58 See, for his biography, al-Ṣafādī, *Wāfi* i, 208–9; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* iv, 173–4. He is the father of a famous poet, migrated from Egypt to Damascus, and had no contact with the transmitters of the *Muqaddima*. He also did not have any (educational) contact with the traditionalist Shāfi'īs of Damascus.

59 See, for his biography, Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* iii, 439–40.

60 See, for his biography, Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* iv, 270–1. See al-Ḥāfiẓ, *Dūr al-Ḥadīth* 18–9.

61 Before Ibn al-Iṣfahānī, Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Alī l-Zamlakānī (d. 774/1327) was appointed in the Rawāḥiyya, who had also taught in the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya. See, for this, *al-Nu'aymī, Dāris* i, 204. Al-Iṣfahānī was born in Iṣfahān in 694/1295 and educated in Tabriz. He came to Damascus in 725/1325. He spent about eight years in Damascus and then moved to Cairo in 733/1333, where he died in 749/1348. In Damascus, he compiled a famous Quran exegesis but was also very famous for his treatises on logic, *kalām*, and philosophy. See, for his appointment at the Rawāḥiyya school, al-Nu'aymī, *Dāris* i, 204–5; and for his biography al Ghouz, *Brokers*.

62 Al-Nu'aymī, *Dāris* i, 205. Unfortunately, he could not be identified.

63 His biography in Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* iv, 51–3. Ibn Ḥajar does not mention any *ḥadīth* related information in al-Fakhr al-Miṣrī's biography, so it is very unlikely he would have studied

the al-Subkī family were appointed in the Rawāḥiyya, indicating a clear change in the intellectual orientation of this school from traditionalism to the rationalist orientation. They were al-Bahā' Abū l-Baqā' al-Subkī, who also taught in the Ashrafiyya, his son Qāḍī l-Quḍāt al-Walī Abū Dharr 'Abdallāh al-Subkī, also a teacher in the Ashrafiyya, and after him, al-Badr Abū 'Abdallāh Muḥammad b. al-Bahā' al-Subkī.⁶⁴

The overview of the teachers in those three institutions indicates two important things. First, for a period of about 70 years, teachers dominated those institutions that had close links to Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ or his students, who had studied the *Muqaddima* and probably also taught it and who can be described as having a general tendency toward traditionalism. Second, at some point at the beginning of the 8th/14th century (around the 20s or 30s) individuals who had tendencies toward rationalism or could clearly be identified as rationalist Shāfi'īs were appointed. The domination of traditionalist scholars over these institutions seemed to have come to an end. The al-Subkī family, as well as other migrated scholars (mostly from Cairo), played a significant role in this change. All the authors of the biographical dictionaries that are the center of this study lived in this crucial period, and it can be assumed that they authored their dictionaries under the influence of these ongoing changes. For Ibn Kathīr and al-Subkī, one can even assume that they authored their dictionaries during their teaching time at the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya. Therefore, it is of particular interest to see how the authors of the biographical dictionaries relate to these individuals and whether or not they can be characterized as traditionalists or rationalists to see what kind of purpose might have stood behind their narrative framing of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's biography.

3 Al-Dhahabī and Ibn Kathīr: The Traditionalists View

3.1 *Al-Dhahabī*

Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. 'Uthmān b. Qaymāz b. 'Abdallāh al-Turkmānī al-Fāriqī al-Dimashqī al-Shāfi'ī al-Dhahabī was born in Damascus in the village Kafarbatnā, as a descendant of a Turkish family, in 673/1275.⁶⁵ In the same year, he was already granted child *ijāzāt* by the brokerage of another

or even taught the *Muqaddima* in the Rawāḥiyya. See, for his appointment, al-Nu'aymī, *Dāris* i, 184–8.

64 Al-Nu'aymī, *Dāris* i, 205.

65 See al-Shaykh, *al-Ḥāfiẓ* 27.

scholar. His foster brother (*akhūh min al-raḡā'a*), the Shāfi'ite scholar 'Alā' al-Dīn Abū l-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm b. Dāwūd b. al-'Aṭṭār (d. 724/1324) mediated that *ijāzāt* for him.⁶⁶ Himself a well-known scholar, Ibn al-'Aṭṭār was also known as *Mukhtaṣar al-Nawawī*, a nickname he earned because of his constant company (*mulāzama*) with Muḥyī l-Dīn al-Nawawī (d. 676/1277).⁶⁷

Despite this early *ijāzāt*, al-Dhahabī only began seriously and actively hearing *ḥadīth* by himself at the age of 18. The serious engagement with *ḥadīth* studies began after he had met the historian and *ḥadīth* scholar 'Alam al-Dīn al-Qāsim al-Birzālī (d. 739/1338).⁶⁸ According to al-Dhahabī, his friend and teacher al-Birzālī had awakened his interest and passion in the field of *ḥadīth* (*huwa lladhī ḥabbaba ilayya ṭalab al-ḥadīth*) with some motivating words by telling him that his handwriting resembled that of the *ḥadīth* scholars.⁶⁹ After this, al-Dhahabī's eagerness to collect narrations must have been very strong. Al-Dhahabī's *mashyakha* counts 1043 individuals.⁷⁰

Al-Dhahabī was educated by Kamāl al-Dīn b. al-Zamlakānī (d. 742/1342) in Shāfi'ī *fiqh*, who has been mentioned above. Al-Dhahabī also studied with Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf al-Mizzī (d. 742/1340) and held close relations with the younger historian Ibn Kathīr. They can all be described as traditionalists. Moreover, almost all of al-Dhahabī's teachers, himself included, had educational ties to students of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ. This is true for al-Mizzī, al-Zamlakānī, and al-Birzālī, who studied with al-Tāj al-Fazārī,⁷¹ heard from al-Shihāb al-Khuwayy, from al-Majd b. al-Mihtār (d. 686/1387),⁷² al-Jamāl al-Sharīshī (d. 685/1386),⁷³ and from al-Fakhr al-Ba'labakkī l-Ḥanbalī (d. 688/1289).⁷⁴

Hence, it is justified to reach the conclusion that al-Dhahabī not only maintained close relations to the network of students of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ. As a traditionalist himself, he is most likely to also have supported the intellectual orientation of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ in terms of both a more *ḥadīth*-based approach to jurisprudence

66 Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* iii, 336.

67 For the biography of Ibn al-'Aṭṭār, see also Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* iii, 5–7.

68 Al-Ḥāfiẓ, *Dār al-Ḥadīth* 15, 205; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh* ixv, 773. Al-Birzālī had studied with al-Tāj al-Fazārī (d. 690/1291) (one of the close students of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ and a teacher in the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Nūriyya), heard from al-Shihāb al-Khuwayy (d. 693/1294) (also a close student), and was appointed as shaykh in the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Nafisiyya in around 717/1317 and al-Nūriyya in around 724/1324.

69 Al-Shaykh, *al-Ḥāfiẓ* 112.

70 Al-Dhahabī, *Mu'jam*.

71 See al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh* xv, 660–1.

72 See *Ibid.*, 563.

73 *Ibid.* 550.

74 *Ibid.* 609.

and the rejection of logic and Greek philosophy. This conclusion is supported by at least two facts. First, al-Dhahabī informs his readers in the entry on Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ in his *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'* about himself having studied and heard the *Muqaddima* from many of the former's students. There, al-Dhahabī states that 21 individuals⁷⁵ had heard the *Muqaddima* from Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ and that all of them, except for one, had also given al-Dhahabī permission to narrate it.⁷⁶ Second, al-Dhahabī addressed the question of the proper understanding of the Divine attributes himself in at least three treatises, expressing in them the traditionalist point of view of accepting the expressions without any allegorical interpretation. Those treatises are al-Dhahabī's short collection of prophetic *ḥadīth* on the *al-nuzūl* (God's descent into the undermost heaven), his collection on God's attributes (*aḥādīth aṣ-ṣifāt*), a 40-*ḥadīth* collection, also on God's attributes (*al-Arba'ūn fī ṣifāt rabb al-'ālamīn*), and his controversial and much discussed book on the "Being above of God" (*al-'Ulūw li-l-'alī al-ghaffār*), in which he gathered Quranic verses, Prophetic traditions, and sayings of the Prophet's companions as well as later scholars.⁷⁷ In those books and collections, he refuses allegorical interpretations of anthropomorphic expressions, claiming that the acceptance of the wording without questioning the how is the way of the *salaf*.

Eventually, al-Dhahabī's intellectual closeness to Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ and the social closeness to the latter's students' circle is also supported by the fact that al-Dhahabī authored a treatise on the *'ulūm al-ḥadīth*, his *al-Mūqīza fī 'ilm muṣṭalah al-ḥadīth*.⁷⁸ While Egyptian authors of the late Mamluk period, such as al-Suyūṭī, saw al-Dhahabī's *Mūqīza* as an abridgment of the *Muqaddima* of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ,⁷⁹ there seemed to be some debate about this among present-day Arab scholars. The editor of the *Mūqīza*, 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghudda, believes that it is an abridgment of the treatise on the *'ulūm al-ḥadīth* of Ibn Daqīq al-Īd entitled *al-Iqtirāḥ fī bayān al-iṣṭilāḥ*, which is supposed to be an abridgment of

75 Those are Tāj al-Dīn and his brother, al-Fakhr al-Karjī, al-Zayn al-Fāriqī, al-Majd b. al-Miḥtār, al-Majd b. al-Zahīr, Zahīr al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-Zanjānī, Ibn 'Arabshāh, al-Fakhr al-Ba'li, al-Sharīshī, al-Jazā'irī, Muḥammad b. al-Kharqī, Muḥammad b. Abī l-Dhikr, Ibn al-Khuwayy, Aḥmad al-Shahrazūrī, al-Ṣard al-Urmawī, al-Ṣadr khaṭīb Ba'labakka, al-'Imād Muḥammad b. al-Ṣā'igh, al-Kamāl b. al-'Aṭṭār, Abū l-Yumn b. 'Asākir, and 'Uthmān b. 'Umar al-Mu'addal. See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 266o.

76 See Ibid.

77 See Ma'rūf, *al-Dhahabī*, 145–6, 148–9.

78 See the modern editions of it by 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghudda (Maktaba al-Maṭbū'āt al-Islāmiyya in Aleppo) and 'Amr 'Abd al-Mun'im Salīm (Dār Uḥud).

79 Al-Suyūṭī, *Baḥr* i, 236–42.

the *Muqaddima* of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ.⁸⁰ Either way, al-Dhahabī's treatise is obviously strongly influenced by Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's *Muqaddima* in terms of structure, content, and scholarly opinions.⁸¹

Another important fact needs to be mentioned here. Despite the fact that al-Dhahabī had already been appointed in the Dār al-Ḥadīth in the Turbat Umm al-Ṣāliḥ, in the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Zāhiriyya, in the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Nafsiyya, in the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Tankiziyya, in the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Fāḍiliyya, and in the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-'Urwiyya,⁸² he seemed to have a strong personal wish to also teach in the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya. According to Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, al-Dhahabī pursued an appointment at the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya after the death of al-Mizzī. However, due to his writings on the Divine attributes and the rejection of any allegorical interpretation, it was clear that al-Dhahabī was not an adherent of the Ash'arī school of theology, given that its most characteristic position is the allegorical interpretation of the Quranic verses on the attributes of God. Therefore, he was denied to be al-Mizzī's successor, and al-Taḳī al-Subkī was appointed instead.⁸³

This means that al-Dhahabī had been affected by the (intellectual) change that was going on in the teaching institutions in Damascus. In fact, his teacher al-Mizzī also ran into the same kind of trouble shortly before he was appointed in 718/1318. Some local Damascenes seemed to have objections against accepting his *mashyakha* there, as Ibn Kathīr and al-Subkī inform their readers.⁸⁴ According to al-Subkī, the main concern that was brought forward against the appointment of al-Mizzī was that al-Mizzī was not an adherent of the Ash'arī school of theology. Allegedly, it was written in the endowment deed that the teacher (*shaykh*) of this Dār is supposed to be an adherent of the Ash'arī school. And although al-Mizzī had made a written statement that he followed this school, the Damascene scholars did not believe him and demanded his dismissal.⁸⁵ Certainly, the events in 705/1306, in which al-Mizzī was imprisoned, had a role in the negative image that Damascene scholars had about al-Mizzī. In the month Rajab of that year, al-Mizzī gave a lecture on the chapter "The creation of the servants' deeds" (*khalq af'āl al-'ibād*) of the Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī

80 Al-Dhahabī, *Mūqīza* 5–6.

81 See, for a comparison between the three treatises of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, Ibn Daḳīq al-'Īd, and al-Dhahabī, Gharaibeh, *Intertextuality*.

82 See Ma'rūf, *al-Dhahabī* 106–10.

83 See Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt* iii, 74.

84 See Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya* xviii, 181; al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt* x, 397–8. Both scholars, though, are very vague when it comes to the question of who exactly opposed the appointment of al-Mizzī. Al-Subkī refers to them as *ahl dimashq*, while Ibn Kathīr states *limā fi nufūs ba'd al-nās*.

85 Al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt* x, 397–8.

in which al-Bukhārī reacted to the creed of the Jahmiyya. During this lesson, doubts about al-Mizzī's beliefs arose, and the Shāfi'ī chief judge Ibn Ṣarṣā had him arrested for several days.⁸⁶

For the purpose of this paper, it is not so important to determine what was behind those claims and what kind of creed al-Mizzī followed. Rather, it is important to note that among the list of the writings of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, the endowment deed of the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya—apparently no longer extant—is mentioned.⁸⁷ Therefore, it seems very crucial to determine what kind of intellectual (or theological) orientation Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ had. Or rather, from the perspective of the scholars of this time, it is crucial to understand how Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ is depicted in the biographical dictionaries.

3.2 *Ibn Kathīr*

The case of Ibn Kathīr is quite similar to that of al-Dhahabī. Ibn Kathīr, whose full name is 'Imād al-Dīn Abū l-Fidā' Ismā'īl b. Kathīr, was born in 701/1301 in the village Majlad al-Qarya in the east of Damascus. He moved to the Syrian capital around 706/1306, shortly after the death of his father.⁸⁸ In Damascus, Ibn Kathīr quickly entered the circles of the traditionalist Shāfi'īs that al-Dhahabī also belonged to. During his education at the Bādirā'iyya school where the *Muqaddima* of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ was assumingly taught from 660/1262 onward by students of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, Ibn Kathīr studied under al-Burhān Ibrāhīm al-Fazārī (d. 729/1329).⁸⁹ Al-Burhān al-Fazārī was known for his traditionalist orientation,⁹⁰ was the son of one of the closer students of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, one of the transmitters of the *Muqaddima*, and led the prayer (*imām*) in the Rawāhiyya school.⁹¹ Besides the fact that al-Burhān introduced Ibn Kathīr to the traditionalist orientation,⁹² he might have also connected him to the circle of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's students. After Ibn Kathīr began studying *ḥadīth* more seriously, he became a student of Jamāl al-Dīn al-Mizzī, who not only was one of his most

86 See Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya* xviii, 54.

87 See the introduction by the editors of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Ma'rifat* 27. See also Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya* xvii, 282, who mentioned that Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ authored the endowment deed (*wa-huwa lladhī ṣannaḥa kitāba waqfiyhā*).

88 Laoust, Ibn Kaṭīr, 42–3.

89 Laoust, Ibn Kaṭīr 43–4. Al-Burhān's full name is Ibrāhīm b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ibrāhīm b. al-Farikāḥ al-Fazārī. He was born in 660/1262 and received his education from his father and others. See, for his biography, Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 34–5.

90 Mirza, *Ibn Kathīr* 66n26.

91 See Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 34–5.

92 See Laoust, Ibn Kaṭīr 44; Ohlander, Ibn Kathīr 150.

influential teachers but also became his father-in-law.⁹³ Ibn Kathīr also held close ties to al-Dhahabī, who has been discussed above. Another Shāfiʿī scholar close to Ibn Kathīr was al-ʿAlam al-Qāsim al-Birzālī (d. 739/1338), a Shāfiʿī traditionalist who was known for his efforts in the fields of historiography and *ḥadīth* studies.⁹⁴

From Ibn Kathīr's social contacts, one can already see a certain (imagined) closeness to Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ and (actual) closeness to the latter's students. His intellectual closeness is expressed in several aspects. First, Ibn Kathīr's Quran commentary, entitled *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿAzīm*, was a traditionalist counter-concept to the commentary of the Shāfiʿī rationalist al-Fakhr al-Rāzī, as Mirza recently pointed out convincingly.⁹⁵ It, therefore, expresses Ibn Kathīr's rejection of logic and Greek philosophy, as Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ did as well. Second, Ibn Kathīr compiled an abridgment of the *Muqaddima*, entitled *al-Bāʾith al-ḥathīth sharḥ ikhtiṣār ʿulūm al-ḥadīth*.⁹⁶ Third, his *Ṭabaqāt al-fuqahāʾ al-shāfiʿiyyīn* is actually also an extension of the *Ṭabaqāt* work that Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ authored, and that al-Nawawī extended, as he expressed himself.⁹⁷ Fourth, Ibn Kathīr was appointed at the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya, the institution of teaching *ḥadīth* in which Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ authored his *Muqaddima*, at some point between 771/1370 (the death of the former teacher al-Tāj al-Subkī) and 774/1373 (Ibn Kathīr's death).⁹⁸ Although it cannot be known with certainty, one can assume that Ibn Kathīr most likely authored his commentary on the *Muqaddima* as well during his teaching time at this institution as sort of a teaching manual. The fact that Ibn Kathīr follows Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's outline and opinions in the commentary on the *Muqaddima* supports the conclusion of an intellectual closeness to Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ.

The analysis of the biographies of both al-Dhahabī and Ibn Kathīr reveal a clear traditionalist orientation. While this is not new, since previous studies

93 Ohlander, Ibn Kathīr 150.

94 See, for a comprehensive biography of al-Birzālī, Mirza, *Ibn Kathīr* 37–8.

95 See Mirza, Was Ibn Kathīr; *Ibn Kathīr*. The first cited article of Mirza summarizes the findings of his PhD thesis.

96 In some sources his *mukhtaṣar* is also referred to as *Ikhtiṣār ʿulūm al-ḥadīth*. There are two editions of the text, one edited as *al-Bāʾith* and the other as *Ikhtiṣār* (see bibliography).

97 Ibn Kathīr, *Ṭabaqāt* ii, 783.

98 Sources are not clear about his appointment. Al-Nuʿaymī only lists the teachers in chronological order until Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī, who died in 756. After that he names Ibn Kathīr and al-Tāj al-Subkī as successors with a remark that the order is not known. See al-Nuʿaymī, *Dāris* i, 15–27. Listed after are: al-Taqī al-Subkī, his son al-Tāj, then the Cairene scholar al-Sirāj al-Bulqīnī, who died in 805 and was appointed as judge over Damascus during these years, and then Ibn Kathīr. See al-Ḥāfiẓ, *Dūr al-Ḥadīth* 60.

have suggested the same,⁹⁹ the present paper adds to this at least three important aspects. Both scholars had close relations to the network of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's students, they both commented on the *Muqaddima* of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, which, hence, can be described as a central text for both scholars, and third, the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya played a crucial role in the lives of both scholars. With these findings, their description of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's life in their biographical dictionaries shall be compared.

4 The Entries on Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ

The following table shows three entries of al-Dhahabī's *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'*, *Tārīkh al-islām*, and *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz* that contain Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's biography. In the last column, the entry of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ in Ibn Kathīr's *Ṭabaqāt* is demonstrated. Only the parts in Arabic are crucial for the argument of the paper. The other information is only summarized. Each column roughly represents a paragraph, so that one can get an idea of what the structure and the content of the entire entry look like.

The entries of Ibn Kathīr and al-Dhahabī in their writings follow a similar outline and make almost the same statement. First, they introduce Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ by citing his name and his birthdate. While Ibn Kathīr goes over the early education of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, al-Dhahabī inserts an anecdote that should emphasize Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's extraordinary scholarly capacity that already appeared during his adolescence (see *Tārīkh al-islām*, *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*). After both scholars outline Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's early and late education, both introduce descriptions about Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's intellectual orientation, which can be perceived—from the perspective of the present study—as the main message and *knowledge* of the entries. Here, both scholars support their own worldview and use Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ as an authority. Ibn Kathīr states, “He was on the path of the *Salaf* with regard to the creed and hated the path of [Greek] philosophy and logic. Moreover he warned [his surroundings] against it[s danger] and prevented it from being taught while he was supported by the rulers in this. He had strong *fatwās* and righteous opinions.”¹⁰⁰

Al-Dhahabī basically gives the same impression. In his *Siyar*, he states that Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ “was of solid creed on the path of the *salaf* and of right religious orientation (*niḥla*). He prevented from entering into what lets the feet slip (*mazallāt al-aqdām*),” which is a reference to the study of philosophy and logic.

99 See, for example Mirza, Ibn Kathir; Bori, Ibn Taymiyya; and Fancy, Science.

100 Ibn Kathīr, *Ṭabaqāt* ii, 782–3.

Al-Dhahabī adds that “he [Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ] believed in God and in His Names and Attributes.” In the *Tārīkh*, al-Dhahabī is more explicit: “He was of right creed on the path of the *salaf*. He prevented from any allegorical interpretations [of the Quran, in particular the Divine attributes] and believed in what was narrated from God and his Prophet the way it was meant.” And in his *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*, al-Dhahabī adds a few details while stating that “he was a *Salafī* of good creed (*ḥusn al-i’tiqād*), who distanced himself from the allegorical interpretations of the *mutakallimūn*.”

A comparison between Ibn Kathīr and al-Dhahabī reveals a great similarity between both characterizations, which fit the intellectual orientations of both scholars. Al-Dhahabī, however, included more information and was more specific about what exactly the “Salafī creed” looked like from his perspective, i.e., the belief in the names and attributes of God without any allegorical interpretations (of the *mutakallimūn*) and the rejection of logic and Greek philosophy.

In addition and in support of his explanations, al-Dhahabī included in his *Sīyar* and the *Tārīkh* Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ’s *fatwā* on the ban of philosophy. Although al-Dhahabī did not cite the entire *fatwā*, the quoted passages largely match the words of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ in the latter’s collection of *fatwās*.¹⁰¹ The first passage he cited speaks about philosophy as the root of all disbelief and evil. For Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, the engagement in philosophy blinded the sight for the Divine *sharī’a*, which is supported by clear evidence. The part that al-Dhahabī left out speaks about the Prophet’s miracles, indicating that those who study philosophy do not believe in the prophethood of Muḥammad despite all the signs and miracles. In fact, in the opinion of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, the miracles of the Prophet were not restricted to his lifetime but were also visible in the miracles of the *awliyā’* (*karamāt al-awliyā’*) and even every time a believer asks God for help through the intercession of the Prophet.¹⁰² Whether or not al-Dhahabī left this passage out because he disagreed with Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ is not easy to answer, since he did not seem to have addressed the question of intercession with the Prophet particularly. In general, he seemed to have approved the existence of the *karamāt* of *awliyā’*, as he also condemned exaggerations and deviations from what he defined as the path of the *salaf*.¹⁰³ The next passage that al-Dhahabī cited from the *fatwā* concerned the ban of using logic, warning of its bad impact and emphasizing that the Divine *sharī’a* was not in need of logic in any way. Ibn Kathīr did not include the *fatwā* in his entry on Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ.

101 For the entire *fatwā*, see Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Fatāwā* i, 209–12.

102 See Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Fatāwā* i, 210.

103 For an overview of passages in his historical writings that approve the existence of *karamāt*, see ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Makkī, *Mawqif* 93–109.

TABLE 6.1 The entries on Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ

<i>Sīyar a'lām al-nubalā'</i> ¹⁰⁴	<i>Tārīkh al-islām</i> ¹⁰⁵
Name	Name
Date of birth	Date of birth
	Anecdote of Ibn Khallikān (short version)
Early education	Early education and from whom he heard
Later education	Teaching positions
Who learned from him	Personal characteristics
Anecdote about his scholarly acumen reported by Ibn Khallikān	Anecdote about his scholarly acumen reported by Ibn Khallikān
Personal characteristics reported by 'Umar b. al-Ḥājjib	Personal characteristics reported by Ibn al-Ḥājjib
Personal characteristics reported by al-Dhahabī:	Personal characteristics reported by al-Dhahabī:
<p>كان ذا جلاله عجيبة ووقار وفصاحة وعلم نافع وكان متين الديانة سلفي الجملة صحيح النحلة كافا عن الخوض في مزلات الاقدام مؤمنا بالله وبما جاء عن الله من اسمائه ونعوته حسن البزة وافر الحرمة معظما عند السلطان</p>	<p>قلت: كان حسن الاعتقاد على مذهب السلف يرى الكف عن التأويل ويؤمن بما جاء عن الله ورسوله على مرادهما ولا يخوض ولا يتعمق من فتاويه أنه سئل عن يشتغل بالمنطق والفلسفة فأجاب:</p>
[...] mentioning of his samā' contacts	<p>الفلسفة أس السفه والانحلال ومادة الحيرة والضلال ومثار الزيف والزندقة ومن تفلسف عميت بصيرته عن محاسن الشريعة المؤيدة بالبراهين ومن تلبس بها قارنه الخذلان والحرمان واستحوذ عليه الشيطان وأظلم قلبه عن نبوة محمد</p>

104 Al-Dhahabī, *Sīyar* 2659–60.105 Ibid., *Tārīkh* xiv, 455–7.

*Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*¹⁰⁶**Ibn Kathīr, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'īyya***¹⁰⁷

Name

Name

Date of birth

Early education and from whom he heard

Anecdote of Ibn Khallikān (short version)

Teaching positions

Early education and from whom he heard

scholarly characteristics

Teaching positions

على طريقة السلف في الاعتقاد يكره طرائق الفلسفة والمنطق
ويعظ منها ولا يمكن من قراءتها بالبلد والملوك تطيعه في ذلك
وله فتاوى سديدة وآراء رشيدة

Mentioning of his writings

Anecdote about his scholarly acumen reported by Ibn Khallikān

Ibn al-Ṣalāh's teachers

Personal characteristics reported by Abū Ḥafṣ Ibn al-Ḥājjib

List of who studied with him *fiqh* (*tafaqqaha 'alayh*)

Personal characteristics reported by al-Dhahabī:

Date of his death and details on his funeral

قلت: كان سلفيا حسن الاعتقاد كافا عن تأويل المتكلمين
مؤمنا بما ثبت من النصوص غير خائض ولا معمق وكان وافر
الجلالة حسن البزة كثير الهيبة موقرا عند السلطان والأمراء

106 Ibid., *Tadhkira* 1430–3.107 Ibn Kathīr, *Ṭabaqāt* ii, 782–3.

TABLE 6.1 The entries on Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ (*cont.*)*Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'**Tārīkh al-islām*

إلى أن قال:

واستعمال الاصطلاحات المنطقية في مباحث الأحكام
 الشريعة من المنكرات المستبشرة والرقاعات المستحدثة وليس
 بالأحكام الشرعية والله الحمد افتقار إلى المنطق أصلا هو قعاقع
 قد أغنى الله عنها كل صحيح الذهن فالواجب على السلطان
 أعزه الله أن يدفع عن المسلمين شر هؤلاء المشائيم ويخرجهم
 من المدارس ويبعدهم

Mentioning of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's fatwā against the
 study of philosophy:

Mentioning of his popularity among the people
 and the Sultan

من فتاويه أنه سئل عن يشتغل بالمنطق والفلسفة لأجاب:

الفلسفة أس السفه والانحلال ومادة الحيرة والضلال ومثار
 الزيف والزندقة ومن تفلسف عميت بصيرته عن محاسن الشريعة
 المؤيدة بالبراهين ومن تلبس بها قارنه الخذلان والحرمان
 واستحوذ عليه الشيطان وأظلم قلبه عن نبوة محمد

إلى أن قال:

واستعمال الاصطلاحات المنطقية في مباحث الأحكام
 الشريعة من المنكرات المستبشرة والرقاعات المستحدثة وليس
 بالأحكام الشرعية والله الحمد افتقار إلى المنطق أصلا هو قعاقع
 قد أغنى الله عنها كل صحيح الذهن فالواجب على السلطان
 أعزه الله أن يدفع عن المسلمين شر هؤلاء المشائيم ويخرجهم
 من المدارس ويبعدهم

Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz

Ibn Kathīr, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'īyya*

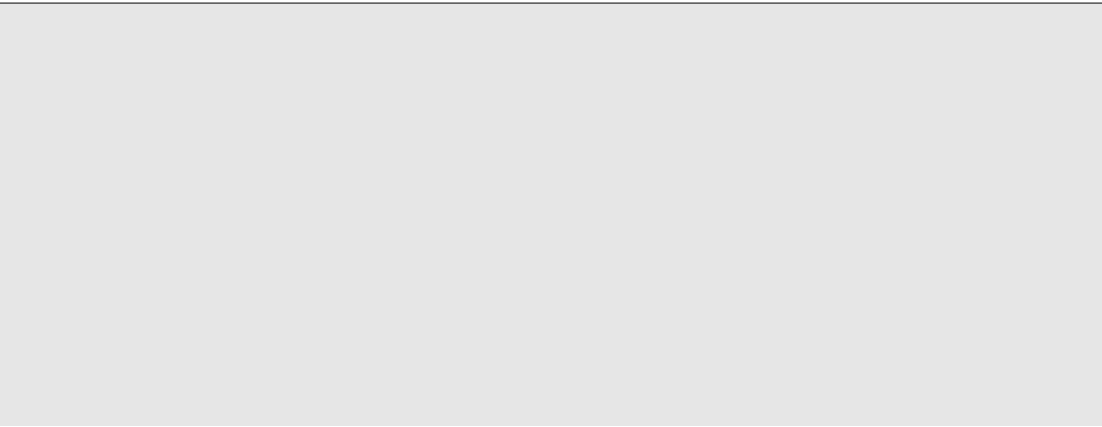


TABLE 6.1 The entries on Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ (*cont.*)

<i>Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'</i>	<i>Tārīkh al-islām</i>
Date of his death and details on his funeral	List of who studied with him <i>fiqh</i> (<i>tafaqqaha 'alayh</i>)
A list of who heard the <i>'Ulūm al-ḥadīth</i> from Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ with a reference that all of them have given al-Dhahabī an <i>ijāza</i> , except for one individual	List of who narrated from him
	Date of his death and details on his funeral

*Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz**Ibn Kathīr, Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'īyya*

List of who studied with him *fiqh* (*tafaqqaha 'alayh*)

List of who narrated from him

Date of his death and details on his funeral

List of individuals who died in the same year

Mention of a *ḥadīth* that al-Dhahabī narrates from Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ through one of his students:

أخبرنا أبو العباس أحمد بن إبراهيم الفزاري المقرئ الخطيب
المحدث النحوي

ثنا أبو عمرو عثمان بن عبد الرحمن الحافظ

أخبرت أم المؤيد زينب بنت أبي القاسم الشعرية وسمعت من
زينب الكندية وابن أبي عصرون عنه

أن إسماعيل ابن أبي القاسم أخبرها

أنا عبد الغافر بن محمد

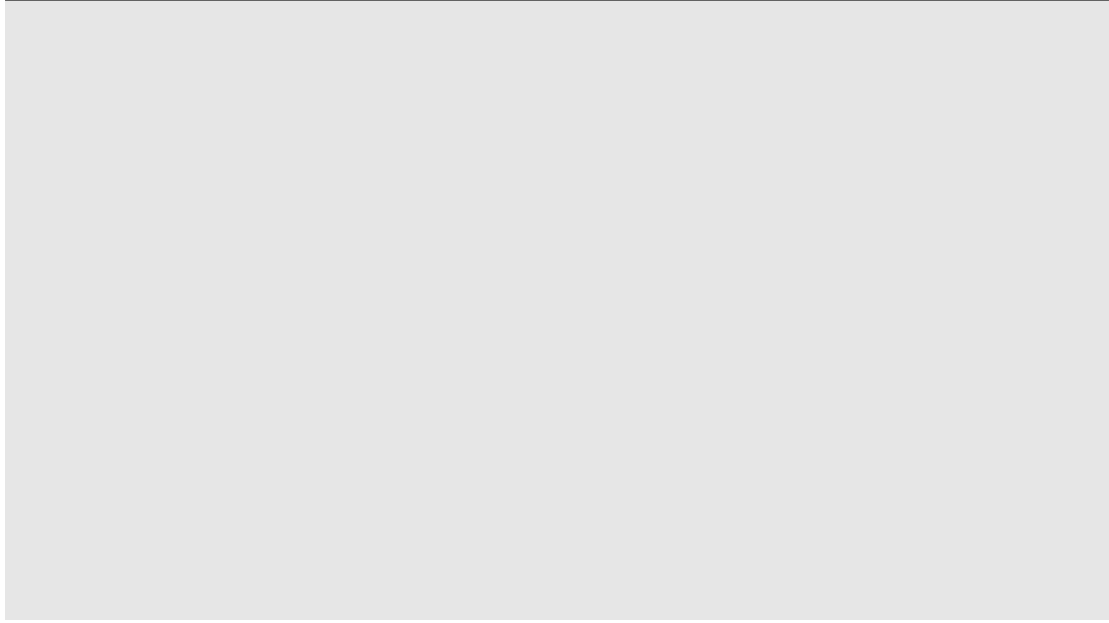
ثنا بشر بن أحمد

ثنا داود بن الحسين

ثنا يحيى بن يحيى

TABLE 6.1 The entries on Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ (*cont.*)

*Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'**Tārīkh al-islām*



*Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz**Ibn Kathīr, Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'īyya*

أنا عبد الله بن محمد بن أبي فروة

يزيد بن خصيفة

عن بسر بن سعيد

عن أبي هريرة قال

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم أيما امرأة أصابت بخورا
فلا تشهد معنا العشاء الآخرة

وقد أخرجه مسلم بإسناد آخر عن بكير بن الأشج عن بسر فقال
عن زينب الثقفية بدل أبي هريرة

Remark that this *ḥadīth* indicates the prohibition for women even old ones to enter the mosques wearing perfume, citing two other *ḥadīth* on this topic

Another difference between Ibn Kathīr and al-Dhahabī is that the latter also includes in his *Sīyar* a list of individuals who had narrated the *Muqaddima* from Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ. Besides the demonstration of the accuracy with which al-Dhahabī seemed to have put together this list, he also used this occasion to inform his reader that he received from all of those individuals—except one—permission to narrate the *Muqaddima* as well, thus highlighting the connection he had with Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ. This connection is also supported by the fact that al-Dhahabī cited in the *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz* a *ḥadīth* that he narrated with a full chain of transmission (*isnād*), in which Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ is also mentioned (with one intermediary between al-Dhahabī and Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ).

Despite these differences between Ibn Kathīr and al-Dhahabī, the picture that both scholars drew of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ is the same. For them, Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ was a traditionalist scholar, as is proven by the remarks on his creed and the condemnation of philosophy and logic. In addition, both scholars sort of feel loyal to Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ due to their own intellectual orientation and their social closeness to the circle of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's students. Against the backdrop of the struggle between traditionalists and rationalists about teaching institutions in general and those that were dominated by Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ and his students (i.e., the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya, the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Nūriyya, and the Rawāḥiyya school), it can also be argued that the outline of biographies is meant to support the claims of traditionalists over these institutions. The argument that both scholars put forward seems to have run as follows: If the scholar who dominated these institutions in the first place was a traditionalist, traditionalists rather than rationalists should continue to teach there. Al-Dhahabī was obviously also trying to justify the appointment of his teacher al-Mizzī in the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya, in addition to his own ambitions to take over its *mashyakha*. Ibn Kathīr, who was appointed in the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya after two rationalists had already been appointed there in between—al-Taḳī and al-Tāj al-Subkī—apparently attempted to reinstate the traditionalist image the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya used to have before.

5 Al-Tāj al-Subkī

In comparison to al-Dhahabī and Ibn Kathīr, al-Tāj al-Subkī shows a significant difference, not only with regard to the entry of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ that he included in his *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya* but also with regard to his own biography and intellectual orientation.

Tāj al-Dīn 'Abd al-Wahhāb b. 'Alī al-Subkī was born in Cairo in 727/1327 or 728/1328 into a family of scholars. His father, Taḳī al-Dīn 'Alī, who was born in

Subk, was a great Shāfiʿī *ḥadīth* scholar and jurist himself, and took over the early education of Tāj al-Dīn.¹⁰⁸ In 739/1339, at the age of eleven, al-Tāj moved with his father to Damascus, where he continued his education, mostly with the local scholars.¹⁰⁹ Although, as Berkey suggests, his education seems “typical of those of the leading ulama of the Mamluk period,”¹¹⁰ the information provided by Ibn Ḥajar about al-Tāj’s teachers, the works he read, the disciplines he specialized in, and the works he authored suggest that al-Tāj had a rather rational orientation compared to his traditionalist Shāfiʿī colleagues in Damascus. It is true that he studied with al-Mizzī and held close relations to al-Dhahabī;¹¹¹ however, al-Subkī also criticized his teacher al-Dhahabī for his bias against Ashʿarī-Shāfiʿī scholars as well as Sufis.¹¹² Makdisi even goes as far as to describe the *Ṭabaqāt* of Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī as work that, through the use of narrative strategies, shapes the historical image of the Shāfiʿī school as rationalist oriented with tendencies toward Ashʿarīsm. Following his predecessor Ibn ʿAsākir, al-Subkī defended Ashʿarī rationalism against the anthropomorphist Ḥanbalīs and traditionalist Shāfiʿīs of his time.¹¹³ Those also include, as was described above, his teacher al-Dhahabī and his colleague Ibn Kathīr.¹¹⁴ This impression goes together with the works Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī read and wrote. Among those that Ibn Ḥajar lists are the *Minhāj* of al-Bayḍāwī and the *Mukhtaṣar* of Ibn al-Ḥājib, both works on jurisprudence and legal theory. In addition, al-Tāj al-Subkī decided to write a larger work on legal theory (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) instead of, as his colleagues did, a work on the principles of *ḥadīth* studies (*ʿulūm al-ḥadīth*).¹¹⁵

This is crucial information—and not only to identify the intellectual orientation of al-Subkī in comparison to Ibn Kathīr and al-Dhahabī. Since al-Subkī also took over the teaching in the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya after the death of his father in 756/1355, it is important to notice that he did not compile a commentary on the *Muqaddima* of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ as Ibn Kathīr did. Moreover, there is

108 See, for a short biography of both Taqī l-Dīn and Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī, Berkey, *al-Subkī* 7–8. See also for slightly more information about the al-Subkī family, Schacht, *al-Subkī* ix, 743–5.

109 See Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* ii, 426.

110 Berkey, *al-Subkī* 8.

111 See Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* ii, 425–8.

112 Al-Subkī, *Ṭabqāt* ii, 22–3; see also Irwin, *Mamluk* 161.

113 See Makdisi, *Ashʿarī* esp. 57–79.

114 For the description of Ibn Kathīr as a traditionalist and his *Ṭabaqāt* as a means of shaping a traditionalist image of the Shāfiʿī school, see Mirza, *Ibn Kathīr* 10–22, 95–112, with examples from the *Ṭabaqāt* and the *Bidāya* of Ibn Kathīr.

115 See Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* ii, 426.

little indication that he had any contact with students of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ at all.¹¹⁶ The only ones were al-Mizzī, Ibn Kathīr, and al-Dhahabī. Al-Subkī, however, criticized them for their traditionalist orientation, which is the characteristic feature that connects them to Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ. Moreover, Leder already stated that al-Taqī al-Subkī, the father of Tāj al-Dīn, did not attach much value to the public reading sessions of *ḥadīth* in the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya, so he did not continue this practice during his employment, which might also indicate that he no longer continued the tradition of teaching the *Muqaddima* of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ.¹¹⁷ In continuation, al-Tāj al-Subkī might have followed his father's lead and done something different from his colleagues, so that the lack of any reference to any reading, studying, and teaching of and commenting on the *Muqaddima* can be interpreted as a strong indication that al-Subkī did not feel a deeper connection to the text in particular or the intellectual legacy of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ in general.

Accordingly, the entry that al-Subkī included in his *Ṭabaqāt al-shāfi'iyya al-kubrā* about Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ differs significantly from the entries of al-Dhahabī and Ibn Kathīr.

Al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-shāfi'iyya al-kubrā*¹¹⁸

Name

List of places he achieved *samāʿ* relations

Personal characteristics:

وتفقه عليه خلائق وكان إماما كبيرا فقيها محدثا زاهدا ورعا مفيدا معلما
استوطن دمشق يعيد زمان السالفين ورعا ويزيد بهجتها بروضة علم جنى كل طالب جناها
ورعا ويفيد أهلها فما منهم إلا من اعترف من بحره واعترف بدره وحفظ جانب مثله ورعا

List of his teaching positions

Anecdote of Ibn Khallikān

Date of his death and details on his funeral

Al-Subkī, in total, shares much less information about Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ with his reader than his two traditionalist colleagues did. After he gives the full name and date of birth, he mentions that Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ had heard *ḥadīth* in Mosul, Baghdad, Naysabur, Marw, and Damascus. In the next paragraph, al-Subkī lists

116 Ibn Ḥajar did not list any of the teachers of al-Subkī. See Ibn Hajar, *Durar* ii, 425–8.

117 Leder, *Damaskus* 248.

118 Al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt* viii, 326–36.

three individuals who narrated *ḥadīth* from him.¹¹⁹ This is much less than the extensive list al-Dhahabī provided, for example, in the *Tārīkh*. There, he counted 18 individuals by name and added that others had heard from Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ as well (*wa-ghayruhum*).¹²⁰ In al-Subkī's entry, Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's influence and role in *ḥadīth* do not appear that strong to the reader.

When al-Subkī speaks about Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ settling in Damascus, he uses the description *salaf*, as his colleagues did. However, instead of referring to a specific intellectual orientation or certain opinions regarding the creed and God's attributes, he uses it in a more general meaning of piety. He states that Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ "brought back the piety of the time of the Salaf [or those who were before us] (*yu'īdu zaman al-sālifīna war'an*)."¹²¹ Al-Subkī, therefore, is aiming for a characterization of a general piety that Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ seemed to have been famous for. He, however, did not connect this piety with a certain intellectual orientation or any theological school. In fact, the use of the word *sālifīn* instead of the word *salaf*, as al-Dhahabī and Ibn Kathīr did and which was more common among the traditionalists, could even have been meant in the sense of "those who were before us," as if al-Subkī meant that Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ attempted to remind society of the piety that it had lost and that previous people had.

The information al-Subkī further gives concerns the travels of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ as well as his teaching positions. He also quotes Ibn Khallikān, stating that Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ was among the greatest in the disciplines of Quran exegesis, *ḥadīth*, and jurisprudence. In addition, al-Subkī supports the image of the pious Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ by quoting an anecdote that was narrated anonymously (*wa-dhakar ghayruh*). It was said that Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ once had said that he never did even a small sin (*ṣaghīra*) in his life. Al-Subkī closes this part of the entry with information on Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's death date and his funeral.

The following part takes most of the space of the entry and contains Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's legal opinions. On about eight pages from the total ten of the entry (in the modern edition), al-Subkī gives examples of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's *fatwās*. He touches upon topics such as the sale of a slave girl, the question of a man intending an optional prayer while he is sitting (not standing up during the prayer) (*nadhara an yuṣallī qā'idan*), inheritance matters, and some other topics, none of which has any connection with theology or creed.

As was expected, the entry in al-Subkī's *Ṭabaqāt* on Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ differs significantly. No references are found to Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's creed. Instead, al-Subkī refers to the general piety of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ that he connects to the *Sālifīn*. Other than

119 Those are al-Fakhr 'Umar b. Yaḥyā l-Karjī, Tāj al-Dīn al-Farikāh, and Aḥmad b. Hibat Allāh b. 'Asākir. See al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt* viii, 326.

120 Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh* xiv, 457.

this, nothing gives the reader the impression that Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ was a traditionalist. By contrast, the long passage on Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's *fatwās*, as well as the reduced list of individuals that heard *ḥadīth* from him, give the impression of a jurist with little engagement in *ḥadīth*. Against the backdrop of the struggle between rationalist and traditionalist Shāfi'īs in Damascus in general and the competition about the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya, it is reasonable to conclude that al-Subkī aimed for a justification of his father's and his own appointment in the Dār. If the "founding father" Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ was rather a good jurist, as al-Taqī and al-Tāj al-Subkī appear, then the claims of traditionalists on predominance over the Dār is invalid.

6 Conclusion

The differences between the three scholars and their accounts on Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ are obvious and support the hypotheses of a bias-driven shape of historiography in general that Makdisi, Mirza, and Irwin note for the historical writings of al-Dhahabī, al-Subkī, Ibn Kathīr, and others as an expression of the opposite intellectual orientation to shape the image of a certain *madhhab*.¹²¹ As the analysis of the social networks of all three scholars demonstrates, the intellectual closeness to Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, and hence the orientation toward traditionalism, as well as its distance from Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, and the resulting orientation toward rationalism, go together with a social closeness to and distance from Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ and his students, respectively.

This appears to be a crucial finding against the backdrop of the ongoing struggle between rationalists and traditionalists in Damascus over teaching institutions during the 8th/14th century. This concerns especially those institutions in which Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ and his students were teaching the *Muqaddima* and that were for about 70 years dominated by them. In the 8th/14th century, these were given to rationalist Shāfi'ī scholars, who mostly migrated from Egypt to Damascus. To put the analysis of the biographical entries of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ in this context highlights the personal interest each of the authors had while framing the biography of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ. This is especially the case if one takes into consideration that these changes happened with the appointment of Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī at the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya after the traditionalist Shāfi'ī al-Mizzī in 742. Since Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ was one of the first scholars who shaped the traditional image of these institutions and influenced their future through the

¹²¹ Makdisi, Ash'arī 59; Mirza, *Ibn Kathīr* 95–103; Irwin, Mamluk 161.

network of his students, and since Ibn al-Ṣalāh also had written the endowment deed of the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya, it becomes self-evident that the depiction of Ibn al-Ṣalāh is crucial to all involved in the struggle over these institutions (i.e., al-Dhahabī, Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī, and Ibn Kathīr). The different narrative strategies, the *knowledge*, and the overall framing of the entries can be seen as additional means by scholars of both camps to dominate in the struggle between traditionalism and rationalism and in the struggle over institutions. While al-Dhahabī and Ibn Kathīr wanted to defend al-Mizzī's appointment, as well as justify their own and reintroduce the traditional image of the school, Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī was, obviously, justifying his father's appointment after al-Mizzī over al-Dhahabī.

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Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī’s Texts and Contexts: Producing a Sufi Environment in the Cairo Sultanate

Zacharie Mochtari de Pierrepont

Aḥmad b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī (773–852/1372–1449) was a famous religious scholar and historian, whose reputation in *ḥadīth* studies was unparalleled in Cairo at the time of his death.* He stood and was remembered as a man of knowledge, wealth, and influence, both socially and scholarly. Son of a wealthy merchant family on his maternal side and a famous and ancient Shāfi‘ī *bayt al-‘ilm* on his paternal side, he occupied a position of *mudarris* in various institutions of Cairo and was appointed many times as *qāḍī l-quḍāt* of the Shāfi‘ī school, for a total of 23 years. His life is relatively well known, mainly due to his fame but also the very extensive biography that his student Muḥammad al-Sakhāwī (d. 902/1497) dedicated to him, *al-Jawāhir wa-l-durar fī tarjamat shaykh al-islām Ibn Ḥajar*. Ibn Ḥajar himself wrote his autobiography and gave the list of his *mashāyikh*, and most of the 9th/15th-century historians of the Cairo Sultanate provided information and biographic notices about him. Modern research also took an interest in this character and at least four academic books have been written in the last decades that deal with Ibn Ḥajar’s life: S. Kawash’s *Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī (1372–1449AD)*, *Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī mu‘arrikh* by K. ‘Izz al-Dīn, *The life and works of Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī* by Aftab A. Raḥmānī, mostly an organized compendium of al-Sakhāwī’s *Jawāhir*, and *Ibn Ḥajar* by R. Kevin Jacques. Thus, when it comes to his personal life, his writings, his institutional positions and his travels, we comparatively know a lot about him. It should not come as a surprise, since Ibn Ḥajar was remembered as one of the greatest Islamic scholars of his time, due mainly to his involvement in *ḥadīth* studies and, among many works, his famous commentary on the *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, the *Fath al-bārī*. Nevertheless, many things are still unknown

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about this author, not in the least concerning the position of his historiographical writings. This will be the focus of this chapter. Despite the fact that studies by J. Blecher,¹ Muḥammad Gharaibeh,² and Anne F. Broadbridge³ have recently tackled some issues linked to Ibn Ḥajar's life, career, competitive environment, and historiographical writings, a lot of work remains to be done in this respect.

This paper aims to engage in a discussion about some features of Ibn Ḥajar's writing of history and the way he shaped new narratives in his last historiographical work, the *Inbā' al-ghumr bī abnā' al-'umr*. It draws special attention to how historiographical works should be seen as coherent systems of meanings and understood in their own discursive contextual framework. As part of an ongoing broader study of Ibn Ḥajar's historiographical works, my main focus will be to understand, in particular, how Ibn Ḥajar addresses some part of the Sufi environment of the Cairo Sultanate. It is my goal to engage a discussion about how a specific sociopolitical historiographical space was created in the *Inbā' al-ghumr* against the wider background of the alleged *siyāsa*-orientation of the period's historiographical production.⁴ It will be argued that in this distinct space, Sufism and Sufi characters were presented to inform about the dynamics of power and the social order that were crafted in the *Inbā'* and that were arguably the main underlying theme of this chronicle.

1 General Framework

The *Inbā'* documents, to quote Ibn Ḥajar's own words, "the events of [the author's] life time since [his] birth in the year 773 [1372] and so on, separating for every year the situations of the *duwal* from the obituaries of the *a'yān*." It is introduced as a continuation of Ibn al-Kathīr's *Ta'rikh*⁵ and claims to draw mainly from Ibn Ḥajar's testimony of what he personally witnessed (*shāhadtu-hu*) and heard from trustful people and some previous historians of the period.⁶ Ibn Ḥajar started to work on the *Inbā'* in the year 836/1432, but it was only completed in 850/1446. With the *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, the *Inbā'* may have been the work Ibn Ḥajar spent the most time working on. It covers a period between the years 773/1372 and 850/1446 and is organized as an annalistic chronicle. Each year is

1 Blecher, *Ḥadīth* 261–87.

2 Gharaibeh, *Brokerage* 223–66; *Narrative* 51–76.

3 Broadbridge, *Academic* 85–107.

4 Khalidi, *Arabic* 181–222.

5 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā'* i, 4.

6 *Ibid.* 4–5.

separated in *hawādith* and *wafayāt* sections. The *wafayāt*, the parts of the work that will be most discussed here, document a wide range of people from various backgrounds and positions and do not consider special social, political, or institutional categories, unlike what had been the case with other biographical writings of Ibn Ḥajar, such as his *Lisān al-Mizān*, which was written 40 years before⁷ and focused exclusively on the *muḥaddithīn*.⁸

The historical context in which Ibn Ḥajar wrote the *Inbāʾ* also gradually evolved in the course of its writing. But, as a hypothesis, it would have made sense for the author to be more careful when he completed his work, to suit the audience of the late 840s/1440s better, and when he considered his chronicle achieved. Being the last historiographical piece produced by Ibn Ḥajar, the *Inbāʾ* also illustrates the last efforts of this scholar to engage in a new historiographical production, just a few years after he had completed his history of the *quḍāt* of Egypt in the *Rafʿ al-‘iṣr ‘an quḍāt Miṣr*.⁹ It is thus most closely intertwined with al-Zāhir Jaqmaq’s rule (841–57/1438–53), at a time when the author was still politically engaged and active. In the last years of the redaction of the *Inbāʾ*, Ibn Ḥajar was actually trying to regain his prestigious position as shaykh of the Sufi Khānqāh al-Baybarsiyya in Cairo, a position he had held without interruption for 30 years and lost in 849/1445 after a confrontation with Sultan Jaqmaq.¹⁰

In this respect, the political and cultural dynamics at the end of al-Zāhir Jaqmaq’s reign are of crucial concern to better understand the *Inbāʾ*. Although poorly known, it seems this period was marked by a renewal of asceticism and exterior signs of extreme piety.¹¹ Some elements tend to show that the political influence of prominent members of the Sufi community, especially tenants of the monistic doctrine, was dwindling. More generally, mentions of Sufism and the number of Sufi characters decrease strongly during the narratives of the *Inbāʾ* concerning al-Zāhir Jaqmaq’s period; no Sufi *zāwiya* is mentioned for this period. Only six characters are explicitly designated as Sufis among the characters of the *wafayāt* in the first years of the sultan’s reign, and none after that. This discrepancy does not mean, of course, that no prominent Sufi characters died during Jaqmaq’s rule. It either underlines the weakening of Sufi *shuyūkh* in the dynamics of power, their decrease in political influence, or Ibn Ḥajar’s disinterest in Sufi scholars between 842/1438 and 848/1451.

7 Ibid., *Lisān* ix, 246.

8 Ibid. i, 2.

9 See M. Tillier, *Vie*.

10 Jacques, *Ibn Ḥajar* 140.

11 Ibn Taghrī Birdī, *Manhal* iv, 298–9; Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo* 259.

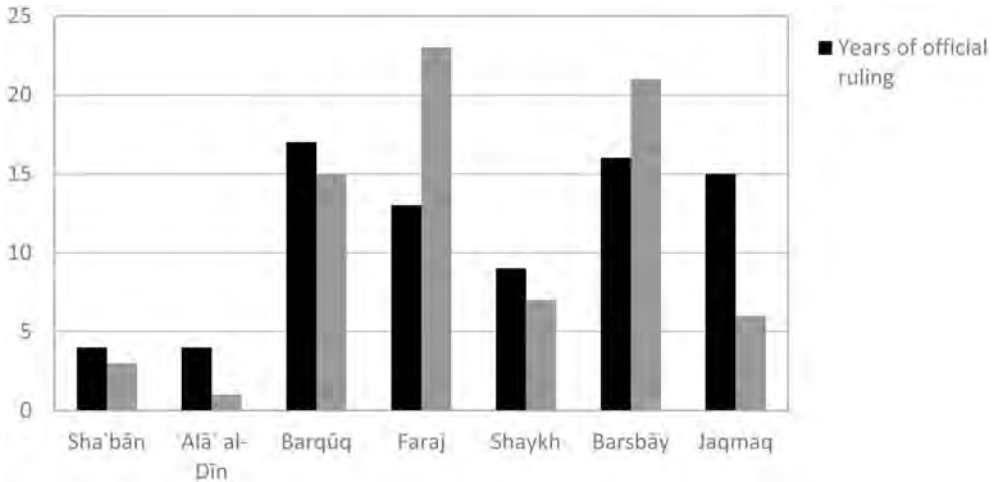


FIGURE 7.1 Number of explicit references to Sufis during each reign covered by the *Inbā'*

In any case, their disappearance from the *Inbā'* is testimony of the different environment in which the last annals of Ibn Ḥajar's chronicle were written. A few years before, Ibn Ḥajar's authorial choices may have been very different under al-Ashraf Barsbāy, a strong supporter of the Sufi environment and a man personally engaged in the patronage and company of Sufis.¹²

It will be argued here that the *Inbā'* must be contextualized and understood in these specific frameworks of both Ibn Ḥajar's personal situation and the broader context of the 840s/1440s. These informed the agency and intentionality of its author¹³ and left a deep impression on how he wrote his chronicle. For that reason, it also seems very useful to draw comparative examples from the *Durar al-kāmina* and the *Dhayl al-durar*, two of Ibn Ḥajar's biographical dictionaries written before Sultan al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq's rule. The *Durar al-Kāmina* focused on 8th/14th-century characters and was completed in 837/1427, while the *Dhayl al-durar al-kāmina* was completed in 832/1429 and covered the years 801–32/1398–1429.¹⁴ The contents of the *Inbā'* thus overlap with each of these works for almost three decades, which allows us to study the attentive rethinking and rewriting of the same events and characters' lives by the same author within an evolving historical context from the early 830s/1430s to the late 840s/1440s. Here, I will argue that the precise recontextualization of each of these works is indispensable to understanding Ibn Ḥajar's historiographical

12 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā'* iii, 72; Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo*, 253.

13 See Hirshler, *Medieval* 1–16.

14 'Izz al-Dīn, *Ibn Ḥajar* 273, 282.

accounts and that Ibn Ḥajar's historical stance, on any subject, should only be understood as a temporary and contextually embedded position. For, as remarked recently by Muḥammad Gharaibeh about the *Lisān al-mizān* and the *Durar al-kāmina*, Ibn Ḥajar was creating with the *Inbā'* new historical narratives, rather than merely reorganizing them.¹⁵ Although, as biographical dictionaries, the *Dhayl al-durar* and the *Durar* certainly did not entirely serve the same ideological and historiographical purposes, they shared a lot of biographical data. The careful modification in the *Inbā'* of many previous accounts, therefore, reflects new discursive strategies serving new purposes.

All in all, it seems that the depiction of Sufi characters in the *Inbā'* reflects three main layers of discursive construction regarding Sufis and their place in history, each of which will be discussed in more detail below. First, their presentation gives an account of Ibn Ḥajar's personal stance on various matters linked to Sufism. Second, Ibn Ḥajar represented Sufi characters in the more general changing political context of the 830s–40s/1430s–40s, taking gradual notice of the new environment in which the ruling elites were producing and reproducing themselves,¹⁶ not because Sufism as a whole was withdrawing from the political sphere but because new groups emerged from the constant and changing struggles of power, influence, and ideology in which Sufis were also taking part. Finally, Ibn Ḥajar was shaping the moral, political, and social boundaries in which Sufi characters were deemed to have a positive role in the Cairo Sultanate. In other words, social order, produced through Ibn Ḥajar's discursive agency, seems to have been the recurrent and main pattern of the *Inbā' al-Ghumr*, in which the dynamics surrounding the *dawla*—the specific configuration of the sultanate's power elites and practices—and its main related protagonists played a central role.¹⁷ Sufi characters obviously had their part in this social and narrative order, like all actors in his chronicle. Ibn Ḥajar engaged in delimiting this role and fixing boundaries in the framework of the social, cultural, and political environment of the 9th/14th century Cairo Sultanate.

As will be demonstrated below, the place of Sufis and Sufi institutions were integrated in narrative strategies that were part of the broader historiographical construction Ibn Ḥajar was erecting. A better understanding of that particular place allows, therefore, one to better grasp that historiographical architecture.

15 Gharaibeh, *Narrative*, 72.

16 Van Steenberghe, *Mamlukisation* 35–7.

17 Van Steenberghe, *Mamlukisation* 20–1; *Appearance* 74.

2 Ibn Ḥajar's Narrative Display of Sufism

As far as Ibn Ḥajar's historiographical works are concerned, their Sufi environment has never attracted much interest among scholars and academics. This makes perfect sense, since Ibn Ḥajar trained as a Shāfi'ī scholar and a *muḥaddith* and was renowned for his work on *ḥadīth* science. At no moment in time was he ever considered a Sufi shaykh, nor did he show a strong or specific interest for Sufi-related cultural production in his many writings.

Thus, Sufism seems to have been marginal in Ibn Ḥajar's career, and this marginality is reflected in the *Inbā' al-ghumr*, a political chronicle mainly interested in the dynamics of power in the Cairo Sultanate and the competitive sociopolitical environment in which the author grew up and struggled. Yet, like most scholars of his time, Ibn Ḥajar was certainly aware of Sufi practices and teachings. It even looks very likely that he was much more informed about it than most of his contemporary scholars, who engaged primarily in traditionalist knowledge. Even without taking into consideration later claims that he had received a Sufi *khirqā*,¹⁸ he had still trained as a young scholar with prestigious Sufi masters of his time and spent more than a year in Zabīd. At this time, Ibn 'Arabī's widespread and contested doctrines of monistic Sufism (*al-ittihād*) were triumphant in the Tihāmi metropolis.¹⁹ For more than 30 years, he was also at the head of the Khānqāh al-Baybarsiyya al-Jashnakīriyya in Cairo, one of the largest Sufi institutions of the Cairo Sultanate, which provided him with important means to build his clientele and career, including from among the Cairo Sufi community.

But, whatever the personal involvement of Ibn Ḥajar in his Sufi environment was, and despite the comparatively peripheral feature of Sufism in the *Inbā'*, he did dedicate a number of his chronicle's *wafayāt* to Sufi characters. As such, this work does participate in informing and shaping a discursive perception of Sufi communities during the first half of the 9th/15th century. It deserves all the more attention as Ibn Ḥajar's chronicle is taken as one of the historiographical frames of reference in the field of 9th/15th-medieval Islamic history.

To underline the evolution of specific narratives concerning Sufism in changing contexts and to emphasize the carefully built discourses embedded in the personal, political, cultural, and social life of the 9th/15th century as represented in Ibn Ḥajar's historical writings, we have mainly used prosopographical data, tracing all characters referred to as Sufis, either explicitly or impli-

18 Geoffroy, *Soufisme* 364.

19 Knysh, *Ibn Arabī* 227; Mochtari de Pierrepont, *Espaces* i, 208, 214.

citly (shaykhs of *zāwiya*, people having followed the *ṭarīqa* of Sufi masters, those linked to a *tāʾifa*, etc.). These references are widespread in the *Inbāʾ al-ghumr*, as they are in most historical chronicles of the time. They illustrate the implementation of a historiographical frame that was consciously chosen by the author. This type of data survey obviously has its limits, since it does not take into account all characters that were engaged in Sufi practices nor can it entirely appreciate the various vocabularies implicitly referring to Sufism. Yet, these references, considered within the whole historiographical framework of the *Inbāʾ*, underline how some specific narrative choices were made by Ibn Ḥajar concerning various topics and figures. The regular absence of these explicit references also stresses narrative gaps, suggesting that, in many cases, the author consciously chose not to refer to the Sufi affiliation of some ‘*ulamāʾ*’, thus shaping them into a distinct historical memory.

By using a precise wording for qualifying individuals, Ibn Ḥajar allows the reader to connect specific individuals to the Sufi path; that is, individuals who “claimed, contested, embraced ... the traditions associated with *taṣawwuf* (Sufism)” and were identified as doing so.²⁰ This precision should be relevant to us since it was relevant for the author. Thus, on the one side, Muḥammad al-Kāzrūnī, nicknamed al-Ṣūfī (d. 776/1375),²¹ or Muḥammad al-Dimashqī (d. 809/1407), described as a “Sufi of the *khānqāh* Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ,”²² to give but two examples, are presented in a way that shed light on their affiliation with Sufism. Even though the author often did not expand on the nature of their affiliation and degree of involvement, both in a personal mystical path and a shared collective experience, the latter was a cornerstone in the historiographical display of Sufism, as already emphasized by Nathan Hofer.²³ Such presentations seem equivocal and intersect with various meanings of an individual’s commitment to the Sufi path. It is not particularly original, and we find the same kind of designations in many other sources throughout the period. But it is of interest to consider this as part of Ibn Ḥajar’s own historiographical choices because it informs us of his narrative construction and influences.

Differences in status, standing, and involvement in *taṣawwuf* were actually expressed through the formal construction of each *tarjama* in the *wafāyāt*, and they meant something specific to their audiences of readers. The formal structure of a *tarjama* often gives by itself a hierarchy of information concerning the involvement of the subject in *taṣawwuf* and hints at how to understand

20 N. Hofer, *Popularisation* 4.

21 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʾ* i, 49.

22 Ibid. ii, 335.

23 N. Hofer, *Popularisation* 5.

the role and moral pretension of each *tarjama* in the broader text's intertextuality. It indeed leaves little doubt that Ibrāhīm al-Mulaqqin (d. 799/1397), a very popular Sufi master and famous preacher (*wā'iz*) of Damascus,²⁴ may not have been seen as connected to *taṣawwuf* in the same way as Muḥammad al-ʿAjāmī (d. 815/1412), a former soldier who took the wool (*al-šūf*).²⁵ The retirement as a Sufi of Muḥammad al-ʿAjāmī was mentioned at the end of his notice and preceded his death's mention, while the status of Ibrāhīm al-Mulaqqin as Sufi was stated in the introductory part of his notice. The same could be said for most great Sufi masters mentioned in the *Inbā'*: The skilful Sufi elites versed in the teaching and practices of *taṣawwuf*, with a number of followers and their own private *majlis*, are often identified in the *tarjama*'s introduction, with the main body of their notice dedicated to their activities as Sufis.

The questions that we now wish to turn to are the following: What was the role of those explicitly identified as Sufis in the larger narrative and metatextuality that Ibn Ḥajar was slowly carving out? What did his choices to identify them as Sufis imply for the discursive efficiency and goals of the *Inbā'*, mostly concerned with shaping the social and political narrative of the Cairo Sultanate? Not only will I argue that these choices underline the very careful selection of wording and narratives by which Ibn Ḥajar constructed the *Inbā'*, they also identify the moral and social boundaries that he set in his discursive constructions and that give life to a Sufi environment that was only crafted as such in the *Inbā'* itself.

3 The Sufi Environment in the *Inbā'* *al-Ghumr*

Characters explicitly designed as or strongly linked to Sufism in the *Inbā'* form a small group: 131 figures are either said to be Sufis, to be learned in *taṣawwuf*, to follow a Sufi *ṭarīqa*, to be a member of a *zāwiya*, or to wear a Sufi *nisba*.²⁶ The Shādhiliyya is by far the most represented *ṭarīqa* of the *Inbā'* (12).²⁷ Most of the other *ṭuruq* only have between one and five members who are introduced in the chronicle.²⁸ Only one reference is made to the great shaykh Aḥmad al-Badawī

24 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā'* i, 530.

25 Ibid. ii, 533.

26 These numbers come from a census of the terms *šūf sufi*, *taṣawwuf*, *zāwiya*, and *zawāyā*. We have also looked for the most common *ṭuruq* in the Cairo Sultanate and their *nisbas*: al-Shādhiliyya, al-Wafā'iyya, al-Aḥmadiyya, al-Qādiriyya, and al-Suhrawardiyya.

27 Not counting the members of the Wafā'iyya.

28 Five for the Mawṣiliyya, three for the Rifā'iyya, five for the Suhrawardiyya, especially via

(d. 675/1276)²⁹ and one mention of the Aḥmadiyya path,³⁰ which may emphasize the decrease of this *ṭarīqa*’s influence among the political elite from the last quarter of the 8th/14th century onward. It seems then that the *Inbā’* corroborates C. Petry’s claim that “references to Ṣūfis in general greatly outnumbered specific citation in either order.”³¹ These numbers in the *Inbā’* do not claim comprehensiveness, especially since some protagonists of the *Inbā’* are presented without being explicitly referred to as members of a Sufi *ṭarīqa*, like the famous Suhrawardī shaykh Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Ghamrī (d. 849/1446).³² Yet, they attest to Ibn Ḥajar’s specific representation and presentation of the main Sufi paths in his environment and the political dynamics of the sultanate. In this narrative representation, important Sufi masters of the Suhrawardiyya, like Aḥmad al-Zāhid (d. 819/1416) or Madyan (d. 861/1458), do not appear in the *Inbā’*, nor does Muḥammad b. Ḥasan al-Ḥanafī (847/1443) appear as a Sufi master.³³ Yet, he was a prominent Shādhilī shaykh and a personal acquaintance and comrade of the author.³⁴ His spiritual successor, Aḥmad al-Sarasī, had also studied with Ibn Ḥajar.³⁵ These characters, because they were not referred to as Sufis, were not included in our data.

Most of the Sufi characters in the dataset thus identified in Ibn Ḥajar’s *Inbā’ al-ghumr* come from the Syro-Egyptian territory, mainly Damascus, Jerusalem, and Cairo, although other regions are also mentioned. Yemeni Sufis (seven) also occupy some substantial narrative space, which may be due to Ibn Ḥajar’s past *riḥlas* in the Rasūlid Sultanate. Mecca, the Ḥijāz, and the Upper-Egyptian Ṣa‘īd region seem in this regard very distant. This actually appears to be a general feature of the *Inbā’*’s inclusion of scholars and does not specifically concern Sufi characters. Sufis in the chronicle do not only represent the Sufi elites in terms of social position and power, although the Sufi elites are well introduced, with a number of *zāwiya* and *ribāt shaykhs* (28), holders of a *mashyakha* in a *khānqāh* (5), and shaykhs of a *ṭarīqa* (4). Four of them are engaged on the Sufi path after retiring from the court or the army. Most are ‘*ulamā’* and represent

the shaykh Yūsuf al-Kūrānī al-‘Ajāmī (d. 768/1368), two for the Qādiriyya, one for the Ṣamādiyya (Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* iii, 287), stemming from the Qādiriyya. No characters belonging to the Aḥmadiyya are mentioned, although its *fuqarā’* are linked to an amir (ibid. ii, 35). We have not included the members of the Ḥurūfiyya (ibid. iv, 100).

29 Ibid. iii, 103. On this figure, see Mayeur-Jaouen, *Sayyid*.

30 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* ii, 35.

31 Ibid. iv, 243.

32 Petry, *Civilian* 270.

33 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* iii, 268. On this Sufi master, see Sha‘rānī, *Ṭabaqāt* ii, 135–62.

34 Geoffroy, *Soufisme* 23.

35 Sakhāwī, *Jawāhir* iii, 1176.

the common type of *al-‘ālim al-ṣūfī* distinguished by É. Geoffroy:³⁶ “scholars with a strong formation in exoteric religious sciences, either one who came on the mystical path during his youth,” while learning *sharī‘a*, or one who later “converted” when of “mature years, after becoming a religious notable holding various *manṣab*-s.”³⁷ As established scholars, these characters often had extensive relationships with the *ahl al-dawla*, but only some of them were part of the sultanate’s institutions of administration and justice (with four *quḍāt*). Some, then, engaged in a scholarly and administrative career in which Sufism appeared as one religious skill and practice among others. Yet, they were still a minority, which underlines that Ibn Ḥajar was not particularly concerned to emphasize the involvement of Sufis in the sultanate’s apparatus of power.

A little more than a quarter of these figures (34) were linked at some moment in their life to a *zāwiya*. The term *zāwiya* appears 48 times in the chronicle, and these institutions are mostly located outside Cairo. If we add to that mentions of *khānqāhs* (98),³⁸ Sufi institutions seem to have been a true concern for the author, although most frequencies concerning *khānqāhs* are linked to holders of the *mashyakhas*, with only some of them identified in the text with a personal practice of *taṣawwuf*. While it would be quite difficult to define any systematic characteristic of Sufis in the *Inbā’ al-ghumr*, being a member of a *zāwiya*, having built a *zāwiya*, or having established oneself as a shaykh of a *zāwiya* is one of the inevitably features mentioned in Ibn Hajar’s work regarding Sufi characters.

Some distinct Sufi groups seem to appear in the *Inbā’*, although the number of Sufi characters is far too low, by itself, to be representative of any specific network beyond the small primary circle of a shaykh and his main disciples. Yet, because of the generally small degree of information about Sufi characters in the *Inbā’*, the presence of some contemporary masters strikes the eye. This is the case of Yūsuf al-‘Ajamī (d. 768/1367)³⁹ and Abū Bakr al-Mawṣilī (d. 797/1394), two *ṭarīqa shaykhs* of the 8th/14th century whose influence was still felt in the first half of the 9th/15th century. They are linked to 15 members of the Sufi community, and 30 textual references are somehow related to them, framing them among the main protagonists of the Sufi environment introduced in the *Inbā’*.

36 Geoffroy, *Soufisme* 126–34.

37 Ibid. 126.

38 The number of mentions was collected using Lexico 3, a software for lexicometric analysis, looking for the most common forms of reference in the *Inbā’*: *al-zāwiya*, *bi-zāwiya*, *zāwiya*, and *zawāyā*. The same pattern was applied for the *khānqāhs*.

39 See Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* iv, 286 (n. 5247); Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iv, 310.

These general and broad features underline that some part of the narrative framework of the *Inbā’*, regarding its Sufi environment, was shaped differently from Ibn Ḥajar’s previous works. This follows from the fact that Sufi characters presented in the *Inbā’* are not necessarily the same ones that feature in the previous historiographical works of Ibn Ḥajar. Some Sufi figures mentioned in the *Durar al-kāmina* and the *Dhayl* are thus not introduced in the *Inbā’*. This is, for example, the case of Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Qalānīsī (d. 773/1372) and Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Iskandar al-Ḥusaynī (d. 777/1375).⁴⁰ In the same way, some Sufi characters of the *Inbā’*, like ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Marāghī, Muḥammad al-Kurdī (d. 788/1386), or Khalīl al-Janadī (d. 813/1410), are not found either in the *Durar* or the *Dhayl al-durar*.⁴¹

In this regard, the *Inbā’* cannot be considered as simply adding some new information after having extracted previous entries from Ibn Ḥajar’s own works. The author relieved his chronicle of characters he deemed now useless or irrelevant in the more general framework of the *Inbā’*. This implies different discursive goals for these works. It also implies the shaping of new narratives better fitting the chronicle’s purpose. At an interpretive level, it means it is not possible to correlate the narrative of a character in Ibn Ḥajar’s historiographical works without referring to the precise context of the writing of such a reference. One must then adopt a diachronic perspective corresponding to different moments of Ibn Ḥajar’s life, social and political environment, and authorial personality, in which particular historiographies were shaped.

The *Inbā’* was also particularly interested in the relations between prominent figures of the *dawla* and members of the Cairo Sultanate’s different communities. The Sufis are no exception, and many Sufis presented in the chronicle were indeed linked to the ruling elites. It underlines that, in some ways, Ibn Ḥajar was mostly concerned with the elites of the scholarly environment. Yet, the interaction between Sufis and the *dawla*, by itself, was not a preoccupation of the author. As mentioned, only a minority of the Sufis presented in the chronicle were indeed holders of sultanic offices. Moreover, Ibn Ḥajar does not seem particularly preoccupied with Sufis of *khānqāhs*, the most clearly endowed religious institutions linked to the sultanic office.⁴² While addressing the *khānqāhs*, it is almost only the holders of *mashyakhas* in which Ibn Ḥajar is interested, many of whom did not have a Sufi background. It is then mainly in relation to the careers and success of Sufis, the competitive environment in

40 Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 118 (n. 284); v, 245 (n. 1337).

41 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* i, 325; ii, 129, 470.

42 See on this question Hofer, *Popularisation* 35–80.

which they were evolving, and their place and role in the politics of the sultanate that Ibn Ḥajar mentioned the links between the Sufi religious elites and the political ones. Such mentions were social and symbolic markers attached to scholars. They were part of delimiting and contextualizing a normative expression of scholarly behaviors and patterns inside the framework and boundaries of the society Ibn Ḥajar was shaping. This implied, from the author, a change in narratives in relation to new contexts.

4 Narrative Changes and Discursive Transformations: Crafting New Meanings

Narrative changes can be particularly emphasized comparing some of Ibn Ḥajar's notices in various works. Recently, M. Gharaibeh presented a case study that also reflected this idea, addressing specific patterns Ibn Ḥajar used to shape different images of the *muḥaddith* Mughulṭāy and considering various narrative strategies developed for the same character both in the *Durar al-kāmina* and the *Lisān al-Mizān*.⁴³ Although M. Gharaibeh did not elaborate on the two very different temporal contexts—almost 30 years separate these two works, corresponding to two very different moments in Ibn Ḥajar's career and the sociopolitical environment of the Cairo Sultanate—he clearly underlined the author's specific discursive strategies that shaped Mughulṭāy's figure in a way that fit Ibn Ḥajar's narrative and scholarly goals.⁴⁴ Indeed, changes in the *Inbā'* narratives, compared to previous works of Ibn Ḥajar, are a striking feature of this work, too. All this highlights the importance of contextualization, in which the author set himself to rewriting some previous narratives.⁴⁵ A good illustration can be found in how Ibn Ḥajar refers to Ibn 'Arabī's Sufi teachings, since it was a point of intellectual and social contention in Cairo in his times.

4.1 *Aḥmad b. al-Raddād and Ibn 'Arabī: Two Adjusted Narratives*

Ibn Ḥajar's position vis-à-vis Ibn 'Arabī has already been approached in Alexander Knysh's brilliant work *Ibn 'Arabī in the later Islamic tradition*.⁴⁶ He pointed out that Ibn Ḥajar conserved through his works an indecisive standing regarding the shaykh himself, "avoiding a clear-cut judgement of heresy or unbelief"

43 Gharaibeh, Narrative 59–65.

44 Ibid. 72.

45 An aspect that does not only concern Sufi figures, but that we will only illustrate here with Sufi characters due to the specific goals of this paper.

46 Knysh, *Ibn 'Arabī* 128–30.

but being “much more mistrustful of Ibn ‘Arabī’s followers.”⁴⁷ While conserving an “elusive”⁴⁸ position regarding the *shaykh al-akbar*, a few references in the *Inbā’* point to an apparent disagreement with his followers’ teachings and practices, criticisms he had already stated softly long before in the *Lisān al-Mizān*.⁴⁹ In the *Inbā’*, Ibn Ḥajar makes a stronger claim, a position particularly noticeable in the *tarjama* of Aḥmad b. al-Raddād (d. 821/1419).

Aḥmad b. al-Raddād al-Qurashī (d. 821/1419) was one of the prominent Sufi shaykhs of Rasūlid Yemen at the beginning of the 9th/15th century, and his biographical notice in the *Inbā’* is all the more relevant since he was a scholar the author had personally met during his Yemeni *riḥla*.⁵⁰ But he was not only an important scholar close to the Rasūlid sultans al-Ashraf Ismā‘īl (r. 778–803/1377–1401) and al-Nāṣir Aḥmad (778–803/1377–1424), he was also a friend and associate of the *qāḍī l-quḍāt* of Yemen, Majd al-Dīn al-Fīrūzābādī, Ibn Ḥajar’s own master of linguistics and grammar, in whose teachings Ibn Ḥajar always took great pride.⁵¹ If we are to believe Ibn Ḥajar, al-Fīrūzābādī’s advice led the Rasūlid sultan al-Nāṣir Aḥmad to name Ibn al-Raddād *qāḍī l-quḍāt* after the death of the latter.⁵² Al-Nāṣir Aḥmad also married a woman from Ibn al-Raddād’s house,⁵³ consequently reinforcing his alliance with the powerful Tihāmi tribe of the Qurashiyyūn, among whom Ibn al-Raddād ranked highly.⁵⁴ Thus, although Ibn al-Raddād was mainly presented by Ibn Ḥajar through the prism of Sufism, Ibn ‘Arabī’s doctrines, and his companionship with al-Nāṣir, he was, in fact, one of the most powerful Yemeni figures at the beginning of the 9th/15th century. In the *Inbā’*, Ibn Ḥajar’s obituary of this character states:

Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr b. Muḥammad b. al-Raddād, al-Makkī, al-Zabīdī *al-ṣūfī*, the *qāḍī* Shihāb al-Dīn al-Shāfi‘ī, was born in 740 [1340], and entered Yemen, where he joined the company of the sultan al-Ashraf b. al-Afḍal and he remained with him. He became a boon companion [of the sultan]

47 Ibid. 128–9.

48 Ibid. 128.

49 Ibn Ḥajar, *Lisān* vii, 392, 396 (n. 7229). Also quoted in Knysh, *Ibn ‘Arabi* 129.

50 Sakhāwī, *Jawāhir* iii, 1074.

51 Ibn Ḥajar, *Raf’* 63; *Dhayl* 176–7 (n. 437).

52 Ibid. *Inbā’* iii, 178. Also quoted in Knysh, *Ibn ‘Arabi* 249. This claim by Ibn Ḥajar is highly dubious: No Yemeni sources seem to mention it, and Ibn al-Raddād’s influence at the court had been very strong long before al-Fīrūzābādī’s death. Ibn Ḥajar may have made this claim to amplify both the influence of his master al-Fīrūzābādī and Ibn al-Raddād’s later supposed theological errors.

53 Burayhī, *Ṭabaqāt* 299.

54 Mochtari de Pierrepont, *Espaces* i, 214, 216.

before getting very close to him. He had many merits as a poet and a clever prose writer, although he had too much fondness for the temporal love and tendencies toward philosophical Sufism ... and he composed much poetry and prose in which he propagated [the] manifest delusion [of Ibn 'Arabī's teachings] until he completely corrupted the faith of the inhabitants of Zabīd, except those God deemed not to.⁵⁵

The position of Ibn Ḥajar regarding Ibn 'Arabī's followers seems to be pretty clear: Ibn al-Raddād overstepped the boundaries of decency and orthodoxy. References to "corruption" (*fasād*) and those spared by the Divine might also be a direct hint at the chaos that followed in Zabīd in the years following Ibn al-Raddād's death and, particularly, that of his companion and son-in-law, the Rasūlid sultan al-Malik al-Nāṣir Aḥmad (r. 803–27/1401–24). Yet, almost 20 years before the *Inbā'* was completed, Ibn al-Raddād's biographical notice in the *Dhayl al-durar al-kāmina* presented this character in quite a different light:

Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr b. Muḥammad b. al-Raddād, al-Makkī, Shihāb al-Dīn, Abū l-'Abbās *al-ṣūfī*. He entered Zabīd and he engaged in *taṣawwuf*. He became a companion of Ismā'īl al-Jabartī,⁵⁶ propagator of Ibn 'Arabī's [teachings], and he specialized in it. He versified them in long poems. He became a boon companion to [the sultan] al-Malik al-Ashraf and then [al-Malik] al-Nāṣir [Aḥmad]. He was [a man of] merits, worshiping and intelligent. He received the [office of chief judge] at the end of his life. I heard of his compositions and good deeds. He died in Dhū al-Qa'da [of the year 821].⁵⁷

This previous account of Ibn al-Raddād is clearly more positive. Ibn al-Raddād was presented stripped of misgivings. His penchant toward Ibn 'Arabī's thesis was not linked to some kind of corruption that hit Zabīd's inhabitants. Of course, in 832/1428–9, when Ibn Ḥajar wrote the *Dhayl al-durar*, the plague, war, and looting had not yet struck the Tihāmi metropolis⁵⁸ nor did the Rasūlid dynasty stand on the verge of collapsing. Yet, Ibn Ḥajar did not elaborate on the *Inbā'*'s account focusing on the Yemeni turmoil of the 840s/1440s, but on Ibn

55 The last sentence is quoted in Knysh, *Ibn 'Arabi* 248, 378. See Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā'* iii, 178.

56 The *shaykh al-shuyūkh* of Zabīd's Sufis and a close companion of the Rasūlid sultan al-Ashraf Ismā'īl.

57 Ibn Ḥajar, *Dhayl* 200 (n. 500).

58 Ibn al-Dayba', *Qurrat* 403; *Bughyat* 112; Vallet, *L'Arabie* 679–80; Mochtari de Pierrepont, *Espaces* i, 66.

‘Arabī’s followers’ dangerous stance that supposedly led the Zabīdī community to its doom. This narrative choice underlines that he addressed this notice for the Cairo Sultanate’s audience. Indeed, since the 840s/1440s, the struggle of Ibn ‘Arabī’s doctrine had winded down in Yemen, following the political decline of Ibn ‘Arabī’s followers.⁵⁹ Yemeni accounts of Ibn al-Raddād also do not only focus on this character’s stance concerning Ibn ‘Arabī, being equally interested in the social and political environment of the master.⁶⁰ It seems Ibn Ḥajar’s own social and political environment had changed between the composition of the *Dhayl* and the *Inbā’*, or his personal opinion had evolved. In any event, Ibn Ḥajar’s statement in the *Inbā’* could not be used to justify by itself Ibn Ḥajar’s general position about Ibn ‘Arabī’s followers or Ibn al-Raddād. Therefore, it seems that Ibn Ḥajar’s position and narration of this particular topic depends on the work referring to it and the context in which it would have been shaped. Thus, Ibn al-Raddād’s notice can only be inscribed in the specific framework in which the *Inbā’* or the *Dhayl* were written, reflecting two different discursive constructions at two moments of Ibn Ḥajar’s historiographical strategies.

Because, taken on its own, Ibn al-Raddād’s notice in the *Inbā’* brings only scant information on the character himself, this *tarjama* may also be more interesting, considering the broader context of the work in regard to conflicts linked to Ibn ‘Arabī’s doctrine. This is why it may also be included in a group of narratives that addressed this question and framed Ibn Ḥajar’s position regarding Ibn ‘Arabī’s followers in the *Inbā’*, as illustrated in *tarājim* like those of Ibn al-Raddād’s master, Ismā‘īl al-Jabartī (d. 806/1404),⁶¹ Aḥmad al-Shabakī (830/1427),⁶² or strong antimonistic characters like the *qāḍī* of Zabīd Aḥmad al-Nāshirī (d. 815/1412).⁶³ Ibn Ḥajar stated in the *Inbā’* his admiration for al-Nāshirī, thus implicitly implying his agreement with Aḥmad al-Nāshirī’s vigorous condemnation of the *fasād* that ensued the excessive beliefs in Ibn ‘Arabī’s doctrine.⁶⁴ He also claimed having studied with this scholar, a rather dubious assertion underlining, again, the careful shaping of a new narrative in the *Inbā’*, even about the author himself. In fact, while Ibn Ḥajar says having

59 Knysh, *Ibn ‘Arabī* 263–9.

60 On Ibn al-Raddād’s account in the 9th/15th-century Yemeni historiographical corpus, see Ahdal, *Tuhfat* ii, 336–7; Burayhī, *Ṭabaqāt* 299–302; Sharjī, *Ṭabaqāt* 88–91.

61 See his notice in Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* ii, 272–3; on Ismā‘īl al-Jabartī’s position on Ibn ‘Arabī, see Knysh, *Ibn ‘Arabī* 241–52; on the “Jabartī circle” in Yemen, see Mochtari de Pierrepont, *Espaces* i, 207–18.

62 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* iv, 25.

63 Ibid. ii, 525.

64 Ibid. 525. See also Knysh, *Ibn ‘Arabī* 254–5.

“gathered” with him (*ijtima‘tu bi-hi*) in the *Inbā’*, implying a close group of students following the course of the teacher, in the *Dhayl* many years before he only claimed to have “seen” him (*ra‘aytu-hu*),⁶⁵ referring to a far more distant relationship. He also did not mention him among his Yemeni masters in his own *mashyakha*, included in the *Raf‘ al-‘iṣr*.⁶⁶ Yet, it may have made sense for the author to bring himself closer to Aḥmad al-Nāshirī in the *Inbā’*, since the zeal, the consistency, and the ordeals this scholar went through—being banned from Zabīd and losing his position as *qāḍī* due to his opposition to Ibn ‘Arabī’s doctrines⁶⁷—made him a paradigmatic illustration of the struggle against Ibn ‘Arabī’s followers in the first half of the 9th/15th century.

Thus, during al-Zāhir Jaqmaq’s rule, when pietism and more exoteric forms of religious piety seem to have gained momentum among the ruling elites, Ibn Ḥajar, by association, could appear in a positive light for those who rose up against the monistic doctrine. Yet, the fact that one of his greatest masters, al-Firūzābādī, had been a defendant of Ibn ‘Arabī,⁶⁸ a fact never explicitly pointed out by Ibn Ḥajar in the *Inbā’*,⁶⁹ was certainly not lost to many ‘ulamā’ close to the doctrines of the unity of being, since al-Firūzābādī’s sympathy for Ibn ‘Arabī’s doctrines was well known at this time.⁷⁰

The manner in which Ibn Ḥajar chose to change some previous narratives written in past historiographical works can arguably be seen as a marker of the gradual need Ibn Ḥajar may have felt to engage or reengage in the framework of a new historiographical work designed to shape and document the political history and changes of his time. In the *Inbā’*, Ibn al-Raddād’s example seems to fit in these new narratives, and it is likely that the Sufi master’s notice may have partly served as a means to an end in regard to laying down Ibn Ḥajar’s position toward Ibn ‘Arabī’s followers. In doing so, Ibn Ḥajar was still maintaining a balance, even at a personal level, never directly engaging with the *shaykh al-akbar* himself. The prominence of Ibn al-Raddād’s influence in Yemen and his personal and well-known connections to the Yemeni sultans may also have been an appealing topic. After all, Ibn Ḥajar had met him, and personal testimonies

65 Ibn Ḥajar, *Dhayl al-durar* 158–9.

66 Ibn Ḥajar, *Raf‘ al-‘iṣr* 63.

67 His critiques of and confrontation with the defendants of Ibn ‘Arabī’s doctrines led to his demise as *qāḍī* of Zabīd and his exile from Yemen. Ahdal, *Tuḥfat* ii, 69–70.

68 Knysh, *Ibn ‘Arabī* 252–4; Strotman, *Majd al-Dīn al-Firūzābādī* 123, 143–55.

69 While, during Barsbāy’s reign, Ibn Ḥajar clearly refers to his master’s position in the *Dhayl al-durar*; 240 (n. 437).

70 Al-Ahdal, *Tuḥfat* ii, 336; Aziz, Religion and mysticism 205; Strotman, *Majd al-Dīn al-Firūzābādī* 146, 148–9.

played a relevant role to fit in the historiographical writing norms of his times.⁷¹ Moreover, such a figure allowed him to draw an implicit parallel between Ibn ‘Arabī’s followers’ abuses and the decline and long fall of the Rasūlid Sultanate, during which the *Inbā’* was written. A moral boundary, designed to prepare and train the reader to a higher form of understanding and elevation of the self (*murū’a*), was also put forth in this short notice, echoing the roles of the literary genres of *adab* and *ta’rikh*.⁷²

5 Ibn Ḥajar’s Narrative Ambivalence and Discursive Layers

Other examples of Ibn Ḥajar’s ambivalent position toward Ibn ‘Arabī’s doctrine can be emphasized with the biographic notice of Sirāj al-Dīn al-Hindī (d. 773/1372), *qāḍī* of the Ḥanafī *madhhab* in Cairo.⁷³ Ibn Ḥajar noted that al-Hindī composed a commentary of *al-Tā’iyya al-kubrā* (or *Naẓm al-sulūk*), a famous poem of the renowned Sufi ‘Umar b. al-Fāriḍ (d. 632/1235),⁷⁴ celebrating mystical union⁷⁵ and later closely associated with Ibn ‘Arabī’s monistic thought. Al-Hindī, in Ibn Ḥajar’s words, was “strongly associated with the monistic Sufis (*yata’aṣṣabu li-l-ṣūfiyya al-ittiḥādīyya*),” and his commentary was rejected (*‘azara li-kalāmi-hi*) by Ibn Abī Ḥajala (d. 776/1374),⁷⁶ a prominent scholar of the Ḥanafī school.⁷⁷ It is the only direct reference to Ibn al-Fāriḍ’s poem in the chronicle. This close association in the narrative sequence between the subject of the notice, al-Hindī, the poem, monistic Sufis, and Ibn Abī Ḥajala’s censorship,⁷⁸ concluding immediately with a mention of al-Hindī’s death, seems to orient Ibn Ḥajar’s own position, as with Ibn al-Raddād’s notice, toward a public opposition to Ibn ‘Arabī’s monistic theories. But ambiguity remains in the *Inbā’*, since Ibn Abī Ḥajala, the poem’s censor, was also presented in the chronicle as an addictive drunk (*mudmin al-khamr*),⁷⁹ thus casting doubt about his testimony and actions. Like with Ibn al-Raddād’s notice, this anecdotic event must also be put in perspective with Ibn Ḥajar’s personal life

71 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* 1–2.

72 Abbès, *L’adab*; Khalidi, *Arabic* 83.

73 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* i, 27.

74 On this character, see Homerin, *Arab*.

75 Boullata, Verbal 152–69.

76 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* i, 29.

77 Ibid. 80–2.

78 Ibn Abī Ḥajala’s position seems as a whole to have been much more qualified than in Ibn Ḥajar’s account. See Homerin, *Arab* 58.

79 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* i, 81.

as he, too, like al-Hindī before him, was said to have written a partial and laudatory commentary of Ibn al-Fāriḍ's *al-Tāʿyya*.⁸⁰ He himself claimed in the *Lisān* to have recited some of Ibn al-Fāriḍ's verses to Sirāj al-Dīn al-Bulqīnī, arguably to obtain his master's opinion on the poet, who strongly condemned it.⁸¹ This leaves no doubt about Ibn Ḥajar's familiarity with the text. Ibn Ḥajar's personal opinion seems to have softened on this matter over the course of his life, which may also have been linked to the growing popularity of the poet as a saintly figure in Cairo.

Al-Hindī and his censor were both judged negatively, and Ibn al-Raddād's figure was presented in different shapes in the *Dhayl al-durar* and the *Inbāʿ*, underlining a qualitative modification during al-Zāhir Jaqmaq's rule to adjust the author's position on a polemical subject. These narratives illustrate Ibn Ḥajar's contextual ambiguity, considered both through the *Inbāʿ*'s own intertextuality and the situation in which this work featured in Ibn Ḥajar's broader career. Thus, although the *Inbāʿ* seems to adopt an apparently stronger stance toward Ibn ʿArabī's doctrine and especially his late followers, ambivalence remains in Ibn Ḥajar's cautious position.

5.1 *Abū Bakr al-Mawṣilī: Shaping Boundaries and New Historiographical Narratives*

However, beyond expressions of the author's stance about Ibn ʿArabī's followers in the *Inbāʿ*, other Sufi characters were also used to build different narratives and outline other social, political, and cultural boundaries and determine limits to Sufis' political involvement.

On this matter, it seems that asceticism, charisma, and spiritual guidance were particularly honored by Ibn Ḥajar, although, again, he clearly set the boundaries in which the influence of charismatic masters had to be contained. One of the most striking illustrations of this discursive construction found in the *Inbāʿ* is the notice of Abū Bakr al-Mawṣilī, one of the longest *tarjamas* of a Sufi character in the chronicle. Abū Bakr b. ʿAbdallāh al-Mawṣilī (d. 797/1394), born in Mosul, was said to be a spiritual disciple of ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jilānī. He was also a Shāfiʿī scholar well trained in *ḥadīth* studies and a passionate defender of the *ahl al-sunna*,⁸² praised by many ʿulamāʾ who came to his *majlis*. He settled in al-Quds during the reign of al-Zāhir Barqūq (784–801/1382–99) and became a prominent Sufi shaykh of the city, at the head of the *ṭarīqa*

80 Geoffroy, *Soufisme* 23.

81 Ibn Ḥajar, *Lisān* iv, 317–9; Geoffroy, *Soufisme* 354, see note 188; Homerin, *Arab* 58–9.

82 Geoffroy, *Soufisme* 86, see note 102.

al-Mawṣiliyya (or al-Shaybaniyya), that comprised two *zāwiyyas*—one in Jerusalem and the other in Damascus.⁸³ The following is a part of Abū Bakr’s notice in the *Inbā’*:

Abū Bakr b. ‘Abdallāh al-Mawṣilī, al-Dimashqī, settled in Damascus, worked with *fiqh* and the science of *ḥadīth* and engaged in Sufi *kalām*. He died in al-Quds in Shawwāl [797/July 1395] at the age of 60 ... Moreover, he used to mix with Sufis. He dug deeply in the science of *ḥadīth* and drew out a lot [from it]. His fame spread and disciples came to him, his mention rose [steadily] and his echo resonated far. The greatest [characters] came to see him. He went on pilgrimage many times. The Sultan heard of him and praised him highly. He came to visit him in his house in al-Quds, and climbed up to him on the heights (*ṣa’ada ilay-hi ilā al-‘aliyya*). [The sultan] ordered money to be given to him, and wrote him intercessions [for him to be granted positions] (*shafā’āt al-ḥasana*), but he [always] refused.⁸⁴

Most of this information, as is often the case in the *Inbā’* when the territory of al-Shām is concerned, comes from Ibn Ḥijjī’s *Ta’rikh*,⁸⁵ even though Ibn Ḥajar’s notice presents this material in a different order and wording. It also did not include a small part on Abū Bakr al-Mawṣilī’s tomb, directly related to the *karāmāt* and the *baraka* attributed by Ibn Ḥijjī to the shaykh. Such a move seems to be a recurrent feature of the *Inbā’*, the *Dhayl*, and the *Durar*, and Ibn Ḥajar is generally very careful when it comes to accounts of pious visits and wondrous deeds, mostly using the formula “it is said on him that (*yuhkā ‘an-hu*)” or “it has been mentioned about him (*dhukira ‘an-hu*),” and rarely involving himself personally.

According to Ibn Ḥajar’s notice, Abū Bakr is a character very well considered. As a shaykh of a *ṭarīqa*, a very popular master, and a scholar trained in religious sciences, he seems to reconcile both the exoteric and esoteric nature of religious knowledge, the mastery of *fiqh*, and the spiritual accomplishment of Sufism. This figure seems to have been a rather important Sufi character in the *Inbā’*: five characters are mentioned as his disciples and companions, which is among the highest number of connections attached to a shaykh of a *ṭarīqa*. Ibn Ḥajar viewed him as a positive character or at the very least had a good opinion of this pious scholar. Ibn Ḥajar’s presentation of Abū Bakr al-Mawṣilī is also significant as to the involvement of Sufi masters in defending the *Sunna* since

83 Geoffroy, *Soufisme* 181.

84 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* i, 497–8.

85 Ibn Ḥijjī, *Ta’rikh* 131.

Abū Bakr was “a champion of the Sunna,”⁸⁶ who was said to have asked his disciples to stick a paper on their foreheads bearing the inscription “*Sufism and the good customs of the Prophet (al-taṣawwuf wa-l-khuluq al-ḥanīf al-nabawī)*.”⁸⁷ However, this notice simultaneously underlines four specific aspects developed by Ibn Ḥajar: his influence upon members of the *dawla*; his refusal to benefit from material wealth and political and social influence using his reputation with the sultan; his mastery of exoteric sciences; and his personal qualities. It thus seems to fit in the chronicle as an elaborate way to discuss the role of charismatic leaders such as Abū Bakr al-Mawṣilī, their involvement in the dynamics of power, their means of influence, their balanced commitment in the *‘ulūm al-dīn*, and their personal deeds and moral integrity, aspects of which were illustrated by Abū Bakr al-Mawṣilī’s presentation in the *Inbā’*.

Later on in the chronicle, Ibn Ḥajar also mentions Abū Bakr’s son Ibrāhīm (d. 814/1411): “Ibrāhīm b. Abī Bakr, al-Māḥūzī, al-Dimashqī. He learned a bit of *fiqh* and followed the Sufi path with a strong religion. He had a lot of wealth and was not accepting anything from anyone. He was advising his companions against accepting any goods from anyone. In that he was following in his father’s footsteps, the *shaykh* Abū Bakr al-Mawṣilī’s path (*ṭarīqa*). People had for him an excess of belief and no *amīr* denied his requests.”⁸⁸

Here, Ibrāhīm is presented in a more ambivalent manner than his father. Just as with Abū Bakr al-Mawṣilī, Ibn Ḥajar insists particularly on his refusal to earn material wealth thanks to his reputation and social standing. Yet, unlike his father, Ibrāhīm is said to have used his influence upon members of the *dawla*, while at the same time the notion of “excess” (*za‘īd*) is attached to the people’s consideration of him. The three main elements of Abū Bakr’s notice are thus presented in reverse: a poor mastery of exoteric religious science, a more negative religious and social influence, and the use of intercessions (*shafā‘āt*) from members of the *dawla*. This presentation emphasizes this character as a less brilliant man and scholar and underlines a generational decrease in the standing of the *ṭarīqa*, despite the moral quality recognized in Ibrāhīm. The previous mention of his father in the *Inbā’* must be taken as a focal point to introduce Ibrāhīm and compare him with his father. This comparison implies the slow decline of the family path and their *zāwīya*, embodied in the chronicle by Abū Bakr, Ibrāhīm, and the other Sufis linked to Abū Bakr al-Mawṣilī.⁸⁹ As such, the father and son, as Sufi masters, are used to present the positive outcome of

86 Geoffroy, *Soufisme* 181.

87 Ibid. 86; quoting ‘Alī al-Buṣrawī, *Ta’rīkh* 59.

88 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* ii, 495.

89 Ibid. 402, 432, 457, 526.

Sufism in society and the boundaries that Sufi *shuyūkh* should respect in regard to their involvement with the *dawla*. One would think Ibn Ḥajar, when it comes to Ibrāhīm, would have also been quoting Ibn Ḥijjī’s *Ta’rīkh*, thus simply echoing this previous work. But Ibrāhīm’s notice in the *Inbā’* was not taken from the very nice account Ibn Ḥijjī’s *Tarīkh* gives of Ibrāhīm, except for a very few elements.⁹⁰ This emphasizes the fact that whereas Ibn Ḥajar chose to include and in some way reproduce Abū Bakr’s notice, mainly from Ibn Ḥijjī, he also decided not to use it for Ibrāhīm, a choice implying a careful discursive strategy. In fact, these two characters seem to be mentioned in the *Inbā’* to echo each other, since Ibrāhīm’s notice only becomes meaningful for a reader after first having knowledge of his father’s notice.

Both notices also fulfill a specific representation linking the *ṭarīqa* al-Mawṣiliyya, the *dawla*, and paradigmatic examples of Sufi shaykhs’ involvement in the society and politics of the Cairo Sultanate during the end of the 8th/14th and the beginning of the 9th/15th centuries. This is what seems to appear from the comparison with Ibn Ḥajar’s previous works, stressing the selection Ibn Ḥajar made when considering the characters of his chronicle. Indeed, the discursive space accorded to Abū Bakr and his son is unmatched in his other works.

Thus, in the *Durar al-kāmina*, Abū Bakr al-Mawṣilī is only presented as follows: “Abū Bakr b. ‘Abdallāh al-Mawṣilī, settled in Damascus and died in al-Quds in 797, aged 60.”⁹¹

As for his son, he is not mentioned in either the *Durar al-kāmina* or the *Dhayl al-durar*, even though Ibn Ḥajar, when writing these two works, was already using Ibn Ḥijjī’s *Ta’rīkh*.⁹² Abū Bakr al-Mawṣilī’s notice in the *Durar* and Ibrāhīm’s absence from Ibn Ḥajar’s previous historiographical works show that, in the 830s/1430s, these characters were almost meaningless as to the historiographical representation the author was then shaping. Yet, Abū Bakr al-Mawṣilī was quite famous in Damascus, and it is doubtful that Ibn Ḥajar had no information about him.⁹³ He had been dead for more than 40 years, but his name was still renowned in the 830s/1430s, and his *ṭarīqa* was still relevant in the social environment of Damascus and al-Quds.⁹⁴ The fact that the *Inbā’*

90 The 19 times he accomplished the *hajj* (20 times in Ibn Ḥajar’s *Inbā’*). See Ibn Ḥijjī, *Ta’rīkh* 970.

91 Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 261 (n. 1187).

92 Ibn Ḥajar does quote Ibn Ḥijjī’s *Ta’rīkh* in the *Durar*, whose writing may have started in 830, two years before the *Dhayl*. ‘Izz al-Dīn, *Ibn Ḥajar* 273.

93 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ta’rīkh* 559–60.

94 Sakhāwī, *al-Daw’* i, 36; *Dhayl* 473.

awarded this new place to Abū Bakr al-Mawṣilī and his son illustrates a new representation Ibn Ḥajar wanted to introduce in his chronicle.

Abū Bakr al-Mawṣilī's example illustrates how using one historiographical work of Ibn Ḥajar to document a Sufi character mentioned in the *Dhayl al-durar*, the *Durar*, or the *Inbā'* would be meaningless without recontextualizing these works, for they would mainly refer to a precise and contextualized moment of Ibn Ḥajar's mindset and shaping of history. This representation may also be why he chose to remain silent regarding the very strong influence Abū Bakr was said to have had on Sultan al-Ẓāhir Barqūq,⁹⁵ such relationships not being in service of the paradigmatic example he was emphasizing with Abū Bakr's representation and behavior to produce a meaning going beyond the character's narrative.

6 Ibn Ḥajar's Chronicle and the Production of a Contextualized Social Order

Following these examples, it appears that it is not the doctrines and ideas that the author focused on when presenting his characters in the *Inbā'*, it is rather a set of public behaviors that he described and to which he attributed personal, legal, and moral opinions. As such, it seems it is the irruption in the public space of practices, ideas, and behaviors deemed unorthodox or morally reprehensible and the subsequent disruption of the public order that seem to be Ibn Ḥajar's main concern in displaying these narratives, echoing his personal position as *faqīh* and chief *qāḍī*. Since the social context in which the author was living and his personal situation changed, he also integrated new narratives into his previous historiographical works, and he transformed previously written ones. But beyond that, the relation between the author and the normative cultural and social framework he was shaping allows us to question the implicit meaning produced by Ibn Ḥajar concerning references to Sufi characters. Indeed, his concern for public order may be why he redefined his position vis-à-vis the Yemeni Sufi shaykh Ibn al-Raddād and his followers and why he may have negatively exposed Ibn 'Arabī's followers for their excesses but not the *shaykh al-akbar* himself. Other cases hint to similar dynamics. Following the growing success of the Suhrawardī Sufi master Muḥammad al-Ghamrī (d. 849/1446)⁹⁶ and his construction of a *jāmi'* in the market of Amīr Juyūsh in Cairo, Ibn Ḥajar

95 Geoffroy, *Soufisme* 86, see note 102.

96 On this character, see Garcin, *Histoire* 290–1.

wrote to him to move elsewhere; the ‘*ulamā*’ had reproached al-Ghamrī for this construction and the preaching that ensued in the market (*fa-‘āba ‘alay-hi ahl al-‘ilm*).⁹⁷ Yet, Ibn Ḥajar made no personal statement regarding al-Ghamrī’s beliefs. He only expressed concern for the question of the mosque in the *sūq*, namely, raising an issue related to the occupation and use of urban spaces. The same pattern of subtle distinction emerges in the case of the Ḥurūfiyya. The *ṭarīqa* al-Ḥurūfiyya⁹⁸ was an esoteric order deemed by some contemporaries as going mostly against the usual accepted religious practices and beliefs of the time.⁹⁹ As already pointed out by O. Mir-Kasimov, Ibn Ḥajar explained to his audience the strange ideas of their original founder, the Persian Faḍl Allāh b. Abī Muḥammad al-Astarabādī al-Tabrīzī (d. 796/1394).¹⁰⁰ Yet, he waited to really engage in the chronicle with the followers of the Ḥurūfiyya only when they appeared as disturbing the public order in the Cairo Sultanate in 820/1417. There, he reminded his audience of the burning of the Ḥurūfiyya’s writings, and at this point, he condemned the Ḥurūfī followers harshly.¹⁰¹

The concern for the disruption of the social order may also help to explain the chronicle’s specific discursive production linked to the Sufi *ṭarīqas* and the way they were introduced. As we have mentioned above, *ṭarīqas* were rarely referred to in the *Inbā’*. Yet, some mentions concerning them still touch upon the same concern of maintaining social, religious, and cultural normative stability. The way Ibn Ḥajar mentioned the Wafā’iyya order, an offshoot of the Shādhiliyya, is one of these cases.¹⁰² When he presented the leader of the Wafā’iyya, the Sufi shaykh ‘Alī b. Muḥammad Wafā’, he introduced him in a rather positive light, mentioning that he had met with him. But he was famously shocked by the excessive manner in which the *murīdīn* of the shaykh testified of their respect and belief in their master: the disciples prostrated (*al-sujūd*) themselves in front of him.¹⁰³ The author felt constrained to leave the room in front of such blameworthy behavior. He felt that this public display of excessive reverence was beyond acceptable boundaries.

Following from this careful attention in the *Inbā’* to public and normative behaviors, one may better understand why most members of the Shādhiliyya

97 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* iv, 243.

98 Also called al-Nasīmiyya or al-Nu‘aymiyya, from the founder Faḍl Allāh Nu‘aymī’s disciple, ‘Imād al-Dīn al-Nasīmī. See Mir-Kasimov, *Takfir and messianism* 193–4, 197. In the *Inbā’*, the Ḥurūfī shaykh of Aleppo is called Nasīm al-Dīn al-Tabrīzī. He was killed in 820/1417. Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* iii, 136–7.

99 Mir-Kasimov, *Takfir* 195–6.

100 Ibid. 196.

101 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* iii, 136–7.

102 On this *ṭarīqa*, see McGregor, *Sanctity*.

103 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* ii, 308; Geoffroy, *Soufisme* 307; McGregor, *Sanctity* 55.

were introduced positively in the *Inbā'*. The Shādhiliyya was a more discreet and private path, mostly confined to dedicated spaces of private religious practice.¹⁰⁴ By far and large—with the exception of the *ṭarīqa*'s branches that went, in some forms, according to Ibn Ḥajar, astray, like the Wafā'iyya—the Shādhiliyya presented no risk of disturbing either the religious and cultural normative framework of the Cairo Sultanate's society or the public order that Ibn Ḥajar, as a *qāḍī*, was bound to uphold.

The *Inbā'* thus displayed various situations in which forms of the practice of *taṣawwuf* were sometimes determined as having a reprehensible footprint on society, power, or religion. As such, one could not claim that the Sufi environment introduced in the *Inbā'* was expressed in a rather negative or positive way, an antagonism far too caricatural. Nor did Sufism form a specific topic in the *Inbā'*. Sufi characters and Sufism—as a body of legitimate and recognized spiritual and religious paths and practices—were part and parcel of the much broader social order presented in the chronicle.

In that regard, recent studies have sometimes dismissed the very contextualized and ideological perspectives set in the medieval narratives of Sufi display, not always taking into account the specific goals and framework of the sources used in their studies. One of the most recent milestones addressing the question of medieval Sufis in the Middle East, Nathan Hofer's *The popularisation of Sufism*, thus uses an impressive array of historiographical narratives to display, in very interesting ways, the role and agency of Sufis in the widespread success of Sufism from the late 6th/12th century to the early 8th/14th century. Yet, using sources ranging from before Ibn Khallikān's (d. 681/1282) masterpiece *Kitāb wafayāt al-a'yān* up until after al-Suyūṭī's (d. 911/1505) short history of Miṣr,¹⁰⁵ going through al-Udfuwī's (d. 799) *Ṭāli'*¹⁰⁶ and its shaping of the Ṣa'īd regional history, the Cairo Shāfi'ī, Ash'arī, 8th/14th-century master al-Subkī (d. 771/1370)¹⁰⁷ or the 9th/15th-century great historian al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442),¹⁰⁸ it does not majorly address the metatextual narrative environment upon which the study's main arguments are grounded. Differences among the sources and the authors, in historical context, cultural and social environment, institutional positions, political and theological differences, and various individual and collective experiences regarding mysticism, create a narrative framework that would have been worth investigating to better grasp the

104 Geoffroy, *Soufisme* 172.

105 Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-mu'ādara fī akhbār mir wa-l- qāhira*.

106 Udfuwī, *al-Ṭāli' al-sa'īd al-jāmi' asmā' nujabā' al-ṣa'īd*.

107 Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-shāfi'iyya al-kubrā*.

108 Maqrīzī, *Al-Muqaffā l-kabīr*.

agency of Sufis in the success of various forms of Sufi practices, discourses, and institutions. The position of Sufism and Sufis in their social and cultural environment evolved in various ways at different stages of the Cairo Sultanate history, along with *taṣawwuf*-oriented discourses and discourses on Sufis and their reception. The very insertion of Sufi narratives in the historiographical framework of the Cairo Sultanate was in that respect part of a wider, dynamic, and contextualized exchange set for various literary, scholarly, political, and ideological needs and a changing audience.

The display of Sufis and Sufism in Ibn Ḥajar's narrative was echoing various strata of meaning that also bear witness to Ibn Ḥajar's evolving environment and contextual changes. When the disruption of a current social and political order was at play, a moral or legal condemnation was likely to be expressed by Ibn Ḥajar. Such a judgment could echo with much strength because Ibn Ḥajar's status, as a scholar of considerable reputation and fame, had become an embodiment of the social and legal order he was narratively representing. Most of the time, though, mentions of Sufism were completely integrated into the normative framework of the chronicle's events and narration, which may have been precisely one of the desired narrative outcomes of the *Inbā'*: to create a historical narrative reference framework, much more likely to be listened to, read, and discussed, that was based on Ibn Ḥajar's personal shaping of his own times. For that reason, the author's self-representation and personal agency in the chronicle's events appear not only as a feature of the *Inbā'* but as a powerful narrative tool. It reinforced both the authenticity of the narratives, upheld the strength of their representation, and boosted Ibn Ḥajar's own standing. Thus, while the author's personal testimonies could add strength to the validity of the historical events he was unfolding, the events were also chosen to display the author's opinions, including on a wide variety of legal, social, religious, and cultural questions, in which matters related to Sufism and Sufi practices were sometimes included.

In that regard, the *Inbā'* was definitely building a new perspective as to Ibn Ḥajar's own historiographical positions and assertive opinions, and while shaping new memories, it was also consciously erasing or omitting some. His last historiographical work thus crafted a new historical narrative that Ibn Ḥajar felt was best serving both his personal interests at the time and the Cairo Sultanate's needs for a narrative of the social order, an order in which Ibn Ḥajar may have felt either himself, Jaqmaq's regime, or his broader audience were ideologically better integrated.

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If a Governor Falls in Damascus: Early Mamluk Historiography Analyzed through the Story of Sayf al-Dīn Karāy al-Manṣūrī

Rasmus Bech Olsen

1 Introduction*

On Jumādā I 22, 711/October 6, 1311, the Mamluk governor of Damascus and viceroy of Syria, Sayf al-Dīn Karāy al-Manṣūrī (d. 719/1319) was arrested. He was subsequently sent to southern Bilād al-Shām (present-day Jordan), where he spent the next seven years imprisoned at the castle of al-Karak. Karāy's life prior to his rule in Damascus has only generated a few scattered references in the sources. However, when he rose to the office of the viceroy of Syria, he caught the attention of several contemporary authors, both inside and outside of Damascus. One aspect of his story that his contemporaries seemed particularly interested in was the question of exactly why Karāy was arrested. In this article, I will examine how six contemporary chroniclers from Egypt and Syria presented Karāy's governorship of Damascus and the circumstances pertaining to his arrest.

This article is inspired by a growing trend within medieval Islamic historiographical studies to soften the conceptual boundaries between chroniclers and literary authors and between *tārīkh* and *adab*. Konrad Hirschler has described this trend as “a cultural turn,” which he defines as the replacement of the traditional source-critical approach to historiography with “an interest in how an authorial decision was made to organize events and of how to endow them with new meanings.”¹ Following this approach, I will thus not be concerned with determining which account of governor Karāy's arrest is closer to the objective historical truth, nor will I attempt to create a stemma for the

* This article is based on chapter 5 of my doctoral dissertation *Just taxes? Tracing 14th century Damascene politics through objects, space and historiography* (Birkbeck College, University of London, 2017). The original thesis chapter also examines the accounts of two additional authors, al-Yūsufī (d. after 755/1355) and al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1363). The thesis is available for download via <http://bbktheses.da.ulcc.ac.uk/286/>.

1 Hirschler, *Studying* 167.

accounts under examination. Instead, I am interested in how the individual chroniclers chose to frame the figure of Karāy and how their narratives gave meaning to his arrest.

The cultural turn has also brought about a reconceptualization of the relationship between the written word (chronicles, biographies, epics, poetry, etc.) and contemporary society. Authors are increasingly seen as participants in the discursive production of their cultural and sociopolitical reality rather than detached observers or artists.² With this perspective in mind, I will also explore how the narratives about Karāy's arrest fit into wider ideological frameworks and how the authorial decisions of the individual chroniclers helped to promote both collective and personal agendas.

Apart from examining the individual author at work, I am also concerned with exploring the impact of collective identities on Mamluk historiography. Since the 1990s, several scholars have distinguished between an *Egyptian* and *Syrian* tradition in Mamluk historiography. Following this distinction, specific chroniclers from Damascus have even been identified collectively as the *Syrian School*.³ So far, however, few attempts have been made to test the qualitative impact of this distinction by comparing different geographical and sociopolitical perspectives on the same cases or by examining the internal differences among chroniclers of the same background. As I will show in this article, Karāy's case is particularly well-suited for this kind of examination since he was involved in high politics in Cairo and street-level power negotiations in Damascus. Thus, he attracted the attention of both courtly and local historians.

I will begin this examination by presenting a short overview of the imperial and local historical context of Karāy's arrest. In section two of the article, I will turn to two chronicles written by contemporary authors from an Egyptian, military, and courtly background. The first is *Kanz al-durar fī jāmi' al-ghurar*, a multivolume history of Islam spanning from the 4th/10th to the 8th/14th century, written by Abū Bakr b. 'Abdallāh b. Aybak al-Dawādārī (d. after 736/1336). The second is *Kitāb al-Tuḥfa al-Mulūkiyya fī l-Dawla al-Turkiyya*, a concise annalistic chronicle of the Mamluk sultanate between 648/1250 and 711/1311 written by Baybars al-Manṣūrī (d. 725/1325). In this section, I will explore how the courtly connections, personal political agendas, and authorial aspirations of these two authors prompted them to present Karāy as a side character in an imperial drama of sultanic succession.

² For Hirschler's contribution to this line of inquiry, see Hirschler, *Authors*.

³ See, e.g., Guo, *Mamluk* 39.

In section three, I will examine the figure of Karāy as he is presented in the narratives of four Damascene scholar-chroniclers from the first half of the 8th/14th century. In general terms, these narratives can be divided into two strains. The first strain is comprised of the account given by ‘Alam al-Dīn Qāsim al-Birzālī (d. 738/1338) in *al-Muqtafī ‘alā l-Rawḍatayn* and two paraphrased versions of al-Birzālī’s account found in *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya fī l-tārīkh* by Ismā‘īl b. ‘Umar Ibn Kathīr (d. 773/1373), and *Dhayl al-Ibar* by Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Dhahabī (d. 747/1347). The second strain is made up of one account written by Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Jazarī (d. 738/1338). Al-Jazarī’s account is part of a larger chronicle section, which was later ascribed to his colleague Quṭb al-Dīn Mūsā l-Yūnīnī (d. 726/1325–6). Therefore, al-Jazarī’s narrative about Karāy is included in al-Yūnīnī’s *Dhayl Mir’āt al-zamān* and not in al-Jazarī’s own chronicle *Tārīkh ḥawādith al-zamān*.⁴ I will examine how the Syrian authors’ narratives are collectively invested in promoting the agency of their city as well as their scholarly colleagues and in defending the sanctity of pious endowments. But I will also explore how different perceptions of historical causality as well as thinly veiled personal disagreements divide these narratives and problematize the notion of a *Syrian School* of historiography.

1.1 *Karāy 711/1311: The Historical Context*

Sayf al-Dīn Karāy al-Manṣūrī was originally part of *al-Manṣūriyya*, the corps of mamluks founded by the Sultan al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn (d. 689/1290).⁵ I have found no information about his role in the first tumultuous decade following al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn’s death, only that he was appointed as governor of Safad in 698/1299 and served as a field commander during the Mamluk-Ilkhānid war in 699/1299. During the first decade of the 8th/14th century, Karāy left Safad for Egypt and later Jerusalem, where he was appointed as governor in 707/1307.⁶

In 709/1310, Karāy led the Mamluk forces of Jerusalem to Damascus to support the return of the exiled sultan, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalāwūn (d. 741/1341), who was the son of Karāy’s original master, Sultan al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn. Since his father’s death, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad had been enthroned as sultan twice, but each of his reigns had ended with exile at al-Karak. During his second reign from 699/1299 to 708/1309, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad had been under de facto

4 With regards to the authorship of al-Yūnīnī’s *Dhayl Mir’āt*, I follow the theory of Li Guo. See Guo, *Early* i, 55–9; Guo, *Mamluk* 38.

5 For a detailed examination of the history of this corps, see Mazor, *Rise*. According to Mazor, Karāy was recruited by Qalāwūn before he became sultan but held no offices of great importance during his master’s reign.

6 *Ibid.* 139, 237.

custody of two senior Maṣṣūri amirs, Sayf al-Dīn Salār (d. 710/1310) and Baybars al-Jāshankīr (d. 709/1310). In frustration with this relationship, al-Nāṣir abdicated the throne to al-Jāshankīr in 708/1309 and returned to al-Karak. He stayed there for ten months and then initiated his reconquest of the throne by traveling to Damascus. During his one-month stay in Damascus, more and more amirs from the Syrian provinces rallied to al-Nāṣir's cause. Karāy was one of those who swore allegiance to al-Nāṣir and later participated in his conquest of Gaza and reentry into Egypt.⁷

After al-Nāṣir made his third ascent to the throne in 709/1310, he rewarded Karāy and several other Maṣṣūri amirs for their support by appointing them to governorships in Syria.⁸ Meanwhile, he recalled the governor of Safad, Amir Baktamur al-Jūkandār al-Maṣṣūri (d. 716/1316), to Cairo and appointed him as viceroy of Egypt. Shortly thereafter, in the spring and summer of 711/1311, al-Nāṣir began to move against these very same amirs in a coordinated arrest campaign. The first victim was his new viceroy Baktamur, whom the sultan accused of planning a coup to rob him of the throne. Next in line were Baktamur's alleged co-conspirators, the Maṣṣūri governors of Syria.⁹

Unlike al-Nāṣir's arrest campaign, the local Damascene context for Karāy's arrest has not previously been studied by modern historians. The following summary of what transpired in Damascus between the spring and early fall of 711/1311 is therefore based primarily on the information provided by contemporary Syrian chroniclers. According to the local sources, Karāy had arrived in Damascus in the spring of 711/1311, and while al-Nāṣir started his arrest campaign, the new governor of Damascus was occupied with carrying out a specific order from Cairo: extracting taxes to pay for an expansion of the Damascene cavalry force due to reports of an imminent Ilkhānid raid on Syria. While it is unclear what the sultanic order actually said, the Damascene chroniclers agree that Karāy demanded a total sum of 750,000 dirhem from the merchants of Damascus to pay for 1,500 mounted troops.¹⁰ As far as we can tell, this sum

7 Ibid. 141–3.

8 Levanoni, *Turning* 29. Apart from Karāy the amirs in question were Quṭlūbak (d. 716/1316) who became governor of Safad, Quṭlūqtamur (d. ?) who became governor of Gaza, and Qarasunqūr (d. 1328/728) who was first appointed to Damascus but then transferred to Aleppo, see Olsen, *Just* 169–70.

9 Neither contemporary chroniclers nor modern historians agree about whether there was a coup under way. Amalia Levanoni argues that the accusation was a convenient pretext for a consolidation of power, whereas William Winslow Clifford and Amir Mazor argue that Baktamur was scheming to substitute al-Nāṣir with one of the sultan's relatives. See Levanoni, *Turning* 28–9; Clifford, *State* 190; Mazor, *Rise* 199–200.

10 The sum and number of troops is quoted by, e.g., al-Birzālī and Ibn Kathīr. See al-Birzālī,

was far higher than earlier war taxes imposed on Damascus by previous Mamluk sultans.¹¹ Moreover, according to the local sources, the tax-extraction process of 711/1311 went far from smoothly. During the late summer and early fall, Karāy's collectors held several unsuccessful meetings with the merchants of Damascus, and they even tried to extend the tax to include shop owners and market vendors. Nevertheless, they were unable to meet Karāy's claim. In late Jumādā 1/September, the governor therefore resorted to taxing the rent for real estate in Damascus quarter by quarter. This order included all properties owned by the *awqāf* (pl. of *waqf*; pious foundation). Pressed by this policy a group of *waqf* beneficiaries pleaded for the *qādīs* and the *khaṭīb* (Friday preacher) of the Umayyad Mosque, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Qazwīnī (d. 739/1338), to intervene on their behalf.

Consequently, on the morning of Monday, Jumādā 1 13/September 27, the *khaṭīb* assembled a complaint procession in the courtyard of the Umayyad Mosque. From there, they headed toward the Sūq al-Khayl, a parade ground north of the walled city, where Karāy was conducting an inspection parade with his troops. The procession participants brought along the black banners from the minbar of the Umayyad Mosque and the city's primary relics: the Quran of 'Uthmān and the Sandal of the Prophet.¹² Unmoved by their pleas and display of piety, Karāy ordered his guards to beat the plaintiffs and arrest their leaders. In the subsequent scuffles, both relics fell or were thrown to the ground. The *khaṭīb* and others were detained for the day and abused both physically and verbally by the governor.¹³

As I will explain in section three, there are disagreements among the Damascene sources about what happened next, but they agree that ten days after the protest, Karāy was arrested by a party of amirs led by the sultan's *dawādār*, Amir Sayf al-Dīn Arghūn (d. 731/1330–31). Karāy was sent in chains to al-Karak, where

Muqtafi iv, 21; Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya* xvi, 88. These taxes were most likely intended to pay for *nafaqa*, a one-time field bonus paid out to troops before a campaign. Based on the sum per rider (500 dirhem), the intention seems to have been recruitment of auxiliary forces from the tribes in the Syrian hinterland rather than Mamluk troops. For a detailed discussion of the nature of the tax and earlier historical parallels, see Olsen, Just 40.

11 In the spring of the year 700/1300, following the Ilkhānid occupation of Damascus, the Mamluk governor requested 480,000 dirhem from wealthy Damascenes, which caused many people to flee the city; see, *Ibid.* 59–63.

12 This Quran was allegedly penned by or for the Caliph 'Uthmān b. 'Affān (d. 47/656), while the sandal had allegedly belonged to Muḥammad. These objects were the most venerated relics housed in Damascus at the time; see, *Ibid.* 47–53.

13 Al-Birzālī, *Muqtafi* iv, 21; Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya* xvi, 88; al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl al-'Ibar* 27; al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl Mir'āt* 1435–6.

he remained for seven years. When he returned to Egypt, he was arrested again and died in prison in 719/1319. The taxes Karāy had sought to extract were officially abolished by sultanic decree after his arrest, and there is no indication that further attempts were made to collect similar sums.

In summary, the historical context leaves the question of why Karāy was arrested open by pointing to two potentially decisive factors: sultanic animosity caused by Karāy's alleged connection to Baktamur's coup and provincial unrest caused by his unpopular fiscal policies in Damascus. In the following sections, I will argue that Karāy's story is worthy of further examination due to this openness, which gives chroniclers room to maneuver as authors. Exactly because the figure of Karāy represents an intersection of courtly and local political currents, he is an ideal prism for studying how contemporary chroniclers chose to weigh and prioritize these currents to reflect their own worldviews and promote their agendas.

2 The Egyptian Perspective

In this part, I will deal with the presentation of Karāy's arrest found in the chronicles of Ibn al-Dawādārī and Baybars al-Manṣūrī. Both of these authors were connected to Cairo and the court of al-Nāṣir. In Ibn al-Dawādārī's case, this connection was indirect. He was the son of a Mamluk amir and accompanied his father on different postings across Egypt and Syria. In contrast, Baybars al-Manṣūrī was a Mamluk amir of the same generation as Karāy and an active participant in politics at the highest level.

The following examination will show that both authors are concerned primarily with describing the courtly angle of Karāy's arrest. Both cast the governor of Damascus as a side character within a wider account of Baktamur's coup and the sultan's purge while downplaying his relationship to his Damascene subjects. However, their narratives reflect more than a shared Cairo-centric understanding of contemporary politics. When examined against the background of the respective authors' lives and wider literary oeuvre, they read like discursive acts of maneuvering within contemporary courtly life.

2.1 *Ibn al-Dawādārī*

Compared to the other authors examined in this article, Ibn al-Dawādārī had a unique position for capturing Karāy's story from both a courtly and a local angle: Not only was Ibn al-Dawādārī connected to the army and the court, but he was also present in Damascus during Karāy's governorship in 711/1311. Ibn al-Dawādārī had arrived in Damascus in 710/1310 as part of the retinue of his

father, Jamāl al-Dīn ‘Abdallāh al-Dawādārī (d. 713/1313). Jamāl al-Dīn had been stationed there as the city’s new *mihmandār* (bearer of the protocol), the officer in charge of receiving and accommodating official guests, and his son remained with him throughout his posting.¹⁴

Despite having the privilege of a dual perspective on the events of 711/1311, Ibn al-Dawādārī, nevertheless, devotes his narrative about Karāy to the final 24 hours leading up to the governor’s arrest. Within this short time span, he retains a strict focus on the interactions between Karāy and the man sent from Cairo to capture him, Amir Sayf al-Dīn Arghūn. According to Ibn al-Dawādārī, Arghūn suddenly arrived from Cairo without warning. Arghūn’s arrival alarmed both the author’s father and governor Karāy, despite his explanation that he had simply come to deliver a sultan’s robe of honor (*khil’a*) for the governor.¹⁵ The author then explains that their distrust in Arghūn was justified since he immediately set up a secret meeting with the resident amirs of Damascus to plan Karāy’s arrest.¹⁶ The following day, while hosting a banquet for his officers and guests, Karāy was surrounded by Arghūn and his allies, who put him in chains and sent him off to prison at al-Karak.¹⁷ Ibn al-Dawādārī devotes three full pages to this representation of Karāy’s arrest. Meanwhile, all other details about the governor’s rule in Damascus, including details about the protest and the arrest of the *khaṭīb*, are completely absent from his account.

The author’s presence in Damascus taken into consideration, we could expect him to know about a violent confrontation between the governor and the civilian population, especially one that took place in front of the governor’s entire retinue during the twice-weekly inspection parade in Sūq al-Khayl. We can, therefore, interpret his strict focus on Karāy’s interaction with Arghūn as a conscious authorial decision to omit the local angle from Karāy’s story. One explanation for this omission, of course, could be that Ibn al-Dawādārī was trying to protect Karāy from criticism. After all, the governor was the superior of the author’s father. However, it seems unlikely that Ibn al-Dawādārī should have harbored concerns for Karāy’s reputation since he does not present any defense of the governor when narrating the details of his arrest. The more likely explanation would seem to be that he simply did not find these events

14 See Lewis, *Ibn al-Dawādārī* 744. According to Ibn al-Dawādārī, his father also briefly held the position *shadd al-dawāwin* (overseer of the treasury). However, this does not fit with the information from other sources I have examined.

15 Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz* ix, 213–4.

16 *Ibid.* 215.

17 *Ibid.* 216.

important enough to mention. In other words, whatever grievances the local population of Damascus might have had with the arrested governor could have been ignored by Ibn al-Dawādārī because he found them either irrelevant or, at best, inferior to the courtly drama marked by the intrigues of intra-Mamluk politics, which he strove to capture in minute detail.

Within the drama of 711/1311, the story of Karāy becomes a parenthesis subsumed under the larger story of Sultan al-Nāṣir and the challenges he faced at the beginning of his third rule. We can see this clearly if we turn briefly to the introduction of the 711 entry in the *Kanz*, of which Karāy's story is part. Here, Ibn al-Dawādārī dedicates a long initial passage to describing how al-Nāṣir decided to move against the viceroy Baktamur and his accomplices: "Our lord the sultan, may God perpetuate his reign, had been made wise by experience, and had again come to fear the poison of the scorpion ... Among those who were made the object of his anger he did not disgrace anyone who had dignity (*ḥurma*), except as retribution for a previous harm and misdeed."¹⁸ In this introduction, the author frames the events of 711/1311 primarily as an account of how the young sultan initiated his third reign with the resolve of a statesman rather than the complacency of a child monarch controlled by his amirs. It is only after these lengthy descriptions and justifications of the sultan's concerns about mutiny that the narrative zooms in on the situation in Damascus during Jumādā 1/September–October.

To summarize, we can say that despite his proximity to the situation, Ibn al-Dawādārī presents the arrest of Karāy as the unequivocal result of the sultan's purge. However, the question remains whether his presentation of Karāy's arrest is colored by the fact that this author was surrounded by the military aristocracy and that he was a mere visitor in Damascus. In answering this question, we can point to two characteristics of Ibn al-Dawādārī's work that could explain why he foregrounds the purge dimension and ignores local events.

First, the focus on the actions of the sultan is not surprising in so far as Ibn al-Dawādārī framed the entire final section of the *Kanz* (the section that covers the period 699–735/1299–1335) as a biography of al-Nāṣir. Throughout this section of the *Kanz*, he portrays the sultan as the sovereign who created peace and stability after century upon century of war and unrest in the Islamic world.¹⁹

18 Ibid. 212–3.

19 Ulrich Haarmann provides two different titles for this section, the original being "al-Nūr al-Bāṣir fī sīrat al-Malik al-Nāṣir" (The clarifying light regarding the life of al-Malik al-Nāṣir). This was changed to "al-Durr al-Fākhir fī sīrat al-Malik al-Nāṣir" (The splendid pearls of the life of al-Malik al-Nāṣir). See Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 80–1. For the portrayal of al-Nāṣir as a bringer of peace, see Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz* ix, 384–7.

When reading Ibn al-Dawādārī's account of Karāy's arrest, we must, therefore, remember that we are dealing with a work centered on al-Nāṣir and possibly even presented to the sultan by the author himself.²⁰ This evidently affects his presentation of political events in the provinces and hereunder Karāy's arrest, which is presented as a prudent decision by a mature sovereign.

Second, we should note that Karāy's arrest provides many opportunities for the author to place himself and his father at the center of events. Haarmann points out that Ibn al-Dawādārī generally tries to make his chronicle unique and interesting by pretending to quote his father or another of his associates when he is really quoting from an existing chronicle.²¹ This tendency for self-promotion becomes especially visible in relation to the story of Karāy. Not only is the author's father cast as a central character in the story, Ibn al-Dawādārī also makes sure to underline his own unique proximity to the governor's arrest in the preface to his 711 entry: "As for Karāy [his arrest] was on Thursday the 23rd of the said month [Jumādā 1]. The servant and author of this book was present during this, saw it, and did not hear about it."²² By focusing on the military aspect of Karāy's arrest, Ibn al-Dawādārī not only favors intra-Mamluk politics and a positive portrayal of the sultan, but he is, in fact, also pursuing a wider strategy of creating a chronicle, which promotes him and his father as central witnesses to the events of the day, perhaps with the hope of becoming a court chronicler.²³

2.2 *Baybars al-Manṣūrī*

Al-Manṣūrī's *Kitāb al-Tuḥfa* distinguishes itself from Ibn al-Dawādārī's *Kanz* in so far as it actually acknowledges Karāy's political problems in Damascus. When mentioning the governor's appointment, Baybars al-Manṣūrī makes the following remark: "he ruled it [Damascus] for a short period but the people received hardship from him nonetheless."²⁴ In contrast to the *Kanz*, we see here at least a cursory interest in the ruling style of the governor. Later, Baybars al-Manṣūrī even highlights that the governor's arrest happened as a direct result of a complaint about his tyrannical way of governing: "In this year he [al-Nāṣir] sent Amir Sayf al-Dīn Arghūn the *dawādār* to Damascus to seize Amir Sayf al-Dīn Karāy when the people complained about the weight of his oppression, his tyranny (*jūr jīratihī*) and the abusiveness of his rule. He was seized at

20 Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 82.

21 Ibid. 194.

22 Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz* ix, 213.

23 Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 84.

24 Al-Manṣūrī, *Tuḥfa* 227.

his table after he had adorned the honorary robe of his sultan."²⁵ In comparison with Ibn al-Dawādārī, Baybars al-Manṣūrī is more attentive to the plight of the Damascenes, but the perspective is nevertheless centered on Cairo and the provincial ramifications of sultanic decisions. First, he does not inform us about the nature of Karāy's tyranny or the steps taken by the *khaṭīb* al-Qazwīnī and his supporters to deal with his abuse. The central actors of this short narrative thus remain al-Nāṣir's *dawādār* and, by extension, the sultan himself. Karāy's arrest is thus again used primarily to highlight the benevolence and justice of the sultan. Second, within the wider context of the 711 entry in *Kitāb al-Tuhfa*, Karāy's story is but one of several stories of neglect and tyranny in the provinces. Almost immediately after presenting the arrest of Karāy, the author thus mentions how the reigning governor of Gaza, Amir Quṭlūqtamur (d. ?), was dismissed and arrested for neglecting his duties: "This was because our lord the sultan had found out that the said Quṭlūqtamur had neglected the safeguarding of the coastal plains to such an extent that Frankish pirates had begun to covet it."²⁶ The story of Karāy's arrest is thus instrumentalized by Baybars al-Manṣūrī in a wider effort to portray the year 711/1311 as a perilous moment where disorder, neglect, and tyranny threatened the internal stability of al-Nāṣir's sultanate. The new Manṣūrī governors of Syria are thus not only accused of conspiring with Baktamur but also of being reckless and tyrannical rulers. Set against this bleak background, the sultan's arrest campaign in 711/1311 appears as a legitimate and diligent intervention for the sake of the security of his realm instead of a purely self-serving maneuver to save his own political position. That this is Baybars al-Manṣūrī's key message is spelled out in unambiguous terms in the concluding comment on the arrests of that year. Here, the author includes two stanzas from a panegyric poem written by the 4th/10th-century poet al-Mutanabbī (d. 354/965) to his patron, the Hamdanid prince of Aleppo Sayf al-Dawla (d. 356/967): "By the grace of God what a heroic king, he seizes the lions in their thicket and shows his inner qualities in their jumps.²⁷ And this is the meaning of the words of al-Mutanabbī. (Poetry) Mighty fear deputised for you and /awe for you wrought more than the heroes achieved. And when those mentioned went into the trap, they were sent to the citadel of al-Karak."²⁸ The concluding lines of al-Manṣūrī's account constitute a parallel to the scorpion parable that Ibn al-Dawādārī used in the introduction to

25 Ibid. 228.

26 Ibid. 227.

27 The Arabic word used is *thanyātahu* (literally, his folds.)

28 Al-Manṣūrī, *Tuhfa* 228. The translation of the poem is from Arberry, *Poems* 70. NB: My italicization.

his 711/1311 entry and underline the point of the narrative: to praise the sultan for his wisdom, courage, and proficiency as ruler. In this context, the situation in Damascus is presented in vague terms as part of a larger catalog of political problems that the sultan corrected in this year.

As in the case of al-Dawādārī, this narrative also links up with the overarching intention of the work in which it is incorporated. As noted by Li Guo, the slim volume that constitutes *Kitāb al-Tuḥfa* (219 printed pages in the 1987 edition) is not an abridged version of al-Manṣūrī's universal chronicle *Zubdat al-fikra fī tāriḫ al-hijra*, as Claude Cahen believed. Rather, it is "another original work on the reign of the Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalāwūn."²⁹ Like the final volume of the *Kanz*, *Kitāb al-Tuḥfa* is primarily aimed at depicting and praising al-Nāṣir, and according to Abdelḥamīd Ṣāliḥ Ḥamdān, the editor of the 1987 edition, it was most likely intended as a present for the sultan himself.³⁰ The story that includes Karāy's arrest is thus employed to fit this particular authorial agenda.

As in the case of Ibn al-Dawādārī, we should acknowledge that Baybars al-Manṣūrī was also pursuing a narrower personal goal with his work. However, unlike Ibn al-Dawādārī, he had more at stake in the matter of Karāy than the claim to be an eyewitness. Baybars al-Manṣūrī was, in fact, the amir who was appointed as viceroy of Egypt when Baktamur was arrested as part of the 711/1311 purge. In his account, he describes this process in the following words: "He [al-Nāṣir] rewarded with the position of viceroy the slave of his grace, the one who had grown up under the charity of him and his father, Baybars al-Dawādār, the compiler of this *sīra* and the relator of these reports, and he honored me with the designated robe of honour."³¹ According to the editor, Ḥamdān, Baybars al-Manṣūrī began to write *Kitāb al-Tuḥfa* around 709/1310 and finished it in its present form around 711/1311, the year he was appointed as viceroy.³² His work is not simply a tribute to the sultan; it is also a self-portrait of the author at the peak of his power. In this light, we can say that Baybars al-Manṣūrī had obvious self-serving reasons for framing the victims of the purge as negatively as possible, in Karāy's case, by including references to his harsh rule in Damascus. This would indirectly help him frame himself as part of a

29 Guo, *Historiographic Studies* 17.

30 Al-Manṣūrī, *Tuḥfa* 14.

31 Ibid. 228. Unfortunately for Baybars al-Manṣūrī, his appointment as viceroy was short lived. He was accused of treason, arrested, and sent off to al-Karak in 712/1312, much like the victims of the purge. He was released and had some of his wealth restored in 716/1316. See Ibid. 14.

32 Ibid. 14.

new, sound, and incorrupt Qalawunid leadership emerging from the political fray of the 711/1311 purge.

Both Egyptian narratives about Karāy's arrest thus betray a view of contemporary politics that is permeated by a center-periphery dynamic. The center of most, if not all, political change is the imperial capital of Cairo, and the decisions taken there reverberate like ripples, causing local change throughout the provinces. This runs counter to the general tendency in the Damascene narratives, which, as we shall see, maintain a continuous focus on the importance of local events and marginalize the influence of the sultan on Karāy's fate.

3 The Syrian Perspective

In this part of the article, I will examine the figure of Karāy as he appears in the narratives of al-Birzālī, Ibn Kathīr, al-Dhahabī, and al-Jazarī. Unlike Ibn al-Dawādārī and Baybars al-Manṣūrī, who shared only their affiliation with the Mamluk military and their geographical attachment to Egypt, these four Syrian historians were personally connected with each other. They were all scholars of hadith and part of the traditionalist trend within the Shāfi'ī school of law. Moreover, within the field of historical writing, they frequently appear as sources, compilers, and editors of each other's work.³³ The connectedness of these authors has caused previous scholars to identify them as belonging to a *Syrian or Damascene School* within Mamluk historiography.³⁴

In contrast to the narrative by Ibn al-Dawādārī and Baybars al-Manṣūrī, the accounts of these four Damascene authors adopt a local rather than a courtly perspective on Karāy's arrest by foregrounding his role in the Damascene tax conflict and toning down his alleged participation in the coup against al-Nāṣir. The simplest (and most innocent) explanation for this choice of focus would be to say that it is natural for a historian to be drawn toward dramatic local events, such as the public display of relics, violence against ordinary citizens, and the arrest of local dignitaries. However, it would be a mistake to regard Damascene scholar-chroniclers as mere compilers of local news motivated by an appreciation for the colorful and dramatic. Even though the Syrian chroniclers had no

33 Al-Birzālī edited and copied the chronicles of al-Jazarī and al-Yūnīnī and also appears frequently as a source in their chronicles. Ibn Kathīr in turn edited al-Birzālī's chronicle and quotes extensively from it in his own work. For a detailed overview of these connections, see Olsen, *Just* 24–9.

34 Humphreys, *History* 241; Guo, *Early* i, 83.

direct stake in the internal power struggles of the Mamluk elite or the courtly life around the citadel of Cairo, an examination of their accounts show that they too thought about the figure of Karāy in political terms and framed his story to fit both collective and individual agendas.

3.1 *A Collective View of the Damascene Versions of Karāy's Story*

First, we must recognize that the story of Karāy as a harsh governor and tax collector must have appealed to the Damascene authors in ways that his connection to Baktamur's coup would not. In his uncompromising stance on taxation, Karāy afforded the Damascene chroniclers an opportunity to confer political agency onto the population of Damascus as protesters and negotiators. Al-Birzālī, Ibn Kathīr, and al-Dhahabī simply describe the protesters as a group made up of the people (*al-nās*). However, al-Jazarī adds more detail and describes it as a procession made up of "the scholars (*'ulamā'*), the jurists, the Quran readers, the muezzins and the common people (*'āmmat al-nās*)."³⁵ Moreover, all four Damascene accounts identify the leader of the protest as Jalāl al-Dīn al-Qazwīnī (d. 739/1338), the *khaṭīb* (Friday preacher) of the Umayyad Mosque. Apart from the *khaṭīb*, they also mention the participation and arrest of Majd al-Dīn al-Tūnisī (d. 718/1319), a Tunisian grammarian who taught in Damascus.³⁶ The specific involvement of these two individuals thus gives the chroniclers an opportunity to emphasize the pivotal political role of the local scholarly community, a characteristic tendency in Syrian historiography that reaches back at least to the 7th/13th century.³⁷

That said, the Damascene chroniclers might also have had a narrower partisan interest in highlighting the roles of al-Qazwīnī and al-Tūnisī since they all shared an affiliation with the Shāfi'ī school of law. A narrative in which al-Qazwīnī and al-Tūnisī, two locally renowned Shāfi'ī scholars, spoke truth to a tyrannical governor and faced physical violence for their words would certainly reflect favorably on the protagonists themselves and, by extension, on their school in general. In addition to their formal association through the

35 Al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl Mir'āt* 1435.

36 While al-Qazwīnī is identified as the leader of the actual procession no details are given about the involvement of al-Tūnisī other than that he was arrested along with al-Qazwīnī and beaten in front of governor Karāy. See al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl Mir'āt* 1436. Al-Jazarī also mentions that the *qāḍī l-quḍāt* of Damascus, Najm al-Dīn b. Ṣaṣrā (d. 724/1324), was summoned by the governor after the protest. However, the judge is not identified as part of the procession, see *ibid.* 1435. In *al-Bidāya*, Ibn Kathīr reports that al-Qazwīnī was verbally abused along with the judge during the protest. See Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya* xvi, 88.

37 For the case of Abū Shāma al-Maqdisī, see Hirschler, *Authors* 113. For the case of Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī, see Khalidī, *Arabic* 202–3.

Shāfiʿī school, we can also see a pattern of personal connections between the two protest protagonists and several of the authors. Al-Birzālī studied hadith with or under Jalāl al-Dīn al-Qazwīnī, and both Ibn Kathīr and al-Dhahabī include laudatory obituaries of him in their respective works.³⁸ Moreover, al-Jazarī seems to have known Jalāl al-Dīn's son, Badr al-Dīn (d. 742/1342), since he quotes him as an informant.³⁹ As for Majd al-Dīn al-Tūnisī, both al-Birzālī and al-Dhahabī praise him for his piety and intellect and also mention that they studied with him in Damascus.⁴⁰

In addition to being an opportunity to highlight popular political agency and Shāfiʿī leadership, the story of Karāy's tax policies allows the authors to make a strong case for the sanctity of *waqf*. There are two connected reasons why our authors may have been drawn to a story about *waqf* taxation. The term *waqf/awqāf* refers to the traditional Islamic pious foundations through which a legally capable person donates part of his or her estate either to his or her descendants (*waqf ahli*) or to a public purpose (*waqf khayrī*). In the Mamluk period, the latter category could include donations for building and financing madrasas or feeding the poor. In principle, *awqāf* were beyond the reach of the state treasury, and taxation or confiscation of *waqf* funds was considered illegal according to sharia law.⁴¹ Consequently, state violations of the *awqāf* were a common occasion for demonstrations and even riots in premodern Middle Eastern societies. According to Miriam Hoexter, these riots were motivated not only by economic grievances that befell those who subsisted on *waqf* funds but also by the fact that infractions on the sanctity of the *awqāf* were seen as a violation of one of the basic principles of good rule.⁴² Against this background, we can read the narratives about the protest as echoes of the wider moral outrage over the taxation of *awqāf* that probably also helped motivate the protesters themselves.

38 The expression used in several obituaries is “wa-kharraja lahu al-Birzālī juzʿan min ḥadīth-ihī.” See, e.g., al-Ḥanbalī, *Shadrāt* viii, 216. For the obituary of al-Qazwīnī by Ibn Kathīr, see Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya* xvi, 287–8; for his obituaries written by al-Dhahabī, see al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh* 448; *Dhayl al-ʿIbar* 112.

39 Al-Jazarī, *Ḥawādith* ii, 183. Apart from this quote, there is also a close description of Badr al-Dīn's inauguration as preacher in 727/1327, which could suggest that al-Jazarī was present at this event, see *ibid.* 185.

40 Al-Birzālī, *Muqtafī* iv, 343; al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh* 193. Majd al-Dīn's obituary is not mentioned by Ibn Kathīr. In the case of al-Jazarī's *Ḥawādith*, there is a lacuna in this work that includes the year 718/1319; therefore, we cannot know whether he includes this obituary and what relationship he might have had with the shaykh.

41 Peters, *Wakf* I.

42 Hoexter, *Waqf* 133.

In this context, we should also note that as Shāfiʿī traditionalists, al-Jazarī, al-Birzālī, Ibn Kathīr, and al-Dhahabī may have been particularly vulnerable to state encroachment on the *awqāf*. In general, the Shāfiʿī traditionalists earned their livelihood from teaching positions funded by the *awqāf* system.⁴³ The authors in question were no exception. Al-Dhahabī was a prominent hadith teacher, Al-Birzālī at one point worked as a professional witness, but only for two years, and Ibn Kathīr briefly held a position as judge.⁴⁴ Al-Jazarī worked throughout his life as a court notary and professional witness. According to al-Birzālī, however, he refused to take any money for these services, subsisting instead on what he could earn from his teaching positions.⁴⁵ The fact that Karāy ordered a tax on the *awqāf* and then retracted it because of local pressure makes his case a valuable story of local agency in defense of the economic system, which was pivotal to the scholarly community that our authors belonged to. While the Damascene authors display a collective disinterest in Karāy's connection with Mamluk factions and courtly politics, their accounts are therefore still every bit as political and strategic as those of Baybars al-Manṣūrī or Ibn al-Dawādārī. In this context, *political* simply means vested in promoting the agency of local (scholarly) actors and defending an important economic pillar of Islamic urban society as well as their own livelihood.

The following section examines exactly how this story of local agency in defense of the *awqāf* was framed in the authors' respective accounts. As will become clear, the fact that they had a common stake in certain aspects of Karāy's story does not prevent them from making distinct authorial decisions of their own.

3.2 *Al-Birzālī, Ibn Kathīr, and al-Dhahabī*

We will begin with a collective examination of the first narrative strain (i.e., the accounts of al-Birzālī, al-Dhahabī, and Ibn Kathīr). Their accounts follow the same succinct pattern; in less than ten lines and without any dialogue, they relate the announcement of the tax decree, the protest, the arrest of the protest leaders, and finally, the arrest of the governor. Moreover, a close comparison of sentence structure and choice of words suggests that these three accounts

43 As Yunus Mirza explains, the traditionalist wing of the Shāfiʿī school of Damascus did not have the access to state resources that many of the rationalist Ashʿaris in the Shāfiʿī school gained through state offices, e.g., in the judiciary system or the treasury. See Mirza, *Ibn Kathir* 31.

44 Rouabah, *Une édition* 312.

45 Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 22.

are related even though we cannot talk of exact copies.⁴⁶ Since al-Birzālī's text is the oldest, it seems probable that the two younger authors, Ibn Kathīr and al-Dhahabī, drew on his version of the protest, albeit without quoting him *ad verbum*.

The common trait of these accounts is that they promote the agency of the protesters by establishing a causal relation between the protest and the subsequent arrest of governor Karāy. In *al-Muqtafī*, al-Birzālī thus concludes his account of the protest with the following words: "Much pain befell the Muslims because of that [Karāy's behavior], and so after that God did not even give him what amounted to ten days, before he was deposed and chained and arrested."⁴⁷ In *al-Bidāya*, Ibn Kathīr presents a very similar conclusion, though, as I will explain below, he adds an appendix to this conclusion, which we do not find in the other two versions: "The people suffered a lot because of this, and so God did not give him more than ten days and then his time came suddenly and he was deposed and arrested."⁴⁸ In al-Dhahabī's version, the causality is slightly less explicit but nevertheless still evident: "The people suffered and they pronounced the *da'wa* against (*da'ū 'alā*) Karāy. And so after nine days he was taken from the governorship and enchained and imprisoned in al-Karak."⁴⁹ These three accounts all conclude that Karāy's oppressive actions against the Damascenes were the direct cause of his demise. Moreover, according to the first and second quote, the arrest and deportation of the governor was not a question of human agency; it was God who directly decided to grant Karāy only ten days in office before punishing him for his offense against the protesters. Here, the confrontation between the protesting Damascene citizens and the governor is recast in theological terms as a confrontation between good and evil, belief and unbelief. Al-Birzālī adds further emphasis to this trope by identifying Karāy's victims as *the Muslims* (*al-muslimīn*), a strategy that indirectly frames Karāy as an outside threat averted by God. Meanwhile, Ibn Kathīr describes Karāy's victims with the less emphatic term *the people* (*al-nās*). However, his account still makes clear that we are dealing specifically with a group of Damascenes on whose account God intervenes. In other words, his account also conveys the notion of a special proximity between his own local community and the divine.

46 Compare al-Birzālī, *Muqtafī* iv, 24 (4–15) with Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya* xvi, 88 (9–16) and al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl al-'Ibar* 27 (7–11).

47 Al-Birzālī, *Muqtafī* iv, 21.

48 Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya* xvi, 88.

49 Al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl al-'Ibar* 27.

In al-Dhahabī's version, there is no direct mention of who facilitated the arrest of the governor. Whether or not we read his account as one of divine intervention depends on how we interpret the expression "they pronounced the *da'wa* against Karāyh" (*da'ū 'alā Karāyh*). To pronounce the *da'wa* against (*'alā*) someone can mean to curse or invoke the name of God against him, as opposed to pronouncing it *for* (*ilā*) someone.⁵⁰ Since the subsequent sentence is in the passive voice, it is difficult to determine whether he means that it was God or simply the sultan who reacted to their *da'wa*. In any case, the complaint of the protesters still led to the arrest.

Despite their differences, we can say that all three accounts ascribe to the local population, the protesters in particular, the ability to have an abusive governor removed and held accountable for his actions. Moreover, in the case of the accounts of al-Birzālī and Ibn Kathīr, we can see that this causality directly transcends the boundaries between what Bernd Radtke calls the *innerworldly* (*innerweltliche*) and the *outerworldly* (*ausserweltliche*). The explanation for the removal of Karāy is not simply the agency of men but the interference of God, who stands out as the real acting subject (*eigentliche Handlungssubjekt*).⁵¹

If we look elsewhere within the work of al-Dhahabī and Ibn Kathīr, we see that they have resorted to divine intervention before in their narratives as a solution to or punishment for sultanic encroachment on Damascene wealth. A good example is al-Dhahabī's description of the dispute between the Sultan Baybars I (d. 676/1276) and the Damascenes about the rights to the orchards (*basātīn*) of al-Ghūṭa in 666/1267. Al-Dhahabī states that when the sultan decided to confiscate the orchards, God burned them as a punishment for his greed: "The sultan had guarded al-Ghūṭa and had wanted to seize ownership of it. He oppressed (ta'aththara) people with injustice and confiscation, and they moaned and supplicated God. Therefore, when they [Baybars's men] pressured the Muslims and obliged them to weigh out the fees (alzamūhum bi-wazn al-ḍamān) on their orchards and even reached for the awqāf, God burned it."⁵² This account follows the same basic logic as the 711/1311 protest accounts of al-Birzālī, al-Dhahabī, and Ibn Kathīr: When a representative of the sultan infringes upon property that is not rightfully his, the Damascenes, who are identified as *the Muslims*, supplicate God, who resolves the situation, in this case by destroying the property the sultan coveted.⁵³

50 See Wehr, *Dictionary* 326.

51 Radtke, *Weltgeschichte* 162–3.

52 Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh* xv, 21.

53 For an overview of the dispute over the orchards of al-Ghūṭa, see Sublet, *Sequestre* 81–6.

In Ibn Kathīr's *al-Bidāya*, we find a somewhat similar comment when he describes a severe tax campaign in Damascus in 688/1289 ordered by Sultan al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn, who died shortly after. The money was collected by the sultan's treasurer, Amir 'Alam al-Dīn al-Shujā'ī (d. 1294/694), but according to Ibn Kathīr, God did not allow the sultan to enjoy the spoils: "Verily this [the tax] accelerated the destruction of the tyrant and his death, for the wealth al-Shujā'ī had gathered for him did not benefit al-Manṣūr, for after this he did not live but for a short while before God chastised him, *he chastises communities in the midst of their wrong* [Q 11:102]."⁵⁴ Once again, we are presented with the idea that God protects the Damascenes from fiscal abuse by making sure that the abuser cannot enjoy his gain, in this case by accelerating the death of the sultan. Here, the point about divine punishment is underlined with a Qur'anic quote that describes God as the historical punisher of unjust pre-Islamic rulers.

To summarize, we can say that al-Birzālī and Ibn Kathīr use the account of the 711/1311 protest to present the specific idea that the people of Damascus can rely on divine protection against tyranny, while al-Dhahabī does so in a more indirect fashion. As we can see from the earlier passages in *al-Bidāya* and the *Tārīkh al-Islām*, this trope is not limited to the specific case of Karāy; the idea of a pact between God and the Damascenes seems to permeate the works of these scholars on a broader scale.

Before turning to al-Jazarī's account of Karāy's arrest, we must, however, consider one detail, which separates the three narratives examined in this section. As mentioned above, Ibn Kathīr's protest narrative contains a short but important appendix. Immediately after his statement that God punished governor Karāy, Ibn Kathīr inserts the following comment, which suggests that the sultan arrested Karāy on the advice of the Ḥanbalī jurist and theologian Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Taymiyya (d. 728/1328): "It was said (*wa-qīla*) that the shaykh Taqī al-Dīn had heard about the matter [Karāy's behavior?] from the people of Syria and had informed the sultan of it, and so he immediately sent for him to be forcefully seized."⁵⁵ Through this comment, Ibn Kathīr modifies the divine intervention element of the story by grounding Karāy's arrest in a

54 Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya* xv, 532. The italicized sentence is part of Q 11:102, which reads "Such is the chastisement of thy lord when he chastises communities in the midst of their wrong: grievous, indeed, and severe is his chastisement." Yusuf Ali (trans.), *The Holy Quran* 542. The verse in question is part of a longer description of how God destroyed pre-Islamic peoples who had sinned, including the story of the punishment of Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

55 Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya* xvi, 88.

more mundane political reality. More importantly, however, is the fact that Ibn Kathīr's individual decision to include Ibn Taymiyya shows there is a limit to the ideological uniformity between his and the other two narratives examined here.

3.3 *Karāy's Arrest and the Politicization of Ibn Taymiyya*

Ibn Taymiyya was one of the leading traditionalist scholars of early 8th/14th-century Damascus. Moreover, he was famous for engaging in public polemical debates with theological adversaries, censuring perceived religious innovations (*bid'ā*), and participating in local and regional politics.⁵⁶ As a scholar, he enjoined a following among traditionalist-oriented Shāfi'īs, which included al-Birzālī, Ibn Kathīr, and al-Dhahabī, all of whom wrote about him in their works. Al-Birzālī's veneration for Ibn Taymiyya is most clearly exemplified in his lengthy obituary of the shaykh. This obituary was later copied by Ibn Kathīr, who adds a great deal of additional information about Ibn Taymiyya's life in *al-Bidāya*.⁵⁷ In the case of al-Dhahabī, the clearest textual testimony to his connection with Ibn Taymiyya is perhaps his biography of the shaykh titled *Nubdha min sīrat Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyya*.⁵⁸

Returning to Karāy's arrest, the question is thus why only Ibn Kathīr mentions Ibn Taymiyya's involvement when all three authors under examination had personal connections with the shaykh and wrote about him at length elsewhere. One answer could be that this difference reflects the fundamental contradiction among the biographers of Ibn Taymiyya about whether to celebrate or marginalize his polemics and political activity. As explained by Catarina Bori, the Ḥanbalī scholars of Damascus were especially uncomfortable with the shaykh's willingness to engage in politics since this did not conform to the pious and noninterventionist image of the founder of their school, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855).⁵⁹ In contrast, Ibn Kathīr, as shown by Bori and others, pursued a general strategy of emphasizing the interventionist aspect of Ibn

56 The fact that this section is confined to comparing a few historiographical representations of Ibn Taymiyya precludes a detailed treatment of his historical role. The complexity of Ibn Taymiyya's juridical and theological doctrines and the width of his engagement in public life has been the subject of many scholarly publications, e.g., Rapoport and Ahmed, *Ibn Taymiyya*.

57 The section of al-Birzālī's *al-Muqtafi* covering the late 720s has not come down to us. For Ibn Kathīr's copy of the obituary of Ibn Taymiyya, see Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya* xvi, 212. For a general overview of Ibn Kathīr's portrayal of Ibn Taymiyya, see Laoust, La biographie.

58 For a philological edition of the *Nubdha* with translation, see Bori, A new source.

59 Bori, Ibn Taymiyya 139.

Taymiyya throughout the contemporary parts of *al-Bidāya*.⁶⁰ In this context, Ibn Kathīr's inclusion of Ibn Taymiyya in his protest narrative seems to be a deliberate choice to divert from al-Birzālī's account of Karāy's arrest to cast Ibn Taymiyya as a political actor by giving him the status of sultanic advisor.

A closer comparison of other references to Ibn Taymiyya shows that this choice is part of a wider trend in Ibn Kathīr's recycling of al-Birzālī's accounts. Al-Birzālī presents two brief accounts about Ibn Taymiyya and al-Nāṣir around 711/1311. The first account relates to Ibn Taymiyya's arrival in Cairo in 709/1310. According to al-Birzālī, al-Nāṣir ordered that the shaykh be sent to Cairo from Alexandria, where he had spent several months in house arrest.⁶¹ At the citadel in Cairo, the shaykh met the sultan at a courtly gathering that also included Damascene notables who had followed al-Nāṣir on his return from al-Karak.⁶² The second account relates to Ibn Taymiyya's return to Damascus in 712/1313. Al-Birzālī notes that Ibn Taymiyya traveled with the Egyptian army to Gaza and made his way from there to Damascus and that people celebrated his homecoming.⁶³ A comparison reveals that Ibn Kathīr quotes heavily from al-Birzālī when describing these two events. However, the account of the sultan's initial meeting with Ibn Taymiyya is expanded by several pages in Ibn Kathīr's *al-Bidāya*. Among other things, he adds a description of how the sultan embraced Ibn Taymiyya, took his hands, and led him to a private space, where they talked for two hours.⁶⁴ In the homecoming scene from 712/1313, Ibn Kathīr once again highlights the personal connection between Ibn Taymiyya and the sultan. He states that Ibn Taymiyya had traveled with the sultan from Egypt to Gaza while al-Birzālī merely stated that he traveled with the army. Moreover, Ibn Kathīr writes that when the shaykh reached Damascus, he found that the sultan had already traveled on to the Hijaz. With this, Ibn Kathīr might be indicating that Ibn Taymiyya had wished to reunite with the sultan in Damascus, a suggestion that is not made by al-Birzālī.⁶⁵

When we compare this with al-Dhahabī's *Dhayl al-ʿIbar*, we see an even more restricted representation of Ibn Taymiyya's political ties. Here, the meeting between the shaykh and the sultan in 709/1310 is simply not mentioned.

60 Apart from Bori, scholars such as Henri Laoust and Donald P. Little have also commented on this tendency in Ibn Kathīr's work. See Laoust, *La biographie*; Little, *The historical*.

61 Ibn Taymiyya's house arrest in Alexandria was apparently the result of his hostile relationship with the Sufi shaykh Naṣr al-Dīn al-Manbijī (d. 719/1319), who was closely tied to Sultan al-Jāshankīr.

62 Al-Birzālī, *al-Muqtafī* iii, 445.

63 *Ibid.* iv, 89.

64 Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya* xvi, 75.

65 *Ibid.* 99–101.

As for Ibn Taymiyya's homecoming in 712/1313, this scene is described in one line that does not include details about his travel arrangements.⁶⁶ Moreover, in *al-Nubdha*, al-Dhahabī's biography of Ibn Taymiyya, we find that he does not simply tone down the connection between Ibn Taymiyya and the sultan around 711/1311. Instead, he explicitly refutes this connection by stating that the shaykh: "settled in Cairo, living in a house, and met with the sultan after that time. [Yet,] the shaykh was not a man of government and did not concern himself with [its] intrigues, so the sultan did not repeat his meeting with him."⁶⁷ In the comparison between Ibn Kathīr's *al-Bidāya* and al-Dhahabī's *Nubdha*, we thus see two radically different portrayals of Ibn Taymiyya in Cairo, which match their respective positions on his influence on Karāy's arrest. Al-Dhahabī emphasizes that even though the shaykh did meet with the sultan, he was "not a man of government" and after their initial meeting was not a frequent confidant of the sultan. This reads like a deliberate defense of the shaykh from any accusations of political involvement and association with the sultan, which further explains why he does not connect Ibn Taymiyya to the arrest of Karāy.⁶⁸ Meanwhile, Ibn Kathīr goes out of his way to underline and emphasize the connection between the shaykh and the sultan around 1311/711. Through his decision to add Ibn Taymiyya, Ibn Kathīr is, therefore, shaping his account of Karāy's arrest for participation in a much wider struggle among the Damascene supporters of Ibn Taymiyya, a struggle to control the shaykh's legacy through the act of writing history.

3.4 Al-Jazarī

Moving now to al-Jazarī's version of Karāy's story, we see that he follows an entirely different compositional scheme than his Damascene colleagues. Instead of producing a short ten-line summary of the tax, the protest, and the governor's arrest, al-Jazarī devotes several pages to the tax negotiations that preceded and succeeded the protest. Moreover, he devotes 29 lines to the protest itself and includes fragments of dialogue between the different contending parties.⁶⁹

66 Al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl al-Ibar* 32.

67 Bori, A new source 345. Bori's translation from the original Arabic.

68 Aside from his connection to Sultan al-Nāṣir, al-Dhahabī also exhibits general criticism of Ibn Taymiyya's polemical approach to politics, as well as to questions of theology. See Bori, Ibn Taymiyya 37–8.

69 This version of the 711 protest was later picked up and modified by several other authors, such as al-Nuwayrī and al-Ṣafadī. Compare al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl Mir'āt* 1434–7 with al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat* xxxii, 136–8 and al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān* iv, 152–3.

The second general feature that distinguishes al-Jazarī's account is that he deemphasizes the causal connection between the tax protest and Karāy's arrest, which his three colleagues promote. In the course of his narrative, al-Jazarī does this by treating the protest and the arrest as two consecutive yet separate events. Furthermore, he ends his account of Karāy's governorship by presenting two contradictory sultanic declarations about the reason for Karāy's arrest. According to al-Jazarī, the first declaration was read out to a gathering of the Mamluk amirs and the *qāḍīs* of Damascus. It stated that Karāy was arrested due to his connection to Baktamur's coup. The second declaration was allegedly read out in public at the end of the Friday sermon at the Umayyad Mosque. This declaration stated that the sultan had removed the governor because of the hardship he had inflicted on Damascus.⁷⁰ By quoting both declarations, al-Jazarī leaves it to his readers to speculate what factor determined the governor's fate. We could even say the existence of two sultanic declaration hints that the very idea that Karāy was arrested due to his tyrannical leadership may have been a publicity stunt aimed at making the sultan more popular with the common population of Damascus.⁷¹ Al-Birzālī does, in fact, present the same two declarations later in *al-Muqtafi*, thereby moderating the claim of direct causality between the protest and the governor's arrest that he made in his protest narrative. Al-Dhahabī and Ibn Kathīr, however, make no attempt to moderate their initial claim that Karāy fell because of his injustice toward the Damascenes as al-Dhahabī quotes none of the two declarations, whereas Ibn Kathīr presents only the second declaration, which tied Karāy's arrest to his tax policies.⁷²

Even though al-Jazarī avoids the claims of causality, which permeate the other three Damascene accounts, we can still regard his presentation of the tax protest and Karāy's arrest as an ideological narrative promoting Damascene identity. As I will show through a series of examples, al-Jazarī's version of Karāy's story also frames the governor as an antagonist against whom the Damascenes can appear sympathetic and exercise political agency. However, al-Jazarī's narrative about Karāy can also be read as a more general story about the breakdown and restoration of principles of proper government. The seeds

70 Al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl Mīr'āt* 1440–1. According to al-Jazarī, the first declaration was made at the gate of the Maydān al-Akhḍar (the Green Hippodrome) west of the walled city on Thursday, Jumādā II 8/October 21, while the second declaration was made the following week on Friday, Jumādā II 16/October 29.

71 According to Amina Elbendary, it was common for 15th-century Mamluk sultans to make a public show of "sacrificing" a lower ranking official in order to deflect popular criticism. See Elbendary, *Crowds* 177–8.

72 Al-Birzālī, *al-Muqtafi* iv, 25–6; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya* iv, 89.

of the parallel story are in fact planted in al-Jazarī's initial description of Karāy's arrival in Damascus in Muḥarram 711/May 1311: "the people went out to meet him, and they lit candles ... He put up his tent in the Maydān, and did not meet with anyone from among the common population."⁷³ This description functions as a forewarning of the governing style of Karāy. Lining the streets and lighting candles (an expensive commodity in 14th-century Syro-Egypt) was a typical way of honoring civilian and military elites when entering or leaving the city.⁷⁴ Moreover, we know from other descriptions of sultans and governors entering Damascus that meeting with the population and receiving petitions on their first day in office was a way for rulers to project an image of themselves as approachable and attentive toward the plight of their subjects.⁷⁵ By stating that Karāy did not meet with any of the common people or make any other gesture to reciprocate their honorific welcome, al-Jazarī is portraying him as a governor who ignores the common conventions of ruler-subject interaction from the start of his tenure.

When we reach the tax conflict in the fall of 711/1311, Karāy's unwillingness to listen, negotiate, or respect normal conventions are again placed at the center. This is first exemplified by his willingness to tax the *awqāf* of Damascus. According to al-Jazarī's account, Karāy made the decision to tax the *awqāf* single-handedly, when his tax collectors had informed him that they could not extract the requested sums from the merchants and market vendors alone.⁷⁶ The author further emphasizes the severity of this decision with a scene, which precedes the arrival of the *khaṭīb*'s procession to Sūq al-Khayl. According to al-Jazarī, a group of the poorest and most vulnerable *waqf* beneficiaries appeared before the governor shortly before the arrival of the procession. This group included blind paupers, lepers and orphans, and al-Jazarī notes that their pleas and abject misery made the amirs cry, though he says nothing of the governor's reaction.⁷⁷

After the arrival of the complaint procession, Karāy's disrespect for conventions is again brought to the center of the narrative through two scenes where he curses and then hits Jalāl al-Dīn al-Qazwīnī, the *khaṭīb* of the Umayyad

73 Al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl Mir'āt* 1428.

74 For other examples of 8th/14th-century Damascenes parading with candles, see Frenkel, *Public* 46. The high price of beeswax candles in medieval Cairo is noted by the historian al-Maqrīzī (845/1442). See, e.g., Perho, *The Arabian Nights* 149.

75 The accessible approach was adopted, for example, by Sultan Kitbughā (d. 702/1302) when he visited Damascus in 696/1295. See Frenkel, *Public* 51. See also al-Jazarī, *Ḥawādith* i, 329.

76 Al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl Mir'āt* 1435.

77 *Ibid.* 1435.

Mosque who led the protest. According to al-Jazarī, the protesters pushed al-Qazwīnī forward in the direction of the governor, who met him with anger: “By the time the *khaṭīb* reached the governor he [Karāy] had been filled with anger and malice towards him [al-Qazwīnī]. The *khaṭīb* greeted him with a ‘peace be upon you’ and he said, ‘may no peace be upon you’ (*fa-salama al-khaṭīb, fa-qāla lā salām ‘alaykum*).”⁷⁸ In this scene, al-Jazarī shows Karāy openly disrespecting not only al-Qazwīnī but also the office of the *khaṭīb*. According to the traditional Sunni-Islamic liturgy, the *khaṭīb* is supposed to initiate the Friday ceremony with a *salām*, which should be returned by the congregation. By choosing to frame the confrontation between the *khaṭīb* al-Qazwīnī and the governor as a disrupted exchange of *salām* greetings, al-Jazarī further cultivates the image of Karāy as a ruling figure who pays no respect to conventions. This is continued in the following scene where al-Jazarī describes the arrest and interrogation of the *khaṭīb* and of others deemed responsible for the protest: “And upon his return the king of amirs [i.e., Karāy] summoned the *khaṭīb* and struck him three times with his hands, and had the amirs not saved him he would have sentenced him ... and when the banquet was laid out, none of the amirs ate anything from it.”⁷⁹ Al-Jazarī goes on to describe how the governor yelled at the Shāfi‘ī *qāḍī l-quḍāt*, Najm al-Dīn b. Ṣaṣrā (d. 724/1324) and made the grammarian Majd al-Dīn al-Tūnisī suffer 90 cane lashes. In this scene, the extraordinary harshness of the governor is further accentuated not only by his willingness to scold and punish religious and judicial dignitaries but also by the reaction of other Mamluk amirs. In order to show just how extraordinary the behavior of the governor is, al-Jazarī lets the attending amirs act as a restraining force on his impulses. Furthermore, they distance themselves from the governor by refusing to partake in the customary banquet, which followed the inspection parade.⁸⁰

In al-Jazarī’s account, the arrestees were released on Monday evening without any resolution to the tax conflict itself. This resolution came four days later after the Friday ceremony at the Umayyad Mosque and is presented by al-Jazarī as the product of skillful negotiation. According to al-Jazarī, governor Karāy was approached during prayer by the leader of the Ḥarīriyya Sufi order, Shaykh ‘Alī b. ‘Alī al-Ḥarīrī (d. 715/1315).⁸¹ During this meeting, al-Ḥarīrī uttered

78 Ibid. 1436.

79 Ibid.

80 According to the administrative manual of al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418), the governors of Damascus routinely gave a banquet for the amirs after the twice-weekly inspection parades in Sūq al-Khayl. See al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ* iv, 195.

81 This shaykh was the son of the founder of the Ḥarīriyya order, Shaykh ‘Alī al-Ḥarīrī (d. 654/

what seems to be a convoluted threat of further civic unrest: “He [al-Ḥarīrī] talked to him [Karāy] about the situation of the people of Damascus and about lightening the claim on them and among other things he said: I love the House of Qalāwūn and I don’t want anyone to curse them (*an yad’ū ‘alayhim*), and he exerted himself in speech (*bālagha fī al-qawl*).”⁸² According to his account, the words of al-Ḥarīrī compelled Karāy to host a new meeting that ended with the tax being lowered from funding 1,500 troops to 400 troops. In addition, the governor suspended the claim until tax collectors from Cairo directly requested it.⁸³

This is what al-Jazarī says of this meeting:

He [Karāy] said to them: “ask the people of the city to appear before us at the palace (*al-qaṣr*).”⁸⁴ When the Friday prayer had ended they went to the palace and he gave them the most noble welcome and rose before them and they kissed the ground [before him]. Then he asked them to be seated, and he said to them, go and set it [the tax] to 400 troops and I will not collect it unless the noble riders appear, and I will strive not to extract anything from you God willing. Then they left him thanking him and calling his praise.⁸⁵

With this successful meeting, which shows the previously antagonistic governor exert himself in pleasantries in front of the Damascene negotiation party, al-Jazarī ends his account of the tax conflict. However, the wider story of Karāy’s rule in Damascus is rounded off in a scene that takes place after his arrest. As mentioned above, al-Jazarī quotes two sultanic declarations stating the reasons for Karāy’s arrest. The first of these two declarations ends with the following guarantee that local grievances will be addressed by Karāy’s temporary replacement Amir Sayf al-Dīn Bahādūr Āṣ (d. 729/1329): “he who has a need (*hāja*) should go to the honourable highness (*al-janāb al-‘ālī*) Sayf al-Dīn Bahādūr

1248). For the biography of the son, see, e.g., al-Ṣafadī, *A’yān* iii, 466. We can speculate that the other three Damascene authors omitted al-Ḥarīrī’s meeting with Karāy due to the general hostility of traditionalist Shāfi’īs toward the Ḥarīrī *ṭarīqa*, whose members practiced excessive ascetism and self-degradation. For Ibn Kathīr’s hostile attitude toward the *Ḥarīrīyya*, see Laoust, Ibn Kaṭīr 72.

82 Al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl Mir’āt* 1436.

83 Ibid. 1436–7.

84 This reference is unclear, but he could be referring to Qaṣr al-Ablaq (the Piebald Palace), which Sultan Baybars built in the 660s/1260s next to the Maydān al-Akhḍar.

85 Al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl Mir’āt* 1436.

Āṣ and present his case for him (*yaqḏīhā lahu*).⁸⁶ The declaration is then followed by a description of how Bahādūr received five or six plaintiffs in one session (*majlis*) on the same day.⁸⁷ The words of this declaration, combined with Bahādūr's reception of the plaintiffs, connects thematically with the scene of Karāy's arrival in Damascus, where he refused to meet with his new subjects. By ending the story of Karāy's rule with an inverted version of his arrival scene, al-Jazarī thus signals the restoration of a more ordered relationship between ruler and subjects.

Let us now, in light of al-Jazarī's account, return to the differences between the Damascene narratives. While the first three Damascene accounts tell a rather simple story of how a sudden crisis erupted and was alleviated through the help of God, al-Jazarī presents a much longer narrative about a protracted conflict between the governor and his subjects that peaks around the protest, after which representatives of the Damascenes are ultimately able to break the governor's recalcitrance at the negotiating table. This is perhaps a more realistic presentation of a political process, but it is just as ideologically charged. In fact, we could say that al-Jazarī's narrative conveys political agency onto the Damascenes in an even more explicit fashion than the other three narratives, since it states that they were able to handle the conflict with Karāy without relying on transcendental intervention.

In this respect, al-Jazarī's narrative about Karāy relates closely to Haarmann's characterization of him as a "Damaszener Lokalpatriot," an author consumed with portraying the Damascene experience of Egyptian hegemony under the early Mamluk sultans.⁸⁸ Nevertheless, al-Jazarī's portrayal of Karāy's governorship also shows the author reflecting on the relationship between Damascus and the Mamluk state in a more nuanced fashion than his three colleagues. As seen above, al-Birzālī, Ibn Kathīr, and al-Dhahabī all use the story of Karāy's arrest as an opportunity to identify the Damascenes as a divinely protected community in conflict with an oppressive external power. In contrast, al-Jazarī's account gives a more nuanced impression by underlining that the figure of Karāy does not reflect the character of sultanically representatives in general. This is exemplified both through the scene where the amirs cry out of compassion with lepers and orphans and in the description of how they intervene in the governor's interrogation of the protest leaders. A third example would be the stark contrast between Karāy's arrival in the city and the arrival

86 Ibid. 144o.

87 Ibid. 144o.

88 Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 26, 138.

of his interim successor Amir Sayf al-Dīn Bahādur Āṣ. What al-Jazarī's narrative seems to suggest is that Karāy's governorship constituted a breakdown of a functional relationship between rulers and ruled, which was since reestablished. In contrast, the previous three accounts seem more intent on using the injustices of Karāy to paint a picture of continued oppression reaching back to the previous century. On this basis, we could perhaps modify Haarmann's characterization of al-Jazarī by saying that his *local patriotism* leaves room for ideas of a less abusive form of sultanic rule based on the principles of accessibility as well as attention to and respect for local actors.

4 Conclusion

The six narratives about the arrest of Sayf al-Dīn Karāy al-Manṣūrī that I have examined in this article illustrate the tendency of Islamic historians to shape narratives about the same set of events according to their respective geographical and sociopolitical affiliation. According to the background of the author, Karāy's governorship and arrest are thus presented either as a courtly story about mutiny or a local story about unjust government or, in the particular case of al-Jazarī, as a story with two parallel tracks—one courtly and one local. Thereby, the findings in this article partially confirm the preconceived division of the historiographical landscape of the early Mamluk period into an *Egyptian* and *Syrian* tradition. When I say partially, it is because these six narratives also reveal the influence of factional and personal agendas, which cannot be ascribed solely to geography. In Ibn al-Dawādārī's case, the imperial angle on Karāy's arrest certainly reflects his military and courtly horizon. However, his account also shows his aspiration to create a panegyric description of Sultan al-Nāṣir's maturation and his interest in carving out a literal place in history for himself and his father, who were at the center of Karāy's demise but otherwise on the margins of early 8th/14th-century Mamluk politics. Moreover, in the case of Baybars al-Manṣūrī, we have seen how this author incorporates Karāy in a specific political campaign with a strong personal element. His depiction of Karāy as a tyrant legitimizes al-Nāṣir's arrest campaign and general consolidation of power after his third ascent to the throne. However, equally important is the fact that Baybars al-Manṣūrī utilizes Karāy's arrest to present his own ascent to the office of viceroy as part of the end of chaos and disorder in the sultanate.

When we reach the four Damascene authors, the idea of a geographical, sociopolitical identity looms even larger since we are dealing with a close-knit group of friends and colleagues from the same profession, who explicitly state that they copied from each other and wrote within a shared tradition. In

line with the idea of the *Syrian School*, I have identified similarities between the Damascene authors, such as a shared interest in promoting members of the Shāfiʿī school and condemning the taxation of *waqf* property. However, by focusing on their specific detailed treatment of one case rather than their chronicles at large, my examination also reveals differences, which the collective school label and a macroperspective on Syrian historiography tend to occlude. These differences relate to questions of whether Karāy was brought down by divine intervention through the aid of Ibn Taymiyya or as a result of nonlocal events. They also relate to the question of how the authors conceive the figure of Karāy in relation to the amirs as a group. This shows that while the *Syrian School* is a comprehensive concept for identifying a group of connected chroniclers who shared a specific model for writing history, further studies are needed, which go beyond the macro level and test the impact (and occasional lack of impact) of these connections on the narratives produced by these writers, who were evidently concerned with presenting both their collective and individual views and with advancing personal sociopolitical agendas as well as the agendas of the group or school.

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Al-‘Aynī and His Fellow Historians: Questioning the Discursive Position of a Historian in the Academic Field in the Cairo Sultanate

Clément Onimus

The Near Eastern 15th century experienced a densification in history writing that led to a multiplication of historiographical works and an intensification of the interactions between historians. These interactions sometimes became a motivation to orient a passage of a text or even to be the topic of the text. In other words, the subjects who used to write history sometimes became the objects of history, either in their lifetimes or after their deaths. Such a literary situation invites us to propose a reflection on the social position of historians in the academic field. This reflection pays tribute to the historians who first introduced the linguistic turn, inaugurated by Hayden White,¹ into Mamluk studies, like Ulrich Haarmann² and Donald Little,³ whose work is still the base for all new reflections on this topic. Recently, this epistemological theme has been renewed by the works of Konrad Hirschler,⁴ Stephan Conermann,⁵ and Jo Van Steenbergen,⁶ who deepened the analysis on the literary construction of history and the role of the author. The questions asked by the linguistic turn meet here the work of Pierre Bourdieu⁷ and his definition of the social field as it has been introduced into Islamic studies by Michael Chamberlain⁸ and his research on the ‘*ulamā*’ of Damascus. At the same time, an intense reflection on Egyptian and Syrian historians is at work, led by several modern scholars, such as Frédéric Bauden⁹ on al-Maqrīzī, René Guérin du Grandlaunay¹⁰ on al-

1 White, *Tropic*.

2 Haarmann, *Quellenstudien*.

3 Little, *History*.

4 Hirschler, *Authors*.

5 Conermann, Tankīz 1–24.

6 Van Steenbergen, Yalbughā al-Khāṣṣakī 423–43.

7 Bourdieu, *Raisons*.

8 Chamberlain, *Knowledge*.

9 See the series of Bauden’s *Maqrīzīana*.

10 Guérin du Grandlaunay, *Irshād*.

Sakhāwī, and Marlis J. Saleh on al-Suyūṭī.¹¹ Al-ʿAynī has also been the topic of a few articles by Nobutaka Nakamachi¹² and Anne Broadbridge,¹³ and he is one of the main characters in Joel Blecher's book on *ḥadīth* commentary, which introduces Foucault's analysis into the field.¹⁴

At this crossroads between the linguistic turn, Bourdieu's concepts, and medieval Middle Eastern studies, we meet this Near Eastern 15th century and its group of interacting historians. As these historians mention each other as figures in the narration of the history of the sultanate, their social interactions were expressed in the framework of historiographical intertextuality, so that each one became a literary character under the pen of his colleagues as well as under his own pen. My point in this article will thus be to understand what discursive procedures were implemented in the polyphonic and dynamic elaboration of an author as a *persona*. Between social interaction and literary intertextuality, I shall argue that history writing is an act of social communication where the representation of the historian is a major stake.

Among these historians, Badr al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-ʿAynī is known to be a prominent scholar and one of the highest officials of the Cairo Sultanate during the first half of this century. An analysis of the discourse about al-ʿAynī in the historiographical writing in relation to a description of his own discourse about his peers should contribute to defining not only his social position but also the literary *persona* that created these interacting texts. Through the case study of this exceptionally controversial scholar, I shall study four aspects of this *literarization* of an author: the definition of the social status of the author, the matter of the critical discourse, the social and literary evaluation standards, and finally, the dynamic process of *literarization*.

1 The Author's Literary Integration inside the Academic Field

Through various discursive procedures, the historians integrate or expel an author from among the academic elite. It appears that al-ʿAynī did experience such a literary social expulsion under the pen of his fellow historians.

11 Saleh, *Suyūṭī* 73–89.

12 Nakamachi, al-ʿAynī's chronicles 140–71.

13 Broadbridge, *Academic* 85–107. Anne Broadbridge gives a lot of detailed data related to al-ʿAynī, al-Maqrīzī, Ibn Ḥajar, al-ʿAsqalānī, and their rivalry.

14 Blecher, *Said the Prophet*.

1.1 *The Biographies and Their Absence*

One of the main historiographical genres was the biographical dictionary. The books of *tarājim* (i.e., biographies) present a series of short biographical notes about a number of people the author considers worthy of being remembered. This genre defines the milieu of the *aʿyān*, the notables. Thus, this genre creates the discursive reality of this social group and, at the same time, gives a historiographical existence and a literary unity of the life of each one of the individuals who is included in this milieu. In short, reading the life of al-ʿAynī in the contemporary biographical dictionaries asks the question: What kind of notable was this individual considered to be? What kind of *aʿyān* was al-ʿAynī? Symmetrically, the absence of a biography of our author in a biographical dictionary must be questioned by the modern historian and come as a clue that the author considers its object as unworthy to be considered as a member of the elite.

Some of the contemporaries of al-ʿAynī, such as Ibn al-Furāt and Ibn Khaldūn, did not write a word about him because they belonged to the previous generation who died before he became an important notable in Egypt. We cannot find a word about al-ʿAynī in Ibn Duqmāq's work either, because his chronicle ends before al-ʿAynī's rise. Nevertheless, some pieces of information about him can be found either in the biographies or the chronicles of two historians who belonged to the same generation and knew him personally: al-Maqrīzī in the *Durar al-ʿuqūd*¹⁵ and Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqālānī in the *Rafʿ al-iṣr*.¹⁶

1.2 *The Disappearing Intrigant*

There is no doubt that al-Maqrīzī wrote the very first biography of al-ʿAynī certainly before 829/1426, as he was appointed to his office of Ḥanafī great judge during this year and it is not mentioned. Actually, the narrative of al-ʿAynī's career stops in 801/1399 when he took the place of al-Maqrīzī at the office of *muḥtasib* in Cairo. Nevertheless, al-Maqrīzī gives a list of al-ʿAynī's works (15 books are quoted), including his chronicle, which, he says, is composed of 20 volumes. This piece of information shows that this list had been written later, at the end of his life in 845/1442, as the twentieth volume of al-ʿAynī's *ʿIqd al-jumān* ends in 850/1446. It is then clear that al-Maqrīzī has supplemented this short biography although he was reluctant to add any word concerning al-ʿAynī's later career and professional success.

15 Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-ʿuqūd* iii, 467–8.

16 Ibn Ḥajar, *Rafʿ* 432.

Al-Maqrīzī narrates only the beginning of al-ʿAynī's career in a few words that were probably inspired by al-ʿAynī's autodocumentary mentions¹⁷ in the volume of his chronicle that deals with Sultan Barqūq's reign,¹⁸ which was obviously written before the end of his reign.¹⁹ Al-Maqrīzī's longstanding quarrel with al-ʿAynī has then determined both the way he wrote the biography and the fact that he chose not to copy it in the *Muqaffā*.²⁰ The beginning of the quarrel in 801/1399 was a sufficient reason to expel any further information, just like if, in al-Maqrīzī's eyes, al-ʿAynī no longer was a member of the *aʿyān* after he took the *ḥisba* from him. Nevertheless, this quarrel is also a historiographical invention; not that it did not happen, but it was actually a very classical event in the competition for an office. Not just al-Maqrīzī and al-ʿAynī but also five or six other people from the judge's milieu used to alternate as holder of the offices of *muḥtasib* and *nāẓir al-aḥbās* (inspector of the pious foundations) according to the evolution of the balance of power between the amirs' factions.²¹ Be that as it may, it is worthy to note that al-Maqrīzī considered that this event meant the end of al-ʿAynī belonging to the *aʿyān* milieu, even though it was one of the causes of his own retirement from the competition for offices in order to concentrate on history writing. It is not impossible that al-Maqrīzī wrote this page while al-ʿAynī's career did actually suffer a gap (between 804 and 818/1402 and 1415), but the coincidence with his own failure in the public career is meaningful; nothing could be said about his rival after his own retirement.²²

1.3 *The Question of the Biographical Genre*

Ibn Ḥajar did not include al-ʿAynī in the *al-Durar al-kāmina* or in its *Dhayl*, but we find a biography in the *Rafʿ al-iṣr ʿan quḍāt Miṣr*, a biographical dictionary of the judges of Egypt that he wrote, as the title explains, in order to defend the reputation of these judges.²³ This page was written when al-ʿAynī was still alive,

17 I refer here to this notion as used in Hirschler, *Authors*.

18 Al-ʿAynī, *Iqd*, ed. Shukrī, 192–3.

19 In the beginning of the volume, al-ʿAynī prays for the length of Barqūq's reign. Al-ʿAynī, *Iqd*, ed. Shukrī, 120.

20 Al-Maqrīzī did not write a biography of al-ʿAynī in the *Muqaffā*, although most of the main historians, judges, and scholars of his time are mentioned in this book.

21 Among these people from the judges' milieu were: Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿUmar al-Ṭandabī, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Bakhānisi, Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Ṭunāḥī, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. al-Bannā.

22 On the academic rivalry between al-ʿAynī and his colleagues, see Broadbridge, *Academic 85–107*. For a detailed record of al-ʿAynī's career, see the introductions of Hajeri, *A critical edition*, and Maʿtūq, *Badr al-Dīn al-Aynī*.

23 Tillier, *Vie* 6.

as he died after Ibn Ḥajar (773–852/1371–1449), and more specifically after his dismissal from the judiciary in 842/1438, which is mentioned in *the Rafʿ al-iṣr*. There is a second biography of al-‘Aynī written by Ibn Ḥajar, hidden in the obituary of his father in the *Inbāʾ al-ghumr*.²⁴ It is explicitly reliant on al-‘Aynī’s own words in the *Iqd al-jumān* and looks like al-Maqrīzī’s biography, as it ends with his appointment to the *ḥisba* in 801/1399. We can, therefore, assume that it was written before al-‘Aynī’s appointment to higher offices during Sultan Barsbāy’s reign.

Generally speaking, these three biographies do not look like classical *‘ulamāʾ* biographies. The *tarājim* and obituaries of *‘ulamāʾ* are standardized with the same pattern: first the family, then the student’s journey (*riḥlat al-ṭalab*) and the teachers, then the positions and teachings, and finally, the works. Here the biographies only emphasize the positions and the interactions with high dignitaries and officials. The form is the main criticism: The fact that the text does not look like a classical *‘ulamāʾ* biography shows that, at that time, al-‘Aynī was considered neither by al-Maqrīzī nor by Ibn Ḥajar as a true scholar, that is, a man who would be worthy of interacting with them.²⁵ On the whole, both contemporary historians demonstrate themselves as reluctant to present comprehensive details about the formation, the teachers, the works, and the career of one of the main officials of the realm, although they both revised their text later. This reluctance to admit al-‘Aynī into the academic elite echoes Foucault’s notion of the “rarefaction of the speaking subjects,” as in these biographies, he appears to be considered illegitimate and unable to take part in the academic discourse society.²⁶

2 The Relativity of the Social Position of the Author

The chronicles give more details on al-‘Aynī than the biographies. The first mention of him comes from the annals of the same authors—al-Maqrīzī’s *Sulūk* and Ibn Ḥajar’s *Inbāʾ al-ghumr*. In both chronicles, al-‘Aynī’s first appearance is his appointment as a *muḥtasib* in 801/1399,²⁷ which ends the *Durar al-‘uqūd*’s biography. The formation of the author—his studies, teachers, and licenses—is

24 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʾ* ii, 107–8.

25 It would have been interesting to find obituaries of al-‘Aynī by al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Ḥajar, but both of them died before our subject. By “classical *‘ulamāʾ* biography,” I mean the *tarājima* as it is described by D. Eickelman in the *ET*. See Eickelman, Tardjama 242–3.

26 Foucault, *L’ordre* 38–49.

27 Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 970; Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʾ* iv, 33–4.

not mentioned in the chronicles, as it is a minor aspect of the biographies.²⁸ Indeed, his formation might have been of a lower level than that of his rivals. Blecher demonstrates that al-ʿAynī followed Ibn Ḥajar by presenting his intellectual genealogy at the beginning of his commentary of al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīh*, but without the ability to challenge his rivals' four-branch, tremendous intellectual genealogy.²⁹ Implicitly, the negligence of the formation means that, in the eyes of his fellow historians, al-ʿAynī's life and career, as presented by Joel Blecher through the thought of Alasdair MacIntyre, did not fit the standards of excellence that are expected of an elite scholar.³⁰ In other words, he owes his brilliant career to unacademic skills.

2.1 *A Criticism of the Social Ascension*

The chronicles emphasize an aspect that is mentioned in every biography of our author: his close relationships with the military elite. In the biography of the *Durar al-ʿuqūd*, al-Maqrīzī shows an unusual insistence on the intercessions he benefited from and that helped him to obtain different offices. The first one came from a scholar—Shaykh al-Sayrāmī—who had just been appointed to the management of the newly built madrasa al-Ẓāhiriyya. Al-ʿAynī met him as they were both making a pilgrimage in Jerusalem and followed him to Cairo, where al-Sayrāmī appointed him as a Sufi in the madrasa. He then evokes an event that all the other historians mention without any details: In 790/1388, al-ʿAynī was submitted to the humiliation of being expelled from the madrasa by its administrator, Amīr Jarkas al-Khalīlī.³¹ A few lines below, he insists on al-ʿAynī's intimacy with the Turks (i.e., the military elite), and particularly Amīr Jakam min ʿIwaḍ, who became his patron. Al-Maqrīzī tells that al-ʿAynī was appointed *muḥtasib* instead of him thanks to Amīr Jakam, which means that he was not appointed for his skills, honesty, and competency but thanks to his intrigues.

In both their chronicles, al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Ḥajar have a common way of dealing with al-ʿAynī's commitment with the military elite and repeat the same anecdotes. They both explain that he was a client of Amīr Jakam (d. 809/1407). Ibn Ḥajar also says that Jakam interceded in his favor in 801/1399,³² and al-

28 Only one of his Aleppine teachers is mentioned in the *Durar al-ʿuqūd* and Ibn Ḥajar, in the *Rafʿ*, names only the ones who had been his own teachers as well.

29 Blecher, *Said the Prophet* 106–8.

30 Ibid. 26.

31 Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-ʿuqūd* iii, 467–8; Ibn Ḥajar, *Rafʿ* 432.

32 He adds that he read this piece of information in al-ʿAynī's chronicle. Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʿ* iv, 33–4.

Maqrīzī relates that Jakam made him a *muḥtasib* in 803/1400.³³ Al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Ḥajar do not speak much about his relationships with Sultans Shaykh and Ṭaṭar, but they mention the intimacy between Sultan Barsbāy and al-‘Aynī, to whom he used to read his own chronicle,³⁴ eventually in order to condemn this friendship, which led Barsbāy to some injustice³⁵ or allowed al-‘Aynī to expel a rival, al-Tifihnī, from the judiciary by plotting against him with the sultan.³⁶ The special relationship that al-‘Aynī had with the military elite, thanks to his fluency in Turkish, is linked to negative connotations.

The insistence on his intense interactions with the military elite is then a common feature of the way al-‘Aynī is depicted by his colleagues, and a way to denigrate his successful career. It is an implicit criticism of his skills as a member of the judicial and academic milieu.

2.2 *The Question of the Qualifications*

Indeed, both al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Ḥajar question al-‘Aynī’s qualifications, either judicial or authorial.

2.2.1 Questioning the Judicial Qualifications

They both criticize al-‘Aynī’s policy but according to their different personal agendas. Al-Maqrīzī spent a lot of ink questioning his exercise of the *ḥisba*, a position for which he used to compete with al-‘Aynī, whereas Ibn Ḥajar constantly questions his exercise of judicial authority.³⁷

Al-Maqrīzī’s narrative of the scarcity of food in 818–9/1415–6³⁸ is an obvious summary of al-‘Aynī’s own narrative in the *Iqd al-jumān*.³⁹ At that time, al-‘Aynī was the *muḥtasib* of Cairo and thus responsible for the food supply of the capital city. But their texts present substantial differences. Al-‘Aynī explains in detail the difficulties that his predecessors encountered at the *ḥisba* during the first months of the scarcity. He quotes at length his dialogue with Sultan al-Mu’ayyad Shaykh, who asked him to administer this office, and says that he first refused because the people used to blame the *muḥtasib* for the drought. After

33 But he does not present such a commentary about his appointment in 801/1399. Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 1038.

34 Ibn Ḥajar, *Raf‘* 432.

35 Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iv, 698.

36 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* viii, 95–6.

37 Furthermore, both Ibn Ḥajar and al-Maqrīzī mention that al-‘Aynī’s exercise of the inspection of the *waqfs* (*naẓar al-aḥbās*) has been officially questioned and his accounts checked in 840/1436. Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 1002; Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* viii, 417.

38 Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iii, 343–4.

39 Al-‘Aynī, *Iqd*, ed. al-Qarmūṭ i, 241–4.

he agreed to wear the investiture robe, he went to the shore of Būlāq, where a lot of grain had arrived on boats, with Amir Īnāl al-Az‘ar, who had been appointed as an auxiliary to him. The population rejoiced because bread was back in the bakeries, although it was still expensive.

In al-Maqrīzī’s version, the appointment of al-‘Aynī is directly linked to the absence of bread. Moreover, al-‘Aynī and Īnāl’s arrival to the shore of Būlāq is presented as a catastrophe. Fearing looting of the boats, the amir, who was under the command of the *muḥtasib*, ordered his soldiers to charge against a dense but innocent mob. Some people were hurt; others executed. And despite the grain supply, it was sold at double its former price. In other words, al-Maqrīzī criticizes severely the way al-‘Aynī performed the *ḥisba* through violence and injustice.

The second scarcity of food happened when al-‘Aynī was in charge of the *ḥisba* in 828/1425. Although al-‘Aynī does not say a word about this event, al-Maqrīzī deals with it at length. According to him, the population of Cairo assembled around his house to demonstrate and protest against his administration of this office, as they considered him responsible for this hard situation. He had to flee to the citadel because he feared they would throw stones at him and complained to Sultan al-Ashraf Barsbāy, who repressed the starving mob severely and arbitrarily. Al-Maqrīzī concludes by saying that people used to hate al-‘Aynī because of these events and adds that the prices continued to increase. Later, he explicitly accuses al-‘Aynī of being the cause of the scarcity, because he did not coerce the sellers.

Whereas al-Maqrīzī presents al-‘Aynī as an incompetent and violent *muḥtasib*, Ibn Ḥajar is not that severe about his exercise of the *ḥisba*. On the contrary, he explains that al-‘Aynī had the courage to order the amirs to sell the grain of their granaries in 819/1416.⁴⁰

But Ibn Ḥajar constantly criticizes al-‘Aynī’s exercise of judicial authority before and after his appointment as Ḥanafī great judge on Rabī‘ II 22, 829/March 3, 1426. A series of disagreements related to several judicial sentences are mentioned by the Shāfi‘ī great judge following a judgment of atheism against a Shāfi‘ī scholar in Ramaḍān 828/July 1425.⁴¹ In 831/1428, another disagreement appeared about the legality of the destruction of a synagogue ordered by a Ḥanbalī judge and questioned by al-‘Aynī.⁴² In 835/1432, Ibn Ḥajar

40 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* vii, 204. He does not say much about the scarcity of 828/1426 but tells about the repression. Cf. *Ibid.* viii, 77.

41 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* viii, 75.

42 *Ibid.* 136.

contradicted a representative of al-‘Aynī about the destruction of a house.⁴³ Once again in 842/1438, they were opposed in a trial against a man who built his house against the wall of a mosque.⁴⁴ In 845/1441, the judicial controversy was related to the identity of the beneficiaries of a *waqf*.⁴⁵ In short, Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī constantly questions the sentences and judicial skills of al-‘Aynī. Unlike al-Maqrīzī, he did not compete with al-‘Aynī for a position, as they did not belong to the same law schools. Thus, their opposition cannot be considered a consequence of such competition for an office but rather a competition for status, or maybe a classical controversy between two law schools, although these kinds of controversies seemed rare during the 15th century according to Yossef Rapoport.⁴⁶

2.2.2 Questioning the Authorial Skills

Ibn Ḥajar also refers to a form of literary competition between himself and al-‘Aynī. This revolved more specifically around some mocking verses that he wrote against al-‘Aynī, particularly on the occasion when, in 820/1417, a minaret started to bow and was about to fall on the madrasa al-Mu‘ayyadiyya where al-‘Aynī used to teach.⁴⁷ To be precise, according to Ibn Ḥajar, he composed his verses to make a fool of the inspector of the buildings, Ibn al-Burjī, but “a member of the council” told al-‘Aynī that these verses were against him. Ibn Ḥajar does not accept this accusation, but perhaps this was not without some hypocrisy. Although he does not tell this in his chronicle, Ibn Ḥajar had not hesitated in the past to mock al-‘Aynī and his prosody. He does not quote al-‘Aynī’s rhymed answer, written in the margin of the published manuscript, but claims that somebody else wrote these verses, as everybody knew he was not able to write poetry. All those verses consisted of puns about towers, eyes, and rocks. The *nisba* of the Ḥanafī judge was near the word *‘ayn*, which means “eye,” whereas the *nasab* of the Shāfi‘ī judge was a homonym of the word *ḥajar*, which means “rock,” and the name of the inspector of the buildings was built on the root *burj*, which means “tower.” Joel Blecher says that these sorts of poetic insults, just like poetic praises, “could hold great sway in shaping one’s reputation.”⁴⁸

43 Ibid. 255.

44 Ibid. ix, 50–1.

45 Ibid. 156.

46 Rapoport, *Legal diversity* 227.

47 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’* vii, 280–1.

48 Blecher, *Said the Prophet* 66–7. Note that Blecher translates in English all these strophes.

This literary controversy could have been just an anecdote if it was not related to other episodes of the relationship between both judges and if some of the following historiographers had not insisted on it.

More important than these poetic polemics was the controversy between al-ʿAynī and Ibn Ḥajar related to their respective commentaries of al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Ibn Ḥajar accused al-ʿAynī of having plagiarized his commentary of al-Bukhārī (*Faḥḥ al-Bārī*): One of their common students would deliver to al-ʿAynī parts of the *Faḥḥ al-Bārī* that the latter integrated in his work (*ʿUmdat al-Qārī*) without attribution.⁴⁹ Ibn Ḥajar even wrote an answer, entitled *Intiqād al-ʿitirād*, to denounce al-ʿAynī's plagiarism and criticisms. Joel Blecher deals at length with this academic feud and develops convincingly the notion of plagiarism during the 15th century. Moreover, as Blecher demonstrates, Ibn Ḥajar constantly revised his work during these decades in order to answer specifically to al-ʿAynī's divergent interpretations of the *ḥadīth*. These revisions were thus expected to enhance the different hermeneutic methods they used to practice in their commentaries.⁵⁰ Considering these elements in regard to Pierre Bourdieu and Alasdair MacIntyre's thoughts, Blecher's analysis of this controversy consists of situating it at the intersection of social and intellectual history for both authors to discuss and revise their manuscripts, not only for social and material rewards but also for interpretative ends and the maintenance of standards of excellence.⁵¹ Despite the importance of this controversy in the Cairene intellectual stage, no contemporary author mentions it, not even Ibn Ḥajar himself. Ibn Ḥajar quotes al-ʿAynī's commentary among the list of his books and then just says that al-ʿAynī "wrote a great part of it and then supplemented it," a sentence with a double meaning, which we can understand as al-ʿAynī not having written the entire book—a hidden allusion to the plagiarism.⁵²

Al-ʿAynī's rivals emphasized some controversial aspects of his career in order to disqualify him as an interacting peer on the judicial and academic stage. But, by contrast with the judicial qualifications, the criticisms of the authorial qualifications are just alluded to in historiographical writings, although they are clearly questioned in the poetic and *ḥadīth* literature. Obviously, intellectual interactions with academic peers used to distinguish between the domains of

49 Blecher, *Said the Prophet* 68, 80.

50 As Blecher explains, Ibn Ḥajar insisted on the commentary of the *ḥadīth* by the *ḥadīth* and the work on the chains of transmitters, while al-ʿAynī worked on the rhetoric rules. Blecher, *Said the Prophet* 80–2, 116–7.

51 Ibid. 26, 56, 71–2.

52 Ibn Ḥajar, *Rafʿ* 432.

knowledge. So, the written expressions of these discussions were distributed according to the nature of the writings. Intertextuality appears then to be a *segmented* process of literary communication.

3 Intertextual Standards and the Evaluation of the Author

Historiography, more than any other domain of literary communication is tied to intertextuality as the historical writings evoke or at least name and list the texts of the authors. As we have seen, the absence of mention of the books and works is meaningful as an act of disqualification and expulsion of the rarefied society of discourse. More specifically, besides the judicial qualifications, the authorial qualifications of a historian are also at stake in history writing. As the domain of the historiographic discourse is generally politics, the intertextual debate relates the author to his commitment to the military elite or his political action as a member of the court and the judicial institution.

3.1 *Questioning the Historiographical Writing*

Ibn Ḥajar insists on the consequences that the patronage of the amirs had for al-'Aynī's historical writing. One striking example is that while he narrates the battle of al-Rastān that opposed Amir Jakam (in rebellion against Sultan Faraj) to Amir Shaykh al-Maḥmūdī on Dhū l-ḥijja 23, 808/June 11, 1406, he says that al-'Aynī exaggerates in favor of Jakam in his chronicle and quotes a few sentences from the *Iqd al-jumān* that end with the assessment that Jakam had fewer soldiers than Shaykh and that God gives the victory to whom he wants. The conclusion that gives the divine protection to Jakam is obviously the words that Ibn Ḥajar questions.⁵³ Al-'Aynī himself does not hesitate to write that he was under the protection of this amir. Although Donald Little considers him as more temperate than al-Maqrīzī in his study of year 824/1421,⁵⁴ we must recognize that he is sometimes a sort of activist in favor of Jakam's memory. According to him, no amir could be compared to him, relating to his courage and boldness.⁵⁵

Metatextuality in historiography is used here as a procedure of the disqualification of the historian. The value of his writings is questioned in relation to his political commitment since the author does not show enough neutrality. Impartiality—or rather, the appearance of impartiality—can then be ranked

53 Ibn Ḥajar, *Imbā'* v, 302.

54 Little, *Comparison* 215.

55 Al-'Aynī, *Iqd*, ed. Bīnū, 186–7.

among the standards of excellence in history writing. Transposing Blecher's analysis into historiography, it could be said that the discussion between the authors is not only related to the competitive social field they belong to but also to the maintenance of such standards; that is, at the intersection of social and intellectual history.

3.2 *Intertextual Recurrent Themes*

3.2.1 Recurrent Themes on al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Ḥajar in al-'Aynī's Chronicle

Al-'Aynī himself used these sorts of procedures of disqualification against his colleagues. It is noteworthy that he could forget to mention in his chronicle *Iqd al-jumān fī ta'rikh ahl al-zamān* some important former historians, like Ibn al-Furāt (d. 801/1399), on whom he did not write an obituary, whereas he did not hesitate to present his contemporary rivals with negative connotations. The evocation of the historians then appears to be linked to the competitive relationship he had with them.⁵⁶ For example, although al-Maqrīzī is almost never mentioned in the *Iqd al-jumān*, al-'Aynī only speaks about his appointments and dismissals as a *muḥtasib*; that is, the events related to his rivalry with al-'Aynī.⁵⁷ He is indeed the only one who gives a negative narrative of al-Maqrīzī's behavior when al-'Aynī, after having been appointed instead of al-Maqrīzī, was replaced by him in 801/1399. Al-'Aynī, as he himself says, was dismissed from the *ḥisba* because he refused to collaborate with Amīr Sayyidī Sūdūn's impious practices of speculation during a food shortage. Nobody accepted to replace him except al-Maqrīzī, whose honesty is then implicitly questioned.⁵⁸ The last mention of al-Maqrīzī that I was able to find in al-'Aynī's chronicle is his dismissal four months later, caused by another act of bribery when one of al-'Aynī's and al-Maqrīzī's competitors for the *ḥisba* bribed another amir to obtain this appointment,⁵⁹ which indicates that this practice was common.⁶⁰ The obituary of al-Maqrīzī is also particularly mocking. Al-Maqrīzī, he says, "used to write chronicles and to practice geomancy." The shortness of the text in itself looks like criticism as, besides this remark, he only mentions twice that he was appointed as a *muḥtasib*. Once again, he is the only historian who adds that this

56 As the chronicle ends in 850/1446, before the death of Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (d. 852/1448), al-'Aynī never wrote a biography of his preferred rival.

57 Al-'Aynī, *Iqd*, ed. Shukrī, 485. Al-'Aynī, *Iqd*, ed. Bīnū, 75, 142, 203.

58 Al-'Aynī, *Iqd*, ed. Bīnū, 186–7.

59 Ibid. 203.

60 Martel-Thoumian, Sale 50–83.

appointment was due to the intercession of Amīr Sayyidī Sūdūn,⁶¹ so we may suggest that this statement is an answer to the chroniclers who explain how al-‘Aynī benefited from Amīr Jakam’s intercessions.⁶² Obviously, al-‘Aynī’s biography of al-Maqrīzī is a specific answer to al-Maqrīzī’s biography of al-‘Aynī. The shortness of both texts and the abbreviation of the biography to the early career of each author aim to denigrate the crucial role they both had in the Cairene academic stage.⁶³

Regarding Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, al-‘Aynī mentions mainly his successive positions.⁶⁴ It is noteworthy that he suspects Ibn Ḥajar to be the author of some verses that made a fool of some other ‘*ulamā*’ during a quarrel.⁶⁵ We may suggest that this suspicion was caused by the minaret quarrel with al-‘Aynī, where Ibn Ḥajar claimed not to be the author of mocking verses against al-‘Aynī, as we have seen before. So, it seems that anonymous verses were a usual way of Ibn Ḥajar’s academic action.⁶⁶ Moreover, al-‘Aynī mentions several times Ibn Ḥajar’s rivalry with the Shāfi‘ī great judge al-Harawwī, who he obviously supports.⁶⁷ But, as far as I know, he never mentions his controversy with Ibn Ḥajar, neither about the plagiarism nor about the minaret affair. He quotes the verses that were written against al-Burjī, who was responsible for the construction, but he does not mention the verses Ibn Ḥajar wrote against him or his rhymed answer.⁶⁸

Nevertheless, al-‘Aynī mentions once their controversy, but he considers it a disgraceful and false accusation of al-‘Aynī’s enemies, probably his rival to the office of Ḥanafī great judge, al-Tifihnī.⁶⁹ It is true that Ibn Ḥajar was never in competition with al-‘Aynī for an office, unlike al-Tifihnī. Whoever was the accuser, he obtained al-‘Aynī’s and Ibn Ḥajar’s dismissals simultaneously in 833/1429 with the statement that they never cease to quarrel and neglect the

61 He is named Sūdūn b. ukht al-Zāhir in this text.

62 Al-‘Aynī, *Iqd*, ed. al-Qarmūṭ ii, 574.

63 As he was working on the year 824/1421, Donald Little mentions that it has been suggested that al-‘Aynī did answer to al-Maqrīzī without naming him in his chronicle. Little, Comparison 210.

64 Al-‘Aynī, *Iqd*, ed. Qarmūṭ i, 142–3; ii, 227, 251, 372, 403.

65 Ibid. i, 321.

66 Verses were a highly regarded act of communication among the ‘*ulamā*’. For example, al-‘Aynī quotes a legal question in verses that had been asked to him and his rhymed *fatwā*. Al-‘Aynī, *Iqd*, ed. Qarmūṭ, ii, 647. Thomas Bauer proposes a similar idea, insisting on the role of “occasionality” in Mamluk literature writing. See Bauer, Mamluk literature as a means of communication 23–56.

67 Al-‘Aynī, *Iqd*, ed. Qarmūṭ i, 352–3; ii, 251.

68 Ibid. i, 306.

69 The very negative obituary of al-Tifihnī is explicit on their hostility. Ibid. ii, 422.

common good of the Muslims.⁷⁰ The anecdote makes it clear, however, that our author did not lose the sultan's confidence after this event, and eventually, he was reappointed as *muḥtasib* two months later⁷¹ and replaced al-Tifihnī as great judge two years later.⁷² The controversy is then deliberately obliterated in the *ʿIqd al-jumān*.

Once again, the poetic and *ḥadīth* polemics are not at stake in the contemporary historiographical writings. By contrast, the mention of the intrigues and the commitment to the military elite are recurrent themes in the texts that mention the social life of al-ʿAynī, so that he had to justify himself and counterattack on the very same topics.

3.2.2 Al-ʿAynī's Justification

Indeed, his annals include several pages of justifications. Beyond the mentions of his fellow historians, al-ʿAynī's chronicle gives the subjective point of view of the author about the events of his life that his colleagues evoke. He is the first one who writes about his expulsion from the madrasa al-Zāhiriyya⁷³ and who mentions Amīr Jakam's patronage.⁷⁴ In regards to the exercise of the *ḥisba*, he justifies himself at length about his role during the scarcity of 818–9/1415–6 but does not speak much about the scarcities of 828 and 829 (1425–6) during which he was also the *muḥtasib*.⁷⁵ In contrast with the works of his colleagues, his intimacy with the sultans is described as positive behavior. In several pages of his chronicle, al-ʿAynī insists on his friendship with the sultans Shaykh⁷⁶ and Ṭaṭar,⁷⁷ to whom he wrote panegyrics,⁷⁸ and Barsbāy.⁷⁹ He also likes to say when he was a witness or a participant in an important event at the court of Sultan Barsbāy.⁸⁰ In one of these occurrences, his chronicle *mise en abyme*, the author mentions the book in the book when he says that he was reading it to Sultan

70 Ibid. ii, 372.

71 Ibid. ii, 373.

72 Ibid. ii, 418.

73 Al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd*, ed. Shukrī, 192–3.

74 Al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd*, ed. Bīnū, 186–7, 203.

75 Al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd*, ed. Qarmūṭ i, 241–4.

76 Ibid. i, 256–7.

77 Ibid. i, 256; ii, 155.

78 The rhymed panegyric to Sultan al-Muʿayyad Shaykh is entitled *Al-Jawhara al-sinniyya fī Taʾrīkh al-dawla al-Muʿayyadyya*. The nonrhymed version is entitled *Al-Sayf al-muhannad fī sīrat al-malik al-Muʿayyad*. The panegyric to Sultan al-Zāhir Ṭaṭar is entitled *Al-Rawḍ al-zāhir fī sīrat al-malik al-Zāhir*.

79 Al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd*, ed. Qarmūṭ ii, 227.

80 Ibid. ii, 313, 319, 320–1, 407.

Barsbāy.⁸¹ By contrast, he does not say a word about his difficult relationship with Sultan Jaqmaq. The last one of his panegyrics dedicated to him⁸² failed to reach his goal as Jaqmaq dismissed him progressively from all his offices. The dismissal from the office of Ḥanafī great judge in 842/1438 is another occasion to justify himself, as it is said to have been ordered “without any cause.”⁸³

It is striking that our three authors chose the same facts and the same topics to assess the value of al-‘Aynī’s life in their historical writings: his position vis-à-vis the military elite, his judicial competences and practice as a judicial officer and a historian, but considered that his competences as a poet and exegete were a minor, or at least a nonhistorical, matter.

Whereas al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Ḥajar’s historiographical writings define a subjective portrait of al-‘Aynī, integrating the object’s subjective point of view on his colleagues in such a complex dialogue that is allows us to draw more than portraits—an arena. Al-‘Aynī’s way to handle his colleagues is helpful in this project, as he speaks explicitly about them and actually stages this conflictual academic arena. His position is defined by the very same criteria his rivals used, but symmetrically. Al-Maqrīzī is accused of being an intrigant, and al-‘Aynī’s relationship with the military elite is considered a positive one. In short, in al-‘Aynī’s writings appears a symmetrical position that gives a second dimension to the portraits that can be found in his rivals’ literature. The perspective I would like to suggest in this article is then somewhat different than Anne Broadbridge’s description of the rivalry between those three historians.⁸⁴ My objective is not to define the social position of the author in the academic field but to show how this position finds its expression through a literary position. In other words, how is al-‘Aynī a *persona* in the polyphonic stage of historical writing?⁸⁵ In this stage, the fact that the authors chose to mention their rivals rather than other historians is a clue that this sort of writing can be apprehended as an act of competitive communication inside the academic field. This creates a dialogue where the authors conceive their works as an answer to the works of their colleague.⁸⁶ The recurrent themes and even events that are dis-

81 Al-‘Aynī, *ʿIqd*, ed. Qarmūṭ ii, 487.

82 The panegyric to Sultan Jaqmaq is wrongly considered as a panegyric to Sultan Baybars entitled *Taʾrīkh al-Malik al-Zāhir Maḥmūd Shāh Baybars*; BnF mss. Arabe 5818. It can be found in the Bibliothèque Nationale.

83 Al-‘Aynī, *ʿIqd*, ed. Qarmūṭ ii, 510.

84 See Broadbridge, *Rivalry*.

85 On the plurality of historiographical voices in the 15th-century Cairene academic scene, see Van Steenberghe and Van Nieuwenhuysse, *Truth* 147–87.

86 On this topic, the analysis of the chronicles can be compared to Blecher’s analysis of the revisions of the *ḥadīth* commentaries.

cussed are then engaged in normative intertextuality since the recurrence of these topics in echoing texts defines the standards of the social position of the historians related to his historiographical writings: fair in his judicial activity and impartial in his relationships with the military elite.

4 The Author's *Persona* as a Process

A question must then be asked: What dialogue do we have? Who answers to whom? The first piece of information about al-ʿAynī comes from his own work. The volume of the *Iqd al-jumān* related to the reign of Sultan Barqūq is plausibly the oldest of all these historiographical writings. But these books were not written in one day. For example, the first time al-ʿAynī is mentioned in Ibn Ḥajar's *Inbāʾ al-ghumr*, he is not named al-ʿAynī or al-ʿAyntābī but “al-Shaykh Badr al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Aḥmad al-Ḥanafī.”⁸⁷ In all the historiographical writings, it is the only time his geographical origins are forgotten in his name.⁸⁸ This is probably a clue that Ibn Ḥajar wrote this page early in his career and certainly before al-ʿAynī's onomastic title was stabilized.⁸⁹ This is just one example that shows that this historiographical writing worked as a complex dialogue where it is not always possible for the modern historian to say which author wrote first about an event or an individual. For example, Donald Little, as well as Sami Massoud, both note that when each one of them compares al-Maqrīzī and al-ʿAynī's chronicles, they were not able to clarify who copied the other.⁹⁰

4.1 *Different Temporalities in Biography Writing*

The various biographies belong to different temporalities, which may explain why they do not deal with al-ʿAynī as a regular member of the *ʿulamāʾ*. They have been written while their object was still alive. The *Durar* biography, as well as the *Inbāʾ* biography, may have been written when both al-Maqrīzī and al-ʿAynī had fallen into disgrace, at the end of Sultan Faraj's reign,⁹¹ so they do not hesitate to be negative. Ibn Ḥajar's biography in the *Rafʿ al-iṣr* was written later, when al-ʿAynī was one of the most prominent dignitaries of the state,

87 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʾ* iv, 33–4.

88 The author calls himself *muṣaṭṭiru-hu*—“its composer”—but sometimes he writes his own name, always with his geographical *nisba* “Maḥmūd al-ʿAynī” or “Maḥmūd al-ʿAynī al-Ḥanafī,” al-ʿAynī *Iqd*, ed. Qarmūṭ ii, 479, 498.

89 Perhaps he copied later some earlier notes.

90 Little, Comparison 210; Massoud, *Chronicles* 159–60.

91 No biography mentions his comeback under Sultan al-Muʿayyad Shaykh.

even after his dismissal as a great judge. So, he criticizes him with some caution. Symmetrically, al-ʿAynī criticizes al-Maqrīzī in his obituary, at a time he could not answer anymore. The temporality of writing is an essential aspect of historiography, as the career of the authors may evolve in various ways. In contrast with the biographies, the chronicles are written progressively, so the writing does not present a state of the life and career but several appearances that can show a dynamic representation of the academic field.⁹²

4.2 *Ibn Ḥajar's Changing Relationship with al-ʿAynī*

Accordingly, Ibn Ḥajar's *Inbāʿ* seems to have evolved with the renewal of the interactions between the two great judges. In Ramaḍān 836/April 1433, during Sultan Barsbāy's expedition to Āmid and the Northern provinces, al-ʿAynī invited Ibn Ḥajar to his homeland in ʿAyntāb (now Gaziantep, Turkey). What is interesting is that he did not invite the other judges or dignitaries who accompanied the sultan. These two old colleagues must have had a sort of mutual respect. Despite their longstanding rivalry, they interacted as equals and as what the sources would usually call *suḥba* (friendship).⁹³ From the 840s on (after 1437), Ibn Ḥajar makes positive notes about al-ʿAynī. For example, the narrative of al-ʿAynī's dismissal by Sultan Jaqmaq in Muḥarram 842/July 1438⁹⁴ is quite different from al-Maqrīzī's narrative,⁹⁵ as he explains that the amirs and secretaries did not walk in his successor's procession—as the custom demands—but went to al-ʿAynī's home. Al-Maqrīzī notes al-ʿAynī's popularity among the amirs at this occasion, too, but from the successor's negative point of view; the new judge demanded that no amir may appeal to him. Later, Ibn Ḥajar notes al-ʿAynī's popularity among the population as well, as he mentions the joy of the people when he was reappointed as a *muḥtasib* in Rabīʿ I 844/August 1440.⁹⁶ Symmetrically, in al-ʿAynī's work, as he himself endured a redemption under Ibn Ḥajar's pen, his controversy with the Shāfiʿī great judge is entirely obliterated.

92 Regarding the dynamic nature of chronicle writing, we may compare al-ʿAynī's writing to Frederic Bauden's statement about al-Maqrīzī who continued writing the *Sulūk* between 820/1417 and 844/1442. See Bauden, Taqī 181.

93 Al-ʿAynī does not speak much of this reconciliation and eventually the all travel to ʿAyntāb is quite shortly depicted, although this must have been an important time in his personal life as he intended, he says, to meet again his remaining brothers and friends. Al-ʿAynī, *Tqd*, ed. Qarmūt ii, 430–2.

94 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʿ* ix, 31.

95 Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* iv, 1069.

96 Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʿ* ix, 126.

This evolution in Ibn Ḥajar's writing is a witness of how important it is to apprehend the dyadic interactions in their diachrony. The redaction of a chronicle used to last a long time, generally decades, and this time-lapse has obvious repercussions for the writing of history. This marks an important contrast with the biographical dictionaries when it refers to the relationships with a biographed person.

Al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Ḥajar define in their historiographical writings their position vis-à-vis al-'Aynī. Besides some "objective facts," such as the institutional offices he held successively, both their positions emphasize some common informative choices: the relationship with the military elite, the intrigues, the lack of competences that are shaded by their personal agendas and interest in the *hisba* or the judiciary. Interestingly, the question of the relationship with the military elite and the practice of the intrigues in order to obtain important positions create, in their writings, a discursive incompatibility between a central position in the military and academic fields. But this discursive position in the social field changes according to the evolution of the relationships between the authors and the offices they held: even al-Maqrīzī, finally, added a list of al-'Aynī's works in a biography where the latter was, in his vision, a pariah of the academic field.

In short, under al-Maqrīzī's and Ibn Ḥajar's pen, al-'Aynī appears as an unusual scholar, a controversial and scandalous man, and a self-interested intriguer who compromised with the military power and, thanks to this commitment, manages to access undeserved positions, but who is also, finally, recognized as a leading scholar by his peers and a dignitary of the state in formation.

4.3 *Memory Writing and the Crystallization of the Literary Persona*

The evolution of the representation of our author did not stop with his death. Al-'Aynī (762–855/1361–1451) died when he was 93 lunar years old, in 855/1451, after having been a major dignitary of the realm for more than 30 years. What representation of him is left after his death? What memory of him did his epigones write? In contrast with the ones mentioned above by his contemporaries, the later biographies are longer and follow the structure of the classical *tarjama* of the *'ulamā'*.

Al-'Aynī's biography in Ibn Taghrī Birdī's (813–74/1411–70) *Manhal* is almost a panegyric.⁹⁷ The author was one of his students and got a complete license (*ijāza*) for all of al-'Aynī's works. He expressed a true devotion to his master,

97 Ibn Taghrī Birdī, *Manhal* xi, 193–7.

and he is the only historian who gives a positive version of all the controversial events of al-ʿAynī's life. His work inherits the intertextual themes and facts that had been emphasized by the former historians. He contradicts Ibn Ḥajar implicitly when he explains that he exercised judicial authority with competence and honor and when he claims that he did not become judge thanks to an intrigue. As al-ʿAynī himself, he considers with respect and admiration his intimacy to the sultans. The biography ends with an impressive list of the sciences at which he excelled (*fiqh*, *uṣūl*, languages, grammar, conjugation, history, *ḥadīth*) and an organized list of his books (commentaries, summaries, histories). The peculiarity of this biography is that the list of his sciences and works is presented twice: the first time when he deals with his role under Sultan al-Muʿayyad Shaykh and the second time at the very end of the biography. There are two possible explanations for this: Either Ibn Taghrī Birdī wanted to insist on his scholarly activity during Sultan Shaykh's reign, or he wrote the first biography in his early life⁹⁸ which he completed later, after al-ʿAynī's death in 855/1451.⁹⁹

Al-Sakhāwī (831–902/1428–97) wrote three biographies of al-ʿAynī that are all copies of the same text with minor differences, the main difference being the length.¹⁰⁰ Al-Sakhāwī's biography is the most complete one, and it is a model of the classical *tarjama* of the *ʿulamāʾ*. He deals at length with his formation, his works, and knowledge. As Ibn Taghrī Birdī, he is reliant on the pieces of information he held from his masters, and thus he refers to the recurrent themes and topics identified earlier. As he was a disciple of Ibn Ḥajar, he shows him as an intriguer and contradicts Ibn Taghrī Birdī when he explains the plots he made in order to become a Ḥanafī great judge. Despite this reliance on former biographies, al-Sakhāwī's biographies give a lot of original pieces of information that the contemporary authors neglected to mention. Examples are the fact that Ibn Ḥajar's son got a license from al-ʿAynī—a piece of information that confirms the impression that their relationship evolved a lot during their lifetime—and that he is the first person to present a detailed narration of the plagiarism affair. Nevertheless, al-Sakhāwī's texts are generally laudatory. This can be explained by the fact that he was also one of al-ʿAynī's students and that he deserved his congratulations. At the end of his version of the biography in

98 Certainly not under Sultan Shaykh's reign because he was ten years old at the end of the reign, but perhaps when he was al-ʿAynī's student.

99 Al-ʿAynī's obituary in the *Hawādīth al-duhūr* is a very short summary of his *Manhal*'s biographical note that insists on his close relationship with Sultan Barsbāy. Ibn Taghrī Birdī, *Hawādīth* ii, 354.

100 Al-Sakhāwī, *Dhayl* 428–40; al-Sakhāwī, *al-Tibr* iii, 140–8; al-Sakhāwī, *al-Ḍawʿ* x, 131–5.

the *Dhayl Rafʿ al-iṣr*, he adds two panegyric verses that evoke both his good exercise of the *ḥisba* and the panegyric he wrote for the sultan.¹⁰¹

Al-Suyūṭī (849–911/1445–1505) wrote three very different biographies of al-ʿAynī.¹⁰² The obituary of the *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara* is obviously a summary of the biography written in the *Nazm al-ʿiqyān*. The latter is a (short) model of a *tarjama* of the *ʿulamāʾ* as described earlier. But the *tarjama* of the *Kitāb Bughyat al-wuʿāh* is different.¹⁰³ The book is a biographical dictionary of the grammarians and the linguists, so the biography emphasizes this aspect of al-ʿAynī’s work. Although the tone is generally positive, al-Suyūṭī severely criticizes his poetry and evokes Ibn Ḥajar’s mockery about his verses in Sultan Shaykh’s rhymed panegyric. He is the one who quotes Ibn Ḥajar’s verses against al-ʿAynī about the bowing minaret, but not al-ʿAynī’s answer.

Al-ʿAynī’s obituary by Ibn Iyās (852–930/1448–1523)¹⁰⁴ is a short but exclusively positive text. He insists on his qualities as a historian by saying that his transmission of history was authentic and truthful. Interestingly, he mentions his skills in poetry as well, although there is little doubt that he knew the controversy about this question with Ibn Ḥajar. The conclusion consists of two laudatory verses composed by an anonymous poet.

Al-ʿAynī’s discursive representation is far more positive under his successors’ pen, with the exception of one of al-Suyūṭī’s biographies. During the decades that followed al-ʿAynī’s death, a memory was built that was not involved in the scholars’ controversies but was dependent on the texts that staged these controversies and on the personal relationships the new authors had with their object. Both Ibn Taghrī Birdī and al-Sakhāwī—the two first generations—were students of al-ʿAynī. The first one is laudatory and entirely dependent on his point of view. The second one is a student of both al-ʿAynī and Ibn Ḥajar, and he elaborates a consensual position that could not be possible before the reconciliation of his masters. Although they belong to the same generation, al-Suyūṭī and Ibn Iyās present very different texts. Ibn Iyās seems to mostly rely on Ibn Taghrī Birdī’s portrait, and it looks like a summary of it. But al-Suyūṭī is puzzling. His classical biographical note in two of his works seems to follow the academic consensus that had been elaborated at al-Sakhāwī’s time, and he recognizes the scholar of great renown that al-ʿAynī was. But he adopts entirely Ibn Ḥajar’s controversial position in the other biographical note. Thus, he writes two totally different biographies of al-ʿAynī, according to the topic of each one of these bio-

101 Probably Sultan al-Muʿayyad Shaykh.

102 Al-Suyūṭī, *Nazm* 174–5; *Ḥusn* 473–4; *Bughyat* 386.

103 Al-Suyūṭī, *Bughyat* 386.

104 Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʾ* 292–3.

graphical books. The common and main evolution of all these late biographies is its *tarjama al-'ulamā'* structure: al-'Aynī had become an eminent scholar after his death. He is then mentioned not just as an intimate of the military elite or as a powerful intrigant but as a great exegete and even as a poet. His elite academic status was finally recognized and published by his epigones. As they could not conceal the various controversies that he was submitted to during his lifetime, they made him a figure of the academic *fitna*.

5 Conclusion

The *literarization* of the author's *persona* is a complex social interaction where the organization of the academic field is at stake, not only through a performative biographical definition of its membership but also through the expression of the standards of evaluation of its member. Indeed, thanks to various discursive procedures, the historians exclude or integrate a scholar among the academic elite, and they emphasize some aspects of his life and career in order to evaluate his status inside the group. This evaluation is performative in that it may influence his reputation and then his career.

The place of the historians in this competition is emphasized because history writing, like poetry, is a specific means of communication inside this milieu that stages the social group, its members, and its quarrels. It creates a peculiar dialogue, which leads some of them to wish to take part in this dialogue in order to defend their social existence and their distinctive situation in their milieu by expressing it.

The 15th century experienced the success of this dialogue and historical controversy as a plurality of voices raised. Various representations of the objectivated author were then depicted according to the different agendas of the historians. In the case of al-'Aynī, this polyphony converged toward an intertextual dialogue where the social and authorial practices and qualifications were discussed in relation with selected themes and facts. What emerges from this polyphony is not only a common *persona* but also the definition of the social and literary standards of evaluation of the field. To be precise, only some of the standards of evaluation appear in the contemporary historiographical writings. Obviously, not everything is an object of history. The discussions in exegesis and poetry are known only thanks to exegetic and poetic writings or thanks to later historiographical writings. Like exegesis or poetry, historiography is just one of the competitive domains of knowledge, but it is also the intertextual place where the social activity of the authors is discussed by itself. In other words, historiography is not a social field *in se*. The social field where the competition

takes place is the *'ulamā'* milieu, in which historiography is a peculiar domain of knowledge as it stages the social activity of the scholars.

As history writing is a lifetime activity among the 15th-century Cairene scholars, it appears to be a dynamic social interactive behavior. The *literated persona* evolves according to the evolution of his career and social interactions with the other historians. In other words, the evolution of the discourse is related to the evolution of the position of the individual in the academic and military fields. This process continues after his death and becomes an act of moral sedimentation of the individual as an *exemplum* through the polyphonic crystallization of a common memory.

Al-ʿAynī appears to be a key author to understand these phenomena, not only because he stood at the core of multiple rivalries, networks, and social fields, but also because his social position and career evolved a lot during his life. His constant conflictual relationships with al-Maqrīzī led to a point-by-point controversy where, after having been denigrated as a member of the scholarly milieu, he tried to reverse either the accusations or the values that were understood to be the standards of evaluation in the academic field. Notably, al-ʿAynī argued in favor of the intimacy to the military power. Such a divergence of opinion shows their asymmetrical institutional situations. By contrast, the relationships with Ibn Ḥajar evolved toward a peer-to-peer controversy as the asymmetrical religious and judicial position was counterbalanced by al-ʿAynī's institutional superiority in historiography.¹⁰⁵ In the end, this situation led to a reconciliation on the basis of their common highly recognized status. The historiographical traces of both controversies and reconciliations were the literary basis for the diachronic construction of the ambiguous *persona* of a great scholar and a controversial courtier in the memory of the Cairo Sultanate, and finally a figure of the academic rivalries.

105 Blecher remarks this asymmetry as the Shāfiʿī judge was hierarchically superior to the Ḥanafī judge and had the privilege to comment the *Ṣaḥīḥ* in front of the sultan, but he doesn't note that, on the contrary, it was al-ʿAynī who had the privilege to read his chronicle to the sovereign. See Blecher, *Said the Prophet* 64.

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PART 3

*Literarization as Social
Practice: Textual Agencies*



Al-Biqā'ī's Self-Reflection: A Preliminary Study of the Autobiographical in His *Unwān al-Zamān*

Kenneth Goudie

1 Introduction*

When discussing the life of Burhān al-Dīn al-Biqā'ī (809–85/1406–80), a 15th-century Quran exegete and historian, modern scholarship has primarily focused on the three controversies in which he became embroiled and which defined the downward trajectory of his later career from 868/1464 until his death in 885/1480. These three controversies were, successively, on the use of the Bible in *tafsīr*, the poetry of Ibn al-Fārīd, and the theodicy of al-Ghazālī.¹ The sole exception to this trend has been the work of Li Guo, who has discussed the role of the autobiographical in al-Biqā'ī's chronicle, the *Izhār al-ʿaṣr li-asrār ahl al-ʿaṣr*.² By analyzing al-Biqā'ī's treatment of three episodes in his life—his infamous divorce case, the harem politics of his concubines, and the premature deaths of his children—Guo provides ample insight into how al-Biqā'ī integrated elements from his own life into his salvation history project.

Nevertheless, however interesting and insightful Guo's discussion is—both in terms of what it reveals about al-Biqā'ī's character and his approach to history writing—all three of these episodes date from after al-Biqā'ī's establish-

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- 1 For the Bible controversy, see in particular Saleh, Fifteenth. For an edition of al-Biqā'ī's treatise in defense of the Bible, see Ibid. *Defense*. For the controversy over the poetry of Ibn al-Fārīd, see Homerin, *Arab* 55–75. For al-Biqā'ī's involvement in the debate on the best possible world, see Ormsby, *Theodicy* 135–60.
- 2 Guo, *Tales*. For a more general study of the *Izhār al-ʿaṣr*, see Guo's *Al-Biqā'ī's*. For the edition, see al-Biqā'ī, *Izhār al-ʿaṣr*.

ment in Cairo. That is to say, Guo's focus is still primarily on al-Biqā'ī as a more mature member of the Cairene intellectual elite. The point at which Guo begins his examination of al-Biqā'ī's life is essentially the point at which al-Biqā'ī was at his most successful. Al-Biqā'ī's path to this success is relatively unexplored. His early life has only been discussed with brevity and is included more to provide the necessary context for discussion of his later life than as an object of study in its own right. This is, of course, a result of how our sources, in general, conceive biography. Unlike modern biographers, who focus on the dynamic and contingent development of character, our sources understand character as determined and fixed and are more interested in the ways in which their subject was exemplary or prototypical. Consequently, exploring the formative years of their subjects was less pressing.

In the case of al-Biqā'ī, however, we are in the fortunate position of having an earlier autobiographical notice, which is contained within his *Unwān al-zamān bi-tarājim al-shuyūkh wa-l-aqrān*. The first part of this notice was written in 841/1437 (that is, the year before he received his first appointments as Sultan Jaqmaq's *ḥadīth* teacher and as the *mufassir* at the Zāhir Mosque) when he was 32 years old and covers his life up until that point. To this, al-Biqā'ī added subsequent notes concerning the years 837/1433–4, 842/1438–9, and 845/1441–2. This notice has been discussed before. Muḥammad al-Iṣlāḥī, the editor of a medieval handlist of al-Biqā'ī's works, used it as the basis of his introductory biography of al-Biqā'ī.³ That being said, al-Iṣlāḥī's discussion of it is descriptive rather than analytical and is essentially a quotation of the notice with interspersed editorial remarks. Otherwise, Walid Saleh is the only scholar to discuss this notice, but he uses it only to make minor corrections to Guo's biography of al-Biqā'ī, upon which he based his own brief biography of al-Biqā'ī.⁴

When discussing Arabic autobiography, the main point of reference remains the 2001 volume entitled *Interpreting the self: Autobiography in the Arabic literary tradition*, edited by Dwight F. Reynolds.⁵ This volume, which consists of an analysis of roughly 140 Arabic autobiographical texts written between the 9th and 19th centuries alongside partial translations of 13 autobiographies, argues convincingly both against the supposed rarity of Arabic autobiography and for the vitality of the tradition.

Rather than approaching the Arabic tradition through the lens of the Western tradition, *Interpreting the self* analyzes the texts on their own merits and highlights four recurring features that played an important role in their authors'

3 Al-Iṣlāḥī, *Fihrist* 19–57.

4 Saleh, *Defense* 12–3.

5 Reynolds, *Interpreting*.

self-representations and construction of individual identities. These features are the portrayal of childhood failures and emotions through a description of action, the narration of dreams as reflections of authorial anxiety, and the use of poetry as a discourse of emotion.⁶ In doing so, the study demonstrates that while the texts may appear less personal than modern autobiographies, they, nevertheless, still are exercises in individuation and clearly communicate their authors' personalities. Where they differ, however, is in what they represent. Within the Arabic tradition "[t]he autobiography did not represent a unique moment for self-representation but rather a frame or summation for revealing a certain portrait of the whole, a context within which one's work would then be placed and evaluated."⁷ The primary purpose, then, of many of these autobiographies was to demonstrate their authors' positions within and relationship with the broader transmission of knowledge through, for example, reference to their lineages, the authority they acquired through their education, and their contributions to that knowledge.

An interesting observation is the existence of direct historical connections between many of the texts and their authors. That is, when taken as a whole, the autobiographies reveal a recurring pattern of historical "clusters" of autobiographical production by authors who were either personally acquainted or who had read each other's texts. Moreover, in some cases, the autobiography of a particularly influential or respected scholar seems to have motivated the writing of an entire sequence of autobiographies.

One such cluster appears in the mid-9th/15th century and continues into the 10th/16th century. This cluster, which is particularly large, revolves around Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (d. 852/1449), who penned a number of autobiographies and who was emulated by a number of his students. For example, al-Sakhāwī (d. 902/1497) included a substantial autobiography in *al-Ḍaw' al-lāmi' fī a'yān al-ḵarn al-tāsi'* and penned an independent autobiography as well, and was followed by his own students, Ibn Dayba' (d. 944/1537) and Zarrūq (d. 933/1493). Another of Ibn Ḥajar's students, al-Suyūfī (d. 909/1505), wrote a substantial autobiography that was emulated by the likes of Ibn Ṭulūn al-Dimashqī (d. 953/1546) and al-Sha'rānī (d. 973/1565). The latter's autobiography is the most expansive premodern autobiography known to modern scholarship.⁸ There was, evidently, something in the air in the 9th/15th century, and it is against this backdrop that al-Biqā'ī's own autobiography was produced. As

6 Reynolds, *Interpreting* 243.

7 Ibid. 247.

8 On his cluster of autobiographies, see Reynolds, *Interpreting* 56.

will be detailed below, he was himself a student of Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī and owed much of his success to him.

Inspired on the one hand by the observations made in *Interpreting the self* and on the other by the Geertzian concept of “thick description,”⁹ this chapter will move beyond a brief and positivist reconstruction of al-Biqāʿī’s life and treat his autobiography not merely as an innocent record of his early life, through which we can reconstruct the chronology of his formative years, but also as a carefully crafted literary work in its own right. There was a reason why al-Biqāʿī, at 32 years of age, decided to write his autobiography: it is a text with a purpose, and it was designed to communicate. The contention of this article is that al-Biqāʿī’s autobiography can be read in two ways: one simple and textual; the other complex and subtextual. On the one hand, it can be read positively as an account of his formative years; on the other hand, it can be read as an attempt to give meaning to those years. This article will, therefore, take a two-fold approach to the autobiography, dealing firstly with what al-Biqāʿī tells us about his formative years before moving to exploring how al-Biqāʿī sought to give meaning to them and what he intended to communicate.

2 The *Unwān al-Zamān*

A number of manuscripts of the *Unwān al-zamān* survive. A 9th/15th-century copy is held in the Köprülü Library under the classmark 119, covering some 386 folios.¹⁰ An incomplete and undated copy is held in the Aḥmadiyya Library in Tunis under the classmark MS Tarājim 5034, covering 193 folios.¹¹ A second, incomplete copy, dating back to the 11th/17th century, is held in the Maulana Azad Library of the Aligarh Muslim University under the classmark MS ʿArabiyya akhbār 40, covering 166 folios and mistitled as the *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt al-shāfiʿiyya*. The Dār al-Kutub holds a copy under the classmark MS Taʾrīkh 4911, which consists of four parts (the first consisting of 256 folios; the second 250; the third 264; the fourth 194) and which was copied in 1352/1933 by Muḥammad Qīnāwī.¹² The Taymūr collection, housed at the Dār al-Kutub, also contains a full copy of the *Unwān al-zamān* in four parts (consisting of 500, 426, 447, and 422 pages respectively) under the classmark MS Taʾrīkh Taymūr 2255, which was

9 See in particular Geertz, *Thick*.

10 Şeşen, İzgi and Akpınar, *Fihris* 572.

11 Manşūr, *Fihris* 442.

12 Dār al-Kutub al-Mişriyya, *Fihris* viii, 186.

copied in 1345/1926 by Maḥmūd Şidqī.¹³ Both Qināwī and Şidqī worked from a photographic reproduction of MS Köprülü 119, which is held in the Dār al-Kutub under the classmark MS Ta'riḫ 1001 and which likewise consists of four parts.¹⁴ Reference is also made to a manuscript of the *'Unwān al-zamān* being held in the Iraq Museum, but no details are available.¹⁵

The work has been partially edited by Ḥasan Ḥabashī, with the letters *nūn*, *hā'*, *wāw*, and *yā'* missing.¹⁶ Ḥabashī's edition is, however, problematic because it is not entirely clear upon which manuscripts it is based. Ḥabashī states that he relied upon two manuscripts, the first of which was held in the Taymūriyya Library under the number 119 and which had originated in the Süleymanīye Library; the second was a photographic reproduction held in Tunis of a manuscript located in the 'Ārif Ḥikmat Library in Medina.¹⁷ Concerning the first, it is likely that he worked from MS Köprülü 119. The text of the edition accords well with this manuscript, and al-İşlāḫī suggests that Ḥabashī based his upon a photographic reproduction.¹⁸ Concerning the second, al-İşlāḫī has argued that this cannot be Tarājim 5034 in the Aḥmadiyya Library because that manuscript is not a photographic reproduction and that the manuscript held in the 'Ārif Ḥikmat Library, MS Ta'riḫ 43, is actually a copy of the *Izhār al-ʿaṣr* and thus has no relationship to the *'Unwān al-zamān*.¹⁹ The issue is further exacerbated by the images following Ḥabashī's introduction, which are a combination of images from two manuscripts of the *'Unwān al-zamān* and the manuscript of al-Biqā'ī's chronicle, the *Izhār al-ʿaṣr*.

Given the uncertainty over the provenance of the edition, the present discussion relies primarily upon MS Köprülü 119 and MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40. As stated above, MS Köprülü 119 is a complete copy from the 9th/15th century, while MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 is an incomplete and later copy. It was completed on Rabī' 1 12, 1069 (December 8, 1658) by Khalīl b. 'Alī al-Ḥusaynī al-Şamādī and ends midway through the biography of 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Anbar. Curiously, the text runs continuously, and there is no indication that Khalīl b. 'Alī al-Ḥusaynī al-Şamādī was aware that his biography of 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Anbar was

13 See the information available at: <https://ihodp.ugent.be/bah/mml01%3A000000390>.

14 Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, *Fihris* v, 273.

15 In his edition of Ibn Fahd's *Muʿjam*, Muḥammad al-Zāhī notes that Dr. Muḥammad Abū l-Afjān informed him of a copy of the *'Unwān* in the Iraq Museum. See Ibn Fahd, *Muʿjam* 338n4.

16 Al-Biqā'ī, *'Unwān*.

17 Ibid. i, 11.

18 Al-İşlāḫī, *Fihrist* 171.

19 Ibid.

truncated or that the entire work was much longer. This suggests that the exemplar from which he worked was itself only partial.

The autobiography as it appears in MS Köprülü 119 covers folios 71^v–9^r and can be divided into two distinct sections. The first of these is the more purely autobiographical, advancing as it does chronologically in the third person from al-Biqā'ī's birth until 841/1437, the year in which we are told the autobiography was written; this section covers folios 71^v–3^r. The second section, which comprises folios 73^r–9^r, begins with a cryptic dream, a reference to his studies with Ibn Ḥajar, and his performance of jihad and the hajj. However, the bulk of it is given over to quoting various of al-Biqā'ī's poems and provides only scant biographical information.

In MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40, the autobiography spans folios 96^r–107^r and contains both of these sections, covering folios 96^r–8^v and 98^v–106^r respectively. To these, it adds a third section, comprising folios 106^r–7^r, which is written in the first person and begins with a remembrance of his mother and then refers to events in 845/1441–2 before moving back in time to discuss his appointment as Sultan Jaqmaq's *ḥadīth* teacher in 842/1438–9. The text in MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 is cleaner, with fewer distortions and mistakes than MS Köprülü 119. That being said, there are occasional passages that have been omitted in MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40. For instance, the material that prefaces the poetry in MS Köprülü 119—the cryptic dream, studies with Ibn Ḥajar, his performance of jihad and the hajj—is not present in MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40.

Taken together, the differences between the two manuscripts suggest that at least two recensions of the *Unwān al-zamān* were in circulation. It seems likely that MS Köprülü 119 contains al-Biqā'ī's earliest extant attempt to compose his autobiography and represents how he conceived of his formative years in 841/1437. Contrarily, the text of MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40, which must date back to circa 845/1441–2 because it does not mention anything after this year, is the revised version of the autobiography, to which al-Biqā'ī added additional material.²⁰ The following discussion will focus primarily on how al-Biqā'ī presented his formative years in MS Köprülü 119 and will then discuss how the additional material in MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 corroborates or modifies these conclusions.

20 It is unclear whether the material present in MS Köprülü 119 and absent in MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 was omitted by al-Biqā'ī as part of his revision or by Khalīl b. 'Alī al-Ḥusaynī al-Ṣamādī in the process of copying the work.

3 A Positivist Approach

Al-Biqā'ī begins his autobiography with an extended discussion of his lineage before moving to his birth in the village of Khirbat Rūḥā in al-Biqā' al-'Azīzī and thence to the murder of his father, two of his uncles, and six other relatives in Sha'bān 821/September 1418. As a result of this, his mother and maternal grandfather took him to Damascus in 823/1420, where he embarked in earnest upon his *riḥla fi ṭalab al-'ilm*, which concerns the bulk of the autobiographical material. He provides the names of a select few of the shaykhs with whom he studied and copious titles of the books with which he became acquainted. He concludes this first section of the autobiography with a number of dreams and visions.

Al-Biqā'ī thus provides a wealth of information with which we can reconstruct his formative years. The autobiography is furthermore so replete with dates—when he met certain shaykhs and when he visited particular cities—that we can pinpoint his movements in particular periods. We know, for instance, that he first traveled to Cairo in 834/1430–1 and began studying with Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, that he traveled to Jerusalem at the end of 834/1431 to study, among other works, the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd, before returning to Cairo in early 835/1431. This chronological information has been schematized in Table 10.1. Instead, our focus will be on the information al-Biqā'ī provides about his lineage and his origins and those shaykhs he singles out in his autobiography.

3.1 *Lineage and Origins*

After recounting his lineage, Ibrāhīm b. 'Umar b. Ḥasan al-Rubāṭ b. 'Alī b. Abī Bakr al-Biqā'ī al-Shāfi'ī Abū l-Ḥasan al-Ribāṭ, al-Biqā'ī tells us that he was from a village called Khirbat Rūḥā in al-Biqā' al-'Azīzī and that he was from the Banū Ḥasan, of which there were three branches: the Banū Yūnus, the Banū 'Alī, and the Banū Makkī. These branches settled throughout al-Shām, with groups in the country of Aleppo, Majdal Ma'ūsh—one of the villages in the north of the Biqā'—and in the lands of Karak al-Shawbak. He further states that this village of some 500 inhabitants—presumably Khirbat Rūḥā—was where the Banū Ḥasan originated. It was from this original village that a final group emigrated to the region of Bilbays in Egypt.²¹

21 MS Kōprülü 119 fol. 71r; MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fol. 96r; al-Biqā'ī, *Unwān* ii, 61.

TABLE 10.1 Chronology of al-Biqā'ī's formative years

Year	Event
809	Birth of al-Biqā'ī in the village of Khirbat Rūhā in al-Biqā' al-'Azīzī.
821	Sha'bān 9 Al-Biqā'ī's family, the Banū Ḥasan are attacked. Death of his father and two uncles; the young al-Biqā'ī is left seriously injured.
823	Al-Biqā'ī and his surviving family members arrive in Damascus, where al-Biqā'ī begins studying the <i>qirā'āt</i> .
826	Al-Biqā'ī begins studying grammar, <i>ṣarf</i> , and <i>fiqh</i> with Abū Ḥāmid Tāj al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Bahādur Sibṭ b. al-Shahīd.
827	Arrival of Ibn al-Jazarī in Damascus, with whom al-Biqā'ī studied the <i>'ashr</i> and memorized his didactic poem, <i>Ṭayyibat al-nashr fi al-qirā'āt al-'ashr</i> . Al-Biqā'ī travels to Jerusalem and studies <i>ḥisāb</i> with al-'Imād Ismā'īl b. Sharīf, a student of Ibn al-Hā'im.
	Ramaḍān Death of al-Biqā'ī's mother.
	Dhū al-Qa'da Return of al-Biqā'ī to Damascus. Al-Biqā'ī studies the treatise of al-Ḥāwā with Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba.
831	Ramaḍān Death of Ibn Bahādur.
832	Beginning Al-Biqā'ī travels to Jerusalem, and studies with Zayn al-Dīn, one of Ibn al-Hā'im's students, and again with al-'Imād Ismā'īl b. Sharīf.
834	Arrival of al-Biqā'ī in Cairo. Beginning of his association with Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, with whom he studies <i>ḥadīth</i> .
	End Al-Biqā'ī travels to Jerusalem and studies the <i>Sunan Abī Dāwūd</i> and other works.
835	Beginning Al-Biqā'ī returns to Cairo.
836	Al-Biqā'ī accompanies Ibn Ḥajar on al-Ashraf Barsbay's campaign against Qarā Yulūk; he studies with a number of shaykhs, the most prominent of whom was Shaykh Burhān al-Dīn al-Muḥaddith, Ḥāfiẓ al-Shām.
837	While returning to Cairo, al-Biqā'ī stops in Damascus and recites to the shaykhs there. Al-Biqā'ī travels to Damietta and Alexandria. Al-Biqā'ī returns to Cairo.
841	Al-Biqā'ī writes the first part of his short autobiography in the <i>'Umwan al-zamān</i> .
842	On the recommendation of Ibn Ḥajar, al-Biqā'ī is appointed to teach <i>ḥadīth</i> to Sultan Jaqmaq in the Citadel of Cairo. Beginning of his position as the <i>mufasssīr</i> at the Zāhir Mosque in Cairo.

Al-Biqā'ī then moves to position himself within the Banū Ḥasan. Although he is forthright about the fact that he does not know his lineage beyond his great-great-grandfather, Abū Bakr, through comparison with the lineages of two of his relatives, whom he refers to as his *ibn 'amm*, he concludes that he is likely from the Banū Makkī. His relatives were called Muḥammad b. Ḥasan b. Makkī b. 'Uthmān b. 'Alī b. Ḥasan and 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. 'Alī b. Yūnus b. Ḥasan. Al-Biqā'ī argues that his relatives count only four generations between themselves and Ḥasan and that because they claim descent from 'Alī b. Ḥasan and Yūnus b. Ḥasan, respectively, then he must be descended from Makkī b. Ḥasan. Al-Biqā'ī further notes that while he does not know his lineage beyond Ḥasan, he has been told that the Banū Ḥasan “traced their lineage to Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ al-Zuhrī, one of those who will witness Paradise,” and that the uncle of Muḥammad b. Ḥasan believed that they had a *nisba* that confirmed this.²² Al-Biqā'ī's attempts to discover this *nisba*, however, were confounded. While traveling with Ibn Ḥajar toward Āmid as part of al-Ashraf Barsbay's 836/1433 campaign against Qarā Yulūk, he asked a group of his relatives in Damascus about the *nisba*; although they deemed it credible, the *nisba* itself was unknown.²³

The main point to be made about al-Biqā'ī's knowledge of his genealogy is the “fuzziness” of the link between his extended kin group and their ostensible ancestor, Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ. In many ways, his knowledge of his genealogy recalls how modern Bedouin remember and record their genealogies. Like modern Bedouin, al-Biqā'ī is more knowledgeable about the microgenealogy of his immediate kin group but is otherwise vague about his genealogy. That he “must have been” a descendant of Makkī b. Ḥasan likewise recalls how Bedouin arrange their genealogies according to what is believed rather than what is known. Like modern tribesmen, al-Biqā'ī and his extended kin group remembered what was useful for them—everyday relationships—and forgot that which had no practical import—their links to an ancient ancestor.²⁴

In this way, al-Biqā'ī's genealogical knowledge allows us not only to reconstruct how he conceived his extended kin group but also suggests that he was among the first of his family to make the transition into a more urbanized and literate society. As Zoltán Szombathy notes: “increasing urbanization and literacy seem regularly to result in an ever greater, rather than lessened, care

22 MS Köprülü 119 fol. 71^v; MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fol. 96^{r-v}; al-Biqā'ī, *Umwān* ii, 62.

23 MS Köprülü 119 fol. 71^v; MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fol. 96^r; al-Biqā'ī, *Umwān* ii, 62.

24 The utility—and problems—of using the genealogical knowledge of modern Bedouin to understand premodern genealogical knowledge has been outlined by Hugh Kennedy. See Kennedy, Oral. On Bedouin genealogy more generally, see Lancaster, *Rwala*.

over genealogies: the more literate and scholarly a community is, the greater degree of precision is needed in formulating *nasab* relationships before they can gain widespread recognition ... the keeping of *nasabs* (*ḥifẓ al-nasab*) is incomparably more meticulous in urban communities than among nomads.”²⁵ That al-Biqā’ī does not have more meticulous knowledge of his *nasab* suggests that he was the first of his family to be exposed to the mores of the scholarly urban communities. This transition is perhaps more fruitfully understood, not necessarily as one from an oral tradition to a literate tradition, as Szombathy and Kennedy suggest, but as a transition from the periphery to the center, both physically and intellectually.

Indeed, the autobiography is fundamentally an account of how he made this intellectual transition. This is, of course, hardly surprising considering that it is contained within a biographical dictionary of his teachers and peers. The autobiography and the *Unwān al-zamān* have the same function: they are designed to underscore his transition from his peasant background to membership in the intellectual elite by memorializing those links he had established with the intellectual elite. Where the *Unwān al-zamān* is the autobiography writ large, the autobiography is the *Unwān al-zāman* writ small. In this sense, we can understand the scholars al-Biqā’ī mentions in his autobiography as particularly influential. That is, these are the links he sought to emphasize over all others. It behooves us, then, to examine further which scholars he chose to mention.

3.2 *Shaykhs*

The shaykhs al-Biqā’ī names in his autobiography can be divided into two categories: those who most influenced the direction of his education and those who were particularly famous in 15th-century intellectual circles. In the case of the latter, his giving pride of place to prominent scholars is one way in which he could gain for himself some measure of the social capital that accrued to their names. These categories, as will be seen, are not mutually exclusive. In terms of balance, however, it is clear that al-Biqā’ī affords more attention to his influential teachers than he does to his famous teachers.²⁶

25 Szombathy, *Genealogy* 27.

26 There is an issue here of circularity when it comes to determining which of the scholars he mentions were prominent; scholars deemed prominent today are not necessarily those who were considered prominent by their peers. Oftentimes, it can come down simply to the vagaries of chance, which allowed the works of one scholar to survive over those of another. This is compounded by the fact that the biographical sources from which we work have interpretative schema—often unarticulated—which in turn delineate “fame” and “importance” in particular ways.

Thus, al-Biqā'ī tells us that after his arrival in Damascus in 823/1420, he began studying the Quran and came to know the seven versions of the *qirā'āt*. He also memorized part of the *Hirz al-amānī fī wajh al-tahānī* of al-Shāṭibī (d. 590/1194).²⁷ His teacher during this time was Sharif al-Dīn Ṣadaqa b. Salāma b. Ḥusayn al-Ḍarīr al-Maṣḥarā'ī (d. 825/1422).²⁸ Sharif al-Dīn al-Maṣḥarā'ī enjoyed a reputation as a preeminent scholar of the *qirā'āt*, and with him, al-Biqā'ī also began to study the *tajwīd* of the Quran. Very little is recorded about Sharif al-Dīn al-Maṣḥarā'ī, with his most extensive biographies being provided by al-Biqā'ī and, not unexpectedly, al-Sakhāwī.²⁹ Otherwise, Sharif al-Dīn al-Maṣḥarā'ī appears in Ibn al-Jazarī's *Ghāyat al-nihāya fī ṭabaqāt al-qurrā'*, a biographical dictionary of Quranic reciters.³⁰ The information provided by all of these biographies is scant and primarily focused upon Sharif al-Dīn al-Maṣḥarā'ī's own studies and work on the *qirā'āt*.

The year after the death of Sharif al-Dīn al-Maṣḥarā'ī, al-Biqā'ī began studying grammar and *fiqh* with Tāj al-Dīn Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad b. Bahādur b. 'Abdallāh al-Jalālī (d. 831/1428).³¹ Much like Sharif al-Dīn al-Maṣḥarā'ī, Ibn Bahādur made little impact in the biographical literature of the period. Al-Biqā'ī and al-Sakhāwī are his only biographers of note. Ibn Bahādur was born at the end of the 8th/14th century and was the grandson of one Faṭḥ al-Dīn b. al-Shahīd, about whom no information seems to have survived. He devoted himself to the study of the Quran and became distinguished for studying it. Al-Biqā'ī continued to study with Ibn Bahādur until the latter died in Ramaḍān 831/June 1428. Touchingly, al-Biqā'ī tells us of his teacher that he, al-Biqā'ī, "did not profit from anyone as he profited from him."³²

Concurrently, al-Biqā'ī appears to have developed a sustained and fruitful relationship with one al-'Imād Ismā'īl b. Ibrāhīm b. Sharif, with whom he began studying in 827/1423–4 in Jerusalem.³³ Al-'Imād b. Sharif is a rather enigmatic

27 This work is known best as *al-Shāṭibīyya*. It was a versification of al-Dānī's compendium of the *qirā'āt*, entitled the *Kitāb al-taysīr*.

28 MS Köprülü 119 fol. 72^r; MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fols 96^v–7^r; al-Biqā'ī, *Unwān* ii, 62.

29 For al-Biqā'ī's biography of Sharif al-Dīn al-Maṣḥarā'ī, see MS Köprülü 119 fol. 112^r. Curiously, Sharif al-Dīn al-Maṣḥarā'ī is missing from MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40. See also al-Biqā'ī, *Unwān* iii, 47–8. For al-Sakhāwī's biography, see al-Sakhāwī, *al-Ḍaw'* iii, 317–8. Al-Sakhāwī's obsession with al-Biqā'ī is well known, and it was so extensive that he provides substantial biographical information about those who crossed paths with al-Biqā'ī. On this, see Saleh, *Defense* 8–10.

30 Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat* i, 304, no. 1461.

31 For al-Biqā'ī's biography of him, see MS Köprülü 119 fols 233^v–4^r; al-Biqā'ī, *Unwān* v, 112–4.

32 MS Köprülü 119 fol. 72^r; MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fol. 97^r; al-Biqā'ī, *Unwān* ii, 63.

33 MS Köprülü 119 fol. 72^r; MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fol. 97^r; al-Biqā'ī, *Unwān* ii, 63.

figure.³⁴ Al-Biqā'ī himself knew little about him beyond an approximate birth-date of 782–3/1380–2. The lack of a death date suggests that he was still alive when al-Biqā'ī wrote the *Unwān al-zamān*. Al-'Imād b. Sharif was a student of Ibn al-Hā'im (d. 815/1412),³⁵ himself an expert in *farā'id* and *hisāb*, and was responsible for directing al-Biqā'ī's studies concerning *hisāb*. These studies involved memorizing two *manzūma* of Ibn al-Hā'im: one on algebra and the other on the formulas of the Bedouin. Later in 832, al-Biqā'ī returned to Jerusalem and studied Ibn al-Hā'im's *al-Wasīla* with another of Ibn al-Hā'im's students, Zayn al-Dīn. He also studied mathematics, *fuṣūl*, and the division of estates with him. During this visit, al-Biqā'ī resumed his studies with al-'Imād b. Sharif, focusing on the *Sharḥ nukhba al-muḥaddithīn* of Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī.³⁶

During this period, al-Biqā'ī encountered two prominent scholars: Ibn al-Jazarī (d. 833/1429) and Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba (d. 851/1448).³⁷ Al-Biqā'ī was particularly impressed by Ibn al-Jazarī, who visited Damascus in 827/1423–4 and whom he lauds as the “most learned of the time, the Shāṭibī of the age.”³⁸ With Ibn al-Jazarī, al-Biqā'ī read aloud from the *ashr* and also memorized Ibn al-Jazarī's didactic poem, the *Ṭayyibat al-nashr fi al-qirā'āt al-ashr*. Al-Biqā'ī showed Ibn al-Jazarī his first *muṣannaḥ* and was authorized by Ibn al-Jazarī to read what they had studied together. Later, in 831/1427–8, he studied *al-Ḥāwī*—a textbook of Shāfi'ī *fiqh* composed by Najm al-Dīn al-Qazwīnī (d. 655/1266)—with Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba. This seems to be a continuation of his earlier studies of a versification of *al-Ḥāwī* by Ibn al-Wardī (d. 749/1349). Neither of these relationships seems to have endured, at least insofar as his autobiography suggests.

This was followed in 834/1430–1 by the beginning of al-Biqā'ī's association with Ibn Ḥajar, with whom he studied extensively. Among the works he studied with Ibn Ḥajar were the *Sharḥ nukhbat al-muḥaddithīn* (from which al-Biqā'ī tells us he benefited greatly), *al-Ta'rīkh al-mufannan*, and the majority of *Sharḥ al-fyṣṣat al-'irāqī fi 'ulūm al-ḥadīth*. Ibn Ḥajar authorized al-Biqā'ī to teach and defended al-Biqā'ī during the judicial contest concerning his future recitation of al-Bukhārī (likely a reference to al-Biqā'ī's appointment as Sultan Jaqmaq's *ḥadīth* teacher) by commending a composition by al-Biqā'ī, *al-'Allāma*.³⁹ The

34 For al-Biqā'ī's biography of him, see MS Köprülü 119 fol. 92v; MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fol. 123r; al-Biqā'ī, *Unwān* ii, 135.

35 Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt* iv, 17–8.

36 MS Köprülü 119 fol. 72r; MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fol. 97r; al-Biqā'ī, *Unwān* ii, 63.

37 MS Köprülü 119 fol. 72r; MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fol. 97r; al-Biqā'ī, *Unwān* ii, 63.

38 MS Köprülü 119 fol. 72r; MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fol. 97r; al-Biqā'ī, *Unwān* ii, 63.

39 MS Köprülü 119 fol. 72r; MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fol. 97r; al-Biqā'ī, *Unwān* ii, 64.

closeness of their relationship is suggested by their traveling together to Āmid as part of al-Ashraf Barsbay's 836/1433 campaign, and its simple longevity.

Other names are mentioned in the autobiography. He makes references to studying with the shaykhs of Aleppo and Damascus, though the onomastic information he provides is too scant to permit the identification of them all. Additionally, al-Biqā'ī tells us of the traditionists with whose students he studied. This is essentially a list of primarily 14th-century scholars: Abū l-Faṭḥ Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Maydūmī (d. 655/1257), 'Alā l-Dīn Mughlāṭāy (d. 762/1361), al-Ṣalāḥ b. Abī 'Amr b. Amayla, al-Subkī (d. 756/1355), Ibn Nubāta (d. 768/1366), and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl b. Kaykaldī l-'Alā'ī (d. 761/1359).

It is clear that al-Biqā'ī was more interested in recounting his interactions with those teachers who fundamentally shaped his intellectual life than he was in co-opting the social capital of prominent 15th-century scholars. Of the three scholars who are regarded by modern scholarship as particularly famous, only Ibn Ḥajar is afforded anything approaching prominence. Al-Biqā'ī's biography of Ibn Ḥajar is expansive,⁴⁰ his biography of Ibn al-Jazarī barely five lines,⁴¹ and his biography of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba nonexistent.

When we read the autobiography positively, we can begin to reconstruct al-Biqā'ī's social and especially his intellectual contexts, outline the curriculum he followed, and see in which particular intellectual traditions he operated. Yet this is only one approach of the autobiography: it also functions more explicitly as an attempt by al-Biqā'ī to give meaning to his formative years. To explore this further, we will focus our attention on three elements of the autobiography. Firstly, we will return to his account of his lineage. Secondly, we will turn to his use of dreams. Thirdly, we will explore how he treats the attack on his family in Sha'bān 821/September 1418.

4 Semiotizing the Self

4.1 *Lineage Revisited*

It was, of course, not unusual for scholars to recount their lineages. Within the highly competitive environment of 15th-century Cairo, lineage as one aspect of *ḥasab wa-nasab* was of central importance.⁴² It was a marker of social status and prestige, one of the ways in which membership of the intellectual elite was both recognized and reproduced. What is curious, though, is why al-Biqā'ī

40 MS Köprülü 119 fol. 18^r–34^v; MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fol. 26^v–49^r; al-Biqā'ī, *Unwān* i, 115–80.

41 MS Köprülü 119 fol. 348^r.

42 On this, see Ed., *Ḥasab*.

chose to include the information he does. While it allows us to reconstruct how he understood his genealogy and the geographical range of his extended kin group, the process of writing it down made the lacunae in his genealogical record—unimportant in his original social context—highly visible. That is, by recording his genealogy, al-Biqā'ī highlights the “fuzziness” of his knowledge of the link between himself and Sa'd b. Abī Waqqās. Al-Biqā'ī draws attention to the fact that his lineage was categorically *not* illustrious. It could not, therefore, serve to highlight his social status. The question, then, is why he included it at all.

That he goes to such lengths to provide any and all information that he can about his lineage suggests that he was aware of how limited his knowledge was, but also of how valuable lineage could be. At the very least, the inclusion of this material is his way of demonstrating that while he may have come from a peasant background, he was not ignorant. He would also have been aware that given his relative lack of social standing, any attempt to claim or generate a prestigious *nasab* would likely have been rejected and ridiculed. As Szombathy notes, genealogy was a marker of prestige, not a generator of it, and attempts to use it to generate prestige on the part of lowly groups did not end well.⁴³

It is in this light that we should read the suggestion that Sa'd b. Abī Waqqās was the ultimate progenitor of al-Biqā'ī's kin group. The attraction of Sa'd b. Abī Waqqās is obvious: he was one of the first Muslims and, as al-Biqā'ī himself tells us, one of those to whom Paradise has been promised.⁴⁴ Furthermore, the Prophet was reported to have acknowledged him as his maternal uncle. “Jābir b. ‘Abdallāh said, ‘Sa'd approached,’ so the Prophet (ṣ) said, ‘This is my uncle, so let a man show me his uncle.’”⁴⁵ Sa'd b. Abī Waqqās and the Prophet's mother, Āmina bt. Wahb were both members of the Banū Zuhra, a clan of the Quraysh. Who better to be descended from than one of the first converts, a relative of the Prophet, and member of the Quraysh?

That al-Biqā'ī's kin group was descended from Sa'd b. Abī Waqqās is likely a family myth or legend, one which al-Biqā'ī was happy to recount but was reluctant to unilaterally accept and propagate, likely for the reason just mentioned. This is a tentative attempt at “genealogical parasitism,” a term coined by Dennis D. Cordell in his study of Dar al-Kuti and applied by Szombathy to medieval Muslim societies, which refers to the practice of grafting new lineages and fam-

43 Szombathy, *Genealogy* 12, 16–8.

44 Al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi'* vi, 100, no. 3747; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan* 144, no. 133; Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan* vii, 46, no. 4649.

45 Al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi'* vi, 104, no. 3752.

ilies onto the standardized medieval genealogical stem.⁴⁶ While categorically claiming descent from Sa'd b. Abī Waqqās would have opened him up to the risk of censure, al-Biqā'ī mentions the family myth in order to preserve the possibility of his kin group's descent from Sa'd b. Abī Waqqās. He did so on the chance that he and his descendants would prove illustrious enough for their genealogy to become accepted. The prestigious have always found the preservation of spurious lineages easier than the lowly.

An apposite example of this is provided by Jo Van Steenberg in his discussion of Ibn al-Qaysanārī's (d. 1352) panegyric for al-Mālik al-Šāliḥ Ismā'īl. The panegyric was Ibn al-Qaysanārī's attempt to demonstrate his historiographical and belletristic skills, as part of which he emphasized his own administrator's pedigree as a member of a longstanding Syrian family that claimed descent from Khālīd b. al-Walīd (d. 21/642), the Sword of Islam.⁴⁷ This was despite the fact that by the 14th century, Khālīd b. al-Walīd's line was considered long extinct by the scholars of *nasab*.⁴⁸ Evidently, this was no concern for Ibn al-Qaysanārī because he had the symbolic capital of his prestigious forebears behind him. Al-Biqā'ī had no such resource, and so he could not risk making any definitive claims vis-à-vis Sa'd b. Abī Waqqās but nevertheless hoped that he and his descendants would generate such capital. That this did not happen is amply demonstrated by the silence of his later biographers concerning his ostensible descent from Sa'd b. Abī Waqqās.

Al-Biqā'ī's extended discussion of his lineage, despite his inability to provide much detail, was thus intended to provide the foundation for his entry into the intellectual society of 15th-century Cairo by demonstrating that he did have knowledge of his lineage, while simultaneously attempting, circumspectly, to arrogate for himself and his kin group the prestige of Sa'd b. Abī Waqqās. That he sought to do so suggests a degree of authorial anxiety on the part of al-Biqā'ī, which is underscored by his use of dreams.

4.2 *Dreams*

Reynolds notes that the narration of dreams in biographical and autobiographical literature is primarily tied "in one way or another, to issues of authorial anxiety: the author argues in dream narrations (dreamed by himself or others) points that he feels he cannot argue on his own authority."⁴⁹ Now, al-Biqā'ī

46 Szombathy, *Genealogy* 5.

47 Van Steenberg, *Qalāwūnid*.

48 Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-'Umarī, *Masālik* iv, 177.

49 Reynolds, *Symbolic* 261–86, 276. This chapter is a much expanded version of Reynolds's discussion of dreams found in *Interpreting* 88–93.

can hardly compete with the sheer volume of dreams some scholars included in their autobiographies,⁵⁰ but his dreams nevertheless perform a similar semiotic function. Only two dreams are narrated in any great detail; the first explains the origins of his grandfather's peculiar *laqab* "al-Rubāt,"⁵¹ while the second is recounted by his maternal cousin concerning a head injury al-Biqā'ī received when he was younger. It is to the second dream that we will turn our attention.

Al-Biqā'ī introduces it by explaining that God blessed him in numerous ways, the greatest of which was perhaps that this head injury was cured by the Prophet. The account proceeds thus:

God Almighty rewarded him [al-Biqā'ī] from His Grace with many and obvious kindnesses of His miracles, amongst the greatest of which—or the greatest—was that he was injured in the head when he was small, and the Prophet (ṣ) cured him, which is to say that the daughter of his maternal uncle, Maryam bt. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. Sulaymān, saw him (ṣ) in a dream, wherein he said to her: "You have one wish from me." She said to him: "The son of my paternal aunt is injured in his head." So he said to her: "Take this remedy to him, and shortly afterwards it will be healed, as if his head had never been injured." His maternal cousin remained after the dream unable to raise the hand to which he had given the remedy.⁵²

Within Islamic oneirocriticism, dreams of the Prophet Muḥammad were deemed to be both unequivocally true and divinely inspired: they could—and did, as Leah Kinberg has demonstrated—function in a similar manner to *ḥadīth*.⁵³ True dreams correlate closely with issues of authority—particularly of a spiritual nature—and social rank.

Al-Biqā'ī's inclusion of a "true" dream, the meaning of which is obvious, was designed to substantiate his status. Given the broader framework of the autobiography, this was likely his intellectual status. It is significant that his recovery from what was, evidently, a serious injury is presented as miraculous and facilitated solely through the intervention of the Prophet. The truth of the dream, in no need of confirmation due to it being of the Prophet, is nevertheless corroborated by the subsequent physical impairment of his cousin.

50 For example, Abū 'Abdallāh al-Tirmidhī and Abū Shāma included 17 and 14, respectively.

51 MS Köprülü 119 fol. 71^v; MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fol. 96^r; al-Biqā'ī, *Unwān* ii, 61.

52 MS Köprülü 119 fol. 72^v; MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fol. 98^r; al-Biqā'ī, *Unwān* ii, 65.

53 Kinberg, *Literal*.

Al-Biqā'ī does refer to other dreams, though he merely tells us that he saw the Prophet in many dreams (in some of which he kissed his hand) and that he also saw Abū Bakr, 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, and 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. Al-Biqā'ī tells us that he "kissed the left hand of 'Alī."⁵⁴ Why al-Biqā'ī chooses not to describe the events of these dreams is unclear, though they still have a legitimizing function, which is enacted by listing the names of those who appeared and by positioning these names after his narration of the dream of his cousin, Maryam bt. Muḥammad. Much like the reference to Sa'd b. Abī Waqqās was an attempt to arrogate for himself some measure of Sa'd's prestige, so too are these dreams attempts on the part of al-Biqā'ī to enhance his prestige through association with the Prophet and three of the rightly guided caliphs. In this way, they are meant to assuage the problem of his lack of social standing.

4.3 *The Attack on His Family*

It is clear that the attack on his family, which resulted in the death of his father, is the crux of the autobiography, though he does only describe it briefly. He states that "the *ṣāhib al-tarjama* was born in approximately 809 in Khirbat Rūḥā ... There, he read the Quran and laboured in it. Then an event committed outrage against them, in which his father, his two uncles, and six of his relatives were treacherously killed in Sha'bān 821. Thereupon his mother and her father took him to Damascus in 823."⁵⁵ Although he does not explicitly link the death of his father with the serious injury he received as a child, we can infer from his treatment of the events that they were both consequences of the attack on his family because they are semiotized in the same way.

Concerning the death of his father, al-Biqā'ī tells us that he heard an unseen voice when he was younger. The notion of the unseen voice, the *hātif*, is closely related to dream symbolism and functions in a similar way. He states that

when he was a boy in Khirbat Rūḥā he attended a mosque called the *zāwiya* of Shaykh Mūsā, wherein he studied by himself. He heard therein a speaker, and he could not see anyone; there was no place for anyone to conceal himself. He [the speaker] said to him: "They will kill your father!" verbatim and repeatedly. And therefore he used to hear this

54 MS Köprülü 119 fol. 72^v; MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fol. 98^r; al-Biqā'ī, *Umwān* ii, 66. Why 'Uthmān was the only one of the *Rāshidūn* not to appear in al-Biqā'ī's dreams is unclear, as is the significance of 'Alī's left hand.

55 MS Köprülü 119 fol. 71^v-2^r; MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fol. 96^v; al-Biqā'ī, *Umwān* ii, 62.

phrase whenever he would pass the graveyard of the companions of the *zāwiya*; then his father was killed shortly thereafter.⁵⁶

This is clearly a portent of future events and is intended to give meaning to the death of his father. The warning transfers it from the realm of the mundane and the random into the realm of prophecy. It is no longer an act of meaningless violence but an event pregnant with meaning. Likewise, when he introduces his maternal cousin's dream of the Prophet, this is framed within the context of the Prophet's intervention being one of the "many and obvious kindnesses" that God had bestowed upon al-Biqā'ī; his injury, much like the death of his father, was purposeful.

The meaning behind both events is revealed in a statement attributed to one of his anonymous companions:

One of his companions expressed the opinion to him that the Prophet (ﷺ) had, in his opinion, sent to the *ṣāhib al-tarjama* a gift. It was one of the greatest of the graces which he had witnessed concerning trials, amongst the greatest of those was the killing of his father and his uncles, for it was a reason for his moving to Damascus. And it was the starting point of his attaining the happiness of searching for knowledge and learning about the lands of men, and witnessing miracles.⁵⁷

The meaning, then, is simple: the attack on his family was neither meaningless nor purposeless. Rather, it was the greatest gift that had been bestowed upon him, for it was the driving force behind his move from the village of Khirbat Rūḥā to Damascus and thence to Cairo.

Our discussion thus far has been based on MS Köprülü 1119. How, then, does the additional material in MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40, which was added some four years after his appointments as Sultan Jaqmaq's *ḥadīth* teacher and as the *mufassir* of the Zāhir Mosque, modify this picture? Covering folios 106^r–7^r, this additional material makes a notable departure by switching to the first person. The effect of this is to make the additional material read in a more introspective and personal manner. Al-Biqā'ī begins with a remembrance of his mother. He states that she "was a good woman, but there was a severity in her character, a quality inherent in most—or all—of our relatives. When she was angry with me, she used to pray that I would die as a highwayman on the streets."⁵⁸

56 MS Köprülü 1119 fol. 73^r; MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fol. 98^v; al-Biqā'ī, *Unwān* ii, 65.

57 MS Köprülü 1119 fol. 72^v; MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fol. 98^{r-v}; al-Biqā'ī, *Unwān* ii, 66.

58 MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fol. 106^r.

He continues by discussing his love for jihad, which expands upon his earlier reference to his activities as a *mujāhid*. Thus, he tells us that he struggled with his bodily appetites and sought to gain mastery over them; he would pray to God that He would help him in this endeavor. So great was his passion for jihad that he devoted himself to the practice of archery and swordsmanship, hoping to master both, and he began to compose a work on the science of the sword, which he hoped would become paradigmatic.⁵⁹ There is thus no ambiguity that al-Biqā'ī devoted himself to military jihad and not to the more pacifist and ascetic *mujāhida*.⁶⁰ While it does suggest, in particular, a somewhat more deep-seated interest in the practice of jihad than is otherwise known, this new material does little to change our semiotic reading of the autobiography so much as it adds nuance to the more positivist traditional reading.

This is, however, not the totality of the new material. The most significant part concerns his appointment as Sultan Jaqmaq's *ḥadīth* teacher. Al-Biqā'ī tells us that

when Sultan al-Malik al-Zāhir Abū Sa'īd Jaqmaq obtained the sultanate in the year 842/1438, I enquired of the *qāḍī l-quḍāt*; and therefore did he speak on my behalf concerning the reading of al-Bukhārī in his—the Sultan's—presence because he who had been reading in that capacity was no longer competent for it. He assented and described me in my absence with reference to many attributes, amongst which was that the handsomeness of my reading was excellent. The slanderers sought to undermine that, exerting themselves and acting deceitfully.

And so, on the day on which he would select someone to read, the *qāḍī l-quḍāt* enquired of the Sultan before the reading. He said: "The one about whom you have spoken—may he be greatly reward." And he praised me concerning my knowledge and my compositions, and said: "Tomorrow, he will read and he will astonish the Sultan."⁶¹

Al-Biqā'ī continues by noting that "God Almighty was kind" and proved the truth of the sultan's statement by making his reading successful and that he made no "barbarism of speech" during it. He does admit that, occasionally, he would misread *'an* as *ibn* and vice versa. He concludes the biography by noting

59 Ibid. fol. 106^{r-v}.

60 More commonly referred to in Western scholarship as *jihād al-naḥs*, the preferred term in premodern writing is *mujāhida*. For discussion of this, see in particular Neale, *Jihad* 47–55.

61 MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fols 106^{v-7r}.

the closeness of his relationship with Ibn Ḥajar, a point more than evidenced by Ibn Ḥajar's pivotal role in the advancement of al-Biqā'ī's career.⁶²

Two points need to be made. Firstly, al-Biqā'ī's emphasis of his gratitude that he made no mistakes during the first recitation, coupled with his candid admission that he occasionally misread *ʿan* as *ibn* and vice versa, suggests that much of his anxiety revolved around his speech and, by extension, his peasant background. This, in turn, suggests that al-Biqā'ī was consciously marked as an outsider by the Cairene intellectual elite, unnamed members of which opposed his appointment because of his less cultured background. That al-Biqā'ī felt the need to return to this and stress that he deserved his appointment on the basis of the excellence of his reading, and to furthermore invoke the authority of Ibn Ḥajar, suggests that the opposition continued to be a factor in his life.

Secondly, and strikingly, the involvement of God within the direction of his life continues. Thus, while Ibn Ḥajar was the one to secure his appointment, it was through neither his nor al-Biqā'ī's agency that his recitation was successful. Rather, it was God who decided to be beneficent and ensure al-Biqā'ī's success and thereby, al-Biqā'ī continues, demonstrating to the sultan the blessings God had bestowed upon al-Biqā'ī.

5 Toward an Ontology of History

The notion that his life was shaped by the Divine is highlighted by Guo in his discussion of al-Biqā'ī's chronicle, the *Izhār al-ʿaṣr*. Guo makes two points about the *Izhār al-ʿaṣr* that bear mentioning here. Firstly, he argues that the *Izhār al-ʿaṣr* is fundamentally eschatological and that this can only be understood in the context of Islamic salvationist history, the central concern of which had, by al-Biqā'ī's time, become

more about the internal threats to the realm, about the concept of the superiority of the righteous Muslim scholars (himself included of course) and just rulers (such as Sultan Īnal) to those unjust rulers (such as Sultan Jaqmaq), corrupt officers, and phony *ʿulamāʾ* ... the paramount concern for him was naturally the internal turmoil and self-destruction that was eating away at the already feeble Mamluk system (*fasād*, *ẓulm* are the buzzwords in the Chronicle throughout).⁶³

62 Ibid., fol. 107r.

63 Guo, *Al-Biqā'ī's* 139.

Secondly, Guo argues that al-Biqā'ī juxtaposes and explains events from his own life with Quranic exegesis and dream symbolism. In doing so, he interprets his life symbolically within the context of this eschatological salvation history. Essentially, al-Biqā'ī sees the trials and tribulations that he undergoes as parallels to the trials and tribulations of the Muslim community at large and that just as the Muslims will be triumphant, so too will he triumph over his opponents and detractors. In both cases, Guo argues, this is because these triumphs are predictable in accordance with the "Heavenly Plan": for al-Biqā'ī, the Divine was guiding the course of his life.⁶⁴

The parallels between this sense of Divine immanence in both the *Izhār al-ʿaṣr* and the autobiography are obvious. In the autobiography, al-Biqā'ī casts his life as fundamentally guided by God and defined by trial and hardship and singles out the death of his father and the opposition that he met in Cairo. In both cases, however, he is triumphant. The eschatological element is also present in the autobiography, though somewhat more muted. Al-Biqā'ī notes the following:

At the end of the 23rd night of the month [Dhū l-Ḥijja] in the year [845/4th of May 1442], I saw whilst dreaming a reciter reading in my house: "The Hour [*al-sā'a*] drew near and the moon was cleft in two." Thus is it auspicious from its beginning with the imminence of *al-Amr* and its end with the attainment of benefit. And God Almighty makes near the realization of that, because He is over all things capable.⁶⁵

The reciter quotes Q 54:1 verbatim, which has intrinsic eschatological meaning. The Hour, for which *al-amr* is frequently a synonym,⁶⁶ refers to the period immediately preceding the end of the world. The splitting of the moon asunder is one of the more dramatic signs of the imminence of the end. Al-Biqā'ī's commentary on his dream, wherein he expresses his hope for the realization of this, suggests that he believed himself to be living in the End Times. The autobiography demonstrates that al-Biqā'ī's belief in the imminence of the Divine in his life and the eschatological future were not unique to the *Izhār al-ʿaṣr*. Rather, it suggests that these were fundamental elements in al-Biqā'ī's ontology of history, which had developed at least some fourteen years earlier when he wrote his autobiography.

64 Ibid.

65 MS 'Arabiyya akhbār 40 fol. 106v.

66 Lawson, *The Quran* xxi, xxiii, 33.

6 Conclusion

Al-Biqā'ī's autobiography can thus be read in two ways. On the one hand, it can be read positively as an account of his formative years; on the other, it can be read as an attempt to give meaning to those years. In truth, both of these aspects work together to support al-Biqā'ī's position within the intellectual elite of 15th-century Cairo. It is no accident that we find it included within his biographical collection. The writing of biographical collections is fundamental to the formation and maintenance of group identities. The periodic updating and compilation of these works is an attempt to assert continuity between the present and the past because the present gains its authority by virtue of the weight of memory. Biographical collections were the battlegrounds on which membership in the intellectual elite was fought. Inclusion in them was a marker of success; exclusion a marker of failure.

Thus, if we read the autobiography positively as a record of his early years, his choice to focus on his *riḥla fi ṭalab al-ʿilm* communicates and underscores his membership in the intellectual elite by stressing and memorializing the links he developed between himself and the members of the intellectual elite, particularly his relationship with Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī. By including himself within his collection, he claims for himself a place within that intellectual community.

When we read the autobiography as an attempt to develop meaning, it becomes not merely an attempt to justify his membership among the intellectual elite but also the record of how al-Biqā'ī sought to rationalize and make sense of a traumatic event from his childhood. For al-Biqā'ī, the only way he could make sense of this was to interpret his life within a symbolic and eschatological framework that gave meaning to the attack on his family by emphasizing the greatness of the miracles and kindness that was bestowed upon him and by asserting that he would, with divine favor, triumph over those trials and tribulations that afflicted him. The dream symbolism emphasizes that the attack on his family was the beginning of a series of coherent events that led to his emigration to Cairo and then his appointment as Sultan Jaqmaq's *ḥadīth* teacher. In this context, the recounting of his lineage takes on new meaning because it highlights how humble his origins were. All of this serves not only to justify his position within the Cairene intellectual elite but also to make his rise to membership of the intellectual elite all the more impressive.

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“And They Read in That Night Books of History”: Consuming, Discussing, and Producing Texts about the Past in al-Ghawrī’s *Majālis* as Social Practices

Christian Mauder

1 Introduction*

[Al-Walīd b. Yazīd] once grabbed his brother and fornicated with him. Moreover, he wanted to drink [wine] on top of the Kaʿba. The author of the work of history (*ṣāhib al-tārīkh*) said: “No one from among the Muslims did (*ʿamila*) what al-Walīd did.” Bon mot (*durra*): He whose victory may be glorious [i.e., Sultan al-Ghawrī] said: “Nay, neither a Christian nor a Mazdaist nor any other person who ever did anything (*aḥad min al-ʿāmilīn*) did something similar to what this ill-fated sinner (*al-fājir al-manḥūs*) did.”¹

This passage comes from one of the three surviving accounts of the *majālis*, or learned gatherings, that the penultimate Mamluk sultan Qāniṣawh al-Ghawrī (r. 906–22/1501–16) convened at the Cairo Citadel. More precisely, the passage forms part of a section depicting how al-Ghawrī and members of his court²

* This chapter is based on research results from my dissertation *In the sultan’s salon: Learning, religion and rulership at the Mamluk court of Qāniṣawh al-Ghawrī* (r. 1501–1516), which I defended at the University of Göttingen in 2017 and am currently preparing for full publication; cf. esp. chapters 3.1.1, 3.1.5., 4.1.1., 4.2, 4.2.7, and 6.3.1. The writing of this chapter was supported by the Humanities Research Fellowship Program of New York University Abu Dhabi and by the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, NJ. I would like to thank the participants of the Fifth Conference of the School of Mamluk Studies in general and Konrad Hirschler, Gowaart Van Den Bossche, and Jo Van Steenbergem in particular for their helpful feedback on an earlier version of this chapter. Furthermore, I am obliged to the Directorates of the Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Istanbul, and the Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi, Istanbul, for granting me access to the analyzed manuscripts.

1 Anonymous, *al-Uqūd* i, fol. 83ʳ.

2 For the purposes of the present chapter, I understand “courts” as internally stratified social bodies centered around the person of a ruler and distinguished by regular access to him or her. For a more refined discussion of what constitutes a court, see Mauder, *Salon*, chapters 1.2.1–1.2.4.

engaged with Umayyad history in general and with the reign of Caliph Walīd b. Yazīd (r. 125–6/743–4) in particular. In many ways, the quote is typical of how members of al-Ghawrī's court approached historical topics. First, the passage clearly shows that information about the past was taken from written historiographical texts, although—and this is likewise typical—the surviving accounts do not identify these works by title. Second, historical knowledge was not only consumed but also interpreted, developed, and produced by commenting on and adding to the available historical literature. Third, in the *majālis* accounts, the members of the late Mamluk court appear as making implicit or explicit statements about themselves. In the passage quoted, for example, Sultan al-Ghawrī condemns the actions of an almost proverbially wicked ruler, thus claiming for himself a rank of moral superiority.

The accounts of al-Ghawrī's *majālis* provide deep insight into the dynamics of the consumption, performative presentation, and production of texts about the past at the Mamluk court, that is, the court of the rulers of the Islamicate polity known in European languages as the Mamluk Sultanate that was in its political, social, religious, cultural, and linguistic characteristics significantly shaped by the fact that many members of its political elite, including numerous rulers, were former military slaves (*mamlūks*). Moreover, the accounts indicate that members of the sultan's court invested considerable time, effort, and cultural capital into engaging with historiographical material. In what follows, I argue that this engagement was part of a dense web of social practices³ that served multiple purposes, including, but not limited to, the representation and legitimation of al-Ghawrī's rule, the exchange and acquisition of cultural capital, the performative enactment and reaffirmation of the courtiers' membership in a refined elite of *udabā'*, i.e., persons possessing *adab*,⁴ the social construction of a shared reality,⁵ the commemoration of events central to the identity of members of the court, and the enjoyment of aesthetic pleasure.

My argumentation proceeds in five steps. The following section provides information on al-Ghawrī's *majālis* as courtly events and their historical background. Thereafter, I analyze practices of the consumption of historical texts

3 I follow Wedeen, *Visions* 15, in understanding social practices as “actions or deeds that are repeated over time; they are learned, reproduced, and subjected to risk through social interaction ... They tend to be intellegible to others in context-depending ways.”

4 Classical studies of this multifaceted concept include Lichtenstädter, *Conception*; Nallino, *Littérature*, esp. 7–34. More recent are, e.g., Bonebakker, *Adab*; Fähndrich, *Begriff*; Gabrieli, *Adab*; Pellat, *Adab*; Lapidus, *Knowledge* (with a focus on its religious aspects); Bauer, *Adab*; Hämeen-Anttila, *Adab*; Enderwitz, *Adab*.

5 On the social construction of reality, see Berger and Luckmann, *Construction*.

during these events. The subsequent section sheds light on practices of discussing and commenting on works about the past in the sultan’s *majālis*. The following part scrutinizes the production of such works at the Mamluk court. The final section summarizes my main findings and discusses their broader implications for our understanding of late Mamluk intellectual history.

2 Al-Ghawrī’s *Majālis* in Historical Context

Qāniṣawh al-Ghawrī ruled as Mamluk sultan over Egypt, Syria, and neighboring regions during a time when the Mamluk Sultanate faced multiple external and internal challenges, including the rise of the rivaling Muslim polities of the Ottomans and the Safavids, the sudden appearance of Portuguese sailors in the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea after their circumnavigation of Africa, consequent shifts in trade routes, recurring outbreaks of the plague, troop mutinies, and a long-lasting trend toward economic contraction.⁶ Moreover, al-Ghawrī had attained the sultanic throne only after a long and violent succession struggle in which half a dozen rulers rapidly succeeded each other over a period of less than five years—a development that demonstrated the contingency of the person of the Mamluk ruler.⁷ In this period of violent conflicts and pronounced economic hardship, al-Ghawrī relied on highly contested measures, such as uncanonical taxes, expropriations, forced purchases, and sales of offices, to collect the revenue necessary for the continued functioning of the sultanic administration, the upkeep of the military, the funding of major construction projects, and the alimentionation of his court.⁸ Consequently, chroniclers of the period decried the sultan as a particularly unjust ruler whose fiscal schemes stood in opposition to established practices of good governance.⁹

In spite of and, as it seems, in reaction to these phenomena of crisis, the sultan maintained a lavish court life that included hosting regular *majālis*, which primarily took place in various halls of the Cairo Citadel during the evenings of two to three days per week. The courtly attendees of these events included high-ranking members of the scholarly and administrative elite such as current and former chief judges, the sultan’s private secretaries, and holders of teaching positions in prominent *madrasas* of Cairo. Further participants encompassed

6 On the challenges that Mamluk rulers of al-Ghawrī’s generation faced, see Petry, *Twilight; Protectors*; Elbendary, *Crowds*, esp. 104; Mauder, *Salon*, chapter 6.1.

7 See Mauder, *Herrschaftsbegründung*.

8 See Petry, *Protectors; Twilight; Institution; Paradox*.

9 See Mauder, *Salon*, chapters 2.1.1–2.1.2.3.

traveling scholars, poets, diplomats, and foreign dignitaries, among whom the Ottoman prince Abū l-Khayr Muḥammad Qorqud (d. 918/1513), the son of Bāyezīd II (r. 886–918/1481–1512), stands out as the highest ranking. While the *majālis* sported less prominent participants, such as musicians and servants, apart from Sultan al-Ghawrī, members of the military elite were conspicuously absent. This last observation highlights the decidedly civilian and largely scholarly character of the gatherings.¹⁰

Most of what we know about these events comes from three sources claiming to provide eyewitness accounts of the gatherings, all of which are preserved in unique manuscripts originally produced for al-Ghawrī's palace library and located today in Istanbul. While two of them, *al-Kawkab al-durrī fī masā'il al-Ghawrī* (The brilliant star on al-Ghawrī's questions)¹¹ and *al-'Uqūd al-jawhariyya fī l-nawādir al-Ghawriyya* (The jewel necklaces on al-Ghawrī's anecdotes),¹² provide very little information on their background and authorship, the third one, *Nafā'is majālis al-sultāniyya fī ḥaqā'iq asrār al-Qur'āniyya* (sic, The gems of the sultanic gatherings on the truths of Quranic mysteries), can be safely attributed to one of the sultan's clients by the name of Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-Ḥusaynī (fl. 911/1506), known as al-Sharīf.¹³ Unlike *al-Kawkab al-durrī* and *al-'Uqūd al-jawhariyya*, which claim to contain "best of" collections of the proceedings of *majālis* taking place during multiyear periods, al-Sharīf provides detailed accounts of 96 gatherings that took place between Ramaḍān 910 (beginning in February 1505) and Sha'bān 911 (beginning in December 1505).¹⁴

10 Mauder, *Salon*, chapters 4.1–4.1.2.4.

11 MS Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi, Ahmet III 1377. The text was partly edited in 'Azzām (ed.), *Majālis*. Hereafter, references to the manuscript are preceded by (MS) and use the pagination in the manuscript. Page numbers in the edition are indicated by (ed. 'Azzām). All quotations for which references to both the edition and the manuscript are given are based on the manuscript.

12 MS Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Ayasofya 3312 and 3313. On this text, see also Mauder and Markiewicz, *Source*.

13 MS Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi, Ahmet III 2680. The text was partly edited in 'Azzām (ed.), *Majālis*. Hereafter, references to the manuscript are preceded by (MS) and use the pagination in the manuscript. Page numbers in the edition are indicated by (ed. 'Azzām). All quotations for which references to both the edition and the manuscript are given are based on the manuscript.

14 On these texts, see, in addition to Mauder, *Salon*; also Awad, *Sultan*; Behrens-Abouseif, *Arts*; Berkey, *Mamluks*; Conermann, *Es boomt* 50–1; Flemming, *Activities*; Perser, *Nachtgesprächen*; Frenkel, *Culture* 11; Nations 63, 68–9; Irwin, *Thinking*; *Literature* 28; Mauder and Markiewicz, *Source*.

The three sources indicate that the *majālis* attendees (including the sultan) discussed during their meetings scholarly questions from a broad array of different disciplines. The fact that *Nafā'is majālis al-sultāniyya* claims to provide a holistic description of the gatherings during a limited period allows us to make quantitative estimates about the frequency with which questions from various fields of learning came up in the gatherings. According to the data provided in this source, legal questions clearly predominated and constituted about a third of the topics of the *majālis*, followed by issues of Quranic exegesis, which accounted for about a fifth of the debates. About an eighth of the debates focused on poetry, rhymed riddles, anecdotes, and other forms of literature, the remainder of the debated questions coming largely from the fields of rational theology, stories about the prophets before Muḥammad, history, and prophetic traditions, all of which appear to have been of roughly the same level of prominence and accounting each for slightly less than ten percent of the discussed material. History or *tārīkh*, as it is called in the accounts of the *majālis*, was thus a recurrent and regular, albeit not the most frequent, discussion topic among the scholars, officials, and foreign visitors that the sultan brought together.

3 Consuming Texts about the Past

Unlike most other fields of learning in which the *majālis* apparently relied mostly on memorized material and rational argumentation, written texts figured prominently in scholarly exchanges about historical topics. The accounts of al-Ghawrī's *majālis* indicate that copies of works about the past were physically present during these events and read aloud for the consumption of members of the court. In addition to the quotation given at the very beginning of this chapter, *al-Kawkab al-durrī* refers, for example, to Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī's (d. ca. 414/1023) anthology *al-Baṣā'ir wa-l-Dhakhā'ir* (Insights and treasures) as a source of historical knowledge about the companions of the Prophet Muḥammad.¹⁵ Such a clear identification of a work by title and author is rather untypical, given that *al-Uqūd al-jawhariyya* and *Nafā'is majālis al-sultāniyya* often use rather vague phrases such as “they read in the book of history (*qara'ū fī l-tārīkh*),”¹⁶ “it was mentioned in the book of history (*dhukira fī l-tārīkh*),”¹⁷ “the author of the book of history said (*qāla ṣāhib al-*

15 Anonymous, *al-Kawkab* (MS) 77; (ed. 'Azzām) 53.

16 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā'is* (MS) 213.

17 Ibid. 219.

tārīkh),¹⁸ or “and they read in that night books of history (*wa-qara’ū fī tilka l-lalya al-tawārīkh*).”¹⁹

In several cases, it is possible to trace back historical material that the sources attribute in such a vague manner to Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Ibn Khallikān’s (d. 681/1282) famous biographical dictionary *Wafayāt al-a’yān wa-anbā’ abnā’ al-zamān* (The [reports] about the deaths of famous persons and the news on the children of time), which seems to have been one of the most frequently studied historiographical works in the *majālis*.²⁰ Among other things, the participants at the sultan’s gatherings read in this work about the lives of prominent early Muslims such as the caliphs ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān (d. 35/656)²¹ and ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 40/661),²² important rulers, including the Umayyad Sulaymān b. ‘Abd al-Malik (d. 99/717),²³ the ‘Abbasid Abū Ja‘far al-Manṣūr (d. 158/775),²⁴ and the Buyid ‘Imād al-Dawla (d. 338/949),²⁵ and famous figures of Islamicate learning, such as the linguist Yaḥyā b. Ya‘mar (d. 129/746),²⁶ the grammarian ‘Alī b. Ḥamza al-Kisā‘ī (d. 189/805),²⁷ the philosopher al-Fārābī (d. 339/950),²⁸ and the polymath Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1200).²⁹

The choice of *Wafayāt al-a’yān* as one of the *majālis* participants’ favorite reading materials is significant. In 1973, Hartmut Fāhndrich noted (it would appear independently from Ulrich Haarmann’s writings about the “literarization” of Mamluk historiography) “that Ibn Khallikān’s *Wafayāt* represents a certain literarization of the genre of ‘biographical dictionary’ in that for the presentation of a great part of the material the literarizing approach of *adab* is employed.”³⁰ As “a mixture of educational and entertaining material or

18 Anonymous, *al-Uqūd* i, 83^r.

19 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā’is* (MS) 215, 251; (ed. ‘Azzām) 128 (*tawārīkh* in second case without article).

20 My understanding of biographical works as a form of history writing is based on al-Qadi, *History*.

21 Anonymous, *al-Uqūd* i, 61^r, based on Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a’yān* vi, 174.

22 Anonymous, *al-Uqūd* i, 61^r, based on Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a’yān* vi, 164.

23 Anonymous, *al-Uqūd* i, 75^v–6^r, based on Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a’yān* ii, 421.

24 Anonymous, *al-Uqūd* i, 86^v, based on Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a’yān* iii, 152–3.

25 Anonymous, *al-Uqūd* ii, 21^r–v, based on Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a’yān* iii, 399–400.

26 Anonymous, *al-Kawkab* (MS) 115; Anonymous, *al-Uqūd* i, 73^v–4^r, based on Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a’yān* vii, 218.

27 Anonymous, *al-Kawkab* (MS) 112, based on Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a’yān* ii, 296.

28 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā’is* (MS) 251–2; (ed. ‘Azzām) 128; Anonymous, *al-Uqūd* ii, 22^v–r, based on Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a’yān* v, 155–6.

29 Anonymous, *al-Kawkab* (MS) 279; Anonymous, *al-Uqūd* ii, 23^v, based on Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a’yān* iii, 141.

30 Fāhndrich, *Approach* 440. See also Fāhndrich, *Man* 30–3, 39.

educational material presented as entertainment,”³¹ in Fährndrich’s evaluation *Wafayāt al-a’yān* represents “a biographical dictionary with numerous features that are common to *adab*-works.”³² While it would be oversimplistic to reduce the value of *Wafayāt al-a’yān* to its entertaining and educational functions, we may assume that the members of al-Ghawrī’s *majālis* selected this work for their practices of historiographic consumption—rather than any other of the dozens of available biographical dictionaries—precisely because of its literary qualities. Thanks to the latter, the collective reading of *Wafayāt al-a’yān* offered not only opportunities to acquire cultural capital but also to enjoy the aesthetic pleasures of a well-composed literary text.

Moreover, the members of al-Ghawrī’s court who met with the ruler in his *majālis* did not consume Ibn Khallikān’s massive *Wafayāt al-a’yān* indiscriminately but rather focused on those parts of the work that were directly meaningful to their own social realities. A case in point is a passage from Ibn Khallikān concerning al-Fārābī and his patron, the Ḥamdanid ruler Sayf al-Dawla (r. 333–56/945–67), which both *al-Uqūd al-jawhariyya* and *Nafā’is majālis al-sultāniyya* mention as a topic of al-Ghawrī’s *majālis*. The story addresses the question of the status of cultural capital vis-à-vis political power. In the version narrated in *Nafā’is majālis al-sultāniyya*, which clearly depends on the one in *Wafayāt al-a’yān*³³ but paraphrases it to a considerable degree, it reads as follows:

Strange incident (*gharība*): It is said in the book of history (*al-tārīkh*): Fārābī entered Sayf al-Dawla’s *majlis*. The ruler said to him: “Sit down!” He asked: “Shall I sit down in my place (*makānī*) or in your place?” [The ruler] said: “Sit down in your place.” Thereupon, he sat down [in a place] above all [others] so that he dislodged Sayf al-Dawla from [his] throne (*sarūr*).

Admonishing (*ta’dīb*): His Excellency, our lord the sultan [i.e., al-Ghawrī] said: “Al-Fārābī did not behave nicely (*malūḥan*) [here], because he deemed it necessary to deal impolitely (*qillat al-adab*) with the shadow of God [on Earth].”

[The story continues:] Thereupon, Sayf al-Dawla’s *mamlūks* wanted to kill al-Fārābī. They said to each other in Persian: “This man is impolite and feeble-minded (*khafif al-aql*).” Al-Fārābī said to them in Persian: “Be patient, for deeds should be judged according to their outcomes (*innamā*

31 Fährndrich, Approach 437. See also Pauliny, Anekdote 143–4.

32 Fährndrich, Approach 437, see also 439–40; Begriff 340–1; Pauliny, Anekdote, esp. 146–56; Fährndrich, *Man* 28, 33–6, 21.

33 Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a’yān* v, 155–6.

l-a'māl bi-l-khawātīm)!" Then, he debated with the scholars of the *majlis* and overcame them all. Sayf al-Dawla was amazed by his attitude and his awe-inspiring appearance (*min hay'atihi wa-haybatihī*) and said to him: "[Do you want to] eat a bite?" [Al-Fārābī] said: "No." [Sayf al-Dawla] asked: "[Do you want to] listen to a song (*naghma*)?" [Al-Fārābī] said: "Yes." [Sayf al-Dawla] thereupon had musicians brought in, but al-Fārābī did not like their performance and said: "If you would grant us permission, we would play a little." They said: "It is all right." Then, [al-Fārābī] took out a piece of wood, fastened strings on it and [began to] play. Thereupon, all people of the *majlis* laughed. Thereafter, he played [again] and they cried. Consequently, Sayf al-Dawla assigned him [a stipend of] two *dīnārs* per day. Al-Fārābī died in Syria.³⁴

This passage was apparently of immediate interest to the members of al-Ghawrī's court for several reasons. First, the court of the famous Islamicate ruler Sayf al-Dawla was depicted as being remarkably similar to that of al-Ghawrī. Like the latter, in addition to the ruler, it encompassed scholars, musicians, and *mamlūks* who met to discuss scholarly topics in the sultan's *majālis*. The historical precedent of Sayf al-Dawla's court as portrayed by Ibn Khallikān thus allowed the members of al-Ghawrī's *majālis* to situate themselves in a shared tradition of Islamicate courtly culture dating back centuries and entailing a set of common cultural norms, expectations, and forms of expression. It provided the members of al-Ghawrī's *majālis* with a point of reference for a shared social reality that transcended their immediate present through a historic precedent.

Second, the passage offered members of al-Ghawrī's court an opportunity to engage more closely, and based on a concrete historical example, with one of the central concepts of this shared courtly reality, namely, *adab*. As the comment toward the beginning of the story attributed to al-Ghawrī indicates, in the *majālis*, the term *adab* denoted primarily a combination of behavioral standards and a related body of knowledge members of courts were expected to master—and not, say, a certain type of literature. This understanding of *adab* is also expressed elsewhere in the accounts of al-Ghawrī's *majālis*: *Nafā'is majālis al-sultāniyya* credits al-Ghawrī with the aphorisms³⁵ "There is nothing in the world that is better than *adab*, for it adorns the rich and covers the poverty of

34 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā'is* (MS) 251–2; (ed. 'Azzām) 128.

35 My understanding of the concept of aphorism in Arabic literature follows Berger, Aphorism.

the poor”³⁶ and “There is nothing in the world that is better than *adab*. *Adab* is a jewel and the intellect (*‘aql*) is its place of origin (lit. its mine).”³⁷ ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib is supposed to have stated, “A person’s honor lies in his knowledge (*‘ilm*) and his *adab*, and not in his origin (*asl*) and his lineage (*nasab*).”³⁸ Moreover, among the *majālis* participants, not reacting properly to a fellow Muslim’s greeting was considered an act of “neglecting (*tark*) [one’s] *adab*,”³⁹ whereas the correct choice of one’s attire in a courtly context demonstrated one’s good manners (*ādāb*).⁴⁰ The depiction of the members of al-Ghawrī’s *majālis* as interested in such questions indicated that they themselves possessed *adab* and were thus members of the cultural elite of *udabā’*. This status provided them with a shared identity not limited to members of the late Mamluk court but also encompassing past generations of learned and refined inhabitants of the Islamicate world with whom the members of al-Ghawrī’s court formed an imagined community, transcending their individual experiences and situating them in the broader context of Islamicate history. At the same time, their identity as *udabā’* also legitimated the common exalted social position of members of the Mamluk court irrespective of their apparently quite diverse ancestry and origin, as the aphorism attributed to ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib shows. We are thus dealing here with a shared identity based on moral and intellectual grounds, and not on ethnicity or kinship, as was arguably the case in most other Islamicate polities of the time, where membership in certain lineage groups was often a necessary, though not sufficient condition for elite status and access to courtly circles. Indeed, one may assume that to the minds of the participants in al-Ghawrī’s *majālis*, it was this emphasis on merit—and not ancestry—that set them apart from the courtly elites of other Islamicate polities of their time.

Third, the example of al-Fārābī’s behavior in Sayf al-Dawla’s *majlis* and his generous treatment by this ruler demonstrated not only the value of cultural capital and its transformability into economic benefits, thus presenting learning and the acquisition of knowledge as routes to worldly success, it also offered a role model and identification figure for the learned members of al-Ghawrī’s court, who could see themselves as standing in the tradition of the great philosopher. The fact that knowledge derived from the writings of scholars such as al-Fārābī, who built on the Greek philosophical heritage, was discussed and appreciated in al-Ghawrī’s *majālis* makes this interpretation particularly plausible.

36 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā’is* (MS) 6; (ed. ‘Azzām) 4.

37 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā’is* (MS) 157; (ed. ‘Azzām) 59.

38 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā’is* (MS) 199; (ed. ‘Azzām) 84.

39 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā’is* (MS) 70.

40 Anonymous, *al-Kawkab* (MS) 231.

ible.⁴¹ Fourth, the story also offered a role model of proper rulership in the figure of Sayf al-Dawla, whom it presents as an ideal Muslim sovereign who reacted with forbearance to al-Fārābī's impolite behavior, demonstrated his support for learning and the arts by hosting *majālis* featuring both scholarly discussions and musical performances, and showcased his generosity by providing the philosopher with a generous stipend. To members of al-Ghawrī's court, the similarities between Sayf al-Dawla and their sultan must have been evident, especially as far as the holding of *majālis* was concerned. The story thus established a connection between al-Ghawrī and a successful ruler of old, while also legitimating the Mamluk sultan as fulfilling the ethical expectations that could be deduced from the behavior of his famous predecessor.

Taken together, the example of the anecdote about al-Fārābī shows how important the consumption of written texts about the past could be for both al-Ghawrī's court as a social body and its members, who through the collective reading of such texts interpreted, contextualized, negotiated, and justified their social status at the top of Mamluk society.

4 **Discussing and Commenting on Texts about the Past**

The members of al-Ghawrī's *majālis* approached the textual tradition of historical knowledge not simply as passive recipients, but also by commenting on, debating, scrutinizing, and questioning its contents. The passage from *al-Uqūd al-jawhariyya* quoted at the very beginning of this chapter is a case in point. It shows the sultan adding to the corpus of available historical knowledge by making an—in this case—negative comment about an earlier ruler who was widely regarded as one of the most amoral Muslim sovereigns of all times. Similarly, *al-Uqūd al-jawhariyya* depicts al-Ghawrī also as adding his thoughts to a piece of historical information about another widely condemned ruler of old:

In the year 411[1020–1], al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh [The One Who Rules According To God's Decree], the ruler of the districts of Egypt, went missing when he was 36 years old. He had been a devil (*shayṭān*), of wicked disposition, fickle faith, and thirsting for bloodshed. He killed many people from among his officials in cold blood and was a heavy wine drinker ... Al-Ḥākim gave orders that nobody was to work during the day and that [everybody] was to stay awake at night instead of during the day. One day,

⁴¹ See Mauder, *Salon*, chapter 4.2.8.

he walked around and saw a tailor who was sewing while seated with a wax candle standing in front of him. Al-Ḥākim said to him: “Have you not heard of our ordinance?” He said: “Yes, oh commander of the faithful, but I have lighted the candle so that I can stay awake [in its light].” Thereupon, al-Ḥākim laughed about him and abolished [his ordinance].

Bon mot (*durra*): He whose victory may be glorious [i.e., al-Ghawrī] said: “It would have been fitting to call him al-Ḥākim bi-Ghayr Amr Allāh [The One Who Does Not Rule According To God’s Decree] because God Most High created the day for earning one’s livelihood and the night for what is to remain veiled.”⁴²

By commenting, in this passage and the one quoted at the beginning of this chapter, on the received historical knowledge about Walīd b. Yazīd and al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh and their qualities as notoriously bad rulers, al-Ghawrī made a statement about what it meant to be a good ruler, namely, governing in accordance with God’s decrees, be it by following His commandments concerning proper behavior—contrary to Walīd b. Yazīd’s example—or by respecting—unlike al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh—the natural order of His creation. Moreover, by using Walīd b. Yazīd and al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh as negative examples, the sultan also implicitly made a statement about his own rule: He knew how to govern in accordance with God’s will and was, therefore, a legitimate sovereign.

Yet the historical material discussed in the *majālis* offered more than warnings about evil rulers. It also showed how virtuous Muslims of old exercised political authority. Again, the sultan is presented in our sources as engaging closely with this kind of material:

‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz was strict toward his family and his relatives and took away from them much of what they possessed. Then they intrigued with his servant, poured poison for him [into a drink] and gave [the servant] one thousand *dīnārs*. It is said that ‘Umar knew that [poison] had been poured [into his drink]. He sent for his servant and said to him after he had treated him sternly: “What prompted you to pour [poison] for me [into my drink]?” He said: “They gave me one thousand *dīnārs* for it and if I had continued to wait on you for one thousand years, I would not have made this [much money].” [‘Umar] said to him: “Bring me [the money].”

42 Anonymous, *al-Uqūd* ii, 25^{r-v}. I have not been able to pin down the source of this anecdote.

[The servant] brought it to him and [‘Umar] gave orders to put it in the treasury. He said to the servant: “Leave so that nobody sees you.” The servant fled as he was told. ‘Umar—may God have mercy on him—died in the year 101[/719–20]. The duration of his reign was two and a half years. He lived for 39 years.

Bon mot (*durra*): He whose victory may be glorious [i.e., al-Ghawrī] said: “What is astonishing about him is that he abolished ...⁴³ short period many wrongs (*maẓālim*), among them the cursing of *imām* ‘Alī—may God be pleased with him—and replaced it with the saying of Him Most High ‘God decrees justice and good behavior.’ Some of the earlier ones count him among the Rightly Guided Caliphs.”⁴⁴

Al-Uqūd al-jawhariyya portrays al-Ghawrī here as genuinely interested in the figure of the Umayyad Caliph ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (r. 99–101/717–20), who appears in the quoted passage as a paragon of severity and justice toward his family, leniency toward his subjects, and pious respect toward the Prophet’s family. Through his study of ‘Umar’s example, al-Ghawrī demonstrated his own efforts to be a fair, clement, and godly ruler. We can, therefore, argue that the reading of historical material in the sultan’s *majālis* not only established shared notions of good rule among the members of the court and thus fulfilled an important function in the social construction of a shared reality but also legitimated al-Ghawrī’s rule, who is depicted as seeking to perfect his own conduct as a ruler through the study of the past.

However, the historical texts that members of the sultan’s court studied and commented on both included lessons about the proper behavior of rulers and offered points of reference for the shared outlook of a courtly elite that sought to abide by certain intellectual and ethical standards. *Al-Uqūd al-jawhariyya* contains a lengthy historical anecdote about how a woman who belonged to “the daughters of the royal ladies (*banāt al-khawandāt*)” approached the Shāfi‘ī chief judge, claiming that the Mamluk ruler al-Zāhir Barqūq (r. 784–91/1382–9 and 792–801/1390–99) was her slave who had never been freed and was therefore unfit to rule. The judge thereupon summoned Barqūq, and the woman produced evidence of his slave status. When the *amīr kabīr* of the time offered to buy Barqūq for 400 *dīnārs*, the woman declined and stated that she would only sell him to the judge. The judge thereupon sold all his belongings, purchased Barqūq from the woman for 22 *dīnārs*, and freed him. Barqūq was subsequently

43 Word illegible in the manuscript.

44 Anonymous, *al-Uqūd* i, 79^{r-v}. I have not been able to pin down the source of this anecdote.

reinstalled as sultan.⁴⁵ *Al-Uqūd al-jawhariyya* attributes the following comment on this anecdote to al-Ghawrī: “In this time, the judges had long tongues [i.e., were eloquent] and short hands [i.e., did not seek worldly gain]. Now, they have long hands and short tongues.”⁴⁶

This episode is not typical for the historical material discussed in al-Ghawrī’s *majālis* insofar as it addresses the history of the Mamluk Sultanate, which usually did not figure prominently in these events, at least as far as our sources tell us. This particular anecdote about the purchase of a Mamluk ruler, however, apparently appealed to the members of al-Ghawrī’s circle. The unusual idea of a ruler being sold for a comparatively small price surely accounted for a significant share of its attractiveness. However, the members of al-Ghawrī’s *majālis* might also have considered the anecdote valuable for the contribution it could make to their shared project of constructing and affirming a common framework of proper behavior. The story championed several key virtues that must have resonated with members of the Mamluk court, including respect for Islamic law as expressed by all of its *dramatis personae*, financial unselfishness as practiced by the unnamed courtly woman, and respect for rulers as well as the proper exercise of one’s office as exemplified by the judge. As al-Ghawrī’s final remark made clear, adhering to the high moral standards the anecdote set was considered a challenge. Yet by studying historical material that contained ethical advice such as the story in question, the members of al-Ghawrī’s circle demonstrated their commitment to a shared vision of how both civilian and military members of the elite of the Mamluk Sultanate should behave.

The comments by members of the sultanic *majālis* on material about the past examined so far could seem to be rather uncritical. The *majālis* participants apparently took up the historical information they found in the available literature and integrated it into their efforts to construct a shared social reality. Other comments, however, reveal that the *majālis* participants did not slavishly accept each and every statement they found in their readings but had agency in appropriating and manipulating the past in accordance with their needs and convictions. This could go so far as to include outright rejection of statements found in works about the past, as the following example from *Nafā’is majālis al-sultāniyya* shows: “The author of *al-ʿAqāʾiq* said: ‘Gabriel came 24,000 times to the Prophet—peace be upon him.’ Answer: I [i.e., the first-person narrator] said: ‘This would necessarily mean that Gabriel came down to

45 Anonymous, *al-Uqūd* ii, 43^v–4^r.

46 Ibid. 44^r.

him—upon whom be peace—three times a day, although the period in which the Prophet received no revelation (*fatrat al-wahy*) is clearly established in the authentic traditions.’⁴⁷ The work referred to here as *al-‘Aqā’iq* was, as I show elsewhere,⁴⁸ Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Marwān b. al-Munajjim al-Ma‘arrī’s (d. 557/1162) *Kitāb al-‘Aqā’iq fī ishārāt al-daqa’iq*, which, although more a parenetic than a historiographical text, served the members of al-Ghawrī’s *majālis* as an important source of information on pre- and early Islamic history. Our sources indicate that they read at least considerable portions of the work over an extended period.⁴⁹ Sultan al-Ghawrī, in particular, held the work and its author in high esteem. During a *majlis* in al-Rabī‘ 1 911/August–September 1505, he recited the first Sura of the Quran three times for the benefit of al-Ma‘arrī’s soul⁵⁰—an, as far as we can say, singular gesture of respect toward a long-dead author.

However, it was possible in the sultan’s *majālis* to criticize even a person of al-Ma‘arrī’s standing if his writings were perceived as falling short of the participants’ intellectual standards. Using his agency as a reader, the first-person narrator of *Nafā’is majālis al-sultāniyya* pointed out a problematic passage in the work and refuted it, thereby demonstrating his acumen and learning. Arguably, he acted here as a kind of representative of the *majālis* participants, who through their collective critical reading of works such as al-Ma‘arrī’s *Kitāb al-‘Aqā’iq* performatively demonstrated and enacted their claims to the status of well-lettered *udabā’*.

While the observations that readers had agency over the texts they consumed and that they exercised this agency inter alia through practices of commenting is hardly surprising, the accounts of al-Ghawrī’s *majālis* also indicate that works about the past could themselves possess agency by influencing and shaping the course of the debate. A case in point is the famous popular epic *Sīrat Baybars* about the exploits of the early Mamluk ruler al-Malik al-Zāhir Baybars (r. 658–76/1260–77), which in al-Ghawrī’s time had acquired a sufficiently stable form to be regarded a written work about the Mamluk past.⁵¹ Yet, when one of the *majālis* participants brought fascicles of what appears to have

47 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā’is* (MS) 203.

48 See Mauder, Salon, chapter 4.2.4.

49 E.g., al-Sharīf, *Nafā’is* (MS) 73, 141, 145, 191, 203, 207, 210–1, 233, 247–8, 256, 259; (ed. ‘Azzām) 77, 93, 95, 131, 135.

50 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā’is* (MS) 143; (ed. ‘Azzām) 54.

51 *Sīrat al-Zāhir Baybars* has received considerable attention in recent years. Examples of particularly important publications include Herzog, *Geschichte*; Legitimität; Garcin (ed.), *Lectures* (and the contributions therein); Garcin, *Histoire* (both parts).

been this work⁵² and another text to the citadel in order to read them in a meeting of the sultan’s circle on the last day of Ramaḍān 910/early March 1505, his suggestion met with opposition:

Shaykh Umm Abī l-Ḥasan came with two books, one of which was the *sīra* of al-Malik al-Zāhir Baybars and his entry into (*dukhūluhu ilā*) [the lands of] the Franks. The second book [included] prophetic traditions about the merit of [being] Muslim (*fī faḍl al-muslim*). He wanted to read the complete contents of these books, although it is not possible to read them in an entire month.

I said: It is not fitting to read these books in this night. As for the *sīra* of al-Malik al-Zāhir, it is [not fitting] because if al-Malik al-Zāhir were [still] alive, he would wish to listen to the *sīra* of the *majlis* of our lord the sultan. As for the second book, it is far from being fitting for the night of the Feast [of Breaking the Fast]. Nay, what is fitting in this noble night is mentioning the merit of [the month of] Ramaḍān and the performance of [its fast], and the merit and the blessing of the feast.⁵³

In this passage, the first-person narrator of *Nafā’is majālis al-sultāniyya* gave three reasons why he considered *Sīrat Baybars* inappropriate reading for the *majlis*: First, in his view, the text was simply too long to be read during one gathering. Second, Sultan Baybars’ accomplishments were of such minor significance compared to those of al-Ghawrī that even Baybars himself would have preferred to hear about the latter. And third, the work did not fit the religious character of a *majlis* held on the last night of Ramaḍān.

Among these three arguments, the second one is of special interest here. Apparently, the first-person narrator feared the agency of *Sīrat Baybars* as a text that would draw attention away from Sultan al-Ghawrī and his courtly *majālis* to the exploits of his famous predecessor Baybars, whose military accomplishments against Mongols and Crusaders—especially as narrated rather fancifully in *Sīrat Baybars*—threatened to overshadow all achievements that al-Ghawrī and his intimates could come up with. Moreover, in this case, it seems that the first-person narrator considered commenting and debating the text as insufficient strategies to tame the distractive potential of *Sīrat Baybars*. The risk was apparently too high that any closer engagement with *Sīrat Baybars* would threaten the success of the *majālis* participants’ common project of

52 On the identification of the work introduced in the source simply as *Sīrat al-Zāhir Baybars*, see Mauder, *Salon*, chapter 4.2.5.

53 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā’is* (MS) 16; (ed. ‘Azzām) 16.

legitimizing the sultan's rule and reaffirming their status as members of the distinguished elite. If Baybars were the benchmark, none of them, not even al-Ghawrī, could have hoped to appear as an accomplished figure posterity would remember as one of the great men of the sultanate. Therefore, in an—as far as we know—unique move, *Sīrat Baybars* was banned from al-Ghawrī's *majālis*. With this step, the members of the court acknowledged that their agency as readers was limited and that the success of their common efforts to present themselves as worthy of elite status could be threatened by a text about the past. We thus see that, in the social context of al-Ghawrī's court, written works about bygone times were central to the elite's activities in self-legitimation and the construction of a shared social reality, but they could also, if used without appropriate discretion, undermine these very goals. The *majālis* participants were apparently keenly aware that certain works about the past were too powerful to be collectively consumed and commented on in a courtly setting.

5 Producing Texts about the Past

Given that the members of al-Ghawrī's *majālis* realized the social impact that writings about the past could have, it would have been almost surprising had they not themselves tried their hand at producing such texts. And indeed, they wrote with *al-Kawkab al-durrī*, *al-Uqūd al-jawhariyya*, and *Nafā'is majālis al-sultāniyya* at least three texts about the—in this case immediate—past, namely, their experiences in the sultan's gatherings. The fact that these works did not belong to the predominant genres of Mamluk historiography (i.e., the chronicle and the biographical dictionary) but were rather produced in the time-honored, but in the Mamluk period rather uncommon, genre of courtly *majālis* literature that blossomed especially in 'Abbasid and Buyid times, should not mislead us in this regard.⁵⁴ Yet, who wrote these works, and why?

Of the three named texts, we can answer these questions most precisely for *Nafā'is majālis al-sultāniyya*, which in the following serves as the subject of a case study on writing about the past at the late Mamluk court. Its author, Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-Ḥusaynī, known as al-Sharīf, does not seem to feature in any other known source. His work, however, provides considerable information about his origin, educational background, and social status in Mamluk Cairo. As both his name and al-Sharīf's explicit statement make clear, he

54 Behzadi, *Art*, esp. 166–7.

claimed to be a descendant of the Prophet Muḥammad through the line of the latter’s grandson, Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 61/680).⁵⁵ Al-Sharīf was not of local Egyptian background but identified his home region as *bilād al-‘ajam*⁵⁶ (i.e., the land of the non-Arabs). The specific way he uses this term in his text suggests that in this case, it might refer more precisely to the territory of the Turkmen dynasty of the Qarā Qoyunlu (Black Sheep), who ruled over Eastern Anatolia, the eastern part of modern Iraq, and most of Iran.⁵⁷ That al-Sharīf appears to describe his home region in reference to this dynasty might implicate that he was born before its subjugation by the Āq Qoyunlu (White Sheep) in the early 870s/late 1460s.

Al-Sharīf was multilingual and knew at least Arabic, Persian, and Ottoman Turkish, as his use of these languages in his work indicates. His command of Arabic, however, was far from perfect, as the considerable number of recurring grammatical mistakes throughout his work demonstrates, including its very title, which, according to the rules of Arabic grammar should read *Nafā’is al-majālis al-sultāniyya fī ḥaqā’iq al-asrār al-Qur’āniyya* instead of *Nafā’is majālis al-sultāniyya fī ḥaqā’iq asrār al-Qur’āniyya*.⁵⁸ Moreover, al-Sharīf seems to have lived a considerable time in a region characterized by Persianate culture, as his frequent references to pre-Islamic Persian personages, Iranian history, and Persianate lore throughout his work suggest.⁵⁹ Furthermore, al-Sharīf apparently had a preference for the Ḥanafī school of law, which he usually mentions first and whose views he gives the most space when narrating legal debates in al-Ghawrī’s *majālis*.⁶⁰ This preference could be explained either through the legal identity of the Mamluk ruling military that was almost consistently Ḥanafī or through al-Sharīf’s assumed area of origin, where this *madhhab* was the most common.⁶¹

Even if we cannot establish beyond doubt that al-Sharīf was a Ḥanafī, the religious terminology used and views expressed in his work do show beyond doubt that he was a Sunni.⁶² He may have left his home region for this very reason, given that his appearance in Cairo coincided with the rise of the Shī’i

55 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā’is* (MS) 203–4; (ed. ‘Azzām) 88.

56 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā’is* (MS) 221; (ed. ‘Azzām) 101.

57 Cf. al-Sharīf, *Nafā’is* (MS) 224; (ed. ‘Azzām) 105.

58 See Mauder, *Salon*, chapter 3.1.1.3.

59 See *Ibid.*; Irwin, *Literature* 28.

60 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā’is* (MS) 11, 62, 103, 107, 138, 159, 220, 224; (ed. ‘Azzām) 10, 100, 105–6.

61 Cf. Heffening and Schacht, *Ḥanafīyya* 163, on the spread of the Ḥanafī school of law in the eastern part of the Islamic world.

62 Cf., e.g., al-Sharīf, *Nafā’is* (MS) 271; (ed. ‘Azzām) 149.

Safavids in former Qarā Qoyunlu territories.⁶³ In the cultural context of al-Ghawrī's court, his Persianate background might have been a valuable asset, given that a contemporaneous chronicler noted that the sultan "was inclined toward the Persians (*abnā' al-'ajam*)."⁶⁴

Whether because of his region of origin or other reasons, al-Sharīf managed to become a client of al-Ghawrī's, who in Rabī' 1 911/August 1505 gave him a paid position as Sufi in his funeral complex.⁶⁵ However, his relationship with the sultan suffered a severe setback when, over the course of the last three *majālis* narrated in the work that took place in late Rajab to early Sha'bān 911/December 1505, al-Sharīf stubbornly defended his view about a seemingly minor question of Quranic exegesis. His adversaries in this debate included al-Ghawrī, whom al-Sharīf implicitly accused of harboring Mu'tazili tendencies. In reaction, the furious sultan brought the *majālis* to an abrupt end and banished all of their participants, including al-Sharīf, from his presence.⁶⁶ The implications of this outcome of the debate for al-Sharīf can hardly be overestimated, given that his economic well-being and social status in Cairo depended on the sultan's goodwill.

We have every reason to assume that this crisis of patronage was the immediate reason for the composition of *Nafā'is majālis al-sultāniyya*, as becomes especially clear in the final passages of the work, which follow al-Sharīf's presentation of the last fateful *majlis* the sultan had so brusquely ended. The first passage of relevance here is introduced as an "apology (*i'tidhār*).⁶⁷ There, al-Sharīf begs his readers for forgiveness for his mistakes.⁶⁷ While works of the Mamluk period regularly included such passages that formed part of a convention of literary production, the passage is noteworthy because it sets the tone for the following section of the text, which is introduced as *ṣūrat al-qīṣṣa* or "the form of [my] petition".⁶⁸

63 Cf. Roemer, Safavid period 212–20.

64 Ibn Iyās, *Badā'ī'* v, 88. See also Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, *Durr* ii.1, 48–9; Alhamzah, *Patronage* 38; Flemming, *Perser* 82; *Nachtgesprächen* 24. On the patronage received by Persianate immigrants in the Mamluk Sultanate, see also Petry, *Elite* 61, 67–8; *Underworld* 260–2; *Patterns*, 173–4; Fernandes, *Politics* 96.

65 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā'is* (MS) 115; (ed. 'Azzām) 36. See also Al-Sharīf, *Nafā'is* (MS) 205–6; (ed. 'Azzām) 90–1. On al-Ghawrī's funeral complex, see Alhamzah, *Patronage*.

66 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā'is* (MS) 259–65; (ed. 'Azzām) 135–43. For detailed analyses of these debates, see Mauder, *Salon*, chapters 3.1.1.3 and 4.2.2.

67 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā'is* (MS) 268–9; (ed. 'Azzām) 145–6.

68 For the translation of *qīṣṣa* as "petition" in the Mamluk context, cf., e.g., Sijepsteijn, *Troubles* 359; Pellat, *Ḳiṣṣa* 186–7. See also al-Qalqashandī, *Subḥ* vi, 202.

Then, I sent a piece of writing (*kitāb*) through (*alā yad*) the lord of the merchants in the world, the generous and liberal one, the most honorable of the servants of God in the presence of the greatest sultan of the lands of God, Khawājā Muḥammad b. ‘Abbād Allāh—may God increase his excellence and perfection. It [i.e., the piece of writing] included a Quranic verse [and read]:

“I am in any case a sinner	and what the revealed law dictates is obligatory
But if you want, forgive us what	we’ve committed, and if you want, punish [us].
God Most High said in his	noble Book: ‘And if You punish them, they are Your servants; if You forgive them, You are the Almighty, the Wise.’ [Q 5:118]

The intercessor of the sinners, and the friend of those who are repentant [i.e., Muḥammad] said: ‘For each thing, there is an expedient (*ḥīla*), and the expedient for sins is repentance.’⁶⁹

Oh sultan of sultans (*sulṭān al-salāṭīn*), oh shadow of God on earth, oh you who is clement [even] if you are in wrath, oh noblest of the rulers of non-Arabs and Arabs, forgive me my sin, and condone my shortcoming!⁷⁰

What al-Sharīf describes here is an earlier attempt to regain the sultan’s favor with the help of a third person, who conveyed al-Sharīf’s written apology to the sultan.⁷¹ In it, al-Sharīf readily acknowledged his guilt and pleaded for al-Ghawrī’s forgiveness through references to the Islamic religious tradition. However, it seems that this first attempt to reestablish cordial relations with the sultan failed, as the text of *Nafā’is majālis al-sulṭāniyya* continues with three poems and a partial citation of the Quranic verse 2:286, which, in Arberry’s translation, reads as follows: “Our Lord, take us not to task if we forget, or make

69 This saying is not included in this form in the six canonical books of Sunni *ḥadīth*.

70 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā’is* (MS) 269–70; (ed. ‘Azzām) 146.

71 We do not know much about Khawājā Muḥammad b. ‘Abbād Allāh except for the fact that he was one of the government officials (*mubāshirūn*) who were deported to Istanbul after the Ottoman conquest of Egypt, cf. Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i’* v, 231. He later returned to Cairo and again became part of the local administration, cf. *Ibid.* 358, 403. He died in or after 927/1521.

mistake. Our Lord; charge us not with a load such as Thou didst lay upon those before us. Our Lord, do Thou not burden us beyond what we have the strength to bear. And pardon us, and forgive us, and have mercy on us; Thou art our Protector. And help us." The plea for forgiveness as the central topic of this verse reappears in the three poems, the first two of which are in Arabic and the third in Ottoman Turkish.⁷² The second reads:

Oh east wind, blow in the early morning
 at the gate of the Khusraw, the Lord of Conjunction,⁷³
 His Excellency, the Sultan, the Commander of the Faithful,⁷⁴
 Qāniṣawh al-Ghawrī, the Beloved of Egypt, the Khān.
 His wisdom, his rule and his justice
 [are like those of] Joseph, Alexander and Anushiruwān.⁷⁵
 After kissing the ground, ask much for forgiveness
 because of the misdeed of the slave with the broken heart.⁷⁶

In light of these verses and the other evidence available, it is obvious that the immediate reason for al-Sharīf's writing of *Nafā'is majālis al-sultāniyya* was his need to apologize to the sultan and to regain the latter's patronage. Yet, this insight leads to another question: Why did al-Sharīf think that he could reconcile with al-Ghawrī by producing a literary work on the sultan's *majālis*? What did the ruler—and with him his court—have to gain from the writing of a work that depicted the quite immediate past?⁷⁷

There are several possible answers to these questions, and we can assume that the expected efficacy of the production of *Nafā'is majālis al-sultāniyya* as a strategy of patronage (re)acquisition lay inter alia in its polyvalence. First, al-Sharīf could demonstrate through the writing of *Nafā'is majālis al-sultāniyya* that he was an *adīb* in possession of cultural capital of value to the sultan. To this end, al-Sharīf documented in his work his command of the three major Islamicate languages of his time (i.e., Arabic, Persian, and Ottoman Turkish).

72 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā'is* (MS) 270–2; (ed. 'Azzām) 147–9.

73 On the application of this title to al-Ghawrī, see Mauder, *Salon*, chapter 6.2.2.

74 On the application of this title to al-Ghawrī, see *Ibid.* 6.2.3.

75 On the connections between al-Ghawrī, Alexander, and Joseph, see *Ibid.* 4.2.4 and 6.2.1.

76 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā'is* (MS) 270; (ed. 'Azzām) 147–8.

77 There is no conclusive evidence of when *Nafā'is majālis al-sultāniyya* was completed, but it must have been produced during al-Ghawrī's lifetime, i.e., no later than ten years after the events depicted therein. Moreover, given what we know about the background of the work, it seems probable that its author completed it in or soon after Sha'bān 911/January 1505.

Moreover, he underlined the importance of his role in the sultan's *majālis*, as becomes apparent from the fact that *Nafā'is majālis al-sultāniyya* credits the first-person narrator with the second-highest number of contributions to the *majālis* discussions attributed to a specific person. Only al-Ghawrī is depicted as a more active participant in the debates.

Second, through his work, al-Sharīf showcased his abilities to support the representation and legitimation of al-Ghawrī's rule. The special attention his work paid to al-Ghawrī's contributions to the *majālis* discussions was well-suited to presenting the ruler not only as the most important participant in these events but also as a particularly wise and well-cultivated sovereign—an *adīb-sultān*. Less subtly, *Nafā'is majālis al-sultāniyya* lauded al-Ghawrī also as a particularly virtuous and powerful ruler who equaled, if not surpassed, the greatest leaders of the past, as al-Sharīf's above-quoted apologetic poem makes very clear. Furthermore, al-Sharīf's work provided literary accounts of al-Ghawrī's practices of consuming and commenting on written works about the past, which, as we saw above, were of representative and legitimating significance.

Third, through his work, al-Sharīf documented and contributed to the project of al-Ghawrī's court society to establish, affirm, and develop a shared social reality defined by the cultural and behavioral norms of *adab*. By providing this project with a literary manifestation, al-Sharīf not only integrated it into a century-old tradition of Arabic writing about learned gatherings that had seen its heyday in 'Abbasid and Buyid times but also legitimated it as a meaningful undertaking that deserved to be recorded.

Fourth, *Nafā'is majālis al-sultāniyya* was undoubtedly also of commemorative value, as it provided written accounts about the sultan's *majālis* that its participants, other members of the court, and posterity could access to learn about and remember al-Ghawrī's gatherings.⁷⁸ That the members of al-Ghawrī's circle felt the need for such a commemorative text becomes apparent from the above-quoted passage in which the first-person narrator asserts that “if al-Malik al-Zāhir were [still] alive, he would wish to listen to the *sīra* of the *majlis* of our lord the sultan.”⁷⁹ This self-referential passage illustrated that there was at least a potential demand for a *sīra* or account of al-Ghawrī's *majālis*, which was exactly what al-Sharīf provided in his *Nafā'is majālis al-sultāniyya*.

78 There is no evidence that *Nafā'is majālis al-sultāniyya* ever circulated beyond courtly readerships during its dedicatee's lifetime.

79 Al-Sharīf, *Nafā'is* (MS) 16; (ed. 'Azzām) 16.

We thus see why al-Sharīf could hope that, by writing *Nafā'is majālis al-sulṭāniyya*, he would regain al-Ghawrī's favor. Whether or not his endeavor was successful, we do not know, as no information about al-Sharīf is available in later sources. Nevertheless, his work allows us unique insights into how the social practices of engaging with historiographical works in al-Ghawrī's *majālis* became themselves part of written texts about the past.

6 Conclusion

Over the course of the last, troubled years of the Mamluk Sultanate, Sultan Qāniṣawh al-Ghawrī convened regular learned *majālis* at the Cairo Citadel. During these meetings, the ruler discussed scholarly questions from a broad array of different disciplines with members of his court, many of whom were accomplished members of the scholarly and administrative elite. While history was not the most common topic of debate, it did account for a significant share of the *majālis* conversations.

The *majālis* participants engaged with writings about the past in different ways. Consumption of such works in the form of collective reading practices constituted a recurring activity, and there is evidence that various works of history were physically present in the citadel spaces where the *majālis* took place. The members of the sultan's circle did not consume historiographic literature indiscriminately but rather focused on works that fulfilled certain aesthetic expectations and spoke to their own realities of life. Ibn Khallikān's *Wafayāt al-a'yān wa-anbā' abnā' al-zamān* is a case in point here. The popularity of this work with the *majālis* members could be a consequence of both its contents, which reflected the interest of the *majālis* participants, and its literary qualities, which prompted Hartmut Fähndrich to characterize it as "a biographical dictionary with numerous features that are common to *adab*-works."⁸⁰

In addition to, and as part of, their practices of collective textual consumption, the *majālis* members discussed and commented on their readings. Our sources attribute to the sultan a particularly active role in these conversations. In particular, they depict al-Ghawrī as evaluating the conduct of the *dramatis personae* of the historical accounts against a specific body of knowledge and proper behavior our source texts refer to as *adab*. Moreover, the sources include comments they attribute to other *majālis* participants, which betray a critical approach to statements in the consumed texts. Apparently, members of the sultan's circle did not hold back their criticism if they considered what they

⁸⁰ Fähndrich, Approach 437.

read unreliable or even wrong. Yet, the *majālis* participants' contributions to the body of historical knowledge were not limited to these comments. They also authored at least three texts in which they narrated their experiences in the sultan's gatherings. Rather than constituting minutes taken during the actual meetings, these texts were works about the past written soon, but definitely, after the events they depicted. As our case study of one of these works—al-Sharīf's *Nafā'is majālis al-sultāniyya*—showed, the dynamics of patronage relations could be decisive for the production of these texts, given that the immediate reason for al-Sharīf's writing of *Nafā'is majālis al-sultāniyya* was an earlier quarrel with his patron al-Ghawrī, who had banished al-Sharīf from his presence.

Nevertheless, our findings suggest that the *majālis* participants did not merely read and discuss works about the past to learn about history, nor did al-Sharīf write *Nafā'is majālis al-sultāniyya* as a simple gift to the sultan. Although each of these practices must be studied individually, they arguably fulfilled similar and, at the same time, multiple social functions. First and foremost, they strongly conveyed the image of al-Ghawrī as a wise and well-lettered sultan who was interested in ethical rulership and sought to situate himself in historic traditions of virtuous rule. While it is thus clear that the various practices of engagement with written works about the past at al-Ghawrī's court examined here served to represent and legitimate al-Ghawrī's rule, their significance did not end there. The specific choice of texts consumed at court suggests that the sultan and his intimates derived aesthetic pleasure from their readings in addition to acquiring and exchanging cultural capital during their gatherings. Moreover, their collective practices of reading and discussing these texts provided the members of the court with opportunities to showcase their knowledge, acumen, and refinement, thus demonstrating that they were members of a cultured elite of courtly *udabā'*. The norms and values that governed their belonging to this elite group likewise found expression in their perusal and discussion of historical works, which thus contributed to the social construction of a shared reality. Last but not least, the writing of works about the *majālis* commemorated these events that represented such important functions in the lives of their participants.

These observations have at least two implications for the broader understanding of late Mamluk intellectual history. First, contrary to what has been assumed, especially by scholars of Arabic literature, courts did matter as centers in the consumption and production of texts in Arabic during the Mamluk period.⁸¹ While this is not to say that communication among people unas-

81 For recent publications doubting the significance of courts in the intellectual and literary

sociated with courts did not form an important part of Mamluk literary and intellectual life, there can be no doubt that courtly patronage existed in the late Mamluk period and that it had an impact on how people thought and wrote about the past.

Second, learned debates at the late Mamluk court largely took place against a background of a specific body of knowledge and behavioral practices our sources refer to as *adab*. Closely connected to courtly aesthetics, the concept of *adab* functioned as an overarching frame of reference that members of the Mamluk court used to imagine and construct their own place in the world. As such, it shaped their approach to texts about the past, which were of central importance to their endeavors to legitimate their status. Future research must show whether *adab* also fulfilled similar functions with regard to other fields of knowledge cultivated in the courtly sphere.

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life of the late middle period, see, e.g., Bauer, Shā'ir 720; Communication 23; Anthologien 83; Herzog, Culture 145; Muhanna, Century 352; Talib, *Epigram* 89–90. For a critical reaction to this view, see van Steenberg, Discourse, esp. 3.

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Historical Representation as Resurrection: Al-Udfuwī and the Imitation of Allāh

Evan Metzger

1 The Significance of Al-Udfuwī's *al-Ṭālī' al-Sa'īd*

In commencing his exceptional study of Qūs, the important medieval regional center that produced so many *'ulamā'* in the 13th and 14th centuries, Jean-Claude Garcin noted that “notre étude n'aurait guère eu de sens, si nous n'avions disposé du dictionnaire biographique des notabilités du haut Sa'id composé à l'époque mammelouke.”¹ The biographical dictionary to which he was referring, so essential to his study and, indeed, to any study of Upper Egypt during the 13th and 14th centuries, is *al-Ṭālī' al-Sa'īd al-Jāmi' Asmā' Nujabā' al-Ṣa'īd* by Kamāl al-Dīn Ja'far b. Tha'lab al-Udfuwī (d. 748/1347).²

This biographical history is a unique source for Mamluk history. Its extraordinary nature and value are due to not only its inclusion of 594 biographies, including four women who were either born or spent a considerable amount of time in Upper Egypt, but also the detailed geographical description of Upper Egypt that al-Udfuwī included at the beginning of the text. It should be noted for the sake of accuracy that al-Udfuwī's Upper Egypt begins around Ikhmīm and ends by Aswan at the border of Nuba—the area known as *al-Ṣa'īd al-A'lā'*—and *not* everything south of the Giza up to Aswan. Beyond this introductory geographical description, the bulk of the text is dedicated to biographies of various individuals who were either born in Upper Egypt or lived there for a large part of their lives. The vast majority of these individuals died in either the 7th/13th or 8th/14th century and are mostly scholars or poets.

Because al-Udfuwī's text is the only biographical dictionary dedicated solely to Upper Egypt written during this period to have been preserved (and likely the only one written during the premodern period at all), it has long been mined as a source of information about the condition and people of the region. This is a centuries-old tradition. One of the earliest Westerners to have done this

¹ Garcin, *Centre*, introduction xi.

² Al-Isnawī, *Ṭabaqāt* i, 86; al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* iii, 23; *Sulūk* iv, 94; al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* xi, 77–8; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 535–7; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt* iii, 22–5; Ibn al-Imād, *Shadharāt* viii, 263–4.

was the 17th-century German theologian Johann Vansleb, who briefly refers to the text in his account of his travels to Egypt as an authority on the time it takes to traverse Upper Egypt.³ Later historians also recognized the value of al-Udfuwī's text. His biographies were recycled, often in truncated form, in the historical works of major Mamluk-era historians like al-Subkī (d. 771/1370), al-Şafadī (d. 764/1363), and al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442).⁴

So, when Garcin wrote his history of Qūş, he was following the deep tracks of a tradition of relying on this same text for knowledge about the Şa'īd. Garcin was not uncritical of his interaction with the text. He acknowledged that a biographical dictionary was a constructed text that only provided a glimpse of the affairs of the people of Qūş.⁵ Nevertheless, his study's main engagement was not with the way in which history was constructed within the text. The same can be said for other contemporary authors who have turned to al-Udfuwī's work as an "archive" of Upper Egyptian medieval Muslim history.⁶ Al-Udfuwī's work has achieved a high level of objectivity within the scholarship on the period, and its entries are often treated as having the accuracy of "reports," but the grounds for this positivity has never been questioned.

Hence, despite centuries of scholarly tradition, al-Udfuwī's history has yet to receive any scrutiny as a *text*, although *al-Ṭālī'* displays many of the features of the new literary-historical style characteristic of the "Literarisierung" of Mamluk-era historiographical texts to which Ulrich Haarmann first drew our attention: the frequent inclusion of anecdotes and mirabilia, the use of poetry and *saĵ'* to adorn the historical narrative, and the attempt to equalize histori-

3 Wansleben, *Present* 13, where he writes, "Giafer ibn Daleb, an Arabian Historian, saith that it is twelve days journey long, as they march with Camels in Egypt, but it is not above four Hours travelling from side to side in the Country that is inhabited: for if we should comprehend in the breadth the Mountains of Sand on the East and West, it is a great deal broader than we have said."

4 Al-Şafadī states about al-Udfuwī, "He composed *al-Ṭālī' al-Şa'īd fi Tarīkh al-Şa'īd*, and he wrote it with skill (*wa-jawwadahu*). I have copied several biographies from that history," in *Wāfi* xi, 78. Similarly, al-Maqrīzī noted in his biography of al-Udfuwī in *al-Muqaffā* that "I have copied a lot from it (*al-Ṭālī' al-Şa'īd*) in this book, and it is a precious book (*kitāb nafīs*) that contains useful stories and biographies not found elsewhere," *al-Muqaffā* iii, 23. Al-Subkī does not cite al-Udfuwī, but it is clear that he relied on al-Udfuwī's biographies due to the word-for-word similarity of some of the entries, such as in the biography of Taqī al-Dīn b. Daqīq al-Īd in al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 207–49.

5 Garcin, *Centre*, introduction xi–xii.

6 The term "archive" as applied to biographical dictionaries is from Cooperson, *Classical, preface* xi, where he notes that "biography is the archive of the Muslims." For studies besides Garcin's that rely on al-Udfuwī as a main source, see Hofer, *Popularisation*; Gril, al-Uqşurī; al-Qinā'ī; and, to some extent, el-Leithy, Sufis.

ographical units regardless of the significance of the content.⁷ By including the latter feature—the equalizing of historiographical units—Haarmann was referring to the tendency of Mamluk authors of chronicles to standardize the length of entries of each year in order to approach an “aesthetic reminiscent of *adab*.”⁸ While his study of “Literarisierung” emphasized chronicles and mostly excluded biographical works, al-Udfuwī’s biographical dictionary does manifest a similar tendency to produce balanced entries. Arranged alphabetically by name, the text includes an entry for every single letter, a feat which pushed al-Udfuwī to search for individuals he otherwise would not have included were it not for the letter commencing their first name. In al-Udfuwī’s words, “I do not mention living individuals but rarely, and always for a reason: either due to a dearth of names for one letter, due to the individual’s having virtues or extraordinary charm, or due to the individual’s having bestowed upon me some kindness or good deed.”⁹ Like Ibn Khallikān, al-Udfuwī’s biographical dictionary was only supposed to include entries of dead people, but the desire to create an aesthetically complete history that *also* performed the sociological function of paying back one’s social debts led him to break his own principle of inclusion.

Thus, al-Udfuwī’s text, bristling with anecdotes, poetry, and aestheticized language, is ripe for a literary analysis. While one could document all of these different literary features indicative of the “Literarisierung der inneren Form,” this is not the approach I will take.¹⁰ Rather, it is suggested here that historiographical form and content cannot be analytically separated in their entirety. Using an integrated approach to form and content, I show how one of the most boilerplate, apparently formal components of the text—the *taḥmīd*—is itself a signifier with meaningful content independent, at times, of the apparent referent of its language. By understanding the literary standards of the *taḥmīd*, one can perceive an intended meaning that transcends the purely aesthetic by artfully employing the literary standards of the age. In the case of *al-Ṭāli‘*, as I argue below, the meaning signified by the form is that the biographies, in all their diversity, are true representations of past lives which, whatever heterodoxy they display, are *worthy* of remembrance.

At the same time, and due to this very heterodoxy, the text is not univocal. The *Ṭāli‘*, for a number of different reasons specific to al-Udfuwī’s historical situation as a liminal individual in both scholarly and religious affiliation and

7 Haarmann, *Auflösung* 55–6.

8 *Ibid.* 56.

9 Al-Udfuwī, *al-Ṭāli‘* 6.

10 Haarmann, *Auflösung* 49.

his provincial origins, exhibits Bakhtinian heteroglossia, a concept defined below. Al-Udfuwī's particular use of the *khutba* is one legitimizing form for this heteroglossia. Another is the need to represent different *madhhabs* or genres. Moreover, the authority of the Upper Egyptian *shuyūkh*, even the most pious of whom are represented as speaking with multiple voices, is a guarantee that otherwise unauthorized behavior, if not legitimate from a religious or legal perspective, is at least worthy of mention. Finally, part of this heteroglossia emerges from the nature of al-Udfuwī's relationship with his subjects. Born and trained in the region but living, as he wrote, in Cairo, al-Udfuwī was writing as the "native informant" for his Cairene audience (the book was dedicated to his teacher Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī, d. 745/1344). It was necessary, therefore, to portray himself as close to his subjects as possible, which included physical proximity to the body. This intimacy, both physical and intellectual, led to the inclusion of alternative and irregular, even unorthodox principles, dictated by the irreducibility of the lived experience of bodies, people, and communities. Finally, I will discuss the results of al-Udfuwī's work: the successful image of himself as a reliable historian and a *faqīh* with a pedigree tracing back to Ibn Daqīq al-ʿĪd (d. 702/1302).

The approach I am suggesting here is unique, as it is rare for *any* biographical collection—not just *al-Ṭālīʿ*—to receive attention as a text rather than a data bank. In this regard, Chase Robinson's observation about prosopographical texts is still largely true: "relatively little has been done" to answer "the first order question—*how* do the texts say what they say?"¹¹ In fact, a recently published study on narrative in Ibn Ḥajar's (d. 852/1449) *al-Durar al-Kāmina* claims to be the first study *ever* to study "the narrative nature of biographical dictionaries."¹² It should not be forgotten, however, that the theological and sociological significance of biographical dictionaries, rather than their status as "archives," has long been recognized. George Makdisi argued that the production of *Ṭabaqāt* prior to and during the Mamluk period was a sign of the legal *madhhab's* corporate identity.¹³ He also wrote a pair of articles on Ash'arism in which he analyzed the use of biographical dictionaries, including al-Subkī's *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya*, to create "a new image of the Shāfi'ite school of law," one "composed of traditionalists and rationalists, a broad-minded school, inclusive of all the religious sciences, especially *kalām*, leader among the orthodox schools of law."¹⁴ In these studies, Makdisi paved the way for further studies of

11 Robinson, *Islamic* 71.

12 Gharaibeh, *Narrative* 51.

13 Makdisi, *Ṭabaqāt*, 379, 385–6, 392.

14 Makdisi, *Ash'arī* 60.

the various messages conveyed by biographical dictionaries beyond the “data” they appear to contain.

Moreover, starting in the 1970s, important work was done on the literary aspects of biographical dictionaries, including studies by Hartmut Fahndrich and Fedwa Malti-Douglas.¹⁵ Whereas Fahndrich studied the “literarization” of Ibn Khallikān’s biographical dictionary and the author’s literary “style” by comparing anecdotes, Malti-Douglas, in her study of al-Ṣafadī’s *Nakt al-Himyān fī Nukat al-‘Umyān*, showed the importance of paying attention to the thematic emphasis of authors of biographical dictionaries by studying how information is presented in the biographies. One cannot, she argued, “distinguish between purely literary or purely historical effect. A change in one aspect of the text most often represents a change in the other. This is because the Medieval Arabic biographical notice functions as a semiotic system, that is a system of signs.”¹⁶ Unfortunately, following Malti-Douglas’s revealing study of how dreams functioned as signs, no study has been dedicated to the semiotic interpretation of a Mamluk-era biographical dictionary.

The same cannot be said for other historical periods. One significant study which reveals the importance of studying biographies, not just as conveyors of information but as signs, is Michael Cooperson’s landmark study *Classical Arabic biography*, which discusses the use of biography “to document and perpetuate traditions of authority based on knowledge borne and transmitted, or merely claimed, by groups (*Ṭawā’if*, sing. *Ṭā’ifa* of specialized practitioners).”¹⁷ An important argument of this study is that biographical dictionaries’ “‘literary effects’ arose in response to the need to negotiate crises in the history of the groups whose collective life the biographers had undertaken to record.”¹⁸ Shocking anecdotes, scandals, and humorous stories all combine to provide an air of veracity to the text. In part, this is a result of biographical writing’s liminal position “on the margins of history,” which invites commentary and judgment from the author on events usually already known to the intended reader.¹⁹

Cooperson argues that these judgments and the apparent veracity of marvelous or embarrassing tales often worked to legitimize the professional occupation of the writer. “In the apologetic prefaces they attached to their works, the *adab*-biographers made explicit what was implicit in Hadith-biography, namely, the notion that professional legitimacy derived from the documented

15 Fahndrich, *Wafayāt*; Compromising; Malti-Douglas, *Controversy*; *Dreams*.

16 Malti-Douglas, *Dreams* 140.

17 Cooperson, *Classical*, preface xii.

18 *Ibid.*

19 *Ibid.* 22–3.

transmission of knowledge.”²⁰ This judgment would not strictly apply to al-Udfuwī, who wrote not of a single *tāʾifa* but of any important person who was born or spent a considerable amount of time in Upper Egypt. Rather than attempting to ground the authority of a particular profession by linking it to ancient or prophetic knowledge or authority, al-Udfuwī attempted to legitimize his *region* and the scholars living in and originating from that region by showing that it boasted a wide range of ‘*ulamā*’ and *udabā*’ whose authority resided in their training in the madrasas and their work as poets, jurists, scribes, and administrators.

2 The Art of Commencing: *Al-Ṭālīʿ al-Saʿīd*’s Laudatory Preamble

What is al-Udfuwī’s vision of historiography, and how does this vision unfold in the text? I propose to answer these questions by beginning with the introduction, or *taḥmīd*, which I will show functions as a semiotic sign, recognizable by his medieval audience. The *taḥmīd* was considered by Arabic rhetoricians to reflect both the content of the text and the author’s intention in writing the text. This occurred not only through directly stating this content and intention but also, as will be described below, through thematic parallelism between the images, themes, and mood of the *taḥmīd* and the proceeding text.

Studies on the *taḥmīd*, also referred to variously as the *khutba*, *iftitāḥ*, *taṣḍīr*, *ḥamd*, or *ṣadr al-kitāb*, are very sparse. Only a few studies have given attention to the *taḥmīd*, or to use Aziz Qutbuddin’s apt translation, the “laudatory preamble.”²¹ The structure of the *taḥmīd*, including the ubiquitous inclusion of the *basmala* (commencing by invoking God’s name), the *ḥamdala* (praising God), and the *ammā baʿd*, were based on developments in the structure of the *khutba*, or Arabic oration, which were already formulaic by the end of the Umayyad period.²² This may explain why the *taḥmīd*, the laudatory preamble, is also sometimes referred to as a *khutba*.²³ According to Bilal Orfali, by the 9th century, the *taḥmīd* had a clear “tripartite structure” composed of the initial *basmala* and *ḥamdala*, then a middle section in which the author states the reason for writing the book and notes the method or sources to be used in the book, and, finally, the laudatory closing statements.²⁴ Authors commonly refer

20 Cooperson, *Classical* 7.

21 Qutbuddin, *Tahmid* 12.

22 Qutbuddin, *Khutba* 206.

23 Ibid. 182.

24 Orfali, *Art* 182–3.

here to the reasons for writing the book; Peter Freimark notes that common justifications are the request of a person or patron.²⁵

Classical Arabic rhetoricians distinguished the *khuṭba* as a place of special significance within a literary composition due to its ability to set the tone for the audience and engage their attention. Abū Hilāl's (d. after 400/1010) remarks in his *Kitāb al-Ṣinā'atayn* in a chapter on "Beginnings" are exemplary of the high regard for introductory statements. We know that this was a book that al-Udfuwī was familiar with since he refers to it in *al-Ṭālī'*, so his words on the subject are worth quoting here.²⁶ According to Abū Hilāl:

Some of the writers have said, "Attend well to your introductions, O writers, for they are the signs of eloquence (*dalā'il al-bayān*)." They said, "The poet must avoid in his poetry and in commencing his speech what can be taken as an inauspicious sign, what provokes tears and aversion to words and discourse by describing desolate homes and the dispersion of communities, mourning the youth and disparaging time, especially in poems whose subject is praise and felicitations."²⁷

While the section above refers directly to poetry, the literary standard of *ḥusn al-ibtidā'*, recognized as a form of aesthetic eloquence since the development of Arabic poetics by Ibn al-Mu'tazz (d. 296/908) as a distinct discourse, was extended to prose as well.²⁸ Whereas Abū Hilāl is laconic about the importance of appropriate introductions, preferring rather to cite dozens of examples of successful introductions, Ibn al-Athīr (d. 637/1239), in his *Mathal al-Sā'ir*, expands on the topic, noting explicitly the importance of introductions for both poetry and prose:

The Twenty-Eighth Device: On Preambles and Beginnings

The truth about this type (of rhetorical device) is that it makes the commencement of one's speech, whether in poetry or epistles, indicative of the intended purpose of the speech. So, if it is (for the occasion of) a victory, then it should be triumphant, if for congratulations, then congratulatory, and if for condolence, then consoling. Such is the case as well for other purposes besides these. The benefit of this is to make known from the start of one's speech what is intended by it, and why it takes this form.

25 Freimark, *Vorwort* 35 ff.

26 Al-Udfuwī, *Ṭālī'* 34.

27 Al-'Askarī, *Ṣinā'atayn* 431.

28 Ibn al-Mu'tazz, *Badī'* 103–5.

The fundamental axiom of this is that it is obligatory for the poet when he composes a poem to consider the following: If it is a pure encomium, not written on the occasion of a particular event, then he must choose between commencing it with amatory verse (*ghazal*) or, if he does not use amatory verse, to commence immediately with the laudatory verse ... But if the poem is written on the occasion of a particular event like the capture of a fortress, the defeat of an army, or something else, then he must not commence with laudatory verse. If he does this, it indicates the poor temperament of the poet and his inability to hit his mark, or, his ignorance of how to place speech in its (proper) order ...

The correct custom for this type is for the poet to avoid commencing a laudatory ode with something that is considered a bad omen. This is based on the *adab* of the soul, not the *adab* of learning. So, he must be wary of doing this on certain occasions, such as describing abandoned homes and encampments which have vanished ... We have specified beginnings here because they are the first things to ring in one's ears. Therefore, if the beginning is appropriate to the following content, then reasons exist for listening. It is enough to mention here the beginnings found in the Quran, such as the laudations which the first parts of the *sūras* commence with, as well as the supplicatory beginnings, such as God's words at the beginning of *Sūrat al-Nisa* ...

The same can be said for beginning with letters, such as God's saying: "*alif-lām wa-ṭā-sīn wa-ḥā-mīm*" and the others like this, for those also direct one's hearing to it, for it strikes the ears as something strange, something completely unaccustomed, which is a cause for one to pay attention to it and listen.²⁹

In another section of the *Mathal al-Sā'ir*, Ibn al-Athīr writes that "speech is commenced with giving thanks because the soul yearns to show gratitude to God, and commencing with what the soul yearns for is what is sought."³⁰ This literary standard, *ḥusn al-ibtidā'* or *barā'at al-istihlāl*, was applied equally to both poetry and prose.³¹ Key to its success was ensuring that the beginning actually reflected the contents of whatever followed. As seen above, a partic-

29 Ibn al-Athīr, *Mathal* i, 96–8.

30 Al-'Askarī, *Ṣinā'atayn* 276; also quoted in al-Qalqashandī, *Subḥ* vi, 225.

31 Safī l-Dīn al-Ḥillī and Abu Hayyān al-Gharnāṭī, however, also refer to it as "barā'at al-matla'," al-Ḥillī, *Sharḥ* 57–9; al-Gharnāṭī, *Baḥr* i, 152.

ularly grave mistake, discussed by both al-‘Askarī and Ibn al-Athīr, was to commence with something that could be taken as a bad omen, such as mentioning the *atlāl* or lamenting time on a joyous occasion. We should, therefore, expect that the *taḥmīd* matches the purpose and content of the book. To have this resonance was not simply ideal in an aesthetic sense; it was a sign that could direct the mood of the reader toward what the writer intended and motivate him or her to react to the following speech in a particular way.

Finally, it should be pointed out that the Quran was, possibly more so for the laudatory prelude than in other aspects of *adab*, considered paradigmatic in this regard. According to al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418), the order of the *khutba*, in which the doxology comes directly after the invocation of Allāh’s name, is based directly on the model of the *Fātiḥa*.³² Epistles that do not begin with the doxology, on the other hand, are a reflection of the insignificance that the author attached to the subject at hand.³³ The trick to a successful *khutba*, which displayed *barā‘at al-istihlāl*, was to convey a hint of one’s intentions while conforming to the Quranic model.³⁴ Hence, the doxology was a highly symbolic field within the literary text, and the way in which a person expressed praise to God was expected to indicate their motivation for writing while directing the expectations of the audience to a particular theme. If we look at al-Udfuwī’s *taḥmīd*, we see:

In the Name of God the Merciful, the Beneficent:

Praise be to God, Reviver of decaying bones, Rejuvenator of what has passed in days of yore. I praise Him for His successive blessings, one following the other, and I thank Him for making me one of the carriers of *‘ilm*, for those who carry it are people of the highest ranks. I give perpetual salutations, unending until the Day of Judgment, to the Prophet sent as a mercy to the universe and a testimony for the pious, and to his companions, who transmitted his path and preserved his way for us. They are among the winners in the world to come.

Al-ḥamd li-llāh muḥyī l-rimam al-bāliya wa-nāshir mā-anṭawā fī l-ayyām al-khāliya. Aḥmaduh ‘alā ni‘amih al-mutarādifa al-mutawāliyya wa-ashkuruh ‘an ja‘alanī min ḥamalat al-‘ilm wa-ḥamalatuh hum ahl al-rutab al-‘āliya wa-uṣallī ‘alā nabīyyih al-mab‘ūth raḥmatan lil-‘ālamīn ṣalātan

32 Al-Qalqashandī, *Subḥ* vi, 225.

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid.

muttaṣila dā'ima ilā yawm al-dīn wa-'alā ālih wa-aṣḥābih alladhīn naqalū ilaynā wa-ḥafazū shari'atah 'alaynā fa-hum fī l-ākhirā min al-fā'izīn.

Considered in isolation, this is a standard introduction that many modern readers may well skip or skim to get to the “content” of the text. Yet, this would be a mistake for two reasons: First, al-Udfuwī and his teacher, Abū Ḥayyān, reveal in their writings that they considered the *khuṭba* of other writers to be a sign of the literary talents of the writer.³⁵ In light of this emphasis both place on the *khuṭbas* of others, it is fair to assume that they—the author and the dedicatee—would likewise approach the *khuṭba* of *al-Ṭālī'* with high expectations. Second, compared to the literary standards of his age, we can see that this introduction is a semiotic sign that al-Udfuwī modeled his vision of historiography on the divine resurrection and final accounting. He does this, moreover, by imitating God, as we will see shortly.

Following the initial *tahmīd*, al-Udfuwī immediately begins listing the reasons that history, in general, is “a necessary craft (*fann*)”: It provides knowledge about prior generations and reveals who is deserving of praise and who is “more undeserving than a thread.” This general description of the purpose of history is the only part of al-Udfuwī’s introduction to have caught the attention of modern scholarship; it was translated by Franz Rosenthal in his *History of Arab historiography*.³⁶ But he did not quote the all-important initial section, so vital as we saw above for signaling the purpose of the text, nor did he focus on what comes next, which reaffirms the significance of the initial thematic.

After this general statement on the purpose of history, al-Udfuwī describes his reasons for writing about Upper Egypt—it is his birthplace, where he was raised and educated, and where he grew old. He then quotes a poem he wrote describing his yearning for the land. Up to this point, nothing is surprising. It is what follows that is remarkable:

I wanted to resurrect that which had passed away from the knowledge of Upper Egypt’s scholars, to spread (*anshur*) the excellence of its notables, to manifest what was hidden among the prose of its rhetoricians and what had disappeared from among the verse of its poets, and to relate what had been forgotten about the virtues of its virtuous people and the nobility of its upright individuals, for a person is honored by the honor of his people, just as he is elevated by their nobility and excellence.

35 Al-Udfuwī, *al-Ṭālī'* 587; al-Gharnāṭī, *Baḥr* i, 112.

36 Rosenthal, *Muslim* 307.

*fa-aḥbabt an uḥyī mā māṭ min ‘ilm ‘ulamā’ihā wa-anshur min faḍl fuḍ-
alā’ihā wa-uḥhir mā khaḍya min nathr bulighā’ihā wa-daras min naẓm
shu‘arā’ihā wa-adhkur mā nasiya min makārim kuramā’ihā wa-karāmat
ṣulaḥā’ihā fa-l-insān yukram bi-kirāmat ahlihi kamā ya’ẓum bi-nubliḥ wa-
faḍliḥ.*

What al-Udfuwī has done here is to model his action of writing history on characteristics he attributes to Allāh in the opening *taḥmīd*. Due to the repetition of words, the parallel structure, and the proximity of the two statements, this act of imitation is unmistakable. Just as God resurrects human beings—in their entirety and regardless of their virtue—in order to be judged, so al-Udfuwī will resurrect the knowledge (*‘ilm*) of the scholars to “spread” it. Key to understanding this passage is the word *anshur*, which constitutes a *tawriyya* or double entendre in which two meanings—one expected (*qarīb*) and the other unexpected (*ba’īd*)—are present to the mind, the reader unable to decide between them but for the existence of a piece of contextual evidence (*qarīna*) that indicates the unexpected meaning.³⁷ While I have chosen above to translate *anshur* as “spread” in order to highlight the dual meaning of the word, there is a clear *qarīna* that indicates the unexpected meaning of “resurrect.” This *qarīna* is the parallel structure within the *khuṭba*, linking the divine resurrection to the resurrection of knowledge through memory. The effect of this parallelism is twofold. On the one hand, it authorizes a recording of the biographies of a large number of contemporary individuals, some of whom, as we will see, are remembered for their heterodox beliefs or practices. On the other hand, it extends the promise of a verisimilitude like that of God’s resurrection for judgment; reviving the dead is not an act of creativity, but rather one that reproduces the past within the present exactly as it was. This implies, of course, recollecting vices as well as virtues.

3 Historiography as *Imitatio Dei*

In his *khuṭba*, al-Udfuwī imitates God both in speech and, metaphorically, in action. In terms of speech, the praise of God as the reviver of dead bones and of what has passed before (*muḥyī l-rimam al-bālīyya wa-nāshir mā-anṭawā fī l-ayyām al-khālīyya*), along with its parallel structure to al-Udfuwī’s descrip-

37 Al-Ḥillī, *Sharḥ* 135–6.

tion of his historiographical undertaking, allude to Quranic passages.³⁸ Quoting or alluding to Quranic passages, often referred to as *iqtibās al-Qurʾān*, was, of course, a common and widely accepted literary practice.³⁹ Moreover, al-Udfuwī's mentor, al-Gharnāṭī, was a proponent of the philological approach to the Quran, according to which the Quran is an "open text": Its meaning is not limited to what is understood by its initial audience, but it continues to reveal new meanings to each generation of Muslims who could apply literary standards to the text to appreciate its eloquence and message. Literary standards, according to this school of thought, were equally applicable to *adab* and scripture; all language, even God's, existed on a continuum. In fact, it was the ability to apply aesthetic standards to both the Quran and *adab* that allowed one to fully appreciate the miraculous inimitability of the Quran (*iʿjāz al-qurān*).⁴⁰

More controversial, however, is the imitation—even if metaphoric—of God's action. After all, from one perspective, nothing seems more fundamental to Islamic orthodoxy than the idea that the God of the Muslims is a God totally unlike His creation. "Nothing is like unto Him (*laysa ka-mithlih shayʾ*)."⁴¹ Possibly because of statements like this, modern scholarship on Islam reveals a very poor understanding of the importance of the concept of the imitation of God, or *imitatio Dei*, in premodern Islamic thought. In fact, several modern scholars, including the eminent S.D. Goitein, have made the case that Islam is characterized by a tendency to imitate the Prophet Muḥammad to the exclusion of God.⁴² According to this perspective, there is no such thing in Islam as the imitation of God, or the *imitatio Dei*, or if such a concept did exist, it only played a minor role. This characterization of Muslim traditions blinds us from recognizing the symbolic import of the imitation of God's speech, the Quran, and God's characteristics. If we take this approach, we put ourselves in the unenviable position of completely missing the importance of metaphoric descriptions of human activity based on God's characteristics, such as the one that frames al-Udfuwī's biographical dictionary.

Before examining this concept in the context of al-Udfuwī's text, I should say something about this concept of the "imitation of God." In a non-Islamic

38 Q 2:28, 78, 243, 258–9; 3:156; 7:158; 8:24, 42; 9:116; 10:56; 22:6, 66; 30:51; 41:39; 36:78–9; 53:44; 80:21–2.

39 Orfali and Pomerantz, *Distant* 192–7.

40 Al-Gharnāṭī, *Baḥr* i, 109–11; see also Saleh, Ibn Taymiyya for a discussion of the philological approach to *tafsīr*.

41 Q 42:11.

42 Goitein, *Studies* 22n2. See also the similar assumptions expressed in Riexinger, *Rendering* 103–4.

context, the term is often used to refer to one of two things. First, in Greek philosophy, it can refer to the idea that all creation strives to achieve its own perfection by approaching the Unmoved Mover. Second, and more commonly, it refers to the Biblical idea, found in both Leviticus and the First Epistle of Peter, that one should be holy as God is holy. Imitating God, *al-tashabbuh bi-llāh* was not by any means foreign to medieval Islamic thought. In the early 14th century when al-Udfuwī was writing, however, it was at times associated by Sunni thinkers with the *falāsifa*, as we learn from Ibn Taymiyya's writings, which reject the notion as "more evil than the *shirk* of the Arab polytheists," because its proponents purport to bridge the ontological gap between God and his creation.⁴³ At the heart of the disagreement over the imitation of God was the ambivalent nature of God's attributes in relation to his creation. On the one hand, God is totally unlike his creation in essence and attributes. This was emphasized by al-Qurṭubī (d. 671/1272) in his commentary on the *laysa kamithlih shay'* verse:

The belief regarding this topic is that God, magnificent of name, in His greatness, His might, His sovereignty, the beauty of His names and exaltedness of His attributes, resembles nothing (*la yushbih shay'an*) from among His creations nor can He be made to resemble them. Indeed, this is part of what the Law determines regarding the Creator and His creation: there is no similarity between them in reality because the attributes of the Eternal are incommensurable with the attributes of His creation. Created beings are ensnared in end-purposes (*aghrād*) and accidents (*a'rād*), but He the Sublime is above that. Rather, He perdures with His names and attributes as we made clear in *al-Kitāb al-Asnā fī Sharḥ Asmā' Allāh al-Ḥusnā*. The statement of God suffices here: "Nothing is like unto him."⁴⁴

On the other hand, God ascribes to Himself attributes that are also used to describe humans and other created things, and it is by understanding God through these attributes that one can acquire the knowledge of Him required of all Muslims. This is true even of the word *shay'* itself, which, of course, can be applied to anything, as al-Qurṭubī writes in his book on the names of God, mentioned in the preceding quote. Is it *tashbih* to call God a *shay'*? According to al-Qurṭubī, drawing this conclusion would mean that a person could not talk about God at all: "That would necessitate that the Creator not be described

43 Ibn Taymiyya, *Ṣafadīyya* 347.

44 Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi'* xviii, 450.

as One or as existing, for other things share with him oneness and existence.” Sharing a name is not the same thing as sharing an essence.⁴⁵

The problem, of course, with this solution is that the names were more than empty signs; to say that God is a “thing” (or Merciful, Reviver, or any other attribute) is to connote something, not just denote a class of objects.⁴⁶ And, indeed, we see al-Qurṭubī in his book on the Divine names describe the proper behavior that names of God instill in the believer. For example, knowing that God is almighty (*‘aẓīm*) leads to abasing oneself in the face of this might.⁴⁷ But for other Sunni writers, including al-Qushayrī (d. 465/1072), al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111), Ibn al-‘Arabī (d. 638/1240), and al-‘Izz b. ‘Abd al-Salām (d. 660/1262), knowing God’s names and attributes did not just produce in humans a certain deportment toward God but, ideally, should also lead to the acquiring of these characteristics: *al-takhalluq bi-akhlāq allāh*. These writers, to various extents, saw the names of God as a model for believers who wished to shed their baser, sublunar characteristics, and associate with the Divine.⁴⁸ For al-Ghazālī, all God’s attributes could be imitated by the believer; some, however, such as those related to His ability to create, could only be imitated *metaphorically*.⁴⁹ Like the Stoics, these writers saw *true* happiness as occurring only once someone had shed their baser attributes and acquired divine characteristics through self-discipline.⁵⁰ According to Ibn ‘Abd al-Salām, in addition to names referring to attributes which *should* be imitated, there are some attributes that *cannot* be imitated, such as God’s eternity, whereas others, such as God’s might, should not be imitated by a human (although it is possible).⁵¹ Unlike these writers, Ibn al-‘Arabī saw *all* the names of God as potential attributes of human beings; in fact, for Ibn al-‘Arabī, being human is exactly this potentiality of acquiring the Divine names latent in each human.⁵²

It should be clear by now that imitating God in the form of *al-takhalluq bi-asmā’ allāh* or *al-takhalluq bi-akhlāq allāh* was a common, widely accepted concept by the time al-Udfuwī was born in the mid-13th century. It is true that

45 Ibid., *Asnā* 91.

46 For the use of the words “denotation” and “connotation” in reference to the Divine Names, see Shahzad, Ibn ‘Arabī’s 14.

47 Al-Qurṭubī, *Asnā* 180.

48 Al-Qushayrī, *al-Risāla* 148–50; al-Qushayrī, 263–5; Al-Ghazālī, *Maqṣad*; Ibn ‘Abd al-Salām, *Shajarat* 53–95.

49 Al-Ghazālī, *Maqṣad* 83–4.

50 For the relationship between the concept of *al-takhalluq bi-akhlāq allāh* and Stoicism, see Groff, Kindī 145–6.

51 Ibn ‘Abd al-Salām, *Shajarat* 53.

52 Chittick, *Sufi* 274.

all of the thinkers cited above were Sufis of one kind or another. Yet, so was al-Udfuwī, and al-Ghazālī and Ibn ‘Abd al-Salām were also highly respected Shāfi‘ī jurists. The latter, in particular, had an important role in shaping al-Udfuwī’s own scholarly milieu, as several of his teachers studied with Ibn ‘Abd al-Salām’s students.⁵³

The idea that imitating God, rather than the ideal man, Muḥammad, is some kind of mutation of orthodox Islamic theology is not just a modern projection onto the past; there were some criticisms of this view. According to Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328), one can only affirm the existence of names and attributes shared between God and His creation to the extent that they are mentioned in scripture, such as “He is beautiful, and He loves beauty.”⁵⁴ By interpolating foreign concepts into Islamic belief, however, Ibn Taymiyya thought that Sunni scholars had violated the fundamental otherness of God:

This was rejected by some people like Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, among others, and they made it so that the servant (*al-‘abd*) could be described as “the imperious (*al-jabbār*)” and “the insolent (*al-mutakabbir*)” according to some explanation of theirs. Then they called all of that “acquiring the characteristics of God (*al-takhalluq bi-akhlāq allāh*),” citing as a hadith, “Acquire the characteristics of God.” Others, like Abū ‘Abdallāh al-Māzarī and some others, censured them for this. They argued that the Lord has no “characteristic (*khuluq*)” that the servant acquires, and they said, “this is philosophy draped in the garment of Islam.” What they meant was the saying of the philosophers: “philosophy is imitating god to the extent of one’s ability.”⁵⁵

Ever the clever polemicist, Ibn Taymiyya associated the widely accepted views on imitating God with the *mutafalsifa*. Nevertheless, to accept this characterization as a general description of Islamic orthodoxy in the early 14th century would be to ignore the flourishing of the concept of the imitation of God, which, as we just saw, was actually embraced by Sunni *fuqahā’* of the highest standing. If the imitation of God as an ethical concept was embraced by main-

53 Al-Udfuwī mentioned al-‘Izz as the teacher or judicial superior of the individuals in biographies number 43, 231, 277, 404, 405, 463, 480, and 587. These individuals included the illustrious Taqī al-Dīn b. Daḡīq al-‘Īd (see below) and the father and mentor of Tāj al-Dīn al-Dishnāwī, whose study circle al-Udfuwī attended for a number of years. Al-Udfuwī eventually received an *ijāza* from him. See al-Udfuwī, *Ṭāli‘* 488–97.

54 Ibn Taymiyya, *Radd* 96.

55 Ibid. 145.

stream Sunni writers, it was not just an ethical or philosophical concept. In practice, it could take the shape of an art form, since, as al-Ghazālī wrote, *all of God's characteristics could be metaphorically imitated*. Such a practice was exactly what a skilled Arabic writer could do to invoke the Divine to embellish and elevate their ideas, and it is what we saw al-Udfuwī do above by inserting the metaphoric imitation of God into the laudatory preamble. We should, then, take al-Udfuwī's claim to model his writing on God's resurrection seriously. It is a claim to objectivity. Just as God resurrects people, exactly as they were, with all of their faults and weaknesses to be judged, so would al-Udfuwī resurrect the work and scholarship of the Upper Egyptians, along with all the heterogeneous traditions and human variance this implies.

4 Al-Udfuwī's Agenda: Objectivity through Subjective Description

We should not be fooled by this claim to objectivity. Al-Udfuwī had an agenda, and the semiotic equivalence of historiography with resurrection was a crafty way to both obscure and achieve this aim. What I will show now is that this appearance of objectivity, authorized by al-Udfuwī's representation of history as an imitation of God's resurrection, led to a radical destabilization of orthodoxy and a simultaneous attempt to show that Upper Egypt hosted Sunni scholars, luminous grammarians, and talented poets. This was no easy task. Upper Egypt in the century prior to al-Udfuwī's death was wracked by violent uprisings.⁵⁶ Many of these uprisings had pro-Fatimid loyalties. Moreover, several members of his own family were well-known Shi'ī supporters, something he could hardly hide in his biographies without being accused of blatant obfuscation of the truth. One of his cousins had even sworn an oath of allegiance at a public ceremony to the 'Aḍīd pretender, Dā'ūd, who appeared in Upper Egypt in 697/1298. In fact, al-Udfuwī himself had attended this ceremony.⁵⁷ Upper Egypt, moreover, still had a large Christian population.⁵⁸ However, apart from a few references to converted Christians, one small notice denying the role of the Sufi shaykh Ibn Nūḥ in the destruction of several churches in Qūṣ, and a generic Sufi description of enchantment by a Christian youth, the Christians of Upper Egypt are entirely overlooked.⁵⁹ Al-Udfuwī only includes biograph-

56 Garcin, *Centre* 128–31, 183–6, 368–74, 379–84.

57 Al-Udfuwī, *Ṭālī'* 66, 368; Daftary, *Ismā'īlīs* 254; Stern, *Succession* 211.

58 Hofer, *Popularisation* 184–5.

59 Al-Udfuwī, *al-Ṭālī'* biographies number 306, 328, 331, and 470. See el-Leithy, *Sufis* for a discussion of al-Udfuwī's portrayal of Ibn Nūḥ's purported role in the destruction of 13

ical entries on Muslims, and the consequence of this decision is that Christians are completely marginalized so as to pose no threat to the positive, thoroughly Muslim image of the region.⁶⁰

Thus, the way al-Udfuwī portrayed his region as a bastion of Sunni orthodoxy was not through any form of forgery but through selective reporting. The Shi'i past is almost entirely eradicated from his biographers, as is the record of the pro-Fatimid revolutions. For example, al-Udfuwī provides no biography of the Banū l-Kanz or their various leaders who went by the title "Kanz al-Dawla," and there is only one brief, offhand reference to the revolt of the Ja'āfira in 650/1252–3.⁶¹ Nevertheless, the Banū Kanz do make regular appearances in the text as the subject of praise poetry composed by Upper Egyptians.⁶² Without previous knowledge of the Banū Kanz, one would never know that these individuals played a controversial part in Upper Egypt's history. Thus, in the biography of 'Alī b. Muḥammad Ibn al-Naḍr, *qāḍī l-quḍāt* in Aswan and Ikhmīm during the vizierate of al-Afḍal Shāhanshāh (r. 1094–1121), it is mentioned that he wrote in praise of the Banū Kanz until they removed him from Aswan.⁶³

This is what makes al-Udfuwī's biographies of his own family of such interest to the historian. It is clear that his family had a long history of leadership within his native town of Udfū. The oldest ancestor in the book, Nawfal b. Ja'far (d. 572/1177), whom al-Udfuwī calls "our most senior forefather," was the *ḥākim* (a judge or arbitrator) of Udfū and 'Aydhāb, and al-Udfuwī says he was informed

churches. El-Leithy calls al-Udfuwī the "partisan" of Ibn Nūḥ, although there is little evidence for this besides al-Udfuwī's inclusion of Ibn Nūḥ in his history. Regardless, el-Leithy notes that Upper Egyptians, like al-Udfuwī, may not have had the same motivation as urban writers living in Cairo to attribute mob violence against Christians to Ibn Nūḥ, who was, in fact, prosecuted by the Mamluk authorities for the church destruction. Ibid. n228. But cf. Hofer, *Popularisation* 216–7, who argues that Ibn Nūḥ was likely the instigator of this revolt.

60 Sometimes the appearance of Christians in al-Udfuwī's history appears to serve the sole purpose of disarming his readers' fears about Christian strength in the region and in the administration. See, in this regard, the anecdote about Majd al-Dīn b. Daḡiq al-Īd, who insists, despite his disciple's warnings, on visiting the house of a Christian tax collector in order to ask the latter for tax alleviation for a Muslim ascetic, only to find the Christian tax collector rushing, barefoot, to greet Majd al-Dīn and assure him that he will always come attend to Majd al-Dīn should he only ask. Al-Udfuwī, *Ṭāli'* 329.

61 Ibid. 504; For the Banū l-Kanz, see Garcin, *Centre* 126–9, 366–79, 383, 392–5, 405; Holt, *Kanz*; Rapoport, *Invisible* 2. For the Ja'āfira, see Garcin, *Centre* 362; and Rapoport, *Invisible* 14–6.

62 See al-Udfuwī, *Ṭāli'* biographies number 66, 69, 127, 183, 199, 206, 316, 415, 459, 462, and 585.

63 Al-Udfuwī, *Ṭāli'* 408–14.

that he had this position for over 40 years.⁶⁴ One of his sons, Mufaḍḍal, was also *ḥākim* for some unspecified period.⁶⁵ His nephew, Tha‘lab b. Aḥmad (d. ca. 640), is mentioned as a *ra‘īs* and *ḥākim* in Udfū for a period of some years. He also corresponded with the fourth Ayyubid sultan of Egypt, al-Malik al-Kāmil Nāṣir al-Dīn (d. 635/1238), and the latter’s letter was still in the family’s possession.⁶⁶ After Tha‘lab, the position of *ḥākim* seems to have been transmitted to the grandson of Nawfal, his namesake Nawfal b. Muṭahhar (d. 657/1258–9), about whom al-Udfuwī only mentions that he was a wealthy yet stingy man, which is why Ibn Shams al-Khilāfa wrote satirical poetry about him.⁶⁷ We also learn from the biography of his brother, ‘Alī b. Muṭahhar (d. ca. 650/1252–3), who was al-Udfuwī’s great-grandfather, that Nawfal preferred to have ‘Alī meet with people in his stead.⁶⁸ After Nawfal b. Muṭahhar, the next *ḥākim* was his paternal cousin, ‘Alī b. Tha‘lab (d. ca. 660/1261–2). At this point, al-Udfuwī no longer seems to be relying on community and family memories for his information, for he says that he was able to read ‘Alī’s *taqlīd*, written by Diyā’ al-Dīn Ja‘far al-Qinā’ī, who was a student of Majd al-Dīn al-Qushayrī (d. 667/1268) and a teacher of al-Udfuwī’s mentor, Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī.⁶⁹ At this point, the position of *ḥākim* appears to have left the family. After this generation, al-Udfuwī’s family filled less prominent positions as *shāhid* (notary) and *khaṭīb* (preacher). Still, even these individuals appear to have faced increasing resistance from the urban class of scholars and jurists, despite apparently enjoying popularity in their hometown.⁷⁰

Why this change in the family’s fortunes after the generation of al-Udfuwī’s great-grandfather? It is hard to escape the conclusion that this was a result of the family’s long-lasting association with two (related) intellectual traditions which were irrelevant and suspicious to the growing class of Upper Egyptian urban scholars and jurists: Shi‘ism and the “ancient sciences” (*al-‘ulūm al-qadīma*), including medicine, philosophy, and music. The family were specialists in these fields; out of the 14 agnates al-Udfuwī included in the *Ṭālī‘*, half of them are identified as having expertise in the *‘ulūm al-qadīma* (see figure 1). These *‘ulūm* were likely transmitted within the family. Al-Udfuwī states explicitly that his uncle Muhadhhab b. Ja‘far learned the *‘ulūm al-qadīma* from

64 Ibid. 684–5.

65 Ibid. 417.

66 Ibid. 176.

67 Ibid. 685.

68 Ibid. 416–7.

69 Ibid. 182, 381–2.

70 Ibid. 662.

the latter's great-uncle, Ja'far b. Muṭahhar, and al-Udfuwī read Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn's writings on Sufism and *falsafa*. Moreover, the town of Udfū was home to other experts in these sciences, such as the 6th/12th-century scholars Ṣakhr b. Wā'il and Zuhayr al-Udfuwī, indicating that the area was likely a locus for the study of the *'ulūm al-qadīma*.⁷¹

Indeed it was only around the generation of al-Udfuwī's great-grandfather that the major sources of resurgent Sunnism, particularly the Najībiyya madrasa and the Shāfi'ī scholars and texts so fundamental to the teaching curriculum, appeared in Qūṣ and its environs. The Najībiyya madrasa, which al-Udfuwī describes as the "the origin of good (*aṣl al-khayr*)" was only built in 607/1210.⁷² Shortly thereafter, Majd al-Din al-Qushayrī, the father of Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Daqīq al-Īd, was invited to move to Qūṣ to teach in the new madrasa. It was Majd al-Dīn, al-Udfuwī writes, who "brought the *madhhab* of the *sunna* to the region" at a time when "the *madhhab* of the Shi'a was ubiquitous."⁷³ If, following Garcin's analysis, we take the arrival of Nāṣir Ibn Abī l-Futūḥ (d. 565/1169), the companion of the highly respected Alexandrian *muḥaddith* al-Silafī (d. 576/1180), as the region's first, gentle nudge toward "la contre-réforme sunnite," we can see that the generation of Nawfal b. Ja'far and his sons was still living in a milieu relatively untouched by the reform movement, but that the generation of al-Udfuwī's great-grandfather was, indeed, the tipping point in the struggle for the sectarian identity of the region's Muslims.⁷⁴ This analysis confirms Tamer el-Leithy's observation of an "emerging fragmentation of Upper Egyptian society" in the early 14th century due to the increasing Islamization of the region, the influx of outsiders, particularly Maghrebis and Sufis, and the repeated violence between Mamluk authorities and Bedouin.⁷⁵ We can add that, from the perspective of local notables like al-Udfuwī's family, this fragmentation was also a result of the increasing oversight of the judiciary from Cairo, which forced individuals to assume the identity of a madrasa-educated, Sunni Muslim in order to gain access to these positions.⁷⁶

71 Al-Udfuwī, *Tāli'* 251, 270.

72 Ibid. 408; Garcin, *Centre* 173.

73 Al-Udfuwī, *Tāli'* 424.

74 Garcin, *Centre* 158–9; al-Udfuwī, *Tāli'* 671–2.

75 El-Leithy, *Sufis* 86, 105–7, 118.

76 When the Chief Qādi b. 'Abd al-Salām ordered that all subordinate judges in the provinces be Shāfi'ī, judges in Upper Egypt who had not received enough training in *fiqh* in the madrasas needed to receive special permission to continue in their positions: al-Udfuwī, *Tāli'* 632. See also 'Abd al-Malik b. Aḥmad al-Armantī's acerbic verse on the ills of the working as a notary in the *sūq al-wirāqa*, which leads to thinking poorly of everyone, produces

In the midst of this social turmoil, why did al-Udfuwī decide to include his Shi‘i, heterodox past in his history of Upper Egypt? As noted above, this is probably in part due to the fact that al-Udfuwī could not hide his Shi‘i heritage, given the prominence of his family. Yet, it is curious that al-Udfuwī includes no biography of his father. This may be because al-Udfuwī, as we learn in another place in his biography, was orphaned before completing his education. In fact, it may be because of his father’s premature death that he was able to integrate so successfully into the dominant Sunni-madrasa culture of his time. Al-Udfuwī relates in his biography of Yūsuf b. Muḥammad al-Suyūṭī that, when the latter was appointed *qāḍī* of Udfū, al-Udfuwī finished studying al-Shīrāzī’s *al-Tanbīh* under him. At the time, al-Udfuwī was an orphan under legal interdiction (*taḥt al-ḥajr*), and al-Suyūṭī, exercising his prerogative as a judge to supervise the wealth and welfare of orphans, decided to increase al-Udfuwī’s stipend and send him to Qūṣ for advanced study. It is clear from al-Udfuwī’s narration of these events that it was a pivotal period in his life. We know from his biographers that he was eventually appointed as *mu‘īd* (an academic position similar to today’s teaching assistant) in Cairo in the prestigious Madrasa al-Ṣāliḥiyya and even held a professorship of *ḥadīth* in the Jankālī b. al-Bābā mosque for a short time before his death.⁷⁷

In light of this transformation in al-Udfuwī’s fortunes, describing his family’s heterodoxy in such clear terms is, far from a surprising incorporation of shameful personal history, a brilliant narrative strategy. On the one hand, as noted above, including strange, shocking, or scurrilous information is a useful way of increasing the reality of the history related. Perhaps more interesting from a historiographical perspective, on the other hand, is that al-Udfuwī in his narration of these events, rather than casting doubt in the reader about his orthodoxy, abolishes any such suspicions by placing himself as an authority on correct belief. Consider, for example, the following selection from his entry on his paternal uncle, an Isma‘ili *faqīh* and *faylasūf*, ‘Abd al-Qādir b. Muḥadhdhab al-Udfuwī:

He believed in the Prophet, peace and blessings upon him, and recognized his position. He believed in the obligatoriness of the Pillars of Islam, although he thought that they are no longer required of someone who obtains knowledge of his Lord, on the basis of reasons he believed in.

a crude disposition prone to litigiousness and envy, and the breaking of familial bonds. Ibid. 340–1.

77 Al-Isnawī, *Ṭabaqāt* i, 86; al-Maqrīzī, *Khīṭaṭ* iv, 723; *al-Muqaffā* iii, 23.

Despite this, he persisted in praying regularly, both in private and in public, and in fasting, but he only fasted according to what his own reckoning required. He thought that performing legal obligations (*al-takālif al-sharʿiyya*) necessarily entails an increase in benefit, even if one has knowledge (of God). He used to think for a long time and get up and dance, saying:

*What a tragedy for one to waste their life on what's allowed
He'll miss the Here and After too, the fool.*

He got sick, and I did not visit him. He died, and I did not pray for him. He has gone now to the graveyard, and he is with Him who knows that which is invisible to the eye and hidden in the heart.

The passage leaves us with the feeling that al-Udfuwī knows the most intimate details about his uncle and seems to have spent a considerable amount of time with him, but we are also assured that al-Udfuwī has dissociated from his uncle, even refusing to visit him on his deathbed or even pray at his funeral. Nevertheless, at the end of this exercise in certainty, we are left with real doubts about the *true* beliefs of his uncle, knowledge of which is only available to God. We see in passages like these that al-Udfuwī, a liminal figure who often traveled between provincial and political centers and who was genealogically on the cuff of Sunnism and Shiʿism, manages, to use Auerbach's words, to portray himself with "the most intense subjectivity" as an objective, reasonable observer, and critic of sectarian identity and belief.⁷⁸ He manages this, moreover, by describing with the utmost intimacy and clarity, a picture of these very heterodox beliefs that never draws suspicion to his own beliefs but still invites a considerable amount of ambiguity as to the damnability of his subjects.

5 Heteroglossia and Carnival in *al-Ṭāliʿ al-Saʿīd*

If there is a clear bias in the selection of biographies, the *Ṭāliʿ* is still not a mouthpiece of any particular consciousness or worldview. Rather, it is characterized by heteroglossia, the Bakhtinian notion of multiple voices and registers grounded in different group practices and ideologies. According to Bakhtin, heteroglossia is a general feature of all discourse: speech is always directed toward an "Other" and expects a response. Moreover, language, always directed toward its "object," struggles both to contain this object and project its repres-

⁷⁸ Auerbach, *Mimesis* 27.

entation to the Other as legitimate. As a result, “neutral” language has no existence; “[a]ll words have the ‘taste’ of a profession, a genre, a tendency, a party, a particular work, a particular person, a generation, an age group, the day, and hour.”⁷⁹ Even highly purposeful, intentional speech is not one’s “own” but rather carries the traces of other speech, appropriated and retransmitted according to one’s situation. Hence, repeated speech, even verbatim quotation, is “always subject to certain semantic changes.” During a person’s upbringing, assimilation of others’ discourses produces “authoritative discourse,” that is, “internally persuasive discourse” with which the individual enters into a dialogic relationship.⁸⁰ Even this relationship to authoritative discourse, shot through with various tendencies toward different positions and ideologies, is semantically open: “in each of the new contexts that dialogize it, this discourse is able to reveal ever new *ways to mean*.”⁸¹ Individuals, constantly balancing competing discourses, are always in a struggle between dialogized utterances.⁸² As a result, speech is never fully one’s own, and even apparently authoritarian statements, such as an official decree, is in dialogue with other ideas; speech is always dialogic to some degree. However, there are certain kinds of literature that express heteroglossia to a greater extent than others, such as novels, which place variant worldviews against one another, producing a struggle in which each voice attempts to establish itself against the demands of the other.⁸³ In addition to the ubiquitous heteroglossia found in any text, the *Ṭālīʿ* exhibits special features of heteroglossia, which can be seen in the following examples.

First, al-Udfuwī was part of a group of historians, poets, and *ʿulamāʿ* who valued entertaining stories for their own sake. This group included the well-known poet and *rāwī* al-Faṭḥ Ibn Sayyid al-Nās (d. 734/1334) and the grammarian, *muḥaddith*, and exegete, Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī. Al-Udfuwī dedicated *al-Ṭālīʿ* to Abū Ḥayyān, and he is one of al-Udfuwī’s primary sources for poetry, *ḥadīth*, and anecdotes about the *ʿulamāʿ*. In this world, comedic and frivolous stories

79 Bakhtin, Discourse 293.

80 Ibid. 342.

81 Ibid. 346.

82 “Within the arena of almost every utterance an intense interaction and struggle between one’s own and another’s word is being waged, a process in which they oppose or dialogically interanimate each other. To ignore this basic fact about language is to transform, and literally kill, the original animated speech, turning it into something ‘utterly reified, a thing.’” Bakhtin, *Discourse* 354–5.

83 Ibid. 261. It should also be noted that Bakhtin did not intend by “novel” a distinct, modern style of representation, but rather a dialogic “force” that appears with particular energy in periods of history in which opposing world views are struggling against each other. Clark and Holquist, *Mikhail* 276–7.

have their place alongside more sober themes. Consider, for example, the biography of one al-Ḥasan al-Numayrī al-Makīn:

Everyone used to have fun with him; they called him “kitty” (*numayr*), meaning the cat. Once when our companion ‘Alā’ al-Dīn al-Uṣfūnī traveled to the Hijaz, he put some flour in a sack, but the mice got to it, so he wrote to al-Makīn a petition whose beginning was:

“Your servant, the flour, kisses the ground beneath your hands, O King of the Cats, the Extraordinary Pussy, the Glorious Feline, the Wise Cat! May God protect you from harm, bring you felicity!”⁸⁴

The grand style of the letter, of which I have only quoted here a portion, is an obvious parody of official petitions. The only apparent reason for writing the letter is to entertain and mock the rigid discourse of the bureaucrats. Indeed, al-Uḍfuwī may well have included the biography of al-Makīn just so that he could insert this parody of high style in his history. This would explain why he felt the need to justify his inclusion of al-Makīn in the book: “I saw him in a dream, and I had not written about him in this history. He said, ‘Why don’t you write about me?’ So, I wrote about him.”⁸⁵ But this reveals more than just al-Uḍfuwī’s sense that he might need a justification for including a biography dedicated to pure joy in his compilation of “scholars.” The biography, as a genre, would seem to be a form given to completeness; most biographies have a clear beginning and a distinct end in death, sometimes articulated in details down to the very time of the day. Yet al-Uḍfuwī entirely undermines this assumption: His subject appears to him in a dream, after his death, and scolds al-Uḍfuwī for excluding him. Al-Uḍfuwī complies with the specter’s demand, but does so by turning his life into an occasion for laughter.

Several elements in this correspond with a fundamental element of Bakhtin’s conception of heteroglossia: carnival. More than just a joyous occasion of decrowning and turning the world upside down, carnival is a state of being and an attitude toward the world with a philosophical critique. As a mode of being in which the world and its ability to surprise is joyously embraced, carnival can be thought of as “a kind of existential heteroglossia.”⁸⁶ Carnival’s literary expression is characterized by “grotesque realism,” which celebrates the body’s ambiguous nature through representations of the world’s physical

84 Al-Uḍfuwī, *Ṭalī* 191.

85 Ibid. 192.

86 Clark and Holquist, *Mikhail* 301.

nature as both the source of all life and as something fundamentally flawed.⁸⁷ Laughter and parody are essential to carnival, which seeks to overturn all claims to univocal, unchanging truth by appealing to the physical ambivalence in everyone's nature. In carnival, the body is celebrated as an unending, imperious force which, even in death, produces new life, as in animal sacrifices. Laughter is, in this sense, an unveiling of apparent truths, revealing the familiar and grotesque materiality residing in all existence.⁸⁸ By dialogizing everything, carnival can also thereby rejuvenate what it comes into contact with.⁸⁹ The need to laugh and experience a renewal of the soul through merriment requires justification, especially if it were to occur near sacred precincts, a tendency directly parallel to al-Udfuwī's sense that he needs to justify including parody.⁹⁰ It is, to some extent, expected that al-Udfuwī, the revivor of dead memories, would embrace this carnivalesque attitude toward life.

Bakhtin developed his idea of carnival on the basis of real medieval European decrowning festivities, which overturned the physical order. The Nūrūz festival, celebrated in Egypt at the time al-Udfuwī was writing, has been compared to Bakhtin's idea of "carnival."⁹¹ During this festival, people were known to drench each other with water, choose a poor fellow to be king, and make mischief and disorder in the streets. In al-Udfuwī's telling, Nūrūz was not condemned by the *'ulamā'* in Upper Egypt. Rather, al-Udfuwī relates in his biography of Majd al-Dīn al-Qushayrī b. Daqīq al-'Īd a single, positive reference that portrays the day of carnival as part of the culture of madrasa:

Despite his scrupulousness and austerity, he was given to elation (*baṣṭa*). Our colleague, the *qāḍī* and erudite *faqīh* Nāsir al-Dīn 'Abd al-Qādir b. Abi l-Qāsim al-Asnā'ī said: Our shaykh Bahā' al-Dīn al-Qifṭī said, "I found a matter of legal disagreement in a notebook, so I locked my door and began studying it. It was the day of Nūrūz and the students were playing and soaking each other with water. They demanded that I go out to them and join them. I refused and focused on the legal matter, so they started to throw the water at my house to the point that I feared that the water would get to me. Then I wrote on a piece of paper to the Shaykh, and I handed it to my slave. She entered and then returned to me; the Shaykh

87 Ibid. 299.

88 Bakhtin, *Rabelais* 118–20.

89 Ibid. 123.

90 Ibid. 77.

91 Shoshan, *Popular* 48–9.

had written: "This is the recompense (*jazā'*) of he who would hold himself above his colleagues!"⁹²

Here we see a classic expression of carnival: the casting aside of regular order, hierarchy, and conventions. Attempts at isolation, to draw oneself apart to study the law, are physically transgressed by the fundamental life-generating, yet ambiguous (it can both cleanse and humiliate), presence of water. Majd al-Dīn al-Qushayrī, the shaykh in the above anecdote, was a towering figure of Sunni orthodoxy (he is credited with removing Shi'ī dominance in Qūṣ), and al-Udfuwī inserts five *ḥadīth* he heard that were transmitted on the authority of Majd al-Dīn in his biography. Though the latter's credentials as a bearer of the official and sacred traditions are impeachable, it is with his approval that the merrymaking continued. In his words, it is not only an optional release from work, routine, and sobriety but a *just punishment* (*jazā'*) for people who try to resist.

In other cases in the *Ṭālī'*, it is the human body that permits transgression of official norms and hierarchy reversal. In Majd al-Dīn's biography, al-Udfuwī describes his "generosity" with food that was entrusted to him for safekeeping. At one point, a man came to Majd al-Dīn to ask for some food on the condition that he would return it at harvest. The harvest came, but the man did not return. Then, in the next year, he came back to Majd al-Dīn asking for more food, and the shaykh obliged his request. When his son-in-law criticized this act—after all, the food was entrusted to Majd al-Dīn and not really his to give—the shaykh merely replied: "If you were the one in need, would you object?"⁹³ An action questionable under the law is sanctioned by the body, which, in its universality, allows for empathy even with strangers like the hungry man. Majd al-Dīn, it should be noted, was no hedonist; like many religious scholars of his day, he was an ascetic. But, according to al-Udfuwī, his asceticism was not due to any hatred of the body nor was it the result of a desire to transcend the world he lived in. Rather, his asceticism was the result of his attempt during a year of famine to live in conditions equal to the people of his region. Upon learning that the people were eating grass out of desperation, Majd al-Dīn "became determined to eat only what the people eat." When the famine passed, he continued to eat this way, saying "my appetite for food has been lifted, so I no longer care about what I eat. The same goes for my desire for clothing, so I no longer care about what I wear. The same also goes for my desire for social prestige (*jāh*)."⁹⁴

92 Al-Udfuwī, *Ṭālī'* 431.

93 Al-Udfuwī, *Ṭālī'* 431.

94 Ibid. 430.

The body is the great equalizer, and its needs, pains, desires, and undeniable demands amount to a voice that cannot be ignored, even at the risk of violating social order. In another anecdote about Bahā' al-Dīn al-Qiftī, it is the ability of legal officials to feel pain and discomfort that transcends social and legal conventions and hierarchies:

Another person demeaned him (by treating him as a social peer) at court, so he jailed him. Then he went up to the roof, and he lay down on a wooden board and leather mat. It was a hot night, and he turned from side to side. Then he stood up on the roof and yelled from the top of the roof: "Go find so-and-so for me and bring him to me!" When the person came, he said, "Release so-and-so from jail." When it was morning, they asked him about it. He replied, "I went up to the roof, and I had a leather mat under me. I started to turn from side to side from the heat, and I asked myself, 'What must it be like for *that* person?'"⁹⁵

While the social norms of court require respect, it is the body which establishes its own exigent demands.

The above examples are limited cases of the carnivalesque insofar as the voice of the body, the people, and laughter never completely overturn the social hierarchy. Rather, al-Udfuwī seems to be more interested in representing the validity of the body and physical enjoyment on a par with the scholarly and spiritual pursuits valorized on so many pages of the book. At times, it appears that food is mentioned for its own sake, such as a story about Diyā' al-Dīn Ja'far al-Qinā'ī, a respected *qāḍī* and *muftī* who al-Udfuwī claims was said to be fit to be caliph. When someone went to visit him at his house, al-Qinā'ī opened his door, "holding in one hand *kināfa* with sugar and a baby dropper in the other. He said, 'I desired this, and the little one desired that.'"⁹⁶ Part of the reason for including an anecdote like this may well be to show that al-Udfuwī had access to the private lives—even the bodies themselves—of the scholars he wrote about, even ones he did not know well. But one can also see here a tendency to revel in food and consumption so characteristic of the carnivalesque. According to Bakhtin, "No meal can be sad. Sadness and food are incompatible."⁹⁷ Al-Udfuwī would likely have agreed. Indeed, Ibn Ḥajar wrote that al-Udfuwī was, despite his (era-appropriate) asceticism, someone who enjoyed "delightful

95 Ibid. 696.

96 Al-Udfuwī, *Ṭāli'* 184.

97 Bakhtin, *Rabelais* 283.

food.”⁹⁸ According to al-Şafadī, who knew him personally, al-Udfuwī was “jolly (*ḍaḥūk al-sinn*) and used to spend his days off from the life at the *madrasa* in an orchard (*bustān*) of his in Udfū.”⁹⁹

For al-Udfuwī, a person’s good-naturedness manifests itself in the ability to embrace the body and its messages, as we saw with Majd al-Dīn above. Spiritual isolation, on the other hand, was a matter of disapproval. Hence, in a rare passage where al-Udfuwī describes an internal *change* that a person undergoes, it is about the transition from an openness to the world to a state of seclusion. The passage appears in the biography of al-Udfuwī’s friend, Sāliḥ b. ‘Abd al-Qawwī l-Asnā’ī, who had a “sonorous voice” and studied music (al-Udfuwī’s passion). “He used to be merry (*tarūb*) and good-natured (*ḥasan al-akhlāq*),”¹⁰⁰ but something happened to him after he moved to Qūs:

He was overcome by melancholy (*al-sawdā’*), and his condition changed. His mind was corrupted (*ḥaşal lahu khabāl*), so that he only spoke rarely and only acknowledged you if greeted first. His joy (*tarab*) and amiability left him. He isolated himself in a chamber in Shaykh Bilāl’s *ribāt*, then in another in Shaykh ‘Abd al-Ghaffār’s *ribāt*, detaching himself from people. He continued in this way until he died ... When I would go to Qūs, he would refuse to sit with me. I would seek him out and greet him, but he would only greet me back.¹⁰¹

Far from being a positive quality, spiritual isolation here appears to be a result of a disease of the mind, a sickness that affects both soul and body. Health, on the other hand, entails conviviality, joy, and enjoyment of physical beauty. This *tarab*, the joy one experiences upon listening to music, could manifest itself as a cheerful disposition to death as well as life. For example, al-Udfuwī writes admiringly about the judge and Shāfi‘ī *faqīh* ‘Abd al-Qawwī b. Muḥammad that he was “high-spirited (*khafīf al-rūḥ*) and good-natured (*ḥasan al-khulq*).” He was also a friend of al-Udfuwī’s family who “loved *samā’* so much” that he requested that musical instruments play at his funeral and weeping women be banned.¹⁰²

Al-Udfuwī, both a *faqīh* and a lover of music and joy, moved in multiple worlds: the religio-legal and the aesthetic and corporeal. Living in both worlds

98 Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 536.

99 Al-Şafadī, *Wāfi* xi, 78; see also Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 535.

100 Al-Udfuwī, *Ṭāli’* 270.

101 Al-Udfuwī, *Ṭāli’* 270.

102 Ibid. 333.

implied for him no contradiction. In this, we learn from his history, he was not alone. Consider, for example, his biography of another of his friends, the notary and poet ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ‘Alī al-Uṣfūnī, who was the author of the letter to the king of the mice mentioned above:

I associated with him for quite some time and saw of him extraordinary noble-mindedness and virtuous action. He was so pleasant he seemed to have been created from a gentle breeze. He was in love with beauty itself, so any comely face would capture every crevice of his heart. When seen, he was always in a state of tranquility. Like a moist twig on which the wind alights, he would quiver and rock with joy (*ṭaraban*). He was a knight in the hippodrome of *adāb* and Ḥasān’s brother in odes. He stayed for many years with us in Udfū when his father was the notary (*shāhid*) of the dīwān, and being in his company abolished sorrows and ushered in joys.

Like many of al-Udfuwī’s associates, he received training in *fiqh* and used this to get a job in the administration as a notary. This did not prevent him from also loving physical beauty and allowing himself to be enraptured by it. Far from sullyng his reputation, this was, for al-Udfuwī a sign of his good-naturedness. This good-natured openness to life could lead to carnivalesque behavior, such as in the following story al-Udfuwī relates about al-Uṣfūnī:

His father once bought him a garment to clothe himself in. A person later asked him for it, and he gave it to him. So, his father bought him another garment, and he took it. Then his father said to him, “Tell me, what would you have done if the woman you love came to you?” He replied, “I’d cover up with her in her robe (*ridā*)!” His father asked, “But what if she didn’t have a robe (*ridā*)?” He replied, “Then I’d say to her, ‘Go away til the summer!’”

His altruistic act of disrobing himself for the sake of another was ridiculed by his own father, who reminded him of his social responsibility, but this was just another opportunity for al-Uṣfūnī to show his good humor, turning it into a joke with clear sexual undertones (sharing a robe). Simultaneously, he reversed gender roles: He would seek shelter from a woman. When pressed by his father for a serious answer, he showed his disdain even for sexual desire if it meant keeping a garment all to himself; his love could come back when the seasons shift and the warm summer air obviates any need for heavy garments. Here we see a classic expression of the attitude of carnival: a disrobing (a loss of status) leads to a reversal of roles.

This knight of *adab* was trained (*ta'addab 'alā*) by a local poet and litterateur, Sharaf al-Dīn b. al-Ghaḍanfar, famous for his *mujūn* (profligate behavior). According to al-Udfuwī, who included an entry on Ibn al-Ghaḍanfar in his history:

Sharaf al-Dīn would often act shamelessly and with profligacy (*kathīr al-mujūn wa-l-khalā'a*). Many famous stories are told about him. Our colleague 'Alā' al-Dīn b. al-Shihāb told me, in his words, "Once, Sharaf al-Dīn b. al-Ghaḍanfar was sitting by the door of the mosque in Usfūn. The call for the afternoon prayer had finished, and a person from among the locals in Usfūn had done his ablutions and arrived to enter the mosque. He saw Sharaf al-Dīn and said, 'The afternoon call to prayer has finished while you were sitting here. Why don't you get up and do your ablutions?' So Sharaf al-Dīn replied, 'My sitting here is better than your prayer without an ablution.' The person, who had done his ablutions, shook his beard—it was wet with water—to show him that he had done his ablutions. Then Sharaf al-Dīn replied, 'You've polluted me (*najjastanī*).'" His tales are many.

Ibn al-Ghaḍanfar is able to mock even the most solemn aspects of official religion: ritual prayer. Many of these stories about *mujūn* are related by al-Usfūnī.¹⁰³ This brings our attention to two points. First, the shape of al-Udfuwī's book, and the heteroglossia therein, are highly dependent on his sources, a point I will return to shortly. Second, *mujūn* literature, a classic genre by al-Udfuwī's age, was not only appreciated by the notaries, jurists, and poets who populated his history and composed his target audience but was, in fact, seen as a legitimate mode of expression distinct from the high religious register that, as we saw, introduced and justified al-Udfuwī's history.

This takes us to the second major cause of heteroglossia in al-Udfuwī's history: the recognition of different, even contradictory, modes of speaking. This is something that al-Udfuwī notes explicitly in his book and makes an effort to distinguish *as distinct voices with distinct world views*. For example, in an entry on the poet and polymath al-Sadīd Muḥammad Ibn Kātib al-Marj, whom al-Udfuwī describes in highly poeticized, almost fawning *saj'*, he claims that al-Sadīd followed the "*madhhab* of the *ahl al-adab* in which they extol the beauty of the youth, compose verses on wine and describe their lovers."¹⁰⁴ Like the

103 The acts of two other *mujūn* poets in *al-Ṭāli'* are also related by 'Alā al-Dīn al-Usfūnī. Al-Udfuwī, *Ṭāli'* 226–9.

104 Al-Udfuwī, *Ṭāli'* 603.

modes of thought characteristic of law, religion, and philosophy, the *ahl al-adab* also receive their due, without criticism but rather with prose dripping with admiration and praise. One finds a nearly identical expression of this duality in another biography, this time of a poet, preacher (*khaṭīb*), and Shāfiʿī *faqīh* who studied with al-Nawawī (d. 676/1277), ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-Samhūdī. In al-Udfuwī’s words, “He was gentle, pleasant and high-spirited, following the *madhhab* of the *ahl al-adab* in his love of drink, young men, and rapture (*ṭarab*).”¹⁰⁵ Following the path of *adab* is no cause for censure; we find none of the condemnations of these practices that we see in some of the biographies of Shiʿis or popular beliefs. Indeed, for al-Udfuwī, the physical land’s abundance in itself is a cause of ambiguity and dualism. This is expressed in a poem about Aswan he includes in his preface:

Aswan is a half-circle in which good and evil have united
It is a suitable residence for the pious worshiper and the wanton sinner
alike.
One acquires yearning for its women, tall and slender like the Moringa
tree,
And the other, divine reward for his prayer.¹⁰⁶

The third major source of heteroglossia emerges from al-Udfuwī’s attempt to represent his *shuyūkh* as founts of orthodoxy and correct practice. In order to do this, the variant, heterodox practices also emerge in the biographies. As a result, we see the ironic preservation of those voices whose authority he attempts to undermine. This is true of heterodox beliefs about Sufi miracles, or *karāmat*. Al-Udfuwī takes the liberty in two biographies of describing what kinds of reports regarding Sufi miracles can be accepted as possibly true. The first occurs in the biography of al-Mulaththam (d. 671/1273), of whom al-Udfuwī has little to say beyond including reports about his longevity (some said he was a close relative of Yūnus or that he had prayed with al-Shāfiʿī) or his ability to be in two places at once. Al-Udfuwī quotes these fantastic stories only to switch to a discourse on heretical opinions spread by some Sufis, relating an opinion attributed to Ibn al-Salāḥ (d. 643/1245) and Ibn ‘Abd al-Salām that people who claim to have seen God on Earth should be punished.¹⁰⁷ The second place where al-Udfuwī writes about the acceptability of reports about *karāmat* is in the biography of the *majdhūb* and popular ascetic Mufarrij b. Muwaffaq

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. 313.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. 33.

¹⁰⁷ Al-Udfuwī, *Ṭāliʿ* 131–5.

al-Damāmīnī (d. 648/1250). Al-Udfuwī includes several minor miracles, including one that would require al-Damāmīnī to be in two places at once. Al-Udfuwī then includes a long discussion on the impermissibility of accepting reports about *karāmat* contrary to experience.¹⁰⁸ Clearly, part of al-Udfuwī's purpose here is to reinforce Sunni *fiqh* and *uṣūl al-dīn* as the arbiter of correct belief and confirm the dominance of the scholarly, textual traditions over the embodied, popular religious traditions of the region. A similar motive seems to undergird his description, and condemnation, of the carnivalesque atmosphere of the annual remembrance of the day Abū l-Ḥajjāj al-Uqṣurī (d. 642/1244) supposedly rose to heaven and met God.¹⁰⁹ Yet, in doing so, he also preserves for us a taste of the beliefs and practices of the region.

The final, and most important reason, for heteroglossia in *al-Ṭālīʿ*, is al-Udfuwī's eclectic interests and sources. According to his biographers, al-Udfuwī was known as someone who read widely and profusely. He was also someone known for his understanding of music and poetry, in addition to his training as a *faqīh* and *muḥaddith* and his love of history. As noted above, specializing in music was something of a family tradition, and al-Udfuwī was the author of a respected essay on the legality of *samāʿ* and music. In the *Ṭālīʿ*, his interest in music is reflected in the several anecdotes describing individuals either approving or turning a blind eye to enjoying music.¹¹⁰

His range of interests is reflected in the number of sources he cites in *al-Ṭālīʿ*. I counted 70 distinct written texts, although this is only an estimate, for he often refers to the *khaṭṭ* of people he knew, and it is not always clear what kind of text he is referring to. His sources included popular *sīras*, *rijāl*-style histories, and anthologies of poetry spanning several centuries. In addition, he refers to the *ṭabaqāt al-samāʿ* that he found in the colleges and libraries he had access to. We know he went searching through books at the madrasa al-Najībīyya in Qūṣ for information, and sometimes these audition notices are the *only* information he provides about people.¹¹¹ We also know from al-Ṣafadī, his contemporary and acquaintance, that he used to sit in the booksellers' market in Cairo, so we can assume he had access to a wide selection of sources. He also cites tombstones he found in the Ṣaʿīd, several official documents, records

108 Ibid. 649–55.

109 Al-Udfuwī, *Ṭālīʿ* 724.

110 In addition to the references above, see *ibid.* 161–2, 190, 251, 537, 584.

111 The *ṭabaqāt al-samāʿ* to which he refers to the most, by far, and is the only source for several biographies, is a record of a *ḥadīth* reading conducted by Ibn Daqīq al-ʿĪd in Qūṣ in the year 659/1260–1. *Ibid.* 62, 73, 185, 215, 232, 252, 276, 363, 420, 552, 602, 637, 639, 664, 665, 740.

of individuals' *ʿadāla* or testifying their orthodoxy, and appointment letters arriving from Cairo. These span a range of almost 200 years.¹¹² All of this is in addition to the orally transmitted anecdotes and poetry, which compose the majority of his material.

The result is a mesmerizing cacophony of voices that seem to mimic the polyphony of reality itself. His ability to pull from a wide array of sources helped him produce a representation of his region that appeared, despite his subtle omissions and editorializations, to be a faithful resurrection of the past. In many ways, al-Udfuwī's stated goal must be seen as a success. His biographers are unanimous in their approval of his historical work, without a peep about his family's sectarian heritage. For example, al-Maqrīzī, in his own biographical dictionary, was forthright about his admiration of al-Udfuwī's work: "I copied a lot from it in this book. It is a precious book containing stories and biographies not found in any other." He had, al-Maqrīzī added, "thorough knowledge of history (*maʿrifa tāmma bi-l-tārīkh*)."¹¹³ What may have pleased al-Udfuwī the most, however, is the success of his biography of Ibn Daqīq al-ʿĪd, a towering figure whom al-Udfuwī never had the chance to see, something which, he writes, caused him pain, although he assures his readers that he benefited in both youth and old age from reading his books.¹¹⁴ By far the longest entry in the *Ṭālīʿ*, Ibn Daqīq al-ʿĪd's biography is the centerpiece of the book. Al-Udfuwī, relying on oral reports, hints that Ibn Daqīq al-ʿĪd may have been a *mujtahid* and that his best work never saw the day of light.¹¹⁵ Ibn Daqīq al-ʿĪd was in many ways exemplary of the ambiguous nature of al-Udfuwī's entries: The premier shaykh whose accolades are universally recognized, his biography is also filled with satiric verses written by others about him, much of which he seems to have approved.¹¹⁶ He was not, moreover, above composing his own raunchy jokes in verse.¹¹⁷ His deep knowledge of Ibn Daqīq al-ʿĪd and his familiarity with many of his students seem to have led later scholars to believe that al-Udfuwī was actually the former's student. Hence, Ibn Ḥajar writes that he "studied closely with Ibn Daqīq al-ʿĪd."¹¹⁸ Attributing such an honor to al-Udfuwī may be the best testimony to his ability to represent his subjects with intimacy and to portray himself as the inheritor of their knowledge.

112 For appointment letters: Al-Udfuwī, *Ṭālīʿ* 381–2, 477, 515, 530, 556; *ijāza*: 357, 363, 393, 433, 443, 556–7, 719; testimonies of character: 102, 253, 295, 308, 352, 535; tombstones: 474.

113 Al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā* iii, 23. See the similar remark in al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* xi, 78.

114 Al-Udfuwī, *Ṭālīʿ* 599.

115 Ibid. 569, 576.

116 Ibid. 585–7.

117 Ibid. 583.

118 Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar* i, 535.

6 Conclusion

In his *tamhīd*, al-Udfuwī establishes a correspondence between God's resurrection and the act of writing history, thereby lending his biographies a veneer of verisimilitude. They appear to be objective representations of the people of his region. By extending the metaphoric imitation of God to the act of historiography, al-Udfuwī justifies inscribing moral, immoral, and ambiguous actions and actors in historical memory. One of the purposes of the craft (*fann*) of history (*tārīkh*), al-Udfuwī tells his reader in his introduction, is to be able to discern the virtuous from the degenerate. It is likely that al-Udfuwī was aware that the metaphor of resurrection and judgment could extend to the reader, who, presented with the resurrected lives in his history, was encouraged to form judgments about their moral character.

It is, moreover, due to his interest in a local region, and not just a particular group of individuals or professional class, that his biographies extend to a multitude of different individuals, modes of speaking, and ideas. The representation of the different voices, like the *madhhab* of the lovers, the heterodox tendencies of his family, the messages conveyed by the body, and the Sufis, heighten the reader's sense of the author's objectivity through a studied use of subjectivity; we seem to *see* some of the individuals just as al-Udfuwī (or his informants) did—eating, sleeping, teaching, joking, etc. Yet the careful exclusion of the region's political upheavals and the delicate evaluation of his family pedigree give one the sense that al-Udfuwī is trying to show his readers something about Upper Egypt: It is a region chock-full of a host of poets and scholars with whom al-Udfuwī is closely associated. There is no reason to think, however, that this intention overly obscures the value of the book as a historical source. At the least, al-Udfuwī's "jolly" nature and his partiality to comedy and carnival would appear to have inspired him to include some entries just for the sake of recording an entertaining anecdote. Certainly, this seems to be true for the entry on the "King of the cats."

Although the literary aspects of al-Udfuwī's history are undeniable, one still wonders if this is due to its biographical genre. After all, Arabic biographical works, long before al-Udfuwī's time, were replete with literary elements; one can point, for example, to the common inclusion of poetry. But it should also be remembered that al-Udfuwī tells us that he wrote a *history* (*tārīkh*). Indeed, al-Udfuwī downplays the difference between chronicles and biography. As he notes in regard to history (*tārīkh*): "The virtuous masters and knowledgeable leaders have written books as numerous as the stars on it (i.e., history). There are those who have organized (it) according to years, and there are those who have organized (it) according to names, in order for its *isnād* (chain of trans-

mission) to be more reliable. There are those who have constricted it to a particular country, and there are those who have encompassed every corner of the world."¹¹⁹ For al-Udfuwī, the organization of the text according to name or its restriction to a particular region, as in the case of the *Ṭālī*, does not make it a less historical text than a chronicle. History, like the resurrection, has a moral purpose, yet this does not exclude the possibility of entertainment. Biographies for him, then, are not *more* literary in nature than chronicles (even if this may be true of most biographies). Certainly, they are not more fictitious. If anything, the organization of history according to biographies promises the kind of clarity and perspicacity only possible through the resurrection of *people*.

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¹¹⁹ Al-Udfuwī, *Tālī*, 3.

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Literarisierung Reconsidered in the Context of Sultanic Biography: The Case of Shāfi‘ b. ‘Alī’s *Sīrat al-Nāṣir Muḥammad* (BnF MS Arabe 1705)

Gowaart Van Den Bossche

While the historiography of late medieval Egypt and Syria is exceptionally well documented and many, if not most, of its major sources have by now been edited and studied, manuscript repositories still contain several historical texts that have received little to no attention from scholars. This essay will present one such unpublished and mostly unstudied excerpt of a historical biography devoted to Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (r. 693–4/1293–4, 698–708/1299–1309, 709–41/1309–41) preserved in the manuscript Arabe 1705, held by the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris. It will be argued that its author can be identified as Shāfi‘ b. ‘Alī (d. 730/1330), who also wrote two well-known historical biographies of the sultans Baybars (r. 658–76/1260–77) and Qalāwūn (r. 678–89/1281–90). Using this particular text as a case study, I will discuss how the concept of “Literarisierung,” first applied to Mamluk historiography by Ulrich Haarmann almost half a century ago, may still be used fruitfully to think about how historiography and literary modes of expression interacted.

In a famous article published in 1971, Ulrich Haarmann argued that historiography in late medieval Egypt and Syria underwent a particular innovation, which he defined as a “Literarisierung der inneren Form,” or “literarization of the inner form.” According to Haarmann, the chronicles and biographical dictionaries produced between the 7th/13th and early 10th/16th centuries should not be considered as innovative in their formal, outer form, as they generally adhered to characteristics set by earlier precedents. There was, however, something distinctive about their inner form (i.e., on the level of individual segments within the larger works). At this level, one would come across a much higher attestation of literary elements, that is, anecdotes, topoi, colloquialisms, and especially miraculous stories, *‘ajā’ib wa-gharā’ib* pervading the annalistic historical narratives.¹ This argument and related observations from Haarmann’s dissertation, *Quellenstudien zur frühen Mamlukenzeit*, sparked a

1 Haarmann, *Auflösung* 48–50.

debate in German academia about the supposed distinction between the historical as a science (*‘ilm*, a term more accurately rendered as a field of knowledge) and the literary as equivalent to entertaining digression. This point was taken up somewhat more stringently by Barbara Langner in her dissertation on popular culture in this period, where she argued that this historiographical tendency was the result of a growing popularization of historiography. She also translated a number of examples of the phenomenon.² Haarmann's and Langner's main challenger was Ernst Radtke, who argued that contemporary authors did not make a distinction between the historical as science rather than as literary and that the elements noted by Haarmann and Langner did not constitute a new development.³ Despite Radtke's criticisms, the idea of "Literarisierung" has been implicitly and often rather uncritically accepted by many later researchers.⁴ Although in Haarmann's and Langner's definition the idea denoted such anecdotal elements, the use of the term "Literarisierung" in the context of historiography does create some confusion: Should it mean, in keeping with Haarmann's observations, that literary elements appear in historiography or rather that history is written according to a literary logic?

Haarmann's argument was about content, and he implicitly suggested that simply being aware of literarization made it possible to distinguish between the facts and the fanciful, so to speak. This essentially positivistic idea may also be found in the influential study of early Islamic historical narrative written by Haarmann's contemporary Albrecht Noth.⁵ The stories and anecdotes may, of course, also be a worthwhile subject of research in themselves, but essentially, these should be studied as *literary* subject matter and not taken at face value. In addition to Radtke's objections against Haarmann's evaluation of Mamluk distinctiveness, we can formulate the remark that this is a very reductive interpretation of what literature and literary forms of expression amount to. In fact, if we look at the history of the term "Literarisierung" in German research, it becomes clear that Haarmann's conceptualization was somewhat idiosyncratic. Consider, for example, the following quote by Gustav von Grunebaum from his influential study *Medieval Islam*, taken from a section where he evaluates a letter written in the *inshā'* tradition:

2 Langner, *Untersuchungen* 127–85.

3 Radtke's earliest engagement with the issue may be found in the introduction (Einleitung) to his edition of the first volume of Ibn al-Dawādārī's *Kanz al-durar wa-jāmi' al-ghurar*. He returned to the topic several times: Radtke, *Literarisierten*; *Weltgeschichte* 186–95. He changed his mind slightly in Radtke, *Literarisierung*.

4 Holt, *Early* 35–6; Guo, *Early* 87–96; Weintritt, *Formen*; Robinson, *Islamic* 100; Conerman, *Tankiz* 4; Mazor, *Topos* 105–6.

5 Noth, *Quellenkritische*. Later translated and updated in Noth and Conrad, *Early*.

Abū l-‘Alā’ [al-Ma‘arrī]’s letter is an extreme but by no means isolated example of that dissolution of thought and sentiment into musical phrase, that sacrifice of sense to sound, which so deeply affected the literatures of the Muslim peoples. The trend begins in the 8th century, to win an uncontested victory during and after the 11th century. *Literarization of ideas and rhetorization of style*—there is no Arabic or Persian after A.D. 1000 who does not, in some measure, exhibit their trace. *Presentation and content interact*. The supremacy in prose and poetry of the writer-virtuoso goes far to inject into any concept of human perfection an element of the *versatile, widely read, quick-witted, and entertaining lit-térateur*.⁶

The quote is, of course, problematic in its negative attitude toward literarization, but von Grunebaum’s evaluation of the literary as a *stylistic* logic, as fundamentally related to a register of language, may, in fact, be useful in evaluating the ways in which historiography can be interpreted within conceptualizations of literature that circulated among late medieval authors. Perhaps most importantly, unlike Haarmann, von Grunebaum also argued that the form of presentation and its content were fundamentally intertwined and can thus not be separated in satisfactory ways. This is an important observation, which also resonates with medieval evaluations of rhetoric and linguistic construction in general.⁷

One surprising result of Haarmann’s conceptualization of literature as equivalent to the anecdotal is that according to him, the small corpus of sultanic biographies (*sīra*, pl. *sīyar*) written by chancery officials during the 7th/13th and early 8th/14th centuries fell outside of the period’s literarization because they were said to build on earlier examples and did not contain as many anecdotes. The examples are never named explicitly, but one assumes Haarmann referred to the works of Bahā’ al-Dīn b. Shaddād (d. 632/1234) and ‘Imād al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī (d. 597/1201) on Saladin (d. 589/1193)—which are not actually that far removed in time from the early Mamluk examples—and the important but somewhat singular *Kitāb al-yamīnī* written by Abū Naṣr al-‘Utbī (d. 1040). Furthermore, in his major study *Quellenstudien zur frühen Mamlukenzeit*, Haarmann evaluates the three *sīras* written by Ibn ‘Abd al-Zāhir as “quantitativ and qualitativ drei der bedeutesten Quellen zur frühen Mamlukenzeit,” because

6 Von Grunebaum, *Medieval* 229–30. Italics mine.

7 For a rare early criticism against the dichotomy between content and form proposed by Haarmann and like-minded researchers, see Malti-Douglas, *Dreams* 139–41.

they were widely used as source material for later historians.⁸ One wonders how texts that supposedly fell outside of a nascent literarized historical tradition could at the same time be highly influential on works firmly within that tradition.

This essay aims to present an as-yet-unedited text and argue by way of examples taken from that text for a different interpretation of Literarisierung that is related to von Grunebaum's evaluation but enriched by more recent frameworks from studies on medieval Arabic literature, especially by Thomas Bauer and Rebecca Gould, and with general ideas of historical emplotment as propounded by Hayden White and Paul Ricoeur. To refer directly to Hayden White, part of what I will be interested in, is the "content of the form," the meaning that is communicated by way of the narrative structure used by an author.⁹ It will furthermore be my contention that reading the corpus of sultanic biographies, to which this particular text belongs, as merely functioning within a logic of legitimization is too reductive. Instead, I propose a broadly defined evaluation of patronage as a performative negotiation of social position, in which agents employed their mastery of various literary registers as a distinctive form of cultural capital.¹⁰

1 Text and Author

The manuscript Arabe 1705 held by the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris has not been studied nor identified in any detail before.¹¹ This is somewhat remarkable as it has been filed in the same shelfmark range as two very closely related and well-known texts. The directly preceding shelfmark BnF MS Arabe 1704 holds the second and third volumes of *Tashrif al-ayyām wa-l-ʿuṣūr bi-sīrat al-Sulṭān al-Malik al-Manṣūr*, a biography of al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn written by Muḥyī l-Dīn b. ʿAbd al-Zāhir (d. 692/1293), Shāfiʿ b. ʿAlī's maternal uncle. Furthermore, BnF MS Arabe 1707 holds find Shāfiʿ b. ʿAlī's own *Ḥusn al-manāqib al-sirriyya al-muntazaʿa min al-sīra l-Zāhiriyya*, an abridgment and reworking of his uncle Ibn ʿAbd al-Zāhir's biography of Baybars.¹² Three further biographies written

8 Haarmann, *Quellenstudien* 97–101 (quotation on 97).

9 White, *Content*.

10 For a similar argumentation on an 8th/14th century literary offering, see Van Steenberg, Qalāwūnid.

11 The only exception I am aware of is Hayat Nasser al-Hajji, who used the manuscript as a source but did not identify its author in *Internal* 205–6. I am grateful to Mustafa Banister for bringing this to my attention. Some episodes of the text are also referred to in Chamberlain, *Knowledge*.

12 The first has been edited by Murad Kāmil and the second by ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Khuwaytir.

by these two intimately related authors were known and have been published before. While the manuscript does not carry the author's name due to its first folios having disappeared, it is possible to securely identify the author of BnF MS Arabe 1705 as the same Shāfi' b. 'Alī who wrote *Ḥusn al-manāqib* on the basis of a number of stylistic mannerisms and, most importantly, a self-attributed epigram concluding a section on the infamous Taqī al-Dīn b. Taymiyya's struggles with the Cairene authorities. A slightly variant version of this poem is unambiguously attributed to Shāfi' by Khalīl b. Aybak al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1363) in his biographical dictionary *A'yān al-ʿaṣr wa-a'wān al-naṣr*.¹³ Al-Ṣafadī met our author personally and reproduced the poem as one among several for which Shāfi' b. 'Alī gave an *ijāza* to al-Ṣafadī. The *ijāza* itself is dated to 728/1328, so Shāfi' clearly deemed the poem important enough to reproduce it two decades after its initial composition.

That same *ijāza* is a small gold mine of information about Shāfi's creative activities, as it also contains an extensive list of more than 30 books written by Shāfi' b. 'Alī. In this list, a multivolume biography of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad is included under the name *Sīrat al-Nāṣir Muḥammad* (The biography of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad)—without a doubt a shorthand for a more elaborate title that now eludes us. A similar work is listed as *Nazm al-jawāhir fī sīrat al-Malik al-Nāṣir* (The string of pearls: The biography of al-Malik al-Nāṣir), but it is explicitly referred to as written "in verse" (*naẓman*). Although this title most certainly belonged to another work, I will return to the important concept of *naẓm*, also attested to in Shāfi's writing beyond the domain of poetry as a theoretical concern for understanding this particular work, and indeed the workings of the literary in historiography in general.¹⁴ The manuscript BnF MS Arabe 1705 does carry two variants of the title *Kitāb ta'rīkh al-salāṭīn wa-l-ʿasākīr* (The history of the sultans and armies) on its covering bifolium, but this very unspecific title must be a later addition, perhaps added by a bookseller.

The manuscript consists of 107 folios and is missing both its beginning and ending folios. It commences in medias res during the sultan's second reign, detailing events of the years 703–5/1304–6, but then it jumps ahead to the year 709/1309 with a discussion of the sultan's defection to Karak and abdication of the throne.¹⁵ Similar to Shāfi's more well-known biography of Qalāwūn, *al-Faḍl*

13 Al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān* ii, 512. It should be noted that Frédéric Bauden had come to the same conclusion concerning the author's identity independent of my findings.

14 Al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān* ii, 507. Shāfi' b. 'Alī also uses the term when describing his uncle's writing of the *sīra* of Baybars: *Ḥusn* 56.

15 There is no noticeable gap in the manuscript, and the title of the new section is even spread across a verso and recto page, so if this is indeed a gap, it must be a copyist's mistake.

al-ma'thūr min sīrat al-sultān al-Malik al-Manṣūr, the text is written predominantly in *saǰ'*. It contains some compiled material: several poems, two of which are explicitly said to be written by the author, as well as one letter and one official document, both composed by the author. Most of this quoted material does not appear elsewhere, and the historical accounts are also unique to this biography, although parallel (but not derived) versions of most of the events may be found in contemporary and later chronicles and biographical dictionaries.¹⁶ Like Shāfi's other *sīras*, no later author explicitly reproduced narrative material from this text, and it is quite likely that this manuscript is part of an original presentation copy due to its careful handwriting and wide spacing throughout.

Shāfi' b. 'Alī is a fairly well-known author of the period, mostly because of the two *sīras* he wrote about Qalāwūn, *al-Faḍl al-ma'thūr min sīrat al-Malik al-Manṣūr*, and Baybars, *Ḥusn al-manāqib*, respectively. The latter is explicitly announced as an abridgment of his uncle Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir's *sīra* of Baybars (itself published under the title *al-Rawḍ al-zāhir fī sīrat al-Malik al-Zāhir*), although several researchers have rightly noted that much more than simply summarize his uncle's text, it also critically reworks and adds material.¹⁷ The author wrote both texts, claiming proximity to the events because of his position as a scribe (*kātib*) at court. While a decent number of contemporary and later entries exist for this author in the prosopographical literature of the period, much of what we know about the author's professional activities as *kātib* comes from the two already known *sīras*. This is due to his remarkable proclivity to extensively detail his various personal contributions to political and especially diplomatic activities. The author appears to have started his scribal activities sometime around the end of Baybars' sultanate, as he quotes a letter he wrote and sent to that sultan's son, al-Sa'īd Bereke, informing him about the death of his father. The letter is sent in the name of the Syrian viceroy (*nā'ib al-salṭana*) Badr al-Dīn Baylik al-Khazindār, so one presumes our author to have been working as a scribe in his service at that point.¹⁸ He subsequently rose to prominence under the short but eventful sultanate of al-Sa'īd Bereke, the period of which he describes in quite some detail in *al-Faḍl*

16 In the edition and commentary of the text currently being prepared by Frédéric Bauden and myself, these parallel accounts are identified and their relationship to Shāfi' b. 'Alī's accounts is discussed extensively.

17 Holt, *Observations*; Northrup, *Slave* 30.

18 Shāfi' b. 'Alī, *Ḥusn* 342–8. The contemporary author 'Izz al-Dīn b. Shaddād also notes that a letter was sent to al-Sa'īd Bereke in the name of this viceroy but does not name the scribe who wrote it. *Ta'rikh* 224.

al-maṭhūr with increasing personal contributions. Although it is somewhat unclear how he ended up in the sultan's chancery, he claims to have been accorded a prominent position in al-Saʿīd Bereke's chancery by the powerful *dawādār* Balabān al-Rūmī (d. 680/1281).¹⁹ Shortly before Bereke's deposal, he switched sides to Qalāwūn's camp, under whose reign he would continue to serve, apparently as *kātib al-darj* (scribe of the bench), until he was famously hit by an arrow in the temple during the Battle of Homs, after which he became at least partially blind.²⁰ While he only very ambiguously mentions this event in his own works, a first-person account of the accident is rendered by al-Jazarī in his extensive obituary of Shāfiʿ. Al-Jazarī, al-Ṣafadī, and all other biographers attest that he was sent home after this event (variations of the phrase *lāzama min-hu bayta-hu* are used by various biographers), although some add that he retained his salary.²¹ The *sīras* of Qalāwūn and Baybars contain a few elements that problematize this proposed run of events, as the author claims to have written several official pieces which should be situated in later periods. While the author's presence in the narrative is noticeably more toned down in the partially preserved *sīra* of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, the text does add two further claims to having written official documents, neither of which are attested elsewhere: a letter addressed to the ruler of Yemen from the year 704/1304 and the caliphal *taqlīd* composed for al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's reinstatement as sultan, to which I shall return in more detail below.²² It is in any case clear that the author kept on writing prolifically in the half-century after the arrow incident. All the *sīras* contain material that should be dated to well after this event, as should a good deal of our author's poetry quoted in other sources.

19 Shāfiʿ b. ʿAlī, *Faql* 49.

20 Paulina Lewicka suggests, on the authority of unnamed ophthalmologists, that becoming fully blind due to such an incident would have resulted in the failure of all other brain functions as well; *Ṣāfiʿ* 91.

21 The first-person account is in al-Jazarī, *Ḥawādith ii*, 429. Other biographical lemmata who mention the author being sent home are: al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān al-aṣr ii*, 503; *Nakt* 163; al-Dhababī, *Tārīkh iii*, 356; Ibn Taghri-Birdī, *al-Manhal vi*, 200; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar ii*, 184. Divergent but unfortunately not very detailed information is given by Ibn Ḥabīb, who only mentions that "he became blind in old age" (*al-darūr ʿalā kibar*), *Tadhkirat* 208.

22 The letter is found on folios 48^r–54^r, and the *taqlīd* on folios 96^v–105^v.

2 “Literarisierung” as Narrative Construction: *Naẓm*

As noted above, Shāfi‘ wrote another work about al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, of which the “thematic phrase” runs as *Naẓm al-jawāhir*, “the string of jewels.”²³ Although that title almost certainly does not apply to the work found in BnF Ms Arabe 1705, the meaning implied by this short phrase is helpful in interpreting the cohesion and meaning of the text preserved in the manuscript. *Naẓm* is a particularly potent Arabic term, most often used to refer to poetic composition, but in fact, it bears much wider signification related to a root meaning of organization. Rebecca Gould has pointed to the importance of this “polysemic term” in the Arabic rhetorical tradition, from al-Jāhiz (d. 255/868) to ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (d. 471/1078) and beyond, as denoting “the order that binds together all the elements that comprise a literary text,” in the first place the Quran, where the term was used to conceptualize that work’s inimitability.²⁴ In al-Jurjānī’s rhetorical interpretation, which has been likened to Saussurean semiotics, it is the interplay between words (*alfāz*, singular *lafẓ*), meanings (*ma‘āni*, singular *ma‘nā*),²⁵ and this binding structure, or *naẓm*, that constituted literary language. As such, *naẓm* was essential in forming the cohesion of any linguistic expression.²⁶ Taking this understanding of literary composition into account means that the distinction between content and form posited by Haarmann becomes highly problematic, as it distinguishes between aspects that were considered to be fundamentally interrelated. In the following paragraphs, I will show that reading the closing third of the *sīra*, which deals with al-Nāṣir Muḥammad’s defection, abdication, and ultimate reascension to the throne in the year 709/1309, through this tripartite lens of words, meanings, and binding structure, suggests a fruitful way to conceptualize how authors engaged with history by way of narrative emplotment.

The background of the story discussed in this section involves the complex history of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad’s ascension to the throne. In 693/1293, while still an infant, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad had succeeded his assassinated brother al-Ashraf Khalīl as sultan but was deposed soon after, only to be reinstated as sultan from 698/1299 until 709/1309. During this second reign, the still young sul-

23 For the term “thematic phrase,” see Ambros, *Beobachtungen* and Hirschler, *Medieval* 66.

24 Gould, *Inimitability* 86.

25 This term is exceptionally complex in itself and has been the subject of much research, but I am here referring to it in its most common usage as denoting “meaning.” See, for an up-to-date bibliography and thorough etymological discussion, as well as a discussion of *lafẓ* near the end of the article, Larsen, *Meaning* 221 (for *lafẓ*). An in-depth discussion of the issue may be found in Key, *Language*.

26 Gould, *Inimitability* 90.

tan was dominated by the two powerful amirs, Sallār and Baybars al-Jāshnikīr. While perhaps not as explicit as in other historical sources, this tension is also evident from the first two-thirds of the manuscript Arabe 1705, which details events from this second reign. For example, in an account about the arrival of Īlkhānid envoys in the year 703/1303, it is Baybars who received and honored these envoys before they met with the sultan.²⁷ Further on, several accounts deal at length with the *hajj* undertaken by the viceroy Sallār as well as his later reunion with his brother.²⁸ While al-Nāṣir Muḥammad is certainly not absent from these first two-thirds of the manuscript—one finds, for example, a laudatory description of a hunting trip and accounts of the birth of an unnamed son, and military endeavors that are carried out in his name—it is clear that he had to share the spotlight with these two powerful men. Things eventually came to a head, and al-Nāṣir Muḥammad abdicated, exacerbated from being dominated by these two amirs, after having escaped to Karak under the ruse of wanting to perform the *hajj* himself. Baybars then ruled for nine months with the regnal title al-Muzaffar until al-Nāṣir reconquered the throne and established his authority for the following three decades. The part detailing the transition of the sultan's second to third reign in the manuscript starts at folio 68^v and continues until 105^v. It provides not only a quite extensive account of the events but also a *taqlīd* (diploma of investiture) written by Shāfi' himself in the name of the caliph al-Mustakfi bi-l-lāh (d. 740/1340) for al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's reinstatement as sultan. Shortly after the quotation of this document, the manuscript is cut off after folio 107.

As it is impossible to study the complete text due to its fragmentary survival, we will focus on this particular section. This will allow us to study various aspects of the text's narrative construction within a continuous and thematic whole. This continuity and cohesiveness may result partly from this section having been a stand-alone text before being integrated into the *sīra*. We know Shāfi' similarly integrated an earlier written text on the Battle of Homs in 680/1281 in *al-Faḍl al-ma'thūr*, although there he clearly signposted having done so and named the text separately in the *ijāza* reproduced by al-Ṣafādī.²⁹ I see at least five arguments in favor of the text's initial composition as a stand-alone treatise. First is the fact that the intervening four years between this part and the directly preceding accounts are discussed only in very broad terms (and

27 BnF MS Arabe 1705, 11^r–2^r.

28 BnF MS Arabe 1705, 19^r–20^v, 45^r–6^r.

29 Shāfi' b. 'Alī, *al-Faḍl*, 79–85 (statements as to the text's previous stand-alone character are made at the beginning and end of this section); al-Ṣafādī, *A'yān* ii, 507, noted as *al-Masā'ir l-murḍīyya fi l-ghazwa l-Himṣīyya*, or "The satisfactory efforts in the Battle of Homs."

only further on in the section) insofar as they were deemed relevant to this section's narrative. Second is *saj'*, which is more consistently sustained here than elsewhere in the *sīra*. Third, in the first part of the *sīra*, Shāfi' concludes the majority of accounts with a variation of the somewhat idiosyncratic statement that an event happened "in this way" (*alā hādhihi l-ṣūra*), which he completely abandons in this later part.³⁰ Fourth, the introductory lines of this section bear a resemblance to the traditional *taḥmīd* section at the start of any Islamic text. Lastly, and most importantly for our purposes, its narrative construction of a departure for Syria and an eventual glorious return to Cairo makes for a cohesive narrative whole. However, even if the text was separately composed, it was clearly reworked to be integrated into the *sīra*. This is evident from Shāfi'°s cross-references to things he has mentioned earlier and the suggestion that the following narrative should be read as a reaction to those events.

2.1 *Analysis 1: Introduction*

The *taḥmīd*-like qualities of the beginning of the section are evident from the first lines:

ذَكَرَ عَوْدَ الْمَلِكِ لِمَوْلَانَا السُّلْطَانَ مَرَّةً ثَالِثَةً
 اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى بِمَوْلَانَا السُّلْطَانَ أَلْطَافٍ وَأَيُّ أَلْطَافٍ * وَمَنْ لَمْ تَزَلْ مِنْ يَدِ نَصْرَتِهِ دَانِيَةً
 الْقَطَافِ * وَظَفَرَ بِمَنَاوَتِهِ³¹ بِأَيْتَاحَةِ الْقَدْرِ * وَأَخَذَ بِنَاصِيَةِ مَعَانِدِيهِ يَحْسِبُ مَا لِلتَّوَكُّلِ عَلَى اللَّهِ
 تَعَالَى مِنْ ظَفَرٍ *

An account of the return of kingship to our lord the sultan for a third time.

God be praised, most high. For our lord the sultan there are benevolences—and what benevolences these are!—and graces, which continue to bestow on him the harvest through the hand of His support. And so too the victory in his struggle through the foreordainment of destiny, taking hold of the forelock of his enemies in reckoning the victory that belongs to [those who] trust in God most high.³²

30 BnF MS Arabe 1705 9^r, 13^r, 15^r, 18^r, 22^v, 23^v, 35^r, 46^r, 49^r, 57^r, 65^v, 67^r. While not an unusual phrase per se (Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir also uses it three times in *Tashrif* 29, 88), it does seem to have been a mannerism of Shāfi' to use it so extensively. He also uses variations of it several times in *al-Faḍl* 28, 38, 59, 69, 100, 114, 118, 139, 140, 150, 156, 162; and *Husn* 66, 113, 118, 172, 264, 321.

31 Variant spelling of *munāwa'a*.

32 BnF MS Arabe 1705 69^r. I am grateful to Mohamad Meqdad for his advice on this translation.

This highly laudatory and rhetorically dense introductory discourse, replete with the ambiguous qualities of the Arabic lexicon, continues for several more lines. As is typical in introductory discourses, at the end the topic is discussed in more detail, albeit without a formal *ammā ba'd* to signpost this transition:

ونوزع في ميراث ملك أبيه ويأبى الله إلا أن يرد الحق في نصابه * ويعيد الملك لمن هو أولى به
 * وقد تقدم ما أعتمده معه أولاً وثانياً من ممالك والده الشهيد من معاندة الله تعالى وانتزاع
 الملك من يده ويأبى الله إلا أن يؤتية إياه * وعصبه ما يستحقه مما أرضى الله فيه وأباه فأباه *
 وهو صابر محتسب صارعاً لله في حُسن تدييره وعلى قدم الإبتال منتصب سائلاً من الله العون
 * مبتهلاً إليه في حسن الحراسة والصون *

The inheritance of his father's kingship was contested [but] God willed rightfulness to return to its origin, and he caused the kingship to return to who is most deserving of it. It has been mentioned before how the *mamlūks* of his father the martyr [Qalāwūn] employed him a first and second time in resistance to God the most high and [how] they removed kingship from the hand [of our lord the sultan], even though God wanted nothing but give [the kingship] to [our lord the sultan]. And [so the sultan] applied himself with zeal to what he was entitled to, which it pleased God [to accord] to him and his father, but he was rejected. But he is patient in anticipation of God's reward, struggling for God in the excellence of his management, upright in beseeching, asking God for help, and praying to Him for the blessing of sustained protection.³³

This introductory discourse announces the fundamental features of the text to follow: the sultan as chosen by God and favored by fate, the accusatory tone against Qalāwūn's former *mamlūks* who dominated al-Nāṣir's first two reigns, and the departure-return structure that is evident from the title and the suggestion that al-Nāṣir overcame his difficulties and established his Godly ordained authority. These narrative stakes are in the following pages emplotted into a cohesive historical account that may be identified with a very widely used narrative form of departure and return.

33 BnF Ms Arabe 1705 69^v-70^r.

2.2 *Analysis 2: Departure and Return*

The departure-return structure evident in this section has many precedents in world literature, and it is even one of the integral ways in which stories work according to structuralist theorists such as Vladimir Propp, Northrop Frye, and those who worked on Jungian archetypes, such as Joseph Campbell.³⁴ The basic format involves a hero having to relinquish a comfortable, static situation to overcome a number of difficulties before ultimately returning to his rightful position. While much of the research on these structures has focused on stories that should be situated within Western mythical and folklore settings, these are not at all alien to the Islamic textual tradition. They are a major building block of the Prophetic *sīra*, in which the point at which Muḥammad leaves Mecca for Medina is even the historical crux around which time itself would come to be measured and his triumphant return to Mecca heralded as the start of Islam as a world-conquering religion. The narrative structure is also present in other works from the very same corpus of early Mamluk *sīras*. Both Shāfi's *sīra* of Qalāwūn as well as Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir's important *sīra* of Baybars contain variants of this structure.³⁵ I will be understanding this type of structure not through the structuralist lens of Propp, Frye, or Campbell, but with Paul Ricoeur, who argued that such paradigmatic structures should be seen as part of "the grammar that rules the composition of new works." In this view, any act of writing is a constant interplay between such received structures and the innovative authorial practice, which results in new configurations of these two poles of the creative process, which he calls "sedimentation" and "innovation."³⁶ Beyond identifying the fact that an author made use of such structures, it is of critical importance to understand, on the one hand, the specific ways in which they are integrated into a particular text and, on the other hand, what meaning they may be said to convey.

One of the clearest ways in which Shāfi's creative development of this structure becomes clear is through his application of symmetrical relations. Consider, for example, the extensive descriptions of the ceremonial of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's departure and return, which more or less bookend the momentous events. Our author uses these to stress the growth of the sultan's glory. While his departure is framed in laudatory language but with several comments denoting the impure intentions of his entourage, when he returns, any trace of doubt is erased, and the sultan ascends the throne in excellent fashion. While his departure from the citadel is described as "he descended from his Citadel

34 Propp, *Morphology*; Frye, *Anatomy*; Campbell, *Hero*.

35 I discuss this more extensively in the fifth chapter of my PhD dissertation.

36 Ricoeur, *Temps* i, 134.

accompanied by his enemies though they made believe that they were his helpers,” al-Nāṣir wisely escapes from this tension to squash it upon his return.³⁷ Contrastingly, the event of his return to the citadel is described as follows:

وكان قد عزم على الإقامة يوم عيده * والطلوع إلى القلعة ثانيه بمقتضى يمن الطالع وسعيده *
ثم بدى له أنه لا طالع اسعد من رقيه إلى منبر الملك وطلوعه * وعوده والعود أحمد إلى منبر
سلطنته ورجوعه * فركب في موكبه والشمس في قبة شرفها * ودائرة أنفتها وأنفها * والنجوم
قد قارنته سعودها * وتمازل دون علو ركابه صعودها * وقد أستغنى ببيض الصفائح عن سود
الصحائف النجومية * ووثق بمتونها في جلا الشك والريب عملاً ونية *

He had decided to celebrate the day of his Feast [of Breaking at the Pond of the Well, see excerpt quoted below] and to ascend the Citadel on the second day [of the Feast] in accordance with the good fortune and radiance of the ascendant star of destiny. Then it appeared to him that there was no ascendant star more radiant than his rise to the pulpit of kingship, his ascension of [the throne], and his return—for finishing what one started is commendable—to the pulpit of his sultanate and his restitution. So he rode triumphantly as the sun in the dome of its elevated place and [in] the sphere of its pride and freshness. And the stars had aligned him to their good fortune, so that he dismounted [to attain on foot] without the greatness of his mounts the insurmountable difficulty, not needing the whitest of camels to [reach] the power of the astronomical pages, trusting in [those pages’] contents [in his struggle] against the doubt manifest and the suspicion, in action and intention.³⁸

This is Shāfi‘ at his most dense, displaying his command of the vast lexical and proverbial wealth of the Arabic language, playing with richly layered and ambiguous terms. These lines may be seen as lying firmly within the panegyric tradition in which astronomical metaphors abound as well, but they also refract in dazzling prose the major narrative point being made in this section: the sultan’s return to power as proof of his guidance by fate. This was an action of excelling, attainment of a predestined position by way of overcoming the doubts and uncertainties and, indeed, the injustice of the sultan’s previous reigns.

37 BnF Ms Arabe 1705 72^{r-v}. وانصره. وأوهموا أنهم أنصاره.

38 BnF Ms Arabe 1705 91^r.

2.3 *Analysis 3: Narrating Ideal Rule through Symmetry and Growth*

While the actions described above are both directly related to the sultan, Shāfi's symmetry is not always linear and plays with motifs that are spread across the section and attributed to various narrative agents. The Pond of the Well, from which the above-quoted action of the sultan's return emanates is, for example, a site of major importance in the section where much symbolic symmetry is situated. In an earlier part, our author describes the actions of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's very young son at this very same place. The young boy had set out to join his father in Karak, accompanied by the sultan's harem.

وحين خرج الركب من الديار المصرية خرج ولده المشار اليه وصحبه الأدر المصونة وخيموا
ببركة الجب—وهي بركة الحجاج—وخرجت أدر الأمراء في خدمتهم للوداع وبكر نائب السلطنة
وأستاذ دارها الأميران المذكوران وصحبتهم الأمراء لوداع السلطان الملك [المنصور علاء الدين
علي؟] ولده فمد لهم سماءً متنوعاً* وجلس على رأس السماط كعادة أبيه -اعز الله سلطانهما -
وهو في دست أبيه متودّعا مودعا* فلما قضوا الخدمة من الأكل قبلوا الأرض بين يديه* وعادوا
بعد أن أبدوا ما يجب من التعظيم لديه *

When the caravan left the Egyptian lands the aforementioned son [al-Manṣūr 'Alī] also left accompanied by the Harem women camping next to the Pond of the Well—that is, The Pond of the Pilgrims—and the women of the amirs in their service left to make their farewells.³⁹ The sultanate's viceroy and *ustādār*, the two aforementioned amirs [Sallār and Baybars al-Jāshnikīr] and their accompanying amirs woke up early to say farewell to the sultan al-Malik [al-Manṣūr] his son, and he laid down for them a varied meal. He sat at the head of the banquet according to the habit of his father—may God strengthen the power of both of them—as he was left in the place of honor of his father as the person who sees off [those left behind]. And when they finished the session as far as the food was concerned [the amirs] kissed the ground in front of him, and they returned after they had expressed the necessary salutations toward him.⁴⁰

39 Reading *ādur* instead of *adur*. The first is a plural form of *dār*, which was often used to denote noble wives. Another option would be to read *adurr* as an unattested plural form of *durra*. For both forms (though with *durra* only in the singular) cf. 'Abd ar-Rāziq, *La femme* 99–101.

40 BnF MS Arabe 1705 75^{r-v}.

The passage is interesting on several levels. In the manuscript, the name of the son whose actions are described here is consistently erased. This may have been the case because al-Manṣūr ‘Alī, who is the most likely candidate to have performed this role, died shortly after the return of the sultan from Karak.⁴¹ This would either suggest that this part was written before 709/1310, but the manuscript as a whole only finished later, or that a later reader erased these names from the manuscript for an unknown reason. One presumes that the name was erased so as not to provoke the sultan’s grief.⁴² On a narrative level, the account is interesting because of the ways in which it plays with the performance of power and the relationships between those who held power. The fact that the two most highly placed amirs in the sultanate, those who effectively directed the affairs of the sultanate, are here portrayed as humbling themselves before the sultan’s infant child creates a complex questioning of the nature and rituals of power. That the very young son of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad is said to have behaved “according to the habit of his father” (*ka-‘ādat abī-hi*) not only shows him to be a worthy heir of the sultanate but also highlights the contextual logic of that power. Perhaps, most importantly, the scene is mirrored and extended at the end of the section when al-Nāṣir Muḥammad returns to Cairo, just before the earlier quoted laudatory excerpt on the sultan’s celestial good fortune:

ولما يزل حتى وصل إلى بركة الجب فكان الأمير الإسفهلار سيف الدين سلار نائب السلطنة المعظمة قد خرج ممن بقي بالقاهرة من العساكر المنصورة * فتلقى مولانا السلطان على ظاهر قبل النزول بالبركة هو والعساكر المنصورة * وترجلوا جميعاً وقبلوا الأرض ويده الشريفة * وغدت طوائفهم بموكبه مطيفة * وترجل خلد الله سلطانه للأمير سيف الدين سلار إيناساً لوحشته * ووفاءً بعهد أمانه وتسكيناً لدوعته * فإنّ المشار إليه كان خائفاً مترقباً * لا يجد دون مهلكه مطلباً * على أنّه ما خرج عن الطاعة ولا خلع ربقته من عنقه * ولا أغب بمواصلات تراميه إلى الخدمة بسلك منيح النصح وطرقه * ثم إنّ مولانا السلطان أقام ببركة الجب يوم نزولها

41 Al-Malik al-Manṣūr ‘Alī (d. 710/1310) was only five or six years old at the time. Bauden, Qalawunid.

42 The son is mentioned three times on folios 75^r, 75^v, and 76^r, all erased. The much-later historian Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī notes that this son came to al-Nāṣir Muḥammad from Karak when the latter had returned to Cairo (which would mean that the son did indeed join his father before the sultan’s reascension) and was loved by his father because he was his only child at that point. He is said to have died while his father was hunting. *Al-Durar* iii, 115 (nr. 262).

وهو يوم الثلاثاء التاسع والعشرين من شهر رمضان المعظم وبات بها وأصبح وقد أحضر المنبر
 وخطيب الجامع الحاكمي القاضي عماد الدين ابن السكّري فضلى بمولانا السلطان صلاة عيد
 الفطر بدلهيزه المنصور وبه مد سماط العيد المتنوع من المآكل مما تشتهيهِ الأنفس وتلذ الأعين
 وخلع مولانا السلطان على العادة

[The sultan] did not stop [going from resting place to resting place] until he reached the Pond of the Well. And the army commander Sayf al-Dīn Sallār, viceroy of the glorified sultanate, had come out from among those who had stayed in Cairo of the victorious armies, and he and [these] victorious armies met our lord the sultan outside before they alighted at the Pond. They all dismounted, and they kissed the ground and [the sultan's] noble hand, and their groups became encircled by [the sultan's] convoy. [Then the sultan] dismounted for the amir Sayf al-Dīn Sallār in friendliness to his cheerlessness, fulfilling the agreement of his security and pacifying his anxiety. For the aforementioned [Sallār] was frightened and fearful, searching for a way out of his [imminent] destruction, entreating that he had not left obedience [to the sultan], and had not taken off its noose from his neck. He did not tarry with the communications that came to his service by way of the procedure and methods of good advice. After that, our lord the sultan stayed in the Pond of the Well for the day of his alighting. This was Tuesday the 29th of the glorified month Ramaḍān and he stayed the night there, and the pulpit and the preacher of the Ḥākīm mosque, the *qāḍī* 'Imād al-Dīn b. al-Sukkarī, were brought. He prayed with our lord the sultan the prayer of the Feast of Breaking in his victorious *dihlīz* tent, where the Feast banquet was laid out with all the varieties of food souls may desire and by which eyes may be pleased. And our lord the sultan distributed *khil'as* in the usual way.⁴³

Such descriptions of ceremonial are not exceptional, and that similar things would happen at these moments is also self-evident in the context of a strongly codified courtly habitus, but the positioning of these excerpts more or less at either end of the section highlights Shāfi's symmetrical construction, as well as his play with motifs of the ideal rule to construct an engaging narrative. In the first excerpt he does so by transplanting these practices to the young boy 'Alā' al-Dīn, who admirably performs his father's duties, but in the second excerpt, the sultan himself, now a fully grown man, is presented as a paragon of

43 BnF MS Arabe 1705 90^v–91^v.

the ideal rule. There is an element of physical growth that is creatively played with here: Shāfi‘ suggests that it is the sultan’s coming of age that allows him to finally triumph over his oppressors and come into his own as the ideal ruler. Furthermore, in this scene, the return to obedience—a veritable topos of the period’s historiography—is interwoven with the sultan’s own performance of his magnanimity. The enemies who made him believe that they were allies are finally either chased off or brought under the sultan’s newly asserted authority.

The symmetry of the “story” is as such unequal and spread out across the sections in various ways. Recurring motifs, places, and discourses are used as a means to stress growth and excellence. Sometimes the symmetry also works as a contrast: The most obvious example of this is the respective portrayal of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (and by extension the son in the account above) and Baybars al-Jāshnikīr, who reigned as sultan for nine months while al-Nāṣir Muḥammad was in Syria. While the first is portrayed as having fortune and fate by his side—for example, by way of the celestial metaphors noted above or in an anecdote involving a miraculous escape from a crumbling bridge—the latter is from the start portrayed as an incompetent ruler who only sits on the throne by the grace of his supporters.⁴⁴ Once those supporters start switching sides to al-Nāṣir Muḥammad’s camp, Baybars’ authority crumbles. This is again symbolically refracted: When the news of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad’s move toward Cairo with growing military support reaches Baybars, he is said to have thrown his turban on the ground in anger.⁴⁵ Considering the widely attested importance attached to headgear by sultans in this period, this can be read as a highly symbolic relinquishment of authority.⁴⁶

The contrasting symmetry is also structurally clear. Consider, for example, the titles of these four consecutive section titles:

44 The anecdote about the crumbling bridge may be found at BnF MS Arabe 1705 74^{r-v}. Other versions of this anecdote are related by, among others, al-Mufaḍḍal, *Histoire* iii, 141; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya* xviii, 79; Ibn Tagh̄rī Birdī, *al-Manhal* x, 272–3.

45 ولما بلغه أن الماء من العساكر المنصورة قد رجع إلى مجاريه * وأن حديث عزم الملك الناصر المتع عدم مجاريه * أخذ بعمامته فرمى بها الأرض * وغض طرفه عن قصد معاندة مولانا السلطان وما كان أحقه من أول أمره بالعض *

BnF MS Arabe 1705 86^v. Note also that Baybars is only rarely referred to by his regnal title and more often by a reference such as “the aforementioned” (*al-mushār ilay-hi*) or by his personal name Baybars, whereas al-Nāṣir Muḥammad is either called by his regnal title or by the reverential *mawlā-nā al-sultān* (our lord the sultan). Furthermore, the whole section includes a lot of word play on the roots *n-s-r* and *z-f-r*, which both denote victory.

46 Fuess, Sultan.

ذكر امر ركن الدين بيبرس وما جرى له من النزول عن الملك والخروج من القلعة.
 ذكر عدم مساعدة الاقدار للمذكور.
 ذكر سعادة نطق مولانا السلطان وحده الصحيح ولا شبهة ان الملوك نقيه الاذهان.
 ذكر حلول مولانا السلطان بكرسي مملكة بقلعة الجبل المحروس.

The case of Rukn al-Dīn Baybars and what befell him in descending from kingship and leaving the citadel.

The lack of support of fate for the aforementioned [Rukn al-Dīn Baybars].

The bliss of the utterance of our lord the sultan and his correct surmise—and there is no doubt that kings are pure minded!

The ascension of our lord the sultan to the throne of his kingdom in the Citadel.⁴⁷

In these titles, and even more so in the content they signpost, Baybars is portrayed as having destiny against him, in large part due to his own actions, which are, among other things, described with the important signifier “corruption” (*fasād*),⁴⁸ while al-Nāṣir Muḥammad is basically flying on the wings of fortune. The third of these sections, which contains a speech in *sajʿ* by the sultan, is even concluded by the statement that “there is no doubt that Egypt[’s future] is auspicious and this good omen is a confirmation [of that].”⁴⁹

The return of the sultan to his throne is as such shown to have been a triumph of fate, but the narrative also suggests that this attaining of the rightful position was not just a given. To achieve his goal, the sultan needed to take action and overcome his limitations. The section can be read as a moral exemplum, a literary meditation on the nature of power. The good and bad choices of power-wielding and their consequences are, as it were, sprinkled across the dense prose in a contrastive and engrossing narrative that leads the reader into a literary universe that is not only rich in rhetoric but also in meaning.

47 BnF Ms Arabe 1705 86^r–90^r.

48 Ibid. 89^r.

49 BnF Ms Arabe 1705 90^r. ولا شك في أن مصر بقالاتها ومصداقه هذا الفال.

2.4 *Analysis 4: The Caliphal Taqlīd*

Conspicuously absent from this narrative, and indeed from much of the *sīra* in general, is Shāfi' b. 'Alī himself as the *kātib* whose presence was so dominant in his other texts. Although it is not spelled out, it is likely that our author, at this point, did not enjoy the same position toward the sultan as he did a few decades earlier. Of course, he is always present by way of his intricate prose, but he also makes his presence as a narrative agent felt at one crucial point at the end of this section, as the author of the caliphal *taqlīd* reasserting the sultan's dominance. This document is introduced as follows:

وأشأ المملوك جامع هذه السيرة التي هي في الحقيقة عنوان السير والمتضمنة ما أرى به ملكها
على من عبر من الملوك وغير تقليداً مناصباً للواقعة تتراح إليه كل أذن سامعه وضمنه صورة العهد
المجدد من أمير المؤمنين مولانا السلطان خلد الله ملكه

The *mamlūk* who compiled this *sīra*—which, in truth, is the epitome of *sīras*, and it details its king's deeds which exceed those of kings whose days have elapsed—composed the diploma of investiture to be declared for the occasion, which satisfied every ear that heard it, and its contents take the form of the renewed contract from the Commander of the Faithful for our Lord the Sultan—may God perpetuate his kingship.⁵⁰

The statement is, of course, significant as a claim to historiographical authority and an insight into the author's general evaluation of his biographical project, but it is also contextually significant because of its relation to the preceding part and the text of the *taqlīd* itself. However, we need to read beyond the pages of the *sīra* itself to evaluate the full weight of this statement. Al-Ṣafadi tells us that when Baybars al-Jāshnikīr ascended the throne, he too had a *taqlīd* written for his ceremonial investiture and that this *taqlīd* was written by Shāfi''s relative 'Alā' al-Dīn b. 'Abd al-Zāhir (d. 717/1317), a leading *kātib* himself and grandson of the famous Muḥyī l-Dīn b. 'Abd al-Zāhir.⁵¹ The present *taqlīd* even seems to refer to 'Alā' al-Dīn's text by stating that "this contract (*'ahd*) that invalidates

50 BnF Ms Arabe 1705 96r.

51 In fact, two *taqlīd* documents were composed for Baybars II, the second apparently as a last-minute attempt to assert his authority against al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's rising support for a return to power. For a discussion of the contents of these contracts (though not of their authors), see Banister, Abbasid 397–8. On the first contract, see also Nielsen, Secular 88.

any contracts like it drawn up for whom is like [the sultan].⁵² This statement positions the diploma as a reaction against a former contract, which we can contextually surmise to have been ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s diploma for Baybars II. While ‘Alā’ al-Dīn was extremely influential at several points during the late 7th/13th century, his relationship to al-Nāṣir Muḥammad seems to have been a troubled one, and the sultan is even said to have hated him, among other things, because he composed the *taqlīd* for Baybars II.⁵³ Shāfi‘ never actually mentions ‘Alā’ al-Dīn, although he does mention ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s father (and his own cousin) Faṭḥ al-Dīn b. ‘Abd al-Zāhir repeatedly in *al-Faḍl al-ma’thūr* and *Ḥusn al-manāqib*. These mentions have made P.M. Holt conclude that “for his uncle and cousin [Shāfi‘] had clearly little affection, even if he showed them formal respect.”⁵⁴ Although other evidence suggests that the relationship between him and his relatives was probably more complex, there does seem to have been a significant degree of competition between the various members of the Banū ‘Abd al-Zāhir. That ‘Alā’ al-Dīn held positions at times when Shāfi‘ himself likely did not due to his blindness, and that the former’s position may have been in real danger considering the well-known purging of the court’s elites at the start of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad’s third reign, may explain why Shāfi‘ here reproduces a *taqlīd* written by himself.⁵⁵ Indeed, it is even possible to read this *taqlīd* as a showpiece in which the author presented himself as a worthy successor to this informal position of leading *kātib* of the realm.

The question of whether this *taqlīd* written by Shāfi‘ was also effectively used in the sultan’s ceremonial third investiture or was only a textual exercise, in line with a number of other documents quoted by the author in *al-Faḍl al-ma’thūr*, is not relevant within the context of the *sīra*.⁵⁶ Here, the *taqlīd* serves to perform Shāfi‘’s claim of being a masterful *kātib*, as part of what may be called a sort of creatively constructed resumé: a performative document that was meant to convey to its reader the wide-ranging writing abilities of its author. While the manuscript of the *sīra* is very likely a presentation copy, we do not know to whom it was offered. However, considering the time frame and the highly demanding register in which the text was written, one is tempted to imagine it being offered to an important agent at the court of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad—perhaps even the sultan himself—at a time when elite circles were being purged and replaced by close confidants of the sultan. As such,

52 BnF Ms Arabe 1705 96^v. هذا عهد ناقض ما سواه لمن سواه من العهود.

53 Al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfi* xv, 216.

54 Holt, Chancery 678.

55 On these events, see Levanoni, *Turning* 28–30.

56 I discuss this practice in detail in section 6.2.3 of my dissertation.

Shāfi' may have intended his text to facilitate either the receiving of a new position or the strengthening of his relationship with leading elites. To do so, he simply displayed that type of labor for which he could be relied on: the composition of excellent prose celebrating the sultan's achievements.

3 Conclusion

Literary, historical, and even documentary elements cannot be separated in this section, and indeed in this *sīra* in general. They are all fundamentally interwoven and communicate across their respective discursive boundaries. It is exactly the literary approach to these events which drives Shāfi's historical emplotment of both the narrative in the *sīra* and the *taqlīd*. Of course, such an approach is not unprecedented in Islamic historiography, but the specific format it takes may be said to amount to a slightly different type of literarization, which is more related to von Grunebaum's definition of the term than Haarmann's: a fundamental entanglement of style and content. Instead of von Grunebaum's negative evaluation of this tendency, however, we can see how such a literary approach could, in fact, be a very powerful narrative tool by which authors not only presented important historiographical interpretations of the past but also performed their own authorial agency. All the evidence suggests that Shāfi' b. 'Alī was not actually active anymore in the chancery in this period, so we may see this text, as well as the two other *sīras* he wrote, as performances of his authorial abilities and a way of showcasing the continued excellence of his prose despite his failing eyesight. Perhaps it even suggests how worthy it would be to reinstate the author at court, or at least how important it would be to maintain close relations with him. Patronage in this context is not simply about legitimization anymore, but it is about a complex negotiation of social status by way of performative displays of linguistic dexterity because it was this superior command of language and meaning that was required of leading *kuttāb*.

Although it was written by a contemporary author, this particular account of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's abdication and reascension may not tell us much that is new about the motives of the political agents involved and maybe not even much about what wide segments of society in the period thought about these doubtlessly tumultuous events, but it is highly informative of the ways in which historians emplotted meaningful versions of the past.

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