MAMLŪK STUDIES REVIEW

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Mamlūk Studies Review is an annual, Open Access, refereed journal devoted to the study of the Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt and Syria (648–922/1250–1517). The goals of *Mamlūk Studies Review* are to take stock of scholarship devoted to the Mamluk era, nurture communication within the field, and promote further research by encouraging the critical discussion of all aspects of this important medieval Islamic polity. The journal includes both articles and reviews of recent books.

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MAMLŪK STUDIES REVIEW

Mamlūk Studies Review is an annual refereed journal devoted to the study of the Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt and Syria (648–922/1250–1517). Since volume XIII, no. 1, *Mamlūk Studies Review* has been published not in conventional print format, but as an open-access online publication. The goals of *Mamlūk Studies Review* are to take stock of scholarship devoted to the Mamluk era, nurture communication within the field, and promote further research by encouraging the critical discussion of all aspects of this important medieval Islamic polity. The journal includes both articles and reviews of recent books. Submissions of original work on any aspect of the field are welcome, although the editorial board will periodically issue volumes devoted to specific topics and themes. *Mamlūk Studies Review* also solicits edited texts and translations of shorter Arabic source materials (*waqf* deeds, letters, *fatāwá* and the like), and encourages discussions of Mamluk era artifacts (pottery, coins, etc.) that place these resources in wider contexts. All questions regarding style should be resolved through reference to *The Chicago Manual of Style.* Transliterated Middle Eastern languages should conform to the system utilized by the Library of Congress (see the conversion chart near the end of this volume) using a Unicode font that contains all necessary diacritical marks (see the website below for further information). Submissions may be made via email, but authors may be required to send a printed copy and/or a CD-ROM which includes the article, all figures and illustrations, and any special fonts used. Please contact the editor (ideally before creating the files) for specifications relevant to illustrations, photos, maps and other graphics. Articles which diverge widely from format and style guidelines may not be accepted, and illustrations which do not meet the requirements set forth by the editors may not be usable.

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MAMLŪK STUDIES REVIEW

The Bruce D. Craig
Prize for Mamluk Studies

The Prize Committee is pleased to announce that Elias Muhanna (Ph.D. 2012, Harvard University) has been named recipient of the 2012 Bruce D. Craig Prize for Mamluk Studies for his dissertation:

> *Encyclopaedism of the Mamluk Period: The composition of Shihāb al-Dīn al-Nuwayrī's (d. 1333)* Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab

Muhanna's dissertation offers a detailed examination of one of the most important Mamluk encyclopaedias and addresses a crucial theme of the Mamluk period, the rise of encyclopaedism. The dissertation connects cultures of literacy to larger political processes, namely state formation. The author argues that al-Nuwayrī's work must be understood within the trend of 14th century administrative and institutional centralization and that it is the expression of a wider trend in blending adab and religious learning. Methodologically, this is a bold move and one that historians rarely attempt, the tendency rather being to examine literary production as related to narrower fields of influence. Furthermore, Muhanna's codicological work is admirable and his grasp of languages strong.

This is a well written, superbly competent, and original study, which makes a major contribution to the study of Mamluk cultural production and the field of Mamluk history at large. The author is to be commended for his close reading of the text. This allows him to offer a much nuanced discussion of the text's genesis, structure, and function. "Encyclopaedism of the Mamluk Period" is the work of an engaged and energetic scholar.

Committee members (in alphabetic order):
Li Guo
Konrad Hirschler
Kristina Richardson

The Bruce D. Craig Prize, carrying a cash award of $1,000, is given annually by *Mamlūk Studies Review* for the best dissertation on a topic related to the Mamluk Sultanate submitted to an American or Canadian university during the preceding calendar year. In the event no dissertations are submitted, or none is deemed to merit the prize, no prize will be awarded. To be considered for the 2014 Prize, dissertations must be defended by December 31, 2014, and submitted to the Prize Committee by January 31, 2015. Submissions should be sent electronically to Marlis J. Saleh, Editor, Mamlūk Studies Review, at msaleh@uchicago.edu.

Previous Prize Winners:

2004: Tamer el-Leithy, Princeton University, "Coptic Culture and Conversion in Medieval Cairo: 1293-1524."

2005: Zayde G. Antrim, Harvard University, "Place and Belonging in Medieval Syria, 6th/12th to 8th/14th Centuries."

2006: Nahyan A. G. Fancy, University of Notre Dame, "Pulmonary Transit and Bodily Resurrection: The Interaction of Medicine, Philosophy and Religion in the Works of Ibn al-Nafīs (d. 1288)."

2007: No prize was awarded.

2008: No prize was awarded.

2009: No prize was awarded.

2010: No prize was awarded.

2011: Prize awarded jointly to Nathan C. Hofer (Emory University), "Sufism, State, and Society in Ayyubid and Early Mamluk Egypt, 1173-1309," and Matthew B. Ingalls (Yale University), "Subtle Innovation Within Networks of Convention: The Life, Thought, and Intellectual Legacy of Zakariyya al-Ansari (d. 926/1520)."

Preface

This issue of *Mamlūk Studies Review* consists of a selection of articles based on papers that were delivered at the 2012 International Conference on Mamluk Literature, a two-day international colloquium focusing on the literature of the Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt and Syria (1250–1517) which was co-sponsored by the Middle East Documentation Center (MEDOC) and the Center for Middle Eastern Studies (CMES) at the University of Chicago. Special thanks to Bruce Craig, founder and editor emeritus of *Mamlūk Studies Review* and the guiding force behind Mamluk Studies at the University of Chicago, who conceptualized this conference and in whose honor it was held.

Marlis J. Saleh
Editor

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Book Reviews

Ahmed H. al-Rahim
University of Virginia

In Memoriam: David C. Reisman
June 21, 1969–January 2, 2011

"Al-ʿUmr qaṣīr wa-al-ṣināʿah ṭawīlah …"*

David Colum Reisman died on Monday, January 2, 2011, at the age of 41, in London, England. He was born David Colum Coen on June 21, 1969, in Dublin, Ireland, to John Cohen (who later added an *h* to his surname), an orthodontist and sculptor, and Olga Ryder. At an early age he moved with his mother to Boston, Massachusetts, where she remarried Joel M. Reisman, whose surname David legally adopted. Reisman's academic interest in Islam began in college at Boston University, where he completed a B.A. and M.A. in Islamic Studies with Merlin Swartz and Herbert W. Mason; the latter is the English translator of much of the French Orientalist Louis Massignon's (d. 1962) *oeuvre.* Massignon's work on Islamic mysticism or Sufism[1] appears—in my memories of conversations with Reisman—to have been formative in impressing upon him the importance of Arabic philology as a critical tool for studying the intellectual history of Islamic civilization.

Mysticism, however, was not to be Reisman's labor of love but rather, and mainly, the intellectual history of Arabic philosophy and its translation into English.[2] To that end, Reisman studied under the direction of Dimitri Gutas at Yale University, receiving a Ph.D. in 2000 with the dissertation "The Making of the Avicennan Tradition: The Transmission, Contents, and Structure of Ibn Sīnā's

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[1] In particular, his *La Passion d'al-Hosayn-ibn-Mansur al-Hallaj: Martyr mystique de l'Islam, exécuté à Baghdad le 26 Mars 922* (Paris, 1922; 2nd ed. Paris, 1975); *The Passion of al-Ḥallāj: Mystic and Martyr of Islam*, trans. Herbert W. Mason, Bollingen Series: 98 (Princeton, 1982).

[2] See most notably *Classical Arabic Philosophy: An Anthology of Sources,* trans. Jon McGinnis and David C. Reisman (Indianapolis, 2007); and Reisman's project, underway at the time of his death, for an eight-part translation series of the entire extant corpus of writings by the fourth/tenth-century philosopher al-Fārābī, titled *The Complete Works of Farabi: The Study of Philosophy in Early Islam,* which may, alas, have to wait another generation.

al-Mubāḥatāt (The Discussions),"[3] which was published in 2002.[4] This study is the first detailed analysis of the manuscripts, structure, and historical transmission of this particular—and as Reisman argues—posthumous collection(s) of Avicenna's (d. 428/1037) correspondences with his disciples and colleagues. The importance of Reisman's work is in presenting the necessary codicological and paleographical foundation for any future critical edition of the *Mubāḥathāt* (the lack of proper critical editions of medieval Arabic texts was often lamented by Reisman). The rigorous training in the philological analysis of medieval Arabic he received from Gutas and the latter's broad intellectual influence, where philology, codicology, and critical historiography are brought to bear on the transmission of medieval Arabic texts, philosophical and otherwise, and their historical intellectual contexts, are evinced in this monograph and in much of Reisman's other publications.

At Yale, while many of us who studied in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations were aware of the formative intellectual presence of Franz Rosenthal (he taught there from 1956 to 1985; d. 2003)—and occasionally ran into him as he was researching in the stacks of Yale's Sterling Memorial Library—it was Reisman who grew near to him in his last years (Reisman would often relay news of Rosenthal and his health). One manifestation of his admiration for Rosenthal, with whom Gutas studied, is the care with which he compiled a handlist of microfilms of Arabic and Syriac manuscripts in Rosenthal's private library (which is now housed at Tel Aviv University).[5] Reisman also studied medieval Arabic grammar, lexicography, and poetics with Beatrice Gruendler at Yale; his penchant was for Arabic syntax and the grammar of particles *(ḥarf).*[6] And while graduate students together, Reisman and I co-organized the first conference of the Avicenna Study Group at Yale University, which was intended to in-

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[3] The dissertation was awarded the William J. Horwitz Prize by the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Yale University.

[4] Published with the same title in the series Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science: Texts and Studies; 49 (Leiden, 2002).

[5] *A Catalogue of the Arabic and Syriac Manuscripts on Microfilm in the Library of Franz Rosenthal,* privately published in limited number, 2000; and also see Reisman's obituary of Rosenthal, "In Memoriam: Franz Rosenthal: August 31, 1914–April 8, 2003," *Aleph: Historical Studies in Science and Judaism* 3 (2003): 329–42.

[6] An example of this was the inaugural Yale Arabic Colloquium (YAC), "The Binary World of *innamā:* Practice and Theory of the Use of the Medieval Arabic Particle," April 15, 1998, wherein Gutas, Gruendler, and Reisman presented a spirited evening of discussion, rich with medieval Arabic textual specimens, of the grammatical uses of the restrictive particle *innamā;* and also see Reisman's poignant analysis of the (mis)translations of *innamā* in his review of *Ibn Taymiyya against the Greek Logicians,* trans. Wael B. Hallaq (Oxford, 1993), *Mamlūk Studies Review* 1 (1997): 129–32.

troduce the research interests of a "new generation of students" to senior scholars working on Avicenna.[7]

As for Reisman's contributions to the field of Arabic and Islamic studies, they were wide-ranging and—in terms of his attempt to do the "spadework,"[8] as he called it, and to be comprehensive—of great scholarly value, particularly in the way he marshaled his evidence; that is, the primary, often untapped manuscripts, and relevant secondary sources on the subject matter he was addressing. In brief, and without taking full stock of his publications or *nachlass,* some of the thematics which interested him include the study of medieval Arabic history, biography, and autobiography as sources for the transmission of philosophy and, more broadly, of Islamic intellectual history;[9] the development of curriculum and pedagogy in medieval Arabic philosophy[10] and medicine[11]; and what may be described as intellectual archaeology of hitherto undiscovered texts and uncatalogued Arabic manuscripts.[12]

The untimely death of Reisman is a clear loss to Arabic and Islamic studies, and especially to those scholars working on the intellectual history of medieval

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[7] A collection of the conference papers was published in *Before and After Avicenna: Proceedings of the First Conference of the Avicenna Study Group,* ed. David C. Reisman and Ahmed H. al-Rahim, Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science: Texts and Studies, 52 (Leiden, 2003); this conference and volume were followed by a second, *Interpreting Avicenna: Science and Philosophy in Medieval Islam, Proceedings of the Second Conference of the Avicenna Study Group,* ed. Jon McGinnis and David C. Reisman, Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science: Texts and Studies; 56 (Leiden, 2004).

[8] See, for example, Reisman's lament—the substance of which, for anyone who knew him, was the hallmark of his scholarship—on the "woeful" state of Ibn Taymīyah studies: "Arabic-Islamic studies is no more plagued by a lack of continuity in scholarship than any other field, but the absence of very basic research on Ibn Taymīyah should nonetheless be perceived as a serious shortcoming to a proper understanding of the man and his work and not simply as a typical, if woeful, characteristic of the field as a whole. *Basic spadework, such as a critical biography, a list and chronology of works, a study of extant manuscripts, and an informed assessment of work to date,* seems to be viewed as an *unfortunate mechanical aspect* of Arabic-Islamic studies best done by someone else, but without such work any study of a discrete aspect of Ibn Taymīyah's life and thought cannot but be tentative [my emphasis]." *Mamlūk Studies Review* 3 (1999): 210–13.

[9] See, for example, his "Stealing Avicenna's Books: A Study of the Historical Sources for the Life and Times of Avicenna," in *Before and After Avicenna,* 91–126.

[10] See his "Al-Fārābī and the Philosophical Curriculum," in *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy,* ed. Peter Adamson and Richard C. Taylor (Cambridge, 2005), 52–72; and "Avicenna's Enthymeme: A Pointer," *Arabica* 56, no. 6 (2009): 529–42, respectively.

[11] See his "Professional Medical Ethics from a Foreign Past," in *Islamic Philosophy, Science, Culture, and Religion: Studies in Honor of Dimitri Gutas,* ed. Felicitas Opwis and David [C.] Reisman, Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science: Texts and Studies; 83 (Leiden, 2004), 26–39.

[12] See his "A Holograph MS of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah's *'Dhayl,'*" *Mamlūk Studies Review* 2 (1998): 19–49; and "Plato's *Republic* in Arabic: A Newly Discovered Passage," *Arabic Science and Philosophy* 14, no. 2 (2004): 263–300.

Arabic philosophy and science; his piercing wit and critique, which characterized much of his scholarship and commentary, will be missed and noted by those who regarded him as a friend and colleague. In one of his last publications, while critiquing the state of Avicennan studies, Reisman acknowledges—very much in the tradition of some of Avicenna's disciples—his own intellectual debt to and the precedence of "the 'Gutasian' legacy,"[13] pointing out that "[u]nfortunately, the foci of research into Avicenna and his legacy has not changed in the past forty to fifty years (never mind the past millennium) … no doubt, it is high time to imitate the master and shatter some paradigms."[14] It was in imitating the master, in his Arabic seminars at Yale, that Reisman and I first met, and of whose *madhhab* Reisman was such an ardent defender[15]—always seeing himself as a link in an *isnād* of scholars which extends back from Gutas to Rosenthal to Paul Kraus (d. 1944).[16]

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[13] See his review of *Avicenna and His Legacy: A Golden Age of Science and Philosophy*, ed. Y. Tzvi Langermann, Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, 8 (Turnhout, Belgium, 2009), *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 131, no. 1 (2011): 176.

[14] Ibid.

[15] See his review of *Ibn Sīnā, lettre au vizir Abū Saʿd: Editio princeps d'après le manuscrit de Bursa*, ed. Yahya Michot, Sagesses musulmanes, 4 (Beirut, 2000), "A New Standard for Avicenna Studies," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 122, no. 3 (2002): 562–77; and "An Unfortunate Response: Iqbal on Gutas," *Islam and Science* 2 (2004): 63–73.

[16] Dimitri Gutas, "Franz Rosenthal: 31 August 1914–8 April 2003," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 149, no. 3 (September 2005): 442.

Thomas Bauer
Universität Münster

"Ayna hādhā min al-Mutanabbī!"
Toward an Aesthetics of Mamluk Literature

Introduction

A few years ago, I was searching for manuscripts of Ibn Nubātah's *Al-Qaṭr al-Nubātī*, his once-famous collection of epigrams. I found out that one of the many manuscripts was kept in a library in the Arab world, and when I happened to visit that country, I decided to stop by and ask for a copy. My visit was successful. I was not only given a free copy of the manuscript, but also an appointment with the director of the manuscript department. Our conversation was less successful, however, since the director harshly disapproved of my scholarly interests. In his eyes, the study of Mamluk literature was not only a waste of time, but an enterprise that would do nothing but bring shame on the Arabs as well. "There is nothing in Mamluk literature," he concluded, "*illā madḥ al-nabī wa-mā yusammī al-Amrīkān ʿgay literature.*'" Before I had time to protest, he read the first line of the first epigram at the beginning of the manuscript aloud and exclaimed: "*ayna hādhā min al-Mutanabbī!*" "What's this compared to al-Mutanabbī!"

After my anger had simmered down, I started to think about the question. Why not just take it seriously? After all, there can be no doubt that al-Mutanabbī's aesthetic *is* different from that of Ibn Nubātah and his contemporaries. But why should that be so? And does "different" equal "worse"? Let us therefore go in search of the aesthetic framework of Mamluk literature, in the hope that this will explain several differences between the literature of the Mamluk period and that of the middle Abbasid period (the period spanning the lifetimes of Abū Tammām and al-Mutanabbī).

The first obstacle we face in our quest is the fact that it is generally not very easy to determine a handful of aesthetic principles no matter what the period of literary history. For the Mamluk period, however, this task seems even more difficult than for the middle Abbasid period because of the extraordinary stylistic plurality of Mamluk-era literary texts. Mamluk poetry has often been criticized for its allegedly mannerist style and abundance of rhetorical embellishments, but this prejudice is unfounded. Of course, there are many complex, highly sophisticated texts—not least in prose—from the Mamluk period, but at the same time there are countless literary texts, often by the same authors, that are easy to read and understand and which make less use of rhetorical figures than most texts by Abbasid-era *muḥdath* poets. Ibn Nubātah, for example, was the author of some

elaborately stylized texts (we will consider an example later), but also of an epic hunting-poem (an *urjūzah*) which Ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī correctly considered as a model of "fluency" *(insijām).* And as Geert Jan van Gelder has put it, it is indeed "poetry for easy listening."[1]

We have more than just a bounty of easy and stylistically simple texts, however; we also have a large number of texts in dialect or at least in a register that approximates the spoken language. Even Ibn Nubātah, whose stylistic ideal was elegance and sophistication, could not avoid composing a *zajal*—though it is admittedly perhaps the most dialect-free *zajal* ever composed.[2] Nevertheless, it is inconceivable that al-Mutanabbī would have ever written anything like it. In al-Mutanabbī's day, the boundaries between high and popular literature were insurmountable, whereas in the Mamluk period, these boundaries became more blurred.

What accounts for this stylistic plurality in the Mamluk period? The most obvious answer to the question would be to assume that stylistic plurality is the result of a plurality of participants and audiences. The multiplication of social groups participating in literature results, in turn, from a change in the social function of literature.

This process of change began during the so-called Sunni revival. In this period, we witness a gradual dissolution of the community of *udabāʾ* on the one hand, with their own largely secular canon, and, on the other, a rise in the importance of the *ʿulamāʾ* with their predominantly religious canon. Yet the gradual merger of these two elite groups did not lead to the disappearance of *adab*. Instead, the process of the *udabāʾ*'s *ʿulamāʾ*ization goes hand in hand with what I call the *adab*ization of the *ʿulamāʾ*. The background of this process has been analyzed thoroughly by Konrad Hirschler. 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 Middle Period that led to the rise of a "literate mentality."[3]

As a result, the percentage of people interested in *adab* actually increased and gradually came to include large portions of the middle classes, with both religious and lay professions and interests. From the Ayyubid period onward, we

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[1] Geert Jan van Gelder, "Poetry for Easy Listening: *Insijām* and Related Concepts in Ibn Ḥijjah's *Khizānat al-Adab,*" *Mamlūk Studies Review* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 31–48. See also Thomas Bauer, "The Dawādār's Hunting Party. A Mamluk *muzdawija ṭardiyya*, Probably by Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn Faḍl Allāh," in *O Ye Gentlemen: Arabic Studies on Science and Literary Culture in Honour of Remke Kruk,* ed. Arnoud Vrolijk and Jan P. Hogendijk (Leiden, 2007), 291–312.

[2] Ibn Nubātah, *Muntakhab al-Hadīyah,* published as *Dīwān al-Fāḍil al-Awḥad al-Shaykh Jamāl al-Dīn Abū Bakr ibn Nubātah* (Beirut, 1304/1886–87), 51–52.

[3] Konrad Hirschler, *The Written Word in the Medieval Arabic Lands: A Social and Cultural History of Reading Practices* (Edinburgh, 2012), 197.

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have enough data to show that even the lower strata of urban society participated, in one way or another, in the production, or at least consumption, of literature. Poets came from all walks of life. They included civil servants like Ibn Nubātah and al-Ṣafadī, high- and low-ranking religious scholars like Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī and Ibn Sūdūn, judges like Ibn al-Damāmīnī (who also tried his luck as an entrepreneur), traders like Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī, and craftsmen like al-Jazzār ("the butcher") and al-Miʿmār ("the builder"). And all these men of letters wrote for a public made up of people from the same or a cognate social group. I would suggest referring to this group by the German expression *Bürgertum,* since this term is less associated with economic status than the French and English *bourgeoisie.* The social group of the *Bürgertum* came to dominate the literary sphere as both producer and consumer.

At the same time, courts became less and less interested in poetry. This may have been due to the fact that many rulers lacked a sufficient command of Arabic to understand the subtleties of Arabic poetry, or because other forms of representation such as architecture and religious patronage came to the fore. Panegyric poetry (*madīḥ),* addressed to princes and rulers, was still the most important, prestigious, and honored poetic genre in al-Mutanabbī's time. In the Mamluk period, its importance declined. Instead, poets, scholars, judges, and civil servants wrote *madīḥ* poems praising one another. As a result of these developments, literature in the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods became a medium for middle-class self-expression and lost much of its former function as a medium of courtly representation.

Of course, *madīḥ* composed for sultans and princes continued. Poets like Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī, Ibn Nubātah, and the young Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī went actively in search of "their" princes and found patrons among the Artuqids, the Ayyubids of Ḥamāh, and the Rasulids, respectively. But they were no longer court poets in the traditional sense. Instead, they were part of a network of *ʿulamāʾ* and *udabāʾ,* and it was among this group that they found their main addressees. The courtly milieu no longer set the norms of style. This is true for the high-brow *udabāʾ* as well as for popular poetry, which becomes more visible in the time due "to the fact that the ruling elite played a much more limited role in setting cultural standards and literary taste and indeed used poetry less systematically as a means of purveying a legitimizing mythology, as was the case during the Abbasid era."[4]

This change in the social role of poetry and prose literature had consequences in many respects. The most important changes are based, I believe, on the fact that the chief communicative function of courtly literature is *representation*

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[4] Margaret Larkin, "Popular Poetry in the Post-Classical Period," in *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period,* ed. Roger Allen and D. S. Richards (Cambridge, 2007), 194–95.

Fig. 1. The Schloss.

Fig. 2. The Prinzipalmarkt..

whereas literature that operates as a social class's medium of self-representation mainly functions as a means of *communication* within the members of the class.[5]

Representation vs. Participation

This leads me to the main thesis of this article. I claim that the difference between the aesthetics of the middle Abbasid period and the Mamluk period is caused by a shift from *representation* to *participation*. The terms *representation* and *participation* are used in structuralist literary theory to denote two poles along the spectrum of modes of writing.[6] The concept ultimately goes back to Roman Jakobson's distinction between metaphoric and metonymic discourse.[7] The distinction between representation and participation is not only helpful for the analysis of literature, but also for other art forms. Perhaps an example taken from architecture would be instructive.

The two photographs above show two architectural sites from the town of Münster. The first (fig. 1) shows the castle, a masterpiece of North German Baroque architecture. Its main communicative function is representation; whoever approaches the building cannot help but be impressed and overwhelmed. The building is *self-focused*. It has a strictly symmetric structure. All parts refer to their respective counterparts, all of which are identical. They have no other context than the building itself.

The second photo (fig. 2) shows the central market, the so called Prinzipalmarkt. Its buildings are also lavishly adorned and meant to evoke admiration. Obviously, they are not devoid of the function of representation. Nevertheless, they are clearly situated very much closer to the pole of *participation*. A single house, beautiful as it may be, would make little sense without its neighbors. It is only through its *contiguity* to other houses that it derives its meaning. The houses are not self-contained, but communicate with one another. Their individual elements refer to the respective equivalents in other houses, which are never exactly the same but provide variants whose appeal lies in the knowledge of their diver-

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[5] On the use of literature for different communicative purposes see now Thomas Bauer, "Mamluk Literature as a Means of Communication," in *Ubi sumus? Quo vademus? Mamluk Studies—State of the Art,* ed. Stephan Conermann (Göttingen, 2013), 23–56.

[6] E.g., Jane Hedley, *Power in Verse: Metaphor and Metonymy in the Renaissance Lyric* (University Park, PA and London, 1988).

[7] Roman Jakobson, "Aspects of Language and Types of Aphasic Disturbances," in idem, *Language in Literature* (Cambridge, MA, 1987), 95–114 (109–10: "The development of a discourse may take place along two different semantic lines: one topic may lead to another either through their similarity or through their contiguity. The metaphoric way would be the most appropriate term for the first case and the metonymic way for the second, since we find their most condensed expression in metaphor and metonymy.")

sity. The different forms of arches, windows, and gables derive their appeal from being variants of the arches, windows and gables of the adjacent buildings. Furthermore, there is text on the façade that refers to an extra-architectural context, and the arcades allow a much more intensive interaction between observer and building. Again, this interaction is only granted as long as the buildings "cooperate." The houses welcome passers-by. Therefore, the representational function of these buildings is not intended to awe, but to stand out.

Applied to Arabic literature, one could draw the following analogy: just as the castle embodies the representational mode and the Prinzipalmarkt represents the participational mode of building, the poetry of the Middle Abbasid period is closer to the representational mode of writing than Mamluk literature, whereas the participational mode is, in contrast, extremely strong in Mamluk literature. This basic fact affects every level and feature of its literature, be it the importance of different genres, the attitude towards poetry, the construction of individual literary texts, the general style, the use of stylistic figures, etc.

Epigrams

Let us start with questions of *genres* and *literary forms* and try to explain the stupendous career of the *epigram*. It is true that there were epigrammatic poems at all periods of Arabic literature. However, in the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods the epigram gains an importance it never previously possessed. In this era, there simply isn't a single poet who did not compose a large number of epigrams, and there are poets like Mujīr al-Dīn Ibn Tamīm, who composed nothing but epigrams. Large anthologies were compiled, which were made up entirely of epigrams, and Ibn Nubātah was the first to compose a thematically arranged *dīwān* devoted exclusively to his own epigrams. Ibn Ḥabīb, Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī, and al-Ṣafadī followed immediately with their own *dīwān*s of epigrams. In those days, the sky above Cairo, Damascus, Ḥamāh, and Aleppo must have been replete with the sound of epigrams. What explanation is there for the enormous popularity of epigrams and what does it have to do with the theory of representation vs. participation?

The answer is that epigrams are extremely communicative. First, epigrams, just like the houses of the Prinzipalmarkt, rarely come alone. An epigram recited in a *majlis* provokes other epigrams by other participants. An epigram sent to accompany a present is answered by the recipient with another epigram. Epigrams come to stand side by side in *dīwān*s and anthologies to delight the reader with a great variety of concepts and punch lines, which in turn reinforces the effect of every single one, just as is the case with the gables of the Prinzipalmarkt.

Second, the epigram is an extremely communicative form because it depends on the interaction of the hearer/reader. A *madīḥ* poem by al-Mutanabbī does not demand anything from the hearer other than being impressed and overwhelmed. The poem is complete and self-contained. An epigram, however, normally ends in a point. This point is its very essence and raison d'être. An epigram is only complete when the point "works." And this *work* has to be done by the hearer/reader. He/she has to grasp the point and appreciate it. Without this "work" the epigram remains meaningless and—in every sense of the word—pointless.

Third, due to the fact that communication is the very essence of epigrams, their content and style is highly oriented toward context. To explain this, let me give an example. It is an epigram by Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī:[8]

<div dir="rtl">

قال في وقّاد

أحببتُ وقّادًا كنجم طالع   *   أنزلتُه برضَى الغَرام فؤادي

وأنا الشهابُ فلا يعاندٌ عاذلي   *   إن ملتُ نحو الكوكب الوقّادِ

</div>

On a Lamplighter:
I fell in love with a lamplighter who is like a rising star and, to please
    passion, I made him take abode in my heart.
As I am Shihāb al-Dīn / a shooting star myself, the critic won't blame
    me if I incline towards a *brightly shining star* / a lamplighter-star.[9]

The theme of the epigram is not an object of luxury, as is so often the case with Abbasid epigrams. Instead, it is a love epigram on a lamplighter, whose job it is to care for the lamps in the mosque: clean them, light them, and extinguish them—not a very prestigious job, but an everyday experience shared by all people in the town. *Ghazal* epigrams on men and women who are characterized by their profession became a genre of its own in this period. These epigrams portray every conceivable person in town and in the countryside, from sultan to beggar, from judge to Bedouin. They eroticize the whole of society, which appears to be composed of lovable people, each having his or her own erotic attraction. The youths and girls of Abbasid epigrams are of rather archetypal beauty. The epigrams of the Ayyubid and Mamluk period let you smell the odors of the market and the quarters of the craftsmen. It is inconceivable that al-Mutanabbī could have made

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[8] Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Uns al-Ḥujar fī Abyāt Ibn Ḥajar,* ed. Shihāb al-Dīn Abū ʿAmr (Beirut, 1409/1988), 352.

[9] A *tawriyah* is noted in the translations in the following way: The primarily intended meaning is underlined, and the secondarily suggested meaning italicized. In case of an *istikhdām,* where both meanings are intended simultaneously, both are underlined.

an epigram on a beautiful tailor girl or a beautiful tanner. Ayyubid and Mamluk poetry instead contextualizes the genre of *ghazal* and the form of the epigram, and its context is everyday life in all its manifestations.

Again, here we are closer to the pole of "participation" than that of "representation." This also holds true for the stylistic figures. The epigram starts with a simile comparing the beautiful lamplighter to a star, which is transferred to a metaphor in the second line. The metaphor is a stylistic device based on substitution. "Beautiful person" is substituted by "star." It is therefore set on the paradigmatic axis of language. In the theory of Jakobson and his adepts, metaphoric representation, which is based on substitution drawing on the paradigmatic axis, is contrasted with metonymic representation, which is based on contiguity and draws on the syntagmatic axis of language. Whereas metaphoric writing is characteristic of representation, metonymic writing is characteristic of participation. For the Abbasid period, this theoretical model fits perfectly. The metaphor was not only one of the most popular stylistic devices; it was also the subject of theoretical inquiry. But what about the Mamluk period? It would seem that metaphor itself did not lose its importance. Poets like Ibn Nubātah and Ibn Ḥajar do not use metaphors to a conspicuously lesser degree than Ibn al-Muʿtazz or al-Mutanabbī. What happens instead, though, is that these metaphors are permanently *recontextualized.* This recontextualization is achieved here with the help of another stylistic device, which became increasingly popular in the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods: the *tawriyah* (or double entendre). *Al-kawkab al-waqqād* "the brightly shining star" is a metaphor. But the representational function of the metaphor is *undermined* somehow by the *tawriyah.* The *tawriyah* allows us—or rather compels us—to understand *al-kawkab al-waqqād* also in the sense: "the star—that is, the lamplighter." Through this *tawriyah,* a new context, a context from everyday experience, is given and the spell of the metaphor is broken. As we will see with other texts, recontextualization is one of the major techniques of Mamluk literature.

I shall not forget to mention the second *tawriyah*—or rather an *istikhdām,* in which both meanings are intended simultaneously—in the epigram. *Al-Shihāb* is a shooting star, and it is the poet himself, but this time not by way of a metaphor, but by a coincidental correspondence between the word and his name. Again, a surprising context is set. This time it is the author of the epigram himself who comes on the scene in person, not simply as an anonymous "lyrical I," but with his own name.

Abbasid epigrams are mostly self-focused. They aim at the description of a person or a prestigious object by finding striking and surprising similes or metaphors. Ayyubid and Mamluk epigrams, on the other hand, are mostly pointed. There are many techniques of creating the point. It is often constituted by a

tawriyah, as we have seen. Very popular also was *iqtibās*—a quotation from the Quran—or *taḍmīn,* a quotation of any other text, provided it was famous enough to be recognized. What all these techniques have in common is that they are based on *recontextualization.* The hearer/reader is surprised to discover the object of the epigram in a context he did not expect.

One of the most popular stylistic devices of the Mamluk period next to *tawriyah* was *tawjīh.* In the sense in which it was used from the Mamluk period onward it is constituted by the use of technical vocabulary, be it from scholarship, the crafts, or any other field, or by book titles or proper names. In *tawjīh,* however, it is not the technical meaning that is intended, but the meaning of these words in everyday speech. *Tawjīh* is close to *tawriyah;* the difference is that with words possessing two meanings, only one of the meanings, the non-technical meaning, makes any sense, and so in order to hint to the reader that there is a technical meaning which is not intended, the author must use two or more words from the same semantic field (again a matter of contextualization).[10]

A short example is the following epigram by al-Ṣafadī:[11]

قال في محدّث

محدِّثٌ ذو قوامٍ * تَغارُ منه العوالي

وطَرْفُه ليس يُغري * إلاّ بجَرح الرجال

On a Hadith Scholar:
Even the lances are jealous of his body,
And if men encounter his glance, they will be hurt.

The *tawjīh* becomes invisible in the translation as it is also in the plain understanding of the Arabic text. A specific context is needed. This context is provided by the fact that several words point to hadith scholarship, though it is not the subject of the epigram. The beloved is a *muḥaddith.* One of the disciplines he has to deal with is *al-jarḥ wa-al-taʿdīl,* the discipline of establishing the reliability of hadith transmitters. Against this background, the final words *jarḥ al-rijāl* assumes a double meaning. Besides "hurting men" a second, technical meaning appears: "criticizing hadith transmitters." An attentive reader may even detect a third usage of hadith terminology. The rhyme word of the first line, *al-ʿawālī,*

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[10] See Ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī, *Khizānat al-Adab,* ed. Kawkab Diyāb (Beirut, 1421/2001), 2:350–83; before Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī the term *tawjīh* was generally used in the sense of what most later authors call *ibhām.* The "new" definition of *tawjīh* is on pp. 353–54.

[11] Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Ḥusn al-Ṣarīḥ fī Miʾat Malīḥ,* ed. Aḥmad Fawzī al-Hayb (Damascus, 2003), 36–37.

does not only mean "lances," one of the most common objects of comparison for a slender, elegantly moving body. In hadith terminology it denotes traditions with the shortest possible chain of transmitters. As we see, al-Ṣafadī uses three expressions taken from hadith scholarship. They form their own context without which the point of the epigram cannot be understood. At the same time, there is an external context: the sphere of hadith studies. Contrary to the metaphors of Abbasid poetry, which form sort of a poetic realm in themselves, hadith scholarship *per se* has no obvious connection to poetry. Again, the stylistic device provides for contextualization in several respects.

In pre-Ayyubid times *tawjīh* hardly played a role. By the Mamluk era, it had become one of the most popular devices. It can be found not only in countless epigrams (especially in love epigrams on youths and girls of a certain profession), but also forms the basis of a number of *maqāmāt.* Several of al-Suyūṭī's *maqāmāt* are *tawjīh*-based; e.g., *Al-Maqāmah al-Baḥrīyah,* in which twenty scholars in different fields complain when they assume that the flood of the Nile has stopped and rejoice when the Nile starts to rise again,[12] or his series of erotic *maqāmāt Rashf al-Zulāl,* in which again twenty scholars, from Quran reader to Sufi, report about their wedding night, each using the terminology of his respective discipline.[13] The "popular" counterpart would be al-Bilbaysī's *Al-Mulaḥ wa-al-Ṭuraf min Munādamāt Arbāb al-Ḥiraf,* in which representatives of forty-nine professions, most of them craftsmen, argue with a hypocritical judge who refuses to serve wine.[14]

Ibn Nubātah's "Snow Letter" to al-Qazwīnī

But let us turn now to another literary genre, which is especially characteristic of the period: the letter. It has been repeatedly stated that prose in the form of letters and documents—not to mention the *maqāmah*—were extraordinarily important in the period, and its literature cannot be adequately understood without taking these texts into account. Again, not much has been done so far in this field,[15] in which Ibn Nubātah also played a key role. Several of his works *(Zahr al-Manthūr, Taʿlīq al-Dīwān)* are collections of his letters or collections of both prose and poetry by him and his correspondents *(Sajʿ al-Muṭawwaq).* None of them has been edited so far.

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[12] *Sharḥ Maqāmāt al-Suyūṭī*, ed. Samīr Maḥmūd al-Darūbī (Beirut, 1409/1989), 1:249–70.

[13] Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Rashf al-Zulāl min al-Siḥr al-Ḥalāl* (Beirut, n.d.).

[14] See Joseph Sadan, "Al-Bilbaysī," *Encyclopaedia of Islam Three* (2010), 1:165–67.

[15] But see the thoughtful introduction to the field by Muhsin al-Musawi, "Pre-Modern Belletristic Prose," in *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period*, ed. Allen and Richards, 101–33.

The following letter is preserved in two autograph manuscripts. It is addressed to Jalāl al-Dīn al-Qazwīnī, author of the famous handbook of rhetoric *Talkhīṣ al-Miftāḥ* and preacher at the Umayyad mosque in Damascus (hence known as *Khaṭīb Dimashq*). The letter was written in the winter of 716/1316–17, which was particularly harsh and saw snowfall in Damascus. Ibn Nubātah was freezing and asked al-Qazwīnī for the gift of a fur coat; or at least, this was the purported message of the letter. But there was a more important purpose behind it. In the year 716, Ibn Nubātah was new in Damascus and trying to get in contact with as many important intellectuals of the town as possible. He did this by sending letters and poems to them in order to convince them that, on account of his talent and education, he was really one of them. This strategy proved to be successful.

As it is a letter between two of the most famous intellectuals of their time, and since Mamluk letters have rarely, if ever, been the subject of literary analysis so far,[16] I will present the "snow letter" in its entirety. Here is the beginning:[17]

يا مولانا صبّحك الله بكلّ صَبيحة بيضاءَ لا من هذه الثلوج الملمّة * وكلّ غنيمةٍ باردةٍ لا من هذه الليالي المدلهمّة *

My lord! May God bring you nothing but mornings of pure "whiteness" (= brightness)—but not whitened by these afflictive snowfalls— | and nothing but "cold" (= easy) prey—but not cooled down by these pitch-dark nights— ‖

At the beginning of his letter, Ibn Nubātah introduces two themes, which are developed in what follows: one is "greeting and compliments"; the other is the bad weather. The two themes run through the whole of the letter right until the very end. In the first part, every phrase of greeting evokes horrible associations with the current meteorological disaster—an association the writer has to dismiss vehemently. In this way, the paradigmatic set of formal phrases of greeting is contextualized with the environment of writer and addressee. Ibn Nubātah persists with this contrast in a second double colon:

وكل ثغر باسم ولا أعني هذه البروق اللامعة * وكلّ ضَرعٍ حافلٍ ولا أرضى هذه السُحب الهامعة ❖ وسقى ديارَك غير مفسدِها ❖

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[16] An exception is Werner Diem, *Wurzelrepetition und Wunschsatz: Untersuchung zur Stilgeschichte des arabischen Dokuments des 7. Bis 20. Jahrhunderts* (Wiesbaden, 2005), in which aesthetic aspects are given due consideration.

[17] The text here is according to the autograph manuscript "Min Tarassul Ibn Nubātah," Escorial MS 548, fols. 91v–92v. Another autograph version displaying a number of interesting variants is Ibn Nubātah, "Sajʿ al-Muṭawwaq," Ayasofya MS 4045, fols. 29v–30v.

...and nothing but front teeth glistening in a smile—but I do not mean these flashes of lightning— | and nothing but udders full of milk (= blessings)—but I am not content with these raining clouds—, ‖ and "may your abode be watered by what does not destroy it!"

The introduction ends with a quotation from a verse by the pre-Islamic poet Ṭarafah,[18] which clearly marks a caesura, even acoustically, since it does not rhyme. Letters are full of quotations, which not only situate the new text in the context of the canon but also serve to connect the knowledge and education of the writer to that of the addressee. Here, the quotation by Ṭarafah has a third function; it introduces a third thematic strand, "Quran and old Arabic lore," which appears several times in the course of the letter.

As we have seen, the letter has a clearly discernible introduction, but this is not set apart thematically from the rest of the letter. Instead its function is to introduce the themes and motives on which the rest of the letter is grounded.

The writer now turns to the addressee and asks him how he feels about the weather they are having. A change of rhythm corresponds to the change in subject. Here the author uses a trio of colons with the last colon being longer than the first two:

كيف أنت في هذا الجليد الذي أذاب قلب الجليد * وهذه الرحمة التي أوقعتنا ﴿فِي العذاب الشديد﴾ [ق : ٢٦] * وهذا البرد الذي لا تقوى الأجساد عليه ولا يقوى على البرد الحديد

How do you feel in this hoarfrost that melted the heart of every sturdy man, | and in this mercy (= rain) that has cast us "into the terrible chastisement" (Q 50:26), | and in this cold against which nobody can resist—but not even iron can prevail against the cold? ‖

Again positive things ("sturdiness, mercy") are contrasted with the weather, but now they succumb to it, which brings the author nearer to his matter of concern. An *iqtibās* from the Quran continues the line of quotations. Many *jinās* form a chain of acoustic linkage throughout the letter.

This first trio of colons is continued and affirmed by a second one. The pace is accelerated, the effect of *jinās* brought to its extreme, and instead of a normal rhyme Ibn Nubātah uses double rhyme (*luzūm mā lā yalzam*)[19] in addition to a very clear

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[18] "May your abode be watered by what does not destroy it: فسقى بلادك غير مفسدها   صوبُ الربيع وديمةٌ تَهْمِي by a rain of spring or a continuous rain that pours forth!

[19] See Pierre Cachia, *The Arch Rhetorician or The Schemer's Skimmer* (Wiesbaden, 1998), 19.

allusion to the Quran. Ibn Nubātah introduces himself as a "stranger," still speaking about himself in the third person:

وهل عندك خبرٌ من حال مغترٍّ مُغتَرَب * مضطرٌّ مضطرب * ساجدٍ من شدّة الهول مقترِب *

Have you heard news about a stranger, beguiled (by false hopes), | a man destitute and unsettled, | bowing himself, stricken by intensive terror, and drawing near (to ask for relief) (cf. Q 96:19: *wa-sjud wa-qtarib*)? ||

The crescendo of this colon leads to the climax of the letter. It starts with an *iltifāt;*[20] the author switches to the first person and gives what I would call the point of the letter, since just like epigrams, even this letter has a point—not at the end, but almost in its middle:

أمّا أنا فقد تحصّنتُ في هذه ﴿الواقعة﴾([الواقعة : ١] بظلٍّ ﴿السماء ذات البروج﴾ [البروج : ١] * ولبستُ السنجاب الأبلق إلا أنه من زرقة الجسَدِ وبياض الثلوج *

As far as I am concerned, to protect me from this "terror" (Q 56:1), I have taken refuge in the shadow of "the heaven with the fortresses (= zodiac)" (Q 85:1), | and I put on the fur of the white-spotted squirrel by combining the blue of the (skin of my) body with the white of the snow.

Ibn Nubātah pretends to be clad in a coat made of the fur of a *sinjāb,* a sort of squirrel whose fur was imported from Russia or the Caucasus. Its color is blue and white. But in fact, Ibn Nubātah could neither find shelter nor afford such a precious fur coat, and therefore he had to rely on the white of the snow and the blue of his cold skin. Ibn Nubātah had used this idea several times, which clearly shows that he also must have understood it as the central point and climax of the letter.[21] Two Quranic quotations continue the theme "Quran and old Arabic lore."

The following colons, which conclude the middle part of the letter, continue with contrasting the themes "bad weather" ("hoar-frost," "snow"), which even turns out to be life-endangering. The main function of this part is to develop the theme "cloak and clothing," which was introduced in the climax colon and is the subject of the letter. Nevertheless it is not a theme that permeates the whole of

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[20] See ibid., 106.

[21] See "Min Tarassul Ibn Nubātah," fol. 131r; Ibn Nubātah, "Zahr al-Manthūr," Chester Beatty MS 3774, fol. 96v.

the letter, but is restricted to its latter half. The development is carried out mainly with recourse to the theme "old Arabic lore":

وتقاويتُ وما قوّة مَن أشابَهُ الضَريبُ صورةً ومعنى * وشاهدتُ الموت فليتَ الأيامَ
أتاحَتْ لي من الكسوة كفنًا حينَ أتاحت لي من الثلج قُطْنا * وجرّبت قول العربي
المقرور إنَّ الحسب لِيُدفِئَني فمَا وجدتُ الحَسَبَ إلاّ يدفنني * واستصوبت قول
بعضهم وقد رأى أعرابيًّا عريانا في مثل هذا اليوم يُنشد [من الوافر]:

كساني عامرٌ وكسا بَنيه   عطاف المجد إنّ له عطافا
فقال والله إنكَ إلى عطاف عَباءة أحوج منك إلى هذهَ العطاف ❖

...and I summoned up all my power, but how much power is left in a man whose hair has been turned white by <u>hoar-frost / fate</u> in his outward appearance and in the sense of the word?![22] | And since I faced death, I wish that fate would give me a shroud as clothing as it has already given me cotton in the form of snow! ‖ And I had the same experience as the Arab who said: "Honor was to warm me, but it did nothing but harm[23] me." And I approved of the saying of the man who, on a day like this, saw a naked Bedouin, who recited the verse: "ʿĀmir clad me and clad his sons. Verily, the cloak of glory is his cloak," whereupon the man said: "By God, you are in more urgent need of a cloak of wool than of a cloak of this kind!"[24]

Just as the introduction did, the middle part ends with a quotation that does not rhyme with the preceding colon. The phrase "This is the time" is a clear marker for the onset of the final passage, in which the writer brings together all the themes of the letter:

وهذا وقت عاطفة من كرمه تُغطّي على الشين * وتُنصِفُ من هذا البلد الذي لا
أزال فيه بين برد جسَد وسخنة عين * وارسالها من ملابسه الشريفة وثيرة الجوانب *
قويّة المناكب * أكفّ بِها هذه العبرات والعبر * وأخلف قيس بن عاصم فأصبح سيد
أهل الوبرَ *

This is the time for an act of mercy of his magnanimity to cover this dishonor | and to compensate for this country, which makes

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[22] His hair has been turned white by hair frost (*ḍarīb = jalīd*), and he has been turned old by fate (*ḍarīb*, the third arrow in the *maysir* game, means "lot, fate," as all other "arrow" terms).

[23] Literally: "bury."

[24] Quoted in several collections of old Arabic Bedouin lore; see, for example, Manṣūr ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Ābī, *Nathr al-Durr*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAlī Qarnah et al. (Cairo, 1980–91), 7:262, 267; Ibn Ḥamdūn, *Al-Tadhkirah al-Ḥamdūnīyah*, ed. Iḥsān and Bakr ʿAbbās (Beirut, 1996), 7:248.

me live with a cold body and a hot[25] eye, ‖ (time for) the mercy of sending from his noble clothes a cloth with soft sides | and strong shoulders, ‖ so that I can keep away with them these tears and terrors[26] | and become, as a successor of Qays ibn ʿĀṣim, the Lord of the people of the fur (= Bedouins).[27] ‖

Resuming the theme of "greeting," Ibn Nubātah now expresses his request for a coat—but what sort of a coat? The preceding colons have shown that there are different sorts of cloaks, such as cloaks of fur and cloaks of honor and of glory. Sometimes people have more need for a coat of fur than a coat of glory. But what cloak did Ibn Nubātah need? Snowy weather does not last too long in Damascus. The more pressing problem is *being a stranger*. Ibn Nubātah introduced himself in the letter as a stranger. Here the subject is taken up again and contrasted in the form of "hot tears" with the cold weather, which could also be read as a metaphor for being alone and without friends far from home, a central theme of Arabic literature across history.[28] Contrary to the Bedouin, who needed a real cloak and not a cloak of honor, Ibn Nubātah, the stranger, needs al-Qazwīnī's cloak of honor with its "soft sides" to give him emotional warmth and "strong shoulders" to lean against and to keep away the "tears and terrors" of being an outsider. Ibn Nubātah's request, obviously, is for a "coat of friendship" rather than for a coat of squirrel fur.

Up until the very last sentence of his letter, Ibn Nubātah continues to contrast the themes of his letters with each other:

وا لله تعا لى يعين بكرمه على هذا القُطر وقِطاره * والأفق ومطار أمطاره * ويغنينا عن هذا البَرَد وإن كان لؤلؤاً منثوراً * وهذه السُ قيا وإن ﴿كان مزاجها﴾ من الثلج ﴿كافورا﴾ [الإنسان : ٥]

May God—exalted be He—aid with His grace against this region and its rains, | its sky and its earth, on which the rainfalls pour down; ‖ and may He part away from us these hailstones, even if they are pearls dispersed, | and make us free from want of such an irrigation, even if "its mixture," due to the snow, "is camphor." (Q 76:5). ‖

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[25] The eye is inflamed with crying.

[26] Literally: "(deterring) experiences."

[27] Qays ibn ʿĀṣim was a companion of the Prophet from the tribe of Tamīm whom the prophet had called *sayyid ahl al-wabar,* see M. J. Kister, "Ḳays b. ʿĀṣim," *EI,2* 4:832–33.

[28] See Thomas Bauer, *Die Kultur der Ambiguität: Eine andere Geschichte des Islams* (Berlin, 2011): 343–75.

With God's (and, one must add, with the addressee's) help, the end is a bit more placatory than the beginning. While in the introduction Ibn Nubātah denied harshly that a "white morning" has anything to do with snow, or a smile anything with lightning, in the end he at least admits that the hail is pearls and the snow is camphor; however, not without restriction. In this way Ibn Nubātah manages to bring together all threads that run through the whole of the letter, and these are exactly the strands he had already laid down in the introductory passage. The *mizāj* of the letter is in fact *kāfūr,* because *kāfūr,* the letter's last word, is at the same time a beautiful thing, the snow, and a Quranic quotation.

The main principle of construction of this and countless other letters could be described as contextualization and permanent recontextualization of a set of themes, motives, and literary techniques, which are already introduced in the beginning of the text.

A Side Glance at the *Qaṣīdah*

It is interesting to observe that many of Ibn Nubātah's *qaṣīdah*s follow exactly the same principle. Abbasid *qaṣīdah*s are made up of several building blocks, which are clearly separated from each other, each constituting an independent thematic unit. Again, the castle of Münster may serve as an analogy. Ibn Nubātah's *qaṣīdah*s are different. Still, they consist of different building blocks, which I call "the frame," mostly *nasīb* and *madīḥ.* But the boundary between these sections is blurred. Instead in the *nasīb,* the poet introduces several *themes* as well as what I call *leitmotifs.* The *nasīb* thus functions as a sort of *exposition* of the themes and leitmotifs of the *qaṣīdah,* whereas the rest of the *qaṣīdah* is the *development,* in which this material is subject to continuous variation and recontextualization. Again, the houses of the Prinzipalmarkt may serve as an illustration. In al-Mutanabbī's famous poem on the victory of al-Ḥadath, vultures appear twice. But the second vultures are the same vultures as the first ones.[29] In Ibn Nubātah's poem on the enthronement of al-Afḍal of Ḥamāh, rain and other forms of precipitation and water appear throughout the whole of the *qaṣīdah,* but hardly twice in the same sense. Instead, there is nearly always another meaning, another reference, and/or a different context. In addition, this poem is also full of quotations from other works, which are now put into a new context. An "aesthetics of smooth transitions," which may have its origin in prose texts, especially in letters,

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[29] On this poem see Derek Latham, "Towards a Better Understanding of al-Mutanabbī's Poem on the Battle of al-Ḥadath," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 10 (1979): 1–22; a more general study on the structure of al-Mutanabbī's poems is Andras Hamori, *The Composition of Mutanabbī's Panegyrics to Sayf al-Dawla* (Leiden, 1992).

is also clearly discernible in this text.[30] Anyway, it would be an interesting task to try to find out to what degree the aesthetics of the letter influenced the aesthetics of the *qaṣīdah* in the Mamluk era. Of course, many more poems would have to be analyzed, not least to find out if the techniques noted here are particular to Ibn Nubātah or characteristic of the period as a whole.

Concluding Remarks

To give a summary, which can only be preliminary at present, we could say that Abbasid poets like al-Mutanabbī devised their *qaṣīdah*s as an arranged sequence of themes and subjects, whereas a Mamluk poet like Ibn Nubātah wove a multi-dimensional thread of variations and recontextualizations. While Abbasid texts tend to be representative, self-focused, and constructed to impress and overwhelm, Mamluk texts tend to be communicative, context-implicated, and constructed to invite the reader to participate. When a critic recently denounced Mamluk poetry for its "lack of virility," she was not altogether wrong. "Virility" is clearly to be sought at the representational end of literature, but Mamluk authors were more oriented towards the other end, the participational pole of literary conversation, where one would rather look for wit and elegance, which can be found in Mamluk literature in abundance.

One may speculate now about why many modern scholars of Arabic literature favor representation, heroism, and virility instead of sophistication, elegance, and, let us say, a literature of "civil society." The political situation of the contemporary Arab world must certainly play an important role in this perspective, fostering the yearning for a Golden Age that can only be attained by heroic struggle. Mamluk literature does indeed have less to offer as a soundtrack for this struggle compared to al-Mutanabbī.

In any case, the shift from the representative and authoritarian towards a more civil, "bourgeois" literature of participation can hardly be considered the result of decadence. Instead, in the Mamluk period we encounter a lively, vigorous literary culture, in which broader layers of society than ever before took part and in which a number of elite poets produced texts that were by no means any less developed and original than their predecessors in the Abbasid period. The aesthetic principles of these texts are different, but they had to be different because times had changed and a new society demanded different kinds of texts. Mamluk men and women of letters managed perfectly to adapt literature to the requirements of their transformed society. What is demanded now from us is to listen patiently

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[30] See Thomas Bauer, " 'Der Fürst ist tot, es lebe der Fürst!' Ibn Nubātas Gedicht zur Inthronisation al-Afḍals von Ḥamāh (632/1332)," in *Orientalistische Studien zu Sprache und Literatur: Festgabe zum 65. Geburtstag von Werner Diem,* ed. Ulrich Marzolph (Wiesbaden, 2011), 285–315.

to Mamluk authors and carefully analyze their texts, to elucidate their own aesthetic standards, and judge their texts by this rather than apply a yardstick of heroism that does not match the participational aesthetics of the Mamluk middle classes.

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Woven Together as Though Randomly Strung: Variation in Collections of Naevi Poetry Compiled by al-Nuwayrī and al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ

Naevi, commonly known as birthmarks or moles, are a recurring theme in pre-modern Arabic erotic poetry.[1] Like other bodily features, birthmarks (Arabic: *khāl*, pl. *khīlān;* also *shāmah,* pl. *shāmāt*) are a topos of erotic poetry that allows poets to amplify a mark of beauty through allusion, simile, and metaphor into a poetic statement *(maʿná).*[2] The trope seems to have emerged in the early Abbasid period and soon became ubiquitous.[3] As with other poetic figures, anthologists collected many of these verses together into stand-alone chapters. The objectives of these collections differed; some brought these poems together as an introduc-

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[1] This theme is common in Arabic's sister literary traditions Persian and Ottoman as well. Perhaps the most famous line of poetry on this topic in any language is by Ḥāfiẓ (d. 1390): "*Agar ān Turk-i Shīrāzī bih dast ārad dil-i mā rā / bih khāl-i hindūyash bakhsham Samarqand-u Bukhārā-rā*" (Ghazal 3: *Ḥāfiẓ: bih saʿy-i Sāyah* [Tehran, 1374 (1995)], 83) ("Oh Turkish maid of Shiraz! in thy hand / If thou'lt take my heart, for the mole on thy cheek / I would barter Bokhara and Samarkand." Translated by Gertrude Bell in *Poems from the Divan of Hafiz* [London, 1928], 90). Note also the poem by the Ottoman Sultan Selim II (r. 974–82/1566–74) that begins:

> *khālin īleh zulfin el bir īlmish*
> > *dilleri dāmīleh nakhjīr īlmish*
> Hand in hand thy mole hath plotted with thy hair;
> > Many a heart have they entangled in their snare.

(E. J. W. Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry*, ed. E. G. Browne [London, 1900–09], 6:165); the translation by E. J. W. Gibb is found in ibid., 3:168–69. See also the poem by Fuḍūlī in ibid., 7:136–37 (text); 3:95 (translation).

[2] See *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., s.v. "Shāma" (by T. Fahd). The English euphemisms "beauty mark" (or "beauty spot") and the French "grains de beauté" exemplify this same tendency. For a list of books and chapters on the topic of naevi, see Ḥasan ʿAbd al-Hādī's helpful list in the preface to al-Nawājī's *Ṣaḥāʾif al-Ḥasanāt fī Waṣf al-Khāl,* ed. ʿAbd al-Hādī (Amman, 2000), 26–30. Thomas Bauer gives an overview of this theme in Abbasid erotic poetry in his *Liebe und Liebesdichtung in der arabischen Welt des 9. und 10. Jahrhunderts: eine literatur- und mentalitätsgeschichtliche Studie des arabischen Ġazal* (Wiesbaden, 1998), 248–54.

[3] Bauer, *Liebe und Liebesdichtung,* 248.

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tion for poetry novices or to determine who first originated a particular image and whether other poets had indecorously borrowed it (i.e., in *sariqāt* texts). The anthologists studied here, however, were rather more concerned with poetic depictions of the human body, and devote several chapters to parts of the body often eulogized in erotic poetry. These poetic collections do not always appear systematically organized; in fact, when not arranged alphabetically by rhyme-letter or by order of precedence as in *sariqāt*-texts, they often appear as though presented at random. The idea of a random presentation of literary material should strike us as dubious, however, and may in fact reflect a continued discomfort with the idea of poetic anthologies as original literary works.

In this article, I will describe an anthological practice I have chosen to call "variation," which can be seen *inter alia* in the composition of two chapters of collected poetry centered around the topic of naevi. These mini-collections, I argue, unfold through a subtle, inexplicit progression of thematic and rhetorical movements. It is only by recognizing this mechanism of variation, which relies on overlapping transitions—as though the poems were cascading—that the literary construction and conscious arrangement of these poetry collections becomes apparent. This process of arrangement, along with others, helps to augment meaning and contribute to what we might call the "macropoetics" or "contextual poetics" of Arabic poetry collections.[4]

What is most significant about these poetry collections, for the purpose of literary history, is that they demonstrate how Mamluk poetry anthologists could use their rich knowledge of the Arabic literary tradition to repurpose common motifs as threads to bind together—using a novel approach—new types of poetry collections, such as the epigram anthology. Alexander Sens has discussed how the technique of allusion functioned in the context of Hellenistic epigram collections:

> A poet's reuse of a particular passage activates the reader's awareness of an entire tradition, thus locating the alluding text in a continuous literary line while treating the target as a poetic ancestor. … [T]he grouping of poems by type or theme could provide a conspicuous generic template against which readers evaluate the interrelationships among individual poems. But it is in the case of an anthology like Meleager's *Garland,* in which the epigrammatist places his own compositions alongside the work of his predecessors, that the impulse to establish and comment on one's epigram-

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[4] These two terms are borrowed from the work of Joseph R. Allen, "Macropoetic Structures: The Chinese Solution," *Comparative Literature* 45, no. 4 (Autumn 1993): 305–29, and *Poems in their Place: The Intertextuality and Order of Poetic Collections,* ed. Neil Fraistat (Chapel Hill, NC, 1986), respectively.

matic pedigree is most vivid: in juxtaposing his own compositions with epigrams on which they are based, the poet lays before the reader his own literary genealogy.[5]

Sens' analysis chimes with my own and suggests that this operation—this radicalization of convention through convention—speaks of a thriving literary culture, wherein an appetite for variety and virtuosity was engendered among readers who demanded an attendant aptitude and erudition from authors. This same trend is mirrored in anthologies on motifs such as tears and incipient beard growth (i.e., ʿidhār).[6] Thomas Bauer has explained this trend more globally vis-à-vis Mamluk society: "Eager to find pleasure in literature, to improve their literary knowledge, and to gain social prestige as cognoscenti of literature and the subtleties of the Arabic language, this bourgeois public engendered a broad demand for literary works, especially in the form of anthologies."[7] Collections of naevi verses, like other poetic anthologies, were part of a wider cultural trend in the Mamluk and Ottoman periods toward encyclopaedism, but they are independent artistic works as well, which exhibit a high degree of aesthetic and formal coherence.[8]

In what follows, I will attempt to draw out one specific compositional dimension in two collections of naevi verses to demonstrate that variation in arrangement (cf. the maxim *varietas delectat*) is an important facet of the aesthetic foundation of Arabic epigram collections.[9] These collections of epigrams on a common theme unfold like a sonata, through a process analogous to exposition and recapitulation—what I have chosen to call variation—and though this process was not remarked upon by contemporary sources, and has thus far escaped the notice of

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[5] A. Sens, "One Thing Leads (Back) to Another: Allusion and the Invention of Tradition in Hellenistic Epigrams" in *Brill's Companion to Hellenistic Epigram: Down to Philip*, ed. P. Bing and J. S. Bruss (Leiden, 2007), 375.

[6] See lists of anthologies on these subjects in the preface to ʿAbd al-Hādī's edition of al-Nawājī's *Ṣaḥāʾif al-Ḥasanāt fī Waṣf al-Khāl,* 25–26.

[7] *EI3,* s.v. "Anthologies. A. Arabic Literature. 2. Post-Mongol Period" (by Thomas Bauer).

[8] On Mamluk encyclopaedism, see Elias Muhanna, "Encyclopaedism in the Mamluk Period: The Composition of Shihāb al-Dīn al-Nuwayrī's (d. 1333) *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab*" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2012), ch. 1.

[9] On the topic of variation (*varietas,* but also *variatio*) more broadly, see Sean Gallagher, "Models of Varietas: Studies in Style and Attribution in the Motets of Johannes Regis and his Contemporaries" Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1998), ch. 2; and *Imitatio, Aemulatio, Variatio: Akten des internationalen wissenschaftlichen Symposons zur byzantinischen Sprache und Literatur (Wien, 22.–25. Oktober 2008),* ed. Andreas Rhoby and Elisabeth Schiffer (Vienna, 2010); see also Kathryn Gutzwiller, "The Poetics of Editing in Meleager's *Garland*," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 127 (1997): 169–200.

scholars, its deployment, function, and clear utility make its prominence in certain epigram collections a matter of consequence.[10]

One chapter of Shihāb al-Dīn al-Nuwayrī's (d. 733/1333) voluminous encyclopedia *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab* is devoted to naevi description.[11] This chapter is divided into two sections with reference to grammatical gender: one "in the masculine" *(ʿalá lafẓ al-tadhkīr)* and the other "in the feminine" *(ʿalá lafẓ al-taʾnīth).*[12] One should also note the brevity of the sixteen poems included in this chapter—all are four lines long or less in the form in which al-Nuwayrī cited them—as evidence of the tendency to anthologize epigrammatic poems. Following the example set by Joseph Sadan in his article "Maidens' Hair and Starry Skies: Imagery System and *Maʿānī* Guides," I will highlight the descriptions used in the sequence of poems in al-Nuwayrī's chapter to demonstrate for the reader the wide variety of images commonly associated with the naevi *maʿná* (figure, metaphor).[13] Highlighting these figures, I will demonstrate how anthologists employed a sophisticated, if unacknowledged, technique of variation to enhance the arrangements of poems on a given theme.

The anonymous author of the first poem compares the mole on the beloved's right arm to the black spot of the heart and says it is like coal-black jet set in a delicate pearl.

<div dir="rtl">

[من المديد]

مِثْلُ ٱلسُّوَيْداءِ عَلَى ٱلقَلْبِ   في ٱلسَّاعِدِ ٱلأَيْمَنِ خالٌ لَهُ

مُرَكَّبٍ مِنْ لؤلؤٍ رَطْبِ   كَأَنَّهُ مِنْ سَبَجٍ فاحِمٍ

</div>

fī s-sāʿidi l-aymani khālun lahū / mithlu s-suwaydāʾi ʿalá l-qalbī
kaʾannahū min sabajin fāḥimin / murakkabin min luʾluʾin raṭbī

On his right arm there's a birthmark,

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[10] Contemporaries did occasionally discuss anthological techniques—albeit obliquely—and they also discussed the importance of variation in the composition of *qaṣāʾid* (sing. *qaṣīdah*) (see, e.g., Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah,* trans. Franz Rosenthal [London, 1958],3:373ff). Robert H. Brower and Earl Miner have discussed a process they call integration (made up of two "integrating techniques": progressions and associations) in connection with Japanese poetry collections, which is clearly analogous to the process of variation I describe here (see R. H. Brower and E. Miner, *Japanese Court Poetry* [Stanford, CA, 1961], 436–38; 319–29; 403–13).

[11] The most detailed and most recent study of this massive encyclopedia is Muhanna, "Encyclopaedism in the Mamluk Period."

[12] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab* (Cairo, 1964–98), 2:80–82, 83.

[13] Joseph Sadan, "Maidens' Hair and Starry Skies: Imagery System and *Maʿānī* Guides; the Practical Side of Arabic Poetics as Demonstrated in Two Manuscripts" in *Studies in Medieval Arabic and Hebrew Poetics,* ed. Sasson Somekh, *Israel Oriental Studies* 11 *(*Leiden, 1991)*,* 57–88.

> like the black spot of the heart
> It's as if it were made of coal-black jet
> and set in a lustrous pearl.[14]

The second poem, by Ibn Munīr al-Ṭarābulusī (d. 548/1153), speaks of a natural beauty who requires no ornaments *('āṭil),* who appears and instantly attracts the ornaments of [the assembly's] gaze. His mole is not, the poet says, crumbs of the ambergris of his temples nor a drop of his eyeliner *(ṣibghat al-kaḥal);* rather it is the black spot of the heart of the one who loves him floating over the fire of his blushing cheek.[15] Ibn Munīr is also the author of the third poem, in which he reprises a simile from the previous poem. Here he addresses his audience, "Do not take the mole on his cheek (note the paronomasia, *lā takhālū khālahu*) for a dried drop of his eyeliner *(min ṣibghi jafnin).* It is an ember from the fire of my heart, which has sunk into [his cheek], been extinguished, and rests there."[16] Th next poem is connected to this last poem by use of the same apostrophic injunction; it begins, "Do not take the mole on his cheek / for a drop of musk that melted from his forelock,"[17] and as in the poem before it, the last line—the punchline, as it were—gives a more meaningful, and metaphorical, explanation for the presence of this feature of beauty: "That is my heart, it has been robbed of its kernel *(dhāka qalbī sulibat ḥabbatuhū)* / which has now settled on his cheek as a mole *(fa-'stawat khālan 'alá wajnatihī).*" Here there is a pun on the phrase "*ḥabbat al-qalb*," which can mean both the "heart's beloved" and "kernel (lit. grain) of the heart," but there is also a further pun because "*ḥabbat al-qalb*" is also known as "*suwaydāʾ al-qalb*" ("the innermost part [or kernel] of the heart"). Read literally, however, "*suwaydāʾ al-qalb*" is the "little-black-thing of the heart" and thus refers to the image of the birthmark: the little black thing stripped from the lover's heart, which has settled on the beloved's cheek.

The next poem in this sequence is by the same Ibn Munīr al-Ṭarābulusī and though the grain allusion (*ḥabbah* as grain weight) is not made explicit, the figure of weight and scales makes clear the relationship between this poem and the one that came before it.[18] The poet compares the beloved's cheeks to two gold

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[14] This phrase "*murakkab min*" ought to mean "composed of," but in context it clearly means "set in," "placed in." The poetic syntax is somewhat clumsy, but it is not necessary to substitute "*fī*" for "*min*" here, although it would make the line read more smoothly.

[15] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab,* 2:80. This is also the source for the poem as it appears in the *Dīwān* (Ibn Munīr al-Ṭarābulusī, *Dīwān,* ed. ʿUmar Tadmurī [Beirut, 1986], 132).

[16] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab,* 2:81.

[17] Ibid.

[18] The *ḥabbah* is equivalent to the avoirdupois grain, equivalent to one-sixtieth of a dirham, or dram, i.e., 64.799 milligrams. On coins, money-changing, and weights see *EI2,* s.vv. "Dīnār" (by G. C. Miles), "Ṣarf (a.)" (by A. Zysow), and "Makāyil. 1. in the Arabic, Persian and Turkish lands" (by

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coins (*dīnār*) being weighed on a scale [to certify their value]. The money-changer (*ṣayrafī*) carefully balances the scale, but because one cheek weighs less than the other the money-changer has to add a carat *(qīrāṭ)*—the mole itself—to the cheek that weighs less so that they balance.[19] The next poem in the sequence departs from the speck motif to introduce a simile with political significance.[20] The anonymous poem announces that "a successor (*khalīfah,* caliph) to Joseph in beauty has appeared." The reader will recall that the figure of Joseph became a by-word for beauty in the Arabic tradition. This successor to Joseph's beauty is nevertheless more daunting than the prophet as depicted in the Bible and Quran: "When he appears both worlds shudder." In the second line of the poem, the beloved is compared to the caliph. The poet says to his companion, "Stop with me and look at him so that you may see / the black flag of the caliphate *(ʿalam al-khilāfah)* on his cheek." This comparison between the mole and the caliph's black flag is the simile that underpins the entire poem, and also links the idea of religious and political succession to aesthetic succession.[21] The beloved is so beautiful that he is reckoned to be in the line of succession from Joseph, but the introduction of the figure of the caliph introduces a whole layer of complexity to this brief poem that is worth unpacking. Two significant layers of meaning were added to the institution of the caliphate during and after the Abbasid revolution. The Abbasids overthrew the Umayyad dynasty in a revolution that was, theoretically, motivated by a strong desire among the Abbasids, their supporters, and their Alid comrades-in-arms to rectify the succession of the caliphate, which had become a hereditary dynasty of the Umayyads. The Umayyads, unlike the family of al-ʿAbbās, were not related Hashemites *(banū Hāshim)* and this was used to great effect to bolster support for the Abbasids among proto-Shiʿites.[22] Succession *(khilāfah)* is thus not merely dynastic succession, but also familial succession from the Prophet, and it is this complex metaphor that is correlated to the idea of the beloved inheriting his beauty from Joseph. Similarly, the Abbasids were known for having constructed an awe-inspiring, fearsome image of the caliph and his imperial strength. The black standard of the Abbasid armies and the caliph's black robes

E. Ashtor). Cf. the epigram by Burhān al-Dīn al-Qīrāṭī (d. 1379) given in Ibn al-ʿImād, *Shadharāt al-Dhahab fī Akhbār Man Dhahab* (Cairo, 1350–51/1931–32), 6:270, and *passim.*

[19] Geert Jan van Gelder kindly suggested "*fa-ḥtāṭā*" be read for "*wa-ḥtāṭā*" at the end of line 1 here.

[20] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab,* 2:81.

[21] Cf. *EI2,* s.v. "ʿAlam" (by J. David-Weill).

[22] The history of the Abbasid revolution is a very vexed issue and much has been written on the subject. My discussion is limited to the popular conception of this revolution and the ethos of the Abbasid caliphate as represented in pre-modern Arabic culture and should not therefore be confused with a historical account. For an introduction to historical and historiographical discussions of this most significant event in early Islamic history, see *EI3,* s.v. "ʿAbbāsid Revolution" (by Elton L. Daniel), *EI2,* s.v. "ʿAbbāsids" (by B. Lewis).

came to symbolize incontestable military and religious authority as an emblem of the Abbasid uprising and subsequent caliphal dynasty but it drew on another common eschatological motif. In the hadith literature, the Prophet Muḥammad explains the signs of the apocalypse thus:

> When we were with the prophet, young men from Banū Hāshim [the prophet's kin] entered and when the prophet saw them his eyes filled with tears and his color turned … so I [ʿAbd Allāh, the narrator] said, "We still see something in your face that we fear," and [the prophet] said, "We are the people of a house for whom God has chosen the afterlife over this life, and after me, the people of my house will face trials, expulsion, and persecution. Until a people come from the East with *black banners* [emphasis mine, *rāyāt sūd*] and they will ask for charity and will not be given it and so they will fight and will be made victorious and then they will be given what they had asked for, but they will not accept it until they bring it to a man from the people of my house and they will fill it with justice as they had filled it up with injustice, and let him among you who realizes this go to them, even if it is as hopeless as crawling on ice *(ḥabwan ʿalá al-thalj)*."[23]

Against this historical background, we can see that the poet's comparison of the mole on the beloved's cheek to the black caliphal standard and its awesome cultural resonance is a light-hearted way of elevating the description of the beloved beyond the trope that he is Joseph's successor in beauty. The beloved is Joseph's successor *(khalīfah)*, but he is also linked to the figure of the tremendous, awe-inspiring emperor-caliph (lit. successor). The mark of his beauty (the mole on his cheek) is, for the one who is infatuated with him, as terrifying as the black standard of the caliph's armies.

The poem that follows on from this one is linked to the caliphal motif by an expression contained in its last line—the line that usually carries the most weight and serves as a climax in these epigrammatic poems. With the image of the fearsome caliph still fresh in the reader's mind, she then encounters a poem that at first does not seem to be correlated with the one immediately preceding it. Yet it is in the last line of this poem that we find a reference to the same cultural nexus of caliphal mystique that links these two poems in a series. The paradoxical ex-

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[23] *Sunan Ibn Mājah* in *Mawsūʿat al-Ḥadīth al-Sharīf,* ed. Ṣāliḥ ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Muḥammad Āl al-Shaykh (Riyadh, 1999) no. 4082, p. 2725; also in *Sunan Ibn Mājah,* ed. Muḥammad Fuʾād ʿAbd al-Bāqī (Cairo, 1952–54), no. 4082, 2:1366.

pression that concludes the poem is made doubly poignant when read against the historical background of another system of caliphal imagery:[24]

[من السريع]

<div dir="rtl">

فَحُبُّهُ ٱلْمَشْهُورُ مِنْ مَذْهَبِي   كَمْ قُلْتُ لِلنَّفْس إِلَيْهِ ٱذْهَبِي

مِنْ عَنْبَرٍ فِي خَدِّهِ ٱلْمُذْهَبِ   مُهَفْهَفُ ٱلْقَدِّ لَهُ شَامَةٌ

طُلوعُهُ شَمْساً مِنَ ٱلْمَغْرِبِ   آيَسَني ٱلتَّوْبَةَ مِنْ حُبِّهِ

</div>

kam qultu li-n-nafsi ilayhi –dh'habī / fa-ḥubbuhu l-mashhūru min madhhabī
muhafhafu l-qaddi lahū shāmatun / min ʿanbarin fī khaddihi l-mudhhabī
āyasanī t-tawbata min ḥubbihī / ṭulūʿuhū shamsan mina l-maghribī

I've often told my soul, "Go after him!
    Loving him is the path (or doctrine) I'm known for."
Slender bodied, with a spot
    of ambergris on his gilded cheek.
I was made to despair of repentance from his love
    when he rose as a sun in the west.

Once again, in this poem the mole on the beloved's cheek is compared to ambergris, thus connecting this poem to the mole motif shared with other poems in this chapter. Yet we should not overlook the image that ends the poem: a sun rising in the west. Those familiar with the traditional lore associated with the Fatimid dynasty will have noticed the connection between this poem and the caliphal poem that precedes it. It is easy to see that this concluding image refers to the Ismaili belief that the Fatimid leader al-Mahdī billāh rose like a sun in the west in accordance with prophetic hadith.[25]

The image of the sun rising in the west is one of the signs of the apocalypse and is well-known from the hadith literature.[26] In the Sunni hadith collection of Ibn Mājah (d. 273/886), there is a chapter "On the rising of the sun in the West" in the section on "Trials and tribulations" *(fitan).*[27] Here Ibn Mājah relates three reports *(aḥādīth,* sing. *ḥadīth)* relating to this apocalyptic sign. The Prophet is recorded as saying "The hour [i.e., the end of time] will not come until the sun rises in the West" and "The first sign of the resurrection *(khurūjan)* is the rising of

[24] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab,* 2:81.

[25] See, *inter alia,* W. Ivanov, *Ismaili Tradition Concerning the Rise of the Fatimids* (London, 1942), 238.

[26] See, *inter alia,* Ibn Kathīr, *Nihāyat al-Bidāyah wa-al-Nihāyah fī al-Fitan wa-al-Malāḥim,* ed. Muḥammad Fahīm ʿAbīyah (Riyadh, 1968), 1:195 ff. On Islamic eschatological traditions, see *EI2,* s.v. "al-Sāʿa. 2. In eschatology" (by U. Rubin).

[27] *Sunan Ibn Mājah* in *Mawsūʿat al-Ḥadīth al-Sharīf,* no. 4070, p. 2722.

the sun in the West." Another harbinger of the end times, of course, is the reappearance of al-Mahdī.[28] Line two of this poem is also connected to another piece of Fatimid lore: the man with the birthmark *(ṣāḥib al-shāmah).* One of the most famous and successful of the Fatimid commanders was al-Ḥusayn ibn Zakarōye, the son of a Fatimid *dāʿī.*[29] He had a birthmark on his face, which he claimed was a heavenly sign *(āyah),* and for this reason was known as *ṣāḥib al-shāmah.*[30] Line two would not necessarily put one in mind of him, but the Fatimid imagery in line three makes the allusion clear and demonstrates the extent to which these epigrams drew on a wide body of shared cultural knowledge. This interpretation of two poems of a total of five lines may seem overlong, but by demonstrating that these poems deal with more than just the birthmark topos and eroticism, and that anthologists arranged these poems in their collections conscientiously—if subtly—we can begin to understand how these poetry collections operated as literary texts; something more than neutral compilations.

The next poem in the sequence builds on the sun motif introduced in the preceding poem. In this poem, the poet describes a slender youth, through whose [dark] hair and [gleaming] brow people arrive at both darkness *(ẓulmah)* and light *(ḍiyāʾ).*[31] "Don't be surprised," he says, ending the poem, "by the mole on his cheek / for every anemone has its black spot." In the next poem, this black spot is morphed into a burnt spot:[32] "When my eye saw the fire of his cheek / my heart rushed toward it like a moth [to a flame][33] // that was burnt by [the fire] and thus became a mole / Just look at the trace of smoke around the edges *(al-ḥawāshī)*." The last image, the edges *(al-ḥawāshī),* can also be read as a reference to the beloved's incipient beard. In the next poem, the simile foregoes the image of fire, but retains the image of flight, as with the moth in the preceding poem. The poet says that a mole appeared upon the beloved's cheek, adorning him [or the cheek], and this increased the lover-narrator's existing passion.[34] "The mole," he says, "is as though it were the beloved [also "grain," *ḥabbah*] of my heart, which flew up

[28] See *EI2,* s.v. "al-Mahdī" (by W. Madelung).

[29] See Heinz Halm, *The Empire of the Mahdi: The Rise of the Fatimids*, trans. Michael Bonner (Leiden, 1996), 79–88.

[30] Ibid., 79.

[31] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab,* 2:81.

[32] Ibid., 82.

[33] Cf. Muḥammad Mansour Abaḥsain, "The Supra-Symbolic Moth in Arabic Religious Poetry from the Late Ottoman Period," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 24, no. 1 (1993): 21–27; this poem is translated on p. 21.

[34] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab,* 2:82.

when it saw him, and so I told it to stop on his cheek." The figure of the heart leads to the next poem, which is all about the interaction between heart, mole, and eye.[35]

[من المجتث]

صَحيحَ قَلْبِي مَريضا　　خِيلانُ خَدِّكَ رَدَّتْ

ما زِلْنَ في ٱلقَلْبِ بيضا　　في ٱلعَيْنِ سودٌ ولكنْ

khīlānu khaddika raddat / ṣaḥīḥa qalbī marīḍā
fī l-ʿayni sūdun wa-lākin / mā zilna fī l-qalbi bīḍā

The birthmarks on your cheek returned
　　My healthy heart diseased.
To the eye they're black, but,
　　in my heart, they're forever white.

Thus the beloved (also grain) of the heart motif in the previous poem has here been altered to create the image of the lover's diseased heart. This diseased heart then provides the occasion for the punchline of the poem in which the rational eye, which recognizes the birthmarks as harmful to the lover, is juxtaposed with the passionate heart, which still retains affection for the thing that has caused it pain. What had been expressed through chromatic synecdoche—white for good, black for bad—becomes explicit in the poem that follows. In this poem, the poet says the beloved's cheek is a mirror of all good things and that its beauty makes all facial features [or qualities, more generally] beautiful.[36] "Why then," he asks in the concluding line, "do I see stars upon it / which are shy even though they are shooting stars *(nayyirāt)?*" Here again it is the concluding image, the shooting star, that provides the link between this poem and the next.

The next poem is interesting not only because of the way it is linked to the poem preceding it, but for the system of metaphors it puts forth:[37]

[من السريع]

طائفَةً ياكَعْبَةَ ٱلحُسْن　　حَجَّتْ إلَى وَجْهِكَ أَبْصارُنا

كالحَجَرِ ٱلأسوَدِ في ٱلرُّكْنِ　　تَمْسَحُ خالاً مِنْكَ في وَجْنَةٍ

ḥajjat ilá wajhika abṣārunā / ṭāʾifatan yā kaʿbata l-ḥusnī
tamsaḥu khālan minka fī wajnatin / ka-l-ḥajari l-aswadi fī r-ruknī

Our gaze makes pilgrimage to your face,

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[35] Ibid.

[36] ibid., vol. 2, p. 82.

[37] ibid., vol. 2, p. 82.

> O Kaʿbah of beauty, and circumambulates,
> Rubbing the birthmark on your cheek
>   as if it were the black stone in the corner. [38]

Let us understand how this poem is connected to the one before it by elucidating the poem's system of imagery. The gaze of the admirers is likened to pilgrims making the pilgrimage to Mecca, and like these same pilgrims the gaze is said to be circumambulating. Yet rather than say that the gaze is circumambulating the Kaʿbah by use of a direct object, the poet employs apostrophe, "O Kaʿbah of beauty," to draw maximum attention to the beloved, who is, of course, the idol around which the gaze is performing the ritual circumambulation *(ṭawāf).* [39] Additionally, the gaze is said to be brushing against the birthmark on the beloved's cheek just as human pilgrims rub their hands against the black stone embedded in a corner of the Kaʿbah. [40] This tactile gaze seeks the beloved out with all the intensity of a religious experience. That pilgrims often also kissed the stone only increases the delicacy of the comparison between religious talisman and the beloved's adorned cheek. [41] The reader familiar with the tropes associated with the naevi topos could probably foresee the reference to the black stone, and would certainly have understood the allusion to the shooting stars of the preceding line; in the Islamic tradition one of the popular explanations for the provenance of the black stone *(al-ḥajar al-aswad)* was that it was something akin to a meteorite. [42] The traditional account of the history of the black stone is as follows: when Ibrāhīm (Abraham) was building the Kaʿbah with his son Ismāʿīl (Ishmael) after the aborted sacrifice, the angel Jibrīl (Gabriel) brought them the black stone, which had been stored in Abū Qubays, "the sacred mountain … overlooking the Great Mosque [i.e., the site of the Kaʿbah] in Mecca," for safekeeping during the flood. Ibrāhīm and his son then built the stone into a corner *(rukn)* of the Kaʿbah structure. [43]

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[38] See Annemarie Schimmel, *As Through a Veil: Mystical Poetry in Islam* (New York, 1982), 73 (cited in Abaḥsain, "The Supra-Symbolic Moth," 22 n). For a further example of the use of the beauty-mark as a description of a pleasing architectural feature, see Gülrü Necipoglu, "The Dome of the Rock as Palimpsest: ʿAbd al-Malik's Grand Narrative and Sultan Süleyman's Glosses," *Muqarnas* 25 (2008): 30 (with thanks to Stefan Tarnowski for the reference).

[39] See *EI2,* s.v. "Ṭawāf" (by F. Buhl).

[40] See *Encyclopedia of the Qurʾān*, s.v. "Kaʿba" (by G. R. Hawting); *EI2,* s.v. "Kaʿba" (by A. J. Wensinck, rev. J. Jomier). Cf. the concept of the "Gaze," its permutations (from Lacan, Foucault, Mulvey, etc.), and debates surrounding it (e.g., Edward Snow, "Theorizing the Male Gaze: Some Problems," *Representations* 25 [Winter 1989]: 30–41).

[41] On kissing, touching, and prostrating toward the black stone, see Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Azraqī, *Kitāb Akhbār Makkah*, Ser. Die Chroniken der Stadt Mekka, Bd. 1 (Leipzig, 1858), 233–35.

[42] See ibid., 218–24, 225–33.

[43] *EI2,* s.v. "Abū Ḳubays" (by U. Rubin); cf. ibid., s.v. "Kaʿba" (by A. J. Wensinck, rev. J. Jomier).

The next poem in the sequence is linked to the poem preceding it but one, thereby creating a retrospective thematic loop that sets the three poems off as a subset. Let us examine how this sequence progresses. The three-line poem by al-Asʿad ibn Balīṭah (d. 440/1048) begins by comparing the effect of the beloved's beauty to the intoxicating effects of wine: "Drunk after seeing him though I don't know / if it was because of his good looks or the wine?"[44] In the last line of the poem, the naevi topos is taken up and here it is said that the birthmarks on the beloved's cheek are like "hours of separation on a night of coming together *(wiṣāl)."* This theme of union, or coming together *(wiṣāl),* which is often a meta-phor for sex (also spiritual union), serves as the punning core of the first line of the next poem, the first of two naevi poems on a female beloved:[45]

[من البسيط]

<div dir="rtl">

لِمُسْتَهامٍ بِها لِلوَصْلِ مُنْتَظِرِ	[١] فَدَيْتُ زائِرَةً في ٱلْعيدِ واصِلَةً
والخالُ في صَحْنِهِ يُغْني عَنِ ٱلْحَجَرِ	[٢] فَلَمْ يَزَلْ خَدُّها رُكْناً أَلوذُ بِهِ

</div>

fadaytu zāʾiratan fī l-ʿīdi wāṣilatan
  li-mustahāmin bi-hā li-l-waṣli muntaẓirī

1. I'd give my life for a visitor, come on the feast day to see
   An adorer who longs for her arrival [or union with her, or sex]

The second line of the poem reintroduces the pilgrimage motif of the last poem but one; a motif foreshadowed by the use of the word visitor *(zāʾirah)* in the first line.

fa-lam yazal khadduhā ruknan alūdhu bi-hī
  wa-l-khālu fī ṣaḥnihi yughnī ʿani l-ḥajarī

2. Her cheek remains the corner I seek shelter in
   And the birthmark on its surface obviates the need for any stone!

This last line makes several direct allusions to the *ḥajj* (pilgrimage) ritual that demonstrate the extent to which, by manipulating situational terminology (a de-vice called *tarjīḥ*), Arab poets were able to eroticize otherwise non-erotic refer-ences. When we take account of all the *ḥajj* allusions, the reading of the line changes dramatically:

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44 Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab,* 2:82.

45 Poem by Kushājim (d. ca. 350/961), al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab,* 2:83.

Her cheek is the corner *of the Kaʿbah* (*rukn*) where I seek shelter /
and the birthmark *in the courtyard* [i.e., *of the mosque*] (*ṣaḥn*) obvi-
ates the need for *the Black Stone (al-ḥajar).*

The final poem in the sequence of *naevi* poems in this chapter of al-Nuwayrī's
encyclopedia is similarly linked to the one preceding it both by grammatical
femininity as well as a common semantic cluster. Where the previous two poems
were linked by words sharing the root *w-ṣ-l,* this final poem is linked to the one
immediately preceding by the root *n-ẓ-r.* Where the lover of the previous poem
was waiting *(muntaẓir),* hopeful for union with the beloved, in this poem, the
same root is used to generate two words having to do with sight: *nāẓir* (looker)
and *manẓar* (view; sight).

[من الطويل]

وَلَوْ بَرَزَتْ ما ضَلَّ باللَيْلِ مَنْ يَسْري   [١]   وَمَحْجوبَةٍ في ٱلخِدْرِ عَنْ كُلِّ ناظِرٍ

مِنَ ٱلنُقْطَةِ ٱلسَّوْداءِ في وَضَحِ ٱلبَدْرِ   [٢]   بِخالٍ بِذاكَ ٱلخَدِّ أَحْسَنَ مَنظَراً

wa-maḥjūbatin fī l-khidri ʿan kulli nāẓirin
    wa-law barazat mā ḍalla bi-l-layli man yasrī
bi-khālin bi-dhāka l-khaddi aḥsana manẓaran
    mina n-nuqṭati s-sawdāʾi fī waḍaḥi l-badrī[46]

Protected from a peeper's gaze, this woman in the women's quarters;
    If she were to appear, no night-traveler would go astray,
With a birthmark on her cheek, that is a more beautiful sight
    Than even the black spot on the brightness of the full moon.

This poem takes up common tropes: the beloved's face, gleaming like the moon,
illuminates the darkness and the mole on her cheek is compared to the spot on
the moon's surface, some of which we have seen employed in other poems in
this chapter. What is most interesting about this poem and the entire sequence
of naevi poems in this chapter is the way in which the author—the anthologist—
strings these poems together. They are not simply a random assortment of poems
on a single topic.

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[46] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab,* 2:83. The poem is by al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Aḥnaf (d. ca. 192/808); see
also in *Al-Muḥibb wa-al-Maḥbūb,* 1:59 (discussed below) and in the poet's *Dīwān* (ed. Karam
Bustānī [Beirut, 1385/1965], 161), where these lines are presented as vss. 3 and 5 of a six-line poem.

I — Black Spot of the Heart

II — Black Spot of the Heart | Eyeliner

III — Eyeliner | "Do Not Take..."

IV — "Do Not Take..." | Grain

VIII — Sun | Black Spot

VII — Apocalyptic Imagery (Sun rising in the west)

VI — Caliphal & Apocalyptic Imagery (Black Flags)

VI — Grain (implied)

IX — Burnt Spot | Flight

X — Flight | Heart

XI — Heart | Black / White

XII — Bad / Good | Stars

XVI — نظر

XV — Black Stone ----- وصل | نظر

XIV — وصل

XIII — Stars (implied) | Black Stone

This diagram represents the variation underlining a series of transitions in al-Nuwayrī's short chapter on naevi verses

Of course, these poems are indeed poems on the common topic of naevi, or else they would not have been included in this chapter at all, but the virtuosity implicit in al-Nuwayrī's anthology is the way in which he (or some other as yet unidentified anthologist from whom he borrowed) orchestrates his collection so that the poems follow on from one another in a sequence that takes the reader from one poem to the next.[47] In an article investigating "… what relations a prac-

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[47] In the introduction to Book Two of his anthology *Kitāb al-Muḥibb wa-al-Maḥbūb wa-al-Mashmūm wa-al-Mashrūb,* al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ says that this book consists of short poems *(muqaṭṭaʿāt al-shiʿr)* about the state of lovers … interwoven *[mutadākhilan baʿḍuhā fī baʿḍ].* He adds that he did not di-

ticed medieval reader noticed between parts of a text," Andras Hamori ponders a difficult question that we may never be able to answer with any certainty: "[t]he modern reader is more or less trained to react to such patterns in a text, but the rhetoric books do not tell us whether the medieval reader observed them."[48] One cannot know whether the medieval reader detected the patterns of arrangement in al-Nuwayrī's chapter—a mini-anthology—which I have sketched here in detail; Hamori is right that the sources are silent about this. One could even imagine that al-Nuwayrī did not himself realize that he was creating a structured, thematically cascading arrangement of poems in his chapter on naevi descriptions. But because this technique is employed by other authors, as we will see below, and because it stands to reason that "practiced medieval reader[s]" were infinitely more sensitive to and aware of patterns of arrangement and intertextuality, I do not think it likely that this is a case of arrangement by accident, or coincidence. Whether every reader detected this pattern is a matter for debate, but it is clearly discernible with only a modicum of concentrated attention and I personally doubt that it went unnoticed by the audience of its day. The question is not whether medieval readers were sufficiently aware of, or properly trained to look for, patterns in poetic arrangements. The question is—having posited, as an axiom of anthological reading, that these poetry collections were not simply collected but were chosen with discretion, arranged with a literary eye, and presented to a literate and sensitive audience—whether any reader could overlook a pattern so obvious.

In al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ's (d. ca. 972) *Kitāb al-Muḥibb wa-al-Maḥbūb wa-al-Mashmūm wa-al-Mashrūb,* the anthologist includes a chapter on naevi in the first book of four, the "Book of the Beloved" *(kitāb al-maḥbūb).* Though three of the poems in this chapter (nos. 2, 8, and 9) are included in al-Nuwayrī's chapter of some three and a half centuries later, we cannot detect the same degree of orchestrated arrangement in al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ's collection of eleven naevi poems. This should not be taken to mean, however, that al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ compiled his collection without any artistic vision or that he did not find occasion to employ variation in his arrangement. The anthologist presents eleven epigrammatic poems—note that, as in al-Nuwayrī's chapter, none of the poems (as cited) is longer than four lines—on the naevi motif, detailing variations in descriptive (ekphrastic) representations *(waṣf)* of this hallmark of beauty. The first four poems in this chapter are not arranged by means of the same technique used by al-Nuwayrī, but they do form a

vide this book into chapters because the object of this section is selection (or choice: *al-mukhtār*) and that dividing things into chapters requires one to include material of lesser quality so as to bulk up the size. Al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ, *Kitāb al-Muḥibb wa-al-Maḥbūb wa-al-Mashmūm wa-al-Mashrūb,* ed. Miṣbāḥ Ghalāwanjī and Mājid Ḥasan al-Dhahabī (Damascus, 1986), 2:3.
[48] Andras Hamori, "Some Schemes of Reading in al-Marzūqī, al-Iskāfī and Faḫr al-Dīn al-Rāzī," in *Studies in Medieval Arabic and Hebrew Poetics,* 20.

set. The set is made up of two poems of one line (poems 1 and 3) alternating with two poems of three and two lines describing women with birthmarks. The one-line poems, the first alternating subset, both hinge on the image of the beloved's ivory white cheek:

> [Poem 1] [49]
> A birthmark like a speck *(nuqṭah)* of copperas *(zāj)*
>   on a sheet of ivory. [50]
>
> [Poem 3] [51]
> A birthmark as though it were a speck *(nuqṭah)* of musk
>   shining against the whiteness of ivory.

These poems are very similar in their imagery, with the substitution of a speck of musk for a speck of copperas in the second of the subset. The figure of the speck is recapitulated in the poem that comes between these two one-liners: the second poem in al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ's chapter, which is an extended version of the last poem included in al-Nuwayrī's chapter discussed above. The reader will recall that in this poem the birthmark on the beloved's cheek is said to be prettier than the sight of the black spot on the brightness of the full moon; the word for "spot" in this intercalary poem is the same as that translated as "speck" *(nuqṭah)* in the poems on either side of it (Poems 1 and 3). The last poem in this set of four, in turn, skips the imagery of the poem that immediately precedes it (Poem 3) to revive the celestial motif from Poem 2:

<div dir="rtl">

[من الطويل]

عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْهُنَّ ٱلْمَلاحَةُ وَٱلشِّكْلُ   خَرَجْنَ خُروجَ ٱلْأَنْجُمِ ٱلزُّهْرِ فَٱلْتَقى

لَقِينا ٱلْمُنَى فيهِ فَحاجَزْنَا ٱلْبَذْلُ   وَخالٌ كَخالِ ٱلْبَدْرِ في وَجْهِ مِثْلِهِ

</div>

kharajna khurūja l-anjumi z-zuhri fa-ltaqá

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[49] Poem by Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Kūfī (al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ, *Kitāb al-Muḥibb wa-al-Maḥbūb*, 1:59).

[50] Copperas is also known as green vitriol or iron sulphate. "1. A name given from early times to the protosulphates of copper, iron, and zinc (distinguished as blue, green, and white copperas respectively) …, used in dyeing, tanning, and making ink." *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "copperas." See also Martin Levey, *Mediaeval Arabic Bookmaking and Its Relation to Early Chemistry and Pharmacology,* Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, n.s., vol. 52, pt. 4 (Philadelphia, 1962), 16 n. See also in Dozy, *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes,* where he explains that *al-zāj al-ʿIrāqī* (Iraqi *zāj*) and *zāj al-asākifah* (cobblers' [?] *zāj*) mean "yellow vitriol" or colcothar (Dozy, *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes* [Leiden, 1881; repr. Beirut, 1991], s.v. "*z-w-j.*")

[51] Poem by ʿAbd al-Malik ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥīm al-Ḥārithī (al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ, *Kitāb al-Muḥibb wa-al-Maḥbūb*, 1:60). On this poet see Ibn al-Muʿtazz, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shuʿarāʾ*, facsimile edition, ed. Abbas Eghbal (Cambridge, 1939, 130–32); ibid., ed. ʿAbd al-Sattār Aḥmad Farrāj (Cairo, 1956), 276–80.

ʿalayhinna minhunna l-malāḥatu wa-sh-shiklū
wa-khālun ka-khāli l-badri fī wajhi mithlihī
laqīnā l-muná fīhī fa-ḥājazanā l-badhlū[52]

[The women] set out like shining stars from which
    they took their beauty and their coquetry,
and a birthmark (like that of the full moon) on a face like it
    was where we found what we desired so we refrained from
    making gifts (?).[53]

Here, as in Poem 2 above, the beloved's birthmark is likened to a spot on the moon's surface; here the poet says figuratively "the birthmark of the full moon" *(ka-khāl al-badr).* But this poem also expands this celestial motif by comparing the group of beautiful women to brightly shining stars. The reader is asked to remember this pattern of alternating subsets—specks of contrasting color on sheets of expensive material and lunar simile—because al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ will return to it again at the end of his chapter on naevi descriptions.

The next two poems in this chapter (Poems 5 and 6) are about male youths, whereas Poems 2 and 4 (discussed above) are about females. The similarities with the imagery that has come before is apparent. In Poem 5, the beloved is described almost as if he were a doll whose beauty is literally handcrafted.[54] The birthmark on his cheek is as though it had been painted there intentionally and his skin is so soft it is as if God has "given him a coat of pearl for skin *(albasahū qushūra d-durri jildā)."* The last line of the poem links it implicitly with the poem that follows, which in turn associates it with Poem 2 above: "And on his cheeks you'll see / no matter when you come, a rose." Keeping this rosy-cheeked boy in the front of our minds, let us consider the proposed connection with the poem that follows. The next poem (Poem 6) is also on a youth; one "cutely coquettish with nice eyes / a marvel like his creator" with two jet-black temple curls over his cheeks.[55] In the third line of this four-line poem, the poet describes the beloved's birthmark as "cutting the heart of one who loves him *(yuqaṭṭiʿu qalba man ʿashiqah)"* and it is this image of "cutting" that links the two poems. In the second line of Poem 2 (omitted from al-Nuwayrī's version of the poem) the beloved's birthmark is said

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[52] Poem by Muslim ibn al-Walīd (d. 208/823), known as Ṣarīʿ al-Ghawānī (al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ, *Kitāb al-Muḥibb wa-al-Maḥbūb,* 1:60–61). In al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ's anthology, the 2nd hemistich of the 2nd line begins "*laqītu,*" but I have adopted the reading of the poet's *Dīwān* and other sources as cited in the textual apparatus.

[53] The concluding phrase "*fa-ḥājazanā l-badhlū*" is highly unclear; the translation offered here is a guess.

[54] Poem by Dīk al-Jinn (d. 235 or 236/849–51) (al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ, *Kitāb al-Muḥibb wa-al-Maḥbūb,* 1:61).

[55] Poem by Kushājim (d. ca. 350/961) (al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ, *Kitāb al-Muḥibb wa-al-Maḥbūb,*1:61–62).

to be cutting as well: "The beauty of the birthmark on her cheek cuts my heart; / if she were to unveil it, it would [positively] resound with magic *(tanaghghama bi-s-siḥrī)*." We can see how common metaphors serve to connect poems in these sequences, yet just as common metaphors and figures are repeated in these sequences, they are also implied. These implied figures also serve to connect poems in a sequence. Let us return to the rose on the youth's cheek; this is a common enough image in erotic poetry.[56] But the rose on the beloved's cheek is not always a mere rose; it can also be a freshly cut rose, as in the following hemistich: "His cheeks like roses freshly cut" *(wa-khudūduhū ka-l-wardi ḥīna qaṭaʿtuhū).*[57] And we can see the same imagery in the following line from a poem, which appears elsewhere in al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ's anthology:

lahu wardun ʿalá l-wajna/-ti mamnūʿun mina l-qaṭfī [58]

He's got a rose on his cheek
 That's forbidden to pluck.

The connection between roses and cutting is not made explicit but it certainly does seem plausible that there is an allusion to an imagined correlation that both of these poems conjure up. The figure of cutting plants may also tie into the idea of the *ḥimá* (sanctuary) and its injunctions. In any case whether or not the cutting birthmark reminds the reader of cut roses, the arrangement of these two poems can be explained more simply: they are both on male youths, whereas Poems 2 and 4, which are grouped together, are both on women.

The next two poems (Poems 7 and 8) both compare parts of the beloved's body to precious materials. In Poem 7, the beloved's curls are made of jet, his [or her] brow is made of pearl, the birthmark on his [or her] cheek is a "flower of musk on moist earth." In Poem 8, it is the birthmark that is compared to jet, after having been said to resemble the black spot of the heart, set in a cheek of pearl. The final three poems (Poems 9, 10, and 11) form a series and seem again to be linked—like the other groupings we have considered—by shared imagery or paronoma-

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[56] It crops up several times in the chapter following the chapter on [descriptions of] naevi in al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ's anthology, the chapter on cheeks *(fī al-khudūd);* see 1:66, Poems 94 and 95; 1:68, Poem 98; 1:70, Poems 102 and 103; 1:70–71, Poem 104; 1:73, Poems 108 and 110; 1:74, Poem 111; and 1:74–75, Poem 113. See also further examples in the chapter after this one, "on [descriptions of] cheeks *(wajanāt)."*

[57] This line is from a poem by the unknown author of "Khadīm al-Ẓurafāʾ wa-Nadīm al-Luṭafāʾ," a seventeenth-century anthology preserved in the Bodleian Library (Oxford) MS Huntington 508, fol. 40a.

[58] Poem by Khālid al-Kātib (d. ca. 269/883) (al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ, *Kitāb al-Muḥibb wa-al-Maḥbūb,* 1:81, Poem 127). See also in the supplement *(dhayl)* in *Amour divin et amour profane dans l'Islam médiéval: À travers le Dīwān de Khālid Al-Kātib,* ed. Albert Arazi (Paris, 1990), 258, Poem 49.

sia. Poem 9 is also included in al-Nuwayrī's text; it is the poem about the female visitor which draws upon pilgrimage imagery (see above). As we have seen, this poem includes a comparison of the beloved's birthmark to the black stone (ḥajar) of the Kaʿbah. The root ḥ-j-r appears to link this poem with the first line of the next poem (Poem 10) in the sequence:

[من الطويل]

بِمُقْلَةٍ وَحْشِيٍّ ٱلْمَحاجِرِ أَدْعَجِ   أَغَنُّ رَبِيبُ ٱلرَّبْرَبِ ٱلْغِيدِ وٱلْمَها

كَنُقْطَةِ زاجٍ في صَفيحَةِ زِبْرِجِ   لَهُ وَجَناتٌ نُكْتَةُ ٱلْخالِ وُسْطَها

aghannu rabību r-rabrabi l-ghīdi wa-l-mahā
    bi-muqlati waḥshiyyi l-maḥājiri adʿajī

One from the gazelle flock: gentle-voiced, supple-necked, and well-raised,
    alongside a wild cow with the big, black eyes of one feral.

And if it is *ḥajar* (the stone) in the preceding poem that leads to *maḥājir* (eyes) in the next, it is then the second and final verse of this poem that introduces us to the concluding movement of the chapter:

lahu wajanātun nuktatu l-khāli wasṭahā
    ka-nuqṭati zājin fī ṣafīḥati zibrijī

Upon his cheeks, the spot of a birthmark in the middle
    is like a speck of copperas on a sheet of gold

The reader will recall the way this chapter began: with an alternating series of poems on specks of contrasting color on surfaces of expensive material and poems involving lunar similes. Thus we see that this—the final line of the penultimate poem—recalls the movement that began the chapter. Even readers who do not know Arabic can appreciate the paronomasia in the pair *nuktah* (spot) and *nuqṭah* (speck) in this line and how it recalls the word that featured prominently in Poems 1 and 3, *nuqṭah*. Technically, this feature of Arabic rhetoric is known as "*al-jinās al-muḍāriʿ*" or, to use Pierre Cachia's expression, "Variant Paronomasia," in which the "matching terms" differ by one letter, representing a phoneme from the same, or a proximate, area of articulation as the phoneme it replaces (i.e., here *kāf* and *qāf* both represent velar sounds).[59] Likewise, the surface (i.e., the beloved's cheek), which in the opening poem was "a sheet of ivory" *(ṣafīḥat ʿāj)* is described

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[59] See Pierre Cachia, *The Arch Rhetorician Or The Schemer's Skimmer: A Handbook of Late Arabic Badīʿ Drawn from ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī's* Nafaḥāt al-Azhār ʿalá Nasamāt al-Asḥār (Wiesbaden, 1998), no. 42. Strictly speaking, the *kāf* is postpalatal and the *qāf* is uvulovelar; see further *EI2,* s.vv. "ḳāf" and "kāf" (both by H. Fleisch).

here as "a sheet of gold" (*ṣafīḥat zibrij)* and as in Poem 3 the birthmark is likened to "a speck of copperas" *(zāj).* These similarities and final-syllable ʤ-sounds make the connection between the end of the chapter and its beginning unmistakable. And if it were not already sufficiently clear, this poem is followed by a one-liner, the last poem of the chapter, which—mirroring the alternating sets at the beginning of the chapter—includes a lunar simile, along with a whole host of velar plosives:

[من البسيط]

كأنَّهُ كَوكَبٌ قَدْ لُزَّ بالقَمَرِ   يا حُسْنَ خالٍ بِخَدٍّ قَدْ كَلِفْتُ بِه

yā ḥusna khālin bi-khaddin qad kaliftu bihī
   ka-annahū kawkabun qad luzza bi-l-qamarī

O beauteous mole on a cheek I've fallen in love with
   It's as though a star has been stuck on to the moon.

This moon image—following on from the verse about a drop on a sheet of gold, which rhymes in *jīm*—brings the reader back to the beginning, giving this chapter of naevi verses a certain symmetry.

What is notable about the thematic progression and style of arrangement we find in the anthologies composed by al-Nuwayrī and al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ is that the anthologists fashioned a structured, literary order out of a well-known corpus of images and tropes. Anthologists always demonstrated their erudition through selection and commentary—the conventional standard by which anthologies are judged—but the dimension of arrangement is yet another technique of composition inherent in curatorial production. By employing the technique of variation in selecting and arranging epigrammatic poems on one narrowly defined poetic topic, anthologists could weave together an entirely different reading experience than one in which the poems are arranged more explicitly. By shedding light on this technique of variation in the arrangement of poetic collections, I hope to have shone a light on the literary potential lurking in many poetic collections once believed to have been put together "at random."

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The Medieval Islamic Literary World-System: The Lexicographic Turn

In Casanova's reading of the *World Republic of Letters,* major restructuration and hence proliferation of the literary world-system is neither totally ordained by academic institutionalization processes, nor confined to the systematization of language through difference and struggle against a hegemonic Latin. In her view, these are no less motivated and driven by the corporate effort of grammarians and writers, an effort that in the case of English drew impetus from a sustained privileging of literature in a self-assertive nationalism.[1] Applied to the medieval and "pre-modern" Islamic cultural world-system, one can argue that grammar, lexicography, and literary production assume even more significance as evidenced in the massive production and demand. As an exemplary man of letters, the Andalusian poet, philologist, and grammarian Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī (d. 745/1344), for example, who settled in Cairo and the Levant, made popular the teaching of Turkish grammar. His Turkish grammar manual was a landmark in the rise of Turkish as the language of empire. That rise coincided with the upsurge in lexicographic activity in Turkish, Persian, and Arabic. In Persian, poets like Asadī Ṭūsī and Qaṭrān Tabrīzī prepared the way for Muḥammad Naqjavānī's (728/1328) *Ṣiḥāḥ al-Furs,* which was based on Asadī's dictionary but took as model Abū Naṣr Ismāʿīl ibn Ḥammād al-Jawharī's (d. 1002 or 1008) Arabic lexicon *Al-Ṣiḥāḥ* (The purist).[2] Like the use of Latin by the rising European vernaculars, both Turkish and Persian made enormous use of Arabic antecedent authority, specifically spelled out in a lexical activity whereby rhetoric was the discursive domain for scholars. Al-Jawharī's lexicon was invaluable to the expanding Ottoman Empire. Mehmet bin Mustafa Vankulu (d. 1592) rendered it in a bilingual Arabic-Turkish dictionary that was to be among the first seventeen texts which Ibrahim Müteferrika published in Istanbul in 1729 as *Vankulu Lügati.* The copious

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[1] Joe Cleary, "The World of Literary System: Atlas and Epitaph," review of *The World Republic of Letters,* by Pascale Casanova, trans. M. B. DeBevoise, *Field Day Review* 2 (2006): 196–219.

[2] *Tāj al-Lughah wa-Ṣiḥāḥ al-ʿArabīyah* (The crown of language and correct Arabic), better known by its short title, *Al-Ṣiḥāḥ fī al-Lughah* (The correct or purist language). John A. Haywood, *Arabic Lexicography: Its History, and Its Place in the General History of Lexicography* (Leiden, 1965), ch. six. M. J. L. Young, "Arabic Biographical Writing," in *Religion, Learning, and Science in the ʿAbbasid Period*, ed. M. J. L. Young, J. D. Latham, and R. B. Serjeant, The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature, vol. 3 (Cambridge, 1990).

front matter which *Vankulu Lügati* has is no less than the summoning of author-ity on the side of the publisher in this imperial venture.[3] The renowned publisher was the first Muslim to be credited with establishing a printing press.[4] On the other hand, the edition of al-Jawharī's *Ṣiḥāḥ* that was begun by E. Scheidius with a Latin translation appeared only in part at Harderwijk (the Netherlands, 1776). The lexicon, with its 40,000 entries arranged alphabetically according to the last letter of the word root, would soon serve as the base and model for the enormous lexi-cal effort during the Mamluk period. Its centrality to the effort is not confined to the model itself, however, or to its material that was incorporated by the Tunisian Muḥammad ibn al-Mukarram ibn Manẓūr in his (d. 711/1311) massive compila-tion, *Lisān al-ʿArab* (The Arab language). Al-Jawharī's career is also exemplary for a republic of letters. Born in Farab (southern Kazakhstan), and working on his dictionary in Nishapur where he died, he received his early education in Baghdad and the Hijaz. In other words, he represents the model Islamic scholar whose search for knowledge inevitably leads to centers of learning, and whose devo-tion to Arabic knows no bounds. Ethnic or residential roots were to fade and the ultimate devotion to Arabic as the language of a Muslim community took over even when its grammar and lexical models were deployed to promote competing languages and vernaculars, like Turkish and Persian.

While also prompted and provoked by the dominance of Arabic, both Turkish and Persian happened to come into their medieval standardization as the lan-guages of empires, following the rule of the Buyids and Seljuks and the ultimate Mongol institutionalization of Persian as the official language. Arabic was on the defensive throughout, but the devotion and skill of its writers, lexicographers, and other professionals in the book industry consolidated its already well-es-tablished lexical base, turning it into the field of rhetoric as a world-system with far-reaching explorations not only in theology, logic, and philosophy, but also in poetry, prose, and the performing arts as the medium for an Islamic culture. The great lexicographic achievements made over centuries within the middle and

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[3] The catalog description (Indiana University, Lilly Library DR 403 M82215, vol. 1) notes that *Vankulu Lügati* has "the most extensive front matter of all the seventeen books in the Mütefer-rika series. It opens with a foreword by Müteferrika and contains a copy of the original imperial edict *(ferman)* issued by Sultan Ahmed III (r. 1703–1730), followed by religious decrees *(fetvas)* is-sued by leading religious figures in the administration giving religious clearance to Müteferrika to establish a press. The religious decrees are followed by a copy of the pamphlet entitled 'The Usefulness of Printing' *(Vesiletü't-tibaʿa),* which Müteferrika wrote and presented to Grand Vizier Damad Ibrahim Paşa. In this pamphlet, Müteferrika lists ten reasons why an imperial printing house should be established."

[4] William J. Watson, "Ibrahim Muteferrika and Turkish Incunabula," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 88, no. 3 (1968): 435–41. Also, Alastair Hamilton, Maurits H. van den Boogert, and Bart Westerweel, *The Republic of Letters and the Levant* (Leiden, 2005), 266–67.

pre-modern period are many,[5] but they culminated as a first stage in the epochal lexicographical achievement of Ibn Manẓūr's *Lisān al-ʿArab,* a work known for its systematic and comprehensive alphabetical arrangement which takes into consideration the needs of actual use and reference. Under each root or variation and conjugation there are examples of use and misuse that make each entry a lively encounter, especially as these are taken verbatim or in a condensed form from antecedent authority that receives due citation. To date it is practically unsurpassed. It was followed by Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Maqrī Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Fayyūmī (d. 770/1368) in his *Al-Miṣbāḥ al-Munīr* (The enlightening lamp). In the period under discussion it holds a prominent place among contemporary lexicons. Al-Fīrūzābādī (d. 817/1415) produced his *Al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ* (Th encompassing ocean) soon after, to be followed by the Yemenite Abū al-Fayḍ Muḥammad Murtaḍá al-Zabīdī (d. 1205?/1791), who in his voluminous *Tāj al-ʿArūs min Jawāhir al-Qāmūs* (The bride's crown from the pearls of the Qāmūs) provides some balance to al-Fīrūzābādī's "Ocean," including further information and incorporating almost in full Ibn Manẓūr's indispensable "Arab language."[6]

However, in the context of our discussion of the republic of letters in the Mamluk and Ottoman periods, these lexicons are no mere listing of words and meanings: Ibn Manẓūr's *Lisān* is a thoughtful reclamation of the lexical space that includes an extensive treasury of proverbs, maxims, poetry, and prose, along with Quran and hadith. Words place the reader into a network of negotiation and correspondence that manages to revive and hold both the ancient and more recent past in dialogue. Thus, it is of immediate relevance to the Mamluk era and its dynamics of the innovative encyclopedic creativity in the context of knowledge acquisition. On the other hand, this lexicographic fervor sets the stage for its unconditional espousal by the *nahḍah* or *yaqẓah* (Arab awakening) advocates.

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[5] In the period under discussion, these are: Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Abū al-Manāqib al-Zanjānī's (d. 656/1258) *Tahdhīb al-Ṣiḥāḥ* (i.e., al-Jawharī's); Zayn al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Rāzī's (d. 666?/1268) *Mukhtār al-Ṣiḥāḥ;* Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Anṣārī al-Shaṭibī's (d. 684/1285) *Ḥawāshī ʿalá Mukhtār al-Ṣiḥāḥ;* Muḥammad ibn Mukarram ibn Manẓūr's (d. 711/1311) *Lisān al-ʿArab;* Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Andalusī Abū Ḥayyān's (d. 745/1344) *Tuḥfat al-Arīb fī Gharīb al-Qurʾān;* Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Maqrī al-Fayyūmī's (d. 770/1368) *Al-Miṣbāḥ al-Munīr;* Majd al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Fīrūzābādī's (d. 817/1415) *Al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ;* Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī's (d. 911/1505) *Al-Muzhir;* Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Khafājī's (d. 1069/1659) *Sharḥ Durrat al-Ghawwāṣ;* and Murtaḍá al-Zabīdī's (d. 1205/1790) *Tāj al-ʿArūs.* Ahead of them there were many others, but a mention has to be made of Ibn Sīdah's (d. 458/1066) *Al-Muḥkam wa-al-Muḥīṭ al-Aʿẓam;* and al-Ṣaghānī's (d. 650/1252) *Al-ʿUbāb, Majmaʿ al-Baḥrayn, Al-Takmilah, Al-Dhayl, Al-Shawārd,* and *Al-Aḍdād.*

[6] For an overview of this significant base, which requires more work, see M. G. Carter, "Arabic Lexicography," in *Religion, Learning, and Science in the ʿAbbasid Period*, 106–17; also Haywood, *Arabic Lexicography;* and Ulrich Haarmann, *Quellenstudien zur frühen Mamlukenzeit* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1970).

Although they had their own point of departure on other matters, they could not resist the compelling lexicographic achievement of the Mamluk period.

The ways in which proponents of the *nahḍah* seek to adjust the engagement with lexicons are worth seeing through Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq's (1805–87) analysis of lexicographic activity to be found in his meticulous piece of research, *Al-Jāsūs ʿalá al-Qāmūs.*[7] In it he describes Ibn Manẓūr's *Lisān al-ʿArab* as follows: "It is reported that it lists eighty thousand items; and it is wonderful in its transmissions, refinement, amendments, and organization: but it is limited in circulation compared to other lexicons. It came after the first age [of the Mamluk period] and was contemporaneous to the time of the author [al-Suyūṭī] of *Al-Muzhir* (sic; al-Suyūṭī came later). May God have them all in His mercy."[8] From this we are to understand that al-Shidyāq is puzzled by this neglect on the part of al-Suyūṭī. "It is strange that Imam al-Suyūṭī does not mention the author of *Lisān* among those who have authored in the field of language." Actually, al-Suyūṭī mentions Ibn Manẓūr in his *Bughyat.*[9] However it is the lexicon that provokes al-Shidyāq's interest: "It is a book in language, philology, grammar, conjugation, hadith explication, and Quranic exegesis." He justifies repetition as being a meticulous transference of information from each primary lexicon. No wonder, he concludes, that: "it is the best book ever authored in language, but its enormous size led to its limited circulation; it discourages students from buying it."[10] Al-Shidyāq makes use of the occasion to criticize al-Suyūṭī for other omissions; and also to underline the significance of al-Jawharī's *Al-Ṣiḥāḥ.* To him, al-Jawharī sets the standard of correctness as applied by the Bedouin Arabs with whom he was in conversation during his stay in Iraq and Hijaz.[11] His lexicon received high acclaim and was to undergo reviews, updates, and amendments; to be followed a year later by Aḥmad ibn Zakarīyā al-Qazwīnī ibn Fāris's (d. 395/1004) *Muʿjam Maqāyīs al-Lughah* (Language standards compendium).[12] Moreover, in methodological terms, al-Shidyāq brought into the discussion another element that underscores the conversational milieu in the middle period. Biographers, explicators, and litterateurs write about these efforts in their entries and obituaries on authors and compilers. There is also the element of comparison, because al-Shidyāq has a comparatist bent and sets out to evaluate each one against the other, especially if a person like al-Suyūṭī has omitted something of significance. Hence, in order to correct the ancestor

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[7] *Al-Jāsūs ʿalá al-Qāmūs,* by Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq, editor of *Al-Jawāʾib* (Istanbul, 1299).

[8] Ibid. *Lisān al-ʿArab* (Beirut, 2010), introduction, 79.

[9] See the note by the editors, *Lisān al-ʿArab,* 1:9.

[10] Al-Shidyāq, *Al-Jāsūs ʿalá al-Qāmūs,* 97–80.

[11] Ibid., 105.

[12] Needless to say, the list is long and there are many lexicons that take over from preceding efforts or carry on a more specialized and focused research.

(al-Suyūṭī) who applauds al-Fīrūzābādī's *Qāmūs* while overlooking the role of *Al-Ṣiḥāḥ*, he explains: "*Al-Ṣiḥāḥ* has the advantage over *Al-Qāmūs* in that it is distinguished by clarity of expression, the consolidated support of the Quran, hadith, Arab proverbs and maxims, and grammatical, linguistic, and conjugational rules. The author often applies a speech construct and structure along with an explanation of lexica."[13] Al-Shidyāq is meticulous, but selectively so. Ibn Manẓūr admits that he has emptied the contents of early lexicons into his enormous dictionary, letting each entry include and appropriate their successive items. The primary sources that he cites are many.[14] Indeed, Ibn Manẓūr's preface is more or a less a reclamation of Arabic and its placement at the center of cultural effectiveness, along with an apology for omissions and a disclaimer of faults, in that he chooses to describe himself as the provider of an accessible concordance. The reclamative tone is more assertive, corresponding as it does to what al-Shidyāq would like to have the lexicographic enterprise become. His reclamation of Ibn Manẓūr brings to one's mind the latter's lament that in his time "to speak in Arabic was often seen as a drawback." Ibn Manẓūr adds: "People compete in compilations of translations in foreign tongues [primarily Latin, Turkish, and Persian], and also in showing their competence in these; hence I have compiled the contents of this work in an age whose people are not proud of their own native language."[15] Th lament should not be taken lightly, for power relations and the loss of Arab political primacy and hence the diminishing role of Arabic in centers of power drove many to search for benefit and profit elsewhere. Al-Fīrūzābādī is no less aware of the problem, but he recognizes the survivalist potential in the Arabic language despite what is "befalling its people." He laments that schools are the only space where Arabic is studied and promoted. But the diligent lexicographer nevertheless overlooks Ibn Manẓūr's *Lisān* and instead offers deserved plaudits to al-Saghānī's lexicon *al-ʿUbāb* (The vast ocean), Ibn Sīdah's *Al-Muḥkam* (The concise), and al-Jawharī's *Ṣiḥāḥ*. He admits that in his time *Ṣiḥāḥ* was the most popular, a verdict that leads him to adopt its contents in full but adding in red what is disputed, updated, and corrected. In anticipation of further lexicographic efforts, he explains the reasons behind this abridged version of his voluminous *Al-Lāmiʿ* (The superb lexicon), which amount to no more than the need to make it more accessible. He nevertheless sets a modernist *(muḥdath)* criterion, in that he negates antecedent

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[13] Al-Shidyāq, *Al-Ǧāsūs ʿalá al-Qāmūs*, introduction, 81.

[14] They include: *Tahdhīb al-Lughah* by Abū Manṣūr al-Azharī (d .370/981?); *Al-Muḥkam* by Ibn Sīdah al-Andalusī (d. 458/1066); *Al-Ṣiḥāḥ* by Abū Naṣr Ismāʿīl ibn Ḥammād al-Jawharī (d. 398/1008); *Ḥāshiyat al-Ṣiḥāḥ* by Muḥammad ibn Barrī (d. 582/1187); *Al-Nihāyah* by Abū al-Saʿādāt ibn al-Athīr al-Jazrī (d. 630/1232); along with *Jamharat al-Lughah* by Ibn Durayd (d. 321/934), which is not listed. See editors' note, 1:13.

[15] Ibn Manẓūr, 1:18.

recurrence as being a value in its own right. He quotes the poet Abū Tammām's remark that "there is so much that is untouched by ancients for their descendants to pick up." Moreover, al-Fīrūzābādī proclaims the lexicographic effort and "the science of language" as "sufficient enough to cover the basic needs of every science," and Islamic law in particular.[16] The negation of antecedent authority is no ordinary matter, and had it been followed up in a wider range of knowledge, it could have left n abiding impact on the construction of knowledge.

Models for *Nahḍah*

Both the need to consolidate correct usage and the broader circulation of Arabic, along with its centrality to every other pursuit, entitles al-Fīrūzābādī's well-organized, neat, and affordable lexicon to emerge as an important antecedent treasury not only to the *nahḍah* and its valorization of lexical enquiry and research, but also and very primarily so to eighteenth-century scholarship. Murtaḍá al-Zabīdī's massive *Tāj al-ʿArūs* might be his best achievement, crowning also his other solid contributions to hadith scholarship, philology, and literature. But we need first to notice his choice of title. In line with his elegies of longing and pining addressed to his dead wife, al-Zabīdī chose a feminine subject as the title for his lexicon.[17] Unlike his predecessors, the "bride's crown" opens up the field of writing, along perhaps with a few others, for public inclusion of women's presence. In the late eighteenth century, "women did appear in the chronicles."[18] Studying with the lexicographer and hadith scholar Muḥammad ibn al-Ṭīb al-Fāsī (d. 1170/1756), with his commitment to clarity of usage and extensive use of hadith in explication, al-Zabīdī brought the medievalist combined interest in root formation and thence conjugation conterminously with an empirical research into the field of practice. Like a free anthropologist, unhampered by a binary other than correct and actual use, he undertook travels, research, meetings, and contacts to corroborate his lexicon. His celebrated salon in Cairo was a meeting place for discussions and a workshop for significant compilations. He made use of all, especially his antecedent authority al-Fīrūzābādī. His students were to carry out further projects and to enrich the cultural scene with studies in philology, hadith, poetry, and history. Noticeably, early lexicographers' inclusion of the description of regions and people received further impetus in al-Zabīdī's dictionary, which makes demography, geography, and medicine among the areas of interest for the rising reading

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[16] Majd al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Yaʿqūb al-Fīrūzābādī, *Muʿjam al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ*, ed. Khalīl Maʾmūn Shīḥā (Beirut, 2009), 22.

[17] On these poems mourning his wife, see Peter Gran, *Islamic Roots of Capitalism: Egypt, 1760–1840* (Syracuse, 1979; repr. 1998) 62, 222, n. 20.

[18] Ibid., 62.

public. The interest in lexicography in the eighteenth century recalls perhaps the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when the zenith of lexicographic research reached unparalleled status. Peter Gran noticed that "six out of the ten copies of a standard dictionary in al-Azhar's library were made in the eighteenth century."[19]

Concomitant with this interest was the revived interest in Abū al-Qāsim al-Ḥarīrī's *Maqāmāt* and *Durrat al-Ghawwāṣ* (The diver's pearl). The revived celebration of the *Maqāmāt* is unique to the age. Studies on and copies of the *Maqāmāt* began to multiply, perhaps following Shihāb al-Dīn al-Khafājī's (d. 1069/1653) study and his emulation of the genre.[20] To memorize the *Maqāmā*t was part of learning good Arabic, as was the tradition in al-Ḥarīrī's days. In the eighteenth century the practice was followed by almost everybody keen on mastering eloquence in speech and clarity in writing. Along with this noticeable revival was the rise of commentaries on al-Qazwīnī's (d. 675/1276) *Talkhīṣ al-Miftāḥ* (The resume of the key), the latter being *Miftāḥ al-ʿUlūm* (Key to the sciences) by Yūsuf ibn Abī Bakr al-Sakkākī (d. 1228).[21]

Two other prominent trends relate to a preoccupation that puzzled scholars for being uniquely typical of eighteenth-century-Egypt. One was the interest in the battle of Badr (17 Ramadan 2/13 March 624), an interest which Peter Gran could not find a reason for other than asking a question: "Is it possible that the eighteenth-century writers of the Battle of Badr felt a renewed sense of identification with the forces of Muhammad [against the non-believing aristocracy of his tribe]? Did they feel that they, too, were struggling in a rather hostile environment against powerful odds?"[22] While it sounds rhetorical, the question still begs further answers, especially if we read it along with the increasing care for the populace already spelled out in al-Shirbīnī's *Hazz al-Quḥūf,* with its dashing satire of the elitism, pedantry in scholarship, compendious and commentarial surplus, and biting irony of some religious circles and sham Sufism.[23] Committed Sufis were already involved in reaching out to the masses. To reach peasants and lower classes, Sufis resorted to the *mawwāl*s and other popular forms of colloquial poetry,[24] a method that was depreciated by the "doyen of literature" Ṭāhā Ḥusayn (1889–1973) and others when it continued to hold sway in the nineteenth century.[25]

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[19] Ibid., 63.

[20] Ibid., 61. There is a further note in the concluding chapter on al-Ḥarīrī as a controversial subject for medievalists.

[21] Abū Yaʿqūb Yūsuf al-Sakkākī, *Miftāḥ al-ʿUlūm* (Key to sciences), ed. Naʿīm Zarzūr (Beirut, 1983).

[22] Gran, *Islamic Roots,* 69.

[23] Yūsuf al-Shirbīnī, *Kitāb Hazz al-Quḥūf bi-Sharḥ Qaṣīd Abī Shādūf* (Brains confounded by the ode of Abū Shādūf expounded), ed. and trans. Humphrey Davies (Leuven, 2005).

[24] Gran, *Islamic Roots,* 66–67.

[25] Ibid.

The combined care for a colloquial *mawwāl,* and the interest in the *faṣīḥ* (pure) of al-Ḥarīrī and in lexicography and philology, are not disconnected from the attention bestowed on the battle of Badr as the victory of a message that rests on Qu anic inimitability *(iʿjāz).* All these were part of the make-up of a political unconscious that could have taken a more nuanced and overt form of resistance not only to Ottoman occupation, but also to another discursive one that continued to hold sway among centers of power. The official Islamic discourse and its core, that was substantially formed by "*nābitat ʿaṣrinā*" (as al-Jāḥiẓ called the Umayyad clientele during the Abbasid period and which was consolidated through the application of the privileged class),[26] was no ordinary challenge for the rising learned class in eighteenth-century Egypt. In their Sufi struggle and revisionist reading of tradition, they were increasingly aware of how the second Umayyad caliph Yazīd used to sing of the war achievements of the Meccan aristocracy in the ensuing battle of Uḥud (23 March 625) against the Prophet and his companions, a battle that returned to the Meccan aristocracy a sense of victory and power and proved an Islamic vulnerability in war tactics and weakness in mobilization. "Had my masters at the Battle of Badr seen …" was the Umayyad slogan and trope for the recovery of rule and supremacy.[27] The middle period witnessed a striding Umayyad discourse under the garb of consensual Sunnah, partly resisted by prominent scholars and jurists like al-Suyūṭī. A counter movement, the praise of the Prophet poem, the *badīʿīyah,* made a comeback in the eighteenth century.[28]

As philology is the stage and means for this discussion, it is bound to receive a great deal of attention throughout the middle and pre-modern period. Its rise to prominence, manifested in the study of tribal and lexical roots, attributes, applications, usage, methods of authentication, and argumentation in poetic and prose

[26] Abū ʿUthmān ibn Baḥr al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/869) tactfully alludes to this officialdom as the discourse of "*nābitat ʿaṣrinā,*" a reference to the pro-Umayyad forces that was to impact official discourse ever since. Abū ʿUthmān ibn Baḥr al-Jāḥiẓ, "Risālah fī Banī Umayyah," in Aḥmad Zakī Ṣafwat, *Jamharat Rasāʾil al-ʿArab,* 2nd ed. (Cairo, 1971), 4:56–68, esp. 58–60.

[27] It was reported that Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiyah (d. 683), the second Umayyad caliph, purportedly tapped the severed head of al-Ḥusayn, the Prophet's grandson, while reciting a poem by Ibn al-Zibaʾrī that celebrated victory over the Prophet at the Battle of Uḥud (625). For a long time that poem served as the Umayyads' mode of recall of their sense of vengeance against the family of the Prophet. Al-Jāḥiẓ, "Risālah," 62.

[28] The credit for the coinage and practice of the term goes to Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī (d. 750/1349), the pioneer in the *badīʿīyah* as a specifically thematic, ideational exercise in expressiveness. He uses "*mukhtaraʿāt*" and other terms to indicate unprecedented newness or inventiveness. See Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī, *Sharḥ al-Kāfiyah al-Badīʿīyah fī ʿUlūm al-Balāghah wa-Maḥāsin al-Badīʿ* (The explication of the sufficient *badīʿīyah* ode in rhetorical sciences and adornments in innovativeness), ed. Nasīb Nashāwī (Beirut, 1982; repr., 1992), 6. Abū Bakr ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī (767–837/1366–1434) also used the term. See Abū Bakr ibn ʿAlī Taqī al-Dīn ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī, *Khizānat al-Adab* (The ultimate treasure trove of literature), ed. Kawkab Diyāb (Beirut, 2001).

domains is only a sign of contestation in the struggle for ascendency. The philologist is a much-needed player in the staging of power relations. On the other hand, the nineteenth century undergoes similar challenges and hence its intellectuals find so much resonance in the prolegomena of Ibn Manẓūr and al-Fīrūzābādī.[29] The battle-ground is to be primarily lexicographic.

The Fight for Culture: Compendiums and Commentaries

The habitual critique of Arab and Islamic modernity is primarily centered on a rejection of a politics of loss and failure in which the modernists (and Ṭāhā Ḥusayn was no exception) categorize the middle period as one of petty entities—albeit with cultural centers in Cairo and Damascus, Morocco, Khwārizm, and Khurasan.[30] In their negative reading of the past, modernists rarely acknowledge its writing. Indeed, they see the compendium, which is a conspicuous landmark of medieval and pre-modern production, as nothing more than a sign of exhaustion and lack of creativity. Portrayed as a merely passive container, the compendium is turned in the dominant modernist discourse into a trope for hagiography, superstition, visitations, rampant esoteric practices, excursions in craftsmanship, and whatever connotes a general lack of rationality. In such a depiction of pre-modern Arabic tradition it is not difficult to see how much is borrowed from the enlightenment critique.[31]

At this juncture we need to reflect on Michel Foucault's discussion of a similar compendious pursuit to be found in sixteenth-century European commentaries, and to consider how far his explanation can be applied to the medieval Islamic gloss and commentary. He quotes Montaigne,[32] who explains: "There is more work in interpreting interpretations than in interpreting things; and more books about books than on any other subject; we do nothing but write glosses on one another."[33] Foucault comments that "these words are not a statement of the bankruptcy of a culture buried beneath its own monuments; they are a definition

[29] Majd al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Yaʿqūb al-Fīrūzābādī, *Muʿjam al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ*, ed. Khalīl Maʾmūn Shīḥā (Beirut, 2009), 24.

[30] Ṭāhā Ḥusayn's article appeared in *Al-Jadīd* (1930) and was reprinted in *Akhbār al-Adab* 186 (2 Feb 1997): 30. Cited by Roger Allen, "The Post-Classical Period: Parameters and Preliminaries," in *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period*, ed. Roger Allen and D.S. Richards, Cambridge History of Arabic Literature, vol. 6 (Cambridge and New York, 2006), 14, 15. Muḥammad ʿĀbid al-Jābirī, *Al-Khiṭāb al-ʿArabī al-Muʿāṣir* (Contemporary Arabic discourse) (Beirut, 1989), 36.

[31] For a comparative perspective, see Herbert Weisinger, "The Middle Ages and the Late Eighteenth Century Historians," *Philological Quarterly* 28 (Jan 1948): 63–79.

[32] Montaigne, *Essais*, 1580–8, livre 3, chap. 8, in Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York, 1970; repr., 1994), 45.

[33] Ibid., 40.

of the inevitable relation that a language maintained with itself in the sixteenth century."[34] The last qualification, the emphasis on historicity, resonates with his argument that the relation of languages to the world is one of analogy, where resemblance stands unchallenged as the base for a written knowledge. Taking the scriptures as a point of departure, Foucault's analysis is an attempt to define commentary and gloss as the infinite proliferation of interpretation that justifies the "sovereignty of an original text."[35] He adds: "And it is this text, by providing foundation for the commentary that offers its ultimate revelation as the promised reward of the commentary." Thus, it is the "interstice occurring between the primal Text and the infinity of Interpretation" that accounts for the proliferation to infinity in interpretation, commentary, and gloss that take writing as a substantial part of the "fabric of the world."[36]

I draw attention here to this analysis for a number of reasons, not the least being the way in which commentary and compendia in the pre-modern period of Arab-Islamic thought have tended to be denigrated among modernists. Islamic medievalists usually focused on the compendium as a treasury of knowledge; the compiler is thus a producer who aims to provide readers with a reservoir which would otherwise be inaccessible in its original form, found in scattered books. The compendium emerges as a lexical index of knowledge, a place where words are listed not only for their etymology or resemblance, nor for their "infinity of adjacent and similar fidelities of interpretation"[37] within a ternary "system of signs,"[38] but primarily for their encyclopedic range among fields of knowledge and communication, a case that is made conspicuous in the model set by Ibn Manẓūr's lexicon, with its wide-ranging reliance on books of geography, demography, history, and literature. The commentary, by contrast, can function differently whenever it is addressed to the learned and highly sophisticated class of literati, people well versed in philosophy, geography, history, philology, and pure science. Thus the books that emerged over a number of centuries as commentaries on Abū Yaʿqūb al-Sakkākī's *Miftāḥ al-ʿUlūm* are no mere dabbling in philological enquiry, nor are they casual explanations and interpretations; instead they regularly unearth the uses of rhetoric and its intricate workings in Arabic as exemplified in written and oral knowledge. They bring the spheres of philosophy, philology, speech acts, semantics, and semiology into conversation, as if to construct intertwined and highly integrated exchanges of information and opinion, as was the case in the responses to al-Khaṭīb al-Qazwīnī's *Īḍāḥ al-Miftāḥ* (The explicator of the key) and

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[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid., 41.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid., 42.

Talkhīṣ al-Miftāḥ (The resume of the key), or Ibn Sīnā's *Al-Ishārāt wa-al-Tanbīhāt* (Remarks and admonitions).[39]

To relocate the discussion in terms of cultural dialectics, whereby conflict and struggle sustain a dynamic process larger than the outcome of wars and invasions and in relation to the conceptualization of a republic of letters, we need to consider first whether or not literary overproduction can be a problem. What if we regard the economics of surplus, especially in matters of contrafaction, parody, and parallel scholarly or explicatory maturations, as both an accumulation and dispersion that make use of an open space in a relatively decentralized state? What if we question the practice of authorized transmission or reading and reporting as a dynamic of a nonbinding gift transaction? What if we read carefully not T. S. Eliot's "Tradition and Individual Talent," with his statements on the ephebe's or neophyte's dependency on ancestors, but rather the renowned Egyptian poet Ibn Nubātah al-Miṣrī's (686–768/1287–1366) sophisticated summation of the ongoing dispute among scholars on the scope of plagiarism (i.e., broadly-based intertextuality) as world-system specific? He stipulates: "I have seen how the byproducts of people's thoughts [*natāʾij afkār al-nās*] are no more than progeny passed on from one to another and from nations whose poetries originate side by side on this earth."[40] Although the Mamluk state was able to claim an Islamic hegemonic order and rule in many regions in the Arab world, it was much less centralized than the earlier Abbasid or Umayyad empires had been. It was also only part of a larger Islamic world where production in philosophy, theology, science, and philology was enormous. For lengthy periods individual sultanates and emirates exercised autonomous rule. Indeed, beyond Mamluk domains, there were sovereign sultanates like Khwārizm that witnessed a very active and thriving cultural life. Yāqūt for one describes the spread of public and private libraries and book markets there from the twelfth century onwards.[41] On the other hand,

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[39] Ibn Sīnā, *Remarks and Admonitions,* pt. 1, Logic, trans. S. Inati (Toronto, 1984).

[40] Cited in Ibn Ḥijjah, *Khizānat al-Adab*, 46. ʿAbduh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Qalqīlah, *Al-Naqd al-Adabī fī al-ʿAṣr al-Mamlūkī* (Literary criticism in the Mamluk period) (Cairo, 1972; based on his 1969 dissertation), 170; but also in Ibn Nubātah, *Talṭīf al-Mazāj min Shiʿr Ibn al-Ḥajjāj* (Refining the mood with the poetry of Ibn al-Ḥajjāj), ed. Najm ʿAbd Allāh Muṣṭafá (Susah, 2001), 49.

[41] In Cairo the historian al-Maqrīzī mentions the Fusṭāṭ book market, the book-sellers' and copyists' markets *(sūq al-kutubīyīn/sūq al-warrāqīn).* These markets grow or decline in accordance with topographical and demographic changes. We should remember that Khizānat al-Kutub (the Ayyubid library collection housed at the citadel that kept only a selected list from the famous earlier Fatimid collection) was lost in a raging fire in 1292. On the other hand, whatever survived found its way into collections supported by wealthy patrons, like Ibn Khaldūn's friend, the wealthy amir Jamāl al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn ʿAlī al-Ustādār, who "purchased [books] from the royal citadel" for his Jamālī madrasah. Recorded too is Baybars II's gift of 500 volumes to the restored mosque of al-Ḥākim. No less significant concerning these libraries and collections was

traditionalist Islamic discourse in the Arab East continued to set the tone for a nostalgic yearning for a past Golden Age of Islamic order, a tone that would necessarily denigrate the present. Thus, the fall of Baghdad to the Mongols in 1258 was bewailed by no less than the Egyptian jurist and scholar Ibn Duqmāq as being the loss of a center, since the universe "was now left without a caliph." [42] No wonder then that the Mamluks were desperate to bring a caliph in person from Baghdad as a symbolic Islamic presence with no more than a ceremonial role. [43] Al-Maqrīzī provides us with an example of a symbolic gesture on the part of the token caliph, the Abbasid Aḥmad ibn al-Ẓāhir (al-Mustanṣir), who drew up a letter of allegiance to the Mamluk sultan Baybars that in fact assigns the latter the authority of the caliph: "For the Commander of the Faithful thanks you for these feats, and admits that, had it not been for your care, the ruptures could have been too vast to be patched. Hence we are hereby endowing you with the rule of the lands of Egypt, al-Shām (Syria), Diyār Bakr, the Hijaz, Yemen, and the Euphrates, and the lands that come under new conquests all over, and assigning to you the administration of their military and populations." [44] Scholars are not far off the mark when they view the shadow play *(bābah)* of the Cairene oculist Ibn Dāniyāl (d. 1310) as a burlesque of that period, one in which the caliph, his descendants,

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the linguistic diversity involved and the co-existence within them of works in Turkish, Arabic, and Persian. Thus, the chronicler and historian Ibn Dawādārī notes that there was a fascinating "Turkish book" in the impressive Arabic collection of the amir Badr al-Dīn Baysarī al-Shamsī (d. 1298). Among known private collections and libraries were those of the Sāmānid Nūḥ ibn Naṣr (d. 954), al-Ṣāḥib ibn ʿAbbād (d. 995), and Muʾayyid al-Dīn al-ʿAlqamī, the minister for the last Abbasid caliphs al-Mustaʿṣim (d. 1258). The bibliophile Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī made use of the library in Marv to compile his compendiums and dictionaries. Indeed, Cairo, Aleppo, and Damascus were known for their libraries, as described by Muslim and Western travelers. The fourteenth-century Jerusalem notable Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm al-Nāṣirī had a magnificent collection, as described in Ulrich Haarmann, "The Library of a Fourteenth Century Jerusalem Scholar," *Der Islam* 61 (1984): 327–33. See respectively: Robert Irwin, "Mamluk Literature," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 1–30; Carl Petry, *The Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1981); Mohammed Makki Sibai, *Mosque Libraries: an Historical Study* (London, 1987); Donald Little, "Religion under the Mamluks," *Muslim World* 73 (1983): 170; and Ulrich Haarmann, "Turkish Legends in the Popular Historiography of Medieval Egypt," in *Proceedings of the Sixth Congress of Arabic and Islamic Studies,* ed. Frithiof Rundgren (Leiden, 1975), 99, 102. For more, see Bakr Shaykh Amīn, *Muṭālaʿāt fī al-Shiʿr al-Mamlūkī wa-al-ʿUthmānī* (Beirut, 2007), 66–76.

[42] Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad ibn Aydamar ibn Duqmāq, *Al-Jawhar al-Thamīn fī Siyar al-Mulūk wa-al-Salāṭīn* (The precious stone in the conduct accounts of kings and sultans) (Ṣaydā, 1999), 223.

[43] Between 1261 and 1517, the token Abbasid caliphs were : al-Mustanṣir II, al-Ḥakīm I, al-Mustakfī I, al-Wāthiq I, al-Ḥakīm II, al-Muʿtaḍid, al-Mutawakkil I, al-Mustaʿṣim, al-Wāthiq II, al-Mustaʿīn, al-Muʿtaḍid II, al-Mustakfī II, al-Qāʾim, al-Mustanjid, al-Mutawakkil II, al-Mustamsik, and al-Mutawakkil III.

[44] Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk li-Maʿrifat Duwal al-Mulūk* (Cairo, 1941), 1:2:454.

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and the Mamluk sultan were all muddled in their intentions and aspirations.[45] Furthermore, during the same period the city of Cairo in particular was to become an attractive location for learned scholars and litterateurs, in that there was enough mobility, opportunity, resources, and renowned scholarly circles and institutions to stimulate intellectual activity.[46] Other cities like Damascus, Aleppo, Fes, Qayrawān, Bukhārā, Samarqand, and Khajand also had their own literate culture, assemblies, reading sessions in private or public spaces, book markets, and learned or learning circles; but Cairo had inherited the cultural traditions of the Fatimids (969–1171) and their successors, the Ayyubids (1171–1250), and offered a cultural climate that was particularly conducive to the growth of knowledge. The learned and their disciples were not always affluent, and al-Maqrīzī lists ordinary jurists and learners as fifth in the scale of income.[47] On the other hand, in Damascus in particular there were also multiple sessions in jurisdiction, *adab,* and grammar that at times were to take place in different sections of the mosque.[48] We have on record the names of highly recognized scholars who started their careers as merchants, booksellers, slaves, copyists, and sons of porters,[49] and whose studies on grammar and lexicography served as bases for their eventual scholarly

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[45] See especially Fawzī Muḥammad Amīn, *Adab al-ʿAṣr al-Awwal al-Mamlūkī: Malāmiḥ al-Mujtamaʿ al-Miṣrī* (Susah, 2009), 12–17. An extensive reading of Ibn Dāniyāl's oeuvre is by Li Guo in *The Performing Arts in Medieval Islam: Shadow Play and Popular Poetry in Ibn Dāniyāl's Mamluk Cairo* (Leiden, 2012).

[46] Muhsin al-Musawi, "Elite Prose—Pre-Modern Belletrist Prose," in *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period,* ed. Allen and Richards, 101–33; Jonathan P. Berkey, *Popular Preaching and Religious Authority in the Medieval Islamic Near East* (Seattle and London, 2001). Also Petry, *The Civilian Elite of Cairo,* 17–18; C. E. Bosworth, *Medieval Arabic Culture and Administration* (London, 1982); and J. H. Escovitz, "Vocational Patterns of the Scribes of the Mamluk Chancery," *Arabica* 23 (1976): 42–62. Regarding the role of chancery scribes, see Muhsin al-Musawi, "Vindicating Profession or a Personal Career? Al-Qalqashandī's *Maqāmah* in Context," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 111–35.

[47] Maḥmūd Rizq Salīm's quote from al-Maqrīzī's *Ighāthat al-Ummah* in *Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī* (Cairo, 1980), 16. See also Konrad Hirschler, *The Written Word in the Medieval Arabic Lands* (Edinburgh, 2012), 25.

[48] George Makdisi, *The Rise of Humanism in Classical Islam and the Christian West with Special Reference to Scholasticism* (Edinburgh, 1990), 51; also Hirschler, *Written Word,* 36, 48–49.

[49] See in particular Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī's (d. 626/1229) itinerary, in Makdisi, *The Rise of Humanism*, 49; also Hirschler's use of Bauer, 190–91. Ibn Baṭṭūṭah mentions in ʿAdan its "pious qāḍī Sālim ibn ʿAbdallāh al-Hindī; [whose]… father …had been a slave, employed as a porter, but the son devoted himself to learning and became a master and leader[in the religious sciences]." *Tuḥfat al-Nuẓẓār fī Gharāʾib al-Amṣār wa-ʿAjāʾib al-Asfār* (The observer's delight in surprises of cities and wonders in journeys), ed. and trans. H. A. R. Gibb, C. Defrémery, and B .R. Sanguinetti as *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325–1354* (Cambridge, 1962; repr. Millwood, NY, 1986), 2:373.

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repute and recognition.[50] Compendiums and anthologies appeared to be one form in a culture industry that was meant to meet the demand for partial reading and discussion of public texts in large or private reading sessions, as documented by scholars who have done some research on the processes of teaching and learning during this period. In other words, the compendium is not a servile reproduction, an unoriginal collation of material and hence a superfluous piece of work, but rather one part of the learning tools, like manuals and formularies, needed to accommodate educational demands. They served as means in the production of knowledge.[51] Throughout these manuals and the centers and means of learning, like libraries, mosques, and other sites of education, Arabic and its sciences hold sway. In other words, the lexical base as broadly defined in Ibn Manẓūr's entries sets the stage for the tabulation of knowledge.

A careful navigation between the twin poles of textual systems and deviations from the norm can also help in the process of restoring this enormous bulk of cultural production to the center of an Arab-Islamic conceptualization of knowledge. It also necessitates a more serious engagement with the substantial work done so far in textual and philological enquiry, including contributions to the reconstruction of the concept of knowledge in classical Islam.[52] But to argue the case in more positive terms, especially in the context of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century interlocutors, it is perhaps worthwhile to speculate on those issues that may serve to reclaim the relevance of that knowledge to the so-called push toward modernity or "awakening" at the turn of the nineteenth/twentieth century, and all in spite of the predominant negative perspective. The "awakening" was itself another perpetuation of "the republic of letters," only it was to take place within a rather mixed discursive space where the European enlightenment held sway.[53] Its revivalist prologue was meant to balance the paradoxical "charming" incursion of Europe.[54] Even so, there is in such an ambivalent space enough room

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[50] Ibid.

[51] See more in Berkey, *Popular Preaching and Religious Authority;* Hirschler, 26–27, 40–41, 45–47, and esp. 186–93; and Thomas Bauer, "Literarische Anthologien der Mamlükenzeit," 71–122, in *Die Mamlüken: Studien zu ihrer Geschichte und Kultur,* ed. S. Conermann and A. Pistor-Hatam (Hamburg, 2003).

[52] George Makdisi's *The Rise of Humanism* is of particular significance to any reconstruction of textual communities in the postclassical era.

[53] J. Brugman, *An Introduction to the History of Modern Arabic Literature in Egypt* (Leiden, 1984); and Muhsin al-Musawi, *Islam on the Street* (Lantham, MD, 2009).

[54] Much is written on this "seduction." See Abdelfattah Kilito, *Thou Shalt Not Speak My Language,* trans. Wael Hassan (Syracuse, 2008), e.g., 9; originally published in Arabic, *Lan Tatakallam Lughatī* (Beirut, 2002).

[For] exemplary discussions of moving "beyond Eurocentrism" as a means to organize world and Middle Eastern history, see Gran, *Islamic Roots;* idem, *Rise of the Rich: A New View of Modern*

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for conjecture and positivist thought. The battle over the body of knowledge, its lexicographical fervor, surplus of production, density of titles, and the eventual sense of loss among reluctant heirs (i.e., modernists) tend to blur the picture and prevent us from looking into the mechanics of production, its significations and markers that must have connected it economically and culturally to its milieu, and thence to the systematic institutionalization of a book industry. The book in its many formats, forms, and targets has reached its zenith within the available means of production. Its front material and divisions received systematic lexical differentiation and naming to guide or respond to readers' expectations. Hence paratexts and peritexts are significations that provide us with a register of priorities and an index of tastes. They should have been an established lexical code among producers, mediators, and consumers.[55]

Thresholds in a Complex Phenomenon

Other noticeable markers are worth mentioning as part of the process of identifying the complexity of acquisition and dissemination of knowledge in the period under consideration. One relates to the kind of prefatory note that was common among scholars of that period. It was not only a *khuṭbah,* explaining the purpose and structure of the book, but also and primarily an autobiographical itinerary that traces also the history of composition or compilation. Such is the prefatory note for the native of Herat Saʿd al-Dīn al-Taftazānī's (d. 792/1390) *Muṭawwal,*[56] which concludes with an expression of some anxiety lest the book suffer at the hands of the stubborn or the dogmatic. In expressing such anxiety, Saʿd al-Dīn al-Taftazānī echoes Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī (667–750/1278–1349), "for obduracy and obstinacy are rampant, and jealousy and disputation are widespread."[57] But no matter how authors and writers approach the latter issue, it still signifies an active climate for ideas. On the other hand, among writers and scholars there were nevertheless significant differences on scholarly, theoretical, ethnic, and sectarian levels, but these appear in their writings as part of the ongoing conversation. Difference and blunt antagonism is one sign of their authors' liveliness and activism. Had they been passive and pacifists they would not have taken the trouble of disputation and research. As a dynamic arena where difference is played out in full, the pre-modern scene offers a complex situation where constel-

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World History (Syracuse, 2008); Samir Amin, *Eurocentrism* (New York, 1989); and idem, *The Arab Nation* (New York, 1978).

[55] Especially on paratexts as thresholds, fringes, zones between texts and off-texts, see Gerard Genette *Paratexts: Thresholds for Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge, 1997), 1–15.

[56] Saʿd al-Dīn al-Taftazānī, *Al-Muṭawwal: Sharḥ Talkhīṣ al-Miftāḥ* (The elaborate or expanded: the explication of the resume of the key) (Beirut, 2004).

[57] Al-Ḥillī, *Sharḥ al-Kāfiyah*, 101.

lations of praise poetry to the Prophet, the rise of compendiums in every field of knowledge, the exhilarated pace of textual and philological exploration, and the tendency to engage with each other across time and space provide a combative linguistic, theological, and informational arsenal to counteract perhaps the vicissitudes of war and occupation. As these gain momentum and generate rejoinders through words and lexical multiplication, we need to see the activity in relation to its seeming peripheral matter: title page, invocations of the divine for blessing and consecration *(basmalah),* expressed gratitude to God *(ḥamdalah),* praise to the Prophet and his companions and family, and prayers, divisions of contents, sectional subtitles, epigraphs, postface, and cover. Along with these there are marginal notes, thresholds, prologues, epilogues, colophons, illustrations, prefaces, and copyists' stamps. The *basmalah* and *ḥamdalah* may take a short or long form to include the writer's invocation of God's help and also to establish an identity as a Muslim subject, a point that may be further consolidated by a referent to the writer's *madhhab,* or official Islamic school of law, like Maliki or Hanafi. The affiliation that concludes a surname empowers the writer among a specific constituency, and underscores the pertinence of the text, defines its logic and content, and addresses an identifiable Islamic community. Thus Ibn al-Ḥājib, to be discussed below, identifies himself as a Maliki theologian. The name, title, dedication, and invocation are thresholds and identifications. The text derives its cohesion and plausibility from their visibility. Illustrated books complement the narrative or the poem, populate its empty spaces and holes, and lend concreteness to abstract or allusive/elusive passages. This shows well in Iranian manuscripts of *Majnūn Laylá.* In the Baghdadi school of Yaḥyá ibn Maḥmūd al-Wāsiṭī (d. 1237), as extant in his illustrations of the *Maqāmāt* of Abū al-Qāsim al-Ḥarīrī (1054–1122), the illustrator cares for the community and the group rather than the single protagonist, a point that matches and augments the increasing awareness among writers and painters of the artisanal, mercantile, and laboring classes. No less present, along with the author, is the copyist. The copyist for Ibn Abī al-Iṣbaʿ's book, Ḍiyāʾ al-Dīn Mūsá ibn Mulḥam, could not leave himself out of the transaction between the author and the reader, and hence concludes the book with a poem in praise of the relatively small book in comparison to the customary voluminous output, in which he also identifies himself as the copyist. In this transaction, the copyist elevates his calligraphic skill as an artisan to the level of the author, sublimating it with a short poem of his own in praise of the product and placing himself among critics with some say on the matter at hand.[58] Thresholds that entail titles, prologues, and customary bracketing of the author's name between religious in-

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[58] Ibn Abī al-Iṣbaʿ, *Taḥrīr al-Taḥbīr* [though it means "writing" elegant compositions in Gelder's translation, the implication as rationalized by his editor is "emancipating innovation"], ed. Ḥifnī Muḥammad Sharaf (Cairo, 1995), 622. Geert Jan van Gelder, "A Good Cause: Fantastic Aetiology

vocation of the names of God, the Prophet, and his family and companions usually lead us into *khuṭbat al-kitāb.* But as usual, it is there that the author will refer to his own person as the shaykh, or *ʿālim,* whose honorific title is ameliorated by being "God's worshipper," His "slave." The humility expressed should be read, however, as a declaration of independence, self-respect, and denial of any servitude or subservience to humans. The matter differs when there is patronage, for the latter may take a differentiated status that splits economic dependency from an ideological one that could entail loss of independent thinking. In most cases, however, there is an undifferentiated patronage that combines its three components in one package: to be supported, and endowed with a dignified status, the poet or author has to renounce or tone down any ideological difference that cannot fit into the codified system.[59] This undifferentiated patronage gets manifested in the form of plain encomium.

But there is more to guide us into the intricacies, not only of levels of patronage or independence in relation to material identifiers, but also of the text itself. The highly developed rhetoric and its sophisticated poetics re-situate us into a spatial critical compound where every term summons concrete images. As these common poetics and peripheral matter generate more in the ongoing production, they provide in part the material constitution of a literacy planetary system. The pre-Islamic poetics of the erotic prelude, *nasīb,* that recalls the departing beloved and her tribe through an engagement with the remains and ruins of a campsite, re-emerges under a different guise and name. What rhetoricians call *barāʿat al-maṭlaʿ* and *barāʿat al-istihlāl* (felicitous and suggestive openings) such as loaded preludes bring about the impact of the place. Through its associations with the pre-Islamic amatory poetic opening and evocations of desire and longing, the recollected or invoked site collapses the spatial and the philological. While the site invokes memory, antecedent tradition of the relevant poetics serves as a base for the newly constituted verbal threshold. Thus al-Mutanabbī says: "Greetings to a site where once a slender one captivated you!"[60] Indeed, Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī's elaborate canvas in rhetoric led many to expound on this territory with more derivations or referents and documentation that most often consolidate a concrete base for poetics that at this juncture derives wording from the human body, craft, and material like silk or metal, craftsmanship like embroidery, and abodes.

(Ḥusn al-Taʿlīl) in Arabic Poetics," in Takhyīl: *The Imaginary in Classical Arabic Poetics*, pt. 2, Studies, ed. Geert Jan van Gelder and Marlé Hammond (London, 2008), 230.

[59] On the distinction between undifferentiated and differentiated patronage, see Andre Lefevere, *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (London and New York, 1992), 17.

[60] Pierre Cachia, *The Arch Rhetorician or the Schemer's Skimmer: A Handbook of Late Arabic Badiʿ Drawn from ʿAbd al-Ghani an-Nabulsi's Nafahat al-Azhar ʿala nasamat al-ashar* (Wiesbaden, 1998), 7.

But both the *taqdīm* (preface), *khuṭbah* (plan and intention), and subdivisions or headings *(ruʾūs)* mean choice and convey a specific plan that shows more conspicuously in adapted or appropriated translations like Abū Isḥāq al-Kindī's (d. 870) adaptation of Ibn Nāʿimah al-Ḥimṣī's translation of the *Enneads* by the third-century philosopher Plotinus, wrongly attributed by a later scribe to Aristotle.[61] Indeed the translator makes it clear that he *naqala* (transferred) what al-Kindī *aṣlaḥa* (corrected and appropriated).[62] The adaptor probably wrote the prologue not to explicate the emergence of the copied and circulated text, and the labor involved in making it available, but primarily to connect the book to a large corpus of philosophical discourse in which al-Kindī was a major player.[63]

Paratexts are not supplementary material *(dhayl),* for dedications and divine invocations function as the text in action. They are not to be confused with what is added later by publishers and editors, and need to be considered only as they appear in their manuscript form. They may emerge as divisions within the text, as Aḥmad ibn ʿArabshāh (1389–1450) does in his biography of Timur, for example. He makes a point of separating an anecdotal narrative of some relevance from the main thrust of his coverage of Timur's conquests. Thus, we come across portions that are placed under the category of "*maqṭaʿ*" (section) and "story," for example.[64]

On other occasions, and they are abundant in the manuscript tradition of the period under consideration, there are marginal notes that could have been an afterthought, an addition by a copyist, disciple, or transmitter. The marginal note is no less functional than a commentary or a gloss, but the latter may well grow into another book. Whenever margins and colored lines, passages, or words multiply we understand that the author struggles to cope with exceptions, current notions, and usage that require attention. But matters can get more complicated whenever a number of scholars across the period under consideration and all over the Islamic lands derive stimulation and impetus or a clue from an author's gloss, or marginal and border note *(ḥāshiyah).* The gloss may well grow into another expanded *ḥāshiyah* or *sharḥ* (explication), *takmilah* (complement, addenda, or supplement), or *dhayl* (supplement). Indeed, it is part of the practice to have these *shurūḥ* taken so seriously by scholars and their reading public that it is rare not to have copies of them still extant. Among the prominent cases, next to the commentaries in rhetoric on praise odes to the Prophet, are the ones that deal specifically with al-Sakkākī's *Miftāḥ al-ʿUlūm.* It suffices to say at this point that the number of books and commentaries instigated is astounding; the sheer

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[61] Peter Adamson, *The Arabic Plotinus: A Philosophical Study of the Theology of Aristotle* (London, 2002), 1.

[62] Ibid., 18.

[63] For a translation of the Prologue in the order it appears in the original, see ibid., 27–30.

[64] Aḥmad ibn ʿArabshāh, *Tamerlane: or, Timur, the Great Amir*, trans. J. H. Sanders (London, 1936).

sequence of abridgements and expansions that take their cue from al-Qazwīnī's impressive abridgement of the third part of al-Sakkākī's *Key* is enormous in both quality and quantity. The scholarly production takes place in a highly specialized domain, the greatest merit of which for educated readers derives from its bearing on the study of religious texts and its systematic and highly nuanced and persuasive instruction in the art of logic and grammar. The rationale behind the effort receives due promotional impetus through the abridgement by the noted scholar and rhetorician Najm al-Dīn al-Qazwīnī (d.675/1276), who hits a sensitive nerve in his resume of al-Sakkākī's *Miftāḥ*. He praises the *Key* as "the best in rhetoric" for its organization, edition, and gathering of principles and roots. But he justifies the abridgement because the primary text or source "is not devoid of padding, digression, and complexity, lacking clarification and abstraction and hence inviting abridgement."[65] In other words, the explicator or editor is here playing the role of the discerning reader, someone who is aware of the needs of others among the reading community. He justifies the effort behind his resume *(talkhīṣ)* as an inevitable response to the demands of a literate society to make it "accessible" and "easy for its readers to understand."[66] This rationale opens the door for further endeavors in the same direction. Each critic or editor has to justify a scholarly effort, and Saʿd al-Dīn al-Taftazānī gives further explanations for his expanded reading and explication of al-Qazwīnī's abridgement, which was obviously so popular among scholars that it invited scholars to expand, explicate, and comment in order to meet the needs of a growing readership. Al-Taftazānī embarked on a double venture. He issued an abridgement *(mukhtaṣar)* and an extended version *(muṭawwal).* He begins by explaining the reason behind his effort as an obligation to release rhetoric from the many misunderstandings and dogmatic explications that beset it. As there was no better place than Khwārizm, he decided to settle there since "Jurjānīyat Khwārizm is the abode of noble men and the haven of the upholders of virtue." There he obtained "the treasuries of knowledge" while consulting knowledgeable rhetors.[67] Working diligently on al-Qazwīnī's abridgement, he celebrates his "*muṭawwal*" as being both comprehensive and meticulous, a feat that can be substantiated by the number of commentaries that followed.[68]

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[65] Najm al-Dīn al-Qazwīnī, *Talkhīṣ al-Miftāḥ* [The resume of the key], (Beirut, n.d.), 1:8–14.

[66] Ibid., 97, 98, 99.

[67] Quoted in al-Taftazānī, *Muṭawwal,* 13. The sequence of the quote is re-ordered to make "lack" a reason for the editor's effort, which is seemingly meant to be so in the original. Ibid.

[68] For a concordance of these abridgements and explications, see al-Qazwīnī, *Al-Īḍāḥ fī ʿUlūm al-Balāghah,* ed. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Munʿim Khafājah (Beirut, n.d.), 1:8–14.

Al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī's (d. 1413) commentary demonstrates the impossibility of such a claim and the inevitable limitations of any project in rhetoric.[69]

In other words, within the lexical domain, terminology and systematic classification of rhetoric place Arabic into a territorial space occupied by rhetors, grammarians, and logicians. Book production relies on this contribution to legitimize its presence. The astounding multiplication of commentaries attests to this turn, which could be seen as an ultimate appropriation of specialized knowledge to the needs of the Islamic street. *Sharḥ* in this case can take many forms, as commentary, explication, marginal notes, and annotations. It can add, emend, explicate, and expand on the original. Its origins, development, and stupendous growth should not be treated as some kind of second-hand or duplicated project. Like manuals, these works flourish and expand whenever there is a thriving reading climate and a community of scholars to participate in discussion. The trend is a testament to a burgeoning book industry and a dynamic cultural climate, which forced scholars to settle in congenial spaces that would make it possible for them to pursue their research, analysis, and consultation. Hence *sharḥ* as a scholarly pursuit belongs among the primary concerns and interests of participants in a republic of letters which is larger than any body politic. The *sharḥ* is an encyclopedic work, a compendium with a plan and strategies of explication, as the significant endeavors that we have been discussing make clear. But each explicator directs his *sharḥ* into the domains he is most familiar with. Al-Taftazānī leads it into speculative theology; while the nineteenth-century publisher decided on his own to have Imam Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī's *Itmām al-Dirāyah* (Completion of knowledge) in grammar and rhetoric bracket al-Sakkākī's text.[70] The publisher speaks of this bracketing as "embroidering and embellishing" its "forelocks."[71] Al-Sakkākī's *Miftāḥ* provokes just as many commentaries as al-Ḥillī's *Ode* and its explanation, and yet each signifies a specific trend in reading, analysis, and annotation. The *Key* places grammar into rhetoric in order to reorient speculative theological reasoning neatly within the domains of the Arabic language and its sciences. The studies of Quranic "inimitability" are brought back into a combined study of logic, grammar, rhetoric, and poetry. Thus, for instance, we have *Al-Kāfiyah fī al-Naḥw* (The sufficient guide in syntax) by the prominent grammarian and speculative theologian Ibn al-Ḥājib (d. 1249), but soon afterwards we have *Sharḥ Kāfiyat Ibn al-Ḥājib* by Raḍī al-Dīn Muḥammad Astarabādhī (d. after 1284); another *Sharḥ* by ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Jumʿah ibn Zayd (d. 1297); yet another

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[69] His commentaries appear as marginal notes or footnotes to the *Muṭawwal.* The editor and publisher included these along with al-Qazwīnī in their version of *Al-Muṭawwal,* 97, 98, 99.

[70] Abu Yaʿqūb Yūsuf al-Sakkākī, *Kitāb Miftāḥ al-ʿUlūm.*

[71] Ibid., embroidered and embellished with Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī's *Itmām al-Dirāyah* (Completion of knowledge) (Miṣr, n.d).

by no less than Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Jamāʿah (d. 1333); and even another by Ṣalāḥ ibn ʿAlī ibn Mahdī al-Zaydī (d. 1446), with a different title from the preceding ones. It has the title: *Al-Najm al-Thāqib: Sharḥ Kāfiyat Ibn al-Ḥājib* (Th piercing star: elucidating the sufficient guide by Ibn al-Ḥājib). Indeed, even more grammarians and philologists would expound on *Al-Kāfiyah* throughout the next six centuries, especially in the eighteenth century. But we are invited to look at this concordance in terms of objective circumstances that impelled scholars to carry on such a project in grammar throughout the thirteenth century. Itineraries in the pursuit of grammar cannot be random engagements across a crowded paratextual map. They build on and reflect on each other so densely that we end up with scarcity of titles and the resignation of some scholars to this fact by adding only their name to their subgeneric commentary like, in the case of the explicator al-Raḍī, *Sharḥ al-Raḍī*. In the latter case, however, it is good to know that resignation entails also a new contract with the source, an exchange that may elicit further responses and commentaries, as the case was in al-Raḍī's commentary. Put together these form the curriculum for training in syntax. Hence Muḥammad al-Shawkānī (d. 1834), for example, cites these books among required readings.[72] On other occasions, the text at hand raises serious issues in theological thought, logic, and grammar, and calls therefore for the intervention of solid scholars across the Islamic lands. Such was the case of Ibn al-Ḥājib's *Mukhtaṣar al-Muntahá al-Uṣūlī* (The resume of the ultimate theological basics). ʿAḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī (d. 1355) wrote his *sharḥ* (commentary) on Ibn al-Ḥājib's *Resume*. His commentary was followed by the marginal gloss of Saʿd al-Dīn al-Taftazānī (d. 1390) and another by al-Sharīf ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad al-Jurjānī (d. 1413). The three are among the most prominent scholars and speculative theologians of their times. Thus, when the glosses, as *ḥawāshī* (marginal explications and annotations), were to be reproduced later in print, the text itself is either showcased in a bordered layout with each explanation and commentary on the left, right, top, and bottom, or it disappears altogether whenever al-Ījī's commentary replaces it. The reciprocity between the host's text and that of the guest undergoes serious transformation when the original author is knowledgeable enough to raise more questions and commentaries or simply invites further explanations. Indeed, the host and guest analogy gets problematized in these intersectional spaces where theologians and also critics scrutinize every textual and conceptualized unit in detail, depending

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[72] In *Ṭalab al-ʿIlm wa-Ṭabaqāt al-Mutaʿallimīn: Adab al-Ṭālab wa-Muntahá al-Arab* (loosely: The search for knowledge and classes of learners: the most desired manners in the acquisition of Islamic knowledge). Associating the knowledge of grammar with Islamic law, he stipulates: "know that the student desiring knowledge of the sciences of Sacred Law must master the disquisitions and intricacies in *Sharḥ al-Raḍī ʿalá al-Kāfiyah*; along with what is scrutinized in *Mughnī al-Labīb*." [Also translated as the sufficient knowledge of the sensible one]. He lists the rest of the books which he considers primers that must be known.

on which copy is at hand.[73] There are scholars like the Moroccan linguist and scholar Muḥammad ibn al-Ṭayyib (d. 1756), the author of *Riḥlah ilá al-Hijāz,* who was also known in his time for a significant series of *shurūḥ.* The *shurūḥ* attest to the popularity of the text under review, a case that applies to almost every book of significance, not only in hadith and theology, but specifically in grammar and philology. Ibn Hishām al-Anṣārī's (d. 1360) *Al-Mughnī al-Labīb ʿan Kutub al-Aʿārīb* (The adroit substitute for grammar books) is a case in point. It has its own *Sharḥ* by Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr al-Damāmīnī (d. 1424?), who is a solid scholar, poet, and litterateur. Ibn Hishām's other books, like *Shudhūr al-Dhahab* (Snippets of gold), also received a number of *shurūḥ* (commentaries, glosses, and explications). Th *shurūḥ* phenomenon that puzzled modernists like Jurjī Zaydān and brought about their biting criticism of the past period signifies a number of things that are lost on most modernists: there is, first, the demand for these in their time; otherwise writers and scholars would not waste time and effort on such painstaking projects. Among the well-known and wealthy booksellers in Cairo, with a network of copyists, was Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Yaḥyá al-Waṭwāṭ (1235–1318), an encyclopedist and author in natural sciences.[74] His wealth indicates a lucrative business. There is, second, the genealogical accumulation of a specific undertaking in theology, logic, or grammar, for example, that requires further elucidation and commentary to meet a horizon of expectations under different circumstances and times. In this sense, the commentary is not different from a translation. There is, third, the inevitable change in taste or milieu that requires a different "cultural script" to fit into acceptable cultural norms.[75]

The semiotics of titles is no less significant, as they are meant to lead the reader into the text and trap him/her in its intricacies. Thus Ibn al-Ḥājib's *Kāfiyah* (Th sufficient guide) generates other *Kāfiyah*s in other domains, such as Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī's in poetry and rhetoric. On the other hand, the use of *sajʿ* (rhyming) in these titles cannot be a random choice or a mere show of dexterity and craft. In response to a horizon of expectation and need, the writer perhaps would like to have his/her production compatible with current needs and demands. In these titles we come across resonance, assonance, intonation, paronomasia, antithesis, contrafaction, and also referents that send us to the body of the text and its inter- and sub-texts. Thus, we encounter ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿAbbāsī's (d. 1556) *Kitāb Sharḥ Shawāhid al-Talkhīṣ al-Musammá Maʿāhid al-Tanṣīṣ* (Designating fa-

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[73] See, for instance, *Al-Ḥāshiyah* of al-Taftazānī, and al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī on al-Ījī's commentary, supplemented by Shaykh Ḥusayn al-Harawī's (Cairo, 1974).

[74] Jamāl al-Dīn al-Waṭwāṭ, *Mabāhij al-Fikar wa-Manāhij al-ʿIbar=Encyclopaedia of Four Natural Sciences,* ed. F. Sezgin and M. Amawi (Frankfurt am Main, 1990).

[75] Lefevere describes the cultural script as "the accepted pattern of behavior expected of people to fill certain roles in a certain culture." *Translation,* 89.

miliar texts: a commentary on the evidentiary verses in *Al-Talkhīṣ*), for example, which implicates us in the study of a series of samples, referents, and intertextual documentation, while meeting the disposition for resonance in titles.[76] The terms "*maʿāhid*" and "*tanṣīṣ*" are loaded, not only with the immediate contractual denotative of the first and the textuality of the second, but also because both work in unison to connote the thresholds of the text. On the other hand, although the word *tanṣīṣ* refers to a textual documentation of references, it derives from the verb *naṣṣa* (noun *naṣṣ*: text) that comes with the preposition *ʿalá* to mean "stipulate in writing." The moment the author or philologist undertakes the pursuit of documentation, textual analysis, and annotation, he/she is deeply involved in scriptoria. Peritexts and paratexts signify then a dense writing tradition where lexicography holds sway.

This noticeable semiotics to be seen in titles of the middle period relates to a professionally-oriented practice. It involves something more akin to market-place language than the rhetorically rich titles of the classical Islamic period. There is less emphasis on the originating rhetorical preoccupation with *iʿjāz* (inimitability), and eloquence. The plain attributes in secretarial or other manuals that constitute a regular phenomenon until the twelfth century give way to a process based more on craft, profession, or market-place transaction. Ibn Sanāʾ al-Mulk (d. 608/1211) sets a road in his *Dār al-Ṭirāz* (House of brocade), which is a unique study of *muwashshaḥ* as intricately woven cloth or an embroidered gown in a textile house.[77] On the other hand, this same shift toward professional and marketplace semiotics entails kinesis, a dramatic normative predication on a rhetorical figure. The subgenre *muwashshaḥ* which the author and poet Ibn Sanāʾ al-Mulk explores in *Dār al-Ṭirāz* combines in the title its stimulating attributes as a street-staged performance and abode of art. Two significant examples that respond and play on each other through processes of parody and subversion are those of al-Ṣafadī and Ibn Ḥijjah. The latter's *Kashf al-Lithām* (exposing, unveiling) is a counterdiscourse to the former's *Faḍḍ al-Khitām* (unsealing, deflowering, and resolving). This battle within titles that reflect on each other in order to undermine content is fought in masculinist terms over a feminized body of tropes and figures of speech like *tawriyah*. At times, the reliance on a Quranic verse from the "Surah of Light," for example, can generate other titles. Muḥammad ibn Saʿīd al-Buṣīrī (1211–94) uses *Al-Kawākib al-Durrīyah* (Pearly stars) as a title for his praise (Mantle) ode to the Prophet, borrowing from the verse on the light of God. The use became so popular that it lent itself easily to other variations, not only in poetry but also in a *maqāmah* addressed, not to the Prophet as the case is in the source ode, but

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[76] ʿAbd al-Raḥīm ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿAbbāsī, *Kitāb Sharḥ Shawāhid al-Talkhīṣ al-Musammá Maʿāhid al-Tanṣīṣ* (Miṣr, 1899).

[77] Ibn Sanāʾ al-Mulk, *Dār al-Ṭirāz* (Damascus, 1977).

to a patron. Such is the *maqāmah* by the eminent chancery scribe Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad ʿAbd Allah al-Qalqashandī (d. 1418).[78] The itinerary which the term takes, from a specific reference to God's light, to the Prophet, and then to a patron, cannot be an ordinary one, and must be seen in terms of a comprehensive drive to humanize knowledge. In this context, titles that make use of concrete terms such as pearls and gems abound, and the whole book industry dances in lively and kinetic imagery.

Private Libraries and Scholarly Networks

With all this in mind, I am here engaging with the contentious modern critique of medieval and pre-modern cultural production as a point of departure, focusing on issues that have previously incurred so much disparagement, especially issues that pertain to lexical proliferation and its systematization in a culture industry. These relate to authorship, legitimation and validation, rhetoric and possible su-perfluity, genealogical construction, transactional codes among peers, fellows, and mentors, public communication and reading, and the impact of a milieu. Very often all these or at least a substantial subset of them show up in one phe-nomenal production, such as the so-named *badīʿīyah* (encomiums to the Prophet), in its circulation and vogue among the learned and common publics. Through a re-mapping of cultural production, along with its previous archival validation or an alternative rapport with reading publics, there emerge new concerns and clas-sifications, each with its concomitant definitions of identity, space, authority, and, most importantly, language and rhetoric.

The upsurge in rhetorical experimentation and the shift away from official discourse, coupled with a sustained undercurrent that dismantles generic or rep-resentative divides between high and low—all characteristic of the pre-modern era—requires different analysis of the production of knowledge. This enhanced devotion to rhetoric, one that has engendered so much negative criticism against a so-called "age of superfluity," is an accurate reflection of a full-scale grammati-cal and linguistic movement aimed at reorienting literate culture, that being a feature of a strongly established, multi-disciplinary effort characteristic of ninth-through eleventh-century knowledge. Elaborated effectively among rhetors, the growth in this rhetorical corpus was often played out among aspiring scholars, like the students and fellows of Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144), a scholar who gave credence and legitimacy to an amazing network of disciples actively involved in presentations, rejoinders, and disputations. The case of the poet and rhetor Rashīd al-Dīn al-Waṭwāṭ (d. 578/1182), the chief secretary in Khurasan, with his guide to rhetorical figures in *Ḥadāʾiq al-Siḥr fī Daqāʾiq al-Shiʿr* (The groves of

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[78] See al-Musawi, "Vindicating Profession or a Personal Career?"

enchantment in the secrets of poetry), is a case in point.[79] Al-Waṭwāṭ's network, as shown in his published letters, demonstrates the significance of this activity in reconciling views, raising questions, strengthening disputations, and ending up by contributing to profound philological knowledge. He made it possible for scholars to be hosted at his own location where they could work on certain books and matters in which they would receive authorization to transmit and teach.[80] Although the book relied on its author's knowledge of the work of the Persian scholar Muḥammad ibn ʿUmar al-Rādūyānī, *Tarjumān al-Balāghah* (Guide to eloquence, written 507/1114), its systematic approach was well-recognized by prominent poets and critics across the Islamic lands. His bilingual expertise and competence as poet and rhetorician was admired by Yāqūt al-Mawṣilī al-Kātib (d. 618/1221–22) in his massive biographical dictionary as "the most knowledgeable of people in Arabic language," a language in which he excelled just as he did in his native Persian. He used to write poetry, in the same rhyme, rhythm and equivalent wording, in both languages. In *The Groves of Enchantment in the Secrets of Poetry* he lists and supplies examples of fifty-five figures and tropes.[81] The brilliant Egyptian rhetor and poet Abū Muḥammad Zakī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Aẓīm ibn Abī al-Iṣbaʿ (d. 654/1256) was similarly to set a model for the Iraqi merchant, eminent poet, critic, and scholar Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī (d. 750/1349), who also argues, like his predecessor, the case for his contribution to rhetoric in terms of some detailed recognition of antecedent authority which took the form of a cultural production that was perused, digested, or critiqued by the successor scholar. In these cases, a chain of tutors and a genealogy of readings can be retrieved; from the process books emerge as the most conspicuous presence in the makeup of a newly authored text that, in the case of al-Ḥillī for example, was to become pivotal for a new wave not only in theorizations regarding rhetoric, but also in the perpetuation of a new dynamic, the encomium to the prophet, not the court, as a means of retention and reclamation of Islamic legitimacy following the era of the "rightly guided" caliphs. Placed at the center of literate culture, this dynamic also leads the discussion of the inimitability of the Quran *(iʿjāz)* on to another sacral but rarely trodden territory. A new sphere for discussion was to grow alongside these other discussions, one that was to enlist the participation of readers, policy makers, historians, biographers, speculative theologians, grammarians, lexicographers, and every writer of note. Despite the devastation that affected these lands and their libraries as a result of

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[79] Rashīd al-Dīn al-Waṭwāṭ served as chief secretary *(ṣāḥib dīwān al-inshāʾ)* to ʿAzīz Khwārizm Shāh (d. 1156) and his successor Āl-Arsalān (d. 568/1172). See al-Waṭwāṭ, *Ḥadāʾiq al-Siḥr fī Daqāʾiq al-Shiʿr*, ed. Ibrāhīm Amīn al-Shawārbī (Cairo, 1945).

[80] Ibid., 30–36.

[81] Ibid.

the Mongol invasions, learned networks still proved to have enough vigor of their own to inject fresh energy into the scene.

We need to keep Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī's place in mind in the process of defining lines of demarcation in scholarship, between Arabs (meaning writers devoted to Arabic language, not on the basis of race) and non-Arabs. In the thirteenth century, there were books that specifically address the criteria for the assessment of non-Arab poetry, meaning in this case the poetry written in Persian as the official language under the Mongols. Along with al-Rādūyānī's work noted earlier, there was Muḥammad ibn Qays al-Rāzī's (d. 1232) *Al-Muʿjam fī Maʿāyīr Ashʿār al-ʿAjam* (The compendium on the principles of Persian poetry). The amount of Sufi poetry composed in Persian between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries may well explain the need for bilingual works of criticism or others that were written in Persian. However, this trend should not be confused with the developing application of multiple modes of analysis among scholars. There were initially the ones using the method of the speculative theologians and the others with their habitual and traditional ways of reading and analysis. The last method was followed particularly by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī and a chain of other critics, until al-Zabīdī's proclaimed preference for the "Arab" way, as being the uncontaminated traditional reading.[82]

But both criticism and rhetoric show the influence of two discourses of specifically analogical reasoning: the Muʿtazilite and the Ashʿarite. The situation was to be politicized further soon after both the Ottoman conquest of Egypt in 1517 and the emergence of Safavid Iran (1502–1736) under Shah ʿAbbās (r. 1588–1629), where both Azerbaijan and Shirwan were annexed to Iran. Among later arrivals from there to Damascus was Mullah Maḥmūd al-Kurdī (d. 1663), who was to settle in Damascus and teach there, using the method which biographers and historians such as Muḥammad Amīn al-Muḥibbī (d. 1699) specify as being the method of verifi ation (commentary and annotation), *taḥqīq,* as practiced in *kutub al-aʿājim* (the books of non-Arabs).[83] Although this phrase replaces that of *al-qudamāʾ* (the

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[82] See Khaled El-Rouayheb, "Opening the Gate of Verification: The Forgotten Arab-Islamic Florescence of the 17th Century," *The International Journal of Middle East Studies* 38, no. 2 (May 2006): 268.

[83] Ibid. Although meaning "verification," the term *taḥqīq* is equivalent to commentary and annotation, an authenticating method that was pursued from the thirteenth century onwards. As for the term *aʿājim,* it began to undergo deflection to mean partly "Persians" only after the rise of the sectarian divide. In Islamic times, and well before the fifteenth century, it meant "non-Arabs." Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī (d. 1143), himself of Persian origin and born in Khwārizm, used the term *ʿajam khalq Allāh* (the non-Arabs among God's creatures). See the preface to his *Al-Mufaṣṣal fī ʿIlm al-Lughah* (Beirut, 1990), 11–12. On the other hand, Ibn Khaldūn used *ʿajam* to mean other nations in his *Kitāb al-ʿIbar wa-Dīwān al-Mubtadaʾ wa-al-Khabar fī Ayyām al-ʿArab wa-al-ʿAjam wa-al-Barbar wa-Man ʿĀṣarahum min Dhawī al-Sulṭān al-Akbar.* As noted also by Nabil Matar,

ancients, i.e., the Greeks), from the twelfth century it assumed a broader application that accompanied the increasing resurgence of national languages across the Islamic lands. With Hulagu Khan's (d. 1265) sweeping and devastating conquests of lands all across Asia and the Near East, the Persian language received legitimation as the official language of the Mongol empire, giving it, in Hamid Dabashi's phrase, world dimensions.[84] At a later date, the Kurdish scholar Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī (d. 1690) was notably mentioned as a scholar with whom such prominent Arab scholars as ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī (d. 1731) and Abū al-Mawāhib al-Ḥanbalī (d. 1714) studied rhetoric, grammar, and philology.[85]

While setting the scene for future generations of scholars, al-Zamakhsharī's circle was more bent on making its point by applying Muʿtazilite reasoning in rhetoric and claiming Arabic as their deliberately acknowledged language of choice. The circle thus did not have the same impact on some other scholars. No less vigorous was the group of scholars that took al-Sakkākī's *Key to Sciences* as the subject of analysis and discourse, including al-Qazwīnī and al-Taftazānī. Entrenched between Muʿtazilites and Ashʿarites, analysis and logical reasoning in the study of language and its enunciation in poetry and prose consolidates a discursive constellation of its own, with many different voices and applications. To a certain extent traditional philology found itself marginalized and began thereafter to reach into domains that were once closed to literati, including the street and its speakers.

Shifting discursive and conversational positions manifest an acute sense of crisis, especially around the mid thirteenth century. As if to ward off the haunting memory of the sack of Baghdad by the Mongol army in 1258 and the consequent campaign to impose Persian or their own language imperially, a counter movement took place. There was soon after an enormous accumulation of compendiums, lexicons, dictionaries, rejoinders, encyclopedic topographies, geographies, and histories that developed along with works composed in every field of knowledge which closely rivals the output of the heyday of productivity in Abbasid Baghdad. Benefitting greatly from this invigorating cultural activity and encyclopedic productivity, the Mamluk state in particular derived moral and ad-

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In the Lands of the Christians: Arabic Travel Writing in the Seventeenth Century (New York and London, 2003): "Although the very concept of 'Europe' did not exist either among the Christian Arabs or Muslims, there was a curiosity about the Rūm (the Qurʾanic name for the Byzantines) the ifranj (Franks) and the ʿajam (Spaniards)…," xviii. Muḥammad ʿAbd Al-Wahhāb al-Ghassānī al-Andalusī uses the term to refer to non-Arabic speaking people. See his *Riḥlat al-Wazīr fī Iftikāk al-Asīr, 1690–1691* [The travels of the vizier to release the hostage), ed. Nūrī al-Jarrāḥ (Abu Dhabi, 2002).

[84] Hamid Dabashi, *The World of Persian Literary Humanism* (Cambridge, 2012).

[85] For more on the seventeenth century, see El-Rouayheb, "Opening the Gate of Verification, 265, minus his interpretation of "*kutub al-aʿājim*."

ministrative power from the institution of the chancery as an administrative and cultural center maintained by its elite. The latter in turn engendered a vigorous atmosphere of competition, one that involved not only departments like finance, military, and chancery scribes, but also an ever-increasing number of other kinds of authors who chose to operate outside statist domains in order to exercise their independence and sense of ownership. As a consequence of this increase in productivity, a new textual regime is established in almost every branch of knowledge, although the predominant field involves issues of statecraft, social order, moral and religious thought, worldly pursuits, and sensory or visionary experience.

As a natural consequence of this cultural milieu, we find a number of epistles or *maqāmāt* that focus specifically on disputation, debate or dialogue among the three leading administrative departments: finance, war and military, and chancery—the last being the primary domain for writers, or *arbāb al-aqlām* (lords of the pen).[86] While clearly being a major participant in the process of state building, at the same time this assiduous activity arouses some suspicions on our part, not with respect to the rules of supply and demand, competition and advancement among writers, but rather relating to its unsettling magnitude. A question that arises is thus: are we in the presence of Borges' minutely drawn map that negates its original?[87] Is this an institutionalization in rhetorical form of a paper empire, of words on words, and *kalām ʿalá kalām* (metadiscourse)? Even when negated by modernists as superfluity, negation of rhetoric and its domains in the culture industry only testifies to its presence in a rich culture which necessarily takes language as its field. "The disclaiming of rhetoric," says Christine Brooke-Rose, "is itself a figure of rhetoric."[88] Was this enterprise essentially constructed on an antecedent authority or a contemporary inventory of poets, prose writers, Sufis, speculative theologians and rationalists, each category having its impact on

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[86] For references to this usage, see Qalqīlah, *Al-Naqd al-Adabī,* 43. Ibn Ḥijjah included this in his *Sharḥ* (mistakenly called *Khizānat al-Adab)* as "Risālat al-sayf wa-al-qalam." See *Khizānat al-Adab*, 1:360.

[87] Jean Baudrillard writes in *Simulacra and Simulation,* trans. Sheila Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor, 1994), 1: "If once we were able to view the Borges fable in which the cartographers of the empire draw up a map so detailed that it ends up covering the territory exactly (the decline of the Empire witnesses the fraying of this map, little by little, and its fall into ruins, though some shreds are still discernible in the deserts—the metaphysical beauty of this ruined abstraction testifying to some pride equal to the empire and rotting like a carcass, returning to the substance of the soil, a bit as the double ends by being confused with the real through aging)—as the most beautiful allegory of simulation, this fable has now come full circle for us, and possesses nothing but the discrete charm of second order simulacra."

[88] Christine Brooke-Rose, "Whatever Happened to Narratology?" *Poetics Today* 11, no. 2 (summer 1990): 283–93.

extraction, conjugation, patching, inversion, derivation, abstruse reasoning, and logical postulations, not to mention hundreds of other means for stemming up with new meanings from the same root or name?[89] However, the simulacrum is no paper tiger. Instead it is there in order to raise questions, invite conceptualization, and also lead to action. Perhaps in anticipation of a disintegrating Mamluk order that is to ensue as a result of the Ottoman invasion of Egypt (1517), it lays the "groundwork" in words in order to formulate a displacement of notions and nations.

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[89] Suzanne P. Stetkevych, *Abū Tammām and the Poetics of the ʿAbbāsid Age* (Leiden, 1991), 16–17. In her translation, al-Jāḥiẓ says: "For the Mutakallimūn [speculative theologians] selected expressions for their concepts, deriving terminology for things for which the Arab language had no word. In doing so they have set the precedent in this for all who came after them and the model for all who follow. Thus they say accident *(ʿaraḍ)* and essence *(jawhar);* to be *(aysa)* and not to be *(laysa).* They distinguish between nullity *(buṭlān)* and nihility *(talāshin)* and they use the terms "thisness" *(hādhiyyah)* identity *(huwiyyah)* and quiddity *(māhiyyah).* In the same way, al-Khalīl ibn Aḥmad assigned names to the meters of the *qaṣīdas*…whereas the [Bedouin] Arabs had not known the meters by those names. Similarly, the grammarians named and referred to the circumstantial accusative *(ḥāl)* the adverbial accusatives *(ẓurūf* and such things)…Likewise, the mathematicians draw upon names which they have designated as signs in order to understand one another…Someone preaching in the heart of the Caliph's palace said, 'God brought him out of the door of non-being *(laysiyyah)* and let him enter the door of being *(aysiyyah).*' These expressions are permissible in the art of Kalam when existing words lack the requisite range of meaning. The expressions of the Mutakallimun are also befitting to poetry…" But see also ʿĀrif Tāmir on the use of these terms by al-Karmānī and al-Fārābī: Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Al-Munāẓarāt* (The debates), ed. ʿArif Tāmir (Beirut, 1992), 28–29.

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On Mamluk Anthologies Again: The Case of Jamāl al-Dīn al-Waṭwāṭ and His *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ al-Wāḍihah wa-ʿUrar al-Naqāʾiḍ al-Qābiḥah*

Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Yaḥyá ibn ʿAlī al-Anṣārī al-Kutubī, known as al-Waṭwāṭ,[1] has been somewhat neglected in modern scholarship, with a few exceptions.[2] He is not listed among the great Mamluk writers, and does not receive an entry in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* nor in the *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature.* This article is in some ways an attempt at remedying this lack of interest, as well as a contribution to evaluating his literary output in the genre of literary anthologies.

1. Life and Social Relations

Despite the lack of esteem he has been given in modern scholarship, al-Waṭwāṭ was held in high regard by such a severe and exacting critic as al-Ṣafadī, who counted him among "the great *adīb*s and the intelligent personalities"[3] of his time. His family was, al-Ṣafadī informs us, of eastern origin from the town of Merw,[4] but he was born in 632/1230 in Egypt, where he died in 718/1318. He did not belong to the circle of the Mamluk administration (this was also the case for other writers of his era), but earned his living as a stationer and bookseller *(warrāq/kutubī)* and practiced this profession all his life. This was likely to have been a profitable occupation; Mamluk scholars were fond of buying books and the book trade in

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[1]Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Literatur* (Leiden, 1949), 2:67; idem, Supplementband 2 (Leiden, 1938), 53–54; ʿUmar Riḍá Kaḥḥālah, *Muʿjam al-Muʾallifīn* (Beirut, n.d.), 3:22; Khayr al-Dīn al-Ziriklī, *Al-Aʿlām* (Beirut, 1995), 5:297.

[2] Muhammad ʿAbd al-Munʿim al-Khafājī, *Al-Ḥayāh al-Adabīyah fī Miṣr: al-ʿAṣr al-Mamlūkī wa-al-ʿUthmānī* (Cairo, 1404/1984), 20.

[3] Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān al-ʿAṣr wa-Aʿwān al-Naṣr,* ed. ʿA. Abū Zayd et al. (Beirut-Damascus, 1998), 4:202. The biographical details given in what follows are based on the biography of al-Waṭwāṭ in ibid., 4:201–7.

[4] But cf. Jurjī Manāsh, "Al-Manāhij fī Waṣf al-Mabāhij," *Al-Mashriq* 10 (1907): 721–29 and 774–86, reprinted *in Studies on Al-Watwat (d. 1318), Ad-Dimasqī (d. 1327), Ibn al-Wardī (d. c. 1446) and al-Bakuwi (15th cent.),* collected and reprinted by Fuat Sezgin (Frankfurt am Main, 1994), 723 (repr.=3), who states that he was of Maghribi origin.

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those times was very brisk,[5] since "book collecting was an expensive yet wide-spread hobby of cultured Mamluks."[6] Notwithstanding the liveliness of the book market, the wide circulation of books, and the profitability of a career as a book-seller, *wirāqah* does not seem to have been counted among the most prestigious careers by contemporary social commentators. Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 771/1370) and Ibn al-Ḥājj (d. 733/1333) harshly rebuke all those who were involved in the "art of the book." Stationers, booksellers, and copyists were accused of circulating books that were "useless to people," even "frivolous"; the *Sīrat ʿAntar* is offered as an example.[7] The low social status of booksellers, which is attested in the works of these authors, probably contributed to the fact that, as we will see, al-Waṭwāṭ was never accepted in the circles of the intellectual elite to which he aspired. Apparently al-Waṭwāṭ practiced his job with great skill: he knew the value of books, was well-informed as to what was available on the market, had good taste and wide professional expertise, and also collected precious books. From this viewpoint, al-Waṭwāṭ's expertise regarding the value of books seems to qualify him as something more than a simple bookseller and clues suggest he must also have been a bibliophile. His job no doubt gave him the opportunity to handle a wide range of books, which doubtless he also consulted and from which his literary activity benefitted. Al-Waṭwāṭ was known in his time for both his encyclopedia and his anthology, works belonging to two genres considered typical of Mamluk literature.[8] He was both a brilliant anthologist, gifted in choosing the best pieces, and a sophisticated prose writer. If we trust his biographers, in particular al-Ṣafadī, he was an outstanding prose writer who could write well on whatever subject he wanted. He mastered the art of *inshāʾ,* but he had no gift for poetry, and al-Ṣafadī categorically states that he was not able to write one single verse.[9]

In spite of the fact that almost all the sources mention that he suffered from an ophthalmic affliction that made light painful for him, his nickname (al-Waṭwāṭ, which means "the bat") probably has nothing to do with his habit of avoiding sunlight as a consequence of the disease.[10] This nevertheless offered others the

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[5] Muḥammad Zaghlūl Sallām, *Al-Adab fī al-ʿAṣr al-Mamlūkī* (Cairo, n.d. [1971?]), 1:120–21.

[6] Ulrich Haarmann, "Arabic in Speech, Turkish in Lineage: Mamluks and Their Sons in the Intellectual Life of Fourteenth-Century Egypt and Syria," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 33 (1988): 93. On this point see also Robert Irwin, "Mamluk Literature," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 2.

[7] Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī, *Muʿīd al-Niʿam,* ed. D .W. Myhrman (London, 1908), 188; for al-Subkī and Ibn al-Ḥājj on this matter see Giovanni Canova, "Libri e artigiani del libro: le raccomandazioni dei giuristi musulmani," *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 12 (2012): 235–63; also Irwin, "Mamluk Literature," 22; Sallām, *Adab,* 1:120–21.

[8] Ḥannā Fākhūrī, *Al-Jāmiʿ fī Tārīkh al-Adab al-ʿArabī* (Beirut, 1986), 1031.

[9] Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān al-ʿAṣr,* 4:202.

[10] Al-Waṭwāṭ was also the nickname of the famous prolific writer Rashīd al-Dīn (d. ca. 578/1182–83) who wrote in Arabic and Persian. Like Jamāl al-Dīn he was of Eastern origin; he lived in Gur-

opportunity to make puns at his expense, playing on his habits and on the meaning of his nickname. Al-Waṭwāṭ's illness and his consequent lifestyle are often recalled in the literature of his time, and particularly in his contemporaries' poetry. In one of his poems Ibn Dāniyāl, the famous ophthalmologist and man of letters, speaks of him in these terms:

> I did not deprive al-Waṭwāṭ of his kohl out of avarice
> > And I'm not one who is annoyed by frequent visits in a day
> But his eyes dislike the sun
> > How can I be able to help him when he's sore eyed?

Some verses of Shāfiʿ ibn ʿAlī (d. 730/1330),[11] the nephew of Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, who will be mentioned in further detail later, also allude to his habits:

> You always walk with people in the dark
> > And these are the habits of the bat *(al-waṭwāṭ)*

and:

> They say: you see al-Waṭwāṭ extremely tired and distressed
> > and I say: this is his constant habit, he runs from night to night[12]

Our author is also recalled, even if indirectly, in a jocular *taqlīd* "*ʿalá sabīl al-mudāʿabah*" written by the famous qadi, prose writer, and poet Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir (d. 692/1292),[13] with whom "the poor al-Waṭwāṭ," as al-Ṣafadī calls

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gandj, the capital of Khwarazm. His biographies bear no mention of an eye disease, which could point to the fact that this nickname was perhaps customary in the eastern part of the Muslim empire without necessarily implying any reference to a physical trait. The nickname could derive from our author's intense nocturnal activity (Roger Maury, "Ǧamâl al-Dîn al-Waṭwâṭ: libraire et auteur égyptien (7/13ème s.)," *Revue de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes* 46, no. 152 (1983): 229.

[11] A historian of Mamluk Egypt; he served as a clerk and had to retire after he had been blinded by an arrow. After having retired from his job at the *dīwān al-inshāʾ*, al-Shāfiʿ ibn ʿAlī became a man of letters and wrote among other things several *adab* works mentioned by al-Ṣafadī. He also was a bibliophile and a collector of books, and Ibn Shākir mentions that he had eighteen libraries full of precious volumes of *adab*. From this viewpoint he could in principle be considered a sort of colleague of al-Waṭwāṭ, in that they shared their literary activity as authors of *adab* works and their expertise in books, notwithstanding the fact that al-Shāfiʿ ibn ʿAlī was a collector while al-Waṭwāṭ was a bookseller. He left numerous writings in prose and poetry, among which is a biography of Baybars that was covertly critical of the late sultan and his previous biographer, the author's uncle Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir (P. M. Holt, "Shāfiʿ b. ʿAlī," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 9:180–81; Sallām, *Adab,* 2:53–55).

[12] Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān al-ʿAṣr,* 4:204.

[13] Administrator and head of the chancery in Egypt and Syria; he wrote the histories of three sultans. His pieces are written in an elaborate *sajʿ* in the style of al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil *(al-ṭarīqah al-Fāḍilīyah).* He became himself an authority and many formulas he elaborated were later used

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him, apparently had a long-lasting enmity. The sources do not give us further details on this, except to comment that Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir hated him and constantly belittled him.[14] This famous *taqlīd,* whose text is reproduced in full in *Aʿyān al-ʿAṣr,* is addressed to Ibn Ghurāb ("the raven's son") who was appointed *wālī* (governor) of the "the birds' species" (*ajnās al-ṭayr*).[15] It is a witty and very elaborate piece of *inshāʾ,* known under the name of "Al-Inshāʾ al-Sulaymānī" after Solomon (Sulaymān), who features as the authority issuing the document. It opens with praise of the beautiful qualities of birds: the beauty of their feathers and their colors, the sound of their harmonious voices, their utility as messengers, and so on.[16] Suddenly the honey-sweet tone turns to a somber one, and Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir launches into the description of a being black in the face and body, despised, miserable, intimately connected with death and darkness, which lives like a parasite, stealing and destroying. This creature is similar to birds but is not a bird; it ejaculates and gives birth as humans do but is not a human. All these traits confer it such an ambiguous and disturbing nature that it could be likened to a metamorphosed devil. In addition this miserable creature is depicted as pernicious for its neighbors, since its presence is an unfailing sign of ruin and destruction. In brief, it is the most contemptible being God has ever created. In the end, after this climax of disgusting descriptions, the horrible creature is openly mentioned and we discover that it is the bat (al-Waṭwāṭ). The *taqlīd* goes on describing the many flaws of the beast and stressing its complete uselessness, be it living or dead, and invites people not to show any respect to it. The unaware reader could always take the words at face value and interpret the entire piece as the satire of a bat, but this naive interpretation based on the surface meaning must be discarded. Al-Ṣafadī and the other biographers direct the interpretation towards the person of our al-Waṭwāṭ, leaving no room for doubt. The bitter criticism of this poor beast, described as completely useless, is in fact addressed to our author, whose long-lasting "accident" with Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir is constantly recalled in the sources.[17] The acid tone of this *taqlīd* aroused the sympathy of al-Ṣafadī, which is revealed by the attribute *miskīn* that he uses to refer to al-Waṭwāṭ.

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by his followers. He also wrote poems in honor of his sovereigns (see J. Pedersen, "Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir," *EI2,* 3:679–80; Shawqī Dayf, *Tārīkh al-Adab al-ʿArabī,* vol. 5, *ʿAṣr al-Duwal wa-al-Imārāt* [Cairo, 1991], 415–20; Sallām, *Adab,* 2:45–52).

[14] Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī, *Kitāb al-Wāfī bi-al-Wafayāt=Das biographische Lexicon des Ṣalāḥaddīn Ḫalīl ibn Aibak aṣ-Ṣafadī,* ed. Sven Dedering (Istanbul, 1949), 2:17 (no. 267).

[15] Mentioned also in Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Al-Durar al-Kāminah fī Aʿyān al-Miʾah al-Thāminah,* ed. Muḥammad Sayyid Jādd al-Ḥaqq (Cairo, n.d.), 3:386; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfī,* 2:17 (no. 267).

[16] He also wrote *Tamāʾim al-Ḥamāʾim,* about carrier-pigeons (al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* in Pedersen, "Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir," 679).

[17] Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān al-ʿAṣr,* 4:204.

The chronic enmity to which this document clearly testifies was not the only unfortunate episode in al-Waṭwāṭ's life; apparently he was not on good terms with legal authorities, as attested by another misunderstanding with the chief judge Ibn al-Khuwayyī (d. 693/1293), himself a good prose writer.[18] The two were friends, and when Ibn al-Khuwayyī was appointed chief judge, al-Waṭwāṭ thought he could somehow take advantage of his friend's new position. He was bitterly disappointed when he received a totally negative reply to his requests. He tried after that to obtain a fatwa against him, and to this end he wrote to the most eminent personalities of Egypt, among them Athīr al-Dīn (the master of al-Ṣafadī, who relates the story), Ibn Dāniyāl, and Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir. But he collected only refusals or negative answers. This *futyā* and the relevant answers, all of them evasive but drawn up in laudatory terms,[19] became a book, whose wide circulation is also attested in the Maghrib. Al-Ṣafadī saw it and copied it in the twelfth volume of his *Tadhkirah,* which as far as we know is not extant.[20] The book was known by the title of *Fatwá al-Futūwah wa-Mirʾāt al-Murūʾah,* with some minor variants.[21] Due to his illness and the enmity of the powerful personalities who apparently did not hold him in great esteem, al-Waṭwāṭ most probably had a hard life. A direct hint at his misery and distress can be found in the epilogue of his anthology *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ,* which is in fact a long prayer where he confesses his weakness and implores God to grant him his livelihood and remove his poverty. Even if these are no doubt commonplace in this literary genre, one is under the impression that in his case these invocations are more sincere and more truthful than usual.

It is perhaps worth underlining that Ibn Dāniyāl, al-Shāfiʿ ibn ʿAlī, and Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, those who mentioned al-Waṭwāṭ in their works, were also accomplished and appreciated poets and, in a period in which communication in verse was commonly practiced among the intellectual elite, they were more in tune with the literary trends than him, as he did not write poetry. It is worth highlighting al-Waṭwāṭ's inability to compose poetry, which was something that was noticed in the biographical sources. In the Mamluk period, poetry became a pre-eminent means of both public and private communication and was also considered, along with flawless mastery of Arabic grammar, as a mark of distinction.[22] Poetry also

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[18] Al-Dhahabī, *Al-ʿIbar fī Khabar Man Ghabar,* ed. Abū Hajar Muḥammad al-Saʿīd ibn Basyūnī Zaghlūl (Beirut, 1985), 3:380.

[19] Ḥājjī Khalīfah, *Kashf al-Ẓunūn ʿan Asāmī al-Kutub wa-al-Funūn,* ed. Şerefettin Yaltkaya and Kilisli Rifat Bilge (Istanbul, 1972; repr. Beirut, n.d.), 2:col. 1241.

[20] On al-Ṣafadī's *Tadhkirah* see Frédéric Bauden's article in this volume.

[21] *Fatwá al-Futūwah wa-Mirʾāt al-Murūʾah:* Ḥājjī Khalīfah, *Kashf al-Ẓunūn,* 2:col. 1241; *ʿAyn al-Futūwah wa-Mirʾāt al-Murūʾah,* Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar al-Kāminah,* 3:386.

[22] Thomas Bauer, "Mamluk Literature: Misunderstandings and New Approaches," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 9, no. 1 (2005): 105–32; see esp.108–10.

became more and more widespread in fields traditionally associated with prose, like the sciences, history, and enigmas, both in the form of versification properly speaking and the use of poetic ornamentation.[23] A lack of poetic talent thus must have been a remarkable shortcoming, and no doubt precluded the individual from any access to the intellectual elite. For this reason al-Waṭwāṭ was probably considered somebody on the fringe of that circle. If we go by the definition of *adīb* given by Ibn Nubātah (d. 768/1366), according to whom the man of letters must be skilled in poetry as well as the fields of linguistic exegesis of canonical texts and *inshāʾ*,[24] al-Waṭwāṭ was only half an *adīb*. Reading his biographies, one is under the impression that he was somehow marginalized from the elitist group of men of letters; al-Waṭwāṭ must have been considered part of that "broadened layer of people with a more or less superficial scholarly training"[25] that the high-brows did not recognize as equals, and as a member of that "partially educated, urban middle class, consisting of people such as craftsmen, traders and minor ulama"[26] that was of enormous importance for the cultural life of that time. Unlike al-Damīrī, who started as a tailor and ended up as a *faqīh*, thus demonstrating that in principle "the life of an alim was a career open to all the talents,"[27] al-Waṭwāṭ was not able to climb the social ladder and—as far as we know—remained a bookseller all his life. Al-Waṭwāṭ, in his contemporaries' opinion, was an accomplished *adīb* and a good writer of *inshāʾ*, but by no means a perfect and complete man of letters.

2. Literary Output

In spite of this ambiguous assessment of his status as a man of letters, al-Waṭwāṭ's literary and scientific outputs are of considerable interest as examples of both the cultural tendencies and the literary standards of his time. The bibliography of al-Waṭwāṭ represents the major trends in the literary output of the period, characterized by the composition of a huge quantity of anthologies, compilations, and encyclopedic works such that "it seems to have been a point of pride to write upon any and every topic."[28] He wrote on science, literature, and also on history. The sources inform us that he made a copy of Ibn al-Athīr's *Al-Kāmil* with his own notes and comments, with the aim of criticizing that author and proposing his own corrections; this annotated copy was possessed by al-Ṣafadī.[29] The notes

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[23] Al-Khafājī, *Al-Ḥayāh al-Adabīyah,* 145 ff.

[24] Bauer, "Mamluk Literature," 119.

[25] Bauer, "Mamluk Literature," 110.

[26] Bauer, "Literarische Anthologien," 269.

[27] Irwin, "Mamluk Literature," 17.

[28] Ibid., 14.

[29] Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān al-ʿAṣr*, 4:204; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfī*, 2:17.

are quoted in the sources as "*ḥawāshin mufīdah ʿalá* Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh."[30] His *risālah Fatwá al-Futūwah wa-Mirʾāt al-Murūʾah* is mentioned in laudatory terms for its fine prose by both Ibn Ḥajar and Ḥājjī Khalīfah, who reports that it was an object of praise on the part of his contemporaries. But his renown is connected in particular to *Mabāhij al-Fikar wa-Manāhij al-ʿIbar* (Delights of thoughts and means of edification), a huge encyclopedia of the natural sciences, which served as the basis for al-Nuwayrī's *Nihāyat al-Arab*.[31] Al-Ṣafadī, who refers to it as *Manāhij al-Fikar wa-Manāhij al-ʿIbar*,[32] describes it as a work in four volumes, very demanding in terms of work, well done and without shortcomings.[33] A summary of this encyclopedia probably circulated under the title *Nuzhat al-ʿUyūn fī Arbaʿat Funūn:* some sources cite this title as an independent work,[34] but this seems contradicted by the description of a Syrian manuscript given by Ghazzī, where the table of contents is identical to that of *Mabāhij al-Fikar*.[35] This well-known encyclopedia has a double focus on both scientific and literary matters, as in addition to the purely scientific data, it contains many quotations from literary and philological sources, among which are *ʿUyūn al-Akhbār* by Ibn Qutaybah, *Al-Mujmal* by Ibn Fāris, and *Murūj al-Dhahab* by al-Masʿūdī.[36] This dual focus gives the work its special flavor and testifies to al-Waṭwāṭ's literary taste and to his wide and complex cultural background. A further title is ascribed to al-Waṭwāṭ, *Al-Durar wa-al-Ghurar,* but the sources do not agree on this title nor on its existence as

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[30] Ḥājjī Khalīfah, *Kashf al-Ẓunūn,* 2:col. 1380, and Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar al-Kāminah,* 3:386.

[31] *Encyclopaedic Historiography of the Muslim World,* ed. A. Samiuddin and N. K. Singh (Delhi, 2003), 716. On the influence of *Mabāhij al-Fikar* on *Nihāyat al-Arab* see Elias Ibrahim Muhanna, "Encyclopaedism in the Mamluk Period: The Composition of Shihāb al-Dīn al-Nuwayrī's (d. 1333) *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab*" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2012), 160–84.

[32] The title is also mentioned with minor variants (Kaḥḥālah, *Muʿjam al-Muʾallifīn,* 8:222, who seems to split up the compound title into two separate titles, and cites separately a *Manāhij al-ʿIbar*); cf. Ḥājjī Khalīfah, *Kashf al-Ẓunūn,* col. 1846 and 1579/2; Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar al-Kāminah,* 3:386; see also Manāsh, "Al-Manāhij," 722.

[33] Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān al-ʿAṣr,* 4:204; idem, *Al-Wāfī bi-al-Wafayāt,* 17=267.

[34] ʿAlī al-Riḍā Karabulūṭ and Aḥmad Ṭūran Karabulūṭ, *Muʿjam al-Tārīkh* [sic] *al-Turāth al-Islāmī fī Maktabāt al-ʿĀlam* (Qayṣarī, Turkey, n.d.), 1:2459; Manāsh, "Al-Manāhij," 722 (repr. =2).

[35] Kāmil Ghazzī, "Kitāb Nuzhat al-ʿUyūn fī Arbaʿat Funūn," *Revue de l'Académie Arabe de Damas* 9 (1929): 681–87, reprinted in *Studies on al-Waṭwāṭ,* ed. F. Sezgin, 24–30. Al-Ḥarbī, in his partial edition of *Mabāhij* (Jamāl al-Dīn al-Waṭwāṭ, *Mabāhij al-Fikar wa-Manāhij al-ʿIbar,* ed. ʿAbd al-Razzāq Aḥmad al-Ḥarbī [Beirut, 1420/2000], 89), confirms that *Nuzhat al-ʿUyūn fī Arbaʿat Funūn* is nothing other than a summary of *Mabāhij al-Fikar*.

[36] It is "important for the art of writing because its encyclopedic wealth is presented in literary format ...the book is an excellent example of the aesthetic principles of the era, challenging negative verdicts on the cultural climate of the period." Muhsin Musawi, "Pre-modern belletristic prose," in *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period,* ed. Roger Allen and D. S. Richard (Cambridge, 2006), 131.

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an independent work.[37] To top it all, we owe to our *muṣannif* a literary anthology, *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ al-Wāḍiḥah wa-ʿUrar al-Naqāʾiḍ al-Qābiḥah* (The blazes of bright qualities and the shameful things of ignominious defects or, briefly, "Of Virtues and Vices"),[38] upon which we shall dwell in this article. This anthology was apparently rather successful: three epitomes are mentioned in the bibliographies, respectively under the titles of *Maḥāsin al-Ghurar, Khaṣāʾiṣ al-Ghurar,* and *Mukhtaṣar Kitāb Ǧurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ,* plus an epitome devoid of a specific title.[39] Th text has been published approximately six times, and the latest edition is very recent.[40] The number of epitomes and of manuscripts preserved, and the several modern editions, are to be taken as an indication of the keen interest aroused by the work in the past and to the present day.

3. *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ:* A Presentation of the Work
3.1: Overview

The literary output of al-Waṭwāṭ seems to reflect that miscellaneous slant that is a typical feature of Mamluk literature,[41] and to fit well within the encyclopedic spirit of his times. But, contrary to the general tendency shown by the great encyclopedias such as *Nihāyat al-Arab, Masālik al-Abṣār,* or *Ṣubḥ al-Aʿshá* that aim to treat *de omni re scibile,* al-Waṭwāṭ splits his body of knowledge into two separate works: the scientific part of al-Waṭwāṭ's project is represented by *Mabāhij al-Fikar* and the ethical part by *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ.* The first, dedicated to natural sciences, is rich both in terms of contents and literary materials and, offering knowledge

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[37] Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar al-Kāminah,* 3:386; mentioned as *Al-Durar wa-al-Ghurar fī Shuʿarāʾ al-Andalus* by Kaḥḥālah, *Muʿjam al-Muʾallifīn,* 3:42, on the basis of Ḥājjī Khalīfah, *Kashf al-Ẓunūn,* col. 248 (erroneous attribution to the author) and Ismāʿīl Bāshā al-Baghdādī, *Hādiyat al-ʿĀrifīn* (Istanbul, 1951; repr. Beirut, n.d.), 2:col. 144; no mention in Karabulūṭ, *Muʿjam al-Tārīkh al-Turāth,* 1:2458–59; mentioned by al-Ṣafadī as *Al-Durar wa-al-Ghurar wa-al-Dirar wa-al-ʿIrar* (*Al-Wāfī bi-al-Wafayāt,* 2:17; idem, *Aʿyān al-ʿAṣr,* 4:204, identified by the editor as an uncorrected form of *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ,* 204, n. 1).

[38] Bauer proposes "Über Tugenden und Laster" (Thomas Bauer, "Literarische Anthologien des Mamlūkenzeit," in *Die Mamlūke: Studien zu ihrer Geschichte und Kultur: Zum Gedenken an Ulrich Haarmann [1942–1999],* ed. Stephan Conermann and Anja Pistor-Hatam [Hamburg, 2003], 111 n. 2).

[39] *GAL,* 2:67; S2:54; Karabulūṭ, *Muʿjam al-Tārīkh al-Turāth,* 1:2458.

[40] Jamāl al-Dīn al-Waṭwāṭ, *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ al-Wāḍihah wa-ʿUrar al-Naqāʾiḍ al-Qābiḥah,* ed. Ibrāhīm Shams al-Dīn (Beirut, 2008), unfortunately a non-critical and non-scholarly edition, with a very brief introduction and no indexes of sources, proper names, and authors. See also Reinhard Weipert, *Classical Arabic Philology and Poetry: A Bibliographical Handbook of Important Editions from 1960 to 2000* (Leiden, 2002), 661.

[41] "Mamluk literature is fascinating because it transcends boundaries…" (Bauer, "Mamluk Literature," 130).

in a literary form, it transcends boundaries between scientific and literary pro-
duction. However, the literary aspect is far more prominent in the second work,
dedicated to ethics. Here al-Waṭwāṭ's declared purpose is to compose a discourse
on a universal theme like that of "virtues and vices," which regards without dis-
tinction elite and common people *(al-khawāṣṣ wa-al-ʿawāmm).* As usual with many
works of that period, the book is intended to be comprehensive and to constitute
the "gentleman's best friend," thus "exempting the intelligent from the company
of a bosom friend and intimate."[42] This recalls the definition proposed by al-Jāḥiẓ
in his famous piece in praise of the book,[43] and is anyway a rather common topos
in the introductions of anthologies. The target intended by al-Waṭwāṭ seems to be
the educated and intelligent man who seeks perfection and who is in a position to
appreciate the lesson of ancients and moderns; this kind of ideal audience must be
kept in mind to appreciate the philosophical slant of some passages of the work,
grounded in the Greek heritage. Well in accordance with the moralizing tones of
some intellectuals of his period, the main aim of al-Waṭwāṭ is the call to practice
virtue and to avoid vice, and in fact the introduction to *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ* takes a
strongly parenetic slant just after the first lines. The author addresses his readers,
inviting them to exert every effort to achieve perfection and not to succumb to
mere instinct, which would render them similar to animals; in this perspective
he sets out to present in detail the essence of morals *(akhlāq),* their true mean-
ings and their different manifestations, and to do this he has recourse to the
discourses of wise men, philosophers *(ḥukamāʾ)* as well as sharp-witted men *(ūlū
al-baṣāʾir wa-al-aḥlām).* Clearly, the *dicta et facta* (sayings and doings) of men of
virtue are thoroughly exploited as exemplars to show the way to perfection. *Ghu-
rar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ* mainly consists of quotations and reported materials, but contrary
to its literary models and specifically the anthologies of Abū Manṣūr al-Thaʿālibī
(d. 429/1038), and if compared with other great anthologies, it contains a relatively
large amount of prose written by the *muṣannif* himself: a long introduction, a
long epilogue, and several comments in the text. The liminal parts of *Ghurar,*
those that delimit the boundaries of the book and thus constitute a kind of frame,
are drawn up in a refined and precious style, closely recalling the *inshāʾ* used
in epistolography. This is not devoid of significance, since the two major prose
styles of the time were typically used in different kinds of works. Artistic prose,
typical of the chancellery's clerks and practiced by professionals of writing, was
characterized by a massive use of rhetorical devices *(badīʿ).* This style, sanctioned
by al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil and called *al-ṭarīqah al-Fāḍilīyah,* was used for epistolography

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[42] Al-Waṭwāṭ, *Ghurar,* 7.

[43] Abū ʿAmr al-Jāḥiẓ, *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān,* ed. ʿAbd al-Salām Hārūn (repr. Cairo, n.d.), 1:50–51, where
he alludes to the book as a *ṣāḥib,* a *rafīq,* etc. On this see N. Anghelescu, *Linguaggio e cultura nella
società araba* (Torino, 1993), 40–50 (trans. of *Limbaj și cultură în civilizația arabă* [Bucharest, 1986]).

and *maqāmāt*. A plainer prose, *adab* style, characterized by a less extensive use of rhetorical devices and a greater attention to contents, was mostly used for literary anthologies and encyclopedias.[44] The choice of a more refined style in the introduction and epilogue of his work not only confirms the fame of al-Waṭwāṭ as a sophisticated prose writer and a master of *inshāʾ* as acknowledged by al-Ṣafadī, but could also be taken as a hint at his desire to show his literary skills and his ability to reach the highest literary standards. The contents of the main body of *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ,* framed by the introduction and epilogue, were also in principle conceived as a demonstration of the author's erudition and his literary taste: aphorisms, wise sayings, verses of poetry, anecdotes and jokes, Quranic quotations, and hadith are chosen with the utmost accuracy and exhibit a remarkable familiarity with the cultural heritage and the literary patrimony.

3.2: Arrangement

Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ is organized around eight ethical cores, represented in the layout of the work according to the eight virtues and their opposites; this makes sixteen ethical features—and sixteen chapters—in all. The pairings of virtues and vices are the following: magnanimity/meanness; intelligence/stupidity; eloquence/inarticulateness; mental acuteness/carelessness; liberality/avarice; courage/cowardice; forgiveness/vengeance; fraternity/seclusion. Virtues and vices are presented and discussed respectively in two consecutive chapters, the first of the two dealing with the virtue and the second of the two dealing with the vice: for instance, chapter one is devoted to nobility *(karam)* and chapter two is devoted to meanness *(luʾm),* while chapter three treats intelligence *(ʿaql)* and chapter four stupidity *(ḥumq),* and so forth. Each chapter treating virtues contains in turn three sections: (1) praise of the virtue, (2) narrative materials and passages in prose and poetry featuring people who possessed or became famous for that virtue, and (3) censure of the virtue. Chapters on vices are organized similarly, subdivided into three sections: (1) censure of the vice, (2) narrative materials and passages in prose and poetry featuring people who possessed or became notorious for that vice, and (3) praise of the vice. There is only one exception to this arrangement, which is otherwise very regular: the third section of the last chapter, that on seclusion, is not in praise of this vice but consists instead of an invocation to God, in the form of a sophisticated prayer. The criteria at the basis of this judgment of value can be pinpointed in the works of such a fierce defender of the Arabic qualities as Ibn Qutaybah,[45] and the catalogue of virtues and vices included in many anthologies, and in *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ* as well, remains astonishingly stable over the centu-

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[44] Sallām, Adab, 2:41–3 and passim

[45] Ibrahim Geries, *Un Genre littéraire arabe: al-maḥâsin wa-l-masâwî* (Paris, 1977), 68.

ries.[46] They are mostly based on the conflict between Arabs and Persians during the *shuʿūbīyah*: Arab ethical values like generosity and magnanimity *(jūd, karam)* are stressed, while typically *shuʿūbī* shortcomings, for instance avarice and envy *(bukhl, ḥasad),* are regarded with contempt. Eloquence *(faṣāḥah),* opposed to inarticulateness *(ʿīy),* has a place of honor as a typical Arab virtue. Intelligence *(ʿaql)* and mental sharpness *(dhakāʾ)* also find their place in *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ,* exactly like in almost all the great anthologies and works of an encyclopedic character, where they usually rank first as signs of God's favor towards human beings.

By way of an example, let us briefly present chapters three and four, respectively on intelligence *(ʿaql)* and on silliness *(ḥumq);* these feature among the top subjects, immediately after magnanimity and meanness. Chapter three opens with a standard topic of Arabic *adab* literature: traditions and aphorisms in praise of the intellect and its excellence. More theoretical considerations regarding the essence of intellect as well as its seat follow this first section: intellect is divided into two types, innate (a gift of God) and acquired, and two possible seats are indicated, heart and brain. This is reminiscent of the debate on the essence and place of intellect whose echoes can be found in *adab* literature of the earlier periods, where it is often combined with two other notions, *ʿilm* and *adab.* In the literary treatment of this matter the practical side of *ʿaql* predominates over the theoretical side, and the description of the features, behavior and deeds of the intelligent person is given much more space than a purely theoretical description of the notion itself. This is also a peculiarity of *adab* literature, where virtues or vices are often described through their realization and their existence in human beings: *ʿaql* and *ḥumq, karam* and *luʾm,* for instance, are spoken of through the description of their concrete manifestations, or through examples featuring men behaving with intelligence, silliness, magnanimity, or meanness. A perfect example of this style is the trilogy of the polymath Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 571/1201), who deals with crucial themes like intelligence and stupidity (adding refinement, "*ẓarf,*" to this couple) in a collection of anecdotes featuring intelligent, silly, and refined people aimed at educating his addressees: *Akhbār al-Adhkiyāʾ,*[47] *Akhbār al-Ḥamqá wa-al-Mughaffalīn,*[48] and *Akhbār al-Ẓurafāʾ wa-al-Mutamājinīn.* Al-Waṭwāṭ

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[46] For an assessment of the significance of Ibn Qutaybah's output and a quick survey of encyclopedic works in the wide sense of the word and see Charles Pellat "Les Encyclopédies dans le monde arabe," *Cahiers d'Histoire Mondiale* 9, no. 3 (1996): 631–58, reprinted in idem, *Études sur l'histoire socio-culturelle de l'Islam* (London, 1976).

[47] On this see Antonella Ghersetti, "La conception d'intellect dans le Kitāb al-aḏkiyāʾ par Ibn al-Ǧawzī," *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* 10 (1992): 63–73.

[48] On this title see Katia Zakharia, "Le Savoir et ses dupes dans *Les Histoires des Idiots et des Sots* d'Ibn al-Ǧawzī," *Bulletin d'Études Orientales* 47 (1995): 217–33. A direct dependence on the two works of Ibn al-Jawzī, *Akhbār al-Adhkiyāʾ* and *Akhbār al-Ḥamqá wa-al-Mughaffalīn,* is not easily identified; neither the author nor the titles are mentioned by al-Waṭwāṭ, and as far as we could

also adopts this format: he minimizes any theoretical treatment of the matter, instead focusing on the concrete signs of intelligence through the description of intelligent people and their deeds. In this perspective, intelligence is identified with behaviors that demonstrate the ability to employ stratagems *(ḥiyal),* for example in order to get out of difficulty. In comparison with preceding *adab* anthologies, in the case of *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ* a stronger emphasis is placed on the ethical aspect of intelligence; among the signs of intellect are listed moderation, mildness, endurance, and even an ascetic attitude. Rather oddly, the third section of the chapter on intelligence, devoted to its blame, is limited to a single topic: slips of the tongue made by people of great intellect. These are fraught with several sorts of danger, from the risk of death to the risk of being more or less bitterly criticized. This restriction imposed on the flaw of intelligence is probably grounded in a crucial theme in Arabic literature: the relationship between intellectual faculties and speech. In the narratives and in literary representations of intelligent people, an appropriate utterance, for example, can rescue one's life and an inopportune utterance can, on the contrary, bring death. The very same theme (speech as a sign of intellectual faculties) is also represented in chapter four, "on silliness." This chapter has a marked humoristic flavor; it contains numerous jocular anecdotes on different categories of people who are deemed stupid: schoolteachers, women, eunuchs, weavers, and so on.[49] Many of the stories contain puns and witticisms, like this one:

> Hārūn al-Rashīd asked Bahlūl who was the dearest person to him; he replied, "The one who sates my stomach." Al-Rashīd then said: "I shall sate your stomach: do you love me?" and Bahlūl promptly answered: "Love is not on credit."[50]

Some minor subsections even carry a formal title clearly referring to jokes, humor, and pleasantries. Here also the point remains that speech is one manifestation, though perhaps not the most important one, of intellectual faculties, meaning both intelligence and the lack thereof, i.e., silliness.

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ascertain there is no verbatim quotation from these books. Nevertheless, some notions and some elements of the arrangement do recall them. Al-Waṭwāṭ probably knew both, and loosely drew inspiration from them.

[49] On the literary representations of stupid schoolteachers see Antonella Ghersetti, "'Like the Wick of the Lamp, Like the Silkworm They Are': Stupid Schoolteachers as a Literary Topic in Classical Arabic Sources," *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 10 (2010): 75–100.

[50] Al-Waṭwāṭ, *Ghurar,* 165.

3.3. Autobiographical References? The Theme of *Ḥirfat al-Adab*

The theme of speech and its utmost realization, eloquence *(faṣāḥah),* is also at the core of the following chapter, number five, devoted to eloquence *(faṣāḥah* and *balāghah).* One section in this chapter is particularly worthy of note both for how it illustrates this theme and for its possible connection with some autobiographical elements.[51] It deals with *ḥirfat al-adab,* an expression that could be translated as "the misery of the profession," often used "to express the disappointment felt by a poet when he leads a life of poverty and full of uncertainties."[52] Even if mostly mentioned in connection with poets and poetry, this expression is also used with reference to professional secretaries or grammarians. In this sense it seems a fitting expression for all the categories of men of letters or of professionals of the "art of the word," but nowhere in the sources so thoroughly perused by S. A. Bonebakker does the "misery of men of letters" appear to be connected with booksellers and stationers *(warrāqūn).* This is, however, precisely what happens in this section of *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ,* in which al-Waṭwāṭ specifically discusses the "misery of the profession" as it affects *ahl al-wirāqah,* the profession held by al-Waṭwāṭ himself. Notwithstanding the absence of any direct hint at his personal situation, in light of the biographical details given in the sources one cannot escape the impression that this part of the book was informed by al-Waṭwāṭ's personal experience. The section, entitled "Sometimes the misery of the profession affected the booksellers, and because of it the clouds of poverty and deprivation cast a shadow on them," contains a large number of verses and sayings alluding to the low standard of living for *wirāqah* professionals. A short story in particular depicts this, through the use of interesting puns pivoting on the comparison between the standard of life and work tools:

> Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ḥabīb, known as Abū Haffān, narrates: I asked a bookseller "How are you?" and he replied: "My life is narrower than an inkwell, my body is thinner than a ruler *(misṭarah),* my rank is more fragile than glass, my fortune is darker than oak apples mixed with vitriol, my misfortune is more stuck to me than resin, my food is more bitter than aloe, my drink is muddier than ink, and anxiety and pain flow in my heart's blood clot like ink in the pen nib." When I exclaimed: "My friend, you mentioned one affliction after the other!" he recited:

> Money hides every defect of men//money raises every scoundrel who is falling

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[51] Al-Waṭwāṭ, *Ghurar,* 207–9.

[52] Seeger A. Bonebakker, "The Misery of Men of Letters: Some Quotations from Their Poetry," *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* 19 (2001): 147.

> You must have money! Seek to make money//and hurl the book of
> science against a wall.

The core of the question seems to be the difficulty of earning one's living by means of culture and knowledge. What is new in al-Waṭwāṭ's treatment of the commonly discussed topic of the underestimation of knowledge in this earthly world is his attempt to associate it with the profession of *wirāqah*. In this context *wirāqah* represents obviously much more than simple book trade or paper making: it has to do more with the immaterial side of books than with their material, physical side. The *warrāq* is depicted not as a skilled craftsman but rather as a man of letters and a cultivated member of society, a viewpoint still more explicit in these verses:

> Practicing *wirāqah*, studying and occupying oneself with knowl-
> edge,
> begets humiliation, difficult financial straits, disgrace and afflic-
> tions

Seemingly, *ahl al-wirāqah,* like many other men of letters, often were not comfortably off, nor did they hold a high rank, and this uncomfortable situation is represented in still more crude terms in the following piece of poetry:

> As for *wirāqah,* it is the most unhappy profession//its branches
> and fruits are deprivation
> The one who practices it is comparable to the tailor's needle//that
> clothes the naked but is itself nude

Eloquence and the mastery of the art of the word *(faṣāḥah, balāghah)* had been for a long time, and still were, a means of social promotion and a way to obtain a high rank, even for people of inferior birth. In the light of this we can appreciate how disappointing it was for al-Waṭwāṭ to see that writing good prose and mastering the art of *inshāʾ,* rightly considered a branch of *faṣāḥah*, was not even enough to earn one's living, to say nothing of wealth and honors. The inclusion of *wirāqah* in the wider field of "the art of the word" is the interesting element in these passages, and can be taken as a hint at the aspiration of the members of a "middle class" to gain social promotion by means of culture.

3.4. Criteria of Selection and Composition

The criteria for the selection of the materials and the composition of *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ* are briefly outlined in the introduction: the thorough perusal and assessment of the sources precedes the selection of their best parts, in which loftiness of content must be associated with excellence of form and rhetorical value. Quality

and variety seem to be the criteria used to select the library from which materials are drawn. The alternation of jest and earnest *(al-jidd wa-al-hazl),* the principle of *adab* considered the prominent feature of the best literary discourse, is also re-called as a criterion guiding the author, together with the criterion of pertinence, on which basis materials are included or excluded. Both prose and poetry alter-nate, just like stringed pearls *(durar manẓūmah),* and "refined verses" are put side by side with narrative materials and humorous stories and jokes *(akhbār, nawādir, fukahāt).*[53] Al-Waṭwāṭ clarifies that he intentionally excluded from the book some suspicious genres, namely *khurāfāt* and *asmār,* fables and tales told in the course of night-time conversations. The openly fictional nature of these genres must have played a role in the decision to discard them, and even if he states that these are excluded to avoid the reader's boredom with useless prolixity,[54] we must keep in mind that this kind of narrative was the target of bitter criticism on the part of the guardians of orthodoxy. We cannot avoid recalling the words of Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī and Ibn al-Ḥājj, who directed slings and arrows against booksellers and copyists suspected of diffusing dangerous and immoral stuff of this sort. Al-Waṭwāṭ must not have been indifferent to this trend of his time: the moralizing tone present in the introduction and in the epilogue of *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ,* which surfaces from time to time throughout the text, and the pious tones of the fervent prayer he addresses to God by way of conclusion, constitute obvious hints at his deep religious feelings and at his sensitivity to ethical themes. Perhaps they also are to be taken as a token of his desire to comply with orthodoxy, in view of his admission to the circle of the intellectual élite.

Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ is composed after the pattern of the great literary antholo-gies of the golden age, which aimed at offering the readers a choice of prose and poetry they could exhibit during literary gatherings to show their refinement and good taste. Irwin says that Mamluk literature often has a "backward looking flavor,"[55] and al-Waṭwāṭ seems to be a fitting example of this "antiquarian" slant of Mamluk writers, both in the way he conceives his anthology and in the choice of his materials and sources. Al-Waṭwāṭ by far prefers to look backwards and de-rive his material from the past rather than presenting the contemporary literary production: the anecdotes he relates are mostly set in Umayyad or early Abbasid times and political personalities like ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, Ziyād ibn Abīhi, al-Ḥajjāj, Hārūn al-Rashīd, and al-Muʿtaṣim feature alongside poets and men of let-ters like Abū Nuwās, Dhū al-Rummah, and even the pre-Islamic past is well rep-resented with great names such as Alexander the Great, Chosroes I Anūshirwān,

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[53] Al-Waṭwāṭ, *Ghurar,* 8.

[54] A further hint at the necessity of synthesis to avoid boredom and to help memorization and repetition (al-Waṭwāṭ, *Ghurar,* 611, 607) has been postponed to the epilogue.

[55] Irwin, "Mamluk Literature," 9.

and Ardashīr ibn Babek. As usual in this genre of works, the material contained in the book is almost exclusively based on quotations, excepting the liminal parts framing the book (introduction and epilogue) and some brief interventions and comments in the text. Some of these are particularly significant in order to comprehend the authorial work, in that it is there that the writer expresses his opinions and clarifies his choices, like the criteria of composition or his assessment of famous authors and their literary output. Some intra-textual authorial interventions aim at explaining the reasons for the exclusion of certain materials: for instance, the passage where al-Waṭwāṭ accounts for the need to skip some amusing stories about Mānī (a famous "intelligent madman"), which are omitted for the sake of brevity and pertinence.[56] Some other interventions are less neutral in that they express bitter criticism against morally suspect behaviors. A case in point is the comment on al-Mutanabbī, whose verses lampooning Kāfūr are quoted in a section on eunuchs. Al-Waṭwāṭ, after having cursed the poets for their hypocrisy, recalls al-Mutanabbī's panegyrics of Kāfūr and then himself severely reproaches the poet: in the crudest terms, he accuses him of being self-serving and false for having first praised and then satirized his patron.[57] While a sophisticated sample of artistic prose, this passage still remains rather unpleasant in tone and one has the impression that now and again the author felt the need to take a stand in line with what the moralists would have expected.

3.5 Sources

In general, al-Waṭwāṭ says almost nothing about the sources upon which he relies; in his introduction they are only described in terms of quality, being "good books collected in various branches of culture"[58] from which he picked the best. The modality of citation is rather loose; verses of poetry, for example, are often anonymous and simply introduced by *qāla al-shāʿir*. With respect to aphorisms and sayings, he sometimes mentions the personality to whom a certain saying is attributed, but much more often he has recourse to generic expressions like *al-ḥukamāʾ, baʿḍ al-ḥukamāʾ, baʿḍ ahl al-tajārib, baʿḍ al-bulaghāʾ*, or simply to one of the *verba dicendi,* like *qālū* or *qīla*. Anecdotes and stories are almost always introduced in this way, by means of *ḥukiya, mā ḥukiya, min al-maḥkī*, or by a generic label like *nādirah* or *min aẓraf mā qīla;* sometimes there is no introductory formula at all and the narration begins abruptly. When existing, reference to the sources in *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ* is generally made in two different ways: quotation of titles and, much more frequently, quotation of authors' names devoid of any refer-

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[56] Al-Waṭwāṭ, *Ghurar,* 171.

[57] Al-Waṭwāṭ, *Ghurar,* 159.

[58] "*Ḥisān al-kutub fī ḍurūb al-adab*" (al-Waṭwāṭ, *Ghurar,* 7).

ence to a specific title. Another kind of source could also be singled out: works that are the point of reference of *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ* and constitute its formal and thematic model, but are not overtly mentioned.

As we have already stressed, citations of precise titles are quite scanty; in over six hundred pages of text we could spot only twenty:[59]

Shuʿab al-Īmān of Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī (d. 458/1066) (quoted in the chapter on *karam*)

Kitāb al-Aghānī of Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī (d. 363/972) (quoted in the chapter on *ʿaql*)

Al-Hafawāt al-Nādirah of Muḥammad ibn Hilāl al-Ṣābiʾ, known as Ghars al-Niʿmah (d. 480/1088) (quoted in the chapters on *ʿaql* and on *ʿafw*)

Manthūr al-Ḥikam (better known as *Mukhtār al-Ḥikam*) of Mubashshir ibn Fātik (fifth/eleventh century) (quoted in the chapter on *ḥumq*)

Kitāb al-Amthāl of Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Maydānī (d. 518/1124) (quoted in the chapter on *ḥumq*)

ʿUqalāʾ al-Majānīn of Ibn Ḥabīb al-Nīsābūrī (d. 406/1015–16) (quoted in the chapter on *ḥumq*)

Kitāb al-Bayān wa-al-Tabyīn of al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/868) (quoted in the chapter on *faṣāḥah*)

Risālah fī Madḥ al-Kalām (?) of al-Babbaghāʾ (d. 398/1008) (quoted in the chapter on *faṣāḥah*)

Yatīmat al-Dahr of al-Thaʿālibī (d. 429/1038) (quoted in the chapter on *faṣāḥah*)

Akhbār fī Wulāt Miṣr (?) of Abū Muḥammad Ḥasan Ibn Zūlāq[60] (d. 386 or 387/996 or 997) (quoted in the chapter on *ʿiy*)

Kitāb al-ʿUmdah of Ibn Rashīq al-Qayrawānī (d. 456 or 463/1063 or 1071) (quoted in the chapter on *ʿiy*)

Badāʾiʿ al-Badaʾih of ʿAlī ibn Ẓāfir ibn al-Ḥusayn Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan al-Azdī (d. 623/1226 or 613/1216) (quoted in the chapter on *ʿiy*)

Al-Mathal al-Sāʾir fī Adab al-Kātib wa-al-Shāʿir of Ḍiyāʾ al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr (d. 637/1239) (quoted in the chapter on *ʿiy*)

Al-Zāhir fī Maʿānī Kalimāt al-Nās of Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim Ibn al-Anbārī (d. 328/940) (quoted in the chapter on *dhakāʾ*)

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[59] An index of names would have made it much simpler to assess the frequency of the occurrences of each name and title; unfortunately the edition we have consulted lacks this kind of tool and, to the best of my knowledge, an edition meeting academic standards is not available yet. The following list is thus based on perusal of the whole work, but some titles could have escaped our attention. The titles are listed in order of their appearance in the text.

[60] Erroneously mentioned as Ibn Dhūlāq in the edition we consulted. The right title is probably *Akhbār Quḍāt Miṣr*.

Sirr al-Faṣāḥah of ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad al-Khafājī al-Ḥalabī (d. 466/1074) (quoted in the chapter on *taghafful*)

Kitāb al-Wuzarāʾ wa-al-Kuttāb of Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ʿAbdūs al-Jahshiyārī (d. 331/942–43) (quoted in the chapter on *sakhāʾ*)

Zahr al-Ādāb wa-Thamar al-Albāb of Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm ibn ʿAlī al-Ḥuṣrī (d. 413/1022) (quoted in the chapter on *shajāʿah*)

Ṭabaqāt al-Shuʿarāʾ (?) of Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ʿImrān al-Marzubānī (d. 384/994) (quoted in the chapter on *ʿafw*)

Al-Tadhkirah al-Ḥamdūnīyah of Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan Ibn Ḥamdūn (d. 562/1102) (quoted in the chapter on *intiqām*)

Bulghat al-Ẓurafā fī Tārīkh al-Khulafā of al-Rūḥī[61] (quoted in the chapter on *intiqām*)

Some of these titles deserve particular attention. The first is a treatise in praise of speech *(Risālah fī Madḥ al-Kalām)* attributed to the poet and man of letters of Naṣībīn Abū al-Faraj al-Babbaghāʾ al-Makhzūmī (d. 398/1008). A fervent admirer of al-Mutanabbī, he was part of the entourage of Sayf al-Dawlah and lived in Aleppo for a while. His works, which at the end of the fourth/tenth century included three hundred pages of poetry, only survive in the anthologies of al-Thaʿālibī, who also quotes long and significant passages of his letters.[62] In the bibliographical sources we did not find any reference to a treatise entitled "*Fī Madḥ al-Kalām*," nor is any similar title mentioned by al-Thaʿālibī in the long section of his *Yatīmat al-Dahr* dedicated to the best of al-Babbaghāʾs poetry and prose ("Fī Dhikr Abī al-Faraj ʿAbd al-Wāḥid al-Babbaghāʾ wa-Ghurar Nathrihi wa-Naẓmihi"). A quick survey of the sources did not help in identifying the sentence quoted by al-Waṭwāṭ and attributed to al-Babbaghāʾ. This approximate quotation, in this and in other passages as well, could be taken as a hint at the fact that al-Waṭwāṭ quotes by heart or in any case does not care for quoting accurately.

The second is *Bulghat al-Ẓurafā fī Tārīkh al-Khulafā* of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Rūḥī (d. after 648/1250), a book of history presenting information on the Islamic dynasties starting from Muḥammad and extending to his successors, from *al-khulafāʾ al-rāshidūn* up to al-ʿĀḍud li-Dīn Allāh.[63] Brockelmann, Ziriklī, and Kaḥḥālah bear no information on this al-Rūḥī, nor have we been able to trace any details on his life and works elsewhere. The only piece of information we could obtain from

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[61] Erroneously mentioned as al-Dawḥī in the edition we consulted.

[62] *GAL,* 1:90, S1:145; R. Blachère, "al-Babbaghāʾ, " *EI2,* 1:845–46.

[63] In the introduction the author lists the kind of information that he plans to give for each personality as follows: *nasab, asmāʾ, ṣifāt, nuʿūt, ummuhātuhum, awlāduhum, muddatuhum fī-al-wilāyah* (Abū al-Ḥasan al-Rūḥī, *Bulghat al-Ẓurafā fī Tārīkh al-Khulafā,* ed. Muḥammad Z. M. ʿAzab [Port Said, n.d.], 3).

the perusal of his work is a *terminus post quem* for his death, since the last year mentioned in the book is 648/1250. Al-Waṭwāṭ quotes this source in connection with the persecution of the Banū Umayyah on the part of al-Saffāḥ and his uncle ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAlī. The story of the desecration of the corpse of Hishām, which appears to have been torn into pieces by ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAlī in 132/750, is quoted verbatim, with only minor adaptation, from *Bulghat al-Ẓurafāʾ,*[64] a source that is mentioned to explain the reason for the desecration: the unjust flogging of ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAlī's father that had been ordered by Hishām. This addition could hint at the author's desire to show his control of the sources and his capability of finding further useful information.

In contrast to the preceding title, which is mentioned in its full and correct form, the third reference on which we will focus is somewhat less clear. Al-Waṭwāṭ mentions a certain *Akhbār fī Wulāt Miṣr,* attributing it to Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan Ibn Zūlāq (d. 386/996 or 387/998). This Egyptian historian wrote works continuing those of al-Kindī on the governors and judges of Egypt, which are almost entirely lost except for the extensive quotations one can find in the books of al-Maqrīzī, Ibn Saʿīd, Ibn Ḥajar, and later authors.[65] This title, *Akhbār fī Wulāt Miṣr,* does not feature in the bibliography of Ibn Zūlāq; al-Maqrīzī's *Muqaffá* and the other sources we consulted mention instead an *Akhbār Quḍāt Miṣr,* while *Akhbār Wulāt Miṣr* appears among al-Kindī's titles. If we discard the possibility of an error on the part of the copyist or the editor, this—like al-Babbaghāʾ's quotation presented earlier—could also prove that al-Waṭwāṭ quotes by heart, and with some inaccuracy.

The next citation we will examine is in fact a combination of two different sources, and could be interesting in terms of evaluating the working method of al-Waṭwāṭ. He mentions the *Kitāb al-ʿUmdah* of Ibn Rashīq al-Qayrawānī (d. 456/1063 or 463/1071)[66] in connection with an anecdote featuring Abū Nuwās, al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Aḥnaf, al-Ḥusayn ibn al-Ḍaḥḥāk, al-Khalīʿ, and Muslim ibn al-Walīd al-Ṣarīʿ improvising verses of poetry on an inexact quotation of the Quran made by Yaḥyá ibn al-Muʿallá al-Kātib.[67] Al-Waṭwāṭ explains that the story is contained in the *Kitāb al-ʿUmdah* of Ibn Rashīq, who adds to the anecdote an additional line of poetry. In its entirety this passage does not completely correspond with the relevant passage from *Kitāb al-ʿUmdah,* but the verses of poetry, which are the focus of the narrative, are quoted verbatim and, all in all, the quotation is reliable. Al-Waṭwāṭ then informs us that he found supplementary information (a verse of Abū

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[64] Al-Rūḥī, *Bulghat al-Ẓurafa,* 104.

[65] *GAL,* 1:149, S1:230; [ed.], "Ibn Zūlāq," *EI2,* 3:979.

[66] On him see *GAL,* 1:307, S1:539–40; Ch. Bouyahia, "Ibn Rashīḳ," *EI2,* 3:903–4.

[67] Ibn Rashīq, *Kitāb al-ʿUmdah fī Maḥāsin al-Shiʿr wa-Ādābihi wa-Naqdihi,* ed. Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd (Beirut, 1981), part 2:91–92, in the chapter on *taḍmīn* and *ijāzah.*

al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Ḥuṭayʾah) and says: "Reading the *Badāʾiʿ al-Badāʾih,* I happened to come across an addition *(ziyādah)* that it is necessary to mention."[68] *Badāʾiʿ al-Badāʾih*[69] is an anthology of improvisations composed by ʿAlī ibn Ẓāfir ibn al-Ḥusayn Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan al-Azdī (d. 623/1226 or 613/1216), an Egyptian *faqīh,* historian, *adīb,* and poet, who was a civil servant in the chancery of al-ʿAzīz, then al-ʿĀdil, then al-Malik al-Ashraf Mūsá ibn al-Malik al-ʿĀdil al-Ayyūbī in Damascus.[70] Along with his works of a historiographical nature, he also wrote an anthology on courageous men *(Akhbār al-Shujaʿān),* which could have been used as a source by al-Waṭwāṭ in the relevant chapter of *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ.* ʿAlī ibn Ẓāfir relates the circumstances of this improvisation in an anecdote that contains a long *isnād* going back to al-Ṣūlī, on the authority of Ibn Khurradādhbih (d. 300/911?).[71] Al-Waṭwāṭ does not mention any *isnād,* nor does he refer to Ibn Ẓāfir's version in its entirety, but prefers to recall the missing verse and add it to the "defective" version of the episode. He could have mentioned the "complete" version, but in doing this he would not have had the opportunity to stress his ability to compare different versions of the same narrative. Reconstructing the process of finding and combining useful information enables al-Waṭwāṭ to emphasize his familiarity with the sources and his skill in selecting and organizing useful information. The quick reference to *Bulghat al-Ẓurafāʾ* mentioned earlier is another element pointing to his ability to select the best and probably also a hint at the wealth of books he had at his disposal.

The last example we would like to consider is the reference to *Ṭabaqāt al-Shuʿarāʾ* of Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ʿImrān al-Marzubānī (d. 384/994). Al-Marzubānī was a literary scholar from Baghdad who studied with famous grammarians like Abū Bakr ibn al-Anbārī and Ibn Durayd, and wrote encyclopedic works on poets and philologians.[72] Few of his works are extant, but information on the titles and sizes of those that did not survive can be found in the *Fihrist* of Ibn al-Nadīm. To the best of our knowledge, a book called *Ṭabaqāt al-Shuʿarāʾ* does not feature in al-Marzubānī's bibliography, but an encyclopedia of poets entitled *Muʿjam al-Shuʿarāʾ* has been preserved, though only partially. The book of al-Marzubānī is mentioned in connection with an anecdote representing an exchange of verses between the caliph al-Maʾmūn and the poet Ibrāhīm ibn Yaḥyá al-Yazīdī (d. 225/840), one of his boon companions. The *nisbah* of the poet is elucidated in the following passage, in which al-Waṭwāṭ obviously intends to complement the story he has just quoted with a useful piece of information.

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[68] Al-Waṭwāṭ, *Ghurar,* 228.

[69] ʿAlī ibn Ẓāfir, *Badāʾiʿ al-Badaʾih* (Bulaq, 1278/1861).

[70] On him see *GAL,* 1:321; SI:553–54; Kaḥḥālah, *Muʿjam al-Muʾallifīn,* 3:453.

[71] ʿAlī ibn Ẓāfir, *Badāʾiʿ,* 123–24.

[72] R. Sellheim, "al-Marzubānī," *EI2,* 2:634–35.

Many other sources were no doubt exploited, but are not explicitly mentioned: reading the pages of *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ,* one cannot avoid recalling major anthologies of the golden age, for example *Muḥāḍarāt al-Udabāʾ* of al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, *Zahr al-Ādāb* of al-Ḥuṣrī, *Rabīʿ al-Abrār* of al-Zamakhsharī, or collections of anecdotes like *Akhbār al-Adhkiyāʾ* and *Kitāb al-Ḥamqá wa-al-Mughaffalīn* of Ibn al-Jawzī. Al-Waṭwāṭ refers to authors' names much more frequently than to book titles: among the personalities occurring with a certain frequency one can find men of letters and secretaries such as al-Thaʿālibī, who is mentioned quite often, Ibn Qutaybah, Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, al-ʿAttābī, al-Ṣāḥib ibn ʿAbbād, al-Jāḥiẓ, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, Ibn al-ʿAmīd al-Kātib, Ḍiyāʾ al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr, and Abū Bakr al-Ṣūlī, but also grammarians and philologians like al-Khalīl ibn Aḥmad al-Farāhidī, Ibn al-Anbārī, al-Aṣmaʿī, Abū al-Aswad al-Duʾalī, and ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī. Unfortunately, the references to these authorities are so loose that one is not in a position to say whether al-Waṭwāṭ consulted their books himself, or if these are second-hand quotations. A large number of aphorisms and wise sayings are ascribed to well-known historical, semi-legendary, or legendary personalities: Wahb ibn Munabbih, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq, al-Shaʿbī, Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Malik, al-Muhallab ibn Abī Ṣufrah, ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Ṣāliḥ, ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ṭāhir, the wise caliph al-Maʾmūn, and al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays feature alongside Jesus, Luqmān, Buzurgmihr, the Prophet, and his companions. Poetry has an important place in this anthology, and short quotations (from two to ten lines of poetry) are numerous. The poet who is by far cited most frequently is certainly al-Mutanabbī, followed by Ibn al-Rūmī, al-Buḥturī, Abū Tammām, and Abū Nuwās. Compared to the quotations of the poets of the Abbasid period, references to pre-Islamic and Umayyad poetry are all in all rather infrequent, and contemporary poets *(shuʿarāʾ al-ʿaṣr),* such as Bahāʾ al-Dīn Zuhayr, scarcely appear in the pages of *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ.* This, coupled with the bookish nature of his sources, could be taken as a hint at the marginalization al-Waṭwāṭ probably suffered and which is attested in the biographical profile outlined by his contemporaries.

Among the authors mentioned by al-Waṭwāṭ, three deserve our attention: Abū al-Faraj al-Babbaghāʾ, Abū al-Faḍl al-Mīkālī (d. 436/1044–45), and al-Bākharzī (d. 467/1075). These are all personalities connected, in one way or another, to Abū Manṣūr al-Thaʿālibī, the great literary critic and anthologist author of *Yatīmat al-Dahr* and *Thimār al-Qulūb.* As for al-Babbaghāʾ, all we know of his prose and poetry is contained in al-Thaʿālibī's anthologies, and this means that the passages of al-Babbaghāʾ quoted by al-Waṭwāṭ result from his acquaintance with al-Thaʿālibī's books. Abū al-Faḍl al-Mīkālī, a poet stylist and traditionist, was a member of the most influential family of Nishapur and remained an intimate friend of Abū Manṣūr al-Thaʿālibī throughout his life.[73] This relationship was so close

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[73] On him see C. E. Bosworth, "Mīkālīs," *EI2,* 7:26.

that the two names are both associated with *Al-Muntaḥal,* an early collection of poetry that is attributed to both of them, but most probably is "a revision by al-Thaʿālibī of his friend's work."[74] Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bākharzī, a poet and anthologist, was a student of al-Thaʿālibī and a poet himself, and wrote *Dumyat al-Qaṣr* as a continuation of his master's *Yatīmah.*[75] The presence of these two names, al-Mīkālī and al-Bākharzī, among the sources mentioned in *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ* is probably to be taken as a hint at the thorough knowledge al-Waṭwāṭ had of al-Thaʿālibī's life, acquaintances, and works, and the simultaneous presence of Abū al-Faraj al-Babbaghāʾ, Abū al-Faḍl al-Mīkālī, and al-Bākharzī among the sources mentioned in *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ* certainly points to the familiarity of al-Waṭwāṭ with al-Thaʿālibī's literary output. All these elements suggest that al-Waṭwāṭ held al-Thaʿālibī in high esteem and considered him and his works as an example to imitate. A further suggestion in this sense is the genre that inspires the overall architecture and the arrangement of *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ, al-maḥāsin wa-al-masāwiʾ,* whose undisputed master was al-Thaʿālibī. Abū Manṣūr al-Thaʿālibī thus emerges as the most influential author for al-Waṭwāṭ in terms of style and of criteria of selection and combination of the materials.[76] While his works certainly inspired the antonymic pattern of al-Waṭwāṭ's anthology, the influence of al-Thaʿālibī is not discernible in the parenetic slant and the moralizing tone that characterizes *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ,* which is completely absent from al-Thaʿālibī's works. While al-Waṭwāṭ emphatically proclaims the ethical goal of his book, intended as a guide to virtue and perfection (which corresponds to practicing virtue, *faḍīlah,* and avoiding vice, *radhīlah*),[77] al-Thaʿālibī openly proclaims the eminently literary and aesthetic purpose of his anthologies.

4. Patterns: The Genre *al-Maḥāsin wa-al-Masāwiʾ*

Al-Waṭwāṭ's dependence upon the great authors of the past, and especially al-Thaʿālibī, is clearly discernible in the model informing *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ: al-maḥāsin wa-al-masāwiʾ.*[78] This is rooted in the Jāḥiẓian corpus and has a long history in Arabic literature. When applied to persons, or to habits and behaviors, the paired terms *al-maḥāsin/al-masāwiʾ* mean "merits/vices" or "commendable/

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[74] E. Rowson, "al-Thaʿālibī," *EI2,* 10:426.

[75] On him see D. S. Margoliouth, "al-Bākharzī," *EI2,* 1:952.

[76] We know for instance that al-Thaʿālibī composed a *risālah* on friendship (see Bilal Orfali, "The Art of the Muqaddima in the Works of Abū Manṣūr al-Thaʿālibī [d. 429/1039]," in *The Weaving of Words: Approaches to Classical Arabic Literature*, ed. Lale Behzadi [Beirut, 2011], 181–202; the work is quoted at p. 186), and friendship is one of the favorite themes of *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ.*

[77] Al-Waṭwāṭ, *Ghurar,* 14–15.

[78] For a concise history of the *al-maḥāsin wa-al-masāwiʾ* genre see the essay by Geries, *Un Genre littéraire arabe*, cited above, and idem, "al-Maḥāsin wa-l-masāwī," *EI2,* 5:1223–27.

blameworthy." This pair of terms can also denote good/bad examples of some-thing, the pros/cons of something, or the positive/negative sides of something, and it is in this last connotation that they constitute the conceptual core of the *al-maḥāsin wa-al-masāwiʾ* genre, roughly translated as "merits and faults," in al-Thaʿālibī's output.

If al-Jāḥiẓ was the first to use this dichotomous structure of the discourse and apply it to ethics *(akhlāq),* the first book properly belonging to this genre is *Al-Maḥāsin wa-al-Masāwiʾ* by al-Bayhaqī (a rather obscure Zaydī author of the fourth/tenth century), which was probably composed during the reign of al-Muqtadir (908–32). It is organized in chapters, each of which is divided into two parts, the first devoted to *maḥāsin* (virtues) and the second devoted to *masāwiʾ* (vices), so that we have for instance a chapter on fidelity/infidelity, one on courage/coward-ice, and so on. This arrangement based on antonymy can easily be traced back to al-Jāḥiẓ, who is frequently cited and whose works seem to be the source of many passages, both in method and content. Al-Bayhaqī's book, intended both for instruction and entertainment, contains the "practical philosophy" of the author and addresses the general public.[79] Al-Bayhaqī's work was almost unknown to later *adab* authors, with some rare exceptions: the first is the anonymous author of *Al-Maḥāsin wa-al-Aḍdād,* for some time attributed to al-Jāḥiẓ,[80] who "borrows" many materials from al-Bayhaqī and transforms this latter's methodological ap-proach into a simple literary game; the second is al-Damīrī (742–808/1341–1405), who cites it in his *Ḥayāt al-Ḥayawān al-Kubrá.* This quotation suggests that the work surely circulated in Egypt in the fourteenth century and perhaps before, and it is not impossible that al-Waṭwāṭ came across it and could thus appreciate its organization and methodological approach. Thanks to the false attribution of *Al-Maḥāsin wa-al-Aḍdād* to al-Jāḥiẓ, the appreciation of this method of compo-sition grew, so that other examples appeared in the course of the fourth/tenth and fifth/eleventh centuries. The thesis/antithesis method characteristic of the *al-maḥāsin wa-al-masāwiʾ* genre was widely practiced by the famous anthologist and literary critic al-Thaʿālibī: he wrote three works shaped around it, but in a way completely different from that of al-Jāḥiẓ or al-Bayhaqī. Two of his titles, *Al-Ẓarāʾif wa-al-Laṭāʾif fī al-Aḍdād* and *Yaqāwīt fī baʿḍ al-Maqāwīt fī Madḥ Kull Shayʾ wa-Dhammihi,* (each one being "the first" of this genre, if we trust al-Thaʿālibī's words), contain the same materials and deal with the same subjects. Contrary to al-Bayhaqī's book, they do not include (with one single exception) anecdotes or narratives and are only conceived to present the readers beautiful sentences and verses of poetry to be cited in the course of witty conversations. Clearly, for al-Thaʿālibī the dialectical method was not a means for treating philosophi-

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[79] Geries, *Un Genre littéraire arabe,* 71–101.

[80] Ibid., 102 ff.

cal or ethical matters, like it had been for al-Jāḥiẓ or al-Bayhaqī; it was rather a display of virtuosity and a way to show his mastery of Arabic eloquence and his thorough knowledge of the literary tradition.[81] This is still more evident in another work of his, *Taḥsīn al-Qabīḥ wa-Taqbīḥ al-Ḥasan* ("Beautifying the ugly and uglifying the beautiful"), shaped according to the principle of the paradox, considered in literary criticism as a sign of eloquence.[82] It contains a selection of the materials taken from his two other titles mentioned above, where things usually considered blamable are instead praised, and the other way round. The success of the *al-maḥāsin wa-al-masāwiʾ* genre is also attested in other cases, in method if not in content, and the practice of first praising and then blaming the same thing is also found in famous works like *Ḥikāyat Abī al-Qāsim al-Baghdādī* and al-Ḥarīrī's *Maqāmāt.*[83] If al-Jāḥiẓ applied the dialectical approach to ethics in order to show the shortcomings of extremism and demonstrate the superiority of the Aristotelian way of the happy medium, in later times, and especially with al-Thaʿālibī, "the typical man of letters unhampered by knowledge of Aristotle and his philosophy,"[84] this method gradually lost its ethical slant to become a sort of bravura performance completely devoid of any educational intent. The peculiar trait of *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ* is the systematic application of the method perfected by al-Thaʿālibī in a very different, moralizing and educative perspective. In some way the two extremities of the line along which the genre developed, al-Jāḥiẓ first and al-Waṭwāṭ last, join each other in that al-Waṭwāṭ's anthology shares the ethical orientation of al-Jāḥiẓ' works, even if in very different terms. *Mutatis mutandis*, our Mamluk bookseller in a certain sense could thus be seen as the spiritual heir of the great Abbasid polymath.

5. A Philosophical Background?

The proclaimed ethical purpose and the organization of *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ* refl ct a certain philosophical background in al-Waṭwāṭ's education, which is also attested by the philosophical concepts and terms that surface throughout the text. Terminology, notions, and the conceptual frame of his work are strongly dependent on Hellenizing philosophy and deserve a careful examination. For instance, in his introduction al-Waṭwāṭ starts by stating that the difference of habits *(akhlāq)* is a function of the difference of elements *(aʿrāq),* and the inclination of each individ-

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[81] Geries, *Un Genre littéraire arabe,* 137.

[82] On this literary practice and al-Thaʿālibī's work in particular see Geert J. Van Gelder, "Beautifying the Ugly and Uglifying the Beautiful: The Paradox in Classical Arabic Literature," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 48 (2003): 321–51.

[83] Geries, *Un Genre littéraire arabe,* 143.

[84] Van Gelder, "Beautifying the Ugly," 336.

ual depends on his essences and accidents *(jawāhir wa-aʿrāḍ).*[85] The relationship between physical constitution and psychology, or in other terms between body and soul, is typical of the humoral physiology of Greek philosophy and medicine that was integrated into Islamic medicine, and so also is the terminology used. But ethics is by far the most interesting facet of this long-standing tradition: in *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ* al-Waṭwāṭ shows the same ambivalent attitude towards virtues and vices typical of Aristotelian thought (which by no means corresponds to moral relativism) that al-Jāḥiẓ adopted in his works. In Aristotelian ethics, and its Islamic reception, a good or a bad behavior can only be assessed as such in context: that is to say that virtues and vices are not absolute, but they must be judged depending on circumstances. In brief, behavior can only be evaluated in terms of the way a certain man shows his positive or negative features in a specific context. Everything is relative, and thus an excess of virtue can turn into a blamable feature: for instance, generosity can become profligacy, and so on.[86] To demonstrate the ambivalence reigning in the ethical realm al-Waṭwāṭ, like some of his predecessors in the genre *al-maḥāsin wa-al-masāwiʾ,* praises and blames the same feature, both for virtues and vices. This mirror symmetry in the inner organization of the chapters of *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ* very properly highlights the relativity of evaluation in ethics, especially in the third section of each chapter, devoted to blaming virtues and praising vices, which is a tell-tale mark of this approach. Al-Waṭwāṭ seems aware that absolute virtue cannot exist and that it can accidentally be spoiled by some external element, just as the moon is darkened by an eclipse, and good and evil can only be defined by reciprocally contrasting them.[87] The same premises seem to be at the core of what could be defined in Aristotelian terms as "the golden man," whose rational soul stands in the middle *(mutawassiṭat al-ḥāl)* between the two poles: every virtue is thus an intermediate condition between excess and deficiency, a mean between two extremes.

This position, shared by al-Jāḥiẓ and the Islamic ethicists of that period, is widely represented in *adab* literature. Nevertheless, in *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ* the ambivalent attitude so characteristic of the *al-maḥāsin wa-al-masāwiʾ* genre is much more mitigated and there seems to be little margin for ambiguity: the lexical entries are used to pinpoint unambiguous concepts, the book has a rigorous and clear-cut structure, and the conceptual frame and organization of the work are clearly articulated in a systematic antonymic disposition. Antonymy is in fact the backbone of this anthology, starting from the title which distinctly sets forth a positive pole opposed to a negative pole. This is not fortuitous at all, inasmuch as the title serves as a key of interpretation for the whole text and is, as al-Waṭwāṭ

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[85] Al-Waṭwāṭ, *Ghurar,* 7.

[86] Geries, *Un Genre littéraire arabe,* 54 ff.

[87] Al-Waṭwāṭ, *Ghurar,* 8, 9.

says (showing here a remarkably lucid perception of the processes implied in anthologizing), "an instructive announcer"[88] of the contents of the book. Antonymy is also represented in the choice of the ethical themes, since both a notion and its contrary are treated; and antonymy is at the core of the method of exposition, based on the successive praise and blame of the positive or negative feature involved. There is a remarkable harmony of content and form, of themes and organization, and this gives this work its peculiar flavor.

Other elements hinting at a philosophical background can be pointed out. Vocabulary, philosophical premises, and perspective are all hints at the familiarity the author must have had with the contents and methods of Greek philosophy, perhaps not based on the habitual reading of the direct sources but on the extensive perusal of secondary sources and learned conversations. One significant example is the use of the term *al-nafs al-nāṭiqah* ("the rational soul"), which alludes to the theory of the tripartite soul formulated in Plato's *Republic* and *Phaedrus*. This is not limited to mere lexicographical pointers; concepts and ideas can also readily be identified, such as the exhortation to practicing virtue. Al-Waṭwāṭ affirms that natural disposition *(khulq)* can be defined as a habit of the soul that a man practices spontaneously. Men can have good or bad natural dispositions, but those who do not have good natural dispositions can acquire praiseworthy morals by means of practice and familiarity (*al-riyāḍah wa-al-ulfah*).[89] This statement unquestionably recalls the Aristotelian notion of virtue as a habit; in Aristotle's moral philosophy, a virtuous character needs to be trained to virtue by teachers and experience. This theory emerges from the words of al-Waṭwāṭ when he states that man achieves virtue by keeping good company, or, on the contrary, acquires vice by keeping bad company.[90] The point is of course introduced by the usual quotations of the appropriate Muslim traditions, but soon the passage takes a more general tone and an unknown *ḥakīm* is brought up to explain the point further; he specifies that a friend of good morality *(akhlāq)* and behavior *(sīrah)* is a paragon and a model to imitate. This corresponds to the premises of Aristotelian ethics: the importance of friendship in directing man to virtue or vice, depending on good or bad company, is one of the points emphasized in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics,* a work widely known in the Arab world. In all probability al-Waṭwāṭ had this treatise in mind when he mentioned "those who occupy themselves with ethics" *(al-mutakallimūn fī al-akhlāq),*[91] and it is also no accident that the fifteenth chapter of *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ* is devoted to friendship and the significance of choosing good friends. In this connection al-Waṭwāṭ also emphasizes

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[88] Ibid., 9.

[89] Ibid., 10.

[90] Ibid., 11.

[91] Ibid., 10.

the importance of personal effort and commitment to reach perfection (*kamāl*),[92] which is a point also treated in the *Nicomachean Ethics,* where the excellent human being is defined as somebody "doing well and being serious" *(spoudaios).* Aristotle also asserts that for a human being virtue must involve reason, and again this is echoed by al-Waṭwāṭ, who underlines the role of thinking *(fikr)* and discernment *(tamyīz)* in leading to virtue.[93] The insistence on the practical nature of ethics, rather than on its theoretical character, also reflects al-Waṭwāṭ's apparent reliance on Aristotelian thought. In this perspective, virtue is rooted in practice and behavior much more than in knowledge, and this equates to saying that to become good one must actually be virtuous and behave as a virtuous man. That is why al-Waṭwāṭ over and over again urges the reader to behave in a praiseworthy manner and to practice virtue.[94] This practical slant also finds a very proper and concrete realization in the structure of *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ,* and namely in the second section of each chapter, where each virtue or vice is depicted through the representation of people characterized by it or who became famous for it. Thus, in each chapter sections one and three constitute a kind of theoretical frame for the notion presented, bracketing a second section that shows, so to speak, virtue (or vice) "in context," concretized in the sayings and deeds of virtuous (or corrupt) people. This careful construction is a further indication of the harmony of the conceptual premises with content and form that characterizes *Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ.*

6. Conclusion

In his anthology, al-Waṭwāṭ showed his capacity for reusing the literary models of the past and adapting them to the goals and expectations of his contemporaries. Taking on the *al-maḥāsin wa-al-masāwiʾ* pattern, he does not tread in the footsteps of al-Thaʿālibī, with the pronounced aesthetic and literary tones of his works. He prefers instead to adopt the ethical intent of the origins of the genre, and thus adapt the literary tradition to the requirements of his time. Anthologies were not "mere repackagings of the literary tradition, but innovative manipulations of that tradition in ways that appealed to contemporary developments in literary taste and sensibilities...[and] late pre-modern and early modern anthologists reinterpreted the canon in ways that appealed to an expanding readership."[95] This is certainly true in the case of al-Waṭwāṭ, whose attachment to the works of the past is based on a sincere appreciation and desire to revive their message. The case of

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[92] Ibid., 11, 14–15.

[93] Ibid., 15.

[94] E.g., al-Waṭwāṭ, *Ghurar,* 12, 15.

[95] *Essays in Arabic Literary Biography 1350–1850,* ed. J. E. Lowry and D. J. Stewart (Wiesbaden, 2009), 7.

Ghurar al-Khaṣāʾiṣ shows that anthologizing was much more than the process of collecting apposite anecdotes and pieces of poetry, and authors were in a position to adopt literary canons and to use the materials of the tradition in an innovative way. Accordingly, forms of inter-textual references were used "to determine one's relation with the past, to enter into a dialogue with its central texts, to introduce their message into contemporary discourse and to adapt it to the then-prevailing tastes."[96] As an author of encyclopedias, of sophisticated *inshāʾ* compositions, and of anthologies, al-Waṭwāṭ perfectly embodied this and the other literary trends of his period.

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[96] Bauer, "Mamluk Literature," 114.

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Composition and Worldview of some *Bourgeois* and *Petit-Bourgeois* Mamluk *Adab*-Encylopedias

The economic and cultural rise of parts of the *ʿāmmah*[1] due to the particular economic and infrastructural conditions of the Mamluk era brought with it the emergence of new intermediate levels of literature that were situated between the literature of the elite and that of the ignorant and unlettered populace; between the Arabic *koiné (al-ʿarabīyah al-fuṣḥá)* and the local dialects (*ʿāmmīyah*s); and between written and oral composition, performance, and transmission. The following article proposes to analyze the composition of three Mamluk *adab*-encyclopedias and compendia and their treatment of poverty and wealth in light of the social milieus of their authors and audiences.

The Rise of a New Class

When the Mamluks took power between 1250 and 1260 in the former Ayyubid lands of Egypt and Syria, the Mongol invasions and the assassination of the Abbasid caliph in Baghdad as well as the ongoing Crusader presence in Palestine all brought about a shift in the eastern Islamic world's center to Mamluk Egypt, which became a highly effective bulwark of Arab-Islamic rule and culture. The

[1] The terms *ʿāmmah* and *khāṣṣah* are used in Mamluk sources written mostly by eminent *ʿulamāʾ*, who thereby expressed their normative perception of social order. In this perception *ʿāmmah* refers to the immense majority of the population that was not part of the military and civil elite. On the other hand, Jonathan Berkey, referring to the question as to whether a distinct Mamluk popular culture existed, argues that "in the Islamic Middle East [the] distinction [between "high" and "popular" culture] is even harder to draw, since the lines separating one social group from another were, in general, more porous than they were in medieval Europe" (Jonathan Berkey, "Popular Culture under the Mamluks: A Historiographical Survey," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 9, no. 2 [2005], 135. See also: Thomas Herzog, "Mamluk [Popular] Culture," in *Ubi Sumus? Quo Vademus? Mamluk Studies, State of the Art,* ed. Stephan Conermann [Göttingen, 2012], 131–58). Many of the individuals I will refer to in this contribution were craftsmen; the "parts of the *ʿāmmah*" intended here comprise what one might somehow anachronistically term "middle-class," "bourgeoisie," and "petite bourgeoisie," and do not include the, in economic and cultural terms, "lowest" classes of the *ʿāmmah*.

Mamluk Empire and especially Cairo had a flourishing urban culture with a developed economy and educational system which benefited during large spans of Mamluk rule from the special socio-economic conditions appertaining to the ancient military slaves' reign. Protected from the "barbarism of the invaders,"[2] i.e., Mongols and Crusaders, Mamluk Egypt and Syria would indeed be the site of an extraordinary cultural flowering from the late thirteenth to the late fifteenth century—a flowering which produced a last great synthesis of Arab and Islamic culture before the onset of the modern era.

The Mamluk Empire's economic strength, at least over large spans of its existence, along with the intense building activity of Mamluk sultans and amirs, not only enriched traditionally wealthy and influential families but allowed other groups to rise in Mamluk society. Indeed, one of the more important social phenomena occurring under Mamluk rule was the accession of craftsmen to a degree of wealth, power, and education. As Doris Behrens-Abouseif has shown for the Circassian period of Mamluk rule,[3] such people as carpenters, stone-cutters, masons, and coppersmiths were not only highly respected and well-paid[4] but rose to very high positions. The first Circassian Sultan al-Ẓāhir Barqūq deigned not once but twice to marry into the family of his chief architect, "*al-muʿallim*" Aḥmad al-Ṭulūnī. In his turn, al-Ṭulūnī, who already occupied the post of *shādd al-ʿamāʾir*, or supervisor of the royal constructions, was appointed an amir of ten and began to dress as a Mamluk; and his descendants would later shun their ancestor's "blue-collar" profession and become scholars and bureaucrats. "*Al-muʿallim*" Aḥmad al-Ṭulūnī would seem to have been no exceptional case. Ibn Taghrībirdī (812–74/1409 or 10–70) and Ibn Iyās (852–ca. 930/1448–1524) reported a number of similar upstart craftsmen, and Ibn Taghrībirdī in particular deplored the fact that posts originally reserved for Mamluks were increasingly occupied by non-Mamluks—by bureaucrats or even craftsmen. Ibn Taghrībirdī and Ibn Iyās did nothing to conceal their disdain toward the "riffraff" *(awbāsh wa-aḥdāth)*[5] in their reports that a butcher became vizier[6] or that a market-merchant,[7] the owner of a

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[2] Jean-Claude Garcin, "Le Proche-Orient à l'époque mamelouke," in *Etats, sociétés et cultures du monde musulman médieval,* vol. 1, *L'évolution politique et sociale*, ed. idem (Paris, 1995), 343.

[3] Doris Abouseif, "Craftsmen and Upstarts," in *Towards a Cultural History of the Mamluk Era,* ed. Mahmoud Haddad et al. (Beirut, 2010), 67–75. See also: Irmeli Perho, "Climbing the Ladder: Social Mobility in the Mamluk Period," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 15 (2011): 19–35.

[4] Ibid., 73–74.

[5] Ibid., 69.

[6] Abū al-Maḥāsin Yūsuf Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Extracts from Abû 'l-Mahâsin ibn Taghrî Birdî's Chronicle Entitled Hawâdith ad-duhûr fî madâ 'l-ayyâm wash-shuhûr,* ed. W. Popper (Berkeley, 1930–42), 3:512–13, 4:771, 780ff. See Abouseif, "Craftsmen and Upstarts," 69.

[7] Abū al-Maḥāsin Yūsuf Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah* (Cairo, 1963–71), 15:388, 397. See Abouseif, "Craftsmen and Upstarts," 69.

sweetmeat shop and son of a carpenter,[8] as well as a fur tailor[9] all rose to the post of supervisor of pious endowments *(nāẓir al-awqāf),* or that a coppersmith became secretary of the public treasury *(wakīl bayt al-māl).*[10] All this proves that these craftsmen and merchants of the fifteenth century had at least become wealthy enough to be able to buy their positions, which was a widespread practice under the Circassian Mamluks. But it seems to me that these historians were not only disconcerted by the fact that corruption permitted the ascent of formerly ostracized commoners *('awāmm)* to high-ranking positions but that these parvenus blurred formerly clear-cut cultural divisions. Maybe it was for this reason that Ibn Taghrībirdī devoted several pages in his chronicle to, and reserved all his contempt for, one of his contemporaries, the coppersmith and *wakīl bayt al-māl* Abū al-Khayr al-Naḥḥās (d. 863/1459). What seems to have most annoyed him was the fact that even though Abū al-Khayr occupied one of the highest posts in the state hierarchy, he still looked and behaved (in his eyes) like a commoner, lacked the knowledge of a respectable *ʿālim,* and displayed his ignorance through his recitation of the Quran like a popular performer rather than as a professional reader.[11] Following Ibn Iyās' assessment of him, Abu al-Khayr adopted the conduct deemed appropriate for a scholar *(takhallaqa bi-akhlāq al-fuqahāʾ)*[12] and inscribed his name in the mausoleum he built for himself as Abū al-Khayr Muḥammad al-Ṣūfī al-Shāfiʿī, obviously trying to create the image of a Shafiʿi scholar and Sufi. As complete fakery on Abu al-Khayr's part seems unlikely, Behrens-Abouseif concludes that Abū al-Khayr did in all likelihood acquire some basic madrasah knowledge at some point in his career.

Ibn Taghrībirdī's critique of social upstarts blurring formerly clear-cut cultural divisions finds a remarkable parallel in the complaint over half-educated, so-called scholars populating the madrasahs, a lament echoed by a number of important authors since the end of the Ayyubid period. The famous Maliki jurist Ibn al-Ḥājj (d. in Cairo 737/1336) fretted that "the Muslims have confused the scholars with the vulgar *(al-ʿāmmī)* without being able to distinguish between them" and that for some of the so-called scholars of his day, "quality, length, and lavish cut

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[8] Muḥammad Ibn Aḥmad Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-Zuhūr fī Waqāʾiʿ al-Duhūr,* ed. M. Muṣṭafá (Wiesbaden-Cairo, 1961–75), 4:44ff. See Abouseif, "Craftsmen and Upstarts," 72.

[9] Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ,* 3:192, 209, 212, 382, 446. See Abouseif, "Craftsmen and Upstarts," 72.

[10] See below the case of Abū al-Khayr al-Naḥḥās.

[11] Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Ḥawādith,* 1:35, 49, 54, 68, 76–77, 80–81, 84; 2:329, 392; 3:408, 410–23, 658. *Nujūm,* 15:375–76, 382, 395–401, 418–22, 429, 441; 16:131, 132, 133, 210–11. See Abouseif, "Craftsmen and Upstarts," 69–71.

[12] Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ,* 3:192, 209, 212, 382, 446. See Abouseif, "Craftsmen and Upstarts," 69–71.

of their clothes [were] the equivalent of science."[13] He further complained that most of those scholars were hypocrites whose way of life hardly corresponded to their teachings in the madrasah[14] and that most of them were more interested in business than in science: "Today the scholars swarm out when the sun rises so as to follow worldly purposes *(fī asbāb al-dunyā)* and to be mostly entirely lost in them. Only rarely do they leave such to come to the mosques and teach."[15] Some thirty years later Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī used roughly the same language to bemoan the worldly motives of many scholars[16] and to criticize the fact that some teachers in the madrasahs either only knew how to recite two or three lines of a book without being able to interpret them, or that they did in fact know more but lazily refrained from teaching what they knew: "But the worst ill is the teacher who only knows two or three lines of a book by heart, who sits down, recites them, and then rises to go away. If he is incapable of doing more than this then he is not suited for teaching and it is not right that he take wages for this. For in reality he has failed his teaching post and his salary has not been honestly earned."[17] What is interesting is the reason al-Subkī gives for criticizing these teachers: "This only opens the way for the commoners *(al-ʿawāmm)* to desire these posts; for few are the commoners who do not know two or three lines by heart. If ever the scholars would shield science and if the teaching scholar would give teaching what it deserves…[then] commoners, beginners, and those in the middle stages of science who are present [at their teaching] would understand for themselves that they are incapable of producing something similar and would know that according to custom and law teachers do not have to be other than this. They would also likely not covet these posts themselves and the commoners *(al-ʿawāmm)* would not desire to occupy the posts of the scholars."[18] Just as Ibn Taghrībirdī and Ibn Iyās complained of commoners achieving high rank in the Mamluk state administration, Ibn al-Ḥājj and Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī deplore the fact that commoners have risen to

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[13] Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Al-Madkhal (ilá Tanmiyat al-Aʿmāl bi-Taḥsīn al-Nīyāt wa-al-Tanbīh ʿalá baʿḍ al-Bidaʿ wa-al-ʿAwāʾid allatī Intaḥalat wa-Bayān Shanāʿatihā)* (Cairo, 1348/1929), 1:155. See for the quotations from Ibn al-Ḥājj and al-Subkī (below): Stefan Leder, "Postklassisch und vormodern: Beobachtungen zum Kulturwandel in der Mamlukenzeit," in *Die Mamluken: Studien zu ihrer Geschichte und Kultur: Zum Gedenken an Ulrich Haarmann (1942–1999)*, ed. Stephan Conermann and Anja Pistor-Hatam (Schenefeld, 2003), 301–2.

[14] Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Al-Madkhal,* 1:155.

[15] Ibid., 207.

[16] Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī, *Muʿīd al-Niʿam wa-Mubīd al-Niqam: The Restorer of Favours and the Restrainer of Chastisements,* ed. D. W. Myhrman (London, 1908), 96; German translation by O. Rescher, *Über die moralischen Pflichten der verschiedenen islamischen Bevölkerungsklassen* (Constantinople, 1925), 59–60.

[17] Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī, *Muʿīd,* 153. See also Leder, "Postklassisch," 303.

[18] Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī, *Muʿīd,* 153.

teaching positions in the madrasahs; and like their historian colleagues, it might well have been the blurring of formerly clear-cut cultural boundaries that most annoyed them. In Mamluk times the madrasahs were indeed much more than specialized teaching institutions for an elite body of students—they had become places of teaching and piety for the neighborhood at large.[19] Commoners increasingly audited the edifying preachments and lectures on the Quran and, most of all, those sessions entailing transmission of hadith.[20] Although there were sporadic attempts to prevent common people *(al-ʿāmmah)* from attending lessons in the madrasahs,[21] this never became a widespread practice. On the contrary, the influx of commoners apparently led to the creation of intermediate teaching positions in the madrasahs. In Mamluk madrasahs religious instruction was provided not only by (more or less) sophisticated scholars but there were also present simple *ḥāfiẓ*es—those who had memorized the Quran and taught it to the people;[22] those occupying the position of *waẓīfat al-taktīb,* who taught writing to those with a desire to learn it; and also a special group of teachers, the *qāriʾ al-kursī*s, which Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī describes in the chapter immediately following that on the *qāṣṣ,* the popular storyteller, in his *Muʿīd al-Niqam* (The Restorer of favors).[23] In this chapter the *qāriʾ al-kursī*s are described as sitting on a chair in a madrasah, a mosque, or a Sufi convent and teaching not by heart as did the storytellers in the streets but from books, and their public was mostly commoners and not the officially enrolled students of the madrasahs. Al-Subkī states that the *qāriʾ al-kursī* should refrain from teaching those books too difficult to understand for the commoners; instead, they should limit themselves to books such as al-Ghazzālī's *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn* or al-Nawawī's *Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn,* which would indicate that at least some of them regularly attempted to teach more difficult subject matter. It is not quite clear to what degree all these basic teachers might have been able to rise to higher positions where they might have become part of that notorious coterie

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[19] See Jonathan Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education* (Princeton, 1992), 182ff.

[20] Stefan Leder, Muḥammad Yāsīn al-Sawwās, and Maʾmūn al-Ṣāgharjī, *Muʿjam al-Samāʿāt al-Dimashqīyah al-Muntakhabah min al-Sanat 550 ilá 750 H: Les certificats d'audition à Damas 550–750 h./1155 à 1349* (Damascus, 1996), attests to broad popular participation in the transmission of hadith outside the madrasahs in Damascus during the period 550–750/1155–1349.

[21] Berkey, *Transmission,* 202, cites a passage from Ibn al-Ḥājj's *Madkhal* in which he states that, "It is desirable [that the scholar] in a *madrasa*, as has been described in a mosque, be humble and approachable to any student or any other who attends him, and that he forbid no one from among the common people [*ʿāmmat al-nās*] to approach him, because if religious knowledge is forbidden to the common people [*al-ʿāmma*], the elite [*al-khāṣṣa*, i.e. the *ʿulamāʾ*] will not benefit from it either."

[22] Berkey, *Transmission,* 203.

[23] Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī, *Muʿīd*, chs. 62 and 63, 162–63. See also Berkey, *Transmission,* 205ff

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which "knew to recite two or three lines of a book without being able to interpret them." At any rate, these minor teaching positions afforded basic instruction to large parts of the Muslim population but offered those "half-instructed"—which many high scholars continuously criticized—the possibility of earning their living at least partly within the educational system.

It would therefore seem obvious that the clear-cut dichotomy of an instructed and wealthy *khāṣṣah* and an ignorant and poor *ʿāmmah* (which might have been more of a discourse in the sources than a social reality) in the Mamluk era must be replaced by a much more nuanced picture of society—a society in which a percentage of the commoners could indeed climb the social ladder and become more or less wealthy and educated persons.

Given the rise of the formerly excluded popular classes to a degree of wealth, it is hardly astonishing that in the historiography of the Mamluk era we notice an increased interest in daily events, in the life and culture of common people, and even in those marginal individuals among them, namely the weak and the poor.[24] We might see this as a sign that the increased exchange with the commoners in educational institutions and endowments and in Sufi orders caused the elite to gradually become aware of the importance of the commoners.

The economic rise of parts of the *ʿāmmah* not only implied their entry into the realms of institutional learning and teaching but the emergence of new intermediate levels of literature that were situated between the literature of the elite and that of the utterly ignorant and unlettered populace, between the Arabic *koiné* (*al-ʿarabīyah al-fuṣḥá*) and the local dialects (*ʿāmmīyah*s), between written and oral composition, performance and transmission. As early as the twelfth century we find testimony to the existence of lengthy heroic narratives that were destined for a broad public and which were probably recited by the popular *quṣṣāṣ* in the streets.[25] In the fourteenth century these narratives were already known as *sīrah*, pl. *siyar,* and covered a large thematic range. The *siyar* narratives were composed in a synthesis of *fuṣḥá* and *ʿāmmīyah* and were cyclically structured in episodes that were intended to be recited periodically, for instance every Friday or every evening at a certain time. They made use of material that was to be found in the canon of traditional elite scholarship and combined it with more popular and entertaining forms of expression. It was through this fusion that the *siyar* can be seen as a partial appropriation of "high" culture by those intermediate levels of

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[24] See Axel Havemann, "The Chronicle of Ibn Iyās as a Source for Social and Cultural History from Below," in *Towards a Cultural History of the Mamluk Era*, ed. Haddad et al., 87–98.

[25] Narratives of ʿAntar and of Dhāt al-Ḥimmah had already been recited during the twelfth century, although it is not clear whether these narratives already showed the full-fledged form of the popular *siyar* in which we know them from manuscripts dating from the fifteenth century on.

Mamluk society of which the authors, reciters, and auditors of these narratives most certainly were a part. For these intermediate "classes" of Mamluk society the heroic *siyar* narratives served not only as night-time entertainment. By virtue of their thematic range they also represented a synthesis of content with regard to Islamic and Islamized cultures; they provided a kind of survey of almost all of Islamic and pre-Islamic culture.[26] Interestingly enough, this appropriation of certain parts of the "high" culture was not a one-way street. As seen in the example of the *Sīrat al-Malik al-Ẓāhir Baybars,* a narrative which had its formative period in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries in Mamluk Egypt and Syria,[27] not only did the authors of the popular *sīrah* borrow from learned biographical and historiographical literature but Mamluk historiographers most certainly borrowed from that popular heroic narrative.[28] Despite condemnations of the content of popular storytelling by prominent ʿ*ulamāʾ,* in the Ayyubid and especially the Mamluk period there was increased interest on the part of people of high social standing as well as learned ʿ*ulamāʾ* in the narratives that the popular storytellers *(quṣṣāṣ)* recited.[29]

At the beginning of the fifteenth century, al-Maqrīzī (766–845/1364–1442) reported that evenings on Cairo's most-frequented thoroughfare, the Khuṭṭ Bayna al-Qaṣrāyn, found groups reciting the *siyar* and *akhbār* and providing other kinds of entertainment: "When the days of the Fatimids were coming to an end…this place turned into a bazaar…a promenade where in the evening the nobles and their like walked to see the enormous multitude of candles and lanterns and everything that men long for and that delights their eye and gladdens their senses. There used to sit a number of groups, where *siyar, akhbār,* and poems were recited and where people indulged in all kinds of games and pastimes. There was such a crowd in this place that its number cannot be calculated, nor can it be related or described."[30]

All this shows that in late Ayyubid and Mamluk times common public spaces of literary entertainment and exchange did indeed exist. This fact should not astonish us, as these places of common perception were in the end nothing less than the spatial translation of the social transformation that society had undergone.

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[26] See: Thomas Herzog, "Orality and the Tradition of Arabic Epic Storytelling," in *Medieval Oral Literature,* ed. Karl Reichl (Berlin/Boston, 2012), 637.

[27] See: Thomas Herzog, *Geschichte und Imaginaire: Entstehung, Überlieferung und Bedeutung der Sirat Baibars in ihrem sozio-politischen Kontext*, Diskurse der Arabistik 8 (Wiesbaden, 2006), 393–419.

[28] Ibid., 358–92.

[29] See Leder's citation of an interesting passage in Ibn al-Athīr's (d. 637/1239) *Al-Mathal al-Sāʾir fī Adab al-Kātib wa-al-Shāʿir*, "Postklassisch," 291–92.

[30] Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Maqrīzī, , *Kitāb al-Mawāʿiẓ wa-al-Iʿtibār fī Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-alĀthār* (Būlāq, 1270/1853–54), 2:28, lines 18 ff.

Three Mamluk *Adab*-Encylopedias and Compendia

In terms of worldviews and mentalities, one of the more interesting genres in Mamluk literature is the *adab*-encyclopedia. By comparing different works of this "genre" we will come across certain features particular to the literature of the new rising class of semi-instructed bourgeoisie.

Hillary Kilpatrick defined an *adab*-encyclopedia (which is of course an ascription to these texts, since their historical authors did not use the term *mawsūʿāt adabīyah)* as a work "designed to provide the basic knowledge in those domains with which the average cultured man may be expected to be acquainted. It is characterized by organization into chapters or books on the different subjects treated so that, although there may be some overlapping of material and repetition, the various topics may be found without difficulty."[31]

The best-known *adab*-encyclopedias are pre-Mamluk: Ibn Qutaybah's *ʿUyūn al-Akhbār* (ninth century), Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi's *Al-ʿIqd al-Farīd* (tenth century), al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī's *Muḥāḍarāt al-Udabāʾ wa-Muḥāwarāt al-Shuʿarāʾ wa-al-Bulaghāʾ* (early eleventh century), and al-Zamakhsharī's *Rabīʿ al-Abrār wa-Nuṣūṣ al-Akhbār* (eleventh/twelfth century). For the Mamluk era the best known works that can be termed *adab*-encyclopedias are al-Nuwayrī's (1279–1332) *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab* (first third of the fourteenth century) and Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī's (1301–49) *Masālik al-Abṣār fī Mamālik al-Amṣār* (first half of the fourteenth century). Al-Qalqashandī's (1355–1418) *Ṣubḥ al-Aʿshá* is in some ways a borderline case, as it is more a specialized administration manual than an *adab*-encyclopedia.

Mamluk *adab*-encyclopedists such as al-Nuwayrī and Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī rely heavily on the tradition of their forerunners. The cultural synthesis of orally transmitted Arab *akhbār* with material that was "*min kutub al-Hind wa-al-ʿajam*"—still distinctly marked in Ibn Qutaybah, for instance—is now taken for granted; *isnād*s mostly disappeared from the Mamluk works. Like many of their forerunners, the works of al-Nuwayrī, Ibn Faḍl Allāh, and al-Qalqashandī were those of civil servants working in the Mamluk *dawāwīn* and were written for men of their own class. Like Ibn Qutaybah's *ʿUyūn* and Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi's *ʿIqd,* they discuss at length the qualities of the ruler, the arts of war and peace, and administrative matters of all kind, while at the same time providing all sorts of historical and geographical information as well as that pertaining to history, natural history, and geography.

All the aforementioned *adab*-encyclopedias shared roughly the same method of compilation. Rosenthal listed the basic ingredients as "accumulations of apho-

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[31] Hillary Kilpatrick, "A Genre in Classical Arab Literature: The *Adab* Encyclopedia," in *Proceedings of the 10th Congress of the Union Européene des Arabisants et Islamisants, Edinburgh, 9–16 September 1980*, ed. Robert Hillenbrand (Edinburgh [?], 1982), 34.

risms, prose mini-essays and snatches of verse rather than full-blown poems"[32]—
to which we might add Quranic citations and prophetic traditions, anecdotes and
quotations from collections of proverbs, and histories. Because the material of
older encyclopedias was recycled into the later ones, the reader has a constant
feeling of déjà-vu in the sense that he recognizes a particular aphorism or poem
but cannot quite say where he first ran across it.

Al-Nuwayrī's (1279–1332) *Nihāyat al-Arab*[33] is perhaps the most systematically
constructed *adab*-encyclopedia we know. His aim is to provide his reader with
a comprehensive guide to the universe. Al-Nuwayrī rigorously divides his work
into five books *(funūn),* each of them divided into five parts *(aqsām)* that are again
divided into chapters *(abwāb).* His conception of affording the reader a universal
overview is reflected in the choice of subjects for the five books: cosmography and
geography *(al-samāʾ),* mankind and related matters *(al-insān wa-mā yataʿallaqu bi-
hi),* animals *(al-ḥayawān al-ṣāmit),* and plants *(al-nabāt).* The fifth and longest book
is entirely dedicated to history *(al-tārīkh)* conceived as a complete universal history.

Structure of al-Nuwayrī's *Nihāyat al-Arab* (ed. Cairo, 1923–97):

Fann	No. of sections *(qism)*	No. of chapters *(bāb)*	No. of pages	% of the total book	% of *fann* 1–4	Title	Topic
1	5	25	416	3	10	السماء	Cosmography and geography
2	5	34	2601	20	63	الانسان وما يتعلق به	Men
3	5	19	468	3	11	الحيوان الصامت	Animals
4	5	17	661	5	16	النبات	Plants
5	5	42	9013	69	-	التاريخ	History
Total	25	137	13159	100	-		
Total, fann 1–4	20	95	4146	-	100		

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[32] Franz Rosenthal, "Sources for the Role of Sex in Medieval Muslim Society, "in *Society and the Sexes in Medieval Islam,* ed. A. Lutfi l-Sayyed-Marsot (Malibu, 1979), 15.

[33] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab.* (Cairo, 1923–97), 33 vols. See: Elias Muhanna, "Encyclopaedism of the Mamluk Period: The Composition of Shihāb al-Dīn al-Nuwayrī's (d. 1333) *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab*" (Ph.D. diss, Harvard University, 2012).

The second Mamluk *adab*-encyclopedia that I treat in this article is of a quite different genre. *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf fī Kulli Fannin Mustaẓraf*[34] is a work that Thomas Bauer termed an anthology with an encyclopedic claim, whereas others do consider it an encyclopedia.[35] In any case, *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf fī Kulli Fannin Mustaẓraf* (The utmost in all elegant arts) is the work of a certain Bahāʾ al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Ibshīhī al-Maḥallī al-Shāfiʿī, an Egyptian of some learning who is briefly cited in al-Sakhāwī's *Al-Ḍawʾ al-Lāmiʿ*. He was born in 790/1388 in the village of Abshuwayh (or Ibshāwāy or Ibshīh)[36] in the central delta province of al-Gharbīyah, but in the first years of his life he moved to al-Maḥallah, also in the Nile delta, where his father was appointed the preacher, *khaṭīb,* of a local mosque. It seems that al-Ibshīhī spent most of his life in al-Maḥallah, where he succeeded his father as *khaṭīb* after his pilgrimage to Mecca in his mid-twenties, about 815/1413. He studied the Quran and *fiqh* in al-Maḥallah and made several trips to Cairo to take instruction there. Al-Sakhāwī cites two of his masters: a certain Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad al-Ṭalyāwī al-Azharī al-Shāfi ī al-Muqriʾ, *shaykhuhu,* and al-Imām ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿUmar ibn Raslān, known as Jalāl al-Dīn al-Bulqīnī.[37] According to al-Sakhāwī, al-Ibshīhī died sometime after 850/1446 and had contact with the literati of his time *(wa-taṭāraḥa maʿa al-udabāʾ),* but his Arabic was not proficient enough for him to be accepted as a real *ʿālim;* as al-Sakhāwī writes, "*wa-kāna fī kalāmihi al-laḥn kathīran.*"[38] Al-Ibshīhī was probably one of those "small" *ʿulamāʾ,* men possessing a certain level of erudition but who were not part of the Mamluk Empire's intellectual elite. As will shortly be seen, the choice of topics and the worldview of al-Ibshīhī's *adab-*

[34] Bahāʾ al-Dīn Abū al-Fatḥ Muḥammad Ibn Aḥmad al-Ibshīhī, *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf fī Kulli Fannin Mustaẓraf* (Beirut, 1999).

[35] Anthology: Thomas Bauer, "Literarische Anthologien der Mamlukenzeit," in *Die Mamluken: Studien zu ihrer Geschichte und Kultur: Zum Gedenken an Ulrich Haarmann (1942–1999),* ed. Stephan Conermann and Anja Pistor-Hatam (Schenefeld, 2003), 101, and Robert Irwin, "Al-Ibshīhī," *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature,* ed. Julia Scott Meisami and Paul Starkey (London, 1998), 1: 337b–338a. Encyclopedia: Kilpatrick, "A Genre," 35, and G. Rat, French translation of al-Ibshīhī's *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf* entitled *Al-Mostaṭraf: recueil de morceaux choisis ça et là dans toutes les branches de connaissances réputées attrayantes par Šihâb-ad-Dîn Aḥmad al-Abšîhî: ouvrage philologique, anecdotique, littéraire et philosophique, traduit pour la première fois par G. Rat* (Paris, 1899–1902), 1:VII (preface of the translator).

[36] Muḥammad Ramzī, *Al-Qāmūs al-Jughrāfī lil-Bilād al-Miṣrīyah: Min ʿAhd Qudamāʾ al-Miṣrīyīn ilá Sanat 1945* (Cairo, 1953–54, repr. 1994), 2:2:95.

[37] Jalāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿUmar al-Bulqīnī (763–824/1362–1421) succeeded his brother Muḥammad as *qāḍī al-ʿaskar* in 791/1389. He lived in luxurious style, "had a retinue of 300 *mamlūk*s, and in 804/1401 obtained the office of Shafiʿi grand qadi, which he held for intervals until his death (H. A. R. Gibb, "al-Bulḳīnī," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., 1:1308–9).

[38] Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍawʾ al-Lāmiʿ li-Ahl al-Qarn al-Tāsiʿ* (Cairo, 1353–55/1934–36), 7:109:

<div dir="rtl">وتعاني النظم والتصنيف في الأدب وغيره، ولكنه لعدم إلمامه بشيء من النحو يقع فيه وفي كلامه اللحن كثيراً.</div>

encyclopedia confirms this supposition and enables us to make further suppositions regarding his social milieu.

According to Ibrāhīm Ṣāliḥ, the editor of the 1999 Beirut edition, al-Ibshīhī's main sources were al-Zamakhsharī's (467–538/1075–1144) *Rabīʿ al-Abrār;* Ibn Ḥamdūn's (d. 1166–67) *Tadhkirah,* an *adab*-encyclopedia that was extremely popular in Mamluk times; al-Ṭurṭūshī's (1059–1126) *Sirāj al-Mulūk*; al-Qazwīnī's (d. 682/1283) *ʿAjāʾib al-Makhlūqāt;* and al-Damīrī's (d. 808/1405) *Ḥayāt al-Ḥayawān.* Except for al-Zamakhsharī's *Rabīʿ al-Abrār* and Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi's (246–328/860–940) *Al-ʿIqd al-Farīd*—from whom he compiles only a few items—al-Ibshīhī fails to indicate his source-material, though he sometimes copies these sources at chapter length, as Ibrāhīm Ṣāliḥ complained.[39]

If we compare al-Ibshīhī's encyclopedia/anthology with those of leading *ʿulamāʾ,* such as al-Nuwayrī's *Nihāyat al-Arab,* we recognize at once that it is much less strictly arranged and considerably shorter.[40] The chapters simply follow one another without being united by the author into larger thematic units. There is nevertheless a certain logic in al-Ibshīhī's arrangement of his 84 chapters *(abwāb)* according to subject matter.

The book starts with a chapter treating the five pillars of Islam—*al-ikhlāṣ lillāh*, *al-ṣalāh*, *al-zakāh*, *al-ṣawm*, *al-ḥajj*—and in the ensuing three chapters al-Ibshīhī addresses what for him would seem to be the most important and desirable qualities of men: *ʿaql*, *dhakāʾ*, *ʿilm*, and *adab*. Al-Ibshīhī continues in this vein in the next nine chapters (5–13), with two chapters on aphorisms and proverbs (5–6); three chapters on eloquence *(balāghah),* the mastering of a clear Arabic *(faṣāḥah),* on orators and poets, and on quick-wittedness in discussions (7–9); and another four chapters on trust in God's rule, on being aware of the consequences of one's actions, that silence is often better than mindless chit-chat, etc. (10–13). This first section in which al-Ibshīhī treats intelligence, eloquence, and wit covers 250 pages—about 16 percent of the book.

In the eight ensuing chapters (14–21, covering a total of 72 pages, or 5 percent of the book) al-Ibshīhī treats subjects related to government: royalty and the sultan, the sultan's entourage, viziers, chamberlains, judges, justice and injustice, and tyranny and tax collection. The most interesting aspect of this group of chapters treating the question of correct government is that he inserts in the chapter on judges and justice not only a section on corruption *(rashwah)* but also a small

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[39] Al-Ibshīhī, *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf,* 1:9 (editor's preface).

[40] The book is nevertheless a very big work (in the 1999 Beirut edition it consists of three volumes of some 1500 pages total) and is by virtue of the wide range of its topics clearly of an encyclopedic character.

section[41] in which he condemns popular storytellers *(quṣṣāṣ)* and the Sufis whom he views as mere charlatans who rob the naïve populace.

The third section that I have identified is a large group of chapters which could be subsumed under the heading "*akhlāq*," or "morality." In twenty-three chapters (22–44) al-Ibshīhī examines actions, attitudes, and character traits that he considers laudable as well as those he condemns; and as always in this *adab*-encyclopedia, he does this through a large number of citations from the Quran, hadith, and poetry and prose, both Islamic and pre-Islamic.[42] The section on "*akhlāq*" covers a total of 493 pages, which is more than a quarter (27 percent) of the book.

Following this important group of chapters on "*akhlāq*," the thematic scope of al-Ibshīhī's *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf* widens to more worldly subjects with a number of chapters on the joys of life, on wealth and poverty, and on life in society. This part of *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf* encompasses a large number of chapters and spans a total of 693 pages, which is some 45 percent of the 1999 edition, and includes chapters on geography and flora and fauna.[43]

Al-Ibshīhī concludes his *adab*-encyclopedia with a series of chapters that I would summarize with the phrase "the misfortunes of life" and related matters.[44]

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[41] Al-Ibshīhī, *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf,* 1:321–24 (section 18, 3).

[42] The laudable or condemnable actions and attitudes cover a large array: *al-maʿrūf, al-mawaddah, al-shafāʿah, al-ḥayāʾ, al-kibr, al-fakhr, al-sharaf, al-jūd, al-bukhl, al-ʿafw wa-al-ḥilm, al-wafāʾ, kitmān al-sirr, al-ghadr wa-al-khiyānah, al-sariqah, al-ḥasad, al-shajāʿah wa-al-jihād, al-madḥ, al-hijāʾ, al-ṣidq wa-al-kasb.*

[43] The chapters on the joys of life cover subjects related to the physical aspects of human existence. These include beauty and ugliness (46); youth and old age, health and strength (48); beautiful voices (68); male and female singers and musicians (69 and 70); love and passion (71); a long chapter on various literary and mostly poetic genres such as *muwashshaḥ* or *zajal* (72, consisting of 123 pages); women, social intercourse with them, laudable and condemnable women, treacherous women, marriage and divorce (73); a chapter on the prohibition of alcohol (74); and two chapters on jokes and anecdotes (75 and 76). The chapters dealing with social life cover subjects like "what to say about gold ornaments, rings, and perfumes" (47); presents and gifts (54); slaves and servants (58); travels and expatriations (50); wealth and the love of money (51); poverty (52); gentleness toward beggars (53); working and professions (55); good and bad fortune and how to endure each (56 and 57); and tricks and stratagems in obtaining one's objectives (61). In that part of his book which I would entitle the joys of *dunyā,* al-Ibshīhī integrated two chapters on "the strange customs of pre-Islamic Arabs" (59) and on divination practices (60) as well as fi e chapters on domesticated and wild animals (62), on the earth, and on rivers, sources, wells, mountains, oceans, jinns, huge buildings, mines and stones, and on the *ʿajāʾib* and *gharāʾib* of all these phenomena of creation.

[44] He introduces this last part of his book with chapters on prayer to God (*duʿāʾ;* 77), destiny (*al-qaḍāʾ wa-al-qadar;* 78), and repentance (*tawbah;* 79), and then goes on to illness and death (80 and 81)—here he addresses the medical treatment of certain diseases (80)—and rounds things off with a discussion of patience and funeral elegies (*al-marāthī*). Al-Ibshīhī then finishes his book with a chapter on *faḍl al-ṣalāh ʿalá al-nabī.*

Remarkably enough, it is only in the context of illness and death—in the penultimate chapter of some 84 chapters and over roughly a dozen of the more than 1,500 pages—that al-Ibshīhī treats the subject of *zuhd*, asceticism, which was a favorite topic in countless writings of the Mamluk era.[45]

Al-Ibshīhī's *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf* (ed. Beirut, 1999) thus has the following structure:

Part	Chapters	No. of pages	% of the book	Topic	Overall topic
1	1–5	62	4	The fi e pillars, intelligence and wit, the Quran and the benefits of reading it	Intelligence, eloquence, and wit
2	5–13	188	12	Eloquence and wit	
3	14–21	72	5	Government	Government
4	22–44	418	27	*Akhlāq*	*Akhlāq*
5	45–76	693	45	Joys of life	*Dunyā*
6	77–84	114	7	Misfortunes of life	
Total		1547	100		

As this brief overview shows, the work of al-Ibshīhī—a provincial imam of some learning, son of a provincial imam, who succeeded his father in his post—differs considerably in scope and choice of subjects from the *adab*-encyclopedias composed by eminent *ʿulamāʾ* in service of the state, like al-Nuwayrī and Ibn Faḍl Allāh alʿUmarī, themselves sons of *ʿulamāʾ*/*kuttāb*. The book is much less universal, contains no section on history, and keeps very brief the section on government. It focuses on the joys of life, on social intercourse, and on morally correct and intelligent behavior in society at large. Al-Ibshīhī's *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf* is the perfect guide for a man of his milieu, who required knowledge pertaining to the functioning of government, to the sultan, his viziers, the judges and tax collectors, and who needed to be conversant in a variety of topics so as to enable him to engage with local notables.

The third Mamluk *adab*-encyclopedia that I should like to discuss here, namely *Al-Kanz al-Madfūn wa-al-Fulk al-Mashḥūn*,[46] is a work that Thomas Bauer termed

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[45] Here is a chapter with a more directly religious theme (on *tawakkul* and *qanāʾah* and the condemnation of avidity), which is integrated into that group of chapters illustrating the good and correct behavior of an Arab and Muslim man.

[46] Yūnus al-Mālikī, *Al-Kanz al-Madfūn wa-al-Fulk al-Mashḥūn* (Cairo, 1956, attributed in this publication to Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī).

an "anthology," moreover a "popular anthology,"[47] whereas I would like to stick with the term encyclopedia. However, as the text is quite unorganized and differs in this way from the mainstream of Arab encyclopedias, I propose to term it an encyclopedic *adab*-compendium.[48] The (main) author of "The buried treasure and the laden ark" is a certain Yūnus al-Mālikī, who in contrast to al-Ibshīhī did not find his way into any of the known biographical dictionaries. There is a short entry in Ḥājjī Khalīfah's *Kashf al-Ẓunūn,*[49] which mentions the title and name of the author—Yūnus al-Mālikī[50]—but with no allusions to the latter's life or date of death. The book is frequently attributed to the Mamluk polygraph Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (849–911/1445–1505)—for example in the 1956 edition of Maktabat Muṣṭafá Bābī al-Ḥalabī that I am using[51]—but this attribution seems improbable owing to the character of the book. The book's author must have lived at the end of the eighth/fourteenth century, as he himself tells us in citing a poem praising the Prophet that a certain Abū al-ʿAbbās ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Muʿṭī had recited to him at *al-ḥaram al-sharīf* in Mecca in Dhū al-Qaʿdah of the year 764/August 1363.[52] He also cites a conversation on religion that he had in Shaʿbān 767/May 1366 in Jerusalem with his "brother in religion" the qadi Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbd al-Dāʾim, known as Ibn Maylaq.[53] Given these dates, the attribution to al-Suyūṭī is impossible, at least for these passages. Many linguistic clues (e.g., the terms he employs, certain dialectal passages), as well as his clear focus on Egypt, would indicate that Yūnus al-Mālikī, or at any rate the author, must have been Egyptian. Although al-Mālikī seems to have been the main author of *Al-Kanz al-Madfūn*, the reference to the Nile flood in the year 854/1450[54] and to the elegy of Sultan Qāytbāy[55] are clearly the work of another author, probably also Egyptian.[56] Th book might thus be a collective work with one particular writer's name serving as a sort of catchall author.

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[47] Bauer, "Literarische Anthologien," 101. See also Giovanni Canova, "Una pagina di *al-Kanz al-Madfūn* sugli uomini più illustri," in *Ultra Mare: Mélanges d'arabe et d'islamologie offerts à Aubert Martin,* ed. Frédéric Bauden (Louvain, 2004), 93–94.

[48] See my argument below, pp. 115–120.

[49] Ḥājjī Khalīfah, *Kashf al-Ẓunūn ʿan Asāmī al-Kutub wa-al-Funūn/Lexicon Bibliographicum et Encyclopaedicum*, ed. G. Flügel (Leipzig, 1853–58), 5:257, no. 10925.

[50] See Canova, "Una pagina," 93–94. Al-Mālikī, *Kanz,* 167, gives Yūnus al-Mālikī as author.

[51] Zirīklī, *Al-Aʿlām,* also gives al-Mālikī as author.

[52] Al-Mālikī, *Kanz,* 249.

[53] Ibid., 161–62.

[54] Ibid., 52–53.

[55] Ibid., 120.

[56] For the question of authorship see also: Canova, "Una pagina," 94–95.

As judged by its content, *Al-Kanz al-Madfūn* may well be considered an *adab*-encyclopedia, but the organization of its content differs widely from the learned *adab*-encyclopedias I presented at the beginning of this article, as well as from al-Ibshīhī's *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf.* We find many small, medium, or long narratives, of one or two lines up to several pages, and mainly in the genres of *ḥikmah, fāʾidah, mathal, nādirah, ḥikāyat lughz*/enigmas; the majority of the text will be in prose, but we also frequently find *sajʿ*/rhymed prose and *shiʿr*/poetry. Among other subjects, *Al-Kanz al-Madfūn* covers the Quran, hadith, *fiqh, uṣūl al-dīn,* etymology, *duʿāʾ* and other prayers for a multitude of occasions; history, mostly in the form of anecdotes or short reports; geography, zoology, and botany, mostly in the form of lists of names and terms; grammar;[57] and medicine, meaning prescriptions for various diseases,[58] aphrodisiacs, and amulets, talismans, and magic spells for a variety of occasions.[59] Al-Mālikī sometimes cites at length parts of works of known authors such as al-Ghazālī, Ibn al-Jawzī,[60] Ibn Taymīyah, al-Ṣafadī,[61] Ibn Nubātah al-Miṣrī, and other authors.[62] Much of the book's information is conveyed in the form of questions and answers—e.g., "Why did such and such happen as it did?" or "Why did such and such bear such and such a name?"[63] or "The difference between *a* and *b* is *c*,"[64] etc., at times in the form of a dialogue between a fictive reader and author. A strong recurring feature in *Al-Kanz* is the lists of names[65] and terms often presenting synonyms or antonyms,[66] these usually presented in the form of questions and responses.

In contrast to those *adab*-encyclopedias that I have hitherto discussed, *Al-Kanz al-Madfūn* has no discernible organizing principle. Judging from the variety of subjects and the book's organization—or rather *non*-organization—it is clear that one of the author's main aims is to entertain. And this it does—particularly in consideration of the fact that the alternation from serious to light subject matter is essential to creating an entertaining encyclopedia. The book is never boring. Serious religious or juridical questions—e.g., "Why was the Quran not revealed

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[57] Al-Mālikī, *Kanz,* 49.

[58] Ibid., 182, 191, 238.

[59] Ibid., 63, 65.

[60] Ibid., 240: "بديع من كلام ابن الجوزي".

[61] Ibid., 220–24: "كتات من صنعة صلاح الدين الصفدي بشارة بوفاء النيل".

[62] Ibid., 224–25: "منقول بمجموع من تصانيف لابن حزم".

[63] Ibid., 98: "لِمَ سمي سيدنا عيسى عليه السلام بعيسى؟".

[64] Ibid., 77: "الفرق بين الباسور والناسور"; ibid., 140: "الفرق بين السخي والكريم والبخيل واللئيم"; ibid., 231: "الفرق بين اليتيم والترجمي".

[65] Ibid., 114: "في اسم الحوت الذي ابتلع نبي الله يونس"; ibid., 137: "أسماء أهل الكهف".

[66] Ibid., 154: "من أسماء الذئب"; ibid., 67: "أسماء أولاد البهائم"; ibid., 69: "أسماء الشمس"; ibid., 125: "من أسماء ساعات النهار"; ibid., 246: "من أسماء المطر".

in a single moment?"[67] or, "How are the male and female heirs of a widow who has remarried to be treated?"—are juxtaposed with a *ḥikāyah muḍḥikah,* a funny story, or with entertaining enigmas.

There is one central idea behind every subject that the book touches on, whether it be religion, science, geography, or etymology—namely, the information should be *useful* in a practical sense, and many of the subjects are in fact introduced by the word "*fāʾidah,*" a useful thing. The bulk of information in the book is useful for daily life—useful in order to duly fulfill one's religious duties, useful so as to assure oneself of a place in paradise, and useful for purposes of conversation.

Owing to its completely unorganized structure, *Al-Kanz al-Madfūn,* even more than al-Ibshīhī's *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf,* could be subsumed (as Thomas Bauer does) under the category of "anthology." But subsuming *Al-Kanz* under the category of "anthology" would mean to overlook the dominant encyclopedic tendency in this work and the educational and instructive tone that marks many parts of it.[68]

An Excursion through Contemporary European Literature to Better Understand al-Mālikī's Work

In order to come to terms with al-Mālikī's intriguingly unordered yet encyclopedic compendium, I looked at similar phenomena in late medieval and Renaissance Europe, and this comparison proved to be fruitful more than just once.[69] *Al-Kanz al-Madfūn* indeed shares certain features with a couple of works that appeared

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[67] Ibid., 122: "ما الحكمة في إنزال القرآن متفرقاً؟".

[68] See also Konrad Hirschler, *The Written Word in the Medieval Arabic Lands: A Social and Cultural History of Reading Practices* (Edinburgh, 2012), 189.

[69] These comparisons with pre-modern European developments make sense as they often attest to quite parallel developments on the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean. These parallel developments have been explained by historians in the field of "global history" by the existence of a pre-modern Eurasian world system, which they claim to have united large parts of Asia, Africa, and Europe. Janet Abu-Lughod (*Before European Hegemony: The World System 1250–1350* [New York and Oxford, 1989]) claims that in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries there existed dense contacts and the mutual exchange of learning inside this world system. (Her theory has been taken up recently by Peter Feldbauer and Gottfried Liedl, *Die islamische Welt 1000 bis 1517: Wirtschaft, Gesellschaft, Staat* [Vienna, 2008].) Reinhard Schulze's sketch of the history of the Islamic world in modern times ("Die islamische Welt in der Neuzeit [16.–19. Jahrhundert]," in *Der islamische Orient: Grundzüge seiner Geschichte,* ed. Albrecht Noth and Jürgen Paul [Würzburg, 1998], 333–403) shows that even the use of European terms like "Renaissance" and "Baroque" may prove useful for the interpretation of certain developments in Islamic history, or at least that the use of these terms might help to enlarge the "hermeneutic horizon" (Schulze, ibid., 333) for modern Islamic history. It is in this sense that I compare al-Mālikī's compendium to late medieval and early modern European proto- or semi-encyclopedic literary genres.

before the emergence of the great early modern Western encyclopedias.[70] In fact, *Al-Kanz*'s aforementioned lists of words and synonyms very much resemble the thematically organized medieval proto-encyclopedic "vocabularies" which presented the world in the form of bilingual word lists (Latin/vernacular languages).[71] Just as their European counterparts made specialized Latin vocabulary accessible to their readers, *Al-Kanz al-Madfūn*'s wordlists made specialized Arabic vocabularies accessible to the average cultivated Arab reader or listener of the book.[72] For instance the *Elucidarius carminum et hystoriarum,* a proto-encyclopedic text published in 1505, contains lists of verbs designating the voices of wild animals,[73] lists of numbers (cardinal, ordinal, distributive, etc.), lists of plants, precious stones, etc., all topics we also find in *Al-Kanz al-Madfūn*'s wordlists. Also like *Al-Kanz*, the titles of European proto-encyclopedic texts often contain metaphors of houses, store-rooms, and containers of all sorts to indicate the volume of the encompassed knowledge—for instance, the *Schatzbehalter* (container of treasures), which the Franciscan monk Stephan Fridolin first published in 1491 in Nuremberg.[74] Finally, another European late medieval proto-encyclopedic work, *Ein lieblich Hystorie von dem hochgelehrten Meister Lucidario,* published in Augsburg in 1483,[75] shows just like *Al-Kanz* the structure of a dialogue between a fictive disciple and his master, the latter giving authoritative answers to the former's questions: "*Lieber meyster*

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[70] Such as those of Pierre Bayle, Johann Heinrich Zeller, Jean-Baptiste Rond d'Alembert; and Denis Diderot; see Schenda, "Hand-Wissen," 15.

[71] Beginning with the tenth-century *Vocabularis Sancti Galli* (see Schenda, "Hand-Wissen," 16–17), many proto-encyclopedic works were at least partly organized in lists of words. See for instance Francesco Alumno, *La Fabbrica del mondo* (Venice. 1548) (see Schenda, "Hand-Wissen," 19); François Pomey, *Indiculus Universalis…/L'Univers en abrégé…* (Lyon, 1667); and Hermannus Torrentius, *Elucidarius carminum et hystoriarum* (Strassburg, 1505). (The historical editions of Pomey and Torrentius can be downloaded as pdf-files from the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek: http://www.gateway-bayern.de).

[72] See for instance the "translation" list of synonyms in al-Mālikī, *Kanz,* 216:

"الصيدلي هو العطار، النخاس دلال الرقيق، الجهبذ الجابي."

[73] See al-Mālikī, *Kanz,* 170: "في أصوات الحيوانات".

[74] Stephan Fridolin and Michael Wolgemut, *Der Schatzbehalter,* The Printed Sources of Western Art, 28 (facsimile of the 1491 Nuremberg edition) (Portland, Oregon, 1972). See Schenda, "Hand-Wissen," 18.

[75] *Ein lieblich Hystorie von dem hochgelehrten Meister Lucidario* is not published, but a later printing of the same work entitled *M. Elucidarius: Von allerhande geschöpffen Gottes, den Engeln der Himmeln, Gestirns, Planeten, vnnd wie alle Creaturen geschaffend sein auff erden* (Augsburg, 1548) can be downloaded as a pdf-file from the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek: http://www.gateway-bayern.de). See Schenda, "Hand-Wissen," 23–24.

sag wie, wie manigen Namen hat nun die helle?"[76] or "*Wieufl der Hymel?*"[77] or "*Wie alt was Adam da er starb?*"[78] or "*Wer war dann der erst Mann der das Buchstaben fande?*"[79] These questions resemble again quite neatly what we find in al-Mālikī's *Al-Kanz al-Madfūn:* "لِمَ خلق الله تعالى النار سبع طبقات والجنة ثمان طبقات؟ or [80] قبض أبونا آدم عليه السلام فائدة:

يوم الجمعة قبل الزوال بلحظة، وفي الساعة الثالثة من يوم الجمعة خلق، وفي الساعة السادسة من يوم الجمعة أسكن جنة عدن، وفي الساعة الحادية عشرة من يوم الجمعة أخرج من الجنة[81] or "أول من خط بالقلم".[82]

However, what distinguishes all the aforementioned works from *Al-Kanz al-Madfūn* is the fact that they organize their subjects and do not present them in an obviously arbitrary way as does al-Mālikī's *Kanz* (the late medieval and early modern pre-encyclopedic compendia usually follow a religiously dominated worldview similar to many Arab-Islamic *adab*-encyclopedias[83]). Even the anthology genre of the *Florilegium,* in which various aphorisms, maxims, and proverbs were assembled as fruits of browsing the corpus of antique literature and which was in the beginning a rather unorganized corpus of "fruits of readings," soon became a hierarchically organized genre of literature.[84]

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[76] "Dear master, tell me: how many hells exist?" *M. Elucidarius*, pdf-file Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, 13: Das iii. Capitel, "Vom Fall Lucifer und der hellen."

[77] "How many heavens exist?" ibid., 15: Das v. Capitel, "Wieufl der Hymel/und wa Adam geschaffen."

[78] "What was Adam's age when he died?" ibid., 16–17: Das vi. Capitel, "Vom Paradeiß/taylung der welt/und wassern des Paradeiß."

[79] "Who was the first man who invented the letters of the alphabet?" ibid., 17: Das vi. Capitel, "Vom Paradeiß/taylung der welt/und wassern des Paradeiß."

[80] Al-Mālikī, *Kanz,* 134.

[81] Ibid., 159.

[82] Ibid., 282.

[83] For instance, the *Indiculus universalis* (1667) of the Jesuit François Pommey has the following structure: (I) Le Monde (The creation of the world, of heaven, the elements, animals, plants, stones and metals); (II) L'Homme (His body, clothes, soul, intelligence, virtues, vices, and passions); (III) La Ville (The city's inhabitants, social groups and ranks, buildings, arts, crafts, the city and the countryside, gardens and fruits); see Schenda, "Hand-Wissen," 19. Concentrating very much on God and the hereafter is the anonymous Anglo-Norman *Elucidarium* from the early thirteenth century (see *Eine altfranzösische Übersetzung des Elucidarium*, ed. Henning Düwell [Munich, 1974], 6 f.): "Li fundemenz de l'ovre seit jetez sur pierre, çoe est sur Crist; e tuit li engienz seit apuiez de quatre fermes columnes. La premeraine comlumne esdreizt l'autorité des prophetes, la secunde establiset la diginité des apostles, la tierce esforzt li sens des espostiurs, la quatre ficht la profitable utilité des maistres." ("The foundations of the work shall be erected on stone, that means on Christ; and the whole framework shall be based on four firm columns: on the authority of the prophets, the dignity of the apostles, the reason of the interpreters, and the profit which the masters may draw from it.")

[84] While Erasmus initially published his collection of proverbs, *Adagia* (1500), as well as his *Parabolae* (1514) and *Apophtegmata* (1531) in a rather unorganized way, the subsequent editions of

Yet another genre in late medieval European literature, the *housebook,* may help us to understand the genesis of al-Mālikī's work. The *housebook* indeed shows a close thematic proximity to the bulk of practically useful information which *Al-Kanz* provides to its readers, while having the same lack of organization as *Al-Kanz.*

The manuscript text collections of the *housebook* type were an urban phenomenon of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Europe and shared a number of common characteristics. They were mostly collected, written, and retained by the same person, in general by men belonging to the urban bourgeoisie; they usually began with one longer literary text (for instance, a heroic epic or romance) which was followed by smaller sections whose suite often didn't follow any logical order—a section of prayer could be followed by a section of maxims, followed by a section on kitchen recipes; and finally, the thematic range of these *housebooks* was usually closely linked to the practical necessities and interests of the collector's/writer's/owner's household (which is why they were called *housebooks*) and/or to their professions.[85]

The emergence of this kind of literature in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries seems to have been mainly due to the fact that the European late medieval era was, just like the Ayyubid and Mamluk era in the Arab world, marked by the spread of education to formally excluded classes of the population such as craftsmen and small merchants—a spread that made the distinction between laymen and clerics no longer that between illiterate and literate.[86] Whereas the most luxuriously executed *housebooks* were works ordered by noblemen or rich bourgeois,[87] we can see in the sixteenth century the spread of this type of text collection in less beautiful manuscripts to urban clerks (e.g., the *housebook* of Jakob Käbitz, Wemdingen, at the end of the fifteenth century;[88] or the *housebook* of Valentin Holl the scribe, Augsburg, 1524–26) or to craftsmen (e.g., the *housebook* collection

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these works in the course of the sixteenth century were placed in alphabetical order. See Gilbert Heß, "Enzyklopädien und Florilegien im 16. Jahrhundert: *Doctrina*, *Eruditio* und *Sapientia* in verschiedenen Thesaurierungsformen," in *Wissenssicherung, Wissensordnung und Wissensverarbeitung: Das europäische Modell der Enzyklopädien,* ed. Theo Stammen, and Wolfgang E. J. Weber (Berlin, 2004), 41.

[85] Dieter H. Meyer, "Hausbuch," in *Reallexikon der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft,* vol. 2, ed. Harald Fricke, 12.

[86] Nikolaus Henkel, "Ein Augsburger Hausbuch des Spätmittelalters," in *Literarisches Leben in Augsburg während des 15. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Johannes Janota and Werner Williams-Kramp (Tübingen, 1995), 27–28.

[87] See for instance the *Hausbuch von Schloss Wolfegg,* circa 1480, which was lavishly illustrated. See Christoph Graf zu Waldburg-Wolfegg, *Venus and Mars: The World of the Medieval Housebook* (Munich, 1998).

[88] Meyer, "Hausbuch," 13.

in several volumes of the weaver Simprecht Kröll, Augsburg, 1516–56;[89] or the *housebook* of the craftsman and later mayor of Augsburg Ulrich Schwarz, d. 1478).[90] The life of Mayor Schwarz resembles in many aspects the lives of the aforementioned mamluk upstarts Aḥmad al-Ṭulūnī and Abū al-Khayr al-Naḥḥās (the latter was a contemporary of Schwarz). Just like his mamluk counterparts, Schwarz rose from a very modest milieu of urban craftsmen, entered local politics (at the latest around 1459), married a rich widow in 1469, occupied a number of public positions (among others that of the city's chief architect), was the administrator of the Hospital of the Holy Spirit over a number of years, and was repeatedly elected mayor from 1469 on (as a candidate of the guilds). In 1478 the city's patricians backed by the Holy Roman Emperor instigated a trial for misappropriation of public funds, at the end of which Schwarz was found guilty and executed.

Although the thematic scope of Schwarz's *housebook* (which in its present state has 163 folios) is much smaller than that of al-Mālikī's *Kanz* (Schwarz's *housebook* very much concentrates on pragmatic prose and in this way greatly resembles the many useful *[fāʾidah]* text sections of *Al-Kanz*[91]), it shows the same lack of order in the arrangement of its texts.[92] Most interestingly, while up to folio 142

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[89] For Holl and Kröll, see Dieter H. Meyer, *Literarische Hausbücher des 16. Jahrhunderts: Die Sammlungen des Ulrich Mostl, des Valentin Holl und des Simprecht Kröll* (Würzburg, 1989), 2 vols.

[90] For Schwarz, see Henkel, "Augsburger Hausbuch."

[91] The other *housebook*s cited above (Jakob Käbitz, Valentin Holl, Simprecht Kröll; see Meyer, *Literarische Hausbücher*) are less focused on pragmatic prose, containing—like *Al-Kanz*—numerous segments of literary prose and poetry.

[92] For instance, in Schwarz's *housebook* we find: (1) a collection of prayers; (2) an extract from the *Practica,* a medical treatise by Bartholomäus Salernitanus; (3) a section on fireworks; (4) various medical and other recipes—how to avoid bad mouth odor, how to make mice flee from one's house, etc.; (5) a section on the making of wine;...(7) an incantation for a sword; (8) recipes and magical techniques; (9) a prayer for recovery from disease;...(12) an extract from the "German Cato" (maxims); (13) a section on recipes for cuisine;...(17) Johannisminne, on courtly love; (18) a treatise on the Black Death;...(21) "Christ's knighthood in the holy week"—each of the seven days of the holy week consecrated to the struggle against one particular cardinal sin; (22) the Ten Commandments and the seven cardinal sins; (23) a recipe to counteract women's discharge; (24) a list of dishes; (25) prayers; (26) maxims for marital life and other realms, and prayers;... (28) notes relating to Vehmic courts; (29) country lore; (30) remedies for horses;...(32) rhymed moral lessons; (33) blessing of arms;...(35) a comparative table of measures of the capacities of various cities; (36) what to do against stains, against burnings, viper bites, what to fish, etc.;... (38) a prayer for the Virgin Mary; and (39) some historical events of the year 1471. See Henkel, "Augsburger Hausbuch," 34–41. The *housebook*s of Jakob Käbitz, Valentin Holl, and Simprecht Kröll are more structured than Schwartz's housebook, but they do also contain texts that have simply been added in random order. Meyer (*Literarische Hausbücher,* 2:766) describes the way in which the different texts were assembled in the *housebook*s as follows: "Die Art und Weise, wie die Sammler an das Sammelgut gerieten, bestimmte die Anlagegestalt ihrer Kollektionen. Überwiegend wurde ein größerer Textbestand zu Beginn der Sammlungen registriert, während

of Schwarz's *housebook* the manuscript is nearly entirely in his own hand, from that point on the manuscript is continued by several other hands, which seem to have been those of his son[93] and his descendants. The folios 153–63, which seem to have been added after the death of Ulrich Schwarz's son Matthäus in 1519 when the manuscript was bound, are entirely blank, a fact that Nikolaus Henkel interprets as proof of the fact that the manuscript was meant to be continued. For him the apparent disorder in the subject material, the fact that spaces were left free, apparently for subsequent additions, as well as the frequent change of pen and ink, all prove a discontinued process of redaction. In order to make the chaotic arrangement of the material available for practical use, a table of contents has been added at the end of the manuscript—either by Schwarz or his son.[94]

Having seen the example of Ulrich Schwarz's *housebook*, we might now regard the genesis of *Al-Kanz al-Madfūn* as being an open and ongoing collection of various materials. Unfortunately, an original manuscript of *Al-Kanz al-Madfūn* from al-Mālikī's or his successors' hands has not been and perhaps never will be found. But were we to have it, I daresay that it would most probably resemble the *housebook* of Ulrich Schwarz and his sons—discontinued, from different hands, open to subsequent additions, and with an added table of contents to make it easier to handle.

Al-Kanz al-Madfūn thus displays the characteristics of a hybrid genre. It is clearly a work with encyclopedic ambitions, meant to provide the readers or listeners with a wealth of knowledge from a variety of fields, and it is not surprising that it resembles a number of European proto-encyclopedic works in its narrative strategies and subject matter. *Al-Kanz al-Madfūn* is also an entertaining book that may well have been read among relatives, neighbors, and friends. *Al-Kanz*'s genesis may well have been similar to that of the *housebook*s of Ulrich Schwarz and other European upstarts of the "*ʿāmmah.*" In fact, I daresay that *Al-Kanz* might be seen as a sort of mamluk *housebook* that has expanded over time to such an extent that it eventually became a petit-bourgeois encyclopedic *adab*-compendium.

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innerhalb der Anlagen sich unterschiedliche Formen kleinerer Texteinheiten in Abhängigkeit von Erwerbsart und Ordnungsstreben der Sammler einstellten. So können poetische Texte [und] pragmatische Prosatexte zu inhaltlich homogenen Corpora zusammengefasst sein…[Es] ergeben sich Abschnitte ohne innere Einheitlichkeit, sobald vom ordnenden auf das rein addierende Sammeln übergegangen wird bzw. werden muss."

[93] See Henkel, "Augsburger Hausbuch," 41.

[94] See ibid., 44.

Poverty and Wealth

After having presented the three *adab*-encyclopedias, in terms of their structure and content, respectively as what one might term an elite work (al-Nuwayrī's *Nihāyat al-Arab*), as a work emerging from the milieu of "small *ʿulamāʾ*" (al-Ibshīhī's *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf*), and as a work arising from a less instructed but literate milieu (al-Mālikī's *Al-Kanz al-Madfūn*), I will now try to highlight the worldview of these three texts by examining one particular subject—namely, the statements these texts make on poverty and the poor, on wealth and the rich, and on working and earning one's living.

In al-Nuwayrī's *Nihāyat al-Arab* this subject is treated in the second *fann: al-insān wa-mā yatʿallaqu bi-hi,* in the third *qism,* which begins with the laudable and reproachable attitudes of men, under the heading *al-jūd wa-al-karam.* This third *qism* follows the first, which treats the physical condition of men, love, and genealogy, and the second *qism,* whose subject matter is the proverbs and customs of the pre-Islamic Arabs and those of the Prophet Muḥammad.

What is interesting in al-Nuwayrī's presentation of poverty and the poor is firstly that he treats them in thematic proximity to that larger part of his second *fann* devoted to the ancient Arabs and their customs, and secondly that he treats poverty in the context of *al-jūd wa-al-karam.* Poverty and the poor are not subjects to which he devotes an independent chapter in his encyclopedia; instead al-Nuwayrī treats the subject as part of the question of generosity and its opposite, *bukhl,* generosity being one of the more prominent and positive ways in which a pre-Islamic freeman Arab could prove his *murūʾah*, or manliness.

Al-Nuwayrī begins this chapter with two Quranic verses on generosity,[95] these being followed by a couple of *aḥādīth* from the Prophet Muḥammad: "Generosity *(al-jūd)* stems from the generosity of God, so be generous and God will be generous toward you."[96] And in the same vein: "Generosity is one of paradise's trees; its branches hang down to the earth. Whoever seizes one of these, I will have him enter into paradise."[97] Consequently, the believer should not fear poverty, because God will rescue him: "Forgive the sin of the generous man because God…takes him by his hand whenever he stumbles, and opens [the way for] him whenever

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[95] "You will not attain piety until you expend of what you love" (Sūrat Āl ʿImrān 3:92) and: "And preferring others above themselves, even though poverty be their portion. And whoso is guarded against the avarice of his own soul, those—they are the prosperers" (Sūrat al-Ḥashr 59:9). Translation Arthur J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted* (London, 1955).

[96] "قال صلى الله عليه وسلم: ʺالجود من جود الله تعالى فجودوا يجود الله عليكم.ʺ"
Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, 3:204.

[97] Ibid. "ألا أن السَخاء شجرةٌ في الجنة أغصانُها متدلِّية في الأرض فمن تعلّق بغُصن منها أَدْخَله الجنة."

he is impoverished."[98] Conversely, avarice precipitates men into poverty, and al-Nuwayrī cites Aktham ibn al-Ṣayfī, "ḥakīm al-ʿarab": "Do not believe in avarice; it [only] hastens poverty."[99] After quite a long chapter on generosity in pre-Islamic times, where al-Nuwayrī cites a number of stories on famous pre-Islamic warriors and generous men such as Ḥātim al-Ṭāʾī,[100] al-Nuwayrī touches again on the subject of poverty and wealth when he treats avarice. Al-Nuwayrī not only cites a hadith of the Prophet Muḥammad stating that avarice is incompatible with belief[101] and that the avaricious will not enter paradise[102] but he cites the Greek philosopher Socrates in his statement that "rich and avaricious men are at the same level as mules and donkeys—they are burdened with gold and silver and they eat straw and barley."[103] Al-Nuwayrī explicitly makes the point about avarice in citing two anonymous voices that represent the mainstream of classical Arab thinking[104] when they respectively state that "an avaricious individual does not merit being called a free man because he is owned by his wealth *(māl)*"[105] and that no wealth belongs to the avaricious man "because he belongs to his wealth."[106] By insisting on the fact that avarice makes men prisoners to their wealth, al-Nuwayrī's statements on avarice dovetail with the main "non-religious" argument that we find in the classical, pre-Mamluk elite literature against poverty: poverty is negative mainly because it strips a free man of his liberty.[107] Al-Nuwayrī ends his treatment of *bukhl* by citing quite a large number of stories about avaricious individuals, compiled from al-Jāḥiẓ's *Kitāb al-Bukhalāʾ* and other sources. In the section "How the Avaricious Justify Their Avarice,"[108] this vision of poverty is clearly expressed in a phrase attributed to Abū Ḥanīfah: "There is no good in the one who does not protect his wealth in order to protect his honor, to care for those

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[98] Ibid. "تجاوزوا عن ذنب السّخيّ فإن الله عزّ وجلّ آخذ بيده كلّما عثر وفاتحٌ له كلّما افتقر."

[99] "ولا تعتقدوا البخل، لتعجلوا الفقر، أخذه الشاعر فقال: أمن خوف فقر تعجلته \ وأخرت إنفاق ما تجمع \ فصرت الفقير وأنت الغني \ وما كنت تعدو الذي تصنع." Ibid., 205.

[100] Ibid., 208 ff.

[101] Ibid., 295. "قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: 'خلتان لا تجتمعان في مؤمن: البخل وسوء الخلق'"

[102] Ibid. "فقال الله عز وجل (للجنة): 'أنت حرام على كل بخيل.'"

[103] Ibid. "وقال سقراط: 'الأغنياء البخلاء، بمنزلة البغال والحمير، تحمل الذهب والفضة، وتعتلف التبن والشعير.'"

[104] Thomas Herzog, "Figuren der Bettler," *Asiatische Studien* 65, no. 1 (2011): 72–73.

[105] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, 3:296. "وقالوا: البخيل لا يستحق اسم الحرية، فإن ماله يملكه."

[106] Ibid. "ويقال: لا مال للبخيل، وإنما هو لماله."

[107] We find this argument, albeit not very explicitly, at the beginning of al-Nuwayrī's chapter on generosity (al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, 3:205): "The generous one is he who gives of his wealth but protects himself from [depending on] the wealth of others.":
"وقال بعض الحكماء: الجواد من جاد بماله وصان نفسه عن مال غيره. وقيل لعمرو بن عبيد: ما الكرم؟ فقال: أن تكون بمالك متبرعا، وعن مال غيرك متورعا."

[108] Ibid., 314. احتجاج البخلاء وتحسينهم للبخل.

for whom he is responsible, and to avoid the worst type of people."[109] This mainstream view of poverty, mendicancy, and avarice is conclusively brought home in a poem by Ibn al-Muʿtazz:

> "O blamer: avarice is not my nature / but I saw poverty being a worse path / Indeed, death is better for a man than avarice / but avarice is better than begging from the avaricious."[110]

To sum up, one can say that al-Nuwayrī treats poverty very much from the perspective of a wealthy Arab Muslim gentleman. Poverty and wealth are seen from the perspective of the charitable *(al-jūd wa-al-karam)* or uncharitable *(bukhl)* person who possesses a certain wealth. In the end, poverty and charity are for him mainly questions of status in society. Poverty is humiliating because of the dependence it entails, wherefore it must be avoided, whereas charity merits honor.

The second author, al-Ibshīhī, takes a more straightforward attitude toward wealth and poverty. He treats these subjects in that part of his book which I have termed "The Joys of Life." Here he dedicates three chapters (51–53) to subjects closely related to our question: *Bāb dhikr al-ghināʾ wa-ḥubb al-māl wa-al-iftikhār bi-jamʿihā,* "Wealth and money, the love of money, and boasting of its accumulation"; *Bāb dhikr al-faqr wa-madḥihi,* "Poverty and praise of poverty"; and *Bāb fī al-talaṭṭuf fī al-suʾāl wa-dhikr man suʾila fa-jād,* "Begging in a gentle way."

Very interesting here is the space that al-Ibshīhī allots the various chapters in his book. Whereas the chapter on "Wealth and money, the love of money, and boasting of its accumulation" covers 17 pages in the Beirut, 1999, edition, the chapter on "Poverty and praise of poverty" is only 6 pages long, and the chapter on "Begging in a gentle way" takes up 14 pages.

Al-Ibshīhī begins his chapter on wealth and the rich with the well-known Quranic verse—"*al-māl wa-al-banūn zīnatu al-ḥayātu al-dunyā*/Wealth and sons are the ornaments of the worldly life"[111]—and then adduces an anonymous *(qīlā)* citation: "*al-faqr raʾs kulli balāʾ wa-dāʿiyah li-maqti al-nās*/Poverty is the fount of all vices and pushes mankind to hatred."[112] Then al-Ibshīhī cites another reason why wealth is positive and poverty is not: "Poverty also robs of manliness and shame. When a man is stricken by poverty, he must give up his shame; and he who loses his shame, loses his manliness *(murūʾah);* and he who loses his manliness is hated; and he who is hated is despised. A man who ends up in this situation can say

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[109] Ibid., 315. "وقال أبو حنيفة: لا خير فيمن لا يصون ماله ليصون به عرضه، ويصل به رحمه ويستغني به عن لئام الناس."

[110] "قال عبد الله بن المعتز: أعاذل ليس البخل مني سجيةً \ ولكن وجدت الفقر شر سبيل \ لموت الفتى خيرٌ من البخل للفتى \ وللبخل خيرٌ من سؤال بخيل." Ibid. See also Herzog, "Figuren der Bettler," 73.

[111] Sūrat al-Kahf 46.

[112] Al-Ibshīhī, *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf,* 2:268.

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whatever he likes, but it will always be used against him."[113] So the first thing al-Ibshīhī does when he addresses wealth and poverty is to underscore the fact that *māl* means *murūʾah* and that poverty means the loss of honor. We can find similar statements in many *adab*-encyclopedias, such as al-Nuwayrī's *Nihāyat al-Arab* or Ibn Qutaybah's *ʿUyūn al-Akhbār* and other classical works—but these authors do not place it right at the beginning of their argument.

After these introductory words, al-Ibshīhī continues in the same vein, citing what he says to be a hadith of the Prophet Muḥammad:[114]

> "There is no good in a man who does not love wealth (or money: māl) to provide for his relatives,[115] to deliver what was committed to his trust, to assure his independence, and to be free from others (literally: from God's creation)."[116]

Al-Ibshīhī then spends another six pages citing poetry, mostly from al-Zamakhsharī's *Rabīʿ al-Abrār* and from the *Tadhkirah* of Ibn Ḥamdūn. If ever one had expected from the title of al-Ibshīhī's fifty-first chapter, "*Bāb dhikr al-ghināʾ wa-ḥubb al-māl wa-al-iftikhār bi-jamʿihā,*" that there would be long passages condemning "*ḥubb al-māl wa-al-iftikhār bi-jamʿihā*/the love of wealth and boasting of its accumulation," one is definitely disappointed. Except for some brief verse at the end of the chapter, none of the numerous poems that al-Ibshīhī compiles in his chapter condemn in the slightest the love of wealth and its accumulation.[117] To the contrary, in his compilation there are two lengthy prose sections that interrupt what might have been some very conventional "*al-madḥ wa-al-dhamm*/ praise and condemnation." The first section—"*fīmā jāʾa fī al-iḥtirāz ʿalá al-māl*/ What has been said on the protection of wealth"—discusses the tricks and stratagems that people employ so as to snatch one's money and how to unmask these con artists and thieves; and the second section—"*nubdhah min al-dhakhāʾir wa-al-tuḥaf*/The most excellent treasures and bijous"—describes the fabulous treasures and jewelry that kings and sultans have possessed throughout history. While the second prose section covers three pages and is mainly compiled from the

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[113] Ibid. "وهو مع ذلك مسلبة للمروءة، مذهبة للحياء، ومن فقد حياءه فقد مروءته، ومن فقد مروءته مُقتَ، ومن مقت أَزْدُرِيَ به، ومن صار كذلك صار كلامه عليه ولا له."

[114] I could not identify this phrase as being a hadith of the Prophet Muḥammad. Ibrāhīm Ṣāliḥ, the editor of the 1999 Beirut edition, says in a footnote that *Al-Tadhkirah al-Muḥammadīyah,* which is one al-Ibshīhī's possible sources here, attributes the saying to Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab, and that al-*ʿIqd al-Farīd* attributes it to a "*ḥakīm,*" a sage. It seems to be a variation of the statement cited by al-Nuwayrī, who attributes it to Abū Ḥanīfah (see n. 109, above).

[115] رَحِمَه: the relatives from the side of the mother, so those one has to protect.

[116] Al-Ibshīhī, *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf,* 2:268. "لا خيرَ لمن لا يحبّ المال ليصلَ به رَحِمَه ويُؤَدِّي به أمانتَه ويَستغني به عن حلب ربّه."

[117] See the poem of a Bedouin below, p. 127.

Kitāb al-Dhakhāʾir wa-al-Tuḥaf by Ibn al-Zubayr (d. 563/1168),[118] the first section on hustlers and thieves covers three and a half pages and seems not to be citations from other authors or a summary compilation of other works (the editor of the 1999 edition found no trace of citation or compilation). It would indeed seem that al-Ibshīhī wrote these pages without any external assistance. Al-Ibshīhī presents a kind of taxonomy of different groups of money-grabbers: "It has been said that the owner of wealth must keep and protect it from the rapacious *(al-muṭmaʿūn),* the betrayers *(al-mubarṭiḥūn),*[119] the liars and those who embellish their talk *(al-mumakhriqūn wa-al-mumawwiḥūn),*[120] and those who hide their real intentions *(al-mutanammisūn)."*[121] As for the rapacious, they flatter the rich and wealthy and offer them perfect "investment opportunities" or try to engage them in treasure-finding projects, which of course all end up with the rich investor losing his money. As for the betrayers, they gain the rich man's confidence through the steady and loyal service of selling and buying for him—and then when he has delegated all his transactions to them, they secretly strip the wealthy man of his money. As for *al-mumakhriqūn* (or *al-muḥtarifūn wa-al-muwaḥḥimūn* in the 1999 Ṣaydā edition), the liars, they present themselves as having acquired great wealth through certain investment strategies and bamboozle their victims into thinking that they can make similar profits by entrusting the swindler with their own monies. Finally, al-Ibshīhī presents *al-mutanammisūn*, hypocrites, those who hide their real intentions, who cloak themselves in piety and pretend to renounce the world in order to become guardians of individual testaments and of other money that must needs be safeguarded. They are, al-Ibshīhī concludes, worse than the brigands and bandits; the naïve individual is on guard against the latter, but the former they foolishly trust.[122]

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[118] Al-Rashīd Abū al-Ḥusayn Aḥmad ibn al-Qāḍī al-Rashīd Ibn al-Zubayr, *Kitāb al-Dhakhāʾir wa-al-Tuḥaf,* ed. Muḥammad Ḥamīd Allāh and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid (Kuwait, 1959).

[119] I could not find the word "*mubarṭiḥ*" in any of the Arabic dictionaries I consulted; my translation "betrayer" comes from the description that al-Ibshīhī gives of "*al-mubarṭiḥūn*."

[120] The 1999 Ṣaydā edition (al-Ibshīhī, *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf fī Kulli Fannin Mustaẓraf,* ed. Darwīsh al-Juwaydī) has here: "*al-muḥtarifīn wa-al-muwaḥḥimīn.*"

[121] Al-Ibshīhī, *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf,* 2:274. "فقد قالوا: ينبغي لصاحب المال أن يحترز ويحفظه من المُطْمَعِينَ والمُبَرِّطِحِين والمُمَخْرِقِين والمُموِّحِّن والمُتَنَمِّسِين."

[122] Al-Ibshīhī seems to have composed these pages himself and they were apparently intended to warn wealthy people against those who sought to steal their money. In a way they resemble ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Jawbarī's *Kashf al-Asrār.* But just as al-Jawbarī—who was apparently less educated than al-Ibshīhī—cannot be called a "small *ʿālim*" (he is not to be found in any biographical dictionary; see Manuela Höglmeier, *Al-Ǧawbarī und sein Kašf al-asrār: ein Sittenbild des Gauners im arabisch-islamischen Mittelalter [7./13. Jahrhundert]: Einführung, Edition und Kommentar* [Berlin, 2006], 31 ff.), his reading public may have been less wealthy than those wealthy men *(ṣāḥib al-māl)* al-Ibshīhī warns against those who want to trap them in fraudulent investments.

Following these pages, which in no way question the legitimacy of "the love of wealth and boasting of its accumulation," al-Ibshīhī still does not conclude his chapter by addressing the subject of money and those who love it but presents a long passage on treasures, precious stones, gold, silver, etc., that is taken from Ibn al-Zubayr's *Kitāb al-Dhakhāʾir wa-al-Tuḥaf.* Interestingly enough, he begins his passage by noting—this also to be found in *Akhbār Makkah* by al-Azraqī (d. 222/837)[123]—that the treasure that the Prophet Muḥammad was said to have found in the cave of the Kaʿbah when he conquered Mecca was said to have been 70,000 ounces or the equivalent of 1,990,000 dinars; and then he continues by elaborating the various treasures obtained during the wars with the Persians and the Byzantines. The whole chapter maintains a serious and even admiring tone, and there is no critique whatsoever of money and wealth. Only at the very end of the chapter on wealth and money does al-Ibshīhī cite a (single) poem stating that all the goods of this world *(dunyā)* are doomed to perish *(a-laysa masīru dhālika lil-zawāl?).*[124] So, in seventeen pages of praising wealth and money, al-Ibshīhī cites only this one short poem representing a different voice, and in all likelihood simply to serve as segue to the next and much shorter chapter praising poverty.

Al-Ibshīhī begins his chapter on the praise of poverty with the Quranic verse "No indeed; surely Man waxes insolent, for he thinks himself self-sufficient,"[125] which is for him an indication that wealth *(ghināʾ)* is condemnable if it leads to tyranny and disobedience of God. Al-Ibshīhī then goes on to cite some of the numerous *aḥādīth* in which the Prophet is said to have valued poverty and the poor—as in the well-known but disputed hadith: "O my God, let me die as a poor man and not as a rich one, and gather me in the group of the poor/*fī jamrati al-masākīn.*"[126] But unlike his section on wealth and money (except for the last poem), al-Ibshīhī vitiates his praise of poverty by compiling statements like: "One of the prayers of the first Muslims *(salaf)* was: 'O God, I take refuge with you from the humiliation of poverty and the vanity of wealth.'"[127] In other citations in his chapter "In praise of poverty," al-Ibshīhī indirectly reassures his readers that it is not possessions and money that are evil but only money gained through illegitimate means[128] and that poverty is grace from God which he only bestows on those nearest him, on his *awliyāʾ*: "The Prophet has said: 'Poverty is one of the

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[123] Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Walīd ibn ʿUqbah al-Azraqī. Al-Ibshīhī, *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf,* 2:280.

[124] Ibid., 2:284. "هب الدنيا تقاد إليك عفواً \ أليس مصير ذلك للزوال"

[125] "كلا إن الانسان ليطغى إن رآه استغنى" Sūrat al-ʿAlaq 6–7. English translation: Arberry, *Koran Interpreted.*

[126] Al-Ibshīhī, *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf,* 2:286. See also Ibn Taymīyah, *Aḥādīth al-Quṣṣāṣ,* ed. Muḥammad al-Ṣabbāgh (Riyadh [?], 1972), hadith no. 50, p. 101.

[127] "أللهمَّ إنّي أعوذ بك من ذل الفقر وبطر الغنى" Al-Ibshīhī, *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf,* 2:289.

[128] Ibid., 2:289. "وقيل مكتوبٌ على باب مدينة الرقة: ويل لمن جمع المال من غير حقة"

graces of God, for he only bestows it on those closest to him.'"[129] In Mamluk times the term *walī* was used for "saintly" people who were said to have special powers by virtue of their special relationship to God, so a Mamluk reader of al-Ibshīhī's book might very well understand this hadith the other way around, meaning that if God hadn't chosen him for poverty then it was because he was not a *walī* of God but just an ordinary believer. Not everybody, al-Ibshīhī seems to be saying here, can be a "saintly" person and have to lead an impoverished existence. Significantly enough, al-Ibshīhī concludes his chapter on poverty by citing a Bedouin *(aʿrābī):* "He who has been born in poverty will have wealth render him arrogant; he who has been born in wealth will only be humble with more wealth."[130]

The last of these three chapters is one discussing begging and the correct treatment of beggars. In this last chapter, which is quite long (14 pages), we find statements like the famous hadith "*Iʿtū al-sāʾil wa-law kāna ʿalá farasin/*Give to the beggar, even if he is on horseback," but al-Ibshīhī gives over much space to condemnations of begging.

If we recall the small amount of space that he gives to asceticism/*zuhd* in the penultimate chapter of his book and how in the middle of a reflection on corruption in the chapter on the qadis he severely condemns Sufis as charlatans who rob the naïve populace,[131] we can see that al-Ibshīhī was certainly no advocate of voluntary poverty as the way of God. In my view, his book quite clearly represents the mentality of "middle-class" men of some wealth: merchants, craftsmen, shopkeepers. I think it safe to assume that he wrote his book with a public in mind that was very much like the notables of al-Maḥallah, where he and his father had been imams.

Coming now to the third and final *adab*-encyclopedia that I want to highlight in this article, the mentality or ideology of Yūnus al-Mālikī's *Al-Kanz al-Madfūn* with respect to money and poverty differs again from that of al-Nuwayrī's work and from that which we can find in al-Ibshīhī's *Kitāb al-Mustaṭraf,* and I am very much tempted to attribute this variation to the differing social background of al-Mālikī.[132] In fact, al-Mālikī's attitude toward wealth and money, as well as poverty

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[129] "الفقر موهبة من مواهب الله، فلا يختاره إلا لأوليائه." Ibid., 2:286.

[130] "وقال أعرابي: من ولد في الفقر أبطره الغنى، ومن ولد في الغنى لم يزده إلا تواضعاً" Ibid., 2:290. Bedouins, who at all times knew poverty very well, have generally not valued this state. Pre-Islamic Bedouin poetry, which forms a considerable part of many classical *adab*-encyclopedias, generally praises wealth.

[131] Ibid., 1:321–24.

[132] Given the fact that al-Mālikī is cited in none of the biographical dictionaries and that this is probably why Ḥājjī Khalīfah cites only the title of the book and the author's name without indicating his date of death; and given the numerous passages which differ both grammatically and lexically from the norm of the Arabic *koïné;* and given the naïve character of the work—we

and asceticism, is very much a petit bourgeois one. The attitude that al-Mālikī (or whoever might have written the book or parts of it)[133] adopts toward wealth and poverty is unlike al-Nuwayrī's Arab Muslim "gentleman"'s attitude or al-Ibshīhī's "middle-class" one in which contentment is privileged. In al-Mālikī's book, terms such as *riḍá* and *qanāʿah* (contentment) form the basis of a wise and virtuous man's behavior. Typical aphorisms or proverbs are: "He who is content with what is bestowed [by God] is also patient in the moment of distress,"[134] or, "The best wealth *(māl)* is that which makes you richer, and better than that is the one that suffices you,"[135] or, "O how ugly is servility if one is in need and how ugly is arrogance if one needs no help. It is said: The fruit of contentment is peace [of the soul]: ثمرة القناعة الراحة."[136]

Th *Kanz al-Madfūn* clearly does not advocate a mendicant life without work; it cites the following proverb, "Better than begging is facing the difficulties of life,"[137] and it states that one has to earn one's money in an honest way without begging: "The best subsistence is the one which is not stained when gained and which is not sullied by the ignominy and servility of begging."[138] Although *Al-Kanz al-Madfūn* at times shows understanding for the distress of the poor—"It is most astonishing that the one who is poor and has a family to provide for does not throw himself on the notables *(al-nās)* with a knife [in his hand]"[139]—its essential attitude is expressed in the aphorism: "Continence is the ornament of the poor and thankfulness is the ornament of the rich."[140]

Al-Kanz al-Madfūn also assures the impoverished that a poor but righteous man is often better than a vile rich one: "Chosroes has said: 'Stinginess is worse than poverty, for the poor man, if he becomes rich, he is content, whereas the rich man, if he gets something, is never content.'"[141] At any rate, *Al-Kanz al-Madfūn* comforts its readers when placing money and wealth in the context of *al-dunyā,* that world which is doomed to perish and therefore of no real importance other

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have to presume that al-Mālikī came from a less educated and wealthy milieu than the likes of al-Ibshīhī.

[133] See above, p. 13.

[134] Al-Mālikī, *Kanz,* 97, l. 22: "من رضي بالقضاء صبر على البلاء".

[135] Ibid., 16, l. 1. "خير المال ما أغناك وخير منه ما أكفاك."

[136] Ibid., 9, l. 1, "ما أقبح الخضوع عند الحاجة، والتكبر عند الاستغناء. يقال: ثمرة القناعة الراحة." A similar idea is expressed by the following: "He who is content with little subsistence [that God has bestowed on him) has no need of most people." Ibid., 97, l. 14 «من قنع باليسير من الرزق استغنى من كثير من الخلق".

[137] Ibid., 45, l. 7: "أحسن من السؤال ركوب الأحوال".

[138] Ibid., 56, l. 16: "خير الرزق ما سلم من الآثام في الأكتساب، والذل والخضوع عند السؤال".

[139] Ibid., 95, l. 7: "قال بعض الحكماء: إني لأعجب ممن له عيال كثيرة وهو فقير كيف لا يخرج على النس بالسيف".

[140] Ibid., 9, l. 12: "العفاف زينة الفقير، الشكر زينة الغني".

[141] Ibid., 69, l. 20: "قال كسرى: الشح أضر من الفقر. لأن الفقير إذا وجد شبع، والشحيح لا يشبع أبدا".

than being the antechamber of *al-ākhirah,* which is the real world after this one: "The ignorant man wants to acquire wealth, whereas the intelligent man wants to acquire perfection. Be abstinent from that which does not subsist and cling yourself to that which persists."[142] Worldly power, like wealth, is not to be desired—it mostly brings trouble and strife: "Being a prince means first to be blamed, then to regret, and finally torture on the Day of Resurrection."[143] Pious people should therefore stay far away from the centers of power, as does the ascetic in the following citation: "An ascetic once looked at the door of the king and said: an iron door, death already prepared, hard agony, and travel far away."[144] So *Al-Kanz al-Madfūn* provides its reader with a quietist moral, and the author's petit-bourgeois ideology is perhaps best characterized by the following two statements:

"Be occupied with what you're responsible for/كن مشغولاً بما أنت عنه مسئول"[145] and: "He who wishes to remain at peace, does not expose himself and leaves courage alone/من أراد البقاء والسلامة فليدع الاقدام والشجاعة."[146]

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[142] Ibid., 18, l. 17: "الجاهل يطلب المال، والعاقل يطلب الكمال. ازهد فيما يزول، واعتقل لنفسك ما يدوم."

[143] Ibid., 110, l. 15: "الامارة أولها ملامة. وثانيها ندامة. وثلاثها عذاب يوم القيامة."

[144] Ibid., 54, l. 12: "نظر زاهد إلى باب الملك، فقال: باب حديد، وموت عتيد، ونزع شديد، وسفر بعيد."

[145] Ibid., 185.

[146] Ibid., 94.

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"Recalling You, My Lord": ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah on *Dhikr*

In her mystical guidebook *Al-Muntakhab fī Uṣūl al-Rutab fī ʿIlm al-Taṣawwuf,* or "The Principles of Sufism," ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah (d. 923/1517) elucidates four fundamental principles of the Sufi path: *tawbah* (repentance), *ikhlāṣ* (sincerity), *dhikr* (recollection), and *maḥabbah* (love). While all of these principles are essential to mystical life, ʿĀʾishah notes the pivotal character of the third principle, *dhikr,* the recollection or remembrance of God. In the context of the classical Sufi tradition, ʿĀʾishah regards *dhikr* as a means of purification in preparation for a unitive mystical state with God. But ʿĀʾishah also knew that recollection was an essential poetic act to stimulate the creative imagination, and many of her poems reflect her personal experiences of both poetic and mystical recollection.

I

ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah was born in Damascus in the ninth/fifteenth century into a respected scholarly family whose members served the Mamluk sultans in a variety of capacities. ʿĀʾishah's father, Yūsuf (805–80/1402–75), was a scholar of Shafiʿi law; he often presided as judge in various cities in Syria, eventually being named the chief Shafiʿi qadi of Damascus. Yūsuf supervised the education of ʿĀʾishah and her five brothers, all of whom studied religious subjects, including the Quran, hadith, and jurisprudence, as well as poetry, which they presumably read with their uncle Ibrāhīm (d. 870/1464), who was a celebrated poet of his day. ʿĀʾishah notes in her writings that she memorized the Quran by the age of eight, and that as a young woman she went on pilgrimage, probably in 880/1475, when her father took his family on the hajj.[1] During the pilgrimage, ʿĀʾishah had an experience that would significantly shape her life and poetic career:

> God, may He be praised, granted me a vision of the Messenger when I was residing in holy Mecca. An anxiety had overcome me by the will of God most high, and so I wanted to go to the Holy Sanctuary. It was Friday night, and I reclined on a couch on an enclosed veranda overlooking the holy Kaʿbah and the sacred precinct. It so happened that one of the men there was reading a *mawlid* of God's

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> Messenger, and voices arose with blessings upon the Prophet. Then, I could not believe my eyes, for it was as if I was standing among a group of women. Someone said: "Kiss the Prophet!" and a dread came over me that made me swoon until the Prophet passed before me. Then I sought his intercession and, with a stammering tongue, I said to God's Messenger, "O my master, I ask you for intercession!" Then I heard him say calmly and deliberately, "I am the intercessor on the Judgment Day!" [2]

Back in Damascus, ʿĀʾishah married Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Ibn Naqīb al-Ashrāf (d. 909/1503), the son of another prominent Damascene family, and together they had at least two children, including a son, ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (897–925/1489–1519), and a daughter, Barakah (b. 899/1491).[3] Later in 919/1513, ʿĀʾishah left Damascus with her son, then in his early twenties, and moved to Cairo. ʿĀʾishah's husband and brothers had died some years before, and so ʿĀʾishah may have travelled to Cairo in order to find her son a job in the Mamluk administration. However, along the way, their caravan was attacked by bandits, and, though they were not harmed, ʿĀʾishah and her son lost all of their possessions and so arrived in Cairo destitute. Fortunately, they were taken in by a family friend, Maḥmūd ibn Muḥammad ibn Ajā (854–925/1450–1519). Ibn Ajā was the confidential secretary and foreign minister of the sultan al-Ghawrī, and he lodged ʿĀʾishah in his harem next to his wife and employed ʿĀʾishah's son as a secretary in the chancery.[4]

ʿĀʾishah dedicated several elegant panegyrics to Ibn Ajā, and she exchanged witty poems with another religious scholar and litterateur of Cairo, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿĀbbāsī (867–963/1463–1557).[5] Mingling with Cairo's political and intellectual elite, ʿĀʾishah studied with a number of the finest scholars of the

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[2] ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, "Al-Mawrid al-Ahná fī al-Mawlid al-Asná," Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyah MS 639 Shiʿr Taymūr, 104–5, and also quoted in Ḥasan Muḥammad Rabābiʿah, *ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah: al-Shāʿirah* (Irbid, 1997), 53.

[3] ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, "Al-Mawrid al-Ahná," 355–56; Rabābiʿah, *ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah: al-Shāʿirah,* 46–47; and ʿAbd Allāh Mukhliṣ, "ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah," *Majallat al-Majmaʿ al-ʿIlmī* (Damascus) 16 (1941): 2:66–72, esp. 69.

[4] Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Ibn Mullā al-Ḥaṣkafī, *Mutʿat al-Adhān Min al-Tamattuʿ bi-al-Iqrān,* ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl al-Shaybānī al-Mawṣilī (Beirut, 1999), 1:483; 2:878; Mājid al-Dhahabī and Ṣalāḥ al-Khiyamī, "Dīwān ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah," *Turāth al-ʿArabī* (Damascus) 4 (1981): 112; and Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm Ibn al-Ḥanbalī al-Ḥalabī, *Durr al-Ḥabab fī Tārīkh Aʿyān Ḥalab,* ed. Maḥmūd al-Fākhūrī and Yaḥyá ʿAbbārah (Damascus, 1973), 1:2:1064.

[5] Ibn al-Ḥanbalī al-Ḥalabī, *Durr al-Ḥabab,* 1:2:1064; 2:2:456–60; also see Muḥammad Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat al-Khillān fī Ḥawādith al-Zamān,* ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá (Cairo, 1962), 1:315; Muḥammad al-Ghazzī, *Al-Kawākib al-Sāʾirah bi-Aʿyān al-Miʾah al-ʿĀshirah,* ed. Jibrāʾīl Sulaymān Jabbūr (Beirut, 1945), 1:101; and Rabābiʿah, *ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah: al-Shāʿirah,* 50–52, 250–51. For more on ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿĀbbāsī, see Wolfhart P. Heinrichs, "ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿĀbbāsī," in

time, some of whom authorized her to teach and give her own legal opinions.[6] No doubt ʿĀʾishah's scholarly and poetic reputation had preceded her to Cairo, for by this time, she had composed nearly a dozen works in prose and poetry, ranging in subjects from prayer, hadith, mysticism, and, her forte, praise of the prophet Muḥammad. While in Cairo, ʿĀʾishah compiled a *dīwān,* which included a *takhmīs* on the *Burdah* by Muḥammad al-Buṣīrī (d. 694/1295), as well as her most famous poem, the *Fatḥ al-Mubīn fī Madḥ al-Amīn* ("The Clear Inspiration in Praise of the Trusted Prophet").[7] This is a *badīʿīyah* poem praising the Prophet, which ʿĀʾishah intentionally patterned on similar works by Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī (d. 749/1349) and Abū Bakr Ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī (d. 838/1434). ʿĀʾishah's poem consists of 130 verses, each containing an elegant example of a rhetorical device (*badʿī,* e.g., paronomasia, antithesis, etc.) used to praise an attribute or action of Muḥammad. ʿĀʾishah also wrote a commentary on each verse and, together with the poem itself, this demonstrates her fine poetic skills and extraordinary command of Arabic language and literature.[8]

ʿĀʾishah's stay in Cairo lasted for three years until she left in 922/1516, as did her son ʿAbd al-Wahhāb. He was then an assistant to Ibn Ajā, and together with Ibn Ajā he rode to Aleppo, where al-Ghawrī was amassing his troops to face the looming Ottoman threat. Perhaps ʿĀʾishah accompanied her son as well, for at that time she had an audience with the sultan in Aleppo, after which she returned to Damascus, where she died the next year in 923/1517.[9]

II

Our sources do not tell us what ʿĀʾishah and the sultan discussed during their meeting, though al-Ghawrī appreciated Arabic poetry.[10] Certainly, ʿĀʾishah's rep-

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Essays in Arabic Literary Biography, 1350–1850, ed. Joseph E. Lowry and Devin Stewart (Wiesbaden, 2009), 12–20.

[6] Ibn al-Ḥanbalī al-Ḥalabī, *Durr al-Ḥabab,* 1:2:1064–65; Ibn Mullā al-Ḥaṣkafī, *Mutʿat al-Adhān,* 2:878; al-Ghazzī, *al-Kawākib,* 1:288–90; Fāris Aḥmad al-ʿAlāwī, *ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah al-Dimashqīyah* (Damascus, 1994), 37–42; and Rabābiʿah, *ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah: al-Shāʿirah,* 167–72.

[7] Al-Dhahabī and al-Khiyāmī, "Dīwān ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah," 112–13, which contains a description of this collection. For a list of ʿĀʾishah's writings see Th. Emil Homerin, "'ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah" in *Essays in Arabic Literary Biography, 1350–1850,* ed. Lowry and Stewart, 21–27. For the *takhmīs,* see: ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, *Al-Qawl al-Ṣaḥīḥ fī Takhmīs Burdat al-Madīḥ,* ed. Ḥasan Muḥammad Rabābiʿah (Amman, 2009).

[8] ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, *Fatḥ al-Mubīn fī Madḥ al-Amīn,* ed. Ḥasan Muḥammad Rabābiʿah (Amman, 2008).

[9] Ibn al-Ḥanbalī al-Ḥalabī, *Durr al-Ḥabab,* 1:2:1061; Ibn Mullā al-Ḥaṣkafī, *Mutʿat al-Adhān,* 1:483; and Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat al-Khillān,* 2:74.

[10] Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-Zuhūr fī Waqāʾiʿ al-Duhūr,* ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá, 3rd ed. (Cairo, 1984), 5:89, and see Carl F. Petry, *Twilight of Majesty* (Seattle, 1993), 119–22.

utation among later generations rested largely on her poetic skills in her *Fatḥ al-Mubīn* and her praise of the Prophet. Perhaps, too, al-Ghawrī sought ʿĀʾishah's spiritual advice and blessings for the dark days ahead, since ʿĀʾishah was also regarded as a respected religious scholar and a Sufi master.[11] ʿĀʾishah's affiliation to Sufism followed in the long lineage of her father's family. One of her great uncles had been a Sufi ascetic, while her uncle Ibrāhīm had been director of a *khānqāh* in Damascus. Moreover, ʿĀʾishah's father and other members of the extended Bāʿūnī family were buried in a plot adjacent to the *zāwiyah* of the ninth/fifteenth-century Sufi master Abū Bakr ibn Dāwūd (d. 806/1403), who was affiliated with the ʿUrmawī branch of the Qādirīyah order.[12]

In many of her writings, ʿĀʾishah attests to her love and loyalty to the Qādirīyah and the order's progenitor, ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (470–561/1078–1166).[13] She was also influenced by another Qādirī mystic, ʿAbd Allāh al-Anṣārī (396–481/1005–89), and ʿĀʾishah composed a verse rendition of his Sufi guide, the *Manāzil al-Sāʾirīn* ("the Stages for the Wayfarers").[14] Significantly, in the introductions to some of her works and in her poems, ʿĀʾishah lauds her spiritual master Jamāl al-Dīn Ismāʿīl al-Ḥawwārī (d. 900/1495) and, later, his successor, Muḥyī al-Dīn Yaḥyá al-ʿUrmawī (fl. inth–tenth/fifteenth–sixteenth c.). ʿĀʾishah once noted:

> My education and development, my spiritual effacement and puri-
> fication, occurred by the helping hand of the sultan of the saints
> of his time, the crown of the pure friends of his age, the beauty
> of truth and religion, the venerable master, father of the spiritual
> axes, the axis of existence, Ismāʿīl al-Ḥawwārī—may God sanctify
> his heart and be satisfied with him—and, then, by the helping hand
> of his successor in spiritual states and stations, and in spiritual
> proximity and union, Muḥyī al-Dīn Yaḥyá al-ʿUrmawī—may God

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[11] Th. Emil Homerin, "Writing Sufi Biography: The Case of Aʾishah al-Baʾuniyyah (d. 922/1517)," *Muslim World* 96:3 (July, 2006): 389–99.

[12] Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Daw' al-Lāmiʿ li-Ahl al-Qarn al-Tāsiʿ* (Cairo, 1934), 2:232, 308; 7:114; Muḥammad Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Al-Qalāʾid al-Jawharīyah fī Tārīkh al-Ṣāliḥīyah,* ed. Muḥammad Aḥmad Duhmān (Damascus, 1980), 1:274–78, 299–301, 489; 2:593; ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Nuʿaymī, *Al-Dāris fī Tārīkh al-Madāris,* ed. Jaʿfar al-Ḥasanī (reprint, Cairo, 1988), 2:196, 202–3; Éric Geoffroy, *Le Soufisme en Égypte et en Syria* (Damascus, 1995), 225–28, and W. A. S. Khalidi, "al-Bāʿūnī," *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., 1:1109–10.

[13] See W. Braune, "ʿAbd al-Ḳādir al-Djīlānī," *EI2,* 1:69–70, and D. S. Margoliouth, "Ḳādiriyya," *EI2,* 4:380–83.

[14] Homerin, "Living Love," 217, and also see S. De Beaurecueil, "al-Anṣārī al-Harawī," *EI2,* 1:515–16.

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continue to spread his ever-growing spiritual blessings throughout
his lifetime, and join us every moment to his blessings and succor.[15]

ʿĀʾishah's husband was also a disciple of al-Ḥawwārī, and after their shaykh's death in 900/1495, ʿĀʾishah had a sarcophagus erected around his grave. Then her husband built a house nearby for ʿĀʾishah so that she could place a lamp on al-Ḥawwārī's grave every Friday evening.[16] ʿĀʾishah's mystical proclivities are also clearly visible in her verse, particularly in her collection of poems entitled *Fayḍ al-Faḍl wa-Jamʿ al-Shaml* ("The Emanation of Grace and the Gathering Union"). This collection is composed of nearly 375 poems collected over much of ʿĀʾishah's mystical life, from her time as a young novice until after she became a Sufi master in her own right. Further, she prefaces nearly every poem by the phrase: *wa-min fatḥi Allāhi ʿalayhā* ("From God's inspiration upon her") or, more often, *wa-min fatḥihi ʿalayhā* ("From His inspiration upon her"), as with this poem:[17]

> You effaced me in awe
>   until vanquished, I vanished,
> And this brought Your beauty,
>   so You stabilized and restored me in grace.
> If not for You, I would have no existence,
>   and my fate would be nothingness.
> Yet, I am happy, my spirit refreshed,
>   for among the atoms, I won a drop of life.
> In You is my hope and joy,*5*
>   so what despair is the void of avoidance!
> You, most high, Who lifts and cheers me,
>   delight and preserve me, You, my obsession!
> God, my Lord, kindly guided me,
>   so misfortunes cleared away,
> And He sent His Prophet in whom
>   I have glory and grace, for he is my life!

[15]Ibn al-Ḥanbalī al-Ḥalabī, *Durr al-Ḥabab,* 1:2:1063–64; also see Ibn Mullā al-Ḥaṣkafī, *Mutʿat al-Adhān,* 2:878; al-Ghazzī, *Al-Kawākib,* 1:287–92; al-ʿAlāwī, *ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah,* 18–19, 124–25, and Rabābiʿah, *ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah: al-Shāʿirah,* 162–67.

[16]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Al-Qalāʾid,* 2:531; Ibn Mullā al-Ḥaṣkafī, *Mutʿat al-Adhān,* 1:292; and al-Ghazzī, *Al-Kawākib,* 1:121. Also see Josef W. Meri, *The Cult of the Saints among Muslims and Jews in Medieval Syria* (Oxford, 2002), 170.

[17]ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, "Dīwān ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah (= Fayḍ al-Faḍl)," Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyah microfilm 29322 of MS 431 Shiʿr Taymūr, 127–28, and *Dīwān Fayḍ al-Faḍl wa-Jamʿ al-Shaml,* ed. Mahdī Asʾad ʿArrar (Beirut, 2010), 224–25, whose edition should be used with caution. Translations of this and other poems by ʿĀʾishah can also be found in Th. Emil Homerin, *Emanations of Grace: Mystical Poems by ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah (d. 923/1517)* (Louisville, KY, 2011).

May he receive from his Lord,
    prayers that will erase all my sins.
May God bless his family, companions, and helpers,*10*
    the spiritual masters and their dependents,
As long as blossoms in the meadows smile in delight
    when the early clouds break down and cry,
As long as the dawn of nearness arises
    and nothing remains of the long night alone.

In this and many other poems, ʿĀʾishah alludes to her mystical quest in love of God and His prophet Muḥammad. Following her spiritual discipline and mystical practice, ʿĀʾishah experienced moments of mystical union, ecstasy, and joy that illumined her faith, as she notes in her comments preceding individual poems, as in the following poem composed, ʿĀʾishah says, "after [God's] blessings had wafted in":[18]

When a breeze of acceptance wafts in,
    a deep love reminds me of union's covenant,
And when a flash of inspiration appears from my Lord,
    my eyes cloud up and pour.
When the leader calls out His name
    as the caravan departs, desire wants my heart to stay,
And when passion's fire is kindled in my ribs,
    then, my friend, I take a drink from recollection's cups.
If critics belittle my claims to love,*5*
    well, ancient is my tale of love for Him,
And when others slander me because of Him,
    my every limb opposes them with passion.
If all the world abandons me, recollection of him
    remains my heart's close companion and friend.
When the One I love is pleased, He guides me
    to the path of righteousness, the straight path,
And He brings me to the pastures of acceptance
    and gives me a taste of inspiration's fruitful knowledge.
He gives me a drink from the spring of love,*10*
    and I attain what I seek and desire,
And He leads me to smell a scent on the breeze of nearness,
    reviving me, though the hot winds blow.
He tears away the veils of pride and heedlessness
    that cloud the skies of the heart,

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[18] ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, "Dīwān (= Fayḍ al-Faḍl)," 52, and *Dīwān Fayḍ al-Faḍl,* ed. ʿArrar, 137–38.

> So I behold the truth of Truth in every atom,
>   and leave aside what passes and does not last.
> O, Lord, confirm my view of You, for You are, indeed,
>   all-knowing of needs, most generous with grace!

This poem is a type of meditative verse which I have termed elsewhere the poetry of recollection, as it is closely linked to the Sufi practice of *dhikr* (recollection/meditation). In such verse, through a process of memory, reflection, and understanding, the poet draws near to God, and in her imagination experiences His love and grace.[19] Louis Martz has studied English meditative poetry extensively, and regarding such verse in the seventeenth century, he writes:[20]

> The nature of meditative poetry...may be defined by studying its close relation to the practice of religious meditation in that era. The relationship is shown by the poem's own internal action, as the mind engages in acts of interior dramatization. The speaker accuses himself; he talks to God within the self; he approaches the love of God through memory, understanding, and will; he sees, hears, smells, tastes, touches by the imagination...Essentially, the meditative action consists of an interior drama, in which a man projects a self upon an inner stage, and there comes to know that self in the light of the divine presence.

Martz found that Christian forms of meditation, especially the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius of Loyola (d. 1556), had significantly influenced the form and content of verse by several English poets including John Donne (d. 1572), George Herbert (d. 1633), Thomas Traherne (d, 1674), and Henry Vaughan (d. 1695), all of whom applied a process of "preparation, composition, discourse,...and colloquy" to compose their meditations and poetry.[21] Nearly five centuries earlier, the Ayyubid Egyptian poet Ibn al-Fāriḍ (576–632/1181–1235) had alluded to *dhikr* and *samāʿ* practices in a number of his poems, though generally, he weaved these religious strands subtly into his introspective *qaṣīdah*s and *ghazal*s.[22] However, several of Ibn al-Fāriḍ's contemporaries, including Ibn al-Sāʿātī (553–604/1159–1209) and al-Sharaf al-Anṣārī (586–662/1190–1264), were more explicit as to the religious nature of some of their poems, particularly those in praise of the prophet Muḥammad.

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[19]Th. Emil Homerin, *Passion Before Me, My Fate Behind: Ibn al-Fāriḍ and the Poetry of Recollection* (Albany, 2011), 249–52.

[20]Louis Martz, "Meditative Action and 'The Metaphysick Style,'" in his *The Poem of the Mind* (New York, 1966), 33–53, quote from 33.

[21]Ibid., 43. Also see Louis Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*, 2nd ed. (New Haven, 1962), his *The Paradise Within* (New Haven, 1964), and Arthur L. Clements, *Poetry of Contemplation* (Albany, 1990).

[22]Homerin, *Passion Before Me.*

Similarly, in Baghdad, the poet and mystic Yaʿqūb al-Ṣarṣarī (588–656/1192–1258) dedicated scores of panegyrics to Muḥammad, including one rhyming in "m" and based on the same ode by Ibn al-Fāriḍ that would later be used by al-Būṣīrī for the opening to his famous *Al-Burdah.* Also inspired by Ibn al-Fāriḍ, and especially by his *Al-Khamrīyah* ("The Wine Ode") and his long mystical poem the *Al-Tāʾīyah al-Kubrá* ("The Ode in T–Major"), Sufi poets of the Mamluk period increasingly composed poems that combined overtly religious themes with double enten- dre and paradox. Such Sufi verse together with the panegyrics to Muḥammad lend a marked metaphysical quality to much Mamluk Arabic poetry.[23] Perhaps culminating this religious trend was ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, as we find religious themes in nearly all of her lyrical verse, whether devotional hymns to the prophet Muḥammad, poems expressing a sense of awe and wonder with the divine, or any number of mystical poems, including a long *tāʾīyah* of her own.[24] Moreover, the meditative process is vital to many of ʿĀʾishah's poems, where memory and recollection are essential to the imagination as it unites thought and feeling for spiritual insights into love and life, as in the poem cited above:

> When a breeze of acceptance wafts in,
>> a deep love reminds me *(yudhakkirunī)* of union's covenant…

This opening recollection echoes the earliest pre-Islamic Arabic verse, where the poet conjures an image of his lost beloved to mourn their love-pact that she has broken. Yet, for ʿĀʾishah, "union's covenant" remains intact, and so she is filled with desire when the *basmalah* is recited to begin a journey; then, she is intoxicated by the pure wine contained in cups of recollection (*jifāni dh-dhikr,* v.4). Nevertheless, she is tried by those who blame and ridicule her, but she holds true to her covenant despite the attempts of others to dissuade her from her love. Though abandoned by everyone, she takes solace from the memory *(dhikr)* of her beloved within her heart (v. 7), which, in turn, leads her into the divine presence and a new life in love. As the poem progresses and the beloved's divine identity becomes clearer, ʿĀʾishah's *dhikr* transforms the ancient poet's reverie and nostal- gia into an act of Sufi recollection to purify the heart of selfishness and lead the way to a mystical epiphany where all things pass away in the "truth of Truth":

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[23]Th. Emil Homerin, "Arabic Religious Poetry, 1200–1899," in *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period,* ed. Roger Allen and D. S. Richards (Cambridge, 2006), 74–86. Also see ʿUmar Mūsá, *Adab al-Duwal al-Mutatābiʿah* (Damascus, 1967), 457–63; Muḥammad Zaghlūl Salām, *Al-Adab fī al-ʿAṣr al-Mamlūkī* (Cairo, 1970), 1:227–74; and, for numerous examples of panegyrics on the prophet Muḥammad, Yūsuf al-Nabhānī, *Al-Majmūʿah al-Nabhānīyah fī al-Madāʾiḥ al-Nabawīyah*, 4 vols. (reprint of Beirut, 1903).

[24]ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, "Dīwān (= Fayḍ al-Faḍl)," 139–51, and *Dīwān Fayḍ al-Faḍl,* ed. ʿArrar, 237– 51. For a translation and analysis of her *tāʾīyah,* see Homerin, *Emanations,* 95–139.

> So I behold the truth of Truth *(ḥaqqa l-Ḥaqqi)* in every atom,
>   and leave aside what passes *(mā yafná)* and does not last.

Here, in the penultimate verse of this poem, ʿĀʾishah alludes to Quran 55:26–27: «All things on earth are passing away *(fānin),* while the majestic and beneficent countenance of your Lord abides *(yabqá).*» Then the poem ends with her prayer that God deepen her spiritual life with further acts of grace.

III

The act of recollection, then, may evoke moments of spiritual transcendence, and so have the power to redeem life, as ʿĀʾishah underscores throughout her verse, and in her Sufi compendium, *Al-Muntakhab fī Uṣūl al-Rutab fī ʿIlm al-Taṣawwuf.* Loosely translated as "The Principles of Sufism," this title can also be read as "Selections on the Roots of Stations in the Science of Sufism." The term "Selections" refers to the fact that ʿĀʾishah consciously based her guidebook on extensive quotations from a number of sources, including the Quran, hadith, and earlier classical works on Sufism, particularly those by Muḥammad al-Kalābādhī (d. 385/995), Muḥammad al-Sulamī (d. 412/1021), and especially Abū al-Qāsim al-Qushayrī (465/1072). As to "the Roots of Stations in the Science of Sufism," ʿĀʾishah likens Sufism to a tree of many branches, yet having four essential roots or principles: *tawbah* (repentance), *ikhlāṣ* (sincerity), *dhikr* (recollection), and *maḥabbah* (love). She addresses each principle in a separate section, beginning with relevant Quranic quotations and traditions of the prophet Muḥammad, followed by aphorisms from the early Muslim forefathers *(salaf)* and the teachings of later Sufi masters. ʿĀʾishah then concludes each section with her own observations and inspired verses on the subject.[25]

ʿĀʾishah holds all four principles as essential to a mystical life, and they form a natural progression toward love. Thus, the fundamental act of repentance must be followed by heroic efforts to lead a sincere religious life free of selfishness and hypocrisy. Using another horticultural metaphor, ʿĀʾishah likens sincerity to water helping the tiny seeds of good works to grow, while hypocrisy is a cyclone that will sweep away the fields of one's labor.[26] But to move beyond sincerity to a higher, selfless, love demands a spiritual purification and transformation through *dhikr,* or the recollection of God, followed by His grace. ʿĀʾishah begins her discussion of this third principle of *dhikr* by quoting God's promise in the Quran (2:152): «*fa-dhkurūnī, adhkurkum*»; «So remember Me, and I will remember you.» This is

[25]ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, "Al-Muntakhab fī Usūl al-Rutab," Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyah microfilm 13123 of MS 318 Taṣawwuf Taymūr, 1074/1663, 1–5. I am currently editing and translating this manuscript for publication.

[26]Ibid, 89–90.

immediately followed by selections from al-Qushayrī's commentary on this verse, where he notes that, for those who understand the Quran literally, this verse means: "Remember Me at the appropriate times, and I will remember you with acts of grace." For the mystics, by contrast, the divine message is: "Remember Me by leaving behind all thought of reward or punishment, and I will remember you by establishing you in My truth *(ḥaqqī)* after your passing away from yourselves."[27] ʿĀʾishah elaborates on recollection's reciprocal relationship between God and His faithful worshippers in a series of mystical interpretations:

> Remember Me with sincerity, and I will remember you among the spiritual elect.
> Remember Me in your striving, and I will remember you in contemplation…
> Remember Me in your passing away, and I will remember you in your abiding…
> Remember Me in your hearts, and I will remember you in nearness to Me…
> Remember Me in your spirits, and I will remember you in moments of enlightenment;
> "Remember Me in your inner hearts, and I will remember you in illuminations!"[28]

Once again, ʿĀʾishah follows the classical Sufi tradition in regarding *dhikr* as both a process and a mystical state. As a process, recollection of God helps the seeker to eliminate selfishness and hypocrisy, and to remain vigilant against Satan. Though it is impossible to remember God constantly with one's lips, the seeker should strive to always recollect God within the heart. Further, similar to repentance, recollection may differ in its effects depending on one's spiritual level, and in this context ʿĀʾishah quotes another verse from the Quran (13:28): «*alā bi-dhikri llāhi taṭmaʾinnu l-qulūbu*»; «Truly, with remembrance of God, hearts find peace!» She follows this with her paraphrase of a commentary by al-Sulamī:

> There are four [types] of hearts. The hearts of the common people are at peace in remembrance of God by glorifying Him, praising Him, and lauding Him in consideration of grace and well-being. The hearts of the religious scholars are at peace with the divine attributes, names, and qualities. So they consider what appears to them from those things all the time. The hearts of the spiritual elite

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[27] Ibid., 96–97. Also see Abū al-Qāsim al-Qushayrī, *Laṭāʾif al-Ishārāt fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān*, ed. Ibrāhīm Basyūnī (Cairo, 1981), 1:137–38.

[28] ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, "Al-Muntakhab," 98–99.

are at peace in remembrance of God with their sincerity, their total dependence on Him, their thanks, and patience, and so they rest in Him. As for the unitarians, this is a bane, for their hearts are not at peace in any mystical state![29]

ʿĀʾishah's unitarians are those advanced mystics for whom even this state of a tranquil heart is a veil between them and the oneness of God, for the ultimate goal of their recollection is a paradoxical state of forgetting everything while abiding in union with God.[30] ʿĀʾishah cites a tradition from the prophet Muḥammad that the surest means to realize this unitive mystical state is to recollect the phrase: "*lā ilāha illā llāhu*"; "There is no deity but God." However, to be effective, this phrase must be said with utter sincerity and free of selfish desires and any thought of other than God alone. When this focused unity is achieved, ʿĀʾishah says:

> Then your recollection is by Him to Him such that you disappear from your recollection into the One whom you recollect. Then [you disappear] from the One whom you recollect into the void of an-nihilation and passing away. This will lead you to the presence of abiding in the One whom you recollect, with an eternal abiding in Paradise with Him and in the grace of His nearness...[31]

ʿĀʾishah notes that Muḥammad is reported to have also said: "One who loves something, remembers it often," and so ʿĀʾishah numbers recollection of God among the signs of love.[32] This is the final stage, where true lovers are effaced completely in the divine Beloved, and ʿĀʾishah underscores this point with the famous divine sayings *(al-ḥadīth al-qudsī)* on love known as "The Tradition of Willing Devotions," a standard Sufi ext in support of mystical union:

> God said: "My servant draws near to Me by nothing more loved by Me than the religious obligations that I have imposed upon him, and My servant continues to draw near to Me by acts of willing devotion such that I love him. Then, when I love him, I become his ear, his eye, and his tongue, his heart and reason, his hand and support."[33]

Yet this transformation is possible due, in large part, to the practice of recollec-tion. By annihilating one's selfishness in God's oneness, the seeker who recol-

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[29]Ibid., 104, and cf. al-Sulamī, *Ḥaqāʾiq,* 1:334.

[30]ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, "Al-Muntakhab," 102–29.

[31]Ibid., 130–39.

[32]Ibid., 137.

[33]ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, "Al-Muntakhab," 148.

lects God is lost in God's recollection of him and so abides in the divine presence. ʿĀʾishah sums up this process in verses near the end of her discussion of *dhikr:*[34]

> I remembered you with a recollection
>   that began from You,
> So I disappeared, immersed in You,
>   not in my memory of You.
> For nothing remained of me
>   to speak save You
> To speak for me
>   from within and without.

IV

ʿĀʾishah clearly intended her *Principles of Sufism* to be a collection of insightful and inspirational passages to aid travelers on the mystic path.[35] Throughout the work, ʿĀʾishah's tone is consistently positive and often uplifting and, perhaps due to her vision of the Prophet and her personal mystical experiences, she is confident that all will be well in the end for all lovers of God. She stresses repeatedly that divine mercy and grace are all around if only we would remember God's love of us, and open our spiritual eyes and see; this is why *dhikr,* or recollection, was of such importance to her. Moreover, in light of her discussion on *dhikr* in the *Al-Muntakhab,* we can better understand and appreciate her references to recollection in her verse. At times she cites pithy verses to serve as religious instruction, as we hear in a series of quatrains from her collection *Emanation of Grace* in which she advises a disciple:[36]

> You seeking all the rules for recollection of the Master,
>   take them from me:
> fear, and hope in tears, shame, purity, fidelity,
>   and standing before His door with humility.

And again:[37]

> All the rules of recollection, I will tell you,
>   so listen up, act on them, and achieve success:
> Permission, humility, hope, shame, and fear,
>   truthfulness, presence, purity, fidelity, and flowing tears.

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[34] Ibid., 138.

[35] Ibid., 3–4.

[36] ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, "Dīwān (= Fayḍ al-Faḍl)," 51, and *Dīwān Fayḍ al-Faḍl,* ed. ʿArrar, 136.

[37] ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, "Dīwān (= Fayḍ al-Faḍl)," 52, and *Dīwān Fayḍ al-Faḍl,* ed. ʿArrar, 137.

The following couplet was inspired, says ʿĀʾishah, as a *munājāh*, or "private prayer" to God:[38]

> In recalling you, my Lord, the spirit finds rest
>   and the soul is relieved of worry and stress.
> One striving here below to remember You,
>   attains glad tidings and happiness.

Similar to verses cited on *dhikr* by al-Kalābādhī and al-Qushayrī, ʿĀʾishah also composed other verse on the spiritual power of *dhikr,* including the following short poem, which she said was "due to [God's] inspiration upon her and her certainty of the nobility of recollection *(dhikr):*"[39]

> When sin soils the hearts,
>   and their light grows dim and dark,
> Then recollection of God is their polish
>   wiping the spots away.
> In recollection of God, how many hearts
>   remove the rust, revealing the light within.

That ʿĀʾishah practiced what she preached on recollection is also confirmed by a number of her poems that recount the effects of mystical experiences, which, she tells us, occurred to her during sessions of mystical audition or *samāʿ:*[40]

> My friend, please,
>   mention again the one I love.
> Despite my devotion to come to him,
>   I can't get enough as long as I live!
> Tales of passion for him
>   have been told by me,
> And in spreading them arose
>   a new life that will never end.
> So I can't forget him;95
>   I can't wait or be without him;
> I can't be away from him.
>   No. I can't cope.
> My tears flow from passion;
>   my heart is grilled by love
> For between my ribs is a fire

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[38] ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, "Dīwān (= Fayḍ al-Faḍl)," 34, and *Dīwān Fayḍ al-Faḍl,* ed. ʿArrar, 114.

[39] ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, "Dīwān (= Fayḍ al-Faḍl)," 31, and *Dīwān Fayḍ al-Faḍl,* ed. ʿArrar, 110.

[40] ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, "Dīwān (= Fayḍ al-Faḍl)," 15–16, and *Dīwān Fayḍ al-Faḍl,* ed. ʿArrar, 88–89.

burning me within.
Critics blame my heart,
 but, my friends, it won't be turned
By their honeyed lies*10*
 for they are masters of deceit.
Yet, when I complained of my state,
 my love sickness, and tribulation,
My heart answered:
 "This is not the way of one who loves.
"To complain about what one encountered
 in love is a disgrace!
"To die for him is nothing;
 misfortunes are adored for him!"
So, do you think I can win*15*
 his nearness curing all my ills?
Being close to him is my highest goal
 and furthest desire,
And I don't mean by this, old loves
 like Salmá or ʿAlwá or Hind.
My only aim is Him
 who knows the heart and love talk,
One everlasting God
 Who shaped all creation.
From Him, I hope for an honored place*20*
 in the safe Abode of Eternity.

Once again, ʿĀʾishah sets the scene at the beginning of her poem as she calls her companion to repeat the name of her beloved, which she has heard during the *samāʿ* session (v. 1). In this poem, she focuses on her longing to be reunited with her beloved (vv. 2–8), and there may be an allusion to the prophet Muḥammad in v. 3, where she states:

For him, tales of passion *(aḥadīthu l-hawá)*
 have been related by me

As is standard in many of ʿĀʾishah's love poems, her critics blame and revile her (vv. 9–10). But when she complains, she is chastised by her heart, which is not only the site of love, but of spiritual inspiration as well, particularly during *dhikr* and *samāʿ*. Heeding the advice of her heart to eradicate her selfish life for love, ʿĀʾishah prays that she may once again return to the presence of the beloved, who is not a person of flesh and blood, but God Himself, as ʿĀʾishah explicitly tells us:

And I don't mean by this, old loves
    like Salmá or ʿAlwá or Hind.
My only aim is Him
    who knows the heart and love talk,
One everlasting God
    Who shaped all creation.

ʿĀʾishah states that her lover is not "Salmá or ʿAlwá, or Hind." These are the names of several beloveds of classical Arabic verse, and, as ʿĀʾishah undoubtedly knew, the celebrated Arab poet Abū Nuwās (d. ca. 200/815) had earlier cast aside such legendary loves in his preference for wine.[41] In ʿĀʾishah's case, however, these beloveds are dismissed to underscore the divine nature of her love, who ʿĀʾishah declares to be: *ilāhun wāḥidun ṣamadun* ("One everlasting God;" v. 19), as she paraphrases the first two verses of Quran 112: «*qul huwa llāhu aḥdun * allāhu ṣ-ṣamadu*»; «Say He is God, the one, God the everlasting.»

In another poem, which also came to ʿĀʾishah during a *samāʿ* session, she says:[42]

Recollection of Him was sweet to taste
    when He whispered to my heart,
And His herald proclaimed:
    "Come quickly to me, obedient to Him!
"Arise, and enter Our presence
    with sincerity as We have ordered;
"Kneel before Our might and submit,
    and this will please Us.
"Give up everything*5*
    until you see only Him,
"For one who comes before Our presence
    with what you have, We have remembered him.
"We accept him, for after the break,
    We mend it with happiness.
"Just so, after rejection,
    We confer nearness.
"What is desired, We have attained;
what is hoped for, is given!"
My heart replied with obedience:*10*
    "Your wish is my command!"
So He befriended my heart, then made it expand.

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[41] See Abū Nuwās, *Dīwān,* ed. Ewald Wagner (Wiesbaden, 1988), 3:106, and Philip F. Kennedy, *Abu Nuwas: A Genius of Poetry* (Oxford, 2005).

[42] ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, "Dīwān (= Fayḍ al-Faḍl)," 56, and *Dīwān Fayḍ al-Faḍl,* ed. ʿArrar, 142–43.

He summoned it, then whispered to it lovingly.
He astonished it, then gave it comfort;
    annihilated it, then made it stay.
He drank with it, then exalted it;
    He graced it, then pleased it.
He made my heart present, then led it away;
    He gave it a drink and quenched it,
And He made it drunk, then baffled it;*15*
    He revived it and gave it new life,
With a cup whose contents
    was beyond the mind's grasp.
For the cup held:
    Allāha: lā ilāha illā hū
    "God! There is no deity but Him!"

This poem appears to be a visionary recital, as recollection of God leads to His inspiration in the heart and then to a dramatic scene in the divine court (vv. 1–3). There, a herald instructs her heart in selfless obedience (vv. 4–9), and when her heart complies, it is remembered by God (*dhakarnāhu;* v. 6). ʿĀʾishah uses a number of Sufi technical terms to describe the heart's subsequent mystical states as God exhilarated *(absaṭahu)* and annihilated it *(afnāhu),* then caused it to abide *(abqāhu)* in His presence (vv. 10–16). Significantly, in the final verse, ʿĀʾishah alludes to the hadith that declares the profession of God's oneness to be the most efficacious *dhikr* for the seeker (v. 17), and so it seems certain that ʿĀʾishah recited this phrase herself in *dhikr* meditation and sessions of mystical audition *(samāʿ).*

This, in turn, raises the question as to whether ʿĀʾishah composed some of her poems to be recited in such sessions. For centuries, poetry has been publicly recited by Sufis as a means to induce trance and mystical experience, and though ʿĀʾishah does not mention that she composed verse specifically for this purpose, several of her poems echo *samāʿ* rituals. This is particularly the case for her *muwashshaḥāt* with their refrains. I would like to close with the following *muwashshaḥ* whose refrain repeats the terms *hū* ("him") and *Allāh* ("God"), which have often been used in Sufi recitation practice. Further, in stanza six, ʿĀʾishah says: "In His epiphany, when He called out from His brilliant fire;" this is a reference to the story of Moses and his encounter with the Burning Bush as recounted in Quran 27:7–11. Finally, I have not translated the refrain but retained the Arabic to give an idea of the rhythm and beat of this poem as it becomes a Sufi chant attesting to the vital role of recollection in the thought and verse of ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah:[43]

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[43]ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, "Dīwān (= Fayḍ al-Faḍl)," 294–96, and *Dīwān Fayḍ al-Faḍl,* ed. ʿArrar, 411–14.

You who annihilates mystically
those absorbed in love of You,
Give to me! Give to me!
Grant me a good life and immortality
with clear vision in union.
Yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu
Yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Allāhu!
My love, my desire,
my goal, my being
Be mine! Be mine!
And mend my break and free me from poverty
with nearness and union.
Yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu
Yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Allāhu!
Love of You enslaved Your lover:
I was dazed when I lost
my reason, my reason,
And love bewildered me and kept me up all night
as it led me on and wore me out.
Yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu
Yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Allāhu!
Your beauty bound me tight,
and when the light appeared, gone was
my shadow, my shadow,
And it stripped me, and nothing remained with me,
as it annihilated me as was right.
Yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu
Yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Allāhu!
I left   yself and went away.
My veil was gone, and my nearness appeared:
My union! My union!
For, He had astonished, then revived me,
and He gave me new life in beauty.
Yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu
Yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Allāhu!
In His epiphany, when He called out
from His brilliant fire,
He said to me, He said to me:
"Arise, drink, and enjoy
the goodness of My grace!"

Yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu
Yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Allāhu!
For He had set a radiant cup out for me
filled with truth's pure wine.
He gave to me, He gave to me
this pure drink with relief
and hope and peace.
Yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu
Yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Allāhu!
These wine jars are unveilings of beneficence
with gnosis to their tavern-mates,
my folk, my folk,
my masters, my loves,
my brothers in my mystical states.
Yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu
Yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Allāhu!
I have an exalted axis among them
who appeared with his fidelity
to me, to me,
and he drew me and brought me near
and raised me up in nobility.
Yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu
Yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Allāhu!
My Master, the greatest to come among us
is the most exalted Prophet.
Bless him! bless him!
and all the apostles, his family
and closest friends, You Most High!
Yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu
Yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Allāhu!
As long as Your cup comes round to my heart
with Your wine in the tavern of nearness,
my drink, my drink,
given to me to drink, quenching me,
and reviving me in union!
Yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Hū, yā Allāhu
Yā Allāhu, yā Hū, yā Allāhu!

Appendix:

Arabic texts from ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, "Dīwān ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah (= Fayḍ al-Faḍl)," Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyah microfilm 29322 of MS 431 (Shiʿr Taymūr):

وَمِن فَتحِهِ عَلَيها (البسيط: ١٢٧–١٢٨):

غَدَيتُ بِالقَهرِ في التَّلاشي	١– مَحيَتَني بِالجَلالِ حَتَّى
أَثبَتَني اللطفَ بِانتِعاشي	٢– فَجادَ مِنكَ الجَمالَ حَتَّى
وَكُنتُ في قِسمَةِ الوَلاشي	٣– لَوْ لاكَ ما كانَ لي وُجُودٌ
قَد فُزتُ في الذَّرِّ بِالرَّشاشِ	٤– وَيا هَنائي وَرَيَّ رُوحي
فَلَيتَ يَأسي خَلَّيَ التَّحاشي	٥– فيكَ رَجائي بكم بَشيري
وَخَلِّني مِنكَ يا انْكِماشي	٦– فَيا انْبِساطي تَعالَ هَنِّ
وَانكَشَفَت عَنِّي الغَواشي	٧– فَاللَه رَبِّي مَنَّا هَداني
وَالفَيضُ مِنهُ فَهوَ مَعاشي	٨– وَجاهُ طهَ لي فيه جاهٌ
تَمحُو ذُنُوبي فَلا تَذَر شي	٩– عَلَيهِ مِن رَبِّهِ صَلاةٌ
ثمَّ المَوالي مِعَ الحَواشي	١٠– وَالآلِ وَالصَّحْبِ وَالمَوالي
تَعَجُّبًا مِن بُكا النَّواشي	١١– ما ابْتَسَمَ الزَّهْرُ في رِياضٍ
لم يَبّقَ مِن لَيلِ النَّوَى شي	١٢– وَلاحَ صُبْحُ الدُّنُوِّ حَتَّى

وَمِن فَتحِهِ عَلَيها وَقَد هَبَّت نَفَحاتُهُ (الطويل: ٥٢):

يُذَكِّرُني عَهْدَ الوِصالِ أَهيمُ	١– إذا هَبَّ مِن تِلقا القَبُولِ نَسيمُ
سَحائِبُ جَفْنٍ وَبْلُهُنَّ عَميمُ	٢– وَإنْ لاحَ بَرْقُ الفَتحِ مِن سَيِّدي فَلي
فؤادي لِشَوقي مَقعَدٌ وَمُقيمُ	٣– وَإنْ هَتَفَ الحادي بِذَكْراهُ صارَ في
فَلي في جفانَ الذِّكرِ صاح نَعيمُ	٤– وَإنْ أُسْعِرَت نارُ الجَوَى بَينَ أَضْلعي
فَإنَّ حَديثي في هَواهُ قَديمُ	٥– وَإنْ ضَعَّفَ الواشُونَ دَعْوايَ في الهَوَى
عَلى كلِّ عُضْوٍ لِلغَرامِ غَريمُ	٦– وَإنْ لامَني العُذالُ فيهِ فَإنَّ لي
لِقَلبي مِنهُ مُؤنِسٌ وَنَديمُ	٧– وَإنْ هَجَرَني العالِمونَ فَذَكرُهُ
سَبيلَ تُقىً مِنهُ الطَّريقُ قَويمُ	٨– فَمَن لي بِأَنْ يَرضَى وَيُرْشِدَني إلى
فَواكهَ فتح كلَهُنَّ علومُ	٩– وَيُدْخِلَني رَوضَ الرِّضَى وَيُذيقَني
أَنالُ بها ما أَبْتَغي وَأَرُومُ	١٠– وَيُنْهِلَني مِن مَورِدِ الحُبِّ شَرْبَةً

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١١- وَيُنْشِقَني مِن نَسْمَةِ القُرْبِ نَفْحَة   تُرَوِّحُ إنْ بالغيرِ حَلَّ سَمُومُ

١٢- وَيَكْشِفَ حَجْبَ العُجْبِ والغَفلَةِ التي   لَها بِسَمَاوَاتِ القلوبِ غُيُومُ

١٣- فَأَشْهَدَ حَقَّ الحَقِّ مِن كلِّ ذرَّةٍ   وَأَترُكَ ما يَفنَى وَليسَ يَدُومُ

١٤- فَيا رَبِّ حَقِّقْ فِيكَ ظَنِّي فَأَنتَ بال   عَطَاءِ كَرِيمٌ وَالمُرادِ عَلِيمُ

</div>

From: ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, "Al-Muntakhab fī Usūl al-Rutab," Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyah microfilm 13123 of MS 318:

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قد فتحَ الله بما تَرا (الطويل ، ١٣٨):

ذَكَرْتُكَ ذِكْرًا مِنكَ ابْتِداؤُهُ   فَغِبْتُ بالاسْتِغْرَاقِ فِيكَ عَنِ الذّكرِ

وَعَنِّي فَلم يَبْقَى سِوَاكَ مُخَبِّرٌ   يُخَبِّرُ عَنِّي السَّريرَةِ والجَهْرِ

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Arabic texts from ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, "Dīwān ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah (= Fayḍ al-Faḍl)," Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyah microfilm 29322 of MS 431 (Shiʿr Taymūr):

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وَمِنه عَلَيها في آداب الذِّكر (دو بَيت: ٥١):

يا مُبْتَغِيًا جَوامِعَ الآداب   في ذِكر مَيَهْمِن فَخُذْ بِخِطابي

خَوفٌ ورَجًا عَلى بُكَاءٍ وحَيا   وَصَفًا وَوَفًا وَذِلَّةٌ بالباب

</div>

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وَمِنه في ذلك (البسيط: ٥٢):

لِلذِّكر جُمْلَة آداب تَضَمَّنَها   ما قُلْتُهُ فاسْتَمِعْ واعْمَلْ تَنَلْ شَرَفا

إنابَة ذِلَّة خَوفٌ رَجا وَحَيا   صِدْقٌ حُضُورٌ صَفا دَمْعٌ يَسُحُّ وفا

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وَمِن فَتحِه عَلَيها مُناجاة (الطويل: ٣٤):

بِذكرِكَ يا مَولايَ لِلرُّوح راحَة   وَلِلنَّفس تَنْفِيسٌ مِنَ الهَمِّ والعَنا

وَمَن كانَ في دُنْياهُ ذِكْرُكَ شُغْلَهُ   فَذاكَ لَهُ البُشْرَى بِما نالَ وَالهَنا

</div>

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وَمِن فَتحِه عَلَيها ثُبُوتِها بِشَرَفِ الذِّكر (المتقارب: ٣١):

إذا ما القلوبُ بِرَينِ الذُّنُوب   تَناقَصَ نُورُها وَانْكَسَفْ

فَذِكرُ الإلَه جَلاءٌ لَها   يَزُولُ بِه ما بِها مِن كَلَفْ

فَكَم مِن فؤادٍ بِذِكرِ الإلَه   تَجَلَّى الصَّداَ عَنهُ ثمَّ انْكَشَفْ

</div>

وَمِن فَتحِهِ عَليها في حَضْرَةِ سَماعٍ (الوافر: ١٥–١٦):

١– ألا يا صاحِبي كَرِّرْ   بِحَقِّكَ ذِكْرَ مَن أَهْوَى

٢– فَمِن وِرْدي لِمَوْرِدِه   مَدَى ما عِشْتُ لا أَرْوَى

٣– وَعَنِّي فيه قَد أَضْحَت   أحاديثُ الهَوَى تُرْوَى

٤– وَفاحَ بِنَشْرِها نَشْرٌ   مَدَى الأَيّام لا يُطْوَى

٥– فَما لي عَنهُ مِن صَبْرٍ   ولا جَلَدٍ ولا سَلْوَى

٦– وَما لي طاقَة بالبُعْ   ـدِ عَنهُ لا ولا أقْوَى

٧– وَدَمْعي في الهَوَى هامٍ   وَقَلبي بالجَوَى يُشْوَى

٨– وَبَينِ أَضالِعي نارٌ   بها حَشْوُ الحَشا يُكْوَى

٩– وَلامَ فؤادي اللَوَّا   مُ يا صَحْبي فَما أَلْوَى

١٠– عَلى تَنْميقِ زُورِهِمْ   فَإِنَّهُمُ ذَوُوا إِغْوَا

١١– وَلَمّا أَنْ شَكَوْتُ الحا   لَ والأَسْقامَ والبَلْوَى

١٢– أجابَ القلبُ ما هَذى   طَريقَة مَن لِذا يَهْوَى

١٣– وَعارٌ في المَحَبَّة بَثْ   ـثُ ما يَلقاهُ بالشَّكْوَى

١٤– وَفيه تَرْخُصُ القَتلَى   وَفيه تُعْشَقُ البَلْوَى

١٥– فَهَلْ تَرَني أَفوزُ بِقُرْ   بِه الشّافي مِنَ الأَدْوا

١٦– فَقُرْبي مِنهُ جُلّ القَصْ   ـدِ ثمَّ الغايَة القُصْوَى

١٧– وَما أَعْني بِذا سَلمَى   ولا هِنْدًا ولا عَلوَى

١٨– وَما قَصْدي بِه إلا   عَليمُ السِّرِّ والنَّجْوَى

١٩– إلهٌ واحِدٌ صَمَدٌ   لِكُلِّ الخَلقِ قَد سَوَّى

٢٠– فَمِنهُ أَرْتَجي الزُّلْفَى   بِدارِ الخُلدِ والمَأْوَى

وَمِن فَتحِهِ عَليها بِحَضْرَةِ سَماعٍ (الوافر: ٥٦):

١– حَلا في الذَّوْقِ ذِكْراهُ   لِقَلْبي حينَ ناجاهُ

٢– وَمُذ نادَى مُناديه: هَلُمَّ إلىَّ لَبّاهُ

٣– تَعالَ ادْخُلْ لِحَضْرَتِنا   بِإخْلاص شَرَطْناهُ

٤– وَذِلَّ لِعِزِّنا واخْضَعْ   فَهَذا مِنكَ نَرْضاهُ

٥- وَخَلِّ الكلِّ حَتَّى أنت   وَلا تَشْهَدَ إلا هُوْ

٦- فَمَن وافى لِحَضْرَتِنا   بما لَكَ قَد ذَكَرْناهُ

٧- قَبِلْناهُ وَبَعْدَ الكَسْـ   ـرِ بالنُّعْمَى جَبَرْناهُ

٨- كَذاكَ وَبَعْدَ صَدِّ الرْ   رَدِّ بالزُّلْفَى وَصَلْناهُ

٩- وَما يَأْمُلُهُ نُبْلِغْهُ   وَما يَرْجُوهُ يُعْطاهُ

١٠- أجابَ مُلَبِّيًا قَلْبي   مُرادَكَ امْتَثَلْناهُ

١١- فَآنَسَهُ فَأَبْسَطَهُ   وَخاطَبَهُ فَناجاهُ

١٢- وَأَدْهَشَهُ فَأَنْعَشَهُ   وَأفناهُ فَأَبْقاهُ

١٣- وَنادَمَهُ فَكَرَّمَهُ   وَأَعْطاهُ فَأَرْضاهُ

١٤- وَأَحْضَرَهُ فَغَيَّبَهُ   وَسَقَّاهُ فَرَوَّاهُ

١٥- وَأَسْكَرَهُ فَحَيَّرَهُ   وَحَيَّاهُ فَأَحْياهُ

١٦- بِكَأْسٍ جَلَّ عَن أَنْ تُدْ   رَكَ لأَفْهامُ مَعْناهُ

١٧- وَمَعْناهُ بِأنَّ اللَّـ   ـهَ لا إلهَ إلا هُوُ

وَ مِن فَتح الله عَليها (المتدارك: ٤٩٢–٢٩٦):

يا مَن أَفْنَى في مَعْناهُ   مَن تَمَعْنَى في هَواهُ

جُدْ لي   جُدْ لي

وَمَتِّعْني وَخَلِّدْني   بالعِيانِ في اتِّصالي

يا هُو يا هُو يا الله   يا هُو يا هُو يا الله   يا هُو يا هُو يا الله

يا الله يا هُو يا الله

يا مَحْبُوبي يا مَطْلُوبي   يا مَقْصُودي يا مَوجُودي

كُنْ لي   كُنْ لي

واجْبُرْ كَسْري وَأَغْنِ فَقْري   بالتَّداني والوِصالِ

يا هُو يا هُوَ يا الله   يا هُو يا هُو يا الله   يا هُو يا هُو يا الله

يا الله يا هُو يا الله

حُبُّكَ نَيَّمَ فِيكَ الْمُغْرَمْ   وَلِي هَيَّمْ لَمَّا أَعْدَمْ

عَقْلِي   عَقْلِي

وَحَيَّرَنِي وَأَسْهَرَنِي   وَأَضْنَانِي بالدَّلالِ

يا هُو يا هُو يا الله   يا هُو يا هُو يا الله   يا هُو يا هُو يا الله

يا الله يا هُو يا الله

مُطْلَقْ حُسْنِكِ لِي قَد أَسَرْ   وَفِنَى لَمَّا نُرُورُ أَسْفَرْ

ظِلِّي   ظِلِّي

وَجَرَّدَنِي وَأَفْرَدَنِي   وَأَفْنَانِي بالحَلالِ

يا هُو يا هُو يا الله   يا هُو يا هُو يا الله   يا هُو يا هُو يا الله

يا الله يا هُو يا الله

غِبْتُ عَنِّي رُحْتُ مِنِّي   زَالَتْ حُجِّي وَافَى قُرْبِي

وَصْلِي   وَصْلِي

قَد أَدْهَشْنِي وانْعَشْنِي   وَأَحْيَانِي بالجَمالِ

يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله   يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله   يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله

يا الله يا هُو يا الله

فِي مَجْلاهُ لَمَّا حَيَّا   مِن سَناهُ بالحُمَيَّا

قَال لِي   قَال لِي

قُمْ تَرَوَّ وَتَمَلَّ   بالإحْسانِ مِن نَوالِي

يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله   يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله   يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله

يا الله يا هُو يا الله

<div dir="rtl">

كَأسُو الأزْهَرْ لي قَد أَطْلَقْ   وَحَقَّقني صِرفُو بالحَقِّ

جَادْ لي   جَادْ لي

هَذا الصَّافي بالإسْعافِ   والأماني وَالآمالِ

يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله   يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله   يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله

يا الله يا هُو يا الله

هَذِي الأدْنانْ جِلوَاتْ مَنَّانْ   عِنْدَ العِرْفَانْ لَها نِدْمانْ

أَهْلي   أَهْلي

وَساداتي وَأحْبابي   وَإخْواني في أحْوَالي

يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله   يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله   يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله

يا الله يا هُو يا الله

لي قَد وافَى بِوَفاهُ   مِنهُمْ قطبٌ ما أَعْلاهُ

إليّ   إليّ

وَجَذَبْني وَقَرَّبْني   وَرَقَّاني لِلمَعالي

يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله   يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله   يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله

يا الله يا هُو يا الله

وَيا مَولى عَلى الأوْلَى   بِنا مِنَّا طَهَ ٱلأعْلى

صَلِّ   صَلِّ

وَاشْمَلْ رُسْلا مَعَ الآلِ   وَالخُلانِ يا مُتَعالي

يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله   يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله   يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله

يا الله يا هُو يا الله

ما دارْ كَأسُكْ عَلَى قلبي   بِمَشْرُوبِكْ في حان قَرْبي

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نُزْلِي   نُزْلِي

وأَحْيَانِي بِالوِصالِ   وَسقانِي وَرَوّانِي

يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله   يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله   يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله

يا هُوَ يا هُو يا الله   يا الله يا هُو يا الله

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Insult, Fury, and Frustration: The Martyrological Narrative of Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah's *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah*

Introduction

A student of Islamic theology is bound to find ample evidence of the heated theological disputes that occurred as early as the seventh century in various literary genres. Theological manuals and treatises, Quran and Hadith exegeses, heresiographical compendia, chronicles, and biographies: all of these provide material on theological controversies. Poetry, on the other hand, has rarely been considered a possible source of information on theological disputes, though those disputes also generated poems. For example, in the famous closing line of his reproachful poem against the Muʿtazilī theologian al-Naẓẓām (d. ca. 230/845), the illustrious poet Abū Nuwās (d. between 198/813 and 200/815) rejects the Muʿtazilī doctrine of *al-manzilah bayna al-manzilatayn* (a definition of the status of the Muslim grave sinner).[1]

Theological controversies are often façades behind which political struggles over hegemony occur. We learn this from the very first *fitan* in Islamic history, which led to the appearance of sectarian groups such as the Khawārij. Further examples occur throughout the history of the development of Islamic thought. Scholars passionately arguing over theological issues such as the nature of the Quran, the definitions of the divine attributes, or the existence of free will were actually the representatives of political trends and positions. There is no doubt that great thinkers developed their thought from simple intellectual curiosity and genuine desire to seek the truth. However, when a theological concept is summarized in a basic formula or slogan and spreads to the wider population of scholars and even laymen, the concept becomes a cliché on the one hand, and a political idea on the other. The process of simplifying a theological concept can lead to harassment and even physical violence directed at scholars. In al-Maʾmūn's (d. 218/833) infamous inquisition *(miḥnah),* the Abbasid government used a theological debate over the concept of the "createdness" of the Quran as a tool to impose its authority on the traditionalists. The repercussions of the *miḥnah,* namely the aggressive and often violent implementation of the formula *al-Qurʾān ghayr makhlūq* by Hanbali traditionalists, or the attack of the Hanbali mob on the Quran

exegete and historian Abū Jaʿfar al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923), are further examples. The pretext for the attack on al-Ṭabarī was his supposedly figurative interpretation of one of the so-called anthropomorphic verses in the Quran. Internal politics was more likely the reason for that severe attack.[2]

Another example of the relationship between theology and politics is the series of Damascene and Cairene trials to which the renowned scholar Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Taymīyah (d. 728/1328) was subjected, between 705/1306 and 707/1307. In Hanbali sources, these trials are referred to as ordeals, *miḥan.* The basis of these trials was theological, because they involved Ibn Taymīyah's hermeneutical approach toward the divine attributes and the anthropomorphic expressions in the Quran and the Hadith. The sources, however, reveal that personal and political rivalries were behind Ibn Taymīyah's trials. The struggle for power is clearly reflected in the reports on the trials. Theology was discussed in the trials, of course, but the subtext was the alternative to the religious establishment which Ibn Taymīyah offered to the masses of his time.[3]

Ibn Taymīyah's trials were formative events for his disciples and followers (the Taymīyan circle). The theological issues of anthropomorphism *(tashbīh)* and the divine attributes *(ṣifāt Allāh)* were indeed issues of contention, if not the major ones, between the Taymīyan circle and the religious establishment whose members followed the guidelines of Ashʿarī *kalām.* Ibn Taymīyah rejected the allegorical interpretation *(taʾwīl)* of the anthropomorphic verses, which the Ashʿarīs practiced with enthusiasm and self-conviction. Refuting this method and tagging it as foreign to the proper Islamic way of thinking, Ibn Taymīyah promoted a subtle and nuanced reading of the anthropomorphic expressions, a reading which his rivals perceived as merely literal.[4] *Tashbīh,* or rather the accusation of *tashbīh* lev-

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[2] A good and precise reading on the relationship between theology and politics is Ahmed El Shamsy, "The Social Construction of Orthodoxy," in *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology*, ed. Tim Winter (Cambridge, 2008), 97–117. On the attack of the Hanbalis on al-Ṭabarī, because of his so-called figurative explanation of Q. 17:79 "...your Lord may exalt you to an honorable station," see: Claude Gilliot, *Exégèse, langue et théologie en Islam* (Paris, 1990), 249–54. In translating the Quranic verses in this article, I consulted *The Koran with Parallel Arabic Text*, trans. N. J. Dawood (London, 1956; repr., 2000), unless otherwise indicated.

[3] The prominent secondary sources on Ibn Taymīyah's trials are: Hasan Qasim Murad, "Ibn Taymiya on Trial: A Narrative Account of His Miḥan," *Islamic Studies* 18 (1979):1–32; Henri Laoust, *Essai sur les doctrines sociales et politiques de Taḳī-d-Dīn Aḥmad b. Taimīya, canoniste ḥanbalite né à Ḥarrān en 661/1262, mort à Damas en 728/1328* (Cairo, 1939), 125–39; Sherman A. Jackson, "Ibn Taymiyyah on Trial in Damascus," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 39, no. 1 (1994): 41–85; Donald P. Little, "The Historical and Historiographical Significance of the Detention of Ibn Taymiyya," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 4, no. 3 (Jul. 1973): 311–27. Also very helpful is the timeline set by Yahya Michot in *Muslims under Non-Muslim Rule: Ibn Taymiyya* (Oxford, 2006), 156–60.

[4] On Ibn Taymīyah's nuanced reading of the anthropomorphic expressions, see: Jackson, "Ibn Taymiyyah on Trial in Damascus"; Yasir Qadhi, "The 'Unleashed Thunderbolts' of Ibn Qayyim

eled by the Ashʿarīs against Ibn Taymīyah, ignited the anger of Ibn Taymīyah's followers and fueled their writings. One such work, written as a response to the trials and the theological controversy that accompanied them, is Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah's (d. 750/1350) *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah fī al-Intiṣār lil-Firqah al-Nājiyah* (Th sufficient and healing [poem] on the vindication of the saved sect, henceforth *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah*), also known as *Al-Qaṣīdah al-Nūnīyah*.[5]

   Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah was considered for years a versified creed reflecting the Taymīyan theological doctrines. However, by contextualizing previously neglected parts of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* I proved in a recent article that this work is actually a political treatise, in direct response to the accusations raised against Ibn Taymīyah by the Ashʿarī ulama of his times. These accusations particularly addressed Ibn Taymīyah's readings of the anthropomorphic texts in the Quran and the Hadith.[6] In the current article, however, I will focus on the means Ibn al-Qayyim used in order to convey his position regarding the dispute between

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al-Ǧawziyyah: An Introductory Essay," in *A Scholar in the Shadow: Essays in the Legal and Theological Thought of Ibn Qayyim al-Ǧawziyyah,* ed. Caterina Bori and Livnat Holtzman, *Oriente Moderno* 90, no. 1 (2010): 135–49; Abdessamad Belhaj, "Ibn Qayyim al-Ǧawziyyah et sa contribution à la rhétorique arabe" in *A Scholar in the Shadow,* 151–60; Livnat Holtzman, "Does God Really Laugh? Appropriate and Inappropriate Descriptions of God in Islamic Traditionalist Theology," in *Laughter in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times,* ed. Albrecht Classen (Berlin, 2010), 165–200.

[5] The text of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* used for the purpose of the present study is the accessible: Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah, *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah fī al-Intiṣār lil-Firqah al-Nājiyah,* ed. ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad al-ʿUmayr (Riyadh, 1416/1996), henceforth: *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996. This edition is generally reliable and fully vocalized. In addition to this edition, I extensively used the three most important commentaries on *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah:* Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn ʿĪsá, *Tawḍīḥ al-Maqāṣid wa-Taṣḥīḥ al-Qawāʿid fī Sharḥ Qaṣīdat al-Imām Ibn al-Qayyim al-Mawsūmah bi-al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah fī al-Intiṣār lil-Firqah al-Nājiyah* (2nd ed., Beirut, 1392/[1972]), henceforth: *Tawḍīḥ al-Maqāṣid;* Muḥammad Khalīl Harrās, *Sharḥ al-Qaṣīdah al-Nūnīyah al-Musammāh al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah fī al-Intiṣār lil-Firqah al-Nājiyah lil-Imām Ibn Qayyim al-Ǧawzīyah* (Cairo, 1424/2003), henceforth: *Sharḥ al-Qaṣīdah al-Nūnīyah;* and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah, *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah fī al-Intiṣār lil-Firqah al-Nājiyah,* ed. Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿArīfī et al. (Mecca, 1428/[2007]), henceforth: *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* BAZ. The latter work contains 5842 verses, while the popular edition of 1996 contains only 5821 verses. Ibn ʿĪsá's interpretation is the most inspiring of the three commentaries, but his suggestions are often dismissed by his successors. See, for instance, his wonderful suggested reading of verse 2, which was refuted by the editor of his book, and ignored by Harrās and Bakr Abū Zayd. *Tawḍīḥ al-Maqāṣid,* 1:38. For information and an analysis of these and other commentaries, see: Bakr ʿAbd Allāh Abū Zayd, *Ibn Qayyim al-Ǧawzīyah: Ḥayātuhu Āthāruhu Mawāriduhu* (2nd ed., Riyadh, 1423/[2002]), 289; *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* BAZ, 1:51–106 (authored by Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿArīfī).

[6] Livnat Holtzman, "Accused of Anthropomorphism: Ibn Taymiyya's *Miḥan* as Reflected in Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya's *al-Kāfiya al-Shāfiya,*" in *Egypt and Syria under Mamluk Rule: Political, Social and Cultural Aspects,* ed. Amalia Levanoni (forthcoming). The Hebrew version of the article: "'Let This Anthropomorphist Be Put to Trial': Ibn Taymiyya's Miḥan as Reflected in Ibn Qayyim al-

Ibn Taymīyah and the Ashʿarīs. Why did Ibn al-Qayyim choose the sophisticated vehicle of poetic expression in order to discuss the complex issue of anthropomorphism and divine attributes, when he could have more easily discussed these topics in prose? The answer lies both in the role poetry played in Ibn al-Qayyim's times, and in the text of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* itself. Therefore, this study first considers Ibn al-Qayyim's choice of poetry as the appropriate means to convey his viewpoint on the dispute between Ibn Taymīyah and the Ashʿarīs, then presents the structure and content of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* and analyzes its various parts. Through this approach, I assess the need that this poem satisfied, both for Ibn al-Qayyim and for his audience; I identify the emotional components of the poem; and, finally, I define the message *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* conveyed to the Taymīyan circle of students, scholars, and laymen.

The Poetry of the Ulama

Although *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* a magnificent poem of six thousand verses, is unique in its volume and ambitious agenda, the work is also a typical literary product of the Mamluk period. This challenging poem aims at surveying the views of every prominent trend and scholar in Islamic thought, polemicizing political rivals, and unfolding the Taymīyan agenda on the divine attributes. *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* cannot be properly evaluated without understanding the circumstances in which it appeared. I am not referring here to the historical background of Ibn Taymīyah's disputes with the Ashʿarīs and the events leading to his trials; rather, I am referring to the intense literary activity in Damascus and Cairo. In my opinion, this activity provides a better and more satisfactory explanation for the appearance of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* than any historical event, notwithstanding the importance of the historical context. The observations of Thomas Bauer, Everett K. Rowson, Salma Jayyusi, and Robert Irwin are fundamental for the reconstruction of the literary activity, and especially poetry, in the period. Ibn al-Qayyim's poem, as we will see, fits with these scholars' findings.

Though rich and diverse, Mamluk literature has largely failed to attract the attention of Western scholars. In his groundbreaking "Mamluk Literature: Misunderstandings and New Approaches," Thomas Bauer discusses Western research's dismissive view of this literature, a view whose origins go back to the nineteenth century. In a nutshell, Western researchers recognized the earlier greatness and glory of Arabic literature in "classical times," while describing Arabic literature of the post-Seljuk period as decadent, stagnant, imitative, worthless, and irrelevant.

Jawziyya's *Al-Kāfiya al-Shāfiya," The New East: Journal of the Middle East and Islamic Studies (Ha-Mizrach Ha-Chadash)* 53 (May 2014).

Bauer emphasizes that the fault was not in the literary texts themselves, but in the prejudiced ideology of Western scholars.[7]

Of course, the lack of appreciation for the literary products of Mamluk times began *in* Mamluk times, when literary critics dismissed their contemporaries' poetic output as inferior and decadent.[8] However, Bauer's criticism of Western scholars is supported by the articles of Rowson, Irwin, and Jayyusi, who express a certain feeling of disappointment in literary work of the Mamluk period. Rowson, for instance, comparing Arabic literature of the Mamluk period with Greek literature of the Alexandrian Age, observes, "Authors worked under the burden of a rich canon of classical texts, which they revered, and which they diligently collected, classified, commented, criticized, and epitomized. By comparison, their own literary efforts, while certainly copious, have been seen as derivative, lifeless, and smelling altogether too much of the lamp."[9] Similarly, Jayyusi accepts the precept that "the post-classical" age of Arabic poetry was one of decline. She judges that poetry in this period began "to lose its former zest and spirit."[10] Robert Irwin refers to the feeling of literary antiquarianism that dominated Mamluk literature, and in particular the poetry written in the "post-classical periods." When a belletrist or poet of the Mamluk period wrote about courting beautiful slave girls or the pleasure of drinking wine in the morning, he was merely reproducing themes from Abbasid literature and not reflecting his own experience.[11] This lack of originality, says Irwin, as well as the artful and taxing devices of Mamluk-period works, are the reasons that "[t]hese sorts of productions have not survived well compared to the work of older poets."[12] Whether the poetry of the Mamluk period is decadent and inferior is a question that will not be resolved here. I will

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[7] Thomas Bauer, "Mamluk Literature: Misunderstanding and New Approaches," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 9, no. 2 (2005): 105–7, 112–16. Bauer pursued a similar line of argumentation in "Communication and Emotion: The Case of Ibn Nubātah's *Kindertotenlieder*," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 53–54, 74–75. In the introduction to the sixth volume of *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature,* Roger Allen examines the label "the period of decadence" that was assigned to the some-500 years between 1258 and 1798 by Western scholars. Roger Allen, "The Post-Classical Period: Parameters and Preliminaries," in *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period,* ed. Roger Allen and D. S. Richards (Cambridge, 2006), 1–8.

[8] Robert Irwin, "Mamluk Literature," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 27, 29.

[9] Everett K. Rowson, "An Alexandrian Age in Fourteenth-Century Damascus: Twin Commentaries on Two Celebrated Arabic Epistles," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 97.

[10] Salma Khadra Jayyusi, "Arabic Poetry in the Post-Classical Age," in *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period*, 27. Bauer's dismissal of the term "post-classical" is well-taken. Thomas Bauer, "In Search of 'Post-Classical Literature': A Review Article," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 11, no. 2 (2007): 137–67.

[11] Irwin, "Mamluk Literature," 9, 13.

[12] Ibid., 13.

merely point out that, in spite of the fact that Bauer, on the one hand, and Rowson, Irwin, and Jayyusi on the other, stand for two opposing positions, they all agree that it was an extremely fertile era in terms of literary activity.

The Mamluk period was characterized by three major features. First, the number of literary works produced was overwhelming. Second, most of these works compiled, interpreted, and classified previous material. Third, the participation of the ulama in the literary sphere was conspicuous compared to previous periods in Arabic literary history.[13] These new "religious poets" composed poems on topics relevant to their everyday occupations and social connections. Bauer mentions, among others, the rhymed *fatāwá* of ulama-poets. We may add theological treatises in verse as one of the religiously inclined genres of poetry that appeared in the Mamluk period.[14] The vast and overwhelming poetical activity of the ulama was harshly criticized by literary critics, such as Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406), who considered the ulama's linguistic skills deficient and yearned for the appearance of professional poets.[15] At any rate, the poetic activity of the ulama was termed *naẓm* (versifi ation) rather than *shiʿr* (poetry), and their poetic products were often called—or demoted to the rank of—*manẓūmah* (didactic versifi ation).[16] There were, however, exceptional works like *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* which the biographers define as a *qaṣīdah.*[17]

Ibn al-Qayyim's literary activity in general, and the composition of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* in particular, fit exactly into this picture of Mamluk literature. As a poem on theology, *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* is a perfect example of what Thomas Bauer calls "the ulamaization of *adab*," because it describes new topics of interest to the ulama. Ibn al-Qayyim, as a poet, represents the process which Bauer names "the *adab*ization of the ulama."[18] Ibn al-Qayyim's training as a poet is a mystery. Since the biographers remain silent about this, we must deduce what we can from his literary works. He was obviously well read in poetry. A systematic

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[13] Bauer, "Communication and Emotion," 62–63.

[14] Livnat Holtzman, "The Dhimmi's Question on Predetermination and the Ulama's Six Responses: The Dynamics of Composing Polemical Didactic Poems in Mamluk Cairo and Damascus," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 16 (2012): 1–54.

[15] Ibid., 21–22; Irwin, "Mamluk Literature," 13.

[16] Geert Jan van Gelder, "Arabic Didactic Verse," in *Centres of Learning: Learning and Location in Pre-Modern Europe and the Near East*, ed. Jan Willem Drijvers and Alasdair A. MacDonald (London, 1995), 103–17.

[17] Zayn al-Dīn Abū al-Faraj ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Rajab, *Kitāb al-Dhayl ʿalá Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah,* ed. Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Fiqī (Cairo, 1372/1953), 2:448, 450; Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī, *Kitāb al-Wāfī bi-al-Wafayāt,* ed. Aḥmad al-Arnāʾūṭ and Turkī Muṣṭafá (Beirut, 1420/2000), 2:196. For more references to the biographical dictionaries and chronicles, see: *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* BAZ, 1:9.

[18] Bauer, "Mamluk Literature," 108–9.

scrutiny of the entire bulk of Ibn al-Qayyim's oeuvre reveals the extensive range of poetry with which he was familiar. Citing poems is a conspicuous trait of Ibn al-Qayyim's writing, and his *Rawḍat al-Muḥibbīn* is particularly abundant in poetry, some of which was penned by Ibn al-Qayyim himself.[19]

Ibn al-Qayyim was a copious and diligent writer. Modern scholarship, both Western and Arab, seems preoccupied with discussions of his "originality" versus his "reliance" on Ibn Taymīyah's works. These discussions, as a recent article demonstrates, are futile because the biographical data, not to mention the dozens of remarks scattered in his works, acknowledge Ibn al-Qayyim's debt to his master, while his own work proves that Ibn al-Qayyim pursued areas of interest alien to Ibn Taymīyah.[20] As textual evidence from his literary oeuvre and several biographical works show, Ibn al-Qayyim's literary output was a mixture of originality and imitation. Again, *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* is a perfect example of this: although Ibn al-Qayyim perceived the poem as a mere abridgement of Ibn Taymīyah's theological works,[21] the variety of theological topics it covered was unprecedented.[22] Ibn al-Qayyim may have been inspired by the doctrinal *Al-Qaṣīdah al-Nūnīyah* (a poem in the *kāmil* meter dealing with the divine attributes and anthropomorphism) of the marginal Andalusī scholar ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad al-Qaḥṭānī (d. 383/993), but Ibn al-Qayyim's *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* is grander and much more elaborate than al-Qaḥṭānī's poem.[23]

Nevertheless, Ibn al-Qayyim's admirable literary activity was typical of scholars of his times. Most of his works are voluminous monographs heavily relying on the works of previous generations, classifying them, and commenting on

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[19] Aḥmad Māhir Maḥmūd al-Baqrī, *Ibn al-Qayyim min Āthārihi al-ʿIlmīyah* (Alexandria, 1976), 201–2.

[20] Caterina Bori and Livnat Holtzman, "A Scholar in the Shadow," in *A Scholar in the Shadow,* 27–31.

[21] See my "Accused of Anthropomorphism" for Ibn al-Qayyim's own avowal on the originality of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah. Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 269, verses 3657–58.

[22] Bakr Abū Zayd includes *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* in a group of didactic poems which he defines as "doctrinal poems corresponding with the thought of the Salaf," *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* BAZ, 1:145.

[23] Ibn al-Qayyim inserted two verses by al-Qaḥṭānī in *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah*. In *Al-Kāfiyah,* Ibn al-Qayyim says: "A [scholar] who, without any fear, uttered truthful things composed such a poem, [in which he said] / that what is written in the Quranic codex by the hands of old and young scholars / is the word of God, its verses and letters. However, the ink and the fine parchment [of the Quran] are created." *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 82, verses 769–71. These verses were identified by Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Sayyid Aḥmad as verses by al-Qaḥṭānī. *Kifāyat al-Insān min al-Qaṣāʾid al-Ghurar al-Ḥisān,* ed. Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Sayyid Aḥmad (Riyadh, 1409/1989), 65. See also *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* BAZ, 2:236–37, n. 769.

them.[24] One of the several factors that make his writings attractive is his ability to produce a monograph from material scattered in many sources, thus creating definitive reference books which remain unique to the present time. Monographs such as *Kitāb al-Rūḥ* (the most comprehensive philosophical monograph in Arabic on the human spirit), *Aḥkām Ahl al-Dhimmah* (a compendium of Islamic laws regarding non-Muslims), *Shifāʾ al-ʿAlīl* (a definitive work on predetermination and free will), *Rawḍat al-Muḥibbīn* (a large-scale treatise on love), and *Madārij al-Sālikīn* (a commentary on an important Sufi manual) have been recognized by scholars as exceptional in their scope.[25] In sum, the diversity of topics Ibn al-Qayyim covers, his ability to make his ideas accessible and coherent, his reliance on other sources—all these factors make Ibn al-Qayyim an excellent representative of scholarly activity in the Mamluk period.[26]

This is the framework in which Ibn al-Qayyim's *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* should be read and evaluated. It is first and foremost an attempt to gather, enumerate, classify, and explain all the known opinions of Muslim scholars on the issue of the divine attributes and the anthropomorphic expressions in the Quran and the Hadith. This is the backbone of the work, from which other theological issues emerge. Ibn al-Qayyim's choice of poetry as the literary vehicle for theology can be explained by the place of poetry within the ranks of the scholarly religious elite of his times. The prestige of poetry—a genre highly regarded in scholarly circles in Ibn al-Qayyim's time and in earlier periods—and the admiration that a good poem earned for its composer were enough to encourage a capable scholar to make the effort. In addition, there are didactic benefits to poetry; a poem circulates better than a work in prose because one can more easily learn it by heart.[27] This assumption is corroborated by the fact that Ibn al-Qayyim's *Al-Ṣawāʿiq al-Mursalah ʿalá al-Jahmīyah wa-al-Muʿaṭṭilah,* a work (in prose) which preceded *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* addresses almost the same topics as *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah.*[28] In other words, dedicating a large-scale monograph in prose to the divine attributes and the polemic with the Ashʿarīs did not prevent Ibn al-Qayyim from com-

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[24] For a description of most of Ibn al-Qayyim's literary oeuvre, see Birgit Krawietz, "Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah: His Life and Works," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 10, no. 2 (2006): 19–64.

[25] Livnat Holtzman, "Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah," in *Essays in Arabic Literary Biography 1350–1850,* ed. Joseph E. Lowry and Devin J. Stewart (Wiesbaden, 2009), 202–23.

[26] See the enthusiastic description of Ibn al-Qayyim's style in Bakr ibn ʿAbd Allāh Abū Zayd, *Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah: Ḥayātuhu, Āthāruhu, Mawāriduhu* (Riyadh, 1412/1991–92; 2nd ed. 1423/2002–3), 115–16.

[27] See my "The Dhimmi's Question," 19, 31.

[28] Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah, *Al-Ṣawāʿiq al-Mursalah ʿalá al-Jahmīyah wa-al-Muʿaṭṭilah,* ed. ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad al-Dakhīl Allāh (Riyadh, 1418/1998). The *Ṣawāʿiq,* which is mentioned in *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* thus predates *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah. Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 156 (verses 1916–17). See n. 103 in my "Accused of Anthropomorphism."

posing a poem on the same issue. This suggests that there was another, more profound reason to write *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* than the mere wish to gain the admiration of his fellow ulama, or the desire to provide students with mnemonic devices. This reason can be found in the content of the poem.

At its core, *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* is an attack on the religious establishment of the time, fueled by the traumatic events of Ibn Taymīyah's trials and his death while imprisoned in the citadel of Damascus. However, *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* also draws from Ibn al-Qayyim's personal experience. Ibn al-Qayyim met Ibn Taymīyah in 713/1313 upon Ibn Taymīyah's return to Damascus after his long imprisonment in Cairo. As a faithful disciple, Ibn al-Qayyim was very much involved in his master's polemics and confrontations with the Damascene ulama. The circumstances that led to Ibn al-Qayyim's own imprisonment in the citadel of Damascus for two years (between 726/1326 and 728/1328) are a bit vague. Both historians of the Mamluk period and contemporary researchers connected Ibn al-Qayyim's imprisonment to that of Ibn Taymīyah.[29] A recent study, however, suggests—on the basis of a close reading of the historian al-Jazarī's (d. 739/1338) account of the events—that both Ibn Taymīyah and Ibn al-Qayyim were imprisoned for Ibn al-Qayyim's provocative behavior in Jerusalem, where he preached against the visitation of holy graves, including that of the Prophet Muḥammad. In other words, Ibn Taymīyah's last imprisonment was perhaps caused by Ibn al-Qayyim, and not vice versa.[30]

Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah was composed, at an unknown date, against the backdrop of these events that obviously combined theology and politics. We may assume that poetry is a much safer vehicle than prose for an author who wishes to address highly sensitive political issues. The restrictions and conventions of a *qaṣīdah* enable a scholar to juggle between things bluntly stated and things subtly suggested. Indeed, attacks on rivals and the use of foul language are acceptable in a *qaṣīdah* but not welcomed or tolerated in prose. Moreover, it is more dangerous to attack one's rivals in prose because prose is more comprehensible and accessible, whereas poems are typically more difficult to decipher. Thus, focusing on the poetic devices Ibn al-Qayyim uses in *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah*, rather than on his theological doctrines and formulas, is probably the best way to appreciate his

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[29] Holtzman, "Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah," 211.

[30] See the introduction to Bori and Holtzman, *A Scholar in the Shadow,* 21. Caterina Bori's innovative reading of al-Jazarī provides the first solid explanation of Ibn al-Qayyim's imprisonment with Ibn Taymīyah. Previous studies that mention Ibn al-Qayyim's imprisonment tend to be vague and incoherent. See, for instance, Henri Laoust, "Ibn Ḳayyim al-Djawziyya," *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., 8:821–22; Bakr Abū Zayd, *Ibn Qayyim al-Ǧawzīyah,* 70–71; or Krawietz, "Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah," 23.

efforts to address an explosive political issue in the guise of a rhymed theological treatise.

The Narrative Line and Structure of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah*

In his 1976 study on Ibn al-Qayyim, Aḥmad al-Baqrī states that Ibn al-Qayyim "was able to pronounce whatever he wished either in prose or poetry."[31] Al-Baqrī adds: "Ibn al-Qayyim uttered an idea in poetry whenever this idea was related to human emotions. This way, the connection between the content [of his poem] to the eternal [human] emotions was bound to draw the reader to read the poem again and again."[32] In other words, Ibn al-Qayyim wrote poetry in order to invoke in his readers or listeners sentiments that would make them more contemplative and attentive to the religious message. Al-Baqrī's observation is based on verses scattered in Ibn al-Qayyim's other works; however, what he says applies also to *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah.* Although al-Baqrī sees *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* merely as a poem dealing with theology, a close reading detects literary devices that were meant to invoke a wide range of emotions in its audience. This so-called theological work actually provides its audience with plenty of opportunities to feel melancholic, empathic, furious, frustrated, and so on. In this respect, *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* is like any other poem, which first and foremost attempts to provide for the emotional needs of its composer and audience.[33]

Ibn al-Qayyim composed *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* with careful consideration of the conventions of elite poetry. The poem was written in the catalectic form of the *kāmil* trimeter, which is defined by the omission of the last syllable of the second hemistich *(mutafāʿilun-mutafāʿilun-mutafāʿilun// mutafāʿilun-mutafāʿilun-faʿilātun).*[34] Also, the same rhyme is maintained throughout the nearly six thousand verses of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah:* the rhyme is loose *(qāfiyah muṭlaqah);* it is accompanied by a *ridf,* that is, the letter of prolongation *alif* precedes the rhyming letter *nūn* (hence the title *Al-Qaṣīdah al-Nūnīyah*); and the rhyme is *mutawātir,* that is, it contains one moving letter which intervenes between two quiescents (for example,

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[31] Al-Baqrī, *Ibn al-Qayyim,* 199.

[32] Ibid. For an appreciation of Ibn al-Qayyim as a poet, see: ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm ʿAbd al-Salām Sharaf al-Dīn, *Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah: ʿAṣruhu wa-Manhajuhu wa-Ārāʾuhu fī al-Fiqh wa-al-ʿAqāʾid wa-al-Taṣawwuf* (2nd ed. Cairo, 1387/1967), 76–81.

[33] See Bauer's observation: "the immediate function of poetry for the individual, that is, to provide for her/his emotional needs," Bauer, "Mamluk Literature," 111.

[34] For the various forms of the *kāmil* meter, see: Al-Khaṭīb al-Tibrīzī, *Kitāb al-Kāfī fī al-ʿArūḍ wa-al-Qawāfī,* ed. Al-Ḥassānī Ḥasan ʿAbd Allāh (Beirut, n.d.), 58–72, and the ever useful W. Wright, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language* (Cambridge, 1859, 1862; repr. 1997), 2:362–63.

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burhāni, which is read *burhānī*, or *wa'l-qurʾāni*, which is read *wa'l-qurʾānī*, etc.).[35] These features, although providing sufficient credentials of Ibn al-Qayyim's linguistic skills, are just one (technical) aspect of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah*. The other, more important, aspect relates to the structure of the poem.

A classical *qaṣīdah* (as opposed to mere versification, *naẓm*) usually consists of three sections: the first is an amatory prelude *(nasīb),* in which the narrator addresses his beloved, laments her departure, or recalls the flirtations of his youth. A transitory verse, which changes the subject and the atmosphere *(takhalluṣ),* leads to the second part of the *qaṣīdah,* the *raḥīl.* In this part, the narrator describes the dangers of his journey and boasts of his bravery. The third part of the *qaṣīdah* is the *qaṣd* or *gharaḍ.* This is the core of the poem, because this part details the subject which motivated the narrator to recite his poem in the first place. It can describe the narrator's arrival at a destination after a long journey. It can also be a panegyric *(madḥ),* a lampoon *(hijāʾ),* self-glorifi ation *(fakhr),* or elegy *(rithāʾ),* or a mixture of several themes. At any rate, it is the peak of the poem.[36] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* contains all three parts of the conventional *qaṣīdah,* but its unusual length makes it difficult to identify the demarcations between them. Further, *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* is also divided into 193 thematic parts *(faṣl,* pl. *fuṣūl).* This external, obvious partition of the poem—made for didactic purposes—also disguises the inner, hidden partition of the poem into the three conventional parts of a *qaṣīdah.* However, the content of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* actually testifies to its tripartite structure. It is noteworthy that the narrator in *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* who represents Ibn Taymīyah's views, addresses a sympathetic audience, which he refers to as *Ahl al-Sunnah*, *Ahl al-Ḥadīth,* or *Ahl al-Ithbāt* (people of the Sunnah, Hadith, or those who affirm God's attributes). This traditionalistic audience represents the Taymīyan circle in its broader sense; that is, Ibn Taymīyah's supporters among scholars and laymen.[37]

The following section describes the three-part structure of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah:* (a) *nasīb,* (b) *raḥīl,* and (c) *qaṣd.*

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[35] For the relevant definitions of the rhymes, see Wright, *A Grammar,* 2:350–55, and al-Tibrīzī, *Al-Kāfī,* 146–56.

[36] The literature in Arabic and English on the structure and contents of the classical *qaṣīdah* is vast and rich. For good introductions, see: F. Krenkow [G. Lecomte], "Ḳaṣīda," *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., 4:713–16; Abdulla El Tayib, "Pre-Islamic Poetry," in *Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period*, ed. A. F. L. Beeston et al. (Cambridge, 1983), 27–113; and Shawqī Ḍayf, *Al-Fann wa-Madhāhibuhu fī al-Shiʿr al-ʿArabī* (6th ed. Cairo, 1976), 13–40.

[37] On *Ahl al-Ithbāt* in *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* see my "Accused of Anthropomorphism."

(a) The *Nasīb*: Easily identified, the shortest part of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* looks like a typical amatory prelude.[38] Th *nasīb* in *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* is abundant in motifs from classical poetry, which are meant to arouse a feeling of nostalgia and sweet melancholy in the audience: the distance between the lovers, the yearning, the bird cooing and lamenting, the slanderers—both men and women—who try to separate the lovers, and the nocturnal visitation of a female phantasm to the jailhouse.[39] The various terms that Ibn al-Qayyim uses here, for instance love (*maḥabbah,* verses 1, 10), passion *(hawá),* passionate love (*gharām,* verse 11), the re-union of lovers (*waṣl,* verse 3), and the suffering lover (*wālih,* verse 13), originated from classical poetry. Ibn al-Qayyim, who meticulously collected and studied the vocabulary of love in his great work *Rawḍat al-Muḥibbīn,* demonstrates here his deep familiarity with love poetry.[40] However, Ibn al-Qayyim's *nasīb* is neither erotic nor profane.[41] Depicting three consecutive scenes, the *nasīb* actually deals with human love for God *(maḥabbah).* When read as an allegory, the theological nature of the *nasīb* becomes apparent, while the typical *nasīb* motifs turn out to be mere adornments. The possibilities hidden in the *nasīb* section of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* were not detected before, and so the reading suggested here is my own interpretation of the text.

Th *nasīb* presents three scenes. The first scene (verses 1–12) is that of a court-house: the narrator is put on trial because of his love for God, a love from which he cannot be averted. The slanderers (characters who often appear in the *nasīb* parts of classical poems) try to separate the narrator and his love, but they fail. In the trial, the slanderers claim that love *(maḥabbah)* and aversion from love *(ṣudūd)* are the same. This sophistic yet absurd argumentation which they bring forth is not valid, as the narrator proves (verse 12). The judge indeed rules that the slan-

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[38] The nasīb part (verses 1–39, *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 31–33) was identified as such by Ibn ʿĪsá (*Tawḍīḥ al-Maqāṣid,* 1:83), Harrās (*Sharḥ al-Qaṣīdah al-Nūnīyah,* 1:25), and Abū Zayd (*Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* BAZ, 1:13).

[39] El-Tayib, "Pre-Islamic Poetry," 43–52. A good and pleasurable way to acquaint oneself with the motifs and vocabulary of the *nasīb* is by reading *Bāb al-Nasīb* in Abū Tammām's (d. 232/846) *Dīwān al-Ḥamāsah.* Abū ʿAlī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Marzūqī (d. 421/1030), *Sharḥ Dīwān al-Ḥamāsah li-Abī Tammām,* ed. Gharīd al-Shaykh (Beirut, 1424/2003), 3:851–999.

[40] Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah, *Rawḍat al-Muḥibbīn wa-Nuzhat al-Mushtāqīn,* ed. ʿAbd Allāh al-Minshāwī (Al-Mansura, n.d.). A comprehensive study of Ibn al-Qayyim's love theory is: Joseph Norment Bell, *Love Theory in Later Ḥanbalite Islam* (Albany, 1979), 92–181. A recent study of Ibn al-Qayyim's terminology of love is: Avivit Cohen, "Between 'the Garden of Lovers' and 'the Censure of Profane Love'—A Comparative Study of Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya's and Ibn al-Jawzī's Theory of Love," (in Hebrew) (unpublished M.A thesis, Bar-Ilan University, October 2010).

[41] This is the observation of the three commentators on *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* who are anxious to defend the didactic and theological nature of the poem. *Tawḍīḥ al-Maqāṣid*, 1:38; *Sharḥ al-Qaṣīdah al-Nūnīyah*, 1:25; *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* BAZ, 1:13; 2:49, n. 1.

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derers' case is invalid, and that the break-up between the lovers (the narrator and God) is wrong.[42]

1   The sentence of love has fixed and unshaken pillars. Aversion from love cannot abolish love.[43]

2   How is it possible to abolish love, when the Judge of goodness[44] ruled for it, and the two rivals agreed on the veracity of his ruling?

3   The witnesses came, testifying that this reunion of lovers was indeed genuine, and that it materialized in the place where charity resides.

4   Thus the powerful sentence of love was confirmed. Even the slanderers could not break this bond of love.

5   This is why the rebukers' opinion was nullified, its pillars collapsed.

6   The slanderers suddenly realized that their opinion was absolutely nullified.

7   They realized that their opinion was not in its place, and that it did not fulfill the required conditions [of logical argumentation]. Therefore, their opinion became null.

8   As a result, the Judge of goodness sealed the court-record, stating that it was wrong to give a verdict of solace and separation from love.

9   The judge then explained to you the absurdity of this sentence and its reversal. So, lend me your ears, you who have ears![45]

10   The slanderers gave their sentence without having a clear proof. They stated that love and aversion from love were the same.

11   But this sentence is unjust. How can you compare passionate love to aversion from love? They are opposites!

12   How different are these two states! You may claim as much as you want that they co-exist, but the fact is that two opposites never co-exist.

In the second scene (verses 13–19), the narrator speaks to himself, as his monologue reflects his inner doubts. He is persuaded by the slanderers' views, and is

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[42] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah*, 1996, 31 (verses 1–12).

[43] Ibn al-Qayyim uses here the rhetorical figure of *taṣrīʿ*, that is, both hemistiches rhyme (*arkāni-yadāni*).

[44] "The Judge of goodness": *qāḍī al-ḥusn*. According to Bakr Abū Zayd, this is the human brain. *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* BAZ, 12:49, n. 2.

[45] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah*, 1996, 31.

nearly tempted to break his bond of love to God, and exchange it with a position of turning away from this love. His soul feels that this move is wrong, but he ignores his soul (here depicted as a bird), condemning her to a miserable life, deprived of goodness and truth. In a sophisticated reversal of roles, the narrator rebukes himself for being tempted to leave God, whereas in the previous part the slanderers rebuked him for his genuine and true love for God.[46]

13   Oh you miserable lover! A lover who attaches no importance whatsoever to his soul, because he sells it out of sheer stupidity.

14   Are you selling the one thing that your soul desires, and replacing it with aversion from love, chastisement, and separation?[47]

15   Don't you know the attributes and the true value of what you sell? Are you such a fool as to not know what is valuable?

16   Woe betide a heart, whose bird does not want to desert the branches of a tree planted in the sand dune.

17   This bird keeps on cooing in the tree, but someone else—not she—gets the fruits of the tree, which are actually close to her.

18   The bird keeps on crying, while the lover who wisely keeps his connection [to God] laughs. The bird complains all the time, while the lover is grateful.

19   But still, if pure beauty was fastened to the stars, this poor bird would aspire to fly there.

The third scene (verses 20–39) takes place in the jailhouse. Here, the suffering narrator is visited at night by a female phantasm. Starting her nocturnal journey in Syria, the female visitor passes through prominent places along the pilgrimage route to Mecca, but she does not stop. She hurries to her destination, which is where the suffering prisoner—the narrator—resides. He is aware that the visitation is but a dream or a vision. The narrator listens attentively to his visitor's words, which bring him joy, and refute whatever he perceived as sheer truth in the past. The narrator, who twice reversed his doctrinal position, is obviously fascinated by the visitor's words; however, being suspicious and ill-fated, he threatens her by quoting a well-known verse: he says that if she lies to him, then she

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[46] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah*, 1996, 31–32 (verses 13–19).

[47] Chastisement and separation (*taʿdhīb wa-hijrān*) are briefly mentioned in *Madārij al-Sālikīn* as a condemned Sufi approach. Ibn al-Qayyim quotes there two verses by Anonymous (a fool, according to Ibn al-Qayyim), who states: "Being chastised and being separated for me is better than being in the best relationship, because when we are in a relationship we are slaves to our fate, and when we are alone we are slaves of the Lord." Ibn al-Qayyim, *Madārij al-Sālikīn*, 2:40.

will be considered a liar. Verse 40, which is a continuance of the narrator's words, is a *takhalluṣ*, an elegant transition to the next part of the poem.[48]

20   And what a beautiful visitor came at night! She feared neither the spies of the amir nor the watchful eyes of the jailers.

21   She crossed the Land of Syria, heading towards Medina, the place from which faith had arisen.

22   She went to Wādī al-ʿAqīq, and she crossed this meeting point not as a pilgrim in a state of ritual consecration, but freely, without anyone being able to stop her.

23   Then she went to Wādī al-Arāk, without intending or hoping to see me.

24   And she went to ʿArafāt, and then Wādī Muḥassir, and Miná, where she offered her sacrifice. And how many sacrifices did she offer!

25   Then she went to Jamarāt—where the stone-throwing ceremony takes place—then she headed to the Kaʿbah, the monument with the covers and pillars.

26   There she made no circumambulation, kissed no black stone, threw no pebbles in the stone-throwing ceremony, and ran between no hills, so she was in no special state of ritual consecration of the two pilgrimages.

27   She went to the top of al-Ṣafā hill, and there she headed off o the house of the agonizing prisoner, who is in love.

28   I wonder whether a guide lent her his clothes, and whether the wind blew under her wings.

29   I swear, if this guide tried to replace her, he would not succeed.

30   If she went that night at the speed of the wind, she would not have made it to Wādī Naʿmān. She would not have reached her destination by night.

31   But she went by herself; her guides were the stars Gemini and not Taurus.[49]

32   She went down to the watering place, to the plentiful wells of tears. She need not go down with the sheep to their watering place.

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[48] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah*, 1996, 32–33 (verses 20–40).

[49] For the identification of the stars *saʿd al-suʿūd* and *al-dabarān,* see: *al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* BAZ, 2:56, n. 31; Edward William Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon* (repr. Beirut, 1968), 3:847, 4:1361.

33   Instead of a she-camel, she mounted the back of her passion and love. Instead of provisions, she took for her journey the memory of her loved one, and the knowledge that their reunion was near.

34   She promised that she would visit me, and indeed she kept her promise. Her visit took place when I closed my eyes.

35   Indeed she took the lover who longed for her by surprise, when she drew the curtains and entered without asking for permission.

36   She unveiled her beautiful face, and said: "I couldn't resist seeing you."

37   She told me something I thought was true. It was something of which my eyes—a long time ago—deceived me.

38   I marveled at her words, I was overjoyed! I said eagerly, although I was overtaken by this dream:

39   "If what you are telling me is a lie,[50] then you will be as guilty as this deceitful liar,

40   This Jahm ibn Ṣafwān and his lot, who negated the attributes of the Creator, the Benefactor."

Th *nasīb* part of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* is closely connected to the entire theme of the poem: it indeed addresses theology, not in a didactic but in a highly artistic fashion. The exterior layer of the *nasīb* elaborates on the doubts in the mind of a suffering prisoner, who sits in his cell after his trial. The prisoner contemplates his trial, in which the struggle between the authentic expression of God-man relations and the detachment between God and man, caused by the use of scholastic and rationalistic argumentations, was presented. Taking the external layer of the *nasīb* (a prisoner unjustly tried for his authentic love for God), it is possible to read the *nasīb* part as a poetical depiction of Ibn Taymīyah's *miḥan*. The elements in the *nasīb* seem to fit perfectly into the *miḥan* narrative: a man is put on trial by people who use sophistic arguments. He is found guilty and sent to a jailhouse that is situated away from Syria. Ibn Taymīyah's Damascene trials were indeed concluded by sending Ibn Taymīyah to Cairo, where he was sentenced and put

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[50] "If what you are telling me is a lie" *(in kunti kādhibata ʿladhī ḥaddathtinī)* was identified by Bakr Abū Zayd as a verse by the poet Ḥassān ibn Thābit (death date unknown, sometime between 40/659 and 54/673). *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* BAZ, 2:58, n. 39. Oddly enough, this verse is taken from the *nasīb* part of Ḥassān ibn Thābit's poem, a poem whose main goal is to condemn al-Ḥārith ibn Thābit for fleeing from the battlefield in the battle of Badr. For a longer version of the poem, see: *Dīwān Ḥassān ibn Thābit,* ed. ʿAbd A. Muhannā (Beirut, 1414/1994), 213–15; the verse above is verse 11. For a shorter version, see Ibn Hishām, *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyah,* ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī (Beirut, 1410/1990), 2:356–57, and Ḥārith's reply thereafter. For a translation of the *Sīrah* version of the poem, see: Alfred Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad* (repr. Karachi, 2007), 345–46.

in detention in the citadel of Cairo.[51] The only element which does not fit the narrative is the issue for which the narrator is put on trial. Ibn Taymīyah was accused of anthropomorphic readings of the Quran, and the love for God was never discussed in his trials. Still, one can connect the love of God, which the narrator expresses, to the traditionalistic point of view, while the sophistic attempt to rebut this love is the rationalistic point of view. In other words, the trial in the *nasīb* part presents the Taymīyan traditionalism put on trial by the rationalistic Ashʿarīs. [52]

Another possibility is to read the *nasīb* as reflecting Ibn al-Qayyim's own life experience. This reading corresponds with an autobiographical passage in *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* in which Ibn al-Qayyim admits his past attraction to Ashʿarī *kalām,* and expresses his gratitude to Ibn Taymīyah, who rescued him from it.[53] In the *nasīb* (verses 16–19), the narrator describes his soul as a miserable bird, who is unable to reach the sweet fruit in the top branches of the tree because she sticks to her place in the tree. The same metaphor appears in an autobiographical section in *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah:*

2271   Haven't you seen this bird, locked in the cage of destruction? Sitting between the branches of the tree, the female-mourners weep for her.

2272   Desperately seeking her salvation, this bird constantly crashes [against the walls of the cage]; the gap between the tree's branches is rapidly closing on her.

2273   This is the bird's fault, because she left the best fruits on the top branches of the tree,

2274   And went to seek for food in the dunghill, poking in the garbage and leftovers, eating insects and worms.

2275   By God, people! Listen to the advice of a compassionate brother who wishes to help you.

I have experienced this once, as I, too, was a bird, trapped in a snare.[54]

Reading both passages—in the *nasīb* and the autobiographical passage—as complementing each another, transfers the reference to the love for God from a

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[51] Michot, *Muslims under Non-Muslim Rule,* 158; Murad, "Ibn Taymiya on Trial", 13.

[52] Ibn Taymīyah's rebuttal of the Ashʿarī argumentations denying the possibility of man's love for God is analyzed by Joseph N. Bell. Bell, *Love Theory,* 74–91.

[53] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah*, 1996, 180–81 (verses 2271–2284); Holtzman, "Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah," 209–10.

[54] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah*, 1996, 180. The passage was previously published in Holtzman, "Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah," 209, and is quoted here with the permission of Harrassowitz Verlag, the publishers.

theological issue to a spiritual issue. In other words, Ibn al-Qayyim describes his inner doubts as a believer, whose love for God is genuine but who is lured to replace this love with the artificial intellectualism of Ashʿarī *kalām.* Hence, he feels miserable, until he is reminded of the true Islamic message by his night-visitor.

(b) The "Raḥīl": The part which follows the *nasīb* in *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* is not thematically distinctive. The *takhalluṣ,* the transition towards the main motive of the *qaṣīdah,* is elegantly constructed by the poet, as part of the narrator's words to the female visitor to his prison cell.

39   "If what you are telling me is a lie, then you will be as guilty as
       this deceitful liar,
40   This Jahm ibn Ṣafwān and his lot, who negated the attributes of
       the Creator, the Benefactor."
41   They denied Him His heavens; they emptied the throne of the
       [presence] of the Merciful.
42   They negated the word of the Glorious God. They determined that
       this word was created.
43   They said: Our Lord does not possess the attributes of hearing and
       seeing. He has neither face nor hands. [55]

In this transitory section, Ibn al-Qayyim heads for the theological dispute. Although he does not start with the Ashʿarīs, but with the dubious historical figure of Jahm ibn Ṣafwān (executed in 749),[56] Ibn al-Qayyim uses the views of Jahm and his alleged followers as a caricature of the Ashʿarī standpoint, which, in his view, denies God's attributes. Several times in *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* Ibn al-Qayyim uses the derogatory name Jahmīyah for Ashʿarīs and Muʿtazilīs alike.[57]

The so-called *raḥīl* section is first and foremost a programmatic speech of the narrator, addressed—at least in the beginning—to the female phantasm. As a didactic section of more than 4800 verses, the *raḥīl* deals with many theological issues, most of which revolve around the discussion of the divine attributes.

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[55] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 33.

[56] William Montgomery Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought* (Edinburgh, 1973, repr. Oxford, 2002), 143–45.

[57] Ibn al-Qayyim describes the Jahmīyah as the proponents of the concept of the created Quran; hence they are the Muʿtazilah. *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 71–72 (verses 622–34). In a rather complex section of the poem, Ibn al-Qayyim refers to the Jahmīyah as the deniers of God's aboveness and His sitting on the throne. However, in this section he seems to be more interested in the views of Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 638/1240). *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 99–102 (verses 1045–91). The Jahmīyah are compared to the Jews, who distorted the true meaning of the scriptures by using figurative interpretation. *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 156–57 (verses 1898–1920).

However, Ibn al-Qayyim's artistic efforts are also reflected in several sections of the *raḥīl,* especially in the frame story. He presents several armies (symbolizing different Islamic trends, including sects and heresies) arriving at a *majlis taḥkīm,* where an arbitration is about to take place. Each party presents its views—mostly on the matter of the divine attributes. However, the narrator comments on every speech, and his comments evolve into lengthy declarations and refutations (from verse 1045 onward), and so the frame-story is broken into many sections of a polemical nature. Perhaps defining the lion's share of the poem (verse 40 to verse 4914) as a *raḥīl* is a bit excessive; however, one cannot ignore the abundance of *raḥīl* motifs hidden in this part of the poem. One typical example is the description of a group of Muʿtazilīs and Ashʿarīs arriving at the *majlis taḥkīm.* Their leader's description of the hardships of his journey could have been taken from any artistic *qaṣīdah:*

351   Another group came along. Their description [of the divine attributes] was similar to the [description of the previous group]; however, they added more things to the scales.

352   [Their leader] said: Listen, O people. Stop amusing yourselves with false notions.

353   I exhausted my she-camel, I have worn out my heart; I made my utmost efforts, and became fatigued.

354   I looked up and down. I looked in front of me, and behind. I looked at my left nd then at my right.

355   Nobody directed me to Him, oh, no! Not a soul guided me to Him,

356   Except for the Holders of Hadith. [They are people] whose teachings go back to the Quran.

357   They said: The One you are looking for is above His worshippers, the sky and every other place. [58]

Th *raḥīl* also borrows other themes from the huge reservoir of Arabic poetry. For example, Ibn al-Qayyim presents a lecture of good advice *(waṣīyah),* addressed to a student who wishes to embark upon a debate with a tough rationalist rival. In this *waṣīyah,* ancient poems of advice echo.[59] Th *waṣīyah* is closely connected to the message conveyed by the narrator in the *nasīb:* it warns its eager listeners not to embark on a debate—a battle, as he puts it—without the proper weapons. The debater should hold the Quran and the Sunnah in hand, and strike his rival,

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[58] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 54.

[59] See, for example, the poem of ʿAbdah ibn al-Ṭabīb (a *mukhaḍram* poet, who was still alive in 25/645) in the *Dīwān al-Mufaḍḍalīyāt,* ed. Muḥammad Ḥamūd (Beirut, 1998), 136–39 (poem no. 27); al-Mufaḍḍal son of Muḥammad, The *Mufaḍḍalīyāt: An Anthology of Ancient Arabian Odes,* ed. and trans. Charles James Lyall (Oxford, 1918–21), 101–4.

the *Muʿaṭṭil* (a Muʿtazilī or an Ashʿarī, who denies the divine attributes) with "the sword of revelation," and he should not use the senseless jabber of *kalām.*

Th *waṣīyah* section (verses 188–260) is quite long and repetitive. The following verses give the core of the message. Added to them are verses 242–43, in which Ibn al-Qayyim refers to his own life experience.

188   O you—a man who seeks his salvation—come and listen to the advice of an experienced man, who came to your rescue!

189   In all your affairs, make sure that you stick to revelation, and not to the gold-embellished senseless jabber.

190   You should come to the rescue of the Quran and the prophetic traditions, delivered by the Prophet, who was sent to bring them to us.

191   Strike—as a warrior of jihad holding the sword of revelation—the very tip of the fingers of those who deny the divine attributes!

192   Be truthful, determined, and devoted to God when you attack! Do not be a coward!

193   Remain firm and patient under the flags of divine guidance. Know that being hit in battle is the outcome of the Merciful's will and satisfaction.

194   Take the Quran and the irrefutable Prophetic traditions as your weapon. Cry the cry for battle from the bottom of your brave heart![60]

[…]

204   Do not fear their great number. They are the flies and insects of humanity. Are you afraid of flies?

205   You can distract them by provoking disputes between them, the way the horseman distracts his horse when he ties a girth around its belly.

206   When they attack you, do not be terrified; do not be a coward.

207   Stay put. Do not attack without your troops. This is not desirable even for the brave man.

208   When you see the troops of Islam arrive with the Sultan,

209   You should enter their ranks; do not stand there all helpless, weak, and afraid.

210   You should take off two pieces of garment, that whoever wears them will be afflicted with disgraceful and humiliating death:

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[60] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 43–44.

211   The garment of sophisticated ignorance and on top of it, the garment of ardent zeal. What miserable garments are they![61]

[…]

242   So proceed straight toward your opponents in the battle, not toward the weakest people in the sides. Bravery is when a man fights his equals in battle.

243   Listen to the advice of the experienced man, who has traveled a lot and knows what goes on in people's minds. [62]

The various parts of the *raḥīl,* especially those which draw their scenes from classical Arabic poetry, succeed in expressing intense emotions of enmity and insult. The *waṣīyah* uses the entire arsenal of military motifs—the battlefield, flags, horses and their equipment, horsemen, surprise attack—to reconstruct the heroic scenes of the celebrated *qaṣāʾid* of past generations.[63] Even the foul language used to encourage the warrior whom the narrator addresses is part of the long tradition of the poetical *hijāʾ.*[64] These scenes and motifs are, however, really codes designed not to depict an actual battlefield, but a metaphorical one: the battlefield of the theological debate, the *munāẓarah.* In sum, although the *raḥīl* draws forms and motifs from the rich Arabic poetical heritage, theology, and more specifically the Ashʿarī-Taymīyan debate on anthropomorphism and Ibn Taymīyah's ordeals, remains its main goal.

(c) The Qaṣd: In the classical *qaṣīdah,* the eventful part of the *raḥīl* concludes with an arrival at a destination, literally or figuratively. The poets of the Umayyad court—al-Akhṭal (d. 92/710), for example—often concluded their poems with a lengthy section of *madīḥ* (panegyric), in which they praised the caliph—their benefactor—in hopes of receiving material reward for their efforts. The poets elegantly glided from descriptions of their hair-raising adventures to depictions of the comforts of the city and the palace in which the caliph resided.[65]

The same transition awaits the reader of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah.* The heated and stormy description of battles, combined with violent attacks on Ashʿarī *kalām* and other Islamic trends, is replaced by a calmer atmosphere—in fact, the calmest—as

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[61] Ibid., 44.

[62] Ibid., 46.

[63] All these motifs are concentrated in Abū Tammām's *Dīwān al-Ḥamāsah.* See: Abū ʿAlī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Marzūqī, *Sharḥ Dīwān al-Ḥamāsah li-Abī Tammām,* ed. Gharīd al-Shaykh (Beirut, 1424/2003), 1:19–554 (*bāb al-ḥamāsah*).

[64] Ibid., 3:1000–1086 *(bāb al-hijāʾ).*

[65] [Al-Akhṭal], *Dīwān al-Akhṭal,* commentary by Rājī al-Asmar (Beirut, 1427/2006), 92–101 (poem no. 12).

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the destination turns out to be paradise. This section of the poem (verses 4915–5721) contains vivid and delightful descriptions of paradise and its inhabitants, descriptions which heavily rely on relevant Hadith material. The ultimate reward that awaits the believers—the Taymīyan circle, no less—at the end of their difficult journey is the actual and physical sight of God (*ruʾyat Allāh,* the vision of God).[66] The traditionalistic concept of seeing God's face was another bone of contention between the Taymīyan circle and the Ashʿarīs, because the Ashʿarīs interpreted *ruʾyat Allāh* metaphorically. Ibn al-Qayyim's description of the groups arriving at paradise and seeing the face of God is his ultimate answer to the Ashʿarīs.

5418   And they will see Him, praised be Him, above them. They will see Him with their own eyes, as clearly as they see the moon and the sun.

5419   This is specifically stated in a Prophetic hadith with multiple chains of transmission, whose veracity only a wicked person denies.

5420   The Quran so says, either directly or by way of implication; these are two ways of expression in the narrative thread of the Quran.

[…]

5428   Suffice it to say that God, praised be Him, described the faces [of the believers] in heaven as bright.

5429   And He also described them as looking, which undoubtedly means that they will look [at Him] using their own eyes.[67]

Further scenes of the heavenly reward which awaits the Taymīyan circle are discussed below.

The Martyrological Narrative of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah*

Martyrology—according to *The New Oxford American Dictionary*—is "the branch of history or literature that deals with the lives of martyrs."[68] Taking this definition at face value, we are bound to admit that *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* is not a martyrology; the narrative axis that starts in the *nasīb* and continues through the *raḥīl* and up to the *qaṣd* of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* however, is martyrological. The poem tells the story of true believers in their battle against evil. These believers,

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[66] The concept of *ruʾyat Allāh* is based on Q. 75:22–23 "On that day there shall be joyous faces, looking towards their Lord" (Dawood, 577), which was interpreted allegorically by the Muʿtazilīs and Ashʿarīs, and taken at face value by *Ahl al-Ḥadīth.* Daniel Gimaret, "Ruʾyat Allāh," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 8:649.

[67] Cf. Q. 75:22–23.

[68] *The New Oxford American Dictionary*, ed. Elizabeth J. Jewell and Frank Abate (New York, 2001), 1049.

as depicted in the poem, stuck to their principles and did not let changes in public taste distract them from their goal: while the elite (the Ashʿarīs, mainly) were lured by the charms of speculative theology, this group of the righteous adhered only to the Quran and the teachings of the Prophet and his followers. Standing for their principles caused suffering and hardships for the members of this group, but they will surely be compensated in the afterlife. This basic tale contains all the building blocks of a martyrological narrative: the story of the battle between good and evil[69] is concluded by the heavenly reward that awaits the righteous warriors.[70]

As we have seen, Ibn al-Qayyim promises his audience that they will see God's face in heaven. This reward is indeed a prominent clause in traditionalistic professions of faith, from Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal's (d. 241/855) onward. Ibn al-Qayyim himself discussed the concept of *ruʾyat Allāh* in prose and poetry in *Rawḍat al-Muḥibbīn* and *Ḥādī al-Arwāḥ ilá Bilād al-Afrāḥ* (The leader of souls to the land of joys).[71] However, the theme of believers in paradise provides Ibn al-Qayyim with an opportunity to use his skills to set up scenes combining the sacred and the profane; since these scenes are set in paradise the feeling of religious piety is maintained.

Most of the scenes of paradise are heavily indebted to the Quran and Hadith. Ibn al-Qayyim's ambition to elaborate on every detail of the huge reward that awaits the believers generates tedious and lengthy passages. His passages on heaven are actually inventory lists: dull and didactic. Even so, they are interesting because they demonstrate his familiarity with motifs and images drawn from classical poetry and reused in the poetry of his contemporaries.[72] One example is the description of the wine in heaven, a drink that is promised to the believ-

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[69] For an analysis of Islamic martyrology, see: Carl W. Ernst, "From Hagiography to Martyrology: Conflicting Testimonies to a Sufi   artyr of the Delhi Sultanate," *History of Religions* 24, no. 4 (May, 1985): 308–27.

[70] An enlightening reading on the heavenly reward that awaits martyrs in Hebrew and Latin martyrological narratives from the times of the Crusades is Shmuel Shepkaru, "To Die for God: Martyrs' Heaven in Hebrew and Latin Crusade Narratives," *Speculum* 77, no. 2 (Apr. 2002): 311–41 (esp. 313–23). Reading this article, one cannot overlook the striking resemblances between the heavenly rewards promised to Christian martyrs and what Ibn al-Qayyim promises for the martyrs of *Ahl al-Sunnah.*

[71] The lengthy sixty-fifth chapter of *Ḥādī al-Arwāḥ* contains a thorough discussion on Quranic verses and hadiths. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah, *Ḥādī al-Arwāḥ ilá Bilād al-Afrāḥ,* ed. Ḥāmid Aḥmad al-Ṭāhir (Cairo, 1423/2003), 309–67. The twenty-sixth chapter of *Rawḍat al-Muḥibbīn* is a sophisticated discussion on abandoning carnal love for the sake of the love of God. According to Ibn al-Qayyim, the chapter is meant for the sophisticated reader with the highest moral attributes. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah, *Rawḍat al-Muḥibbīn wa-Nuzhat al-Mushtāqīn* (Beirut, n.d.), 394.

[72] Jayyusi, "Arabic Poetry," 36–37.

ers in the Quran and the Hadith. Ibn al-Qayyim describes the heavenly wine as depicted in the Quran:

5184   There [i.e., in heaven], they will be given pure nectar to drink; its last sips leave the odor of musk, that lingers. Its first sip is [as tasty as] its last sip.

5185   They will be given wine, delicious for its drinkers. It will neither dull their senses nor cause them sickness or discomfort. [73]

[...]

5189   They will drink from the fount named Salsabīl, tempered with camphor. This is the beverage of the pious.

5190   This is the beverage of the righteous; however, the favored will have a second beverage.

5191   It is called Tasnīm. What they will drink is absolutely the best. [74] It is made only for the most favored, the ones specifically chosen by God. [75]

Earthly wine, on the other hand, is depicted in derogatory terms, as causing drunkenness, loss of the mind, and illness. [76] Ibn Qayyim's illustrations in both cases, of heavenly and earthly wine, do not go beyond flat duplications of the Quran. Ibn al-Qayyim, it seems, cannot allow his imagination to recreate the taste and smell of wine. When it comes to carnal lust, however, Ibn al-Qayyim is freer in his poetic expression. An extremely lengthy section describes the houris, the beautiful virgins of paradise: [77]

4915   O you, who wishes to ask the hand of the fair houris in marriage! O you, who wishes to be intimate with them in the garden of the afterlife.

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[73] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 368. Cf. verse 5184 to Q. 83: 25–26, and verse 5164 to Q. 37:46–47. In translating the Quranic expressions on wine to English, I consulted Dawood's translation of the Quran.

[74] *yudʿá bi-tasnīmin, sanāmun shurbuhum.* Here Ibn al-Qayyim uses a *tawriyah* (double entendre), playing on the similarity between *tasnīm* (the name of the drink) and *sanām* (the hump of the camel, here used metaphorically for denoting a peak).

[75] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 368. Cf. verse 5189 to Q. 76:17–18, verse 5190 to Q. 83:28, and verse 5191 to Q. 83:27.

[76] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 368 (verses 5186–87).

[77] The beautiful houris appear in three sections in the poem. *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 347–49 (verses 4915–44), 371–80 (verses 5232–5386), 381–83 (verses 5387–5417). Parts of these sections appear in *Rawḍat al-Muḥibbīn* as one poem. *Rawḍat al-Muḥibbīn wa-Nuzhat al-Mushtāqīn* (Beirut, n.d.), 254–58.

4916 If only you knew who you wished to marry, you would offer her your entire fortune!

4917 If you knew where she lived, you would rush to her, even if you had to run on your head!

4918 I already described to you the road leading to her house. So if you wish to unite with her, stop being slow and weak.

4919 Hurry up and quicken your paces; you will get there within the hour.

4920 Then you will be able to make love passionately. Encourage your soul by speaking about this forthcoming union. And while you can, offer the bridal money.

4921 Consider [your entire lifetime] as the month of Ramaḍān, in which you fast before you meet her. Consider the day of your union as breaking the fast in ʿĪd al-Fiṭr.

4922 Sing her praises when you go to your journey. When you encounter terrifying events, remember that you long for her.

4923 Do not occupy your thoughts with the house of the old days, in which you squandered your time in decadent amusements.

In spite of the erotic tone of this passage, Ibn al-Qayyim reminds his listeners that the road to paradise, and hence to the beautiful houris who reside there, passes through true piety and belief. The motif of the memories of past amusements, much used in classical poetry to invoke feelings of nostalgia in the audience, is used by Ibn al-Qayyim for a different purpose: he wishes to motivate his listeners to embrace the genuine traditionalist faith. According to Ibn al-Qayyim (the former sinner who held Ashʿarī views), there is no need to dwell on the glory of the past when the future of the true believer is much brighter.

In his description of the houris, Ibn al-Qayyim combines several sources. First and foremost his description relies on Hadith, the discussions of the early traditionalists, Quran exegetes, and lexicographers. A good example is the description of the houris' eyes (verse 5275), which is actually a dense versification of Ibn al-Qayyim's interpretation of the word ḥūr, leaning on the views of traditionalists like Ibn ʿAbbās (d. 68/687–88) on the one hand, and the views of the lexicographers on the other.[78] However, the description of other body-parts of the houris is very much formed by the conventions of elite poetry: their cheeks are rosy, their kisses are sweet, they are lean but luscious.

5274 Now, listen to the description of the brides of paradise, and then pick one for yourself, you knowledgeable one!

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[78] Cf. *Ḥādī al-Arwāḥ*, 241.

5275 The white of the cornea of their eyes is contrasted with the black of the iris. They are the most beautiful women, perfect in their traits and qualities.

5276 They are beautiful to such a degree that whoever glances at them is confused by their beauty. The eye of the beholder is confused.

5277 When seeing them, the beholder says: "Praised be He who granted them with beauty and good deeds!"

5278 The beholder drinks from the cups of their beauty, until you see that he is indeed drunk.

[...]

5287 Their cheeks are red; in their mouths are pearly teeth; their eyes are black; their limbs are feeble.

5288 When they smile, the splash of lightning comes out of their mouths, casting light on the ceiling and walls of the palace.

5289 We were told that when this luminous lightning appears, someone from paradise will ask about it,

5290 And he will get the response: "This is the light coming from the laughing mouth in the upper heaven, as you may as well see."

5291 By God! The one, who kisses that mouth, indeed receives—by that kiss—everything his heart desires.

The colorful and perhaps erotic description of the kisses of the houris is toned down by Ibn al-Qayyim's undoubted piety. His source in this case is an unreliable hadith that is also tagged as mere fabrication *(mawḍūʿ);* however, Ibn al-Qayyim considered this hadith good enough for his poem.[79] The tension between the didactic and the erotic remains throughout the passage:

5292 Her body is well-watered with the liquid of youth. She is like a shoot planted by the waters.

5293 When the waters of paradise go through her veins, she bears the most colorful fruits

5294 Such as roses, and apples, and pomegranates in one single tree. Praised be He, who planted this garden!

5295 Her figure is like a flexible branch; her beautiful legs are neither too long nor too short.

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[79] The hadith, on the authority of ʿAbd Allāh ibn Masʿūd, quoted the Prophet as saying: "A splash of light appeared in the sky. They looked up, and lo and behold! The light comes out from the open mouth of a houri, laughing in the presence of her husband." *Sharḥ al-Qaṣīdah al-Nūnīyah,* 2:430, *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* BAZ, 2:988, n. 5306.

5296   Her thighs grow out of a nursery made of ivory. You might think that this nursery, her buttocks, is one of the hills in the sand-dunes.

5297   She is all made of enormous curves: her breasts are separated from her belly, and they are actually floating in a distance, not near her belly.[80]

5298   No, all the houris are full-bosomed; their breasts are swelling and round, just like smooth pomegranates.

With the same detailed precision, Ibn al-Qayyim describes the houris' necks, cleavage, and ankles.[81] One might think that Ibn al-Qayyim, in his anatomical descriptions, did not confine himself to religious texts and classical poetry, but allowed his imagination to go wild, particularly when reading a very blunt passage on the houris' genitalia, which leads to an elaborate description of sexual intercourse between a believer and a houri.[82] The passage is, in fact, solidly based on Hadith material and the discussions of the early Quran exegetes,[83] though its bluntness exceeds the details provided by the Hadith. Commentators on *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* apart from Muḥammad Khalīl Harrās, chose to skip this passage and not interpret it. Even Ibn al-Qayyim himself concludes the passage with an apology: "O God, please forgive my pen for exceeding the proper bounds" (verse 5321). On this, Harrās remarks: "The author sensed that his pen advanced too much and too far, and that he was too explicit about matters that should be left implicit."[84]

There is nothing profane or obscene in Ibn al-Qayyim's descriptions of the carnal delights that await the believers in heaven. These sensual descriptions, as I

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[80] This verse is paraphrased according to Harrās's interpretation. *Sharḥ al-Qaṣīdah al-Nūnīyah,* 2:431.

[81] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 375 (verses 5299–5305).

[82] Ibid., 375 (verses 5306–20). Cf. *Ḥādī al-Arwāḥ,* 239–42 (the description of the houris' genital organs), 262–65 (the description of the sexual intercourse between the houris and the believers). I believe—although the matter should be further checked thoroughly—that Ibn al-Qayyim's description of the houris' genital organs is quite exceptional. Franz Rosenthal's 1987 article which refers to several prominent Islamic works on carnal love in paradise, like Ibn al-Qayyim's *Ḥādī al-Arwāḥ* and *Rawḍat al-Muḥibbīn,* does not mention any such description in the works he cites. Franz Rosenthal, "Reflections on Love in Paradise," in *Love and Death in the Ancient Near East: Essays in Honor of Marvin H. Pope,* ed. John H. Marks and Robert M. Good (Guilford, CT, 1987), 247–54. See also Jane Idleman Smith and Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, *The Islamic Understanding of Death and Resurrection* (Albany, 1981; repr. New York, 2002), 147–50, 158–68.

[83] For references to relevant Hadith literature and Quran exegeses, see: A. J. Wensinck [Ch. Pellat], "Ḥūr," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 3:581–82; Maher Jarrar, "Houris," *The Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān,* ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Leiden, 2001), 2:456.

[84] *Sharḥ al-Qaṣīdah al-Nūnīyah,* 2:434.

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said before, are drawn from religious literature. However, Ibn al-Qayyim chooses to conclude *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* with a more didactic tone. First, he addresses his listeners with another *waṣīyah* containing a petty description of four archetypical enemies of the believer (verses 5722–5777), and demanding that believers fight for their beliefs with every means they have (verses 5778–5780). Then he puts in the mouths of the true believers a prayer (verses 5780–5821), in which they ask God to protect the Quran and the Prophet. The prayer will be discussed below.

However, the description of the heavenly reward is but one—albeit central—ingredient of the martyrological narrative, and indeed it comes at the end of the poem. What precedes this description is a thorough and systematic process of psychological manipulations on the part of Ibn al-Qayyim, which are meant to arouse a wide range of emotions in a receptive audience, inciting them to act. The melancholic atmosphere of the *nasīb* transfers into a series of rhythmic attacks on the Ashʿarīs. *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* is a raging poem: its militant atmosphere, occasional foul language, and determined attacks on the Ashʿarīs all combine to create a piece that is much more than a versified creed or a mere polemical treatise. The "emotional baggage"—if we may borrow a contemporary term—invested in *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* is tremendous. Ibn al-Qayyim, who had his share of *miḥan* (of which his listeners were well-aware), weaves the martyrological narrative from three basic emotions: insult, fury, and frustration. Alongside these, he emphasizes the importance of perseverance, acceptance—a state accomplished after completing a process of rationalization—and self-pride. By skillfully expressing these emotions, Ibn al-Qayyim nurtures the martyrological narrative, and leads his captive audience to the conclusion that an action against the Ashʿarīs is inevitable. At this point, the description of paradise and the carnal pleasures awaiting the believers is presented as the peak of the narrative. The process of propagandizing for an attack on the Ashʿarīs is successfully concluded. The listeners become "we"—an elect and highly motivated community, self-acknowledged and determined.[85]

The following verses demonstrate Ibn al-Qayyim's rhetorical strategy. They appear in three consecutive passages.[86] Dealing with the accusations of anthropomorphism addressed by the Ashʿarīs to the Taymīyan circle (referred to here as *Ahl al-Sunnah*), these passages reflect a process which the narrator undergoes

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[85] "The martyrological narrative textually interprets the act of martyrdom to be one supportive of order, community, and ideology. Martyrs' accounts are sanitized and contextualized by the incorporation of doctrine and propaganda in order to legitimate, support, and transmit the ideology of the persecuted faction." Nikki Shepardson, "Gender and the Rhetoric of Martyrdom in Jean Crespin's 'Histoire des vrays tesmoins,'" *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 35, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 158.

[86] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 182–87 (verses 2302–75).

and which his audience undergoes with him: the passive sense of insult ripens to an aggressive open call for an active attack. First, the narrative is dominated by insult, a sense which is nurtured by the Ashʿarīs' false accusations of anthropomorphism addressed to *Ahl al-Sunnah*. The arguments in this passage are fairly rational and balanced. A direct rejoinder to the Ashʿarī accusations, they show a desire to persuade the accusers that their accusations are false, and to convince them to reverse their misjudgment. Gradually, the sense of insult grows into fury, which is probably the dominant emotion in *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah*. Fury finds its many expressions in foul language and accusations of heresy, all of which are addressed to the Ashʿarīs. The shift from insult to fury is a shift from passivity to activity. Ibn al-Qayyim's own ordeals and his hatred of the Ashʿarīs charge the text with another conspicuous trait: apart from addressing the collective accusation of anthropomorphism addressed to the Taymīyan circle, the atmosphere is heated by the use of anaphora (verses 2365–68). The rhythm of the recitation accelerates, the tone of the reciter becomes urgent and high, and the charged message reflecting Ibn al-Qayyim's personal experience and feelings explodes in the face of his prospective audiences—the Taymīyan circle, first and foremost, but also the Ashʿarīs themselves. As the text progresses, it is evident that Ibn al-Qayyim adopts for himself the definition of an anthropomorphist instead of refuting Ashʿarī accusations of anthropomorphism. The text reveals the depths of insult that Ibn al-Qayyim feels, as well as his perseverance, acceptance, and self-pride.

One cannot ignore the sarcasm and insult in Ibn al-Qayyim's tone when he willingly embraces the derogatory name anthropomorphist *(ḥashwī)*.[87] The depths of sarcasm and self-insult are demonstrated in a passage in which Ibn al-Qayyim addresses this name, charging it with a *double entendre* (*tawriyah*, another esteemed rhetorical device). *Ḥashw* literally means "to stuff" and [worthless] "stuffing," and figuratively means "something of little worth." Rationalist thinkers referred to traditionalists as *ḥashw, ḥashwī* (pl. *ḥashwīyah*), meaning scholars of little worth and anthropomorphists. In the following passage, Ibn al-Qayyim juggles between the literal and the metaphorical meanings of *ḥashwī*, using several derivatives, demonstrating his sarcasm:

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[87] In his unsurpassed article of 1934, A. S. Halkin defines *ḥashwīyah* as "a vague term of insult" closely connected to the Hanbalis and meant to denote "an ignorant, reactionary lot who grossly exaggerated anthropomorphism and were receptive enough to accept any fantastic belief or superstition." A. S. Halkin, "The Ḥashwiyya," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 54, no. 1 (1934): 12, 2. See also "Ḥashwiya (Ḥasawiyya, Ḥushwiyya, or Ahl al-Ḥashw)," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 3:269.

2302 One of the curiosities is that they [i.e., the Ashʿarīs] call the people who follow divine revelation—whether Prophetic hadiths or Quranic verses

2303 By the name of *ḥashwīyah*. By that name they refer to people whose existence is worthless *(ḥashw fī al-wujūd),* people who are waste products of the human race.

2304 The ignorant among them believe that the *ḥashwīyah* "stuffed" *(ḥashaw)* the Lord of all beings into the beings themselves,

2305 Because they [i.e., the *ḥashwīyah*] say that the Lord, to Him belong majesty and rule, is "*above* the beings" and "*in* the sky."

2306 These asses thought that "*in*" stands for an accusative of place, meaning that the All-Compassionate *is* confined to one place.

2307 By God! Nothing like it was ever heard from any sect in any time.

2308 Do not defame the *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* with this notion. This is not their view. May evil befall the slanderer!

2309 Indeed, they believe that the upper sky is [unfolded] in the palm of the Creator of all beings

2310 Like a mustard seed in the palm of someone who keeps it. God the Sovereign is the Sublime!

2311 Do you think, then, that He is the confined one—or is the sky confined?

2312 How many times did you call [us] anthropomorphists and *ḥashwīyah!* This defamation is never concealed from the eyes of the All-Merciful.

2313 Hear me out, ye people! If the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet indeed express this "stuffed" view, then you may as well testify

2314 That we are, thanks to our Lord, pure *ḥashwīyah.* We do not deny it, and we do not hide it.

2315 Do you know who among your shaykhs used this [derogatory] name a long time ago?

2316 [The Muʿtazilī ʿAmr] ibn ʿUbayd called ʿAbd Allāh, the son of the caliph, by this name. The same ʿAbd Allāh who drove Satan away![88]

2317 So, indeed you are the successors of Ibn ʿUbayd, just as [*Ahl al-Ḥadīth*] are the successors of ʿAbd Allāh. How is it possible to compare between these two inheritances?

2318 Do you know who is worthy of this name? Do you know for whom [the name *ḥashwīyah*] exactly fits?

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[88] Ibn al-Qayyim refers here to ʿAmr ibn ʿUbayd (d. 144/761), one of the first of the Muʿtazilah, who described ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUmar (d. 73/693), the son of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, as *ḥashwī.* See references to primary sources in: *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* BAZ, 2:575–76, n. 2328.

2319   This is the one who stuffs notebooks and brains with undesired innovative notions that contradict the obligating content of the Quran.

2320   This is the real *ḥashwī!* Not *Ahl al-Ḥadīth,* who are leaders of faith and Islam!

2321   They drew water from the sweet springs of the Prophetic traditions, not from the garbage of these "thinking brains"!

2322   However, you drew water from the filthy Qallūṭ River, which carries all the filth, dirt, and squalor in its waters![89]

[…]

2341   Indeed we are anthropomorphists, praised be the Lord, because we do not negate the attributes of the Creator, the Merciful.

2342   We swear that none of us has said that God is a body *(jism),* you slanderers!

[…]

2360   Woe unto you, who goes down to the sewage canal to draw water! If only you saw the filth on your lips and teeth!

2361   If only you saw the filthy marks in your heart, when you get yourself ready to perform your deeds and the rituals of Islam!

2362   If going down to this filthy source of water agrees with you, then all this filth agrees with you. Why does this stinking source of water please you?

2363   I advise you to cleanse your mouth from your wicked filthy words.

2364   Go ahead, abuse the *ḥashwī!* Abuse the "stuffed" people of religion, the people of the Quran, the Hadith, and faith!

2365   Welcome, O "stuffed" people of the right path. Others are the "stuffed" people of the wrong path, and there is no comparison between the two groups.

2366   Welcome, O "stuffed" people who hold the absolute certain knowledge of the truth. Others are the "stuffed" people who have doubts. The two groups are not equal twins.

2367   Welcome, O "stuffed" people who sit in the mosques. Others are the "stuffed" people who sit in public lavatories. How can you compare the two?

2368   Welcome, O "stuffed" people of paradise! Others are the "stuffed" people of hell. Are the two groups equal?[90]

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[89] For the identification of the Qallūṭ River, see *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* BAZ, 2:576, n. 2334.

[90] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 182–87 (verses 2302–75).

The sense of frustration which accompanies the various parts of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* is conspicuous especially when Ibn al-Qayyim relates the roots of the theological dispute between *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* and the Ashʿarīs. Ibn al-Qayyim depicts futile trials to explain his—and *Ahl al-Ḥadīth*'s—position to the Ashʿarīs. Armed with self-persuasion and a strong feeling of inner justice, Ibn al-Qayyim explains that his theological position is identical to that of the Prophet and the Salaf. The unbridgeable gap between Ibn al-Qayyim and the Ashʿarīs widens because they use two different sets of language: his the straightforward language of the Hadith; theirs the tortuous language of the *kalām*. He masters their language, they belittle and reject his. In verses 3818–19, Ibn al-Qayyim hints that the Ashʿarīs are heretics: their rejection of the sacred texts and their use of allegorical interpretation connect them with the hypocrites *(munāfiqūn)* in the Prophet's times.

3810   O people! You know that the animosity between us is rooted in events that happened a long time ago.

3811   We rely on the Quran and the Righteous Tradition which interprets the Quran.

3812   We also rely on our pure intellect and the natural disposition [in which] the All-Compassionate [created] humans, before they altered it.

3813   These are four inseparable principles; each of them equally and indiscriminately affirms the other and corroborates it.

3814   By God! According to what you constantly declare, these four principles never affirm one another.

3815   Because you claim: "What is perceived by the intellect contradicts what the Quran and the Hadith tell us.

3816   Therefore, we give precedence to what our intellect perceives. And as for the teachings of the Quran and the Hadith—we freely use various devices of allegorical interpretation [of the texts].

3817   When we are unable to handle the text, we toss it aside, ascribing no importance to the text whatsoever. Our only intention is to be amiable."

3818   Indeed, in so doing you follow your ancestors. When they were urged to follow the Quran,

3819   they turned away. When calamity befell them, they swore: "Our only desire is conciliation and amity." [91]

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[91] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 279 (verses 3810–19). What echoes in verse 3819 is Q. 4:61–62: "When they are told: 'Come to be judged by that which God has revealed and by the Apostle,' you see the hypocrites turn a deaf ear to you. But how would it be if one disaster befell them on account of what their hands committed? They would come to you swearing by God that they desired nothing but amity and conciliation."

Insult, fury, and frustration are interwoven in a lengthy piece of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* (divided into several parts) that recounts the chain of sufferings of *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* throughout history, a chain in which Ibn Taymīyah's ordeals are but a link. Ibn al-Qayyim presents a schematic inventory of the inner polemic and the civil strife within "Islam"; in other words, Ibn al-Qayyim lists the defining (negative) events in the history of Islam, from the assassination of the caliph ʿUthmān (d. 35/655), through the *miḥnah* of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, up to the *miḥan* of Ibn Taymīyah. Oddly enough, Ibn al-Qayyim sees all these (political) events as "the crimes of figurative interpretation" *(jināyat al-taʾwīl),* or, as Harrās puts it, "[Ibn al-Qayyim] determines here that the root of all calamities that befell Islam is *taʾwīl,* which is actually a distortion of the texts and an apostasy."[92] By *taʾwīl* and elsewhere by *ṭāghūt,*[93] Ibn al-Qayyim refers to the rationalistic, and hence foreign, approaches of Ashʿarī thought. Much can be argued against Ibn al-Qayyim's interpretation of Islamic history, but the fact is that while enumerating milestones in Islamic history and placing them—as crimes committed in the name of *taʾwīl*—on the same historical level, Ibn al-Qayyim gains an incredible rhetorical leverage. This leverage is achieved by a complete harmony between form and content: the compelling rhythm of the text and the use of anaphoras combined with the flow of detailed calamities, one after the other, are rhetorical devices that increase animosity against the Ashʿarīs in the eyes of his potentially sympathetic audience.

In the following verses, Ibn al-Qayyim does not refer to the Ashʿarīs, but rather to sectarian groups in Islamic history (the Khawārij, the Rawāfiḍ, and the Muʿtazilah). The Ashʿarīs, in spite of the fact that they were not a sect but the leading trend in Sunni Islam, if not the very essence of Sunni Islam, are depicted by Ibn al-Qayyim as following in the footsteps of preceding sects, the Muʿtazilah especially, by harassing *Ahl al-Ḥadīth.*

1757   Moreover, the root of every calamity that befell Islam came from *taʾwīl. Taʾwīl* distorts the holy texts. *Taʾwīl* causes the spreading of lies.

1758   *Taʾwīl* divided Islam into seventy-three sects.[94] There are many evident proofs for that.

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[92] Sharḥ al-Qaṣīdah al-Nūnīyah, 1:308.

[93] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 275–278 (verses 3758–3809).

[94] From which seventy-two are heretical sects, and only one—*al-firqah al-nājiyah*—is saved. The tradition, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (d. ca. 57/678), states: "The Messenger of God said: the Jews were divided into seventy-one or seventy-two sects. The Christians were divided into seventy-one or seventy-two sects. My nation will be divided into seventy-three sects." For a collection of the various versions of this tradition, see: Abū Bakr al-Ājurrī (d. 360/971), *Kitāb*

1759   *Taʾwīl* assassinated the caliph [ʿUthmān], who was responsible for the collection of the Quran, who was the possessor of the two lights,[95] a man of virtues.

1760   *Taʾwīl* assassinated the caliph after him; I of course refer to ʿAlī, the slayer of his opponents in the battlefield.

1761   *Taʾwīl* slew al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī and his family. Because of *taʾwīl,* their flesh was cut to pieces.

1762   Because of *taʾwīl,* the sanctity of the city of Medina was desecrated in the battle of al-Ḥarrah.[96]

1763   The blood flooded [in the city] as if it was the Feast of Immolation.

1764   Because of *taʾwīl,* al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf shed blood and slew the pious believer and the adherent of the Quran.

1765   Because of *taʾwīl,* the soldiers of the hostile al-Ḥajjāj did in Mecca whatever they did.

1766   *Taʾwīl* caused the rise of the Khawārij. *Taʾwīl* also caused the appearance of those ugly beasts, the Rawāfiḍ.

1767   Because of *taʾwīl,* the Rawāfiḍ brutally cursed the chosen people after the Prophet, and slandered them.

1768   Because of *taʾwīl,* the tyrants drew their swords, thinking that they were doing the right thing.

1769   Because of *taʾwīl,* the Muʿtazilah came up with ideas that weakened the strength of faith.

1770   Because of *taʾwīl,* they claimed that God's word is a created being.

1771   Because of *taʾwīl,* they denied the existence of divine predetermination. By so stating, they resembled the Zoroastrians *(Majūs),* the worshippers of fire.

1772   Because of *taʾwīl,* they stated that the grave sinners are bound to stay forever in hell like the idolaters.

1773   Because of *taʾwīl,* they completely denied the intercession of the Prophet, the Chosen.

1774   Because of *taʾwīl,* the Imām al-Shaybānī [Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal], the most righteous man of *Ahl al-Sunnah,* was flogged by their whips.[97]

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al-Sharīʿah (Beirut, 1421/2000), 16–20. For a discussion on the importance of the tradition of the saved sect, see Watt, *The Formative Period,* 2–3, 326, n. 4.

[95] *Dhū al-nurayn* is an epithet given to the caliph ʿUthmān for being the husband of Ruqayyah and Umm Kulthūm, the Prophet's two daughters. *Sharḥ al-Qaṣīdah al-Nūnīyah,* 1:309.

[96] The battle of 63/683, between Yazīd ibn Muʿawiyah and the rebellious people of Medina. L. Veccia Vaglieri, "al-Ḥarra," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., 3:226.

[97] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 147–48 (verses 1757–74).

The description of the chain of disasters that befell Islam is a part of Ibn al-Qayyim's rationalization for his animosity against the Ashʿarīs. The Ashʿarī use of figurative interpretation and their rejection of the anthropomorphic descriptions of God in the Hadith make them the successors of sects deviating from true Islam.

2179 [Their methods of interpretation] caused enmity between us. Because of this, we are their adversaries.
2180 They go astray because of their stupid reasoning, while we stick to the Quran.
2181 Our methods contradict theirs. The two cannot walk together, ever.
2182 We refuse to profess the convictions and lies that they profess.
2183 We dismiss their views. We attach no importance to their views. We are satisfied with the teachings of the Prophet and the precise verses *(muḥkam)* of the Quran.
2184 Whoever is not satisfied with these two, God will not protect him from the calamities of time.
2185 Whoever does not choose these two as his cure, God will never bring cure to his heart and body.
2186 Whoever has no use for these two, the Lord of the throne will condemn him to death and deprivation.
2187 Whoever is not guided by these two, God will not guide him to the paths of truth and faith. [98]

However, demonizing the Ashʿarīs and describing their brutality is the most effective element in the process of rationalizing the animosity against them. In various sections of the poem, the description of the Ashʿarīs' brutality towards *Ahl al-Ḥadīth,* or "us," often deteriorates to simple defamation:

2188 We argue only with eminent scholars and not with these people, who are the lowest of the lowest and despicable bugs.
2189 They are the filth of humanity, pure garbage, rotten corpses, and ugly creatures.
2190 These are people who, because of their heresy, animosity, and slanders, demanded the blood of true scholars.
2191 They loathe *Ahl al-Ḥadīth,* because they despise the Sunnah and the Quran.

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[98] Ibid., 174–75 (verses 2179–87).

2192   Their slander is their food, in which they delight. I wish that God
would cut their throats![99]

The Message of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah*

Insult, fury, and frustration are crystallized in *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* into two
positive emotions for the Taymīyan circle: self-pride—or a sense of community—
and hope for a better future. These are mostly reflected in the advanced parts of
Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah, and will be demonstrated here by three representative sec-
tions. All of these sections have one common denominator: they project a great
deal of certainty that a bright future for the true believers—*Ahl al-Ḥadīth* or the
Taymīyan circle—will indeed come to pass.

The sense of self-pride is interwoven throughout the discourse of *Al-Kāfiyah
al-Shāfiyah,* and it reaches its peak in a prayer, a pledge that *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* address
to God. Ibn al-Qayyim now names them the *Muthbitūn.* This name is certainly a
variation of *Ahl al-Ithbāt,* meaning "the affirmers of God's attributes," but it can
also denote "the Followers of the *Muthbit.*" In the introduction of *Al-Kāfiyah al-
Shāfiyah,* Ibn al-Qayyim refers to Ibn Taymīyah as the *Muthbit,* the affirmer, hence
the *Muthbitūn* are the followers of Ibn Taymīyah.[100] The prayer of the *Muthbitūn*
is soaked in Quranic terminology and allusions to Quranic verses. Although the
prayer is tagged as a collective address of the *Muthbitūn,* it is in fact a prayer of
the individual. In its first half (verses 2789–2801) the individual humbly asks God
to open his heart to the Quranic message; the second half (verses 2802–17), how-
ever, is a request to annihilate the enemies of the *Muthbitūn.* Here, as in previous
passages, Ibn al-Qayyim's personal life-experience as a reformed rationalist is
reflected.

2789   O Protector of Islam! O Protector of the traditions that are attrib-
uted to the one who was sent to bring the Quran!

2790   O You who are the apparent truth! Your sayings are also an appar-
ent truth! And so are the promises to meet You [in the hereafter]!
Your Messenger is also an apparent truth!

2791   Open the breast of every believer for the reception of your re-
ligion. Open their breasts widely, so they reach the summits of
belief.

2792   Let their hearts be led by the Quran and not by what the slander-
ers say.

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[99] Ibid., 175 (verses 2188–92).

[100] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 15–29. For an analysis of the introduction, see my "Accused of
Anthropomorphism."

2793 Let the Party of the Right Path win with the help of the Quran. Annihilate, by the power of the Quran, the Party of the Straying Path and the Supporters of Satan.

2794 By the power of the Quran, revive the one who wishes to revive the Quran. By the power of the Quran, protect the Quran from the slanderer who uses snares and tricks.

2795 Decapitate the People of Deviation, those who replace [the Quran], those who believe its teachings are false, those who are tyrants.

2796 I do solemnly swear by the grace that You granted me, and by my heart which You made as a vessel receiving the Quran;

2797 And by the words that You wrote on my heart, ordering me to follow the Right Path—and indeed in my heart I read the lines of faith;

2798 And by the fact that You pulled me out from the well of the People of False Convictions,[101] when You threw at my rescue the ropes of the precise verses of the Quran;

2799 And by the fact that You let me drink the sweet water from the spring, which is accessible to every thirsty man;

2800 And by the fact that You protected me from drinking the water underneath the filthy layer of false convictions and distorted minds;

2801 And by the fact that You guarded me from the tests You put to those who passed judgment on You, slandering You.

2802 They tossed Your book behind their backs, and clung to the decorated and senseless jabber.

2803 And by the fact that You showed me the undesired, vain, and varnished innovations, that Satan plants in the heart of the human being.

2804 Satan engraves [and decorates] these things, just like the artists, who cover the engraving with paint.

2805 The deceived thinks that these things are the truth, when actually they are phantoms of water in the desert.

2806 By all these I do solemnly swear that I will fight Your enemies, as long as You allow me to do so. Fighting them will be my habit.

2807 I will disgrace them and humiliate them publicly. Using my tongue, I will tear their skin apart.

2808 Using the Quran, I will reveal their secrets, those secrets which were concealed from the weak.

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[101] This reading follows Bakr Abū Zayd's version, who reads *biʾr aṣḥāb al-hawá. Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* BAZ, 2:639. The common version, *ḥubb aṣḥāb al-hawá,* is indeed rather obscure.

2809   I will follow them wherever they go. I will follow them, as the proverb goes, as far as Abadan.

2810   I will stone them with the milestones of divine guidance. I will stone them with piercing shooting stars.

2811   I will lie in wait, observing their tricks. I will besiege them everywhere.

2812   I will make their flesh and blood the greatest sacrifice, in Your day of victory.

2813   I will send them fearless troops, who never escape the battlefield.

2814   I will send the soldiers of both revelations—the Quran and the Sunnah. The soldiers of the natural disposition of Islam *(fiṭrah).* The soldiers fighting for the teachings of the intellect and the teachings of the scriptures. The soldiers of good deeds.

2815   I will do that—until every reasonable man will understand, who [among us] is more worthy of being considered a person whose conduct is ruled by both intellect and the Quran?

2816   I will seek advice in God, then in His messenger, His book, and the laws of true faith.

2817   If my Lord so wishes, all this will come true. If He does not wish so, then the ruling is His, the All-Merciful.[102]

Ibn al-Qayyim plays here in two different fields, the allegorical and the literal. By stressing that he will fight his enemies using the Quran, his wits, and his tongue, Ibn al-Qayyim supposedly presents an allegory for a theological debate. However, the violent air of the prayer is striking: although the narrator describes himself as using metaphorical weapons (Quran, words, and good deeds), the outcome does not seem to be metaphorical at all, as the enemy's flesh and blood are presented as sacrifices for God (verse 2812). Ibn al-Qayyim, who so resents the use of allegory when it comes to interpreting the Quran, by all means uses allegory in his poetry, even though the so-called allegorical expressions of flesh, blood, and death in the battlefield can also be taken literally.

In a passage in which he enumerates Ibn Taymīyah's prominent writings, and wishes to avenge the *miḥan* which his enemies put him through, Ibn al-Qayyim expresses an open death wish for the Ashʿarīs. Again, this is an allegory, stating that the only way to defeat the Ashʿarīs is by reading Ibn Taymīyah's writings. In other words, aside from the Quran and the Sunnah, Ibn Taymīyah's writings are the ultimate weapon against the Ashʿarīs. Here, as in the previous passage, the metaphorical battlefield is the theological debate, but the many details of the Ashʿarīs' metaphorical destruction form a three-dimensional picture of physical

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[102] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 213–14 (verses 2789–2817).

suffering and actual defeat. Ibn al-Qayyim toils a great deal to construct the scene of the Ashʿarīs' defeat, which—it is safe to assume—gave a great deal of pleasure to his audience: just as the Ashʿarīs divested God from His attributes, they will be divested from their human traits in the battlefield (verse 3630). The passage below certainly amplifies the undertone in other parts of *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* and enhances the assumption that *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* is first and foremost a piece of Hanbali martyrology, drawing in part from Ibn al-Qayyim's own life-experience, but mostly from the harsh experience of Ibn Taymīyah.

3627   If you wish to witness the death of the remnants of the People of *Taʿṭīl* and heresy [the Muʿtazilah and Ashʿarīyah, who deny the divine attributes];

3628   If you wish to see them as prisoners in very poor condition, their hands tied to their beards;

3629   If you wish to see them as targets of the lances, while no horseman who is capable of throwing a lance is left n their midst;

3630   If you wish to see them when the swords catch them, divesting them from their human qualities and the oaths they have taken;

3631   If you wish to see them abandoning the Quran and the Sunnah, forsaking their sound mind and the requirements of the Quran;

3632   If you wish to see them become a laughingstock and a source of mockery—remember how often they mocked true faith—;

3633   If you wish to see their residences deserted, remaining in such a condition for a very long time, with the help of God Almighty;

3634   If you wish to see their houses deserted, their community scattered, so even two of them will never meet together again;

3635   If you wish to see the Merciful divest their hearts of every knowledge and true belief,

3636   Because they divested the Merciful of His attributes. They even claimed that the throne is empty of the presence of the Merciful.

3637   They denied the existence of speech in God. They denied the existence of His attributes of perfection, because they were ignorant and slanderers.

3638   If you wish to see all that, then I suggest that you dedicate your time to read the writings of the imam, the shaykh of existence, the scholar of divine knowledge.

3639   I of course refer to Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad, this ocean whose knowledge encompasses every creek, and bay, and canal.

[verses 3640–67 list various works by Ibn Taymīyah]

3668 [In these works, Ibn Taymīyah] helped God, His religion, the Quran, and the Prophet, using the sword and the scripture.

3669 [Ibn Taymīyah] humiliated them by revealing their ignorance. He demonstrated inconsistency in their thought throughout the ages.

3670 By God! He threw them under the shoes of the People of Truth. Before that, they were walking with crowns.

3671 He threw them to the bottom of the pit. Before that, they were considered the luminaries of many a town.

3672 Isn't it a wonder that by using their weapon [of speculative theology] he managed to bring about their fall and ruin?

3673 For years, they were holding our forelocks in their fists. However, all they managed to get from us is but one tortured prisoner.

3674 But then we held their forelocks in our fists. However, they received from us a rope for [their] rescue.

3675 And so, by the grace of God, their kings became slaves for the supporters of the Prophet.

3676 Their troops, who formerly attacked the armies of faith, were now led [from the battlefield as prisoners].

3677 A man who has knowledge of what the two groups were saying about God already knows all that I told you above.

3678 Stupid and sluggish talk, feeble arguments—we deserted them. But that is not the case with you [because you clung to them]. Using sluggish talk and lacking sluggish talk are two—very different—things.[103]

The third passage presents another feature in the martyrological narrative: that of hope and recompense. In the *qaṣd* section, Ibn al-Qayyim promises the true *Ahl al-Sunnah,* those who were afflicted by the harassment of the Ashʿarīs, the reward of paradise and its delights, and the seeing of God's face. Although the *qaṣd* section ends with a festive and decorated praise of God (verses 5778–80), it actually reflects the conflict between the Taymīyan circle and the Ashʿarīs at its utmost. At first sight, this *grand finale* embroidered with rhetorical repetitions is a *madīḥ,* a panegyric poem: it is recited in unison by the righteous Hanbalis or *Ahl al-Sunnah.* The recitation in unison as well as the frequent use of anaphoras ("By the truth of…" [*wa-bi-ḥaqqi*] in verses 5782–85, "O my God" [*yā Rabbi*] in verses 5797–5803, and so forth) give the illusion of a liturgical piece, conveying gratitude, glory, and genuine religious expression. However, the *grand finale* relates a different message: it wishes death for the Ashʿarīs, and along the way mentions the Sufis as devious rivals of *Ahl al-Sunnah.* The Ashʿarīs and Sufis are not separate

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[103] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 267–70 (verses 3627–78).

groups here: the Damascene and the Cairene elite embraced the monist teachings of Ibn al-ʿArabī to a certain degree, so the critique here is again directed at the Ashʿarī ulama.[104] In spite of its grandeur, the following passage is dominated by a highly emotional atmosphere, thus giving the imploring an urgent and intensified nature:

5780 O Defender of faith! [we implore You]

5781 By the life of Your face! You are the most generous when You accede to our requests! By the light of Your face, O Glorious One!

5782 By the truth of Your grace which You granted without asking anything in return!

5783 By the truth of Your mercy which encompasses all the creatures, the beneficent as well as the evil ones!

5784 By the truth of Your beautiful names, which are meant to praise the All-Merciful!

5785 By the truth of Your praise, a praise which encompasses all beings, but for You, the Creator of all beings, it is many times as much.

5786 Because You are God, *Allāh*, *Ilāh*, and *al-Ḥaqq*, the One that all creatures worship, the One who is sacred, there is no other [but You].

5787 Oh, no! Every worshipped deity besides You, from below Your throne down to the lower earth, is untrue and void.

5788 In You we take refuge, in You we seek protection. You help the bewildered and the worried.

5789 Who besides You hears the needy and accedes to his request in times of hardship?

5790 We turn to You because there is something we wish for, and we hope it pleases You. Whoever wishes for it is worthy of Your help.

5791 So please, determine that [this wish] is a part of the graces You bestowed amply upon us all the time.

5792 [We wish] that You would help the Quran, the Prophet, and the divine religion which You brought down by the Decisive Proof *(burhān)*.

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[104] The monist inclination of the elite is well reflected in ʿAbd Allāh ibn Taymīyah's testimony on the Damascene trials, where he describes the ulama preparing for the confrontation with Ibn Taymīyah by reading Ibn al-ʿArabī's *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*. See: the letter of ʿAbd Allāh ibn Taymīyah to his brother, Zayn al-Dīn, in: Ibn Taymīyah, *Majmūʿ Fatāwá Shaykh al-Islām Aḥmad ibn Taymīyah*, ed. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad Qāsim and Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad Qāsim (Medina, 1425/2005), 3:131.

5793 You chose Your religion; You picked the chosen one from among humankind to establish this religion.

5794 This was the religion which You chose for this human being who most pleased You. It is the most precious of all religions.

5795 Grant Your messenger, who was sent to bring the monotheist religion, help and succor, and humor him.

5796 Help him by granting Him precious victory, as You helped him throughout the ages.

5797 O God! Help the better of the two parties to overcome the party of the straying and the soldiers of Satan.

5798 O God! Please sacrifice the evil between the two parties for the sake of the chosen ones, the soldiers of the Quran.

5799 O God! Make your victorious party compassionate, full of love and care for each other.

5800 O God! Protect them from undesired innovations that infiltrated our religion throughout the ages.

5801 O God! Keep them away from the [Sufi] brotherhoods *(ṭarāʾiq),* the roads of which lead to hell!

5802 O God! Guide them with the light of inspiration, so they will arrive at You, and gain the prize of [inhabiting] paradise!

5803 O God! Help them and lead them to victory! Protect them from the temptations of the tempter!

5804 Lead them to victory, O God, with the help of the Quran that You brought down.

5805 O God! They are the foreigners, who seek refuge in You. You are the Benefactor!

5806 O God! For Your sake they fought with their fellow men, except the righteous.

5807 Although they were needy, they departed from their closest friends only to please the Compassionate.

5808 They were pleased with Your protection. Whoever wins Your protection is utterly secured and confident.

5809 They were pleased with Your Revelation. They were not pleased with anything other than Your Revelation. They were not pleased with people who present senseless notions.

5810 O God, strengthen their faith. Make them guides for the lost and bewildered.

5811 Let the Soldiers of Affirmation *(ʿAsākir al-Ithbāt),* who are the people of truth and knowledge, overcome the party of the deniers [of the divine attributes]!

5812   Bring supporters for *Ahl al-Sunnah!* Help them any time!

5813   Make them leaders of the pious! Provide them with patience and absolute certainty.

5814   They will be guided by Your command, not by what some people invented and not by the enmity they preach for.

5815   Strengthen them by Your truth. Lead them to victory. You have governance.

5816   Forgive their sins. Make them do right. You always forgive readily.

5817   All praises are meant for You. Your praise never perishes.

5818   Your praise fills the skies and the earth. Moreover, every existent and every possibility in its utmost degree

5819   Is the outcome of Your creative will. Behind all that [You created] lies everlasting and eternal praise.

5820   Bless Your prophet and grant him the most noble prayers and salvation! Grant him Your perfect approval.

5821   Bestow Your blessings upon his companions and successors.[105]

Did *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* reach a large audience, or did its message to the Taymīyan circle remain hidden between its numerous verses? *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* was a popular text, recited by Ibn al-Qayyim himself to an enthusiastic audience.[106] The number of glosses written on the poem also indicates its importance in the eyes of later generations.[107] Today, however, the persistence of its presentation as a Taymīyan or Salafi creed in verse sterilizes the poem of its emotional components and colors it as yet another dull theological work on the divine attributes.

Conclusion

Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah, a multi-layered poem of outstanding volume, was composed as a response to the formative events of the Taymīyan circle, that is, Ibn Taymīyah's *miḥan. Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* is labeled as a theological-polemical work on the divine attributes and anthropomorphism, written in verse for didactic and mnemonic purposes. However, Ibn al-Qayyim composed the poem in

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[105] *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah,* 1996, 408–10.

[106] See the introduction to Bori and Holtzman, *A Scholar in the Shadow,* 25. Several unknown findings about *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah*'s proliferation in Damascus will be presented in my "*Tashbīh,* Ḥashwiyya, and *Takfīr:* Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī's Counterattack on the Later Ḥanbalis," in Holtzmann, *Defining Anthropomorphism: The Challenge of Islamic Fundamentalism* (Edinburgh, forthcoming).

[107] For a thorough survey of glosses, some of which are still in manuscript, see: *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* BAZ, 1:51–106.

order to satisfy various emotional and probably social needs of Ibn Taymīyah's followers—whether educated or laymen. *Al-Kāfiyah al-Shāfiyah* helped these people reshape and strengthen their communal identity by telling (or reciting) a martyrological narrative. According to this narrative, the followers of Ibn Taymīyah are the successors of previous generations of adherents to the Quran and the Sunnah, who suffered a great deal at the hands of the intellectual elite. The last round of the battle between the adherents of the Quran and Sunnah—the traditionalists—and the rationalistic elite was the *miḥan* of Ibn Taymīyah. The battle between good and evil is not yet concluded, but the poem promises its audience that victory awaits, and in any case, the brave warriors of the Quran will receive their full recompense in the afterlife.

Ibn al-Qayyim uses the vehicle of the highly artistic *qaṣīdah* to its fullest: he succeeds in expressing such a wide range of emotions throughout this so-called "Taymīyan creed in verse" by skillfully using various rhetorical and poetical devices that the artistic value of the poem can no longer be dismissed. All these devices are invested in the goal of arousing in the audience a sense of self-victimization. The martyrological narrative overshadows to some degree the theological aspects or layers of the poem; however, these aspects are indeed the lion's share of the poem, and should not be neglected. Ibn al-Qayyim's success in building a poem in the guise of a theological treatise, which hides between its lines the kind of verses that are meant to unite individuals into a community facing a mighty enemy, is indeed impressive. The reception of the poem in Ibn al-Qayyim's times and after is the matter for a different line of investigation.[108]

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[108] See my "*Tashbīh*, Ḥashwiyya, and *Takfīr*.

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Notes on the Literature of Sufi Prayer Commentaries

> "The seven heavens and the earth, and all beings therein, declare His glory: there is not a thing but celebrates His praise; And yet ye understand not how they declare His glory!" (Q. 17:44) Yusuf Ali trans.

The interpretation of religious texts has a long and strange history. Although the practice itself is ancient, systematic reflection on its method and procedure has only become more complex over time. Parts of the Hebrew Bible recount narratives from earlier parts of the same book— an exegetical connection that ties both narratives nicely into a single scripture. Later, the Christian revelation would largely define itself against its Jewish roots. Interpretation, often with the sense of a "new" reading of the scriptures, was the basis here for a new religion, a messianic version of Judaism embodied in the hagiography of a minor Jewish preacher. The Islamic tradition too, one might say, found itself by rereading its Abrahamic antecedents. Central to its own self-image, the Quran repeatedly asserts corrective interpretations of these earlier "books." Often the Islamic revelation calls upon its readers to take it as a rereading of the earlier Christian and Jewish books.

With all of this reading across epochs and traditions, along with the rereading taking place within texts themselves, where does interpretation start? Should we ask ourselves where "reading" ends and where "interpretation" begins? As modern thinkers we are necessarily, if often unconsciously, indebted to contemporary ideas and debates on the matter. But of course exegesis, like any other great cultural enterprise, has a history to it. The medieval Scholastics largely agreed upon a four-fold schema of textual interpretation, which located meaning in the literal, the allegorical, the moral, and the esoteric senses of a text. In contrast, for us as moderns, one compelling idea is the widely held notion that reading and interpretation are not easily—if at all—disentangled. Whether we like it or not, for example, the idea of authorial intention (at least the most naïve versions of it) has been deeply shaken. Further, debates over reading communities and textual reception have greatly complicated our notion of "reading." It was two generations ago in a famous essay that Rudolph Bultmann asked if it is possible to read

at all without presuppositions.[1] His essay sought to nuance the subject-object model of reading, in favor of one that recognized the reader's contribution to the event of the text itself. This was not a reworking of the four-fold exegesis of the medievals, but rather a paradigm shift. No longer will decoding a text (or for that matter an image) fully illuminate its meaning; and besides, Bultmann's followers would add, no one has ever been mechanically, innocently, decoding texts anyway. So modern literary theory wants to say that reading and interpretation are indeed inextricably interwoven. The philosopher Arthur Danto now wagers his entire aesthetic theory on the "work and interpretation arising together in aesthetic consciousness"; and Stanley Fish's exploration of a "Text in this Classroom?" shakes loose the deterministic grasp of the interpretive community, yet remains committed to it as part of the complex equation that constitutes reading.[2]

I begin with these comments on reading and interpretation in the hope of sharpening our sensibilities to the ideas, assumptions, and interpretive dynamics at play when we encounter *sharḥ* or commentary literature. This is writing that is unrepentantly exegetical, and as such to our modern ears might sound inauthentic, derivative, or narrowly determined. As students of literature we are unlikely to ever point to a commentary as the apex of an author's creative genius. Even in the fourteenth century, Ibn Khaldūn famously remarked on the harm that epitomes were doing to students. He conceded these works were intended to facilitate learning, but in reality they often produced overly dense summaries that nevertheless omitted many essential points.[3] With these warnings in mind, I believe a balanced and discerning historical perspective on premodern *sharḥ* writing can allay both the medieval and modern anxieties around commentary. In fact, the literary record itself embraced exegesis in a profound way. Islamic philosophy took some of its most important steps through the commentary form. Whether this was by epitome, paraphrase, or line-by-line explanation, all of the great philosophical writers—Ibn Rushd surely being the most prominent—engaged closely with earlier Greek texts. Parallel to this tradition of philosophical writing, commentary is of yet greater significance in relation to the Quran. The *tafsīr* genre took many forms, and was reflected in a vast array of approaches and commitments.

The central text of the Islamic revelation has inspired innumerable commentaries, the production of which has not slowed in the modern period. While the

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[1] R. Bultmann, "Is Exegesis without Presuppositions Possible?" in his *Existence and Faith* (London, 1964), 342–51.

[2] See A. Danto, *The Philosophical Disenfranchisement of Art* (New York, 1986), 45, and S. Fish, *Is There a Text in this Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge, MA, 1980).

[3] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History,* trans. Franz Rosenthal (Princeton, 1967), chapter 6, section 35.

Scholastics' four-fold reading of scripture grew into modern hermeneutics, Quran interpretation also evolved. In the early and medieval periods interpretive schema were debated along the lines of exegesis from "tradition" *(bi-al-maʾthūr),* from "sound opinion" *(bi-al-dirāyah),* and by "allusion" *(bi-al-ishārah).* The Quran itself (Q. 3:7) seemed to contribute a framework for its own interpretation, distinguishing between its clear *(muḥkamāt)* and ambiguous *(mutashābihāt)* verses. And the later history of *tafsīr* often struck out in new directions, some of which represented novel interpretive paradigms. The modern phenomena of scientific rationalism, psychology, and structuralism, all variously embraced by thinkers such as Muḥammad Shaḥrūr, Naṣr Ḥāmid Abū Zayd, and Mohammed Arkoun, have opened new horizons for Islamic exegesis.

While the focus of the present essay is more modest, it shares these concerns around reading and exegesis. The texts in question for our study are the "revealed" or inspired prayer compositions of the great Sufi saints of the Mamluk period. They are texts belonging to a genre called variously *duʿāʾ, ḥizb* (pl. *aḥzāb), wazīfah, ṣalāh* (pl. *ṣalawāt), tawaṣṣul, taṣliyah, dhikr* (pl. *adhkār),* or *wird* (pl. *awrād).*[4] Although the terminology is inconsistent, with prayers referred to by more than one term, the genre as a whole is clearly identifiable as consisting of supererogatory petitionary prayer compositions. Making a strictly literary categorization more difficult however, is the fact that some of these terms can also refer to the course of spiritual training of which the prayers form only one part (e.g., *wazīfah* and *wird*), or Sufi devotional ritual in a much wider sense (e.g., *dhikr*). Additionally, the term *duʿāʾ* is used outside of Sufism to indicate part of the obligatory salat prayers, as well as referring generally to almost any informal petitionary private prayer, whether written or improvised *ad hoc.*[5]

Despite the difficulty in labeling this genre of writing, there are clear parameters and characteristics at play. For example, authorship is of central importance. An anonymous prayer composition, for reasons that will become clear below in our discussion of the content of such prayers, would typically not find a wide audience. The inspired nature of these compositions is inextricably associated with the saintly status recognized of their authors. In a less determined but related way, these texts are also typically located within clearly identifiable reading communities. Building on their association with a saintly figure, the *walī* (pl. *awliyāʾ*),[6] these prayers are normally integrated into the rites and rituals of a Sufi order *(ṭarīqah,* pl. *ṭuruq).* While not every composition finds such a positive

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[4] See C. Gilliot's "Dhikr" in *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., for a wider survey of this terminology.

[5] For a survey of terminology relating to petitionary prayers see C. Padwick, *Muslim Devotions* (London, 1961), 4–23, and J. Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford, 1971), 195–217.

[6] For more on the conception of personal "sanctity" see R. McGregor, "Friend of God" in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, THREE.*

reception, they are intended to serve such ritual and institutional purposes, and the subsequent renown of *awliyāʾ* often parallels the popularity of their inspired prayer compositions. Quite typical also is the content of these prayers. Beyond being petitionary in nature, they are strikingly intertextual. In this aspect their engagement with Quranic material is foundational; prophetic figures, tropes, and imagery are recycled into the prayers, often through direct textual borrowing. This appropriation and redeployment of Quranic text, as we shall explore below, on the one hand reinforces the theological and devotional functions of the prayers, while on the other hand the implications of such intertextuality—and the assumptions behind them relating to the inspired saintly "author"—complicate the notions of "scripture" and revelation.

While the focus of this paper is the Sufi context of the Mamluk era, it should be noted that the practice of supererogatory prayer—here meaning simply divine petitions outside of the salat ritual—goes back to the time of the Prophet. The Quran mentions several forms, including *ṣallá ʿalá* and *ṣalawāt, dhikr, tabāraka,* and *duʿāʾ.*[7] Not only were these forms of prayer common in pre-Islamic Arabia, but associated group rituals had apparently developed around them. The Quran mentions Muḥammad's night prayer vigils, and later devotional recitations of early sections of the revelation, taking place within groups apparently assembled specifically for that purpose. Although Islamic prayer revolves around salat, petitionary prayers, while not an obligation, are common and constitute a practice that is as old as the community itself. In the Quran Abraham requests that God strengthen him in his salat, and that He receive Abraham's petitionary prayer. "Lord, grant that I am steadfast in salat, and that my descendants are also. O Lord, hear too my petitions *(duʿāʾ)* to You" (Q. 14:42). Note that this request itself is made in the form of a petition. Collections of the petitionary prayers of the prophet Muḥammad are common. Al-Ghazzālī (d. 505/1111) was only one of many writers to collect and comment on these. In the following generation, Abū al-Karam al-Andarasfānī (d. after 564/1169) composed the *Brilliant Corpus of the Prayers of the Prophet,* which consists of 160 chapters containing 1530 prayers for various occasions, all said to have originally been composed by Muḥammad.[8] The circulation of these prayers among the first generations of Muslims warrants a closer study of its own, not

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[7] See G. Böwering's "Prayer" in the *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān,* gen. ed. J. McAuliffe (Leiden, 2001). On the prominent twelfth-century Maghribi prayers of Abū Madyan, see his *The Way of Abū Madyan,* trans. V. Cornell (Cambridge, 1996), 36–39.

[8] A. H. al-Ghazzālī, "Al-Adhkār wa-al-Daʿwāt," book nine of *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn.* See also the translation by K. Nakamura (London, 1990). Al-Andarasfānī, "Al-Jāmiʿ al-Bahī li-Daʿwāt al-Nabī," MS no. 1945 in P. Hitti et al., *Descriptive Catalog of the Garrett Collection of Arabic Manuscripts* (Princeton, 1938).

least because there is some evidence for disputes over the licitness of using extra-Quranic petitionary prayers.[9]

This *aḥzāb* and related prayer literature has a vast history that remains largely unexplored within our scholarly field. Robert Irwin and Thomas Bauer are the most recent experts to note the dearth of studies on Mamluk-era religious literature.[10] Perhaps because in comparison with other genres of religious literature (Quran, hadith, *fiqh, adab, falsafah*) these works would be considered of lesser historical and literary value, they have received little attention from researchers. Nevertheless a quick look at any major Islamic manuscript collection will show that this material was produced, copied, and commented upon by many writers century after century. A recent study of a Mamluk-era library in Damascus, for example, observes that prayer books made up a great proportion of the collection.[11] This devotional literature also enjoyed a significant presence in public religious life. Rituals, including funerals and pilgrimages to shrines, were often occasions for recitation.[12]

Turning back to the texts, we must note first the peculiar conception of authorship that was at play behind the *aḥzāb* associated with saintly figures after the sixth/twelfth century. More specifically, the dynamic of divine inspiration, and the elevated status of the one receiving and representing it, strongly marks this textual production. In the early Mamluk sultanate and elsewhere in the central Islamic lands, the rise of the great Sufi orders engendered a new level of formalization and institutionalization of Islamic mysticism. The teachings, discipline, and rituals specific to each order were defined and anchored in the example of the eponymous founder. In Egypt many orders made their appearance in the Mamluk era, the most prominent being that of the Shādhilīyah, founded on the saintly

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[9] Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728) is quoted on this in L. Massignon, *Essai sur les origines du lexique technique de la mystique musulmane* (Paris, 1954), 189. The debate is over the proper use of *awrād*. Supplicatory texts *(duʿāʾ* and *adhkār)* became part of the Sufi literary canon from at least the fourth/tenth century. A. Karamustafa, *Sufism: The Formative Period* (Edinburgh, 2007), 86.

[10] See their comments in R. Irwin, "Mamluk Literature," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 12, no. 1 (2003): 1–30, and T. Bauer, "Mamluk Literature: Misunderstandings and New Approaches," *MSR* 9, no. 2 (2005): 105, 123.

[11] K. Hirschler, *The Written Word in the Medieval Arabic Lands* (Edinburgh, 2012), 147–49. The reference is to the library of the Ashrafīyah Mausoleum established in the early seventh/thirteenth century.

[12] By the nineteenth century these public recitations were so common that an overseer *(shaykh qurrāʾ al-ḥizb al-Shādhilī)* was appointed to organize reciters and assure proper conduct. Other devotional texts in the genre, such the *Burdah* of al-Buṣīrī (d. 694/1294) and al-Jazūlī's (d. 869/1465) *Dalāʾil al-Khayrāt,* were also widely recited. See F. De Jong, *Turuq and Turuq-linked Institutions* (Leiden, 1978), 112, n. 78. For a literary study of the *Burdah* see chapter two of Suzanne Stetkevych's *The Mantle Odes: Arabic Praise Poems to the Prophet Muhammad* (Bloomington, 2010).

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teachings and example of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī (d. 656/1258). Each Sufi order has its unique structure and history, but a number of elements remain common. These included the sanctity *(walāyah)* of the founding figure, his rule of spiritual discipline, the web of allegiances built upon the master-disciple *(murshid-murīd)* relationship, and the inspired petitionary prayer texts revealed to the saint. In accordance with predominant Sunni theology and prophetology, these prayers were transmitted by inspiration *(ilhām),* a lesser form of divine communication than that of the prophets' revelation *(waḥy).* Recorded as part of the saint's hagiography, these prayers are typically received through a mystical vision in which the prophet Muḥammad, an angel, or the enigmatic figure al-Khaḍir transmit the text. Al-Khaḍir is generally identified as a prophet—appearing apparently in the Quran (18:65–82)—with a mystical capacity second only, in Sufi eyes, to the prophet Muḥammad. In the hagiography of al-Shādhilī his *aḥzāb* and *awrād* were received from al-Khaḍir and the Prophet.[13] Thus, the status of a prayer composition was tied to the mystical reputation of its saintly "author." This form of literary production then is as much about its author as it is about its own content.

This issue of religious authority remained central to the self-conception of Sufi institutions. One Sufi order deriving from the Shādhilīyah was that of the Wafāʾīyah, based on the teachings and model of Muḥammad Wafāʾ (d. 765/1363) and his son ʿAlī Wafāʾ (d. 807/1405).[14] They maintained an ambivalent relationship with the memory of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī, claiming to adhere to his teachings, and yet seeking to surpass his spiritual authority. Inspired prayers are not surprisingly brought to play in this conflict. In a heavenly vision ʿAlī Wafāʾ learns that the *aḥzāb* and *wazīfah* of the Wafāʾīyah are indeed superior to those of the Shādhilīyah.[15] This challenge to the saintly authority of al-Shādhilī was again mounted when ʿAlī elsewhere claimed that his father's sanctity had surpassed that of all others, and that he is thus exempted from the practice of reading any other *walī*'s prayers. Tellingly, in a bid to establish their own spiritual authority the Wafāʾ shaykhs composed and recommended their own *aḥzāb* prayers. In the primary hagiography of the order ʿAlī provides the following details: "Whoever recites our *ḥizb* with presence of heart, is forgiven by what is between the two [Quran] verses found in the noble *ḥizb* of the *Great Opening,* that read, 'Lord, we have wronged ourselves. If you do not forgive us, and show mercy, we will be lost' [Q. 7:23] and 'Lord, forgive and show mercy; You are the best of those who

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[13] Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh, *Durrat al-Asrār wa Tuḥfat al-Abrār* (Cairo, 1987), 17.

[14] See R. McGregor, *Sanctity and Mysticism in Medieval Egypt: The Wafāʾ Sufi Order and the Legacy of Ibn ʿArabī* (Albany, 2004), 50–70.

[15] ʿAlī Wafāʾ, "Mafātīḥ al-Khazāʾin al-ʿĀlīyah," Dār al Kutub MS 152 *taṣawwuf*, fol. 92b.

show mercy' [Q. 23:118]."[16] In his own hagiography, al-Shādhilī had described the effectiveness of the recitation of his prayers *(awrād),* saying that they are steady vehicles conveying the pious to the doors that open onto the secrets of the unseen world.[17] The power politics swirling around this and undoubtedly many other Sufi rivalries show that this literature was inextricably intertwined with claims of religious authority.

Regarding the structure and content of the prayer compositions themselves, we immediately note their petitionary tone, and their reuse of Quranic material. In the first section of al-Shādhilī's "Al-Ḥizb al-Kabīr," entitled "Ḥizb al-Āyāt," Quran quotations make up almost the entire text.[18] Typically, verses may be run together as follows: "Our Lord! Avert from us the Wrath of Hell, for its Wrath is indeed an affliction grievous. Evil indeed is it as an abode, and as a place to rest in [Q. 25:65–66]. Our Lord! Grant unto us wives and offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes [Q. 25:74]."[19] The Quranic passages in these prayer texts vary in length and style, and they are also edited in order to preserve the voice and syntax of the prayer narrative. These emendations can be slight, changing a pronoun or the tense of a verb conjugation, so "We taught (him) knowledge from our own presence" [Q. 18:65] becomes, "So teach us knowledge from Your Own presence."[20] Used this way, the Quranic text is both an integral component of the prayer text, and yet is altered to serve in its new context. The reader has the sense that this is a familiar text, yet one that has been disarticulated and recombined in new ways. It would seem reasonable to assume that at some level this familiarity can also be understood as the intertextual communication of the *ḥizb.* My quick survey of the sixty-three Quranic passages quoted in this section indicates that nineteen of them treat eschatological themes, and fifteen evoke prophetic figures.

The petitionary material making up the *aḥzāb* of al-Shādhilī varies widely in theme and content. Both mundane topics such as overcoming rivals and enemies, as well as devotional statements reflecting concepts of Sufi mystical theology, appear. On the practical level, for example, the petitioner might ask, "O Omnipotent Lord, for whom destruction of the tyrant and wayward ruler is easy, I ask that

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[16] Abū al-Laṭāʾif, "Al-Minaḥ al-Ilāhīyah fī Manāqib al-Sādāt al-Wafāʾīyah," Dār al-Kutub MS 1151 *tārīkh,* fol. 7a. The hagiography also describes (fol. 29a) an episode in which a lesser rival shaykh tries to steal one of Muḥammad Wafāʾ's *aḥzāb* in order to establish his own fame as a holy man. For a listing of the prayer texts attributed to Muḥammad and ʿAlī Wafāʾ see McGregor, *Sanctity and Mysticism,* 219, 220.

[17] J. Renard, *Ibn ʿAbbād of Ronda* (New York, 1986), 176.

[18] Al-Shādhilī, "Ḥizb al-Kabīr" in *Nibrās al-Atqiyāʾ wa-Dalīl al-Anqiyāʾ* [The lamp of the pious and the guide of the pure] (Tunis, 1964), 11–24.

[19] Ibid., 17.

[20] Ibid., 27

You outwit those who plot against me…and trick him who would double-cross me, by turning his malice back upon him. I ask You to bury him who prepares pit-falls for me. Lead him who prepares the snare of treachery for me, my Lord, to be caught in his own trap."[21] A central element of the *ḥizb* is supererogatory appeal for mercy and intercession. A typical petition is the following: "The sinners assemble, O God, anticipating your pardon. They hold out their hands to you, O God. They stand before you and implore by Muḥammad, O God. Forgive them their offences, O God; and consent to the mediation of Aḥmad (Muḥammad)."[22] Several related devotional themes appear throughout the *aḥzāb* texts, although their treatment is rather cursory. Standard mystical concerns such as trusting in divine providence *(tawakkul),* as well as seeking union with the divine secret *(sirr al-jamʿ),* are mentioned in several places.[23]

Academic interest has barely begun to survey this devotional literature, but perhaps equally significant are the commentaries written on them. With this material, as was the case for the prayers themselves, titles and terminology are inconsistent. Commentary may appear under several headings, including *tafsīr, taʿlīqah, tahdhīb, mukhtaṣar, ḥawāshī,* or *taṣḥīḥ,* among others.[24] In other contexts these descriptors are also applied variously to treatments of Quran interpretation, studies in grammar, *fiqh,* hadith studies, poetry, etc. Sorting out the terminology for both devotional prayers and the commentaries written on them is a challenge for the researcher. That said, for the purposes of our discussion, I will refer to all commentaries as *sharḥ,* which is the term well represented in the primary literature and appears in the title of most of the significant commentaries on the *aḥzāb* of the Sufi rders.

Considering that these small prayer texts are far simpler in style and language than perhaps any other genre of religious writing, one must wonder about the intention, strategy, and import behind the composition of their commentaries. We noted earlier the classical categories of Islamic exegesis, but difficulty in language could hardly account for the production of these prayer commentaries. Clearly some extra-textual considerations are at play. It seems that in addition to simply promoting the prayer text to a reading community, a *sharḥ* advances the religious profiles of the subject author and the commentator. In asserting and witnessing to the *walāyah* of the saint, the commentator in some sense claims a degree of charisma and authority. This would follow from the logic that the inspired prayers can only divulge their full esoteric wisdom to an elevated and discerning mysti-

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[21] Al-Shādhilī, "Ḥizb al-Naṣr," in *Nibrās al-Aṭqiyāʾ wa-Dalīl al-Anqiyāʾ,* 94.

[22] Al-Shādhilī, "Ḥizb al-Tawassul" in *Nibrās al-Aṭqiyāʾ wa-Dalīl al-Anqiyāʾ,* 81.

[23] Al-Shādhilī, "Ḥizb al-Tawḥīd" in *Nibrās al-Aṭqiyāʾ wa-Dalīl al-Anqiyāʾ,* 91; and "Ḥizb al-Kabīr," 17; "Ḥizb al-Ikhfāʾ," 108.

[24] See C. Gilliot, "Sharḥ," *EI2.*

cal sensibility. In unlocking the message of the saintly prayer, the commentator has demonstrated his own esoteric expertise. This hypothesis warrants further testing against data from the history of organized Sufism of the Mamluk era, but for our purposes here we can point to at least one supporting example. We saw above the Wafāʾīyah presenting itself as a rival to the authority of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī, but at the same time, in a parallel dynamic, ʿAlī Wafāʾ was appropriating that same authority. As part of his hagiography of the Wafāʾ shaykhs, ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī pointed to ʿAlī's ability to interpret "Ḥizb al-Baḥr" as proof of his mystical insight and sanctity.[25]

The most prominent and earliest commentary on the Shādhilī prayers is *Al-Laṭīfah al-Marḍīyah bi-Sharḥ Duʿāʾ al-Shādhilīyah* [The profound allusion in the explanation of the prayer of the Shādhilīyah][26] by Ibn Mākhillā (d. 733/1332). An inventory has yet to be made of this *sharḥ* literature, which has apparently been produced with regularity up into the contemporary period.[27] In his introduction Ibn Mākhillā outlines a number of basic Sufi concepts, including the levels of esoteric knowledge as they are related to the faculties of speaking and hearing, along with a discussion of variants of the hadith "Whoever attacks My saint *(walī)* has made war on Me" and "Whoever attacks the friend *(walī)* of God, it is as though he has torn down the Kaʿbah seven times" (pp. 10-11). This opening section appears to be a defense of the foundations of religious authority *(walāyah)* upon which the prayer text was written, as well as a framing of the subsequent commentary within the mainstream of Sufi oncepts and terminology of the period.

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[25] Al-Shaʿrānī, *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrá* (Beirut, 1988), 2:31. ʿAlī Wafāʾ wrote no formal *sharḥ*, or at least none survives. He expounded orally and extemporaneously on such material.

[26] I am using the Cairo 1935 Muḥammad Rabīʿ edition. In 2011 a new edition by ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Naṣṣār appeared, which includes a substantial new introduction and detailed footnote commentaries.

[27] The prayer itself, "Ḥizb al-Baḥr" or "Litany of the sea," was widely known. The famous world traveler Ibn Baṭṭuṭah (d. 770/1369) presents the full text in his *Travels*, trans. H. A. R. Gibb, (Cambridge, 1958), 1:25–27. Perhaps Aḥmad Zarrūq's (d. 899/1493) "Sharḥ Ḥizb al-Baḥr" from *Sharḥ Ghawāmiḍ Ḥizbay al-Shādhilī* (Cairo, 2011) is the most widely circulated commentary. For a historical overview of this Sufi thinker see S. Kugle, *Rebel Between Spirit and Law: Ahmad Zarruq, Sainthood, and Authority in Islam* (Bloomington, 2006), 43–65. Other commentaries include Abū al-Hudá Muḥammad al-Rifāʿī's (d. 728/1328) *Qilādat al-Naḥr fī Sharḥ Ḥizb al-Baḥr* (Cairo, 1931); ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Fāsī's (d. 1035/1626) *Sharḥ Ḥizb al-Kabīr* (Cairo, 1998), which comments significantly on Ibn Mākhillā's commentary; Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Salām al-Bannānī's (d. 1163/1750) "Sharḥ Ḥizb al-Barr," Tunis Bibliothèque Nationale MS ʿAbdalīyah 4755; Shāh Walī Allāh's (d. 1177/1763) *Hawāmiʿ Sharḥ Ḥizb al-Baḥr* (Delhi, 1890); Murtaḍá al-Zabīdī's (d. 1205/1790) *Sharḥ Murtaḍá al-Zabīdī ʿalá Ḥizb al-Barr* (Cairo, 1913); and Abū al-Maḥāsin al-Qāwuqjī's (d. 1304/1887) *Kitāb al-Badr al-Munīr ʿalá Ḥizb al-Shādhilī al-Kabīr* (Alexandria, 1862). For more titles see S. ʿAmmār, *Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī* (Cairo, 1951), 22–24, and Ḥājjī Khalīfah's *Kashf al-Ẓunūn* (New York, 1964), 4:28.

In the first of three following sections making up the main body of the work, the author discusses the spiritual benefits of reciting this prayer. He also presents a number of hagiographical episodes from the life of al-Shādhilī.[28] Th second section (pp. 27–37) presents the text of "Ḥizb al-Baḥr" along with comments pointing out the Quranic sources for various phrases, and explaining certain vocabulary used. Ibn Mākhillā goes on to recount some of the 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. An interesting point is also taken up here; it centers on the question of how prophets, saints, the learned, and the commoner can all petition God for forgiveness or protection using the same formulae—recall the Quranic intertextuality at play here. More specifically, the question is: Can they be asking for the same thing? Ibn Mākhillā's answer will be discussed in detail below. Accounting for the miraculous nature and power of the *ḥizb* is a concern for other commentators also. Aḥmad Zarrūq's *sharḥ* draws parallels between the *ḥizb* and several instances of miracles in the Quran dealing with prophets and the theme of water travel and fl ods.[29] Another commentary, an explanation *(taʿlīq)* of Aḥmad Zarrūq's and Ibn Mākhillā's commentaries, transmits reports on the miraculous powers of "Ḥizb al-Baḥr" to calm storms at sea, protect against highway robbers along the hajj route, and divert the stings of scorpions.[30]

In the final section (pp. 38–94) Ibn Mākhillā takes up the issue of the prayer's use of Quranic phrases. In defending the intertextual nature of "Ḥizb al-Baḥr" (and by implication, the legitimacy of the divine inspiration of saints like al-Shādhilī) Ibn Mākhillā makes use of a range of arguments. He draws on legal sources (Qadi ʿAyyād's discussion of Muḥammad's use of Quranic phrases as supplication), theological arguments (al-Bāqillānī's doctrine of *iʿjāz,* or inimitability of the Quran, allows for the intertextual use, but insists that the quote loses it miraculous nature), and the principles of rhetoric (*iqtibās,* or adaptation, in composition preserves the integrity of the original Quranic or hadith source). Aḥmad Zarrūq is also sensitive to the intertextuality of the prayer. His treatment of the text follows even more closely the Quranic borrowings, and typically refers back

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[28] Ibn Mākhillā's source for these accounts appears to be *Laṭāʾif al-Minan*—the hagiography of al-Shādhilī written by Ibn ʿAṭā Allāh al-Iskandarī (d. 709/1309).

[29] *Sharḥ Ghawāmiḍ Ḥizbay al-Shādhilī,* 28–33. The pagination I am citing for this text, which refers to an online version, may not accurately reflect that of the printed edition.

[30] Ibn Duqmāq, "Qaṭf al-Zahr min Sharḥ Ḥizb al-Baḥr," al-Azhar MS 936382, fols. 2b, 4a. This manuscript cannot have been authored by Ibn Duqmāq the famous Egyptian chronicler, since it quotes from Ahmad Zarrūq, who died some ninety years later than the historian. I have not been able to identify this later Ibn Duqmāq, or find any other copies. The manuscript, marked as part of the Azhari *waqfīyah* of the *riwāq al-Maghāribah,* is damaged and illegible in several places.

to the structure and content of the original surah in order to elucidate the meaning of a borrowed passage appearing in the *ḥizb.*

Ibn Mākhillā's *sharḥ* also takes up the status of saints and prophets. In this context, the primary concern is to explain how the "inspired" prayer of a saint can contain quotations from the revelation (Quran) to a prophet. The question is not simply whether it is appropriate to quote and paraphrase the Quran, but rather, how the saint (and his common followers) can petition for what should be reserved only for prophets. Ibn Mākhillā's answers to these questions shine an indirect light on his notion of *walāyah.* In his comments on al-Shādhilī's petition, *nasʾaluka al-ʿiṣmah* (we ask you for protection/inerrancy), he notes that *ʿiṣmah,* as generally understood, is restricted to prophets, who are protected from committing grave sins. The central distinction in the discussion here is his qualifier "according to their level." For Ibn Mākhillā this also allows him to account for other apparent paradoxes. On the issue of how both the common believer and the saint—and a prophet for that matter—may make the identical supplication, for example for forgiveness, in "Ḥizb al-Baḥr," Ibn Mākhillā points out that since the petitioners are at different spiritual levels, the meaning and status of their petitions is different. Essentially, he resolves the issue by appealing to the semantic context (i.e., the status of the person who is speaking) in order to draw distinctions between various speech events that employ apparently identical locutions. Zarrūq's commentary addresses the infallibility passages also, lending them roughly the same interpretation. He distinguishes prophets as the only individuals whose station requires them to be incapable of sin; however, providence may extend this status to saints and even common believers. Hence the petition of the prayer, Zarrūq says, is not for the necessary *ʿiṣmah* of a prophet, but rather for a state of preservation *(ḥifẓ)* from sin. In their intermediary position, the saints apparently enjoy this preserved state, while they are not accorded *ʿiṣmah.* This preservation is thus accessible, but far from guaranteed, for the common petitioner. Zarrūq quotes two Quranic passages (11:43, 3:101) where *ʿaṣima,* here meaning protection, is granted by God according to his will. Thus, "when the prayer runs 'We petition You for infallibility' it means we request that You shield us from sin; that it be made inaccessible and distant from us."[31] On this same question of infallibility Ibn Duqmāq summarizes much of what Aḥmad Zarrūq proposed, and adds that the prophets' position can be called absolute *(muṭlaqah)* infallibility. Also, each petitioner is asking from his/her own spiritual rank *(ḥāl),* which determines the kind of *ʿiṣmah* they are eligible to receive.[32]

Ibn Mākhillā applies the same type of argument to the meaning of the phrase "[Lord,] subjugate to us this sea as You subjugated the sea to Moses." He remarks

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[31] *Sharḥ Ghawāmiḍ Ḥizbay al-Shādhilī,* 34.

[32] Ibn Duqmāq, "Qaṭf al-Zahr min Sharḥ Ḥizb al-Baḥr," fol. 6b.

that this should not necessarily be taken as a request to God each time to part the seas, but instead should be understood as a petition for the "miracle" of divine beneficence in the lives of lowly petitioners—establishing within them righteousness, godliness, and wisdom. He says, "Know that the manifestation of omnipotence *(qudrah)* is sometimes by grace and miracle, and the breaking of the anticipated norms; or it is by the miracle of fixing norms and engendering wisdom... The second kind [of miracle] is destined for the generality of creation, while the first kind is only for the elite of the prophets and the saints" (p. 75). Thus Ibn Mākhillā's discussions in *Al-Laṭīfah al-Marḍīyah*—refl cting his discussions of sanctity elsewhere—serve to blur the hard lines between prophets and saints (not unlike the effort to nuance the dividing lines between the Quran and the *ḥizb* prayer). This is done by extending to the saints the attributes previously reserved for the prophets. The same blurring of lines occurs in Ibn Mākhillā's resolution of the apparent paradox of a prophet asking for forgiveness in the same manner as a common believer; or that common believer asking for the same divine favor a saint or a prophet might petition for. Zarrūq interprets the request to "subdue the seas" much along the general lines of a petition for equanimity and balance in the face of life's tribulations. The comments from Ibn Duqmāq on this passage are more substantial, but run in much the same direction, taking the turbulent seas as a metaphor for both the worldly and metaphysical challenges that confront the believer. In a typically Sufi approach, he also distinguishes between the exoteric meaning, which here reads drowning as losing God's help, and the esoteric meaning, which takes the "sea" *(baḥr)* to be a "sea of knowledge" that God makes calm, allowing the seeker to dive into it and to emerge erudite *(mutabaḥḥir)*.[33]

The continued production of *aḥzāb* commentaries is evidence of the active reflection upon, and ritual use of, these saintly inspired devotional prayers. While a *sharḥ* can function as a textual intermediary, it might itself become a contested statement, eliciting its own responses both positive and negative. Commentaries and epitomes of Ibn Mākhillā's *sharḥ* await closer inspection, and apparently even refutations of this *ḥizb* have been written.[34] A wider context of competition and polemics, which we saw above beginning early in the history of the Shādhilīyah, clearly continued throughout the Mamluk era and beyond. The history of these debates around the authority, efficacy, and licitness of *aḥzāb* literature has yet to be written, but starting points have already appeared. Ibn Ṭulūn (d. 953/1546) notes the heated public discussions that arose around al-Shādhilī's "Ḥizb al-Nūr," pointing out the prominent role one of al-Suyūṭī's (d. 911/1505) students, al-Dirīnī,

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[33] Ibid., fols. 9b, 10b.

[34] A. al-Būtījī (seventeenth cent.?), "Mukhtaṣar al-Laṭīfah al-Marḍīyah," Budeiri Library Jerusalem MS *taṣawwuf* 32/29/b; and anonymous, "Al-Radd ʿalá Abī al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī fī Ḥizbihi," *Fihris al-Makhṭūṭāt al-Muṣawwarah* (Cairo, 1954), entries no. 103, no. 161.

played in its defense. These polemics apparently did not divide neatly along Sufi/ non-Sufi interests; and in more than one instance the *aḥzāb* of the Shādhilīyah are attacked by leaders of rival Sufi rders.[35]

This contested history aside, allow me to conclude with a few remarks on the literary qualities of these prayers. Jaroslav Stetkevych has characterized the typical *sharḥ* on poetry of this period as one that treats the poem word for word on its morphological, syntactic, and lexical levels, following with a brief summary paraphrase. The commentaries on mystical poems (e.g., Ibn al-ʿArabī's *Tarjumān al-Ashwāq* or Ibn al-Fāriḍ's *Dīwān*) adopted much the same approach, but added equivalencies for the symbols presented in the text, and concluded with paraphrases of content that were largely "…a recapitulation of the mystic intention."[36] Stetkevych is talking about mystical poetry, with its classical form, style, and symbolism. This material is not interchangeable with our *aḥzāb,* but much of his characterization applies. In brief, Stetkevych's criticism is that Sufi interpretations were burdened with an overconfidence in the dichotomy of form and meaning that held the meaning to be easily identified, isolated, and spoken for. The limitations of this simplistic approach meant that the commentaries could not make room for the aesthetics and polysemy at play in the poems.[37] Our quick survey above of a handful of exegetes might not allow for a definitive characterization of this entire genre of religious writing, but it does seem that the limitations Stetkevych has identified in relation to poetry are at play in our literature. Our three commentaries above showed a concern to anchor the original text in its Quranic progenitor, with no attention paid to the poetic strength of the original, and how that would subsequently resonate in the *aḥzāb.* The interpretations limit themselves to identifying intertextual borrowings, to allegorical, symbolic, and theological reductions of the prayer texts. That said, this small literature of prayer commentary does not deserve the obscure fate it has suffered to date. It is clear that at least some of these commentators draw on wide learning in the Islamic sciences, and often in creative ways, to respond to the *aḥzāb.* The best of this literature should be included in our history of Islamic religious literature, and should be integrated into our accounts of the history of Sufism and Islamic devotional practices more generally.

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[35] On both points see E. Geoffroy, *Le Soufisme en Égypte et en Syrie à l'époque mamlouke* (Damascus, 1995), 155, 277.

[36] J. Stetkevych, *The Zephyrs of Najd* (Chicago, 1993), 92.

[37] Ibid., 97.

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The Drug *Zajal*s in Ibrāhīm al-Miʿmār's *Dīwān*

Unlike the Mamluk *muwashshaḥah,* which Sulāfah ʿAbd Allāh treated in her recent monograph,[1] neither Mamluk *zajal*s nor the Eastern *zajal* tradition as a whole have been studied to date, and only a few published studies on individual *zajal*s exist. Madeleine Voegeli wrote about an Egyptian ballad monger's *zajal* by al-Nāyib from around the eleventh/seventeenth century.[2] Otfried Weintritt elaborated on a *zajal* by the Cairene al-Ḥammāmī ("the bathkeeper"; d. 712/1312), which describes the decline of his bath.[3] Margaret Larkin's article dealt with a model *zajal* by the Egyptian poet al-Ghubārī (active during the second half of the fourteenth century).[4] Heikki Palva studied an Egyptian *zajal* of the eighth/fourteenth century "in dispraise of women," written in Hebrew characters.[5] Thomas Bauer examined Ibrāhīm al-Miʿmār's *zajal* on the river Nile,[6] which is one of a dozen *zajal*s that are the subject of the current article. More recently, Hinrich Biesterfeldt produced an article on al-Miʿmār's *zajal* on beer, which is also a central focus of this study.[7] All the *zajal*s discussed in this article are included in an edition of Ibrāhīm al-Miʿmār's *dīwān* that Thomas Bauer, Anke Osigus, and I are currently preparing.

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[1] Sulāfah ʿAbd Allāh, *Bināʾ al-Uslūb fī al-Muwashshaḥḥāt al-Mamlūkīyah* (Homs, 2009).

[2] Madeleine Voegeli, "*Manṣūbat Ṣafā l-ʿaiš*—Ein volkstümliches, ägyptisch-arabisches zağal aus dem 17. Jahrhundert," *Asiatische Studien: Zeitschrift der Schweizerischen Asiengesellschaft* 50 (1996): 463–478.

[3] Otfried Weintritt, "An-Nāṣir al-Ḥammāmī (gest. 712/1312): Dichter und Bademeister in Kairo," in *Alltagsleben und materielle Kultur in der arabischen Sprache und Literatur: Festschrift für Heinz Grotzfeld zum 70. Geburtstag,* ed. Thomas Bauer and Ulrike Stehli-Werbeck (Wiesbaden, 2005), 381–90.

[4] Margaret Larkin, "The Dust of the Master: A Mamlūk-era Zajal by Khalaf al-Ghubārī," *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* 2 (2007): 11–29.

[5] Heikki Palva, "An Egyptian-Arabic Zajal from the Fourteenth (?) Century," *Studia Orientalia* 101 (2007): 197–217.

[6] Thomas Bauer, "Das Nilzağal des Ibrāhīm al-Miʿmār: Ein Lied zur Feier des Nilschwellenfestes," in *Alltagsleben und materielle Kultur in der arabischen Sprache und Literatur,* ed. Bauer and Stehli-Werbeck, 69–88.

[7] Hinrich Biesterfeldt, "Mizr fī Miṣr: Ein Preisgedicht auf das Bier aus dem Kairo des 14. Jahrhunderts," in *Differenz und Dynamik: Festschrift für Heinz Halm zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Hinrich Biesterfeldt and Verena Klemm (Würzburg, 2012), 383–98.

Ibrāhīm al-Miʿmār (d. 749/1348) is one of the most famous poets of the Mamluk era. His *dīwān* was "so popular in the Mamluk period that Ibn Taghrībirdī did not dare to quote much of it, since it was known to everybody anyway."[8] Almost all the information we have about him goes back to al-Ṣafadī's *Aʿyān al-ʿAṣr* and *Al-Wāfī bi-al-Wafayāt*.[9] As the name al-Miʿmār indicates, he was an architect or master-builder. Some of his epigrams actually contain construction terminology, which, as examples of the (by then very fashionable) device of *tawriyah* (i.e., double entendre), imply two meanings: the obvious technical one and a non-technical, often frivolous one. Mostly the last word of these epigrams is loaded with the *tawriyah,* which at the same time constitutes the point of the poem. The following epigram, number 66 in our typescript of al-Miʿmār's *dīwān,* is a good example of this technique:

> *li-llāhi ḥajjārun bi-alḥāẓih / qad taraka al-aḥyāʾa amwātā*
> *kam qultu min ʿishqī lah laytanī / kuntu li-dhā al-ḥajjāri naḥḥātā*

> [God, what a stonecutter, who with his glances turns the living into dead
> How often my passion made me say: I wish I could be his chiseler]

Al-Miʿmār was a member of a fairly educated middle class in Cairo and wrote from that perspective. Some of his poems give voice to grievances and exposing social inequities.[10] He wrote about millers, merchants, weavers, cotton manufacturers, and cotton carders, to name a few. We can assume that al-Miʿmār's main source of income was not related to his work as a poet. He made his living as a master-builder and was not dependent on rewards from rich or powerful persons. His *dīwān* gives ample evidence of this fact, as panegyric poetry is largely absent. Neither do we find there any summons to his audience to reward him for his poetry, such as is seen in the anonymous ballad-monger's *zajal* studied by Voegeli or in al-Ghubārī's poem, which seems to have been commissioned or sponsored by a number of shopkeepers.[11] This does not mean that al-Miʿmār did not promote himself and his work; al-Ṣafadī mentions that he received an epigrammatic poem as a welcome present from al-Miʿmār. We can only guess what would have hap-

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[8] Thomas Bauer, "Mamluk Literature: Misunderstandings and New Approaches," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 9, no. 2 (2005): 118.

[9] For details on his life, see Thomas Bauer, "Ibrāhīm al-Miʿmār: Ein dichtender Handwerker aus Ägyptens Mamlukenzeit," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 152 (2002): 63–93. Bauer wrote another article on al-Miʿmār, which deals with the only *maqāmah* of his that has come down to us: idem, "Die Leiden eines ägyptischen Müllers: Die Mühlen-Maqāme des Ibrāhīm al-Miʿmār (st. 749/1348)," in *Ägypten-Münster: Kulturwissenschaftliche Studien zu Ägypten, dem Vorderen Orient und verwandten Gebieten,* ed. Anke I. Blöbaum et. al. (Wiesbaden, 2003), 1–16.

[10] See for example Thomas Bauer, "Nilzaǧal," and idem, "Mühlen-Maqāme."

[11] Voegeli, "*Manṣūbat,*" 471; Larkin, "Al-Ghubārī," 22.

pened if al-Miʿmār had not addressed this epigram to him.[12] For a poet from the Mamluk period, whether from the elite of society or not, poetry did not return enough reward to sustain a decent living: Even the highbrow poet Ibn Nubātah often complained about his poverty, though this may not have been meant literally but rather as an example of the topos of the poverty-stricken poet.[13] A good illustration of the dilemma faced by non-elite poets is the case of Yaḥyá al-Jazzār (d. 679/1281) who, though he tried to survive as a poet by writing loads of panegyric poetry, was forced to return to his job as a butcher. He is reported to have said that as a poet he had to run after the dogs, but he was better off as a butcher with the dogs running after him.[14]

Although al-Miʿmār's poems brim with graphic descriptions of sex, carousing, sexual innuendo, dissolute behavior, winebibbing, and hashish use, al-Ṣafadī describes him as an ascetic man who led a modest lifestyle and avoided the powerful figures of his time. He lived in Bāb al-Lūq, a quarter where, according to al-Maqrīzī, jugglers, snake charmers, wrestlers, and other members of the lower class of society lived. This quarter was also known for various sorts of debauchery: when Quṭ ādār (d. 730/1329) became governor of Cairo in 724/1324, he confiscated large amounts of hashish in Bāb al-Lūq, and had it burned at Bāb Zuwaylah where, at the same time, large quantities of confiscated wine were also destroyed.[15] The latter gate is portrayed in three poems by al-Miʿmār, where he describes it as notoriously drunk and inciting the envy of passers-by.

Al-Ṣafadī calls al-Miʿmār an *ʿāmmī ẓarīf,* "a refined man from the common folk," with no specific training as an *ʿālim* and no proficiency in grammar or writing *fuṣḥá* poems full of *laḥn,* a mixture of sub-standard and standard Arabic. On the other hand, al-Ṣafadī explicitly praises al-Miʿmār's dialectal poetry, saying that he shows his real genius in this field. Interestingly, al-Ṣafadī refrains from quoting any of these poems, which may be the result of the incompatibility of this originally oral poetry with the standards of professionalism within the group of *udabāʾ* at that time.[16] Also, colloquial Arabic has always been the preferred means of communication through all layers of society. It is, however, decidedly informal, which may, in the eyes of anthologists and *udabāʾ,* have made it unsuitable for reproduction in written form.

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[12] Bauer, "Al-Miʿmār," 69.

[13] Thomas Bauer, "Ibn Nubātah al-Miṣrī (686–768/1287–1366): Life and Works: Part I: The Life of Ibn Nubātah," *MSR* 12, no. 1 (2008): 30; and idem, "Misunderstandings," 126–27.

[14] Bauer, "Misunderstandings," 120.

[15] Bauer, "Al-Miʿmār," 69.

[16] Bauer, "Al-Miʿmār," 70–71.

His Dīwān

According to the edition currently being prepared, al-Miʿmār's *dīwān* consists of five hundred four epigrammatic poems, one laudatory *qaṣīdah,* thirty-two *mawwāl*s, one *muwashshaḥ,* twelve *zajal*s, and one *maqāmah.* Th epigrammatic poems are mostly two-verse compositions, though some have three, some four, and a very few five or more verses. The longest has twelve verses. The thematic range of his poems runs the gamut from poems on love, wine, hashish, sex (often using the terminology of certain trades and crafts), to poems about certain persons (most satirical, very few laudatory), to poems about Egypt and Cairo, pests, and other subjects related to his time and environment. We find in his *dīwān* only one laudatory *qaṣīdah,* counting eighteen verses, which he wrote for the secretary ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī (d. 769/1368). The *qaṣīdah* is followed by a comment by his contemporary, the poet Shams al-Dīn b. al-Ṣāʾigh (d. 725/1325): "He (al-Miʿmār) made this although he does not have any *ʿarabīyah* (good Arabic)." Al-Miʿmār replied: "How could a donkey get himself a cart [also *ʿarabīyah*]?" and improvised the following verses:

> *yaqūlūna hādhā mā lahū ʿarabīyah / wa-lasnā narāhu li-al-nuḥāti yujārī*
> *fa-qultu lahum min ayna lī ʿarabīyah / wa-mā fuztu fī al-dunyā bi-ḥaqqi himārī*

> [They say: "He has no *ʿarabīyah,* we don't see him frequent the grammarians."
> I told them: "How should I get a cart, when I haven't even obtained the money for a donkey in this world?"]

With regard to language, the ordering of the different poems is revealing. After the alphabetically-ordered epigrammatic poems in formal Arabic, we find *mawwāl*s in dialect, which are in turn followed by a *muwashshaḥ* in formal Arabic, or what can be called al-Miʿmār's formal Arabic, as it is mixed with colloquialisms. Consequently, it seems that it was not felt necessary to divide the *dīwān* according to his use of formal and informal Arabic. Perhaps the reason for placing the *mawwāl* after the epigrammatic poems is the length of the *mawwāl,* which closely approximates that of the shorter poems in the alphabetical section. The juxtaposition of the *muwashshaḥ* with the *zajal* that comes directly after it may be due to the affinity between the two genres.

In Mamluk times, the *muwashshaḥ* was often used for laudatory purposes. Al-Miʿmār follows this traditional approach in his only *muwashshaḥ,* which begins with a love theme (stanzas 1–2) and continues with a description of nature showing a *takhalluṣ* in stanza four. Stanzas five to eight praise an unnamed *sayyid* on the occasion of the *ʿīd al-fiṭr,* the feast of fast-breaking at the end of the month of

Ramaḍān, which makes this a typical piece of occasional poetry. The *muwashshaḥ,* however, does not end with a *kharjah,* but with an ego-passage where al-Miʿmār gives an account of how he wrote the poem. Its length—eight stanzas—is quite atypical for a *muwashshaḥ;* even Mamluk *muwashshaḥ*s normally do not exceed five or six stanzas at most. Like his laudatory *qaṣīdah,* al-Miʿmār's *muwashshaḥ* is characterized by an elegant but unadorned formal Arabic.

His *Zajals*

In order to get a general overview of the main themes that are dealt with in al-Miʿmār's *zajals,* let us have a look at the order of the poems in the *dīwān*:

1. laudatory
2. satire against "the hoarder," symbol for greed (*zajal* of the Nile)
3. lament by a man who cannot satisfy his lovers
4. wine
5. beer
6. hashish
7. hashish
8. lament by an unhappy bride over her husband
9. lament by a girl unwilling to marry
10. lament by a man who cannot satisfy his lovers
11. defamatory
12. fragment on a sex and hashish fiend

Two of these *zajal*s were created to commemorate a particular occasion, such as the plenitude of the Nile in the Nile *zajal* and the feast of Ramaḍān in the laudatory *zajal.* Most of al-Miʿmār's *zajal*s recount a story or tie together incoherent episodes that make up a loosely connected story. As a general rule the *zajal* starts off with a statement such as "A tiny amount of green hashish is much better than two thousand red ones" and then passes on to the narrative. There are, however, examples of a more coherent organization of the narrative parts within a *zajal:* the self-ironical *zajal* on the deplorable fate of a man who has four young lovers (no. 3) is so organized, with a *maṭlaʿ* introducing the poem and giving basic information about the subject of the *zajal.* In the first stanza he describes his mishap in more detail, mentioning how difficult it is for an old man to have four lovers in one year (the coincidence of four lovers and the four seasons of the year may be fortuitous or intended by the author). The next stanza recapitulates his life as a soldier and a homosexually active man. The next four *dawr*s are dedicated to four amorous adventures, each featuring one of his four lovers.

Although I did not explicitly list the *zajal*s on wine, hashish, and beer as "laments" like the other *zajal*s, this does not mean that they are not essentially laments or complaints as well. The protagonist does not obtain the drugs he craves and spends all his time and energy on the quest for the coveted intoxicants and other objects of desire associated with the drug. Al-Miʿmār's self-mocking laments with sexual themes (numbers 3 and 10) belong to the *ayrīyāt* genre, as they express, in coarse and comical language, the woes of sexual disappointment, soreness of the penis, impotence, or mere exhaustion. In this respect it has to be mentioned here that the creation of *mujūn* poetry was not a domain of the lower or middle classes. Instead, many a religious scholar or judge took delight in producing this type of poetry.[17] In the *zajal*s that contain praise and direct or open criticism (or lampooning) the narrative element is far less present because these poems describe or enumerate the qualities of the persons being praised or criticized.

Al-Miʿmār's *zajal*s only rarely include figures and structural elements of *ghazal* poetry. One notices the absence of any praise for the Prophet and laudatory passages at the end of the *zajal*s. Likewise, al-Miʿmār must have been used to the fact that people were inclined to listen to his poems, because there are no phrases demanding the attention of the audience at the beginning, a common feature in other *zajal*s from this and later periods. One quality almost all al-Miʿmār's *zajal*s share is that they take up the main theme right away or name the subject matter explicitly in the first half verse of the *maṭlaʿ*, ensuring that his audience knows from the start what a *zajal* will be about. In most cases the first words identify the theme of the poem. Following is a list of the first half-verses of the *zajal*s:

1. **li-sayyidī** *fī kulli ʿīd hanan jadīd* (laudatory *zajal* mentioning his "*sayyid*")
2. **nīlnā awfā** *wa-zāda bi-ḥamdillah* ("word-keeping" and plenitude of the Nile)
3. **fī hawá ṣibyān** *ḍanīt* ("emaciation" because of the love for boys)
4. *manaʿūnā* **mā al-ʿinab** ("wine has been prohibited")
5. *mā nashrab* **al-mizr** *al-ʿajīb* ("let us drink the wonderful beer")
6. *mithqāl* **ḥashīsh** *min dhī al-khaḍrá* ("one *mithqāl* of the green hashish type")
7. *naʾayt anā ʿan* **al-ḥashīsh** ("I turned away from the hashish")
8. **māl zawjī** *yazkhum wa-lī uffū* (husband making his wife unhappy)
9. *yā ummī anā fī* **al-ḥurrīyah** ("O mother, I am free")
10. *mā anā illā* **fī shiddah min** *ʿilqī* ("I am distressed because of my lover")
11. **Aḥmad Sumayk ibn al-Jazzār** (name of the mocked person)
12. *rayt fī al-Ribāṭ* **shayṭān** ("I saw a devil in Rabat")[18]

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[17] Bauer, "Al-Miʿmār," 74, and E. K. Rowson, s.v. *mujūn,* in *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature,* ed. Julie Scott   eisami and Paul Starkey (London, 1998), 2:546–48.

[18] I try to transliterate the *zajal*s written in vernacular as they occur in the Arabic manuscript. While I refrain from interpreting the pronunciation of some sounds which most probably were

With the exception of number 9, where the daughter informs her mother that she is free and does not want to marry, the verses leave no doubt what each *zajal* will be about.

As for the language of the *zajal*s, al-Miʿmār makes ample use of the Egyptian vernacular of the time. As we do not have an autograph of al-Miʿmār's *dīwān,* the linguistic discussion of the vernacular used is not as profitable as the discussion that Vrolijk undertook for his edition of Ibn Sudūn's *Nuzhat al-Nufūs.*[19] The manuscripts of al-Miʿmār are not as illustrative of the author's *laḥn,* or vernacular-shaping and transliteration, as is Ibn Sudūn's autograph. Nonetheless it can be assumed generally that basic morphological elements remain intact and reveal the author's vernacular. We find colloquial expressions even in epigrams written in more or less standard language. For example, in 448 we have the words *dā jinn,* which would be correctly spelled *dhā junn* or *dhā jinn* ("this one gone crazy"). The copyist of the *dīwān* explains it in the following way:

> *arāda bi-qawlihi wa-dā jinn wa-dhā wa-maḍá ʿalá lughat ahli Miṣr idh yakhlaʿūna al-dhāl dālan wa-arāda bi-qawlihi junnah yaʿnī al-junūn*

> ["Saying *wa-dā jinn* he means *wa-dhā* ("and this one"), doing this he speaks in the manner of the Egyptians who replace the letter *dhāl* with the letter *dāl; junnah* in his text means craziness."]

It is highly probable that the free choice between vernacular and standard forms made it easier for al-Miʿmār to conform with the meter he chose for his poems; in some cases the poet may have wanted to use a colloquial form (for example, *lannū* instead of the standard form *li-annahu,* "because he") because it fit the meter more easily.

Zajal or *Bullayq*

In his book *Al-ʿĀṭil al-Ḥālī wa-al-Murakhkhaṣ al-Ghālī,* Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī divided the *zajal* genre into four types. According to his categorization, whatever contains love poetry, bacchic, or floral poetry is called *zajal* (proper); that which contains jesting, dissolute behavior, and joking is called *bullayq;* that which contains *hijāʾ* and defamation is called *qarqī;* and that which contains pious admonitions

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pronounced differently, such as the Egyptian *gīm* for written *jīm,* I try to conform to requirements that the meter imposes, such as the vernacular two-syllable *lannū* instead of the standard four-syllable *li-annahū.*

[19] Arnoud Vrolijk, *Bringing a Laugh to a Scowling Face: A Study and Critical Edition of the "Nuzhat al-Nufūs wa-Muḍḥik al-ʿAbūs" by ʿAlī Ibn Sūdūn al-Bašbuġāwī* (Leiden, 1998), 137–59.

and wisdom is called *mukaffir.*[20] Margaret Larkin has demonstrated that these definitions by al-Ḥillī and others were inconsistently applied, and can therefore only be considered as tentative attempts at a categorization of *zajal*s.[21]

Still, it is useful to further investigate the question of categorization and typology, as al-Ḥillī cites some examples in his work. The *bullayq*s are very interesting with respect to al-Miʿmār's *zajal*s. Al-Ḥillī mentions that there are *bullayq*s in the manner of the Egyptians and *bullayq*s in the manner of the Baghdadis. The examples he gives are both on sex and dissolute behavior. The *zajal* that al-Ḥillī cites as an example of the Egyptian type is a lighthearted piece that contains "graphic reference to body parts and their demands."[22] It is written in a humorous tone, which is partly the result of an unleashed self-mockery and the burlesque twists and turns that the story takes. The Baghdadi model *zajal,* in contrast, recounts the tragic experience of a father who rebukes his wayward daughter for prostituting herself and contains neither a self-mocking attitude nor explicit language.

As can be inferred from the list of the subjects above, there can be no doubt that most of al-Miʿmār's *zajal*s (numbers 3–10 and 12) fit al-Ḥillī's *bullayq* category, as they are related to dissolute behavior, joking, and jesting. Regarding the distinction between Egyptian and Baghdadi-style *zajal*s, we can also clearly identify al-Miʿmār's *zajal*s as the Egyptian type. They are all self-mocking laments with graphic descriptions of actual sexual acts written in a cheerful tone and recounting peripatetic episodes in the life of the narrator. One example of this, in *zajal* number 6, may suffice here: the narrator describes having sex with a boy from the Maghreb. The boy turns his back and bends down to allow the narrator to penetrate him, which he does "two thousand times" (*ʿaddayt ʿalayhi alfayn jarrā,* see stanza 16, line 169[23]). After a while the boy gets sore and protests against his tormentor (stanza 17, lines 170–72):

> *dār qallī mā ʿindak ḥinnā*
> *yā ibn al-zablaḥ qūm ʿannā*
> *nādaytu aṣbir lī sunnā*
> *dakhīlak āwald al-ḥurrā*

[He turned and said to me: Don't you have any pity?

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[20] Margaret Larkin, "Popular Poetry in the Post-Classical Period," in *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period,* ed. Roger Allen and D .S. Richards (Cambridge, 2006), 205.

[21] Ibid., n. 45.

[22] Ibid., 206–7.

[23] A full critical edition of all four drug *zajal*s can be found at the end of this article. Line numbers here refer to the continuous line numbering that spans all four poems.

> Oh, you son of a bitch,[24] get off f me!
> I cried out to him: Hold out a little more, let me finish,
> I beg you, O son of a freeborn woman!]

Only two of al-Miʿmār's *zajal*s are not outright comical or graphically obscene: the laudatory one (number 1) and the truly satirical, not self-ironic one (number 11) against his contemporary, Aḥmad Sumayk, an *adīb* to whom al-Miʿmār dedicated another four shorter defamatory poems. This *zajal* may be regarded as a *qarqī* by al-Ḥillī's definition. In contrast, all the other *bullayq*s are marked by a self-ironic slant and are satirical only in this sense, so they cannot be categorized as *qarqī*s. Apart from that, it is worth mentioning that the laudatory poem on the occasion of the feast of Ramaḍān (number 1) is designated as a *bullayq (wa-qāla fī fann al-bullayq),* though it shows no sign of humorous intent unless one considers the comparisons in the poem purely as comical hyperbole; among other examples, al-Miʿmār rates the praised person more knowledgeable in grammar than al-Sībawayh. However, the general tone does not support this interpretation. Also strange is the designation as *muwashshaḥ* given to a poem (number 2, a lament about sexually demanding boys) that is—linguistically, formally, and thematically—clearly a *bullayq.*

Form and meter

Al-Miʿmār's *bullayq*s are not short, in contrast to what Sallām suggests as a definition of *bullayq*s. It is not clear, however, if he meant the total length of the *bullayq*s or the fact that some consist of half verses and some of full verses (see below).[25] Al-Miʿmār's *zajal*s range from 5 to 31 stanzas in total length. The meters that al-Miʿmār used most for his *zajal*s are *rajaz* (five times) and *khafīf* (twice). *Mujtathth* and *madīd* each occur once. In this respect mention has to be made of the peculiarity that not all the *zajal*s have a recognizable meter (numbers 9, 10, and 11 are mostly long syllables) or that the meter is not respected throughout the poem (as in 3, 6, and 12).

The following table lists the number of stanzas in each *zajal,* the meter used (meters in quotation marks are irregular examples just mentioned), and the rhyme scheme of the stanzas including the *maṭlaʿ.* The rhyme scheme is almost always *aa bbba.* Only in poems 2, 3, and 12 do we find the scheme *aa bbbaa,* with two verses at the end of the stanza.

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[24] The term or name *Ibn al-Zablaḥ* is unknown to me, but seems to be a more or less vulgar insult like the English one I thought appropriate under these circumstances.

[25] Cf. Larkin, "Popular," 205, n. 45.

zajal		stanzas	meter	rhyme scheme
1	laudatory	31	*rajaz*	a a bbba
2	satirical (Nile)	5	*khafīf*	a a bbbaa
3	lament	6	"*madīd*"	a a bbbaa
4	wine	21	*khafīf*	a a bbba
5	beer	14	*rajaz*	a a bbba
6	hashish	22	"*rajaz*"	a a bbba
7	hashish	9	*rajaz*	a a bbba
8	lament	13	*mujtathth*	a a bbba
9	lament	13	l ong syl	a a bbba
10	lament	18	l ong syl	a a bbba
11	defamatory	6	l ong syl	a a bbba
12	fragment		"*rajaz*"	a a bbbaa

As we know, the closing verse of every stanza is half the length of the *maṭlaʿ*, but in al-Miʿmār's *zajal* we have an interesting feature of the use of meter within the stanza structure. Namely, with respect to formal features it is possible to further break down al-Miʿmār's *zajal*s into three main groups:

> Group one: Full verse, non-alternating feet, aa bbbaa (2, 3, and 12)
> Group two: Half verse, non-alternating feet, aa bbba (1, 5, 7, 9, and 11)
> Group three: Half verse, alternating feet, aa bbba (4, 6, 8, and 10)

Group One consists of *zajal*s that have a *maṭlaʿ* with two full verses (i.e., every verse comprises two half verses) and equally the four verses of the stanza contain full verses. As an example we may cite the *maṭlaʿ* of the hoarder (number 2, Nile-*zajal*).

> *nīlnā awfá wa-zād bi-ḥamdi llāh*   *dhā al-ziyādah ḥadīthuhā qad shāʿ*
> *fariḥū n-nās wa-ʿabbasa al-khazzān*   *baqá wajhū dhirāʿ wa-qamḥū bāʿ*

[The Nile kept its word and reached plenitude by the grace of God
The news of this plenitude spread
The people rejoiced and the hoarder scowled
His face got as long as one cubit and his grain one fathom (and his grain got sold)]

Group two includes *zajal*s with half verses. The *maṭlaʿ* and all the verses of the stanza consist of half verses that each contain two metrical feet (what I call non-alternating feet). The structure is as follows:

– – ◡ –/– – – –//
– – ◡ –/– – – –//
– – ◡ –/– – – –//
– – ◡ –/– – – –//

As an example we may cite *zajal* number 6 (*maṭlaʿ* + first half of first stanza, lines 121–23):

> *mithqāl ḥashīsh min dhī al-khaḍrá   aḥsan huwa min alfayn ḥamrá*
> *sukru al-muḥammaṣ huwa al-muʿlam*
> *aṭyab min al-khamrah wa-aslam*[26]

[One *mithqāl* of the green hashish type
is better than 2,000 red ones (or of gold)
The intoxication of the toasted one is heard about
better than wine and healthier]

We see that the *zajal* consists of half verses, not full verses with a double verse *maṭlaʿ* as in the first group. Every half-verse contains two metrical feet. For example, *mithqāl ḥashīsh* is the first foot (– – ◡ –) and *min dhī al-khaḍrá* (– – – –) the second, and so on. Group three differs from the second in the way that the meter within the half verses alternates between one and two feet. Let us look at the metrical structure of *zajal* number 5, on beer (*maṭlaʿ* + first stanza, lines 90–92):

– – ◡ –/– – ◡ –//
– – ◡ –//
– – ◡ –/– – ◡ –//
– – ◡ –//
– – ◡ –/– – ◡ –//
– – ◡ –//

> *mā nashrab al-mizr al-ʿajīb   min ghayr tujīb*
> **ṭibṭāb yaṭīb** *bīh ʿīshnā   bīh ṭibt anā   aysh dhā al-tawānī qum binā*
> *minnū naṭīb*

[Let us drink the wonderful beer
but don't bring
the Sudanese type. Beer lets us enjoy our life

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[26] The arrangement of the verses imitates the arrangement of the verses in the manuscript of the *dīwān*.

I enjoy my life with it
What are you waiting for, come on
and let us enjoy it!]

We notice that the first half verse of the *maṭlaʿ (mā nashrab al-mizr al-ʿajīb)* contains two metrical feet (– – ◡ –/– – ◡ –) whereas the second half verse *(min ghayr tujīb)* contains only one (– – ◡ –). This pattern persists throughout the whole *zajal*, and imparts a peculiar sing-song character, making it easier to memorize and probably also easier to sing the poem. In some *zajal*s another interesting feature can be observed: the first metrical foot of the two-foot verses sometimes ends with the common rhyme. In the example above *(ṭibṭāb yaṭīb bīh ʿīshnā) ṭibṭāb yaṭīb* is half of the half verse, accounts for exactly one metrical foot (– – ◡ –), and ends with the common rhyme *(-īb)*. Thus the unit of two metrical feet in one half verse is broken into two parts. Using this technique, al-Miʿmār even further diversifies the rhythmic pattern of the poem beyond the alternating pattern of two-foot and one-foot half verses.

The Drug *Bullayqs*

There is no doubt that al-Miʿmār liked to include wine, hashish, and beer as the subjects of his poems, but he did not use these motifs only to add additional licentiousness: he also dedicated four entire *bullayq*s to praising these drugs. These four *bullayq*s are grouped together in the section on *zajal*s beginning with the wine *bullayq,* followed by the *bullayq* on beer and ending with two on hashish. Because the *bullayq* praising beer *(mizr)* is the first of its kind known in Arabic literature, it merits special attention and was therefore the subject of the above-mentioned study by Hinrich Biesterfeldt. Perhaps because it is the intoxicant associated most closely with the lower strata of society, beer has never been portrayed in as refined a fashion as wine or hashish.[27] See, for example, this poem by the *adīb* Abū al-Khayr al-ʿAqqād:[28]

> *tará al-zayyāh yahwá kulla ḥulwin*[29]
> *wa-ʿabd al-mizr fī dhull wa-shaynī*

[You can observe the hashish-eater loving everything sweet
while the slave of beer is humble and despised]

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[27] Hashish was often referred to as the drug of the Sufis: see Franz Rosenthal, *The Herb* (Leiden, 1971), 13.

[28] Cited from the manuscript of Abū al-Tūqah Taqī al-Dīn Abū Bakr ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad al-Badrī al-Dimashqī's (847–94/1443–89) *Rāḥat al-Arwāḥ,* in Rosenthal, *Herb*, 28, and ibid., n. 2.

[29] There is a strong correlation between the consumption of sweets and hashish; see Rosenthal, *Herb,* 14.

Hashish became very popular in poetry from the eleventh century on. Rosenthal says that in the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries all poets would have written some poems on hashish, though many of these must have been suppressed.[30] Could the same be true for beer? There is no way to know. Very little non-canonical Arabic poetry has survived that does not stem from literate poets with more than a modicum of education. It is a common feature of all drug *bullayq*s that they focus on the pleasures that are derived from or associated with its consumption (see the first stanza of the beer *bullayq* above, lines 90–92, or the following verse from the first hashish *bullayq*, (stanza 2, verse 1, lines 125–27): *mā ladhdha ʿīshī ḥīna naskar,* "How delightful is life when I get high." The second hashish *bullayq* presents a picture that is apparently the exact opposite of the other drug *bullayq*s, as the narrator acrimoniously renounces the use of hashish because it ruined his physical and mental health, his reputation, and his economic situation (*maṭlaʿ* and stanza 1, lines 190–92):

> *naʾayt anā ʿan al-ḥashīsh / mahmā naʿīsh*
> *aḥiss rūḥī tanṭafī / wa-takhtafī / wa-ʿaqlī yatkhabbal wa-fī*
> *udhnī ṭashīsh*

> [I forswear hashish / as long as I may live
> I feel how my soul extinguishes / and disappears / how my mind gets dumb and in
> my ears there is this humming sound]

:(Stanza 3, lines 195–96)

> *ākul wa-lā aʿrif shibaʿ / baṭnī ttasaʿ / wa-fnayt fulūsī wa-al-qiṭaʿ*
> *wa-lā baqīsh*

> [I eat and eat / my belly swells / I frittered away my money, even the coins
> and nothing is left]

Admonitions only make him get up and walk a little, until he takes his next dose and falls into a slumber of oblivion (stanza 4, lines 197–98):

> *lammā tusabbīnī afīq / wa-amshī al-ṭarīq / ablaʿhā arqud mā astafīq*
> *mimmā aṭīsh*

> [When you scold me I get up / and walk off / o take her (a morsel)
> and lie down without waking up // from the slumber I fell into]

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[30] Ibid., 5.

Beer appears in some older texts, as in the *Risālat al-Ghufrān* by al-Maʿarrī, where he describes it flowing in his description of paradise.[31] Ibn Dāniyāl (d. 709/1311) mentions it together with wine and hashish in some of his *qaṣīdah*s, where victims of the prohibition of these drugs lament their fate (*qaṣīdah*s 69 and 71).[32] In his shadow-play *Tayf al-Khayāl,* Ibn Dāniyāl has a character in the play compose an elegiac poem on the occasion of Iblīs' death. Returning to Cairo after a long absence, the character discovers that Sultan Baybars I has banned prostitution and alcoholic drinks, including beer. He describes broken mugs and scattered grain mash (used in brewing beer), which means for him that Iblīs has died and inspires him to compose an elegy.[33]

In his beer *bullayq*, al-Miʿmār gives details about different types of beer, its color and consistency, its effects on body and soul, brewing styles, beer storage, and beer consumption. We have already seen that he does not like the Sudanese type known as *ṭibṭāb* (stanza 1, verse 1, line 91). For example:

(Stanza 2, verses 1–2, line 93):

> *rayt fī tujīb mizr saʿīd / abyaḍ jadīd*

> [I saw in Tujib a happy beer / white and fresh]

(Stanza 5, verse 1, line 99):

> *aḥmar yuḥākī li al-dhahab / idh insakab*

> [Red, it resembles gold / when it is poured]

(Stanza 6, verses 1–2, line 101):

> *wa-lū ʿuwayn li-ajli al-ṭaḥīn / wa-li-al-ʿajīn*

> [It has a little eye because of the ground grain / and the mash][34]

(Stanza 7, verses 1–2, line 103):

> *idh ṭalaʿ mizrī wa-fār   / iṭʿamnī fār*

> [When it rises and froths / (even) a mouse satiates me]

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[31] Cf. Biesterfeldt, "Mizr," 385.

[32] Li Guo, "The Devil's Advocate: Ibn Dāniyāl's Art of Parody in His Qaṣīdah No. 71," in *Mamlūk Studies Review* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 180, 184, n. 16.

[33] Cf. James T. Monroe and Mark F. Pettigrew, "The Decline of Courtly Patronage and the Appearance of New Genres in Arabic Literature: The Case of the *Zajal,* the *Maqāma,* and the Shadow Play," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 34, nos. 1–2 (2003): 144.

[34] It is not clear what is meant by the little eye. Perhaps he means bubbles that are produced during the fermentation process of the mash.

Although he describes beer, some of al-Miʿmār's expressions seem to pertain to wine culture, such as *qum dīrhā*, "get up and let it turn" (stanza 8, verse 1, line 105) for Standard Arabic *qūm adirhā*. The consumption of beer is also associated with sweets or sugar. In this respect it resembles hashish (stanza 8, verse 3, line 105):

> *yaḥlū lanā maʿ sukkarah*

[With sugar it is sweet to our tongue]

Beer, like hashish, is depicted as sexually liberating. On the day of union between narrator and lover, beer has the following effect (stanza 10, verses 1–2, line 109):

> *yaṭīb maʿū khalʿa l-ʿidhār / bilā istitār*

[with it one will enjoy letting go of any restraints / candidly]

While the description of drugs and their effects is important in the beer and hashish *bullayq*s, al-Miʿmār did not include such descriptions in his *bullayq* on wine, which revolves around the quest to find it after its prohibition. Maybe he assumed that praise of wine had lost some of its appeal, or that the theme had been sufficiently exhausted by poets before him. Beer, on the other hand, had never been the subject of longer descriptions or praise so he may have wanted to make up for it and create something new and funny that would fall on fertile ground with a lower or middle class audience who consumed beer regularly. As we will see, however, he still preferred wine over any other drug.

As a matter of fact, in his *bullayq*s al-Miʿmār constantly compares beer or hashish with wine when they are mentioned together. This occurs twice in the beer *bullayq* and once in the first *bullayq* on hashish:

Beer *bullayq* (stanza 4, verses 1–2, line 97):

> *dhā mizr yunsīka al-khamr / idhā ikhtamar*

[This beer makes you forget the wine / when it is fermented]

Beer *bullayq* (stanza 5, verses 3–4, lines 99–100):

> *ishrab wa-qul aysh mā al-ʿinab / aw mā al-zabīb*

[Drink, and say: forget about wine / or *nabīdh*]

Hashish *bullayq* number 1, (stanza 1, verses 1–2, lines 122–23):

> *sukru al-muḥammaṣ huwa al-muʿlam / aṭyab min al-khamrah wa-aslam*

[The intoxication of the toasted one is heard about / better than wine
and healthier]

In all the instances of such comparisons it seems as if al-Miʿmār purposely sets
up a moot competition between the two inferior intoxicants and wine to give the
victory to the one that is the focus of the poem, as if it were merely an exercise
of original composition. In one poem, beer may be the focus and is praised as the
best intoxicant; in the next, hashish receives the same amount of praise. However,
no matter which drug is being praised wine is always the ideal against which the
other drugs are measured. Note also that comparison of or competition between
intoxicants (especially hashish and wine) was a *topos* used widely by poets be-
fore al-Miʿmār. See, for example, several seventh/thirteenth-century poems by
al-Isʿirdī (619–56/1222–58) mentioned by Rosenthal.[35]

Plot, Themes, and Structural Units in the Drug *Bullayq*s

One of the common features of many *bullayq*s in al-Miʿmār's *dīwān* is that they
tell a story or tie together narrative episodes that may not seem to fit together
well. As we have seen, the backdrop of any *bullayq* story is a lament or complaint
about difficulties the narrator has faced. The drug *bullayq*s are no exception to
this rule. It is even possible to narrow down and define more precisely the com-
mon themes and structural units of the drug *bullayq*s.

The wine poem begins with the fact that wine is prohibited and winebibbers
are deprived and sad, as even the wine filter wails (stanzas 1–4, lines 3–19). Con-
sequently, the narrator goes on a quest for wine, accompanied by a friend. They
pass by Qalyūb, a city in lower Egypt (also mentioned in the first hashish poem),
where they cannot find even a drop of wine. They continue to a monastery (stan-
zas 5–8, lines 20–35), where they cajole the priest into giving them some wine in
return for a present. What the priest brings is totally undrinkable (stanzas 9–14,
lines 36–59). Resigning themselves to their fate, they call off the quest and return
home (stanza 15, lines 60–63). On the way (stanzas 16–17, lines 64–71) they try
their luck with a beer seller but get only some sort of liquid dough. They know
that only wine will make them happy. Stanza 18 (lines 72–75) employs the erotic
imagery that is common to all drug *bullayqs*:

> *wa-lā nahwā illā al-sharāb al-qadīm /*
> *wa-muʿayshiq jadīd yakun lī nadīm*

[I only love old wine / and a new sweet lover as companion]

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[35] Rosenthal, *Herb,* 6.

Pedophilic fantasies follow (stanza 19, lines 76–79) when the narrator says that he yearns for sex with boys not older than seven years *(wa-murādī min al-ṣighār aṭfāl / … Ibn sabʿah yaḥmil ibn sabʿīn).* This is followed by a declaration of repentance that does not seem to be a model of great sincerity (stanza 20, lines 80–83), not only because it comes after drooling over boys in the preceding stanza, but also because the tone of the stanza does not feel sincere; he repents at the age of seventy, when he no longer has the financial or physical means to satisfy his lust. Recall that he even had to beg for wine in the preceding stanzas.

> *illā annī qad athqalatnī al-dhunūb*
> *mā baqayt naḥtamil li-kuthr al-ʿuyūb*
> *wa-mā ʿād lī awfaq siwā an natūb*
> *yā ilāhī uktubnī min al-tāyibīn*

> [But sins made me carry a heavy burden
> I cannot bear them anymore, so many are my wrongdoings
> It is best for me now to repent
> O God, please put me down with the repenters]

Th *bullayq* ends with the chronogram of his repentance: *warrakhū billāhi tawbata al-Miʿmār,* "By God, mark the date of al-Miʿmār's repentance" (stanza 21, lines 84–87). The wine *bullayq* has by far the most coherent story line of al-Miʿmār's drug *bullayq*s. Episodes are linked together in a chronological and conclusive way until the narrative chain of events is severed at the end of the quest and through the erotic section, when the thoughts, fantasies, and declarations of the narrator take over.

The beer *bullayq* also begins with a quest. This time the narrator calls out to his companion and urges him to procure beer from Tujīb (stanzas 1–3, lines 90–96). This time, however, the quest ends here and the narrator goes on to characterize the qualities of different types of beer and their effects on the human organism in the following stanzas (stanzas 4–8, lines 97–106; see also above). He still addresses the same friend with various prompts and orders, such as *qūm dīrhā,* "Get up and have it turn round" (line 105), and *iskar wa-ṣīḥ,* "Get drunk and shout" (line 107), but there is no succession of events or episodes that could be considered a viable story. Stanza 6 (lines 101–2) contains a critical remark against the fault-finder, a certain *Najīb* who is a *hajīn* (vile man), which contrasts nicely with the meaning of his name (the noble). Stanzas 9 and 10 (lines 107–10) describe how well beer and dissoluteness complement each other. Again, we find a reference to detractors, although this time no name is given: *wa-man yaʿīb fiʿlī jahār / khallī yaʿīb,* "and if somebody finds fault with me openly / let him do so" (stanza 10, verses 3–4, lines 109–10). The *faqīh* Abd al-Salām may criticize him; however, the narrator is not a

shaykh, nor an imam, nor a preacher (stanza 11, lines 111–12). What the detractors say is gibberish to him (stanza 12, lines 113–14). He eventually (stanza 13, lines 115–16) invalidates what he has said in the poem by producing an *iqtibās* of the verses from the Surah al-Shuʿarāʾ ("the Poets"), verse 226: *wa-annahum yaqūlūna mā lā yafʿalūna*. In the second half of the stanza he praises himself for his excellent poetry and asserts that only the sharp-witted can penetrate it. Al-Miʿmār terminates his apology with the following remarks (stanza 14, lines 117–18):

> *wa-lū kalām law tunṣifūh*
> *kan tūṣifūh*
> *aẓunnuhum mā yaʿrifūh*
> *lannū gharīb*

> [He has the gift f speech, if you did justice to him
> you would praise him
> but I think you don't know him
> because he is a stranger (to you).]

The notion of the stranger or the outcast who is not understood by his fellow countrymen reoccurs in the first hashish *bullayq* (line 136).

At this point, it is useful to return to the identity of the narrator. Al-Miʿmār leaves no doubt that he himself is talking in his poems. We have seen that he gives his name in the chronogram of his wine *bullayq* above. In the beer *bullayq* he asserts with the help of the Quranic verses that he is merely a poet who may say many things without really having done any of it. This may well be true, if we trust his biography as presented by al-Ṣafadī, who describes him as leading a modest life. Al-Miʿmār is intent on producing the image of the licentious, self-indulgent man (and woman, as in *bullayq* number 8), whose only aim is the satisfaction of his desires. Around this figure, al-Miʿmār creates stories intended to inspire and excite his audience, despite the fact that his real life may not have conformed to what he wrote. In the beer *bullayq,* he openly refers to this stark contrast. On the other hand, it is very probable that his audience was well aware that not only the stories and episodes, but also the desires and convictions, in al-Miʿmār's poems may have been imaginary; this does not mean, of course, that these stories would have any less power to excite them.

Very much like the beer *bullayq*, the first hashish *bullayq* praises the qualities of hashish. Compared to wine it is much better and healthier (stanza 1, lines 121–24). In contrast to the beer *bullayq,* however, al-Miʿmār does not address himself to an imagined interlocutor here. He declares his intention to ignore the baleful detractors who want to mar his enjoyable life (stanza 2, lines 125–27). At the same time he does not want to be known as a hashish eater, something that his red eyes

nevertheless betray (stanza 3, lines 128–30). His quest for hashish begins (stanza 4, verse 3, line 133):

> *wa-qumtu namshī li-al-munyā*
> *sarayt li-Qalyūb maʿ Shubrā*

> [I set out and walked to fulfill my wish
> passing through Shubrā I went to Qalyūb]³⁶

He includes a flashback (stanzas 4–7, lines 134–45), where he explains that all his life he has been a lazy bum, who neglected work and cared only for his pleasures. When his father scolded and insulted him, he defended himself by saying that his father must let him be because he needs only a little morsel to eat and a scrap of cloth. Why tire himself and be unhappy when there is so little time until he descends into the grave (*ʿalaysh dhā natʿab aw nashqā / qablamā nanzil fī al-ḥufrā;* lines 144–45)? Again, as in the other drug *bullayq*s, an erotic part follows the episode of the quest (stanzas 8–11, lines 146–57). It opens with a lyric verse on the boys of Egypt, who are more handsome than Iraqis (stanza 8, lines 146–47):

> *wādī Miṣr wādī ghizlān*
> *fīhi al-milāḥ ajnās wa-alwān*

> [The valley of Egypt is a valley of gazelles
> Handsome boys are there of every sort and every hue]

This generic erotic section, which does not specify an individual beloved, is followed by a short passage on a little boy (stanzas 12–14, lines 158–65) and a long narrative about a misadventure with a boy from the Maghreb, with graphic descriptions of the sexual act (stanzas 15–20, lines 166–81; see above). When he is done with the boy, he gives him a pouch full of coins. At the end of the poem (stanzas 21–22, lines 182–87) al-Miʿmār serves the listener a rather sluggish and funny repentance similar to the one in the wine *bullayq*. An excerpt follows (stanza 22, lines 185–87):

> *yā Allah bi-jāh sayyid ʿAdnān*
> *aghfir dhanūbī yā Raḥmān*
> *wa-nẓur lī yā Ṣaḥb al-Iḥsān*
> *naẓrah yakūn fīhā jabrā*

> [O God, by the dignity of the great Adnan
> forgive my sins, O Merciful
> and look at me, O Beneficent One
> with a look that that has some force in it (that sets me right)]

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³⁶ Shubrā is a northern district of Cairo, Qalyūb is a town further north.

As in many epigrammatic poems, al-Miʿmār includes a *tawriyah* at the end of the last verse, whose obvious meaning refers to the force of God (cf. one of God's epithets: *al-Jabbār*) and whose hidden meaning refers to putting the narrator back on a righteous path.

A comparison of the structure of the three drug *bullayqs* yields four basic parts common to all of them:

1. praise (of the drug)
2. quest
3. erotic part
4. repentance / apology + ego-passage (beer *zajal*)

The second hashish *bullayq,* however, does not conform to the above structure because it is conceived as a counterpoint to the *bullayq*s that praise drugs; in contrast to these, it centers on the sufferings that result from hashish addiction (see above). Nevertheless, in this *bullayq* al-Miʿmār again inserts a short erotic passage near the end of the poem (line 205):

> *wa-ayya ṭiflin abṣurū*
> *qaṣdī ajburū*
> *in kān furayj mā waffarū*

> [Any child I see
> will become my target
> when there is no pussy around]

Other Poems on Drugs in al-Miʿmār's Dīwān

Drugs are also a favorite subject in al-Miʿmār's shorter epigrammatic poems. Although he undertook to write a praise *bullayq* on beer and lift its reputation, beer is the least common subject in his epigrammatic poems. In these, wine is a subject thirty times, hashish ten times (twice in connection with wine, once with beer), and beer only three times (once in connection with hashish, twice with wine). In other words, he mentions wine three times as often as hashish and ten times as often as beer. It is worth noting that hashish or beer are often mentioned together with wine, which is another indication that wine was the point of reference for the other two drugs.

Wine is by far al-Miʿmār's favorite drug. The thematic reach of these poems ranges from the usual call to drink wine and condemnation of the fault-finders (epigrammatic poems numbers 15, 64, 557) to financial issues where he declares grape wine to be too expensive and recommends date wine instead (number 31). Wine is shown to be an important component of health and well-being. In one

instance a doctor prescribes pure date wine to fend off a patient's distress (number 32); in another wine is used against choking (number 273); in winter it warms together with a barbecue (number 88); and when spring comes the body requires wine and sex (number 580). Love and sex are very often mentioned in connection with wine (numbers 130, 142, 145, 252, 270, 457, 509, 569). In contrast to the majority of his poems, where the lover is a boy, he composed one poem that mentions wine in connection with a woman, Salmá (number 518). Prohibition of wine is another favorite topic (numbers 216, 261, 271 437, 487, 526). Failed repentance is the main theme of poem 292, where the protagonist swore to repent a thousand times, only to break his oaths again and again.

Al-Miʿmār wrote a longer poem (eleven verses; number 271 in the edition) that seems to have been the template for his second hashish *bullayq.* He makes use of the same rhyme consonant as the common rhyme of his *bullayq (-īsh).* Apart from this formal similarity, he uses the same expressions and verse elements, as, for example, the image of the narrator who spent more money than there are grains of sand in the ʿArīsh desert (see the last verse of the second hashish *bullayq,* line 208). However, in contrast to the *bullayq,* the narrator in the poem neither condemns hashish nor foreswears its use. On the contrary, he says life is worth living only with hashish; he blames the fault-finders, ignores what they say and indulges in erotic fantasies. From the latter point of view, it therefore more closely resembles the first hashish *bullayq.* The other poems on hashish take up the common *topoi* related to hashish and its consumption. One (number 267) contains a call to eat hashish, here *al-muḥammaṣ* ("the toasted one") and *al-kibāsh* ("the ram"), which shall procure drunkenness and stupor. In another (number 241) hashish and passionate love are associated, as the narrator loves a hashish eater whose physical and physiognomic features resemble those of hashish. The narrator's heart is toasted *(muḥammaṣ)* which is at the same time the name of a type of hashish. In number 530 hashish and anal sex are related to each other as the poet recommends that the reader sift the hashish and purge it of clay, then chew it while lying on his bed; if he gets sexually excited he should not have anything other than anal intercourse.[37] In poem 291, al-Miʿmār mentions mixing hashish and date wine, which makes the protagonist crazy and quarrelsome. Most of these poems are epigrammatic, containing two verses. As in many other poems of this type, al-Miʿmār uses the device of *tawriyah* at the end of the last verse, which also contains the point. In poem number 25, for example, the narrator asks a man who is addicted to hashish if he has no fear of the plague *(kubbah,* "plague boil") that kills everyone: "Woe unto you! Don't you fear this grain [hashish pill] *(ḥabbah)*? He replied: 'Let me live eating this plague boil [hashish pellet] *(kubbah).*'"

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[37] Cf. Rosenthal, *Herb,* 83.

Another typical feature of al-Miʿmār's epigrammatic poems is the use of *tawjīh*,[38] the elements of which often refer to the sphere of a certain trade or craft. In poem 336, we hear about a hashish addict and copyist of whom the narrator is particularly fond:

> *wa-nāsikh qalbuhū muʿallaq (taʿlīq)*
> *bi-al-mubzir al-akhḍar al-muwarraq (waraq)*
> *raʾayt fī thawbihī riqāʿan (ruqʿah)*
> *ʿalimtu tamzīqahu muḥaqqaq (muḥaqqaq)*

> [That copyist whose heart is attached to
> the green, seedy and leafy one
> I noticed patches on his garment
> I knew beyond doubt that it will be torn]

Unfortunately, the English translation can only render the non-technical meaning of the words, which in a technical sense are related to calligraphic styles (*taʿlīq, ruqʿah, muḥaqqaq*) or writing in general (*waraq,* leaf).

Let us finally turn to the epigrammatic poems that mention beer. As in the example of the hashish poem above, one beer poem seems to have been the template on which the beer *bullayq* has been created:

> *qum wa-ghtanimhā mizratan*
> *tughnīka ʿan bint al-dinān*
> *ṭibṭāba ṣarf bi-qawlihā*
> *fa-nhaḍ wa-daʿ ʿanka al-tawānī*

> [Get up and grab a beer
> it will make wine (the daughter of the earthen wine jugs) dispensable
> for you
> just avoid the Sudanese type
> so get up and shake off   our idleness]

The closeness of this poem to the beer *bullayq* is striking. As in the *bullayq* the narrator addresses a friend, telling him to get up and search for beer. The Sudanese type *ṭibṭāb* is again not preferable (see stanzas 1–2 of the *bullayq,* lines 90–94). The sentence *fa-nhaḍ wa-daʿ ʿanka al-tawānī* changes to *wa-nhaḍ wa-daʿ ʿanka al-kasal* where *al-kasal* (laziness, indolence) in the third stanza (line 95) of the *bullayq* replaces *al-tawānī* (idleness, limpness). *Tughnīka ʿan bint al-dinān* corresponds to *dhā mizr yunsīka l-khamr* ("this beer will make you forget the wine") in stanza 4 (line 97).

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[38] Cf. Larkin, "Popular," 212.

In poem 541 the narrator tells of how he and his boyfriend emptied jugs of Sudanese beer and ate purses full of hashish. In poem 455, people ask the narrator why he does not drink his beer from a glass container. He answers that not every jinn enters a bottle, which is also a direct reference to wine.

Conclusion

Ibrāhīm al-Miʿmār wrote about the dissolute life in Cairo, but his own lifestyle (which al-Ṣafadī calls modest) may not have conformed to the imagery in his poems. His *zajal*s are for the most part *bullayq*s, according to al-Ḥillī's definition, because they brim with coarse, graphic language and are meant to be funny and entertaining. The self-mocking narrator of the *bullayq*s suffers from his inability to fulfill his physical needs and desires, which are mostly related to drugs and sex. In many cases, drugs are catalysts that arouse sexual desires. The drug *bullayq*s are examples of how drugs are strongly related to sex and sexual fantasies. Typically, the *bullayq* begins with the narrator departing on a quest to find his favorite drug and praising its qualities. These two parts are followed by an erotic section which is presented either as mere fantasy or as reminiscence of an amorous misadventure with a boy. The ends of the *bullayq*s are marked either by the reluctant repentance of the narrator or by an apology, as in the *bullayq* on beer. Al-Miʿmār paid great attention to the metrical structure of his *zajal*s. Some are constituted of verses whose lengths alternate between one and two feet, creating a wavelike melody when the poem is recited.

Although al-Miʿmār is the first poet to compose a *bullayq* praising the qualities of beer, his other poems show clearly that he prefers wine over beer and hashish. With this in mind, the *bullayq*s on beer and hashish seem intended to demonstrate the poet's literary originality, and amuse a lower class audience familiar with beer-drinking and hashish-eating.

Appendix

The following four drug *zajal*s are taken from the edition of al-Miʿmār's *dīwān* currently in preparation at the University of Münster under the supervision of Thomas Bauer. The sigla in the critical apparatus refer to the following manuscripts:

س	= Escorial, árabe 463, fols. 78b–85b
ف	= Istanbul, Fatih 3793
ت	= Cairo, Dār al-Kutub al-Qawmīyah, Taymūr, shiʿr 673
د	= Dublin, Chester Beatty 5483
ه	= Tehran ,Kitābkhānah-yi Millī
ل	= London ,British Library 8054

[٥٣٥]

وَقَال أَيْضًا [من الخفيف؛ س، ف، ت، د، هـ، ل]

٣   مَنَعُــــونَا مَـــآ العِنَــــبْ يَاسِّـــينْ   أَللَّه يَكْفِــــي لَا يَمْنَعُـــونَا التِّـــين

بِاللَّه قُــــــلِّي إِذَا مُنِعْنَـــــا الـــرَّاحْ
وَحُرِمْنَـــا مِـــنَ الوُجُـــــوهِ الْمِـــلَاحْ
بَيْـــشْ بَقَيْنَـــا نَسْـــــتَجْلِبِ الأَفْــرَاحْ
٦   وَالْخَلِيـــعْ كَيْـــفْ تَـــرَاهْ يعِيـــشْ مِسْـــكِينْ

وَعَـــلَى مَـــا العِنَــــبْ بَـكَا الـــرَّاوُوقْ
وَالشَّمَـــعْ صَـــارْ بِعَبْرتِـــوا مَخْنُـــوقْ
٩   / وَالوَتَــرْ بَاتْ مِــنَ الغُـــرُوبِ لِلشُّـــرُوقْ
مِـــنْ أَنِينُـــوا تَسْمَـــعْ لُـــو فِي اللَّيْـــلْ حَنِيـــنْ

٧٨b

وَلَقَــــــدْ هَـــــانُوا حَضْرَةَ الْمَحْضَرْ
١٢   وَتَلَــــــوَّنْ ذَا الـــــزَّهْرُ وَآتــــــغَبَّرْ
وَبِغَيْظِهِــــــوا رَيْحَانَنَــــا آتْمَـــــرَّرْ
وَعَـــلَى وَجْهِـــوا صَلَّــبَ الْيَــاسِمِيْنْ

١٥

وَالنّــــدَامَى عَــادْ جَمْعُهُـــمْ فِي شَـــتَاتْ
حَــزِنُوا كِـــنَّ مَـــاتْ لَهُـــمْ أَمْـوَاتْ
هَـــذَا قَاعِـــدْ يَبْـكِي عَـــلَى مَـا فَاتْ
١٨   وَذَا يَبْـــكِي وهَـــذَا الآخَـــرْ حَــزِينْ

وَلَيَ صَاحِبْ زَمَـان مَعُوا كَان نَطِيـبْ
جَانِي قَـــلِّي مُشْـــتَاقْ أَنَا يَا أَدِيـبْ
٢١   لِشُرَيَيِـــه لَــوْ أَنَّهَـــا مِـــن زَبِيْـــبْ
/ أَرَى قَـــلْبِي يَــرْتَاحْ لِهَـــذَا الْـــحِينْ

٧٩a

٢٤   فَقَصْـــــدُنَا مُنِيَــــه إِلَى شُـــبْرَى

مَـا لَقِيـنَـاش رُحْـنَـا طِنَـان الأُخـرَى

وِفِي قَلْيُـوبْ قَـالُوا وَلَا قَطْـرَاه

دُرْنَا مِـن مَرْصَـفَه إِلَى شِـبِيـنْ   27

وَصَعَدْنَا قِبْـلِي ذَكِ البُـلْدَانْ

وَنَبَشْـنَا طَمَّـوْه لِـدَيـر شَعْرَانْ

مَـا أَمَـرَّ الطَّـرِيق إِلَى حُلْـوَانْ   30

أَخْـرَبَ اللَّه طُـرًّا عَـلَى التِّيبِـيـنْ

وَتِعِبْنَـا مِمَّـا نُجِـدّ السِيـرْ

وَلَا صِـبْنَا فِي ذَا السَّفَـر مِـن خَيـرْ   33

جِئْنَـا عِنْـدَ المَسَـا لِوَحـدِ الدَّيـرْ

قُمْنَـا نَـزْعَقْ لِلشَّـيـخ أَبُـو مَـرْتِينْ

/ وَنْقُـل لُـو يَابُـونَا قَـد جِينَـكْ   36   79b

عَسَى جَـرَّه بُجَيَـات رَهَابِينَـكْ

وَيُمِيتَـكْ رَبِّ عَـلَى دِينَـكْ

وَنَا نَـدْرِي أَنَّـو أَخَـسّ الدِّيـنْ   39

إِلَّا نَضْحَـكْ عَلَيـهِ وَنْتَهَـزَّرْ

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رَيْـت مَغْـرِبِي فِتْنَـه مَخْلُـوقْ   نَادَيْتُـــو مُـــور قَـلِّي أَرَّا

/ دَوَّرتُ بُـــو ذِيـــك الدَّوْرَه
جِينَـــا مَـكَان يُسْمَـــى الجُــوْرَه

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عَـــبَرْتُ وَحْـــدِ الفَـــاخُورَه   عَــدَّيْت عَلَيْــهِ الـــفَيْن جَـــرَّا

دَارْ قَـلِّي مَــا عِنـدَكْ حِنَّـا
يَا ابْـــنَ الـــزَّبَلَّح قُـوْم عَنَّـا

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نَادَيْتُـــو أَصْـــبِرْ لِي سُـــنَّا   دَخِيْـــلَكْ آوْلُد الحُـــرَّا

عَـــادَ قَـلِّي ضَـــاقَتْ أَنفَـاسِي
أَهْلَـــكْتَني كَمْ ذَا قَـــاسِي

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وَاشْ بِالله قَلْبَـــكَ ذَا القَـــاسِي   مَـا لُـو شَـبِيه إلَّا السَّخْـرَا

يَا مَغْـــرَبِي قُـــمْ يَا جَـــانِي

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لَا حَالْ يَجِـــــي آبِي يَلقَــــانِي

لَـــوْ كُنـــت كَبْـــشَ اللِحْيَـــانِي   رَاحْ بِاللهِ جِـــــلْدَك لِلْفَـــرَّا

فَصِرْتُ كَـــنِّي آلَّا مَهْلُـــوس

/ أَضُّمُـــوا لَا صَـــدْرِي وَابُـــوس   85a

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وَكَانَ مَعِـــي صُرَّه حَنـــدُوس   جَعَلْـــتُ فِي يَـــدُّو الصُّرَّا

وَقُمْـــتُ وَانَا فِي ذِلَّه

نَقُـــول تُـــرَى اشْ كَان ذِي الـــزَّلَّه

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وَنَشْكُـــوا مِـــن ذَنْـــبِي لِلَّه   لَعَلُّـــو يَغْفِـــر ذِي الـــعَثْرَا

يَا اللَّه بِجَـــاه سَـــيِّد عَـــدْنَان

أَغْفِـــر ذُنُـــوبِي يَا رَحْمَـــان

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وَانظُـــر لِي يَا صَحْـــبَ الإحْسَـــان   نَظـــرَهْ يَكُـــون فِيهَـــا جَـــبْرَا

[٥٣٨]

189   وَقَالَ أَيْضًا [من الرجز؛ س، ف، ت، د، ه، ل]

نَأيــــتْ أَنَا عَـــنِ الحَشِيـــــش   مَهْمَـــا نَعِيـــــش

أَحِـــسُّ رُوحِي تَنْطَفِي   وَتَخْتَفِـــي   وَعَقْـــلِي يَتْخَبَّـــل وَفِي
أُذْنِي طَشِيـــــش

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بَعْـــدَ الرِّيَاسَـــهْ والوِقَـــار   مَـــعَ الكِبَـــار   أَضْحَى حَرِيفِي بُو الحِمَار
وَاخِي الْغَـــريش

آكُلْ وَلَا أَعـــرف شِـــبَعْ   بَـــطْنِي اتْسَّـــعْ   وَآفنَيت فُلُوسِي والقِطَعْ
وَمَـــا بَقِـــي ش

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/ لَمَـــا تُسَـــبِّينِي أَفِيـــق   وَآمْشِي الطَّـــرِيق   أَبْلَغْهَا أَرقـد مَا آسْتَفِيقْ   85b
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وَمَـــــــــا مَعِيـــــــــــشْ

201   قَـــالَ النَّقَـــانِق مُنْيَـــــتِي   هِي بُـــــــــــغْيَتِي   وَانَا مُحَـــارِف شَــهْوَتِي

قَـــــدْرُهْ دَشِـــــــــيش

تَرْكبْ وَفِي الْحَلْـــوَا تَجُـول   لَمَّـــا تَصُـــــــــولْ   وَتَنَـغَمِ حَـــتَّى تَقُـــول

204   كَـــــتْر قَبِـــــــــــيش

وَأيّ طِفْـــــلٍ أبْصُرو   قَصْـــدِي آجْـــــبُرُو   إنْ كَان فُرَيْخ مَــا وَفِّــرُو

وَآن كَان بِـــــــــــرِيش

207   نَطلُـــــبْ دَرَاهمْ تنتَقَـــــدْ   فِي ذَا البَـــــــــلدْ   تَـفْنَى وَلَـو كَانَـتْ عَـدَدْ

رَمْـــــــلَ الْعَـــــرِيش

2 وَقَال أيْضًا] وقال ف ل   3 يَاسِّينْ] ياسّن س؛ باالسين د ل؛ (والصواب من ف ت ه) | أَللّه يَكْفِي] يالله سلم ت   4 بِاللّه قُلِّي] هات قل لي د ه ل   5 الْمَلَاخْ] الصباح ت د ه ل   6 بَقِينَا] نبقا د ه ل | نَسْتَجْلِبْ] يستجلب ل   7 كَيْفْ] (لا ترد في ه) | تَرَاهْ] نراه ت   8 وَعَلَى مَا] على ماذا د ه ل   9 وَالشَّمَعْ] والشميع ه ل | بَعْبُرتوا] بعبرتو ف   10 وَالوَتَر بَاثْ] والوتيرات ت؛ والوترات د   11 أَنِيْنُوا] أنينو ف | لُوْ] لوا د   12-15 وَلَقَد...الْيَاسِمِيْنْ] (لا ترد هذه الأبيات في ه)   12 هَانُوا] اهانوا ف؛ هان ت د ل | حَضْرَةً] حصرم ت؛ حضرو ل | الْمُحَضَرْ] المحصار د   13 الزَّهْرُ] الدهر ت | وَاتْغَبَّرْ] واتغير ف ت د ل   14 وَبَغَيْظُوا] بغيضوا د ل؛ بغيظو ف | وَبَغَيْظُوا...اَتْمَرْز] (في ت: هذا البيت ذكر قبل البيت السابق)   15 وَجَمُّوا] وجمو ف ت | صَلَّبْ] قد (فوق السطر) صلّب س؛ (والصواب من ف ت د)   16 عَاد] (لا ترد في ه ل د) | جَمْعُهُمْ] حمعهم س؛ جميعهم د ل؛ (والصواب من ف ت ه)   17 حَزِنُوا] حزنو ف ت   18 هَذَا] ذا ف؛ هاذا د؛ هدا ه | يَبْكِي] يندب ف   19 يَبْكِي] يندب د ه ل | وَهَذَا] وذاك ت د ه ل   20 مَعْوْاكَان] كان معو س ف؛ كان معوا ه؛ (والصواب مـن ت د ل)   21 قَلِّي] قال لي د ه ل | يَا أَدِيبْ] يادِيب ت   22 زَبِيْبْ] ربيب ه   23 أَرَى] أر د ه ل | لِهَذَا] ذا (فوق السطر س)؛ لها ذا ت ه ل؛ لها دا د | الْحِينْ] لحين ت ل   24 مُنِيه] المنيه د ه ل   25 لَقِينَاشْ] لقينا ت د ه ل | طِنَان] طنا ف   26 قَطْرَاهْ] قطرا ت د ه ل   27 مَرْصَفَهْ] مرصفا د ه ل | شِبِيْنْ] شيبين د   28 وَصَعَدْنَا] وصدنا ه | ذَكِ البُلْدَانْ] ذا البلدان ت؛ ذالبلدان د ل؛ ذي البلدان ه   30 الطَّرِيقْ] الطريق ه   31 التِّبِيْنْ] التبين س ه؛ التبين ت؛ التبن د؛ التبين ل؛ (والصواب من ف)   32 وَتَعِبْنَا] قد تعبنا ت د ه ل | السَّيرْ] المسير س؛ (والصواب من ف ت د ه ل)   33 ذَا السَّفَرْ] ذا السّفره ف؛ ذالسفر د؛ دا السفر ه   34 المَسَا] المسى ف | لَوَحِدْ] لوحدا د ل   36 وَنَقُلْ] ونقول ه | لُوْ] له ت؛ لوا د ه | يَابُوْنَا] يا أبونا ل | جِينَكْ] جيناك د ه ل   37 جَرَّهْ] جرا د ه ل | بُحَيَاتْ] حيات ت د ه | رَهَابِينَكْ] رهابنيك ف؛ رهابيناك د ه ل

38 رَبِّي ه | دِنْتَكْ] دنتك د؛ دنياك ل   39 وَنَا] وأنا د ل | أَتُّو] بأنوا ت د ه ل   40 إِلَّا] إلّا
لأني د ه ل | نَضْحَكْ...وَنَتَهَزَّرْ] أَضحك عله ومهزر ه   43 وَبَقَيْنَا] ورجعنا د ه ل | نُخَاطِبُوا]
خاطبوا ه   44 وَنَحَنَا] نحن د ه ل   45 وَآنتَ] وأنتوا ه ل | تَدْرِي] تدروا د ه ل | كَيْفَ] أيش د
ه ل   46 وَأَنَا] ونا ه | ندعي] ندعوا د ه ل   47 إِتُّو] انوا ت ه | يَفْتَح] يفسح ه
49 خَوَّفُوا] خوفو ت؛ خوفه ت   50 شُوَيْخ] شيخ ف؛ شوخ د؛ شوخ ه   51 مَعُو] معوا ت د
ه ل | جَرَّه] جرا ه | وَهُوَ] (لا ترد في ت) | يَا آشْبِين] ياشـبيين ت   53 غَيَّرُ] إلا د ه ل
وَآظْنَّها] أظنها د؛ أظنها ه ل   55 وَتْقُول] وتقول ه؛ ونصيح د ه؛ ونصح ل | لُو] له ت؛ لوا ه ل | الظَّما]
الضما د   56 خَدِتُّ] خدت د ل؛ حذت ه   57 مِثْلِي] مثل ه ل | رَفْته] زقتا ت؛ زفت د؛ رفت
ه؛ زفت ل   58 سَوْدَا] سود ه | مَلَانه] ملانا ت   59 قُلْتُ] فلت ه | ذِي] دي د ه | نَحْسه]
نحسا ت؛ نحسه ه | لِلطِّين] للطن ه   60 وَرَجَعْنَا] فرجعنا د | أَيْش] أش د   61 كَيَف] أيش ل
| فَقَلِّي] فقل لي ت؛ فقال لي د ه ل   63 مِن...خَائِبِينْ] من ذا السفره خايبن ف | ذَا] دا ه
65 لِوَاشِنِ] لواش ت؛ لواسن د | المَزَارُ] الأمزار ت د ل؛ إلا مزار ه   66 إِسْقِني...فَقُلْتُ] اسقي
ما عجن فملتوا ه   67 فَمَاذَا] ماذا ف؛ ليس ذا ت؛ فمادا ه | أَصْلَا] أصل ت | ذَا العَجِيْنْ]
دالعجين د؛ دا العجن ه   68 وَأَنَا] ونا ه | مَا...ابْنِ] وانا نهوى ياخل بنت ت | غيَّه] غيا د
70 نَتْبَعُو] نتبعوا ت د ه ل | يَصِيْر] صر ه؛ يضير ل   71 نَدْخُلْ] تدخل د
73 يَكُنْ] يكون د ل   74 نُفِق] سفق ه | عَلَيْش] على أيش د ه ل   75 وَأَنَا] ونا ه | فِي] في ه
التَّمْكِينْ] المكس ه   76 الصِّغَارُ] الصعار ه   77 نَقَوْل لَك] تقول س؛ نقول ف؛ يقولوا د ل؛
قولوا ه؛ (والصواب من ت) | عِزْلَانْ] عرلان د   78 وَلَقَد...ذِي] ولقد في هذا د ل | ذِي] ذا ف
ت ه   79 ابن] ولد ه   81 نَحْتَمِلْ] نحتمل ف؛ أنحمل د؛ أتحمل ه؛ انحمل ل   82 أن نَثوبْ]
أني أتوب ت د ه ل   83 مِن] مع ت د ه ل | التَّايِبِيْن] التايبن ف؛ التاس ه   84 وَرَّخُوا]
ورحوا ف؛ وارج ه   85 سِنِين...اعْمَارْ] بالتبر في الأعمار ت؛ بالتبر طول الأعمار د ل؛ بالمسك
طول الأعمار ه   86 قُولُو] قولوا ف ت د ل؛ ثم فولوا ه | النَّبِي] السي ه | المُخْتَارُ] المختار ف؛
المحار ه   87 سَبْعُمَائَة] سبعمائة ه؛ سبع مائة ل | خَمْس وَأَرْبَعِيْن] خمسة وأربعه ه   89 وَقَالَ
أَيْضًا] وقال رحمه الله ل   90 مِنْ...تُجِيبْ] من غير في (تحت السطر) تجيب ت؛ غير في نجيب د؛
غير في نحب ه؛ غير في نجيب ل؛ غير في نجيب ف | تُجِيبْ] تحيب ف   91 طِنْطَاب...عَيْشـنَا] طنطاب طاب
عيسنا ه | بِيه] (لا ترد في ت د ل) | بِيه] به د ل | ايْشْ] أش د | ذَالتَّوانِي] ذا التواني ف ه
92 مِنُّو] منوا ت د ه ل | نَطِيبْ] طب ه   93 تُجِيبْ] نجيب د ل؛ نحيب ه | جَدِيدْ] حديد ه؛
جدد ل | وِذِيْ] وادي د ه ل | تُجِيب] نحيب د ه   94 ذِي...قَرِيبْ] الا قريب ت د ه ل
95-96 إِن...تَصِيبْ] (لا ترد هذه الأبيات في د)   95 رِدتْ] رمت ه ل | مِزْرَةْ] مرزة ه | العَسَلْ]
كالعسل ت ل؛ دالعسل ه | رُوحْ] روع ف؛ قم ه ل
97 إِحْذَرْ] احضر ت؛ واحدر د؛ احدر ه | تَجِدْ] تحد ف | مِنُّو] منوا ت د ه ل | السَّكَّرُ] سكر د
ه ل   99 لِلذَّهَبْ] الذهب ف؛ ذا الدهب د؛ ذا الذهب ه ل | أَيْش] أش د   100 الزَّبِيْبْ]
الريب د؛ الرسب ه   101 وَلُو] ولوا ه | عُوَين] عويل ت | كَثُو] كوا د ل   102 وَاسْمُو] واسمو

ت د ه ل | نَجِيْبْ] نجيب ه   حيب ه   104–103 إذا...وَجِيبْ] (لا ترد هذه الأبيات في د)   103 مُزرِي]
مزرو ت؛ مزروا ه ل | قلت] فلت ه | جيت] حيب ف ه؛ جب ت؛ جيب ل | مِثُو] منوا ت
ه | جفَازْ] خفار ف   104 وَجِيبْ] وخيب ف؛ وحب ه   105 مِنَ الذَّرَه] من ما الدره ت د ل
| يَحَلُوا] حلو ف؛ تحلوا ت د ه ل   106 فِي بَيْت] في بت ف؛ في سيت د؛ ى س ه؛ في سيب
ل | قَضِيْبْ] قصيب د؛ فضيب ه   107 اسْكَرْ] واسكر ل | وَصِيحْ] واصح د؛ واصيح ل | أَيْش]
أس د | ذِي] ذا ت ل؛ دا د؛ دي ه | سَعَادَه] سعاد ت ه | يَزُوزْ] يروز ف؛ نزور د؛ ترور ه
108 يَوْمَ] خ صح ذاك (في حاشية س)؛ ذاك د ه ل   109 مَعُو] معوا ت د ه ل   111 نَا] يا ه
| أَيْش] أش د؛ أيس ه | ذَا الْكَلَامْ] ذالكلام د ه ل | وَلَا] والا ت د ل   113 عِنْدِي] بين د ه؛
بين ل | هُذَا] هدا ل | نَفْسُو] نفسوا ت د ه ل   115 يَقُلْ] يقول ف ت د ه ل | حِيَل] خيل د
ل   116 لُبُو] لب ت؛ لبوا د ل

117 وَلُو] ولوا ل | تَنَصِفُوهْ] ينصفوه ت د ه ل | تُوصِفُوهْ] يوصفوه ت د ه ل   118 لَأُو] لانوا ت
د ه ل   120 وَقَالَ أَيْضًا] وله بليق د؛ وقال ل   121 ذِي] دا د؛ ذا ه؛ دي ه | الخَضْرَا] الحصرا د
| أَحْسَنْ...حَمْرَا] عندي يساوي ألفين حمرا (في حاشية ت)؛ عندي يساوي ألفي حمرا د ه ل
122–124 سُكَّرُ...الخَمْرَا] (لا ترد هذه الأبيات في د)   122 المُحَمَّضْ] المخمص ه | هُو المُغَلَمْ] والمعلم
ه ل   123 الخَمَرَهْ] خ العرا (في حاشية س)؛ الخمرا ه ل | وَاسْلَمْ] أو اسلم ه   124 قَالُو] قالوا
ف؛ قال ت د ه ل | ابن] إن ه | تُشَاكِل] نشاكل ف ل؛ يشاكل ت ه | ذِي الخَمْرَا] ذالخمرا ل
125 لَذَّ] لد د   126 بِذِي] بدا د؛ بذا ل | وَآتْخَنْكَرْ] خ واتختر (في حاشية س)؛ واتختر ت د ه ل
127 وَاي مَن] ومن ت؛ وامن ه | قضُدُو] قصدوا ت د ه ل | يُثَوَّرْ] يورث ت؛ يتور د ل | فِيُّ]
لي ت؛ بي د ه ل | الصَّفْرَا] الضفرا ه   128 نَقُلْ لكَ] نقلك ت؛ نقل لك د؛ نقول لك ه | أَيْش]
أش د؛ أش ه   129 صَازِ...غِيَّا] صار في ذي العشبه لي غيا ف | ذِي] دا د؛ ذا ل
الغُشبه] الشعبه د ه ل؛ العشبا د ه ل؛ (والصواب من ف ت)   غِيَّا] عيا د   130 لَاحَدْ] لحد ت
بِيَّا] بها ل   131 لِذِي] لذا د ل | الصَّطْلَهْ] السطلا ه   135 مَعِيشه] معيشا ه | تَنَعَطَّالْ] تتعطال
ت؛ تتعطل د ل؛ سعطال ه   136 وَاي مَن] ومن ت؛ وايمن ه | يَقُلِّي] يقل لي ت؛ يقل د؛ نقول
لي ه؛ يقول ل | لَا تَصْطَالْ] لا تصطل د ل | هُو يَبَصَرْنِي] ويبصرني د ه ل
137 أَبِي] إنّي س؛ لي أبي د ه ل؛ (والصواب من ف ت)   يَابنَ الرِّفْتَا] يا ابن الزفتا ف؛ يا ابن
الرفتا ه ل   138 مُنَفَّتَا] منفيا ل   139 لَأجْلَكْ] لجلك ت؛ حتى د ه ل | خَرَجْنَا] خرخنا ف
بِنَحْسَكْ] لأجلك د ل؛ من أجلك ه | يَا عُزَّا] يالعرا ت؛ يا العرا د ه ل   140 نَقُولْ لُو] نقولو ت؛
نقول لوا د؛ نقل لو ه؛ نقل لوا ل   142 الخَلَاعَهْ] الخلاعا د ه ل   143 بِلُقَمَه] بدرهم د ه ل
خِزْقَا] خيرقا د   144 عَلَيْش] فليش د ل | ذَا] (لا ترد في د ه)   145 ذِي] دا د؛ دي ه؛ ذا ل
قَبْلَ مَا] قبل اما ت؛ قبل مر د؛ قبل م ه؛ قبل أن ل   146 وَادِي مِصْر] لو ريت مصر د ه؛ لو
رايت مصر ل   147 فِيهْ] فيها د ه ل | أَجْنَاشْ] خ احواك (في حاشية س)؛ احواك د ه؛ أحوال
ل   148 جِي] تعا د ه؛ تعالى ل | تَبَصَرْ] ابصر د ه ل   149 خَلُّونِي] خلون د | مَثْوَحَّلْ] متزحل

د؛ مترحل ه ل   150   وَلَيْسْ] فليش ل؛ وليش ل   151   نَبْصَرْ] تبصر ه | نَرَى] ترى ه
152   وَاشْ] وايش ت ل | مَا] ليس د ل؛ لس ه | يُحْكَا] حكى ه   154   سَهْرَانْ] سكران ف
157   لَوْنُوْ] لونوا د ه ل   158   هَوِيْت] لقيت د ه؛ لو ل | مِثْلُو] مثلوا ت د ه ل   159   لَزِمْتُوْ]
لزمتوا د ل؛ لرمفني ه | شُغْلُوْ] خ شكلو (في حاشية س)؛ شغلوا ت؛ شكلوا د ه ل
160   دَرَوْ] دروا ف ت د ه ل | أَهْلُوْ] أهلوا ت د ه ل | يُقِيْمُوْ] يقيمو ت | لِي] إلى ت   161   أَشْ]
أيش ف ل   161–163   أَشْ...لِلدَّرَا] (لا ترد هذه الأبيات في د)   161   وَاشْ] وأيش ف ت ل | ذَا]
لأفراط] دا لأفراط ه   163   يُسَبِّلْ] سبّل ه؛ يسلل ل | لِلْأَسْيَاطْ] خ للاسواط (في حاشية
س)؛ للاسواط ت ه ل | وَرَاشْ] وراسو ت؛ وراسوا ه ل | يُوَقِّفْ] توقف ت ل؛ وقف ه
لِلدَّرَا] للدزا ه   165   وَأَنَا] ونا ت | مِنَ...مَخْنُوْق] من السطلا محنوف ه   166   رَيْت] رايت ل
مَخْلُوْق] محلوق ه | نَادَيْتُوْ] ناديت ف؛ ناديتوا ت؛ فصحت د؛ فقلت ه ل | قَلِّي] قال لي د ه ل
167   بُوْ] بوا د ه | ذِيك] ديك ت ه ل | الدَّوْرَهْ] الدورا ه ل   168   الجُوْرَهْ] الحوره ت؛ الجورا د
ه ل   169   عَبَرْتُ] دخلت د ه ل | وَخْذِ] وجد ف؛ وحد ت؛ وحدا د ه ل | الفَاخُوْرَهْ] الفاخورا
ه ل | الفَيْنْ] الفي ت ه ل | جَرَّا] جَرَّه ا ف   170–172   دَازْ...الحُرَّا] (لا ترد هذه الأبيات في د)
170   قَلِّي] قال لي ه ل   171   يَا...الزَّبَلَّحْ] خ صحـ ايش ذي المصيبه (في حاشية س)؛ آش ذا
لمصيبه ه؛ أيش ذالمصيبه ل | قُوْمْ] قم ه ل   172   نَادَيْتُوْ] ناديت ف ت؛ ناديتوا ه ل | آوَلُدْ] آي
ولد ه   173   قَلِّي] قال لي د ه ل   175   وَاشْ] وايش ل | ذَا القَاسِي] القاسي س؛ ذالقاسي د ل؛
دا القاسي ه؛ (والصواب من ف ت) | لُوْ] لوا ت ه ل | السَّخْرَا] الصخرا د ه ل؛ (تضاف هذه
الأبيات في حاشية د): أش دالمصيبه والدهما مثلك ما رأيت في دالدنيا || يا ابن القطوع ات ماتعيا
اش من حديد هدالزبرا؛ (وفي ه): آش ذا لليه والدهيا مثلك ما ريت في الدنيا || يا ابن القطوع
آت ماتعيا آش من حديد هي دالزبرا؛ (وفي ل): أيش ذالمصيبه والدهيا مثلك ما ريت في ذا الدنيا
|| يا ابن القطوع آت ماتعيا أيش من حديد هي ذالزبرا   176   مَغْرَبِي] مغربي ه | جَانِي] حاني ه؛
حاني ل
177   لَا حَالْ] لا حـن ت؛ لحـل د ل؛ لحـن ه | آبِي] خـابى (في حاشـية س)؛ بي ف ه
179   مَهْلُوْش] خ ملهوس (تحت السطر س)؛ ملهوس ت د ه ل   180   أَضْمُوا لَا] أضمو الى ت؛
أضم إلى د ه ل   181   وَكَانَا] ودار ه | جَعَلْتُ...الصُّرَّا] دفعت لو ذاك لاَ الصرا س (في حاشية)؛
د ه؛ دفعت لو ذاك الصرا ت ل   182   ذِلَّهْ] دله د ه ل   183   نَقُوْل] تقول د | اشْ] ايش ف ت
د ل؛ اس ه | ذِي] دا د؛ دي ه؛ ذا ل   184   وَنَشْكُوا] ونشكو ف؛ وشكوا ه | لَعَلُّوْ] لعل ت؛
لعلوا ل | يَغْفِر] لعصر ه | ذِي] دا د؛ دي ه؛ ذا ل | الغَثْرَا] العترا ل   187   صَحْبَ] صاحب ل
نَظَرَهْ] نظرا د ه ل | جَبْرَا] جبره ف؛ حبرا ه   190   نَأَيْت] تايب ت ه ل؛ تاتب د | مَهْمَا نَعِيشْ]
طول ما أعيش ت د ه ل   191   يَتْخَبَّلْ] يتحبّل س ف؛ انخبل ه؛ (والصواب من ت د ل)
192   أُذْنِي] إدني د   193   أَضْحَى] أصحى د | بُوْ] أبُو س ف؛ أيوب (؟) د ه؛ أيوب ل؛ (والصواب
من ت) | الحِمَازْ] حمار د؛ جمار ه ل   194   وَاخِي] أخو ت؛ واخي د ه ل | الغَرِيشْ] العريش ه
ل؛ (وتضاف في ه): لو أبصرتني حين نسطل هلن تندهل بشهمي حس أمشي جمل أو دب

هيش؛ (وفي ل): لو أبصرتني حين نسطل كان تندهل حين أمشي حمل أو دب هيـش

196 بَقي ش] بقيش ف ت د ه ل   198–197 لَمَّا...أَطِيش] (لا ترد في د)   197 تُسَبِّيني] تسـتّيني

ف؛ سسيني ه؛ تسيبيني ل   199 أَقُل] أقول ف د ه ل | أَش] أيش ف ت د ه ل

201 وَانَا] ونا ت   202 قَدَرُهْ] قدرة د ه   203 تَرَكَبْ] نركب د ل | تَجُول] نجول د ل | وَتَنغَتِم]

وسـغتم ف؛ وننـغتم د ل؛ وننـغتم ه | تَقُـول] نفـول ه؛ نقـول ل   204   كَـتْر]كاتـر د ه ل

206–205 وَأيّ...بريش] (لا ترد هذه الابيات في س ت)   205 أَبْصُرو] أبصروا د ه ل | آجْبُرُو]

اجبروا د ه ل | وَفَّرُو] وقروا د؛ وفروا ه ل   206 وَآن] أو د ه ل   207 نَطْلُبْ] تطلب د؛

نطلب ه | تِنتَقَدْ] ينتقد س؛ نبيقد ف؛ نتقد ه؛ (والصواب من ت د ل) | ذَا] دا د؛ دي ه | ذَا

البَلْد] ذالبلد ل

Book Reviews

Robert Irwin, *Mamlūks and Crusaders: Men of the Sword and Men of the Pen,* Variorum Collected Studies Series (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2010). Pp. xii+370.

Reviewed by Niall Christie, Corpus Christi College and Langara College, Vancouver

To scholars of the Mamluks, Robert Irwin requires little introduction; well known for both his academic works and his fiction writings, the author of *The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The Early Mamluk Sultanate, 1250–1382* (1986) and *The Arabian Nights: A Companion* (1994), among other works, has been an influential figure in the development of study of the medieval Islamic Middle East in general and Mamluk studies in particular. Thus this collection of articles, dating from 1977 to 2008, is a useful and welcome addition to the library of any scholar of the Crusading and Mamluk periods.

Irwin's title, *Mamlūks and Crusaders,* is a deceptively simple one, not doing justice to a volume that contains chapters on not only the eponymous individuals but also merchants, poets and storytellers, Arab amirs, Mongol horsemen, and historians both medieval and modern, to name but a few. Some may find a full list of article titles useful: (I) "Iqtaʿ and the end of the crusader states"; (II) "The supply of money and the direction of trade in thirteenth-century Syria"; (III) "The Mamluk conquest of the county of Tripoli"; (IV) "Egypt, Syria and their trading partners 1450–1550"; (V) "Factions in medieval Egypt"; (VI) "The image of the Byzantine and the Frank in Arab popular literature of the late Middle Ages"; (VII) "How many miles to Babylon? The *Devise des Chemins de Babiloine* redated"; (VIII) "Toynbee and Ibn Khaldun"; (IX) "Eating horses and drinking mare's milk"; (X) "Usamah ibn Munqidh, an Arab-Syrian gentleman at the time of the crusades reconsidered"; (XI) "The impact of the early crusades on the Muslim world"; (XII) "What the partridge told the eagle: a neglected Arabic source on Chinggis Khan and the early history of the Mongols"; (XIII) "Under western eyes: a history of Mamluk studies"; (XIV) "ʿAli al-Baghdadi and the joy of Mamlūk sex"; (XV) "The privatization of 'justice' under the Circassian Mamluks"; (XVI) "Mamluk literature"; (XVII) "Orientalism and the early development of crusader studies"; (XVIII)

"Tribal feuding and Mamluk factions in medieval Syria"; (XIX) "Al-Maqrizi and Ibn Khaldun, historians of the unseen"; (XX) "Gunpowder and firearms in the Mamluk sultanate reconsidered"; (XXI) "*Futuwwa*: chivalry and gangsterism in medieval Cairo"; (XXII) "Ibn Zunbul and the romance of history"; and (XXIII) "The political thinking of the 'virtuous ruler', Qansuh al-Gawrī. Several of these articles have appeared previously in the pages of this journal. Irwin's scholarship is of course excellent, and at the time of their publication a significant number of these articles were pioneering studies.

If one were to allow oneself to be inspired by Irwin's own talent with the pithy phrasing, one might comment that a Variorum collection is a curious beast (cf. Irwin's "improbable beast" in Chapter II, p. 75). Rather than gathering a number of articles on a particular theme, it instead takes a particular author as the epicenter of its choice of materials. This is not entirely a bad thing; each volume provides readers with a collection of works of a top-notch scholar, usefully gathered together in one volume. However, given that scholars publish articles over an extended period of time in ever-changing fields, and also do not always concentrate on the same research areas throughout the period in question, one can find oneself with a miscellany of works that, while of highest quality, feel a little dated at times, as well as slightly scattered and lacking in a central focus.

Of these two causes for concern, the first is occasionally present in this volume; probably the most apparent example is Chapter X on Usāmah ibn Munqidh, a figure who has since been the subject of considerable study, particularly in Paul M. Cobb's *Usama ibn Munqidh: Warrior-Poet of the Age of Crusades* (2005) and *The Book of Contemplation: Islam and the Crusades* (2008). This is not to detract from the immense value of Irwin's study, which is the important corrective upon which most later studies of the Shayzarī amir have been based, but our attention is still drawn to one limitation of this sort of compiled volume. The second concern is less apparent, in that all the articles contained in this volume are indeed of interest to scholars studying the Crusades and/or the Mamluks, even though the range of topics addressed is extremely broad.

As hinted above, the quality of Irwin's scholarship is of course complemented by his ability to craft a memorable turn of phrase. Whether it be describing stories in the *Kitāb al-Zahr al-Anīq fī Lubūs wa-al-Taʾnīq* of ʿAlī al-Baghdādī as having "the ring of truth—or, if not that, then at least the dull clank of possibility" (Chapter XIV, p. 56), or stating that the historical section of Shibāb al-Dīn al-Nuwayrī's *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab* "provided disproportionately a large tail to this learned dog" (Chapter XVI, p. 8), Irwin's works are thus both scholarly and at times entertaining to read, which only enhances the value of this collection.

Irwin's introduction, in which he states explicitly that he has now moved away from Mamluk studies to work on the *Arabian Nights*, feels like a passing of the

torch, especially as he lays out some possible avenues of study of the Mamluk pe-
riod even as he bids it farewell. Chapters XIII and XVII of this collection provide
a useful starting point for those wishing to build upon his suggestions, while the
other articles in the volume also serve as helpful, scholarly, and accessible entries
into more specific topics. This reviewer would thus strongly recommend it to both
students and scholars of the Crusades and the Mamluks.

Kristen Stilt, *Islamic Law in Action: Authority, Discretion, and Everyday Experiences
in Mamluk Egypt* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). Pp. xii + 238.

Reviewed by Caterina Bori, Università di Bologna

This is an important book. It is important because of the questions it asks, the
answers it gives, or at least attempts to give, and the research trajectories it sets. It
is important because it brings our understanding of the role, action, and jurisdic-
tion of the *muḥtasib* in Mamluk Egypt (Cairo and Fustat) a good step forward and
because it tackles with due care a crucial issue in historical Islamic legal studies,
that of the relationship between the theory and practice of law: two faces of the
same coin that have often been researched separately. Social, religious, political,
and economical daily practice mattered to legal scholars and ulama, although it is
not easy to detect legal change provoked by social and historical change. Ulama
often reacted to social practice and tried to regulate the daily life of individuals
according to their own vision of an Islamicly correct conduct. It is more difficult
to detect how, if, and in what format doctrine informed the decisions and daily
behavior of ordinary people, many of them poor and uncultivated. By explor-
ing the figure of the *muḥtasib,* the relationship between theory and practice is
one of Stilt's major concerns. In fact, for every single case she presents, Stilt ex-
plores to what doctrinal pressures the *muḥtasib* eventually responded, or how
doctrine could be used to provide the rationale behind certain measures. When
legal theory provided little guidance, it emerges that it was usually the sultan's
policy *(siyāsah)* which offered grounds for action. In fact, Stilt identifies two ma-
jor sources of authority behind the *muḥtasib*'s sphere of action: *fiqh* and *siyāsah.*
Fiqh defined what was right and what was wrong and in a simplified, hence more
accessible form, made up the core of the *muḥtasib's* manuals. Stilt shows how,
most of the time, rules of *fiqh* had direct pertinence to the officials' decisions such
as measures against gambling and wine, or the length of towels to be used in
bathhouses. The counterpart of *fiqh* for the *muḥtasib*'s decisions, she argues, was
siyāsah, which she describes as policy-based decisions associated with the ruler

and informed by the priority of serving the public interest *(maṣlaḥah)*. Currency, taxes, and public order were the ruler's prerogatives and, in this regard, the sultan exercised his control by directing the *muḥtasib* towards specific measures such as collecting a special tax to fight the Ottomans, or ruthlessly punishing an episode of theft which was evidently perceived as a threat to the public order. According to Stilt, the two legal dimensions of *fiqh* and *siyāsah* did not usually clash in their capacity as sources of authority for the *muḥtasib*. Stilt reports only one case in which a scholar objected to the collection of a *zakāt* that did not meet the doctrinal requirements of *zakāt*. In this specific regard, *Law in Action* shows that the tension between *siyāsah* and *fiqh* did not specifically articulate around the figure of the *muḥtasib*. However, one may add that the tension was there (Stilt seems to be aware of this, pp. 32–33), but it emerged in literature other than chronicles (Stilt is also aware of this, p. 189). It probably involved the jurisdiction of other legal actors, such as the qadi. Apart from *fiqh* and *siyāsah,* the *muḥtasib*'s action was strongly driven also by his own discretion, especially in the area of punishment.

Stilt also examines how the people who were meant to be regulated by the *muḥtasib* reacted from time to time to the different measures taken by the officer. This is a most interesting trajectory of enquiry, for it well underlies that action is meant to set in motion a reaction, and that if one wants to research thoroughly the interaction between law and society, it will not be sufficient to examine rules and their enactment, but reactions to rules and spaces for enacting such reactions will also have to be carefully taken into consideration. In other words, it is not only the rule and its enactment that matters, but also how the "rule" is perceived, received, and responded to by those involved. In this regard, it is difficult to distinguish a common pattern in Stilt's book. People enjoyed different spaces of resistance according to the circumstances. There was little they could do in the face of new currency issuances, but in the case of bread shortages the commoners repeatedly attacked the *muḥtasib,* crowded bakeries to make their voices heard, and directed their anger at the amirs who were responsible for hoarding grain. When the *muḥtasib* forbade women to camp outside in order to gain a view of the yearly caravan to Mecca, the *muḥtasib*'s prohibition was not taken too seriously: after a while, women returned to the street and secured themselves a front-row seat to the pilgrimage procession. In this case, and for some reason, the *muḥtasib*'s measure was not perceived as binding.

The book is divided into nine chapters. Chapters 1 and 2 are introductory. The first is a brief presentation of the Mamluk sultanate, of the social organization of its inhabitants and the main features of its economy, and, more specifically, of the places featured in the book (Cairo and Fustat). The chapter then moves to the sources available for reconstructing the legal history of the Mamluk period: the sources of legal authority, and the interaction between them, the main legal insti-

tutions, and legal actors of the period. The second chapter describes the position of the *muḥtasib,* his duties, and the sources which present them, and then turns to a depiction of the *muḥtasib*s of Cairo and Fustat, the geographical expanse of their jurisdiction, and the change in their social background through time. Chapters 3 to 9 investigate the spheres of action of the *muḥtasib* in specific topical areas: devotional practice; serious crimes and offences (gambling, consumption of intoxicants, prostitution); regulation of Christians and Jews; commercial transactions (market regulation, consumer protection, pricing, availability of grain); currency and taxes; and, finally, public order. This last set of chapters follows a recurrent structure: the description of a cluster of selected cases pertaining to the main topic of the chapter, an examination of the eventual connection between the case at issue and legal doctrine (the leading question behind being: to what extent was such and such measure justified in *fiqh* or in *ḥisbah* manuals?), analysis of the reasons behind the *muḥtasib*'s decision, and the reactions of the people targeted by these decisions. Step by step, Stilt poses many questions. Many of them are left unanswered because of the nature of the sources. But still, they serve the purpose of highlighting the great diversity of variants whose combination determined the daily experience of law.

In sum, the book explores the multiple ways in which law was put into action during the Mamluk period by taking the *muḥtasib* as its central actor. By investigating the sources of authority which informed the *muḥtasib*'s actions, the expanse of his activities, and their interaction with the people they regulated, Stilt delivers a complex and nuanced picture of the daily experience of law in which a multiplicity of factors at work, often discretional and circumstantial, affected both the *muḥtasib*'s activities and their reception among the commoners. In the future, it will be interesting to see how law was put into action also in minor centers of the Mamluk domain and whether one can detect patterns of change in the *muḥtasib*'s activity. It would be also most desirable to widen our research horizon by considering what was happening in Europe in the same period (1250–1500) when a similar field of research is tackled. But, for the moment, we are grateful to Kristen Stilt for this significant contribution, which will be compelling reading for social and legal historians alike.

ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, *Sharḥ al-Badīʿīyah al-Musammāh bi-al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn fī Madḥ al-Amīn*. Edited by Riḍā Rajab (Damascus: Rand lil-Ṭibāʿah wa-al-Nashr wa-al-Tawzīʿ, 2008). Pp. 434.

ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, *Badīʿīyat al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn fī Madḥ al-Amīn*. Edited by Ḥasan Rabābiʿah (Amman: Wizārat al-Thaqāfah, 2008). Pp. 172.

ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, *Al-Badīʿīyah wa-Sharḥuhā: al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn fī Madḥ al-Amīn*. Edited by ʿĀdil Kuttāb and ʿAbbās Thābit (Damascus: Dār Kinān lil-Nashr wa-al-Tawzīʿ, 2009). Pp. 213.

Reviewed by Th. Emil Homerin, University of Rochester.

Th *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn fī Madḥ al-Amīn* ("The Clear inspiration in praise of the trusted prophet") is the most famous poem composed by ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah (d. 923/1517). The poem has been copied many times and published as early as 1886. Th *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn* is a *badīʿīyah,* a poetic form that developed during the Mamluk period in which each verse praises the prophet Muḥammad while illustrating a rhetorical device (e.g., types of paronomasia, antithesis, etc.). Moreover, like her predecessors in the genre, ʿĀʾishah adds a commentary after each verse in which she names and explains the rhetorical device and cites examples by earlier poets. Needless to say, this is a very complex type of poem, and together with its commentary, the *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn* is a testament to ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah's polished poetic skills and substantial erudition.

In 1981, two Syrian scholars, Mājid al-Dhahabī and Ṣalāḥ al-Khiyamī, published a detailed article entitled "Dīwān ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah" (*Turāth al-ʿArabī* 4:110–21) in which they describe a 921 AH manuscript written in ʿĀʾishah's own hand (al-Ẓāhirīyah [Damascus] MS 7335) and a 1304 AH copy made of this original (al-Ẓāhirīyah MS 11320). These manuscripts contain the *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn* and several other poems composed by ʿĀʾishah during her stay in Egypt. Over the last five years, at least three edited editions of the *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn* have appeared in print.

Of the three editions reviewed here, the *Sharḥ al-Badīʿīyah al-Musammāh bi-al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn fī Madḥ al-Amīn* edited by Riḍā Rajab is the most useful. In his introduction, Rajab gives a concise summary of *badīʿ* ("rhetorical figures") in Arabic literature (pp. 7–17), followed by a review of the *badīʿīyah* as a distinct poetic genre. While there has been some speculation on the originator of the form, as a genre the *badīʿīyah* follows the lead of the Mamluk poet Ṣāfī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī (d. 750/1349) who composed a *badīʿīyah* in the meter *basīṭ* and rhyming in "m" in imitation of the *Burdah* or "Mantle Ode" by Muḥammad al-Būṣīrī (d. 694/1295), to which he added a commentary. This, then, became the model for similar poems

by subsequent poets, including Ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī (d. 837/1434), Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505), ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, and ʿAbd al-Ghānī al-Nābulusī (d. 1143/1731) (pp. 17–21). In a useful appendix, Rajab has given the texts to these and other noted *badīʿīyāt,* though without their commentaries (pp. 251–372).

Next, Rajab provides photos of his sources for his edition, which include al-Ẓāhirīyah MS 11320, and then he gives a brief and very general account of ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah's life and writings (pp. 22–30). I was not surprised that Rajab was unaware of my work on ʿĀʾishah, but I was surprised that he never mentioned Ḥasan Rabābiʿah's earlier study in Arabic, *ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah: al-Shāʿirah* (1997). There follows Rajab's edition of ʿĀʾishah's *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn,* which is clearly printed with a partially voweled text and with extensive footnotes to Quranic verses, hadith, and the poets and poetry that ʿĀʾishah cites in her poem and commentary (pp. 31–249). Following his appendix of *badīʿīyāt,* Rajab includes a number of useful indexes to his edition of ʿĀʾishah's *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn.* I want to acknowledge Rajab's efforts for his edition, yet I am puzzled by several issues. First, why did he not seek out and edit ʿĀʾishah's own copy of the *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn*, al-Ẓāhirīyah MS 7335? Did he not know of its existence or is it unavailable for some reason? Second, in their description of the original manuscript of the *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn,* al-Dhahabī and al-Khiyamī state that the poem was composed of 129 verses, yet Rajab's edition has only 127 verses. What is missing and why?

We may find an answer in *Badīʿīyat al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn fī Madḥ al-Amīn,* edited by Ḥasan Rabābiʿah, though along with other problems. As noted above, Rabābiʿah has published a study of ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah's life and work, and he has also published an edition of her *Al-Qawl al-Ṣaḥīḥ fī Takhmīs Burdat al-Madīḥ* ("The Five-fold good word on *The Mantle of Praise*"), ʿĀʾishah's *takhmīs* on al-Būṣīrī's *Burdah.* In his very brief introduction to his edition of the *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn,* Rabābiʿah refers the reader to his earlier study, and other recent works in Arabic on ʿĀʾishah. He then discusses his sources for his edition of the text. He notes that he was in Syria and had consulted a number of manuscripts, including al-Ẓāhirīyah MS 11320 (1304 AH, though Rabābiʿah gives the date incorrectly as 1204 AH), but that for the most part he has relied on MS 619 Taymūr from Egypt's Dār al-Kutub, which, he says contains 130 verses (pp. 7–12). Next, Rabābiʿah provides photos of his sources (pp. 15–24), which are blurry and, in eight cases, exactly the photos that Rajab provides in his book. Adding to this odd "coincidence" is Rabābiʿah's caption to photos on pp. 21–24 as being from MS 619 Taymūr when, in fact, they are absolutely identical to Rajab's photos of al-Ẓāhirīyah MS 11320, which clearly match the description of the manuscript by al-Dhahabī and al-Khiyamī. Something is amiss here.

As was the case with Rajab's edition, Rabābiʿah's edition of the *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn* (pp. 25–131) is clear, partially voweled, with ample footnotes to Quranic verses,

hadith, and the poets and poetry that ʿĀʾishah cites in her poem and commentary. It should be noted that, whatever the relationship to Rajab's edition, Rabābiʿah's notes are his own, as are his useful indices (pp. 133–72). Yet, despite his statement that the poem is 130 verses long, Rabābiʿah's edition has only 129 verses, since there is no verse numbered 49 in his edition. The two additional verses beyond Rajab's edition are #101 on *al-ittisāʿ* (p. 112), which suspiciously lacks any commentary by ʿĀʾishah, and verse #129 on *al-tawjīh* (pp. 128–29), which does have a commentary resembling the others in the *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn*.

The third and final recently edited text of the *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn* is *Al-Badīʿīyah wa-Sharḥuhā: al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn fī Madḥ al-Amīn*, edited by ʿĀdil Kuttāb and ʿAbbās Thābit. Their introduction to the life and work of ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah is largely a paraphrase of the account by the biographer Muḥammad al-Ghazzī (d. 1061/1651), and both editors seem unaware of recent studies on her (pp. 5–13); they also provide a general introduction to the *badīʿīyah* genre, including ʿĀʾishah's *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn* (pp. 13–22). As to manuscript sources, the editors rely on a manuscript at al-Mustanṣirīyah University, presumably in Iraq, though they do not provide a catalog number or date for the manuscript (pp. 22–26). Their partially-voweled edition of the *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn* has 126 verses, with source footnotes and variant reading from nineteenth-century published editions of the poem, followed by indices. Like the Rajab edition, the Kuttāb/Thābit edition is lacking the verse on *al-ittisāʿ*, the verse and commentary on *al-tawjīh*, as well as the verse and commentary on *tawshīḥ* (Rajab #80; Rabābiʿah #81).

ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, *Al-Qawl al-Ṣaḥīḥ fī Takhmīs Burdat al-Madīḥ*. Edited by Ḥasan Rabābiʿah (Amman: Wizārat al-Thaqāfah, 2009). Pp. 250.

Reviewed by Th. Emil Homerin, University of Rochester

Over the last ten years, several books, articles, and translations of writings by ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah (d. 922/1517) have appeared, including in *Mamlūk Studies Review*. Among these works was Ḥasan Rabābiʿah's very useful study *ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah: al-Shāʿirah* (1997), and now he has issued an Arabic edition of ʿĀʾishah's *Al-Qawl al-Ṣaḥīḥ fī Takhmīs Burdat al-Madīḥ* ("The Five-fold good word on *The Mantle of Praise*"). As the title indicates, this work is in homage to Muḥammad al-Būṣīrī's (d. 694/1295) famous panegyric to the prophet Muḥammad, popularly known as the *Burdah* or "Mantle Ode." As Rabābiʿah explains in his introduction to his edition, a *takhmīs* consists of an original poem by an earlier poet, to which a later poet adds three hemistiches to each verse of the original poem, hence the name *takhmīs* ("to make

five-fold"). In this case, ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah's hemistiches precede each verse by al-Būṣīrī, while rhyming with the first hemistich of the target verse (pp. 15–18).

Rabābiʿah based his Arabic edition of this poem on MS 619 Taymūr in Egypt's Dār al-Kutub, dated 1304/1886; the scribe states that this copy was made from a manuscript written in ʿĀʾishah's own hand and completed in 921/1515. Rabābiʿah claims, incorrectly, that MS 619 Taymūr was completed in 1204 AH, but it is clear from the photos he provides of the manuscript that the date is 1304 AH (p. 14). Significantly, two Syrian scholars, Mājid al-Dhahabī and Ṣalāḥ al-Khiyamī, published an excellent article in 1981 ("Dīwān ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah," *Turāth al-ʿArabī* 4:110–21) describing both a 921 AH manuscript written in ʿĀʾishah's own hand and a 1304 AH copy, containing a number of poems composed by ʿĀʾishah during her stay in Egypt. ʿĀʾishah's introduction to this manuscript is identical to that in MS 619 Taymūr, suggesting that MS 619 Taymūr is an abridged copy of the 1304 AH copy, which contains several other poems in addition to the *Al-Qawl al-Ṣaḥīḥ* and is nearly twice as long. Though Rabābiʿah cites the article by al-Dhahabī and al-Khiyamī (p. 3), he fails to make this connection. What is more, I do not understand why he did not consult the originals in Damascus.

Drawing from ʿĀʾishah's introduction, Rabābiʿah notes that ʿĀʾishah composed this *takhmīs* in 921/1515 after her earlier one was stolen, along with other writings, during her journey to Cairo from Damascus in 919/1513. Rabābiʿah also discovered that ʿĀʾishah's version of al-Būṣīrī's *Burdah* omits three verses (vv. 135, 144, 148) from the standard 160 vv. edition of the poem, and he goes on to note several grammatical issues and orthographic peculiarities of the manuscript, which he ascribes, in large part, to scribal error (pp. 3–10).

In his edited edition of the poem (pp. 22–85), Rabābiʿah provides a generally clear, partially voweled text with helpful footnotes on vocabulary, poetic tropes, and allusions to the Quran, hadith, and Sufi concepts. However, a number of verses from the *Burdah* as found in this edition (vv. 77, 104, 134, 141, 150, 157) are spaced incorrectly with what should have been the last word of the first hemistich being placed as the first word of the second hemistich, thus making it appear that ʿĀʾishah's hemistiches have the wrong rhyme. There are a few minor typos as well: v. 21 *(lil-marʾi* not *lil-mar),* v. 86 *(al-sanah* not *al-sunnah),* and v. 123 *(yarmī* not *tarmī).*

Following the poem, Rabābiʿah presents his analysis of it, which he divides into ten thematic sections: (1) the opening *nasīb,* (2) on the *nafs* and its lust, (3) praise of the Prophet, (4) the Prophet's birth, (5) his miracles, (6) praise of the Quran, (7) the Prophet's night journey and heavenly ascension, (8) his military battles, (9) the poet's plea for intercession, and (10) the poet's closing prayer (pp. 87–203). For each section, Rabābiʿah cites, again, the verses from his edition of the poem (with all of his footnotes!), while his analysis is little more than a prose recap of the

Burdah, with almost no mention of ʿĀʾishah's verses and how they interact with the original poem. In several places, Rabābiʿah (e.g., p. 98) asserts that ʿĀʾishah's verses take the poem in a mystical direction. While a few Sufi concepts and terms do appear in her verses, ʿĀʾishah's *Al-Qawl al-Ṣaḥīḥ* has only a faint Sufi flavor, especially when compared to much of her other verse.

From the outset of the poem, ʿĀʾishah imagines herself as al-Būṣīrī's travel companion standing in the abandoned campsite, recalling together a life wasted in sin, but one that may be redeemed by devotion to the beloved Prophet. Throughout the poem, ʿĀʾishah's verses elaborate on al-Būṣīrī's themes and images, adding further details, examples, or commentary. She also uses vocabulary from nearby verses in the *Burdah*, thus presaging or echoing the original poem to good effect. Had Rabābiʿah given attention to these and other interactions between the two poets, his analysis would have been substantive and useful. Nevertheless, by editing and publishing ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah's *Al-Qawl al-Ṣaḥīḥ fī Takhmīs Burdat al-Madīḥ,* Ḥasan Rabābiʿah has made a meaningful contribution to Arabic literature and Mamluk studies.

Doris Behrens-Abouseif, ed. *The Arts of the Mamluks in Egypt and Syria: Evolution and Impact,* Mamluk Studies, vol. 1, edited by Stephan Conermann (Göttingen: Bonn University Press and V&R Unipress GmbH, 2012). Pp. 351, with more than 150 illustrations, many in color.

Reviewed by Jonathan M. Bloom, Boston College and Virginia Commonwealth University

Over three decades ago, in 1981, Esin Atil, the indefatigable curator of Islamic art at the Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, organized the first international loan exhibition devoted specifically to Mamluk art. Entitled *Renaissance of Islam: Art of the Mamluks,* it was first shown in Washington at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution; it then traveled to the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Cincinnati Art Museum, the Detroit Institute of Arts, the Phoenix Art Museum, and the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford. The Washington venue was accompanied by a lavish symposium held at the National Gallery of Art, and many of the papers from that event were published in the second volume (1984) of the journal *Muqarnas.* The papers reflected the state of the study of Mamluk art at that time. A few years later, Michael Hamilton Burgoyne published his magisterial *Mamluk Jerusalem: An Architectural Survey* (1987), and five years after that in 1992 Michael

Meinecke published his long-awaited *Die Mamlukische Architektur in Ägypten und Syrien (648/1240 bis 923/1517).*

At that time it seemed like Mamluk studies were on a roll, but the fickle focus of most historians of Islamic art shifted elsewhere. Twenty-five years after the initial exhibition and symposium, Prof. Doris Behrens-Abouseif, the *doyenne* of the study of Mamluk art and author of *Cairo of the Mamluks: A History of the Architecture and its Culture* (2007) among other books, thought it was an appropriate time to readdress the subject. While a new exhibition remains only a pipe-dream, this book is based on the conference, *The Arts of the Mamluks in Egypt and Syria,* that she organized in 2009 at the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London. As the editor says, it is not a "proceedings" publication (p. 9), but she doesn't explain why: although it presents sixteen chapters on various subjects by fifteen individuals who spoke at the conference, ten more of the presentations were not published in this volume.[1]

The volume is bookended by three rather general chapters. The introduction is the editor's short overview of the art of the Mamluks and a summary of the following papers. The second chapter, by Nasser Rabbat, is a rather diffuse thought piece on the experimental quality of early Mamluk art. The editor closes the volume with a somewhat longer essay on Mamluk perceptions of foreign arts, which cites such familiar examples as the Crusader Gothic portal reinstalled in the madrasah of Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad, the great *īwān* of the madrasah of Sultan Ḥasan, or the Iranian-style ceramic tiles used to decorate a few minarets in Cairo. Nowhere in this volume will the curious reader find a broader assessment of the nature of Mamluk art and its place in the grand scheme of things.

Six of the chapters deal specifically with architecture, mostly in Cairo but also in Aleppo, Damascus, and Anatolia. Bernard O'Kane discusses the long-vanished mosque of Bashtak in Cairo, of which only the portal remains in situ, and deftly reconstructs it on the basis of drawings by the nineteenth-century British architect James Wild now in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Iman Abdulfattah and Mamdouh Mohamed Sakr present the remains of a Mamluk reception room excavated on the Cairo citadel along with its mosaic decoration, which they reconstruct using Computer Aided Design (CAD). The somewhat

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[1] According to the conference program, other speakers included Philipp Speiser on "Mamluk Archaeology: An Overview on Recent Excavation Projects"; Geoffrey King, "Mamluk Art in the Arab Peninsula"; Stefan Weber, "Rebuilding the City: Damascus after Timur Lenk"; Abdallah Kahil, "Stone Carving in Mamluk Cairo"; Alison Ohta, "Binding Relationships: Mamluk, Ottomans and Turcomans"; Mariam Rosser-Owen, "Cairo and Granada: Artistic Interchange between the Mamluks and Nasrids"; Anna Ballian, "The Mosul Tradition Meets Mamluk Metalwork: A Rasulid Basin and a Jaziran Candlestick"; Fodil Fadli and Magda Sibley, "The Mamluk Hammams of Cairo"; and Howayda Al-Harithy, "Mamluk Tripoli Reinscribed." Concluding remarks were given by Robert Irwin.

disorganized presentation of the material predictably concludes that such fancy mosaic decoration was made to enhance the prestige of the ruler. Julien Loiseau applies a text-based approach to explain the proliferation of Friday mosques in Cairo during the Mamluk period. His interesting study concludes that there was a change in the meaning and practice of Friday worship during the Mamluk period, as worshipers wanted to stay closer to home and pray with fellow members of more exclusive religious communities. Julia Gonnella discusses the Mamluk throne hall added over the entrance to the Aleppo citadel by the little-known amir Jakam min ʿIwan (d. 1407), and Ellen Kenney discusses a mosque built by the amir Tankiz al-Nāṣirī in Damascus, of which only a few bits and pieces (a tomb and a rebuilt minaret) survive in part. In a book of unusually good reproductions, many in beautiful color, her figure 8 is one of the worst images I have seen in a long time. Finally, Mehmed Baha Tanman discusses Mamluk elements in the Beylik architecture of Anatolia, particularly under the Ramazanoğlu and the Dulkadiroğlu, both vassals of the Mamluk state.

Seven of the chapters deal with particular objects or classes of objects: Sophie Makariou and Carine Juvin present an interesting but inconclusive study of Mamluk inlaid metal stands, based on a hexagonal panel in the Louvre that was clearly recycled from an earlier tray. Although six-sided stands are some of the most familiar examples of Mamluk metalwork, they remain poorly understood and their purpose undetermined. Two of the chapters present new light on particular classes of objects. Rachel Ward's essay convincingly establishes a reliable and completely new chronology for enameled glass lamps. Her close and careful analysis of specific lamps has reversed the chronology of enameled glass, one of the most familiar arts of the Mamluks. She clearly shows how artisans became increasingly adept in applying colored enamels over the course of the fourteenth century, although she doesn't even mention where—Cairo or Damascus—these beautiful vessels might have been made. Roland-Pierre Gayraud begins by presenting a useful, if rather pedestrian, summary of Mamluk ceramics. His chapter takes an unexpectedly interesting turn when he sensitively discusses why Mamluk pottery declined—whether from the movement of artisans, or massive imports from the Far East, Anatolia, and Renaissance Italy. His chapter is one of the very few in this volume to look at the larger picture.

Rosalind Haddon writes about Mongol (and Chinese) influences on Mamluk ceramics. It is difficult to believe that in this day and age people still write about the idea of "influence" as if it were a disease that one art catches from another. Many years ago, the noted British art historian Michael Baxandall stated that the idea of influence was wrongly conceived, because it confuses the agent and patient. In this case the Mongols had no power (or influence) over Mamluk potters; rather potters in the Mamluk realm may have looked at Mongol ceramics and

copied or emulated them, or perhaps—as Haddon suggests—tile specialists from Ilkhanid Iran may have migrated to Cairo, although there is no evidence that tile specialists made crockery. The carpet specialist Jon Thompson presents a chapter on the enigmatic group of Mamluk carpets and where the tradition of making them came from. Thompson sensibly proposes that the Mamluk carpet industry was based in Turkmen practice of the mid fifteenth century. Following an idea first put forward in A. W. Newhall's (unpublished) dissertation (1987), the Mamluk ruler Qāytbāy established the workshop to furnish the many buildings he was constructing in Cairo. Zeren Tanindi continues her meticulous work in the libraries of Istanbul, here focusing on the patronage of two bibliophile Mamluk amirs, Qānṣūh the Master of the Stables and Yashbak the Secretary, at the very end of the Mamluk period.

The most far-reaching of the chapters on objects is that of J. M. Rogers, who writes on the court workshops of the Bahri Mamluks. Although Rogers, who has been writing about Mamluk (and other) subjects for more years than anyone else at the conference, readily admits that there is absolutely no textual evidence for court workshops under Mamluks, all their contemporaries seem to have had them. He then proposes that two of the most famous examples of Bahri Mamluk metalwork, namely the basin made for Hughes of Lusignan, King of Cyprus, and the anonymous but spectacular Baptistère de Saint-Louis, both in the Louvre, are products of this hypothetical court workshop. Citing visual similarities between the manuscript illustrations produced by the historian Matthew Paris (d. 1259) at the Cistercian Abby of St Albans in Britain and the Baptistère, Rogers further proposes that Muhammad ibn al-Zayn's distinctive imagery on the Baptistère was inspired by Cistercian art as mediated through a hypothetical Cistercian Crusader intermediary. This hypothesis is as intriguing as it is unprovable, but Rogers's paper—like Gayraud's on ceramics—is one of the few that looks at Mamluk art in broader contexts.

This is a useful, if ultimately disappointing volume. It is refreshingly free from theory, with which many contemporary scholars feel the need to liberally season their texts. Some of the papers present new material in interesting ways, but the whole seems less than the sum of its parts. Apart from Rabbat's attempt at delineating a Big Picture for the early period, the reader will find a lot about little details but little about the nature of Mamluk art and the role of the arts of the Mamluk period in comparison to those of contemporary Iran, Anatolia, the Maghrib, or al-Andalus. There is nothing about calligraphy and manuscripts of the Quran, and nothing about textiles, apart from carpets, although these were major media in the period. In sum, this is not a book for the novice. I realize that I am writing this review for *Mamlūk Studies Review,* but it would seem to me that a new book on Mamluk art might try to ask—and answer—such questions as how

important it is, how it relates to the arts of the contemporary world, both Islamic and Christian, or how it develops—or doesn't—over time. The "select" bibliography at the end is just that—select and somewhat idiosyncratic.[2] The map might have included some of the less-familiar Anatolian sites mentioned in Tanman's chapter. Although the publication received support from the Barakat Trust and the Fondation Max van Berchem, this did not make this otherwise attractive book affordable to the people who might want or need to read it, and upon publication I know that several authors immediately circulated PDFs of their chapters because it was so outrageously expensive.

Sulāfah ʿAbd Allāh, *Bināʾ al-Uslūb fī al-Muwashshahāt al-Mamlūkīyah* (Ḥimṣ: Dār al-Maʿārif, 2009). Pp. 309.

Reviewed by Hakan Özkan, University of Münster

ʿAbd Allāh's monograph sets out with a seemingly naïve question: "Was there anything like a *muwashshaḥ* genre in Mamluk literature?" While anyone who merely takes a cursory glance at Arab literature written in the Mamluk ages would say yes, the truth is that we do not know much about this genre. The author is therefore right to ask this question at the very beginning of her study. For the same reason ʿAbd Allāh's book is a welcome contribution to the understanding of the *muwashshaḥ* genre during the Mamluk reign and to a lesser degree in the Ottoman era.

Rightly ʿAbd Allāh remarks in her introduction that the literature of the later ages of Islamic history has been largely befuddled by "random generalizations" (p. 5) and wrong judgments that stigmatize the literature of that time as weak and stale, without any objective or scientific underpinning. As a direct consequence of this misconception ʿAbd Allāh seeks to reread the Mamluk *muwashshaḥ*s using methods pertaining to the fields of modern literary criticism in the light of their context, that is, the historical and societal circumstances at the time of their creation. The literary critical approach ʿAbd Allāh refers to puts the phonetic, grammatical, idiomatic, and semantic structure of the *muwashshaḥ*s at the core of her work, characterizing the linguistic analysis as one of its mainstays.

As corpus she chose from the poems of twelve famous *washshāḥūn:* Sirāj al-Dīn al-Maḥḥār, Shihāb al-Dīn al-ʿAzzāzī, Ṣadr al-Dīn ibn al-Wakīl, Ibn Nubātah, Badr al-Dīn ibn Ḥabīb, Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī, Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī, Shams al-

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[2] There is, for example, no citation of my "Mamluk Art and Architectural History: A Review Article," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 3 (1999): 31–58.

Dīn al-Wāsiṭī, Fakhr al-Dīn ibn Makānis, ʿAlī Wafā al-Iskandarī, Majd al-Dīn ibn Makānis, and ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah (in the appendix ʿAbd Allāh includes short biographies of all these poets, pp. 257–77). This covers almost the whole Mamluk era from 684/1250 until the Ottoman conquest of Egypt in 923/1517, with the notable absence of *muwashshaḥ* poets from the ninth/fifteenth century. The only exceptions are Majd al-Dīn ibn Makānis, who died 822/1419, and ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, d. 922/1516. Poets such as Ibn Sudūn (868/1464) and the famous hadith scholar Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (852/1449), who both composed a noteworthy number of *muwashshaḥ*s, deserve to have been among the *washshāḥūn* represented in this volume.

In addition to secondary literature on the subject, the author consulted not only printed anthologies of *muwashshaḥ* poetry such as the *Taʾhīl al-Gharīb* and the *ʿUqūd al-Laʾāl fī al-Muwashshaḥāt wa-al-Azjāl* by al-Nawājī, but also unedited manuscripts such as the "Durr al-Maknūn fī Sabʿat Funūn" by Ibn Iyās.

Throughout her study ʿAbd Allāh uses the Andalusian *muwashshaḥ* tradition as reference and basis for comparative analyses, which abound in her work. As we know that the first examples of Eastern *muwashshaḥ* poetry were modeled on their Western predecessors, her approach is sound and leads in most cases to cogent results that show the differences between Eastern and Western *muwashshaḥ* poetry. However, the question of representability of the corpus utilized, be it on the Mamluk or the Andalusian side, is a matter that ʿAbd Allāh should have discussed in more depth. This is also the case for the quantificational analyses and percentage calculations of the first chapter.

In the introduction (pp. 5–16) ʿAbd Allāh gives an outline of the scope of her work and explains why her work fills a considerable gap in the history and study of Arabic literature, followed by a short section on terminology and a summary of the history of the Mamluk empire. The study is divided into four chapters, each with a dedicated introduction and concluding remarks at the end that make this a very well-structured scholarly work. The first chapter deals with the formal elements, meter and rhyme in the first place. ʿAbd Allāh proceeds with a quantificational analysis of these elements by setting up tables that show how often a certain meter or rhyme letter has been used and compares these figures to those of Andalusian *muwashshaḥ*s (see pp. 26–28, 30–32, for example). Apart from the fact that the Mamluk *washshāḥūn* employed two new meters, *dūbayt* and *silsilah,* one of the noteworthy results is the far less frequent use of the meter *basīṭ* in Mamluk *muwashshaḥāt* (pp. 26, 30) as compared to the Andalusian varieties. In this chapter ʿAbd Allāh comments also on the expressional and phonetic peculiarities of internal rhymes *(al-taqfiyah al-dākhilīyah* and *al-taṣrīʿ),* paronomasia *(jinās),* and the insertion of elements known in rhymed prose *(tarṣīʿ),* which are frequent in Mamluk *muwashshaḥ*s. The author is right in pointing out that these elements

are not merely embellishments as has been claimed, but rather they contribute to the purport of the poems because they semantically interrelate with the content of the verses or the stanza and thus accentuate their meaning. Lastly ʿAbd Allāh remarks that the majority of *muwashshaḥ*s were sung, and therefore meters could differ from the traditional ones because of rhythmical and musical strictures. She also correctly asserts that some *muwashshaḥ*s show different meters, one used only in the *aqfāl* and one only in the *ghuṣūn.*

In the second chapter ʿAbd Allāh turns her attention to semantic fields that are represented in the *muwashshaḥ*s. She identifies five fields: love, wine, praise, elegy, and mysticism. For every field she counts the related words. Thus, in the field of *ghazal,* or love poetry, we find *qalb, qamar, firāq, ẓabī, thaghr, ḥubb, bukāʾ, shawq, jamāl, wajh, ṣadd, ṣabr, waṣl, ʿadhl, ʿiṭr, sahar, salwá, shaʿr, khaṣr, hāmah, mawt, dallāl,* etc., all clearly belonging to the field in question (pp. 81–82). But ʿAbd Allāh includes only nouns in her count and completely neglects verbs and adjectives. In the *muwashshaḥ* of Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī on page 86, for example, she does not mention the verb *habānā* "he gave us as present" as belonging to the field of generosity. For me, these lexical items should also have been included in the analysis. Furthermore, it is hard to understand why even nouns like *turāb* "dust" in an elegiac *muwashshaḥ* by al-Maḥḥār on page 88 are not considered as belonging to the fi ld of *rithāʾ.* Finally, it is regrettable that ʿAbd Allāh totally eclipsed the semantic fi lds of *mujūn, khalāʿah,* and *hazlīyah* or *hubālīyah.* This is probably one reason why she did not include Ibn Sudūn and others in her study. In the second section of chapter two ʿAbd Allāh discusses the types of intertextuality; among these we find the *muʿāraḍah* between Mamluk poets and their counterparts in Andalusian and other Eastern or Mamluk *muwashshaḥ* poetry. She examines borrowings from the Quran, insertions of verses or parts of verses from old poetry, insertions of the names of famous people and traditional proverbs, and lastly types of semantic opposition of words, word phrases, and contrastive parallelisms.

ʿAbd Allāh dedicates the third chapter of her book to the structure of the *muwashshaḥ*s, including the function of the *kharjah* and its linguistic registers. Much to the detriment of her work, she wrongly interprets and translates a clearly vulgar *kharjah* in Turkish which ends in *sekem senī* (Tr. *sikeyim seni,* "let me fuck you") (p. 145). She not only renders the already incorrect version of *Tawshīʿ al-Tawshīḥ,* an anthology of *muwashshaḥ*s, but reiterates it with minor alterations. In the corresponding footnote to her translation she states that she used a modern Turkish-Arabic/Arabic-Turkish learner's dictionary. But what is the use of a Turkish dictionary if you do not know any grammar and (even if you know the grammar) you cannot (or do not want to) correctly interpret the variety spoken by the Mamluks in Egypt at that time? In that respect my presumption from above in relation with *mujūn* and Ibn Sudūn's *hubālīyāt* unfortunately proves true.

In the final chapter ʿAbd Allāh analyzes four figures of speech and stylistic devices: allegory, metaphor, metonymy, and symbol. Although her treatment of these items is valuable insofar as they are dedicated discussions of single *muwashshaḥ*s, they appear somewhat erratic. Hence, the conclusions ʿAbd Allāh draws from her discussion are limited to general statements like "the innovation of the Mamluk *washshāḥūn* lies in their style insofar as every *washshāḥ* singles himself out by using a special style in order to express his desired meaning" (p. 251).

In concluding this review, note first of all that it is the great merit of Sulāfah ʿAbd Allāh to have presented the first comprehensive study of Mamluk *muwashshaḥ*s. This is to be highlighted, given that the literatures of the later centuries have been unjustifiably neglected for more than a century by Arab and Western scholars alike. While ʿAbd Allāh's study is very well organized and the modus operandi she follows is mostly logical and clear, the modern literary critical approach she refers to in her introduction does not really shine through because she does not lay out a pertinent methodology that is based on such an approach. Furthermore, there are only a few references to critical methods and works of modern literary criticism in the four main chapters. The most convincing parts of her work are the first two chapters, where she presents a statistical analysis of the formal elements of Mamluk *muwashshaḥ*s and examines their semantic fields, comparing them consistently with their Andalusian counterparts. Finally, it is regrettable that sexuality, frivolity, and graphic descriptions in literature still seem to be taboo among Arab scholars, especially as a notable portion of the literature produced in that period relates to these subjects.

The book has a few omissions and typos that I will not list here except for one major omission: ʿAbd Allāh obviously leaves out one stanza of a *muwashshaḥ* by al-Maḥḥār that she refers to in her following discussion (pp. 51–53).

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ء	ʾ	خ	kh	ش	sh	غ	gh	م	m
ب	b	د	d	ص	ṣ	ف	f	ن	n
ت	t	ذ	dh	ض	ḍ	ق	q	ه	h
ث	th	ر	r	ط	ṭ	ك	k	و	w
ج	j	ز	z	ظ	ẓ	ل	l	ي	y
ح	ḥ	س	s	ع	ʿ				
		ة	h, t (in construct)			ال	al-		

َ	a	ُ	u	ِ	i
ً	an	ٌ	un	ٍ	in
آ	ā	ُو	ū	ِي	ī
اَ	ā	ُوّ	ūw	ِّي	īy (medial), ī (final)
ى	á	وَ	aw	يَ	ay
				يّ	ayy

Avoid using apostrophes or single quotation marks for *ʿayn* and *hamzah*. Instead, use the Unicode characters ʿ (02BF) and ʾ (02BE).

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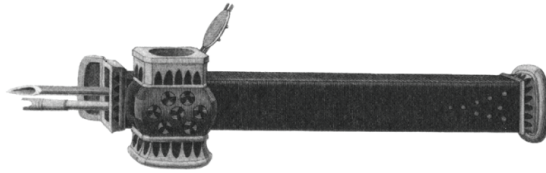
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