Authors as Readers in the Mamlūk Period and Beyond

edited by Élise Franssen
Authors as Readers in the Mamlûk Period and Beyond
Filologie medievali e moderne

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Authors as Readers in the Mamlūk Period and Beyond

edited by Élise Franssen
Abstract

Authors read. They read to inform themselves and stay up-to-date, they read for their pleasure and to get inspired. And they write, by definition, using their readings in the course of their writing process. Authors often keep written traces (sometimes dated) of what they have read: a short statement on a manuscript page, a blurb, an anecdote in a letter to a colleague or friend, a résumé or notes jotted down in a notebook, a reading journal, an explicit quotation in their own work or the use of information available only from a specific source and otherwise unknown.

Scrutinising authors’ readings is informative on a variety of levels. It provides information on their tastes and interests, on the subjects of their work at a given period, on their methodology and possible note-taking strategies, or on their scholarly milieu. It also brings a lot to intellectual history, giving information about the texts and manuscripts circulating at a certain period, in a certain place and milieu.

The research project RASCIO (Reader, Author, Scholar in Context of Information Overflow, Marie Curie Grant Agreement no. 749180, 2018-21) aimed at getting a better sense of al-Ṣafadī’s (d. 764/1363) working method, his scholarly network, his habits as a reader and as a scholar in the extremely rich context of the beginning of the Mamlūk period. Reaching the end of the project, an international conference was to be organised in order to share the results of RASCIO and to broaden the scope by confronting these results to other situations: other authors, other periods, other places... The world pandemic of COVID-19 obliged us to cancel the event, originally planned for 10-12 December 2020 (then postponed to 13-15 April 2021), at Ca’ Foscari University of Venice, and entitled Authors as Readers in the Mamlūk Period and Beyond. Al-Ṣafadī and his Peers. We nevertheless proposed that all speakers directly write an article instead of a conference paper, and to publish the initially planned proceedings. Nine speakers replied positively and this book is the result of this initiative.

Authors as Readers in the Mamlūk Period and Beyond gathers eight contributions investigating the readings of different authors from different points of view. The studied authors are mainly from pre-modern Islam – al-Qād ī al-Fāḍil, Ibn Taymiyya, al-Ṣafadī, al-Subkī, al-Maqrīzī – with three notable exceptions: an incursion in the Ottoman nineteenth century with Es’ad Efendi, a detour by the French court of King Charles V with his physician Evrart de Conty working as a translator, and a preface mentioning the papyrus of Philodème de Gadara, from Greek Antiquity.

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Authors as Readers in the Mamlūk Period and Beyond
[The writers] who read books by good authors and thumb through wise men's works in order to make use of the ideas they contain are on the right track. (al-Ǧāḥīz, cited by Pellat, C. *The Life and Works of Jāḥīz*. London: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1969, 114)

La bibliothèque est elle-même, pour l'écrivain, un lieu de consommation de cervelles plus ou moins fraîches, de digestion ou de rejet de la pensée d'autrui. [...] ce que la bibliothèque d'un écrivain permet d'intercepter et d'appréhender, c'est moins un savoir qu'une série de relations – relations entre des esprits par l'intermédiaire de textes, relations entre des textes par l'intermédiaire de manuscrits, relation entre une écriture et son environnement. (Ferrer, D. "‘Un imperceptible trait de gomme de tragacanthe...’" D'Iorio, P.; Ferrer, D., *Bibliothèques d'écrivains*. Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2001, 8)
Le volume que j’ai le plaisir de présenter ici est la synthèse d’un plus vaste projet, que j’ai eu l’honneur de diriger et qu’Élise Franssen a développé dans le cadre d’une Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship à l’Université Ca’ Foscari de Venise. Ce projet, RASCIO. Reader, Author, Scholar in a Context of Information Overflow, multiforme et novateur, avait pour but d’analyser, par le biais de l’étude pointue de la bibliothèque d’un savant de l’époque mamelouke, quelles étaient les stratégies des érudits de l’époque pour gérer l’énorme masse d’informations à leur disposition pour s’en servir afin d’écrire leurs propres ouvrages. Le thème était sans aucun doute bien choisi, ainsi que la période et la figure du savant qui a fait l’objet de cette recherche : Ḥalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī (1297-1363) est en effet l’un des savants les plus représentatifs de la période mamelouke, une période où l’activité intellectuelle était intense et la masse d’informations dont les hommes cultivés disposaient impressionnante.

Ce phénomène n’est pas sans nous rappeler ce qui se passe aujourd’hui-même, et notamment le problème posé par la quantité phénoménale de données qui circulent, surtout grâce aux nouvelles technologies, un phénomène qui impose – et imposait aussi à l’époque mamelouke – la mise au point de stratégies visant à sélectionner, organiser et finalement utiliser ces données pour écrire un ouvrage qui, à l’époque d’al-Ṣafadī, était très souvent à caractère encyclopédique et anthologique.

Chaque auteur est donc avant tout un lecteur. al-Ṣafadī ne faisait pas exception, comme Élise Franssen le démontre dans l’enquête exhaustive qu’elle a menée sur les textes qu’il possédait ou qu’il consultait, sur les notes qu’il y ajoutait lorsqu’il les lisait. Celles-ci révèlent...
Les habitudes de lecteur et nous font connaître le réseau de savants dans lequel il évoluait. Dans une perspective comparative, d’autres chercheurs explorent ici ce même sujet concernant d’autres auteurs qu’al-Ṣafadî et à des époques et dans des cultures différentes. Le lecteur de cet ouvrage collectif, vu que ce volume parle de lecteurs, aura ainsi l’occasion de s’interroger sur les différentes pratiques de lecture, pour se rendre finalement compte que, dans l’univers de l’écriture tout du moins, ces pratiques, dans des contextes historiques et culturels différents, sont plus semblables qu’on ne pourrait le penser de prime abord. Je ne peux que féliciter Élise Franssen, ainsi que les chercheurs qui ont participé à cette publication, pour avoir accepté le défi d’aborder ce thème dans une perspective comparative, interdisciplinaire et novatrice qui ouvre de nouvelles pistes de recherche.
Préface

Tiziano Dorandi
CNRS

Liber legebatur, adnotabat, excerpebatque

Quand, il y a plusieurs mois, Élise Franssen m’avait invité à participer au colloque interdisciplinaire au sujet des auteurs en tant que lecteurs qu’elle organisait à l’Université Ca’ Foscari de Venise, j’avais immédiatement accepté sa proposition car ce sujet correspond depuis plusieurs années à un volet de mes recherches que je n’ai pas tout à fait abandonné.

J’avais alors suggéré comme titre de mon exposé “Un auteur antique au travail : nouvelles considérations sur le PHerc. 1691/1021 de Philodème de Gadara”. Je me proposais de revenir sur le Papyrus d’Herculanum 1691/1021, qui est un document unique de très grande importance, car il transmet un cas rarissime dans l’Antiquité gréco-romaine d’un brouillon, non autographe, d’un livre : un véritable manuscrit d’auteur aux caractéristiques tout à fait spécifiques. À travers une étude de ce document et une analyse de ses particularités physiques, de sa structure et de l’organisation des données qu’on y lit, il est possible d’avoir une idée concrète de la manière de travailler de Philodème et donc de se représenter l’auteur à son écrivain en train de lire ses sources, préparer des cahiers de notes, élaborer les matériaux qu’il a recueillis et rédiger enfin un livre dans les toutes premières phases de sa composition.

Ce thème s’éloignait du thème principal du Colloque, dont le titre était Authors as Readers in the Mamlûk Period and Beyond. Al-Ṣafadî and his Peers. Il avait néanmoins attiré l’attention de l’organisatrice de la rencontre, qui l’avait accepté, suivant l’esprit d’interdisciplinarité qu’elle voulait insuffler à son projet.
La suite des événements et les difficultés liées à la terrible crise sanitaire qui persistent ont eu comme conséquence le report et ensuite l’annulation du colloque. D’où la décision, à mon avis plus qu’opportune, de la part d’Élise Franssen de se concentrer essentiellement sur la publication sous forme de volume des interventions prévues.

Le volume est maintenant devant nous et il donne une excellente idée des thèmes qui occupent notre jeune collègue et qui ont fait l’objet principal de ses recherches sur RASCIO. Reader, Author, Scholar in a Context of Information Overflow pendant les trois années de son séjour à Venise en tant que Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow. Ce projet vise à donner une idée de la méthode de travail d’al-Ṣafadī (1297-1363) et de son réseau savant, dont Franssen a analysé les habitudes de lecteur et d’érudit dans le contexte du début de la période mamelouke. Pour cela, la chercheuse s’est fondée sur l’étude approfondie d’un holographe de cet auteur : le quarante-quatrième tome des cahiers de ses lectures personnelles (Taḏkira). À partir de, et au-delà de ce document important, Franssen avait donc proposé à plusieurs collègues d’élargir leur champ d’action en confrontant les résultats qu’elle a obtenus à d’autres situations, d’autres auteurs, d’autres périodes, d’autres lieux. Les chapitres du volume sont une preuve concrète de la validité de l’ensemble de ce type de recherches et les résultats qui y sont présentés s’avèrent d’une grande utilité pour tous ceux qui travaillent sur ces sujets fascinants dans n’importe quel milieu culturel, région géographique ou époque, de l’Antiquité classique à l’ère moderne.

La grande majorité des chapitres du volume ont évidemment comme objet des auteurs dont la collocation géographique et la chronologie ne s’éloignent pas trop du milieu d’al-Ṣafadī. Deux seulement parmi eux portent sur le monde occidental (le Moyen Âge avec M. Goyens et les Temps modernes avec T. Van Hemelryck, qui s’est finalement désistée). A côté de ceux-ci, aurait dû trouver place l’article que j’avais moi-même prévu et dans lequel je me proposais de jeter un regard sur l’Antiquité gréco-romaine.

Malheureusement, pour toute une série de conséquences, je me suis trouvé dans l’impossibilité de maintenir ma promesse. C’est pour cette raison que, quand Élise Franssen m’a enfin proposé d’écrire une préface au livre, j’ai accepté son offre de bon gré et pas uniquement pour payer, par ce moyen, une partie de ma dette. J’ai en effet pensé que cette occasion m’aurait donné la possibilité de présenter un aperçu, très limité il va de soi, de ce qu’aurait été le contenu de mon chapitre et dont le but principal était celui de prouver que des pratiques semblables à celles d’al-Ṣafadī et à d’autres auteurs du Moyen-Âge oriental et occidental étaient déjà présentes dans la société gréco-romaine. Ces quelques pages ne remplaceront évidemment pas ma contribution, mais elles donneront au moins une toute petite idée de mes résultats. Un lecteur plus curieux trouvera, s’il le désire, une
présentation d'ensemble des conclusions auxquelles j'étais arrivé sur ces questions dans mon article “Pratiche di redazione e di produzione libraria nella biblioteca di Filodemo a Ercolano”, qui complète ce que j'avais écrit dans mon petit livre Nell'officina dei classici. Come lavoravano gli autori antichi (Roma, 2007).

Le PHerc. 1691/1021 fait partie de la bibliothèque personnelle du philosophe épicurien Philodème Gadara (1er s. av. J.-Chr.) qui avait été ensevelie par l'éruption du Vésuve de l'année 79 apr. J.-Chr. et miraculeusement découverte au milieu du XVIIIe siècle à Herculanum. Ce papyrus présente une écriture négligée, une mise en page irrégulière ; on y aperçoit des ratures, des suppressions, des ajouts entre les lignes, dans les marges et dans l'espace entre les colonnes ; on a détecté aussi des doublons, des annotations qui marquent des transpositions de parties de texte, des additions, des dégâts causés au texte ; en outre le rouleau est écrit aussi bien sur le recto que sur le verso. Comme le plus souvent dans l'antiquité gréco-romaine, il n'est cependant pas autographe : il a été rédigé sous dictée. Philodème avait dicté ou avait fait recopier, sous sa surveillance, sur rouleau de papyrus toute une série d'extraits tirés de plusieurs auteurs qui avaient écrit sur le sujet de son livre et qu'il avait parfois ici et là retravaillés. Ce papyrus est donc le résultat d'une première systématisation des excerpta rassemblés par le philosophe au fil de ses lectures pour la composition d'un livre sur l'histoire de l'Académie, de Platon à Antiochus d'Ascalon et son frère et successeur Aristos. Plus dans les détails, on peut supposer un processus de composition selon lequel Philodème avait lu, ou s'était fait lire, ses sources ; il avait marqué (adnotare) les passages qui l'intéressaient le plus ; ceux-ci avaient été copiés par un de ses aides ou ont été dictés à un sténographe (notarius). Tous ces matériaux avaient été enfim copiés sur le recto du rouleau que l'on connaissait aujourd'hui comme PHerc. 1691/1021. Au cours de ses enquêtes ultérieures, l'Épicurien avait augmenté le dossier déjà rassemblé et copié. Ces nouveaux extraits avaient été alors ajoutés, faute d'espace, au verso du même papyrus sur lequel figurait, au recto, le texte y afférent.

Le fait que ce rouleau ne soit pas un document holographique ne doit pas non plus surprendre. Dans l'Antiquité gréco-romaine l'auto- graphie d'un texte était en effet un phénomène rare, l'écriture étant considérée comme opus servile, et la méthode de la dictée non seulement d'un texte littéraire, mais aussi de recueil de notes ou d'extraits, était habitude courante. Les 165 rouleaux de papyrus qu'avait

2 Voir tout dernièrement Marganne, M.-H. (2020). « Comment reconnaître un autographe parmi les papyrus littéraires grecs ? L'exemple du P. Oxy. 74.4970 ». Bau-
réunis le grand érudit de l’époque flavienne Pline l’Ancien, d’énormes cahiers de notes écrits sur le recto et sur le verso, n’étaient pas non plus autographes, de la main de Pline. Ils avaient en effet été copiés ou rédigés sous la dictée par ses secrétaires. Les mêmes considérations valent aussi pour les dossiers que l’on doit supposer à l’origine des *Nuits Attiques* d’Aulu-Gelle ainsi que pour la rédaction de ces livres en tant qu’œuvre littéraire.

Qu’un recueil de notes ait été rassemblé par un auteur en recopiant les extraits de sa propre main ou non ne change pas la mise et la fin pour laquelle ces passages étaient destinés reste la même. Ce qui est bien plus important est de remarquer que l’on retrouve des traces de cette pratique de plus en plus loin dans le temps et dans des régions et cultures entre elles assez différentes.

Si les cahiers de notes de ce genre sont assez fréquents et répandus dans l’Antiquité gréco-romaine, on en repère des traces encore plus consistantes et tangibles dans le monde byzantin – où la culture de la *συλλωγή* (recueil) a toujours joué un rôle fort –, dans le Moyen Âge occidental et jusqu’à la Renaissance, moment où j’ai arrêté mon enquête dans la pleine conscience que le phénomène est répandu bien au-delà et jusqu’à l’époque moderne. Dans ces nouveaux milieux et à ces époques différentes domine presque toujours une écriture autographe, comme dans l’entourage d’al-Ṣafadī.

Je ne donne que trois exemples de ces cas plus tardifs que j’ai choisis, parmi beaucoup d’autres, parce qu’ils ont déjà occupé mon attention, certes d’une manière assez marginale. Dans le monde byzantin, je signale le gros carnet de notes transmis par le manuscrit de Heidelberg, Palatinus gr. 129 du milieu du XIVe s., autographe du grand érudit constantinopolitain Nicéphore Grégoras ainsi que celui du *Parisinus* gr. 2381, XIVe s., rassemblé par un savant anonyme avec des intérêts surtout scientifiques, qui le copia en large partie de sa main. Si l’on passe à la Renaissance italienne, on peut énumérer plusieurs cahiers de notes de la main d’Ange Politien (1454-1494), parmi lesquels le *Parisinus* gr. 3069 dont j’ai récemment étudié quelques extraits.

Il y a, on le voit, de quoi occuper pendant des années encore de nombreux chercheurs et envisager la publication de plusieurs ar-


Articles et livres sur ce sujet tout à fait intriguant et riche d'enseignements en ce qui concerne différentes expressions de la culture, que celles-ci soient holographes ou non. Un vaste monde ouvre de plus en plus ses portes devant nous. Il faut en profiter et on ne sera pas déçus des résultats qu'on atteindra. Le volume d'Élise Franssen en est un exemple à suivre.
Foreword

Élise Franssen
Università Ca’ Foscari Venezia, Italia

This miscellany is a workaround, a bypass, a fallback solution... Indeed, the initial plan was to organise a conference, and then to publish proceedings, as we would normally do. It would have been a closing conference for a great project, my Marie Skłodowska Curie project RASCIO. Reader, Author, Scholar in a Context of Information Overflow. How to Manage and Master Knowledge When There is Too Much to Know? (grant agreement no. 749180). The call for papers and the invitations were sent in February 2020, for a conference to be held in Venice, 10-12 December 2020. But February 2020 was when the COVID-19 pandemic began and no one imagined that an event scheduled nearly a year in advance would be impacted by this global health situation. However, in October 2020, after an entire spring and summer confined at home with my children, I had to resign myself to postponing the conference to spring of 2021, 13-15 April – and everyone was, or tried to be, confident that the situation would be over by then, and that COVID-19 would simply be part of our collective bad memories... We all know now that in Europe, even in spring a year later, we could not live, travel, and go about daily life as we used to, not at all: schools were closed again in several countries, including Belgium; the Veneto vacillated between an orange and a red zone; more or less severe lockdowns came one after another in all European countries... Winter 2022 looks the same and we still cannot see the end of this hardship...

A virtual conference could have been possible. Nevertheless, a conference without the chats at coffee breaks, the informal lunches, a farewell dinner, the human contacts and meetings seems terri-
bly sad to me. I have taken part in conferences as a remote speaker, and it has always been a very strange experience. Even if I am convinced that for environmental reasons, it is often better not to travel and to take part in conferences while at home, I could not imagine that the social apex of this project, in which I invested so much personally, intellectually and emotionally, would come to a close when I was sitting alone, at home; this was not an option. I decided to publish these “non-proceedings of a non-conference” in a surrealistic - maybe surrealistic! - way, instead. If we are missing the conviviality of the conference anyway, we will at least want to have a written trace of the contributions from which more people can benefit and have the chance to read and reread.

And so here is the result. A journey from Antiquity to the nineteenth century across authors’ tricks and habits, tastes and methodology; a journey through the Arab-Turkish world and Europe; a journey passing by belles-lettres, medicine, correspondence, theology, and history; in brief, a wide spectrum of authors, genres, and epochs, deepening our understanding of the peculiar readers that are authors, and showing us that reading habits of people who write are often similar across the borders of place and time.

This pluri- and inter-cultural approach is comparable to that of Jürgen Paul and David Durand-Guédy, in their interesting workshop By One’s Own Hand - for One’s Own Use at the CSMS (Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures, Hamburg University): in February 2020, they gathered specialists of Europe, the Arab world, the Iranian world, and the Turkish world, as well as of Chinese and Japanese cultures, of Hebrew manuscripts, and of Old Babylonian texts, for this interesting event. The workshop focused on manuscripts and texts for one’s personal use, whether utilitarian or for pleasure, and the proceedings, which promise to be very rich, are forthcoming (Writing for oneself. Berlin: de Gruyter. Studies in Manuscript Cultures); if you are reading this, you may well find their book interesting and I encourage you to seek it out.

I would like to thank all the authors who have replied positively to my request despite the tight schedule and who appear in the table of contents of this book: Frédéric Bauden, Mehdi Berriah, Yehoshua Frenkel, Michèle Goyens, Jaakko Häämeen-Anttila, Stefan Leder, and Nazlı Vatansever. I am very grateful for their participation and I very much hope to meet in person in the near future. I would also like to express my gratitude to those who had planned to take part in the conference, but had to decline my offer to include their paper: Olly Akkermann, Thomas Bauer, Fozia Bora, Caterina Bori, Roger Chartier, Carine Juvin, Ahmed al-Rahim, Adam Talib, Gowaart Vandenbossche, Tania van Hemelryck, Dirk Van Hulle, and Güllü Yıldız. I appreciate their frankness, understand their difficulties and hope to meet soon, in person.
Since this book is also the tangible conclusion of my Marie Skłodowska Curie research project RASCIO, this is the place to thank all the individuals and institutions who have given their support at one stage or another of the project: all my gratitude goes first to Antonella Ghersetti, my dear Supervisor; I would also like to thank Frédéric Bauden; Lisa Botter and Andrea Rudatis, both very efficient and understanding administrative support for researchers of the DSAAM (Department of Asian and North African Studies of Ca’ Foscari University of Venice); the late Maria Pia Pedani and her husband Antonio Fabris; Maxim Romanov; Daniela Meneghini, pleasant colleague and editor of the oriental section of Edizioni Ca’ Foscari’s series Filologie medievali e moderne; Marius Suciu, excellent Project Officer; Vicente Martí Tormo, my dear office coworker; the Ca’ Foscari Research office, and in particular Silvia Zabeo, a model of efficiency and accuracy with a great deal of humanity; Stefano Patron and Alessandro Busetto, kind and attentive librarians; Carlo Volpato; Marina Buzzoni; Eugenio Burgio; Claudia Simonelli; Alessandro Rizzo; and last but not least, my dear Aimee Kelley. I am grateful to the University of Liège Oriental Languages and Literature Department for their ad hoc support and welcome during some of the strange months of the pandemic. I extend my deepest thanks to The European Union 2020 Research Programme and Ca’ Foscari University Venice.
Introduction

Élise Franssen
Università Ca’ Foscari Venezia, Italia

Once you have learnt to read, you read all the time. Whether for utilitarian reasons or for pleasure, we read so frequently that we do not even know how many times a day we do so. Part of what we read is books, and the books we choose to read tell much of our tastes and interests: browsing through someone’s bookshelves can reveal much of the owner’s personality, activities, and likes and dislikes. It also gives general information about the circulation of information, especially when the library observed is old: the given time and place it was possible to read the texts in question under this form.¹

Authors do read as well, and they are special readers. They are creators: litterateurs are artists whose medium is language. The scholarly production also has a hint of creativity: the only fact to produce a new text about a certain subject is an act of creation. The way we treat a particular topic, the moment we decide to treat it, the perspective we adopt, the links we tie with other realities, data or ideas... all these circumstances contain a varying degree of creativi-

¹ For the Islamic world, with the notable exceptions of Hitzel 1999 and Strauss 2013, about the Ottoman period, we are lacking studies of average individuals’ libraries. D’Hulster 2020 is the study of the library of a person of exception: sultan Qansūh al-Ǧawrī. The volume about Topkapı palace library at the same period is very instructive as well: see Necipoğlu et al. 2019, but their book concerns again exceptional book owners. Hirschler (2012) and Hirschler (2016) do not deal with personal libraries, but gather information about unexceptional readers. Behrens-Abouseif’s texts (2018) is more general, but worth consulting, especially for its material approach to the libraries (physical structure, architecture...). Outside Islam, for Byzantium, see Cavallo, Carrié 2010; for Europe, see Hermand et al. 2014 and Cavallo, Chartier 2001 (notably Grafton 2001) and their bibliography.
ty. Nothing is lost, nothing is created, everything is transformed: we only reshuffle material seen, heard, read, or lived elsewhere. Thus, authors’ libraries are extremely informative: the books owned by a certain author tell a lot of his/her tastes and subjects of predilection, but also of his/her past, present and future (possible) works.2

How can we approach an author’s library? Sometimes, lists of books are known: this is the case for Ibn ‘Abd al-Hādī’s (d. 744/1343), for instance.3 Some authors’ biographies also include indications about their library. Another source of information about an author’s readings is the marks he/she left on the books read: consultation notes, comments, marginalia, ex-libris... The mere presence of these “paratexts”4 is already a source of information at least at two different levels. The first level is the information provided by the mark: this author owned/read/studied this book. It is already very useful and can be put in relation with the bio-bibliography of the author in question. The second level is the importance given to the record of this information. For the ex-libris, a first explanation is straightforward: when lending or losing a book, one can more easily find it again when one’s name is on it. The way to express one’s ownership can be meaningful: the example of Poliziano citing his friends in his ex-libris is eloquent (see chapter 3): it inscribes himself in a network of litterateurs.5 Similarly, the vocabulary used by al-Ṣafadī or al-Maqrīzī to indicate their consultation and note-taking of a certain manuscript is interesting as well (see chapters 3 and 5): the terms chosen imply the reading, and sometimes the note-taking, the excerpting, or the extracting of the book read. The analysis of such short inscriptions opens a window on their scholarly methods. Many authors leave traces of their reading in the margins of the books. These marginalia can be of many different types:6 comments, sometimes disparaging for the text or its author (see al-Maqrīzī in chapter 6), thoughts, links with other information or readings, even first drafts for a new book; in the latter case, reading the marginalia is like attending the formation of a new idea, the fertilisation of one mind by an idea, a text, or, more precisely, the reading of a text. Indeed, as noted by Ferrer,7 the marginal note is the reference to the moment of the

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2 Several examples of authors’ libraries will be cited in the next pages. Let us begin with Açıl 2015; Haarmann 1984; Kohlberg 1992; Liebrenz 2018; Mejcher-Atassi 2019.
3 Hirschler 2020.
4 Term forged by Genette to designate any peripherical text with regard to the actual text of the book or manuscript in presence. Among others, see Genette 1982.
5 Grafton 2001, 259-60.
6 Jackson 2002 offers a wide panorama and reflection on English-language marginal annotations on books, dating back to the period between 1700 and 2000.
reading, in the present, soon past, but it is oriented towards the future - the re-reading of the note - , and hence becomes the materialisation of this past moment of reading, of this fecund “meeting between [an author]’s disposition of mind and a text, and it carries in itself the sprout of a new text”.

Traces of reading experiences, but also of what we saw, heard, or lived remain in our brain and integrate our memory, a reservoir that I imagine as a great inner library, with shelves and boxes, arranged according to specific classifications (subjects, rhymes or sonorities, ideas, but also circumstances of one’s life when reading something...) that constitute the basis for our new ideas, and this is even more true for authors. It enters what Ferrer calls “authors’ virtual library”: the intertextual references found under an author’s pen in any writings of his/her, attesting his reading of a certain text. From these references, the researcher can reconstruct a collection of titles and texts of which the author in question was aware. These intertextual references can be found in published texts, but also in ‘genesis documents’, like notebooks, reading journals, drafts etc.

Indeed, next to the “marginalists” who write directly on the book pages, there are the “extractors” who dismantle the text and write down part of it elsewhere. Because they feel they have to sustain their memory, or fear not to remember perfectly what they have just read or heard, these readers write down what they deem important to be recorded, for instance in a reading journal or in a commonplace book, an in-between place to store someone else’s words in order to remember them and perhaps use them oneself. We will see examples of such tools for pre-modern and modern Islam in the coming pages (especially in chapters 3 and 8); they were already used in Antiquity; examples of similar sorts of compendia are sporadically known in Europe from the twelfth century, and were in favour during the Renaissance and still during the Enlightenment but with more reluctance.

Such collections of excerpts are meant to meet several requirements: we already mentioned the demand for memory; second, writing down something read (or heard) is also a way to study it and appropriate it; third, it is the place where an author can find an argument, an example, or a thesis developed by someone else (and their more or less precise bibliographical references), in order to use it in

8 “[La note] est le mémorial d’une rencontre entre le texte et une disposition d’esprit, mais aussi l’épure embryonnaire d’un nouvel événement de pensée – et en dernier ressort, d’un nouveau texte qui sera dérivé du premier” (Ferrer 2001, 21; transl. by the Author).
10 These two categories were elaborated and described, with examples, by Ferrer 2001, 16-21.
11 Hamesse 2001, 140, 149 et passim; Décultot 2003, 7-38, partic. 8-11; Blair 1996.
his/her own writings after all; fourth, such collections, personal, at first, often came to be readers’ digests for others: the tendency to read only the commonplace books and not the original works anymore came to be lamented upon during the Enlightenment.12 Similarly, the writers resorting only to their books of excerpts to compose their own books were mocked and disregarded during the same period, especially in France; but the wind-up merchants kept one as well: they had an ambiguous relation to these tools, ashamed to need one, but at the same time jealous of it and dependent on it.13 In fact, such tools appeared each time the sum of knowledge available in a certain culture became too heavy and wide for the human brain.14 This is a cultural convergence.15

When preserved, such reading journals are a goldmine of information. Sadly, they are not often identified as such, and thus are not studied.16 As it happens, they are not easy to study, though. Their contents are often so varied that it can be hard to find an angle of approach. If a mere list of the contents is already useful,17 it is not sufficient. What is interesting to my eyes is the links between the readings and the writing process. Indeed, for an author, the reason why it is important to record something is sometimes the project, more or less concrete, of writing something (a book, an essay, a poem...) in relation to what was just read. The reading can be the source of inspiration, or the project can condition the reading. Being able to determine what comes first (project of writing or reading) is meaningful and helps retrace the mental process of the author. Generally speaking, reconstructing the avant-texte, that is: gathering and organising all the documents in relation to the birth of a text (including the reconstitution of an author’s library, physical or virtual) brings us behind the scenes of the writing process and makes the genetic interpretation of the creation progress possible:18 it is one of the main steps of ge-

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12 Hamesse 2001, 141.
13 Décultot 2003, 10-11, 23-7. For instance, Montaigne, Voltaire or Diderot mocked the German scholars following the tradition of excerpting but they did it themselves as well.
14 Blair 2003; 2010. Examples are known in the Chinese culture as well: the leishu are commonplace books, collections of excerpts, see Blair 2007; Elman 2007.
15 Concept especially used in Prehistory studies, to characterise identical behaviours of different populations that cannot be explained by a direct influence of one population on the other. For instance, see Otte, Noiret, Remacle 2009, passim. It has nothing to do with Henry Jenkins’ theory about past and present media contents’ convergence, which he called “Convergence Culture” (see Jenkins 2006).
16 This is valid for Islamic manuscripts, and for European manuscripts as well. See Décultot 2003, 26.
17 Like the one established by Arberry 1961 for several volumes of al-Ṣafadī’s reading journal (his taḏkira).
etic criticism. Notions of endogenesis (endogénèse) and exogenesis (exogénèse) were also coined in the frame of genetic criticism.\textsuperscript{19} The subject of this book concerns exogenesis: the term is defined as the “selection and appropriation of the sources”\textsuperscript{20} while the endogenesis is the writing process, in its different stages of drafting and reviewing. In fact, the genetic criticism aims at analysing the written work in light of its gestation, as a process, documented by a series of documents attesting to it: drafts, but also notebooks, preliminary notes, reading journals, or titles of works read. In the end, with the genetic approach, the birth of the work studied is fully contextualised.

Indeed, when compared to the author’s production, the information about an author’s readings complements our knowledge of his/her work. For instance, we get to know if the reading of the sources is concomitant to their use or if an intermediate step is implied, like a notebook or a reading journal (taḏkira) as a depository of information or quotations waiting to be used in a future work, like al-Šafadī and Es’ad Efendi did (see chapters 3 and 8). It also provides information about the level of ‘digestion’ of the sources by the author in question: are the texts read cited verbatim, as al-Maqrīzī does for the Testament of Ardašīr (see chapter 6), or are they paraphrased? Are the original work and actual manuscript cited or not, and if yes, with which degree of precision are they cited?

To do justice to such documents, and to present most of the information available, digital tools prove extremely useful. Two specific projects come to mind as eloquent examples in this regard: the BDMP (Beckett Digital Manuscript Project), which aims at digitally presenting Beckett’s manuscripts, together with the documents of the avant-texte and other useful tools;\textsuperscript{21} and the BVH (Bibliothèques Virtuelles Humanistes), which gathers together digitalised documents, books and personal manuscripts of the Renaissance, as well as their digital editions and search tools.\textsuperscript{22} These examples are inspiring and could be a great source of inspiration for the Arabic manuscript tradition.

If studying authors as readers amounts mostly to dealing with case studies – each author is different and his/her readings can only be dif-


\textsuperscript{20} De Biasi 2011, 190 (transl. by the Author).

\textsuperscript{21} Directed by Dirk Van Hulle and Marc Nixon, see https://www.beckettarchive.org/.

\textsuperscript{22} Directed by Chiara Lastraioi, see http://www.bvh.univ-tours.fr.
Authors as Readers in the Mamlūk Period and Beyond, 15-26

What we tried to do with this volume is to show the common points of different authors in their reading practices across time and space to see if general trends and peculiarities would appear.

This is not the first collection of articles about authors’ libraries: at least three excellent publications come to mind when thinking of the topic. Nevertheless, this thematic volume is different in various regards. First, its scope of study is not limited to modern writers: most of the authors tackled here date back to the pre-modern period. A straightforward consequence of this is the lack of documents. When scholars working on Flaubert or other authors of the twentieth century complain about the immensity of their documentation and the great number of preparatory documents at their disposal for one book, we, scholars working on the pre-modern period in Islam, are extremely lucky if we have both a draft and final stage of a text, or a mention in a reading journal and a quotation in a published work. Second, since we study pre-press societies, the status of fixed text is less evident than in the modern period: even after its publication - in the first sense of the word: after having been rendered public, as attested by audition certificates, for instance - , the text of a given book could change, be augmented, and/or corrected. Third, as already said, multi- and inter-disciplinarity are distinctive features of this volume. Indeed, the idea was to confront authors’ practices in terms of reading across time and space. Observing the relation between the reading author and the author read, while reading ourselves the production of the reader-author offers a rich and inspiring *mise en abyme*. It is also the occasion to reflect on our own practices as readers and authors.

We have already mentioned several contributions in the course of this introduction, but I would like to sum up more systematically each of them. After a short glimpse into the antique world by Tiziano Dorandi in his preface, the volume follows a chronological order. Hence, the reader will find as first chapter a contribution about Saladin’s state secretary, al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil (d. 596/1200). Stefan Leder brilliantly shows that al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil was not simply a clerk composing stereotyped texts for the sultan’s chancery, but that he was a real creative author. al-Ṣafadī would have agreed: he was an admir-

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23 This is what the bibliography of European authors show; see D’Iorio, Ferrer 2001; Knoche 2015; Van Hulle, Nixon 2013.
24 A good example, for the Ottoman world, is Hitzel 1999.
er of al-Qâdī al-Fâdil’s poetry and gathered a collection of his verses (Muḥtār šīr al-Qâdī al-Fâdil, Selections from the Poetry of al-Qâdī al-Fâdil”). The readings of al-Qâdī al-Fâdil scrutinised here are the letters to which he responded: these are a real source of inspiration for him and the refined style he implemented in his letters of reply resonates with the letter received. In addition, al-Qâdī al-Fâdil mentioned other readings of his in his letters, his reply letters becoming both a source of information about his skills as an author and his tastes as a reader.

The mere analysis of an author’s production can also provide a wealth of information about his readings. For instance, in chapter 2, Mehdi Berriah offers an analysis of Ibn Taymiyya’s (d. 728/1328) readings and of his uses of the latter. The great scholarly culture of Ibn Taymiyya is shown by the wide variety of sources mastered and used wisely by him. The focus is methodological here: the reading is approached through its results in the theologian’s works. This contribution shows different things. First, Ibn Taymiyya’s tremendous knowledge of the texts is revealed by several examples. Second, we see his exceptional capacity in using any text if it is useful for his argumentation: Ibn Taymiyya did not confine himself to the ḥanbalī corpus; on the contrary, he pulled out all the stops to make his point. It shows his independence and his critical and analytical ability. It also implies that he was reading a lot. These matters of fact make Berriah think Ibn Taymiyya must have used tools like taḏkiras (reading journals), notebooks, summaries, and/or indexes. We hope to discover any material trace of them one day.

In the case of al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1363), several volumes of his taḏkira reached us, both holograph manuscripts and scribal copies. al-Ṣafadī’s taḏkira is the subject of the second part of the third chapter of this volume, devoted to the scholar al-Ṣafadī as a reader (by the Author of this introduction). al-Ṣafadī’s taḏkira is contextualised in the Islamic tradition. Its extent and contents are described. The various types of texts featured in it are excerpts of readings, texts heard (mainly poetry or riddles), first drafts of his works, or parts of the latter, and documents composed in the frame of his professional activity as chancery secretary. The first part of the article deals with the ownership and consultation marks that al-Ṣafadī left on the title page of various manuscripts. These number fifteen in the current state of research. All of them are described, as well as the manuscripts bearing them and the use al-Ṣafadī did of these readings and note-takings. al-Ṣafadī’s son’s library is also tackled, since, as far as we know now, it is only composed of books inherited from his father. The third part of the article concerns al-Ṣafadī’s inner library, materialised by the manuscripts of other authors’ texts he copied and by his own holograph manuscripts. All of this information provides us with a clearer image of al-Ṣafadī, a scholar whose methodology
is not so different from ours, a scholar who takes notes and cites his sources, whose reading agenda is dictated by scholarly and professional activities.

al-Ṣafadī’s working method is also approached by Yehoshua Frenkel, in his article about Tāğ al-Dīn al-Subkī’s and Ḥalīl b. Aybak al-Ṣafadī. What should be the historian’s methodology according to al-Subkī is explained and examples of cooperation between al-Subkī and al-Ṣafadī are displayed. The master-disciple relationship is thus put forward and the book is shown as ‘an open enterprise’: it can be emended and/or augmented by others in the course of study sessions.

With chapter five, we cross the Mediterranean. Michèle Goyens leads us to the court of King Charles V (d. 1380) where a skilful and conscientious translator, the king physician Evrart de Conty, was busy with the Middle-French translation of a pseudo-Aristotelian text: the *Problemata*. The draft of the second version of his translation has been preserved. This manuscript is extremely rich, since it contains various marginalia showing the translator at work. These demonstrate his critical mind towards the source text (the Latin translation by Bartholomew of Messina) and its commentary by Pietro de Abano at his disposition, and his struggles, hesitations, and creativity to render the technical terms and concepts in a non-intellectual language. Besides, it is the occasion to mention the diglossia at stake in the Middle Ages. In the end, Evrart de Conty appears not only as a careful and creative translator but also as an author of various comments inspired by his reading of the source text and above all, by Pietro de Abano’s commentary. Some of these comments were introduced inside his translation thus forming part of the text for the later reader. Goyens finally underlines the usefulness of digital editions to render the richness of this kind of document.

Chapter six returns to the Arabic world, and more specifically, to the Mamlūk sultanate. Frédéric Bauden continues his exploration of al-Maqrīzī’s (d. 845/1442) writings, life and activities investigating this time al-Maqrīzī’s readings and their relation to his contemporary scholarly production, as well as his marginalia. This study sheds light on a variety of subjects: book circulation (which works were accessible to al-Maqrīzī?), author’s methodology (when did al-Maqrīzī consult the books? What did he retain from them? How did he use them?) and networking (from whom did he borrow the books?). The marginalia consist of corrections, additions or comments, and provide information about his understanding and rating of the texts he read. The article is richly illustrated and documented.

al-Maqrīzī is the author studied in chapter seven as well. Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila offers us the analysis of al-Maqrīzī’s account of the Testament of Ardašīr in his *Ḫabar ʿan al-bašār*. Since we have the very manuscript al-Maqrīzī read – Miskawayhi’s *Taḡārib* – as a source of information for this event, and the holograph of the vol-
Authors as Readers in the Mamlūk Period and Beyond, 15-26

In the last chapter of this volume, Nazlı Vatansever leads us to the nineteenth-century Ottoman sultanate. We follow the readings of an important intellectual and statesman of the time, Es'ad Efendi, thanks to his mecmū’a. This personal notebook gathers excerpts of texts he read, but also first drafts of works of his and lists of books used to compose some of his own works. It is the perfect tool to approach Es'ad Efendi as a reader and to follow his writing activity, in parallel to his readings. Besides, his readings are influenced by the evolution of his career and the mecmū’a thus appears as a mirror of various facets of the man.

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Authors as Readers in the Mamlūk Period and Beyond, 15-26


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Élise Franssen
Introduction


Letters in My Mind
Concepts and Practices of Response in the Writing of al-Qādī al-Fāḍil

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Abstract al-Qādī al-Fāḍil, Saladin’s omnipotent minister and head of the state chancery, was a famous prose stylist and a model for later authors of epistolary literature. In his letters, al-Qādī al-Fāḍil mentions the critical reading of his own texts, and he reacts to incoming letters as an inspiration for his work as an author. For this reason and as a central component of the practice and concept of correspondence, which carried his writing, the response is a pivotal topic. al-Qādī al-Fāḍil referred to reading the letters he received, anticipated replies, encouraged or urged his addressee to respond, thereby referring to what the reception and reading of the reply letter meant to him as an author whose artful writing was meant to induce and nourish the ideal of an affective relationship.


The beginnings and evolution of ornate prose (inšāʾ) are closely related to the institution of the state chancery. For centuries, the refined prose style displayed by chancery scribes in letters and official documents linked the demonstration of rhetoric proficiency, the representation of political authority – in particular of the rulers in the name of whom the texts were issued – and the appeal to moral values and religious beliefs. The stylistic features such as assonance (tarṣīʿ), paronomasia (ḡinās) and particularly prose rhyme (sağʾ), which became
firmly established in the fourth/tenth century, as well as figurative embellishment such as tropes, metaphors, similes, and allusions, and the insertion of Qur’ānic quotations and poetry, were conventional characteristics of ornate prose also beyond the Arab speaking world. These elements of elegant and ornate style, in conjunction with the regular structuring of letters and documents and the use of specific formulaic expressions in its different parts, provided a complex formal framing. The composition of these multilayered texts, which might construe a multitude of equivocal references, was a highly appreciated art and underwent a remarkable evolution over the centuries, especially from the sixth/twelfth century onwards. An abundant didactical literature accompanied the scribes’ work. Despite the official nature of diplomatic letters and the practical importance of official acts such as a decree (tawqīʿ, marsūm), an appointment (taqlīd) and other types of official communication – intercession (ṣafāʿa), blame (muʿātaba), reports of victories (futūḥāt) or minor notes (ruqʿa) – archival preservation of original documents was rare, at least as far as we can infer from what was preserved. A major part of this literature survived in compilations of letters, documents and excerpts, and selective florilegia (or rather collections of what was available), all dedicated to prominent representatives of the art. As these collections often aimed at demonstrating the literary achievement of the secretary-authors as well as the compilers’ connoisseurship, and were not composed for the purpose of historical documentation, they often anonymise the addressees of the letters or persons referred to in the documents. Yet historiography and manuals of the chancery scribes’ art, as well as encyclopedias, also provide pertinent material.

This is particularly true for the oeuvre of al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil, ‘Abd al-Rahīm b. ‘Alī al-Baysānī, whose prose enjoyed an excellent reputation among contemporaries and exercised remarkable influence. Prominent chancery scribes of the Ayyubid and Mamlūk periods

1 Hachmeier 2002a, 3; 2002b, 139.
2 Mitchell 2009, 13-18, 118-44.
3 For the study of documents from the eighth to the fourteenth century, Diem 2018. Hachmeier 2002a, 27-93 examined the structure and content of the letters of Abū Isḥāq al-Ṣābiʾ. Hein 1968, 27-93 studied the form and content of Ayyubid’s diplomatic documents and letters.
4 Diem 2002, 155.
5 For the time up to the fifth/eleventh century, see Hachmeier 2002b, 142-51. In the Ayyubid period, the works of Ibn al-Ṣayrafī (d. 542/1147), on him, see Helbig 1909, 10 ff.; Ibn Mammātī (d. 606/1209); and Ibn Šīṭ al-Qurašī (d. Muḥarram 625/December-January 1227-28) were significant.
6 Diem 2020, 502.
composed anthologies of his writings, as a rule mostly letters, and thus expressed their great esteem for his highly refined and wonderfully balanced prose style. Muwaffaq al-Dīn al-Ḥasan b. Ahmad al-Dībāǧī (d. 617/1220), a chancery clerk as well as wazir under Sultan al-Kāmil, composed an eclectic collection entitled Min tarassul al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil. Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn ‘Abd al-Zāhir (d. 692/1292), administrator and head of the chancery for the Mamlūk Sultan Baybars, Qalāwūn and al-Ašrāf Ḥalīl, produced the anthology al-Durr al-naẓīm min tarassul ʿAbd ar-Raḥīm, and Ġamāl al-Dīn Ibn Nubāta (d. 768/1366), poet, adīb, prolific author and chancery scribe, compiled al-Fāṣil min kalām al-Fāḍil. Ibn Nubāta also acknowledged al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s virtuoso mastership of ornate epistolary prose composition in one of his adab anthologies, and compiled two collections of his own chancery prose.

The bulk of al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s writings is preserved in anonymous collections, some of which may date back to his lifetime or the early thirteenth century. Authors of works on the history of the Ayyubid period, such as al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s colleague ʿImād al-Dīn al-Ḥṣāfānī (d. 597/1201) and Abū Šāma (d. 665/1268), also quote his writings. Ibrahim Hafsi’s unpublished biography and edition of 430 letters and documents offers a survey of the sources, mostly manuscripts, which he used for his study. In addition to his letters, fragments of his mutaǧaddidāt, a type of journal, are also preserved. al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s letters constitute an important, yet seldom-used source for modern research on Saladin and his time, and the obvious prominence of his epistolary style has also encouraged modern research in Arabic epis-

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7 Diem 2015, 135 points out that letters may refer to, or even convey, official decisions. A strict distinction between letters and edicts thus was not always applied.
9 al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil MS Sūleymaniyah. The text was edited under the title Rasāʾil ‘an al-ḥarb wa-l-salām (al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil 1978).
11 al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil 1959.
12 al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil MS London.
13 Bauer 2009, 190, 197.
15 Abū Šāma 1418/1997 comprises more than 120 quotations of and from al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s letters.
16 Hafsi 1979. Cf. Smarandache 2015. Most of these manuscripts are not edited to date. The forthcoming edition (Rasāʾil al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil) makes use of all the material available for the 326 letters, which it contains.
18 With the exception of Lyons, Jackson 1984. The authors refer frequently – about 250 times – to al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s letters preserved in various manuscripts. These references to al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil do not appear in the index of the book.
tolography to include his letters. Several studies of Werner Diem contributed substantially to our acquaintance with his work.\footnote{In Diem 2002, 10 letters of al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil are considered. Diem 2015, 75-112 and 369-71, discusses, interprets and partly translates 32 letters of intercession. Diem 2020 contains pertinent observations regarding four of al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s letters.}

Born in Ascalon in 529/1135, he came to Egypt as a young man, found humble and precarious employment as a scribe in Cairo and Alexandria, and then ascended to the position of the deputy head of the Fatimid chancery in 563/1167.\footnote{Helbig 1909, 18.} Three years later, he became director of the diwān al-inšā’ in Cairo and held this position officially until his death, which occurred on the 6 or 7 Rabi’ II 596/26 or 27 January 1200. He was actively involved in the transition from Fatimid to Ayyubid rule and served Saladin as his right hand when the latter became vizir of the Fatimid caliph al-ʿĀḍid li-llāh. With the end of the Fatimid era, the submission to the Abbasid caliph’s authority and the negotiation of Saladin’s needs and interests were mainly conducted through al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s correspondence. Once Saladin’s dominion in Egypt was established in 567/1171, al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil remained his omnipotent minister and chief diplomat for more than two decades.\footnote{Saladin died in 589/1193.} He assisted with Saladin’s war against the Franks in Syria, where he was often at Saladin’s side. He also supported Saladin’s expansion into northern Syria and the Ǧazīra practically and diplomatically, even though he felt free to advocate the interests of Egypt in the correspondence with his patron.\footnote{Ehrenkreutz 1972, 187 ff., 228. See also Dajānī-Shakeel 1977.} al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil entertained a literary maǧlis frequented by scholars and literati,\footnote{al-Ṣafadī 1408/1988, 346 ff.} and among the prestigious endowments he made were, quite characteristic of his private interests, book endowments.\footnote{Hirschler 2012, 131, 135.}

At this time, the institution of the chancery (diwān al-inšā’) was a pillar of the state, a pivotal component of the alliance between the politico-military and the civil elites and a crucial agent of the political communication between central power and the governmental and military leadership of fief holders and members of Saladin’s extended family.\footnote{On the organisation and political impact of this institution, see also Eddé 1999, 316-22.} al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s correspondence gives ample evidence of his personal influence and self-reliance. Even though the importance and weight of practical agendas and the style conventions of the chancery required issuing official texts according to these paradigms, there remained enough leeway for al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s proper articulation to include his authorial accentuation. His prose is a mile-
stone in the evolution of epistolary literature; this is not only obvious from the brilliant rhetorical elaboration of al-Qādī al-Fāḍil’s writings, but also apparent in his self-awareness as an author and his appreciation of letters he received and the mastership of their authors. From this perspective, reading, or the various kinds of reading, to which his letters refer, is a foundational practice for the process of writing. His letters maintain the idea of correspondence and sustain the irreplaceability of response, documenting reading as a practice and revealing that reading is a conceptual component of his writing.

In a letter addressed to ʿImād al-Dīn, al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil explained that, for him, writing a text was a creative act instigated by impulse and nurtured by an enduring stimulus that would not end the moment he had composed the text. He described the constant effort of correcting and improving the texts, which he had written or dictated. When he expressed his view of his work as an author, he applied the rhetoric embellishment and hyperbolic periphrasis characteristic of the ornate prose style, yet the display of a diversity of references, allusions and linguistic nuances appears particularly elaborate here.26 As correspondence between colleagues, this letter was not written in the name of Saladin or any other superior and may be considered as belonging to the genre of iḫwāniyyāt, letters of exchange between friends and colleagues.27 al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil, who had recommended to Saladin the employment of ‘Imād al-Dīn as his munšiʾ in the year 570/1175,28 was a colleague, superior and supportive friend of ʿImād.29 As the private correspondence among the urban elites of literati, scholars and civil officials later developed into a proper literary discipline, al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s prose here again has a precur- sory and foundational character.30

In the attempt to highlight aspects of the literary dimension of his epistolary work, we apply a reductive approach regarding al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s scintillating prose, which translation cannot adequately render, and concentrate instead on specific ideas to which the prose refers. Our translations are therefore selective, approximate and necessarily simplifying. It is our intent, however, to convey something of the enthusiasm that this prose induced among the educated of the time and during the following Mamlûk period and we therefore incorporate samples of his sophisticated rhetorical style.

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27 Hachmeier 2002a, 2, 37; Bauden 2017, 204-8.
29 The title of ‘Imād’s historical work al-Fath al-qussī fī al-fath al-qudsī, referring to Quss ibn Sā’ida, was inspired or encouraged by al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil; Richter-Bernburg 2014, 46.
30 Ibn Nubāta 2019, 11.
I do not write [anything] on a scrap of paper (fa-lâ aktubu ġuzâzatan) [he writes] without asking to bring it forward to me again in due time, and no detail (wa-lâ lum'ata) without being exposed to utmost disgust when I read through it again (fi stirğâ‘ihâ). Tirelessly I apply sharp criticism by unsheathing the sword of the Sunday-people, when I bring it in shape (lâ azâlu uğarridu fi ahğihâ sayfa ahli l-aḥadi), and I become as frail (wa-taḍ'ufu nafsî) as the Sabbat-people’s souls (da'fa anfusi ahli s-sabt) while trying to preserve it (fi stibqâ‘ihâ). There are reasons for this. One is that, by God, I do not write any utterance (lafżatan) without being unsatisfied (ġayru râdın) afterwards, and unwilling that it is quoted or something is reproduced from it (ġayru mu’tirin li-an tunqala ‘annî wa-lâ an yunqala minhâ).

Another reason, he explains, refers to his good reputation (fiyya žunûnun ġamîlatun) and wish to “not reduce with what I write [lit. with my own hand] the credit which I have in the hearts of well-meaning people” (wa-lâ ‘astarğî’u bi-yadî mâ liya fi qulûbi ahli ḥusni ż-zânni min al-awârî). He also hints at his difficult situation, explaining that his responsibilities at the chancery naturally provoke rebuke and rejection, but that he is willing to endure this situation despite all difficulties.

While this argument may be understood, in accordance with an allusion at the beginning of this letter, as an excuse for not returning to ‘Imâd al-Dîn the books he had borrowed from him, the explication of his working method also highlights that al-Qâdî al-Fâdîl does not need model texts found in books in order to compose his texts. Yet his remark also implies that reading, in this case the critical reading of his own text, was a basic tool used in his work as an author. He returns to this aspect when he asserts that he never saw something written the day before that did not require being redone today (illâ wa-qtidâ l-wuqûfu ‘alayhi al-yawma), either because of the depreciation of its purpose (tasfîhan li-murādîhi) or the rebuke of its hyperbolic and composition (qadḥan fî mubâlağatihi wa-qtiṣâdihi). In another passage of this letter, al-Qâdî al-Fâdîl emphasises that for the process of writing, or dictating, he is completely within himself, not distracted by any preoccupation or disturbance (lâ a‘lamu šâġilan li-qalbin aw sam‘in), and does not allow for secondary considerations or calculations. “During the dictate I do not seek confirmation of the beauty of the text (lâ stath-bitu fihi ‘alâ ġariyyin)” and while writing with his own hand, he does not restrain (lit. tighten the strings of) his hand (from moving with the flow) of his ideas (lâ aḥbîsu ‘anâna yadî ‘alâ ḥâṭîri).
This idealised image of authorship served more than one purpose. al-Qādī al-Fāḍil presented his own inspired creativity as a model and incitation, and he highlighted that the originality of his writing did not depend on books from which he would copy. It also relates to the idea that the mastery of ornate prose meant striving towards perfection. As an author, al-Qādī al-Fāḍil was well aware, of course, that his own texts were read and sometimes, if not regularly, also read aloud. Producing texts with the purpose of having them read aloud was a common practice at the chancery; official texts, such as edicts, which al-Qādī al-Fāḍil regularly produced, might explicitly request a public reading of the document (tilāwa). Reading letters aloud could serve a similar purpose, namely communicating them to an assembly of people. In this case, however, the performative character of the reading would contain a demonstration of the particularly artful composition of the text, making recognisable its aesthetic qualities, such as assonance and symmetry, rhyme and rhythm of the koła. The attention for both kinds of reception, we assume, were thus part of the author’s strategy when he composed his texts. al-Qādī al-Fāḍil’s reply to an anonymous addressee, probably a person of high standing, contains a laudation of the letter he had received. Here he mentions the reaction of those who read it aloud as an evidence for the letter’s outstanding qualities and the reader’s as well as the listeners’ respect for its author. “And what would our patron think”, he writes, “of the faces of the slaves, as they were cheerfully shining when they read it, and of their tongues which, when articulating it, were spluttering because of their utmost respect for it?!”

His reference to reading aloud probably indicates a usual practice and it implies that al-Qādī al-Fāḍil considered careful attention to the text’s phonetic effects as being part of the author’s task; in a reply letter to ʿImād al-Dīn, he affirms this. His eulogy, adorned by metaphoric and hyperbolic phrasing, asserts that accomplished ornate prose is a delight when read or heard (wa-adḥat kutubuhā tataḥāda bayna r-rāʾīna wa-l-sāmiʿīna).

In this letter, dated 14 Muḥarram 574/2 July 1178, al-Qādī al-Fāḍil elucidated more specifically that reading the artfully composed epis-

33 His letter to an anonymous amīr contains an edict (manšūr), which he ordered – in Saladin’s name – to be publicly proclaimed from the pulpit (minbar). al-Qādī al-Fāḍil 1978, 234-6, spec. 236. Cf. Rasāʾil al-Qadī al-Fāḍil (forthcoming), Risāla 129.
34 al-Qādī al-Fāḍil, Ǧuzʾ min kalām al-Qādī al-Fāḍil, ff. 58b-59a (p. 118 f.; cf. fig. 2). Rasāʾil al-Qadī al-Fāḍil (forthcoming), Risāla 221.
35 Referring to ʿImād as al-ḥadra.
tale of his addressee served as a source of inspiration. His allusion to his own expertise as an author of refined prose at the end of his empathic appraisal of ‘Imād’s letter did not serve, or at least not centrally, his claims as an authority, but purposely correlated responsive reading and creative authorship. al-Qādī al-Fāḍil here evokes the benefits of studying the letter in a way that penetrates to its precious essence (wa-stašfaftu ġawharahu l-ṭamīn) and seeks healing from its grace manifest in a clear message (wa-stašfaytu min fāḍlihi l-mubīn). The effects of ‘Imād’s letter produce an extended, if not endless, shade and protective sphere and sweet, salubrious water (fa-raʾaytu kitābatan warafat zilālan wa-raqqat zulālan). al-Qādī al-Fāḍil asserts that praising the letter to the highest heavens is a forgivable wrong: the one who lets himself go unrestrained when describing it does not stumble or commit a sin, but will be forgiven (lā yaʿṭuru man aṭlaqa ʿināna waṣfihi fa-yakūnu muqālan). al-Qādī al-Fāḍil’s praise of the unchallenged uniqueness of ‘Imād’s style makes use of the notions ḥaqīqa and maǧāz in a pun that has a double entendre. ‘Imād’s letter, he states, reached the (protected) treasures of the scribe’s craft as a matter of fact and with respect to literal meaning (of course through his use of appropriate metaphors), while the utmost to be realised by a less capable person is to reach this metaphorically and with respect to metaphorical meaning (by use of less appropriate metaphors) (Wa-ḥaṣalat min ḏaḫāʾiri hādhihi ʿalā l-ḥaqīqa, wa-quṣārā l-muqaṣṣiri an yaḥṣula ʿalā l-maǧāzi). ‘Imād’s pen (lit. ‘pens’; the plural is employed hyperbolically) is, metaphorically, the conquering sword of the hero to whom “the land of rhetoric” was made subservient (ḏululan), in reference to the Qur’anic notion. After elaborating on the significant equitation of the chancery scribe’s pen and political power, al-Qādī al-Fāḍil insinuates that the recognition of the letter’s superior quality is a binding juridical act: ‘Imād al-Dīn’s letters were considered to replace his hand (used for vowing, we infer; wa-stunībat kutubuhā ʿan yadihā), and they thus constitute a protecting hindrance (or, intended ambiguity, a butt) for the sinners (fa-hiya ʿurḍatun lī-l-

36 ‘Imād al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī 1987a, 108-10, reproduced by Hafsi 1979, no. 67. In the quoted passage, we correct a few readings of the editor of ‘Imād’s al-Barq al-šāmī. For a documentation of the variants, which appear in manuscripts containing anonymous collections of al-Qādī al-Fāḍil’s letters, see Rasāʾil al-Qādī al-Fāḍil (forthcoming), Risāla 169.
37 ‘Imād al-Dīn 1987a reads raqqat.
38 ‘Imād al-Dīn 1987a reads rāqat.
40 ‘Imād al-Dīn 1987a reads ǧulūlan.
41 67:15: “He it was who made the earth subservient to you”.
42 ‘Imād al-Dīn 1987a reads unšiʿat.
āṯimīn). As a condition for this rule, “the testimonies for its superior quality were brought forward (wa-ubdiyati š-šahādatu bi-faḍlihā)”. Therefore, the qurʾānic precept would be applicable: “We shall not conceal the testimony of God, or else we are counted sinners”.43

In a particular expression of his appreciation for ‘Imād’s letter, al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil relates his reading of it to his own work as an author. ‘Imād’s letters, “every passage of which appears as a unique and imitable pearl (of a necklace; wa-ġadat kullu fiqratin minhā yatīmatan)”, he states, would make a deep impression on every reader. If this is the case, al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil argues further, “for the one who is not directly addressed or concerned (man lam yakun bi-hā maʿniyyan), or for the one whom the concealed, intended meaning of the letter might allude to (wa-man rubbāmā kāna sirru surūrihā ‘anhu makniyyan)”, what would one think of someone like himself?

Someone who takes up from them the tiny twilight of daybreak as evidence (fa-mā ẓ-ẓannu bi-man44 yataqalladu minhā l-faǧra45 burhānan), and to whom the (everlasting) stones of their exquisite features (ḥawālidu46 mahāsinihā) grant that they will endure for a time after the [end of] time? Someone whose petrified thought becomes flexible (talīnu ṣaḫriyyatu fikrihi), and who is sustained by these letters in his effort of inventing figurative expression (fa-yakūnu bi-hā ʿalā tawlīdi l-maʿānī muʿānan)?!

One may suggest that al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s praise reflected the ambitious style of ‘Imād’s ornate prose. However, when al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil referred to the personal experience of receiving inspiration from reading this letter, he again spoke to his addressee as an author who read his prose. A short reference to his reading experience also appears in a reply preserved in Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir’s (d. 692/1292) collection al-Durr an-naẓīm min tarassul ʿAbd ar-Raḥīm.47 The remark concerns the letter al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil had received from his anonymous addressee and regards his expertise of active and responsive reading: while reading, he wrote, he elaborated in his mind on the ideas, or figurative expressions, that the wording of the letter suggested. Yet apart from this aspect, this letter’s character is quite different from what he wrote to ‘Imād al-Dīn.

43 5:106: wa-lā naktumu šahādata llāhi innā idan la-mina l-āṯimīna. The context here is the testimony for a bequest.
46 The three stones of the fireplace that support the cooking-pot.
The duties as a chancery scribe, we may suppose, required the production of letters of reply as a common diplomatic practice, and included the convention of an articulation of gratitude for a received letter. al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil applied this scheme here in his own fashion. A major thematic aspect of the missive, as we read it, regards the value that he bestowed upon the communication with his correspondent, while the style of the received letter was less significant. Making use of an established motif, he placed next to the conventional eulogy of his addressee five verses complaining about the grief and despond caused by separation from the beloved – “The letter reached the distressed because separation afflicted him” (al-ka’iba li-mā ‘arāhu min al-firāqi). Continuing in this vein, he confirmed the arrival of the addressee’s letter: “The illustrious letter reached me at a time of looking forward (to it with great impatience) and of an anticipation growing every day” (waṣala l-kitābu l-karīmu ilayya ḥīna taṭalluʿin ẓādī wa-tawqūʿin yāzīdu fī kullī yawmīn ẓādīd). The author’s relief and delight upon being in contact with his correspondent again explained his esteem for the letter, which he received with utmost care and respect.

When he broke its seal and kissed the letter [lit. his lips came close to the abundant refreshment that it offered] and let his gaze pasture freely in its blossoming [meadowland] (fa-lammā faḍḍa ḥitāmahu wa-šāfaha mudāmahu wa-sarrahā nāzirahu fī nādirihī), and when he augmented in his mind the ideas, or figurative expressions, of the letters wording (wa-tazayyada maʿāniyahu min alfāẓīhi fī ḫāṭirī), and studied what the writing had laid down (waqafa ʿalā rasmihi), and inferred (qaḍā) what the mamlūk [referring to himself] had to honour and observe according to his instruction (mā yaǧibu mina t-taʿẓīmi ʿalā rasmihi), and saw a plantation full of ripened fruits (rawḍatan qad aynāt) and gardens which had blossomed, bearing fruits (qad azharat wa-aṯmarat), his mind (ṣarāʾir) was delighted and his heart (ḏamāʾir) gladdened. The ties of his benevolence (asbāb niʿamihī) were reaffirmed in him, and renewed were for him (ʿindahu) the obligations resulting from his nobleness (min ʿuhūdi karamihī).

As we may infer from al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s references to the letters, which he had received or expected to receive, many of his letters were factually or intentionally part of an exchange. Yet the collections

48 Ahmad Badawī included these verses in his edition of the Dīwān (al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil 1961, 493, no. 607).
49 The author’s use of the third person, after referring to himself in the first person, ties in with the preceding poem and alludes to his authorship of the verses.
50 Mudām, lit. continuing rain; also wine.
that preserve his writings focus on al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil as the author of outstanding ornate prose and thus do not contain replies or letters that were sent to him. Notwithstanding the scarceness of documented correspondence containing letters from both sides, we may certainly suppose that the exchange of letters was a routine particularly in matters of political significance. A letter written in the name of Saladin and sent to the Abbasid caliph after the conquest of Sinjār, when Saladin stayed at Nişibin in the early month of Ramaḍān of the year 578/December-January 1182-1183, contains al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s allusion to letters he had received earlier from the caliph. Saladin’s military operations in the Ğazīra and his objective to subdue Mosul were contested matters, and al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil was obviously anxious to emphasise Saladin’s docility in reaction to the caliph’s letters:

“Whatever replies reached him [i.e. Saladin] extended the pastures of hope, lightened the lamps of accepted guidance, reached his inner craves, and deepened his insight even though its perspicacity had waned” (wa-mahmā waradahu mina l-aġwibati fasaḥa masāriḥa r-raǧāʾi, wa-aḏkā maṣābīḥa l-ihtidāʾi, wa-balağa fī nafsihi munāhā, wa-zāda fī baṣīratih wa-in kāna stibṣāruh qad tanāhā).

Diplomatic correspondence, as this case illustrates, was a means of polite communication articulating and negotiating specific political interests. More generally, communication through the exchange of letters granted relational contact and served the social cohesion between the participants, important for the functioning of the state and the networking of the head of the chancery. The intersecting of both perspectives, duty and personal relationship, fostered diplomacy and provided personal statement with authority. The wide range of al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s correspondence in the wider context of the state chancery, may illustrate this aspect. At the same time, the collections of excerpts, represented here by the Konya manuscript, manifest the perception of his writings as epistolary literature largely independent of the historical and functional contexts of the chancery. Detached from the circumstance of the individual communication, this literature depicts and models the common cultural exercise of writing and receiving messages composed in accordance to the exi-

51 As an exception, see Bauden 2017. ʿImād al-Dīn 1987 also occasionally includes the exchange of letters from both sides.
52 Lyons, Jackson 1984, 182.
54 A preliminary list of 2,080 items of al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s correspondence (letters, documents and fragments), many of which are preserved in several sources, does certainly not comprise everything preserved. Even if this list may still hide so far unrevealed cases of multiple preservation in several sources, it may give an idea of the extent of the author’s activity.
gent conventions of ornate prose. Yet even if the practice of reading remains in the background, we can discern an implicit notion of readership. For instance, when al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil explained in his response the impact and value of a letter he had received from the Emir ʿIzz al-Dīn Mūsak, Saladin’s nephew (d. 585/1189), he insinuated that he had held it in his hands, read it and appreciated it. He mentions the significance of the amīr’s letter as a means of access to the sender (ḏarīʿa), describes the sensual sensation that the musk-scent of its ink conveyed, and the smell that spread when he touched it, as well as the cheerfulness that arose from the reflecting surface of its page (al-bišru l-lāʾihu min mirʾāti ṭirsihi).

In al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s writing, the composition and reception of letters were closely interrelated, not only for the exigencies of the chancery and not only in terms of the author’s explicit reference to the impulse that reading might afford to writing. Letters of al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil suggest that receiving replies was a purpose and postulate of his writing, since they were a medium of expressing an idealised affective relationship often conveyed according to literary convention through love poetry. Independent of how al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s use of this theme related to literary tradition and to the relationship between the persons concerned in the individual case, it often stands for the importance given to the reciprocity of correspondence: the idea and practice of response was a concept that drove and structured his writing. One may encounter in al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s writing the solicitation of a close relationship with the addressee in a particularly elaborate manner. However, this aspect is to some extent a common trait of correspondence and al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s elaboration of this motif illustrates his art of prose composition in the framework of chancery letters and more specifically relates to the conceptual framework of response. Both the aesthetic dimension of its literary articulation and the pragmatic objective of valuing the relationship between the author and his addressee are plausible incentives for this practice.

Waiting for a reply impatiently, urging the addressee to send a reply and despair over the addressee’s abstinence from replying are topoi, which explain the author’s attachment and wish for reciprocity. His pleas may very well have been a concern of plausible actuality, such as the sickness of his addressee, and he thus described his impatience to receive a letter, which would announce recovery. “He (referring to himself as ḥādim) waits for a reply letter which lets him expect an answer to the invocations elevated to their creator (fa-hu-

57 Diem 2015, 275.
wa yantaẓiru ǧawāban yanẓuru bi-hi ilâ ǧawābi l-ad’iyyati l-marfū’ati ilâ ilâ ḥāliqihi).58 al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s concern for the continuity of communication with his correspondent and the responsiveness of his addressees pervades many of his letters. Letters, it seems, were written in order to assure and encourage communication. Metaphorically, communication – through letter writing, one must note – signifies life.

In an undated letter to Saladin, al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil implores him to resume the correspondence. The metaphoric use of the terms truce and war, and the inversion of their meaning make his plea particularly impressive.59 The arrows, which he asks Saladin to shoot, revive, and the truce, which means that no arrows are shot, is a deadly peril.

The slave over time entered a truce (kāna l-mamlūk ma’a l-ayyām ‘alā ḥudnatin), yet it declared its proper war since our patron’s hand made him become hors de combat, depriving him of the weapon of its letters (fa-āḏinat bi-ḥarbhihi muḏ ‘aṭṭalathu yadu mawlānā min silāḥi kutubihā). [...] When the arrow of our patron’s letters is notched for the bowstring, it revives the moment it hits, the slain (wa-s-sahmu min kutubi mawlānā idā fuwwiqā aḥyā bi-ʾišābatihī l-maqtala). By God, he is a marksman who revives with his shot, and a renegade whose forbearance kills (fa-lillāhi huwa min rāmin yuḥyī bi-ramyihi, wa-nāhin yaqtulu bi-nahyihi). The slave had a share (saḥm) of his patron’s letters, which kept him alive, and when they stopped to flow, the share became an arrow (saḥm), which destroyed him (kāna li-l-mamlūkī sahmun min kutubi mawlānā yuḥyī fi-lammā nqaṭaʿat sāra sahmun yurdihi). So induce the arrow to hit him – if not, he is killed by its failure to appear (fa-ʿarid ‘alayhi s-saḥma wa-illā qutila bi-ʿuṭlatihi).

In another instance, al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil compares the effect of the addressee’s letter that revives the reader to that of the rain, which brings back vegetation to the dried earth as the Qur’ān depicts it,60 and thus gives emphasis to this idea.61

The condition of the hearts is like the condition of this (lifeless) earth, lifeless when the letters ceased as is the numbness of the earth when rain has stopped to fall (ka-ḍalika ḥālu l-qulūbi ka-

58 al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil, Ǧuzʾ min kalām al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil (ms Konya, Yūsuf Aghā 4881), ff. 58a-b (p. 117; cf. figs 1-2). Rasāʾil al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil (forthcoming), Risāla 220.
60 22:5: wa-tarā l-arḍa hāmidatan fa-iḏā ʾanzalnā ʿalayhā l-māʾa htazat wa-rabat wa-anbatat min kulli zawḡin bahīqin.
61 al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil, Ǧuzʾ min kalām al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil, ff. 58b-59a (pp. 118-19; cf. fig. 2). For another quotation from the same letter, see fn. 34.
When the letter came [down] to us from our patron, it was as if rain would fall upon us (fa-iḍā nazala bi-nā min mawlānā l-kitābu fa-huwa ka-mā nazala ʿalaynā s-sаḥābu). It brought life [lit. motion] back into the bodies (with the alertness of the mind reawakened), just as the dried earth [i.e. its vegetation] comes into motion again. Fresh ideas grew from every fragrant pool, as the earth brings forward all kinds of splendid plants (fa-hazza l-ʿаṭāfa hтизаа l-arđī l-ʿiğāfi, wa-anbatati l-hаwаtīrū min kul-lī rawżīn ʿаrīg inbаta l-arđī kullа zawğīn bahīg).

This simile represents the reply letter as a source of life and intellectual vitality and reveals the significance of a fecund topic in the writing of al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil. As the extracts above show, he referred to letters received, anticipated replies and encouraged or urged his addressee to respond. The topic of the reply relates his concept of
authorship to the idealised image of reading: al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s mind responds to the stimulating text he reads, and reading is not only a means of absorbing the text, but also of valuing the courtesy implied by the sending of the message. The expression of appreciation is generally a formal aspect of letters, yet the rhetorical elaboration on the image of affective relationship, which the issue of the reply letter accommodates and invites in the context of both diplomatic and private correspondence, is an essential component of the communication that ornate prose is expected to entertain and frame. The reply letter serves as a means to construe affective relationships in a context of intersecting social conventions and established literary themes. Pivotal as it is for any correspondence, the reply letter is an essential feature of al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s prose, independent of its true appearance and shape.
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Ibn Taymiyya’s Methodology Regarding His Sources: Reading, Selection and Use
Preliminary Study and Perspectives

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Abstract Over the past two decades, the growing number of works on Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328) has confirmed the ever-growing interest of scholars in the famous Ḥanbalī theologian of Damascus, who is undeniably one of the most studied and well-known medieval Muslim theologians. In addition to the diversity of the subjects covered, the analysis of Ibn Taymiyya’s writings demonstrates the author’s vast erudition and his argumentation methodology, which was both efficient and complex. Even though he has been the subject of research in both the Arab world and Western scholarship, grey areas remain regarding what can be called Ibn Taymiyya’s source methodology. Based on a close reading of a sample of the Hanbali theologian’s writings, this article attempts to provide some preliminary information on Ibn Taymiyya’s way of reading, selection and use of sources in his argumentation methodology. Far from being an exhaustive study that would require a complete analysis of the Hanbali scholar’s work, this article aims to be a preliminary study to suggest analytical and research perspectives.


Summary 1 Introduction. – 2 The Texts. – 3 Opinions of the Companions. – 3.1 Pre-Eminence According to Merit and ġumhūr al-ṣaḥāba as a Selection Criterion. – 3.2 Relevance of the Source at the Expense of Its Pre-Eminence. – 4 Use Your Opponent’s Corpus of Texts. – 4.1 Capacity to Use the Opponent’s Corpus. – 4.2 Circulation Across the Maḏḥabs and Independence from the Maḏḥabs. – 4.3 Ambivalence in Ibn Taymiyya’s Treatment of the Writings of Ašʿarī Mutakallimūn Authors. – 5 Rigour and Criticism in the Reading of Sources. – 6 Conclusion.
1 Introduction

Ibn Taymiyya is undeniably one of the most studied medieval Muslim theologians and one who raises the most interest among researchers both in the Arab world and in the West. This is due to his numerous works on a wide range of subjects, in which a rich and complex writing still influences to a certain extent contemporary Islam. As a result, Ibn Taymiyya is more often (mis)quoted than understood.¹

The flowering of works over the last two decades has broadened our knowledge of the theologian’s work and thought including his position in matters of dogma, Sufism, logic, philosophy, politics but also the later reception of his writings and principles. However, the significant number of works on Ibn Taymiyya is still insufficient to hope to propose a definitive introduction to his thought and writings.² Ibn Taymiyya’s enormous body of work was due to his vast erudition that came from the study and knowledge of a corpus of sources as wide as they were varied, just like the diversity of the subjects he dealt with in depth. In his writings, Ibn Taymiyya quoted jurists, theologians, exegetes, muḥaddiṯūn, Sufi masters, philosophers, historians – whether he liked them or not – and their works, sometimes to support his opinion and elsewhere to criticise and refute the views of his opponents. The fact that Ibn Taymiyya used such a corpus of sources confirms his “intellectual independence”.³ It is also because of his views and his profound knowledge of Aristotelian logic, Greek philosophy and kalām, but also because all these elements influenced his methodology, that Ibn Taymiyya was criticised by some traditionalists, including the Hanbalis and other scholars from his circle like al-Dahabi.⁴

One only needs to read Ibn Taymiyya’s magnum opus Darʾ al-taʿāruḍ to be made aware of his vast erudition, which many of his contemporaries acknowledged, whether they were close to him or adversaries, an erudition before which, in the words of Yahya Michot, “on ne peut rester que pantois”.⁵ Recently, Carl Sharif El-Tobgui has shown that the Darʾ al-taʿāruḍ:

reveals a broadly coherent system of thought that draws on diverse intellectual resources. Ibn Taymiyya synthesized these resources and, combining them with his own unique contributions, created an approach to the question of reason and revelation that stands

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¹ Rapoport, Shahab 2010, 4; Michot 2020b.
² Rapoport, Shahab 2010, 5; Michot 2020a, VI-VII.
³ Anjum 2012, 184; El-Tobgui 2019, 87-93.
⁵ Michot 2000, 599.
in marked contrast to previously articulated approaches. Through this ambitious undertaking, Ibn Taymiyya develops views and arguments that have implications for fields ranging from the interpretation of scripture to ontology, epistemology, and the theory of language.\(^6\)

It is true that Ibn Taymiyya’s rather dry writing style, as well as his repetitive digressions and tangled discussions that overshadow the internal structure of his arguments, coupled with an uninterrupted flow of detailed information and quotations, often make his writings difficult to read – the level of difficulty varying from work to work. However, despite these difficulties, one can analyse Ibn Taymiyya’s discursive strategy and some of these aspects have already been studied.

In his book Ibn Taymiyya: ḥayātu-hu, Muḥammad Abū Zahra (d. 1974) highlighted Ibn Taymiyya’s writing manḥāǧ in tafsīr, issues related to dogma, jurisprudence and Sufism. For Muḥammad Abū Zahra, his manḥāǧ was the same regardless of the field.\(^7\) In an important contribution, Ibrāhīm ʿUqaylī was interested in the importance given to revelation, reason and the Arabic language itself in Ibn Taymiyya’s manḥāǧ.\(^8\) The Arabic language as a reasoning tool in Ibn Taymiyya was later analysed in detail by Hādī Aḥmad Farḥān al-Šāǧirī\(^9\) and then ‘Abd al-Allāh b. Nāfī al-Daʿğānī.\(^10\) In 1999, the book Manḥaǧ ṣaḥḥ al-Islām by ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Sa’d al-Ḥaǧīlī attempted to highlight the various aspects of Ibn Taymiyya’s written output, the historical context, the number of writings, the date and place of production.\(^11\) Finally, other aspects of Ibn Taymiyya’s manḥāǧ have been studied, like the issue of takfīr,\(^12\) dogma,\(^13\) innovations (bidaʿ)\(^14\) or even knowledge in general.\(^15\)

Undeniably, Ibn Taymiyya’s argumentation strategy in the fields of philosophy and rationalism, particularly in his Darʿ al-taʿāruḍ, attracted much scholarly interest and fostered a substantial scientif-

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6 El-Tobgui 2019, 4-5.
8 ‘Uqaylī 1994, 109-76.
10 al-Da’ğānī 2014, 537-649.
14 al-Muqrin 2014.
15 al-Da’ğānī 2014.
ic output to this day. Following Syed Nomanul Haq, Nadjet Zouggar pointed out that the digressions that characterise Ibn Taymiyya’s writing style allowed him to discuss various topics and were in a way “dans le champ du kalām auquel il refusait pourtant d’appartenir”. The idea of a Taymiyyan kalām would however certainly deserve further investigation.

While Ibn Taymiyya was an important historical source for his time, he also knew how to use history in his argumentation strategy in order to corroborate his religious arguments as Sa’d b. Mūsā al-Mūsā and Daniella Talmon-Heller have demonstrated. Geography was not left out. In her article, Zayde Antrim highlighted Ibn Taymiyya’s “discourse of place” concerning the Šām region. He highlighted the region’s merits and history to encourage the Mamlūks to defend it as the territory of Islam against the danger of Mongol invasion. The complexity of Ibn Taymiyya’s argumentation methodology and discursive strategy should not obscure the fact that he was also capable of simplifying particularly sibylline theological subjects for the sake of the popular masses.

While all these works provide insight into Ibn Taymiyya’s argumentation methodology and discursive strategy, his source methodology is less well known. This paper intends to explore this issue in further depth. I mean by source methodology how Ibn Taymiyya, on the one hand, selected, read his sources and dealt with them, on the other, how he integrated them into his argumentation strategy. This is not an exhaustive study of Ibn Taymiyya’s source methodology based on a complete analysis of all his works, which would require a collective effort as with so many other aspects of Ibn Taymiyya’s thought and writing methodology. This article is a preliminary study to suggest analytical perspectives and provide initial findings.


17 In the preface of the book Ibn Taymiyya and His Times, Syed Nomanul Haq already questioned whether Ibn Taymiyya should be considered a philosopher or a neo-mutakallim. Rapoport, Shahab 2010, IX.

18 Zouggar 2010, 198.

19 Michot 1995.


22 Bori 2013, 78-80; 2018, 301-2.
based on the examination of a selection of passages taken from different works among the writings of the Ḥanbali theologian and dealing with various subjects. These thoughts, which came to light on reading some of Ibn Taymiyya’s writings, will be further developed at a later date by analysing some of his other writings.

2 The Texts

This study is based on five of Ibn Taymiyya’s writings: al-Fatwā al-ḥamawiyya (The Fatwā for the People of Hama), al-Istiqāma (The Rightness), Iṭtiṣār al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm li-muhālafat aṣḥāb al-Ǧaḥīm (The Necessity of the Straight Path in Distinction from the People of Hell), al-Ǧawāb al-bāhir fī zuwwār al-maqābir (The Outshining Answer About the Visitors of Graves) and al-Iḥnāʿīyya (The Iḥnāʿīs [title referring pejoratively to the Mālikī Taqī al-Dīn Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr al-Iḥnāʿī]).

Written in 698/1298, the Fatwā al-ḥamawiyya was Ibn Taymiyya’s response to a question by inhabitants of the city of Hama about the verses and ḥadīṯs mentioning names and attributes of God.23 This fatwā by Ibn Taymiyya, in the form of a treatise, was not to the liking of the Ašʿarī ʿulamāʾ and followers of the kalām, some of whom tried to have him judged and condemned.24 The second work is al-Istiqāma, probably written between the years 708-09/1308-09 during his incarceration in Egypt.25 In al-Istiqāma, Ibn Taymiyya emphasised the need to follow the right and just path with regard to the divine names and attributes as well as the oneness of God via the observance of the precepts of the Qurʾān and the Sunna in order to avoid in fine any innovation.26 One of the characteristics of the book is that most of it was actually a commentary on Abū al-Qāsim al-Qušayrī’s Risāla (d. 465/1072-73).27 Ibn Taymiyya acknowledged that this work contained much that was good and true but it “lacks the path fol-

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23 The verses concerned are as follows: S20/V5; S57/V4; S41/V11.
For the ḥadīṯs: “Verily, the hearts of all the sons of Adam are between the two fingers out of the fingers of the Most Gracious” (Al-Ǧabbār will put his Foot in the fire of Hell). Ibn Taymiyya 2015, 61-2 (if not otherwise stated, all translations are by the Author). According to Ibn ‘Abd al-Hādī, Ibn Taymiyya’s student and biographer, there are two fatawā // fatwā-s al-ḥamawiyya: a small one (suġrā) and a large one (kubrā). Ibn Taymiyya 2015, 16.
26 Ibn Taymiyya 2005, 35.
27 On al-Qušayrī, his work and thought see Chiabotti 2008-09; 2013a; 2013b; 2014; 2016.
lowed by the majority of the awliyāʾ of God”. Al-Istiqāma showcased the importance of tasawwuf as a spiritual path, bringing one closer to God and Ibn Taymiyya’s interest in it. Al-Istiqāma is in itself another argument refuting the false accusation that Ibn Taymiyya was staunchly anti-Sufi.

In the Iqtiḍāʾ al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm li-muḫālafat aṣḥāb al-Ǧaḥīm, written around 715/1315-16, the third writing selected from his corpus, Ibn Taymiyya dealt with “a very important rule among the rules of šariʿa”, the danger of imitating the People of the Book or polytheists in their practices. These included, for instance, going on pilgrimage to visit the tombs or mausoleums of saints or prophets, or celebrating non-Islamic festivals in the company of infidels and polytheists.

The last two works of Ibn Taymiyya I have selected for this study are al-Ǧawāb al-bāhir fī zuwwār al-maqābir and al-Iḫnāʾiyya, both of which concern visiting the tombs. In his Ġawāb al-bāhir, Ibn Taymiyya defends the following position: it is possible to visit graves (even those of non-believers in order to remember the dead) as the Sunna authorises (ziyāra šarʿiyya) and avoiding introducing into this practice innovations (ziyāra bidʿiyya) that can lead the Muslim to the širk (polytheism/associationism) particularly through the veneration of the dead or imploring their help and/or intercession. The other important point that Ibn Taymiyya emphasises is the prohibition to travel to visit the tombs of the saints and prophets according to his in-

28 للكن فيه نقضة عن طريقة أكثر أو أرنيه الله”, Ibn Taymiyya 2005, 89.

29 The ill-established hypothesis that Ibn Taymiyya was a stubborn opponent to Sufism no longer holds as Henri Laoust, George Makdisi, Thomas Homerin and more recently Assef Qays clearly demonstrated his links with al-taṣawwuf especially with al-Qādiriyya Ḥanbali brotherhood. Laoust 1960, 35; Laoust 1962, 33; Makdisi 1973, 118-29; Homerin 1985; Assef 2012. In reality, Ibn Taymiyya only strongly condemned certain practices such as samāʿ which he considered an innovation to which he was vehemently opposed in contrast to al-Ġazālī who considered it licit on condition that certain rules were strictly observed: Ibn Taymiyya 1991. See also Michot 1988; Ibn Taymiyya 2001. The words of Carl Sharif al-Tobgui in his recent book sum up the issue quite well: “Ibn Taymiyya’s reputation for being implacably anti-Sufi is inaccurate and misleading when indiscriminately generalized, but it is not entirely without foundation as he was indeed staunchly – and very vocally – opposed to discrete ideas and practices that were widely associated with Sufism in his day. For Ibn Taymiyya’s critiques of such aspects of contemporary Sufism, critiques that are responsible not only for the stereotype we have inherited of him today but also for a considerable amount of the opposition and tribulations he faced in his own day” (El-Tobgui 2019, 88 fn. 32).

30 Estimate made from the copy that was originally kept at Chester Beatty Library but was later purchased by al-Imām Muhammad b. Saʿūd University. Nowadays, the manuscript is conserved at the Central Library of Riyadh under the number 4160. Ibn Taymiyya 2003, 18, 20.

31 Ibn Taymiyya 2003, 51.

32 In addition to al-Ǧawāb and al-Iḫnāʾiyya, see Ibn Taymiyya 2001b, vol. 14, t. 27. See also Ibn Taymiyya 2007, 131-7. For more information see Taylor 1999, 179-94; Olesen 1991; Munt 2014, 227-51; Berriah, forthcoming.
interpretation of the hadīṭ: “No travel except to one of the three mosques: the mosque al-Ḥarām (Mecca), this mosque which is mine (Medina) and the mosque al-Aqṣā (Jerusalem)”. Ibn Taymiyya considered travelling to visit the tombs of the prophets and saints as an innovation since it was neither encouraged by the Prophet nor even practised by the Companions except for very rare exceptions. Moreover, this innovative practice is dangerous since such visits can, over time, turn into a kind of pilgrimage like those of the Christians. For Ibn Taymiyya, whoever goes to Medina must go there with the intention (al-niyya) of praying in accordance with the hadīṭ quoted above and not with the intention of visiting the Prophet’s tomb. The same applies to Jerusalem with the al-Aqṣā mosque and the tombs of the prophets present in the area. In his voluminous al-Iḫnāʾiyya, written during his last stay in prison in Damascus, Ibn Taymiyya, on the one hand, retorts to the accusations of the Mālikī qāḍī al-quḍāt Taqī al-Dīn Abū Bakr al-Iḫnāʾī (d. 750-751/1350-51) against him and, on the other hand, refutes the latter’s positions which encourage visiting the tomb of the Prophet Muḥammad, other prophets and saints in general. Ibn Taymiyya takes up the arguments already present in his Ġawāb al-bāhir which he develops further while bringing in new ones.

In addition to Ibn Taymiyya’s writings, I also make use of contemporary chroniclers of the Ḥanbalī šayḥ of Damascus as well as his biographies when necessary.

3 Opinions of the Companions

After the Qurʾān and the Sunna, the opinions of the Prophet’s Companions constitute the third source of reference in Islam, both for dogmatic issues, belief/creed and Muslim law with differences in their consideration according to the Sunni maḏhab. It is true that the opinions of the Companions, and to a lesser extent those of the Successors (tābiʿūn), are of particular importance to Imam Aḥmad.

Like the founder of his formative maḏhab, Ibn Taymiyya quoted extensively the so-called al-salaf (ancestors or predecessors) or al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ (pious predecessors) in his arguments, especially the Com-
companions of the Prophet. What interests us here is how Ibn Taymiyya chose the opinions of the Companions and quoted them to support his ideas as well as to refute those of his opponents. While it is not possible to carry out a complete analysis of Ibn Taymiyya’s works, we will focus on two themes that he dealt with in two of his works: the first concerns the visitation of the tomb of the Prophet, the prophets and the saints in general. This is one of the topics on which Ibn Taymiyya wrote extensively, especially towards the end of his life, and for which he repeatedly used the opinions of the Companions. The second theme deals with the merit of Arabs over other peoples and of the Arabic language over other languages. Initially, Ibn Taymiyya approached the subject through a sociological prism before ‘Islamising’ it by inserting it into religious discourse.

The examination of these two themes will allow us to compare Ibn Taymiyya’s use of the Opinions of the Companions. Of course, the results presented here are only preliminary and far from definitive; they will be supplemented by further analyses.

3.1 Pre-Eminence According to Merit and ġumhūr al-ṣaḥāba as a Selection Criterion

The last major polemic initiated by Ibn Taymiyya in his writings concerned the ziyārāt. Scholars have seen Ibn Qayyim al-Ǧawziyya (d. 751/1350) as the trigger for this controversy. The works and letters Ibn Taymiyya wrote during his last term of imprisonment reveals the extent of the polemic, its violence as well as the animosity of his opponents towards him, especially the Mālikī Abū Bakr al-Iḫnāʾī. In fact, his supporters and their opponents kept it going, with Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 756/1355), Ibn ʿAbd al-Hādī (d. 744/1343) and others even later.

When writing on the visitation of tombs, Ibn Taymiyya called tirelessly on the Opinions of the Companions quoting them to support his statements and deconstruct the discourse of his opponents. One of his chief arguments, which he often insisted upon in his various writings, is that no Companion from the time of the Rāšidūn caliphs or later rulers made journeys for the sole purpose of visiting the tomb of a prophet or a saint. The Companions who travelled to Jerusalem went there to pray in the al-Aqṣā Mosque, the third mosque after that

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37 For example, on the fiṭra see Holtzman 2010, 163-88. See also Anjum 2012, 215-32.
38 Berriah, forthcoming.
39 Berriah, forthcoming. See also El-Rouayheb 2010, 288-95.
of Mecca and Medina for which the Prophet authorised the journey. According to Ibn Taymiyya, none of the Companions who travelled to Jerusalem visited the tomb of Abraham.

Not all the opinions of the Companions were of equal value for Ibn Taymiyya and he ranked them by merit. The four Rāšidūn caliphs, Abū Bakr (d. 13/634), ʿUmar b. al- Hạṭṭāb (d. 23/644), ʿUṯmān b. ʿAffān (d. 35/656) and ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 40/661) occupied, in regnal order, the first places. This position was supported by several hadīṣs, the best known of which was that reported by Abū Dāwūd and al-Tirmiḏī according to Abū Naǧīḥ al-ʿIrbāḍ b. Sāriya. In his Rafʿ al-malām ʿan aʾimmat al-aʿlām, Ibn Taymiyya stated that the Rāšidūn caliphs were the most knowledgeable about the Prophetic Sunna, especially Abū Bakr who was most often in the company of the Prophet, then came the turn of ʿUmar. Then came the “ten promised to Paradise” (al-ʿašara al-mubaššarīn bi-l-ǧanna), followed by precedence in conversion, the Hijra, participation in the first battles of Badr, Uḥud, etc.

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40 Ahmad, al-Buḫārī, Muslim and others reported from Abū Hurayra: "لا تشد الرحال إلا إلى ثلاثة مساجد المسجدين: المسجد الحرام، والمسجد النبوي، والمسجد الأقصى (No travel except to one of the three mosques: the mosque al-Ḥarām [Mecca], the mosque of the Prophet [Medina] and the mosque of al-Aqṣā [Jerusalem])."

41 For a quotation of this argument see Ibn Taymiyya 2011-12a/1433H, 195.

42 It is also quoted by al-Nawawi in his Fourteen hadīṣs: “I advise you to fear Allah, listen, and obey, even if an Abyssinian slave is put in charge of you. Whoever lives after me will see many conflicts. You must adhere to my Sunna and the Sunna of the righteous, guided successors. Hold firmly to it as if biting with your molar teeth. Beware of newly invented matters, for every new matter is an innovation and every innovation is misguidance” (translated by Sunnah.com, https://sunnah.com/nawawi).

43 Ibn Taymiyya 1992-93, 10. Ibn Taymiyya always quotes the opinion of each of the four caliphs in the chronological order of their reign, which also corresponds to their merits. See 11, 16-17.


45 In his Ğawāb al-bāhir fī zuwwār al-maqābir, Ibn Taymiyya indicates this ranking of the Companions according to their merits by reporting a dispute that broke out between the two Companions ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAfīf and Ḥālid b. al-Walid: “He [the Prophet] said in an authentic hadīṣ: ‘Do not insult my companions, by the one who has my soul in his hands, if one of you gives in alms the equivalent of Mount Uḥud in gold, it would not reach the [amount] of the mudd of one of them or even half of it.’ This was said to Ḥālid b. al-Walid when he quarrelled with ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAfīf because the latter was among the early converts, those who spent well before al-Fatḥ [the conquest of Mecca], who fought, and the fatḥ referred to here is the pact of Ḥudaybiyya. Ḥālid, ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ and ʿUṯmān b. Ṭalḥa converted during the truce following al-Ḥudaybiyya and before the capture of Mecca. They were among the muḥāǧirūn followers and not like the original muḥāǧirūn. As for those who converted in the year of the capture of Mecca, they are not considered muḥāǧirūn because there was no ḥiǧra after the capture of Mecca. Those who converted from among the inhabitants of Mecca are called al-ṭulaqāʾ because the Prophet let them go in peace after the capture of the city by arms in the image that the prisoner of war is released” (Ibn Taymiyya 2011-12a/1433H, 260-1).
Ibn Taymiyya put forward this pre-eminence of the Rāšidūn caliphs in several passages. According to him, during the reigns of the four Rāšidūn caliphs, the Companions who travelled and stayed in Medina, when they had finished praying behind the caliph who occupied the place of imam, would either greet the latter and keep him company for some time, or leave the mosque, or else they remained seated in the mosque while making ḍikr (the remembrance of God). In any case, and Ibn Taymiyya insisted on this point, there was no account according to which the Companions visited the Prophet’s grave. Saying the tašliyya (uttering the salutation over the Prophet) in the tašahhud in prayer or outside of it, was the practice that the Prophet had recommended for himself and was therefore far more meritorious.

Similarly, in response to those who considered that the mosque in Medina had more merit since it enshrined the Prophet’s tomb, Ibn Taymiyya argued that the Prophet’s mosque in Medina already had more merit at the time of the Rāšidūn caliphs before it included his tomb for one good reason: that era had more merit – because closer to the time of the Prophet – than later times when the expansion of the mosque was carried out by integrating the Prophet’s tomb within its walls.

The proponents of visiting the Prophet’s grave relied, among other things, on a narrative that ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar b. al-Ḫaṭṭāb, one of the most illustrious Companions and considered to be among the most learned, used to go to the Prophet’s grave after returning from a journey to visit the Prophet as well as Abū Bakr and his father, ʿUmar,

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46 The tašahhud is the part of the Muslim prayer where the person kneels facing the qibla after two rounds of prayer (rakʿāt), holding out the index finger of the right hand, leaving it either motionless or performing with slight circular movements to the right. At this point, the believer utters a formulation glorifying and praising God, greeting the Prophet followed by the two attestations of faith. The second tašahhud, which closes the prayer, is performed before the taslīm. In this second tašahhud, an invocation of blessings and peace upon the Prophet Muḥammad and Abraham is added. This invocation is known as the tašliyya. Sābiq 2009, 119-23.

47 Ibn Taymiyya 2011-12a/1433H, 205, 258-9; see also 277 et 292. For Ibn Taymiyya, the devil did not try to trick the Companions by making them hear some voice that would make them believe that the Prophet had responded to their greeting or had spoken to them from his grave, a belief and superstition that came after the Companions. Nothing is reported about the Companions in this regard, which makes them a reliable and fundamental source for Ibn Taymiyya regarding the visit to the Prophet’s tomb. Ibn Taymiyya, Ǧawāb al-bāhir, 260-1. In his book The Holy City of Medina, Sacred Space in Early Islamic Arabia, Harry Munt states that a kind of “pilgrimage” existed in Medina from the second/eighth century onwards, which consisted of visiting sites related to the Prophetic story. However, it was not until the fourth/tenth century that the visit to the Prophet’s tomb became increasingly popular and can be considered ritual. Munt 2014, 141-3.

48 Ibn Taymiyya 2011-12a/1433H, 304.
both of whom were placed on either side of the Prophet’s grave.\textsuperscript{49}

Ibn Taymiyya at no point questioned the veracity of this account of Ibn ‘Umar’s well-known practice. To refute the opinion of his opponents, Ibn Taymiyya initially invoked the \textit{ǧumhūr al-ṣaḥāba} (the majority opinion of the Companions) to show that the case of ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Umar was, in fact, an exception among the majority of the Companions for whom there was no testimony attesting to this practice.\textsuperscript{50}

Later in his \textit{al-Ǧawāb al-bāhir}, he mentions another practice of Ibn ‘Umar which was also considered to be an exception. It was reported that he sought to pray in the exact location where the Prophet had prayed in the Medina mosque in order to pray there in turn. This practice of Ibn ‘Umar could be seen as, implicitly, seeking some \textit{baraka} (blessing) from the Prophet in the locations where the latter had prayed. To show that this practice was an exception, that it was not in line with the Sunna and that it was not to be followed, Ibn Taymiyya summoned both the \textit{ǧumhūr al-ṣaḥāba} as well as the pre-eminence of the \textit{Rāšidūn} caliphs:

\begin{quote}
ولم يأخذ في هذا بفعل ابن ﻋمر، كما لم يأخذ بفعله في التمَّسُح بمعدة على المنبر، ولا بِاستحباب قصد الأماكن التي صلى فيها؛ لكون الصلاة أدركته فيها، وكان ابن عَمَر يستَحِبُّ قصدًا للصلاة فيها، وكان جمهور الصحابة لا يستَحِبون ذلك، بل يستَحِبون ما كان - صلى الله عليه وسلم - بِالصلاة. وكان أبوه عمر بن الخطاب ينهى من يقصدُها للصلاة فيها، ويقول: “إِذَا هلك من كان فيلكم بهذا، فإنهم أخذوا آثار أبيائهم مساجد، من أدركته الصلاة فيها، فَليُصْلِّ، وإلا فَليذهب.”
\end{quote}

and one should not take this practice of Ibn ‘Umar [that of coming to visit the Prophet’s grave] as an example or touching by brushing with one’s hand [\textit{tamassuḥ}] the place he [the Prophet] occupied on the \textit{minbar} or even seeking to pray at the places where he [the Prophet] prayed because Ibn ‘Umar liked to pray at these places while the majority of the Companions [\textit{ǧumhūr al-ṣaḥāba}] did not like to do this but instead they liked what he [the Prophet] liked, that is, to pray wherever one was when the hour of prayer arrived. His father, ‘Umar b. al-Ḥaṭṭāb forbade seeking out these places to pray and he said, ‘Surely those who preceded you perished because of this; they took the footsteps and relics [\textit{ātār}] of their prophets as places of worship. Let him who is in a place at the time when the hour of prayer has arrived, let him pray there, or else let him go!’\textsuperscript{51}

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\textsuperscript{49} Abū Bakr to the right, ‘Umar to the left.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibn Taymiyya 2011-12a/1433H, 276, 282-3.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibn Taymiyya 2011-12a/1433H, 295-6. For another account of ‘Umar’s disapproval of praying in a place because the Prophet had prayed there see 304.
In this and other passages, Ibn Taymiyya relied on the opinion of one of the Rāšidūn caliphs, in this case that of ‘Umar who is none other than the father of ‘Abd Allāh. Since the father’s position and merit was superior to that of the son, so were his opinions, sayings and practices. Moreover, Ibn Taymiyya ended his argument by explaining that this pre-eminence of ‘Umar in merit, supported by the words of the Prophet, meant that one had to follow him,\textsuperscript{52} before his son ‘Abd Allāh, despite the latter’s merits, which were certainly numerous, but lesser:

And ‘Umar enjoined upon them [the Companions and Muslims] what the Prophet taught them [sanna-hu la-hum] and ‘Umar b. al-Ḥaṭṭāb was one of the Rāšidūn caliphs for whom we were ordered to follow the traditions [sunnati-him]. And he [‘Umar] has a peculiarity in this from the fact that he and Abū Bakr are to be taken as an example since he [the Prophet] said: ‘take as an example the two who are after me: Abū Bakr and ‘Umar’. Taking [someone] as an example is superior to following a tradition.\textsuperscript{53}

This criterion of merit also applied to less illustrious Companions. Ibn Taymiyya reported the discussion between Abū Hurayra, one of the greatest narrators of ḥadīṯ, and Abū Baṣra al-Ǧifārī about visiting Mount Ṭūr:

And it is according to him [the Prophet], in the two Sahīhs, that he [the Prophet] said: ‘One does not undertake a journey except to three mosques: the holy mosque [Mecca], this mosque which is mine [Medina] and the mosque al-Aqṣā [Jerusalem].’ So much so that Abū Hurayra travelled to Mount Ṭūr where God spoke to Moses b. ‘Imrān upon him be Peace – and that Abū Baṣra al-Ǧifārī said to him, ‘How I wish I had joined you before you left. I heard the Prophet of God – may the prayers and salvation of God be upon him – say: ‘One does not use a mount [for travelling] except for

\textsuperscript{52} On ‘Umar’s authority see Hakim 2008; 2009a; 2009b. I thank Hassan Bouali for his precious remarks and these references.

\textsuperscript{53} Ibn Taymiyya 2011-12a/1433H, 296.
three mosques: the Holy Mosque, this mosque which is mine [Medina] and the al-Aqṣā Mosque [Jerusalem].

While he was not among the best-known Companions, Abū Baṣra al-Ǧifārī was the son of Baṣra b. Abī Baṣra b. Waqqāṣ who was himself a Companion of the Prophet. Abū Baṣra al-Ǧifārī was raised in the Muslim religion. As for Abū Hurayra, Muslim historians and biographers reported that he converted only late, in year 7 of the Hijra.

In addition, as the passage indicates, Abū Baṣra al-Ǧifārī was one of the transmitters of the hadīth about the only permission to travel to the three mosques for the purpose of worship that Abū Hurayra would later relate. It is this hadīth that formed the pillar on which Ibn Taymiyya’s argument about the visitation of graves rested throughout the controversy. Although not explicit in the quoted passage, Abū Baṣra al-Ǧifārī’s remark to Abū Hurayra shows implicitly the precedence of the former over the latter, justified by the primacy of his conversion to Islam. On the subject of the expansion of the Medina mosque carried out during the reign of ‘Uṯmān, Ibn Taymiyya again invoked both the criterion of precedence of the Companions according to their merits, in this case with the character of ‘Umar, as well as that of the ǧumhūr al-ṣaḥāba:

وقد كره كثير من الصحابة والتابعين ما فعله عثمان من بناء المسجد بالحجرة والقصة والنباج، وهؤلاء ما فعله الوالي أكثر، وأما عمر فإنه وسعه، لكن بناء على ما كان من بنائه من اللين، وعمده جذوع النخل، وسقفه الجريد، ولم يُفعل أن أحداً كره ما فعل عمر، وإنما وقع النزاع فيما فعله عثمان والوليد.

and many of the Companions and Successors hated what ‘Uṯmān – may God be pleased with him – did by building the mosque with stone, plaster and teak wood, and hated even more what al-Walīd [d. 96/715] did [in the matter of works]. As for ‘Umar – may God be pleased with him – he enlarged the mosque using the same materials already present in its [original] construction namely: mud bricks, its pillars with trunks and its roof with palm branches. It has not been reported that anyone [among the Companions] disliked what ‘Umar did but rather the disagreement was about what ‘Uṯmān and al-Walīd did.

54 Ibn Taymiyya 2011-12a/1433H, 189-90.
55 Some versions state that Abū Hurayra was present (šahida) at Ḫaybar’s expedition although it is not known whether he fought or not. According to other versions, Abū Hurayra arrived in Medina after the Prophet had gone on an expedition against Ḫaybar. Ibn Sa’d 2001, 5: 232-3; Ibn al-ʿAṯīr 2012, 1412.
Although the material used for the work carried out by the third caliph ʿUṯmān was of better quality and far stronger than that used under ʿUmar, the latter’s work on the Medina mosque was considered to be better by Ibn Taymiyya for two reasons: ʿUmar used the same type of material constituting the initial structure of the mosque. Although Ibn Taymiyya did not directly mention the Prophet here, ʿUmar seemed to be presented as imitating the Prophet, the best of men, in his choice of building materials for the mosque; second reason: according to Ibn Taymiyya there was no account of a Companion criticising ʿUmar’s expansion work unlike those of ʿUṯmān and al-Walīd. Therefore, the lack of criticism of ʿUmar’s works by Companions seemed to stand for Ibn Taymiyya as an approval of the latter towards ʿUmar’s works. Although the works of ʿUṯmān and al-Walīd made the building stronger, enlarged it and thus allowed more believers to come and pray in the mosque, Ibn Taymiyya considered the quality of the works not in terms of their material result, but according to the time, rank and merits of the one who ordered them, all echoing the Prophetic ḥadīths. This dual recourse to the Companions as a source, a use that was both vertical (criterion of precedence according to merit) and horizontal (majority of the Companions) was a fairly effective method to refute the opinions of opponents who relied on isolated opinions and/or practices of illustrious Companions. By quoting the opinion of a more illustrious Companion and then the ǧumhūr al-ṣaḥāba (majority of the Companions), Ibn Taymiyya made it very difficult for any counter-argument to be made even on the basis of Companions’ opinions. Ibn Taymiyya really stands out due to the frequency with which he used this dual criterion. Further analysis of his other writings would confirm this trend. In the following lines, I will try to show that Ibn Taymiyya did not always follow this methodology scrupulously in referring to the Companions and that he proceeded in a different way depending on the subject matter.
3.2 Relevance of the Source at the Expense of Its Pre-Eminence

In his *Iqtida’ al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*, Ibn Taymiyya devoted about thirty pages to the question of Arabness, the merits of Arabs and the Arabic language, approaching the subject through a religious and, to a lesser extent, sociological and cultural prism.  

By way of introduction, Ibn Taymiyya offered an interesting ‘ḫaldūnian’ sociological analysis of the different peoples before Ibn Ḥaldūn, each of whom had two components: nomadic living in the *bādiyya* (steppe/desert) and sedentary living in the *ḥadāra* (city/town).

At the beginning of his argument, Ibn Taymiyya reported two sayings attributed to Salmān al-Fārisī (d. 33/654) followed by one by ʿUmar b. al-Ḫaṭṭāb to show the superiority of Arabs and the Arabic language over non-Arabs. Given the manner, seen above, in which Ibn Taymiyya used the Companions, one would have expected ʿUmar, the second *Rāšidūn* caliph, to be cited before Salmān since he occupies a higher rank as having the most merits in the Sunni tradition. However, Salmān was cited before ʿUmar. But why quote the latter when words attributed to the second Caliph of Islam and other more illustrious Companions following the example of ʿAlī, about the importance of the Arabic language and Arabism were well-known?

The choice of quoting Salmān before ʿUmar was due to Ibn Taymiyya’s need to build a more relevant and compelling argument. Salmān was of Persian origin and his testimony in favour of the Arabs constituted a stronger, more ‘hard-hitting’ argument than that of an Arab ʿUmar from the Quraysh. Here, the criterion for selecting sources was no longer precedence and merit but relevance. The word of a non-Arab Companion who lived among the Arabs and who defended Arabness was a far more relevant testimony than that of one of the most illustrious Arab Companions.

Ibn Taymiyya followed the same method when highlighting the merits of Muslim Persians, particularly those of Isfahan from where the Companion Salmān al-Fārisī was said to be originated. Ibn Taymiyya reported the words of the one who was considered the best of the Successors, and who was an Arab, Saʿīd b. al-Musayyib who praised the merits of the Muslim Persians, especially those of Isfahan. Ibn Taymiyya’s choice to devote a section to the merits of the

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60 Ibn Taymiyya 2003, 270; Ibn Sa’id 2001, 4: 69. Ibn al-Aṯīr reports that he may also have come from the city of Rāmahurmuz in Ḫūzistān. Ibn al-Aṯīr 2012, 499-500.
Persians was not insignificant since there were many great tābiʿūn and tābiʿ tābiʿīn (Successors) of Persian origin who were students of the Companions and transmitters of their opinions such as ʿIkrima, the mawlā of ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbbās.\(^{61}\)

As these few elements show, Ibn Taymiyya’s selection and use of the opinions of the Companions and Successors was not only based on the criterion of merit but also on the relevance of his argument and to ensure his discursive strategy was more effective.

4 Use Your Opponent’s Corpus of Texts

4.1 Capacity to Use the Opponent’s Corpus

Certainly, one of the characteristics of Ibn Taymiyya’s source methodology was his ability to use his opponent’s sources at his own advantage. This could only be carried out by someone who had a good knowledge of his opponent’s corpus. The writings that probably best highlight Ibn Taymiyya’s use of his opponents’ sources in order to deconstruct their discourse were probably those on the visitation of tombs, particularly his Ǧawāb al-bāḥīr and al-Iḥnāʾīyya. Composed at the very end of his life, the latter were the culmination of Ibn Taymiyya’s art, having reached the peak of his erudition, which fed into a solid and effective argumentation methodology built up over a lifetime of writing, discussion, debate and polemics.\(^{62}\)

It was after receiving a copy of the text of the Mālikī qāḍī Taqī al-Dīn Abū Bakr al-Iḫnāʾī that Ibn Taymiyya responded to the latter’s very virulent criticisms and false accusations in a work that he would entitle after his opponent’s name.\(^{63}\) In al-Iḥnāʾīyya, Ibn Taymiyya reviewed each of al-Iḥnāʾī’s criticisms and remarks point by point, refuting them and deconstructing his discourse on the basis of arguments and information of all kinds drawn from a large and varied body of sources.\(^{64}\)

In addition to the verses of the Qurʾān, the ḥadīṯs, and the words of the Companions and Successors that he cited in a jumble, Ibn Taymiyya relied very frequently on the Mālikī corpus. This phenomenon is already observable in his Ǧawāb al-bāḥīr, but in al-Iḥnāʾīyya the fre-

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\(^{61}\) Ibn Taymiyya 2003, 269-70.

\(^{62}\) He is said to have started writing at a fairly early age, in his early twenties. Al-Ḥaǧīlī 1999, 16-17.

\(^{63}\) For more information about this polemic see Berriah, forthcoming.

\(^{64}\) In particular, pointing out the weak, deficient and fabricated nature of the ḥadīṭs referred to by al-Iḥnāʾī encouraging the visit to the Prophet’s tomb. Ibn Taymiyya 2011a, 110, 137-41, 144, 150, 252-3, 264, 266, 300, 365-6. See also Ibn Taymiyya 2003, 509; 1997, 81-3.
quency is higher and the process more obvious. Why did Ibn Taymiyya quote Mālikī scholars and not Ḥanbalī, those of his formative maḏhab? We know that he wrote a book extolling the merits of Imam Mālik’s school entitled, Ṭafḍīl maḏhab Mālik wa ahl al-Madīna wa-ṣiḥḥat usūlī-hi. But the primary reason for selecting the rich Mālikī corpus on the visitation of graves was not Ibn Taymiyya’s respect and admiration for Imam Mālik, but rather because his opponent Tāqī al-Dīn al-Iḫnāʾī was the qāḍī al-quḍāt of the Mālikis.

To support his positions and refute those of al-Iḥnāʾī, Ibn Taymiyya repeatedly quoted, in addition to Imam Mālik, the various Mālikī authorities who shared his own position on the ziyārāt: the qāḍī Ibn al-Qāsim (d. 191/806) and his Muḍawwana, Ismāʿīl b. Ishāq (d. 282/896) and his al-Mabsūt, the qāḍī ʿIyāḍ (d. 544/1149), the qāḍī ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Bağdādī (d. 422/1031), Abū al-Qāsim b. al-Ǧallāb (d. 378/989), Muḥammad b. al-Mawwāz (d. 269/875), ʿAbd al-Ṣamad b. Bašīr al-Tanūḫī (d. first half of the sixth/twelfth century) and ʿAbd Allāh b. Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī (d. 386/996) among others. By building his argument on reading texts from his opponent’s maḏhab, Ibn Taymiyya deconstructed the latter’s discourse and discredited it. Compared to the Mālikī ‘ulamāʾ, Ibn Taymiyya quoted few Ḥanbalī and even refuted some of their positions. In doing so, Ibn Taymiyya showed on the one hand that his position on the issue was the same as those of Imam Mālik and the leading Mālikī authorities. On the other hand, he highlighted the opposition between the positions of his opponent al-Iḥnāʾī and those held by eminent scholars belonging to his own maḏhab. The image of an al-Iḥnāʾī who was not a ‘good’ Mālikī or, even worse, who did not know his maḏhab well, while he was its most illustrious representative by virtue of his high position of qāḍī al-quḍāt, seemed to be Ibn Taymiyya’s methodological trademark. It should be noted that several Mālikī ‘ulamāʾ living in Damascus supported Ibn Taymiyya during his incarceration. They wrote a letter confirming that his opinion on the ziyārāt was

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67 As the authentication of ḥadīṯs by Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Ǧanī al-Maqdīṣī (d. 600/1203) advocating the ziyārāt, Ibn Taymiyya only cites the kunya and nisba which is the same for ʿAbd al-Ǧanī and his cousin Muwaffaq al-Dīn, better known as Ibn Qudāma’. The former was a ḥadīṯ scholar. Ibn Taymiyya 2011a, 143. See also al-Matrūdi 2006, 97. On Ibn Taymiyya’s criticism of Ḥanbali scholars see al-Matrūdi 2006, 92-128, 172-85; Bori 2010, 33-6.

68 Ibn Taymiyya 2011a, 184.
not in opposition to the šari‘a.\textsuperscript{69} This wide-ranging selection from the Mālikī corpus by Ibn Taymiyya and the way he used it showed his deep knowledge of the Mālikī maḏhab, as if he had been a Mālikī. In fact, an analysis of Ibn Taymiyya’s writings demonstrates his erudition in all the maḏhabs and a great respect for each of the founders of the four schools of law.\textsuperscript{70} However, it seems that, with the exception of the Ḥanbalī maḏhab, Ibn Taymiyya’s expertise in the Mālikī maḏhab was superior to the others, for he considered it to be the most accurate in matters of uṣūl.\textsuperscript{71} All these elements, to which we could add others, show that Ibn Taymiyya, by the end of his life, had become, as was already the case in the field of heresiography, an expert in the maḏhabs, as mentioned by his contemporaries and biographers.\textsuperscript{72}

I would like to take this opportunity to add a few remarks on a point related to Ibn Taymiyya’s reading his sources and dealing with them. Ibn Taymiyya remained faithful to the Ḥanbalī school of law, favouring the approach of the people of ḥadīṯ over that of the people of opinion (al-ra‘y).\textsuperscript{73} In his recent book, Carl Sharif El-Tobgui writes:

> Despite his intellectual independence, Ibn Taymiyya maintained his affiliation with the Ḥanbalī school throughout his life, an affiliation that implied as much a theological outlook as an approach to law and legal theory.\textsuperscript{74}

While one cannot but agree with these statements, a close examination of some of his writings like al-Ǧawāb al-bāhir and al-Iḫnāʾiyya, shows that, at the end of his life, Ibn Taymiyya no longer wanted to put forward his affiliation to Hanbalism in his arguments, or at the very least did not find it necessary.

\textsuperscript{69} Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥaḍī 2002, 278-84.


\textsuperscript{71} Ibn Taymiyya 2006, 33-80; al-Matroudi 2006, 43.


\textsuperscript{73} al-Matroudi 2006, 41-4.

\textsuperscript{74} El-Tobgui 2019, 88.
4.2 Circulation Across the Maḏḥabs and Independence from the Maḏḥabs

The contents of al-Ǧawāb al-bāhir and al-Iḫnāʾiyya testify to the high degree of scholarship and mastery achieved by Ibn Taymiyya in the knowledge of the maḏḥabs. As we have seen, Ibn Taymiyya quoted extensively from the Mālikī ‘ulamāʾ to refute the positions of Abū Bakr al-Iḫnāʾī on visiting the graves. He did the same with the ‘ulamāʾ of the other maḏḥabs, whether of law or thought, quoting, discussing and commenting on their opinions as if he was affiliated with each of them although it was known that he opposed the four official maḏḥabs on several points of jurisprudence (masāʾil fiqhiyya). I think it is possible to speak of pluri-maḏhab referencing use in Ibn Taymiyya.

This can certainly be explained, in our case-study, by pragmatic reasons linked to the polemic and by a concern to effectively refute and deconstruct the discourse of his opponents with relevant arguments. But there is more: combined with other examples that cannot be discussed here, this pluri-maḏhab referencing can be read as Ibn Taymiyya’s willingness to ‘circulate’ between the maḏḥabs, to use their respective corpus when and how he saw fit. This ‘intellectual independence’ of Ibn Taymiyya from the maḏḥabs is confirmed by many of his students and biographers.

Although Ibn Taymiyya was trained as a Ḥanbāli from his youth, he was not always careful to emphasise his membership of the maḏhab and to identify himself with it in his positions. Let us keep in mind that Ibn Taymiyya, besides eliciting criticism from other Ḥanbalīs, also criticised the methods and opinions of several great Ḥanbāli scholars such as Abū Bakr al-Ḫallāl (d. 311/923), or Abū Yaʿlā (d. 458/1066) to name but a few, just as he criticised some of the principles of the Ḥanbāli maḏhab including some that he considered to be innovations (bidaʿ). Caterina Bori suggests “that Ibn Taymiyyah’s detachment from the authority of the four maḏhab-s and his challenge to judicial authority became socially and politically inconvenient at some point, as his death in prison shows”.

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77 Bori 2010, 33-6.
79 al-Matroudi 2006, 92-8. For what he considers to be erroneous rules in the maḏhab (ġalat), see also 107-15. For some maḏhab rules that he refutes, see 122-5.
80 Bori 2009, 67.
His independence from the maḏḥabs was well-known, especially towards the end of his life, when he sometimes seemed to place himself above the maḏḥabs, wishing maybe to detach himself from them for certain issues. The example of his two works on visiting the tombs are noteworthy in this respect. Let us recall in passing that Ibn Taymiyya wrote an epistle on the abandonment of taqlīd in which he said that there was no need to follow the opinions of the four schools.81

How can this circulation across the maḏḥabs be explained? First of all, it is the result of a long intellectual journey and a solid expertise in the maḏḥabs. But above all, it is motivated by Ibn Taymiyya’s primary concern to protect the principle of tawḥīd against all deviant practices that could lead to the širk (polytheism/associationism), a leitmotiv that he hammers tirelessly in his writings. This desire to defend the Islamic creed of divine uniqueness, the spread of heterodox practices and beliefs that can lead the believer to the širk explains why Ibn Taymiyya devoted most of his writings to issues related to dogma and belief.82 For Ibn Taymiyya, the search for the truth, the need to protect the tawḥīd, the interest of Muslims and not that of a maḏhab or a school of thought, are the most important things.83 Despite his admiration for Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Ibn Taymiyya

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82 “He [Ibn Taymiyya] – May God be pleased with him – has written a great deal on the founding principles [uṣūl] in addition to other sciences. I asked him about the reason for this and to write me a text on law, which would group his choices and preferences so that he would serve as a support [ʿumda] for giving fatwās. He replied: ‘concerning the branches [al-furūʿ] the matter is simple. If a Muslim follows and applies [qalla-da] the opinions of one of the ‘ulamāʾ who is authoritative, then he is allowed to practice his religion based on his words [of the scholar] and for what he is not certain that this scholar made a mistake. As for the founding principles of religion [uṣūl], I have seen people of innovation, bewilderment and passions like followers of philosophy, bāṭiniyya, heretics [malāḥida], supporters of the unity of existence [waḥdat al-wuǧūd], Dahriyya, Qadariyya, Ṣafar, Ṣidr, Yahyā, those who refute divine Names and Attributes [al-muʿaṭṭila], anthropomorphists [al-muǧassima wa-l-mušabbiha], the supporters of al-Rawāndī, those of Kullāb, the Sulamiyya and others among the people of innovation […] and it was clear that many of them sought to nullify the sacred šarīʿa of Prophet Muhammad, which prevails over all other legislations, and that they put people in doubt regarding the founding principles of their religion [uṣūl dīni-him]. This is why from what I have heard or seen, it is rare that the one who opposes the Book and the Sunna and is favourable to their words does not become a zindiq or has no longer the certainty [yaqīn] about his religion and belief. When I saw this situation, it seemed obvious to me that it was up to anyone who had the capacity to combat these ambiguities, these trivialities, to refute their arguments and errors, to strive to expose their vile and low character as well as the falsity of their evidence in order to defend the religion of pure monotheism and the authentic and illustrious prophetic tradition”. Al-Bazzār 1976, 33-5. See also al-Ḥaǧīlī 1999, 37-43. Nevertheless, he devoted several writings to jurisprudence (al-fiqh) and the foundations of jurisprudence (uṣūl al-fiqh). Ibn Taymiyya 2011-12b/1433; Ibn Rušayqiq 2001-02/1422H, 306-9. See also al-Matroudi 2006, 23-9; Rapoport 2010; al-ʿUṭayšān 1999; ʿUlwān 2000; al-Barīkān 2004; Abū Zahra 1991, 350-65, 378-405.
83 Ibn Taymiyya 2011a, 11, 243, 276-82, 286, 451, 466, 468-72.
Mehdi Berriah

2 • Ibn Taymiyya’s Methodology Regarding His Sources: Reading, Selection and Use

Finally, Ibn Taymiyya’s circulation across the maḏḥabs and independence from the maḏḥabs lead to another question – raised by several scholars – namely that of Ibn Taymiyya’s level of iǧtīḥād but which will not be addressed here.

4.3 Ambivalence in Ibn Taymiyya’s Treatment of the Writings of Ašʿarī mutakallimūn Authors

Ibn Taymiyya’s critical stance on certain points of the Ašʿarī doctrine, particularly with regard to the Ašʿarite scholars who followed the kalām, is becoming better known thanks to recent scholarship. Despite his disagreements and criticisms, Ibn Taymiyya still acknowledged that the Ašʿarī scholars had produced many good results. Some of their interpretations of the Divine Names and Attributes were correct, despite the influence of Ǧahmīte and Muʿtazīīite

84 al-Matroudi 2006, 45.
87 The question is whether or not Ibn Taymiyya should or could be considered a mu’tahid muṭlaq. For many of his biographers and students, there is no doubt that Ibn Taymiyya was a mu’tahid. Some of them, such as Ibn Qayyim al-Ǧawziyya, al-Birzālī, Ibn ‘Abd al-Hādī, al-Bazzār and Ibn Kaṭīr had much admiration for their šayḫ, which may explain the praise. Others such as Šams al-Dīn al-Dahabī did not share all his views and even seem to have distanced themselves from the šayḫ for various reasons. Despite this, for al-Dahabī, Ibn Taymiyya reached the level of mu’tahid muṭlaq. His greatest opponents of the Ašʿarī school among his contemporaries such as Taqī al-Dīn al-Sukhlī (d. 756/1355), Ibn Zamlakānī (d. 727/1327) or other later ‘ulamāʾ such as Ibn Ḥaǧar al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 852/1449), in spite of their virulent criticism, acknowledged his immense scholarship. The laudatory remarks, reported by al-Dahabī, allegedly made by Ibn Daqīq al-ʿĪd (d. 702/1302) about Ibn Taymiyya, constitute one of the most important testimonies in his favour. Ibn Daqīq al-ʿĪd was a pupil of the famous ‘Izz al-Dīn ‘Abd al-ʿAzīz b. ʿAbd al-Salām and successor of Ibn Bint al-Aʿzz as al-Šāfīʿī qāḍī al-ṣuqāṭ. According to Tāǧ al-Dīn al-Sukhlī (d. 771/1370), the ‘ulumāʾ did not disagree that Ibn Daqīq al-ʿĪd was considered the muḥaddid of the seventh/thirteenth century. As will be clear, the question of Ibn Taymiyya’s level of iǧtīḥād is still far from being decided.
To better refute the views of his opponents, Ibn Taymiyya does not hesitate to quote and incorporate Ašʿarite authors and their works into his argument: the *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn wa iḫtīlāf al-muṣallīn* of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ašʿarī (d. 324/936) about the ʿisma (impeccability/infallibility) of the Prophet especially in his *Minhāǧ al-Sunna*;90 the *Tahāfūt* of al-Ġazālī (d. 505/1111) in his *Radd ʿalā al-Mantiqiyyīn* and other writings;91 he took up some of the positions of Faḥr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210) whom he contrasted with other positions of al-Ġazālī on the issue of the priority of reason over revelation, just as he found inspiration in the structure of the arguments from some of al-Gazālī’s works, like *Masāʾil al-ḥamsūn* and *Taʾsīs al-taqdīs*.92

In his *al-Iḥnāʾiyya*, in addition to Mālikī scholars, Ibn Taymiyya quoted famous Ašʿarī scholars such as Abū Muḥammad al-Juwaynī (d. 478/1085), Abū Ḥāmid al-Ġazālī (d. 505/1111) and Abū Zakariyyāʾ al-Nawawī (d. 676/1277) to corroborate his statements even though this did not prevent him from criticising these same authors elsewhere and disagreeing with them on various issues.93 This ambivalent method of Ibn Taymiyya in dealing with Ašʿarī authors by criticising them on the one hand, and using them to refute other opponents on the other, comes out quite well in his *al-Fatwā al-ḥamawiyya al-kubrā*.

At the beginning of his *fatwā*, Ibn Taymiyya criticised the position of the mutakallimūn who considered the ḥalaf to be more learned than the salaf.94 To show the vain nature of the practice of kalām, Ibn Taymiyya reported words that he attributed to great mutakallimūn such as Abū al-Fatḥ al-Šahrastānī (d. 548/1153), Faḥr al-Dīn al-Rāzī or

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89 For Ibn Taymiyya the interpretations found in the *Taʾsīs al-taqdīs* of Faḥr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, in Abū al-Wafāʾ b. ‘Aqlī as well as in Abū Ḥamīd al-Gazālī are those of Bišr b. Giyāṯ al-Marīsī who, according to Ibn Taymiyya, was implied in the spread of the doctrine of taʿṭīl al-ṣifāt (denial of divine attributes) of the Ǧahmiyya. Ibn Taymiyya 2015, 86-7.

90 Zouggar 2011, 84-5.


94 Generic term for the generations following the salaf. In other words, from the third/tenth century onwards.

95 Ibn Taymiyya 2015, 68. In his *Rafʿ al-malām*, Ibn Taymiyya writes:

“۩یَذَّرُ ۩کَاِنَّا اوُلَآمِم ۩أَمَانِپُعُولُها و۩أَقُفَّاهَا و۩أَف۩ضِلُّها. ۩ف۩ن۩م۩ىَعَم۩ح۩م۩أَق۩ضَ۩ع۩ٰٰٰ۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩۩…"
Abū al-Maʿālī al-Ǧuwaynī, who were said to have expressed, at the end of their lives, their doubts, their remorse, their dissatisfaction – for some of them even their repentance – for not having succeeded in finding the ‘way’ despite they made great efforts, implicitly by practising the kalām. As usual, Ibn Taymiyya left the best argument for last and quoted a saying he attributed to Abū Ḥāmid al-Ǧazālī:

أكثر الناس شكاً عند الموت أصحاب الكلام.

The people most prone to doubts when death presents itself to them are the people of the kalām.

Ibn Taymiyya presented the saying he attributed to al-Ǧazālī as an acknowledgement, a kind of mea culpa of these mutakallimūn for practising kalām and considering it the way forward. Nevertheless, Ibn Taymiyya’s criticism would not prevent him from using, later in the fatwā, these same authors and other Ašʿarīs to corroborate his opinion on the ‘uluww (height, altitude) of God who was on his throne, the latter situated above the seven heavens. Ibn Taymiyya quoted the Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn of Abū al-Ḥassan al-Ašʿarī (d. 324/936) and the Kitāb al-asmāʾ wa al-ṣifāt of Abū Bakr al-Bayhaqī (d. 458/1066).

Further on, Ibn Taymiyya defended the idea that the term al-istiwāʿ in verse 5 of Sura 20 could not be interpreted and refuted the interpretation of the term yad as niʿma (benefit). To support his position, he quoted once again Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ašʿarī and his work al-Ibāna as well as the Mālikī qāḍī Abū Bakr al-Baqillānī (d. 402/1013) – with his work also titled al-Ibāna – the best Ašʿarī mutakallim who existed according to Ibn Taymiyya. A little further he used the words of al-Baqillānī to refute the belief that God, by virtue of His Being, was

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96 It is the case for Faḫr al-Dīn al-Rāzī.
97 Ibn Taymiyya 2015, 68-70.
98 Ibn Taymiyya 2015, 70.
99 Ibn Taymiyya 2015, 127-37. It is on this last point that several Ašʿarī scholars have accused Ibn Taymiyya of anthropomorphism. This accusation is based on the following syllogism: if God is attributed a direction (in this case al-ʿuluw), this amounts to saying that He is therefore contained in a space and only a body can be contained in a space. God cannot therefore have a direction as is asserted in the Muršida of Muhammad b. Tūmart (d. 524/1130), often, and wrongly, attributed to Ibn ʿAsākir, one of the reference texts of the Ašʿarī belief: "ليس له قبل ولا بعد ولا فوق ولا تحت ولا طرف ولا شمال ولا أمام ولا خلفه" (al-Qāḍī 1999, 31-2, 46). In another version, we find: "لا غايته الجهات المتى سكاز المبدعون".
100 Ibn Taymiyya 2015, 186, 190.
103 Ibn Taymiyya 2015, 203.
present everywhere (fī kulli makān bi-dāti-hi). Ibn Taymiyya concluded his line of reasoning with his most relevant argument, namely a passage from the *Risāla al-nizāmiyya* of Abū al-Maʿālī al-Ǧuwaynī (d. 478/1085) in which the author explicitly stated that the best path to follow regarding the interpretation of divine names and attributes was that of the *salaf*.

These few examples illustrate this ambivalent attitude of Ibn Taymiyya’s towards certain Ašʿarī-*mutakallimūn* ulemas: on the one hand, refuting some of their opinions, on the other hand, integrating them into his discursive strategy and using them to refute the opinions and arguments of other opponents. Ibn Taymiyya did not shy from this ambivalent use of the texts of the *mutakallimūn* to support his theses. On the contrary, shortly before the end of his *fatwā*, Ibn Taymiyya explained in no uncertain terms why he quoted them:

And his [Abū Bakr al-Baqillānī’s] sayings and similar sayings of others among the *mutakallimūn* on this subject are numerous for anyone who wants to know them. And certainly, we could have been content only with the Qurʾān, the Sunna, the traditions of the *salaf* and dispensed with reporting their [the *mutakallimūn*’s] sayings. But the main thing is that God grants the servant’s wisdom and faith to have reason and religion so that he can understand and profess religion. Thereafter, the light of the Qurʾān and Sunna will suffice for him and he will not need anything else. Nevertheless, most people have become affiliates of certain groups of *mutakallimūn* for whom they have a good opinion at the expense of others. They are convinced that they [the *mutakallimūn*] have achieved in this regard what no one has done apart from them and that even if one were to come to them with a verse, they will not follow it until one of their [the *mutakallimūn*’s] words is presented to them.

There is no denying that Ibn Taymiyya exhibits a certain transparency and intellectual honesty in this passage. Nevertheless, on careful examination it also turns out to be yet another argument against the *mutakallimūn*: by explaining that he used the words of *mutakallimūn*

104 Ibn Taymiyya 2015, 204.
105 Ibn Taymiyya criticises this position at the beginning of the book, see fn. 95.
106 Ibn Taymiyya 2015, 205.
to speak to those who follow the kalām, Ibn Taymiyya showed on the one hand that he held the same opinion as the earlier great šuyūḥ mutakallimūn on crucial points relating to dogma and that on the other hand, the proponents of the over-interpretation of divine names and attributes among the neo-mutakallimūn were innovators. This process was quite similar to that employed in al-Iḥnāʾī’s refutation of the visitation of the tombs with the use of Mālikī-Ašʿarī sources; or that of al-Qušayrī, regarding the kalām as the path of the great Sufi masters, with the use of a Sufi corpus.

5 Rigour and Criticism in the Reading of Sources

In addition to transparency in his choice to use mutakallimūn authors in his Fatwā al-hamawiyyya al-kubrā, a certain rigour in the reading, treatment and validation of texts which are used as sources seems to emerge from the analysis of Ibn Taymiyya’s writings. Given the impossibility of conducting an in-depth analysis of Ibn Taymiyya’s entire output, I will limit myself to his work entitled al-Istiqāma. One of Ibn Taymiyya’s criteria of source validation that recurred quite often in this work was isnād (chain of transmission). Although less well known and less presented as a muḥaddiṯ, Ibn Taymiyya was competent in the science of hadīṭ and the so-called science of narrators (ʿilm al-riǧāl). He emphasised the importance of the isnād and lamented that in his time, “many among the servants did not memorise the hadīṭ or their isnād and consequently, there were many errors made in both the isnād and the matn [text] of the hadīṭ”. Ibn Taymiyya sifted through the passages of al-Qušayrī’s Risāla with particular attention to those in which the author reported the sayings attributed to different Sufi masters, validating them or not after analysis of the isnād.

Al-Qušayrī reported that Ḏū al-Nūn al-Miṣrī was said to have been asked about verse 5 sura 20 and replied that God confirms His Being there and refutes any place for Him. God exists by His Be-

107 On Ibn Taymiyya’s position on the different types of interpretations see Zouggar 2010, 198-204.


109 Ibn Taymiyya 2005, 159:

110 His full name Abū al-Fayḍ Ṯawbān b. Ibrāhīm, born in Aḫmīm in Egypt in 179/796. Great Sufi scholar and master who died in Egypt in 245/859. For more information see Chiabotti, Orfali 2016, 90-127.

111 “The Most Merciful [who is] above the Throne established”
ing and things exist by His command (ḥukm) and as He Wills. But for Ibn Taymiyya, the problem of the Isnād arose already before analysing its content:

I say: he [al-Qušayrī] does not cite any Isnād going back to Dū al-Nūn for this saying. In these books, there are many stories/anecdotes reported with an Isnād that has nothing true. So, what about this evil saying reported without an Isnād which makes one attribute to šuyūḥ something a reasonable person would not say. This word has nothing to do with the verse, on the contrary it opposes it. This verse does not in any way refer to the affirmation (iṯbāt) of the Being of God (ḏāti-hi) or even to the refutation that it is contained in a place. So how can this verse be explained in this way?!

When it says 'that He exists by His Being and things exist by His command (ḥukm)', it is a word of Truth but this is not the meaning of this verse.\footnote{Ibn Taymiyya 2005, 150. This position echoes what is also found in the Muršida: (al-Qāḍī 1999, 20-7, 46)}

Further on, we find this same problem of the Isnād concerning a saying which al-Qušayrī attributed to Dū al-Nūn and according to which he praised the merits of the beautiful voice and the samāʾ which pushes and directs hearts towards the truth (al-haqq). For Ibn Taymiyya:

This saying has no Isnād going back to Dū al-Nūn but he [al-Qušayrī] reports it without quoting its main narrator [arsala-hu ʿirsālan]. Many of what he reports in this book are actually false words that are

\footnote{Ibn Taymiyya 2005, 151.}

\footnote{Ibn Taymiyya 2005, 275.}

\footnote{Although it is not a prophetic ḥadīṯ, Ibn Taymiyya treats this ḥadīṯ (narrative) attributed to Dū al-Nūn using the nomenclature of ḥadīṯ scholarship. By the expression arsala-hu ʿirsālan Ibn Taymiyya refers to the mursal ḥadīṯ, characterised by the lack of the last person to hear the ḥadīṯ directly from the Prophet.}
falsely attributed to these people; either Abū al-Qāsim [al-Qušāyri] heard it from some people and considered it true or he found it written in some books and considered it authentic […]". 116

Ibn Taymiyya went on to highlight the phenomenon of attributing false and misleading words to the most illustrious šuyūḥ and ‘ulamā’ for the purpose of legitimising a particular belief or innovative practice:

And among the most numerous lies are those about the famous šuyūḥ and we have seen and heard what only God is able to count. And Abū al-Qāsim despite his erudition and his reported versions with an isnād, in his book al-Risāla, there is a significant portion of the false narratives about which there is no need to polemicise for the one who has a minimum of knowledge of the reality of the narratives that are reported about them [the šuyūḥ]. 117

Ibn Taymiyya did not merely note the absence of the isnād or criticise its authenticity. In the discussion that concerns us, Ibn Taymiyya cited the texts in which, according to him, many stories and narrations related to the samā‘ were found:

As for the one who supports, with an isnād, narrations related to the samā‘ then most of the time he uses two works: the book al-Lam‘ by Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāq which reports after Abū Ḥātim al-Siǧistānī, after Abū Naṣr, after ‘Abd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī; the book al-Samā‘ of Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī that he heard from him directly. 118

Ibn Taymiyya was ardently opposed to singing, which he considered a perversion and a danger for the heart. 119 Although he was an enthusiast for warrior arts like furūšiyya, Ibn Taymiyya had no taste for military music, a military practice for which there is no trace either

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118 Ibn Taymiyya 2005, 276.
Authors as Readers in the Mamlūk Period and Beyond, 45-82

in the Prophet or the *salaf*. But it was above all the *samāʿ* practised by some *mutasawwifa* with all the turpitudes and perversions committed therein that he strongly denounced and condemned. However, Ibn Taymiyya’s position on the *samāʿ* should in no way be taken as a condemnation of Sufism as such or of the brotherhoods as has already been well demonstrated by several scholars.

In other passages of his *al-Istiqāma*, Ibn Taymiyya pointed out the absence of *isnād* which was one of the first criteria – if not the first – for validating a reported saying even before analysing its content. Even for a saying that he considered good, Ibn Taymiyya did not fail to point out the absence or lack of knowledge of the *isnād*. Like a *muhaddīth*, Ibn Taymiyya analysed in depth the *isnāds* quoted by al-Qušayrī and did not hesitate to point out when one of the narrators was unknown:

"Abū al-Qāsim said: ‘the *šayḥ* Abū ‘Abd al-Rahmān reported to us: ‘I heard Abū al-ʿAbbās b. al-Ḥaššāb al-Baġdādī who heard Abū al-Qāsim b. Mūsā who heard Muḥammad b. Ahmad who heard al-Anṣārī who heard al-Ḫarrāz say, ‘the real closeness [to being with God] is not losing the attachment for the good things in one’s heart and the serenity of mind towards God’."

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120 According to Ibn Taymiyya, the origin of the military music would come from Persian kings. This tradition would have spread through the conquests of the Persian armies during Antiquity. Ibn Taymiyya 2005, 238. For Ibn Taymiyya, the Prophetic tradition at war is "خفض الصوت". Poetry is acceptable for motivating and exciting the combatants’ ardour to fight. Ibn Taymiyya 2005, 238, 242, 279. For more information see Michot 2016, 8-10 and Frenkel 2018, 5-12. It should be noted that for some *ʿulamāʾ* music could be a psychological weapon in the service of Muslims. For the Ḥanafī Badr al-Ḍīn al-ʿAynī (d. 855/1451), banging the drum was allowed in the context of war to gather the fighters and as a signal for combat readiness. Although it is detestable (*makrūḥ*) to use bells (*al-ağrās*) in the territory of Dār al-ḥarb to avoid detection by the enemy, there is no harm in hanging them on the horse harness for frightening the enemy before the fight. Al-ʿAynī 2014, 1: 452-3.

121 In many passages of his writings, Ibn Taymiyya denounces the contemplation and penchant for hairless young people in the circles of *samāʿ*. See also Pouzet 1963, 132; Homerin 1985, 226 fn. 32; Berriah 2020.

122 See fn. 30.

123 Here are just a few examples. Ibn Taymiyya 2005, 157-8.

124 (And this saying is a good saying even if its *isnād* is not known) (Ibn Taymiyya 2005, 379).
I say, ‘this story has in its isnāḍ someone whose degree of trust [ḥāl] is not known and even if it is true that this saying is from Abū Sa‘īd al-Ḥarrāz, it does not mean that closeness to God is achieved only by this means’.  

One might think that Ibn Taymiyya raised this criterion of a narrator’s lack of knowledge in the isnāḍ to protect the reputation of Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī, a great Sufi šayḫ whom he greatly revered and whom he quoted extensively in his writings. Yet, Ibn Taymiyya also raised the problem of isnāḍ and was equally dubious about a saying on divine attributes that al-Qušayrī attributed to al-Ḥusayn b. Manṣūr, better known as al-Ḥallāǧ, and whose reputation as a misguided person, heretic and even apostate was well known and which Ibn Taymiyya did not forget to mention. Regarding the words of al-Ḥallāǧ, Ibn Taymiyya wrote:

Is this saying – and God is more Knowledgeable – really from al-Ḥallāǧ or not? In the isnāḍ there is a narrator whose degree of trust [ḥālu-hu] I do not know and I have seen many things attributed to al-Ḥallāǧ in books, epistles and statements when they are lies without any doubt, even though it is true that in many other sayings attested to be those of al-Ḥallāǧ, there is corruption, disorder and disruption.

We must acknowledge here a certain rigour and objectivity on the part of Ibn Taymiyya, which were not always present, if we take into consideration the criticisms he made of al-Ḥallāǧ in other fatwās. It is clear that no matter which author al-Qušayrī attributed a saying to, whether he was appreciated or not by Ibn Taymiyya, the isnāḍ was the first element to be analysed. This way of proceeding was later confirmed when Ibn Taymiyya expressed doubts about the isnāḍ of a saying he considered to be ‘good’ and which was attributed to al-

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125 Ibn Taymiyya 2005, 154. See page 158 for another example of criticism of the absence of an isnāḍ.
126 Ibn Taymiyya 2005, 106.
128 See for example the false accusations against Rašīd al-Dīn, highlighted by Michot 1995.
129 Massignon 1975. Nevertheless, he agrees on several points with al-Ḥallāǧ and his perception of al-Ḥallāǧ and his creed seems to have evolved over time. See Michot 2007.
Fuḍayl b. ʿIyāḍ (d. 187/803), a famous Sufi šayḫ whom he particularly liked. For some sayings reported by al-Qušayrī from Sufi masters, Ibn Taymiyya did not limit himself to refuting the authenticity of the isnād but made corrections and clarifications. This is the case with a saying attributed to Sahl b. ʿAbd Allāh about the created character of the letters of the Qurʾān:

هذا الكلام ليس له إسناد عن سهل، وكلام سهل بن عبد الله وأصحابه في السنة والصفات والقرآن أشهر من أن يذكر هنا. وسهل من أعظم الناس قولًا بأن القرآن كله حروف، ومعانيه غير مخلوقة، بل صاحبة أبو الحسن بن سالم – أخبر الناس بقوله – قد عرف قوله وقال أصحابه في ذلك. وقد ذكر أبو بكر بن إسحاق الكلاهاني في "العزف في مذاهب التصوف"، عن الحارث الشامسي وأبي الحسن بن سالم، أنهما كانا يقولان: إن الله يتكلم بصوت، ومذهب السالمية أصحاب سهل، ظاهر في ذلك، فلا يترك هذا الأمر الشهور الموروث ظاهرة لحکاية مرسلة لا إسناد لها.

This saying has no isnād from Sahl. The saying of Sahl b. ‘Abd Allāh and his companions about the Sunna, the Attributes and the Qurʾān are so well known that there is no need to recall them here. Sahl is among the most illustrious people who claimed that the Qurʾān in its entirety consists of ḥurūf and that its meanings are not created. Moreover, his companion Abū al-Ḥasan b. Sālim – the most knowledgeable of Sahl sayings – and his companions, are known for his words on this subject. Abū Bakr b. Ishāq al-Kalābāḏī has mentioned in his book al-Taʿarruf fi maqhab al-tasawwuf according to al-Ḥāriṯ al-Muhāsibī and Abū al-Ḥasan b. Sālim that both say: ‘surely God speaks through a ṣawt.’ The maqhab of the Sālimiyā and the companions of Sahl is clear on this and it is not appropriate to bring a mursal narration without an isnād for this type of thing that is clear and well-known.

Ibn Taymiyya’s methodological process demonstrates both a scientific rigour and a vast erudition, which were unanimously accepted by his contemporaries, whether those in his circle or his fiercest opponents.

6 Conclusion

The analysis of a sample of Ibn Taymiyya’s writings has shed light on some aspects of his source methodology. Of course, these results are only preliminary and, given the limited corpus, need to be completed. The example of the visit to the tombs shows how Ibn Taymiyya used the Companions in order to disprove his opponents who based their arguments on the opinion or word of a Companion. In the first instance, Ibn Taymiyya invoked the authority of a Companion who

131 Ibn Taymiyya 2005, 163.
was higher in the ranking of merits. If it was an isolated opinion as in the case of Ibn ʿUmar, Ibn Taymiyya opposed it in a second step to the ǧumhūr al-ṣaḥāba (majority of the Companions).

Ibn Taymiyya did not follow this methodology in every case. Depending on the subject matter, the relevance of the word reported by the Companion could prevail over the order of merit of the Companions. Thus, Ibn Taymiyya gave priority to the word of Salmān al-Fārisi over that of ʿUmar, the second caliph of Islam and who occupied the second place in the ranking of the Companions in the Sunni tradition, on the subject of the superiority of the Arabs and the merits of Arabness since it made his argument more relevant and effective.

The examination of the Ǧawāb al-bāhir and al-Iḫnāʾiyya, writings dealing with the visitation of graves, showed Ibn Taymiyya’s ability to use to his advantage, thanks to his vast erudition and sound knowledge of the different maḏḥabs and schools of thought, the sources of his opponents regardless of their maḏhab of affiliation. Ibn Taymiyya built his arguments on sources from his opponent’s maḏhab and used it against him to deconstruct his discourse and discredit him. His expertise in the maḏḥabs in general, and the Mālikī maḏhab in particular, allowed him to discuss and quote the opinions of the ‘ulamā’ of the different maḏḥabs as he wished. Although he was attached to the Ḥanbali maḏhab and admired its founder, it would seem that Ibn Taymiyya was not concerned with necessarily appearing to be a Ḥanbali scholar and/or ensuring that the opinions of the scholars affiliated with his maḏhab prevailed, particularly towards the end of his life. This pluri-maḏhab referencing and selection of sources, which he practiced at the end of his life, was the result of both his expertise in the maḏḥabs and a long intellectual journey. It was a further indicator of his independence from the maḏḥabs, an independence that was evident in his later writings: Ibn Taymiyya wanted to place himself above the maḏḥabs, to detach himself from them in the treatment of certain issues because quite simply the struggle to defend his conception of orthodoxy went beyond the maḏḥabs and concerned all Muslims without distinction. In line with the work of other scholars, the passages analysed in this study confirm Ibn Taymiyya’s ambivalent attitude towards certain Ašʿarī-mutakallimūn ‘ulamā’: on the one hand, he criticised them and disagreed with them on several points, on the other hand, he did not hesitate to use them against his opponents.

The examination of other writings of Ibn Taymiyya would allow us to potentially corroborate these results but, above all, bring new elements regarding his source methodology, which remains to be studied in depth as well as the idea of a Taymiyyan kalām.
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Authors as Readers in the Mamlūk Period and Beyond, 45-82


al-Ṣafadī: The Scholar as a Reader

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Abstract  Ḥalīl b. Aybak al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1363) was a famous author of the Mamlūk period. He was a renowned scholar, especially for his great literary culture and for his encyclopedic knowledge, chiefly of biographies. This article approaches him as a reader and focuses on the link between his readings and his scholarly production. The sources of information tackled here are three-fold. First, the ownership statements found on manuscripts title pages are tracked and analysed, put in relation to his contemporaneous writings and life events. Second, his reading journal (taḏkira) is investigated and its various roles are specified; its extent, original number of volumes, contents and uses are all discussed and the preserved manuscripts are also cited. Third, the manuscripts preserved in his hand, whether holographs or copies of other authors’ works, are investigated. Indeed, these are part of his inner library, even if some of them were offered to others.


Summary  1 Introduction. – 2 Documentary Evidence: The Paratextual Elements in Manuscripts. – 2.1 Ex-libris and Consultation Marks. – 2.2 A Word of Conclusion. – 3 Al-Ṣafadī’s Reading Journal: The Taḏkira al-Ṣalāḥiya. – 4 Al-Ṣafadī as a Reader and as an Author: The Holograph Manuscripts and the Manuscripts with Autograph Interventions. – 4.1 al-Ṣafadī as a Scribe. – 4.2 al-Ṣafadī’s Holographs. – 5 Conclusion.
1 Introduction

Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Ḫalīl b. Aybak al-Albakī al-Ṣafadī (696-764/1297-1363) was a well-known author of the Mamlūk period.1 The Mamlūk sultanate between 648/1250 and 923/1517 stretched over the lands of Egypt, Syria, Palestine and the Hejaz. The head of the state – the sultan – was normally a manumitted slave of Central Asian origin (a mamlūk),2 bought in his childhood and brought to Egypt to be educated and raised as a future military man,3 just like the other mamlūks, forming the army of the state. The Mamlūk army was organised under the authority of the sultan and of various amīrs, whose power varied according to the number of mamlūks they owned.

The Mamlūk sultans succeeded the Ayyubids and established themselves as the major power in the region, and then in all the Arabo-Islamic world, by putting an end to the Crusades and to the Mongol invasions. A peaceful period thus began, allowing the arts to flourish. Literature and scholarship benefitted from the situation as well, and the Mamlūk period is now recognised for its great intellectual vivacity: the sum of knowledge reached an unequalled level, notably thanks to the great cultural exchanges among different parts of the Islamic world, the multiplication of places of knowledge, the encouraging patronage from wealthy personalities – sultans, amīrs, and the civilian elite – and the possibility to travel and to make books and ideas travel easily.4 To master this growing knowledge, scholars would arrange it in encyclopaedias, manuals, anthologies and dic-

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1 GAL G II 39-42, S II 27-9. Biographical data are found chiefly in the account given by his friend al-Subkī, Ṭabaqāt, 10: 5-32 (no. 1352), but also in al-Ḍahābī, Muʿjam, 91-2 (no. 107); Ibn al-ʿIhmād, Ṣaḥārat, 8: 343-4; Ibn Ḥaǧar al-ʿAsqalānī, Durar, 2: 87-8; Ibn al-ʿIrāqī, ʿIrāqī, 2: 134-6; Ibn ʿAṣūr, Bidaʿ, 14: 303; Ibn Qādī ʿṢuhba, Ṭabaqāt, 3: 120-1; Ibn Qādī ʿṢuhba, Ṭāḥiḥ, 3: 227-9; Ibn ṣafārī al-Ṣaḥābī, Waṭayīṭ, 2: 268-70 (no. 789); Ibn Ṭaḡrībirdī, Manḥal, 5: 241-57; Ibn Ṭaḡrībirdī, Nuʿmü̲m, 11: 19-21; al-Maqrīzī, Durar, 2: 77-8; al-Maqrīzī, Sulūk, 3: 87; al-Ṣaḥābī, Waṭīṭ, 1: 135 (no. 258); for secondary sources, see Āṣīn 2005; Little 1976; Rosenthal in EI2; Rowson 2019; Van Ess 1976; Van Ess 1977, etc.

2 ‘Normally’ because a tendency to transmit the sultanic power to one’s son is observed at various stages of the Mamlūk history. “Mamlūk”, literally “thing possessed”, hence “slave”, see Ayalon in EI.

3 This training consisted in a military instruction, but not only: a religious education was also provided, as well as literacy and law classes, that could be rather advanced depending on the personal skills of the young mamlūk and on the wealth of his master. See Flemming 1977; Franssen 2017; Mauder 2021.

4 Behrens-Abouseif 2008, 10-11, 16; Manstetten 2018.
tionaries: the period is defined as an age of encyclopaedism.\footnote{5} Summaries, commentaries and abstracts from this knowledge were also written, a kind of a secondary literature that made the knowledge more accessible.

A great system of knowledge transmission was in full vigor. It is known thanks to the written sources (annals, histories, biographical dictionaries...) and it is reflected in a number of annotations found in manuscripts: licences of transmission (iǧāzāt), i.e. authorisations given by an author (or a master) to transmit and teach a certain text to others and to provide them with such a licence afterwards; certificates of audition (samāʿāt), i.e. attestations that such persons assisted the lessons of a certain master or author about a certain text; and collation notes (balāġāt or tablīġāt), attesting the comparison of the manuscript in presence with another one or several others, older and/or nearer from the author of the text, this comparison possibly done in community, by several scholars gathered together for a number of meetings.\footnote{6} All of these notes are extremely useful for our understanding of knowledge construction in the Mamlûk period and allow us to discern social practices in the study and elaboration of scholarship and expertise, as we will see in some examples.

al-Ṣafadī was one of these authors and scholars. Very prolific, he composed numerous books, some of them counting tens of volumes. His curiosity and expertise were multi-faceted as illustrated by the different fields in which he was active. He was and still is particularly reputed for his biographical dictionaries, mainly the Wāfī bi-l-wafayāt (The Comprehensive Book of Obituaries)\footnote{7} and the Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr wa-aʿwān al-nasr (Notables of the Age and Supporters of Victory),\footnote{8} which are still used by researchers today. He was also a famous litérateur, both in prose and in poetry, as well as a theorician and practitioner. For instance, in his Šinān al-šinās (Gardens of Paronomasia) – a monograph about a specific literary device, namely paronomasia (a type of pun, or play on words) – he used for the first time a book structure he favoured, which is in two parts: the first one is theoretical (etymology, definitions, classifications of the stylistic device under study); and the second practical: an anthology of verses, often his own, using the literary device previously expounded. This book structure was implemented to treat three other literary devic-

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\footnote{5}{van Berkel 2013; Muhanna 2013; Muhanna 2018.}
\footnote{7}{Ed. Ritter et al. 1931-. I borrow the translation of al-Ṣafadī’s book titles from Rowson 2009.}
\footnote{8}{Ed. Sezgin, ‘Amāwī 1990.}
es: tawriya, istiḥdām (two forms of double-entendre)\(^9\) and tašbīh (simile; see §§ 3 and 4.2). He was also a renowned literary critic (see his al-Ǧayṭ al-musaḡgam fi šarḥ Lāmiyyat al-ʿaḡam, Copious Showers of Commentary on the ‘Poem Rhyming in -l- of the Non-Arabs).\(^10\) His Taṣḥīḥ al-taṣḥīf wa-taḥrīr al-tahrīf (Correction of Misspellings and Rectification of Mispronunciations)\(^11\) or Maʿānī al-wāw (The Various Meanings of the Particle wa-)\(^12\) are a linguist’s oeuvres. History, linguistics, literature, but also tradition and religious studies: his wide gamut of knowledge reflects what was expected from a gentleman (adīb) and even more from a chancery secretary.\(^13\)

He was born in Şafad, Palestine, in 696/1297, his father being a Mamlūk amīr.\(^14\) As the son of a Mamlūk, he is part of what was called then the awlād al-nās, and, as it would often be the case for Mamlūk offspring after him, he worked as a civil servant at different ranks of the Mamlūk chancery.\(^15\) He worked and lived in different towns, in the two capital cities, Cairo and Damascus, but also in Şafad, Aleppo, Hamah and al-Raḥbah. He held different positions, beginning from the lowest rank for chancery secretaries, kātib al-darḡ (‘secretary of the roll’, responsible for the writing of everyday documents) from 717/1317-18, in his hometown, Şafad, to the highest: kātib al-sirr (‘secretary of the secret’, head of the chancery), in Aleppo, in 759/1358, skipping over the intermediary position of kātib al-dast (literally ‘secretary of the rostrum’, responsible for the important documents).\(^16\) In 745/1345, he worked for the dīwān al-inšāʾ (central chancery) at the Cairo Citadel, the sultan’s al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ Ismāʿīl (r. 743-6/1342-5) own chancery. At the end of his life, from 760/1358, he was wakīl bayt al-māl (agent of the Mamlūk treasury) in Damascus. Contrary to other great scholars of the Mamlūk period, like al-Maqrīzī, for instance,\(^17\) he never left the administration to dedicate himself to his scholarly activities and he was still in his post when he died from the plague on 10 Šawwāl 764/23 July 1363.

A great number of autograph and holograph manuscripts of his were preserved until today, a fact often interpreted as material evi-

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9 Bonebakker 1966.
11 Ed. al-Šarqāwī 1987b.
12 Unpublished.
14 For the bibliography about his biography, see fn. 1.
15 On this specific category, see Haarmann 1988.
16 This appellation comes from the fact that, in the central chancery of Cairo, this secretary was on the rostrum next to the sultan at various occasions. On the organization of the Mamlūk chancery, see Dekkiche 2011, 263-9; Martel-Thoumian 1992, 40-7.
17 See Bauden 2020, 144.
vidence of the excellent reputation he and his work enjoyed during his lifetime, and until now (see §§ 4.1 and 4.2).  

In order to envisage al-Ṣafadī as a reader, different sources of information are available. First, the documentary evidence: notes he left on manuscripts because he owned them (ownership marks) or borrowed them. These are the subject of the first part of this article, together with consultation notes and note-taking attestations that were left by al-Ṣafadī in the manuscripts he used, perused, and read. All of these are paratextual elements; that is, small textual units unrelated to the main text of the manuscript but featured on its pages. The paratextual elements are a wealth of knowledge for the historian of the book, the historian of ideas, or the biographer, among others. Sometimes, they are dated and bear a direct or indirect indication of place, still improving their documentary value.

Another great source of information about al-Ṣafadī’s readings is his reading journal, his taḏkira. This document is the object of the second part of this contribution. The *raison d’être* of the taḏkira, its chronology, use, look and extent will all be discussed. Special attention will be given to the holograph fragments or volumes of the taḏkira that were preserved until today, two of them having been identified only recently.

Third, the manuscripts copied by al-Ṣafadī will be considered as well. Indeed, if these were not always his property, they were first owned by him, and in any case, they are part of his inner library, since he cautiously copied their text. The reasons for such copied works are varied – and not always known – but what we see of the care he took in doing them is always tremendous. Already in his early twenties, al-Ṣafadī showed a great concern for the exactitude of the text he copied. This concern had to do with his own copying, but also with the exemplar chosen to be reproduced. He took great care to respect the manuscript copied, re-read his work to make sure he did not commit errors or *sauts du même au même*. Even more, his concern was merely philological since he was looking for the best source to be copied or to collate his text with. This “best source” was a holograph, when

19 The term “paratexte” was coined by Gérard Genette. See Genette 1982, among others.
20 Happily, these paratextual elements are more and more used by scholars and several ongoing projects aim at gathering them, see ELEO (Ex-Libris ex Oriente) project in ULiège (http://web.philo.ulg.ac.be/islamo/ex-libris-ex-oriente/), the Refaiya project in Leipzig University (https://www.refaiya.uni-leipzig.de/content/index.xml) or the efforts of Berlin State Library to mention them in their online catalogue (http://orient-digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/content/index.xml). A double special issue of the *Journal of Islamic Manuscripts* was devoted to them and gathered 12 studies about them, see Liebrenz 2018a. See also below fn. 24.
available, an authorial manuscript (checked by the author of the text) or an apograph, a direct copy of a holograph.21

For the same reason – the fact that his works are part of his inner library - holograph manuscripts of al-Ṣafadī’s that were preserved until today will be mentioned. On the contrary, even if they also reflect his readings, the licences of transmission and audition certificates mentioning his name or issued by him will not be systematically treated here.

2 Documentary Evidence: The Paratextual Elements in Manuscripts

Bibliophiles often leave a trace of their property in their books. It can be a seal impression, an ornate ex-libris, like the one of the late Seeger A. Bonebakker [fig. 1] in the twentieth century,22 or a few words scribbled on one of the first pages of a manuscript; the Italian humanist scholar and poet Poliziano (d. 1494), for instance, used to write this simple note: “Angeli Politiani et amicorum” at the beginning of his books, a way to testify to his intellectual history and to the intellectual milieu he was in.23

Similarly, the first pages of Arabic manuscripts are often filled with short notes by different hands, traced at different moments of the history of the book. Some of them are just a name jotted down on one corner of the page, but others contain additional details, like the date, place and price of purchase or the name of the lender and an expression of gratitude to him. Others are a bit more ornate, with the name of the owner written in a beautiful way. Others have been circled by a later bibliophile in order to draw attention to them and their value. Some are property marks, others are consultation statements. Whatever they look like, these marks and their context actually provide a great deal of information about a range of themes: at an individual level, about the readings of the person in presence, and, when the mark is dated, about the moment of this reading, thus more broadly, about the biography of the person and his intellectual history, or his methodology, about the peculiar handwriting of the person; at a collective level, about the history of the book, including

21 For terminology, see Bauden, Franssen 2020, 2-37, spec. 3, 20.
22 Seeger A. Bonebakker (1923-2005) was a Dutch orientalist who worked mainly for the University of California in Los Angeles. He had a special relation with Venice and the Ca’ Foscari University and bequeathed all his library (worth 70,000 €, as estimated in 2006, counting almost 8,000 books, 200 microfilms of manuscripts and thousands of printed articles), as well as nearly 230,000 € to finance the cataloguing of the collection and doctoral and post-doctoral projects about Arabic literature. See Franssen 2019.
23 Grafton 2001, 259-60.
the circulation of books and ideas (what was read where and when), about the extent and status of libraries, either private or public; and many other details particular to each case.\textsuperscript{24}

When the person who left the mark is a well-known scholar, these pieces of information are even more valuable. In the case of al-Ṣafadī, we are lucky enough, in the current state of research, to have fifteen marks of different kinds.

\subsection{Ex-libris and Consultation Marks}

al-Ṣafadī’s ex-libris and consultation marks currently identified can be classified in three different groups. First, we will concentrate on simple marks, which merely attest to his ownership, and of which nine were found. Second, we will mention one mark featuring supplementary information about the author of the text of the manuscript. Third, consultation marks will be discussed; these five marks are also instructive in terms of working methodology, since they always specify the fact that notes were taken from these readings. We will also

\textsuperscript{24} On the historical value of these notes, see Görke, Hirschler 2012. Studies taking into account these paratexts are happily more and more numerous, see for instance and in addition to the references cited in fn. 20: Daaïf, Sironval 2013; Krimsti 2018; Liebrenz 2018b; Zouache 2018 etc. See also Bauden in this volume.
mention al-Ṣafadī’s son’s ownership marks, written on manuscripts inherited from his father's library and of which there are four.

2.1.1 Simple Ex-libris

Simple ex-libris marks are short marks, just a few words, always written parallel to the spine, usually from the bottom up saying *Min kutub Ḫalīl b. Aybak [al-Ṣafadī]* (‘from among the books of Ḫalīl b. Aybak [al-Ṣafadī]’).\(^{25}\) This inscription generally occupies two or three lines, the first featuring solely *min kutub*, the final *bā’* being elongated so that these two short words occupy the same space as his name.

This is the case in the manuscript of the Bibliothèque nationale de France (henceforth BnF) Arabe 2061 (see fig. 2).\(^{26}\) This manuscript is a copy of the *Tālī kitāb wafayāt al-aʿyān*, the continuation of Ibn Ḫallikān’s *Kitāb wafayāt al-aʿyān*,\(^{27}\) by al-Muwaffaq Faḍl Allāh Muḥammad b. Sulaymān b. Aḥmad b. Tāğ al-Dīn b. Abī al-Faḥr Ibn al-Ṣuqāʿī (d. 726/1325),\(^{28}\) more precisely the obituaries for the years 660/1262-725/1325. We know that Ibn al-Ṣuqāʿī served as a secretary in different dīwāns related to crimes of fraud in the Mamlūk administration. He had thus access to sensitive information that other biographers did not know about. Jacqueline Sublet adds that his integration in the Damascene *intelligentsia* granted him of witty and unheard anecdotes and stories about his peers of the administration.\(^{29}\) It is no wonder at all that such a text was part of al-Ṣafadī’s library: it is often cited in the *Wāfī*\(^{30}\) and must have been one his main sources for the obituaries of those years.

As ex-libris, al-Ṣafadī simply wrote *Min kutub Ḫalīl b. Aybak al-Ṣafadī* on the title page, parallel to the spine and facing upward, in two short lines [fig. 3]. We also know that al-Ṣafadī had a personal copy of Ibn Ḫallikān’s opus (see § 4.1).

\(^{25}\) His *nisba* “al-Ṣafadī” is not always mentioned and there is no apparent logic explaining its presence or absence.

\(^{26}\) The ex-libris is cited in the catalogue: Mac Guckin de Slane 1883-95, 367. The MS is freely available online: https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b11001646v.image.

\(^{27}\) GAL G I 326-8, S I 561; ed. Abbās 1968-72.


\(^{29}\) Sublet 1973, XVIII-XXVIII.

\(^{30}\) Sometimes *verbatim*, see Sublet 1973, XII, 183 fn. 253 et *passim*. See also van Ess 1976, 256-7.
Another example of such simple ex-libris is found on the title page of a manuscript kept in the Turkish Islamic Arts Museum in Istanbul (Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi, henceforth TIEM), under the shelf mark 2014T. In this case, it is a text of adab by al-Ǧāḥiẓ (d. 255/868-9), “the father of adab”,31 the famous littérature of the ʿAbbāsid period, described as a “bibliophile and sometimes bibliomaniac”.32 This short epistle is entitled Risāla fī madḥ al-kutub wa al-ḥaṭṭ ʿalā ǧamʿi-hā (see the title page, fig. 4), hence an epistle about bibliophilia, but one should not trust this title: the text is actually a portion of the Kitāb al-ḥawayān by the same author.33 I did not have the chance to consult this manuscript, but Frédéric Bauden procured a copy of its microfilm for me and it seems to be an exceptional manuscript. The twenty-six folios display a very regular and large handwriting, in only five lines per page, a masterful example of calligraphic ṣūluṭ.34 The colophon is

32 “al-Ǧāḥiẓ, la cui passione di bibliofilo, e talvolta di bibliomane, traspare da ogni riga” (Ghersetti 1994, 67 et passim).
33 More precisely, an abbreviated form of a passage of the first volume of 1947 edition (by ʿAbd al-Salām b. Hārūn), from p. 50, as already shown by Rice 1955, 27. Note that the shelf mark given by Rice is TIEM 1024, but he is describing the manuscript we now know under the shelfmark TIEM 2014T.
34 About ṣūluṭ, see Gacek 2009, 274-5; Blair 2006, XXIII, 167.
signed “Alī b. Hilāl”, a fact that lets us suppose the manuscript was penned by the great calligrapher Ibn al-Bawwāb (d. 255/868-9), one of the two eminent calligraphers who have developed the five calligraphic styles still in use today. Nevertheless, D.S. Rice has convincingly shown it was a forgery: “The paper, ink, and script indicate that the manuscript is probably a Mamlūk forgery attributable to the fourteenth century”. Nevertheless, D.S. Rice has convincingly shown it was a forgery: “The paper, ink, and script indicate that the manuscript is probably a Mamlūk forgery attributable to the fourteenth century”.

The ex-libris stands in two lines [fig. 5], in this case with the nisba (“al-Ṣafadī”). A bit further, indications of place and date are added: bi-Dīmašq al-mahrūsa sana 761 (‘in Damascus the safeguarded, year 761/1359-60’). Had al-Ṣafadī been fooled by the forger? I could not answer, but since the manuscript is written on “thick salmon-coloured paper,” a paper often used by al-Ṣafadī for his own holographs (see below §§ 3 and 4.2), one may wonder if he had not recognised it as a common commodity...

35 On Ibn al-Bawwāb, see Sourdel-Thomine in *EI*2; Rice 1955, 5-9; Blair 2006, 160-73 *et passim*. al-Šanṭī 2007 develops the idea that this MS was actually penned by Ibn al-Bawwāb.

36 Rice 1955, 27.

37 Rice 1955, 27.
An interesting thing to add is the fact that the ownership marks have all been circled. Besides this, a new page has been pasted down on the title page and cut so that the ownership marks, the title and the author name are nevertheless visible. As it is often the case, the title page of the manuscript was probably very damaged, and a careful bibliophile must have wanted to restore his acquisition. Actually, we know this book collector is Abū Bakr b. Rustam al-Širwānī (d. 1135/1722-23): his ex-libris is the only one that was directly written on the new f. 1 (in the upper right corner). He gathered an impressive library and seems to have had a habit of circling the previous ex-libris of his books, especially those by famous scholars or characters.  

al-Ṣafadī was fond of adab, of works with a literary character, and, as we will demonstrate, he was fond of books so it is no wonder that such a book was part of his library: the theme it claims to cover, its conscientious calligraphy, and the name of its author are all reasons to covet such a book, even if it is not as old as the calligrapher’s name in the colophon makes us think.

Two other examples of simple ownership statement are found in two manuscripts of the Fazılahmed Pasha collection of the Köprülü Library: 1518 and 1519, the two volumes of the Kitāb al-af’āl, by Abū ‘Uṭmān Sa’īd b. Muḥammad al-Maʿāfirī al-Qurtubī ūnumma al-Saraqūṣṭī, also known as Ibn al-Haddād (d. after 400/1010) [figs 6, 8]. The date and place of each ex-libris are noted a bit farther down: bi-Dimašq al-mahrūsa sana 758 (‘in Damascus the safeguarded, in the year 758/1356-57’) [figs 7, 9].

According to the colophon, the manuscript was copied in Damascus in 670/1271-72, by a certain Yaḥyā al-Muṭarriz al-Ḥanafī.  

The book in question is about linguistic matters (more precisely verb morphology), one of al-Ṣafadī’s numerous interests. It is striking that three of his works about lexicography, namely the Ġawāmiḍ al-Ṣiḥāḥ (Problems in [the Lexicon Titled] ‘The Sound’), the Nufūḍ al-sahm fī waqaʿa li-l-Ǧawharī min al-wahm (The Penetrating Arrow, on the Errors of al-Ǧawhari [in his Lexicon Titled ‘The Sound’]) and the Ḥālī al-nawāhid ʿalā mā fī al-Ṣiḥāḥ min al-Šawāhid (The Adornment of the Full-Breasted, on the Poetic Citations in [the Lexicon Titled ‘The Sound’]) were written in this same year. For the first two,

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38 On al-Širwānī, see Fuʿād Sayyid 2003, 19-24 (who cites this particular ms); Richard 1999; Bonmariage 2016.  
40 Ms Fazılahmed Pasha 1518, f. 245.  
42 Ed. ʿĀyiš 2006.  
43 Unpublished.  
44 Rowson 2009, 339.

we know that al-Ṣafadī had finished his drafts in Ǧumādā I 757/May 1356 and 21 Ramaḍān 757/17 September 1356, respectively. 46 We have here one of his reference books for the composition of the different works about linguistic and phonologic correctness he wrote during that period. 47

In a manuscript now in Bursa, in the İnebey Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi, under the shelf mark Hüseyin Çelebi 764, one reads Min kutub | Ḥalīl b. Aybak al-Ṣafadī, on f. 2a (the title page), parallel to the spine, in the inner margin [figs 10-11]. The book is a copy of al-Rawḍ al-unuf fī šarḥ al-sīra al-nabawīyya li-Ibn Hišām, by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Suhaylī (d. 581/1185). 48 The author is from al-Andalus, where he studied with the traditionalist Abū Bakr Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 543/1148), 49 a specialist in religious studies, among others. The book in question is a commentary on a biography of the Prophet Muḥammad (sīra), mainly on the biography originally written by Ibn Hišām (d. 218/833 or 213/828). Ibn Hišām’s sīra relies on the lost text of Ibn Isḥāq (d. ca. 150/767), 50 son of a ḥadīṯ transmitter and grandson of a contemporary of the Prophet.

The manuscript is an apograph: it was collated with a manuscript that had been read aloud and checked by the author. It was copied on 10 Šawwāl 607/27 March 1211, in Jerusalem (al-Bayt al-maqdis), by Ḥusayn b. Faḍl b. Ḥalaf al-Maqdisī. A contemporary and acquaintance of al-Ṣafadī, Muģulṭāy b. Qilīǧ (d. 762/1361), had written a critical commentary of al-Suhaylī’s biography of the Prophet, 51 a subject that was in vogue during the Mamlūk period. The Prophet’s birthday, the mawlid al-nabī, was celebrated more and more widely, and Muhammad’s biography was recited for the occasion. al-Ṣafadī composed such a text to celebrate the Prophet’s birthday, entitled al-Faḍl al-munīf fī al-mawlid al-šarīf (The Overwhelming Merit of the Noble Birthday), and hence we have here, with this manuscript, one his sources. 52

45 Note that a fair copy, dedicated to the head of the chancery, was realised the same year by al-Ṣafadī as well. al-Ṣafadī, Gawāmiḍ, 35-6.
46 According to the colophons of the two scribal copies realised on the basis of the draft of the first volume, which is lost. al-Ṣafadī, Nufūḏ, 25-6.
47 The Taṣḥīḥ al-taṣḥīf wa taḥrīr al-taḥrīf was finished only a couple of years later, if we trust the date of the iǧāza: 759/1358. See § 4.2 and al-Ṣafadī, Taṣḥīḥ, 34.
49 Robson in EF; GAL G I 525, S I 632-3, 732-3.
51 Entitled al-Zahr al-bāsim fī sīrat Abī al-Qāsim, see GAL G II 48, S II 47-8 and Hamdan in EF. The two men knew each other and exchanged letters, see al-Ṣafadī, Alḥān, 2: 321 (no. 99); al-Ṣafadī, Aʿyān, 5: 433-8 (no. 1865); al-Ṣafadī, Wāfī, 26: 145 (no. 109).
52 Franssen, forthcoming; al-Ṣafadī’s Faḍl al-munīf was edited by ʿĀyiš 2007. About the mawlid, see Katz 2007, and for the mawlid texts from Mamlūk Damascus, partic. 54-61, 216.
Another simple ex-libris is found on the title page of MS Rağıp Paşa 1078 [fig. 12]. This manuscript is a copy of the *Tāḥrīr al-tahbīr fī ṣinā‘at al-ši‘r wa-l-naṭr wa-bayān i‘ğāz al-Qurʾān* (The Composition of the Writing in the Art of Poetry, Prose and Exposition of the Inimitability of the Qurʾān), by Zakī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm b. ʿAbd al-Wāḥid, commonly called Ibn Abī al-Iṣbaʿ (d. 654/1256). As the title implies, it is a work of stylistics. This manuscript was commissioned for the library of Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, as attested by the cartouche with the ornate chrysography visible on the title page. The Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī family counted several important chancery secretaries of the Mamlūk period. This manuscript was commissioned for Muḥyī al-Dīn Yaḥyā, head of the chancery (kātib al-sirr) successively in Damascus and Cairo. According to the mark, al-Ṣafadī acquired the manuscript in 738/1337-8, the year of Muḥyī al-Dīn Yaḥyā’s death. The

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53 Ed. Ḥifnī 1963.
54 Harb in *EF* I.
55 We will discuss further this particular MS a bit later (see § 4.1), as well as another manuscript commissioned for the same library.
56 Salibi in *EF* II (1).
ownership mark is simple, written parallel to the spine; it says only Min kutub | Ḥalīl b. Aybak ‘afā Allāh ‘an-hu | sana 738 (‘from among the books of Ḥalīl b. Aybak, may God forgive him, year 738’) [fig. 13]. Other ownership statements are visible on the same page, four of them written beneath al-Ṣafadī’s and in the same direction. Another ownership mark is written in the opposite part of the page from al-Ṣafadī’s; it is in the name of Aḥmad b. Yāḥyā b. Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī al-ʿAdawī al-Qurašī, the son of the first owner of the manuscript. At the time of his father’s death, this Aḥmad was in prison for having displeased the sultan al-Naṣir Muḥammad, and this is probably why al-Ṣafadī was able to acquire the manuscript. All of the five ownership marks written in the lower part of the page have been circled in red, probably by al-Širwānī (see fn. 38), whose ownership statement is in the superior margin, next to the spine. A short taqrīz (blurb) was added inside the spine and seems to be in al-Ṣafadī’s hand.

In addition to manuscripts, albums of paleography can also be a source for the discovery of paratextual elements. It is the case with al-Munajjed’s, since several ownership marks cited above are dis-

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57 Salibi in EI² (2).
played on its pages. On plate 66, we see another example of al-Ṣafadī’s simple ex-libris, undated [fig. 14]. The plate shows the title page of a poetic anthology by Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. al-Muṭahhar al-ʿAdawī al-Ṣimšāṭī (third/ninth c.), the Kitāb al-anwār wa-maḥāsin al-ašʿār, a manuscript that was dedicated to the ‘Abbāsid caliph al-Muṭaṣim bi-Llāh (d. 227/842). The manuscript is preserved in Topkapı palace (henceforth TKS) under the shelf mark Ahmet III 2392. al-Ṣafadī was extremely fond of poetry and this manuscript is old and prestigious; he must have been happy and proud to have it in his collection.

Sometimes, the catalogues of manuscripts do specifically mention the paratextual elements. This is the case, although not systematically, of Dār al-Kutub wa-l-Waṭāʾiq al-Miṣriyya’s (henceforth DK). For instance, under the entry about al-Kāšif ‘an riḍāl al-kutub al-sittā, by Šams al-Dīn al-Dāhābī (d. 748/1348), one finds the mention of al-Ṣafadī’s ownership statement dated 763/1361-62. I did not have
the chance to consult the manuscript, or to have access to it digitally, but one may think it is an alternative title for al-Ḍahabi’s *al-Kāšīf fī maʿrifat man la-hu riwāya fī al-kutub al-sitta*. In any case, the book must be a biographical dictionary of the transmitters (riǧāl) of the six most important hadīṭ collections. Hence, this is the first book on religious sciences that we have found in what remains from al-Ṣafadī’s library, and an important source for his redaction of biographies.

2.1.2 Simple Ex-Libris with Details About the Author of the Text

The second category deals with more detailed ex-libris. In a *maǧmūʿ* preserved in the Ayasofya collection under the shelf mark 3711, one finds, from what is now f. 64, a *risāla* supposedly by Ibn al-Bayṭār.

Ibn al-Bayṭār (d. 646/1248) is an Andalusian author originally from Málaga who studied botany in Seville and then left the Iberian Peninsula to carry out a study trip to the East, ending up as chief herbalist for the Ayyubid Sultan al-Malik al-Kāmil. His *opus major* is the *Ǧāmiʿ li-l-mufradāt al-adwiya wa-l-aǧḏiya*, a dictionary of natural history, where he synthesised the knowledge of his time about plants, vegetables, animals and minerals. He is also known for his commentary on Dioscorides, listing drugs and medicines in various languages (Arabic, Latin, Berber).

In the manuscript Ayasofya 3711, no title was written on the title page – we can only read paratextual elements by several owners and readers – but the beginning of the text, f. 64b, says in red that this is the *Risālat Ḥunayn b. Ishāq al-mutaṭabbib fī al-awzān wa-l-akyāl* (*Ḥunayn b. Ishāq’s Epistle on the Weights and Measures of Capacity*) [*figs 15-16*]. Ḥunayn b. Ishāq (d. 260/873) was an outstanding translator of the ‘Abbāsid period, specialised in Greek scientific literature. It is mostly thanks to him that Galen’s and Hippocrates’ works were transmitted to the Arab and then to the Latin worlds. He used to work as a genuine philologist, gathering as many manuscripts as possible and collating them in order to translate a faithful text. He was also an author and various texts of his are preserved, on subjects as varied as linguistics, philosophy, anecdotes attributed to Greek philos-
ophers, meteorology or religious subjects (he was a Christian Nestorian). Nevertheless, I have not found any trace of such an epistle.

The annotations we can read on what should have been the title page are interesting in various respects. Next to the simple ownership mark of al-Ṣafadī, of the same kind as those we have already seen, several other marks insist that the following pages are in Ibn al-Bayṭār’s own handwriting. For instance, the following inscription occupies the place normally intended for the title of the book:


These quires are in the hand of our šayḥ the wise man, the eminent Diyā’ al-Dīn ‘Abd Allāh the herbalist from Málaga, may God sanctify his spirit and illuminate his grave. Ibn Suwaydī the doctor wrote this lauding [God] and praying [saying the taṣliya].
Is that truly a manuscript in the hand of Ibn al-Bayṭār? Without another sample of his handwriting it is difficult to assert this with a good degree of certainty. 66 Nevertheless, Ibn al-Bayṭār was born and raised in al-Andalus and we know that the Arabic handwriting in use in the Western parts of the Islamic world is different from the one used in the East. In this text, various features of what we call maġribī script are effectively visible, the most straightforward being the dot under the fāʾ (instead of above) and the single dot above the qāf (instead of the double dot); the small tail crossing the written line in the alifs is another clear feature. 67 One could add the description of the dāl, forming an angle of broadly 45 degrees, with its upper part curved, or the kāf, which is smaller than usual and presents, in its mabsūṭa form, a vertical upper part. 68 Such features are an argument in favour of the identification of the hand.

Another commentator, a certain ʿUṯmān b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān..., indicated that this is a risālā by al-Baʿlabakkī, that is Qustā b. Lūqā al-Baʿlabakkī, another outstanding translator of the ʿAbbāsid period (see the upper outer corner of the same f. 64). 69 al-Ṣafadī seems convinced of the hand identification: next to the inscription that occupies the title place, he added three lines of text, in diagonal in the outer margin [fig. 16]:

\[
\text{Qultu huwa Ibn al-Bayṭār | şāhib Kitāb al-mufradāt al-mašhūr | wakataba Ḥalīl b. Aybak al-Ṣafadī}
\]

I said: he [i.e. the person mentioned in the previous inscription] is Ibn al-Bayṭār, the author of the well-known book about the simples.

If al-Ṣafadī is right, we have here a working document penned and used by an outstanding scholar of the Ayyūbid period, owned and used by another outstanding scholar, of the Mamlūk period. al-Ṣafadī’s ex-libris is, as always, written parallel to the spine, in the inner margin, and includes his nisba: Min kutub | Ḥalīl b. Aybak al-Ṣafadī (‘from among the books of Ḥalīl b. Aybak al-Ṣafadī’). A bit farther, he wrote bi-Dimašq | sana | 763 (‘in Damascus, 763/1361-62’).

The reason why such a book was part of al-Ṣafadī’s library may be linked to his last position as Damascus wakīl bayt al-māl (from

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66 On the identification of handwritings, see Bauden, Franssen 2020; more specifically Franssen 2020.
67 On maġribī script features, see Déroche 1994; Houas 1886; van den Boogert 1989; on the andalusī more precisely, see Gacek 2009, 8-9; Bongianino 2017a; Bongianino 2017b and his bibliography.
68 About the kāf mabsūṭa, see Gacek 2009, 318-19.
69 Hill in EI²; GAL G I 204-5.
which necessitated the mastering of weights: this knowledge may be part of what one should know in order to be an accomplished agent of the Mamlūk treasury in Damascus. The late date of acquisition – he was already sixty-seven and was in his last year of life – corroborates this hypothesis. The prestige of the author and copyist may also have sufficed to arouse al-Ṣafadī's interest.

2.1.3 Consultation Marks with Note-taking Attestation

Consultation marks with note-taking attestations are another type of personal marks. These are a bit longer and more informative than the simple ex-libris. For instance, on the title pages of four manuscripts of the Fāzīlāhmed Pasha collection, shelf marks 1161 to 1164, there are two lines in the hand of Ṣafadī, explaining that he “finished or consulted [the book] and what was before it, selecting and choosing the best parts of it“. These manuscripts are four volumes of the geographical dictionary Kitāb Muʿğam al-buldān by Yāqūt al-Rūmī al-Ḥamawī (d. 626/1229), the reference work at that time in geography and toponymy, which also includes biographies of prominent figures of the places cited, as well as poetry and literary subjects.

Yāqūt al-Rūmī, the author, was born into a Byzantine family and sold as a slave. His master was a merchant, who provided him with an outstanding education and took him along during his numerous travels. Yāqūt took advantage of these travels to visit libraries and to meet local scholars and study with them. After a disagreement, the merchant manumitted Yāqūt, who decided to earn his life as a warrāq, copyist and bookseller, and went on travelling extensively and composing his various books.

The manuscripts preserved are volumes two to five. The marks are, as usual with the ex-libris, written alongside the spine, from bottom to top, in two lines, and the wording is very similar though never exactly the same:

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70 On this position, see Martel-Thoumian 1992, 62.
72 I.e. the first volume of the work, which apparently has not been preserved.
73 Gilliot in EF²; GAL G I 479-81, S I 880. Ed. Wüstenfeld 1866-73.
\textit{vol. 2, Fazilahmed Pasha 1161} [figs 17-18] 
\begin{quote}
\textit{ṭāla’-hu wa mā qabla-hu muntaqiyan | Ḫalīl b. Aybak al-Ṣafadī ḥāmidan wa muṣalliyan.}
\end{quote}

\textit{Ḫalīl b. Aybak al-Ṣafadī studied it [i.e. this book] and what stands before it, selecting [best passages], lauding [God] and praying [the Prophet].}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image1}
\caption{Figures 17-18 Yāqūt. \textit{Kitāb Mu‘ǧam al-buldān}. Köprülü Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi, ms Fazilahmed Pasha 1161, f. 1a and detail (courtesy Köprülü Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi)}
\end{figure}

\textit{vol. 3, Fazilahmed Pasha 1162} [fig 19] 
\begin{quote}
\textit{farağa min-hu wa mā qabla-hu muṭāli‘an wa muntaqiyan | Ḫalīl b. Aybak al-Ṣafadī ḥāmidan wa muṣalliyan.}
\end{quote}

\textit{Ḫalīl b. Aybak al-Ṣafadī finished it [i.e. this book] and what stands before it, studying it and selecting [best passages], lauding [God] and praying [the Prophet].}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image2}
\caption{Figure 19 al-Ṣafadī’s consultation mark in Yāqūt. \textit{Kitāb Mu‘ǧam al-buldān}. Köprülü Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi, MS Fazilahmed Pasha 1162, f. 1a, detail (courtesy Köprülü Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi)}
\end{figure}
Halil b. Aybak al-Ṣafadī finished it [i.e. this book] and what stands before it, choosing and selecting [best passages], lauding [God] and praying [the Prophet].

This book was extremely useful to al-Ṣafadī as a source of first-hand information for his greatest biographical dictionary, the *Wāfī*, and is abundantly cited in different biographies. The considerations on literature must have particularly pleased him.

The next mark is featured on the title page of another manuscript in a Western handwriting: Ibn al-Bayṭār’s was not the only *maġribī* hand in al-Ṣafadī’s library. As attested by two volumes now preserved respectively in the DK under the shelf mark *taʾrīḫ mīm* 103, and in the Maʿhad Balaṣfūra al-dīnī, near Sūhāǧ (no shelf mark number), at least another *andalusī* hand was represented. These manuscripts are volumes four and six of ʿAlī b. Mūsā b. Saʿīd al-Andalusī (or al-Maġribī)’s (d. 685/1286) *Kitāb al-Muġrib fī ḥulā al-Maġrib*. Actu-
ally, the book is the result of the work of four generations: this description of events in al-Andalus since the time of its conquest was begun by an acquaintance of ‘Alî b. Mūsā’s great-grandfather, Abū Muhammad ‘Abd Allâh b. İbrâhîm al-Ḥiğârî (d. after 530/1135), and was continued by different ancestors of Ibn Sa‘îd al-Andalusî or al-Mağribî (grandfather, granduncle, and father). The book’s fame preceded the arrival of its last author in the East, so that when Ibn Sa‘îd al-Andalusî arrived in Cairo on his way to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca, he was already well-known. According to the colophons of the remaining volumes, the holograph was finished in 657/1250 in Cairo. Volumes four and six are not the only ones preserved, but they are the only ones to show al-Ṣafadî’s handwriting. On the title page of volume four [fig. 22], one can read an inscription in his hand, for once written horizontally, perpendicular to the spine, which is the usual way, but which is also contrary to al-Ṣafadî’s habit, as we have seen. It says [fig. 23]:

\[\text{Ṭālā’a-hu wa intaqā min-hu māliku-hu | Ḥalîl b. Aybak b. ‘Abd Allâh al-Ṣafadî ‘afā Allâh ‘an-hu.}\]

Its owner, Ḥalîl b. Aybak b. ‘Abd Allâh al-Ṣafadî, may God forgive him, consulted it and selected [passages] from it.
Again, other inscriptions are displayed on this same page, among others a consultation mark by al-Maqrīzī, located in the upper left corner of the page, dated 803/1400-1 (see chap. 6, Bauden’s contribution in this volume). Like in the case of the pseudo-Ibn al-Bawwāb’s manuscript, with the text by al-Ǧāḥiẓ, some ownership and consultation marks have been circled. Only two marks, both consultation marks, were highlighted this way: al-Šafadī’s and the one just beneath it, by another Ḥalīl, Ḥalīl b. ‘Umar b. Muḥtāq al-Āš’arī. His handwriting is similar to al-Šafadī’s: a very regular and professional handwriting, very respectful of the calligraphic standards and thus close to the theoretical nasḫ, influenced by tawqīʿ, a chancery script characterised by a “liberal use of hairlines” (see the ligature between the tā’ and the alif). Two sound differences immediately visible reside in the final loops, more ample and less regular in al-Āš’arī’s hand, and in the blanks between the words, much more reduced in al-Šafadī’s handwriting. Such handwritings are tricky: they are so impersonal that they can be difficult to identify. Nevertheless, a precise analysis of the combination of their peculiar features, on the basis of the objective criteria developed by forensic scientists, can help a lot to distinguish even such regular chancery secretaries’ hands.

The title page of vol. six [figs 24-25], now preserved near Suhāq, in the Maḥad Balaṣfūra al-dīnī, presents the same kind of annotation, at roughly the same place. It says:

Ṭāla’a-hu wa ‘allaqa min-hu mā ihtāra-hu | māliku-hu Ḥalīl b. Aybak ʿafā Allāh ‘an-hu.

Its owner, Ḥalīl b. Aybak, may God forgive him, studied it and copied [the passages] he selected.

We thus see that al-Šafadī does not designate himself the same way on these two volumes of the same book, which he probably acquired at the same time. It proves that adding his nisba or not, and completing his name with his father’s kunya or not, are not significant, nor instructive of the moment of the inscription.

76 The term nasḥ is so imprecise – almost any Mašriqī script can be qualified as nasḥ – that it should be used very cautiously. See Witkam 1978, 18; Franssen 2017, 321-2. About the characteristics of nasḥ, see Gacek 2009, 163; for illustrations of the calligraphic nasḥ dating back to the end of the Mamlūk period (holograph dated 908/1503), see al-Ṭayyibī, ed. al-Munajjed 1962, 64-6.
77 On tawqīʿ, see Gacek 2009, 263-5.
78 Gacek 2020, 69.
79 For an example of such an analysis on a scribe’s handwriting, see Franssen 2020. See also here fn. 131.
Other ownership marks are also visible on the title page of this manuscript. The work can be classified in the field of history, specifically of al-Andalus, and was useful to al-Ṣafadī for the composition of Andalusians’ biographies in his Wāfī.  

2.1.4 Muḥammad b. al-Ṣafadī’s Library

If we know nothing about al-Ṣafadī’s wife (or wives?), we can gather information about his children from documentary sources, namely licences of transmission of his works (iǧāzāt). We thus know that he had two sons named Muḥammad – “the Muḥammadān”, as al-Ṣafadī calls them (with the dual suffix), specifying afterwards their kunya, respectively Abū ʿAbd Allāh and Abū Bakr – but also, and this is not a well-known fact, at least three daughters, Fāṭima, Salmā and Asmā.  

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80 For a more complete account of the different readers’ marks present on the various volumes of the work, see the edition: Hasan 1953, 59.  
81 Another work of the same author is cited among the sources effectively used by al-Ṣafadī for some biographies of the Wāfī, see van Ess 1974, 259.  
82 Fāṭima is cited in the iǧāza dated 759/1358 of MS Ayasoya 4732 (a holograph of the Taṣḥīḥ al-taṣḥīf wa-taḥrīr al-taḥrīf), Salmā and Asmā, in the iǧāza dated 757/1356 of MS Çorum, Genel Kitaplık 1906 (a holograph of the Gawimiḍ al-Ṣāḥib), see § 4.2. Note that several of his personal mamluks are also cited in iǧāzāt: Asinbuğā al-Turki, Murād
One of the Muḥammads inherited al-Ṣafadī’s library and we can find his ex-libris on various manuscripts. The mark is usually very similar to his father’s: the localization and the direction are the same (in the inner margin of the title page, parallel to the spine), the handwriting is also similar (harmonious chancery hand), but bigger and inscribed with a wider qalam, almost always saying ṣāra min kutub | Muḥammad b. (Ḫalīl) | al-Ṣafadī (‘became part of Muḥammad b. [Ḫalīl] al-Ṣafadī’s books’). Here are three examples.

Ms Ayasofya 4732 is a fragment of the holograph of al-Ṣafadī’s Taṣḥīḥ al-taṣḥīf wa-taḥrīr al-taḥrīf. The title page shows Muḥammad b. al-Ṣafadī’s ownership statement, which states: ṣāra min kutub | Muḥammad b. al-Ṣafadī (‘became part of Muḥammad b. al-Ṣafadī’s books’), and below: min sana arba’ wa sittīn wa-sab‘i mi‘a (‘from the year 764/1363’), that is the year of his father’s death [figs 26-27]. This ownership mark was circled, and the book was also part of al-Širwānī’s collection (see § 2.1.1 and fn. 38, and the upper right corner of the title page).

al-Turki or Arḡūn al-Ḫiṭāʾī. I have found a trace of a possible fourth daughter of his in an iǧāza not directly related to al-Ṣafadī: Leder et al. 1996, 119 mention a certain Bilqīs bint Šalāh al-Dīn Ḥālīl b. Ḥāyak al-Ṣafadī as part of the attendees to the reading of a ḥadīṯ by Hibat Allāh al-Akfānī (m. 524/1129-30) in 748/1348 in a Damascus mosque, the masǧid Barānī al-Qaṣṣāʾīn.
This manuscript appears to be a draft of the beginning of the text. It comprises many inserts and blanks, the beginning of a section often coincides with the recto of a folio. The fair copy of the same text is said to be kept in Riyāḍ University Library. As a matter of fact, according to a description by al-Šarqāwī, the editor of the text, the Riyāḍ manuscript also presents an ownership mark in the name of Muhammad b. al-Šafadī and dated 764 as well.83 This manuscript must be the fair copy of the text.

Mss Staatsbibliothek Berlin (henceforth SBB) Wetzstein II 150-151 are the four tomes in two volumes of al-Šafadī’s Alḥān al-sawāǧīʿ bay-na al-bādiʿ wa al-murāǧiʿ (Tunes of Cooing Doves Between the Initiator and the Responder [in Literary Correspondence]). This is the holograph of the text, and it shows several traces of work in progress (see § 4.2). The title page of the second volume (that is tome three, MS SBB Wetzstein II 151) bears the ownership statement of one of al-Šafadī’s sons Muhammad. The inscription is written in red ink and has been partially scratched, but we still can read min kutub | Muḥammad b. Ḥalīl al-Ṣafadī (‘from among the books of Muhammad b. Ḥalīl al-Šafadī’), written parallel to the spine, and a bit further, perpendicular to the spine, we read min sana arbaʿ wa sittīn wa sabʿi miʿa (‘from the

83 al-Šafadī, Taṣḥīḥ, 33.
year 764/1363’), again the year of al-Ṣafadī’s death. Note that the title page of the first volume (ms SBB Wetzstein II 150) has been scratched and the surface erased by this scratching corresponds to the one of Muhammad b. al-Ṣafadī’s ownership mark on volume three [figs 28-29].

On the MS Ayasofya 1970 (a fragment of the holograph of the tenth volume of the biographical dictionary Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr wa aʿwān al-naṣr), the ownership mark of Muhammad b. al-Ṣafadī has been scratched away as well, but is still decipherable. It appears on f. 108b (the first folio of this text: the manuscript is a miscellany), under the iǧāza [fig. 30].

2.2 A Word of Conclusion

This sampling is mere coincidence and cannot be considered representative of al-Ṣafadī’s library: it is only what has survived during the almost seven centuries separating al-Ṣafadī’s lifetime from today, 2022. It is what was spared from worms, fires, floods, carelessness and any other of the many threats to a manuscript’s preservation. Moreover, these small annotations are located on one of the most fragile part of the manuscripts: the first folio. Hence, other manuscripts that were al-Ṣafadī’s property may well be preserved but without any mark attesting they were his, without us knowing he kept them on his bookshelves. Besides, a more systematic search for his ownership or consultation annotations could lead to new discoveries: there can be many other marks in his name scattered in diverse libraries. Still, it is nevertheless interesting to sum up the information this sample provides us.

Out of the fifteen marks by al-Ṣafadī, one-third (five) are displayed on works of literature, poetry, stylistics or linguistics. Besides this, almost half of the total (seven manuscripts) can be said to belong to the biographical literature, among which two of them are about religious figures (the Prophet Muḥammad himself and the transmitters of the six main hadīṯ collections), and four of them are not only biographies but also works on geography. These last four manuscripts also enter the sciences section, which comprises only one other work, for a total of five volumes (but only two works). The volumes dealing with history number three in total, one of them being a biographical history.

The works represented in this view of al-Ṣafadī’s library mainly date back to the Ayyūbid period, just before al-Ṣafadī’s times, and to
the Mamlūk period (five of them, in eight volumes), with the notable exception of the two ʿAbbasid texts (by al-Ǧāḥiẓ and al-Šimšāṭī), one text of the fifth/eleventh century (by Ibn al-Haddād) and two works by contemporaries of al-Ṣafadī, al-Ḍahabī and Ibn al-Ṣuqāʾī.

Five manuscripts are valuable manuscripts, philologically and/or codicologically speaking: there is one apograph (a copy of a manuscript checked by the author, the manuscript by al-Suhaylī, from Bursa, Înebey Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi, Hüseyin Çelebi 764); one manuscript copied by a famous scholar of the Ayyūbid period, Ibn al-Bayṭār (ms Ayasofya 3711), which could be the only surviving copy of a risāla by the famous ʿAbbāsid translator Ḥunayn b. Ishāq; one calligraphed manuscript (pseudo Ibn al-Bawwāb, MS TIEM 2014T); two manuscripts dedicated to important figures, one manuscript dedicated to the ʿAbbāsid caliph al-Muʿtaṣim bi-Llāh (ms TKS, Ahmet III 2392, by al-Šimšāṭī) and the second dedicated to the library of Ibn Faḍl Allāh, with a chrysographed cartouche.

In the current state of research, all the manuscripts bearing al-Ṣafadī’s son’s ex-libris are holographs of the father.

**Table 1** Recap chart of the ownership and consultation marks in the name of al-Ṣafadī and of his son. NB: the dates followed by a * are dates featured in the iǧāza, which means they are dates of transmission of the text, not exactly dates of composition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N° manuscript</th>
<th>Library</th>
<th>Shelfmark</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Süleymaniye K. Rağıp Pasha</td>
<td>1078</td>
<td>Ibn Abī al-Iṣbaʿ</td>
<td>Taḥrīr al-taḥbīr fī ṣināʿat al-šiʿr wa al-naṭr wa bayān iʿǧāz al-Qurʾān</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>adab</td>
<td>ex-libris</td>
<td>738 Ø</td>
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<td>Ibn al-Ḥidād</td>
<td>K. al-afʿāl (vol. 1)</td>
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<td>linguistics</td>
<td>ex-libris</td>
<td>758 Damascus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Süleymaniye K. Fazılahmed Pasha</td>
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<td>Ibn al-Ḥidād</td>
<td>K. al-afʿāl (vol. 2)</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>linguistics</td>
<td>ex-libris</td>
<td>758 Damascus</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>DK</td>
<td>17 mim</td>
<td>al-Ḍahabī</td>
<td>? bio of ḫadīṯ transmitters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ex-libris</td>
<td>763 Ø</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ḥunayn b. Ishāq</td>
<td>R. fi ol-ʿawzān wa al-ʿākyāl K. al-anwār wa maḥāsin al-asʿār</td>
<td>bef. 646</td>
<td>sciences</td>
<td>ex-libris</td>
<td>763 Damascus</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>TKS</td>
<td>Ahmet III 2392</td>
<td>al-Šimšāṭī</td>
<td>Tālī K. wafāyāt al-aʿyān</td>
<td>bef. 227</td>
<td>poetry</td>
<td>ex-libris</td>
<td>Ø Ø</td>
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<tr>
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<td>BnF</td>
<td>Ar. 2061</td>
<td>Ibn al-Ṣuqāʾī</td>
<td>Muḥam al-buldān</td>
<td>733</td>
<td>biography</td>
<td>ex-libris</td>
<td>Ø Ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Süleymaniye K. Fazılahmed Pasha 1161</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yāqūt al-Rūmī</td>
<td>Tālī K. wafāyāt al-aʿyān</td>
<td>704</td>
<td>geography</td>
<td>toponymy bio consultation &amp; notes</td>
<td>Ø Ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nº manuscript</td>
<td>Library</td>
<td>Shelfmark</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Type</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>Ø</td>
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<td>Mu'ğam al-bul'dān</td>
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<td>consultation &amp; notes</td>
<td>Ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
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<td>Yaqūt al-Rūmī</td>
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<td>consultation &amp; notes</td>
<td>Ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>DK</td>
<td>ta'riḥ mim 103</td>
<td>Ibn Sa'id al-Andalusí (al-Mağribi)</td>
<td>K. al-Muğrib fi ḥulā al-Mağrib (vol. 4)</td>
<td>657</td>
<td>history</td>
<td>ex-libris, consultation &amp; notes</td>
<td>Ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Suhāğ</td>
<td>Ma'had al-Dini</td>
<td>Ibn Sa'id al-Andalusí (al-Mağribi)</td>
<td>K. al-Muğrib fi ḥulā al-Mağrib (vol. 6)</td>
<td>657</td>
<td>history</td>
<td>ex-libris, consultation &amp; notes</td>
<td>Ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Süleymaniye K.</td>
<td>Ayasofya 4732</td>
<td>al-Ṣafadī</td>
<td>Taṣḥīḥ al-taṣḥīf wa taḥrīf al-taḥrīf</td>
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<td>linguistics</td>
<td>Muhammad b. al-Ṣafadī’s ex-libris</td>
<td>764</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>al-Ṣafadī</td>
<td>Alḥān al-sawāḏi bayna al-bāḍi’ wa al-murāḏi</td>
<td>758*</td>
<td>bio</td>
<td>[Muhammad b. al-Ṣafadī’s ex-libris]</td>
<td>[764]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>SBB Wetzstein II</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>al-Ṣafadī</td>
<td>Alḥān al-sawāḏi bayna al-bāḍi’ wa al-murāḏi</td>
<td>758*</td>
<td>bio</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<td>Ayasofya 1970</td>
<td>al-Ṣafadī</td>
<td>Ayyān al-asr wa a’wān al-naṣr</td>
<td>758*</td>
<td>bio</td>
<td>Muhammad b. al-Ṣafadī’s ex-libris</td>
<td>764</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Another source of information about al-Ṣafadī’s readings is his taḏkira. Etymologically, a taḏkira is something that sustains memory. In some respects, it is similar to Western Renaissance florilegia or commonplace books: it is “a collection of quotations culled from various authoritative sources”, “serving as an aid to memory by building and preserving a storehouse of acquired knowledge”, which was also “central to the presentation and composition of literary works”. The commonplace books appeared in a context of overabundance of information, and of books, such a context being the one of the Mamlūk period as well. They are sometimes called biblothèques portables (‘portable libraries’), a locution that perfectly renders their raison d’être. Nevertheless, the examples from the Islamic world that have reached us or mentions of these examples that have reached us, do not feature the “organizational pattern” that is so important for Renaissance commonplace books; rather, they were completed in a chronological order, following the readings of their owner or, and this is

84 The word is used in different titles of works, often with the meaning of handbook, in the sense ‘what should be recorded in term of’. For instance, one can think of ʿAlī b. ʿIsā’s Taḏkira al-kahhālin (GAL G I 236, S I 884), a handbook of ophthalmology; or of al-taḏkira al-Hamdānīyya, the adab encyclopaedia of the thirteenth-century Ibn Hamdān (GAL G I 1281, S I 493). In the Ottoman and Persian traditions, the taḏkiras, often called safīnas, are poetic anthologies or biographical dictionaries of poets. They deal exclusively with poetry and they are edited books: they are meant to circulate. See Dufour, Regourd 2020 for Yemenite examples and the bibliography.


86 Blair 1996.

87 The chancery secretary al-Qalqašandī cites, in his chancery manual, Ibn Fadl Allāh’s taḏkira (Ṣubh, 7: 29) and Ibn Manẓūr’s taḏkira, entitled Taḏkira al-labīb wa nuẓhat al-adīb (Ṣubh, 14: 70), both being the repositories of letters and documents written by chancery secretaries. Besides, ʿAḥmad b. Mubārakšāh was keeping a taḏkira entitled Safīna, where for instance, otherwise lost zaḡals by Ibn Quzmān were recorded, see Hoenerbach, Ritter 1950, 267. Another chancery secretary, ʿAlī b. Muzaffar al-Kindī al-Wadāʿī (d. 716/ 1316) was also keeping a taḏkira; it was known as al-taḏkira al-kindīyya (see, among others, al-Ṣafadī’s Aʿyān, 3: 546-55, no. 1237) and is said to have counted thirty volumes (al-Ziriklī 2002, 5: 23). Kristina Richardson recently identified several volumes of the Ottoman Damascene judge Ibn Mufliḥ’s taḏkira (Richardson 2020). Other authors are reputed to have used a taḏkira, now lost, for instance al-Maqrīzī (see Ibn Quṭlubuġa, Ṭāǧ, 85; note that al-Maqrīzī himself never uses the word taḏkira, but mentions his maḏāmī). I am grateful to Frédéric Bauden for providing me with these information).

88 Even if, according to al-Ṣaḥāwī, Ibn Ḥaǧar al-ʿAsqalānī used to keep two taḏkiras, one for belles-lettres (al-taḏkira al-adabiyya) and the second one for the traditions (al-taḏkira al-ḥadīṭiya), al-Ṣaḥāwī adds that, since it was not arranged in chapters, it contained many repetitions; a student of Ibn Ḥaǧar decided to organise it. al-Ṣaḥāwī, Gawāhir, 2: 694-5, 771; Ritter 1953, 81-2.
a second major difference, its composition activities, for instance in the frame of his duties at the chancery.  

Thus, al-Ṣafadī’s taḏkira, al-Taḏkira al-Ṣalāḥiyya or al-Ṣafadiyya, is a multi-volume work, arranged chronologically, containing results of his readings, parts of his writing activities and correspondence, some of his works as a composer of official documents for the chancery, first drafts of (or parts of) some of his books, and notes jotted down about a particular subject. It was for his personal use that he kept it, even if he lent several volumes to friends and colleagues, as attested in various biographies of the Wāfī and of the Aʿyān. For instance, the mamlūk Tašbuḡā, dawādār (executive secretary) of al-Nāṣir Muhammad, who had a beautiful handwriting and a penchant for erudition, used to borrow al-Ṣafadī’s taḏkira, volume after volume, to study it, when both men were in Damascus (wa-kāna yaktubu kitāba ḥasana mansūba wa-kāna fi-hi mayl ilā al-ḥudalā‘. Wa-kāna bi-Dimašq yasīrū yastaʿīru minnī al-taḏkira allatī lī ḡuʿzan baʿd ḡuʿzin yuṭāliʿuhā).

The biographical dictionaries are not the only works where al-Ṣafadī cites his taḏkira. Since the taḏkira contains part of his correspondence, it is no surprise that various volumes are cited in al-Ṣafadī’s book of correspondence, his Alḥān al-sawāţī’ bayna al-bādi’ wa-l-murāţī’ (Tunes of Cooing Doves Between the Initiator and the Responder [in Literary Correspondence]). This book is arranged like a biographical dictionary as well. Under the name of his addressees, we find the details of letters sent and received. For instance, the record about his friend – and then nemesis – Ibn Nubāta (d. 768/1366) is instructive in more than one regard. Indeed, we read that Ibn Nubāta had borrowed a book from al-Ṣafadī, namely the Kitāb al-tašbīḥāt (also known under the title al-Manāqib al-nūrīyya), by the adīb and chancery secretary Ibn Ẓāfīr (d. 613 or 623/1216 or 1226). When returning the book, Ibn Nubāta wrote a letter of thanks in which he would ask at the same time for a text in prose he had read in al-Ṣafadī’s taḏkira. His request is very ornate and his short note in praise of the taḏkira contains a Qurʿānic quotation (al-Kahf 76), but sadly he does not specify the volume number of the taḏkira.

This anecdote is interesting for several reasons. First, it teaches us that al-Ṣafadī had a copy of the Kitāb al-tašbīḥāt. It also con-
firms that al-Ṣafadī was lending books to friends and gives the assurance that al-Ṣafadī’s friends knew what was in his taḏkira. Hence the image of the taḏkira as a personal tool must be nuanced: it was public to a certain extent.

Another argument for this status of availability of the text of the taḏkira lies in Ibn Dāniyāl’s entry in the Aʿyān. There, al-Ṣafadī mentions various poems, giving their type and the volume number of his taḏkira where he had recorded them, namely the first, third and twenty-fourth.96 Why would al-Ṣafadī give this information if his taḏkira were not available for readers?

Still another example is found in Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī’s entry in the Alḥān al-sawāği.97 Taqī al-Dīn and Tāǧ al-Dīn al-Subkī98 were close friends of al-Ṣafadī; they knew each other when al-Ṣafadī was studying with Taqī al-Dīn, Tāǧ al-Dīn’s father. The three men exchanged numerous letters in the course of their lives, and on one occasion al-Ṣafadī explains that he wrote a reply letter to Taqī al-Dīn; he cites the verses included in the letter in the Alḥān and explains that the part of the letter which is in prose is integrally recorded in the twenty-ninth volume of his taḏkira, showing us again that the taḏkira was available. The same goes with other scholars and colleagues of al-Ṣafadī, like Ğamāl al-Dīn Ibn Ğānim (d. 744/1344), who wrote laudatory lines about the fifth volume of the taḏkira,99 and about Ibn Qāḍī al-Mawṣil (born in 698/1299),100 who wrote such eulogistic verses in the nineteenth volume of the taḏkira, a volume al-Ṣafadī had sent to him at his request.101

What is even more interesting is the mention of the taḏkira in al-Ṣafadī’s biography by Tāǧ al-Dīn al-Subkī, Taqī al-Dīn’s son.102 After giving al-Ṣafadī’s titles, birth date, specialities, and the name of two

96 al-Ṣafadī, Aʿyān, 4: 431.
97 al-Ṣafadī, Alḥān, 2: 5-18, partic. 9 (no. 56). On al-Subkī’s family, counting several important scholars, see Schacht, Bosworth in EF.
98 al-Ṣafadī, Alḥān, 1: 392-424 (no. 52).
99 This text is recorded by al-Ṣafadī in the section of the Alḥān devoted to Ibn Ğānim, see al-Ṣafadī, Alḥān, 1: 357-76, partic. 361 (no. 45). On Ibn Ğānim, see al-Ṣafadī, Aʿyān, 2: 696-707 (no. 883); al-Ṣafadī, Wāfī, 17: 351 (no. 296); or al-ʿUmarī, Masālik al-abṣār, 12: 461-8 (no. 27).
100 Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Qāhir Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Šahrazūrī al-Mawṣilī, see al-Ṣafadī, Wāfī, 3: 275-7 (no. 1317), where one of his poems, asking al-Ṣafadī some verses from the taḏkira, but without specifying the volume number, is recorded. See also Ibn Ḥaḡar, Durar, 4: 21.
101 al-Ṣafadī, Alḥān, 2: 129-32, partic. 132 (no. 80).
102 al-Subkī, Ṭabaqāt, 10: 5-32 (no. 1352). See also Frenkel’s chapter in this volume.
of his masters – Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī and Ibn Sayyid al-Nās – he explains that al-Ṣafadī was prolific in the fields of adab and history: he himself claimed to have authored more than 600 volumes. Then comes the statement of friendship between both men, friendship begun during the frequent visits by al-Ṣafadī to Tāǧ al-Dīn’s father and which lasted until al-Ṣafadī’s death. Later, Tāǧ al-Dīn lists several of the official posts held by al-Ṣafadī, preceding all of them by sā’adtu-hu fa- (‘I favoured him and then he became...’), and then giving the date and cause of death of al-Ṣafadī. Afterwords, once again, al-Subkī emphasises his own importance for al-Ṣafadī, this time for his writing process: he states that al-Ṣafadī would not write a book without asking him advice on fiqh, hadīth and grammar and that he was the one to urge al-Ṣafadī to write the A’yān al-ʿaṣr. A bit later in the text, al-Subkī shows that this assistance was actually mutual: he goes on explaining the role of al-Ṣafadī in the elaboration and diffusion of his book Gamʿ al-ğawāmiː al-Ṣafadī copied it, took part in the study sessions and read it aloud himself, taking pleasure in its elaboration and thus he is associated with part of its importance. Then, al-Subkī recalls several anecdotes and gives verses written by al-Ṣafadī and his responses. Here he mentions the taḏkira:

Once, he lent me a volume of his taḏkira. He had authored a book about description and imitation [al-waṣf wa al-tašbīḥ] and he had inspected the taḏkira searching for description and imitation; he wrote on all the volumes he had finished to inspect this way ‘[search for] imitation from [this volume] is finished’ [naḡiza al-tašbīḥ min-hu].

al-Subkī is alluding to al-Ṣafadī’s al-Kašf wa al-tanbīh ʿalā al-waṣf wa al-tašbīḥ (Revelation and Instruction about [Poetic] Description and Simile). We thus see again that al-Ṣafadī was lending volumes of the taḏkira to friends and colleagues. But here, in addition, we have the demonstration that the taḏkira was really a tool for al-Ṣafadī as an author, a reservoir of examples he had read elsewhere for future works: he was perusing his reading journal in search of appropriate verses, passages or text excerpts when he needed them. We have seen that many of his works are composed of two parts, theoretical and practical. In the latter, he would list hundreds of examples of the stylis-

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103 Fath al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn Sayyid al-Nās (d. 1334), outstanding scholar from a young age, who had inherited a great library from his family, see Rosenthal in EF.
104 As already noted, see § 1, and al-Subkī, Ṭabaqāt, 10: 6.
105 al-Subkī, Ṭabaqāt, 10: 7.
106 Not in GAL, but preserved: the holograph is kept at the BnF, under the shelf-mark Ar. 3345, see § 4.2.
tic device dealt with, which supposes the gathering of such excerpts and a place to store them. This reservoir is clearly the taḏkira. It is also interesting to see that he was keeping track of his work on the pages of the taḏkira itself, to make sure he would not use the same excerpt in the same book more than once. We thus have the confirmation that the taḏkira was a major methodological tool for al-Ṣafadī, even if it was less personal than first thought.

In this particular case, al-Subkî does not give the number of the volume of the taḏkira he had borrowed. We have already seen quoted volumes 5, 19, and 29. How many volumes were there originally? According to al-Ṣafadî’s biography by al-Maqrîzî, the taḏkira stood in thirty volumes. But then, how can we explain the existence of volumes 48 and 49? And especially of volume 44, which is a holograph, the original volume handwritten by al-Ṣafadî, not a later copy?

In fact, by the time of al-Maqrîzî, at least one complete set of the taḏkira was in circulation and it was a scribal copy of the original in thirty volumes. We can estimate that the holographs originally numbered a maximum of fifty volumes; indeed, the last date featured in volume 49, the last known volume, is 18 Ḏumādā I 762/26 March 1361, only a year and three months before al-Ṣafadî’s death, on 10 Šawwâl 764/23 July 1363. The preserved volumes are not equally distributed, but we still can estimate the time needed to complete one volume, which seems to be more or less a year on average, even if a certain level of variation is observed (see table 2). To explain the difference between the number of volumes of the copy and the original, we can check the number of folios of the original volumes of the taḏkira. For instance, volume 44, a complete holograph, counts 95 ff. This is not much for a manuscript, probably because it had to be portable: we can imagine that al-Ṣafadî was carrying the in-progress volume with him, to record on the spot the texts he composed, read or heard. The limited dimensions of the manuscript also support a claim for portability – 186 × 128 mm is less than the usual in-quarto format (220 × 150 mm) – as well as the orientation of the page:

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107 Quotations or mentions of many other volumes of the taḏkira can be found in different biographical notices by al-Ṣafadî. An exhaustive survey, preferably realised with the help of digital tools, would be useful.

108 al-Maqrîzî, Durar, 2: 77-8 (spec. 77).

109 Mss cited by GAL G II 32, British Library (henceforth BL) India Office (henceforth IO) 3799. This puzzle has already been solved by Frédéric Bauden during a keynote speech in Chicago in 2010, titled “A Neglected Reservoir of Mamlûk Literature: al-Ṣafadî and his Taḏkira”. I warmly thank him for providing me access to his text, presentation and material.

110 Ms Princeton University Library (henceforth PUL) Garrett 3570Y.

111 al-Maqrîzî, Durar, 2: 77.

112 Ms BL IO 3799.
Élise Franssen

3 • al-Ṣafadī: The Scholar as a Reader

Figure 31
al-Ṣafadī. *al-Taḏkira*, vol. 44. Princeton University Library, MS Garrett 3570Y, f. 30b, 31 (courtesy PUL)

Figure 32
al-Ṣafadī. *al-Taḏkira*, vol. 5, 6 or 7. Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, ms Landberg 812, f. 2, with the date 731 (line 3) (courtesy SBB)
the format is a *safīna*, a book where the spine is parallel to the text, not perpendicular to it as usual, like modern notebooks (see fig. 31).113

The Arabic name of this format also means ‘boat’: the *safīna*-books are meant to circulate.114 It is particularly meaningful that at least one *taḏkira* is entitled *Safīna* – ‘Alī b. Mubārakšāh’s (d. mid-ninth/mid-fifteenth century) – and that the manuscripts of the Persian and Turkish genre called *taḏkira* (volumes of poetry or biographies of the Prophet) are *safīna*-shaped manuscripts.115

The newly discovered fragment of al-Ṣafadī’s *taḏkira* is a *safīna*-shaped manuscript as well [fig. 32]. Ms Landberg 812, from the Berlin State Library, is only a fragment, without any indication of the number of the volume. There are three dates in the manuscripts, all of them of from the year 731/1331.

The first and second volumes of the *taḏkira* feature the years 728 and 729, respectively, so that one could think that al-Ṣafadī was filling a volume within a single year. But the next date available is 735 for vol. 13. Apparently, at that time al-Ṣafadī was filling more than one volume per year. If we imagine he was completing two or three volumes per year, it means that during the year 731, he was using volume five, six or seven. The allusion to volume five in the *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr* does not help us: none of the texts preserved in the few folios from Berlin are cited.

The information available in the current state of research are as follows [table 2].

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113 On this particular format, see Déroche et al. 2005, 53; Gacek 2009, 34.
114 See also Dufour, Regourd 2020 about Yemenite safīnas.
115 See Heinrichs et al. in *EI2* and chap. 8 here, by Vatansever.
Table 2  The volumes of al-Ṣafadī’s taḏkira, their date of composition and their mention in other works by al-Ṣafadī. NB: the dates in *italics* are not documented but deduced from the overall distribution of the volumes; the MSS in *bold* are holographs or contain holograph folios; CB stands for Chester Beatty Library; ÖNB stands for Österreichische Nationalbibliothek

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<i>This MS and the following one (FB Gotha Ar. 2141) remain to be investigated. No date was found on their pages (Mac Guckin de Slane 1883-95, 584, says the MS BnF Ar. 3339 is dated 874/1469-70, but it is actually the date of one of the consultation marks, by a later reader). The handwriting is extremely similar to al-Ṣafadī’s, but much faster than the examples found till now: the influence of tawqīʿ, especially for the abusive ligatures, is much more salient and the lack of many dots is observed. These two MSS would deserve further study. Regarding the MS from Oman, it seems to be a holograph as well, as pointed out to me by Benedikt Reier, whom I warmly thank for the information.</i>

<i>ii Known under the title Dīwān al-fuṣahāʿ wa taṛḡumān al-bulaḡā (GAL G II 40; Flügel 1865, 365-7, no. 389), this safinā-shaped MS is actually most likely a copy of a volume of al-Ṣafadī’s Taḏkira. Indeed, it comprises a sample of all the texts usually found in the taḏkira: letters, poetry by him and by others, copies of chancery documents and copies of texts he read. For instance, two texts by Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, the Yaqaẓat al-sāhir and the Damʿat al-bākī (till now lost, apart from the last folio of the Damʿat, see Rice 1951, 856; Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, Taʿrīf, 40-1), are recorded in extenso; in al-Ṣafadī, Wāfī, 8: 255, cited in Van Ess 1976, 259, al-Ṣafadī assures he read these texts to Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā Ibn Faḍl Allāh and we have here the confirmation that he copied them as well. This MS deserves thorough further study.</i>
Ms SBB Landberg 812 only counts nine folios. The first two folios present letters, both dated 731: f. 1, a letter from Šihâb al-Dīn Abû al-Ṭanâ‘ Mahmûd (d. 725/1325),116 one of al-Ṣafadī’s masters, also a chancery secretary, to Ibn Ġānim,117 f. 2, a letter by al-Ṣafadī, sent to the Head of Damascus chancery. On f. 3b, we can read a tawqī‘ (decree) for the nomination of the šayḥ Šalâḫ al-Dīn Ḥalîl al-ʿAlâ‘î (d. 761/1359) as mudarris (teacher) at the Madrasa al-Ṣulâ‘îyya in Jerusalem.118 On f. 4b, there is a waqf certificate for Ibn Ġānim’s Egyptian house (diyār al-miṣriya), and from f. 8b to the end, we can read verses that were recited in al-Ṣafadī’s presence by Ṣâfî al-Dīn Abû al-Faḍl al-Ḥillî (d. 749/1348)119 and others by Ibn Ḥamdîs al-Ṣiqillî (d. 527/1132).120 Such a brief description of the contents of this short fragment eloquently shows the variety of the contents, but also the personal character of the taḏkira: when al-Ṣafadī cites texts he has not composed, it is because he received them as a listener or as reader.

Another type of content found in the taḏkira is the first drafts of books by al-Ṣafadī. Ms PUL, Garrett 3570Y, another holograph of the taḏkira, the volume 44, offers a great example of this latter category. From f. 8 to f. 31, we can read the very first (and only?) version of al-Faḍl al-munîf fî al-mawlid al-šarîf (The Overwhelming Merit of the Noble Birthday [of the Prophet Muḥammad]),121 al-Ṣafadī’s treatise about the Prophet’s birthday. The circumstances of its composition are explained in a short statement at the beginning of the text. It echoes al-Subkī’s account of the composition of the Ğam‘ al-ḡawāmî’ mentioned earlier: at “closest friends’ request” (al-aṣḥāb al-aʿazz), al-Faḍl al-munîf was recited and improved in the course of a maǧlis precisely held during the night of the Prophet’s birthday in Rabî’ I 759/February 1358. The first version of the text was ready a bit earlier, since the iǧâza literally attached to the text – on a fly leaf added in the binding of the manuscript, thanks to a stub – is dated 23 Ṣafar 759/4 February 1358.122

117 Already mentioned here, because of the laudatory lines he wrote about al-Ṣafadī’s taḏkira.
118 The madrasa was established by Šalâḥ al-Dīn, the Ayyubid sultan, when he conquered Jerusalem. It is now Saint-Anne church. On Šalâḥ al-Dīn Ḥalîl al-ʿAlâ‘î, see al-Ṣafadī, A’yân, 2: 328-36, partic. 333 for his nomination at Jerusalem madrasa al-ṣulâ‘îyya.
120 Rizzitano in EF.
121 Ed. ʿĀyiš 2007.
122 A more detailed account and analysis of the text is forthcoming in Mamlûk Studies Review, see Franssen, forthcoming.
Finally, the same manuscript provides us with the third type of contents found in the *taḏkira*: the book excerpts. For instance, from f. 33 to f. 47b, we find the *Kitāb al-itbāʿ wa al-muzāwaḡa*, by Ibn Fāris (d. 395/1004), an alphabetically arranged collection of pairs of words that present the same pattern. al-Ṣafadī copied the text carefully, even leaving a large blank space under the title, later filled by a reader [fig. 33].

It is striking to note that even in his *taḏkira*, al-Ṣafadī leaves blank spaces under the titles of the book excerpts he takes note of, beginning the proper text on the verso, just like in manuscripts meant to be published. Similarly, he uses red ink for the titles and his page layout clearly distinguishes the different parts of the text, respecting its articulation, especially in the case of poetry. Surely, this would help him to find information later when needed. The quires were numbered, a small “۴۴” in the upper left extremity of the first folios of the quires (see fig. 33) showing that the number of the volume of the *taḏkira* was added to the number of the quire. The fact that the beginning of the quire coincides most of the time with the beginning of the text excerpt comes as no surprise. An exhaustive codicological study of the four (or five, if the Oman MS enigma is solved) holographs of the *taḏkira* is forthcoming.

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123  GAL G I 130, S I 197-8; Fleisch in *EP*.
124  Ed. Brünnow 1906.
4 Al-Ṣafadī as a Reader and as an Author: The Holograph Manuscripts and the Manuscripts with Autograph Interventions

As clearly explained by Adam Gacek, and as recalled in the introduction of the recently published In the Author’s Hand, a holograph is a manuscript entirely handwritten by its author, whereas an autograph bears an inscription in the hand of the author of the text, the main part of the text being handwritten by someone else (or being a typescript). If the term ‘holograph’ was first only used for manuscripts in Arabic script, it is now used to describe manuscripts in Latin or Greek script, as shown by the title of the European Society for Textual Scholarship (ESTS) 2022 conference in Oxford: Histories of the Holograph. From Ancient to Modern Manuscripts and Beyond. The ESTS defines the holograph as “a manuscript that is written by the person named as, or presumed to be, its author”.

In this section, I claim that a scholar’s library can be understood in a wider acceptation: not merely the books physically owned, bought or received by a scholar, and the books read, studied or used for one’s work and for which, for instance, an īğāza was granted; but also the books the scholar wrote, working as a scribe, or copying them for his own use. al-Ṣafadī is acknowledged for the great number of manuscript volumes he handwrote, these being his own opus or not: he worked as a scribe more than once and was praised for his beautiful handwriting, something mentioned by most of his biographers. As stated earlier, I consider these manuscripts as constitutive parts of his library, even if we know that some of them were kept elsewhere, in great libraries of the time, for instance, as we will see. Indeed, his writing of (and sometimes, commenting on) the texts brought these into his inner library, his mental bookshelves. The manuscripts treated here are thus holographs and manuscripts of another author’s work handwritten by al-Ṣafadī.

A last point remains to be addressed: how to identify a holograph? The researcher working on the oeuvre of an author can generally recognise his handwriting at first sight, without needing any further confirmation, but without being able to rationally explain exactly how.

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126 Bauden, Franssen 2020, 1-25.
127 This is why Marganne exclusively used the term “autograph”, even when referring to ancient Greek fragments wholly handwritten by their author, in her contribution in Bauden, Franssen 2020; see Marganne 2020. See also Goyens here, chap. 4.
129 See the list of his biographers in fn. 1.
130 The question has been addressed in Bauden, Franssen 2020.
In the case of al-Ṣafadī, his great respect of the model of ideal calligraphic styles may be an impediment, but his handwriting nevertheless shows a number of peculiarities and distinctive features. A precise, exhaustive and objective analysis of his handwriting is forthcoming and will be the most useful way to demonstrate this.\textsuperscript{131}

4.1 al-Ṣafadī as a Scribe

For different reasons, al-Ṣafadī copied texts by other authors. It could be for his own use in the course of his work, because he could not acquire any copy of a work, for pecuniary reasons or because the work in question was not easily available, or because he deemed it better to take care of the copy by himself, thus already studying the whole work once, and thus trusting the version of the work at his disposal.\textsuperscript{132} It could also be to please a friend, or to act as “registerer” during a reading and study session of a work with its author, after which audience certificates were issued – like al-Subkī’s \textit{Ǧamʿ al-ġawāmi‘}, mentioned earlier – or as a gift, for instance to Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, the chancery secretary, as we have seen.

In the case of MS BnF Arabe 3127, we do not find any specific information regarding the motives of its copy by al-Ṣafadī. The text is a commentary by ‘Abd al-Malik b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Badrūn (608/1211)\textsuperscript{133} about the \textit{qaṣida} by the Andalusian poet and \textit{adīb} ‘Abd al-Maǧīd b. ʿAbdūn al-Yāburī al-Fihrī (d. 529/1134 or 520/1126),\textsuperscript{134} who has worked for the Aftāsid chancery.\textsuperscript{135} The \textit{qaṣida} is entitled \textit{al-Bassāma}\textsuperscript{136} and is a long poem lamenting the fall of the Aftāsids, following more gen-

\textsuperscript{131} Such an analysis will be realised on the model developed in Franssen 2020. I speak in favour of such analyses for any important author. These would be helpful in the discovery of unknown and unsigned holographs and autographs, and for the confirmation of signed ones, or the eviction of forgeries. The creation of a database gathering the salient points for many authors and specimens of their handwriting is a must for tomorrow’s research.

\textsuperscript{132} I have not come across any disparaging remarks from al-Ṣafadī about scribes’ works, but some of his fellow authors are well-known for their disdain regarding scribal copies of manuscripts, which they describe as careless and full of errors. al-Maqrīzī’s comments in the margins of MS Leiden University Library Or 560, the copy of his small treatises that he ordered from a scribe at the end of his life, are particularly eloquent in this regard. See Bauden, forthcoming.

\textsuperscript{133} al-Ṣafadī, \textit{Wāfī}, 19: 176-7 (161); GAL G I 271, 340, S I 579-80.

\textsuperscript{134} al-Ṣafadī, \textit{Wāfī}, 19: 129-36 (115); GAL G I 271, S I 480.

\textsuperscript{135} The Aftāsids being one of the dynasties of the \textit{Tawā‘if}, the small principalities that flourished in many cities of al-Andalus between the fall of the Umayyads and the advent of the Almoravids. See Lévi-Provençal in \textit{EF}.

\textsuperscript{136} Or al-Baššāma – \textit{bi-aṭwāq al-hamāma}. This text was edited and commented upon by Dozy 1848, mainly on the basis of this specific manuscript, that he recognised as handwritten by al-Ṣafadī, see Dozy 1848, 11-13.
eral considerations about other sovereigns’ violent death and the adversity of one’s destiny. al-Ṣafadī’s manuscript presents two different styles of handwriting: the original text of the qaṣīda, the text by Ibn ‘Abdūn, is written in a large ṣuṭuṭ, while the text of the commentary, by Ibn Badrūn, is mainly in a more usual style of handwriting, that we could call mašrīqi, and is also in a more usual size [fig. 34]. The colophon (p. 250) is introduced by a line in ṣuṭuṭ as well and says the manuscript was finished mid-Ramaḍān 717/end of November 1317, in Ṣafad [fig. 35].

By then, al-Ṣafadī was in his early twenties and working as kātib al-darǧ for the governor Ḥusayn b. Ǧandar Bak, in Ṣafad, but regularly travelling to Damascus. This manuscript is the earliest dated trace of al-Ṣafadī’s handwriting and work known today. We know that Naǧm al-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn al-Aṯīr (d. 737/1336), a contemporary of al-Ṣafadī working in the Mamlūk chancery in Cairo, wrote a commentary on this qaṣīda as well, relying much on Ibn Badrūn’s text but

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137 The manuscript was paginated.

augmenting it slightly with parts of his own composition. Hence, we can deduce that the qaṣīda and its commentaries were in favour at that time, and were probably deemed to be known by learned people, adībs and by those versed in literature.

In the chronological order of preserved manuscripts copied by al-Ṣafadī next comes a collection of sermons by ʿAbd al-Raḥīm b. Nubāta (d. 374/984), an ancestor of Ğamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Nubāta, the Mamlūk poet, friend and later nemesis of al-Ṣafadī. The manuscript is entitled al-Ḫuṭab al-mubāraka. It is part of the collections of the PUL and preserved under the shelf mark Garrett 298B. Its

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139 Dozy 1848, 25-35.
140 GAL G I 92, S I 149-50; al-Ṣafadī, Wāfī, 18: 388-90 (no. 399). The manuscript contains some texts by some of the author’s descendants as well: his son Abū Ṭāhir Muḥammad, his grandson Abū al-Farağ Ṭāhir b. Muḥammad and his great-grandson Abū al-Qāsim Yaḥyā b. Ṭāhir. This collection was gathered around 629/1223, see PUL digital library, MS Garrett 298B, accessible from http://arks.princeton.edu/ark:/88435/kp78gg43d. And see the manuscript itself: the authors of the sermons are cited on the title page.
141 Hitti 1938, 566-7 (no. 1907); Rosenthal in EF.
Figure 38  al-Ḥarīrī. Muqāmāt. Danmarks Kongelige Bibliotek, MS Cod. Arab. Add. 83, f. 1a (courtesy DKB)
Figure 39 al-Ḥarīrī. Maqāmāt. Danmarks Kongelige Bibliotek, MS Cod. Arab. Add. 83, f. 154 (courtesy DKB)
Authors as Readers in the Mamlûk Period and Beyond, 83-152

The manuscript is acephalous as almost a whole quire is missing: the second quire begins with f. 2, as attested by the quire signature (ordinal number in full) observed in the upper outer margin. The copy is carefully rendered and a number of marginal glosses in red ink are referred to with the letter kāf, written in the text and in the beginning of the marginal gloss [fig. 37]. The meaning of this abbreviation is found in the author’s biography by al-Ṣafadî in the Wāfî bi-l-wafayât: these are Tāǧ al-Dîn al-Kindî’s comments, which were carefully added to the Ḥuṭṭab text, by al-Ṣafadî.\(^{142}\) Other marginal glosses are introduced by the letter sād.

The text is fully vocalised and the titles of the sermons are written in bigger letters, as are a few articulating words inside the text. An interesting system of foliation and quire numbering is present, but it has probably been realised at a later period by one of the bookbinders who have taken care of this volume. This manuscript is thus a careful copy in every sense of the word: the handwriting is regular and conscientious and the manuscript shows evident traces of careful study.

The manuscript of al-Ḥarîrî’s Maqâmât preserved in the Danish Royal Library under the shelf mark Cod Arab Add 83 is more renowned [fig. 38].\(^{143}\) It is a hybrid manuscript: the main text is not by al-Ṣafadî, having been written by the famous al-Ḥarîrî (d. 516/1122),\(^{144}\) but the marginal glosses, explanations and digressions are al-Ṣafadî’s own production and everything is handwritten by him. This copy is a very ornate: the title and the colophon are surrounded by an illuminated frame and the titles of every maqâma are written in gold ink outlined in black and in “a formal calligraphic tawqīʿ”; several medallions, illuminated or traced in red ink, stress the rhythm of the text. The orthoepic signs, such as the vowels, are traced in colour as well: in total, five colours are observed in the whole manuscript: black, gold, red, light blue and dark blue.

The colophon [fig. 39] confirms that the illumination is al-Ṣafadî’s work, as well as the copy and the commentary; all of this (except for some of the marginal glosses, but we cannot tell which ones are later) was done in Šafad in 720/1320-1. To me, this manuscript can be seen as a kind of a business card, displaying some of al-Ṣafadî’s skills: he is a talented scribe, who chooses well his exemplar, who

\(^{142}\) al-Ṣafadî, Wâfî, 18: 390. About Tāǧ al-Dîn al-Kindî, see al-Ṣafadî, Wâfî, 15: 50-7 (no. 63).

\(^{143}\) Perho 2007, 1416-21.

\(^{144}\) GAL G I 326, S I 486-9; Margoliouth, Pellat in EF.

\(^{145}\) Gacek 2010; 2020, 70.
does not make major mistakes, whose handwriting is legible and skillful and confines to calligraphy; he is a dexterous illuminator, who is able to produce masterful compositions and to use wisely different kinds of textual dividers; he is also an extremely cultivated adīb, capable of understanding and glossing one of the most demanding texts of Arabic culture. At that time, al-Ṣafadī was in his early to mid-twenties, and he was still living in Ṣafad but may have wanted to upgrade to a better position in the administration, or to a more important chancery, leaving his regional hometown for one of the capital cities of the Mamlūk sultanate. All these skills are validated, as attested by the display of collation statements and iǧāzāt (licences of transmission), directly on the pages of the manuscript (ff. 1-4), dated 724/1324-758/1357. One specific collation statement eloquently displays the philological consciousness and the importance granted to the transmission of faithful texts that motivated al-Ṣafadī and many of his peers. Unfortunately, this statement is incomplete and scattered around ff. 3b and 1a. It testifies, in the hand of al-Ṣafadī, to three reading sessions organised in the Ğāmiʿ al-Aqmar in Cairo in 729/1328, during which not less than 13 other manuscripts of the Maqāmāt, including a holograph by al-Ḥarīrī, were read and collated. This was an event and was even reported by al-Ṣafadī in his Wāfī in the entry about Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī (d. 745/1344), who countersigned the certificate and added a few words in his hand (fig. 38, f. 1a). This particular manuscript is a witness of the transmission of al-Ḥarīrī’s Maqāmāt in the Mamlūk period, and more generally, as already said, of the importance given to the transmission of exact texts.

If we continue to follow the chronological order of preserved manuscripts in the hand of al-Ṣafadī, the next one was copied more than twenty years later. It is now kept in Erfurt-Gotha Forschungsbibliothek (henceforth FB Gotha) under the shelf mark Orient. A 1731. It is a fragment of the eighth volume of Ibn Ḫallikān’s (d. 681/1282) biographical dictionary, the Wafāyāt al-aʿyān wa-anbāʾ abnāʾ al-zamān. According to the colophon (f. 145, see fig. 40), al-Ṣafadī copied it for himself and finished the copy of this volume on 3 Šawwāl 741/22 March 1341.

146 For the detail of the collation statements and reading certificates, see Gacek 2010, 151-65.
147 On this regard, see the interesting Talib 2019.
149 On the transmission of al-Ḥarīrī’s Maqāmāt, see Keegan’s work, especially Keegan 2017.
150 Pertsch 1878, 3: 318-19. This manuscript is cited in al-Ṣafadī’s entry by Rosenthal in the EI2.
151 GAL G I 327-8, S I 561. Fück in EI2.
The handwriting appears quickly done yet it is very legible and carefully placed. The beginnings of the biographies are highlighted in red ink and most of the time pointed out in the margins as well, under the usual name of the biographes (see fig. 41, f. 97). Few corrections are visible in the margins. The margins are straight, the text being justified. The copy of this work is emblematic of al-Ṣafadī’s interest in history and biography. If our partial information is correct, in the first part of his career as an author, al-Ṣafadī’s works dealt exclusively with literature: lexicography (Ma‘ānī al-wāw, ‘The Various Meanings of the particle wa-’), specific stylistic devices (Ǧinān al-ǧinās, ‘Gardens of Paronomasias’), poetic anthologies (Muntaḥab ši’r Muǧīr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Yaʿqūb b. Tamīm, ‘Selected Poetry of Ibn Tamīm’), textual criticism (Ǧawāmiḍ al-Ṣiḥāḥ, ‘Problems in [the Lexicon entitled] “The Sound”’), linguistic corrections (Taṣḥīḥ al-taṣḥīf wa taḥrīr al-taḥrif, ‘Correction of Misspellings and Rectification of Mispronunciation’) and textual commentaries (al-Ǧayṯ al-musaǧǧam fī šarḥ Lāmiyyat al-ʿaǧam, ‘Copious Showers of Commentary on the “Poem Rhyming in -l” of the non Arabs’). The first biographical dictionary he undertook to compose is also the most extensive, the Wāfī bi-l-wafāyāt. We know that he was already dealing with the biographes whose names began with qāf in 745/1345, as attested by a list of works for which he granted an iǧāza to his colleague at Cairo.
chancery, Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad. Ibn Ḥallikān’s work is a major source for al-Ṣafadī’s Wāfī and we may wonder if he would have begun its composition before having at his disposal a complete copy of this biographical dictionary.

al-Ṣafadī’s philological concern is already clear, but here is still additional evidence of it: more than once he copied previous colophons found in the manuscript he was copying, especially if the colophon contained crucial information about the quality and precision of the current text. This is not only the case with Ibn Ḥallikān’s manuscript just mentioned, but also with MS Raḡip Pasha 1078 [fig. 42].

This manuscript is a copy of the Tahrīr al-taḥbīr fī ṣināʾat al-šiʿr wa al-naṭr wa bayān iʿgāz al-Qurʾān (The Composition of the Writing in the Art/Skill of Poetry, Prose and Inimitability of the Qurʾān), by Zakī al-Dīn ‘Abd al-ʿAẓīm b. ‘Abd al-Wāḥid, commonly called Ibn Abī al-Iṣbaʿ (d. 654/1256). As the title implies, it is a work of adab. This manuscript was commissioned for the library of Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmari,

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152 The grandson of Šīhāb al-Dīn Maḥmūd, a former teacher of al-Ṣafadī; Rowson 2009, 351.
153 See van Ess 1976, 256.
154 GAL G I 306, S I 539. The text was edited in Cairo in 1583/1963.
as attested by the cartouche with the ornate chrysography visible on the title page (see a bit further for another example of such a dedication, in a holograph).

The exemplar used by al-Ṣafadī is an apograph: it was copied on the holograph. Again, the colophon was copied by al-Ṣafadī, who did not add any more specific information about this particular copy [fig. 43]. The title page is adorned by illuminated cartouches. The first cartouche displays the title of the book and the name of its author in a thick golden frame, with floral and vegetal motifs surrounding the inscription, while the second one, beneath it, shows an inscription of dedication in thick ṯuluṭ in white ink, outlined in black, on a dark blue background adorned with golden vegetal motifs. As already said, the dedication is to the library (ḥizāna) of Ibn Faḍl Allāh, Muḥyī al-Dīn Yaḥyā, kātib al-sirr in Damascus and then in Cairo from 729/1329 until his death in 738/1338. The manuscript must have been copied between these two dates.

Finally, one can mention the manuscript of Taqī al-Dīn al-Subki’s, Ġam’ al-ġawāmi’ preserved in the Jerusalem National Library, MS Ya-

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155 The ex-libris of Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī has already been mentioned, see § 2.1.1.
huda Arabic 198. It was written by al-Ṣafadī in the course of maǧālis (sessions) with his friend, Ṭāqī al-Dīn al-Subkī, in 761/1360, for his own use. Yehoshua Frenkel deals with this particular manuscript in his contribution to this volume.

4.2 al-Ṣafadī’s Holographs

al-Ṣafadī’s holographs can be divided into two groups: fair copies and drafts or works-in-progress documents. Nevertheless, as we have already seen, almost all the manuscripts of al-Ṣafadī bear traces of corrections or additions: as was noted by Rowson, al-Ṣafadī showed a “tendency to keep revising and supplementing works after their publication”.156 In this case, the word ‘publication’ must be understood in its etymological sense, i.e. ‘to render public’. For our modern minds, the publication is the printed text, but printing and publishing are not exactly the same.157 The printed text can still be revised, but it is seen as fixed, and most of the time definitive. In premodern times however, the situation was different. First, the printing press did not yet exist, so each copy of a same work was different from the others: handwriting, page layout, number of folios, type of paper, number of volumes, scribal errors... are as many changeable elements. But the difference from our time is still more profound; the texts were considered fluid, and knowledge was ever-evolving, as well as literary expressions.158

According to my current incomplete estimation, almost 60 volumes of al-Ṣafadī have been preserved. Some of them are only short fragments, but others are several volumes long. I will only mention here several fair copies, i.e. manuscripts that are nearly free of corrections, and will deal with this subject more extensively in the future.

The holograph of the first volume of al-Kašf wa-l-tanbīh ʿan al-waṣf wa-l-tašbīh (Revelation and Instruction about [Poetic] Description and Simile), MS BnF Arabe 3345 is a fair copy.159 The title page displays now a bizarre geometric composition, most likely designed in order to hide previous ownership statements or consultation notes [fig. 44]. The text is about a specific rhetorical figure, the tašbīh, ‘compari-

156  Rowson 2009, 344.
157  It becomes crystal clear if you think of online publications.
158  Other examples of text fluidity, revisions and multiple versions of a same text can be found in Blecher 2017; Burge 2016; Hirschler 2012a; 2012b; Sublet, Roiland 2017; Talib 2013 etc. The situation was the same outside of the Arab world and the advent of the print did not immediately change the situation: it is only gradually that the tendency to heavily revise one’s text after its publication faded; see Cerquiglini 1989.
159  Mac Guckin de Slane 1883, 585.
son' or 'simile', and al-Ṣafadī articulated his monograph as usual: two big introductions, about terminology and theoretical questions, and examples, verses displaying tašbih, by numerous authors of different ages, arranged thematically. Apart from a small insert between ff. 20b and 21, an addition, nothing diverges from the regular justified text [fig. 45].

Second, in the Danish Royal Library in Copenhagen, Cod. Arab 294 is a holograph of the Kašf al-ḥāl fī waṣf al-ḥāl (Revealing the Situation about Describing Beauty Marks). Just like MS Raġip Pasha 1078 mentioned earlier, this manuscript was dedicated to the library of Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, šāḥib dawāwīn al-inšāʾ (f. 1a). The dedication is chrysographed and outlined in black, on the title page, under the elegant cartouche accommodating the title and a circular decorative composition, probably not the work of al-Ṣafadī [fig. 46].

160 On the tašbih as a rhetorical figure, see van Gelder in EI2.

161 For instance, as already noted, he wrote monographs on two other rhetorical figures, namely the ḡinās ‘paronomasia, wordplay’ (Ǧīnān al-ḡinās, see Heinrich in EI; ed. Ḥalabi) and the tawriya/istiḥdām ‘double-entendre’ (Faḍḍ al-ḥitām ‘an al-tawrīya wa al-istiḥdām, see Bonebakker in EI and Bonebakker 1966; ed. al-Ḥinnāwī).

162 Perho 2007, 1142-6. The MS is visible online http://www5.kb.dk/permalink/2086/manus/254/dan/1/.
Again, the text presents two introductions, the first one lexicographical and the second one concerning the meanings of moles and a list of persons presenting peculiar beauty marks; then comes a list of verses by different authors, including al-Ṣafadī himself, arranged alphabetically according to the rhyme letter and by subject. The manuscript only counts 58 folios, and finishes abruptly, without any conclusion or colophon, but the entire alphabet is covered, as the last chapter is about the letter yāʾ. What is extremely interesting is the presence of many blank spaces, left at the end of every chapter, in case the author found other examples to fit in (for instance see f. 22b, fig. 47, where one counts only ten lines on the page, instead of the usual 17 lines per page, like on f. 14, for instance). This could be interpreted as another clear demonstration of the fluidity of texts but it could also be understood differently: that al-Ṣafadī made sure to always begin a chapter (or section, for the introduction) in the upper part of a page, whether recto or verso. This is plausible, but is not a usual scribal practice. A last interesting thing to note is the numeration of the quires, with the feminine form of the ordinal adjective,
in letters, and the presence of catchwords on the versos of a continued text – there is no catchword if the next recto begins with the title of a new section or chapter. Finally, collation notes (balāga) are visible in the outer margin of several folios, always in the last folio of a quire, sometimes partially trimmed off, such as on ff. 8b, 18b and 28b (see fig. 48).

Third, the SBB fragment of the Sarf al-ʿayn ‘an šarf al-ʿayn fī wasf al-ʿayn (Avoiding Envy While Paying Cash Down for Descriptions of the Eye) MS or. Oct. 3806 is the third clean copy known. It consists only of a short fragment of 23 folios. Again, the title page is illuminated [fig. 49], the title inscribed in a rectangular cartouche finished on its outer side by a medallion, and on its lower side by a polylobed circle housing the name of the author. The title page was realised by another illuminator; it displays a heavily adorned title cartouche, filled with vegetal motifs in dark blue, red and gold, while the au-
The handwriting of the main text appears quickly done, the layout is simple but very regular, red ink is used to highlight or to write some words, giving rhythm to the meaning of the text. One chapter title is displayed on f. 2b, in black ink but with a bigger module [fig. 50]. Few indications are observable in the margins. Two different papers are observed, one white and one darker, a colour between saffron-yellow and reddish. The structure of both papers is similar to the structure of all the papers of al-Ṣafadī’s holographs.

The manuscripts showing traces of work-in-progress are more numerous. For instance, all of the holographs of the biographical dictionaries fit this category, as al-Ṣafadī continued working on them until his death. An exhaustive list of al-Ṣafadī’s surviving holographs, including details about the status of the text in presence (is it a working document? Does it contain many corrections and/or additions?) and about its materiality (al-Ṣafadī favours three specific papers) is in preparation.

5 Conclusion

The study of the three sources of information discussed in this paper – the paratextual statements, the reading journal, and the manuscripts in al-Ṣafadī’s own hand – provides us with a more precise picture of al-Ṣafadī as a reader, but also as a scholar. What is striking for me is the similarity of his working method with that of today.

This should come as no surprise, since it is very logical, but it is now clearly shown: al-Ṣafadī follows what could be called a reading agenda, in which he reads what he needs for the work in progress; this is particularly clear when the ownership and consultation statements are dated. For instance, his acquisition of the Kitāb al-afʿāl, by al-Saraqusṭī, a book on verb morphology, coincides with the period of his publication about linguistic and phonologic correctness. It is a pity that his ownership note on al-Suhaylī’s critic of Ibn Hişām’s biography of the Prophet Muhammad is not dated, but I would surmise that it was bought at the end of the 750s/1350s, when al-Ṣafadī was composing his al-Faḍl al-munīf fī al-mawlid al-šarīf to celebrate the Prophet’s mawlid. When he was appointed wakīl bayt al-māl of Damascus, al-Ṣafadī naturally would have required some help with

165 Benedikt Reier is working on the Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr holographs in the frame of his PhD Archive Fever in Egypt and Syria: The Social Logic and Use of Biographical Dictionaries in the Mamlūk Period (1250-1517 CE), prepared under the supervision of Konrad Hirschler, at the Frei Universität Berlin.
his new function: he bought Hunayn b. Ishāq’s epistle on weights and measures, handwritten by another recognised author in the field of sciences, Ibn al-Bayṭār, the herbalist of an Ayyubid sultan.

Another common point of al-Ṣafadī’s working method with ours, and contrary to some of his contemporary scholars, is the fact that he systematically cites his sources. This is true for the texts he mentions in his taḏkira, and it is also the case in his monographs and biographical dictionaries: as already shown, chiefly by Van Ess and Little, his biographical notices always feature information of provenance for the data he transmits, whether the name of the author from whom he read the information, or the name of the person from whom he heard it, but also very often the fact that he heard it himself.

The taḏkira appears as the perfect intermediary between the readings and the use of the readings, between the documentation and the synthesis, the heuristics and the citation. This tool is an ideal aid for both the conscientious philologist and the fecund anthologist, to efficiently find back useful examples and illustrations of a certain literary device when needed (as attested by his biographer al-Subkī about the tašbih, as we have seen) and their sources, but also for the chancery secretary, who finds examples of nomination decrees, contract marriages and other official documents (like in the volume of the taḏkira from Berlin, when he was still in his early career), and for the biographer of his contemporaries, who writes down any beautiful poem, clever riddle or interesting play on words he heard or he received in a letter, any interesting thing he heard or read and the circumstances under which he received the information.

The manuscripts in his hand are instructive in more than one regard. When he copied texts by other authors, it could be a gift (Ibn Abī al-Iṣbaʿ’s work of adab was commissioned to the library of Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī), or for his personal library (Ibn Ḫallikān’s Wafāyāt was very useful for al-Ṣafadī). Thanks to his son’s ownership statements, it appears that al-Ṣafadī used to keep not only the drafts or preparatory documents of his own works, but also the fair copies: both versions of his Taṣḥīḥ al-taṣḥīf are preserved and feature his son’s ownership statement. We also know that drafts could have been transmitted in their unfinished state, since some of them bear an iǧāza. This is the case of several manuscripts of the Aʿyān (and this comes as no surprise, since many of the people mentioned in

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166 See al-Maqrīzī (Bauden 2010), for instance, or the fact that al-Suyūṭī devoted a book to plagiarism (al-Suyūṭī, al-Fāriq), or even the recommendations by al-Subkī for the historian’s work (see Frenkel in this volume). The conflict between al-Ṣafadī and Ibn Nubāta should be mentioned, since the latter accused the former of plagiarism of some of his verses. The limit between emulation and plagiarism is sometimes very thin, see Rowson 2009, 349-50; Lāšīn 2005.

this work were still living and thus their achievements and activities, worth remembering, including their deaths, current), but it is also true of other works, for instance of the Ġawāmid al-Šiḥāb. This last point deserves further investigation and the future list of al-Šafadī’s holographs under preparation will shed new light on the question.

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Authors as Readers in the Mamlūk Period and Beyond, 83-152


Authors as Readers in the Mamlūk Period and Beyond, 83-152


On Networking and Book Production in Fourteenth-Century Damascus
Tāǧ al-Dīn al-Subkī’s and Ḫalīl b. Aybak al-Ṣafadī’s Working Methodology

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Abstract A unique manuscript, written in Damascus (in 1359), sheds light on author-copyist relation. Taĝ al-Subkī and al-Ṣafadī, two well-known scholars and authors, met at a private house and produced a legal compendium, which became popular among Muslim jurists. The inspection of this unicidum and its comparison with printed editions of Ǧamʿ al-ǧawāmiʿ enriches our data on book production in the Mamlûk Sultanate.

Keywords Taĝ al-Dīn al-Subkī. al-Ṣafadī. Ǧamʿ al-ǧawāmiʿ. Book production.

Summary 1 Introduction. – 2 al-Ṣafadī and Historians’ Methodology. – 3 Tāǧ al-Dīn al-Subkī’s Ǧamʿ al-ǧawāmiʿ. – 4 Authors’ Methodology. – 5 In Conclusion.

1 Introduction

The diffusion of both the written word and reading skills generated literate enclaves in the urban centres of the Fertile Crescent long before the emergence of the Mamlûk Sultanate (1259-1517). Through meticulous examination of several manuscripts of Taĝ al-Dīn al-Subkī’s Ǧamʿ al-ǧawāmiʿ fi ʿilm uṣūl al-fiqh (The Assemblage of Ǧamʿ al-|. 1 Ibn Ğubayr, al-Riḥla, 271-2. |
Numerous [books] on the Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence), this chapter investigates fourteenth-century Mamlūk authors’ working methods. Its point de départ is that contemporaneous recipients (the audience) did not consider a book’s manuscript as a completed recension. It was for them instead an open text, with changes inserted during its transmission. In support of my thèse de travail I will provide a condensed account of two prolific scholars who stand out in the fourteenth-century Damascene records. Inter alia, I will analyse accounts that cast light on authors’ working methods and book production.

The reading and writing of books within the Mamlūk Sultanate was the art of transmitting facts and ideas, as well as amusing the audience. This creative activity was not always a silent practice. On the contrary, reading was often a collective aural routine. Voices flanked the word. Writing went hand in hand with listening/reciting. The aural transmission was an integral stage in the writings’ transmission. The production of a book was often seen as a speech act and, hence, preliminary steps in the writing of a book could imply listening instead of silent reading.

There were several ways in which authors who worked in this era could obtain texts and read works that were written by past masters or by colleagues. To peruse works that interested them they could visit libraries, participate in learning circles, consult manuscripts, borrow (istaʿāra), buy manuscripts from booksellers (warrāqūn; kutubiyyūn) or obtain autographs and/or holographs (malaktu-hu bi-ḥaṭṭi-hi) and gain transmission licenses (iǧāza). The act of private acquisition did not result in the vanishing of a text, which continued to surface in the communal space. This is visible in many manuscripts that bear the mark waqf (endowment).

2 al-ʿUdfuwī, al-Ṭālīʿ, 46 (wa-waḡadtu anā bi-Asnā kitāban sammā-hu šāḥibu-hu); Hirschler 2012; 2020.
3 Leder et al. 1996.
7 al-Ṣafadī, al-Wāfī, 18: 528; al-Biqāʿī, ʿUnwān, 4: 122 (wa-raʾyu ḥaṭṭa Ibn al-Ḡazarī bi-ṭalika), 150 (kataba li bi-ḥaṭṭi-hi); al-ʿUdfuwī, al-Ṭālīʿ, 654.
8 al-Biqāʿī, ʿUnwān, 4: 177; Chamberlain 1994, 15, 49; Ducènè 2006; Arjmand 2018; Vajda 2012; Witkam 2012.
Students sought out revered men of letters. They studied with them, reciting aloud before them (qara’tu ‘alay-hi), or listened to an author reading from his compilations (sami’tu) or otherwise presenting a text (‘araḍa). The aural communication was an integral stage in written transmission. Reciting aloud textual productions, such as exegeses, religious sciences, literary works and poetry, was a common group practice, as we learn from many jottings at the end of works that refer to public performances of reciting and listening (qara’a/sami’a). Hearing the text went hand in hand with seeing it written.

Audiences who listened to the dictation of a book often used written notes while copying (qultu wa-aḥḍara lī waraqa) their masters’ manuscripts (naqaltu min ḥattī-hi), summarising their books (talḥīs) and toiling to produce high quality works (al-šayḫ al-muṭābir). The opening remarks by Abū Sa‘īd Ḫalīl b. al-ʿĀlāʾī, who studied in Damascus with al-Ḏahabī (ba‘da an qara’tu ‘alay-hi), provides one example among many records of this undertaking. In one of his impressive onomastic productions, al-Ḏahabī furnishes a short entry on Taqī al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAli b. ʿAbd al-Kāfī al-Subkī (683-756/1284-1355), the father of Tāǧ al-Dīn (727-771/1327-1370), whose Ḟamʿ al-ǧawāmiʿ fī ʿilm uṣūl al-fiqh serves as the hub of the present study. The great Damascus scholar declares: “I listened to his reading and he listened to mine” (sami’tu ‘alay-hi wa-samiʿa minnī).

This technique of transmission was not restricted to ḥadīṯ, Qur’ān exegeses or jurisdiction, but was common also in poetry and literary
works. Evidence of it can be traced in sources that report on the production of books. This working method provides a basis for assuming that the copyists or the transmitters regarded the text as open to interpretations (शरह), abridgments (तल्हिस; मुहतासर) and continuations (गयल), similar to their activity when discussing each other’s texts together. They did not erase the authors’ names; on the contrary, they used the authors’ works and names as bases on which rested a complex structure of other texts.

Based upon his in-depth investigation of al-Nuwayrī, Elias Muhanna concludes that “copying [ناسح] involved more than mere replication of exemplary manuscripts. Some level of editing and markup was not only considered acceptable, but was expected from a good scribe”. Contemporaneous recipients did not consider these agents’ interventions as a corruption of the author’s recension. The evolution of abridged compendia (muḥtasars) supports this deduction. Yet, this very common technique of book circulation does not rule out self-production, namely the compilation of books by an author who inscribed a draft (musawwada) and later produced a fair copy (mubayyada).

The above-mentioned sources (i.e. authorisation certificates (بجا), transmission records (سامحات), colophons, and title pages), and also chronicles and biographical dictionaries, provide an emic view of the textual production in Mamlūk Damascus and highlight circles of scholars, their learning and compilation. Nevertheless, this rich documentation does not fully illuminate the working techniques of such authors and the way they read texts/listened to the voice of masters and selected, reused or discarded information gathered in this way. In order to gather information that reveals their practices and methods we should look at another sort of contemporary source: references within the works that record transmission of textual production and name works consulted by authors. Some information on working methods and personal meetings can also be traced in manuscript marginalia.

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21 al-Biqāʿī, ‘Umwān, 4: 13; al-Ṣafadī, Aʿyān, 5: 334 (“listening to lyric love poems [gayal] he [Ibn Hayyān] took the liberty of shedding tears”), 341 (“he authorised [bija] me, the writer of these lines [al-Ṣafadī], to transmit literary compilations [al-tasānif al-adabiyya]”).

22 Muhanna 2020, 238.


As already indicated, three protagonists, Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī, Tāǧ al-Dīn al-Subkī, and Ḫalīl b. Aybak al-Ṣafadī (696-764/1297-1363) serve as the focus of the present article. Looking at them through the prism of a unique Mamlūk document that fortunately reached us, we are able to investigate techniques of textual production and transmission of books in fourteenth-century Damascus. The document in question is an understudied manuscript of Tāǧ al-Dīn al-Subkī’s Ğamʿ al-ǧawāmiʿ in the handwriting of Ḫalīl b. Aybak al-Ṣafadī. This latter prolific author recorded, rather than copied, a legal work that had been compiled by Tāǧ al-Dīn al-Subkī, his companion and the son of his celebrated teacher.27

As such, this manuscript illuminates the circumstances surrounding communication between an author and a scribe. From that data we can, therefore, deduce more general conclusions on the relations between a man of letters and his devoted audience who, by recording his work, contributed to its dissemination. Producing a recension of his master’s book, al-Ṣafadī intervened as an agent, other than the author, in the transmission of that work.28

2 al-Ṣafadī and Historians’ Methodology

Al-Ṣafadī is known as the author of several biographical dictionaries and other works, and historians of Mamlūk textual production agree on his importance. Analysis of Middle Islamic Arabic textual production reveals that, in some of his compilations, al-Ṣafadī referred to earlier writings that were either composed by him or were comments on his social companions and intellectual circles.29 Indeed, many of his writings inform his audience about his working techniques and practices in collecting data and, more generally, his method of textual production.30 He often quotes paragraphs and verses, both short and long, from early and late Arab authors.

In several of his works, al-Ṣafadī refers to this composition technique. The texts that he consulted, or copied,31 were employed by him in two opposing ways: on the one hand, as a source of inspiration, as

27 On the close working relations between these two scholars, see Little 1976, 205.
28 See chap. 3 of this book, by Élise Franssen, for more details about al-Ṣafadī as a scribe.
29 Little 1976, 197.
31 al-Ṣafadī, A’yôn al-ʿaṣr, 5: 331 (no. 1831): “He [Ibn Ḥayyān] composed a great number of works [ṭaṣānīf] that were distributed all over [sāra wa-tāra]. They spread all over but did not vanish. The gleaming books were read and copied [nusiḥat]. Preserving the books of past generations’ fallacies did not alter them”.

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A case in point is al-Ṣafadī’s detailed biography of ʿUṯmān b. Ḥāǧib al-Mālikī (570-646/1177-1249), within which the biographer narrates:

[the] šayḥ Šams al-Dīn [al-Ḏahabī] says: I copied [wa-naqaltu] from a manuscript in the hand of [min ḫaṭṭi] the jurist al-Tuḫī al-Šāfīʾī whom I already mentioned earlier in my book. He wrote a dissertation [taʿlīq] on Ibn Ḥāǧib but did not complete it; Ibn Ḥallīkān has also mentioned him; I learned that Ibn al-Wākīl has provided a similar account.

Several paragraphs of al-Wāfī bi al-wafayāt (The Continuum List of Deceased Men), one of al-Ṣafadī’s major compilations, illustrate al-Ṣafadī’s close relations with the al-Subkī family. In the introduction to this multi-volume work, he presents the history of Arab historiography and adds guidelines for those who are engaged in producing historical works. These lines support and further illuminate my argument regarding inter-author relations. This paragraph is based on a long quotation (naqaltu min ḫaṭṭi al-imāmi) from Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī’s handwriting:

I copied the following lines from a text that the grand savant, šayḥ al-Islām, the chief judge Taqī al-Dīn Abī al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Kāfī al-Subkī al-Šāfīʾī had written himself [min ḫaṭṭi]. [It says]: “While compiling [naqala] from a written record, the faithful historian should concern himself with a literal transmission rather than an interpretative one. The data that he transmits should be in the words that have been recorded [muḏākara] by him, and which subsequently should be written down accurately. He should name the author of the text that he transmits. He should differentiate between the text transmitted by him and paragraphs added by him. In biographies [tarḡama] written by him he should meet four essential conditions. This is required even in cases that he either extends the biography or shortens it. He should know the circumstances of the person he portrays, his learning, religiosity and other qualities. Although it is very difficult to meet it, this obligation should not be missed [wa-haḏā ʿazīz ǧiddan]. He should have a comprehensive knowledge of the vocabulary and obtain a very eloquent style when depicting the subject of the biography. He should portray all the circumstances of this person and his features. Describ-

32 al-Ṣafadī, Taṣḥīḥ.
33 al-Ḏahabī, Taʾrīkh al-islām, 48: 320.
ing him, he should be very precise, not adding unnecessary data and not omitting necessary information. Emotions should not govern his depiction, which in the case of a person whom he loves will lead his flattering efforts astray and will cause him to accumulate needlessly words. And in the opposite case it will result in neglecting essential words. Hence, he should avoid emotions and should not give into sentiments; indeed, this is very difficult. Sound evaluation should lead the biographer while depicting someone he does not like, and he must advance along the path of even and balanced composition. These are four primary stipulations and to them can be added an additional fifth one. Only the combined stipulations enable the biographer to produce a sound portrayal and balanced picture. The most difficult among these primary stipulations is the evaluation of a person’s scholarship. To evaluate correctly the person who concerns him, the biographer must know profoundly all the branches of science and must be familiar with the scholarly production of the subject of the biography”.35

In al-Šafadi’s biography of al-Ḍahabī we read:

Kamāl al-Dīn b. al-Zamlakānī (d. 727/1327) read al-Ḍahabī’s history \(\text{ta’rīḫi al-kabīr al-musammā bi-ta’rīḫ al-islām}\) carefully, inspecting section after section till he completed surveying \(\text{muṭālaʿa}’\) it. He concluded his reading with the remark: “This is a fine scholarly work, I studied it and gained from it. I read with him a considerable number of his compilations \(\text{taṣānīf}\). Reading them I did not stumble upon the dullness \(\text{Ǧumūd}\) of hadīṯ scholars nor upon the ponderousness \(\text{kūdana}\) of transmitters. On the contrary, he [al-Ḍahabī] is a scholar with deep insight. He makes sharp analysis of opinions \(\text{ḏarba}\) and piercing evaluation of past scholars’ methodology and of sages’ writings. I was deeply impressed by his working practice. If, in his writings, he criticized a hadīṯ, he would first clarify its meaning and indicate its weak points or faults in the chain of transmission, pointing out deficiency of transmitters. Only with him and in his writings did I find this high quality of working habits”.36

In both quotations al-Šafadi provides guidelines for the historian who is engaged in compiling a book. He advises him about collecting data and evaluating it, yet he does not mention originality. Moreover, the subtext of al-Šafadi’s advice amplifies the conformism of writers. Although an author should not avoid a critical approach to texts

35 al-Šafadi in Amar 1911, 44-7; Ritter 1962, 1: 46.
consulted by him, he is advised to follow his predecessors and to refrain from breaking the literary lines.

Concentrating on a **unicum** text, namely the copy of Ǧamʿ al-ǧawāmiʿ in al-Ṣafadī’s handwriting, I will look into al-Ṣafadī’s role in writing down his master’s recitations and in the transmission of the book’s draft.

3 **Tāǧ al-Dīn al-Subkī’s Ǧamʿ al-ǧawāmiʿ**

Taqī al-Dīn ‘Ali b. ‘Abd al-Kāfī al-Subkī was an eminent Mamlūk scholar and jurist whose intellectual productions were favourably received during his lifetime and among Šafiʿite, and it continues to the present day. The list of his works is impressive, containing approximately 30 books and numerous epistles that cover a vast range of subjects, from grammar to jurisdiction. This productivity boosted his social position and intellectual fame; in Damascus, and villages in the city’s green belt, students gathered around him. They studied ḥadīṯ and jurisdiction with the master, who held several high ranking scholarly and juridical positions. As we shall see, some among them transcribed his lectures, and these manuscripts circulated among book-reading communities. Among his students was his son Tāǧ al-Dīn and al-Ṣafadī.

Tāǧ al-Dīn al-Subkī is considered the most illustrious member of the well-known family of Shāfiʿī ʿulamāʾ from the Mamlūk period. He composed a considerable number of books, including, among other subjects, biographies and texts on juridical administration and jurisdiction.

The earliest account of his life was written by his son Tāǧ al-Dīn al-Subkī in his great biographical dictionary of eminent Šafiʿites (al-Ṭabaqāt al-Šāfiʿīya al-kubrā). Ahmad b. Ibrāhīm al-Šāfiʿī copied this long entry as an independent booklet, titled Kitāb Iʿlām al-aʿlām bi-manāqib sayḥ al-Islām qādī al-quḍāh ‘Ali al-Subkī rahimahu Allāhu informing the learned public about the virtues of the late Muslim leader and chief judge ‘Alī al-Subkī (in 17 Šaʿbān 766/9 May 1365). A joint examination of the various manuscripts of al-Subkī, al-Ṭabaqāt al-Šāfiʿīya and a comparison with his Kitāb Iʿlām resulted in the conclusion that the booklet version of the biography contains a limited number of changes. See Kitāb Iʿlām (Princeton University Library, Islamic Manuscripts, MS Ar. Garrett no. 2258Y).

Thomas, Mallett 2013, 5: 88-91; Schacht 1997.

For his teachers see Ibn Saʿd al-Ṣāliḥī, Muʿǧam šuyūḥ al-Subkī. For his works Brockelmann 2016, 2: 92-3.

The first one was actually written by al-Subkī himself. al-Subkī, *Manʿ al-mawāniʿ*, 1: 369.
couraged them to facilitate access to it and they worked diligently to achieve this goal.\footnote{al-Zarkašı̄ 2000; Ibn al-ʿIrāqī al-Kurdī al-Qāhirī ʿal-Šāfiʿī 2004; al-Maḥallī al-Šāfiʿī, 2005; al-Waqqād al-Azharı̄ 2006.} According to my estimation, at least four authors wrote exegeses on this work of al-Subkī during the first century after the book’s composition.

The circulation of such pre-modern exegeses of the Ġamʿ al-ġawāmī, as well as the publication of several modern editions of the book, illuminate al-Subkī’s prominent position in Islamic juridical studies and the reception of his scholarship, at least among the Šāfiʿītes. However, it seems that the recensions currently circulating fail to collate all of the interesting manuscripts of the book.\footnote{Ed. by ʿAbd al-Munʿim Ḫalīl Ibrāhīm (1424/2003) and ʿAq ı̄lah Ḥusayn (1432/2011).} Editors of these editions of the Ġamʿ do not refer, to the best of my knowledge, to the manuscript stored at the library of Princeton University (copied in 921/1515). Its colophon reads:

The complier [muṣannif] completed the fair copy of [this work] [kāna tamām bayāḍi-hi] in his dwelling at al-Dahiša, in the village of al-Nayrab in the suburb of Damascus on the last watch of the night of 1 Ḏū al-Ḥiǧga 760/3 November 1359.\footnote{al-Subkī, Ġamʿ al-ġawāmī fī ʿilm uṣūl al-fiqh (Princeton Islamic Manuscripts, MS Ar. Garrett 4168Y), see appendix 3.}

A second manuscript that did not catch the attention of modern editors is kept in Jerusalem, at the National Library of Israel (henceforth NLI); this manuscript of al-Subkī’s compilation was handwritten by al-Ṣafadī. This recension ends with a colophon written and signed by al-Ṣafadī, which means that we are facing with a holograph:\footnote{On this term see Gacek 2020. Editor’s note: technically speaking, the Author is mentioning a manuscript handwritten by another famous author, that is, a manuscript for which the scribe is also an author. ‘Holograph’ can be said when a manuscript is entirely in its author’s hand. Since al-Ṣafadī is not the author of the Ġamʿ al-Ḡawāmī, the manuscript cannot be called a holograph. See Bauden, Franssen 2020 and Gacek 2020. On the contrary, the blurb mentioned below is holograph: it is the oeuvre of al-Ṣafadī and it is in his hand.} this manuscript was written entirely in al-Ṣafadī’s hand. It opens with a blurb (taqrīz), a short poem put down in al-Ṣafadī’s handwriting.\footnote{al-Biqāʿī, ʿUnwān, 4: 191; Rosenthal 1981; Levanoni 2013. See appendix 1 for the edition of this taqrīz.}

This is a compilation by our master and leader Abū al-Naṣr ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Subkī. I, Ḫalīl b. Aybak al-Ṣafadī, wrote this blurb [taqrīz] of that composition:
“This is a book in Islamic law that incredibly transformed the perception of juridical principals [ṣūl] [in the Qurʾān and ḥadīth as they are applied by the judge]. If you were to ponder on the book’s content you would find it a striking artefact. This compilation [ǧamʿ] is an abridgment of an unmatched legal anthology. Disregarding it would damage you, so don’t neglect it. It exposed gleaming moons, its shining beams explore hidden topics. Uniquely the book’s author beamed, radiating steadily his merits. Unafraid, he concluded his verdict decisively, neither a close opponent nor a remote adversary could disagree with him. He directed and taught those who gathered around him, and every letter will profit us, even when we become old. His eloquent speech refines and astonishes, and you will solemnly use it even if you do not understand a word in the text. He accomplished marvellous achievements while epitomizing, adding highly sophisticated expressions to it. He did not leave a single word without clearly explaining it, these exegeses by him are astonishing. In an extremely pleasing and beautiful approach he combined the understanding of the Qurʾān and ḥadīth, the two sources of legal theory, with legal dialectic disputation [ǧadal], providing an account of loose wording in an eloquent form. As if tomorrow the agama lizard due to his eloquent talk will be saved and beloved. Similarly, opposing him the sword’s blade will decay. The poor Ibn al-Ḥāġib is merely the chief guardian who stands at the gates of our eminent magistrate”.

According to the colophon, al-Ṣafadī visited Tāġ al-Dīn al-Subkī’s home, where he listened to his master’s lectures and dictations and wrote them down, resulting in a book. It reads:

Halil b. Aybak al-Ṣafadī, the scribe who inscribed this compilation [kātibu-hu], completed writing it down for his own usage [taʿlīqihi li-nafsi-hi] on the fifth of the month Rabīʿ II in the year 761 [24 February 1360] in the protected city of Damascus.

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48 Calder 2010, 140; Musa 2014, 327.
49 For a reference to Tāġ al-Dīn al-Subkī’s, Gamʿ al-ǧawāmiʿ, see Zakariyah 2015, 24.
50 Siddiqui 2019.
51 A reference to Ibn al-Ḥāġib al-Mālikī’s Ġāmiʿ al-ummahāt.
52 al-Subkī, Gamʿ al-ǧawāmiʿ (Jerusalem, NLI, MS Yah. Ar. 198). In addition to the above-mentioned manuscript of the Gamʿ al-ǧawāmiʿ, the NLI also owns some folios of al-Ṣafadī’s al-Wāfī, which were not used by the editors of the two editions of this impor-
This manuscript demonstrates that, although writing was the prevalent method of preservation and transmission of a book, dictating could sometimes be the preliminary stage of textual production. This explains minor distinctions between the manuscripts at our disposal. There was no final recension.

It should be added that this unique manuscript is not the only reference to the close relations between Tāġ al-Dīn al-Subkī and al-Ṣafadī. Such closeness obliterates the borderlines that separate the two men, the master-writer and his student-scribe, particularly given that the age gap between them was not very wide. Occasionally they become a united entity that jointly produced a text, as will be demonstrated below. Moreover, in the earlier stage of their career, the two were joined by a third scholar, al-Subkī’s father, Tāqī al-Dīn, creating a multi-generational set of writers and readers. This collaboration resembles the study and transmission of ḥadīṯ and is an additional verification of the holistic approach that characterises the Arab-Islamic Republic of Letters.

Indeed, master-student relations are depicted in several other contemporaneous works. A case in point is the opening paragraph of al-ʾUdfuwī’s treatise on ṣūfī doctrine. Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Dimašqī al-Qaymārī notes that he wrote (wa-ḏā ḥaṭṭi-hi wa-ṣaḥḥa ḏalika) it at the house of Abū Ḥayyān in the Ṣāliḥiyya madrasa in Cairo, where the author (muʾallif) dictated his work (samiʿa ǧamīʿa haḏā al-kitābi min lafẓi muʾallifi-hi al-šayḫ al-imām al-ʾUdfuwī bi-ḥuḍūri sayyidi-nā wa-šayḫi-nā Ibn Ḥayyān yawma al-ʾṯnayn ʿašr Ṣafar sanat 741 bi-manzili šayyhi-nā Abī Ḥayyān). al-Subkī’s intellectual vita (muʿǧam) should also be mentioned here. Thanks to this, we possess rich data on the Damascene scholarly circles, and on the productivity of the three savants mentioned above. Nevertheless, I will refrain here from analysing the detailed information that the vita furnishes, and will limit my contribution to a single node in al-Ṣafadī’s circle of intellectual acquaintance, namely al-Ṣafadī’s activity within the coterie of Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī and his relations with Tāġ al-Dīn al-Subkī, his master’s son. In fact, they operated as a collective, a community that shared recreational delight in book production.

4 Authors’ Methodology

In the previous sections I have mentioned, *inter alia*, scholars’ circles, networks and inter-generation communication. This section of the paper looks at the techniques of composition and book transmission. It will cast light on several authors who functioned, often simultaneously, as recipients as well as disseminators.

Among al-Ṣafadī’s contemporaries in fourteenth-century Damascus, transmission of condensed paragraphs from earlier volumes, as well as offering pastiches, were common practices, as we learn from his and other scholars’ texts. To write the biography of al-Ṣafadī, Ibn Ḥaǧar al-ʿAsqalānī collected data from various sources, which he names:

al-Ḍahābī cherished him [qāla fī ḥaqqi-hi] arguing: “I learned with him and he studied from me”; Ibn Kaṯīr says: a note written by him informs the reader: “I wrote circa five hundred tomes”; His student Ibn Ḥamza al-Husaynī (1315-1364) said [similar words] and also Ibn Rafiʿ al-Sallāmī (1305-1372).

Many times, the sentence “the writing is completed” did not indicate that the composition of a book had indeed ended. It is not rare to stumble upon a sentence that discloses continuations (*ḏayl*) of books compiled by past authors, nor the completion of a compilation previously started by another author. It seems that the community of writers/readers imagined transmitted/copied texts as ‘a work in progress’ engaged by creative littérateurs. Al-ʿAlāʾī, a Jerusalemite contemporary of Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī, opens his book with the statement:

What drove me to compile [ǧamaʿa] this book is *al-Ašbāh wa al-naẓāʾir*, a composition *[taʿlīq]* about this topic that was written by Ṣadr al-Dīn Ibn al-Wakīl, one of the great scholars with whom I met. His nephew, Zayn al-Dīn, added to it [tammaʿ alay-hi] several legal enquiries. I extracted from several compendia similar issues and added them to this book of mine.

In his *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Šāfiʿiyya*, his paramount work, Tāǧ al-Dīn al-Subkī provides a detailed biography of al-Ṣafadī, who was his colleague and one of his father’s students. The entry contains information on al-Ṣafadī’s working method, as we can summarise from the following ego-documents:

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He did not endeavour to compose a book without consulting me. He would ask me and enquire about topics in law, tradition, sources of jurisdiction and philology. This is certainly the case with his book on the leading figures of our days [A’yān al-‘aṣr]. I was the one who suggested its compilation to him and encouraged him to compose it. Frequently he asked for my advice while he was busy with its composition. When I prepared my short synopsis in jurisdiction and theology, the book that is named Ġam’ al-ḡawāmi’, he copied my text [kataba-hu bi-ḫaṭṭi-hi]. He participated regularly in my learning circle and read the entire book aloud, while I chaired the session. His reciting was very agreeable. He profited from re-reading the book. Moreover, he participated in clarifying some points in the book. He named me as the compiler of the book, although he contributed in clarifying certain points in the text. I accompanied him from childhood. I used to write to him and he wrote to me. He encouraged me to immerse in adab [...] One time he granted me the privilege of reading a volume of his Taḏkira. At that point he was occupied in writing a book about description and imitation. He used to search in the Taḏkira and to take notes, whenever he found an appropriate line. 59

From the reference to the taḏkira we can confirm that the usual mnemonic for composing a compilation was the use of notes (hypomnēma: private notes to commit to memory for a lecture). 60 It supported the predominant aural ‘reception’ of a book, which should not surprise students of Arabo-Islamic civilisation. Although Islamic jurisdiction procedures emphasise the importance of oral evidence, the use of documents in court halls is nevertheless widely recorded. 61

The common method of literary production mentioned above is illustrated by another paragraph taken from Tāǧ al-Dīn al-Subkī’s works; it casts light on his close working relations with al-Ḏahabī, “one of the four [Damascene] scholars (ḥuffāẓ) of our days, there is no fifth”, who served both as his companion and as his teacher (ustāğu-na; wa-huwa allaqi ḥarqa-ḥa-na fī hāḏīhi al-ṣinā’a). 62 Al-Subkī then dwells upon al-Ḏahabī’s compilation technique and quotes an ego-document:

I was struck [yuʿǧibu-ni] by the words of our šayḫ Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥāfiẓ in a chapter composed by him after he had completed the

59 al-Subkī, Ṭabaqāt al-Šāfiʿiyya, 10: 6-7. About al-Ṣafadī’s Taḏkira, see chap. 3 by Elise Franssen.
compilation [taṣnīf] of his book al-Mīzān. He [Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Hāфиз] stated: “in this compilation of mine, I mentioned a considerable number of trustworthy transmitters of ḥadīṯ [ṭiqāt] who have been refuted by al-Buḫārī, al-Muslim and other authoritative ḥadīṯ collectors. They did so because these men were refuted by sources that evaluate the credibility of ḥadīṯ transmitters. I mentioned their name in my work not because I disqualified them as untrustworthy, but in order to inform my audience about my evaluation of their features”.

As argued above, contemporary authors regarded the book as an open enterprise, ‘a work in progress’, which we can also conclude from lines that encouraged poets to quote works of earlier writers (taḍmīn, i.e. inclusion, quotation); the compilation of exegeses and continuations (ḏayl) is further support for this hypothesis. In the biography of Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī, his son Tāḏ al-Dīn narrates:

I copied these verses from a text [ḥatt] that my brother Abū Hāmid Ahmad handwrote about verses that our father had recited (in AH 719) [...] Our friend, the paramount scholar Ṣalāh al-Dīn Ḥalīl b. Kaykaladī al-ʿAlāʾi, inserted [ḍammana] the first stanza in a poem that he wrote.

Al-Ṣafadī wrote a short treatise that praised the art of inclusion:

How nice is the making of poetry by an elegant scholar who, by writing highly sophisticated texts appropriately, following his father’s benevolence or memories of a beloved friend, will guard their fame forever. I liked the idea of composing a work that uses earlier texts, a compilation that will augment scattered verses and fragments and will assemble new and old stanzas, will organize dispersed ideas and consolidate strewn literary branches. This work will make difficulties easier and will provide literature lovers with all they need. It will illuminate the marginal topics and will be useful for those who debate them, supporting them and saving them from [errors]. It will save the one who does not play according to the canon and eliminate [his mistakes]. He will not be approached and not flattered.

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63 Tāḏ al-Dīn al-Subkī, Ṭabaqāt al-Šāfiʿīyya, 9: 111.
64 van Gelder 1997; Gully 1997, 467.
65 On this genre see Farah 1967; Massoud 2007, 25-6.
67 al-Ṣafadī, Kitāb iḫtiyār taḍmīḥ al-taḍmīn, Princeton University Library MS Ar. Garrett 440Y, ff. 32a-34b, see appendix 2.
Yet this stylistic approach does not eliminate the notion of the difference between originality and plagiarism among Mamlûk authors. The boundary between literary theft and convention or legitimate appropriation of motives (lafẓ) and rhetorical devices (md’nâ) was clear. Al-Suyûṭî’s “On the difference between the author and the thief (plagiarist)” explores the relation between these two categories.

5 In Conclusion

This contribution has concentrated on a single node in mid-fourteenth century Damascene networks. By comparing the two recensions (Berlin, Princeton) of Tâǵ al-Dīn al-Subkî’s Šam’ al-ğawāmi’ with the copy made by Ḫalīl al-Ṣafadī (Jerusalem), we can shed new light on author-scribe relations in Mamlûk Damascus, as well as on al-Ṣafadī’s and al-Subkî’s working method. The texts analysed serve to augment biographical and historical reports, which illuminate the production of knowledge, the role of the author and the role of the copyist.

The written and the aural served together in the transmission of texts: reading was often performed collectively and loudly, and reading aloud and writing down the text that the author/teacher read to an audience was a common practice, and it illuminates social practices. In a number of cases, the production of the written text was done in group, in a circle assembled around an author who performed as a reader of a text compiled by himself. The widespread use of the verbs ‘I read aloud/I listened to’ (qara´tu/sami´tu) indicates that reading was a speech act. Some of those present among the listeners in the learning assembles recorded the lectures, which ended up in the form of books. The materials reviewed above also cast light on the common contemporary concept of book, on both authorship and reception.

Yet, although data sources regularly report on collective reading aloud, such information does not exclude the possibility of solo silent reading or writing/copying (naqaltu). It would be proper to mention here that the verb katabtu (I wrote) is not often used by the contemporary authors who reported on their compilation techniques. The close inspection of the documentation discussed in this article adds to the growing knowledge of Mamlûk learning, transmission of knowledge, compilation techniques and book production.

68 On questions of originality and plagiarism see von Grunebaum 1944; Heinrichs 1987-88; Bonebakker 1997; Bauden 2010.

69 al-Suyûṭî, al-Fâriq; al-Biqā‘î, ‘Unwân, 4: 45.
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دياب قامَ، 1976-1963/1395-1383، في تقریز هذا المصفوفة
 الكتاب له في الأصول عداً غرباً، وهي نوعاً من العناصر ككل تكن مميتاً، وَجِمَعَناً في المجمل بلنشر فلما صدرت تلك مخطوطة
 كتبس يُدوّرُ مصطلحات يكتب عن مَن يُتقبِّله فُقَرَاقَ صَمْفُوَنَهُ، فِيْدَا مِنها.
 وأحكمها فما ينخسي رتيبةً بِإِيَاقِهٖ وَعَمْلاً أو قريباً وصدّ ما حَوَّاله وَكَلّ حَرْفُ إِذَا قَبِيبَ يُجِيبِ يُجِيب
 وقد رافق صياطينها ما إن تُريق أن تزينه به
 واعجر حين أوجز مع بيانه الأدبياً
 فما من نفلت إلا وِيَطِ معارياً لم يكن فيها مرِياً
 حولي الأصول مع جدل يبدع وحصن تصرف يحكي السبا
 كان بين الحَيْبِين غداً ناجياً يَجَسِّن بلاغاً منه حَيْبِي
 فخَّلَ السيف بالضاء بِضَرِبِيها
 كما ابن الحاجج المكين 1 على أوباب قاضياً نقياً

قبلَ مَسِبَّ الرحم من الرحم أو عَفْوَ اللهم ورحمة
 قال مولانا ودكنا قاضياً قاضياً جَهَّة المذهب
 فمن الثاني القُرقُس لسان المتكلمين مُحِي الناظرين

علامة العلماء، والذين لا يتهيء ولكل دار ساحل

جاج الدين أبو نصر عبد الوهاب السکی ابن قاضي القضاة شیخ الإسلام
 نقل الدين أبي الحسن على ابن قاضي القضاء زين الدين أبو محمد عبد الكافي

الأصري الباجي الشافعي، مفتى الإسلام، تأيماً

وبوفاها

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Appendix 3
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Abstract This article wants to discuss how an autograph manuscript can be a source of knowledge regarding medieval translation methodology, showing the efforts the translator makes, having read his source text, to ponder the words to use in order to express the ideas displayed in it as adequately as possible. The text at stake is Evrart de Conty’s Middle French translation of the pseudo-aristotelian Problemata, made on the basis of the Latin translation by Bartholomew of Messina and its commentary by Pietro de Abano. The numerous corrections in the manuscript reveal a continuous re-reading of the translation and display the translator’s struggle to render the content of the source texts as accurately as possible, but also his concern to make his translation easy to understand for his audience.


1 Introduction

When Evrart de Conty, the physician of King Charles V of France, translated the (pseudo-)aristotelian Problemata into French at the end of the fourteenth century, he used Bartholomew of Messina’s Latin translation (1260) of the Greek source text, as well as Pietro de Abano’s Expositio (1310), a commentary on Bartholomew’s translation that Pietro composed because of the obscurity of that text, a word for word translation from Greek to Latin. Every act of translation implies an act of reading in order to interpret the source text adequately, and usually also an act of re-reading, where the translator verifies if the translated version matches the original appropriately.

Evrart’s Middle French translation is preserved in a manuscript that has been acknowledged as an autograph, showing quite some passages where the translator hesitates, correcting words, sentences or passages, adding new ones. Those hesitations not only display the translator’s difficulties with respect to the French language, but also show his struggle to render the content of the source texts as accurately as possible, and also easy to understand for his audience, all testimonies of a thorough reading not only of his source texts, but also of his translation.

This article wants to show how the autograph manuscript is a source of knowledge regarding Evrart’s translation methodology, and the efforts the translator makes to ponder the words to use in order to express the ideas displayed in the source texts as adequately as possible. The analysis of corrections and additions will also allow to observe how this translator manages to interpret the medical knowledge of the source texts that form the basis of the translation.

In the following, I will briefly present the texts at stake (§ 2), before evoking the question of bilingualism in the Middle Ages (§ 3). A third section is dedicated to the autograph manuscript, which shows the author at work, his reading and re-reading of the source texts and of his translation (§ 4) and which allows us to look into some case studies of Evrart’s hesitations and struggle while translating Aristotle (§ 5), before drawing some conclusions.

2 The Problemata physica and their Translations

The pseudo-aristotelian Problemata physica is a Greek treatise composed partly by Aristotle himself, and partly by his students and suc-

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1 We have already presented those texts extensively in previous publications. For more details, see e.g. Goyens, De Leemans 2004; De Leemans, Goyens 2005; Guichard-Tesson, Goyens 2009.
cessors. It is a colourful collection of ‘problems’ on diverse themes, such as medicine, music, meteorology, gardening etc., all themes that interested the medieval scholar, yet at least one third of the treatise is dedicated to medical problems.2

The treatise is divided into 38 sections, and each problem has systematically the following structure: first the author asks a question “Why is it that...?”, which is followed by an answer “It is because...”.

During the Middle Ages, the Greek text has been translated a first time into Latin by Bartholomew of Messina, ca. 1260.3 Half a century later (1310), Pietro de Abano added a commentary to that translation.4 At the end of the fourteenth century, ca. 1380, the French king’s physician Evrart de Conty translated both Bartholomew’s translation and Pietro’s commentary into Middle French. It is this translation that will be at the centre of this contribution, and that my colleague Françoise Guichard-Tesson and I are editing.5

It might be important to stress that in Evrart’s translation, each problem is divided into two parts, a Texte and a Glose. Roughly speaking, the Texte translates Bartholomew’s translation, and the Glose Pietro’s commentary, but it is somewhat less simple than that: the Texte already includes wordings of Pietro’s comments, and the Glose translates Pietro’s commentary in a freer way, since Evrart often does not respect the structure of his source and adds his own reflections to the text.6

In order to understand what happens when we see Evrart’s hesitations in his autograph manuscript, let us first look into the situation of bilingualism in the medieval translation context.

2 The Greek text has been edited among others by Louis 1991-94.
3 The translation by Bartholomew of Messina has not yet been the object of a critical edition as a whole; only specific fragments have been edited: the first section is edited in the Aristoteles Latinus Database (ALD) in a semi-critical way by Dévière (see also Dévière 2009), as well as by Seligsohn 1934 and Marenghi 1966; Gijs Coucke’s edition of section IV is included in his doctoral dissertation (Coucke 2008, vol. 1). Bartholomew’s translation is transmitted in more than 50 manuscripts, of which one of the most important seems to be MS PATAVINUS, Bibl. Antoniana, Scaff. XVII, 370 (fourteenth century).
4 The commentary has not been edited in its entirety either, apart from certain fragments. The prologue was edited by Pieter De Leemans (De Leemans 2016); section IV by Coucke (2008, vol. 2), section VII by Delaurenti (unpublished transcription); section XXXII in the unpublished master thesis by Devriese 2013, 76-101. The manuscript tradition of Pietro’s commentary is complex; see Coucke 2008, 2: xxxi-xlvi. However, there are four manuscripts containing Bartholomew’s translation as well as Pietro’s commentary.
5 The edition of the whole of the text is the project of a team of researchers, under our supervision. Françoise Guichard-Tesson and I are completing the edition of the first section, which will also present an extensive introduction on the author, the manuscripts, the text genre, the methodology of editing an autograph, etc.
6 For a detailed study of this matter, see De Leemans, Goyens 2007.
3 The Medieval Translator and the Question of Bilingualism

In her PhD dissertation, Van Tricht discusses the issue of bilingualism in a medieval translation context. When we want to understand how translators work, it is important to comprehend the linguistic situation in the medieval period. In France, there was not yet a standardised language, and different dialects were at stake, among others the king’s dialect, *françois*, which became later on the standard language. But for religious, legal or scientific matters, Latin, the learned language, was used. Medieval translators were in a plurilingual situation, a dialect being their mother tongue, and Latin being their second language, acquired during their studies, since they learned to read and write in Latin and later on studied at the university in Latin. Their second language is thus rather predominant in a specific domain.

In modern times, the situation of plurilingualism, and more specifically of bilingualism, can be summarised in the following diagram:

![Diagram](image)

*Figure 1 Revised Hierarchical Model. Van Tricht 2015a, 163; 2015b, 56 and Kroll, Stewart 1994*

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7 What follows is drawn from Van Tricht 2015a and 2015b.
8 See, for instance, Ouy 1986.
As the model shows, in a translator, who usually translates from a foreign language towards his/her mother tongue, the lexicon is more developed in his/her first language (L1, represented by the larger circle), and there is a stronger association between the conceptual level and his/her first language (represented by the thick line between L1 and C), more so than is the case for his/her second language. If there are interferences between those languages, they will go from L1 towards L2, and not the other way around, as has been shown in research on that matter.⁹

But what happens during the Middle Ages? One has to take into account the sociolinguistic reality of the time. In the case of Evrart de Conty, we see a cleric who learned to read and write in Latin, and who studied medicine at the university in Latin. So his first language in the medical domain is Latin, and not his mother tongue. When he translates a Latin text such as the *Problemata*, and more specifically medical issues, the situation becomes quite complex: while translating towards his mother tongue, specific medical terminology for instance will be more elaborated for him in his second language, Latin; we could summarise this by adapting figure 1 in the following way:

![Figure 2](image.png)

Figure 2  Adaptation of Kroll, Stewart’s (1994) Revised Hierarchical Model to the domain of medieval medicine, cf. Van Tricht 2015a, 183; Van Tricht 2015b, 56

So what happens here is that, for a specific domain, the lexicon of the second language is more developed, and the relation with C stronger with L2, than is the case for the mother tongue, and that L2 influences L1 now, and not the other way around.

⁹ Among others, Costa, Santesteban 2004; Van Tricht 2015b, 54.
We can see this happening while Evrart is translating. In a study I made with Elisabeth Dévière, where the medical terminology of Bartholomew of Messina, for the first section of the *Problemata*, was screened for borrowings from Greek, the language used in Bartholomew’s source text, we found 28 borrowings from Greek in the Latin translation. Those borrowings were already in use in contemporary medical texts. These words were, in their turn, translated by Evrart into French by borrowings from Latin in 25 cases, 5 of them being neologisms attested for the first time in Evrart’s text. Let me give just two examples. The Greek term ἀποπληξία (*apoplexy*) was translated by Bartholomew with the Latin *apoplexia*, a borrowing from Greek; Evrart used the French borrowing *apoplexie* in his text, already attested in French medical texts before his translation. Another example is the Greek καύσους, referring to a burning fever, translated in Bartholomew’s text with *causon* and the derivative *causonides*, and in the French translation by *causon* and the neologism (*fievres*) *causonides*. In other words, borrowings from Greek into Latin can lead to borrowings of the borrowings in the French medical terminology.

We observed that both translators tried to develop translation strategies that allowed them to stay close to the contemporary terminology, trying to avoid neologisms as much as possible, but when they had to coin new words, they integrated them in the best way they could into the phonological and morphological systems of their respective goal language.

In order to see how the translator works, the autograph manuscript can play an important role, revealing quite some interesting hesitations and corrections during the translation process.

4 **An Autograph Manuscript: The Author/Translator at Work**

Evrart’s text is transmitted in about 8 complete manuscripts, one of which is nowadays considered to be an autograph. Ms Paris BnF fr. 24281-24282 counts about 500 folios, distributed over 2 volumes. There are also 7 complete and 2 incomplete copies that are still preserved up until today.  

Gilbert Ouy characterised this manuscript as a “brouillon du second jet”, a ‘second draft’ of the text, implying a re-reading by the translator of a first version of his text. Figure 3 shows clearly why: the text is already quite definitive, but there are still some corrections and additions made to the text, as can be seen in the right and left margins where text is added, and corrections are made even in...
Figure 3  Pseudo-Aristotle. *Problemata*. Evrart de Conty’s Middle-French translation. MS Paris BnF fr. 24281, f. 17a
the added passages. In the entire manuscript, there is hardly a page that does not contain erasures, corrections or additions, going from a single erased letter, correcting a careless mistake, to a cut folio, or a replaced one. It shows the author at work: adding, cutting out, correcting letters, words, phrases or sentences.

Medieval autograph manuscripts are rather rarely preserved. Some examples are those by Jean Miélot, Christine de Pizan, and of course Evrart de Conty. Delsaux shows that there are different types of autograph manuscripts to be discerned in that period, and the one made by Evrart de Conty is a “manuscrit de composition”, where the author composes and writes his own text.12 In the catalogue established by Delsaux and Van Hemelryck, this manuscript is classified as entirely transcribed by the author.13

Of course, an autograph manuscript is interesting from several points of view. It allows to study certain characteristics of the author’s language with respect to spelling, morphology or syntax, and to detect the stages in a translator’s work. Without going into details, we can observe the high quality of grammatical spelling on behalf of the author, who pays much attention to noun declension in a period where it was already largely abandoned, agreement of verbs and adjectives etc., of which erased or added letters are testimonies.

We could mention here the interesting case of the nasal consonant n or m before the bilabials m, b or p. When Evrart does not shorten the word, thus when he does not use the tilde to abbreviate the nasal consonant, he usually writes n, as in the following cases: corrunpent (A1 f. 246b9),15 enpaindre (A2 f. 19a10, 19a55),16 enpeesche (A1 f. 30b25),17 impossible (A1 f. 148a27), impression (A2 f. 13b8). In the same way, we find n before m in most of the cases:18 poissanment (A1 f. 34b47), evidentment (A1 f. 247b39, A2 f. 5a31), souffissanment (A1 f. 17b16, 149b55, A2 f. 15b42, 19b6, 183a20, 186b51), granment (A2 f. 194a31). In the examined sections, we found only one occurrence of mm in enflammee (A1 f. 16a41).

An autograph manuscript also allows interesting insights in the chronology of the corrections. We can discern three layers of correc-

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12 Delsaux 2013.
14 See the study made on these aspects by Guichard-Tesson 1993.
15 We refer to the autograph manuscript in the following way: A1 and A2 refer to the first (ms 24281) and the second volume (ms 24282) respectively, followed by the folio number, recto (a) or verso (b), and the line number on the page.
16 But we also find empaindre (A2 f. 15b49, 16a25, 19a27, 19b21).
17 We also found once mp in empeeschie (A1 f. 30b26).
18 This usage was verified systematically on the following sections: I, VIII, IX (probl. 1-5), XV (probl. 1-5), XVI, XX (probl. 1-6), XXX (1-12), which is almost 20% of the text.
tions in Evrart’s work: a first layer is the immediate correction of the text, while the author is copying or composing it; an example of this is found in A1, ff. 112b-113a, where we see that, while he was already writing the text of a new problem, he realised that he forgot a part of the *Glose* at the end of a former problem, which he adds at the bottom of the page and the beginning of the following page; he uses different symbols, like a clover or a square, to indicate where to put the addition. Other corrections reveal an immediate proofreading, when words are erased and replaced by another on the same line, in the margins or between the lines. A third layer of corrections are written with ink of a different colour, and are thus made during a subsequent revision.\(^{19}\)

We find different types of corrections in the manuscript. First of all, some manifest errors, like words repeated by accident, or confusions, or typical mis-reading and copying errors, but also corrections made for stylistic reasons, or allowing the text to be more comprehensible for his audience.

Yet some other interventions are highly interesting from a linguistic and a translational point of view. In what follows, corrections that reveal hesitations with respect to the choice of certain words or the translation of specific concepts will be examined more closely.

### 5 Translating Aristotle: Some Case Studies of Evrart’s Attempts

The study of the autograph manuscript gives us indeed the possibility to see the author at work, reading and interpreting a source text. His erasures, additions and corrections sometimes disclose interesting hesitations with respect to the choice of certain connectives or determiners, or the translation of specific scientific concepts, showing an author and translator that weighs his words while rendering the ideas of Aristotle, the *grand philosophe*.

Let us first examine a case where the semantics of connectives are at stake, such as the hesitation between *car* and *pource que*. The following passage is situated at the beginning of the text, the prologue, and is thus not a translated sentence. It shows the hesitation between *pource que* (because), and *car* (because, for):

La seconde cause poet estre pour ce que les choses medicinauls nous sont plus evidentes et mieus congneües quant on y entent, *pource que* *car* nous nous congnissons mieus que les autres choses.

(I, prologue; A1, f. 1a)

\(^{19}\) For illustrations of these types of correction, see Guichard-Tesson, Goyens 2009, 178-82, ill. 5-7.
The second cause might be because the medical things are more obvious and better known to us, if one tries to understand, because we know ourselves better than any other thing.20

The semantic difference between the two connectives is subtle: they are both used to express a causative relation, but car, originating from Latin quare (that is why), usually justifies a preceding assertion; the sentence introduced by car in the preceding example seems indeed to justify what the translator just declared. On the other hand, in the first part of the sentence, the author already used the connective pource que, so it is possible that he wanted to avoid a repetition. A second example is found in a translated part, at the end of the Texte, a passage that translates Bartholomew’s text; this time, the connective car is replaced by pource que written between the lines:

Pource conclut Aristotes après que li vomites waulroit mieux en cest cas que la sueur, car pource que li vomites purge mieux les grosses humidités visqueuses que la sueur ne fait. (II, 22, Texte; A1, f. 69b)

This is why Aristotle concludes afterwards that vomiting is more profiting in this case than sweat, for because vomiting purges the thick viscous humidities better than sweat would do.

In Bartholomew’s translation, the connective corresponding to pource que is propter quod (because of):

[A mplius viscosum glutissimum cum humidum quidem expellitur; propter commixtionem, cum spiritu autem non potest, maxime autem hoc est quod ledit] propter quod et vomitus sudoribus alleviant magis. (Problemata Physica, incunabulum Mantua, 1475, f. 41a)

We know that Pietro’s comment is often a source of inspiration also for the part Texte, and there, we find, interestingly, quare. Yet, in this example, the sentence introduced by the connective pource que in Evrart’s text is a real explanation, and not a justification of a preceding assertion; in Pietro’s comment however, this explanation precedes the assertion that vomiting is more profiting than sweat, so quare is perfectly suitable for that context:

sicut etenim vomitus fortior est purgatio quam sudor, ita purgat humores grossiores, quare merito magis iuvant vomitus quam sudoribus (Pietro de Abano, Expositio Problematum, incunabulum Mantua, 1475)
In the following example, the translator’s intervention in an added comment reveals a more accurate vocabulary:

Et devons savoir que par l’air, en ceste partie, ne doit pas tant seulement estre entendus li airs qui *est entour nous* nous avironne sans moyen, mais ausy toutes les aultres choses qui sont entour nous. (I, 1, Glose; A1, f. 6a)

And we have to know that by air, in this section, we should not only understand the air *that is around us* surrounds us without intermediate, but also all the other things that are around us.

The wording *est entour nous* is erased and followed, on the same line, by the more compact verb phrase *nous avironne*; it is thus an immediate correction, and probably not influenced by the phrase *qui sont entour nous* at the end of the sentence. A more accurate phrasing is also at stake in the following translated passage; it concerns a problem dealing with the question why a dry and cold summer and autumn is profitable to women and phlegmatic persons:

> et c’est voir, ce dit Aristotes, s’il n’y ha erreur en lor gouvernement par lorerreur et defaute me euls meismes et par lor coupe. (I, 11, Texte, A1 f. 18b)

And it is true, Aristotle says, if there is no mistake in their regime, due to themselves or their fault.

Bartholomew’s text reads:

> nisi per se peccaverint. (Problemata Physica, incunabulum Mantua 1475)

The erased part, *lor erreur et defaute*, repeats *erreur* (error) found earlier in the sentence and adds *defaute*, which means ‘fault’, but also ‘privation, shortage’. In the Latin translation by Bartholomew, we find the verb *peccare* (to make a fault, to sin). In Pietro’s comment, we find the substantive *peccatum*. The French word *coupe*, which obviously replaces the erased nouns, implies the responsibility that comes with a fault that is made, and carries also the connotation of sin. The correction made by Evrart leads him to a translation that is semantically more accurate, and closer to the source text.

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A fourth example regards the translation of a nominal phrase. In the following passage, Evrart first translates the Latin phrase *ex vapore viscoso fumoso* in Pietro’s commentary quite literally with *de une vapeur fumuse et visqueuse*; however, he erases it and replaces it by *de matere moiste et vaporeuse*:

Et pource veons nous, en ciauls qui sont de seche complexion et froide et en l’aaige qui a ce se acorde, que nul cevel ne vienent ne ne s’engendrent se trop poy non, qui est significations que li cevel sont engendré de *une vapeur fumeuse et visqueuse matere moiste et vaporeuse*. Et de ce dit Avicennes que li cevel sont engendré *de une vapeur fumeuse et visqueuse* quant elle se coagule et endurcist es pores de la teste. (I, 16, *Glose*; A1, f. 25a-b)

And that is why we see, in those who are of dry and cold complexion and of an age that is in accordance with it, that no hair is generated, or just a small amount, which means that hair is generated by a *smoky and viscous vapor* *moist and vaporous matter*. And of this, Avicenna says that hair is generated by a *smoky and viscous vapor* when it coagulates and hardens in the head’s pores.

The corresponding passage of Pietro’s commentary reads as follows:

*quoniam in siccis complexionibus et etatibus et frigidis vehementer aut minime aut pauci nascuntur. Unde Avicenna [...] capillus nascitur *ex vapore viscoso fumoso* quando congelatur in poris.* (Pietro de Abano, *Expositio Problematum*, incunabulum Mantua, 1475)

So the first time Evrart uses the expression, which he replaces immediately by another wording, is in a sentence that he manifestly adds: “qui est significations que li cevel sont engendré de matere moiste et vaporeuse”, a sentence that actually already encroaches upon the following one, translated from the source text where Pietro uses the expression *vapore viscoso fumoso*. In the added sentence, while first literally translating Pietro’s expression, Evrart realises that he would have to use the same expression in the next phrase, so he chooses another wording, viz. the generic term *matere* (matter, substance), accompanied by the adjectives *moiste* (humid) and *vapeureuse* (vaporous), which could be considered as (almost) synonymous with respect to *vapeur fumeuse et visqueuse* in the following sentence, but this rephrasing is lacking the feature of viscosity. The adjective *visqueux* refers to the liquidity of a substance, a feature also present in the adjective *moiste* used the first time, but adds the feature of viscosity.

A rather complex yet intriguing case is one of the corrections found in problem 9 of the first section, in the part *Glose*. Figure 4 is an en-
largement of f. A1, 17a given in figure 3, and shows the passage that will be analysed.

It regards the multiple corrections marked in read on the folio. This text section concerns the influence of the weather on health, and specifically on what happens to unborn children, or newborns. If springtime is cold and dry, it has a bad influence on the foetus, and there is a risk of a miscarriage. If the child is born alive, he will be weak and imperfect because of the cold. But it might happen that he survives, during this cold and dry springtime.

The final version of Evrart’s text reads as follows:  

\[ \text{as if he wanted to say that this contained dampness softens and loosens the cords of the child and separates them from the womb, thus leading to a miscarriage. And if they are born alive, he says, they will be weak and imperfect because of the overabundant cold. However, he says, it can happen sometimes that they may survive in this calm weather and be fed, this is to say in this cold and dry spring time.} \]

This passage contains five stages of correction. First, Evrart writes a sentence which he does not seem to like: \textit{Et briefment dit il c’est aventure qu’il puissent} (and briefly, he says, it may be that they may); he erases it and replaces it in the left margin by another wording \textit{Toutefois combien qu’il puist} (However, although he may), which he still does not like, so he erases also the addition:

\[ \text{The sentence that has been subject to multiple corrections is in italics.} \]
Toutefois dit il il poet bien avenir aucune fois aussi que s’il volsist dire que c’est aussi que une aventure (However he says it may happen sometimes as if he wanted to say that it is by chance), partly above the erasure, partly below:

... seront il feble et imparfait pour le superhabondant froidure. Et briefmement dit il c’est aventure qu’il puissent

However, he does not like this hesitation (aussi que s’il volsist dire que c’est aussi que une aventure) either, so he erases it and replaces it by writing poeent bien (may well) between the lines of the text, in the centre of the line, and then continues his sentence:

... seront il feble et imparfait pour le superhabondant froidure. poeent bien en tel serenité de tans et estre nourri, c’est a dire en tel prin tans froit et sec.

While making all these corrections, he forgets the conjunction and pronoun qu’il that is necessary to link the subordinate clause to the main clause, which has been added by the copyists in the copies that were made of the autograph.

So we see that the translator-commentator really struggles with the part where he has inserted lots of modalities: “it may happen that, sometimes, by chance, they could...”. It is clearly a difficult part of the text, since he writes a line further that “some say that Aristot-le talks about children here” (dient aucun que Aristotes parle cy des enfants...) and also “and it seems that he wants to say...” (et samble qu’il woeille dire). This hesitation does not appear in Pietro’s comment, at least not in the versions I looked at; this is the corresponding passage in Pietro’s text:

Unde facta quadem humidi relaxatione separantur ab eis, propter quod embriones nutrimento privati moriuntur; si debiles extiter-int aut semivivi egrediuntur in aborsum. Si autem fetus non fuerit adeo imbecilis quod predicto egrediatur modo, remanent in vita.
cum multa tamen imbecilitate ratione virtutis et imperfecte quantitatis, si accidat ipsos nasci in huiusmodi vere quia cum forest prius in loco humidio et calido venientes ad frigidum et siccum mutatione maxima mutantur. (Pietro de Abano, *Expositio Problematum*, incunabulum Mantua 1475)

Therefore, because of a certain fact, contained dampness, by softening [the embryos], loosens the cords [of the embryos], that is why embryos, deprived from nutrition, die; if they are weak, they will be expelled, or come out half-alive, by way of a miscarriage. If however the fetus is not weak to the point that he would be expelled in the declared way, he stays alive with yet a great frailty because of a defective strength and quantity, when it happens that they are born in such a springtime so that they would have come first into a moist and warm place, and are then moved towards a cold and dry one, by way of the largest mutation.

So it seems that Evrart is the one who has doubts about the content of what he reads in Aristotle’s text, and the fact that this autograph manuscript is available allows us to see the author struggling with his interpretation and translation of his source. Of course, there is no certainty regarding the model Evrart had before him, so we cannot rule out a different version of Pietro’s commentary. Anyway, more research is necessary to point to the exact reasons of these hesitations, in the light of the medical context of the time.

### 6 Some Conclusions

In this article, I wanted to show the opportunities offered by an autograph manuscript with respect to the study of the transmission of ideas, and the translation of classical authorities into a medieval context. While editing Evrart’s *Livre des problemes*, there are quite some challenges, especially for the cases where we see the author struggling with his translation. These are interesting passages, that need to be offered to the scientific community in order to be researched more thoroughly, also in the light of the specific situation of bilingualism in the medieval context, and that reveal how an author, as a reader, struggles with the precise interpretation and translation of a source text.

In the edition Françoise Guichard-Tesson and I are preparing and that will be published in a printed version, these stages of the work appear via a thorough description of the process. Gilbert Ouy and Ezio Ornato developed a model, in the late 1980s, that allowed them

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to visualise different subsequent autograph manuscripts of a Latin treatise by Jean de Montreuil, making use of different fonts, font sizes and symbols that indicate the stage of the alteration of the text, each stage corresponding to a different autograph manuscript. Unfortunately, this model was too complex for Evrart de Conty’s manuscript, since it is not always possible to indicate the exact stage of a correction, all the alterations appearing within the same manuscript.

In our printed edition, the corrections will be described in the critical apparatus. The last case analysed earlier will thus be presented in the following way: the edited text itself presents the final version, while in the critical apparatus the interventions of the author are explained; this is shown in the next extract:

... seront il feble et imparfait pour le superhabondant froidure. Toutefois, dit il, il poet bien avenir aucune fois qu’il poeent bien1 vivre en tel serenité de tans et estre nourri, c’est a dire en tel prin tans froit et sec.

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[1] Passage avec couches de corrections successives. Et briefment dit il c’est aventure qu’il puissent raturé après froidure et remplacé en m.g. avec indication de position, par toutefois combien qu’il puist, raturé à son tour et remplacé au-dessus par toutefois dit il il poet. Suite de la phrase (toutefois dit il il poet) bien avenir aucune fois ausi que s’il volsist dire que c’est ausi que une aventure, en m.g. Ensuite, aussi que s’il volsist dire que c’est ausi que une aventure raturé après fois, toujours en m.g. Dans le texte même, poeent bien suscrit au-dessus de qu’il puissent raturé; qu’il raturé, mais nécessaire au sens.

Text passage with several layers of corrections. Et briefment dit il c’est aventure qu’il puissent erased after froidure and replaced in the left margin with indication of position, by toutefois combien qu’il puist, that is also erased and replaced above by toutefois dit il il poet. Continuation of the sentence (toutefois dit il il poet) bien avenir aucune fois ausi que s’il volsist dire que c’est ausi que une aventure, in the left margin. Then, ausi que s’il volsist dire que c’est ausi que une aventure erased after fois, still in the left margin. In the text itself poeent bien written above qu’il puissent that is erased; qu’il erased, although necessary for the meaning

When we want to show the different stages of Evrart’s work, the printed version of the edition does not leave much room for visualisation; we did our best to capture the evolution of his work within the context of the printed edition. So next to the printed edition, a
web-version offering more possibilities that may lead to a better understanding of what is going on in the mind of our author-translator, would be interesting. Let us look into one possible web-based presentation, on the basis of the same passage, making the subsequent stages of the corrections visible:  

This type of visualisation may lead to a better understanding of what is going on in the mind of our author-translator: the physician Evrart de Conty, reading, translating and commenting a scientific treatise of the ‘great philosopher’ Aristotle, whom he admires and wants to respect in the best possible way. But sometimes, he is confronted with difficulties, because of a Latin source text that might have been al-

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I was inspired, amongst others, by *The Samuel Beckett Digital Manuscript Project*, developed at the Centre for Manuscript Genetics of the University of Antwerp, directed by Dirk Van Hulle and Mark Nixon; see [https://www.beckettarchive.org/](https://www.beckettarchive.org/).
tered by succeeding copies, as he states more than once, and because of his aim to render a text that is comprehensible for his audience. The edition of his commented translation should do justice to an author that is scrupulous and eager to instruct his audience.

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Maqriziana XVI: al-Maqrîzî as a Reader

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Abstract This article aims at analysing notes left by the renowned Mamlûk historian al-Maqrîzî (d. 845/1442) in dozens of manuscripts representing sixteen works. Two categories of notes are considered: consultation notes and marginalia. Al-Maqrîzî’s consultation notes, dated or datable over a period spanning some fifty years, allow us to demonstrate which texts he accessed, when he consulted them, what his reading practices were and from whom he borrowed the books. Thanks to his marginalia, which consist of corrections, additions, and emotional notes, it is also possible to shed light on al-Maqrîzî’s assessment of the work of some authors.


Summary 1 Introduction. – 2 Al-Maqrîzî as a Reader. – 3 Methodological Issues. – 4 Al-Maqrîzî’s Library. – 5 Borrowing Books.– 6 Libido Marginalium. – 7 Conclusion.

1 Introduction

Studies devoted to the history of reading have flourished during the last three decades, shedding light on readers and reading practices over various periods since Antiquity. In the Islamic context, with the exception of Gregor Schoeler’s book that addressed, en passant,

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some issues linked to the transmission of books in the first centuries,\textsuperscript{2} we only have Hirschler’s study to establish an overview of some of the questions related to reading in the medieval period.\textsuperscript{3} Though this work greatly improved our knowledge of collective reading practices, whole topics remain understudied, especially with regard to individual reading practices.\textsuperscript{4} One of the reasons for this lacuna lies in the nature of the material: these practices are seldom described in books, rather we must focus on the materiality of reading. This materiality includes ownership marks stating that a book was in the library of a scholar, consultation notes attesting that a given scholar read and took notes from a book, and marginal annotations and other means by which readers altered the text (corrections, cancellations, underscores etc.). All these elements, which Gérard Genette (in the 1980s) broadly defined as ‘paratexts’, provide invaluable information on the reader’s interaction with the book. These elements imply that thousands of manuscripts are read and a scholar’s hand is known: a note signed by a scholar does not necessarily attest that this is really his handwriting and must be confirmed through a palaeographical analysis and a comparison with other samples of his handwriting. Once these impediments are overcome, paratextual marks related to reading provide their fair share of data by which we can study the reading techniques of a given scholar, and thus better approach readers that are made of flesh and bones, as stressed by Houari Touati.\textsuperscript{5} While scholars interested in reading practices in Europe, more particularly for Renaissance and Modern English books,\textsuperscript{6} have paid a lot of attention to marginalia, Islamic manuscripts and printed books have barely been studied from this point of view.\textsuperscript{7} Their collection and analysis will enable a new chapter of the history of reading in Islam to be written, but not exclusively. In fact, reading is often linked to writing: authors are also readers who need sources on which to build their own works. Thus, the traces they left in books offer insight into their interest in a text and marginalia help us better understand their assessment of the text. Moreover, the notes they took while reading that they used to create their own works provide us with invaluable infor-

\textsuperscript{1} For Ancient Greece and Rome, see more recently Johnson, Parker 2009; for the Middle Ages and Renaissance, Moulton 2004; for the modern period, see more particularly Chartier 1995 as well as Robert Darnton’s works.
\textsuperscript{2} Schoeler 2006.
\textsuperscript{3} Hirschler 2012.
\textsuperscript{4} For a first attempt regarding the Ottoman period, see Hitzel 1999.
\textsuperscript{5} Touati 2007, 12.
\textsuperscript{6} See Jackson 2001; Sherman 2008. For a recent similar approach regarding manuscripts from early medieval Europe, see Teeuwen, van Renswoude 2017.
\textsuperscript{7} For an early study that lacks any analytical perspective, see Fu’ād Sayyid 1999.
mation on the history and the process of writing. Consequently, the study of all the elements that led to the writing of a text (the avant-texte), a field that is deeply embedded in genetic criticism that aims to locate the creative act in its spatial and temporal contexts, is crucial to analyse a scholar’s reading and writing practices.

2 Al-Maqrīzī as a Reader

To address some of the above-mentioned issues, I consider the case of the Egyptian scholar Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī (766-845/1364-1442). One may indeed argue that al-Maqrīzī’s relevance for such a study is not in doubt given his fame, a fame he owed and still owes to his output as a historian. A prolific scholar who authored dozens of volumes covering many aspects of the history of Egypt and its most significant actors from the Islamic conquest to his own time, he represents a case in point: there are many witnesses to his activity that have reached us in his own handwriting (notebooks, summaries, drafts, and fair copies). In total, these works with his handwriting cover more than 5,000 leaves. To produce his works, al-Maqrīzī, who often defined himself as a compiler (ǧāmiʿ), relied on hundreds of books that he found in various libraries, private and public, including his own. Thanks to his methodical practice of leaving his mark in each book he consulted, we know precisely which manuscripts he consulted, provided they have been preserved. The perusal of tens of thousands of manuscripts over the last twenty years has allowed me to collect thirty-nine consultation notes in volumes representing sixteen works (see table 1 and appendix). This number may seem negligible when compared to the quantity of manuscripts that I examined but for a scholar like al-Maqrīzī, who may have consulted several hundreds of volumes, the number of consultation notes identified already corresponds to a good percentage. We must also take into account several losses. Manuscripts that were extant in the ninth/fifteenth century are not necessarily still accessible, as some collections were lost for a wide variety of reasons. In some cases, multi-volume works were dismembered, a phenomenon that further complicates the process of locating the various volumes. Moreover, while I perused tens of thousands of manuscripts, these represent a tiny percentage of the manuscripts held in various libraries around the world. The digitalisation of manuscripts and their accessibility online, a phenomenon that is quickly expanding in Europe and North America, has greatly facilitated research focusing on the history of the book in Islam. Nevertheless, this process has not yet been fully

8 For the modern period, see D’Iorio, Ferrer 2001.
implemented in countries known for their rich collections, like Turkey, Egypt, and Syria. Though libraries in Istanbul offer researchers the possibility of examining digitised versions of their manuscripts, as yet access to these collections is only possible in person. Last but not least, manuscripts that have reached us may have gone through various processes, including obliteration and alteration. Ownership statements and consultation notes may constitute proofs in cases in which a manuscript has been stolen and/or acquired in obscure circumstances. Quite often, leaves where such marks and notes were left (usually the title page and the last leaf, or sometimes leaves that preceded and/or followed them) were altered, damaged, or even removed. In such cases, precious information related to the history of the book is lost. The preceding remarks serve to underline the fact that we may yet discover more notes jotted down by al-Maqrīzī in the manuscripts he consulted, but we are not likely to find significant numbers of them.

3 Methodological Issues

Of course, the identification of a note in al-Maqrīzī’s handwriting may seem like searching for a needle in a haystack. It often results from a stroke of serendipity, though the most advantageous method consists of narrowing the scope by consulting copies of sources that he used to compose his works. Historical works must definitely be prioritised given his output in this field, but he was also active in other fields, like ḥadīṯ, theology, and law, for instance. Thus, we cannot reduce the scope as much as we would hope. Whenever al-Maqrīzī quotes a source and manuscripts of this source are still available, the research can be limited to copies that predate al-Maqrīzī’s death. Unfortunately, al-Maqrīzī was not known for revealing his sources. Serendipity may thus still play a major role in spotting other marks left by al-Maqrīzī.

Besides the laboriousness involved in searching for traces of a particular scholar in manuscripts, identifying his handwriting with a certain level of confidence remains problematic. Even in the case of marks displaying the name of the person who penned them, we must always consider the possibility that these are forgeries. As in every domain in which economic interests may play a role, manuscripts could fetch higher prices when they were said to be in the author’s handwriting, i.e. holographs, or to have been owned by some renowned scholar. In some cases, the production of the forgery may result from a less materialistic impetus: an owner may have reproduced a consultation note by another author, and written it in his own manuscript, or he might have copied an ownership statement found on another copy to document this historical witness. Generally speaking,
forgeries – whatever the underlying reason for their production – can be detected with the help of palaeography. Regrettably, palaeographical studies of scholars’ handwritings in the world of manuscripts in Arabic script are almost nonexistent. Given this, the identification of a scholar’s handwriting relies on one’s experience and knowledge of the handwriting. The more examples of a scholar’s handwriting are available, the greater our level of confidence. Even in the medieval and early modern period, scholars and booksellers were able to recognise a famous scholar’s hand and would indicate their identification. But such identifications of someone’s handwriting may also be misleading for a number of reasons. When a later owner of MS Reisülküttab 862 [fig. 1] spotted an ownership statement signed Ahmad ibn ‘Ali and dated 811/1408-09, he outlined it to emphasise its significance and wrote beneath it a note indicating the alleged identity of the author of the statement: “This is al-Maqrīzī’s handwriting”. While both names and the date fit with al-Maqrīzī’s given names and the period he was active as a scholar, the handwriting differs completely from al-Maqrīzī’s hand as witnessed by thousands of leaves and the thirty-nine consultation notes listed in the appendix and by the detailed palaeographical study I recently carried out. The owner who highlighted the ownership statement was obviously misled in his attempt to recognise the author of this statement. His intention in doing so does not really matter. Ultimately, in his eyes and in the eyes of someone who is not an expert on al-Maqrīzī, the manuscript’s value significantly increased.

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9 On this issue and for a broad outline of what needs to be done, with some examples of leads to be explored, see Bauden, Franssen 2020.
10 For an example regarding al-Maqrīzī, see Bauden 2020a, 164 fn. 98.
12 In Ottoman Turkish: Maqrizinin ńaṭtidir.
13 See Bauden 2020a.
Another ownership statement by the same person [fig. 2] on MS Arabic 3315 at the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin allows us to rule out any link between this Ahmad ibn ‘Alī with al-Maqrizi as, in this specific case, we also find a note of consultation in al-Maqrizi’s hand on the same leaf (see fig. 55). Here, the ownership statement reveals that the book was purchased by Ahmad ibn ‘Alī in 825/1422 in Damascus while al-Maqrizi’s consultation note is dated 824/1421. The palaeographic comparison between the two marks means we can dismiss any link between the two: the hands that penned the marks had nothing in common. Moreover, al-Maqrizi wrote the number five differently from other scholars: he used the digit for four closed by a vertical line (۴) while he used the so-called Persian shape (٤) for the number four. In the ownership statement written by the person called Ahmad ibn ‘Alī, the digit used is the usual one (٥), found widely in Egypt and Syria at that time. These examples demonstrate how cautious one must be in attributing a mark to a given scholar without further palaeographic investigation. Knowledge of the scholar’s life may prove essential too: al-Maqrizi did travel to Damascus and regularly spent several months there between 810/1407 and 815/1412, but after the latter year he stayed in Cairo, only leaving the capital to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca.

The examples considered above show how difficult it is to ascertain the attribution of a specific mark to a scholar when his nisba (his family name broadly defined) is not part of the name. Such cases cannot be regarded as fakes as they were penned by a namesake. Though seldom found in manuscripts, forged ownership statements and consultation notes usually resulting from bad intent should not be overlooked. Deception can be detected in some marks but a mark labelled as a fake can also result from the desire of a later owner or reader to keep a trace of a mark found in the same copy but on a leaf that was damaged or on another copy, as in the case detailed now, which concerns al-Maqrizi.

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14 Min kutub | Ahmad ibn ‘Alī | bi-Dīmašq sanat | 825 (from among Ahmad ibn ‘Alī’s books in the year 825).
15 See respectively figs 32 and 35 for digit 5 and figs 55, 72, and 73 for digit 4.
16 In his catalogue of Arabic manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Library, Arthur Arberry paid heed to the 825 ownership entry, characterising it as being signed by al-Maqrizi without doubt. He did not say anything about the consultation note clearly signed by al-Maqrizi. See Arberry 1955-69, 2: 31.
17 Bauden 2014, 166.
On the title page of the seventh volume of Ibn Ḥaldūn’s (d. 808/1406) magnum opus, al-ʿIbar, a consultation note said to be by al-Maqrīzī states that he took notes from it in the year 833/1429-30 (see [fig. 3]). This note is tricky because this is a formulary that al-Maqrīzī customarily followed in his consultation notes. Though the form of the note looks convincing, two elements are contradictory. First, the handwriting does not compare, even minimally, with al-Maqrīzī’s. Second, it does not make sense that al-Maqrīzī would have taken notes from Ibn Ḥaldūn’s al-ʿIbar at the end of his life (twelve years before his death to be precise). Al-Maqrīzī attended Ibn Ḥaldūn’s teaching sessions in his youth, in the late eighth/fourteenth century, and knew Ibn Ḥaldūn’s work well. It has been argued that Ibn Ḥaldūn’s teaching and œuvre deeply impacted the young al-Maqrīzī and his work, and al-Maqrīzī expressed his admiration for his former master and his books in extravagant terms. As a consequence, should this consultation note be entirely dismissed on these grounds? The case might be more complicated than it seems.

The person who penned the note in question also wrote several marginalia throughout the manuscript, which is dated to the year 796/1394, i.e. during al-Maqrīzī’s lifetime. The same person also covered the leaf that precedes the title page with various notes, including the table of contents of the volume in question. Unfortunately, it is impossible to identify this person, though, from the contents of some notes, it appears that he was writing at the end of the tenth/sixteenth century. The detailed notes clearly point to a scholar – and probably a historian. On f. 3b, the list of contents ends with the following words: min kutub Fatḥ Allāh (from among Fatḥ Allāh’s books). These words clearly appear to be an ownership statement that was apparently copied by our anonymous annotator. As we see below, Fatḥ Allāh was the head of the chancery in Cairo at the beginning of the ninth/fifteenth century and owned a remarkable library: his own-

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18 See below.
19 See Rabbat 2012.
20 See Ito 2021.
21 On f. 5a, the date 985/1577-8 is quoted.
ership statements tally with the one quoted here. This information strengthens the impression that this annotator was indeed copying details found elsewhere and, more probably, on a leaf that preceded the title page.\textsuperscript{22} Thus, the consultation note attributed to al-Maqrīzī should be considered credible, though we should not accept it at face value. The annotator perhaps faced a damaged note – something that justified the replacement of the leaf – and what he thought to be the year 833 could well have been 803, a date that would better fit with al-Maqrīzī’s use of Ibn Ḫaldūn’s work. This example therefore shows how and why copies of notes may still be valuable, though the status of this particular note impairs its significance for our study.\textsuperscript{23}

In most cases, ownership statements and consultation notes are signed by their authors. Thanks to these signatures, such marks can be compared with other similar marks and, whenever possible, with other samples of a scholar’s handwriting (holograph manuscripts, autograph notes). However, autograph notes – usually marginalia – are less frequently signed because the annotator already indicated (on one of its leaves) that he owned or consulted the manuscript. As we saw, such marks may be altered, damaged, or even disappear entirely. In such circumstances, the autograph marginalia can only be spotted by a trained eye. Of course, the attribution must still be confirmed palaeographically. All in all, it appears that studies on reading practices in Islam can only be undertaken with any seriousness in coordination with an exhaustive palaeographical analysis of a given scholar’s handwriting. In the case of al-Maqrīzī, I recently published such an analysis and thus I am in a better position to provide accurate information about his consultation notes and marginalia.

4 Al-Maqrīzī’s Library

Born into a family of scholars, on both his paternal and maternal side, al-Maqrīzī was raised in an intellectual environment and surrounded by books. His maternal grandfather, who played a decisive role in the education of the young al-Maqrīzī, died when the latter was nineteen years old. His father followed him to the grave three years later. Thus, by the age of twenty-two, al-Maqrīzī had lost the two most prominent figures of his childhood and youth. Both his grandfather and his father had personal libraries. Though nothing is known of these libraries, they must have included a few dozen books, as did most private libraries of that period. In the case of his grandfather, at least

\textsuperscript{22} The present leaf (f. 3) is a replacement as it was pasted on a band of paper that appears to be a remnant of the leaf that was cut out.\textsuperscript{23} In fact, it is not listed in the appendix.
one work that has survived is known to be have been in his ownership; this was a volume that al-Maqrīzī consulted two decades after his grandfather’s death. The book then belonged to another person, whom al-Maqrīzī thanked. From this indication, we can understand that the book had been sold by his grandfather, or more probably after his death. As a scholar, al-Maqrīzī also studied various works during his education and afterward, according to the traditional method, i.e., in the presence of a master. As a result, he was granted licenses to transmit such works, of which he may have copied some during the sessions. The works that he transmitted included Kitāb Faḍl al-ḫayl (The merits of horses), a book composed by al-Dimyāṭī (d. 705/1306), and Ibn al-ʿAdīm’s (d. 660/1262) Buḫyat al-ṭalab, a multi-volume history of Aleppo. Both works were later transmitted by al-Maqrīzī himself to another generation of scholars. The transmission could not have been done without al-Maqrīzī possessing a copy.

Beside these books related to his education, al-Maqrīzī collected books that certainly proved useful to fulfill his public duties (he held various positions) and in composing his own books when he started to write. While I retrieved some thirty-nine consultation notes over the last twenty years, it appears that not a single ownership statement has resurfaced. This absence can be explained by two reasons. Either al-Maqrīzī did not adopt a similar approach toward his own books, that is, he decided not to write ownership statements in books that were part of his library, or none of the books that he owned have survived or been found so far. Whatever the case may be, and despite our lack of knowledge about his private library, he left some clues in his own works, and these help us imagine how he built his library and which books were in it.

To procure books, al-Maqrīzī could rely on the book markets in the main cities where he lived and stayed. Cairo was his birthplace and the city where he spent most of his life, though he sojourned several years in Damascus and Mecca, two cities that were considered significant intellectual centres in the Mamlūk realm. In Cairo, the book market was located close to where al-Maqrīzī lived, i.e., in the formerly Fatimid quarter with its main street called Bayn al-Qaṣrayn (lit. ‘between the two palaces’).

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24 See no. 14 in the appendix.
25 The owner from whom al-Maqrīzī borrowed the book, al-Diǧwī, was an old acquaintance: the person in question played a role as a professional witness when the inheritance of al-Maqrīzī’s grandfather was divided between his heirs. It is probably at that time that al-Diǧwī could acquire the book in question. See al-Maqrīzī 2002, 3: 99-100 (no. 985).
26 On these aspects, see Davidson 2020.
ing of a wealthy Damascene scholar (Ibn al-Muğlí, d. 828/1424) whom he visited when he was in the Syrian capital and to whom he paid a call when the latter was in Cairo, states that Ibn al-Muğlí accompanied him during his visits to the book market (ṣūq al-kutub) in Cairo.\footnote{Al-Maqrízī 2002, 2: 469-70 (no. 789).} Such visits imply that al-Maqrízī continually searched for books that might surface in one bookshop or another.

To help him find the objects he sought, al-Maqrízī also resorted to booksellers. One of these, al-Amšāṭī (d. 823/1420), also known as al-Kutubī, i.e. the bookseller, was highly praised by al-Maqrízī, who described him as a man with a high level of expertise in books (‘urifa bī-l-ḥibra al-tāmma fīhā), words that can be interpreted to mean that he was able to recognise collectors’ items and find rarities because of his knowledge of private libraries and their contents.\footnote{Al-Maqrízī 2002, 3: 104 (no. 991).} Al-Maqrízī also discloses that he was a good customer of al-Amšāṭī from whom he bought and sold books.\footnote{Al-Maqrízī 2002, 3: 104 (no. 991).} This last piece of information reveals that al-Maqrízī, like many book owners, parted with some of his books in order to buy new ones.

Apart from these small clues, al-Maqrízī also occasionally reveals that he owned a particular work, as in the following case: “I copied it in this way from Ibn al-Kalbī’s hand in the book Kitāb Nasab al-abnā’ (Lineage of the sons) which is in my possession in his handwriting”.\footnote{Al-Maqrízī 2006, 2: 241 (ḥākaḏā naqaltu-hu min ḫaṭṭ Ibn al-Kalbī fī Kitāb Nasab al-abnā’ la-hu wa-huwa ʿindī bi-ḫaṭṭi-hi). If not otherwise stated, all translations are by the Author.} Al-Maqrízī must have particularly valued this copy, as it was a holograph of a rare text (now considered lost) by an author who died in 204/819 or 206/821.\footnote{Al-Maqrízī 2006, 2: 241 (ḥākaḏā naqaltu-hu min ḫaṭṭ Ibn al-Kalbī fī Kitāb Nasab al-abnā’ la-hu wa-huwa ʿindī bi-ḫaṭṭi-hi). If not otherwise stated, all translations are by the Author.} In some cases, al-Maqrízī also speaks of the books that he received from colleagues, like a collection of poems (dīwān) from his friend and neighbour al-Awhādī (d. 811/1408).\footnote{Al-Maqrízī 2002, 1: 186.}

Nowadays al-Maqrízī is also appreciated for passing on information about numerous works from the Fatimid period, works to which he still had access and many of which are no longer extant. One such work was a book composed by the Fatimid vizier Yaʿqūb ibn Killis (d. 380/991).\footnote{On him and his work, see Walker 2017.} The caliph al-Ẓāhir (r. 411-27/1021-36), who banned all other law books, urged that this compendium dedicated to Ismaillī legal materials (fiqh), together with another work, should be committed to memory. According to al-Maqrízī, the book was organised into chapters, as is usual for legal works, and was one-half the size of al-

\footnotesize

32 Al-Maqrízī 2006, 2: 241 (ḥākaḏā naqaltu-hu min ḫaṭṭ Ibn al-Kalbī fī Kitāb Nasab al-abnā’ la-hu wa-huwa ʿindī bi-ḫaṭṭi-hi). If not otherwise stated, all translations are by the Author.
33 On him and his work, see Sezgin 1967, 268-71.
35 On him and his work, see Walker 2017.
Buḥārī’s (d. 256/870) well-known Ṣaḥīḥ. Al-Maqrīzī was able to provide such material details because, he said, he owned it and read it.36

5 Borrowing Books

If al-Maqrīzī could rely on his personal library and continually sought to acquire new sources from the book market, in some cases he had no choice but to borrow books from private and public libraries. The loaning of books was such a well-established practice in Islam that the issue was considered in legal terms.37 A book deposit could be requested depending on the status of the library. Private owners were allowed, without restrictions, to ask for a fee, although this practice was not always applied. Close relationships between colleagues favoured the exchange of books and their loan for long periods, in some cases even for free. By contrast, the request of a fee was contested in the case of public libraries, particularly those endowed as charitable institutions. Book loans from public libraries were also considered a peril to the integrity of a collection, a situation that drove the founders of endowed institutions, including libraries, to refuse to loan books in any circumstances, even with the payment of a deposit.38 Despite these measures, librarians in charge of endowed libraries were subject to bribery, a situation that led to the dismemberment of collections.39

Whenever al-Maqrīzī borrowed a book, he added a consultation note in it. This practice seems to have been al-Maqrīzī’s standard practice as is confirmed by the number of notes so far identified (thirty-nine) (see table 1). In many respects, such notes represent invaluable sources of information as they offer data on the copy that al-Maqrīzī accessed, his purpose in reading the source, when he read it, at what pace, and how he reacted, as a reader, to some parts of the text. Considered together with the contextual paratexts, these notes also allow us to guess, in some cases, the identity of the lender.

38 See al-Suyūṭī 1958.
### Table 1  Al-Maqrīzī's consultation notes

<table>
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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>City</th>
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<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Date</th>
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What is most surprising in these consultation notes is how methodical and systematic al-Maqrīzī was in registering his access to a particular book: such notes were added on every single volume of a multi-volume work. The contents of these notes vary only slightly over the years, from one work to another, but also from one volume to another in the case of a multi-volume work, and seem to have followed a formulary that al-Maqrīzī maintained over some fifty years. The most frequently used form of note contained: (a) a verb indicating the purpose of the reading; (b) an invocation for the person who loaned the book; (c) al-Maqrīzī’s name, rarely followed by an invocation for himself; (d) the date. I shall now review the various elements.

Each note starts with a verb indicating the purpose of his reading: istafāda (18 notes) or intaqā (19 notes). Sometimes, al-Maqrīzī coupled them with another verb: ṭālaʿa, which means ‘to consult, to read’. In fact, the first two verbs clearly indicate another activity. On one hand, istafāda can be translated as ‘to take advantage of’, and in this specific context, ‘to take notes’. The word fāʿida, belonging to the same root, refers to a useful note. On the other hand, intaqā has the idea of extracting what is useful in the reader’s mind. In rare cases, al-Maqrīzī connected this verb with the word fāʿida, indicating that he excerpted useful notes. Given these slight differences, al-Maqrīzī seems to have used both terms to indicate different processes: summarising a source or excerpting from it. This assumption can be verified thanks to the summaries that have been preserved in al-Maqrīzī’s hand and are found inserted in his notebooks or occupying a full volume. For instance, al-Maqrīzī summarised Ibn ʿAdī’s al-Kāmil based on several volumes of this work now held in Cairo. His consultation notes on several of these volumes are introduced by the verb istafāda. The holograph volume containing his summary is now held in Istanbul; on the title page, al-Maqrīzī characterised it as a muḫtaṣar, i.e. a summary. Yet in one of his notebooks, al-Maqrīzī included excerpts that he made of Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī’s Masālik al-abṣār; his consultation note found in several volumes of this work starts with the verb intaqā. On the basis of the chronological distribution of the consultation notes, we also note that he used the verb istafāda, for the most part, until 807/1404-5; by contrast, he used the verb intaqā over-

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40 As in the case of Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī’s Masālik al-abṣār (see nos. 26-35), a 27-volume work. Ten volumes that once belonged to the same set bear al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note.
41 In the case of the consultation notes found on nos. 36 and 38, the verb is not visible anymore.
42 See no. 25 in the appendix (intaqā min fawāʾiḥ-i-hi).
43 See nos. 1-8 in the appendix.
44 Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Murad Molla 575.
45 On this issue, see Bauden 2008, 73-6 and 83.
whelmingly after that date. Such a variation might indicate a shift in the way al-Maqrīzī read and took notes after a certain period, a shift that corresponded to his activity as a writer: after starting with exhaustive summaries at the beginning of his career, he became more selective in his choices and instead opted for excerpts for his later works.

After indicating the purpose of his reading, al-Maqrīzī systematically proceeded with an invocation of the owner or lender of the book (dāʿīyan li-). The term he used to designate the owner is always mālik while the lender was referred to by the word muʿīr. In just one case, al-Maqrīzī chose a circumlocution (li-man aʿāra-hu, ‘for the one who lent it’).46 The distinction al-Maqrīzī made between owner and lender could be significant, that is, in the case of a lender al-Maqrīzī meant a loan that implied a fee or a deposit. Be that as it may, the name of the owner or the lender is not mentioned. We are left to guess from whom al-Maqrīzī might have borrowed these numerous volumes. To determine this, a contextual study of the other paratextual marks may prove fruitful when such marks are contemporary with al-Maqrīzī’s dated consultation notes. Among the books al-Maqrīzī consulted, some belonged to famous book collectors.

One of these book collectors was certainly Kamāl al-Dīn Ibn al-Bārizī (d. 856/1452) who, with his father Nāṣir al-Dīn (d. 823/1420), occupied the position of head of the chancery on various occasions at the beginning of the ninth/fifteenth century. Both were acquaintances of al-Maqrīzī. Nāṣir al-Dīn donated five hundred of his books to the library attached to al-Muʿayyad Šayḫ’s funerary complex in Cairo.47 The ownership statement identified on the volumes of Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī’s Masālik al-abṣār must have belonged to his son Kamāl al-Dīn, given that they do not bear endowment notes to al-Muʿayyad Šayḫ’s library and the volumes were later acquired by another book collector.48 Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation notes in these volumes are dated 831/1427-28, i.e. a time when Kamāl al-Dīn Ibn al-Bārizī’s career had reached its apex. The quality of his library was renowned in his lifetime, but unfortunately had to be sold on his death to pay his debts.49 The auction fetched over 6,000 dinars, with some volumes selling for 250 dinars. Kamāl al-Dīn Ibn al-Bārizī’s propensity to answer positively to a request from a borrower was proverbial. Moreover, it was known that he did not retrieve his loaned books unless someone else requested them or he needed them personally.50

46 No. 37 in the appendix.
47 See Behrens-Abouseif 2018, 25.
48 See no. 26 in the appendix.
49 Al-Saḥāwī 1934-36, 9: 239.
50 Al-Biqāʿī 1992-93, 1: 190. Dozens of his ownership statements have been identified in the frame of the ELEO project.
Fatḥ Allāh al-Dāʿūdī al-Tabrīzī (d. 816/1413) was another famous bibliophile who was also among al-Maqrīzī’s close circle of acquaintances, as he frequented him for more than thirty years. Fatḥ Allāh was a physician who also headed the state chancery. His library became famous for its many rarities. Indeed, his ownership statements appear on dozens of manuscripts, and among those that were consulted by al-Maqrīzī, I counted no fewer than four volumes representing two different works. For Ibn Waḥšiyya’s al-Filāḥa al-nabatiyya, al-Maqrīzī even modified his standard and simple invocation (dāʿiyan li-) addressed to the owner, opting instead for a more elaborate one to display more overtly his appreciation and gratitude for Fatḥ Allāh.

Besides libraries owned by close friends, al-Maqrīzī was sometimes allowed access to works composed by some of his colleagues. This practice was widespread among authors, even before the fair copy of a work was ready. In the case of al-Maqrīzī, we know that he lent some of his drafts to friends and colleagues. Unsurprisingly, al-Maqrīzī consulted their works too. One of these was a biographical dictionary of Ḥanafi scholars authored by Ibn Duqmāq (d. 809/1407). In this case, al-Maqrīzī’s invocation referred to the lender as the author (ǧāmiʿ), meaning that Ibn Duqmāq loaned al-Maqrīzī the book directly.

Al-Maqrīzī also greatly benefitted from Ibn al-Furāt’s al-Ṭarīq al-wāḍiḥ al-maslūk: he wrote consultation notes in several volumes and also acknowledged the extent to which he took advantage of when referring to the author in the entry he devoted to him in his biographical dictionary of contemporaries.

Last but not least, like his colleagues al-Maqrīzī resorted to endowed libraries. Access to the books in such libraries was not necessarily public in the sense that anyone could consult them, but scholars like al-Maqrīzī managed to gain entry because of their status, fame, and acquaintances. In al-Maqrīzī’s time one such reputable library was located in the Maḥmūdiyya madrasa founded by Maḥmūd al-Ustādār (d. 799/1396). This amir purchased the private library of an Aleppan scholar, a library that was renowned for its high quality books and rare copies. He then endowed some four thousand volumes.

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51 See al-Maqrīzī 2002, 3: 8-17 (no. 899); Behrens-Abouseif 1987.
52 See al-Saḥāwī 1934-36, 6: 166 (ǧamaʿa kutuban nafīsa, ‘he collected rare books’).
53 Collected in the frame of the ELEO project.
54 Nos. 16-18 and 38 in the appendix.
55 Dāʿiyan li-mālīki-hi bi-l-baqāʾ wa-l-ʿizz al-madīd (no. 16); dāʿiyan li-mālīki-hi bi-l-ʿizz al-sarmad wa-l-naʿīm al-madīd (no. 17); dāʿiyan li-mālīki-hi bi-bulūġ al-daraḥat al-ʿulā fi l-ḡazaʾ al-awfā (no. 18).
57 See nos. 12-13 in the appendix.
58 Waqaftu ʿalay-hā ... wa-stafadtu min-hā. See Bauden 2020b, 97 fn. 119.
and placed the library under the supervision of a librarian. There, at the very end of his life al-Maqrīzī borrowed a six-volume set of Ibn Miskawayh’s *Tağārib al-umam*. This loan went against the policy set by the founder of the endowment, according to the note placed on the title page of the first volume.\(^{59}\)

In their standardised form, al-Maqrīzī’s consultation notes featured his name which is usually given as Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī, though in the case of two works, he signed his name without his family name (*nisba*). If al-Maqrīzī avoided mention of his family name, it might have been an expression of the humility of a young scholar.\(^{60}\)

In a very limited number of cases, al-Maqrīzī appended an invocation in his own favour: *latafa Allāh bi-hi* (may God be kind with him).\(^{61}\)

Finally, with the exception of his consultation notes found in two works present in nine volumes, all his notes are dated, sometimes with a precise indication of the month (he did this between the years 805/1403 and 819/1416). Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation notes over a span of fifty years indicate that his scholarly reading was ongoing throughout his life and continued until his very last breath. These notes also provide us with incomparable data as they enable us to establish when al-Maqrīzī accessed a specific source and took notes from it, and, consequently, we can date his summaries and excerpts. Thanks to these details, the reuse of his notes in his own works can also be dated accordingly. Yet the date when he read and made notes from a specific source should not be considered the unique moment he gained access to that source. This was particularly true at the beginning of his career as a young author when his working programme was still limited. When focused on a specific project, al-Maqrīzī did not necessarily pay attention to all the data in a given source. Later, when working on other projects, he may have returned to a work he had previously summarised and, in another reading, extracted specific information. Such a case can be identified in the work of Ibn Saʿīd (d. 685/1286-87).\(^{62}\)

Al-Maqrīzī read *al-Muğrib* entirely\(^{63}\) in 803/1400-1

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\(^{59}\) On this note, see Bauden 2020d, fig. 7 and the translation below the figure.

\(^{60}\) See nos. 1-8 and 39 in the appendix. In both cases, the date is also missing. However, it can be determined for Ibn ʿAdī’s *al-Kāmil* (nos. 1-8), thanks to the summary al-Maqrīzī prepared on the basis of this text which he dated to the first day of the year 795/1392: the reading of the volumes thus took place during the preceding year. The second consultation note (no. 39) is only partly visible now, but it looks very similar to the consultation note found in nos. 1-8. Given the similarity between the formulary and the handwriting (at that time, al-Maqrīzī was in his early thirties), no. 39 might indicate that it should be dated to that period of al-Maqrīzī’s life.

\(^{61}\) Nos. 1-8 (dated 795), 16-17 (dated 806), 39 (undated but see previous note).

\(^{62}\) Nos. 9-11 in the appendix.

\(^{63}\) In his consultation note, he indicated that the work included fifteen volumes (*si-fr*). See no. 9 in the appendix.
but we know that he must have consulted it later because on the title page of the third volume he added a long biography of the author that he extracted from Ibn al-Ḫaṭīb’s *al-Iḥāṭa*, a work we know he only accessed and extracted information from in 808/1405.

The dates that mention the month and concern a multi-volume work also help us analyse al-Maqrīzī’s pace of reading and excerpting information. As demonstrated from several samples, al-Maqrīzī summarised a text while reading it, i.e. he read a portion of text and took note (either *verbatim* or in a slightly modified form) of anything he was interested in. In the case of Ibn Wahšiyya’s *al-Filāḥa al-nabaṭiyya*, al-Maqrīzī managed to consult a copy in five volumes, of which only three are extant (volumes 1, 4, and 5). In his note in the first volume al-Maqrīzī stated that he completed reading and taking excerpts from it in Rabī’ II 806/18 October-15 November 1403. The same process was finished for the last two volumes, in Ǧumādā I 806/16 November-15 December 1403 and Ǧumādā II/16 December-13 January 1404 respectively. Thus, over the course of three months, he was able to read more than one thousand leaves while writing excerpts at the same time. Of course, he did not devote the entire day to reading, particularly in that period of his life when he was still engaged in public life, and filled various positions. Time constraints applied too, as the books had been borrowed and needed to be returned to the owner within a reasonable time limit.

The consultation notes were probably added at the end of the process and thus state that al-Maqrīzī had read and used a specific work on the given date. Otherwise, he would not have indicated, in some cases, the month when he read and excerpted information from them. We can marshal evidence that this was indeed the case by paying attention to some variations thus far not emphasised: instead of starting with the usual above-mentioned verbs (*istafāda*, *intaqā*, and *ṭālaʿa*), two notes are introduced by the verb *anhā*, which means ‘to finish’, and are followed by the nature of the activity (reading, excerpting).

The addition of the consultation notes at the end of the process and the materiality of these notes cannot be overlooked. Until his early forties, al-Maqrīzī favoured a rather ostentatious position on the title page: the notes are predominantly found on the left side of the page,

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64 See no. 9 in the appendix.
65 See no. 20 in the appendix.
66 For the study of this process, see Bauden 2008, 59-67; 2009, 101-9.
67 See nos. 16-18 in the appendix.
68 The total number of leaves in the three extant volumes (respectively 305, 253, and 190) is 748. In his consultation note on the last volume, al-Maqrīzī confirmed that he read the five volumes (no. 18: *anhā-hu muṭālaʿatan wa-ntiqāʾan wa-l-arbaʿa qabla-hu*). For another example, see also nos. 22-4 in the appendix and Bauden 2020b, 96-8.
69 See nos. 16 and 18 in the appendix; respectively *anhā-hu muṭālaʿa atan wa-ntiqāʾa*n.
in the upper left corner or in the centre of the outer margin, depending on the availability of free space. From the year 810/1407-8, he showed a preference for the right side (upper or lower corner, centre of the margin), with his text written parallel to the spine (vertically), as though he wanted to make it less visible. Such a choice impacted the conspicuousness of the notes as the inner margin, less subject to damage than the outer one, is nevertheless the one where the glue used to paste the quires in case of rebinding can overflow and lead to the disappearance of part of the text written near the spine.\textsuperscript{70} The evolution noticed in the placement of his consultation notes cannot be purely accidental as it does not result from a lack of space on the left side. However, any attempt to interpret it remains conjectural.

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation notes also allow us to better understand the competitive context that prevailed between scholars with regard to who was able to gain access to some texts. Even though scholars exchanged information about their findings, the dated notes established that a given scholar read the text in question before anyone else. Such a competition can be detected in several notes left by scholars whom al-Maqrīzī knew personally and sometimes considered friends. Three of these figures passed away before al-Maqrīzī had published any of his renowned works: Ibn al-Furāt (d. 807/1405), Ibn Duqmāq (d. 809/1407), and al-Awḥadī (d. 811/1408). These three authored works – some of which they were not able to finish – in the field of history, including chronicles, and/or biographical dictionaries, and/or topographical compendia, three genres in which al-Maqrīzī later distinguished himself. In the case of al-Awḥadī, we can establish that al-Maqrīzī always followed him, by one or even several years.\textsuperscript{71} This confirms what we already knew: al-Awḥadī had been working on a project dealing with the history of the city of Cairo for a long time, well before al-Maqrīzī wrote his book on the same subject.

\section*{6 Libido Marginalium}

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation notes offer a wealth of information on the texts he read, including which texts he took notes from, when, and from whom he borrowed them. Despite the quantity of data such notes reveal about al-Maqrīzī’s readings, they fail to convey al-Maqrīzī’s opinion of them. To address this issue we would be left in the dark if it were not for the marginal notes that he penned in some of the texts

\textsuperscript{70} This is the reason the first lines of some of his notes are not visible anymore (see nos. 27, 36-8).

\textsuperscript{71} See nos. 10-11, 19 in the appendix.
he read. Marginalia were rarely signed by their annotator\(^72\) and their attributions to a specific reader are even more challenging than the identification of a signed consultation note. Whenever a scholar left a consultation note in the manuscript, his marginalia are easier to compare with it. However, as in the case of al-Maqrīzī,\(^73\) these consultation notes have sometimes disappeared and it is only by perusing the whole manuscript that we can spot marginalia in his hand, and even then it must be confirmed through a palaeographical analysis.

**Table 2**  
al-Maqrīzī’s marginalia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Library</th>
<th>Shelf-mark</th>
<th>Marginalia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī</td>
<td><em>Masālik al-abṣār</em></td>
<td>Istanbul</td>
<td>Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi</td>
<td>Aya Sofya 3416 ff. 11a, 156b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī</td>
<td><em>Masālik al-abṣār</em></td>
<td>Istanbul</td>
<td>Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi</td>
<td>Aya Sofya 3418 ff. 7b, 67a, 71a, 74a, 108b, 149b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī</td>
<td><em>Masālik al-abṣār</em></td>
<td>Istanbul</td>
<td>Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi</td>
<td>Aya Sofya 3432 ff. 114b, 127a, 156b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī</td>
<td><em>Masālik al-abṣār</em></td>
<td>Istanbul</td>
<td>Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi</td>
<td>Laleli 2037 f. 65a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ibn al-Furāt</td>
<td><em>al-Tariq al-wāḥiḥ al-maslūk</em></td>
<td>Vienna</td>
<td>Österreichische Nationalbibliothek</td>
<td>A.F. 122 f. 116a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ibn al-Furāt</td>
<td><em>al-Tariq al-wāḥiḥ al-maslūk</em></td>
<td>Vienna</td>
<td>Österreichische Nationalbibliothek</td>
<td>A.F. 125 ff. 197a, 226b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ibn al-Furāt</td>
<td><em>al-Tariq al-wāḥiḥ al-maslūk</em></td>
<td>Rome</td>
<td>Biblioteca apostolica vaticana</td>
<td>Arabo 726 f. 187a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ibn Saʿīd</td>
<td><em>al-Muʿgrīb</em></td>
<td>Cairo</td>
<td>Dār al-Kutub wa-l-Watāʿiʿq al-Miṣriyya</td>
<td>Tārīḫ mīm 103 (vol. 3) f. 105b*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Al-Nadīm</td>
<td><em>al-Fihrist</em></td>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>Chester Beatty Library</td>
<td>Arabic 3315 ff. 1a, 3b (2 notes)*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Al-Nadīm</td>
<td><em>al-Fihrist</em></td>
<td>Istanbul</td>
<td>Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi</td>
<td>Şehid Ali Paşa 1934 f. 17a (2 notes)*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{i}\) Note edited in Ibn Saʿīd 1970, 249 fn. 2.

\(^{ii}\) Note edited in al-Nadīm 2009, 1/1: 107 (of the introduction).

\(^{iii}\) Note edited in al-Nadīm 2009, 1/1: 10.

\(^{iv}\) Both notes were edited in al-Nadīm 2009, 1/2: 668.

Twenty-one marginalia were identified in ten volumes\(^74\) of four different works (see table 2). Compared with the total number of volumes listed in table 1, table 2 shows that al-Maqrīzī seldom resorted to annotations in the texts and that whenever he did, he limited them to

\(^{72}\) In the case of al-Maqrīzī, he only signed two of his marginalia. See below, fig. 9 and the marginalia in Ibn Saʿīd’s *al-Muʿgrīb*.

\(^{73}\) In two volumes of Ibn al-Furāt’s *al-Tariq al-wāḥiḥ al-maslūk* (see Table 2, nos. 5-6) no consultation notes have been found, even though they contain marginalia in al-Maqrīzī’s hand.

\(^{74}\) In al-Maqrīzī’s time there were nine volumes, given that al-Nadīm’s *al-Fihrist* was in one volume and that it was split into two volumes much later.
four texts: Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī’s *Masālik al-abṣār*, Ibn al-Furāt’s *al-Ṭarīq al-wāḍiḥ al-maslūk*, Ibn Saʿīd’s *al-Muġrib*, and al-Nadīm’s *al-Fihrist*. As we saw, all the books mentioned in table 1 were loaned to al-Maqrīzī. As these books were someone else’s property, he may have been reluctant to alter the text. In fact, in his treatise on the technique of the written transmission of learning, Ibn Ğamāʿa (d. 733/1333) specifically stressed that marginal notes should not be made in borrowed books, with the exception of corrections to the text, and these should only be made with the owner’s permission. Ibn Ğamāʿa recommended that “the blank space (which is found on the pages that contain) the introductory and final formulas of a book should be left blank,” and that “[n]otes may be made in that space, however, if one can be sure that the owner of the book would approve of it”. Despite the prescriptive nature of these recommendations, it seems that readers of borrowed books annotated them whenever they felt the need to do so and these recommendations did not prevent al-Maqrīzī from annotating the four above-mentioned texts whose reading must have triggered some reaction. Two questions thus arise: What was the nature of his irrepressible desire to add notes in a volume that had to be returned to its owner, an impulse that Daniel Ferrer characterised as *libido marginalium*? And *cui bono* (for whose benefit) did he add these notes? In what follows, I address these issues by reviewing al-Maqrīzī’s marginalia according to their nature. Scholars studying marginalia in European printed books from the Renaissance to the Modern period have established various kinds of typologies to which each marginal note, taken broadly as a paratext linked or not to the main text, can be attributed. However, such typologies do not necessarily apply fully to manuscripts, given that most of the scholars who worked on European printed books mostly took into consideration the private libraries of writers. In al-Maqrīzī’s case, the situation is clearly different, as all the books containing his marginalia were not part of his private library, rather they were borrowed. Thus, I divide his marginalia according to the purpose of the annotation: corrections, additions, comments.

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75 Rosenthal 1947, 10.
76 Rosenthal 1947, 10.
78 Regarding the particular case of Dürenmatt, see the more recent work of Wieland 2015. For other schemes formulated by Elaine Whitaker and Carl James Grindley, see Sherman 2008, 16-17.
Corrections

Among all of al-Maqrīzī’s marginalia, I only identified one example of a correction regarding not the contents but the formulation of the sentence. In this case [fig. 4], because the sentence did not make sense, al-Maqrīzī noticed that the copyist of the text had forgotten a word. Instead of reading “ʿAbd al-Ḡanī headed to Isfahan with a pouch of money” (ḫaraǧa ʿAbd al-Ḡanī ilā Iṣbahān wa-maʿa-hu kīs fulūs), al-Maqrīzī indicated in the margin that the last part of the sentence (“with a pouch of money”) read “without” (ṣawābu-hu walaysa maʿahu).79 Al-Maqrīzī inserted the word ṣawābu-hu (that which is correct is...), then clearly indicated where the marginal correction should be placed in the text with a sign pointing in the direction of the outer margin, where the correction is. The sign was inserted after the word ‘Iṣbahān’. As we saw, in his treatise Ibn Ǧamāʿa approved of this kind of correction, which was intended to improve the text. Here, al-Maqrīzī could not help adding the correction given the misinterpretation. For someone who was writing a summary of the text while reading it, this correction must have felt almost compulsory, as it meant he had to temporarily stop reading and write the marginal correction.

Additions

Compared with the correction analysed above, additions were much more frequent and point to another kind of impulse in the reader. We have already seen that on two occasions al-Maqrīzī added the biography of the author on the title page of the text that he read,80 thus helping to contextualise the work. It was also perhaps a way for him to express his gratitude to the book owner from whom he borrowed it by providing interesting information regarding the life of the author. The examples that I review below also show that al-Maqrīzī regarded his additional notes as a means to supplement the text. In most of these cases, he introduced them with an abbreviation clearly indicating their function: the letter ḥāʾ for ḥāšiya, i.e. note, gloss.81

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79 One can see that the copyist hesitated as the word kīs seems to have first been written fa-laysa. The copyist then cancelled the fāʾ but failed to correct the sentence.
80 See nos. 9 and 25 in the appendix.
81 See figs 5-6, 9.
In the following four examples, al-Maqrīzī provided additional information to enrich the text. In fig. 5, the marginal note conveys that the city of Delhi was ruined by Tīmūr Lang, information that the author of the work, Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī (d. 749/1349), could not be aware of, as he died well before Tīmūr Lang’s political career even started [fig. 5]. Given that at this point in the text the author describes the city of Delhi in detail, based on the testimony of an informant, al-Maqrīzī wanted to point out that the description was no longer accurate.

In the next example [fig. 6], Ibn Faḍl al-Allāh al-ʿUmarī’s text gives the biography of a person and states that he taught in various institutions, including the Mosque of the amir Mūsak in the Fatimid quarter of Cairo. In front of this mention, al-Maqrīzī supplies information regarding the mosque in question, stating that it disappeared when it was integrated into the mausoleum of al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn inside his complex in the Bayn al-Qaṣrayn quarter. By the time al-Maqrīzī penned this marginal note, he had already completed the first version of his topography of Cairo where he indeed refers to this event. Thus, the note may be considered a way for al-Maqrīzī to establish his standing in issues linked to the history of Cairo.

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82 Al-Maqrīzī 2013, 2: 500.
83 On the same leaf, he added a marginal note regarding the Ṭaybarsiyā madrasa.
In other cases, the marginal additions may seem trivial. While reading and taking notes from Ibn al-Furât’s chronicle, al-Maqrîzî came across a passage where the author mentions the amir Sayf al-Dîn Šayḫ al-Mâhmûdî. He felt the need to explain that this amir was later known under his regnal title: al-Malik al-Mu‘ayyad [fig. 7a]. Some thirty leaves later, al-Maqrîzî read another passage where the same person was evoked under a slightly different name: Šayḫ ibn Maḥmûd Šâh. This time, he indicated in his marginal note that this person became sultan after the caliph al-Musta‘în [fig. 7b]. Ibn al-Furât died a few years before Šayḫ’s career as a sultan unfolded (r. 815-24/1412-21), but al-Maqrîzî wanted to communicate that the rather obscure amir Ibn al-Furât mentioned was the same one who later became sultan.
This Šayḫ became sultan of Egypt after the caliph al-Musta‘īn. This Šayḫ is al-Malik al-Mu‘ayyad.

Al-Maqrīzī’s desire to supply additional information to the text he was reading can also be detected in the following example [fig. 8]. Here, the author, once again Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, speaks of the famous poet Ibn Dāniyāl (d. 710/1310). It is not really a biography, rather the text details several episodes in which Ibn Dāniyāl’s eloquence was better expressed. In fact, the author does not even mention his full name, limiting himself to his surname (Ibn Dāniyāl). This lack of detail triggered al-Maqrīzī’s desire to add more information about Ibn Dāniyāl’s full pedigree as well as his main profession (as a physician and oculist) and to specify his exact date of death.
Marginal additions also gave al-Maqrīzī the occasion to boast about his own accomplishment as a scholar. When Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī opened his chapter on poets with Imruʾ al-Qays, who lived in the pre-Islamic period, al-Maqrīzī wrote a marginal note [fig. 9] giving an example of his knowledge and demonstrating that he knew that two poets bore the same name Imruʾ al-Qays: the first was the one Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī meant, who lived before the Prophet and whom al-Maqrīzī undoubtedly identified based on the initial words of his most famous poem; and the second one, who was not mentioned by the author, was a Companion of the Prophet and converted to Islam and did not apostatise, but remained firm in his faith even after the Prophet’s death. Al-Maqrīzī further stressed that he had dedicated a booklet (ǧuzʾ) to the namesakes of the pre-Islamic poet and he signed his addition in case future readers wanted to know the identity of the annotator.
Note
Imru’ al-Qays the poet who said “Halt, both of you. Let’s weep…” He is the son of Huğr – with vowel u on the unpointed letter ḥā’ – ibn al-Ḥāriṭ the King ibn Amr ibn Huğr the myrrh eater al-Kindī. He lived about forty years before the birth of the Messenger of God – God bless him and grant him salvation. As for the Companion [of the Prophet], he was Imruʾ al-Qays ibn Amr ibn Muʿāwiyah ibn al-Ḥāriṭ the elder ibn Muʿāwiyah ibn Ṭawr ibn Murtuʾ ibn Kinda al-Kindī. He was sent as an envoy to the Messenger of God – God bless him and grant him salvation – and went back to the land of his people, firm in his faith in Islam.
He did not apostatise with those who did and took part in the battle of Yarmuk. He was also a poet. I compiled a very useful booklet on those named Imruʿ al-Qays. Written by Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī.
Emotional notes

Several of al-Maqrizi’s marginalia can be characterised as notes that were caused by his emotional reaction to what he was reading. In such cases, it seems that al-Maqrizi could not help expressing his disagreement in a marginal note. The first example of this clear exhibition of *libido marginalium* regards Ibn Sa’id’s *al-Muğrib* which al-Maqrizi read and summarised in 803/1400-1. In a passage where Ibn Sa’id talked about Ibn Sūrin, a secretary who was active at the state chancery in the Fatimid period, the author acknowledged that he could not find any details about this person until he consulted the work of another secretary from the same period. Al-Maqrizi expressed his irritation in a colourful way, addressing the author directly, as though he was talking to him – even though Ibn Sa’id was long dead: “May God forgive you!”. Al-Maqrizi was indignant because he knew that Ibn Sa’id had consulted the work of a Fatimid historian, al-Musabbihi – whose work al-Maqrizi also accessed –, where Ibn Sūrin appears on numerous occasions, and he noted this. Al-Maqrizi took the occasion to show the breadth of his knowledge and outlined the major elements of Ibn Sūrin’s life and character. The note ends with a reference to a personal work that al-Maqrizi was currently writing and hoped to soon prepare the fair copy of. He once again signed his marginal note to help the reader identify the author of the annotation, or, more probably, the author of the work-in-progress.  

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84 See no. 19 in the appendix.

85 The work, Ḥulāṣat al-tibr fi aḥbār kuttāb al-sirr, is no longer extant. The fair copy of this work was not yet completed more than ten years later. See Bauden 2017, 216-17.
May God forgive you! This Ibn Sūrīn is renowned and his standing among the secretaries of the Fatimid dynasty is reputed. I know that you copied from al-Musabbiḥī who mentioned Ibn Sūrīn in numerous places in his Kitāb al-kabīr fī aḫbār Miṣr (Great Book on the annals of Egypt). He also quoted a great deal of his compositions. He was Abū Manṣūr Bišr ibn ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Sūrīn, the secretary in charge of the issuance of the decrees. He was a Christian and passed away on 17 Ṣafar 400. He distributed alms in the amount of three hundred dinars each year, pretending that they were an expiation for [his] mention of [God’s] blessing over our lord Muḥammad – God bless him and grant him salvation – at the end of the decrees that he composed. He was a stern zealot in religion. I found several decrees he composed and I have never seen a secretary or a composer more inspired in quoting Qurʾānic verses that fitted the circumstances of what he was writing. I mentioned him in what I am currently writing about those who occupied the positions of composer and of secretary responsible for the issuance of decrees in Egypt. If God wills, He will make possible its completion and enable me to prepare the fair copy. Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī – may God be kind to him – wrote it.

Al-Maqrīzī’s marginalia sometimes also included disparaging comments addressed to the author. When he consulted Ibn al-Furāt’s chronicle, al-Maqrīzī’s eyes fell on a passage in which the author spoke about the mosque of al-Azhar and the Friday sermon there. Al-Maqrīzī showed his disagreement with the author [fig. 10], first by denigrating him (“This is a statement made by someone who has no knowledge at all of the annals of Egypt”), then by exhibiting his overwhelming knowledge.
This is a statement made by someone who has no knowledge at all of the annals of Egypt. In the annals of the Fatimid dynasty, starting after the reign of al-Hākim until it vanished, it is reported that the Friday prayer was never discontinued at the mosque of al-Azhar, except in the days of the sultan Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Yūsuf. [At that time,] the supreme judge, Ṣadr al-Dīn Ibn Dirbās, considered, in accordance with a legal opinion attributed to al-Šāfiʿī, that two sermons could not be held in the same city.

Al-Maqrīzī’s disparagement of the author is even more frequent in Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī’s text. In one passage, the author argues that the Arabic spoken by Andalusis improved after the establishment of the Umayyad Amirate in 138/756 and that the scientific movement developed from that point until it reached the level of their Oriental counterparts. In the following marginal note [fig. 11], placed before the substance of the passage, al-Maqrīzī invoked God’s forgiveness for the author and explained that, despite his readings, the author’s discourse was based on his chauvinism.
Note
May God forgive you when you say “From this moment on they spoke Arabic”. You are well aware from your readings that Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr entered the Maghrib with Arab troops. Then Balǧ entered with Arab troops. This took place well before Abd al-Raḥmān’s arrival. Far from being a secret, these facts are well-known except that your chauvinism led you to [say] that.

In another volume of the same work, al-Maqrīzī continued with his critical comments [fig. 12]. First, he stressed that the author was mistaken in stating that the name of the city of al-Manūfiyya was derived from the Memphis (Manf) of Antiquity. On this occasion, he drew the attention of future readers to his own work; namely, his book on the topography of Cairo. Second, he emphasised that the author was also mistaken about the origin of the name of Banū Naṣr Island. After expounding on the true origin of the name with a profusion of details, he concluded his annotation with a sarcastic comment: “Know, O Saʿd, that this is the way camels are brought to the watering place”. Al-Maqrīzī’s satire can only be understood by someone who has knowledge of the story related to this quotation. The context for the story linked to this quotation can be found in al-Qālī’s (d. 356/967) Ḏayl al-amālī, where al-Qālī explains that it regards the dumbest of the Ar-

Figure 11
A marginal note by al-Maqrīzī in Ibn Fadl Allāh al-ʿUmarī’s Masālik al-abṣār. (Courtesy Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, ms Aya Sofya 3418, f. 7b)
abs. 86 The message could not be clearer: here al-Maqrīzī is showing Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī that he had erred and needed to be put on the right path, i.e. corrected.

Figure 12  Two marginalia by al-Maqrīzī in Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī’s Masālik al-abṣār. (Courtesy Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Aya Sofya 3416, f. 156b)

Note
This is pure imagination. Memphis (Manf), which was the capital of the land of Egypt in Antiquity, is now located on the edge of Giza and known as al-Badrašīn. I have several stories about it in the book Kitāb al-Iʿtibār bi-ḏikr al-ḫiṭaṭ wa-l-āṯār (Reflections on the quarters and monuments).

Note
That which is correct is that the Island of Banū Naṣr takes its name from the Banū Naṣr ibn Muʿāwiya ibn Bakr ibn Hawāzin. This is because the Banū Ḥamās ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿUmar ibn Amr ibn Dahmān ibn Naṣr ibn Muʿāwiya ibn Bakr ibn Hawāzin exerted a mighty power over the land of Egypt and they proliferated such that they occupied the lower part of the country and achieved supremacy over it until the Lawāta, one of the Berber tribes, dominated over them. The Banū Naṣr endured and settled in al-Ǧidār, and they became sedentary in a place known by their name in the middle of the Nile. This is the Island of the Banū Naṣr. Know, O Saʿd, that this is the way camels are brought to the watering place.

86 Al-Qālī 2001, 587 (the full verse reads: awrada-hā Saʿd wa-Saʿd muštamil | mā hakadā tārad yā Saʿd al-ibī).
The above-mentioned authors were not the only ones whom al-Maqrīzī chided; al-Nadīm also bore the brunt of his irritation. The two following marginalia were added by al-Maqrīzī in relation to the same passage [figs 13a-b] where he identified some confusion (taḫlīṭ) in the data given by al-Nadīm about the genealogy of the Ismailis. These illustrate al-Maqrīzī’s desire to correct information that he deemed misleading. Here again, al-Maqrīzī addresses al-Nadīm directly, to show him that he is alone in pretending what he says.

Note
This is confused. The one that you name Saʿīd is [in reality] Ubayd Allāh al-Mahdī, and Abū al-Qāsim is his son whose title was al-Qāʾīm. He came to Egypt with him and went with him to the Maghrib. Thus he is not the one you think he is.

Note
This is once again confused. The one who rebelled against him is Abū Zayd and the name of the one who was Ismāʿīl’s father is none other than Muḥammad – and some say ʿAbd al-Raḥmān. As for [the name] al-Ḥasan, he was not called this way and you are the only one who says otherwise.
The marginalia detailed above allow us to address the questions laid out at the beginning of this section: why and for whom did al-Maqrīzī write these marginalia in books that did not belong to him? A partial answer regarding corrections and additions was given above. In such cases, it seems that al-Maqrīzī wanted to improve the text he was reading and, given that the book was borrowed, he did so for the sake of the book owner and all future readers and owners. Should we brush aside the idea that this was a one-sided transaction? The emotional notes, as we characterised them, demonstrate that another phenomenon is at play. As Heather Jackson notes, “all annotators are readers but not all readers are annotators. Annotators are readers who write”. The combination of both actions – reading and writing – is best expressed by a portmanteau word specifically created to describe the person who is a writer and a reader at the same time: the ‘wreader’. As a consequence, we must consider the relationship that the wreader establishes with the text and, through the text, with its author. As we see, al-Maqrīzī engages in some kind of debate or conversation with the author whom he addresses as ‘you’. Such a debate/conversation can only be fictitious as the authors al-Maqrīzī was talking to were all dead by the time he was reading their texts: these authors could not reply. His – sometimes offensive – comments could not be addressed to the authors directly: rather they constituted for him a kind of reward, as it enables him to have the final word over the authors whose texts he is reading. As some theorists of reading state, “the experience of reading always involves an element of contest or struggle, and an oscillation between surrender and resistance, identification and detachment”. In such circumstances, the reader may be seen as a rival of the author, and as someone who wants to show that he knows better. This characterisation best fits al-Maqrīzī’s marginalia, particularly those that reveal his indignation. Through them, al-Maqrīzī expresses his superior knowledge, something that is proven by his own output about which he does not neglect to boast. These marginalia, taken together with al-Maqrīzī’s consultation notes or, more rarely, with his signature, entail “a degree of self-assertion, if not aggression” that comes with a boomerang effect: his prickly notes, more than his annotations, put al-Maqrīzī in a bad light and the ‘wreader’ al-Maqrīzī has been hoisted by his own petard.

87 Jackson 2001, 90.
88 Wieland 2015, 147.
91 Jackson 2001, 90.
7 Conclusion

While our understanding of collective reading in the medieval period in the Islamic world has greatly improved thanks to the study of the reading certificates (samāʿāt), much work remains to be done to reach a similar level of knowledge about scholars reading books in solitude. A major obstacle – the collection and identification of the marks they left in books that belonged to them or that they borrowed from other owners – is in the process of being overcome thanks to digitalisation and the accessibility of manuscripts in online repositories. Other caveats still remain, like the authentication of a scholar’s handwriting or the decipherment of his notes. When these issues are solved, a scholar’s consultation notes and marginalia provide a wealth of information on his reading interests, his motivations and aims in accessing a given source, his interaction with the text, and his fictitious dialogue with its author. Furthermore, this consideration of notes left by other scholars can help to contextualise some aspects of a reader’s access to books and to recreate the network of book owners from whom he borrowed texts not extant in his own library.

In this case study devoted to al-Maqrīzī, our aim was to demonstrate that a medieval scholar’s consultation notes and marginalia represent an ideal example of how the above-mentioned issues can be approached. Moreover, what I found in some of al-Maqrīzī’s marginalia is only a token of a more general phenomenon that would seem to apply to other authors/readers in other periods and places. Indeed, in writing down his satirical and disparaging comments, al-Maqrīzī was no exception: studies on readers’ marginalia in Renaissance and modern English books show that this phenomenon has already been observed.
Appendix

Detailed List of al-Maqrīzī’s Consultation Notes

1 Cairo, Dār al-Kutub wa-l-Waṭā‘iql al-Miṣriyya, MS Muṣṭalaḥ ḥadīṯ 94


Description This work is a dictionary of some 2,212 persons whose probity and trustworthiness are assessed as transmitters of prophetic traditions; it was composed by ‘Abdallāh ibn ʿAdī ibn ʿAbdallāḥ al-Ǧurǧānī, better known as Ibn al-Qaṭṭān (d. 365/976 or 360/971).

Bibliography Fihrist al-maḫṭūṭāt 1956, 279.

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a, in the upper left corner)

Though the note is not dated, al-Maqrīzī’s access to this manuscript can be dated precisely to the year 794/1392 thanks to the summary he made of Ibn ʿAdī’s text. The holograph of the summary has been preserved and is available at the Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi in Istanbul, MS Murat Molla 575. In the colophon (ff. 216a-b), al-Maqrīzī states that he completed the summary on the first day of the year 795/17 November 1392, implying that he read and took his notes during the previous months:

2 The information regarding the presence of al-Maqrīzī’s notes of consultation in this source (nos. 1-8) is based on the data provided in the following references: Fihrist al-maḫṭūṭāt 1956, 279; Fu’ād Sayyid 2013, 121; and Ibn ʿAdī 2014, 1: 46-9. The discrepancies, contradictions, and inconsistencies in the descriptions of these three references prevent any reconstruction of the volumes without verification of the manuscripts. For instance, Fu’ād Sayyid 2013, 121, mentions the presence of al-Maqrīzī’s notes of consultation on MSS Muṣṭalaḥ ḥadīṭ 94 and 97, though the catalogue of the library, Fihrist al-maḫṭūṭāt 1956, 279, does not mention a shelf mark Muṣṭalaḥ ḥadīṭ 97 for this work. I was only able to check the presence and the text of al-Maqrīzī’s note on MS Muṣṭalaḥ ḥadīṭ 94. Consequently, the information regarding MSS Muṣṭalaḥ ḥadīṭ 54, 95, 96, including the history of the various volumes, must be taken with caution pending further confirmation after examination of the manuscripts.

3 In the preserved version.


5 Sic. This repetition is due to a modification that al-Maqrīzī made by erasing part of the religious invocation in order to modify it, which he did later in life, as it is clear from his handwriting.
History of the Manuscript  It was copied by Naṣr ibn Abī al-Qāsim ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Nahwī al-Iṣkandarī; this first volume was completed in Ṣafar 523/January-February 1129; it was bequeathed as a waqf by the Mamlūk sultan al-Muʿayyad Šayḫ to his mosque at Bāb Zuwayla in Cairo completed in 824/1421.

2 Cairo, Dār al-Kutub wa-l-Waṯāʾiq al-Miṣriyya, MS Muṣṭalaḥ ḥadīṯ 94
Manuscript  Same as no. 1 above. The volume contains biographies starting with the letter sin until the letter tā’. Maġribī script. 213 ff. Part of the same set as no. 1 above.
Description  Same as no. 1 above.
Bibliography  Fihrist al-maḫṭūṭāt 1956, 279.
Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a, in the upper left corner)

History of the Manuscript  Like no. 1.

3 Cairo, Dār al-Kutub wa-l-Waṯāʾiq al-Miṣriyya, MS Muṣṭalaḥ ḥadīṯ 96
Description  Same as no. 1 above.
Bibliography  Fihrist al-maḫṭūṭāt 1956, 279.
Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a)

History of the Manuscript  This copy was made for the library of the Almoravid amir Ibrāhīm ibn Yūsuf ibn Tāshufīn and completed on Ṣafar 523/January-February 1129.

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6 According to the editor of Ibn ʿAdī 2014, 1: 46, the copyist was a student of the Damascene traditionist Ibn ʿAsākir (571/1176). Given the date of the copy (523/1129), this looks highly improbable and it might indicate that the date of the copy was read incorrectly.

7 The document establishing the religious endowment was issued on 4 Jumādā II 823/16 June 1420. See Meinecke 1992, 2: 319.

8 In Fihrist al-kutub 1888-92, 1: 243, the date is Ṣafar 593/December 1296-January 1297. Any of the two dates is problematic as the amir in question is reported to have died in 520/1126 or 515/1121-2.
4 Cairo, Dār al-Kutub wa-l-Waṭāʾiq al-Miṣriyya, MS Muṣṭalḥaḥ ḥadīṯ 54
Manuscript  Same as no. 1 above. The volume contains biographies starting with ʿUṯmān ibn Maqsam and finishing with ʿUtba ibn ʿAlqama. Maġribī script. 139 ff. Part of the same set as no. 3 above.
Description  Same as no. 1 above.
Bibliography  Fihrist al-maḫṭūṭāt 1956, 279.
Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a)

History of the Manuscript  Same as no. 1 above.

5 Cairo, Dār al-Kutub wa-l-Waṭāʾiq al-Miṣriyya, MS Muṣṭalḥaḥ ḥadīṯ 96
Manuscript  Same as no. 1 above. The volume contains biographies starting with ʿAbd al-Raḥīm ibn Zayd and ending with Fiṭr. Maġribī script. 150 ff. Part of the same set as no. 3 above.
Description  Same as no. 1 above.
Bibliography  Fihrist al-maḫṭūṭāt 1956, 279.
Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a)

History of the Manuscript  As no. 3.

6 Cairo, Dār al-Kutub wa-l-Waṭāʾiq al-Miṣriyya, MS Muṣṭalḥaḥ ḥadīṯ 95
Manuscript  Same as no. 1 above. The volume contains biographies starting from Muḥammad ibn Yazīd and ending with Maṭar. 106 ff.
Description  Same as no. 1 above.
Bibliography  Fihrist al-maḫṭūṭāt 1956, 279.
Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a)

History of the Manuscript  It was copied by Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad ibn Muqbil and dated 784/1382.
7  Cairo, Dār al-Kutub wa-l-Waṭā‘īq al-Miṣriyya, MS Muṣṭalḥ ḥadīṯ 96
   Manuscript  Same as no. 1 above. The volume contains biographies starting
               with Mu‘āwiya and ending with Wahb. Maḡribī script. 158 ff. Part of the
               same set as no. 3 above.
   Description  Same as no. 1 above.
   Bibliography  Fihrist al-maḫṭūṭāt 1956, 279.
   Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a)

   استفاد منه داعيا لمالكه أحمد بن علي لطوفه الله به.

   History of the Manuscript  Same as no. 3 above.

8  Cairo, Dār al-Kutub wa-l-Waṭā‘īq al-Miṣriyya, MS Muṣṭalḥ ḥadīṯ 96
   Manuscript  Same as no. 1 above. This is the last volume of the work, it starts
               with the biography of Yaḥyā ibn Muslim. Maḡribī script. 137 ff. Part of the
               same set as no. 3 above.
   Description  Same as no. 1 above.
   Bibliography  Fihrist al-maḫṭūṭāt 1956, 279.
   Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a)

   استفاد منه داعيا لمالكه أحمد بن علي لطوفه الله به.

   History of the Manuscript  Same as no. 3 above.

9  Cairo, Dār al-Kutub wa-l-Waṭā‘īq al-Miṣriyya, MS Tārīḫ mīm 103
   Manuscript  Ibn Sa‘īd, al-Muḡrib bi-ḥulā al-Maḡrib. A composite volume contain-
               ing book 3 (ṣifr) and 4.⁹ Maḡribī script. 142 ff.
   Description  This work was authored by several members of the family of the
               Banū Sa‘īd over a period of some 115 years, but was completed in its present
               state by ‘Alī ibn Mūsā Ibn Sa‘īd al-‘Ansī (d. 685/1286-7). It consists of fifteen
               volumes (ṣifr) covering a geographical area including Egypt (six volumes), North
               Africa (three volumes), and al-Andalus (six volumes). The work mixes geographical
               descriptions of cities with biographical entries of famous persons from the past
               and the present; the whole work is chronologically organised.¹⁰

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⁹ See below no. 10.

¹⁰ On the author and his work, see Cano Ávila 2004. The contents of this volume were published in Ibn
Sa‘īd 1953.
Al-Maqrizi’s consultation note (f. 1a, in the middle of the left half of the upper margin)

طائفة واستفسار: أحمد بن علي المقرزي/ داعياً لمالكه في سنة 826/1280 وعده خمس عشر سنة.

Beside this note, al-Maqrizi also added, on the same folio in the available space, a long biography of Ibn Sa’id that he extracted from Ibn al-Ḫatib’s al-Iḥāṭa.¹¹

History of the Manuscript  The volume is a holograph and was copied for the library (hizâna) of the Aleppan historian Ibn al-ʿAdîm (d. 660/1262) in Aleppo between 645/1247 and 647/1250; there is an undated consultation note by Ibn Duqmâq (d. 809/1407) [fig. 15];¹² it was bequeathed as a waqf by the Mamlûk sultan al-Muʿayyad Şayḫ to his mosque at Bâb Zuwayla in Cairo completed in 824/1421.¹³

For al-Maqrizi’s consultation of al-Iḥāṭa, see no. 20 below.
10 Cairo, Dār al-Kutub wa-l-Waṭāʾiq al-Miṣriyya, MS Tārīḥ mīm 103

Manuscript  As no. 9. Volume 3 contains book (ṣifr) 4. Maḡribī script. 189 ff. 14
Description  As no. 9.

Figure 16
al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note in Ibn Saʿīd’s al-Muḡrib.  
(Courtesy Dār al-Kutub wa-l-Waṭāʾiq al-Miṣriyya, ms 103 Tārīḥ mīm, f. 132a)

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 132a, in the upper left corner)

History of the Manuscript  As no. 9. In addition, there is an undated consultation note by Ḫalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1363) in which he states that he owned this volume [fig. 17]; there is an undated consultation note by Ibn Duqmāq (d. 809/1407) [fig. 18]; there is a dated consultation note by Aḥmad ibn Abdallāh al-Awḥadī (d. 811/1408) [fig. 19]; and there is a consultation note by Fath Allāh (d. 816/1413) dated 810/1407-8 [fig. 20].

Figure 17
al-Ṣafadī’s consultation note in Ibn Saʿīd’s al-Muḡrib.  
(Courtesy Dār al-Kutub wa-l-Waṭāʾiq al-Miṣriyya, ms 103 Tārīḥ mīm, f. 132a)

Figure 18
Ibn Duqmāq’s consultation note in Ibn Saʿīd’s al-Muḡrib.  
(Courtesy Dār al-Kutub wa-l-Waṭāʾiq al-Miṣriyya, ms 103 Tārīḥ mīm, f. 132a)

14 The contents of this volume were published in Ibn Saʿīd 1970.

15 استفاد منه داعياً لمالكه  / أحمد بن علي المقريزي  / سنة 803.

See chap. 3 in this volume, by Élise Franssen.

16 استفاد منه داعياً لمالكه  / إبراهيم بن دقماق  / سنة 803.
11 Sūhāǧ, Maḥad Balašfūra al-Dīnī, shelf number unknown

Manuscript  As no. 9. Volume 6. Maġribī script. 235 ff. This volume covers al-Andalus. 19
Description  As no. 9.

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 6a, in the middle of the outer margin)

استفاذ منه داعيا مالكه / أحمد بن علي المقرزي / سنة 803.
History of the Manuscript  
As no. 9. In addition, there is an undated consultation note by Ḫalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī in which he states that he owned this volume (f. 6a) [fig. 22]; there is an undated consultation note by Ibn Duqmāq [fig. 23]; and there is a dated (802/1399-1400) consultation note by Ahmad ibn Abdallāh al-Awḥādī (f. 6a) [fig. 24].

12  
Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayi Kütüphane Müzesi, MS Ahmet III 2832  
Manuscript  
Description  
This four-volume work, composed by Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad ibn Aydamur al-ʿAlāʾī, known as Ibn Duqmāq (d. 809/1407), consists of a biographical dictionary of Hanafi scholars. The entries are organised by generations (ṭabaqāt), starting from the founder, Abū Ḥanīfa, and then alphabetically in each section.  
Bibliography  
Karatay 1962-9, 3: 556 (no. 6454).
History of the Manuscript  This volume is a holograph dated 794/1392; there is a consultation note by ʿAbdallāh ibn Ahmad al-Bišbīšī dated 803/1400-1 (f. 1a) [fig. 26]; there is an undated ownership statement by ʿAlī ibn al-Adamī al-Ḥanafī (f. 1a) [fig. 27]; and there is an undated consultation note by Muhammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Saḫāwī (f. 1a) [fig. 28]. In 825/1422, it was endowed by Fāris al-Ašrāfī to al-Azhar mosque (f. 1a).24

24 Fāris al-Ḥāzīndār al-Ṭawāšī (death date unknown but the endowment note shows that he died sometime after 825/1422).


27 This is the famous traditionist and historian al-Saḫāwī (d. 902/1497). On him, see Petry 1995.
13 London, British Library, MS Or. 8050

**Manuscript**  Same as no. 12 above. Volume 3 covers generations 5-7. Part of the same set including no. 12.

**Description**  Same as no. 12 above.

**Bibliography**  Stocks 2001, 227.

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**Figure 29**

al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note in Ibn Duqmāq’s *Naẓm al-ǧumān*.
(Courtesy British Library, MS Or. 8050, f. 2a)

**Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note** (f. 2a, in the middle of the outer margin)

**History of the Manuscript**  Same as no. 12 above (consultation note by al-Bišbīšī [fig. 30] and al-Saḫāwī [fig. 31]; there is a note of endowment made by Fāris al-Ḥāzīndār).  

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**Figure 30**

al-Bišbīšī’s consultation note in Ibn Duqmāq’s *Naẓm al-ǧumān*.
(Courtesy British Library, MS Or. 8050, f. 2a)

**Figure 31**

al-Saḫāwī’s consultation note in Ibn Duqmāq’s *Naẓm al-ǧumān*.
(Courtesy British Library, MS Or. 8050, f. 2a)

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28 Ms Pet. II.24 (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek) is another holograph copy of this volume with the same contents. It seems that MS Or. 8050 corresponds to the first version and MS Pet. II.24 to the second. The latter was owned by Ibni al-Adamī as no. 12, as well as by Fath Allāh (on him, see no. 10). Ms Arabe 2096 (Paris, BnF), a holograph copy of the first volume, confirms that Ibn Duqmāq prepared a fair copy: in the colophon (f. 154a) he states that he completed the process (*bayyadtu hādīhi al-nusḥa min al-musawwada*) in 795/1393.

29 *Note: The text is in Arabic.*

30 *Note: The text is in Arabic.*
Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphane Müzesi, MS Ahmet III 1822
Al-Ṭūfī, al-Intiṣārāt al-islāmiyya fi kašf sunnat al-naṣrāniyya. 121 ff.

**Description**
This is a work composed by Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Qawi al-Ṭūfī (d. 716/1316) as an apology of Islam and written in close connection with his refutation of Christianism.14

**Bibliography**

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**Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note** (f. 1a, in the middle of the outer margin)

النَّفخ في عقباهم

**History of the Manuscript**
This copy is an apograph dated 711/1311, i.e., three years after the completion of the work; there is an undated note (of ownership?) by Muḥammad ibn Ṭālib ibn Ṭālib al-Ṣāʾiġ (f. 1a) [fig. 33]; there is an undated ownership statement by Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Ḥaydara (f. 1a, in the middle of the outer margin) [fig. 34].

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14 On al-Ṭūfī and his work, see Demiri 2013. The work has been published in al-Ṭūfī 1992.


15 Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Reisülküttab 157

**Manuscript**  

**Description**  
This is the famous collection of prophetic traditions collected by ʿAlī ibn ʿUmar al-Dāraquṭnī (385/995).34

**Bibliography**  
Nil.

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Figure 35  
al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note in al-Dāraquṭnī’s *al-Sunan*.  
(Courtesy Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Reisülküttab 157, f. 1a)

**Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note** (f. 1a, in the middle of the upper half of the outer margin)

استفاد منه داعياً / لمالك أحمد بن علي / المقرزي في ذي القعدة سنة ٥٠٨.

**History of the Manuscript**  
This copy is dated 511/1117 and was made by ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbī ʿĪyām ibn ʿAbī Laylā; the copy was read aloud by the copyist to Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad al-Ṣadafī (d. 514/1120)35 during the same month the copy was completed (f. 1a); a certificate of audition witnesses that the text was read in the presence of three masters in 753/1352 in Cairo; there is a (consultation?) note by ʿĪyām al-Biqāʿī (d. 885/1480)36 dated 862/1458 [fig. 36].

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Figure 36  
al-Biqāʿī’s (consultation?) note in al-Dāraquṭnī’s *al-Sunan*.  
(Courtesy Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Reisülküttab 157, f. 1a)37

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34 On the author and his work, see Sezgin 1967, 206-9.

35 He is probably al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad ibn Fīrruh al-Ṣadafī (d. 514/1120). On him, see de la Puente 2012.

36 Al-Biqāʿī is the famous scholar who authored a chronicle and used the Bible in his exegesis of the Qurʾān. On him and his work, see Thomas 2013.

37 إبراهيم البقاعي / في رمضان سنة ٤١٢.
16 Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Fatih 3612


**Description**  The work, written by Aḥmad ibn Ḥāl ibn Qays al-Kasdānī, known as Ibn Waḥšiyya (d. 318/930-1), corresponds to an agricultural treatise mixing botanical and astrological information as well as ancient stories.  

**Bibliography**  Nil.

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**Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note** (f. 1a, in the upper left corner)

أنهاء مطالعة وانتقاء من / فوائد داعيا ملكك بالبقاء / والعز المديد بن علي / المقرزي لطف الله به في / شهر ربيع / الآخر سنة ست وثمانان مائة.

**History of the Manuscript**  Though undated, this volume was written before 640/1242-43 as it belonged to a set in five volumes of which volumes 4 and 5 have been preserved and volume 4 includes a colophon added by a later hand dated from that year; there is an undated ownership statement by Fath Allāh (f. 1a) [fig. 38]; and there is a dated note of acquisition by Aḥmad ibn Mubārakšāh al-Ḥanafī (d. 862/1458) who owned the whole set in five volumes (f. 1a) [fig. 39].

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38 On the author and his work, see Hämeen-Anttila 2006. The work was published in Ibn Waḥšiyya 1993-98.

39 See no. 17. The manuscript is more likely from the sixth/twelfth century.

40 ملكك / لفح الله.
17 Rome, Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, MS Arabo 904

Manuscript Same as no. 16 above. This is vol. 4. 253 ff. Part of a set in five volumes.

Description Same as no. 16 above.

Bibliography Levi della Vida 1935, 86.

**Al-Maqrizi’s consultation note** (f. 1a, in the upper left corner)

اعتقان منه داعياً [اللهم] `بالعز السُّمَّد والنعم المدلي` / أحمد بن علي المفريزي لطف الله [[ه ش]] في جندي．

History of the Manuscript This is a copy made before 640/1242-43, which corresponds to the date added by a later hand; there is an undated ownership statement by Fatḥ Allāh (f. 1a) [fig. 41]; and there is a dated ownership statement by Aḥmad ibn Mubārakšāh al-Ḥanafi (f. 1a) [fig. 42].

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He is Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad (known as Mubārakšāh) ibn Husayn al-Qāhirī al-Sayfī Yašbak al-Ḥanafi. On him, see al-Saḫāwī 1934-36, 2: 65 (no. 200).
18 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Huntington 326

Manuscript Same as no. 16 above. This is vol. 5. 190 ff. Part of a set in five volumes.
Description Same as no. 16 above.
Bibliography Uri 1787, 118 (no. CCCCLXIII).

I am grateful to Umberto Bongianino for kindly sending pictures of this manuscript.
Figure 43
al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note in Ibn Wahšiyya’s *al-Fīlāḥa al-nabāṭiyā* (vol. 4). (Courtesy Bodleian Library, ms Huntington, f. 1a)

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a, in the upper left corner)


History of the Manuscript  There is an undated ownership statement by Fatḥ Allāh (f. 1a) [fig. 44], and an ownership statement by Ahmad ibn Mubārakšāh (f. 1a) [fig. 45].

Figure 44
Fatḥ Allāh’s ownership statement in Ibn Wahšiyya’s *al-Fīlāḥa al-nabāṭiyā* (vol. 4). (Courtesy Bodleian Library, ms Huntington, f. 1a)
19 San Lorenzo de El Escorial, Real Biblioteca de El Escorial, MS Árabe 534, ff. 132a-289b


**Description** This history of Egypt from the Muslim conquest to the author’s lifetime was written by Muḥammad ibn ʿUbayd Allāh al-Musabbiḥī (d. 420/1029). Only one volume, covering part of the year 414/1023-24 and most of the year 415/1024-25, has been preserved. The digits were probably added by a later hand as the colour of the ink differs from the text of the mark.

**Bibliography** Derenbourg 1884, 362-3 (no. 534).

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The digits were probably added by a later hand as the colour of the ink differs from the text of the mark.

On him and his work, see Bianquis 1993. This volume was published in al-Musabbiḥī 1978; 1984.
History of the Manuscript  This fortyeth volume of the work was bound at a later date with another unrelated text; though undated, this copy seems to be from the sixth/twelfth century; there is a consultation note (f. 132a) by Ḥamd ibn ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Ḥasan ibn al-Awḥadi dated 803/1400-01 in Cairo [fig. 47].

Figure 47
al-Awḥādī’s consultation note in al-Musabbiḥī’s Aḫbār Miṣr. (Courtesy Real Biblioteca de El Escorial, MS Árabe 534, f. 132a)46

20 Lost?


Description  This is a history of Granada in eight volumes composed by the polymath and head of the chancellery in the same city, Lisān al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Ḥaṭīb (d. 776/1374).49

Bibliography  de Castro León 2021, 180-1.

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note:

انتهى منه داعياً مؤلفه أحمد بن علي المقرزي في شهر ربيع الثامن سنة ثمانمائة وثمانية

History of the Manuscript  This fourth volume was part of a full set in eight holograph volumes sent by the author to Cairo as an endowment to the Saʿīd al-Suʿādāʾ convent;51 this volume could still be consulted by the historian from Tiemcen al-Maqqarī (d. 1041/1632) during his stay in Cairo and he registered some of the notes that were left by scholars from various periods;52 these included, beside al-Maqrīzī’s note, notes by Ibn Duqmāq, Ibn Ḥaǧar al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 852/1449),53 and al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505),54 among others.

21 Tübingen, Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, Universitätsbibliothek, MS Ma. VI.18


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50. There is a lacuna in the text as the number of the month is not provided.
51. This set is considered lost, though some 170 scattered folios were retrieved in al-Azhar mosque in the last century; their fate is currently unknown.
53. He is the chief magistrate who was also a colleague and a friend of al-Maqrīzī. On him, see Van Arendonk, Schacht 1986.
54. He is the famous polymath. On him, see Ghersetti 2017.
This concerns the life of the Damascene traditionist Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Nawawī (d. 676/1278) narrated by his student, ʿAlī ibn Ibrāhīm ibn al-ʿAṭṭār al-Šāfiʿī (d. 724/1324), who completed the fair copy in 708/1309.

Bibliography
Seybold 1907, 36.

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a, in the upper right corner, parallel to the spine)

History of the Manuscript
This copy appears to be a unicum; moreover it was copied by the author’s brother in 744/1343 and collated with the author’s holograph (f. 47a).

22 Rabat, al-Maktaba al-Wataniyya, MS 241 qāf

Manuscript

Description
This work is a multi-volume history of Islam with a major focus on Egypt and Syria up to the author’s own time and preceded by several volumes on the prophets who preceded Muḥammad; it was composed by Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥīm ibn al-Furāt al-Hanafī (d. 807/1405).

Bibliography

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a, in the middle of the inner margin, parallel to the spine)

History of the Manuscript
This volume is an undated holograph; there is an undated ownership statement by Muḥammad al-Abšādī al-Mālikī (d. aft. 898/1493) (f. 1a) [fig. 50]; there is an undated ownership statement by Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥīm ibn al-Ḥanafī al-ʿAlāʾī (d. 902/1497) (f. 1a) [fig. 51]; and there is an undated

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55 On him and his work, see Bora 2019. The Rabat MS remains unpublished.
ownership statement by Ahmad ibn Fath al-Dīn al-Zāʾir (d. bef. 931/1525) (f. 1a) [fig. 52].

Figure 50
al-Abṣādī’s ownership statement in Ibn al-Furāt’s al-Ṭarīq al-wāḍiḥ al-maslūk. (Courtesy al-Maktaba al-Wataniyya, ms 241 qāf, f. 1a)  

Figure 51
al-ʿAlāʾī’s ownership statement in Ibn al-Furāt’s al-Ṭarīq al-wāḍiḥ al-maslūk. (Courtesy al-Maktaba al-Wataniyya, ms 241 qāf, f. 1a)  

Figure 52
al-Zāʾir’s ownership statement in Ibn al-Furāt’s al-Ṭarīq al-wāḍiḥ al-maslūk. (Courtesy al-Maktaba al-Wataniyya, ms 241 qāf, f. 1a)  

23 Rome, Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, MS Arabo 726

Manuscript Same as no. 22 above. This volume covers the years 639-58.
Description Same as no. 22 above.  

57 From al-Saḫāwī 1934-36, 8: 184 (no. 467).
58 His full name was Muḥammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ināl ibn al-Šīḥna al-Dawādār al-ʿAlāʾī al-Hanafī. On him, see al-Saḫāwī 1934-36, 6: 295. For several other ownership statements related to him, see Bauden 2020c, 220-7.
59 From Bauden 2020c, 227-33. The Vatican MS remains unpublished.
Authors as Readers in the Mamlūk Period and Beyond, 195-266

Figure 53
al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note in Ibn al-Furāt’s al-Ṭarīq al-wāḍīh al-maslūk. (Courtesy Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, ms Arabo 726, f. 291b)

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 291b, on the left, below the end of the text)

History of the Manuscript  This is an undated holograph volume.

24 Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, MS AF 123

Manuscript  Same as no. 22 above. This volume covers the years 672-82.
Description  Same as no. 22 above.61

Figure 54
al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note in Ibn al-Furāt’s al-Ṭarīq al-wāḍīh al-maslūk. (Courtesy Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, ms AF 123, f. 95b)

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 95b, in the lower left corner, written vertically)

History of the Manuscript  Another holograph volume.

61 The note is barely legible now, but it was read almost a century ago by Tisserant 1914, xxxiii; however, he was unable to read the second and the third words.

62 The contents of this volume have been published in Ibn al-Furāt 1942.
Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, MS Arabic 3315


Description This catalog of works available in Arabic and composed by Arabs and non-Arabs from Antiquity to the fourth/tenth century was compiled by Muḥammad ibn ʿIshaq al-Nadīm (d. 385/995).


Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a, in the middle of the upper half of the inner margin, parallel to the spine)

 выполнен من [فزأ] لداعة / ... / أحمد بن علي المقرئي سنة 242.

Al-Maqrīzī also added a biography of al-Nadīm on the title page.

History of the Manuscript This is an undated apograph copy datable to the early fifth/eleventh century, an ownership statement (f. 1a) by a certain Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī dated 825/1422 in Damascus; and there is an ownership statement (f. 1a) by Yahyā ibn Ḥiǧǧī al-Ṣāfīī dated 885/1480-81.

Arberry 1955-69, 2: 31, wrongly attributes this mark to al-Maqrīzī. This attribution can be dismissed, as demonstrated in this study.

He is Yaḥyā ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿUmar ibn Ḥiǧǧī al-Ṣaḍī al-Dimašqī al-Qāhirī (d. 888/1483), a famous book collector. See al-SAḤAWĪ 1934-36, 10: 252-4 (no. 1030).
Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Ayasofya 3416


**Description**  This is a 27-volume encyclopaedic work composed by the chancery secretary Ahmad ibn Yahyā Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarāl-Šāfiʿī (d. 749/1349).

**Bibliography**  *Defter* 1887, 205.

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a, in the lower right corner, parallel to the spine)

Three excerpts selected in this multi-volume work are extant in al-Maqrīzī’s note-book held in Liège (ms 2232).

**History of the Manuscript**  This is a copy datable to the eighth/fourteenth century; there is an ownership statement by Ibn al-Bārizī (d. 856/1452) [fig. 59]; and there is an ownership statement by Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Īnāl al-ʿAlāʾī al-Dawādār al-Ḥanāfī [fig. 60].

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68 On him and his work, see Krafūlskī 1990. The work has recently been completely published several times, the last time by Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī 2010, but no real critical edition of the whole is available.

69 See Bauden 2003, 63-4; 2006, 135.

27 Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Ayasofya 3418

Description  Same as no. 26 above.
Bibliography  Defter 1887, 205.

Figure 61
al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note in Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī’s *Masālik al-abṣār*. (Courtesy Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, ms Ayasofya 3418, f. 1a)

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a, in the middle of the lower half of the inner margin, parallel to the spine)

١٣٨ سنة / المقرري علي بن أحمد / [...]

History of the Manuscript  Same as no. 26 above.
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28 Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Laleli 2037
Manuscript  Same as no. 26 above. This is vol. 6.
Description  Same as no. 26 above.
Bibliography  Nil.

Figure 62
al-Maqrizi’s consultation note in Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī’s Masālik al-abṣār. (Courtesy Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, ms Laleli 2037, f. 1a)

Al-Maqrizi’s consultation note (f. 1a, in the middle of the lower half of the inner margin, parallel to the spine)

History of the Manuscript  Same as no. 26 above.

29 London, British Library, MS Add. 9589
Manuscript  Same as no. 26 above. This is vol. 14.
Description  Same as no. 26 above.
Bibliography  Stocks 2001, 386.

Figure 63
al-Maqrizi’s consultation note in Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī’s Masālik al-abṣār. (Courtesy British Library, MS Add. 9589, f. 1a)

Al-Maqrizi’s consultation note (f. 1a, in the middle of the lower half of the inner margin, parallel to the spine)

History of the Manuscript  Same as no. 26 above.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Manuscript</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Bibliography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>30</td>
<td>Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Ayasofya 3428</td>
<td>Same as no. 26 above. This is vol. 15.</td>
<td>Same as no. 26 above.</td>
<td>Defter 1887, 205.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Arabe 2327</td>
<td>Same as no. 26 above. This is vol. 17.</td>
<td>Same as no. 26 above.</td>
<td>de Slane 1883-95, 408.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
32 Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Ayasofya 3432

Manuscript  Same as no. 26 above. This is vol. 19.
Description  Same as no. 26 above.
Bibliography  Defter 1887, 205.

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a, in the middle of the lower half of the inner margin, parallel to the spine)

History of the Manuscript  Same as no. 26 above; in addition, there is a consultation note by ʿUmar ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmar ī al-ʿAdawī al-Quraš ī in Cairo dated 793/1391 [fig. 67].

33 Manchester, John Rylands Research Institute and Library, MS Arabic 16

Manuscript  Same as no. 26 above. This is vol. 20.
Description  Same as no. 26 above.
Bibliography  Mingana 1934, 532-4.

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 3a, in the middle of the lower half of the inner margin, parallel to the spine)

"He is the great-great-grandchild of the author of the book."
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History of the Manuscript  Same as no. 32 above.

34 Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Ayasofya 3437
Manuscript  Same as no. 26 above. This is vol. 25.
Description  Same as no. 26 above.
Bibliography  Defter 1887, 205.

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a, in the middle of the lower half of the inner margin, parallel to the spine)

History of the Manuscript  Same as no. 26 above.

35 Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Yazma Bağışlar 1917
Manuscript  Same as no. 26 above. This is vol. 26.
Description  Same as no. 26 above.
Bibliography  Nil.

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a, in the middle of the lower half of the inner margin, parallel to the spine)
36 Istanbul, Millet Genel Kütüphanesi, MS Feyzullah 549

Manuscript  Al-Haythami, Mawārid al-ẓamān fī zawāid Ibn Ḥibbān.

Description  A collection of prophetic traditions extracted from Ibn Ḥibbān’s (d. 354/965) Ṣaḥīḥ, the selection is limited to the traditions that were not quoted by al-Buḫārī and Muslim, and was organised into chapters by ʿAlī ibn Abī Bakr ibn Sulaymān al-Hayṭami al-Qāhirī al-Šāfī’ī (d. 807/1405).73

Bibliography  Nil.

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a, in the upper right corner, parallel to the spine)

History of the Manuscript  This is a holograph copy.

37 Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Ayasofya 3116

Manuscript  Ibn Miskawayh, Taǧārib al-umam wa-ʿawārif al-humam, vol. 1. Part of a set in six volumes.74

Description  This is a universal history from the pre-Islamic Persian dynasties until the beginning of Islam down to the author’s lifetime written by the Buyid secretary Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Yaʿqūb Ibn Miskawayh (d. 932/1030).75

Bibliography  Defter 1887, 187.

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a, in the middle of the upper half of the inner margin, parallel to the spine)

74 The six volumes are together (mss Ayasofya 3116-21).
75 On the author and his work, see Arkoun 1970. The work is published in Ibn Miskawayh 2001-02.
History of the Manuscript  This is a copy dated 505/1111; it has a dated (797/1395) note of endowment of the whole set by Mahmūd al-Ustādār (d. 799/1396) to his madrasa in Cairo.76

38 Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Ayasofya 2577M


Description  This is an abridgement of Ibn Ḥawqal’s (d. after 368/978) Ṣūrat al-ard, a description of the earth with maps attributed to Abū Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Balḥi.77

Bibliography  Defter 1887, 154.

Figure 73

al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note in al-Balḥi’s Aqālim al-buldān. (Courtesy Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Ayasofya 2577M, f. 1a)

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a, in the middle of the lower half of the inner margin, parallel to the spine)

History of the Manuscript  This was commissioned by ʿAlam al-Dīn Sanǧar al-Ǧāwalī (d. 745/1345) (f. 1a);78 there is an ownership statement (f. 1a) by Fatḥ Allāh [fig. 74]; and there is a note of endowment by sultan Ḫuṣqadam (d. 872/1467) to his mosque located in the desert outside Cairo in 871/1466.

Figure 74

Fatḥ Allāh’s ownership statement in al-Balḥi’s Aqālim al-buldān. (Courtesy Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Ayasofya 2577M, f. 1a)

76 On this person and his library, see Behrens-Abouseif 2018, 25.
78 On him, see al-Ṣafadī 1931-2010, 15: 482-4 (no. 645).
Authors as Readers in the Mamlūk Period and Beyond, 195-266

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Marsh 424

**Manuscript** Šāfiʿ ibn ʿAlī, al-Faḍl al-maʾṯūr min sīrat al-sultān al-malik al-Mansūr.

**Description** This is a biography of the Mamlūk sultan al-Mansūr Qalāwūn (r. 678-89/1279-90) composed by the chancery secretary Šāfiʿ ibn ʿAbbās al-Kinānī al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 730/1330).

**Bibliography** Uri 1787, 169 (no. DCCLXVI).

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**Figure 75**

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note in Šāfiʿ ibn ʿAlī’s al-Faḍl al-maʾṯūr. (Courtesy Bodleian Library, MS Marsh. 424, f. 1a)

Al-Maqrīzī’s consultation note (f. 1a, in the upper left corner)

استفاد منه د[اعبا]... / أحمد بن علي لطف الله يه

**History of the Manuscript** This is an undated copy possibly made at the author’s request for the library of a certain Šihāb al-Dīn (f. 1 a);⁸¹ there is a dated ownership statement by ʿUṯmān ibn al-Mulūk in Cairo (f. 1a, in the upper left corner) [fig. 76].

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⁸⁰ On him and his work, see Van Den Bossche 2018. The work is published in Šāfiʿ ibn ʿAlī 1998.

⁸¹ This Šihāb al-Dīn can be tentatively identified as Šihāb al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn Salmān ibn Fahd al-Ḥalabī (d. 725/1325), a famous chancery secretary and belletrist celebrated for his prose and poetry. On him, see al-Ṣafadī 1931-2010, 25: 301-61 (no. 196). Another hand added the name Maḥmūd below the inscription giving some weight to this identification.

⁸² He is probably Fahr al-Dīn Uṯmān ibn Muḥammad al-ʿAyūbī al-Qāhirī, known as Ibn al-Mulūk due to his pedigree, according to which he was a descendent of the Ayyubids. He died in 884/1470. On him, see al-Saḥawī 1934-36, 5: 143 (no. 485). The number preceding the year is illegible because the border was damaged. Given the space occupied by the word and taking into account the date of his death (he was more than seventy years old), it must correspond to one of the tens, more probably 40 given that it starts with an alif.
Bibliography

Primary Sources


Authors as Readers in the Mamlūk Period and Beyond, 195-266

Secondary Sources


Frédéric Bauden
6 • Maqriziana XVI: al-Maqrīzī as a Reader


*Deifter-i Kütüphane-yi Ayasofya* (1887). Dersaadet [Istanbul]: Mahmut Bey Matbaası.


al-Maqrīzī as a Reader of *The Testament of Ardašīr*

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**Abstract**  This chapter discusses the way al-Maqrīzī quotes *ʿAhd Ardašīr* through Miskawayhi. As we have at our disposal al-Maqrīzī’s holograph and the manuscript of Miskawayhi’s *Taḡārib* he used, we can see exactly how al-Maqrīzī understood the text he quoted. This is particularly illuminating in cases where Miskawayhi, or the copyist of the manuscript, had misunderstood the *ʿAhd* and al-Maqrīzī had a partly corrupt text in front of him. Even though elsewhere al-Maqrīzī can be very free with his sources, with this text he avoids emendations and aims at a high fidelity to the text. Sometimes, however, we can see how he has misunderstood the text and changed its original meaning.


Arabic literature, historiography included, is cumulative and traditional in character, copying longer or shorter extracts from earlier works and compiling new works partly or wholly based on these extracts. This generates polyvalence in texts: while in its original context, a fragment had a certain function, according to which it was understood by its readership, in other contexts it may have a different meaning for a new readership.

Later authors usually modified the excerpts they quoted, abbreviating or rephrasing them or mixing them with material from other sources. Accordingly, we see them as authors creating a new text rather than readers trying to understand an old one. Few text types, such as quotations from the Qurʾān, were usually quoted without changes: even poems underwent abbreviations and verses were often reshuffled to create a new poem in a new order, even if they were less often completely rephrased.
This article studies one specific case as an example of how an author read, understood, and dealt with a text he quoted. The text in question is ‘Ahd Ardašīr (The Testament of Ardašīr), an early Arabic translation of a probably sixth-century Middle Persian text. As such, its language is somewhat archaic and its train of thought is not always easy to follow. Its earliest surviving form is represented by MS Köprülü 1608, ff. 146b-155b, used for his edition and translation of the text by Mario Grignaschi. The manuscript is late, probably from the early eleventh century AH, and its last抄写者 was not very learned as shown by several crude mistakes, but in general it represents an early stage in the transmission history of the text and the mistakes are mostly transparent and the original text easy to reconstruct. The other texts that transmit the ‘Ahd contain numerous passages that are further removed from the original.

Next in stratigraphy comes the anonymous Nihāyat al-arab (196-200), which contains an abbreviated version of the text. The date of the Nihāya is uncertain, but it may partly go back to the ninth, or even eighth century. Typically, the author of the Nihāya has not attempted to copy the exact original wording of the text but has freely rephrased it.

The unabbreviated text next surfaces in Miskawayhi’s (d. 421/1030) Taḡārib al-umam with some significant changes, most of which are clearly inferior readings that confuse the sense of the original and sometimes result in a text that cannot be understood. Another, heavily abbreviated version, al-Muntaḫab min ‘Ahd Ardašīr ibn Bābak fī al-siyyāsa, was edited by Ahmad Bek Tīmūr from a manuscript dated 710/1311 and published by Muḥammad Kurd ‘Ali in his Rasāʾil al-bulaḡāʾ (299-301).

The focus in this article is on the next, and final, level. From Miskawayhi’s Taḡārib the text was copied by al-Maqrízī (d. 845/1442) into his al-Ḫabar ‘an al-bašar (II §§ 23-54). What makes this level particularly interesting is that we can see exactly how al-Maqrízī has worked and how he read and understood the text, with no outside influence to muddy the water. This is because we still have the very manuscript of the Taḡārib al-Maqrízī used, MS Ayasofya 3116, as
shown by a reader’s note on it, and, moreover, this has been conveniently edited in facsimile by Leone Caetani. Al-Maqrizí’s own text is further preserved in a holograph, MS Fatih 4340, the relevant section of which has been edited, together with the facsimile reproduction of the holograph.

The text of the ‘Ahd has been inserted into Miskawayhi’s Taḏārib and al-Maqrizí’s Ḥabar in toto, with no attempt either to elaborate, lengthen, or abbreviate it. It is often claimed that by grafting texts into a new context authors were consciously manipulating their meaning. Sometimes this clearly is the case, but often the evidence for such hidden agendas is vague and depends on subtle changes, which may as well be due to the oversensitivity of the scholar studying the text. However that may be in other cases, in this particular case it is difficult to see any hidden agenda behind the changes the text has undergone. Thus, the existing text shows al-Maqrizí as a reader trying to understand the text, rather than a writer deliberately manipulating it.

Even a superficial look at the manuscript shows that al-Maqrizí has endeavoured to keep the text in the form he found it: usually in the Ḥabar, he uses one main source at a time and adds to it material from other sources, which has often been written in the margins of the holograph. In the case of the ‘Ahd, al-Maqrizí uses no other sources but faithfully copies the whole work from a single source, Miskawayhi’s Taḏārib, with no additions of his own and, moreover, does it remarkably carefully, so that the margins of this section (ff. 139b-145b) are clear, whereas most of the margins are full of corrections and additions.

As the text of the ‘Ahd does not have religious prestige, even though Ardašır was generally considered a wise and just king, it may be that the unwillingness to tamper with the text mainly rises from its being a complete, clearly defined work. It seems that Miskawayhi’s and al-Ṭabarí’s texts were freely modified and considered mines of material to be quarried, but the ‘Ahd was a complete and unified whole not to be touched.

The copy al-Maqrizí was using contained numerous mistakes, whether by Miskawayhi or the copyist of MS Ayasofya 3116. Mostly al-Maqrizí copies these as such into his text, even when it is hard to

6 Bauden, forthcoming and chap. 6, Bauden’s contribution in this volume.
7 Hämeen-Anttila, forthcoming.
8 When speaking of the Ḥabar, I primarily refer to the section on pre-Islamic Iran, which, I believe, also reflects more generally al-Maqrizí’s use of sources. However, his attitude towards the sources slightly varies between the sections of the Ḥabar, and I have only studied this section in detail.
9 See Hämeen-Anttila, forthcoming.
see how the copied text could have been understood. E.g. MS Köprülü 1608, f. 147b, reads:

وَهَذَا الْبَابُ مِنَ الْأَبْوَابِ ٱلَّتِي يَكُثُرْ بَيْنَهَا سُكُورُ ٱلْفَسَادِ وَيِهِتَّجُ بِهَا قُرُائَةُ ٱلْبَلَاءِ وَيَعْمِي الْبَصِيرَ عِنْ لِطِيفِ مَا يَنْتَهَى مِنَ ٱلْأَمْوَرِ فِي ذَلِكَ.

This is one of the ways that add to the inebriety of corruption and through it the effects of affliction are awakened and [even] an intelligent person is made blind of the [at first] subtle breeches of affairs.\(^{10}\)

In Miskawayhi, 

\textit{Tağārib} (ms Ayasofya 3116, 100), and following him, al-Maqrīzī, \textit{Ḫabar} II § 25, this has become (diacritics and vocalisation from al-Maqrīzī):

وَهَذَا الْبَابُ مِنَ الْأَبْوَابِ ٱلَّتِي كَثُرَ سُكُورُ ٱلْفَسَادِ وَيِهِتَّجُ بِهَا قُرُائَةُ ٱلْبَلَاءِ وَيَعْمِي الْبَصِيرَ لِطِيفِ مَا يَنْتَهَى مِنَ ٱلْأَمْوَرِ فِي ذَلِكَ.

This does not make much sense, and we may translate it as:

This is one of the ways that break the inebriety of corruption, and through it the proximities of affliction are awakened. The affairs that have been profaned in that will be enough [as a warning example?] for an acute observer.

More than anything this remains empty words, and it is only their vagueness that protects them from sounding completely out of place. It is not easy to imagine what al-Maqrīzī has thought of the sentences. Did he stop thinking about what he was copying or did he not realise that the words do not make much sense? Was the ‘Ahd for him too prestigious to be corrected without evidence or abbreviated by excising what was beyond emendation?

In \textit{Ḫabar} II § 29, al-Maqrīzī either has not noticed that there is a problem or if he has, he has not found a suitable way to correct it. Following Miskawayhi, he reads:

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ ٱلْعَاقِلِ سَالٌ عَلَيْكُمْ لِسَانِهِ وَهُوَ أَفْقَعُ سِيَّهُ.

As such, the sentence means: ‘Know that an intelligent man uses his tongue against you,\(^{11}\) and his tongue is sharper than his sword’. Although grammatically blameless, the sentence is odd in the context:

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\(^{10}\) All translations are by the Author.

\(^{11}\) This is meant to be read sāllun ‘alay-kum lisāna-hu, but it is possible that al-Maqrīzī read it as sāla ‘alay-kum lisānu-hu.
why should intelligent men use their tongue against kings for no obvious reason? MS Köprüülü 1608, f. 149a provides the answer to the problem, as it reads al-ʿāqil al-mahrūm ‘intelligent man deprived/left without’. If al-Maqrīzī was sensitive to the problem, he silently accepted his inability to correct the issue and left the odd sentence as he found it.

In most of these cases, al-Maqrīzī’s problems arise from mistakes made by Miskawayhi or the copyist of MS Ayasofya 3116. In Ḥabar II § 38, we have a case where it is al-Maqrīzī who has carelessly misread the text and produced a sentence that does not make sense. He reads:

 وهكذا الملك وولي عهده، لا يسر الاوضع إلا وضع سوته في قيائه

The original of Miskawayhi, Taǧārib (ms Ayasofya 3116, 113), reads (vocalisation from the original):

 وهكذا الملك وولي عهده، لا يسر الاوضع ان يعطى الآخر سوته في قيائه

So it is with the king and the heir-apparent. The higher of them will not be pleased to see the lower have his wish fulfilled and see him pass away.

When reading the text, al-Maqrīzī has overlooked the words يُعْطَى اَن and then changed the vocalisation (al-awḍaʿu suʾla-hu > illā waḍʿu suʾli-hi; note that it is basically simply the spacing that needs to be changed: الاوضع سوته > الا وضع سوته) in an attempt to make sense. The deliberately altered vocalisation shows that this was not a mere mistake in copying, but al-Maqrīzī tried to understand what he had (mis)read. He did not notice his mistake even though the continuation should have alerted him to the correct reading:

ولا يسر هذا الاوضع ان يعطى الآخر سوته في البقاء

Examples such as this make one suspect that the phenomenally productive al-Maqrīzī has at least in this last major work of his worked hastily, not always stopping to look carefully at the text he was reading and copying. In the case of Miskawayhi, this would be understandable, as he was still excerpting the book a few months before his death, as we can see from his reader’s note, dated 844.12

Another attempt at correcting a corrupt text is found in Ḥabar II § 38, where al-Maqrīzī writes about divulging the name of the heir-apparent:

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12 See Bauden in this volume, chap. 6.
The word إحياء is one of the very few marginal corrections in the section that contains the ‘Ahd. The text derives as such from Miskawayhi, *Tağārib* (ms Ayasofya 3116, 113), with the exception that MS Ayasofya 3116 uses diacritical dots more sparingly than al-Maqrīzī and actually writes إحيا, not إحياء, as al-Maqrīzī. The marginal addition shows that al-Maqrīzī stopped to think about the passage and checked it against Miskawayhi. The text is somewhat strange and while it is just conceivable to make sense of يتخذ كل واحد منهما وغراً على إحيا صاحبه, it is not a very natural way to express the idea of each feeling hatred of leaving the other alive. But this is how al-Maqrīzī will have understood it, after first accidentally dropping the word إحيا, which would actually make the sentence slightly less odd. But the change was not deliberate, as we can see from al-Maqrīzī restoring the word in the margin.

The enigma is solved by ms-Köprülü 1608, f. 151a, which reads:

ومن هنا بتآيبنا بالسَّهمة يُتخذ كل واحد منهما إحيا وإخواناه وأهلاً ثم يدخل كل واحد منهما وعَر على إحيا

There are two simple mistakes in this sentence, both easily corrected. The first إحيا has been written إحيا, and the dot of gayn has been dropped from وغر. In both the correction is obvious. Otherwise, this makes good sense:

When they drift further from each other they take for themselves friends, confidants, and family, and they both feel hatred against the friends of the other. This will undoubtedly lead to the destruction of one of them.

The copyist of MS Ayasofya 3116 has dropped some crucial words and, as usual, been sparing with diacritical dots, which has left the latter word for ‘friends’, إحيا, in an ambivalent form. As ‘friends’ does not make much sense in the corrupt sentence as found in MS Ayasofya 3116, al-Maqrīzī has tried to make sense and, perhaps misguided by the continuation, which mentions ‘destruction’, has read this as the opposite, ‘leaving alive’. Here, al-Maqrīzī has not consciously changed anything, merely added diacritical marks in the way he considered appropriate.

While usually following the original even when it leads him into difficulties, there is one case in the ‘Ahd where al-Maqrīzī has opted for correcting the text. This comes in Ḥabar II § 45, where Miskawayhi, *Tağārib* (ms Ayasofya 3116, 120) reads:

وفي الرُّغبة صنف دعوا إلى أنفسهم إجاه بالآباء والرد له ووجدوا ذلك عند العقليين ناقفاً ورضاً قرب الملك

الرجل من أولئك لغبر نيل في رأي ولا إجاء في العمل ولكن الآباء والرد أغرباء به.
Despite the misplaced madda, the word pair والرد والأباء has to be read al-ibāʾ wa-l-radd, which is also supported by MS Köprülü 1608, f. 153r, where the first of these appears unequivocally in the form bi-l-ta'abbī wa-l-radd. The scribe of MS Ayasofya 3116 has written the madda in the first instance clearly above the first consonant (ب،ر) and in the second it is not clear whether it belongs to the first or the second consonant (بأ’ or أبأ’). The place of the madda is ambivalent also in al-Maqrīzī, but he has clearly read the word as al-ābāʾ, dropping the word الراد from both cases and putting the final verb in plural, instead of the dual in original:

وفي الرعية صنف دعوا إلى أنفسهم الجاه بالآباء ووجدوا ذلك عند المغفلين أنفسهم إلى الدعوة إلى صنف الرعية.

The changes make it clear that al-Maqrīzī took the word الآباء to mean ‘fathers/ancestors’ and could do nothing with the following al-radd (لا له) so he dropped it from both places, which also makes it less probable that it was dropped accidentally. In the latter sentence, he changed the verb from the dual (أغرايأه، subjects: al-ibāʾ and al-radd) to the plural (أغروا، subject: al-ābāʾ) Thus, for him the text read:

Then there are those who claim high rank through ancestors. They find this useful among inattentive people. A king may draw close one of these not because of any nobility of thought or sufficient deeds, but because the (mention of) ancestors makes him want (to have) him (in his entourage).

The original speaks of ostensibly simulating reluctance to accept a nomination, but al-Maqrīzī changes this to claiming such a nomination on the basis of illustrious ancestors.

To sum up the relations between the versions of ‘Ahd in MS Köprülü 1608, Miskawayhī’s Taǧārib, and al-Maqrīzī’s Ḥabar, the text has mainly been transmitted intact and both later authors probably understood most of the text in the same way as its author/translator intended it to be understood. At least al-Maqrīzī, however, was removed, both spatially and temporally, from pre-Islamic Iran, which he did not know too well. He would probably have been unable correctly to understand the references to Zoroastrian and Sasanian institutions. Occasionally, the text uses Arabic terms that refer to Sasanian institutions. While it is probable that the author/translator and some among his audience knew the Middle Persian equivalents and functions of these, it is also probable that they were not as clearly understood by Miskawayhī and it is highly dubious whether al-Maqrīzī had any idea of what functions each of these had. To take but one example, MS Köprülü 1608, f. 148b, speaks of al-‘ubbād and
al-mutabattilīn, changed into al-ʿubbād and al-nussāk in Miskawayhi, Taǧārib (ms Ayasofya 3116, 105) and retained as such by al-Maqrīzī (Ḫabar II § 29). The words are rather vague in Arabic and do not directly refer to any category of Zoroastrian religious officials, but it is quite possible that the author/translator equated these with hērbads and mōbads, both here and in Ḥabar II § 35.

Miskawayhi or the copyist of his work did not do very careful work, and the version of the Taḏārib is often corrupt. In most cases, al-Maqrīzī has copied the corrupt text without trying to emend it or to avoid the problem by abbreviating or rephrasing the passage. This is probably due to the prestige of the text, but whether this is simply because it was a complete whole or specifically because this particular text enjoyed great repute still in the Mamlūk period is not clear.

This has led al-Maqrīzī as a reader to try and find interpretations that would make sense. When he has made no changes in the text, this remains invisible to us and we can only speculate on how he might have understood certain passages. In some cases, we may doubt whether al-Maqrīzī understood what he was reading or whether he gave up and merely copied what he saw. In a restricted number of cases, al-Maqrīzī has either tried to emend the text or has provided diacritical marks, other than those intended by the author/translator, to a word originally without diacritics. These enable us to see how al-Maqrīzī as a reader interpreted the text when the original interpretation had been lost, either by mistakes in copying or by missing diacritical marks.

One final point. Why did al-Maqrīzī include the ‘Ahd in his history of Iran? His section of Sasanian Iran also includes two shorter texts, Sīrat Anūširwān wa siyāsatu-hu (The Life of Anūširwān and his ways of governing) (Ḫabar II §§ 161-83), also quoted from Miskawayhi, Taḏārib, and, as an appendix to this, still following Miskawayhi, a speech by Anūširwān to his people (Ḫabar II §§ 184-90). In the earlier sections of Iranian history, he had included the maxims of philosophers at the burial of Alexander (Ḵabar I §§ 202-4) and some material on Aristotle and Plato (Ḵabar I §§ 237-46) from other sources. All these are much shorter than the ‘Ahd, and only the Sīrat Anūširwān is quoted as an independent, complete text, like the ‘Ahd.

All these inserted texts belong to wisdom literature. By including such extensive chunks of text al-Maqrīzī both follows the tradition which had seen many of the pre-Islamic Persian kings as sages akin to prophets and strengthens it. The ‘Ahd and Sīrat Anūširwān are also rare texts, which may have been an additional reason for al-Maqrīzī to quote them in full in his work, giving it the added value of preserving two rare texts. Thinking in the context of the fifteenth century, the existence of these texts in the Ḥabar would have been a major asset, as they would otherwise have been extremely difficult to find.
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Abstract  This paper focuses on a book list that was recorded by Şahhāflarşeyḥizāde Esʿad Efendi, who occupied an important place as a scholar and as a chronicler in both cultural and political life of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century, in one of his personal manuscript notebooks. This type of personal manuscript notebook was called mecmūʿa in Turkish and consisted of a variety of selected texts (e.g. poems, lines of prose, chronograms, correspondence, calculations, prayers). Generally, a compiler or several compilers selected texts and gathered their own mecmūʿa with these texts – this was a very common habit among Ottoman scholars. Esʿad Efendi started to compile his own at the beginning of his official career, collecting parts of the various books he had read and copying them into his mecmūʿa. In addition, Esʿad Efendi’s mecmūʿa contains uncompleted first drafts of his works and a list of books that he used during his researches. Considering together the book list and the works written by Esʿad Efendi in the following years, it is possible to see the relationship between the texts compiled into his mecmūʿa, the readings he made and his career trajectory. Thus, this paper aims to uncover the details of these relations through an examination of Esʿad Efendi’s reading practices.

Keywords  Ottoman book history. Ottoman reading culture. Ottoman Mecmūʿa. Şahhāflarşeyḥizāde Esʿad Efendi. Ottoman scholars’ reading practices.

Summary  1 A Short Overview of Esʿad Efendi’s Career Line and of His Works. – 2 Esʿad Efendi’s Book List. – 3 Concluding Remarks.
1 A Short Overview of Es'ad Efendi’s Career Line and of His Works

Es'ad Efendi was an exceptional personality who made considerable, various and lifelong contributions to the fields of culture, politics and education in his numerous roles as a poet, author, translator, literary critic, book collector, owner of a public library, court-historiographer, director of the Imperial Publishing House, education minister, and the first Ottoman ambassador to Iran. Moreover, he had a unique title in the whole of Ottoman history: Ṣahḥāflarşeyḥizāde (son of the shaykh of booksellers), which sums up his métier and his relationship with books, reading and writing. Es'ad Efendi was born on December 6, 1789 in Istanbul in the district of Hagia Sophia. His family was originally from Malatya, as he repeatedly mentioned in his mecmūʿas, and had the title of seyyid, which are known to have had an important place in the Ottoman bureaucratic hierarchy; seyyids were educated as scholars and respected by state officials, which certainly helped Es'ad Efendi’s career journey.

In 1738, Es'ad Efendi’s grandfather and father came to Istanbul, and after that, they brought the rest of the family from Malatya to Istanbul. Es'ad Efendi’s father, Ahmed Efendi, started his education in the madrasa as soon as he came to Istanbul but did not become a müderris immediately after his madrasa education; he had

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1 Abu-Manneh, s.v. “Mehmed Es’ad, Sahaflar Şeyhizade”.
2 Ṣahāflarşeyḥi: the person responsible for the second-hand bookseller’s activities in the Ottoman Empire, and the head of the second-hand bookshop guild. See Erünsal 2013.
3 This information was first given by Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, who wrote the biography of Es’ad Efendi while Es’ad Efendi was still alive. This biography contains information about his life and career that Es’ad Efendi himself had written to Hammer in a letter. See Hammer-Purgstall 1938, 463.
4 A term that refers to the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad.
5 As a matter of fact, Es’ad Efendi served as Nākibū’l-eşrāf in the later years of his career. Nākibū’l-eşrāf was the title given to the officials who dealt with the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad in the Ottoman Empire. This duty was institutionalised in the Ottoman Empire around 1494 and over time, it gained an important place in the Ottoman hierarchy. Nākibū’l-eşrāfs took part in the ceremonies near the şayḥ al-islām, in the first line. See Buzpinar 2006.
6 Süleymaniye Manuscript Library (SK) Es’ad Efendi Collection MS 3847, on a paper between 17a-18b.
7 Müberris: high-ranking lecturer in higher education institutions (madrasa) in the Ottoman Empire, where Islamic law and various other sciences were taught, especial-
begun his career by selling books around Hagia Sophia when he was a madrasa student, and it seems that he continued with this after finishing school.\(^8\) During this time he gained the official title: Şahhâflarşeyhi. In 1769, after Aḥmed Efendi had passed the ruʾūs exam,\(^9\) he became a mûderris and worked at the different levels of madrasa ranks such as şaḥn-i şemān, ibtidâʾ-i altmûşlî and müsîlî-i Süleymâniyye\(^10\) in different madrasas. After his duties as a mûderris, he was then appointed as judge in Jerusalem, Egypt and Mecca, which were important Ottoman provinces, indicating his success in his job. At the age of 74, Aḥmed Efendi died on the way to Medina, when his boat sank in the Red Sea.\(^11\)

Es’ad Efendi had been with his father during his tenure in Jerusalem and Egypt, so not only did he have the opportunity to receive a good education, but he also learned about bureaucracy and government work from his father. Es’ad Efendi survived the accident, returned to Istanbul and continued his education with Hodja Emin Efendi for a long time. Sources containing information about Es’ad Efendi’s life indicate that he was patronised by Ḥālet Efendi (d. 1822),\(^12\) who had helped secure Es’ad’s first appointment as a mûderris with the rank of ibtidâʾ-i ħârîc in May of 1808, as was claimed.\(^13\)

Before holding high-level positions, like court-historiographer, director of the Imperial Publishing House, journalist and minister of education, Es’ad Efendi started his career as a mûderris in 1808.\(^14\) After that, because he had trouble supporting his family, Es’ad Efendi decided to switch from mûderris to a judge’s regency; he was hence assigned in Kütahya (a city in Western Anatolia) as regent of judge in 1821 and, in 1822, he was sent to Birgi (a town in Western Anatolia) with the same title, staying there until 1824. From then on, Es’ad Efendi’s career was on the rise, and this rise lasted until his death in 1848.\(^15\) In 1825, he returned to Istanbul as the clerk of the Istanbul Court and, in 1827, he was appointed as a chronicler (vak’a-nûvîs) and remained at this post for the rest of his life.
The most striking point is that Es’ad Efendi was the person brought to the head of the new practices of the Empire, as well as very high positions such as the judge of Istanbul (İstanbul kâdisi), the Nāḳibü’l-eşrāf and the chief military judge of Rumelia (Rumeli kâz’askeri). He was appointed in the census held for the first time in the Empire in 1831 and was appointed as the director of the Imperial Printing House (Tabḥâne-i Âmire) and the chief editor of the first official newspaper (Takvim-i Vekâyi) in 1831 as well; the first Ottoman Ambassador to Iran in 1833, a member of the Quarantine Council in 1838; a member of the Supreme Council of Judicial Ordinances (Meclîs-i Aḥḳām-i Dāḫiliyye) in 1839; and Minister of Education in 1846 – the first Minister of Education in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey’s history. Finally, just before his death, he was brought to the Presidency of the General Assembly of Education (Meclîs-i Maʿārif-i ʿUmūmiyye), in 1848. Although Es’ad Efendi aspired throughout his life to become ṣayḥ al-islām as the peak of his career, he never achieved this goal; Es’ad Efendi died on January 11, 1848 in his mansion on the Bosphorus in Kanlıca in Istanbul. He was buried in the garden of his library, which he had ordered built in 1845 in the Yerebatan district of Istanbul, following a funeral in the Sultan Ahmed Mosque where almost all of the scholars in Istanbul, state officials and the ṣayḥ al-islām were present.
During his life-time Es’ad Efendi produced many works in across diverse fields. Sometimes the disciplines he worked on were very different from each other in terms of content, although the topics he worked on share several characteristics. It is possible to categorise Es’ad Efendi’s original works under the three general headings: historical, literary and religious works. In addition to these categories, Es’ad Efendi translated works as well. Undoubtedly, the most important of his works in the field of history is his chronicle, generally known as Tārīḫ-i Es’ad, detailing in two volumes the events between October 1821 and July 1826.25 One of the most important indicators of Es’ad Efendi’s support for the Sultan’s reforms is undoubtedly his work Üss-i Zafer (‘The Bases of Victory’, published in 1828 by the Imperial Publishing House in Istanbul), which explains the reasons for the abolition of the Janissaries and how this decision was based on verses of the Qur’an, ḥadīths and quotations from various Islamic textual sources.26 Like most Ottoman bureaucrats, scholars and intellectuals, Es’ad Efendi was deeply interested in literature and he compiled a Divān of his poems and a Tezkire named Bāge-i şafā-endüz, which is an addendum (ţeyl) to the Tezkire of Sâlim.27 Aside from his works in these two genres of typical classical Ottoman literature, the most original works of Es’ad Efendi in the field of literature are Şāhidü’l-Müverriḥīn (The Testimony of the Chronogramers) and Sûrüri Mecmū’asi (The Miscellany of Sûrüri).28 The Sûrüri Mecmū’asi came into being as a collective effort and hence is not a work belonging to Es’ad Efendi alone. The poet Sûrüri (d. 1814) only collected chronograms for his mecmū’a and, after his death, the manuscript was passed on to his student Keçecizâde ʿİzzet Mollâ (d. 1829), and later, following Keçecizâde’s death, to Es’ad Efendi; all three of them added chronograms, and so the mecmū’a was completed as a collective effort. At the same time, Es’ad Efendi penned his work Şāhidü’l-Müverriḥin with the inspiration given to him by Sûrüri’s mecmū’a. Es’ad Efendi explains, in the Şāhidü’l-Müverriḥin, the features and types of the art of the genre of chronogram, evaluates and discusses various verses in each section of the work and recommends the most appropriate chronogram for each genre of chronogram. Moreover, he uses these explanations and evaluations to elaborate on the orthography rules in Ottoman-Turkish. With these practices, it seems that

25 An addition (ţeyl) to his chronicle was written by the clerk of the ministry of interior (dāḫiliyye nāẓiri), ʿAbdürzezzâk Bâhir Efendi (d. 1860), in one of the copies of Es’ad Efendi’s chronicles. See Millet Library in Istanbul, History (Tarih) Collection, MS 50.
26 Heinzelmann 2000.
27 Sâlim (d. 1743) was an Ottoman poet and calligrapher. He wrote a bibliographical work called Tezkire-i Sâlim that includes the biographies of the poets who lived between 1688-1722.
Es'ad Efendi was the first in the entire history of Ottoman literature to write a theory of a literary genre and express his own views as a poet, thereby acting as a literary critic.  

He also wrote many treatises on different topics of religion. Es'ad Efendi engaged with these issues within the boundaries of the Sunni branch of Islam, which was the doctrine of the state and of the majority of the Ottoman population, and never stepped outside these boundaries. In addition, translations occupy a large part of Es'ad Efendi's scholarly activities as he worked on translation and on its theory; his best-known translation is the Mustaṭraf, the translation of Muḥammed b. Ṭāhir Ibfashī's (d. 1446) El-Mustaṭraf min külli fennin mustazraf (A Quest for Attainment in Each Fine Art) which earned Es'ad Efendi the title ‘Mustaṭraf’s Translator’. In addition to some of the works mentioned above, Es'ad Efendi has compiled so many mecmū’aş that it is currently impossible to determine their number. He also wrote treatises on various subjects that appear to be lost. Their titles are mentioned in his mecmū’aş but the actual manuscripts cannot be located in his own or other's libraries.

2 Es'ad Efendi's Book List

When Es'ad Efendi was appointed the regent of judge in Kütahya, he made a list of the titles of the books he took with him from Istanbul to Kütahya, added those he later bought in Kütahya, and recorded this list in his mecmū’a. The mecmū’a (ms 3847), which includes the book list discussed in this paper, is found within Es'ad Efendi’s own collection in the Istanbul Süleymaniye Manuscript Library. The mecmū’a has mixed content, with no special/systematic inner organisation, and is a 161-leaf,}

29 Of course, it has to be noted that the literary critics in the biographical dictionaries (teşekkires) of the poets and art of poetry are not ignored. However, teşekkires are generally biographical works and focus on the lives of poets and their poetic aspects rather than a particular literary genre.

30 Marzolph 2013, 35; Vadet 1979; Marzolph 1992, 60.

31 Yılmazer 2000, LXXXI-II.

32 Mecmū’aş stand in the world of Ottoman manuscripts as a very special and complicated genre. One of the main reasons of this speciality and complication is that, as mentioned above, mecmū’aş consisted of a variety of selected texts. Occasionally, some were produced systematically and professionally for one discernible purpose like anthologies. On the obverse of this systematic production, some mecmū’aş are characterised by dissimilarity, multiplicity and assortment of texts. These are mixed-content mecmū’aş that compilers have made for their own use, and do not have consistency of subject or genre throughout. These are often called ‘personal mecmū’aş’ to emphasise the compiler’s motives for selection and intended use. Es'ad Efendi compiled a personal mecmū’a while he was in Kütahya and Birgi. He copied his original texts, as well as various texts from the books he read, into this manuscript.
large-size manuscript (193 × 123 mm). There is no particular layout, nor frame, and the MS is generally written in black ink. The texts in the manuscript, which were written in Turkish, Arabic and Persian, depending on the source-text read, sometimes have a heading, especially if they were copied from other books. There is not any note-taking discipline readily apparent. For instance, there are many folios that have different directions of writing on a same page. Moreover, it is possible to see many entries on a single page, while sometimes only one couplet is the sole content of the folio. Following the marginal notes is also difficult: for instance, notes on different pages are connected to each other by lines. Pages were not numbered by Es‘ad Efendi himself. Although correspondences were specifically dated by Es‘ad Efendi, the other texts have no dates. Es‘ad Efendi used to write “Ḥüve‘l-Mu‘īn” (He-God-is the Helper) at the beginning of the texts he created himself. This habit is seen frequently, in this mecmū‘a and in the other mecmū‘as he compiled in later years. The content of mecmū‘as can be categorised as follows.

**Copies of official correspondence**: in his mecmū‘as, Es‘ad Efendi made copies of letters he wrote to other bureaucrats, as well as copies of letters sent to him by others. Although mostly official in content, some letters contain biographical information about Es‘ad Efendi.

**Excerpts from various books**: Es‘ad Efendi noted the references of most of the excerpts he included in his mecmū‘as. This provides an opportunity to learn about the books he has read and to profile him as a reader, and it illustrates the relationship between the works he wrote and those he read.

**Essays**: the mecmū‘as contain a number of essays written by Es‘ad Efendi on the topics of Turkish spelling and punctuation, language reforms and poetic prose. These essays will serve as the primary source for describing his personality as an intellectual.

**Poem quotations and notes**: these contain verses written by other poets as well as the chronograms composed for his new appointments. They also contain annotations and dates Es‘ad Efendi wrote regarding the works of other poets.

**Drafts**: Es‘ad Efendi’s mecmū‘as contain the drafts of some of his works that have since then been published in final form. The drafts provide a glimpse into the way the work was created, and reveal the methods Es‘ad Efendi used in his work.

**Biographies of other authors**: as a writer of a bibliographical anthology, Es‘ad Efendi was keenly interested in biographical information.
In addition to the general categories cited above, his mecmūʿas contain selections from Qurʾānic verses and ḥadīths, drug recipes, date calculations and his financial sheets.

The book list is found on ff. 140b-142a in the mecmūʿa. Esʿad Efendi’s list starts with the heading “It is the books I have brought from Istanbul to Kütahya which are mentioned [here]” and contains 169 titles. The second part of the list, entitled “Books Acquired in Kütahya,” consists of 29 volumes. As it can be inferred from these titles, Esʿad Efendi had made meticulous records in his mecmūʿa of the volumes he took to Kütahya when he was posted there for an assignment, and of the books he purchased there. With respect to the properties of Esʿad Efendi’s list, although he has sometimes listed books on fiqh and fatwā or history and literature together, no further effort at classification can be observed, and, predictably, abridged titles of books have been used, especially for Arabic volumes, rather than their full titles. Nevertheless, he has taken note of the names of the authors of the books, and sometimes of the copyists or calligraphers as well. In the case of mecmūʿas or booklets including a known author or copyist, these names have been given; however, some mecmūʿas are described by their content or appearance.

In this list, which runs for about one and a half folio, the titles of the books are written side by side and there are usually five of them in a row. The information contained in Esʿad Efendi’s detailed lists would have helped him keep track of his inventory and prevented loss during his subsequent moves. It is Esʿad Efendi’s care for his books and his efforts to record them that have enabled his extensive collection to survive to the present day. Nevertheless, as explained

33 The original Turkish title in Esʿad Efendi’s mecmūʿa is: Āsitāneden Kütahya’ya götürdüğüm kütübdür ki ẓikr olunur.
34 The original Turkish title in Esʿad Efendi’s mecmūʿa is: Kütahya’dan tedārik olunan kütüb.
35 For example, instead of Ravżatüʾl-Aḥbāb fī Siyeriʾn-Nebī ve-l-Āl ve-l-Aṣḥāb, he writes Ravżatüʾl-Aḥbāb for short.
36 Such as Mecmūʿa-i Esʿār, Mecmūʿa ez-Fīkh, Mecmūʿa-i Tūlānī or Siġir Dili Mecmūʿa ez-Fīkh. These examples and similarly-described mecmūʿas probably have unknown compilers, otherwise Esʿad Efendi, whose attention to citing the names of authors, copyists or calligraphers is notable, would have noted them down as he has done in other mecmūʿas.
37 Today, the Esʿad Efendi book collection in the Süleymaniye Manuscript Library still contains one or more copies of many volumes recorded in this list. It is not possible to know whether Esʿad Efendi took any of these volumes with him, and if he did, which ones. Although the online catalogue has been checked for each book, only the catalogue numbers assigned to them in the Süleymaniye Manuscript Library are provided here as needed; however, this does not mean that the corresponding volume has been taken to Kütahya or acquired there.
above, while Es'ad Efendi has not explicitly classified the books on his list, he has made a systematic recording of them and added details like appearance, price and the persons the books were sold or lent to. The notes Es'ad Efendi has written next to some of the book entries shows that he did not collect books solely out of personal preferences as a reader or as requirements for his government job, but that he was also engaged in book circulation and trade. In addition, some books were marked with the letter mīm written in red ink and Es'ad Efendi explains the mīm as follows: “The ones marked in red were trusted to Allah’s care and shipped to Istanbul in the custody of my wife. May Allah protect, 1821-22”. As the note explains, Es'ad Efendi sent some 90 of the volumes he either brought from Istanbul or acquired in Kütahya with his wife, who left Kütahya before he did. He made a mark next to the volumes he sent to ensure that they all arrived safe and sound.

His first list begins with the entries Qurʾān and Tafsir al-Beyzāvī, and continues with Münāvī’s (d. 1467) annotation of Cāmiʿü’s-Ṣaģīr (two volumes). Es'ad Efendi has recorded three Qurʾāns in his list, two of which he took to Kütahya, and one he acquired there. One of the volumes is recorded as “Holy Qurʾān written on 60 folios”. Together with the Qurʾān copies, there are four tafsīrs (al-Suyūṭī’s tafsīr Itḳān fī ʿulūm al-Ḳurʾān, Tafsir al-Beyzāvī, Risāletü’t-tenzihāt by Saçaklızāde, al-Rāġib al-Iṣfahānī’s Durrat al-taʾwīl fī mutašābih al-tanzīl), all of which Es'ad Efendi had brought from Istanbul and not acquired in Kütahya.

The complete Es'ad Efendi’s Library collection has an extensive Qurʾānic exegesis selection counting 222 volumes, some of which are primary sources in interpretation, and others secondary sources, written across the Ottoman territory. Besides the obvious purposes of reading the Qurʾān for worship and Qurʾānic interpretations for better understanding of the Qurʾān, these books had a special importance for Es'ad Efendi. As Es'ad Efendi was assigned to Kütahya as a regent, he would be responsible for adjudicating cases related to the study of fiqh based on the Qurʾān. Therefore, he also needed interpretations to do his job properly.

Of course, regents made extensive use of legal resources as well. This is why, in addition to books on fiqh and Islamic inheritance, there were almost 100 volumes on calculation, ḥadīṯ and theology, which were also resources to support the study of fiqh. This wealth of knowledge on Islamic studies, comprising almost half of the books on the list, suggests that Es'ad Efendi took nearly the entire Ottoman

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38 Mecmûʿ şurḥ ile işâret olunan kitâblar mütevekkilên ‘ale’l-Allâhi te’âlâ harem yeddî-yêle Âsitâne’yê irsâl olundu. Allahümme sellemnâ fi gurre-i Rebi’ü’l-Âhir 1237.
39 For a definition of regency, see: İpşirli in TDVIA.
Authors as Readers in the Mamlūk Period and Beyond, 277-302

madrasa compendium with him to Kütahya. The volumes acquired in Kütahya are of similar nature to those brought from Istanbul, and are mostly on fiqh, fatwā and hadīth. Furthermore, with the exception of the Qurʾān and Mūnāvī’s comments on Şeybanî’s (d. 805) famous works Câmî‘î’s-Şağîr, mentioned above, there are no recurring entries for books acquired in Kütahya, which means that Es’ad Efendi only bought the books he had not brought from Istanbul, did not have on hand or felt the need to buy during his assignment.

Continuing to look closely at Es’ad Efendi’s lists, books on fiqh make up a sizeable number of the books on the list, and include almost all resources read and studied in the Ottoman Empire as well as Hanafî literature. Among the primary resources of fiqh and the Hanafî school, el-Câmi‘î’s-Şağîr is one of the most reliable. In Es’ad Efendi’s list, Mūnāvī’s comments on Câmî‘î’s-Şağîr is in the fourth position after Qurʾāns. The list also shows that the book was sold by Es’ad Efendi, but then acquired again in Kütahya. In other words, the fiqh books on the list begin with this key resource, which was still current at the time. Another resource in the Hanafî fiqh literature is al-Kudûrî’s (d. 428/1037) el-Muḫṭaṣar.

Cited together with this work by Kudûrî is ‘Alâeddîn es-Semerkandî’s (d. 539/1144) Tuḥfetü’l-Fuḳahâ, which is noted as being based on Kudûrî’s el-Muḥṭaṣar, but having a different systematic approach than the works written up to that time. On Es’ad Efendi’s list, one also finds books that are known to be popular among Hanafî scholars: Burhâneddîn al-Merginâni’s (d. 593/1197) al-Hidâye, Tâcûşerî’s (d. eighth/fifteenth century) Vikâyetü’r-Rivâye, Mollâ Hüsrev’s (d. 885/1480) Dûrerü’l-Hükkâm and Ğurerü’l-aḫkâm, and İbrâhîm al-Ḥalebî’s (d. 956/1549) Mûlteḳâ’l-Ebhûr. The fact that he took with him all of these resources and a number of other books to Kütahya leads one to think that Es’ad Efendi did a vast amount of reading and analysis for his position. To support sources in fiqh with studies in Islamic inheritance, calculation, hadîth, theology, prophetic biography, morality and politics, and logic, Es’ad Efendi’s list contains fundamental works like Makâṣîdü’l-Makâṣîd (by al-Taftâzâni, d. 1390), Kirst Hadîş Tercûmesi (Translations of Forty ḥadîthṣ) by an Ottoman scholar Vaḥdetî (d. 1723) and Şerîḥ-i Sirâciye (by al-Curcânî, d. 1413). One of the most extensive areas in Es’ad Efendi’s list is books on fatwâ. Most of the fatwâ books written either by Hanafî jurists or in the Ottoman territory that were part of Es’ad Efendi’s collection were taken with him to Kütahya. Es’ad Efendi added this list to his mecnu’a to ensure that he had all the resources he may need while performing his duty as a regent in Kütahya. Es’ad Efendi’s close in-

41 Hızlı 2003, 329; Erünsal, Aydın 2019.
terest in *fiqh* and *fatwā* literature may be the result of his professional needs and interests, as well as his career plans; Es'ad Efendi aspired to become ṣayḥ al-islām one day, and could have been working towards this objective from the early days of his assignment.

In his history as well as Üss-i Zafer, Es'ad Efendi often referenced Qur’anic verses and ḥadīths, and cited almost all scholarly Islamic references known in the Ottoman territories. Es'ad Efendi’s grasp of Islamic sources, owing to his father being a judge (qāḍī) and partly responsible for educating Es'ad Efendi, proved to be a great advantage in his career. Being pro-modernisation, Sultan Mahmud often commissioned Es'ad Efendi to produce propaganda against the opponents of modernisation and, for this, Es'ad Efendi used ḥadīths, verses and Islamic sources; in this light, being well-versed in Islamic literature boosted Es'ad Efendi’s career. Furthermore, after 1835, which may be considered his late career, Es'ad Efendi wrote treatises on faith, worship and conversion, and used such a variety of sources to substantiate his arguments. There is no doubt that Es'ad Efendi's treatises are the culmination of the readings he did in his early career.

Es'ad Efendi’s list also contains 12 history books, four of which were acquired in Kütahya and all of which are noteworthy. In 1827, six years after being posted to Kütahya, Es'ad Efendi was appointed chronicler (vak’a-nüvis) and the history books on his list show that he had started reading about history far in advance of his appointment. All of the history books on Es'ad Efendi’s list are in Turkish and include chronicles by Ottoman court chroniclers like Peçevi, Na’īmā, Rāṣid, and ʿĀsım Efendi. The chronicles by Peçevi, Sa’ādeddīn Efendi and Na’īmā in particular are known to be read among Pashas and Ottoman bureaucrats.

However, Es'ad Efendi diversified into subjects like Albanian history and started translating Muḥammed Muṣliḥiddīn al-Lāri al-Anṣārī’s Persian-language world history titled *Merʾāt al-edwār wa merḳāt al-akbār* (A Mirror for the Eras and the Staircase of Narratives) while he was in Kütahya, giving it the title *Zībā-yi Tevārīḥ* (The Ornament of Chronicles). It is possible to consider Es'ad Efendi’s studies in history and this translation as evidence that he considered history or being a historian a step in his career.

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42 There are references to Münāvī’s comments on Câmi’ü’s-Ṣaġīr, which is found in Es’ad Efendi’s list, in Üss-i Zafer as well, see Es’ad Efendi 1828, 170-4.

43 Sievert 2013, 189-91.

44 See MS 3847 (in Es’ad Efendi Library Collection in Süleymaniye Library), 30a-34b. Es’ad Efendi intended to translate the book into Turkish by referring to its previous translation by Sa’ādeddīn Efendi and other resources, taking its timeline from creation to the reign of Yavuz Sultan Selim and extending it to the Mahmud II era, but he was only able to translate the text to the chapter on the Daylamis. See Süleymaniye Manuscript Library (Istanbul), Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 2410 (holograph).
The list also contains a geography and a logic book, as well as three books on morals and politics. The geography book on the list is Cihān-nūmā, which was written by the famous Ottoman scholar and encyclopaedist Ḥāǧǧī Ḥalīfā. Therefore, it is possible that Esʿad Efendi used this work while translating Muḥammad Mušliḥiddin al-Lāri al-Anṣāri’s world history. Books on morality and politics that Esʿad Efendi read, such as Naṣīḥatuʾl-Mūlūk (by the Ottoman scholar Şarīʿ Abdullāh), Şerḥuʾl Aḥlākuʾl-ʿAdūdiyye (by the Ottoman scholar İsmāʿīl Mūfid İstanbul) and Aḥlāk-i ʿAlāī (by the Ottoman scholar Kınalızāde) introduced another perspective to his identity as a historian, and served as a source for the treatises on ʿamel (deeds) that he would later write.

In the case of Esʿad Efendi, for whom reading and writing were a major part of life, it is difficult to place hard boundaries between his professional and personal interests. However, it makes sense to consider the books of literature on the list as reflective of Esʿad Efendi’s personal reading habits. Esʿad Efendi took 16 volumes that may be considered books of literature (such as Dīvān, mašnawīs) and rhetoric books. Obviously, the books on rhetoric and the dictionaries, including one of key terms in Islamic studies, particularly Qurʾān and ḥadīṭ, entitled el-Külliyyāt, a dictionary of terms entitled et-Taʿrīfāt and Fi ḳhüʾl-Luḡa ve Sirrüʾl-ʿArabiyye, are books that Esʿad Efendi probably used as sources while reading or working on the Qurʾān or Arabic interpretations and fiqh texts. Meanwhile, if we consider that Esʿad Efendi began his work on Turkish spelling at around this time, the fact that he brought dictionaries such as ed-Dürerüʾl-Münteḫabātiʾl-Mensūre (Gaḥātāt-i Ḥafīd Efendi), Luḡat-i Vankulu, Deşīşe, Burḥān-i Kāṭʿi, Tuḥfe-i Vehbī makes sense for his researches about the spelling. Esʿad Efendi’s mecmūʿa also contains his short work on Turkish spelling rules, and the definitions and etymologies of some words. Esʿad Efendi’s knowledge of these matters must have helped him considerably during his tenure as director of the first Imperial publishing house, where he was in charge of choosing the books to be printed. One of his successors as chronicler, Lütfi Efendi, even argues that Esʿad Efendi’s proofreading performance in the printing of Üss-i Ẓafer was what brought him the directorship.

The key sources that draw Esʿad Efendi’s portrait as a reader are the compendia and collected works on his lists. For pleasure reading,

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45 Esʿad Efendi has cited Kınalızāde’s Kūnhūl-aḥbār in Üss-i Ẓafer as well. See Esʿad Efendi 1828, 200.
46 For example, his short treatise Naṣr-uʾn-Azīz (The Sacred Help). See Yılmazer 2000, LXXV.
47 These are all the dictionaries that were often used by the Ottoman scholars.
his preferences are poetry like divan and mesnevi; in fact, the prevalence of poetry for pleasure reading among Ottoman readers continued until printed books became common and Western genres like the novel gained currency. In this respect, it can be said that Es’ad Efendi acted like a typical pre-print Ottoman scholar in his personal reading. Es’ad Efendi brought variety into the poetry he read by expanding to the mesnevi genre, and he chose the works of Atayi, which was very popular in the Ottoman territories. On the other hand, he preferred poets closer to his time for divan readings. Küliyât-ı ‘Atâ’i (Complete Works of ‘Atâ’i), 49 Şerh-i Gülistân (Annotation of Gûlistân), Küliyât-ı Sûrûri (Complete Works of Sûrûri), 50 Divân-ı Sâmi (Divân of Sâmi), Divân-ı ‘Âsim (Divân of ‘Âsim), Küliyât-ı Nâbi (Complete Works of Nâbi) 51 are some of the other books than the mecmûas that reflect his ‘personal reading’ habits, and so a discussion of these books within his library collection is warranted in order to better grasp Es’ad Efendi as a reader. In addition, as mentioned above, Es’ad Efendi worked on Sûrûri’s mecmûa, and we can thus imagine that Es’ad Efendi was interested in his other works, too.

As explained above, the largest section in Es’ad Efendi’s personal library, apart from his mecmûas, is literature, comprised of 426 books and second only to the number of books on fiqh. One-third of the library, or 135 out of 426 books, are compendia of poetry and many books classified under literature are in verse; it is natural that, as a court poet himself, Es’ad Efendi was interested in poetry. Even if, as a classical Ottoman literate, Es’ad Efendi had to write texts in prose (correspondences) and to read prose (resources, books on fiqh), poetry occupied a major part of his personal reading, as already mentioned. Es’ad Efendi also compiled a Divân, in which he used plain language, a way to implement the linguistic reform movement of the era in his own poetry. Since Es’ad Efendi was also a writer of biographical dictionaries (his Bâğçe-i safâ-endûz), it is natural to come across books on Prophetic biography and other biographies, such as Ravzatü’l- Aḥbâb, or Süleymânnâme, on his list. It is certain that Es’ad Efendi made use of the biographies on his list as resources, but it is also reasonable to think that he was inspired by the way information was compiled and books were written.

Es’ad Efendi’s list also includes books on mysticism, such as Şerh-i Risâle-i Naḵşibendiyye (by Ḥâdimî), or Kitâbû’l-Ḥiṭâb (by İsmâ’îl Hakki); five of them were brought from Istanbul and three were ac-

49 ‘Atâ’i (d. 1635), known as Nev’î-zâde ‘Atâ’i, is an Ottoman poet. The collected works include ‘Atâ’î’s biographical dictionary and various letter examples. Es’ad Efendi makes references to ‘Atâ’i in Üss-i Zafer as well. Es’ad Efendi 1828, 256.
50 Sûrûri (d. 1814) is an Ottoman poet.
51 Nâbi (d. 1712), Sâmi (d. 1734), ‘Âsim (d. 1760) are Ottoman poets.
quired while in Kütahya. Esʿad Efendi’s interest in the Naḳşıbendī Order is clear since his father was close to it; nevertheless, Esʿad Efendi never revealed himself as a mystic, which leads one to wonder whether his interest in this subject was limited to its professional application.

Finally, mecmūʿas merit particular attention, as these hold a special place in both Esʿad Efendi’s library and book list: Esʿad Efendi’s book collection features 557 mecmūʿas, forming the largest category in his library. Mecmūʿas can be thought of as ‘the sidelines’ of library collections in Ottoman book culture in that they always make up for a shortcoming of a collection. For a statesman like Esʿad Efendi, mecmūʿas were both an instrument for his reading and writing activities, as well as a convenient form that contained texts written by various authors about different topics, saving him the burden of taking many other books to Kütahya when he was assigned there. Therefore, mecmūʿas take up a considerable part of his library and, thus, of his book list. Esʿad Efendi took 14 mecmūʿas from Istanbul to Kütahya, and these mecmūʿas are like the table of contents or the summary of his list: there are mecmūʿas on fiqh and fatwā, as well as poetry, and a mecmūʿa entitled Mecmūʿa-i Edebiyye, which contains prose.

3 Concluding Remarks

Although madrasa literature lies at the core of the reading practices of Ottoman scholars, the latter personalised their readings according to their interests, scholarly and professional aspirations, and other activities. Esʿad Efendi focused on Islamic studies and law, supplementing these subjects with history, literature and mysticism. The books Esʿad Efendi read on Islamic studies were usually in Arabic, except for fatwā books, and these were mostly by Ottoman compilers, although there are a few Arabic examples too. The predominance of Arabic in Islamic sources can be observed in Esʿad Efendi’s book list as well as in his library. Among the almost 4,000 books, the most numerous are Kütübü’l-Fiḳh (The Books of fiqh) with 552 books. Adding 267 Kütübü’l-hadīt (The Books of ḥadīts), 222 Kütübü’l-Tefsīr (The Books of tafsīr), and 64 Kütübü’l-Fetāvā (Books of fatwā) brings the total of nearly a thousand, making up a significant portion of the books he owned. As I mentioned in several footnotes above, there are references to Islamic sources in Esʿad Efendi’s historical writings, but they are more often found in the religious treatises, Esʿad Efendi’s focus on towards the end of his career.

The Persian-language books on the list are mostly on literature and history. The majority of the books are in Turkish and cover a wide range of subjects, from fatwā to biography, rhetorics, literature and history. Esʿad Efendi’s knowledge of Persian and familiar-
ity with works written in Persian must have played a part in his assignment as the first ambassador to Iran. Archive documents suggest that Es'ad Efendi was closely involved in the cultural scene. His personal library contains books that may have been bought from Iran. In other words, Es'ad Efendi did not simply carry out an official duty in Iran, but was a close follower of books and cultural activities as well.

The book list and the works written by Es'ad Efendi in the following years reveal the relationship between the texts compiled into his mecmû'a, the readings he made, and the career path he followed. As such, this study attempted to show how the reading practices of an Ottoman scholar shaped his career by drawing attention to the relationship between mecmû'as and reading practices – an area that has not been studied in detail yet. A comparison of the books on the list and the texts copied into his mecmû'a shows that the parallels between them are limited to a few citations and notes. The reading that Es'ad Efendi undertook, starting from his time in Kütahya until his return to Istanbul, deeply influenced his later career, his activities, and the ideas surrounding them.
Appendix

Es'ad Efendi’s Book Lists (with translation of his notes)

List 1  Books he brought from Istanbul to Kütahya

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of the book</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Tefsir-i Beyzavi with calligraphy by Hayali. It was loaned to es-Seyh</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Theology (Tafsir)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibrahim Karahisari who is residing in Birgi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 The exquisite Muṣḥaf-ı Şerif written in sixty leaves</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Coran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Printed Muṣḥaf</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Coran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Şerh-i Cami u’s-şagir by Munavi, sold to Molla - two volumes</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Theology (Hadith)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Hadis-i Erbo’in [Translation of Forty Hadit] by Vahdeti, with</td>
<td>Persian</td>
<td>Islamic Theology (Hadith)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>calligraphy by the commentator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Ravżatü’l-Ahbab on Prophetic Biography, exquisite</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Prophetic Biography (Siyer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Hāşiye-yi Durer by Şurunbulali</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fiqh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Siyer-i Abdul’aziz Efendi der Tercüme-i Kazerunî</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Prophetic Biography (Siyer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Prophetic biography by Abdul’aziz Efendi, translation of Kazeruni’s work]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Siyer-i Veyesi 60 - new [Prophetic Biography by Veysi]</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Prophetic Biography (Siyer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Fatâwâs of Ali Efendi, with nesîh calligraphy</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fatwa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Other Fatâwâs of Ali Efendi, dispersed</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fatwa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Nhecî’n-Necât</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fatwa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Behcetü’l-Fatâwâ with calligraphy by Şiddikizade</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fatwa)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

52 In order to clearly explain the many abbreviations used by Es’ad Efendi, I have translated his notes directly into English, instead of giving the full Ottoman Turkish transcription, and preferred to give the original terms in footnotes, where clarification is required. My own translations for the book titles are given in square brackets.

53 Today, the Es’ad Efendi book collection in the Süleymaniye Manuscript Library (SK) in Istanbul still contains one or more copies of many volumes recorded in this list. It is not possible to know whether Es’ad Efendi took any of these volumes with him to Kütahya, and if he did, which ones. Therefore, all the copies of the books in the list in Es’ad Efendi’s book collection today are mentioned in the footnotes. SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 3, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 42, 43, 97.

54 Exquisite is nefiś in Turkish.

55 Two other Şerh-i Cami’u’s-şagir, by Munavi, are still part of Es’ad Efendi’s book collection. SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 364, 368.

56 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 340.

57 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 2112.

58 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 651.

59 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 2286.

60 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 2285, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291.

61 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 1065, 1067, 1068, 1069, 1070, 1071, 1072, 1081, 1082.

62 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 1033.

63 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 558, 559.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of the book</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14 Durretu’-Tevil by al-İsfahâni. It was loaned to Gürçü Aḥmed Efendi who is residing in Birgi</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Theology (Tafsîr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Bezzâziyye</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fatwâ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Kâdiḥân</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fatwâ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Dûrer wa Gûrer</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fatwâ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Mecmû’a with calligraphy of Dursunzâde</td>
<td>Multilingual</td>
<td>Miscellany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Durr-i Muhtâr gifted to Muftî</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fiqh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Şerh-i Manzûmeti Muhibbîyye by al-Nâblusi</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fiqh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Fatâwâs of Timurtaşı</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fatwâ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Fatâwâs of Ḥayriyye</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fatwâ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Treatise of Timurtaşı</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fiqh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Kayd-i Cedîd, exquisite</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fatwâ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Şerh-i Torikat-i Muhammedîyye by Ḥadîmi</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Misticism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Şerh-i Şahî if</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Theology (Kalâm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Şerh-i the Treatise of Nakshîbedîyye by Ḥadîmi</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Misticism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Şerh-i Menâr by Ibn-i Melek</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fiqh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Bahîr-i Rû’îk with Tekmile four volumes</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fiqh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Fatâwâs of Seyyid Rîzâ</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fatwâ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Treatise on calculation in Turkish</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Calculation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 Sâkk by Şanîzâde [Miscellany on Islamic Law]</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Miscellany</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

64 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 176.
65 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 1089, 1090, 1091.
66 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 856.
67 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 3663.
68 It is possible that he was the calligrapher Dursunzâde ʿAbdullâh Feyzî (d. 1610).
69 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 687.
70 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 1555.
71 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 1114.
72 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, mss 1118-1119.
73 Treatise/treatises is risâle/resâ’il in Turkish. This treatise is probably Risâle fi’n-Nukûd.
74 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 586, 853-854.
75 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 1529.
76 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 1253, 1254, 1272.
77 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 3543.
78 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 563.
79 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 563.
80 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 1111.
81 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 1111.
82 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 1111.
83 It is not clear which treatise is meant.
84 This miscellany could not be found in Es’ad Efendi’s current book collection.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of the book</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Furūk by İsmā’īl Hakki</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fiqh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galatāt-i Ḥafid, lost</td>
<td>Arabic-Turkish</td>
<td>Dictionary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tārīḫ-i Hasan Paşa [the Chronicle of Hasan Paşa]</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Külliyyāt-i Atāyī [the Complete Works of Atāyī]</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tārīḫ-i Vāṣif [the Chronicle of Vāṣif]</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellany by Ḥafid-i Taftāzānī</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Miscellany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadīs-i Erbaʿin by Akkirmāni [Forty Hadīṯs]</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Theology (Hadīṭ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʿAleʾl-kāfiye by Cāmī</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Syntax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tārīḫ-i Naʿīmā [The Chronicle of Naʿīmā] printed, two volumes</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tārīḫ-i Rāṣid [The Chronicle of Rāṣid] printed, three volumes</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tārīḫ-i Ağvan [The History of Albania]</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tārīḫ-i Timur [The History of Timurlenk]</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cihānnümā</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vankuli, two volumes</td>
<td>Arabic-Turkish</td>
<td>Dictionary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ed-Deşīşe</td>
<td>Persian-Turkish</td>
<td>Dictionary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tibyān-i Nāfi'</td>
<td>Persian-Turkish</td>
<td>Dictionary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tārīfh-i Seyyid</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Dictionary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**85** SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, mss 3244, 3245, 3681.

**86** Two copies of this book are preserved in Es’ad Efendi’s book collection today. SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, mss 2862, 3207.

**87** He may be Eyüplü Hasan Paşa (d. 1723) who was the governor of Bağdād.

**88** SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 2872.

**89** SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 2190.

**90** SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 3742.

**91** This book could not be found in Es’ad Efendi’s current book collection.

**92** SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 162, 3075, 3076, 3077.

**93** SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 2187, 2439.

**94** SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 2130, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135.

**95** This book could not be found in Es’ad Efendi’s current book collection.

**96** SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 2092.

**97** SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 2046.

**98** SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 3286, 3288.

**99** SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 3210, 3211.

**100** SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 3189.

**101** SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 3255, 3256, 3257.

**102** SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 3198, 3199, 3200, 3201, 3202, 3203.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of the book</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zeyl-i Aṭāyī 103</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Biography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mecmü'a on Islamic Law 104</td>
<td>Unknown (possibly Arabic)</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fiqh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mecmü'a on Fiqh with my own humble calligraphy</td>
<td>Unknown (possibly Arabic)</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fiqh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitābu’l-Ḥiṭāb by İsmā’īl Ḥaḳḳı 105</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Mysticism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Şerh-i Hadis-i Erba'in by Şeyh Ḥaḳḳı 106</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Islamic Theology (Ḥadīṯ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Şerh-i Ṣalavāt-i Meşīşiyye by Ḥaḳḳı 107</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Prayer Book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mecmü'a by Ḥaḳḳı, two volumes 108</td>
<td>Multilingual</td>
<td>Miscellany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mecmü'a 109 (with my own humble calligraphy) [includes]: el-Keşkūl/el-Musemmā [bound with] İntiḥāb uʾl-ʿUlūm</td>
<td>Multilingual</td>
<td>Miscellany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatāwās of Ali Efendi Akkirmâni 110</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fatwā)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esbāh ve’n-Nezā’ir 111</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fiqh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devhatu’l-Meşâyiḥ with the Zeyl-i Munib 112</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Biography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Şerh-i Gulistān by Sıyāhizâde and with his calligraphy 113</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Şadrü’s-Şerī’a 114</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fiqh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multeqā 115</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fiqh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süleymānname by Aziz Efendi 116</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Biography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ḥilânetu’l-Fatāwâ 117</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fiqh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zeyl-i Esbāh by Ibnīl-Muṣannif 118</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Islamic Law (Fiqh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mecmû’atu’l-Fatâwâ [includes] Resâ’il-i uṭrâ 119</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Miscellany</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

103 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 2309, 2310, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344.
104 It was not possible to find the manuscripts recorded in the list as Mecmü’a in the library catalogue.
105 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 1608, 1621.
106 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 341.
107 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 352, 3580.
108 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 3572, 3767.
109 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 1144.
110 This book could not be found in Es’ad Efendi’s current book collection.
111 There are more than ten copies of Esbāh ve’n-Nezā’ir (by Ibn Nuceym) in Es’ad Efendi’s library.
112 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 2265, 2441.
113 This book could not be found in Es’ad Efendi’s current book collection.
114 It is not clear which book is meant. Es’ad Efendi gave only the author’s name here, it may refer to al-Vıkâye, which was frequently read among Ottoman scholars.
115 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 1047.
116 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 2284.
117 This book could not be found in Es’ad Efendi’s current book collection.
118 This book could not be found in Es’ad Efendi’s current book collection.
119 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 698.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of the book</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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120 SK Esʾad Efendī Collection, MS 1112.  
121 SK Esʾad Efendī Collection, MS 70.  
122 SK Esʾad Efendī Collection, MSS 224, 1165, 1166.  
123 SK Esʾad Efendī Collection, MSS 1203, 1204, 1382.  
124 SK Esʾad Efendī Collection, MSS 2579, 2566, 2567, 2568.  
125 Ḥāṣiyetuʾl Ḥayālī ‘alā Şerhiʾl-ʿAḳāʾid is meant here. SK Esʾad Efendī Collection, MS 1230.  
126 SK Esʾad Efendī Collection, MSS 1244, 1245.  
127 SK Esʾad Efendī Collection, MSS 3430.  
128 This book could not be found in Esʾad Efendī’s current book collection.  
129 SK Esʾad Efendī Collection, MSS 3000, 3001, 3679.  
130 Since this addendum is probably also a treatise that it is probably in a Mecmūʿa.  
131 This treatise is probably in a Mecmūʿa.  
132 SK Esʾad Efendī Collection, MSS 668, 669, 879, 992, 3631, 3808.  
133 Evḥaduʾl-Meṣālik could be meant.  
134 This book could not be found in Esʾad Efendī’s current book collection.  
135 SK Esʾad Efendī Collection, MSS 1224, 1225, 1226, 1227, 1242.  
136 This book could not be found in Esʾad Efendī’s current book collection.  
137 It is not clear which book is meant. Esʾad Efendī gave only the author’s name here.  
138 Probably Kuhistānī’s (d. 1554) work Cāmiʿuʾr-rumūz is meant. SK Esʾad Efendī Collection, MSS 612, 794, 872.  
139 SK Esʾad Efendī Collection, MSS 668, 669, 879, 992, 3631, 3769, 3808.
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140 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 2003.
141 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 667.
142 This treatise could be in a Mecmû’a now.
143 There are many treatises belonging to Ibn Nuceym in Es’ad Efendi Collection.
144 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 997.
145 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 3065, 3066.
146 Bursali Mehmeh Tahir, Osmanlı Müellifleri, ed. A. Fikri Yavuz and Ismail Özen, vol. 1 (İstanbul: Meral Yayınevi, 1972), 480. This book could not be found in Es’ad Efendi’s current book collection.
147 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 977.
148 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 1231, 1414, 3702.
149 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 1804, 1805.
150 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 2589, 3212.
151 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 2308.
152 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 629, 630, 631, 632.
153 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 3312.
154 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 3247.
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155 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 816.
156 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 3849.
157 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 2643, 2644.
158 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 3331, 3724, 3766, 3782.
159 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 1008.
160 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 860, 861, 862, 863.
161 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 1065, 1067, 1068, 1069, 1070, 1071, 1072, 1081, 1082.
162 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 617.
163 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 873, 874, 875, 876, 877.
164 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 1043, 1044.
165 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 2239.
166 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 558, 559.
167 It is not clear which book is meant.
168 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 1175, 1192.
169 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 3570.
170 This book could not be found in Es’ad Efendi’s current book collection.
171 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 3570.
172 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 812.
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¹³³ SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 1123, 1125.
¹³⁴ SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 1129.
¹³⁵ SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 529, 711, 712.
¹³⁶ This book could not be found in Es’ad Efendi’s current book collection.
¹³⁷ SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 929.
¹³⁸ SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 3782.
¹³⁹ SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 3695.
¹⁴⁰ SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 697, 924, 695, 3754.
¹⁴¹ SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 1184.
¹⁴² It is not clear which Çünkünnâme is meant, Es’ad Efendi gave only the author’s name here.
¹⁴³ SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 2412.
¹⁴⁴ SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 1164, 1457.
¹⁴⁵ It should be a Mecmû’a which contains texts from Sağnun’s (d. 854) work, al-Mudevvetu’l Kubrâ.
¹⁴⁶ SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 547.
¹⁴⁷ Devrân is a mystic ritual among şûfs. SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 1352.
¹⁴⁸ SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 3624.
¹⁴⁹ SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 614.
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190 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 1094, 1117.  
191 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 480, 500.  
192 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 1186.  
193 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 258.  
194 It is not clear which Şerh-i ‘Aḵāʾid is meant.  
195 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 3164, 3165.  
196 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 2661.  
197 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 31.  
198 This book could not be found in Es’ad Efendi’s current book collection.  
199 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 2999, 2999.  
200 There are still Şerh-i Câmi’u’s-ṣaḡīr by Munāvī in Es’ad Efendi Collection, today.  
201 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 3612.  
202 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 3324.  
203 Fatāwās of ‘Alī Efendi is meant. SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 1065, 1067, 1068,1069, 1070, 1071, 1072, 1081, 1082.  
204 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 2105, 2135.  
205 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 2094.  
206 It may be meant to refer to the ‘Asker-i Cedid of Vak’a-nuvis Aḥmed Vāṣif. This book could not be found in Es’ad Efendi’s current book collection.
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207 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 2149.
208 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 558, 559.
209 In this second and shorter list, Es’ad Efendi also recorded the prices of some books.
210 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 19, 21, 25.
211 It may be meant to refer to the Şerh-i Cāmi’u’s-ṣaghīr by Munāvī.
212 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 1050, 1051, 1052, 1053, 1054, 1055, 1056, 1057.
213 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 3589.
214 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 284.
215 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 3144.
216 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 379, 1240.
217 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 429, 430.
218 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 356.
219 This book could not be found in Es’ad Efendi’s current book collection.
220 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MSS 738, 799.
221 It is not clear which book is meant. Es’ad Efendi gave only the author’s name here.
222 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 1442.
223 It is not clear which book is meant. There are several books which have the title: Hiṣn-i Haşın.
224 This book could not be found in Es’ad Efendi’s current book collection.
225 SK Es’ad Efendi Collection, MS 3572.
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Es’ad Efendi (1828). Üss-i Zafer. İstanbul: Tabhane-i Amire.


Transliteration

ا  ā
ب  b
ت  t
ث  ṭ
ج  ḍ
d
ذ  ḍ
r
ز  z
س  s
ش  š or ş
س  s
ك  k
ل  l
م  m
ن  n
و  ū or w
ی  i or y
ہ  h
ا  a or at
ب  b
پ  p
ژ  ç
ف  v
گ  g
پ  p
Conference Programme
Authors as Readers in the Mamlūk Period and Beyond. Al-Ṣafadī and his Peers
Università Ca’ Foscari Venice, 10-12 December 2020

Provisional programme

Day 1 – 10 December, Ca’ Dolfin
14.00-14.15 Foreword (Antonella Ghersetti)
Coffee Break

Authors as Readers – al-Ṣafadī Specifically
15.45-16.30 Güllü Yıldız, “al-Ṣafadī and his iḫwān: Authoring and Reading the Epoch Through Correspondence”
16.30-17.15 Ahmed H. al-Rahim, “al-Ṣafadī and the Philosophers”
17.15-18.00 Gowaart Vandenbossche, “The Blind and the Bold: Networks of Meaning in al-Ṣafadī’s tarǧamas of Šāfiʿ ibn ‘Alī (d. 730/1330)”
18.00-18.45 Yehoshua Frenkel, “An Appendix to Two Works by al-Ṣafadī”
Aperitivo

Day 2 – 11 December, Ca’ Cappello
Authors’ Reading Practices I: Methodology – or How to Use What You Read?
8.30-9.15 Tiziano Dorandi, “Un auteur antique au travail. Nouvelles considérations sur le P. Herc. 1691/1021 de Philodème de Gadare”
9.15-10.00 Mehdi Berriah, “Le commentaire de la Risāla al-qusayriyya : un exemple de la méthode de travail d’Ibn Taymiyya”
10.00-10.45 Tania van Hemelryck, “Dis-moi ce que tu as lu... La place du livre dans le geste auctorial au XVe siècle”
Coffee Break

Authors’ Reading Practices I - Continuation
11.00-11.45 Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila, “Al-Maqrīzī as a Reader. The Case of The Testament of Ardašīr”
11.45-12.30 Michèle Goyens, “The Physician as Reader and Commentator of Other Physicians’ Works: The Testimony of Evrart De Conty and His Autograph Manuscript (c. 1380)”
12.30-13.15 Nazlı Vatansever, “The Portrait of Mustaṭraf, the Translator as a Reader”
Lunch at Venice Eat, Ca’ Foscari Courtyard

Authors’ Reading Practices II: Who Reads What and How? What for and How Do We Know?
15.45-16.30 Carine Juvin, “Reading on Writing: What Did the Mamlūk Calligraphers Read?”
Coffee Break

Authors’ Reading Practices II - Continuation
16.45-17.30 Adam Talib, “The Directionality of Poetry Collection”
17.30-18.15 Thomas Bauer, “Ibn Ḥaǧar Reads Ibn Nubātā”
19.30 Farewell Dinner

Day 3 – 12 December, Ca’ Cappello
Authors as Readers – Chancery & Archives
8.30-9.15 Olly Akkermann, “The Bohras as Neo-Fāṭimids: Documentary Remains of a Fāṭimid Past in Gujarat”
9.15-10.00 Fozia Bora, “Stories, Documents and Narrative Strategies: The Archival Turn in Medieval Arabic Historiography”
10.00-10.30 Stefan Leder, “Reading and Reception as Part of al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil’s Literary Production (12th c.)”
Coffee Break

Authors as Readers – Their Libraries
11.30-12.15 Frédéric Bauden, “al-Maqrīzī’s Traces of Readings”
12.15-13.00 Roger Chartier, “Les auteurs, ces lecteurs particuliers”

Conclusions (Élise Franssen)
Contributors

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Filologie medievali e moderne


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Authors read and they use their readings within their writing process. Scrutinising authors’ readings provides information on their tastes, working subjects at a given period, methodology, and scholarly milieu. It also brings a lot to intellectual history, highlighting the texts and manuscripts circulating in a certain context. Eight contributions investigating the readings of as many authors, from different points of view, are gathered here. The studied authors are mainly from pre-modern Islam – al-Qādī al-Fāḍil, Ibn Taymiyya, al-Ṣafadī, al-Subkī, al-Maqrīzī – with three exceptions: an incursion into the Ottoman nineteenth century – Es’ad Efendi –, a detour by the French court of Charles V – Evrart de Conty –, and a preface about Greek Antiquity – Philodême de Gadara.