

PERLE PREZIOSE

*Saggi biografici sul mondo islamico
offerti a Claudio Lo Jacono
per il suo ottantesimo compleanno*

A cura di
Daniela Amaldi, Michele Bernardini e Roberto Tottoli



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AL-MAQRĪZĪ (D. 845/1442) AS SEEN BY AL-SAHĀWĪ

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Despite recognition of al-Maqrīzī's literary achievements during his lifetime, both within and beyond the frontiers of the Mamluk territories, the biographies devoted to him by contemporary historians remain limited in both scope and content.² Among the few that are available, I have chosen to present in this volume dedicated to Claudio Lo Jacono the entry written by al-Sahāwī (d. 902/1498) in his biographical dictionary of persons who lived in the ninth/fifteenth century for three reasons.³ Primarily, this entry is one of the most extensive and comprehensive, comprising 1,348 words in Arabic. Al-Sahāwī also provides an extensive list of al-Maqrīzī's works, most of which he was able to access himself. Secondly, al-Sahāwī had the opportunity to become acquainted with al-Maqrīzī, despite the latter passing away when he was only thirteen years of age. In his chronicle, *al-Tibr al-masbūk*, at the beginning of the obituaries for the year 845/1441–2, al-Sahāwī includes al-Maqrīzī among those whom he had the opportunity to meet in person.⁴ Additionally, in his autobiography, al-Sahāwī lists al-Maqrīzī among his mentors suggesting a bond between the two men.⁵ Thirdly, al-Sahāwī presents an uncompromising view of al-Maqrīzī, offering a candid portrait of a scholar who was highly regarded by most of his contemporaries. It is a well-documented fact that in his works, al-Sahāwī did not refrain from expressing harsh criticism about his contemporaries. His *al-Ḍaw' al-*

¹ I am grateful to Bogdan Smarandache for reading and editing my text. I am the sole responsible for any remaining mistake.

² For a list of the sources in which biographies of al-Maqrīzī can be found, see Bauden, "Taḳī al-Dīn", p. 162 (fn. 1). The following reference may be added: al-'Aynī, *Iqd*, p. 574 (no. 195).

³ The text was compared with the entry found in his *al-Tibr al-masbūk*, a chronicle conceived as a supplement to al-Maqrīzī's *al-Sulūk*. The (minor) differences are noted in the footnotes.

⁴ Al-Sahāwī, *Al-Tibr*, I, p. 70.

⁵ Al-Sahāwī, *Iršād al-ġāwī*, p. 179.

lāmi‘ offers particularly trenchant examples of his tendency to adopt a harsh and critical stance towards the individuals he writes about. This fact was already known during his lifetime, as evidenced by an anecdote transmitted by the Aleppine historian Zayn al-Dīn ‘Umar b. Aḥmad al-Šammā‘ (d. 936/1529). Upon requesting access to a copy of *al-Ḍaw’ al-lāmi*‘ in Mecca during the year 916/1510–1, al-Šammā‘ was met with outright refusal. The copy belonged to the renowned Meccan historian, ‘Izz al-Dīn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. ‘Umar b. Fahd (d. 922/1516), who refused to share it on the basis that certain details in some biographies contained therein should be excluded from public view. Eleven years later, al-Šammā‘ finally gained access to the aforementioned copy, following the owner’s death, with the assistance of his son, Ġār Allāh b. Fahd (d. 954/1547). On the basis of this copy, al-Šammā‘ prepared an epitome, excluding the majority of al-Saḥāwī’s disparaging remarks.⁶

Al-Saḥāwī’s biography of al-Maqrīzī can be divided into several sections dealing with the scholar’s identity, education, career, literary output, criticisms, and descriptions drawn by coeval scholars. It also includes a sample of his poetry and concludes with a discussion of the circumstances surrounding his death. What distinguishes al-Saḥāwī’s portrayal of al-Maqrīzī is its frankness. Al-Saḥāwī acknowledges the numerous admirable qualities of al-Maqrīzī, including his diverse intellectual interests, his dedication to the pursuit of knowledge, which he never failed to pass on to others, his commitment to professional excellence, his profound understanding of the pre-Islamic era and other religious traditions, and his exemplary character and zeal for religious observance. Yet, despite the admirable traits he enumerates, al-Saḥāwī does not shy away from acknowledging his imperfections.

Primarily, al-Saḥāwī’s objective was to highlight al-Maqrīzī’s deficiencies in the field of tradition studies (*‘ulūm al-ḥadīth*). This is why he denigrates his grasp of the fundamentals of the science of tradition, such as the discipline of impugning and approving (*al-ġarḥ wa-l-ta’dīl*) the transmitters of a tradition. As an example, al-Saḥāwī emphasizes al-Maqrīzī’s lack of precision in documenting the names of traditionists, citing four instances where this is evident, particularly with regard to the orthography of these names. Al-Saḥāwī suggests that these examples of misspellings and slips of letters may reflect the sources consulted by al-Maqrīzī. He nevertheless holds that this observation does not exonerate al-Maqrīzī: given the depth of knowledge typically associated with

⁶ Al-Šammā‘, *al-Qabas al-ḥāwī*, I, 28. Al-Maqrīzī’s biography in the latter (I, p. 173–5, no. 167) is indeed devoid of any criticism.

the science of tradition, a traditionist is expected to either verify such errors or at least be able to spot them. In the same vein, al-Saḥāwī challenges al-Maqrīzī's assertion that he descended from the Fatimids. His critique does not pertain to the genealogy itself, but rather to the source upon which al-Maqrīzī based his assertion. Al-Saḥāwī discloses that he discovered that al-Maqrīzī's source was a certain al-Furriyānī, whom he characterizes as a consummate fabulist, despite al-Maqrīzī's estimation of him as a most learned transmitter (*ḥāfiẓ*).⁷ In the view of al-Saḥāwī, al-Maqrīzī is not only culpable of placing reliance on untrustworthy informants; he also covered his tracks by failing to quote them when reporting on their statements.

In essence, it can be stated that al-Saḥāwī's perspective on al-Maqrīzī reflects the teachings he received from his mentors, primarily Ibn Ḥaḡar (d. 852/1449), who exercised the greatest influence on him and knew al-Maqrīzī personally. In his apology of history as an ancillary field of inquiry for religious studies, al-Saḥāwī explicitly articulates the need for source criticism in this discipline, citing al-Maqrīzī's work as an example to be avoided:

Indeed, a great many defects have become apparent, and reprovable attitudes of the ugliest sort have spread. This noble branch (that is, history) has been cultivated by those who accept misspellings and misreadings, because they do not have an exact knowledge of the rules of transmission and trust transmitters who are not recognized as trustworthy and sensible. They have come to write down both substantial and inconsequential things as well as both proven and shaky, unsound traditions. If I were here to set down what happened to the leading historian, Taqī-ad-dīn al-Maqrīzī, you would be amazed, and you would avoid looking for his works.⁸

The question thus arises as to whether al-Saḥāwī's view of al-Maqrīzī was motivated by bad faith, as Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid has suggested,⁹ or whether, as Nasser Rabbat has recently proposed, al-Saḥāwī was al-Maqrīzī's nemesis.¹⁰ It is evident that al-Saḥāwī conducted an uncom-

⁷ Al-Maqrīzī does so in his biography of al-Furriyānī in *al-Durar*, III, 146–7. For a description of the qualities required from a traditionist to be considered a *ḥāfiẓ*, see al-Saḥāwī, *Al-Ġawāhir*, I, p. 79–84.

⁸ Rosenthal, *A history*, p. 356. Al-Saḥāwī recycled part of this passage, without the personal criticism of al-Maqrīzī, in his introduction to *al-Tibr*, p. I, 37.

⁹ Sayyid, *Al-Maqrīzī*, p. 88.

¹⁰ Rabbat, *Writing*, 4, p. 169, 190.

promising examination of the lives of his contemporaries. Does this indicate a lack of rigor on his part and a proclivity for unsubstantiated criticism? In the case of al-Maqrīzī, al-Sahāwī did not advance his critiques without reason. In enumerating instances of al-Maqrīzī's incompetence as a traditionist, he underscores that these observations are based on his examination of al-Maqrīzī's writings. In the absence of an indication as to the specific works of al-Maqrīzī that contain these errors, al-Sahāwī's critique can in fact be traced to a small text of traditions that al-Maqrīzī copied and was authorized to transmit. The proposed amendments to al-Maqrīzī's work, outlined by al-Sahāwī in his biography, are readily discernible due to al-Sahāwī's distinctive handwriting in the margins.¹¹ Moreover, his characterization of al-Furriyānī as a liar is not merely rhetorical. Ibn Ḥaḡar was the first to identify al-Furriyānī as an untrustworthy transmitter. Aware that al-Maqrīzī had been relying on him in his works, Ibn Ḥaḡar attempted in vain to caution him.¹² Finally, al-Sahāwī was the first to disclose that al-Maqrīzī had obtained a draft of an extensive work on the topographical history of Cairo by his colleague, al-Awḥadī (d. 811/1408), which had taken him years of research, and that al-Maqrīzī proceeded to expand upon this draft without acknowledging its original author. It has been demonstrated that this allegation of plagiarism was well-founded and that al-Sahāwī's source for it was, once again, his former teacher, Ibn Ḥaḡar.¹³

In conclusion, al-Sahāwī's biography of al-Maqrīzī presents a balanced and nuanced portrayal of a man who attracted the attention of many of his contemporaries and peers. Al-Sahāwī included substantiating evidence in his criticism, so that many of his accusations can be corroborated through further investigation. In his evaluation of al-Maqrīzī (and in the remainder of his *al-Ḍaw'*), al-Sahāwī employed *al-ḡarḥ wa-l-ta'dīl* with the objective of distinguishing between those individuals who could be regarded as trustworthy and those who could not. He can by no means be blamed for trying to be fair in his assessment of those he was acquainted with. As the historian al-Malaṭī (d. 920/1514) observes, authors writing about their peers are all the better equipped to offer insight through their first-hand knowledge, especially when questioning their views, and can thereby make important contributions to critical historical discourse.¹⁴

¹¹ *Ġuz'*, fols. 2a, 3a.

¹² The whole story is studied in Bauden, "Maqriziana XVII".

¹³ Bauden, "Maqriziana IX."

¹⁴ Al-Malaṭī, *Al-Maḡma'*, I, p. 351.

The following translation corresponds to al-Sakhāwī. *al-Daw'*. II, p. 21-25 (no. 66).

Differences found in *al-Tibr*. I, p. 70–78, are indicated in the footnotes.

Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. 'Abd al-Qādir b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. Tamīm b. 'Abd al-Ṣamad b. Abī l-Ḥasan b. 'Abd al-Ṣamad b. Tamīm,¹⁵ Taqī l-Dīn Abū l-'Abbās b. al-'Alā' b. Muḥyī l-Dīn al-Ḥusaynī l-'Ubaydī, originally from Baalbek, the Cairene, grandson of Ibn al-Ṣā'ig.¹⁶ He is known as Ibn¹⁷ al-Maqrīzī, a teknonym referring to a quarter in Baalbek, which was known as the quarter of the Maqāriza. His roots were in Baalbek.

His grandfather was one of the greatest traditionists¹⁸ and his son moved to Cairo, where he held some positions related to the judiciary and worked as a secretary at the chancery.¹⁹ He begot the person who is the subject of this biography.

He (al-Maqrīzī) was born in the sixties [of the eighth c.], according to what he used to tell and write in his own hand. Our master [Ibn Ḥajar] said that he saw in his own handwriting something indicating that he determined that his birth took place in the year [7]66[/1364–5] in Cairo,²⁰ where he grew up in comfortable conditions.

He memorized the Qur'an and participated in the audition sessions led by his maternal grandfather, Šams al-Dīn b. al-Ṣā'ig al-Ḥanafī, Burhān al-Dīn al-Āmidī,²¹ 'Izz al-Dīn²² b. al-Kuwayk,²³ Nağm al-Dīn b. Razīn,²⁴

¹⁵ In *al-Tibr*, he adds: "b. 'Alī b. 'Ubayd, the son of the Commander of the Believers, al-Mu'izz li-dīn Allāh, for whom Cairo was erected and the first among the 'Ubaydī-s to control it. Al-Mu'izz's name was [p. 71] Mu'izz b. al-Manšūr Ismā'īl b. al-Qā'im Abū l-Qāsim b. al-Mahdī 'Ubayd Allāh—the one who settled in the Maghreb before [the year] 300—b. Muḥammad b. Ġa'far b. Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl b. Ġa'far al-Šādiq b. Muḥammad al-Bāqir b. Zayn al-'Ābidīn 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī b. Abū Ṭālib. The sheikh, the historian."

¹⁶ Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Alī l-Su'ūdī b. al-Ṣā'ig (d. 776/1375), a famous *ḥanafī* scholar. See Bauden, "Taqī al-Dīn", p. 164 (fn. 9).

¹⁷ "Ibn" is missing in *al-Tibr*.

¹⁸ Muḥyī al-Dīn 'Abd al-Qādir (b. 677/1278–9, d. 732/1331), a leading traditionist who moved from Baalbek to Damascus. See Bauden, "Taqī al-Dīn", p. 162 (fn. 4).

¹⁹ 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Alī (d. 779/1378). See Bauden, "Taqī al-Dīn", p. 163 (fn. 6).

²⁰ Addition made to the text of *al-Tibr*, probably by a reader: "I say: When he was three years old, he was taken to Ibn al-Ṣā'ig's classes with Abū Hurayra b. al-Šaraf al-Maqdisī, who was four years old. Abū Hurayra was born in the year 767. The birth of al-Maqrīzī thus took place in the year [76]6 in Cairo."

²¹ Ibrāhīm b. Dā'ūd b. 'Abd Allāh al-Āmidī (b. 714/1314–5; d. 797/1395), a traditionist who settled in Cairo. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, I, p. 111–112 (no. 38).

Šams al-Dīn b. al-Ḥaššāb,²⁵ al-Tanūḥī,²⁶ Ibn al-Šayḥa,²⁷ Ibn Abī l-Mağd,²⁸ al-Bulqīnī,²⁹ al-‘Irāqī,³⁰ al-Hayṭamī,³¹ al-Farsīsī,³² among others. He asserted that he had heard the first tradition to be transmitted to anyone (*al-musalsal*) from ‘Imād al-Dīn b. Kaṭīr,³³ which is hardly true.

He went on pilgrimage and, in Mecca, participated in the audition sessions of al-Niṣāwarī,³⁴ al-Amyūṭī,³⁵ Šams al-Dīn b. Sukkar,³⁶ the judge

²² In *al-Tibr*, he adds: “Abū l-Yumn.”

²³ Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Laṭīf b. Aḥmad al-Iskandarī, known as Ibn al-Kuwayk (b. 715/1315, d. 790/1388), a traditionist who lived in Cairo, in al-Maqrīzī’s neighborhood. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, III, p. 55–56 (no. 929).

²⁴ ‘Abd al-Raḥīm b. ‘Abd al-Waḥḥāb b. ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Ḥamawī, known as Ibn Razīn (b. 707/1307, d. 791/1389), a traditionist. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, II, p. 238 (no. 564).

²⁵ Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. ‘Umar al-Qurašī al-Maḥzūmī, known as Ibn al-Ḥaššāb (b. 710/1311, d. 789/1387), a traditionist. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, III, p. 190–191 (no. 1095).

²⁶ Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm b. Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Wāḥid al-Dimašqī (b. 709 or beg. 710/1310, d. 800/1398), a traditionist whose family was originally from Baalbek. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, I, p. 82–85 (no. 30).

²⁷ Not Ibn Abī l-Šayḥa as in *al-Ḍaw’*. Zayn al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad b. al-Mubārak al-Ḥusaynī, known as Ibn al-Šayḥa (b. 715/1315, d. 799/1396), a traditionist who traded in cloths. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, II, p. 379–380 (no. 716).

²⁸ Ġamāl al-Dīn Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-Amyūṭī (b. 715/1315–6, d. 790/1388), a *šāfi’ī* traditionist from Cairo who later settled in Mecca. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, I, p. 100–101, no. 33.

²⁹ In *al-Tibr*, he adds before his name: “Sirāğ al-Dīn.” Sirāğ al-Dīn ‘Umar b. Raslān b. Nuṣayr al-Bulqīnī (b. 724/1324, d. 805/1403), a *šāfi’ī* traditionist from Cairo. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, II, p. 431–436 (no. 740).

³⁰ In *al-Tibr*, he adds before his name: “Zayn al-Dīn.” Zayn al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥīm b. al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-‘Irāqī (b. 725/1325, d. 806/1404), a famous Egyptian traditionist. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, II, p. 234–237 (no. 563).

³¹ Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Abū Bakr b. Sulaymān al-Hayṭamī (b. 735/1335, d. 807/1405), the famous *šāfi’ī* traditionist who authored *Mağma’ al-zawā’id wa-manba’ al-fawā’id*. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, II, p. 478–479 (no. 800).

³² Šams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ḥasan b. ‘Alī l-Farsīsī (b. 719/1319, d. 806/1404), an Egyptian traditionist. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, III, p. 91 (no. 973).

³³ ‘Imād al-Dīn Ismā’īl b. ‘Umar b. Kaṭīr al-Dimašqī (b. 701/1301–2, d. 774/1373), the famous *šāfi’ī* traditionist who authored the historical work *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, I, p. 400–401 (no. 327).

³⁴ In *al-Tibr*, he adds before his name: “‘Afīf al-Dīn.” ‘Afīf al-Dīn ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Niṣāwarī l-Makkī (b. 705–6/1305–7, d. 790/1388), a traditionist from Mecca. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, II, p. 355–356 (no. 685).

³⁵ In *al-Tibr*, he adds before his name: “Ġamāl al-Dīn.” See above, fn. 28.

Abū l-Faḍl al-Nuwayrī,³⁷ Saʿd Allāh al-Isfarāʾinī,³⁸ Abū l-ʿAbbās b. ʿAbd al-Muʿṭī,³⁹ and many others. [*al-Tibr*. 72] Those who gave him a license of transmission were al-Isnāwī,⁴⁰ al-Aḍraʿī,⁴¹ Abū l-Baqāʾ al-Subkī,⁴² ʿAlī b. Yūsuf al-Zarandī,⁴³ as well as others; and, from Syria, the most learned (*ḥāfiẓ*) Abū Bakr b. al-Muḥibb,⁴⁴ Abū l-ʿAbbās b. al-ʿIzz,⁴⁵ Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad [*al-Dawʿ*. p. 22] b. Dāʾūd,⁴⁶ and many others. He worked a lot, visited the masters—meeting the greatest of them—attended the teaching sessions of the leading ones, and acquired knowledge from them.

He learned jurisprudence according to the *ḥanafī* school, which was the school of his maternal grandfather, and memorized a concise treatise on it. When he grew up, he became a *šāfiʿī* in the year [7]86[/1384], when he was just over twenty years old, after the death of his father. He

³⁶ Šams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. Sukkar (b. 719/1319, d. 801/1398), a *ḥanafī* scholar born in Cairo who later settled in Mecca. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, III, p. 43–46 (no. 920).

³⁷ Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Nuwayrī (b. 722/1322, d. 786/1384), a *šāfiʿī* traditionist from Mecca. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, III, p. 35–37 (no. 916).

³⁸ Saʿd al-Dīn Saʿd Allāh b. ʿUmar b. ʿAlī l-Isfarāʾinī (d. 786/1385), a sufi who lived for a while in Mecca until his death. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, II, p. 96–97 (no. 486).

³⁹ Šihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Muʿṭī (b. 709/1309–10, d. 788/1386), a *mālikī* grammarian born in Egypt who settled in Mecca, Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, I, p. 345–346 (no. 255).

⁴⁰ In *al-Tibr*, he adds before his name: “Ġamāl al-Dīn.” Ġamāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥīm b. al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī al-Isnāwī (b. 704/1305, d. 772/1370), a *šāfiʿī* traditionist who lived in Cairo. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, II, p. 230–234 (no. 562).

⁴¹ In *al-Tibr*, he adds before his name: “Šihāb al-Dīn.” Šihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Ḥamdān b. Aḥmad al-Aḍraʿī (b. 708/1310, d. 783/1381), a traditionist born in Deraa who settled in Aleppo. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, I, p. 261–263 (no. 168).

⁴² In *al-Tibr*, he adds before his name: “Bahāʾ al-Dīn.” Bahāʾ al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Barr b. Yaḥyà l-Subkī (b. 707/1307, d. 777/1375), a *šāfiʿī* traditionist from Cairo. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, III, p. 248–254 (no. 1155).

⁴³ Nūr al-Dīn ʿAlī b. Yūsuf b. al-Ḥasan al-Zarandī (b. 708/1308–9, d. 772/1371), a *ḥanafī* traditionist from Medina. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, II, p. 476–478 (no. 799).

⁴⁴ Šams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Aḥmad al-Maqdisī (b. 713/1313–4, d. 789/1387), known as Ibn al-Muḥibb or al-Šāmit (the silent), a *ḥanbalī* traditionist from Damascus. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, III, p. 184 (no. 1083).

⁴⁵ Šihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr b. Aḥmad al-Nābulusī (b. 707/1307, d. 798/1396), a *ḥanbalī* traditionist from Damascus. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, I, p. 363–364 (no. 282).

⁴⁶ Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Dāʾūd al-Maqdisī (b. 708/1308–9, d. 796/1394), a *ḥanbalī* traditionist. Ibn Ḥaġar, *al-Durar*, IV, p. 293 (no. 4338).

stuck to this school, although he was inclined towards *ẓāhirism*. This is why our master [Ibn Ḥaḡar] said: "He was fond of the science of traditions and applied himself steadily to it, to the extent that he was accused of being a follower of the school of Ibn Ḥazm, though his knowledge of it was inexistant."⁴⁷ And this even though his father and grandfather were *ḥanbalīs*.

His research interests spanned several disciplines, and he had his share of merit. He copied a lot in his own hand and prepared summaries. He wrote in verse and prose. He restituted the benefit he acquired. He served as a deputy judge and worked as a chancery secretary. He served as market inspector in Cairo more than once, the first time having been in the year 801[/1398–9].⁴⁸ He also served as preacher at the Great Mosque of ‘Amr and at the Madrasa of [Sultan] Ḥasan, then as imam and inspector of the Mosque of [the caliph] al-Ḥākim, as reader in *ḥadīṭ* [*al-Tibr*. 73] at [the Madrasa] of [Sultan] al-Mu‘ayyad in replacement of al-Muḥibb b. Naṣr Allāh,⁴⁹ when the latter was appointed teacher for the *ḥanbalīs* at the same institution, and in other capacities. He was praised for the way he carried out his duties during his appointments.

He succeeded in forming a link with al-Ẓāhir Barqūq.⁵⁰ He entered Damascus with his [al-Ẓāhir Barqūq’s] son, al-Nāṣir,⁵¹ in the year [8]10[/1407], then returned with him. He was repeatedly offered the position of judge of Damascus, but he refused. He became closely associated with Yašbak,⁵² the executive secretary, for a while, and through him earned a lot of money. It is even said that he deposited cash with him.

He made the pilgrimage more than once, extending his stays in Mecca. He also travelled to Damascus several times, where he was appointed as inspector of the endowment of [the Dār al-Ḥadīṭ founded

⁴⁷ Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Inbāʾ*, IV, p. 187.

⁴⁸ In *al-Tibr*, he adds: "in replacement of the sheikh Šams al-Dīn al-Naḡānisī, before being dismissed in favor of the sheikh Badr al-Dīn al-‘Aynī on 26 Dū l-Ḥiḡḡa of the same year."

⁴⁹ Muḥibb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Naṣr Allāh b. Aḥmad al-Baḡdādī (b. 765/1364, d. 844/1440), a *ḥanbalī* judge who settled in Cairo. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, I, p. 264–267 (no. 173).

⁵⁰ The sultan reigned twice (784–91/1382–9, 792–801/1390–9).

⁵¹ Barqūq’s son, al-Nāṣir Faraḡ, who ruled 801–8/1399–1405.

⁵² Sayf al-Dīn Yašbak al-Šaʿbānī l-Ẓāhirī (d. 810/1407). He was appointed executive secretary on two occasions: 802–3/1400 and 804–7/1402–4. Ibn Taḡrī Birdī, *Al-Nuḡūm*, XII, p. 119–122 (no. 2656).

by] al-Qalānisi⁵³ and the Hospital of Nūr al-Dīn,⁵⁴ even though it was stipulated [in the endowment] that this position was normally reserved to the *šāfiʿī* judge of Damascus. He was also appointed teacher at the Madrasa of [Sultan] al-Ašraf,⁵⁵ the Madrasa of [Ḥwāḡa] Iqbāl,⁵⁶ and others.

He then withdrew and stayed in his city, devoting himself to [writing] history, until he became famous for it and his reputation spread far and wide. He wrote a certain number of books in this field, such as:

- The Quarters of Cairo (*al-Ḥiṭaṭ li-l-Qāhira*), which is [a] useful [work] because he had access to al-Awḥadī's⁵⁷ draft, as mentioned in the latter's biography,⁵⁸ appropriated it and made additions to it of little significance;
- The Unique Necklaces Regarding the Useful Biographies of the Luminaries (*Durar al-ʿuqūd al-farīda fī tarāḡim al-aʿyān al-mufīda*), in which he mentioned his contemporaries;
- The Pleasure for the Ears Regarding the News,⁵⁹ the Circumstances,⁶⁰ the Offspring, and the Possessions of the Messenger (*Imtāʿ al-asmāʿ bi-mā li-l-rasūl min al-anbāʾ wa-l-aḥwāl wa-l-ḥafada wa-l-matāʾ*), which he wished to see copied in Mecca and transmitted orally, and he was able to do so; [*al-Tibr*. p. 74]
- the Introduction (*al-Madḥal*) to the latter;
- The Necklace Made from Caskets of Jewels Regarding the Rulers of Miṣr and Fustat (*ʿIqd ḡawāhir al-asfāt fī mulūk Miṣr wa-l-Fustāt*);
- The Clear Exposition and Plain Presentation of the Arab Tribes That Are on the Egyptian Soil (*al-Bayān wa-l-iʿrāb ʿammā fī arḍ Miṣr min al-aʿrāb*);

⁵³ An institution founded by Ibn al-Qalānisi (d. 729/1329). Al-Nuʿaymī, *Al-Dāris*, I, p. 71–72.

⁵⁴ The hospital built by the Zengid sultan, Nūr al-Dīn, in 548/1154.

⁵⁵ This institution, a Dār al-Ḥadīṭ, was founded by the Ayyubid sultan, al-Ašraf Mūsā (r. 626–35/1229–37). It was inaugurated in 630/1233. Al-Nuʿaymī, *Al-Dāris*, I, p. 36–42.

⁵⁶ An institution founded by a merchant, Ḥwāḡa Ġamāl al-Dawla Iqbāl (d. 603/1206–7). Al-Nuʿaymī, *Al-Dāris*, I, p. 118–123.

⁵⁷ Šihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Ḥasan al-Awḥadī (b. 761/1359, d. 811/1408), a scholar who worked for many years on a book on the topography of Cairo. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, I, p. 185–190 (no. 120).

⁵⁸ This phrase is not in *al-Tibr*.

⁵⁹ Read *al-anbāʾ*, not *al-abnāʾ* as in *al-Ḍawʾ* and *al-Tibr*.

⁶⁰ Not *al-aḥwāl* as in *al-Ḍawʾ*.

- The Cognizance of the Late Muslim Rulers⁶¹ Who Are in the Land of the Abyssinians (*al-Ilmām fīman ta'aḥḥara bi-arḍ al-ḥabaša min mulūk al-islām*);
- The Curious Rarity Made of the Wonderful Stories of Hadhramaut (*al-Ṭurfa al-ġarība fī aḥbār Ḥaḍramawt al-ʿaḡība*);
- The Knowledge of the Rights That Should Be Recognized on the Part of the People of the Prophet's House over Other People (*Ma'rifa mā yaḡibu li-āl al-bayt al-nabawī min al-ḥaqq ʿalā man ʿadāhum*);
- The Lesson Learned⁶² from the True Believers on the Historical Facts of the Fatimid Imam Caliphs (*Ittiʿāz al-ḥunafāʾ bi-aḥbār al-aʾimma al-fāṭimiyyīn al-ḥulafāʾ*);
- The Way to Behave by Taking Cognizance of the Dynasties of Rulers (*al-Sulūk bi-ma'rifa duwal al-mulūk*), which includes the events up to his death;⁶³
- The Great History in Continuation (*al-Tārīḥ al-muqaffā l-kabīr*), which stands in sixteen volumes and which—so he claimed—would have spanned over eighty volumes had he completed what he intended;
- The Report on the Feast of Circumcision (*al-lḥbār ʿan al-iʿdār*);
- The Intimation and the Notification⁶⁴ on the Construction [*al-Ḍawʾ*. 23] of the Ka'bah, the Sacred House (*al-Išāra wa-l-iʿlām bi-bināʾ al-kaʿba bayt al-ḥarām*), and its summary;
- The Mention of the Rulers and Caliphs Who Performed the Pilgrimage (*Ḍikr man ḥaḡḡa min al-mulūk wa-l-ḥulafāʾ*);
- The Strife between the Umayyads and the Abbasids (*al-Taḥāṣum bayna Banī Umayya wa-Banī Hāšim*);
- Pearls of Divine Ordinances (*Šuḍūr al-ʿuqūd*); [*al-Tibr*. p. 75]
- The Light of the Night Traveler for Gaining Knowledge about Tamīm al-Dārī's Story (*Ḍawʾ al-sārī fī ma'rifa ḥabar Tamīm al-Dārī*);
- The Legal Measures of Weight and Capacity (*al-Awzān wa-l-akyāl al-šarʿiyya*);
- The Removal of the Fatigue and the Trouble Regarding the Knowledge of How to Sing (*Izālat al-taʿab wa-l-ʿināʾ fī ma'rifa al-ḥāl fī l-ġināʾ*);
- The Occurrence of the Favor and Purveyance Regarding the Request for a Good Ending (*Ḥuṣūl al-inʿām wa-l-mayr fī suʾāl ḥātima al-ḥayr*);

⁶¹ Not *fī ta'aḥḥur man* as in *al-Tibr*.

⁶² Not *īqāz* as in *al-Ḍawʾ*.

⁶³ In *al-Tibr*, he adds: "which my present book supplements as I have indicated."

⁶⁴ Read *al-iʿlām*, not *al-kālām* as in *al-Ḍawʾ* and *al-Tibr*.

- The Splendid Resolutions for the Knowledge of the Mineral Bodies (*al-Maqāṣid al-saniyya fī ma'rifa al-aḡsām al-ma'diniyya*);
- The Abstraction of the Expression of Unity (*Taḡrīd al-tawḥīd al-mufīd*);
- The Collection of Pearls and the Sources of Useful Lessons (*Maḡma' al-farā'id wa-manba' al-fawā'id*), which encompasses intellectual reflection and acritical transmission, and involves the art of earnestness and wit – its volumes amounted to about one hundred –;
- What he witnessed and heard that was not reported in any book (*Mā šāhadahu wa-sami'ahu mimmā lam yunqal fī kitāb*);
- The Path to Survival (*Šārī' al-naḡāh*), which includes all the matters in which human beings differ in the fundamentals and branches of their religions, with an exposition of their proofs and a way to draw out the truth from them;
- The Intimation and Indication for Puzzling out the Water's Riddle (*al-Išāra wa-l-īmā' ilā ḥall luḡz al-mā'*), which is witty; as well as others;
- He also wrote a blurb for the Biography of al-Mu'ayyad by Ibn Nāhiḍ.⁶⁵

I read in his handwriting that his works exceeded two hundred large volumes and that his teachers amounted to six hundred.

He had a good memory for history, but had little knowledge of the ancients, which is why he makes many misspellings and slips of letters in their names, though they were perhaps miswritten in the texts [he consulted]. Here is what I saw in his handwriting in this regard: Ibn al-Badan,⁶⁶ which has the short vowel *a* above the *bā'* and the *dāl*, though he wrote it in his own hand as al-Budn;⁶⁷ 'Alī b. Maṣṣūr al-Karaḡī, al-Silafī's master, which is written with a *ḡīm*, though he wrote it with a *ḥā'* [al-Karḡī];⁶⁸ he often wrote 'Ubayd Allāh instead of 'Abd Allāh and vice versa. I was even told that he wrote Abū Ṭāhir b. Maḡmiš,⁶⁹ the

⁶⁵ This sentence is missing in *al-Tibr*. The author of *al-Sīra al-šayḥiyya* is Muḡammad b. Nāhiḍ b. Muḡammad al-Ḥalabī (b. 769/1367–8, d. 841/1438). Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, III, p. 379–380 (no. 1328).

⁶⁶ In *al-Ḍaw'* Ibn al-Badr, which is a mistake. 'Abd al-Ḥāliq b. 'Abd al-Šamad b. 'Alī l-Baḡdādī l-Šaffār, known as Ibn al-Badan (b. 456/1064, d. 538/1143), a traditionist from Baghdad. Al-Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, XX, p. 60.

⁶⁷ In *al-Ḍaw'* al-Badal, which is a mistake.

⁶⁸ Not 'Alī but Makkī b. Maṣṣūr b. 'Allān al-Karaḡī (d. 491/1098). Al-Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, XIX, p. 71–2.

⁶⁹ Abū Ṭāhir Muḡammad b. Muḡammad b. Maḡmiš al-Ziyādī l-Šāfi'ī (d. 400/1009–1010), a traditionist from Nishapur. Al-Šafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, II, p. 271–272 (no. 172), where the correct orthography and pronunciation of Maḡmiš are detailed.

transmitter of the first tradition to be heard, when he was transmitting it, with a *ḥā'* [Maḥmiš] instead of a *ḥā'*.⁷⁰

As for the contemporaries, he singled out in their biographies what was not generally accepted, as can be seen in his statement regarding Ibn al-Mulaqqin,⁷¹ namely that he was very bad at prayer. Nevertheless, he used to rely heavily on untrustworthy people without even quoting them, to such a point that he did so regarding his own genealogy.⁷² His rationale for saying that he hailed from the Fatimids (*al-ʿUbaydiyyūn*)⁷³ was that he once entered the Mosque of al-Ḥākim when his father said to him: "Son, this is the mosque of your ancestor." [*al-Tibr*. 76] However, this is contradicted by Ibn Rāfi's⁷⁴ statement regarding the genealogy of ʿAbd al-Qādir, his grandfather, whom Ibn Rāfi' claims to have been an *anṣārī*,⁷⁵ even though the subject of this biography (i.e., al-Maqrīzī) expressed doubts about it. Nevertheless, in his works, he never went beyond ʿAbd al-Ṣamad b. Tamīm when giving his genealogy, even if he divulged more than that to those he trusted. Then I saw a proof that for this teknonym (al-ʿUbaydī) he relied on al-Furriyānī,⁷⁶ who was famous for his lies. But God knows best! Someone who describes such a person as *al-ḥāfiẓ* taken in its technical sense can only speculate. Statements are not well-founded when there is room for doubt.⁷⁷

⁷⁰ These examples are not mentioned in *al-Tibr*.

⁷¹ Such a statement is not found in the biography he wrote for Sirāḡ al-Dīn ʿUmar b. ʿAlī b. Aḥmad, known as Ibn al-Mulaqqin (d. 804/1401), or his son Nūr al-Dīn ʿAlī (d. 807/1405). Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, II, p. 429–431 (no. 739) and p. 482–483 (no. 808).

⁷² In *al-Tibr*, he adds: "that I gave at the beginning [of his biography]."

⁷³ In *al-Tibr*, he says: "His rationale for this."

⁷⁴ Taqī l-Dīn Muḥammad b. Rāfi' b. Hiḡrās al-Sallāmī (b. 704/1305, d. 774/1372), an Egyptian traditionist and historian, the author of a supplement to al-Birzālī's chronicle. The biography of al-Maqrīzī's grandfather is not found in the published version. Ibn Rāfi'. *Al-Wafayāt*. However, Ibn Ḥaḡar mentions it in the biography he dedicated to al-Maqrīzī's grandfather. Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Al-Durar*, III, p. 5.

⁷⁵ I.e., a descendant of the Anṣār, the Medinese who offered their support to the Prophet.

⁷⁶ Not al-Uryānī as in *al-Ḍaw'*. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Furriyānī (b. 780/1378, d. 862/1457–8), a traditionist born in Ifrīqiya who later moved to Egypt and Syria. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, III, p. 146–147 (no. 1030).

⁷⁷ The last two sentences are not in *al-Tibr*. The very last one seems to be corrupted in *al-Ḍaw'* and is here translated tentatively. In his quotation of this passage from a manuscript in Damascus copied by al-Saḥāwī's friend, ʿIzz al-Dīn b. Fahd, Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī added a *sic* (*kaḏā*), which confirms that the sentence is incorrect as it stands. ʿAlī, "al-Ḍaw'", p. 12.

He was very fond of reminiscing about ancient events of the pre-Islamic period (*ǧāhiliyya*) and beyond. As for the events of the Islamic period, the knowledge of the men (i.e., transmitters) and their names, [the discipline of] impugning and approving, the ranks, the lives, and other secrets and virtues of history, he was not well-versed in them.⁷⁸ His knowledge of jurisprudence, the Tradition, and grammar was limited. He had some knowledge of the sayings of the ancestors, [*al-Ḍaw'*, p. 24] and a familiarity with the doctrine of the People of the Book, so much so that the best of them used to come and learn from him. He had good manners, generosity of spirit, and great humility. He was highly attentive to those who visited him. He was adept at memorization, devoted himself to nocturnal prayer, engaged in private worship, strove for excellence in prayer—which he performed with composure—, and observed his own customary practices (*sunan*).

This [sense of devotion] led a prominent figure, according to what I heard, to reproach him for being estranged from him. [On that occasion], he declaimed the words of someone else:

The leaping rabbit held a discourse
in which there is a call for the minds of all to understand
I run from dogs, but
my optimal outcome is to remain undetected by them.⁷⁹

If he would have declaimed what Ibn al-Mubārak⁸⁰ said, it would have been better:

We were spared and relieved
from going back and forth
and interacting with a mean
or generous and magnanimous person,
rather embracing chastity, subsistence,
contentment, and probity.
Despair has become our gateway
to success. [*al-Tibr*, p. 77]

⁷⁸ The last two sentences are not in *al-Tibr*.

⁷⁹ The verses were recited to al-Maqrīzī by Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Salāwī (d. 803/1401), when he met him in Alexandria. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, III, p. 117 (no. 1001).

⁸⁰ ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Mubārak b. Wāḍiḥ al-Ḥanḏalī l-Marwazī (b. 118/736, d. 181/797). Al-Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, VIII, p. 379.

He was an expert in divinatory techniques (*zā'irġa*), the astrolabe, geomancy (*raml*), time calculation (*mīqāt*). He even took a horoscope (*tālī'*) for Ibn Ḥaldūn⁸¹ as the latter asked him to set the time of a certain appointment. It is reported that he set a day for him, which subsequently proved to be accurate, and that this was deemed as a prodigious feat.

Despite all this, the eminent individuals held him in high regard, either due to a sense of apprehension for what he could write or because of his remarkable memory.

He transmitted some of his own works, as well as those of others he was allowed to [transmit], in Mecca and in Cairo, where the most esteemed experts attended his sessions.

He reported that he attended the reading sessions of al-Dimyātī's⁸² *The Merit of the Horse (Faḍl al-ḥayl)* twice under the direction of Abū Ṭalḥa l-Ḥarrāwī.⁸³ Therefore, they trusted his account. The text was read in [al-Maqrīzī's] presence several⁸⁴ times. In the year preceding his demise, he (al-Maqrīzī) even wrote, in his own handwriting, that he was unaware of any individual who could pretend to transmit this text [from this master]. I saw in the handwriting of our friend Naġm al-Dīn⁸⁵ b. Fahd that he (al-Maqrīzī) had attended al-Ḥarrāwī's sessions when he was four years old,⁸⁶ though I am unsure of his basis for making such an assertion.

In his [biographical] dictionary,⁸⁷ our master depicted him in the following way: "His poetry is excellent and his prose brilliant. He has written outstanding works, particularly those regarding the history of Cairo. He has indeed revived the city's landmarks, elucidated its previously obscure events, renewed its exploits, and provided biographical accounts of its notables."⁸⁸

⁸¹ The famous historian (b. 732/1332, d. 808/1406).

⁸² Šaraf al-Dīn 'Abd al-Mu'min b. Ḥalaf b. Abī l-Ḥasan al-Dimyātī (b. 613/1217, d. 705/1306). Ibn Ḥaġar, *Al-Durar*, III, p. 30–32 (no. 2525).

⁸³ In *al-Tibr*, he adds: "al-Ṭabardār." Nāšir al-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Yūsuf al-Ḥarrāwī l-Ṭabardār al-Kurdī (b. 697/1298, d. 781/1379). Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, III, p. 192–193 (no. 1099).

⁸⁴ In *Ḍaw': marra*. Read *ghayr marra*, as in *al-Tibr*.

⁸⁵ Naġm al-Dīn 'Umar b. Muḥammad b. Fahd (b. 812/1409, d. 885/1480), a Meccan historian.

⁸⁶ Ibn Fahd, *Mu'ġam*, p. 64.

⁸⁷ In *al-Tibr*, he adds: "in the last section, which the subject of this biography had access to."

⁸⁸ Ibn Ḥaġar, *Al-Maġma'*, III/1, p. 60.

Nevertheless, in his Apprising [the Ignorant] (*inbā'* [*al-ġumr*]),⁸⁹ he refrained from such hyperbole, saying instead: "He had a profound interest in history, amassing a vast amount of information [*al-Tibr*, p. 78] and writing extensively on the subject. His keen interest in history led him to commit a substantial portion of it to memory." He also said: "He was of good company, and it was a pleasure to engage in discourse with him."⁹⁰

Al-ʿAynī⁹¹ said: "He was involved in the composition of historical texts and in the practice of geomancy. He was in charge of the inspection of the markets (*ḥisba*) in Cairo towards the end of al-Ẓāhir's (i.e. Barqūq's) reign. He was subsequently replaced by the present writer, and then reinstated during the tenure of the executive secretary, Sūdūn, who was the nephew of al-Ẓāhir.⁹² This was due to the aforementioned Sūdūn's injustice, which prompted the present writer to resign."⁹³

Ibn Ḥaṭīb al-Nāṣiriyya⁹⁴ says in the biography of his (al-Maqrīzī's) grandfather: "He is the grandfather of the eminent imam, the historian, Taqī al-Dīn."⁹⁵

Someone else said: "He compiled a book based on his own observations and experiences, which were not derived from any book. One of the most remarkable things in this book is his [account of] passing along the street between the two palaces (*Bayna l-Qaṣrayn*) in Ramaḍān [7]91[/24 August–22 September 1389], and overhearing the common people discussing the release of al-Ẓāhir Barqūq [*al-Ḍaw'*, p. 25] from his prison in al-Karak as people gathered around him. I verified the day this happened, and it was accurate."⁹⁶

[Sample] of his poetry, on Damietta [*tawīl* meter]:⁹⁷

May God let Damietta flourish and live on

⁸⁹ In *al-Tibr*, he says: "in his History".

⁹⁰ Ibn Ḥaṭīb, *Inbā'*, IV, p. 187–188.

⁹¹ Badr al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Aḥmad b. Mūsā l-ʿAynī (d. 851/14), the famous historian.

⁹² Sūdūn al-Ẓāhirī (d. 803/1401). Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, II, p. 101–103 (no. 491).

⁹³ Al-ʿAynī, *Iqd*, p. 574.

⁹⁴ ʿAlā' al-Dīn ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. Saʿd al-Ḥalabī, known as Ibn Ḥaṭīb al-Nāṣiriyya (b. 774/1372–3, d. 1440), a traditionist and historian from Aleppo. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, II, p. 552 (no. 870).

⁹⁵ Ibn Ḥaṭīb al-Nāṣiriyya, *Al-Durr*, III, p. 1456–1457 (no. 830).

⁹⁶ This paragraph does not appear in *al-Tibr*.

⁹⁷ Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Mawāʿiz*, III, p. 608.

Its recollection has made me more and more passionate about it.
May the clouds carried by the winds continue to water
a land, whose beauty imitates the eternal garden

It is composed of more than twenty verses.⁹⁸

He died in the afternoon of Thursday, 26th Ramaḍān in the year [8]45[/7 February 1442] in Cairo after a protracted illness. According to our master [Ibn Ḥaḡar], this marked the conclusion of eighty years of his life. He was buried on Friday before the designated time for prayer in the enclosure of the Sufi convent built by Baybars.⁹⁹ May God have mercy on him and on us.¹⁰⁰

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⁹⁸ These verses are not in *al-Tibr*.

⁹⁹ Known as al-Ḥānqāh al-baybarsiyya or al-rukniyya Baybars. Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Mawā‘iz*, IV/2, p. 732–740.

¹⁰⁰ In *al-Tibr*, he adds: “How well someone said [about him]: You were always so fond of other people’s obituaries, writing them down, until I saw yours among them.”

- Ibn Ḥaṭīb al-Nāṣiriyya, ‘Alī b. Muḥammad, *Al-Durr al-muntaḥab fī takmilat tāriḥ Ḥalab*, A.F. al-Hayb (ed.), Al-Kuwayt, Mu’assasat ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Sa‘ūd al-Bābṭayn al-Ṭaqāfiyya, 2018, 6 vols.
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