

Book Reviews

Response to TH. EMIL HOMERIN, review of *Sanctity and Mysticism in Medieval Egypt: The Wafā' Sufi Order and the Legacy of Ibn 'Arabī*, by Richard J. A. McGregor, *Mamlūk Studies Review* 9, no. 2 (2005): 238–41.

RICHARD J. A. MCGREGOR

I would like to respond to Emil Homerin's review of my book *Sanctity and Mysticism in Medieval Egypt: The Wafā' Sufi Order and the Legacy of Ibn 'Arabī* in *MSR* vol. 9, no. 2. Homerin is right to point out the difficulty in identifying clear lines of influence between mystical thinkers. The issue at hand is how to characterize the relationship between Ibn 'Arabī and Muḥammad and 'Alī Wafā'. Since the Wafā's were not students within the well-known "Akbarian" school—that is, they did not identify themselves as systematizers or commentators on Ibn 'Arabī's work—we are obliged to comb through the Wafā' writings in search of similarities with Ibn 'Arabī's work. In this context Homerin writes "McGregor must undertake a more extensive and exacting comparison if he wants to assess the scope and strength of Ibn 'Arabī's influence on Muḥammad and 'Alī" (p. 241). I would agree with this only in part. Yes, more comparisons (especially of material not relating to *walāyah*) would be welcome, but I am confident that such subsequent work would support my characterization that Muḥammad and 'Alī Wafā' have read Ibn 'Arabī closely. However the picture becomes less clear once we realize that the Wafā's have gone a step further, and put the Akbarian system to work in their own mystical speculations (see p. 8). Thus the question arises as to what exactly we mean by "influence"? Certainly Ibn 'Arabī's technical vocabulary has been imported into the Wafā' writings, and so have many key concepts; but the Wafā's were not slavish, and the details of their doctrine of *walāyah*, for example, differ significantly from Ibn 'Arabī's. They are deeply "influenced" by his wider hermeneutic, ontology, epistemology, and technical vocabulary, but at the same time they strive to assert their own insights and identities. How they manage to do both is fascinating, and should force us to examine what exactly we mean by "influence." Homerin would argue that what I am calling the Akbarian influence may well be found elsewhere, with Ibn al-Fāriḍ for example. I would not dispute that the wider strokes of this mystical philosophy went beyond the writings of Ibn 'Arabī, but my view is that so much of the Wafā' writing can be explained in light of Ibn 'Arabī that he is certainly a primary "influence." I am not sure how we could quantify the "scope and strength" of this influence. This said,



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at the same time I am sure a full comparison of the Wafā' poetry with that of Ibn al-Fāriḍ would also yield interesting parallels (or influences), and certainly a closer reading of the Akbarian school figures (Qūnawī et al.) would be worthwhile. One final point: I would like to remind readers that the Arabic texts provided in the notes are unedited copies of the manuscript texts, and not typos (although neither the English nor the Arabic texts are completely free of those). See my "Note on Transliteration" for more on this.

AḤMAD FAWZĪ AL-HAYB, *Al-Taṣannu' wa-Rūḥ al-'Aṣr al-Mamlūkī* (Damascus: Manshūrāt Ittiḥād al-Kuttāb al-'Arab, 2004). Pp. 121.

REVIEWED BY ROGER ALLEN, University of Pennsylvania

As the specific discipline of literature studies has come to define itself and to develop its own theoretical modes over the course of the last century or so, the need to write and, more often than not, to rewrite literary histories has come to be regarded as being part of a continuing process. In the case of the Arabic heritage, the literary historian enters a sphere in which the basic chronological parameters and esthetic criteria are often regarded as having been set long since, and within the contexts of both indigenous and external research. Scholars here confront a set of historical attitudes that can be viewed as a perfect model of the rise, decline, and renaissance model of generic developments (or lack thereof). *Mamlūk Studies Review* (and especially Volume VII and articles in Volume IX) has played a major part in attempts to challenge some of the critical postures and attitudes engendered by approaches to this topic that have set specific chronological boundaries to periods of efflorescence and decline. The Mongol sack of Baghdad in 1258, for example, has been adopted as a convenient dividing-line between a "high" period before it and a "period of decadence" after it; all that in spite of clear signs of change in the anterior period and of continued creativity in the so-called "Mamluk" period that followed it (the latter being a period that Professor Thomas Bauer has recently declared to be "one of the apogees of Arabic literature" (*MSR* 9, no. 2 [2005]: 129).

The work under review here thus enters a subfield of Arabic literature studies in which traditional attitudes are already being challenged, although, it has to be admitted, mostly from outside the Arabic-speaking region itself. There is a certain irony here too, one that involves the as-yet-unexplored history of the origins and motivations at work in this usage of the term "decadence" to describe a six-century



period in Arabic literary history. As Bauer also points out as a contribution to that much-needed project, the process of tarring several centuries of literary creativity with the brush of “decadence” can be seen as part of the nineteenth-century agenda of European powers in order to justify their colonial intentions by underlining the “backwardness” of the peoples in the target regions (see esp. *ibid.*, 105–7). Such lessons in the applications of history were, it would appear, well learned by Arab scholars such as Ṭāhā Ḥusayn and Aḥmad Amīn during their studies in France in the early decades of the twentieth century.

Within the context of the “*taṣannu*” of the title of this volume, it goes without saying, of course, that the juxtaposition of the “natural” (*maṭbū*‘) and the “artificial” (*maṣnū*‘) in discussions of Arabic poetry and debate over their relative virtues (particularly in the context of an increased emphasis on *badī*‘) had been part of the critical milieu at least since the time of Ibn Qutaybah (d. 889); indeed that very topic is the focus of a complete study by Mansour Ajami, *The Neckveins of Winter* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1984), not mentioned by the author of the current study (but then all the sources in this work are in Arabic). One can perhaps get a glimpse of the attitudes involved by posing the question as to whether the “*taṣannu*” of the title is best translated in English as “artifice,” with its mostly positive connotations—the process of acquiring a craft, or rather as “artificiality,” with its implications of contrivance and even lack of sincerity.

The author announces in both his prefatory and concluding material that he wishes to assess the phenomenon during the Mamluk era through two lenses: that of the period in question, and that of the contemporary era. He is to apply the principles he outlines to the poetry of two poets from the period: Ibn al-Wardī (d. 1349) and Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī (d. ca. 1349). However, whatever the parameters that are cited and the intentions that are made, what emerges is a prolonged lament over the course of Arabic poetry and its modes of analysis, beginning with the publication of *Kitāb al-Badī*‘ by Ibn al-Mu‘tazz (d. 908). As has been noted many times, that particular work was actually a rather conservative gesture, in that it intended to show that the trend towards increased elaboration in the use of poetic devices was a matter of emphasis; Arabic poetry (and indeed the text of the Quran itself) contained many examples of the devices to which Ibn al-Mu‘tazz had drawn attention. In his rapid survey of the development of artifice (or is it artificiality?—pp. 16–33), the author suggests that in the pre-Islamic era and the early period of the Islamic caliphate, the two elements of “naturalness” and “artifice” were in some kind of balance (p. 19), raising, of course, the question as to: in whose eyes and according to what criteria. This typically idealized scenario in analyzing the earliest periods in the Arabic poetic tradition is seen as undergoing a gradual change “which distanced it bit by bit from the element of content which is the basis of the tradition” (*ibid.*). The “problem” is, at least in the view of those



who would cast generic developments of this kind in negative terms, that subsequent poets and critics adopted Ibn al-Mu‘azz’s categories (and especially his “*muḥassināt*” [embellishments]) and proceeded to produce larger and larger lists of their examples. In this context Abū al-‘Alā’ al-Ma‘arrī (d. 1058) comes in for his due share of opprobrium for the elaboration of devices in his *Luzūmīyāt* (p. 20), as do al-Ḥarīrī (d. 1122) and al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil (d. 1200) for their similarly elaborate prose works (pp. 13, and 20–22). But the major culprits in this gradual and prolonged process are said to be the critics (p. 22): Abū Hilāl al-‘Askarī (d. 1005) and Ibn Rashīq (d. 1063?) are cited as merely two of those who assembled long lists of devices, until a time when one of the two poets whose works are analyzed in detail in this volume, Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī, managed to assemble 104 of them. This led, we are told, to a change in the nature of the poetic art and the function of the poet; the concentration on form over content meant that “the poet no longer believed that poetry was an expression of his emotions and a portrait of his feelings” (p. 31). Poets resorted to imitations of each other and to attempts at besting their forebears; the study of plagiarism became a growth industry.

The author then proceeds to analyze the two above-mentioned poets in separate chapters. With Ibn al-Wardī, he concentrates on the individual aspects in the enhanced use of *badī‘* devices (evident from the subdivision of the chapter into a number of specific *muḥassināt* categories); with al-Ḥillī (and specifically his *Durar al-Nuḥūr fī Imtidāḥ al-Malik al-Manṣūr* [Pearly necklets concerning the eulogy of al-Malik al-Manṣūr]) the author’s analytical method demands a more unified and comprehensive approach to the poems, particularly since they are mostly (and naturally, considering the title) panegyrics.

Not surprisingly, the result of such surveys of these two poets and their poems (indeed their individual lines) succeeds in providing confirmation of the generally negative image of the direction of the poetic tradition provided in the prefatory chapters.

This work then contextualizes a detailed study of two poets of the Mamluk era in a very particular way. In returning to my opening thoughts about the larger issues involved in contemporary studies of Arabic literary history in general and of this era in particular, I am left to wonder in what way(s) is the “deck stacked” in a study of this type. The author’s use of sources is excellent and extremely well referenced, but one is drawn inevitably to the conclusion that, by relying on sources, both pre-modern and modern, that clearly operate within a matrix of historical periodization and a view of generic development that prefers breaks (ruptures perhaps) to continuities, the verdicts to which this volume inexorably leads the reader are almost a foregone conclusion. Indeed the very introduction to the volume, by ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Ashtar, uses the term “*khumūd*” (decline) on its very first page. What I find missing in this study is any desire to call into question



the very parameters on which these assessments of broad cultural trends are based. For example, we can certainly read the poetry and the criticism of it (and, in this case, the critical analysis of both the poetry and its criticism), but what about the views of the audiences (including critics) that were contemporary with the poetry and poets? Are we really to believe that, for several centuries in Arabic literary creativity, the variety of audiences that listened to and read the poetry that was created within a certain time period and its cultural norms and expectations did not appreciate and even enjoy what they were hearing and reading? Are we supposed to blame them for "getting it wrong" on esthetic criteria? Or is it rather that an entirely different set of critical yardsticks were at work? I would suggest that, before we can really attempt to assess poetic creativity during this prolonged period, a more profoundly researched answer to that last question is a prerequisite.

This volume then provides a useful survey of the work of two poets of the Mamluk era, set against a study of the place of artifice in the poetic tradition that is firmly based in long-accepted opinions that may well need to be substantially revised.

SUHAYR MUḤAMMAD IBRĀHĪM NU‘AYNI‘, *Al-Ḥurūb al-Ṣalībīyah al-Muta‘akhhirah: Ḥamlat Buṭrus al-Awwal Lūsinyān ‘alā al-Iskandarīyah, 1365 M/747 H* (Giza: ‘Ayn, 2002). Pp. 260, maps.

REVIEWED BY NIALL CHRISTIE, University of British Columbia

In this book Suhayr Nu‘ayni‘ presents an account of the attack made on Alexandria in 767/1365 by the Lusignan King of Cyprus, Peter I (d. 770/1369). This is widely regarded as one of the last major actions undertaken by the Crusaders in the eastern Mediterranean, and despite the fact that the Latins only occupied Alexandria for a few days, it had a significant impact, exacerbating tensions between Muslims and Christians for years after the event and contributing to the slow decline and eventual downfall of Lusignan Cyprus in the ninth/fifteenth century. Until now Peter of Lusignan’s expedition has received relatively little attention from scholars in comparison to the other major Crusading expeditions, something that, while understandable in the face of its limited size and scope, nevertheless makes this book a welcome contribution to the field.

Nu‘ayni‘ begins her account of the events by surveying both previous scholarship on the attack on Alexandria and the sources that provide information about the events. She makes use of both primary and secondary sources from both Europe



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and the Middle East; she pays particular attention to the *Kitāb al-Ilmām bi-al-I'lām* of the Muslim eyewitness, al-Nuwayrī al-Sikandarī (d. after 775/1372), the *Prise d'Alexandrie* of the French poet Guillaume de Machaut (d. 778–79/1377), and the *Recital Concerning the Sweet Land of Cyprus* of the Cypriot Greek chronicler Leontios Makhairas (d. c. 835/1432), but also makes use of a wide range of other sources from both the contemporary and later European and Middle Eastern literature.

The bulk of Nu'ayni's work is divided into five parts. In the first of these she provides a description of Europe and the Levant before the attack on Alexandria. Her account of the Levant focuses on the political, social, and economic situation of Egypt under the Mamluk sultan al-Ashraf Sha'bān (d. 778/1377), and also details relations between the Mamluk sultanate and its neighbors in Iraq, Armenia, the Byzantine Empire, and Africa, while her account of Europe describes the various states of the region, again in political, social, and economic terms, before describing Cyprus in detail. In the second part of her work Nu'ayni focuses more closely on the history of Cyprus preceding Peter of Lusignan's expedition, examining the circumstances that led him to conceive the idea of attacking Alexandria, the motives ascribed to him by the sources, and his efforts to garner support for the venture in Europe. The following two parts of Nu'ayni's text describe the expedition itself, from Peter I's departure from Venice on 7 Shawwāl 766/27 June 1365 through his capture of Alexandria on 24 Muḥarram 767/10 October 1365 to his eventual withdrawal from the city a few days later. Her account is detailed, and she both compares and analyzes the primary sources. The fifth part describes the aftermath of the attack and its impact on both the internal relations of the Levantine region and the wider interactions of the Levant and Europe, with particular attention paid to its effect on military and commercial interaction between Christians and Muslims and Europeans and Levantines.

Nu'ayni concludes her work with an account of the subsequent "death" of the crusading movement and the Muslim response in the ninth/fifteenth century before providing an analysis of the events. She is highly critical of the attack, regarding it as a result of the papacy's inability to change with the times and accept that it no longer directed the military might of Europe, something that was further exacerbated by a more widely-held, outdated European perception of political, economic, and military realities in the Levant. Meanwhile, Peter I is blamed for pursuing policies that merely consumed the resources of Cyprus and left it destitute, making it ripe for subjugation and conquest by external enemies, while he is accused of pursuing his venture for commercial and political rather than pietistic motives. Such a negative portrayal of the situation is, naturally, open to question, particularly when it comes to the issue of Peter I's motives. While the attack has been regarded by some scholars as an attempt to dominate Mediterranean commerce, others have



regarded Peter I as being genuinely stimulated by a crusading zeal that he also displayed in earlier life.¹ Thus the matter is somewhat more complex than Nu‘ayni‘ believes.

Shortcomings aside, Nu‘ayni‘’s work is of great value as a detailed account of the attack on Alexandria that takes account of both European and Levantine sources. As such, it is recommended for scholars interested in this dramatic and controversial event.

MUḤAMMAD YŪSUF AYYŪB, *Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī: Ḥayātuhu wa-Shi‘ruhu* (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Adīb, 1999). Pp. 269.

AḤMAD KHĀLID JĪDAH, *Al-Madāris wa-Niẓām al-Ta‘līm fī Bilād al-Shām fī al-‘Aṣr al-Mamlūkī* (Beirut: al-Mu‘assasah al-Jāmi‘īyah, 2001). Pp. 432.

REVIEWED BY WALID SALEH, University of Toronto

These two books cover different aspects of the intellectual life of the Mamluk era, and in so doing point to a regrettable absence of any substantial general study in English of the cultural and intellectual life under the Mamluks such as one is accustomed to read about medieval Europe. The first book is a study of the poetry of one of the leading intellectual figures of the Mamluk era, while the second is a survey of the educational system under the Mamluks. Before discussing them individually, a generalization about the milieu in which they were produced is in order. Both works share in obvious ways both the virtues and the faults typical of most secondary literature coming from the Arab Middle East. Invariably there is much to learn from such works, and this reviewer, for one, is a devoted reader of them. Despite their shortcomings, they offer the interested reader many insights and directions for study. Some are indeed indispensable in so far as they have carried out the first stage of assessing information available in the literature on a certain topic. Ultimately there is no telling when such works can be useful and there is no substitute for assessing each on its own merits.

The first work under review here, *Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar*, makes clear two things: that the collected poems of Ibn Ḥajar are now available in print, and that a study

¹For a variety of opinions, see for example Norman Housley, "The Crusading Movement," in *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Crusades*, ed. Jonathan Riley-Smith (Oxford, 1995), 272–74; Peter Edbury, "The Latin East, 1291–1669," in *ibid.*, 298–300; and Sir Harry Luke, "The Kingdom of Cyprus, 1291–1369," in *A History of the Crusades*, ed. Kenneth M. Setton (Madison, 1969–89), 3:352–60.



on this most important author is sorely needed. Like many of his peers Ibn Ḥajar wrote many important works in many different fields—altogether 216 works, according to the author of this study. This huge number of books makes it even harder for those planning to study his intellectual career. One only needs to point to his epoch-making commentary on al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *Fath al-Bārī fī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, to realize that he is one of the most important of medieval hadith scholars. The current edition of *Fath al-Bārī* is in 14 volumes, totalling about 8000 pages of finely-printed text. Recently his *mu'jam* has been published—under the title *Al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras*, edited by M. al-Mayādīnī (Beirut, 1998)—allowing us a rare opportunity to study what Ibn Ḥajar studied of previous Islamic scholarship.

Ayyūb's work is dedicated to a study of the poetry of Ibn Ḥajar and he makes clear that this study was part of his M.A. work, which also included the edition of Ibn Ḥajar's unpublished second collection of poetry, *Al-Sab'* (p. 5). This newly-published collection is different from his *Dīwān*, which has been available for a while. We are not told this, however, and only by going through the footnotes and the bibliography does this fact become clear. The first one hundred pages of Ayyūb's work offer a biography of Ibn Ḥajar, which includes a full list of his works (pp. 77–87). The rest of the book is a study of the poetics of Ibn Ḥajar, and the approach here is squarely traditional. His poetry is analyzed through the lens of genres, eulogy, panegyric, etc. Ayyūb's critical vocabulary is anything but scholarly; we are still here in the realm of the school of "truth and beauty." But in the course of this analysis we do learn that Ibn Ḥajar used to travel to Yemen to recite his poetry to their kings for money. This is a very interesting snippet of information, and unfortunately Ayyūb does not inform us about his sources for it. The most interesting aspect of Ibn Ḥajar's poetry, however, is his non-traditional poetry, the non-*qaṣīdah* poetry, such as *al-muwashshahāt*. The *kharjahs* of these poems were written in colloquial Egyptian dialect. This is rather important information to know and dialectologists should take note. The bibliography at the end of the book is important, as it includes a large number of secondary Arabic studies on the intellectual life in the Mamluk era, the only such studies available so far.

The second book under review, *Al-Madāris* by Jīdah, is a better work on the whole, in so far as it is a more systematic study of the educational system of the Mamluk era. Most of the work is a listing of all the information available in the sources on madrasahs, their names, dates of establishment, and the names of professors who taught there. There is also an analysis of the curriculum, the students' life, professors' duties, etc. The merit of this work is that it offers a detailed survey of all the information available in primary sources, a task that is usually beyond most of us. Scholars wishing to write on the educational system



will benefit immensely from this work. As for the cultural life of the Mamluk era, we still await a study that will do justice to its monumental achievements in the cultural sphere.

Kitāb Waqf al-Sulṭān al-Nāṣir Ḥasan bin Muḥammad bin Qalāwūn ‘alā Madrasatihi bi-al-Rumaylah. Edited by Huwaydā al-Ḥārithī. Bibliotheca Islamica, vol. 45 (Beirut: in commission at United Distributing Co., 2001). Pp. 295 + 11.

REVIEWED BY JOHANNES PAHLITZSCH, Freie Universität Berlin

The foundation of Sultan al-Nāṣir Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn (735/1334-762/1360) on Maydān al-Rumaylah (today Maydān Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn) opposite the Citadel could very well be termed the most magnificent building of the Mamluk period in Cairo. Thus, the edition of the long endowment deed (*waqfiyah*) of Ḥasan’s foundation by Huwaydā al-Ḥārithī, who is Associate Professor for Architecture and Design at the American University of Beirut and already well known for her work on Islamic art and architecture with a special emphasis on the Mamluk period, is most welcome.¹

The *waqfiyah* of Sultan Ḥasan has been transmitted in two copies, both in the possession of the Dār al-Wathā’iq al-Qawmīyah in Cairo. The original parchment document (no. 40/6) of which a small portion has been published by Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn in 1986² is damaged and has not been used by al-Ḥārithī. Instead, she relied on an obviously contemporary bound manuscript copy (no. 365/85). According to al-Ḥārithī a comparison of this copy with the fragments of the *waqfiyah* demonstrate that it is an exact copy of the original. Also included in the bound copy and published by al-Ḥārithī are the texts that have been written on the back of the original *waqfiyah*, namely a confirmation of the *waqfiyah*, an

¹Cf. for example “The Complex of Sultan Ḥasan in Cairo: Reading between the Lines,” *Muqarnas* 13 (1996): 68–79; “Invisible Boundaries, Visible Presence: Persian Cultural Influence on Medieval Cairo,” *Electronic Journal of Oriental Studies* 7 (2004): 1–28; “The Ewer of Ibn Jaldak (623/1226) at the Metropolitan Museum of Art: An Inquiry into the Origin of the Mawsili School of Metalwork,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 64 (2001): 355–68; “The Concept of Space in Mamluk Architecture,” *Muqarnas* 18 (2001): 73–93; “Turbat al-Sitt: An Identification,” in *The Cairo Heritage: Papers in Honor of Layla Ibrahim*, ed. Doris Behrens-Abouseif (Cairo, 2000), 113–31; “The Patronage of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn, 1310–1341,” *Mamlūk Studies Review* 4 (2000): 219–44.

²In: Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirat al-Nabīh fī Ayyām al-Manṣūr wa-Banīh*, vol. 3 (Cairo, 1986), 341–449.



incomplete second *waqfiyah* with additional endowments and new personnel appointments, and a similarly incomplete list of further *waqf* lands in Egypt and Syria.

The first *waqfiyah* of Sultan Ḥasan follows the usual form of Islamic endowment deeds. After an introduction describing the religious merits of the *waqf* there follows the very casual statement that the endowed property belonged to the private property of the founder (pp. 1–5). This short remark stands in sharp contrast to the explicit formulas used in the *waqfiyah* of Ḥasan's grandfather Qalāwūn.³ The description of the newly-erected buildings of Ḥasan's complex (pp. 5–10) is followed by the long list of endowed properties in Egypt and Syria (pp. 10–148). It is remarkable to find foundations like the "*waqf 'alā al-Madrasah al-Nūrīyah al-Ḥanafīyah*" and many other foundations included in the endowed properties without giving any reference to how they could be transferred to Ḥasan's foundation—if by means of *istibdāl* or because the plague has ruined many foundations.⁴ As is well known, these descriptions of property could be of great value for topographical research. However, the *waqfiyah* of Ḥasan could be used as well for the study of the history of older foundations not only in Egypt but also in Syria, especially in Damascus. Then the purpose of the foundation and its different parts, namely the *qubbah*, the *jāmi'*, the *madrasah*, and the *maktab al-sabīl* are given together with a list of its staff, their salaries, and instructions to distribute donations on specific occasions (pp. 148–73). The next section deals with the duties of the administrator (*nāzīr*) of the foundation, the appointment of the founder's family as administrators, and the general stipulations of the founder (*shurūṭ*) followed by the final legal formulas, the date, and subscriptions of witnesses (pp. 173–79). The fact that Ḥasan appointed himself as the first *nāzīr* with all rights to change his foundation including the right of *istibdāl* might hint at the legal means that were used in the transfer of the above-mentioned *waqf* lands into Ḥasan's foundation.

In editing the documents contained in MS 365/85 al-Ḥārithī follows the method of reproducing the text as it is "with no corrections, additions, or alterations except for some characters added for the purpose of clarity" (p. 10, English introduction). Furthermore she provides her edition with a double apparatus, giving in the first one some helpful information about the meaning of certain terms or the location of certain places while the second one is the critical apparatus. In view of the fact that a considerable part of the original *waqfiyah* still exists (according to

³In: *Ibid.*, vol. 1 (Cairo, 1976), 337.

⁴For a similar case cf. the discussion of Sultan Īnāl's foundations by Lucian Reinfandt, *Mamlukische Sultansstiftungen des 9.15. Jahrhunderts: Nach den Urkunden der Stifter al-Ašraf Īnāl und al-Mu'ayyad Aḥmad Ibn Īnāl*, Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, vol. 257 (Berlin, 2003), 74–84.



Amīn, a text of 1258 lines) it would have been very desirable to use both versions of the document for the establishment of the published text whenever possible. A comparison with Amīn's edition of parts of the original *waqfiyah* shows that there are not only differences between the two versions as indicated in the apparatus of Amīn's edition but that MS 365/85 even has a considerable lacuna which is filled by Amīn's edition. It is true that al-Ḥārithī does mention this fact in a note. However, she does not give the missing text (cf. p. 150, l. 4; Amīn, pp. 389–95, ll. 1209–58). Thus, al-Ḥārithī's text cannot be called a critical edition of Ḥasan's endowment deed based on all available copies of the document. Instead al-Ḥārithī's edition should be described best as a reproduction of one specific version.

Unfortunately one's faith in the reliability of this reproduction is shaken if one compares the few pictures of the manuscript published in the book with the printed text. So al-Ḥārithī's text reads on p. 176, l. 15, *yajrā* with *alif maqsūrah* instead of *yajrī* as is indicated quite clearly in the manuscript (cf. the picture on p. 290). On the same page, l. 19, one has to read *thubūtihi* as in the manuscript instead of *thubūthihi*. On p. 209, l. 18, the manuscript has *wa-min dhālika* instead of *min dhālika*, which makes a difference in terms of syntax, and on p. 210, l. 2, something got mixed up between the footnote and the text (cf. p. 293). While the published text reads *qīrāṭ faddān* the manuscript has *qīrāṭ min faddān*. Confusingly, al-Ḥārithī states in note 2 that *qīrāṭ faddān* corresponds to the manuscript, which should be corrected to read *qīrāṭ min faddān*.

Al-Ḥārithī's method to reproduce the manuscript unchanged might have the advantage of giving an unadulterated impression of the Mamluk court's use of the Arabic language. However, one gets the impression of a certain methodological inconsistency when she follows the model of the manuscript in writing *hā'* instead of *tā'* *marbūtah* or *alif mamdūdah* instead of *alif maqsūrah* at the end of the word while adding the missing diacritics in the middle of the word as in the case of *mubād al-ṭughātin* (p. 180, l. 5, cf. p. 291), to give just one example. On the one hand she substitutes *hā'* at the end of *al-ṭughātin* instead of *tā' marbūtah*. On the other hand she changes the '*ayn*' of the manuscript to *ghā'*. All in all it would have improved the legibility of the text to standardize the use of, e.g., *tā' marbūtah*, *alif maqsūrah*, or *hamzah* at the end of the words as well.

With regard to headings, paragraphs and punctuation al-Ḥārithī follows the same method. Only the headings found in the manuscript, be it in the text proper or in margins, are inserted into the text. A few editorial measures like the addition of periods might have helped the reader to find his or her way through the very long descriptions of endowed properties. Furthermore al-Ḥārithī's unsystematic insertion of headings and subheadings does not help to clarify the structure of the *waqfiyah*. So no heading, paragraph, or even a period separates the section on the



foundation's expenditures from the section on the duties of the *nāẓir* (pp. 171–73). Especially in the case of the localization of the endowed property it is not helpful to find, e.g., the Madrasah al-Nūrīyah in Damascus, which is mentioned without any reference to its location, under the general heading of property in the *diyār al-miṣrīyah* (pp. 10 and 32).

Despite its editorial shortcomings—and maybe it should be taken into account that al-Hārithī is an art historian, not a philologist—the edition of Sultan Ḥasan's endowment deed is a very valuable contribution to the study not only of Cairo and its history, but also of the history of other cities such as Damascus and Antioch. In particular, the indices of people and place names are very important tools for future research.

YAḤYÁ IBN 'ABD AL-'AZĪM AL-JAZZĀR, *Dīwān al-Jazzār*, edited by Muḥammad Zaghlūl Sallām (Alexandria: Munsha'at al-Ma'ārif, 2001). Pp. 109.

'UMAR IBN MAS'ŪD AL-MAḤḤĀR, *Dīwān Sirāj al-Dīn al-Maḥḥār*, edited by Aḥmad Muḥammad 'Aṭā (Cairo: Maktabat al-Ādāb, 1422/2001). Pp. 488.

REVIEWED BY THOMAS BAUER, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität

The editions under review are dedicated to two poets from the earlier period of the Mamluk era. Neither of them has got an entry in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, nor in the *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*. But they were famous enough in their time, and the editions under review prove that both are interesting, provide important material for a better understanding of early Mamluk cultural life, and doubtlessly deserve further study. The editors, however, seem to have had difficulties to find a publisher for their products, and therefore instead of a calligraphic layout and gold imprinted cloth (now standard with religious texts) one finds homemade, awkwardly printed books sometimes hard to read (and to obtain), as is the case with al-Maḥḥār's *Dīwān*, or full of printing errors and other shortcomings, as is the case with the *Dīwān* of al-Jazzār.

Yaḥyá al-Jazzār (601–79/1204–81) is one of the first of the many craftsmen-poets of the period. He grew up in the butcher shop of his parents in al-Fuṣṭāṭ. When his father discovered that his boy could make verses, he presented him proudly to Ibn Abī al-Iṣba'. "Well done," Ibn Abī al-Iṣba' remarked on hearing the boy's lines, "you are a good diver." The father took this as a compliment for his son's talent and brought a present of food to Ibn Abī al-Iṣba', but he had only meant that the son had not yet mastered the meters of poetry and was thus "diving" from one



baḥr "sea = meter" into the next.¹ This anecdote is important because it shows that poetry met with great interest even among craftsmen and that poetry was seen as a means to social advancement.

Al-Jazzār surmounted his problems with meters and, according to al-Şafadī, became the best poet of his time next to al-Sirāj al-Warrāq.² His success as a poet allowed him to give up his job as a butcher and to try to earn a living by composing panegyric poetry. For a while this attempt proved successful, but in his later years he had to resume his craft as a butcher. To people who mocked him for that, he replied that as a butcher the dogs would run after him, whereas as a poet he had to run after the dogs. The life of al-Jazzār is therefore characteristic for the role of poetry in the Mamluk period as a whole in a twofold way. First, al-Jazzār is a good example of the spread of literary knowledge and practice in the whole of society right down into the class of merchants and craftsmen. Second, this increase in poetic production led to a lowering of its monetary value, so that it became increasingly difficult to earn one's living only by composing poetry.

In his history of Mamluk literature, M. Zaghāl Sallām had dedicated a comparatively long chapter to al-Jazzār and pointed to the poet's importance.³ An edition of the *Dīwān* of al-Jazzār by the same scholar may meet therefore with great expectations. But it turns out to be a great disappointment. It is not easy even to figure out what exactly M. Zaghāl Sallām edited. There is no description of a manuscript and not even a hint about what the basis of the present edition is. As a matter of fact, the whole introduction is nothing else but the very chapter on al-Jazzār from Zaghāl Sallām's history of Mamluk literature dating from 1971. No modifications or additions have been made. Though it is true that progress in the study of Mamluk literature is rather slow, it is not so slow that absolutely nothing has happened during the last three decades!

To find out what we have before us, we have to turn to another text on al-Jazzār that has been edited more recently. It is al-Şafadī's notice on al-Jazzār in the twenty-eighth volume of *Al-Wāfi bi-al-Wafayāt*,⁴ which is, with its thirty pages, the longest entry in the whole volume. This volume is now available in an excellent edition by Ibrāhīm Shabbūḥ, who spent more effort and care on these thirty pages than Zaghāl Sallām did for his entire edition. For in addition to the manuscript of the *Wāfi*, Shabbūḥ also used two manuscripts relevant for the poetry of al-Jazzār. The first is a selection of al-Jazzār's poetry, compiled by the poet himself and dedicated to his close friend, the famous historiographer of

¹ Al-Şafadī, *Al-Wāfi bi-al-Wafayāt*, vol. 28, ed. Ibrāhīm Shabbūḥ (Berlin, 2004), 184.

² Ibid.

³ Muḥammad Zaghāl Sallām, *Al-Adab fī al-Aşr al-Mamlūkī* (Cairo, 1971), 2:135–51.

⁴ Al-Şafadī, 183–212.



Aleppo, Kamāl al-Dīn Ibn al-‘Adīm (588–660/1192–1262), entitled *Taqāṭīf* (variant reading: *Taqīf*) *al-Jazzār*. It is preserved in a manuscript in Tunis. The second is a manuscript preserved in Istanbul and entitled *Al-Muntakhab min Shi‘r al-Shaykhayn*. It contains poems by al-Jazzār and his “sparring partner” al-Sirāj al-Warrāq.⁵ As becomes clear from a comparison between al-Şafadī’s article and M. Zaghāl Sallām’s edition, the latter used a film of the Tunis manuscript (without even mentioning this fact), and the edition is therefore not an edition of the *Dīwān al-Jazzār*, but of the *Taqāṭīf al-Jazzār*. Sallām did not use the *Muntakhab*, though it is mentioned in a footnote on p. 7, and consequently a great portion of the poetry of al-Jazzār that has come down to us is missing in the edition.

As an anthology, the text edited by Zaghāl Sallām gives only a rather small selection of al-Jazzār’s poems, and for most of the longer poems only excerpts are given. The bulk of the poetry is *madīh* and *ghazal*. The last part of the book is entitled “Al-Dirā‘ah al-Nājihah wa-al-Biḍā‘ah al-Rājihah” and consists of twenty-eight poems in praise of the prophet, each comprising ten lines. Each poem rhymes on a different consonant of the alphabet, and the rhyme consonant is always also the first letter of every line. A further development of this scheme was used by al-Şafī al-Ḥillī in his *Durar al-Nuḥūr fī Madā‘ih al-Malik al-Manşūr*.⁶ Ibn Sa‘īd al-Maghribī, who was a friend of al-Jazzār, and the editor consider these poems as literarily inferior to al-Jazzār’s achievements in other genres, and I do not dare to contradict.

In the high proportion of *madīh*, the low proportion of satiric, frivolous, and sarcastic epigrams, and the lack of a discernible influence of the spoken language, al-Jazzār’s poetry differs from that of other craftsmen poets like Ibrāhīm al-Mi‘mār. It is not easy to decide, therefore, to what degree al-Jazzār can be considered a “popular poet,” as the editor calls him (p. 5), notwithstanding al-Jazzār’s social origin and position. But this impression is, at least partially, due to the fact that in his *Taqāṭīf* al-Jazzār presents a selection of his poetry meant to meet the taste of an educated *kātib* who may not have been interested in the ups and downs of Cairene everyday life. So, e.g., al-Jazzār composed several pieces on his donkey. An elegy on this animal is quoted in al-Ghuzūlī’s *Maṭāli‘ al-Budūr* and mentioned in the editor’s introduction (p. 16), but only half of the twelve lines are given in the text (p. 40). We can read an even more complete version of seventeen lines now in al-Şafadī’s notice.⁷ Even more interesting is a poem that al-Jazzār puts into

⁵A copious selection of the poetry of Sirāj al-Dīn al-Warrāq is now easily accessible in Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī, *Masālik al-Abşār fī Mamālik al-Amşār*, vol. 19, ed. Yūnus Aḥmad al-Sāmarrā‘ī (Abu Dhabi, 1424/2002), 15–306.

⁶See W. Heinrichs, “Şafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī,” *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 8:803b.

⁷Al-Şafadī, *Wāfi*, 211–12.



the mouth of his little infant. In this poem, which is preserved in several sources, but not in Zaghlūl Sallām's edition,⁸ al-Jazzār uses baby talk. So far, Ibn Sūdūn was the only poet known to have used baby talk in his poems.⁹ Such findings show that it may indeed be reasonable to draw a line of popular poets from al-Jazzār to al-Mi'mār and further to Ibn Sūdūn.

Further examples may demonstrate that the text edited by M. Zaghlūl Sallām is far from being exhaustive. In the recently published anthology *Al-Muḥāḍarāt wa-al-Muḥāwarāt* by al-Suyūṭī, al-Jazzār is quoted five times with altogether sixty-two lines.¹⁰ This shows that al-Jazzār was not yet forgotten after 250 years, but it also shows that the *Dīwān* that is now in our hands contains only a segment of al-Jazzār's production, since only three of the sixty-two verses in the *Muḥāḍarāt* reappear in the *Dīwān*. Among the missing pieces we find two elegies on the scholar 'Izz al-Dīn ibn 'Abd al-Salām, a short piece of three lines, and a long one of thirty lines, and a poem of twenty-three lines in praise of al-Zāhir Baybars on the occasion of the pilgrimage in the year 664. Not only are these poems missing from Sallām's edition, we do not find in it even a hint of a relationship between the poet and 'Izz al-Dīn or Sultan Baybars. Especially important, both from a literary as from a biographical point of view, is the entry on al-Jazzār in Muḥsin al-Amīn's *A'yān al-Shī'ah*.¹¹ Interesting enough is the fact that al-Jazzār has got an entry in it. Further, al-Amīn provides the most detailed account of al-Jazzār's life, and finally, the entry presents a remarkable poem rhyming on *ūzū/īzū* on al-Ḥusayn not given in any other source. The editor has not used these and other sources, which are crucial for the understanding of al-Jazzār and his poetry. And even those that were known to him were used in a superficial and negligent way. To mention only one example: The *Dīwān* contains a short '*Āshūrā*' poem that corroborates al-Jazzār's veneration for the *Ahl al-Bayt*. Its first line is given in the edition as follows:

ويعودُ عاشوراءُ يُذكرُني وُزءُ الحَسِينِ، فليتَ لِمَ يُعدُ

The poem is quoted—as the editor notes—in al-Ṣafadī's *Tamām al-Mutūn*,¹² but

⁸Ibid., 209–10.

⁹Arnoud Vrolijk, *Bringing a Laugh to a Scowling Face: A Study and Critical Edition of the "Nuzhat al-Nufūs wa-Muḍḥik al-'Abūs" by 'Alī Ibn Sūdūn al-Bašbuḡāwī* (Leiden, 1998), 33–34.

¹⁰Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Kitāb al-Muḥāḍarāt wa-al-Muḥāwarāt*, ed. Yahyā al-Jubūrī (Beirut, 1424/2003), 128, 294–95, 376–77.

¹¹Muḥsin al-Amīn, *A'yān al-Shī'ah*, 5th ed., ed. Ḥasan Amīn (Beirut, 1420/2000), 15:247–51.

¹²Al-Ṣafadī, *Tamām al-Mutūn fī Sharḥ Risālat Ibn Zaydūn*, ed. Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo, 1969), 207. On this text see Everett K. Rowson, "An Alexandrian Age in Fourteenth-Century



this did not help to avoid the three mistakes, and the vocalization given in al-Şafadī's text, where we read 'Āshūrā' *yudhakkirunī* instead of 'Āshūrā' *u yudhakkirunī*, should at least have been given as an alternative reading in the apparatus. According to this source, the above line should be read as follows:

ويعودُ عاشورا يُذكرُني رزءُ الحسين، فليت لم يعد

'Āshūrā' comes back and reminds me of al-Ḥusayn's affliction—
would that it never came back!

Unfortunately, this example is representative of the whole edition. Relevant sources are either not used at all or only selectively. Even in al-Şafadī's *Tamām al-Mutūn* we can find several lines by al-Jazzār which are not mentioned by the editor of the *Dīwān* (pp. 49, 64, 285). The text itself is marred by countless mistakes, which cannot always be corrected as easily as in the example given. Sometimes *shaddah* and vowel signs seem to be haphazardly distributed among the consonant text. It is hard to believe that an experienced scholar and editor such as M. Zaghūl Sallām can be held responsible for the mess. In any case, this combination of a defective edition and an out-dated study can hardly be considered the last word on al-Jazzār.

The fame of al-Jazzār was overshadowed to a certain degree by the great poets of the next two generations, but during his lifetime his renown even spread to Syria and inspired a young man in Aleppo who was just beginning to write his first poems to compose a *muwashshaḥ* in praise of al-Jazzār and to send it to Egypt. This young man was Sirāj al-Dīn 'Umar ibn Mas'ūd al-Maḥḥār (d. 711/1311), also known as al-Kattān. The *muwashshaḥ* is found in al-Maḥḥār's *Dīwān* (p. 304-5). The headline that says that the poem is "in praise of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Jazzār al-Miṣrī" has to be corrected to "Abū al-Ḥusayn," since the poet, who is addressed by al-Maḥḥār as "Yaḥyá," is without doubt none other than Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Jazzār. Therefore, it must have been composed in the year 679/1281 or earlier and thus is one of the earliest preserved poems by al-Maḥḥār, most of which date between 683 and 711 (see the editor's remark, p. 12).

Though al-Jazzār and al-Maḥḥār were of similar social origin, the latter's fate differed much from that of his older Cairene colleague, for, in contrast to al-Jazzār, al-Maḥḥār managed to find patrons who allowed him to make a living from his poetry. From the year 683 onwards, al-Maḥḥār stayed in Ḥamāh as a court poet to the Ayyubid princes who still were allowed to govern this town under Mamluk

Damascus: Twin Commentaries on Two Celebrated Arabic Epistles," *MSR* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 97–110.



sovereignty. The same constellation was to repeat itself half a century later, albeit with a more famous poet—Ibn Nubātah—and probably a more famous prince—Abū al-Fidā’—too. Al-Maḥḥār’s sultans were al-Malik al-Manṣūr II (r. 642–83) and al-Malik al-Muẓaffar III (r. 683–98), to whom he offered most of his panegyric odes and some of his *muwashshahāt*. Several poems are also dedicated to al-Manṣūr’s brother al-Malik al-Afḍāl, and a panegyric *muwashshah* is addressed to the latter’s son ‘Imād al-Dīn (no. 42, pp. 301–4), who is none other than Abū al-Fidā’, the future al-Malik al-Mu‘ayyad and patron of Ibn Nubātah. The comparatively simple style of al-Maḥḥār’s *qaṣā’id*, however, seems to be closer to Bahā’ al-Dīn Zuhayr than to Ibn Nubātah.

For this or for some other reason, later authors displayed only minor interest in the *madīḥ* poems of al-Maḥḥār. Al-Ṣafadī, to mention one example, dedicates quite a long article to al-Maḥḥār in his *A‘yān al-Aṣr* (3:662–77), in which he does not quote from al-Maḥḥār’s panegyric odes at all, but only from his epigrams and his *muwashshahāt*. As a matter of fact, the *muwashshah* seems to be the proper domain of al-Maḥḥār’s poetic genius, in contrast to Ibn Nubātah, who perhaps only composed panegyric *muwashshahāt* on al-Malik al-Mu‘ayyad because al-Maḥḥār’s songs still resounded in the palace of Ḥamāh. On the contrary, half of al-Maḥḥār’s *Dīwān* is made up of *muwashshah* and *zajal*—a quite unusual proportion for a court poet. In fact, with his more than sixty *muwashshahāt*, al-Maḥḥār provides the largest corpus of this poetic form in the Bahri Mamluk period. Despite its metric and rhythmic complexity, the *muwashshah* was considered a simpler and more popular form of poetry than the *qaṣīdah*. The audience expected from the *washshāḥ* not a sophisticated presentation of striking and original *ma‘ānī*, but a melodious arrangement of the well-known topoi of love poetry. After all, one must never forget that *muwashshahāt* were meant to be song texts. The editor has already drawn our attention to al-Maḥḥār and his crucial role for the Mamluk *muwashshah* in a recent publication, which inevitably overlaps with the present edition.¹³ It corroborates that al-Maḥḥār was a preeminent *washshāḥ* of the Bahri Mamluk period.

The same holds true regarding the vernacular brother of the *muwashshah*, the *zajal*. Al-Maḥḥār’s *Dīwān* contains the remarkable number of thirty-seven *azjāl*, which represent a major corpus of the Eastern *zajal* in its earlier period. Al-Maḥḥār was certainly not the first Eastern *zajjāl*. A *zajal* by Mujīr al-Dīn Ibn Tamīm (d. 684/1285) is quoted by al-Nawājī.¹⁴ But the genre was probably still in its formative

¹³*Dīwān al-Muwashshahāt al-Mamlūkīyah fī Miṣr wa-al-Shām: al-Dawlah al-Ūlá (648–784/1250–1382)*, ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad ‘Aṭā (Cairo, 1990); see the review by Mustapha Kamal, *MSR* 6 (2002): 198–202.

¹⁴Shams al-Dīn al-Nawājī, *‘Uqūd al-La‘āl fī al-Muwashshahāt wa-al-Azjāl*, ed. ‘Abd al-Laṭīf



period in the East when al-Maḥḥār wrote his contributions. As far as I can judge, the Andalusian model is more visible with him than with any other *zajjal* of the Mamluk realm. He considers Ibn Quzmān as his model and boasts that whoever hears his *zajal* will imagine that Ibn Quzmān is still alive (p. 360). Therefore it naturally follows that al-Maḥḥār does not hesitate to use words typical of the Arabo-Andalusian dialect (such as the negative particle *las*). In the end of the first *zajal* in the *Dīwān*, al-Maḥḥār declares that “Western are my words, though I am from Syria” (*Maghribī lafzī lākinnī min ahl il-Shām*, p. 344). In this respect, his *zajal* differs remarkably from that of later authors such as al-Mi‘mār or Ibn Sūdūn who only use their own (Cairene) dialect in the *zajal*. Cairo, however, plays a role even in the *zajal* of the Syrian al-Maḥḥār. In *zajal* no. 13 al-Maḥḥār depicts an elementary school (*maktab*) in a Cairene setting (*qarīb Darb il-Wazīr*). The teacher (*faqīh*) sits at the door of his class like an amir, correcting, threatening, or even beating every pupil who is committing a speech error (*alḥan*)—quite a nice idea in a vernacular *zajal* (p. 361):

ثُمَّ مَكْتَبَ قَرِيبِ دَرْبِ الْوَزِيرِ
 وَفِيهِ الصَّبِيَّانُ صَغَارٌ وَكِبَارٌ
 وَقَفِيهِ جَالِسٌ عَلَى بَابِ مَكْتَبِهِ
 أَيَّ مَنْ أَلْحَنَ فِي الْكَلَامِ يُعْرَبُهُ
 وَيَهْدِدُ ذَا وَذَا يَضْرِبُهُ
 وَهُوَ جَالِسٌ بَيْنَهُمْ كَالْأَمِيرِ
 الصَّرَامَهُ وَالْأَدَبَ وَالْوَقَارَ

It seems that for this genre depiction the reality of Cairo and its dialect was more influential than that of Cordoba.

The editor had only a single (albeit old and reliable) manuscript at his disposal, or rather, a microfilm of it, since the original (formerly in Alexandria) seems to be lost now (p. 18). Considering this and the fact that only comparatively few quotations of al-Maḥḥār’s poems in other sources could help him, one can only admire the formidable task that the editor has accomplished. As minor shortcomings one could mention the lack of a bibliography and the fact that the page numbers given in the index are not correct (one can find the poems though according to the number given to them). One should also mention the entry on al-Maḥḥār in Ibn Taghrībirdī’s *Manhal*,¹⁵ which, however, does not provide verses absent from

al-Shihābī (Baghdad, 1982), 201–2.

¹⁵Yūsuf Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal al-Ṣafī wa-al-Mustawfā ba’d al-Wāfī*, vol. 8, ed. Muḥammad



‘Aṭā’s edition. In sum, ‘Aṭā has done an excellent job and we can only be grateful for having al-Maḥḥār’s poetry now in a reliable edition, which is deserving of a more lavish presentation. A careful edition like ‘Aṭā’s shows that one can only promote the cause of Mamluk literature by dedicating to it as much diligence and effort as is the custom with pre- and early Islamic poetry.

RĀ’ID MUṢṬAFĀ ḤASAN ‘ABD AL-RAḤĪM, *Fann al-Rithā’ fī al-Shi’r al-‘Arabī fī al-‘Aṣr al-Mamlūkī al-Awwal* (Amman: Dār al-Rāzī, 2003). Pp. 430.

REVIEWED BY TH. EMIL HOMERIN, University of Rochester

Rithā’, or “elegy,” is one of the oldest genres of Arabic poetry. The Arabic elegy probably arose out of pre-Islamic Arab lamentations for dead relatives, usually senior adult males. After the coming of Islam, poets gradually extended the genre to include other relatives, including women and children. Poets also composed elegies on important public figures, such as amirs, viziers, caliphs, and their family members, for whom the elegy served as a type of eulogy and obituary. Similarly, classical Arab poets composed verse lamenting the deaths of the Shi‘i imams, the destruction of Muslim cities by infidels, and the reversal of Muslim fortunes. The classical Arabic elegy, then, had a long and respected tradition. Poets of the Mamluk period added to this legacy, and this is the focus of *Fann al-Rithā’ fī al-Shi’r al-‘Arabī fī al-‘Aṣr al-Mamlūkī al-Awwal* by Rā’id Muṣṭafā Ḥasan ‘Abd al-Raḥīm.

At the outset, ‘Abd al-Raḥīm never states why he confined himself to the first half of the Mamluk period. There is some justification for dividing Mamluk rule into two periods based on dynastic change, but ‘Abd al-Raḥīm does not state how this division is applicable to the study of elegy. Perhaps he simply wanted to limit his study in terms of sources and research time, or maybe he hopes to write a sequel, though I doubt that he will reach further conclusions to warrant this. Still, ‘Abd al-Raḥīm’s study is a very useful survey of the type of elegies composed during the Mamluk period.

‘Abd al-Raḥīm cites al-Mubarrad’s (d. 285/899) observation that an effective elegy may give consolation to the bereaved and contribute to proper public mourning. Yet ‘Abd al-Raḥīm has little else to say about the elegy’s uses and purposes, in general. Further, he does not discuss the origins of *rithā’* or detail its developments

Muḥammad Amīn (Cairo, 1999), 324–29.



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but, instead, moves directly into the Mamluk period, categorizing and describing elegies in terms of the deceased. He begins with a chapter on deceased family members and close relatives (pp. 1–37) introduced by a brief discussion of poets' elegies for themselves and the recurrent themes of the brevity of life and the inevitability of death. He then moves on to elegies on male relatives. Among these, the most frequent subject is the death of a son. 'Abd al-Raḥīm observes this as a change from the Umayyad and Abbasid periods when elegies to brothers were more frequent. He notes that this may be the effect of Arab, Muslim society moving away from tribal life, in which brothers were valued as allies, toward urban living and the increasing importance of the nuclear family, in which sons were thought to preserve the family's line and fortune. Citing numerous verses by a number of poets, 'Abd al-Raḥīm shows that sons who died young were generally praised for their sinless life and handsome appearance, while older and grown sons were eulogized for their skills, learning, and virtue. Often the blissful life of the deceased son in heaven is compared to the living hell of the grieving father.

In contrast to the many poems on sons, 'Abd al-Raḥīm could find only three short elegies written by sons for their fathers, and he is at a loss to explain why. It may be that 'Abd al-Raḥīm would have found more examples had he searched further, especially in the many collections of Mamluk poetry still only in manuscript, which he obviously did not consult. It may be too, however, that most sons did not feel a pressing need to compose an elegy for their fathers, who were often eulogized by their contemporaries. Further, most societies regard the death of parents as a sad but inevitable event, and the natural, ordered passing of a generation, while the death of a child is often viewed as a shocking and tragic event requiring an explanation and extraordinary consolation.¹

'Abd al-Raḥīm dedicates his second chapter to elegies on men of state, especially the sultans (pp. 38–114). Often the elegists had once been in the employment of the deceased, and they are worried about their futures following their patron's death. 'Abd al-Raḥīm asserts that many of these elegies were written by poets interested more in their own prestige and financial security than in consoling the bereaved family. While this is undoubtedly the case for some poems, 'Abd al-Raḥīm belabors the point and underestimates the possible friendship and respect that may have grown between poets and patrons. In addition, the sorrow and concern over an uncertain future voiced in many elegies may well have echoed feelings in the larger populace worried over possible chaos in the wake of a ruler's death. Hence, the elegist's praise of the deceased's successor, usually his son, may reflect the

¹C.f. Th. Emil Homerin, "A Bird Ascends the Night: Elegy and Immortality in Islam," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 59, no. 4 (1991): 247–79, and Avner Gil'adi, *Children of Islam* (Oxford, 1992), 67–119.



hope for a peaceful transition in power and the need to maintain a world with order and sense.

‘Abd al-Raḥīm passes over such issues and concentrates, instead, on an inventory of some of the themes and images found in these “royal” elegies. As in most elegies, the deceased is presented in an ideal fashion and, in this case, the deceased sultan may attain near mythical status as the manly, pious, Muslim ruler and defender of Islam. Here, ‘Abd al-Raḥīm fails to make a connection that others have made regarding elegy and eulogy in general, namely their ability to portray, to a significant degree, a society’s norms and values regarding relations between ruler and ruled, husband and wife, parents and children, etc. However, ‘Abd al-Raḥīm does draw attention to descriptions of royal funerals in many elegies and their usefulness for reconstructing some of the important funeral rites and rituals of the Mamluk period. Finally, ‘Abd al-Raḥīm notes that the elegies on sultans, generals, and other important men of state usually praise the deceased and seek consolation in his certain heavenly reward. In the case of such great sultans as Baybars and Qalāwūn, some of their battles and achievements may be dramatically and, to a degree factually, recounted and praised. Yet a few elegies have a sharper, negative tone. Often short and sometimes in more folk poetic forms, these invectives castigate the deceased for bad behavior and an immoral life, and offer a curse in lieu of praise. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm suggests that this may have provided some solace to those victimized by the deceased, while serving as a warning to living officials who cared for their own reputations and legacies.

In chapter three, ‘Abd al-Raḥīm reviews elegies on the men of the pen, the many religious scholars and litterateurs in Mamluk domains (pp. 116–66). These elegies were often composed by colleagues and students and, too, by poets formerly patronized by the deceased. Generally, the deceased is praised for his learning, piety, generosity, and forbearance, and occasionally for his courage in facing the infidels in battle, or for standing up for the community against unjust rule. Eminent scholars, including Ibn Taymīyah (d. 728/1328) and Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 756/1355), were often the subject of many elegies, some of which mentioned the deceased’s fields of learning and specific writings by name. Secretaries, too, were praised in elegies for the power of their pens to do good and correct wrongs, and poets offered consolation to the bereaved by lauding such pious legacies. References to the Quran and hadith are frequent in these elegies, which often depict the deceased as alive and well in heaven, in his writings, and in his obedient children and learned students.

‘Abd al-Raḥīm reviews elegies on women in his fourth chapter (pp. 167–96). He claims that there is a scarcity of these elegies. Certainly there are fewer elegies for women than men, and ‘Abd al-Raḥīm is probably correct to attribute this to women’s lower social status in the Mamluk period. Nevertheless, he cites many



examples and could have offered even more, especially had he known of Abū Ḥayyān's (d. 745/1344) many elegies for his grown and accomplished daughter Nuḍār (d. 730/1329).² Such elegies by fathers for daughters and husbands for wives are a valuable and largely untapped resource for the study of male-female relations in the Mamluk period. Why 'Abd al-Raḥīm segregated women relatives from the men is not clear, particularly as they are treated with the same respect as their male counterparts. Deceased wives of the elegist or of his colleagues are depicted as pious and generous, of good character, and sometimes learned. Deceased women may be likened to a buried treasure or a secluded maiden, and physical attributes may be lauded in ideal terms (i.e., a face like the full moon), which one finds, but less frequently, in elegies on male relatives. 'Abd al-Raḥīm may be right to assume that women are more often compared to elements of nature, and men to civilization and learning, though this is by no means a hard and fast rule in Mamluk elegies. Moreover, when a wife's death is likened to the setting of the sun, for instance, this may not denote the loss of physical beauty (especially if the wife was elderly), so much as to the poet losing the "light of his life."

This raises one of the major short-comings of this book, namely the author's apparent lack of analysis regarding nearly universal themes involving death, dying, and symbolic immortality. The eclipse of the sun or moon, the setting of the sun, moon, and stars, the broken branch, the wilting of the redolent flower, the departure of the traveler, and many other motifs occur time and again in world literature and art to symbolize, not just the loss of beauty and love, but above all death. Yet, they imply new life as the sun, moon, and stars will rise again, the leafless tree and dead flower will sprout anew in spring, while the traveler will safely arrive at a heavenly home. While 'Abd al-Raḥīm is certainly aware of the symbolic associations of many such themes, he never fully acknowledges their essential function to place the sorrow of the bereaved in larger contexts (of nature, society, religion, etc), in order to assert that while the deceased is gone, they are not annihilated but live on in their legacies and, of course for Muslims, in heaven.³

In the fifth chapter, 'Abd al-Raḥīm recounts many elegies composed on Muslim cities that were devastated by the Mongols or Crusaders, including Baghdad, Damascus, and Alexandria (pp. 197–253). Occasionally, a poet may attribute this catastrophe to God's retribution against the sinful life of the city's inhabitants though, more often than not, the tragedy is seen as a wake up call for Muslims to take up arms and defeat the infidel. While acknowledging dramatic and stylistic

²Homerin, "A Bird Ascends the Night."

³See Robert Jay Lifton, *The Broken Connection* (New York, 1983), 3–112, and George Lakoff and Mark Turner, *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago, 1989), 1–56.



dimensions of these elegies, ‘Abd al-Raḥīm also points to their possible historic value as some of the elegists were eye-witnesses to the destruction of the Muslim cities that they lament. Weapons and battles are sometimes described in detail, and while the infidels are often depicted as vicious dogs, filthy pigs, or other unsavory characters, the Mamluks are not always lauded as lions and heroes. This was especially the case in elegies on the sack of Alexandria in 767/1365, which resulted, in part, because the Mamluk forces fled the city without fighting.

‘Abd al-Raḥīm gathers together a number of topics in his sixth chapter, including elegies on animals, broken drinking goblets, lost arrows, slave boys, singers, the banning of hashish and wine, and the loss of the good life of debauchery (pp. 254–301). These elegies are frequently works of humor and satire, and this chapter features many verses from the shadow plays of Ibn Dāniyāl (d. 710/1310). Elegies on the death of male slaves, however, are serious poems, and of some significance. Several recount the poet’s grief at the loss of a young slave boy, whom the poet was raising and educating as he had his own sons. Other elegies for youthful male slaves (*ghilmān*) resemble elegies for concubines in that love and the physical beauties of the young man are the focus of praise. Had ‘Abd al-Raḥīm compared such elegies with those on concubines, instead of segregating men and women, he might have found that it is not the sex of the deceased so much as his/her social status that determines whether the deceased’s physical or moral features will be the major subject of praise.

‘Abd al-Raḥīm devotes his seventh and final chapter to elements of form and style (pp. 303–401). Once again, this is a largely descriptive chapter, in which he takes up routine notions of poetic harmony and unity, which are easily achieved in the *rithā’* since its subject is the deceased and reflections on life and death. He notes the frequent quotation of the Quran and hadith as sources of consolation, particularly in assuring the bereaved that there is a life after death. He mentions some of the classical poets, including Abū Tammām (d. ca. 232/845), al-Mutanabbī (d. 354/965), and al-Ma‘arrī (d. 449/1058), frequently referred to in Mamluk elegies, and briefly discusses poetic influences. He also catalogs various stylistic elements, including the use of repetition, interrogatives, imperatives, etc., that elegists employed to heighten the tone and pitch of their poems. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm draws attention to the frequent appearance of scholarly terms and jargon in elegies as indicative of their authors’ academic and scribal background, and he ends with a discussion of the rhetorical devices (*badī’*) that were quite popular in the Mamluk period. Unlike many scholars of Mamluk literature, ‘Abd al-Raḥīm does not dismiss *badī’* with contempt. Rather, he notes that if used in excess, it will distract the reader from the poem’s theme, while its judicious use may enhance the poem’s form and content. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm argues forcefully that antithesis (*ṭibāq*) and paronomasia (*jinās*) are particularly suited to elegy. Antithesis accords especially



well with elegy given the natural contrasts between life and death, joy and sorrow, night and day, etc.; as for paronomasia (*jinās*) and similar devices, when carefully applied they add to the musical qualities of any verse.

Despite these insights, ‘Abd al-Raḥīm occasionally makes the common mistake of equating simplicity with sincerity, and rhetorical style with insincerity, a false dichotomy that has plagued the study of Arabic literature. For example, he cites the rhetorical verses composed by al-Ṣafadī on the death of Abū Ḥayyān’s daughter Nuḍār as being forced and artificial due to the use of rhetorical devices, yet had ‘Abd al-Raḥīm read Abū Ḥayyān’s own elegies to his daughter, he would have found many of the same devices, and this applies to many poets of the time, including Ibn Nubātah who composed a number of elegies on his dead children.⁴ Further, ‘Abd al-Raḥīm questions the sincerity of emotions and grief underlying other elegies, particularly those composed on the children and women folk of colleagues, whom the poet may have seldom met due to social constraints of the period. It may well be true that most of these men did not know or interact with the female members of a colleagues’ family, though we do not know this for certain. However, this lack of personal contact does not render the elegists’ words insincere. Today, many of us send sympathy cards with verses that we never even composed, yet most of us are sincere in our expressions of condolences to others. I think that we must view the elegies from the Mamluk period in the same light. They were publicly recognized and, perhaps, expected forms of condolence exchanged among the learned and ruling classes of Mamluk society and, as such, an important means of social discourse about life and death, love and friendship. To question the sincerity of these elegies is to miss an important and quite intended function.⁵ ‘Abd al-Raḥīm should have understood this as he cites (p. 196) several “Thank You” poems composed in response to elegies previously received in sympathy for a lost loved one. While ‘Abd al-Raḥīm focuses on stylistic similarities of the poems, he ignores their social dimension and relevance.

This is indicative of the major flaw in his study, which is the lack of critical analysis on many themes and issues. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm never analyzes a complete elegy in any detail, and he often abridges his quotations without telling his reader. Moreover, he fails to read elegies from the Mamluk period in the larger context of elegy, in general, and, as is the case with many Arab scholars, he cites almost nothing by Western scholars relevant to his topic. To his credit, he has cited in his bibliography most of the many Arabic works written on *rithā’*. Despite its

⁴Thomas Bauer, “Communication and Emotion: The Case of Ibn Nubātah’s *Kindertotenlieder*,” *Mamlūk Studies Review* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 49–95.

⁵Th. Emil Homerin, “Reflections on Arabic Poetry in the Mamluk Age,” *Mamlūk Studies Review* 1 (1997): 63–85, esp. 74–75.



shortcomings, *Fann al-Rithā' fī al-Shi'r al-'Arabī fī al-'Aṣr al-Mamlūkī al-Awwal* offers a detailed description of elegies composed in the Mamluk period, and a tantalizing glimpse into their importance for the study of Mamluk society.

Governing the Holy City: The Interaction of Social Groups in Jerusalem between the Fatimid and the Ottoman Period, edited by Johannes Pahlitzsch and Lorenz Korn (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2004). Pp. 156, maps, illustrations, tables.

REVIEWED BY NIALL CHRISTIE, University of British Columbia and Corpus Christi College, Vancouver

This edited volume comprises eight articles dealing with a variety of issues related to the city of Jerusalem during the second/eighth to fifteenth/twentieth centuries. Of these, five are of direct relevance to the Mamluk period (648–922/1250–1517), while the others are likely to be more peripheral to the interests of the readership of this journal. All but one of the articles derive from a round-table discussion of Jerusalem in the Middle Ages held at the 28th Deutscher Orientalistentag in Bamberg in March 2001.

In the introduction, the editors set out the scope of their volume; they seek to explore the social rather than political or religious history of the city, focusing in particular on the interaction of its inhabitants with the urban fabric. In doing so, they present articles that make particular use of sources that are consulted less frequently by modern scholars than the historical chronicles, including legal documents, inscriptions, and architectural remains.

Given this emphasis, it is fitting that the first two articles, "Primary Sources on Social Life in Jerusalem in the Middle Ages," by Khader Salameh, and "The Arabic Stone Inscriptions in the Islamic Museum, al-Ḥaram ash-Sharīf, Jerusalem," by Salameh and Robert Schick, introduce two such types of sources. In the first article, Salameh surveys the collections of documents held in three institutions in Jerusalem, the Aqṣá Mosque Library, the Islamic Museum, and the Shari'ah Court at the Ḥaram al-Sharīf, which collectively include documents dating from the first/seventh to fourteenth/twentieth centuries, many of which are relevant for the study of the Mamluk period. Salameh pays particular attention to what these documents reveal about the role of *awqāf* (charitable endowments) in Jerusalem. The second article complements the first by drawing attention to the Arabic stone inscriptions found in the Islamic Museum in Jerusalem, which include tombstones and dedicatory, Quranic, and building inscriptions. Eleven examples, ranging in



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date from the second/eighth to the thirteenth/nineteenth centuries (including three from the Mamluk period), are given in Arabic, Arabic transliteration, and English, with illustrations of the actual artifacts also being included.

The next article, "Manifestations of Private Piety: Muslims, Christians and Jews in Fatimid Jerusalem," by Andreas Kaplony, addresses the ways in which people of all three faiths reacted to the holiness of the city during the Fatimid period (358–492/969–1099). Drawing in particular on the *Safarnāmah* of Nāṣir-i Khusraw and the *Faḍā'il Bayt al-Maqdis* of Ibn al-Murajjā al-Maqdisī, Kaplony shows that personal piety could manifest in a number of ways, including the performance of pilgrimages, the establishment of residence at holy sites, seeking to die and/or be buried in the holy city, donations of lamps, oil, and carpets, and the patronage of architectural work and institutions. Thus Kaplony explores religious observance as conducted by members of all social classes during the period.

Moving from the Fatimid to the Ayyubid period, the next two articles consider the attention paid to Jerusalem by Saladin (d. 589/1193) and his descendents. In "The Transformation of Latin Religious Institutions into Islamic Endowments by Saladin in Jerusalem," Johannes Pahlitzsch examines Saladin's foundation of three religious institutions, a madrasah, a *khānqāh*, and a hospital, as part of his re-Islamization of the city after the Muslim conquest of 583/1187. Pahlitzsch shows that Saladin sought to ensure a smooth transition in the administration of both Muslim and non-Muslim religious institutions during the Muslim takeover, only changing their religious affiliations if such changes helped with this transition. An edition and translation of the *waqfiyah* (endowment document) of the *khānqāh* is included. Meanwhile Lorenz Korn, in "The Structure of Architectural Patronage in Ayyubid Jerusalem," considers Ayyubid architectural patronage in the city, demonstrating that the fact that relatively few buildings were founded by Saladin's descendents (with the exception of his nephew al-Mu'azzam 'Isā [d. 624/1227]) is indicative of the city's decline, in the Ayyubids' eyes, from a symbol of the jihad to an unimportant town that could be traded away for political ends.

The last three articles of the volume are concerned, either directly or indirectly, with the Mamluk period. Yehoshua Frenkel's "The Relationship Between Mamluk Officials and the Urban Civilian Population: A Study of Some Legal Documents from Jerusalem" uses a variety of *waqfiyāt*, petitions, decrees, and death registers to show how these documents can shed light on the history of those individuals normally neglected by the historical narratives. Frenkel demonstrates that while the Mamluk rulers used *awqāf* as a means of establishing their legitimacy as rulers, the lower classes could also make use of the institution in a variety of ways to assert themselves in the public sphere. Frenkel includes texts and translations of two decrees in support of his argument.

Joseph Drory addresses the issue of natives of Jerusalem working in the heartland



of the Mamluk realm in "Jerusalemites in Egyptian Society during the Mamluk Period." Drory notes that both medieval sources and modern scholars regard inhabitants of the holy city as having contributed little to the Mamluk state. Drory proposes to disprove this assertion, which he does by presenting case studies of three chief judges of Jerusalemite origin who became highly influential in Egyptian religious and political circles in the eighth/fourteenth to tenth/sixteenth centuries, showing that contrary to received wisdom, natives of the city did rise to positions of considerable prominence in Egyptian society.

The final article of the volume, "The Walls and Gates of Jerusalem Before and After Sultan Süleyman's Rebuilding Project of 1538–40," by Mohammad Ghosheh, surveys the development of the city's wall and gate defenses from the Ayyubid to the early Ottoman periods. Much of Ghosheh's article is devoted to the Mamluk period, and he shows that contrary to the general opinion, the Mamluk city did have some walls, built at least in part through the efforts of the city's population, as is apparent from statements in several court records. Ottoman court records also prove to be useful, revealing information about the work conducted on the walls of Jerusalem during the early Ottoman period. Ghosheh concludes by noting that current scholarly opinions about the defenses of Jerusalem and the historical sources that refer to them must be re-evaluated in the light of the new evidence contained in the Mamluk and Ottoman court records, of which he provides illustrations and edited texts of several. The volume concludes with a bibliography.

As should by now be apparent, *Governing the Holy City* is an important volume for its contributions to modern understanding of the social history of Jerusalem. However, it is even more important for its use of hitherto largely neglected legal documents and inscriptions from archives and museums in Jerusalem. Scholars of the medieval Middle East, and the Mamluk period in particular, are beginning to make increasing use of such sources in their research; this volume, with its surveys of available resources and its presentation and use of numerous texts and translations of such sources, can only help to encourage this healthy trend.



ŞALĀḤ AL-DĪN KHALĪL IBN AYBAK AL-ŞAFADĪ (attributed), *Law‘at al-Shākī wa-Dam‘at al-Bākī*, edited by Muḥammad ‘Āyish (Damascus: al-Awā’il, 2003). Pp. 104.

REVIEWED BY EVERETT K. ROWSON, New York University

In a 2004 review for this journal of an edition of one work by al-Şafadī (d. 764/1363) and a study of another, I noted the burgeoning interest in this author in both the Middle East and the West, and expressed the hope that the trend would continue.¹ I am gratified to say that it has not only continued but intensified. The Beirut-Wiesbaden edition of al-Şafadī’s massive biographical dictionary, *Al-Wāfi bi-al-Wafayāt*, now lacks only three of its thirty volumes; his dictionary of contemporaries, the *A’yān al-‘Aşr*, has been available since 1998 in a serviceable if not optimal six-volume edition;² and his voluminous correspondence (almost a biographical dictionary in itself, as well as a literary anthology), the *Alḥān al-Sawāji‘*, appeared in two volumes in an excellent edition in 2004.³

Muḥammad ‘Āyish is one of several recent enthusiastic converts to Şafadī studies. Besides the *Law‘at al-Shākī*, under review here, he has also edited al-Şafadī’s amusing parody of the genre of literary commentary, the *Ikhtirā‘ al-Khurā‘*,⁴ and is promising an edition of the *Tashnīf al-Sam‘ bi-Insikāb al-Dam‘*, one of al-Şafadī’s many “theme” anthologies, this one focusing on tears. But the field is getting crowded. A first critical edition of the *Tashnīf* appeared already in 2000⁵ (it was published earlier, uncritically, in Cairo in 1903), as did one of the *Ikhtirā‘* (never previously published).⁶ In 2003 al-Şafadī’s “beautiful boy” anthology, *Al-Ḥusn al-Şarīḥ fī Mi‘at Malīḥ*, was edited for the first time.⁷ But the prize for industry at this point must go to Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Majīd Lāshīn, who in 2005 published

¹Reviews of al-Şafadī, *Al-Kashf wa-al-Tanbīh ‘alā al-Waşf wa-al-Tashbīh*, edited by Hilāl Nājī and Walīd ibn Aḥmad al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Zubayrī (Leeds: Majallat al-Ḥikmah, 1420/1999), and of Nabīl Muḥammad Rashād, *Al-Şafadī wa-Sharḥuhu ‘alā Lāmīyat al-‘Ajām: Dirāsah Taḥlīliyah* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Ādāb, 1421/2001), in *Mamlūk Studies Review* 8, no. 1 (2004): 315–23.

²Al-Şafadī, *A’yān al-‘Aşr wa-A’wān al-Naşr*, ed. ‘Alī Abū Zayd et al., 6 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-Mu’āşir and Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1998).

³Al-Şafadī, *Alḥān al-Sawāji‘ bayna al-Bādi‘ wa-al-Murāji‘*, ed. Ibrāhīm Şāliḥ, 2 vols. (Damascus: Dār al-Bashā’ir, 2004).

⁴Al-Şafadī, *Ikhtirā‘ al-Khurā‘ fī Mukhālafat al-Naql wa-al-Ṭibā‘*, ed. Muḥammad ‘Āyish (Amman: Dār ‘Ammār, 2004).

⁵Al-Şafadī, *Tashnīf al-Sam‘ bi-Insikāb al-Dam‘/Ladhdhat al-Sam‘ fī Şifat al-Dam‘*, ed. Muḥammad ‘Alī Dāwūd (Alexandria: Dār al-Qafā’ li-Dunyā al-Ṭibā‘ah wa-al-Naşr, 2000).

⁶Al-Şafadī, *Ikhtirā‘ al-Khurā‘*, ed. Fārūq Asalīm (Damascus: Ittiḥād al-Kuttāb al-‘Arab, 2000).

⁷Al-Şafadī, *Al-Ḥusn al-Şarīḥ fī Mi‘at Malīḥ*, ed. Aḥmad Fawzī al-Hayb (Damascus: Dār Sa’d al-Dīn, 2003).



first editions of al-Şafadī's *Al-Rawḍ al-Bāsim wa-al-'Arf al-Nāsim* (a general anthology of his own poetry), his *Şarf al-'Ayn* (a "theme" book on eyes), and his *Al-Hawl al-Mu'jib fī al-Qawl al-Mūjib* (one of a series of studies on particular rhetorical figures).⁸ Most importantly, Lāshīn has also published the most comprehensive biography and study of al-Şafadī to date, an impressive work that will be basic for all future Şafadī studies.⁹

If it is his, the *Law'at al-Shākī wa-Dam'at al-Bākī* (The Sufferer's pain and weeper's tear) must count as al-Şafadī's most enduringly popular work. At least twenty-five manuscripts of it are known, it was the first of his works to be printed (in a lithograph edition in Cairo in 1857), and it was republished at least a dozen times between 1864 and 1922, in Cairo, Istanbul, Hims, and Tunis. In form it is a *maqāmah* (also described in some manuscripts as a *risālah*, but the two terms were virtually synonymous in the Mamluk period), a relatively brief prose narrative, giving an account in the first person of the narrator's love affair with a young Turkish soldier. The plot is minimal—the two meet by chance, fall in love on the spot, arrange to meet a week later, spend a happy night of love, and then part—but proceeds extremely slowly, since the point is not the story but the language, which is an elaborately rhetorical rhymed prose, punctuated at regular intervals by short passages in poetry. The verses, whose authors are never identified (this was conventional in the *maqāmah* genre), usually recast what has just been said in prose, a procedure that reflects the popularity of both *ḥall al-naẓm* (prosification) and *naẓm al-manthūr* (versification) among the littérateurs of the period.¹⁰ The improbabilities of the plot—of which there are many, such as the reproaches the beloved directs at the lover when they first meet, accusing him of abandoning the good sense he knows he has always shown in the past by not falling in love—are to be explained by the fact that the entire exercise is driven by the conventions of love poetry, not in any sense by reality.¹¹

In the introduction to his new edition of this text (the first since 1922, to the best of my knowledge), Muḥammad 'Āyish briefly reviews al-Şafadī's life and works (a very incomplete and rather perfunctory list); summarizes the *Law'ah's* plot (laudably avoiding any editorial comment on its homoerotic theme); lists

⁸All Cairo: Dār al-Āfāq al-'Arabīyah, 2005.

⁹Muḥammad 'Abd al-Majīd Lāshīn, *Al-Şafadī wa-Āthāruhu fī al-Adab wa-al-Naqd* (Cairo: Dār al-Āfāq al-'Arabīyah, 2005).

¹⁰Both devices have been analyzed by Amidu Sanni, *The Arabic Theory of Prosification and Versification* (Beirut-Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1998).

¹¹For further discussion of the content of the text see Everett K. Rowson, "Two Homoerotic Narratives from Mamluk Literature: al-Şafadī's *Law'at al-shākī* and Ibn Dāniyāl's *al-Mutayyam*," in *Homoeroticism in Classical Arabic Literature*, ed. J. W. Wright, Jr. and Everett K. Rowson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 158–91.



some of the previous printed editions of the work and describes the manuscripts on which he has relied for his own; discusses the problem of its authorship; and explains how he has gone about editing it. All of this is presented clearly and succinctly, but there are some issues that merit comment.

The most important of these is the question of authorship. ‘Āyish is sufficiently cautious about this that the cover of his book reads “attributed to (*al-mansūb li-*) al-Şafadī.” In fact, as he explains in some detail, while the majority of manuscripts do in fact attribute the work to al-Şafadī, there are others that assign it to no fewer than four other authors: Şafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī (d. 752/1351), Ibn Khaṭīb Dārayyā (d. 811/1408), Zayn al-Dīn al-Ḥarīrī (d. 967/1560), and ‘Alā’ al-Dīn al-Māridīnī (ninth/fifteenth c.). The only one of these he takes seriously, however, is Zayn al-Dīn, since that attribution appears in both the *Shadharāt al-Dhahab* of Ibn al-‘Imād and the *Kashf al-Zunūn* of Ḥājji Khalīfah (whereas an attribution to al-Şafadī appears nowhere in the bio-bibliographical tradition, nor does al-Şafadī seem ever to mention the title in his own works, despite his habit of frequent cross-referencing among them). ‘Āyish is nevertheless inclined to accept the attribution to al-Şafadī, although offering no real arguments for it beyond a vague claim of similarity of style between the *Law‘ah* and al-Şafadī’s correspondence as reproduced in his *Alḥān al-Sawāji‘*.

Lāshīn has now gone into this question in somewhat greater detail.¹² He is also inclined to grant al-Şafadī’s authorship, but besides appealing, like ‘Āyish, to style and to the preponderance of the manuscript evidence, he also notes that most of the (unattributed) poetry in the *Law‘ah* also appears (attributed) in al-Şafadī’s other works, especially in the *Wāfi*, and lists quite a number of examples, including a two-line poem that is not only in fact by al-Şafadī himself but serves as the introduction to one of his unpublished works, a collection of literary exchanges from the past with the title *Al-Mujārāh wa-al-Mujāzāh fī Mujārayāt al-Shu‘arā’*. He also notes that at one point the beloved, addressing the narrator, refers to “your imam al-Shāfi‘ī,” which is exactly how al-Şafadī, a fervent adherent of the Shafi‘i school of Islamic law, would have done it; and, less convincingly, argues that the narrator’s describing himself as a *şabb dam‘uhu mithl ismihi* (“a besotted one whose tears are like his name”) is a reference to al-Şafadī’s personal name, Khalīl, which literally means “close friend,” the intended meaning being that the narrator’s tears (which *do* appear in great abundance throughout the text) are his inseparable companion. (It seems more likely, however, that the reference is to the word *şabb* itself, which can mean “poured out” as well as “besotted.”)

This question cannot be settled in a review, but a few further considerations may be noted. ‘Āyish has done an admirable job of tracking down most of the

¹²Lāshīn, *Al-Şafadī*, 95-98.



authors of the *Law'ah's* poems (87 out of 145), and they fit quite well with al-Şafadī's authorship. At least five are by al-Şafadī himself (Āyish notes three, to which Lāshīn has added one, and I have identified another); seven are by his colleague and sometime friend Ibn Nubātah; a number of others are by other colleagues and friends, including one by Ibn al-Wardī and another by his early mentor Shihāb al-Dīn Maḥmūd; and none seem to postdate his own lifetime. Were the work later, one would expect the occasional appearance of a later poet.

On the other hand, there are serious questions about the relationship between this work and some other titles mentioned in contemporary sources. One of al-Şafadī's very first works was a *maqāmah* (or *risālah*) titled *Ibrat al-Labīb bi-'Athrat al-Ka'ib* (A Lesson for the perspicacious from the stumbling of the disconsolate [lover]), which he himself tells us he composed in emulation of a *maqāmah* enjoying enormous popularity in Cairo when he arrived there in 727/1327, the *Marāṭi' al-Ghizlān* of 'Alā' al-Dīn Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir.¹³ The text of the latter has been tracked down by Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila in al-Nuwayrī's *Nihāyat al-Arab* (where the author but not the title is given), and is in fact an account of an affair with a young Turkish soldier.¹⁴ Al-Şafadī's *Ibrah* (which is also in some manuscripts called "Al-Maqāmah al-Aybakīyah," suggesting that it was his *only*, or at least his most famous, *maqāmah*) has never been published; but any temptation to identify it with the *Law'ah* would seem to founder on the fact that both the *Ibrah* and the *Law'ah* are included, side by side, in a Bodleian manuscript (MS Sale 34). Further complicating matters is the fact that al-Şafadī informs us that at some point he studied with Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-'Umarī the latter's *Dam'at al-Bākī*,¹⁵ about which nothing further appears to be known, while some manuscripts (and one early publication) of the *Law'ah*, while attributing it to al-Şafadī, call it *Dam'at al-Bākī wa-Law'at al-Shākī*. One can only hope that further investigation of manuscripts of the *Law'ah*, and the now long overdue publication of the *Ibrah*, will help clear up this situation.

The resources 'Āyish had mustered to establish his text are very far from ideal. For his base (*aşl*), he has relied on a 1331/1912 Cairo printing, apparently purely on the basis of availability, since he himself points out its poor quality. This he has collated with two relatively recent manuscripts from the library of Maḥmūd Sab' al-Mustashār (not further identified) in Cairo, the first ("Ş") dated

¹³ Al-Şafadī, *A'yān al-'Aşr*, 3:496.

¹⁴ Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab* (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Mişrīyah al-'Āmmah lil-Kitāb, 1923-), 8:140–9. See Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila, *Maqama: A History of a Genre* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002), 340, 386. The *Marāṭi' al-Ghizlān* of Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir is not to be confused with the work of the same title by al-Nawājī (d. 859/1455), which is a collection of epigrams about beautiful boys, in the tradition of al-Şafadī's *Al-Ḥusn al-Şarīh*.

¹⁵ Al-Şafadī, *Wāfi*, 8:255; *A'yān*, 1:420.



1272 and attributing the work to Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī and the second (“D”) undated (?) and attributing it to Ibn Khaṭīb Dārayyā. Besides frequent minor textual variations among these, manuscript “S” frequently supplies additional words and phrases, which the editor has mostly included in his text, in brackets. The apparatus lays out all significant variants in lucid fashion. I have in turn collated the text with the 1922 Cairo edition by Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad Hārūn, which supplies yet more minor variations, lacks almost all the additions from “S”, and turns out to have a major lacuna that becomes apparent only from the collation. (Hārūn also supplies some attributions for the poetry, which do not always agree with those of ‘Āyish.)

In textual terms, then, we are hardly better off than we were in 1922, and must continue to await a truly critical edition. ‘Āyish’s printed text is certainly easier to read than the older ones, however, and he has supplied quite a lot of vocalization, almost all correct, and is sensitive to both the meaning and the scansion of the poetry. His work in tracking down the verses in other sources is to be appreciated. A table of verses at the end (first rhyme word, meter, author if known, number of lines, page number) is helpful. The only other end matter is a bibliography of primary sources, but for a short work of this kind no further indices would be expected.

