

## al-Şafadī: The Scholar as a Reader

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

**Keywords** History of reading. Books circulation. Authors' methodology. Arabic manuscripts. Mamlūk period.

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



## 1 Introduction

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

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

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**1** GAL G II 39-42, S II 27-9. Biographical data are found chiefly in the account given by his friend al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 10: 5-32 (no. 1352), but also in al-Dahabī, *Muġam*, 91-2 (no. 107); Ibn al-ʿImād, *Şaġarāt*, 8: 343-4; Ibn Ḥaġar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Durar*, 2: 87-8; Ibn al-ʿIrāqī, *Ḍayl*, 2: 134-6; Ibn Kaṭīr, *Bidāya*, 14: 303; Ibn Qāḍī Şuhba, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3: 120-1; Ibn Qāḍī Şuhba, *Tārīḥ*, 3: 227-9; Ibn Rāfiʿ al-Salāmī, *Wafayāt*, 2: 268-70 (no. 789); Ibn Taġribirdī, *Manhal*, 5: 241-57; Ibn Taġribirdī, *Nuġūm*, 11: 19-21; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, 2: 77-8; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 3: 87; al-Saḥāwī, *Waġīz*, 1: 135 (no. 258); for secondary sources, see Lāşīn 2005; Little 1976; Rosenthal in *EP*; Rowson 2019; Van Ess 1976; Van Ess 1977, etc.

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

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

**4** Behrens-Abouseif 2008, 10-11, 16; Manstetten 2018.

tionaries: the period is defined as an age of encyclopaedism.<sup>5</sup> Summaries, commentaries and abstracts from this knowledge were also written, a kind of a secondary literature that made the knowledge more accessible.

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

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

5 van Berkel 2013; Muhanna 2013; Muhanna 2018.

6 Chamberlain 1994; 1997; Gacek 2001; 2009, 51-6, 65-9; Hirschler 2013; Leder et al. 1996; 2000; al-Munajjed 1955; Rosenthal 1947; 2007; Schöler 2009; Sellheim in *EF*; Sublet 1997; Vajda 1957; 1983; Vajda et al. in *EF*; Witkam 2007.

7 Ed. Ritter et al. 1931-. I borrow the translation of al-Şafadī's book titles from Rowson 2009.

8 Ed. Sezgin, 'Amāwī 1990.

es: *tawriya*, *istiḥdām* (two forms of double-entendre)<sup>9</sup> and *tašbīh* (simile; see §§ 3 and 4.2). He was also a renowned literary critic (see his *al-Ġayṭ al-musaġġam fī šarḥ Lāmiyyat al-‘aġam*, Copious Showers of Commentary on the ‘Poem Rhyming in -l’ of the Non-Arabs).<sup>10</sup> His *Tašḥīḥ al-tašḥīf wa-taḥrīr al-taḥrīf* (Correction of Misspellings and Rectification of Mispronunciations)<sup>11</sup> or *Ma‘ānī al-wāw* (The Various Meanings of the Particle wa-)<sup>12</sup> are a linguist’s oeuvres. History, linguistics, literature, but also tradition and religious studies: his wide gamut of knowledge reflects what was expected from a gentleman (*adīb*) and even more from a chancery secretary.<sup>13</sup>

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

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

<sup>9</sup> Bonebakker 1966.

<sup>10</sup> Ed. Dār al-Kutub al-‘ilmiyya 1975.

<sup>11</sup> Ed. al-Şarqāwī 1987b.

<sup>12</sup> Unpublished.

<sup>13</sup> Dekkiche 2011, 255-60; Martel-Thoumian 1992, 133-6.

<sup>14</sup> For the bibliography about his biography, see fn. 1.

<sup>15</sup> On this specific category, see Haarmann 1988.

<sup>16</sup> This appellation comes from the fact that, in the central chancery of Cairo, this secretary was on the rostrum next to the sultan at various occasions. On the organization of the Mamlūk chancery, see Dekkiche 2011, 263-9; Martel-Thoumian 1992, 40-7.

<sup>17</sup> See Bauden 2020, 144.

dence of the excellent reputation he and his work enjoyed during his lifetime, and until now (see §§ 4.1 and 4.2).<sup>18</sup>

In order to envisage al-Şafadī as a reader, different sources of information are available. First, the documentary evidence: notes he left on manuscripts because he owned them (ownership marks) or borrowed them. These are the subject of the first part of this article, together with consultation notes and note-taking attestations that were left by al-Şafadī in the manuscripts he used, perused, and read. All of these are paratextual elements; that is, small textual units unrelated to the main text of the manuscript but featured on its pages.<sup>19</sup> The paratextual elements are a wealth of knowledge for the historian of the book, the historian of ideas, or the biographer, among others. Sometimes, they are dated and bear a direct or indirect indication of place, still improving their documentary value.<sup>20</sup>

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

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

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**18** Rosenthal *EF*; Sellheim 1976-87, 1: 200-1, 2: 111; Rowson 2009, 345. See also Paul 1994.

**19** The term “paratexte” was coined by Gérard Genette. See Genette 1982, among others.

**20** Happily, these paratextual elements are more and more used by scholars and several ongoing projects aim at gathering them, see ELEO (*Ex-Libris ex Oriente*) project in ULiège (<http://web.philo.ulg.ac.be/islamo/ex-libris-ex-orient/>), the Refaiya project in Leipzig University (<https://www.refaiya.uni-leipzig.de/content/index.xml>) or the efforts of Berlin State Library to mention them in their online catalogue (<http://orient-digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/content/index.xml>). A double special issue of the *Journal of Islamic Manuscripts* was devoted to them and gathered 12 studies about them, see Liebrecht 2018a. See also below fn. 24.

available, an authorial manuscript (checked by the author of the text) or an apograph, a direct copy of a holograph.<sup>21</sup>

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

## 2 Documentary Evidence: The Paratextual Elements in Manuscripts

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

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

<sup>21</sup> For terminology, see Bauden, Franssen 2020, 2-37, spec. 3, 20.

<sup>22</sup> Seeger A. Bonebakker (1923-2005) was a Dutch orientalist who worked mainly for the University of California in Los Angeles. He had a special relation with Venice and the Ca’ Foscari University and bequeathed all his library (worth 70,000 €, as estimated in 2006, counting almost 8,000 books, 200 microfilms of manuscripts and thousands of printed articles), as well as nearly 230,000 € to finance the cataloguing of the collection and doctoral and post-doctoral projects about Arabic literature. See Franssen 2019.

<sup>23</sup> Grafton 2001, 259-60.



**Figure 1**  
Seeger A. Bonebakker's personal  
ex-libris. Università Ca' Foscari  
Venezia, Biblioteca Area Linguistica,  
Dipartimento di Studi sull'Asia  
e sull'Africa Mediterranea,  
Bonebakker's collection. © Author

the circulation of books and ideas (what was read where and when), about the extent and status of libraries, either private or public; and many other details particular to each case.<sup>24</sup>

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

## 2.1 Ex-libris and Consultation Marks

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

<sup>24</sup> On the historical value of these notes, see Görke, Hirschler 2012. Studies taking into account these paratexts are happily more and more numerous, see for instance and in addition to the references cited in fn. 20: Daaif, Sironval 2013; Krimsti 2018; Liebrez 2018b; Zouache 2018 etc. See also Bauden in this volume.

mention al-Şafadī's son's ownership marks, written on manuscripts inherited from his father's library and of which there are four.

### 2.1.1.1 Simple Ex-libris

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

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

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

<sup>25</sup> His *nisba* "al-Şafadī" is not always mentioned and there is no apparent logic explaining its presence or absence.

<sup>26</sup> The ex-libris is cited in the catalogue: Mac Guckin de Slane 1883-95, 367. The MS is freely available online: <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b11001646v.image>.

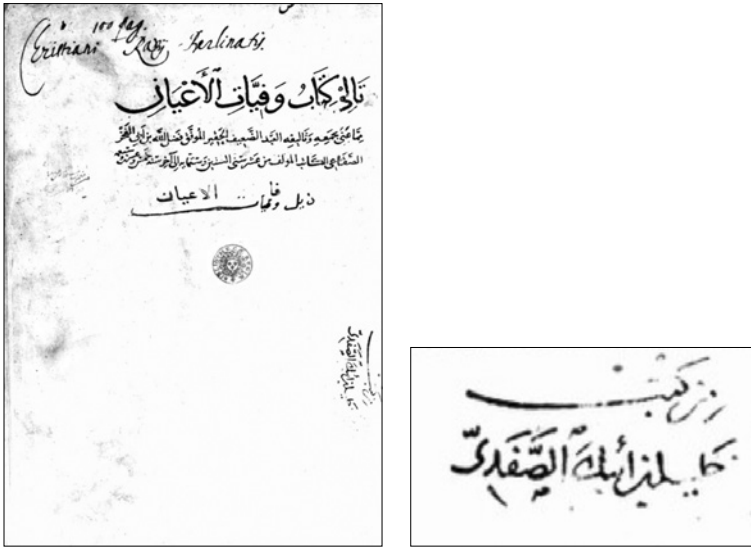
<sup>27</sup> GAL G I 326-8, S I 561; ed. 'Abbās 1968-72.

<sup>28</sup> al-Şafadī, *A'yān*, 4: 459 (no. 1586); al-Şafadī, *Wāfi*, 3: 139 (no. 1082); GAL G I 328; ed. Sublet 1973.

<sup>29</sup> Sublet 1973, XVIII-XXVIII.

<sup>30</sup> Sometimes *verbatim*, see Sublet 1973, XII, 183 fn. 253 *et passim*. See also van Ess 1976, 256-7.





Figures 2-3 Ibn al-Şuqā'ī. *Talī kitāb wafayāt al-a'yān*. Paris, BnF, Arabe 2061, f. 1 and detail (courtesy BnF)

Another example of such simple ex-libris is found on the title page of a manuscript kept in the Turkish Islamic Arts Museum in Istanbul (Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi, henceforth TIEM), under the shelf mark 2014T. In this case, it is a text of *adab* by al-Ġāḥiẓ (d. 255/868-9), “the father of *adab*”,<sup>31</sup> the famous *littérateur* of the ‘Abbāsīd period, described as a “bibliophile and sometimes bibliomaniac”.<sup>32</sup> This short epistle is entitled *Risāla fī madḥ al-kutub wa al-ḥaṭṭ ‘alā ġam‘i-hā* (see the title page, fig. 4), hence an epistle about bibliophilia, but one should not trust this title: the text is actually a portion of the *Kitāb al-ḥawayān* by the same author.<sup>33</sup> I did not have the chance to consult this manuscript, but Frédéric Bauden procured a copy of its microfilm for me and it seems to be an exceptional manuscript. The twenty-six folios display a very regular and large handwriting, in only five lines per page, a masterful example of calligraphic *ṭuluṭ*.<sup>34</sup> The colophon is

31 GAL G I 158-160, SI 239-247; Pellat 1956; Montgomery 2013; 2018; Ghersetti 1994.

32 “al-Ġāḥiẓ, la cui passione di bibliofilo, e talvolta di bibliomane, traspare da ogni riga” (Ghersetti 1994, 67 *et passim*).

33 More precisely, an abbreviated form of a passage of the first volume of 1947 edition (by ‘Abd al-Salām b. Hārūn), from p. 50, as already shown by Rice 1955, 27. Note that the shelf mark given by Rice is TIEM 1024, but he is describing the manuscript we now know under the shelfmark TIEM 2014T.

34 About *ṭuluṭ*, see Gacek 2009, 274-5; Blair 2006, XXIII, 167.



Figures 4-5 al-Gāhiz. *Risāla fi madh al-kutub wa al-ḥaṭṭ 'alā ḡam'i-hā*. Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi, MS 2014T, f. 1 and detail of place and date of acquisition (courtesy D.S. Rice 1955, plate XVC and TIEM)

signed “Alī b. Hilāl”, a fact that lets us suppose the manuscript was penned by the great calligrapher Ibn al-Bawwāb (d. 255/868-9), one of the two eminent calligraphers who have developed the five calligraphic styles still in use today.<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless, D.S. Rice has convincingly shown it was a forgery: “The paper, ink, and script indicate that the manuscript is probably a Mamlūk forgery attributable to the fourteenth century”.<sup>36</sup>

The ex-libris stands in two lines [fig. 5], in this case with the *nisba* (“al-Ṣafadī”). A bit further, indications of place and date are added: *bi-Dimašq al-maḥrūsa sana 761* (‘in Damascus the safeguarded, year 761/1359-60’). Had al-Ṣafadī been fooled by the forger? I could not answer, but since the manuscript is written on “thick salmon-coloured paper,”<sup>37</sup> a paper often used by al-Ṣafadī for his own holographs (see below §§ 3 and 4.2), one may wonder if he had not recognised it as a common commodity...

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

<sup>36</sup> Rice 1955, 27.

<sup>37</sup> Rice 1955, 27.

An interesting thing to add is the fact that the ownership marks have all been circled. Besides this, a new page has been pasted down on the title page and cut so that the ownership marks, the title and the author name are nevertheless visible. As it is often the case, the title page of the manuscript was probably very damaged, and a careful bibliophile must have wanted to restore his acquisition. Actually, we know this book collector is Abū Bakr b. Rustam al-Şirwānī (d. 1135/1722-23): his ex-libris is the only one that was directly written on the new f. 1 (in the upper right corner). He gathered an impressive library and seems to have had a habit of circling the previous ex-libris of his books, especially those by famous scholars or characters.<sup>38</sup>

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

Two other examples of simple ownership statement are found in two manuscripts of the Fazīlahmed Pasha collection of the Köprülü Library: 1518 and 1519, the two volumes of the *Kitāb al-af'āl*, by Abū 'Uṭmān Sa'īd b. Muḥammad al-Ma'āfirī al-Qurṭubī ṭumma al-Saraqustī, also known as Ibn al-Ḥaddād (d. after 400/1010) [figs 6, 8].<sup>39</sup> The date and place of each ex-libris are noted a bit farther down: *bi-Dimaşq al-maḥrūsa sana 758* ('in Damascus the safeguarded, in the year 758/1356-57') [figs 7, 9].

According to the colophon, the manuscript was copied in Damascus in 670/1271-72, by a certain Yaḥyā al-Muṭarriz al-Ḥanafī.<sup>40</sup> The book in question is about linguistic matters (more precisely verb morphology), one of al-Şafadī's numerous interests. It is striking that three of his works about lexicography, namely the *Ġawāmiḍ al-Şiḥāḥ* (Problems in [the Lexicon Titled] 'The Sound'),<sup>41</sup> the *Nufūd al-sahm fī mā waqa'a li-l-Ġawharī min al-wahm* (The Penetrating Arrow, on the Errors of al-Ġawharī [in his Lexicon Titled 'The Sound'])<sup>42</sup> and the *Ḥālī al-nawāhid 'alā mā fī al-Şiḥāḥ min al-Şawāhid* (The Adornment of the Full-Breasted, on the Poetic Citations in [the Lexicon Titled] 'The Sound')<sup>43</sup> were written in this same year.<sup>44</sup> For the first two,

38 On al-Şirwānī, see Fu'ād Sayyid 2003, 19-24 (who cites this particular ms); Richard 1999; Bonmariage 2016.

39 Zirikī 2002, 3: 101, who does not know of these copies. Ed. Şaraf 1975.

40 Ms Fazīlahmed Pasha 1518, f. 245.

41 Ed. Nabḥān 1996.

42 Ed. 'Āyiş 2006.

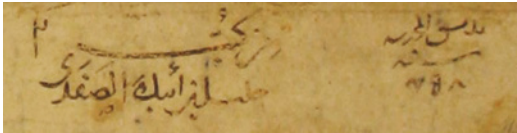
43 Unpublished.

44 Rowson 2009, 339.



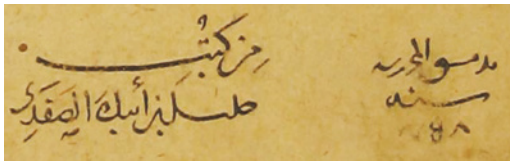
Figures 6-7

Abū 'Uṭmān Sa'īd b. M. al-Ma'āfirī al-Qurtubī ṭumma al-Saraqusṭī. *Kitāb al-Af'āl*, vol. 1. Köprülü Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi, MS Fazılamed Pasha 1518, f. 1 and detail (courtesy Köprülü Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi)



Figures 8-9

Abū 'Uṭmān Sa'īd b. M. al-Ma'āfirī al-Qurtubī ṭumma al-Saraqusṭī. *Kitāb al-Af'āl*, vol. 2. Köprülü Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi, MS Fazılamed Pasha 1519, f. 1 and detail (courtesy Köprülü Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi)



we know that al-Şafadī had finished his drafts in Ğumādā I 757/May 1356<sup>45</sup> and 21 Ramađān 757/17 September 1356, respectively.<sup>46</sup> We have here one of his reference books for the composition of the different works about linguistic and phonologic correctness he wrote during that period.<sup>47</sup>

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

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

<sup>45</sup> Note that a fair copy, dedicated to the head of the chancery, was realised the same year by al-Şafadī as well. al-Şafadī, *Ġawāmiḍ*, 35-6.

<sup>46</sup> According to the colophons of the two scribal copies realised on the basis of the draft of the first volume, which is lost. al-Şafadī, *Nuḥūd*, 25-6.

<sup>47</sup> The *Taṣḥīḥ al-taṣḥīf wa tahrīr al-tahrīf* was finished only a couple of years later, if we trust the date of the *iğāza*: 759/1358. See § 4.2 and al-Şafadī, *Taṣḥīḥ*, 34.

<sup>48</sup> Raven in *EP*; GAL G I 413, S I 206, 733-4. Ed. al-Wakīl 1387-90/1967-70.

<sup>49</sup> Robson in *EP*; GAL G I 525, S I 632-3, 732-3.

<sup>50</sup> On Ibn Hişām: Montgomery Watt in *EP*; GAL G I 135, S I 732-3. On Ibn Ishāq: Jones in *EP*; GAL G I 135.

<sup>51</sup> Entitled *al-Zahr al-bāsim fī sīrat Abī al-Qāsim*, see GAL G II 48, S II 47-8 and Hamdan in *EP*. The two men knew each other and exchanged letters, see al-Şafadī, *Alḥān*, 2: 321 (no. 99); al-Şafadī, *A’yān*, 5: 433-8 (no. 1865); al-Şafadī, *Wāfi*, 26: 145 (no. 109).

<sup>52</sup> Franssen, forthcoming; al-Şafadī’s *Faḍl al-munīf* was edited by ‘Āyīš 2007. About the *mawlid*, see Katz 2007, and for the *mawlid* texts from Mamlūk Damascus, partic. 54-61, 216.



Figures 10-11 al-Suhaylī. *al-Rawḍ al-unuf fi šarḥ al-sira al-nabawiyya li-Ibn Hišām*. Bursa, İnebey Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi, MS Hüseyin Çelebi 764, f. 2a and detail (courtesy İnebey Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi)

Another simple ex-libris is found on the title page of MS Rağıp Paşa 1078 [fig. 12]. This manuscript is a copy of the *Tahrīr al-tahbīr fī šināʿat al-šīʿr wa-l-naṭr wa-bayān iğāz al-Qurʾān*<sup>53</sup> (The Composition of the Writing in the Art of Poetry, Prose and Exposition of the Inimitability of the Qurʾān), by Zakī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīm b. ʿAbd al-Wahīd, commonly called Ibn Abī al-Işbaʿ (d. 654/1256).<sup>54</sup> As the title implies, it is a work of stylistics. This manuscript was commissioned for the library of Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, as attested by the cartouche with the ornate chrysography visible on the title page.<sup>55</sup> The Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī family counted several important chancery secretaries of the Mamlūk period.<sup>56</sup> This manuscript was commissioned for Muḥyī al-Dīn Yaḥyā, head of the chancery (*kātib al-sirr*) successively in Damascus and Cairo. According to the mark, al-Şafādī acquired the manuscript in 738/1337-8, the year of Muḥyī al-Dīn Yaḥyā’s death. The

53 Ed. Ḥifnī 1963.

54 Harb in *EP*.

55 We will discuss further this particular MS a bit later (see § 4.1), as well as another manuscript commissioned for the same library.

56 Salibi in *EP* (1).



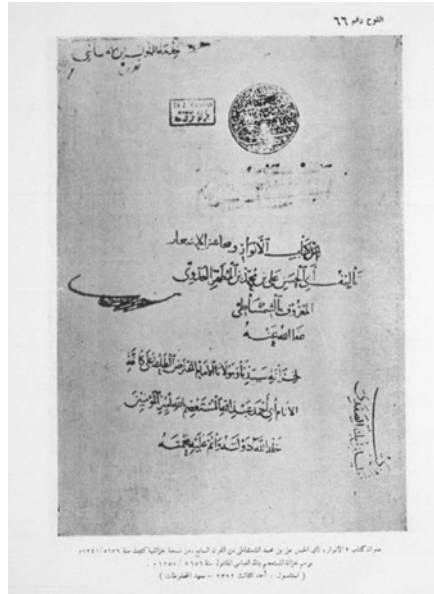


Figures 12-13 Ibn Abi al-Iṣba'. *Kitāb Taḥrīr al-taḥbīr fī šinā'at al-šī'r wa al-naṭr wa i'ḡāz al-Qur'ān*. Raġip Pasha Kütüphanesi, ms 1078, f. 1 and detail (courtesy Raġip Pasha Kütüphanesi)

ownership mark is simple, written parallel to the spine; it says only *Min kutub | Ḥalīl b. Aybak 'afā Allāh 'an-hu | sana 738* ('from among the books of Ḥalīl b. Aybak, may God forgive him, year 738') [fig. 13]. Other ownership statements are visible on the same page, four of them written beneath al-Şafadī's and in the same direction. Another ownership mark is written in the opposite part of the page from al-Şafadī's; it is in the name of Aḥmad b. Yāḥyā b. Faḍl Allāh al-'Umarī al-'Adawī al-Qurašī, the son of the first owner of the manuscript.<sup>57</sup> At the time of his father's death, this Aḥmad was in prison for having displeased the sultan al-Naṣir Muḥammad, and this is probably why al-Şafadī was able to acquire the manuscript. All of the five ownership marks written in the lower part of the page have been circled in red, probably by al-Şirwānī (see fn. 38), whose ownership statement is in the superior margin, next to the spine. A short *taqrīz* (blurb) was added inside the spine and seems to be in al-Şafadī's hand.

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

<sup>57</sup> Salibi in *EP* (2).



**Figure 14**  
al-Şimšāṭī. *Kitāb al-anwār wa-maḥāsīn al-aš'ār*. Ms Topkapı, Ahmet III 2392, f. 1 (courtesy al-Munajjed 1960, plate 66)

played on its pages.<sup>58</sup> On plate 66, we see another example of al-Şafadī's simple ex-libris, undated [fig. 14]. The plate shows the title page of a poetic anthology by Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. al-Muṭaḥhar al-'Adawī al-Şimšāṭī (third/ninth c.), the *Kitāb al-anwār wa-maḥāsīn al-aš'ār*, a manuscript that was dedicated to the 'Abbāsīd caliph al-Mu'taṣim bi-Llāh (d. 227/842).<sup>59</sup> The manuscript is preserved in Topkapı palace (henceforth TKS) under the shelf mark Ahmet III 2392. al-Şafadī was extremely fond of poetry and this manuscript is old and prestigious; he must have been happy and proud to have it in his collection.

Sometimes, the catalogues of manuscripts do specifically mention the paratextual elements. This is the case, although not systematically, of Dār al-Kutub wa-l-Waṭā'i'iq al-Miṣriyya's (henceforth DK). For instance, under the entry about *al-Kāšif 'an riġāl al-kutub al-sitta*, by Şams al-Dīn al-Ḍahabī (d. 748/1348), one finds the mention of al-Şafadī's ownership statement dated 763/1361-62.<sup>60</sup> I did not have

<sup>58</sup> al-Munajjed 1960.

<sup>59</sup> On al-Şimšāṭī, see Heinrichs in *EP*.

<sup>60</sup> *Fihrist al-maḥṭūṭāt* 1956, 278, MS 17 *mim*. On al-Ḍahabī, see GAL G II 46-8, S II 45-7; Ben Cheneb, Somogyi in *EP*. See also Romanov's works on the computational treatment of the information taken from al-Ḍahabī's *Ta'riḥ*, for instance Romanov 2017.



the chance to consult the manuscript, or to have access to it digitally, but one may think it is an alternative title for al-Ḍahabī's *al-Kāšif fī ma'rifat man la-hu riwāya fī al-kutub al-sitta*.<sup>61</sup> In any case, the book must be a biographical dictionary of the transmitters (*riḡāl*) of the six most important *ḥadīth* collections.<sup>62</sup> Hence, this is the first book on religious sciences that we have found in what remains from al-Ṣafadī's library, and an important source for his redaction of biographies.<sup>63</sup>

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

The second category deals with more detailed ex-libris. In a *maḡmū'* preserved in the Ayasofya collection under the shelf mark 3711, one finds, from what is now f. 64, a *risāla* supposedly by Ibn al-Bayṭār.<sup>64</sup> Ibn al-Bayṭār (d. 646/1248) is an Andalusian author originally from Málaga who studied botany in Seville and then left the Iberian Peninsula to carry out a study trip to the East, ending up as chief herbalist for the Ayyubid Sultan al-Malik al-Kāmil. His *opus major* is the *Ġāmi' li-l-mufradāt al-adwiya wa-l-aḡḡiya*, a dictionary of natural history, where he synthesised the knowledge of his time about plants, vegetables, animals and minerals. He is also known for his commentary on Dioscorides, listing drugs and medicines in various languages (Arabic, Latin, Berber).

In the manuscript Ayasofya 3711, no title was written on the title page – we can only read paratextual elements by several owners and readers – but the beginning of the text, f. 64b, says in red that this is the *Risālat Ḥunayn b. Ishāq al-mutaṭabbib fī al-awzān wa-l-akyāl* (Ḥunayn b. Ishāq's Epistle on the Weights and Measures of Capacity) [figs 15-16]. Ḥunayn b. Ishāq (d. 260/873)<sup>65</sup> was an outstanding translator of the 'Abbāsīd period, specialised in Greek scientific literature. It is mostly thanks to him that Galen's and Hippocrates' works were transmitted to the Arab and then to the Latin worlds. He used to work as a genuine philologist, gathering as many manuscripts as possible and collating them in order to translate a faithful text. He was also an author and various texts of his are preserved, on subjects as varied as linguistics, philosophy, anecdotes attributed to Greek philos-

<sup>61</sup> Ed. 'Aṭiyya, al-Mawṣī 1972. His *Riḡāl al-kutub al-sitta*, cited in GAL G II 48, with a MS in Patna, in the Khuda Bakhsh oriental public library, may well be the same work with another alternative title.

<sup>62</sup> See Juynboll, Hendrik in *EP*; Robson in *EP*.

<sup>63</sup> al-Ṣafadī cites abundantly al-Ḍahabī *opus magnum*, the *Ta'rīḥ al-Islām*, in the *Wāfī*, as shown by van Ess 1976, 260-1.

<sup>64</sup> GAL G I 492, S I 896; Vernet in *EP*.

<sup>65</sup> GAL G I 205-7, S I 366-9; Strohmaier in *EP*; Bergsträsser 1966a; 1966b; Sezgin 1999.



Figure 15-16 Hunayn b. Ishāq. *Risāla fi al-awzān wa-l-akyāl*. Handwritten by Ibn al-Bayṭār, with a commentary by Quṣṭā b. Luqā al-Baʿlabakkī. Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Ayasofya 3711, f. 64 and detail (courtesy Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi)

ophers, meteorology or religious subjects (he was a Christian Nestorian). Nevertheless, I have not found any trace of such an epistle.

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

*Hādihi al-karārīs bi-ḥaṭṭ ṣayḥi-nā al-ḥakīm | al-fādiḥ Dīyā’ al-Dīn ‘Abd Allāh al-Aššāb | al-Mālaqī qaddasa Allāh rūḥa-hu wa-nawwara Allāh ḥarīḥa-hu | kataba-hu Ibn al-Suwaydī al-mutaṭabbib ḥāmīdan wa muṣallīyan | wa musallīman*

These quires are in the hand of our *ṣayḥ* the wise man, the eminent Dīyā’ al-Dīn ‘Abd Allāh the herbalist from Málaga, may God sanctify his spirit and illuminate his grave. Ibn Suwaydī the doctor wrote this lauding [God] and praying [saying the *taṣliya*].

Is that truly a manuscript in the hand of Ibn al-Bayṭār? Without another sample of his handwriting it is difficult to assert this with a good degree of certainty.<sup>66</sup> Nevertheless, Ibn al-Bayṭār was born and raised in al-Andalus and we know that the Arabic handwriting in use in the Western parts of the Islamic world is different from the one used in the East. In this text, various features of what we call *maġribī* script are effectively visible, the most straightforward being the dot under the *fā* (instead of above) and the single dot above the *qāf* (instead of the double dot); the small tail crossing the written line in the *alifs* is another clear feature.<sup>67</sup> One could add the description of the *dāl*, forming an angle of broadly 45 degrees, with its upper part curved, or the *kāf*, which is smaller than usual and presents, in its *mabsūṭa* form, a vertical upper part.<sup>68</sup> Such features are an argument in favour of the identification of the hand.

Another commentator, a certain ‘Uṭmān b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān..., indicated that this is a *risālā* by al-Ba‘labakkī, that is Qusṭā b. Lūqā al-Ba‘labakkī, another outstanding translator of the ‘Abbāsīd period (see the upper outer corner of the same f. 64).<sup>69</sup> al-Şafadī seems convinced of the hand identification: next to the inscription that occupies the title place, he added three lines of text, in diagonal in the outer margin [fig. 16]:

*Qultu huwa Ibn al-Bayṭār | šāhib Kitāb al-mufradāt al-mašhūr | wa-  
kataba Ḥalīl b. Aybak al-Şafadī*

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

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

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

<sup>66</sup> On the identification of handwritings, see Bauden, Franssen 2020; more specifically Franssen 2020.

<sup>67</sup> On *maġribī* script features, see Déroche 1994; Houdas 1886; van den Boogert 1989; on the *andalusī* more precisely, see Gacek 2009, 8-9; Bongianino 2017a; Bongianino 2017b and his bibliography.

<sup>68</sup> About the *kāf mabsūṭa*, see Gacek 2009, 318-19.

<sup>69</sup> Hill in *EP*; GAL G I 204-5.

760/1358), which necessitated the mastering of weights: this knowledge may be part of what one should know in order to be an accomplished agent of the Mamlūk treasury in Damascus.<sup>70</sup> The late date of acquisition – he was already sixty-seven and was in his last year of life – corroborates this hypothesis. The prestige of the author and copyist may also have sufficed to arouse al-Şafadī’s interest.

### 2.1.3 Consultation Marks with Note-taking Attestation

Consultation marks with note-taking attestations are another type of personal marks. These are a bit longer and more informative than the simple ex-libris. For instance, on the title pages of four manuscripts of the Fazıl Ahmed Pasha collection, shelf marks 1161 to 1164,<sup>71</sup> there are two lines in the hand of Şafadī, explaining that he “finished or consulted [the book] and what was before it,<sup>72</sup> selecting and choosing the best parts of it”. These manuscripts are four volumes of the geographical dictionary *Kitāb Muġam al-buldān* by Yāqūt al-Rūmī al-Ĥamawī (d. 626/1229), the reference work at that time in geography and toponymy, which also includes biographies of prominent figures of the places cited, as well as poetry and literary subjects.<sup>73</sup>

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

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

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**70** On this position, see Martel-Thoumian 1992, 62.

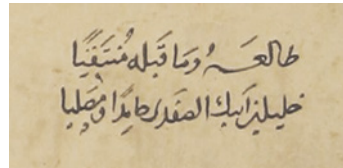
**71** Şeşen 1406/1986, 595-7.

**72** I.e. the first volume of the work, which apparently has not been preserved.

**73** Gilliot in *EP*; GAL G I 479-81, S I 880. Ed. Wüstenfeld 1866-73.

**vol. 2, Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 1161 [figs 17-18]** *ṭāla'a-hu wa mā qabla-hu muntaqiyān* | Ḥalīl b. Aybak al-Şafadī ḥāmidan wa muşalliyan.

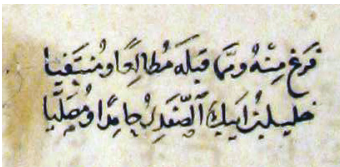
Ḥalīl b. Aybak al-Şafadī studied it [i.e. this book] and what stands before it, selecting [best passages], lauding [God] and praying [the Prophet].



**Figures 17-18** Yāqūt. *Kitāb Mu'ğam al-buldān*. Köprülü Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi, ms Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 1161, f. 1a and detail (courtesy Köprülü Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi)

**vol. 3, Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 1162 [fig 19]** *farāğā min-hu wa mā qabla-hu muṭālī'an wa muntaqiyān* | Ḥalīl b. Aybak al-Şafadī ḥāmidan wa muşalliyan.

Ḥalīl b. Aybak al-Şafadī finished it [i.e. this book] and what stands before it, studying it and selecting [best passages], lauding [God] and praying [the Prophet].

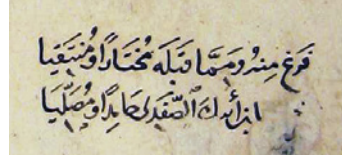


**Figure 19** al-Şafadī's consultation mark in Yāqūt. *Kitāb Mu'ğam al-buldān*. Köprülü Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi, MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 1162, f. 1a, detail (courtesy Köprülü Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi)

**vol. 4, Fazlāhmed Pasha 1163 [fig. 20]** *farāġa min-hu wa mimmā qabla-hu muḥtāran wa muntaqīyan* | Ḥalīl b. Aybak al-Şafadī ḥamīdan Allāh wa muşallīyan.

Ḥalīl b. Aybak al-Şafadī finished it [i.e. this book] and what stands before it, choosing and selecting [best passages], lauding [God] and praying [the Prophet].

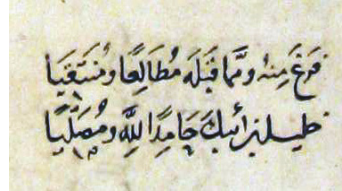
**Figure 20**  
al-Şafadī's consultation mark in Yāqūt.  
*Kitāb Muġam al-buldān*. Köprülü Yazma Eser  
Kütüphanesi, MS Fazlāhmed Pasha 1163, f. 1a, detail  
(courtesy Köprülü Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi)



**vol. 5, Fazlāhmed Pasha 1164 [fig. 21]** *farāġa min-hu wa mimmā qabla-hu muṭālī'an wa muntaqīyan* | Ḥalīl b. Aybak ḥamīdan Allāh wa muşallīyan.

Ḥalīl b. Aybak al-Şafadī finished it [i.e. this book] and what stands before it, studying it and selecting [best passages], lauding God and praying [the Prophet].

**Figure 21**  
al-Şafadī's consultation mark in Yāqūt.  
*Kitāb Muġam al-buldān*. Köprülü Yazma Eser  
Kütüphanesi, MS Fazlāhmed Pasha 1164, f. 1a, detail  
(courtesy Köprülü Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi)



This book was extremely useful to al-Şafadī as a source of first-hand information for his greatest biographical dictionary, the *Wāfī*, and is abundantly cited in different biographies.<sup>74</sup> The considerations on literature must have particularly pleased him.

The next mark is featured on the title page of another manuscript in a Western handwriting: Ibn al-Bayṭār's was not the only *maġribī* hand in al-Şafadī's library. As attested by two volumes now preserved respectively in the DK under the shelf mark *ta'riḥ mīm* 103, and in the Ma'had Balaşfūra al-dīnī, near Sūhāġ (no shelf mark number), at least another *andalusī* hand was represented. These manuscripts are volumes four and six of 'Alī b. Mūsā b. Sa'īd al-Andalusī (or al-Maġribī)'s (d. 685/1286) *Kitāb al-Muġrib fī ḥulā al-Maġrib*.<sup>75</sup> Actu-

<sup>74</sup> van Ess 1976, 96.

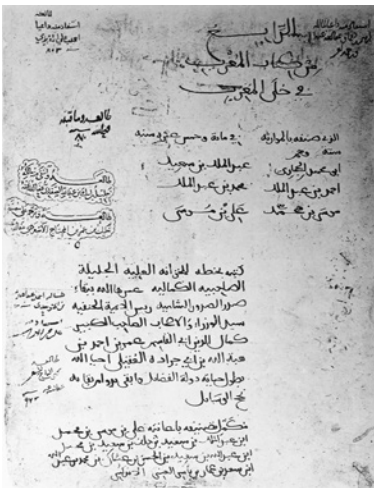
<sup>75</sup> GAL G I 336-7, S I 576-7; Pellat in *EP*; *Fihris al-kutub* 1924-63, 5: 353-4; 'Abd al-Badī' 1956, 257; ed. Ḥasan 1953.



ally, the book is the result of the work of four generations: this description of events in al-Andalus since the time of its conquest was begun by an acquaintance of ‘Alī b. Mūsā’s great-grandfather, Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Ibrāhīm al-Ḥiġārī (d. after 530/1135), and was continued by different ancestors of Ibn Sa‘īd al-Andalusī or al-Maġribī (grandfather, granduncle, and father). The book’s fame preceded the arrival of its last author in the East, so that when Ibn Sa‘īd al-Andalusī arrived in Cairo on his way to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca, he was already well-known. According to the colophons of the remaining volumes, the holograph was finished in 657/1250 in Cairo. Volumes four and six are not the only ones preserved, but they are the only ones to show al-Şafadī’s handwriting. On the title page of volume four [fig. 22], one can read an inscription in his hand, for once written horizontally, perpendicular to the spine, which is the usual way, but which is also contrary to al-Şafadī’s habit, as we have seen. It says [fig. 23]:

*Ṭālā‘a-hu wa intaqā min-hu māliku-hu | Ḥalīl b. Aybak b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Şafadī ‘afā Allāh ‘an-hu.*

Its owner, Ḥalīl b. Aybak b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Şafadī, may God forgive him, consulted it and selected [passages] from it.



Figures 22-23 Ibn Sa‘īd al-Maġribī. *Kitāb al-Muġrib fi ḥulā al-Maġrib*, vol. 4. Dār al-Kutub al-miṣriyya, MS *ta’riḥ mim* 103, f. 1 and detail (courtesy DK)

Again, other inscriptions are displayed on this same page, among others a consultation mark by al-Maqrīzī, located in the upper left corner of the page, dated 803/1400-1 (see chap. 6, Bauden's contribution in this volume). Like in the case of the pseudo-Ibn al-Bawwāb's manuscript, with the text by al-Ġāhiz, some ownership and consultation marks have been circled. Only two marks, both consultation marks, were highlighted this way: al-Şafadī's and the one just beneath it, by another Ḥalīl, Ḥalīl b. 'Umar b. Muḥtāġ al-Aş'arī. His handwriting is similar to al-Şafadī's: a very regular and professional handwriting, very respectful of the calligraphic standards and thus close to the theoretical *nash*,<sup>76</sup> influenced by *tawqī'*, a chancery script characterised by a "liberal use of hairlines" (see the ligature between the *ṭā'* and the *alif*).<sup>77</sup> Two sound differences immediately visible reside in the final loops, more ample and less regular in al-Aş'arī's hand, and in the blanks between the words, much more reduced in al-Şafadī's handwriting. Such handwritings are tricky: they are so impersonal that they can be difficult to identify.<sup>78</sup> Nevertheless, a precise analysis of the combination of their peculiar features, on the basis of the objective criteria developed by forensic scientists, can help a lot to distinguish even such regular chancery secretaries' hands.<sup>79</sup>

The title page of vol. six [figs 24-25], now preserved near Suhāġ, in the Ma'had Balaşfūra al-dīni, presents the same kind of annotation, at roughly the same place. It says:

*Ṭāla'a-hu wa 'allaqa min-hu mā iḥtāra-hu | māliku-hu Ḥalīl b. Aybak  
'afā Allāh 'an-hu.*

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

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

<sup>76</sup> The term *nash* is so imprecise – almost any *Maşriqī* script can be qualified as *nash* – that it should be used very cautiously. See Witkam 1978, 18; Franssen 2017, 321-2. About the characteristics of *nash*, see Gacek 2009, 163; for illustrations of the calligraphic *nash* dating back to the end of the Mamlūk period (holograph dated 908/1503), see al-Ṭayyibī, ed. al-Munajjed 1962, 64-6.

<sup>77</sup> On *tawqī'*, see Gacek 2009, 263-5.

<sup>78</sup> Gacek 2020, 69.

<sup>79</sup> For an example of such an analysis on a scribe's handwriting, see Franssen 2020. See also here fn. 131.





Figures 24-25 Ibn Sa'īd al-Maġribī. *Kitāb al-Muġrib fi ḥulū al-Maġrib*, vol. 6. ms al-Ma'had Balasfūra al-Dīnī (Suhāġ), no shelfmark number, f. 1 and detail (courtesy Ma'had al-Maḥtūtāt al-'arabiyya)

Other ownership marks are also visible on the title page of this manuscript.<sup>80</sup> The work can be classified in the field of history, specifically of al-Andalus, and was useful to al-Şafadī for the composition of Andalusians' biographies in his *Wāfi*.<sup>81</sup>

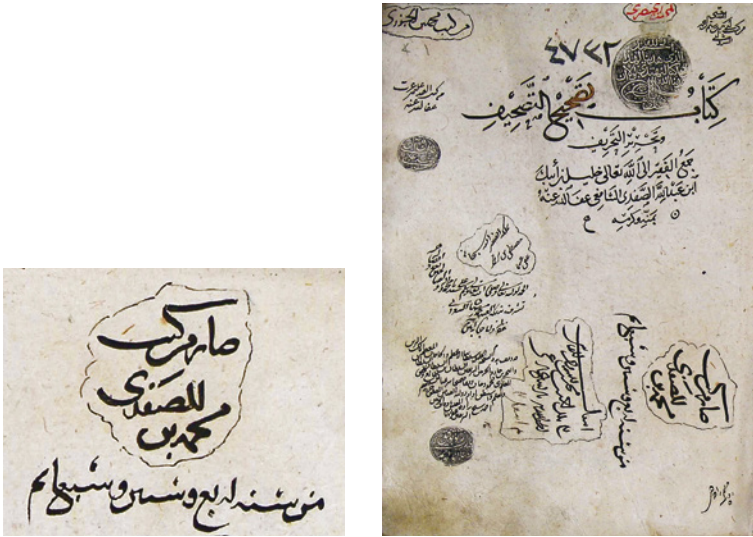
### 2.1.4 Muḥammad b. al-Şafadī's Library

If we know nothing about al-Şafadī's wife (or wives?), we can gather information about his children from documentary sources, namely licences of transmission of his works (*iġāzāt*). We thus know that he had two sons named Muḥammad – “the *Muḥammadān*”, as al-Şafadī calls them (with the dual suffix), specifying afterwards their *kunya*, respectively Abū 'Abd Allāh and Abū Bakr – but also, and this is not a well-known fact, at least three daughters, Fāṭima, Salmā and Asmā.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>80</sup> For a more complete account of the different readers' marks present on the various volumes of the work, see the edition: Ḥasan 1953, 59.

<sup>81</sup> Another work of the same author is cited among the sources effectively used by al-Şafadī for some biographies of the *Wāfi*, see van Ess 1974, 259.

<sup>82</sup> Fāṭima is cited in the *iġāza* dated 759/1358 of MS Ayasoya 4732 (a holograph of the *Taṣḥīḥ al-taṣḥīf wa-taḥrīr al-tahrīf*), Salmā and Asmā, in the *iġāza* dated 757/1356 of MS Çorum, Genel Kitaplık 1906 (a holograph of the *Ġawāmiḍ al-Şahāḥ*), see § 4.2. Note that several of his personal *mamlūks* are also cited in *iġāzāt*: Asinbuġā al-Turkī, Murād

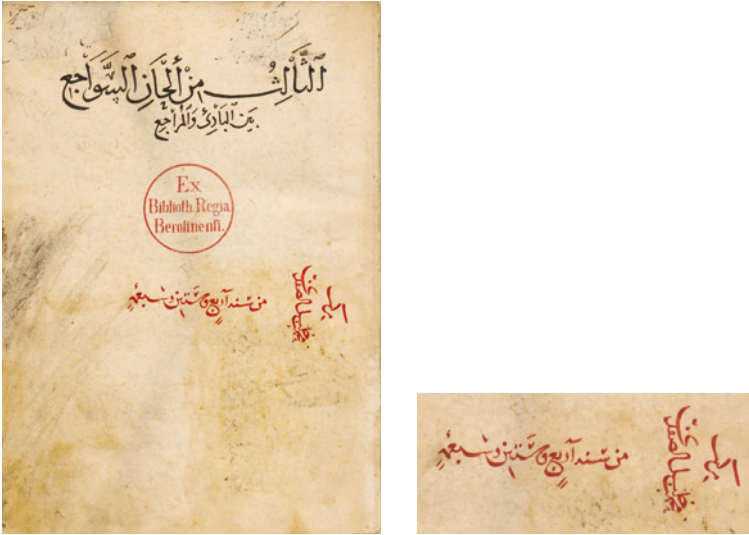


Figures 26-27 Ḥalīl b. Aḃbak al-Şafadī. *Taṣḃih al-taṣḃif wa-taḃrīr al-taḃrīf* (holograph). Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Ayasofya 4732, f. 1 and detail (courtesy Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi)

One of the Muḃammads inherited al-Şafadī’s library and we can find his ex-libris on various manuscripts. The mark is usually very similar to his father’s: the localisation and the direction are the same (in the inner margin of the title page, parallel to the spine), the handwriting is also similar (harmonious chancery hand), but bigger and inscribed with a wider *qalam*, almost always saying *şāra min kutub | Muḃammad b. (Ḥalīl) | al-Şafadī* (‘became part of Muḃammad b. [Ḥalīl] al-Şafadī’s books’). Here are three examples.

Ms Ayasofya 4732 is a fragment of the holograph of al-Şafadī’s *Taṣḃih al-taṣḃif wa-taḃrīr al-taḃrīf*. The title page shows Muḃammad b. al-Şafadī’s ownership statement, which states: *şāra min kutub | Muḃammad b. al-Şafadī* (‘became part of Muḃammad b. al-Şafadī’s books’), and below: *min sana arba’ wa sittin wa-sab’i mi’a* (‘from the year 764/1363’), that is the year of his father’s death [figs 26-27]. This ownership mark was circled, and the book was also part of al-Şirwānī’s collection (see § 2.1.1 and fn. 38, and the upper right corner of the title page).

al-Turkī or Arġūn al-Ḥitā’ī. I have found a trace of a possible fourth daughter of his in an *iġāza* not directly related to al-Şafadī: Leder et al. 1996, 119 mention a certain Bilqīs bint Şalāḃ al-Dīn Ḥalīl b. Aḃbak al-Şafadī as part of the attendees to the reading of a *ḥadīṡ* by Hibat Allāḃ al-Akfānī (m. 524/1129-30) in 748/1348 in a Damascus mosque, the *masġid* Barānī al-Qaṣṣā’in.



Figures 28-29 Ḥalīl b. Aybak al-Şafadī. *Alḥān al-sawāġī'* (holograph), vols. 3-4. Staatsbibliothek Berlin, MS Wetzstein II 151, f. 1 and detail (courtesy SBB)

This manuscript appears to be a draft of the beginning of the text. It comprises many inserts and blanks, the beginning of a section often coincides with the recto of a folio. The fair copy of the same text is said to be kept in Riyāḍ University Library. As a matter of fact, according to a description by al-Şarqāwī, the editor of the text, the Riyāḍ manuscript also presents an ownership mark in the name of Muḥammad b. al-Şafadī and dated 764 as well.<sup>83</sup> This manuscript must be the fair copy of the text.

Mss Staatsbibliothek Berlin (henceforth SBB) Wetzstein II 150-151 are the four tomes in two volumes of al-Şafadī's *Alḥān al-sawāġī'* *bayna al-bādi' wa al-murāġī'* (Tunes of Cooing Doves Between the Initiator and the Responder [in Literary Correspondence]). This is the holograph of the text, and it shows several traces of work in progress (see § 4.2). The title page of the second volume (that is tome three, MS SBB Wetzstein II 151) bears the ownership statement of one of al-Şafadī's sons Muḥammad. The inscription is written in red ink and has been partially scratched, but we still can read *min kutub | Muḥammad b. Ḥalīl al-Şafadī* ('from among the books of Muḥammad b. Ḥalīl al-Şafadī'), written parallel to the spine, and a bit further, perpendicular to the spine, we read *min sana arba' wa sittin wa sab'i mi'a* ('from the

83 al-Şafadī, *Taṣṣiḥ*, 33.

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

On the MS Ayasofya 1970 (a fragment of the holograph of the tenth volume of the biographical dictionary *A'yān al-'aşr wa a'wān al-naşr*), the ownership mark of Muḥammad b. al-Şafadī has been scratched away as well, but is still decipherable. It appears on f. 108b (the first folio of this text: the manuscript is a miscellany), under the *iğāza* [fig. 30].

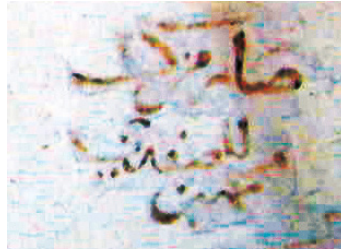


Figure 30

Ḥalīl b. Aybak al-Şafadī. *A'yān al-'aşr wa a'wān al-naşr* (holograph, part from vol. 10). Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Ayasofya 1970, f. 108b, detail (courtesy Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi)

## 2.2 A Word of Conclusion

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

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

The works represented in this view of al-Şafadī's library mainly date back to the Ayyūbid period, just before al-Şafadī's times, and to

the Mamlūk period (five of them, in eight volumes), with the notable exception of the two ‘Abbasid texts (by al-Ġāḥiẓ and al-Şimşātī), one text of the fifth/eleventh century (by Ibn al-Ḥaddād) and two works by contemporaries of al-Şafadī, al-Ḍahabī and Ibn al-Şuqāī.

Five manuscripts are valuable manuscripts, philologically and/or codicologically speaking: there is one apograph (a copy of a manuscript checked by the author, the manuscript by al-Suhaylī, from Bursa, İnebey Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi, Hüseyin Çelebi 764); one manuscript copied by a famous scholar of the Ayyūbid period, Ibn al-Bayṭār (ms Ayasofya 3711), which could be the only surviving copy of a *risāla* by the famous ‘Abbāsīd translator Ḥunayn b. Işḥāq; one calligraphed manuscript (pseudo Ibn al-Bawwāb, MS TIEM 2014T); two manuscripts dedicated to important figures, one manuscript dedicated to the ‘Abbāsīd caliph al-Mu’taṣim bi-Llāh (ms TKS, Ahmet III 2392, by al-Şimşātī) and the second dedicated to the library of Ibn Faḍl Allāh, with a chrysographed cartouche.

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

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

N° manuscript		Mark							
Library	Shelfmark	Author	Title	Date	Field	Type	Date	Place	
1	Süleymaniye K. Rağıp Pasha 1078	Ibn Abī al-Işba’	<i>Tahrīr al-taḥbīr fi şinā’at al-şir wa al-naṭr wa bayān iğāz al-Qur’ān</i>	∅	<i>adab</i>	ex-libris	738	∅	
2	Süleymaniye K. Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 1518	Ibn al-Ḥidād	<i>K. al-af’āl</i> (vol. 1)	670	linguistics	ex-libris	758	Damascus	
3	Süleymaniye K. Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 1519	Ibn al-Ḥidād	<i>K. al-af’āl</i> (vol. 2)	670	linguistics	ex-libris	758	Damascus	
4	TIEM 2014T	al-Ġāḥiẓ	<i>R. fi madḥ al-kutub</i>	∅	<i>adab</i>	ex-libris	761	Damascus	
5	DK 17 <i>mim</i>	al-Ḍahabī	<i>al-Kāşif’an riğāl al-k. al-sitta</i>	?	bio of <i>hadīṭ</i> transmitters	ex-libris	763	∅	
6	Süleymaniye K. Ayasofya 3711	Ḥunayn b. Işḥāq	<i>R. fi al-’awzān wa al-’akyāl</i>	bef. 646	sciences	ex-libris	763	Damascus	
7	TKS Ahmet III 2392	al-Şimşātī	<i>K. al-anwār wa maḥāsīn al-aş’ār</i>	bef. 227	poetry	ex-libris	∅	∅	
8	BnF Ar. 2061	Ibn al-Şuqāī	<i>Tāli K. waḥāyāt al-’ayān</i>	733	biography	ex-libris	∅	∅	
9	Süleymaniye K. Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 1161	Yāqūt al-Rūmī	<i>Muğam al-buldān</i>	704	geography toponymy bio	consultation & notes	∅	∅	

N° manuscript		Mark							
Library	Shelfmark	Author	Title	Date	Field	Type	Date	Place	
10	Süleymaniye K. Fazilahmed Pasha 1162	Yâqūt al-Rūmī	<i>Muğam al-buldān</i>	703	geography toponymy bio	consultation & notes	∅	∅	
11	Süleymaniye K. Fazilahmed Pasha 1163	Yâqūt al-Rūmī	<i>Muğam al-buldān</i>	703	geography toponymy bio	consultation & notes	∅	∅	
12	Süleymaniye K. Fazilahmed Pasha 1164	Yâqūt al-Rūmī	<i>Muğam al-buldān</i>	704	geography toponymy bio	consultation & notes	∅	∅	
13	DK	<i>ta'riḥ mīm</i> 103	Ibn Sa'īd al-Andalusī (al-Mağribī)	<i>K. al-Muğrib fi ḥulā al-Mağrib</i> (vol. 4)	657	history (al-Andalus)	ex-libris, consultation & notes	∅	∅
14	Suhāğ	Ma'had al-Dīnī	Ibn Sa'īd al-Andalusī (al-Mağribī)	<i>K. al-Muğrib fi ḥulā al-Mağrib</i> (vol. 6)	657	history (al-Andalus)	ex-libris, consultation & notes	∅	∅
15	İnebey Yazma Eser K.	Hüseyn Çelebi 764	al-Suhaylī	<i>al-Rawd al-unuf fi şarḥ al-sıra al-nabawiyya li-Ibn Hişām</i>	607	bio of Prophet	ex-libris	∅	∅
16	Süleymaniye K. Ayasofya 4732	al-Şafadī	<i>Taşḥīḥ al-taşḥīf wa taḥrīr al-taḥrīf</i>	759*	linguistics	Muḥammad b. al-Şafadī's ex-libris	764	∅	
17	SBB	Wetzstein II 150	al-Şafadī	<i>Alḥān al-sawāğī' bayna al-bādī' wa al-murāğī'</i>	758*	bio	[Muḥammad b. al-Şafadī's ex-libris]	[764]	∅
18	SBB	Wetzstein II 151	al-Şafadī	<i>Alḥān al-sawāğī' bayna al-bādī' wa al-murāğī'</i>	758*	bio	Muḥammad b. al-Şafadī's ex-libris	764	∅
19	Süleymaniye K. Ayasofya 1970	al-Şafadī	<i>A'yān al-aşr wa a'wān al-naşr</i>	758*	bio	Muḥammad b. al-Şafadī's ex-libris	764	∅	

### 3 Al-Şafadī's Reading Journal: The *Taḍkira al-Şalāhiyya*

Another source of information about al-Şafadī's readings is his *taḍkira*. Etymologically, a *taḍkira* is something that sustains memory.<sup>84</sup> In some respects, it is similar to Western Renaissance florilegia or commonplace books: it is "a collection of quotations culled from various authoritative sources", "serving as an aid to memory by building and preserving a storehouse of acquired knowledge", which was also "central to the presentation and composition of literary works".<sup>85</sup> The commonplace books appeared in a context of overabundance of information, and of books, such a context being the one of the Mamlūk period as well. They are sometimes called *bibliothèques portables* ('portable libraries'), a locution that perfectly renders their *raison d'être*.<sup>86</sup> Nevertheless, the examples from the Islamic world that have reached us or mentions of these examples that have reached us,<sup>87</sup> do not feature the "organizational pattern"<sup>88</sup> that is so important for Renaissance commonplace books; rather, they were completed in a chronological order, following the readings of their owner or, and this is

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**84** The word is used in different titles of works, often with the meaning of handbook, in the sense 'what should be recorded in term of'. For instance, one can think of 'Alī b. 'Isā's *Taḍkirat al-kaḥḥālīn* (GAL G I 236, S I 884), a handbook of ophthalmology; or of *al-taḍkira al-Ḥamdūniyya*, the *adab* encyclopaedia of the thirteenth-century Ibn Ḥamdūn (GAL G I 281, S I 493). In the Ottoman and Persian traditions, the *taḍkiras*, often called *safīnas*, are poetic anthologies or biographical dictionaries of poets. They deal exclusively with poetry and they are edited books: they are meant to circulate. See Dufour, Regourd 2020 for Yemenite examples and the bibliography.

**85** Hooks 2012, 206-7. On commonplace books, see also Blair 2003; 2010, 69-90, 112-16; Havens 2001. On the use of the commonplace books to gather information about the reader, see Colclough 1998.

**86** Blair 1996.

**87** The chancery secretary al-Qalqaşandī cites, in his chancery manual, Ibn Faḍl Allāh's *taḍkira* (*Şubḥ*, 7: 29) and Ibn Manzūr's *taḍkira*, entitled *Taḍkirat al-labīb wa-n-zhat al-adīb* (*Şubḥ*, 14: 70), both being the repositories of letters and documents written by chancery secretaries. Besides, Aḥmad b. Mubārakşāh was keeping a *taḍkira* entitled *Safīna*, where for instance, otherwise lost *zağals* by Ibn Quzmān were recorded, see Hoenerbach, Ritter 1950, 267. Another chancery secretary, 'Alī b. Muzaffar al-Kindī al-Wadā'ī (d. 716/1316) was also keeping a *taḍkira*; it was known as *al-taḍkira al-kindīyya* (see, among others, al-Şafadī's *A'yān*, 3: 546-55, no. 1237) and is said to have counted thirty volumes (al-Ziriklī 2002, 5: 23). Kristina Richardson recently identified several volumes of the Ottoman Damascene judge Ibn Mufliḥ's *taḍkira* (Richardson 2020). Other authors are reputed to have used a *taḍkira*, now lost, for instance al-Maqrīzī (see Ibn Quṭlubūga, *Tāğ*, 85; note that al-Maqrīzī himself never uses the word *taḍkira*, but mentions his *mağāmi*). I am grateful to Frédéric Bauden for providing me with these information).

**88** Even if, according to al-Saḥāwī, Ibn Ḥağar al-'Asqalānī used to keep two *taḍkiras*, one for belles-lettres (*al-taḍkira al-adabiyya*) and the second one for the traditions (*al-taḍkira al-ḥadiṯiyya*). al-Saḥāwī adds that, since it was not arranged in chapters, it contained many repetitions; a student of Ibn Ḥağar decided to organise it. al-Saḥāwī, *Ġawāhir*, 2: 694-5, 771; Ritter 1953, 81-2.

a second major difference, its composition activities, for instance in the frame of his duties at the chancery.<sup>89</sup>

Thus, al-Şafadī's *taḍkira*, *al-Taḍkira al-Şalāḥiyya* or *al-Şafadiyya*,<sup>90</sup> is a multi-volume work, arranged chronologically, containing results of his readings, parts of his writing activities and correspondence, some of his works as a composer of official documents for the chancery, first drafts of (or parts of) some of his books, and notes jotted down about a particular subject. It was for his personal use that he kept it, even if he lent several volumes to friends and colleagues, as attested in various biographies of the *Wāfī* and of the *A'yān*. For instance, the mamlūk Ṭašbuġā, *dawādār* (executive secretary) of al-Nāşir Muḥammad, who had a beautiful handwriting and a penchant for erudition, used to borrow al-Şafadī's *taḍkira*, volume after volume, to study it, when both men were in Damascus (*wa-kāna yaktubu kitāba ḥasana mansūba wa-kāna fī-hi mayl ilā al-fuḍalā'*. *Wa-kāna bi-Dimaşq yasīru yasta'īru minnī al-taḍkira allatī lī ġu'zan ba'd ġu'zin yuṭālī'uhā*).<sup>91</sup>

The biographical dictionaries are not the only works where al-Şafadī cites his *taḍkira*. Since the *taḍkira* contains part of his correspondence, it is no surprise that various volumes are cited in al-Şafadī's book of correspondence, his *Alḥān al-sawāġi' bayna al-bādi' wa-l-murāġi'* (Tunes of Coining Doves Between the Initiator and the Responder [in Literary Correspondence]).<sup>92</sup> This book is arranged like a biographical dictionary as well. Under the name of his addressees, we find the details of letters sent and received. For instance, the record about his friend – and then nemesis – Ibn Nubāta (d. 768/1366) is instructive in more than one regard.<sup>93</sup> Indeed, we read that Ibn Nubāta had borrowed a book from al-Şafadī, namely the *Kitāb al-tašbīhāt* (also known under the title *al-Manāqib al-nūriyya*), by the *adīb* and chancery secretary Ibn Zāfir (d. 613 or 623/1216 or 1226).<sup>94</sup> When returning the book, Ibn Nubāta wrote a letter of thanks in which he would ask at the same time for a text in prose he had read in al-Şafadī's *taḍkira*. His request is very ornate and his short note in praise of the *taḍkira* contains a Qur'ānic quotation (*al-Kahf* 76), but sadly he does not specify the volume number of the *taḍkira*.

This anecdote is interesting for several reasons. First, it teaches us that al-Şafadī had a copy of the *Kitāb al-tašbīhāt*.<sup>95</sup> It also con-

<sup>89</sup> Bauden 2019, 36 fn. 171.

<sup>90</sup> "al-Şalāḥiyya" refers to his *laqab* Şalāḥ al-Dīn.

<sup>91</sup> al-Şafadī, *A'yān*, 2: 585.

<sup>92</sup> Ed. Sālim 2005.

<sup>93</sup> al-Şafadī, *Alḥān*, 2: 180-268, partic. 253 (no. 87). On Ibn Nubāta, see Bauer 2009.

<sup>94</sup> GAL G I 321, S I 553-4; Ed. in *EI*<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>95</sup> The particular manuscript that was al-Şafadī's property has not been found. The only recorded MS of the text is MS Escorial 425 (Derenbourg et al. 1884, 2: 283). I have



firms that al-Şafadī was lending books to friends and gives the assurance that al-Şafadī's friends knew what was in his *taḍkira*. Hence the image of the *taḍkira* as a personal tool must be nuanced: it was public to a certain extent.

Another argument for this status of availability of the text of the *taḍkira* lies in Ibn Dāniyāl's entry in the *A'yān*. There, al-Şafadī mentions various poems, giving their type and the volume number of his *taḍkira* where he had recorded them, namely the first, third and twenty-fourth.<sup>96</sup> Why would al-Şafadī give this information if his *taḍkira* were not available for readers?

Still another example is found in Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī's entry in the *Alḥān al-sawāḡi'*.<sup>97</sup> Taqī al-Dīn and Tāġ al-Dīn al-Subkī<sup>98</sup> were close friends of al-Şafadī; they knew each other when al-Şafadī was studying with Taqī al-Dīn, Tāġ al-Dīn's father. The three men exchanged numerous letters in the course of their lives, and on one occasion al-Şafadī explains that he wrote a reply letter to Taqī al-Dīn; he cites the verses included in the letter in the *Alḥān* and explains that the part of the letter which is in prose is integrally recorded in the twenty-ninth volume of his *taḍkira*, showing us again that the *taḍkira* was available. The same goes with other scholars and colleagues of al-Şafadī, like Ğamāl al-Dīn Ibn Ğānim (d. 744/1344), who wrote laudatory lines about the fifth volume of the *taḍkira*,<sup>99</sup> and about Ibn Qāḍī al-Mawṣil (born in 698/1299),<sup>100</sup> who wrote such eulogistic verses in the nineteenth volume of the *taḍkira*, a volume al-Şafadī had sent to him at his request.<sup>101</sup>

What is even more interesting is the mention of the *taḍkira* in al-Şafadī's biography by Tāġ al-Dīn al-Subkī, Taqī al-Dīn's son.<sup>102</sup> After giving al-Şafadī's titles, birth date, specialities, and the name of two

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not had the chance to peruse it or to see any reproduction of it. The description by Derenbourg does not give any chronological detail. Since it is acephalous, al-Şafadī's ownership mark would anyway have disappeared.

**96** al-Şafadī, *A'yān*, 4: 431.

**97** al-Şafadī, *Alḥān*, 2: 5-18, partic. 9 (no. 56). On al-Subkī's family, counting several important scholars, see Schacht, Bosworth in *EP*.

**98** al-Şafadī, *Alḥān*, 1: 392-424 (no. 52).

**99** This text is recorded by al-Şafadī in the section of the *Alḥān* devoted to Ibn Ğānim, see al-Şafadī, *Alḥān*, 1: 357-76, partic. 361 (no. 45). On Ibn Ğānim, see al-Şafadī, *A'yān*, 2: 696-707 (no. 883); al-Şafadī, *Wāfi*, 17: 351 (no. 296); or al-'Umārī, *Masālik al-absār*, 12: 461-8 (no. 27).

**100** Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Qāhir Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Şahrazūrī al-Mawṣilī, see al-Şafadī, *Wāfi*, 3: 275-7 (no. 1317), where one of his poems, asking al-Şafadī some verses from the *taḍkira*, but without specifying the volume number, is recorded. See also Ibn Ḥaġar, *Durar*, 4: 21.

**101** al-Şafadī, *Alḥān*, 2: 129-32, partic. 132 (no. 80).

**102** al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 10: 5-32 (no. 1352). See also Frenkel's chapter in this volume.

of his masters – Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī and Ibn Sayyid al-Nās<sup>103</sup> – he explains that al-Şafadī was prolific in the fields of *adab* and history: he himself claimed to have authored more than 600 volumes. Then comes the statement of friendship between both men, friendship begun during the frequent visits by al-Şafadī to Tāġ al-Dīn’s father and which lasted until al-Şafadī’s death. Later, Tāġ al-Dīn lists several of the official posts held by al-Şafadī,<sup>104</sup> preceding all of them by *sā’adtu-hu fa-* (‘I favoured him and then he became...’), and then giving the date and cause of death of al-Şafadī. Afterwards, once again, al-Subkī emphasises his own importance for al-Şafadī, this time for his writing process: he states that al-Şafadī would not write a book without asking him advice on *fiqh*, *ḥadīth* and grammar and that he was the one to urge al-Şafadī to write the *A’yān al-aşr*. A bit later in the text, al-Subkī shows that this assistance was actually mutual: he goes on explaining the role of al-Şafadī in the elaboration and diffusion of his book *Ġam‘ al-ġawāmi‘*: al-Şafadī copied it, took part in the study sessions and read it aloud himself, taking pleasure in its elaboration and thus he is associated with part of its importance. Then, al-Subkī recalls several anecdotes and gives verses written by al-Şafadī and his responses. Here he mentions the *taḍkira*:

Once, he lent me a volume of his *taḍkira*. He had authored a book about description and imitation [*al-waşf wa al-taşbīh*] and he had inspected the *taḍkira* searching for description and imitation; he wrote on all the volumes he had finished to inspect this way ‘[search for] imitation from [this volume] is finished’ [*naġiza al-taşbīh min-hu*].<sup>105</sup>

al-Subkī is alluding to al-Şafadī’s *al-Kaşf wa al-tanbīh ‘alā al-waşf wa al-taşbīh* (Revelation and Instruction about [Poetic] Description and Simile).<sup>106</sup> We thus see again that al-Şafadī was lending volumes of the *taḍkira* to friends and colleagues. But here, in addition, we have the demonstration that the *taḍkira* was really a tool for al-Şafadī as an author, a reservoir of examples he had read elsewhere for future works: he was perusing his reading journal in search of appropriate verses, passages or text excerpts when he needed them. We have seen that many of his works are composed of two parts, theoretical and practical. In the latter, he would list hundreds of examples of the stylis-

**103** Faṭḥ al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn Sayyid al-Nās (d. 1334), outstanding scholar from a young age, who had inherited a great library from his family, see Rosenthal in *EP*.

**104** As already noted, see § 1, and al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 10: 6.

**105** al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 10: 7.

**106** Not in GAL, but preserved: the holograph is kept at the BnF, under the shelfmark Ar. 3345, see § 4.2.

tic device dealt with, which supposes the gathering of such excerpts and a place to store them. This reservoir is clearly the *taḍkira*. It is also interesting to see that he was keeping track of his work on the pages of the *taḍkira* itself, to make sure he would not use the same excerpt in the same book more than once. We thus have the confirmation that the *taḍkira* was a major methodological tool for al-Şafadī, even if it was less personal than first thought.

In this particular case, al-Subkī does not give the number of the volume of the *taḍkira* he had borrowed. We have already seen quoted volumes 5, 19, and 29.<sup>107</sup> How many volumes were there originally? According to al-Şafadī's biography by al-Maqrīzī,<sup>108</sup> the *taḍkira* stood in thirty volumes. But then, how can we explain the existence of volumes 48 and 49?<sup>109</sup> And especially of volume 44, which is a holograph, the original volume handwritten by al-Şafadī, not a later copy?<sup>110</sup>

In fact, by the time of al-Maqrīzī, at least one complete set of the *taḍkira* was in circulation and it was a scribal copy of the original in thirty volumes.<sup>111</sup> We can estimate that the holographs originally numbered a maximum of fifty volumes; indeed, the last date featured in volume 49, the last known volume, is 18 Ğumādā I 762/26 March 1361,<sup>112</sup> only a year and three months before al-Şafadī's death, on 10 Şawwāl 764/23 July 1363. The preserved volumes are not equally distributed, but we still can estimate the time needed to complete one volume, which seems to be more or less a year in average, even if a certain level of variation is observed (see **table 2**). To explain the difference between the number of volumes of the copy and the original, we can check the number of folios of the original volumes of the *taḍkira*. For instance, volume 44, a complete holograph, counts 95 ff. This is not much for a manuscript, probably because it had to be portable: we can imagine that al-Şafadī was carrying the in-progress volume with him, to record on the spot the texts he composed, read or heard. The limited dimensions of the manuscript also support a claim for portability – 186 × 128 mm is less than the usual in-quarto format (220 × 150 mm) – as well as the orientation of the page:

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

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

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

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

**111** al-Maqrīzī, *Durar*, 2: 77.

**112** Ms BL IO 3799.

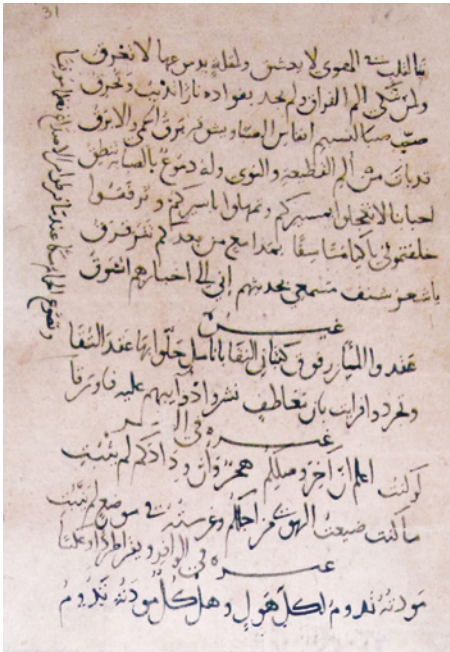


Figure 31  
al-Ṣafādī. *al-Taḳḱira*, vol. 44. Princeton University  
Library, MS Garrett 3570Y, f. 30b, 31 (courtesy PUL)

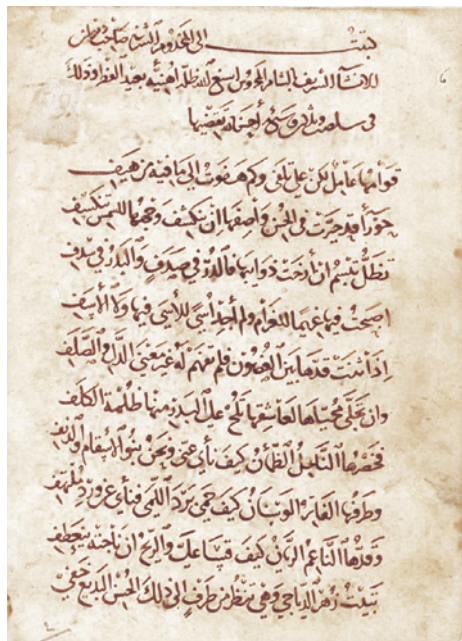
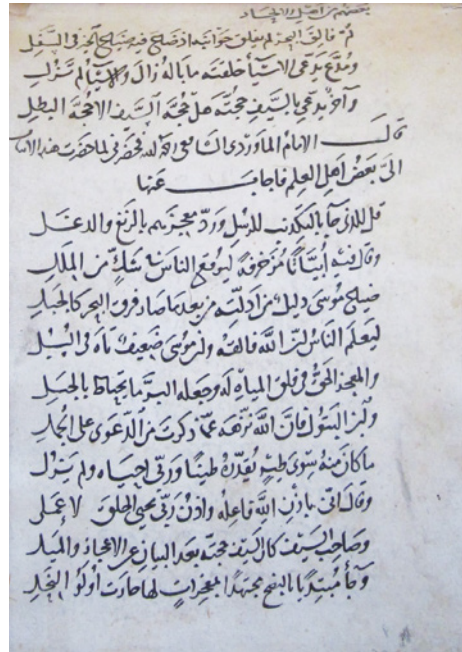


Figure 32  
al-Ṣafādī. *al-Taḳḱira*,  
vol. 5, 6 or 7. Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin,  
ms Landberg 812, f. 2, with the date 731 (line 3)  
(courtesy SBB)

the format is a *safīna*, a book where the spine is parallel to the text, not perpendicular to it as usual, like modern notebooks (see [fig. 31](#)).<sup>113</sup>

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

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

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

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

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**113** On this particular format, see Déroche et al. 2005, 53; Gacek 2009, 34.

**114** See also Dufour, Regourd 2020 about Yemenite *safīnas*.

**115** See Heinrichs et al. in *El<sup>2</sup>* and chap. 8 here, by Vatansever.

**Table 2** The volumes of al-Şafadī's *taḍkira*, their date of composition and their mention in other works by al-Şafadī. NB: the dates in *italics* are not documented but deduced from the overall distribution of the volumes; the MSS in **bold** are holographs or contain holograph folios; CB stands for Chester Beatty Library; ÖNB stands for Österreichische Nationalbibliothek

Vol.	Date	Mss	Mention
1	728	BL IO Isl. 3829	<i>A'yān</i>
2	729	BL IO Isl. 3829 (f.89)	
3	<i>729-730</i>		<i>A'yān</i>
4	<i>730</i>		<i>A'yān</i>
5	<i>730-731</i>	<b>SBB Landberg 812</b> (731)	<i>Alḥān; A'yān</i>
6	<i>731</i>		
7	<i>731-732</i>		
...			
11	<i>733-734</i>		<i>A'yān</i>
12	<i>734</i>		<i>A'yān</i>
13	735	DK Adab 420.1	<i>Nuṣrat al-ṭā'ir</i>
14	735-736	DK Adab 420.2 DK Adab 9796 CB Ar. 3861	<i>A'yān</i>
...			
18	<i>739</i>		<i>A'yān</i>
19	<i>740</i>		<i>Alḥān; A'yān</i>
20	<i>741</i>		<i>A'yān</i>
21	<i>742</i>	FB Gotha 2140 CB Ar. 5178	
22	<i>743-744</i>	FB Gotha 2140	
23	<i>745</i>	Beşir Ağa Eyüp 162	
24	<i>745</i>	CB Ar. 3861 (f. 56)	<i>A'yān</i>
25	<i>745-746</i>	CB Ar. 3861 (f.89)	<i>A'yān</i>
26	<i>746-747</i>	CB Ar. 3861 (f. 136)	<i>A'yān</i>
...			
29	<i>748</i>		<i>Alḥān; A'yān</i>
...			
32	<i>750</i>		<i>A'yān</i>
33	<i>751</i>		<i>A'yān</i>
34	<i>752</i>	Tehran 3209	<i>A'yān</i>
...			
37	<i>755</i>		<i>A'yān</i>
38	<i>756</i>	DK Adab Taymūr 804	<i>A'yān</i>
...			
44	<i>759</i>	<b>PUL Garrett 3570</b>	
...			

Vol.	Date	Mss	Mention
48	761	BL IO Isl. 3799 DK Adab 420.3	
49	762	BL IO Isl. 3799 (f. 69)	
?		<b>BnF Ar. 3339<sup>i</sup></b>	
?		<b>FB Gotha Ar. 2141</b>	
?		<b>Oman nat. Lib. 1384</b>	
?	729-732	ÖNB Cod A F 395 <sup>ii</sup>	

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

<sup>ii</sup> Known under the title *Dīwān al-fuṣaḥā' wa tarġumān al-bulaġā'* (GAL G II 40; Flügel 1865, 365-7, no. 389), this *safīna*-shaped MS is actually most likely a copy of a volume of al-Şafadī's *Ṭaḍkira*. Indeed, it comprises a sample of all the texts usually found in the *ṭaḍkira*: letters, poetry by him and by others, copies of chancery documents and copies of texts he read. For instance, two texts by Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-'Umarī, the *Yaqaẓat al-sāhir* and the *Dam'at al-bākī* (till now lost, apart from the last folio of the *Dam'at*, see Rice 1951, 856; Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-'Umarī, *Ta'rīf*, 40-1), are recorded in extenso; in al-Şafadī, *Wāfi*, 8: 255, cited in Van Ess 1976, 259, al-Şafadī assures he read these texts to Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā Ibn Faḍl Allāh and we have here the confirmation that he copied them as well. This MS deserves thorough further study.



Ms SBB Landberg 812 only counts nine folios. The first two folios present letters, both dated 731: f. 1, a letter from Şihāb al-Dīn Abū al-Ṭanā' Maḥmūd (d. 725/1325),<sup>116</sup> one of al-Şafadī's masters, also a chancery secretary, to Ibn Ġānim;<sup>117</sup> f. 2, a letter by al-Şafadī, sent to the Head of Damascus chancery. On f. 3b, we can read a *tawqī'* (decree) for the nomination of the *şayḥ* Şalāḥ al-Dīn Ḥalīl al-'Alā'ī (d. 761/1359) as *mudarris* (teacher) at the Madrasa al-Şalāḥiyya in Jerusalem.<sup>118</sup> On f. 4b, there is a *waqf* certificate for Ibn Ġānim's Egyptian house (*diyār al-miṣriyya*), and from f. 8b to the end, we can read verses that were recited in al-Şafadī's presence by Şafī al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl al-Ḥillī (d. 749/1348)<sup>119</sup> and others by Ibn Ḥamdīs al-Şiqillī (d. 527/1132).<sup>120</sup> Such a brief description of the contents of this short fragment eloquently shows the variety of the contents, but also the personal character of the *taḍkira*: when al-Şafadī cites texts he has not composed, it is because he received them as a listener or as reader.

Another type of content found in the *taḍkira* is the first drafts of books by al-Şafadī. Ms PUL, Garrett 3570Y, another holograph of the *taḍkira*, the volume 44, offers a great example of this latter category. From f. 8 to f. 31, we can read the very first (and only?) version of *al-Faḍl al-munīf fī al-mawlid al-şarīf* (The Overwhelming Merit of the Noble Birthday [of the Prophet Muḥammad]),<sup>121</sup> al-Şafadī's treatise about the Prophet's birthday. The circumstances of its composition are explained in a short statement at the beginning of the text. It echoes al-Subkī's account of the composition of the *Ġam' al-ġawāmi'* mentioned earlier: at "closest friends' request" (*al-aşḥāb al-a'azz*), *al-Faḍl al-munīf* was recited and improved in the course of a *maġlis* precisely held during the night of the Prophet's birthday in Rabī' I 759/February 1358. The first version of the text was ready a bit earlier, since the *iġāza* literally attached to the text – on a fly leaf added in the binding of the manuscript, thanks to a stub – is dated 23 Şafar 759/4 February 1358.<sup>122</sup>

**116** al-Şafadī, *A'yān*, 5: 372-99. See also Van Ess 1977, 97 and Little 1976, 204.

**117** Already mentioned here, because of the laudatory lines he wrote about al-Şafadī's *taḍkira*.

**118** The *madrasa* was established by Şalāḥ al-Dīn, the Ayyubid sultan, when he conquered Jerusalem. It is now Saint-Anne church. On Şalāḥ al-Dīn Ḥalīl al-'Alā'ī, see al-Şafadī, *A'yān*, 2: 328-36, partic. 333 for his nomination at Jerusalem *madrasa al-şalāḥiyya*.

**119** al-Şafadī, *Wāfī*, 18: 481-512; al-Şafadī, *A'yān*, 2: 86-98; Heinrichs in *EP*; DeYoung 2011.

**120** Rizzitano in *EP*.

**121** Ed. 'Āyiş 2007.

**122** A more detailed account and analysis of the text is forthcoming in *Mamlūk Studies Review*, see Franssen, forthcoming.



Finally, the same manuscript provides us with the third type of contents found in the *taḍkira*: the book excerpts. For instance, from f. 33 to f. 47b, we find the *Kitāb al-itbā' wa al-muzāwaḡa*, by Ibn Fāris (d. 395/1004),<sup>123</sup> an alphabetically arranged collection of pairs of words that present the same pattern.<sup>124</sup> al-Ṣafadī copied the text carefully, even leaving a large blank space under the title, later filled by a reader [fig. 33].

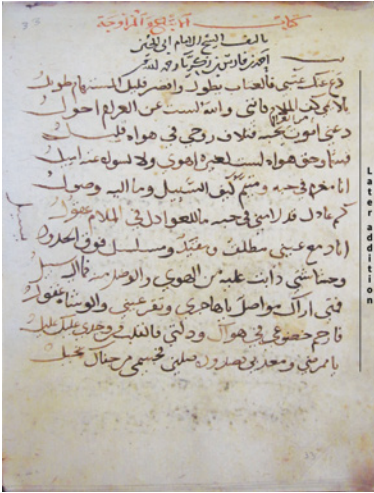


Figure 33

al-Ṣafadī. *al-Taḍkira*, vol. 44.  
Ms Princeton University Library, Garrett  
3570Y f. 33, title of text excerpt  
(courtesy PUL)

It is striking to note that even in his *taḍkira*, al-Ṣafadī leaves blank spaces under the titles of the book excerpts he takes note of, beginning the proper text on the verso, just like in manuscripts meant to be published. Similarly, he uses red ink for the titles and his page layout clearly distinguishes the different parts of the text, respecting its articulation, especially in the case of poetry. Surely, this would help him to find information later when needed. The quires were numbered, a small “٤٤” in the upper left extremity of the first folios of the quires (see fig. 33) showing that the number of the volume of the *taḍkira* was added to the number of the quire. The fact that the beginning of the quire coincides most of the time with the beginning of the text excerpt comes as no surprise. An exhaustive codicological study of the four (or five, if the Oman MS enigma is solved) holographs of the *taḍkira* is forthcoming.

<sup>123</sup> GAL G I 130, S I 197-8; Fleisch in *EF*.

<sup>124</sup> Ed. Brünnow 1906.

#### 4 Al-Şafadī as a Reader and as an Author: The Holograph Manuscripts and the Manuscripts with Autograph Interventions

As clearly explained by Adam Gacek,<sup>125</sup> and as recalled in the introduction of the recently published *In the Author's Hand*,<sup>126</sup> a holograph is a manuscript entirely handwritten by its author, whereas an autograph bears an inscription in the hand of the author of the text, the main part of the text being handwritten by someone else (or being a typescript). If the term 'holograph' was first only used for manuscripts in Arabic script,<sup>127</sup> it is now used to describe manuscripts in Latin or Greek script, as shown by the title of the European Society for Textual Scholarship (ESTS) 2022 conference in Oxford: *Histories of the Holograph. From Ancient to Modern Manuscripts and Beyond*. The ESTS defines the holograph as "a manuscript that is written by the person named as, or presumed to be, its author".<sup>128</sup>

In this section, I claim that a scholar's library can be understood in a wider acceptance: not merely the books physically owned, bought or received by a scholar, and the books read, studied or used for one's work and for which, for instance, an *igāza* was granted; but also the books the scholar wrote, working as a scribe, or copying them for his own use.

al-Şafadī is acknowledged for the great number of manuscript volumes he handwrote, these being his own opus or not: he worked as a scribe more than once and was praised for his beautiful handwriting, something mentioned by most of his biographers.<sup>129</sup> As stated earlier, I consider these manuscripts as constitutive parts of his library, even if we know that some of them were kept elsewhere, in great libraries of the time, for instance, as we will see. Indeed, his writing of (and sometimes, commenting on) the texts brought these into his inner library, his mental bookshelves. The manuscripts treated here are thus holographs and manuscripts of another author's work handwritten by al-Şafadī.

A last point remains to be addressed: how to identify a holograph?<sup>130</sup> The researcher working on the oeuvre of an author can generally recognise his handwriting at first sight, without needing any further confirmation, but without being able to rationally explain exactly how.

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**125** Gacek 2009, 14-16; 2020.

**126** Bauden, Franssen 2020, 1-25.

**127** This is why Marganne exclusively used the term "autograph", even when referring to ancient Greek fragments wholly handwritten by their author, in her contribution in Bauden, Franssen 2020; see Marganne 2020. See also Goyens here, chap. 4.

**128** See <http://genesis-ests-oxford.eu/ests-2022/>.

**129** See the list of his biographers in fn. 1.

**130** The question has been addressed in Bauden, Franssen 2020.

In the case of al-Şafadī, his great respect of the model of ideal calligraphic styles may be an impediment, but his handwriting nevertheless shows a number of peculiarities and distinctive features. A precise, exhaustive and objective analysis of his handwriting is forthcoming and will be the most useful way to demonstrate this.<sup>131</sup>

#### 4.1 al-Şafadī as a Scribe

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

In the case of MS BnF Arabe 3127, we do not find any specific information regarding the motives of its copy by al-Şafadī. The text is a commentary by ‘Abd al-Malik b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Badrūn (608/1211)<sup>133</sup> about the *qaṣīda* by the Andalusian poet and *adīb* ‘Abd al-Maġīd b. ‘Abdūn al-Yāburī al-Fihri (d. 529/1134 or 520/1126),<sup>134</sup> who has worked for the Aftāsids chancery.<sup>135</sup> The *qaṣīda* is entitled *al-Bassāma*<sup>136</sup> and is a long poem lamenting the fall of the Aftāsids, following more gen-

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

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

**133** al-Şafadī, *Wāfī*, 19: 176-7 (161); GAL G I 271, 340, S I 579-80.

**134** al-Şafadī, *Wāfī*, 19: 129-36 (115); GAL G I 271, S I 480.

**135** The Aftāsids being one of the dynasties of the *Ṭawā’if*, the small principalities that flourished in many cities of al-Andalus between the fall of the Umayyads and the advent of the Almoravids. See Lévi-Provençal in *EP*.

**136** Or *al-Baššāma – bi-aṭwāq al-ḥamāma*. This text was edited and commented upon by Dozy 1848, mainly on the basis of this specific manuscript, that he recognised as handwritten by al-Şafadī, see Dozy 1848, 11-13.



Figure 34 Ibn Badrūn. Commentary on Ibn 'Abdūn's *qaṣīda* entitled *al-Bassāma*. BnF, MS Arabe 3127, p. 60 (courtesy BnF)



Figure 35 Ibn Badrūn. Commentary on Ibn 'Abdūn's *qaṣīda* entitled *al-Bassāma*. BnF, MS Arabe 3127, p. 250: end of the text and colophon (courtesy BnF)

eral considerations about other sovereigns' violent death and the adversity of one's destiny. al-Ṣafadī's manuscript presents two different styles of handwriting: the original text of the *qaṣīda*, the text by Ibn 'Abdūn, is written in a large *tulūṭ*, while the text of the commentary, by Ibn Badrūn, is mainly in a more usual style of handwriting, that we could call *mašriqī*, and is also in a more usual size [fig. 34]. The colophon (p. 250)<sup>137</sup> is introduced by a line in *tulūṭ* as well and says the manuscript was finished mid-Ramaḍān 717/end of November 1317, in Ṣafad [fig. 35].

By then, al-Ṣafadī was in his early twenties and working as *kātib al-darġ* for the governor Ḥusayn b. Ġandar Bak, in Ṣafad, but regularly travelling to Damascus. This manuscript is the earliest dated trace of al-Ṣafadī's handwriting and work known today. We know that Naġm al-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn al-Aṭīr (d. 737/1336),<sup>138</sup> a contemporary of al-Ṣafadī working in the Mamlūk chancery in Cairo, wrote a commentary on this *qaṣīda* as well, relying much on Ibn Badrūn's text but

<sup>137</sup> The manuscript was paginated.

<sup>138</sup> Zirikli 2002, 1: 97.



Figure 36 Abd al-Rahīm Ibn Nubāta. *al-Ḥuṭab al-mubāraka*. Princeton University Library, MS Garrett 298B, f. 178: colophon (courtesy PUL)



Figure 37 'Abd al-Rahīm Ibn Nubāta. *al-Ḥuṭab al-mubāraka*. Princeton University Library, MS Garrett 298B, f. 72: marginal glosses (courtesy PUL)

augmenting it slightly with parts of his own composition.<sup>139</sup> Hence, we can deduce that the *qaṣīda* and its commentaries were in favour at that time, and were probably deemed to be known by learned people, *adībs* and by those versed in literature.

In the chronological order of preserved manuscripts copied by al-Şafadī next comes a collection of sermons by 'Abd al-Rahīm b. Nubāta (d. 374/984),<sup>140</sup> an ancestor of Ġamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Nubāta, the Mamlūk poet, friend and later nemesis of al-Şafadī. The manuscript is entitled *al-Ḥuṭab al-mubāraka*. It is part of the collections of the PUL and preserved under the shelf mark Garrett 298B.<sup>141</sup> Its

<sup>139</sup> Dozy 1848, 25-35.

<sup>140</sup> GAL G I 92, S I 149-50; al-Şafadī, *Wāfī*, 18: 388-90 (no. 399). The manuscript contains some texts by some of the author's descendants as well: his son Abū Ṭāhir Muḥammad, his grandson Abū al-Faraġ Ṭāhir b. Muḥammad and his great-grandson Abū al-Qāsim Yaḥyā b. Ṭāhir. This collection was gathered around 629/1223, see PUL digital library, MS Garrett 298B, accessible from <http://arks.princeton.edu/ark:/88435/kp78gg43d>. And see the manuscript itself: the authors of the sermons are cited on the title page.

<sup>141</sup> Hitti 1938, 566-7 (no. 1907); Rosenthal in *EP*<sup>2</sup>.





Figure 38 al-Ḥarīrī. *Maqāmāt*. Danmarks Kongelige Bibliotek, MS Cod. Arab. Add. 83, f. 1a (courtesy DKB)



Figure 39 al-Ḥarīrī. *Maqāmāt*. Danmarks Kongelige Bibliotek, MS Cod. Arab. Add. 83, f. 154 (courtesy DKB)



colophon explains this copy was realised in Şafad in Muḥarram 718/ March 1318 by Ḥalīl b. Aybak ‘for himself’ [fig. 36]. The manuscript is acephalous as almost a whole quire is missing: the second quire begins with f. 2, as attested by the quire signature (ordinal number in full) observed in the upper outer margin. The copy is carefully rendered and a number of marginal glosses in red ink are referred to with the letter *kāf*, written in the text and in the beginning of the marginal gloss [fig. 37]. The meaning of this abbreviation is found in the author’s biography by al-Şafadī in the *Wāfī bi-l-wafayāt*: these are Tāġ al-Dīn al-Kindī’s comments, which were carefully added to the *Ḥuṭab* text, by al-Şafadī.<sup>142</sup> Other marginal glosses are introduced by the letter *şād*.

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

The manuscript under the shelf mark Cod Arab Add 83 is more renowned [fig. 38].<sup>143</sup>

It is a hybrid manuscript: the main text is not by al-Şafadī, having been written by the famous al-Ḥarīrī (d. 516/1122),<sup>144</sup> but the marginal glosses, explanations and digressions are al-Şafadī’s own production and everything is handwritten by him. This copy is a very ornate: the title and the colophon are surrounded by an illuminated frame and the titles of every *maqāma* are written in gold ink outlined in black and in “a formal calligraphic *tawqī*”;<sup>145</sup> several medallions, illuminated or traced in red ink, stress the rhythm of the text. The orthoepic signs, such as the vowels, are traced in colour as well: in total, five colours are observed in the whole manuscript: black, gold, red, light blue and dark blue.

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

<sup>142</sup> al-Şafadī, *Wāfī*, 18: 390. About Tāġ al-Dīn al-Kindī, see al-Şafadī, *Wāfī*, 15: 50-7 (no. 63).

<sup>143</sup> Perho 2007, 1416-21.

<sup>144</sup> GAL G I 326, S I 486-9; Margoliouth, Pellat in *EF*.

<sup>145</sup> Gacek 2010; 2020, 70.

does not make major mistakes, whose handwriting is legible and skillful and confines to calligraphy; he is a dexterous illuminator, who is able to produce masterful compositions and to use wisely different kinds of textual dividers; he is also an extremely cultivated *adīb*, capable of understanding and glossing one of the most demanding texts of Arabic culture. At that time, al-Şafadī was in his early to mid-twenties, and he was still living in Şafad but may have wanted to upgrade to a better position in the administration, or to a more important chancery, leaving his regional hometown for one of the capital cities of the Mamlūk sultanate. All these skills are validated, as attested by the display of collation statements and *iġāzāt* (licences of transmission), directly on the pages of the manuscript (ff. 1-4), dated 724/1324-758/1357.<sup>146</sup> One specific collation statement eloquently displays the philological consciousness and the importance granted to the transmission of faithful texts that motivated al-Şafadī and many of his peers.<sup>147</sup> Unfortunately, this statement is incomplete and scattered around ff. 3b and 1a. It testifies, in the hand of al-Şafadī, to three reading sessions organised in the Ğāmi‘ al-Aqmar in Cairo in 729/1328, during which not less than 13 other manuscripts of the *Maqāmāt*, including a holograph by al-Ĥarīrī, were read and collated. This was an event and was even reported by al-Şafadī in his *Wāfī* in the entry about Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī (d. 745/1344), who countersigned the certificate and added a few words in his hand<sup>148</sup> (fig. 38, f. 1a). This particular manuscript is a witness of the transmission of al-Ĥarīrī’s *Maqāmāt* in the Mamlūk period, and more generally, as already said, of the importance given to the transmission of exact texts.<sup>149</sup>

If we continue to follow the chronological order of preserved manuscripts in the hand of al-Şafadī, the next one was copied more than twenty years later. It is now kept in Erfurt-Gotha Forschungsbibliothek (henceforth FB Gotha) under the shelf mark Orient. A 1731.<sup>150</sup> It is a fragment of the eighth volume of Ibn Ḥallikān’s (d. 681/1282) biographical dictionary, the *Wafāyāt al-a‘yān wa-anbā’ abnā’ al-zamān*.<sup>151</sup> According to the colophon (f. 145, see fig. 40), al-Şafadī copied it for himself and finished the copy of this volume on 3 Şawwāl 741/22 March 1341.

**146** For the detail of the collation statements and reading certificates, see Gacek 2010, 151-65.

**147** On this regard, see the interesting Talib 2019.

**148** al-Şafadī, *Wāfī*, 5: 276-81.

**149** On the transmission of al-Ĥarīrī’s *Maqāmāt*, see Keegan’s work, especially Keegan 2017.

**150** Pertsch 1878, 3: 318-19. This manuscript is cited in al-Şafadī’s entry by Rosenthal in the *EP*.

**151** GAL G I 327-8, S I 561. Fück in *EP*.

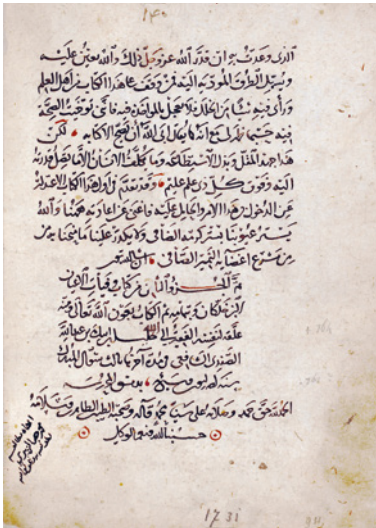


Figure 40 Ibn Hallikān. *Wafayāt al-a'yān wa-anbā' abnā' al-zamān*. Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, MS Orient. A 1731, f. 145: colophon (courtesy Forschungsbibliothek Gotha)



Figure 41 Ibn Hallikān. *Wafayāt al-a'yān wa-anbā' abnā' al-zamān*. Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, MS Orient. A 1731, f. 97 (courtesy Forschungsbibliothek Gotha)

The handwriting appears quickly done yet it is very legible and carefully placed. The beginnings of the biographies are highlighted in red ink and most of the time pointed out in the margins as well, under the usual name of the biographees (see fig. 41, f. 97). Few corrections are visible in the margins. The margins are straight, the text being justified. The copy of this work is emblematic of al-Ṣafadī's interest in history and biography. If our partial information is correct, in the first part of his career as an author, al-Ṣafadī's works dealt exclusively with literature: lexicography (*Ma'ānī al-wāw*, 'The Various Meanings of the particle wa-'), specific stylistic devices (*Ginān al-ġinās*, 'Gardens of Paronomasia'), poetic anthologies (*Muntaḥab šī'r Muḡīr al-Dīn Muḡammad b. 'Alī b. Ya'qūb b. Tamīm*, 'Selected Poetry of Ibn Tamīm'), textual criticism (*Ġawāmiḡ al-Sihāḡ*, 'Problems in [the Lexicon entitled] "The Sound"'), linguistic corrections (*Taṣḡīḡ al-taṣḡīf wa taḡrīr al-taḡrif*, 'Correction of Misspellings and Rectification of Mispronunciation') and textual commentaries (*al-Ġayṡ al-musaġġam fī šarḡ Lāmiyyat al-aġam*, 'Copious Showers of Commentary on the "Poem Rhyming in -l" of the non Arabs'). The first biographical dictionary he undertook to compose is also the most extensive, the *Wafī bi-l-wafayāt*. We know that he was already dealing with the biographees whose names began with *qāf* in 745/1345, as attested by a list of works for which he granted an *iġāza* to his colleague at Cairo



Figure 42 Ibn Abī al-İşba'. *Ṭaḥrīr al-Ṭaḥbīr fī šinā'at al-ši'r wa-l-naṭr wa bayān i'ğāz al-Qur'ān*. Ms Raġip Pasha 1078, f. 1

chancery, Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad.<sup>152</sup> Ibn Ḥallikān's work is a major source<sup>153</sup> for al-Şafadī's *Wāfī* and we may wonder if he would have begun its composition before having at his disposal a complete copy of this biographical dictionary.

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

This manuscript is a copy of the *Ṭaḥrīr al-Ṭaḥbīr fī šinā'at al-ši'r wa al-naṭr wa bayān i'ğāz al-Qur'ān* (The Composition of the Writing in the Art/Skill of Poetry, Prose and Inimitability of the Qur'ān), by Zakī al-Dīn 'Abd al-'Azīm b. 'Abd al-Wāḥid, commonly called Ibn Abī al-İşba' (d. 654/1256).<sup>154</sup> As the title implies, it is a work of *adab*. This manuscript was commissioned for the library of Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-'Umarī,

<sup>152</sup> The grandson of Šihāb al-Dīn Maḥmūd, a former teacher of al-Şafadī; Rowson 2009, 351.

<sup>153</sup> See van Ess 1976, 256.

<sup>154</sup> GAL G I 306, S I 539. The text was edited in Cairo in 1583/1963.



Figure 43

Ibn Abī al-Isḥāq. *Tahrīr al-tahbīr fi sināʾat al-sīr wa-l-naṭr wa bayān iḡāz al-Qurʾān*. Raḡīp Pasha Kütüphanesi, ms 1078, f. 148b (courtesy Raḡīp Pasha Kütüphanesi)

as attested by the cartouche with the ornate chrysography visible on the title page (see a bit further for another example of such a dedication, in a holograph).<sup>155</sup>

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

Finally, one can mention the manuscript of Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī's, *Ġamʿ al-ḡawāmiʿ* preserved in the Jerusalem National Library, MS Ya-

<sup>155</sup> The ex-libris of Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmārī has already been mentioned, see § 2.1.1.

huda Arabic 198. It was written by al-Şafadī in the course of *maġālis* (sessions) with his friend, Tāqī al-Dīn al-Subkī, in 761/1360, for his own use. Yehoshua Frenkel deals with this particular manuscript in his contribution to this volume.

## 4.2 al-Şafadī's Holographs

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

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

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

<sup>156</sup> Rowson 2009, 344.

<sup>157</sup> It becomes crystal clear if you think of online publications.

<sup>158</sup> Other examples of text fluidity, revisions and multiple versions of a same text can be found in Blecher 2017; Burge 2016; Hirschler 2012a; 2012b; Sublet, Roiland 2017; Talib 2013 etc. The situation was the same outside of the Arab world and the advent of the print did not immediately change the situation: it is only gradually that the tendency to heavily revise one's text after its publication faded; see Cerquiglini 1989.

<sup>159</sup> Mac Guckin de Slane 1883, 585.



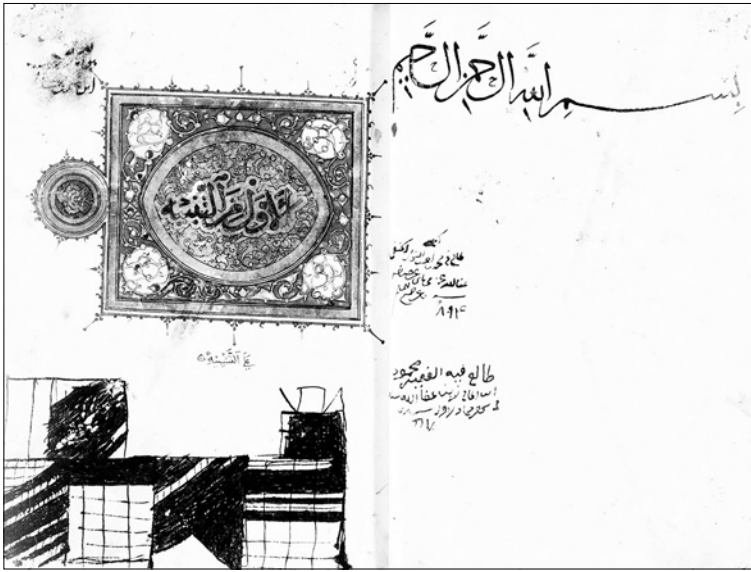


Figure 44 al-Şafadī. *al-Kašf wa-l-tanbih 'alā al-wašf wa-l-tašbih*, vol. 1. BnF, MS Arabe 3345, f. 1 (courtesy BnF)

Figure 45 al-Şafadī. *al-Kašf wa-l-tanbih 'alā al-wašf wa-l-tašbih*, vol. 1. BnF, MS Arabe 3345, ff. 20b-21 (courtesy BnF)





Figure 46  
al-Şafadī. *Kaşf al-ḥāl fi waşf al-ḥāl*.  
Danmarks Kongelige Bibliotek,  
ms Cod. Arab 294, f. 1a (courtesy DKB)

son' or 'simile',<sup>160</sup> and al-Şafadī articulated his monograph as usual:<sup>161</sup> two big introductions, about terminology and theoretical questions, and examples, verses displaying *taşbīh*, by numerous authors of different ages, arranged thematically. Apart from a small insert between ff. 20b and 21, an addition, nothing diverges from the regular justified text [fig. 45].

Second, in the Danish Royal Library in Copenhagen, Cod. Arab 294<sup>162</sup> is a holograph of the *Kaşf al-ḥāl fi waşf al-ḥāl* (Revealing the Situation about Describing Beauty Marks). Just like MS Raġıp Paşa 1078 mentioned earlier, this manuscript was dedicated to the library of Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-'Umarī, *şāḥib dawāwīn al-inşā'* (f. 1a). The dedication is chrysographed and outlined in black, on the title page, under the elegant cartouche accommodating the title and a circular decorative composition, probably not the work of al-Şafadī [fig. 46].

<sup>160</sup> On the *taşbīh* as a rhetorical figure, see van Gelder in *EP*<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>161</sup> For instance, as already noted, he wrote monographs on two other rhetorical figures, namely the *ġinās* 'paronomasia, wordplay' (*Ġinan al-ġinās*, see Heinrich in *EP*<sup>2</sup>; ed. Ḥalabī) and the *tawriya/istiḥdām* 'double-entendre' (*Faḍḍ al-ḥitām 'an al-tawriya wa al-istiḥdām*, see Bonebakker in *EP*<sup>2</sup> and Bonebakker 1966; ed. al-Ḥinnāwī).

<sup>162</sup> Perho 2007, 1142-6. The MS is visible online <http://www5.kb.dk/permalink/2006/manus/254/dan/1/>.

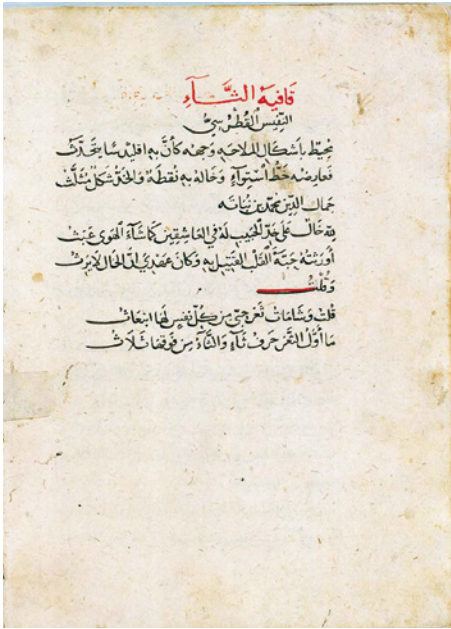


Figure 47 al-Ṣafadī. *Kaṣf al-ḥāl fi waṣf al-ḥāl*. Danmarks Kongelige Bibliotek, MS Cod. Arab 294, f. 22b (courtesy DKB)

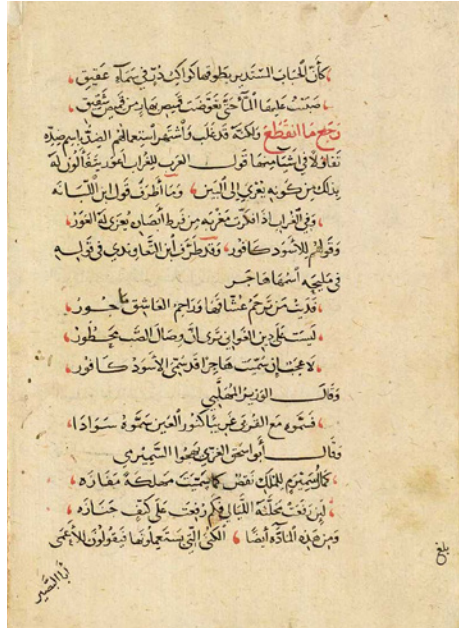


Figure 48 al-Ṣafadī. *Kaṣf al-ḥāl fi waṣf al-ḥāl*. Danmarks Kongelige Bibliotek, MS Cod. Arab 294, f. 8b (courtesy DKB)

Again, the text presents two introductions, the first one lexicographical and the second one concerning the meanings of moles and a list of persons presenting peculiar beauty marks; then comes a list of verses by different authors, including al-Ṣafadī himself, arranged alphabetically according to the rhyme letter and by subject. The manuscript only counts 58 folios, and finishes abruptly, without any conclusion or colophon, but the entire alphabet is covered, as the last chapter is about the letter *yā*<sup>7</sup>. What is extremely interesting is the presence of many blank spaces, left at the end of every chapter, in case the author found other examples to fit in (for instance see f. 22b, fig. 47, where one counts only ten lines on the page, instead of the usual 17 lines per page, like on f. 14, for instance). This could be interpreted as another clear demonstration of the fluidity of texts but it could also be understood differently: that al-Ṣafadī made sure to always begin a chapter (or section, for the introduction) in the upper part of a page, whether recto or verso. This is plausible, but is not a usual scribal practice. A last interesting thing to note is the numeration of the quires, with the feminine form of the ordinal adjective,

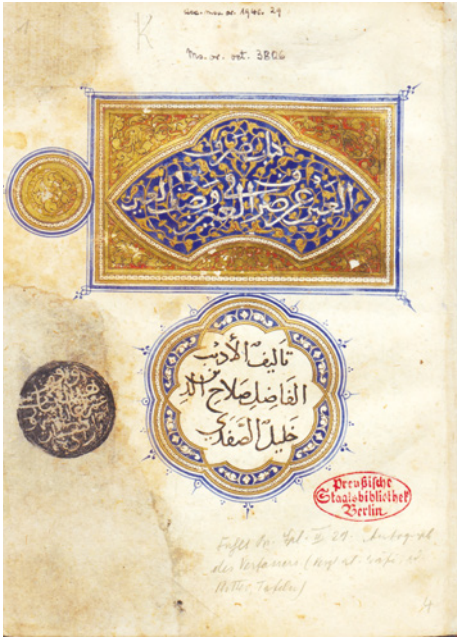


Figure 49 al-Şafadī. *Şarf al-'ayn 'an şarf al-'ayn fī waşf al-'ayn*. Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, MS or. Oct. 3806, f. 1 (courtesy SBB)



Figure 50 al-Şafadī. *Şarf al-'ayn 'an şarf al-'ayn fī waşf al-'ayn*. Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, MS or. Oct. 3806, f. 2b (courtesy SBB)

in letters, and the presence of catchwords on the versos of a continued text - there is no catchword if the next recto begins with the title of a new section or chapter. Finally, collation notes (*balāġa*) are visible in the outer margin of several folios, always in the last folio of a quire, sometimes partially trimmed off, such as on ff. 8b, 18b and 28b (see fig. 48).

Third, the SBB fragment of the *Şarf al-'ayn 'an şarf al-'ayn fī waşf al-'ayn* (Avoiding Envy While Paying Cash Down for Descriptions of the Eye) MS or. Oct. 3806 is the third clean copy known.<sup>163</sup> It consists only of a short fragment of 23 folios. Again, the title page is illuminated [fig. 49], the title inscribed in a rectangular cartouche finished on its outer side by a medallion, and on its lower side by a polylobed circle housing the name of the author. The title page was realised by another illuminator;<sup>164</sup> it displays a heavily adorned title cartouche, filled with vegetal motifs in dark blue, red and gold, while the au-

<sup>163</sup> Sellheim 1976, 1: 54.

<sup>164</sup> According to Gacek 2020, 69.

thor cartouche is more spaced out but presents a very delicate outside ornament.

The handwriting of the main text appears quickly done, the layout is simple but very regular, red ink is used to highlight or to write some words, giving rhythm to the meaning of the text. One chapter title is displayed on f. 2b, in black ink but with a bigger module [fig. 50]. Few indications are observable in the margins. Two different papers are observed, one white and one darker, a colour between saffron-yellow and reddish. The structure of both papers is similar to the structure of all the papers of al-Şafadī's holographs.

The manuscripts showing traces of work-in progress are more numerous.<sup>165</sup> For instance, all of the holographs of the biographical dictionaries fit this category, as al-Şafadī continued working on them until his death. An exhaustive list of al-Şafadī's surviving holographs, including details about the status of the text in presence (is it a working document? Does it contain many corrections and/or additions?) and about its materiality (al-Şafadī favours three specific papers) is in preparation.

## 5 Conclusion

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

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

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<sup>165</sup> Benedikt Reier is working on the *A'yān al-ʿaṣr* holographs in the frame of his PhD *Archive Fever in Egypt and Syria: The Social Logic and Use of Biographical Dictionaries in the Mamlūk Period (1250-1517 CE)*, prepared under the supervision of Konrad Hirschler, at the Frei Universität Berlin.

his new function: he bought Ḥunayn b. Işhāq's epistle on weights and measures, handwritten by another recognised author in the field of sciences, Ibn al-Bayṭār, the herbalist of an Ayyubid sultan.

Another common point of al-Şafadī's working method with ours, and contrary to some of his contemporary scholars,<sup>166</sup> is the fact that he systematically cites his sources. This is true for the texts he mentions in his *taḍkira*, and it is also the case in his monographs and biographical dictionaries: as already shown, chiefly by Van Ess and Little, his biographical notices always feature information of provenance for the data he transmits, whether the name of the author from whom he read the information, or the name of the person from whom he heard it, but also very often the fact that he heard it himself.<sup>167</sup>

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

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

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

**167** Little 1976; Van Ess 1976; 1977.



this work were still living and thus their achievements and activities, worth remembering, including their deaths, current), but it is also true of other works, for instance of the *Ġawāmid al-Şihāh*.<sup>168</sup> This last point deserves further investigation and the future list of al-Şafadī's holographs under preparation will shed new light on the question.

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168 Ms Çorum, Genel Kitaplık 1905.

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