A Critical Study of Shams Al-Din Al-Dhahabi's (D. 749/1347) Contribution to Arabic Literature With Special Referenc to His Historical Work

ABSTRACT

A THESIS

Submitted to the Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, U.P.(India)
FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF

Doctor of Philosophy
IN
ARABIC

Under the Supervision of

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ABSTRACT

The doctoral thesis entitled, 'A critical study of Shams Al-Din Al-Dhahabi's (D. 749/1347) Contribution to Arabic Literature With Special Reference to His Historical Work' consists of an introduction and six chapters along with a bibliography. The thesis comprises 179 pages.

The contents are as follows:

Introduction

Chapter I: Al-Dhahabi's biographical Sketch.
Chapter II: Al-Dhahabi's Contemporaries
Chapter III: Al-Dhahabi's works
Chapter IV: Al-Dhahabi's style and works on historical literature
Chapter V: Al-Dhahabi's Tarikh al-Islam
   - A critical analysis.
   - Section - A: The Manuscripts of the Tarikh al-Islam
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   - Section - D: Biographies in the Tarikh
   - Section - E: An importance of his Tarikh.
Chapter VI: Al-Dhahabi's position

Bibliography.
The introduction throws light on the significance of the topic, pointing out the main features of the life of Shams al-Din al-Dhahabi, the background of the age concerned and valuable contributions made in the field of Arabic language and Literature.

Al-Dhahabi (6/3–143/1274–1347 A.D.) lived and worked between the later half of the 7th/13th and early half of the 8th/14th centuries. In this age, the Arabic literature was passing through a crisis. Stagnation and decadence were apparently visible in the society. But, at the same time, the intellectual energy and literary taste that displayed themselves in this period must not be underrated.

So many outstandings, scholars rose to eminence like Lisan al-Din b al-Khatib (d.7/6/1376). Ibn Batufa (d.7/9/1376), Al-Qazwini (d. 6/82/1283) Al-Damashqi (d.7/27/1327) Ibn al-Wardi (d.8/50/1446) Ibn Khalikai (d.6/81/1282), Al-Safadi (d.7/6/1363), Taj al-Din al-Subki (d.7/71/1370), Ibn Farheen (d.7/99/1397) and shams al-Din al-Dhahabi (d.7/48/1348) and
many others in different fields of literature.

In the field of history and historical biographies, al-Dhabi made a very significant contribution. His 'Tarikh al-Islam' is no doubt, the most authentic and most important contribution on Mongol invasion of the caliphate. A detailed study of this valuable historical work is made in the thesis.

The first chapter deals with the biography of al-Dhakabi. He was having Turkish lineage and belongs to the Shafiite School of Islamic jurisprudence. He was brought up at Damascus. His father began to deal in gold by making the finished products out of it. He attained great efficiency and expertise in this profession. Thus, he was called al-Uhahabi (Gold Dealer) shams al-Din al-Dhahabi was born in the year of 673/1274. He got education from some of the very prominent scholars of the time. He soon
excelled as Muhaddis Qari, Faqih, and Muarrikh. He was called Shaikh al-Muhaddisin.

The second chapter provides details of al-Dhabi's contemporaries Al-Dhahabi actually lived and worked under the Bahri Mamluk rules (648/792/1250-1390) in Egypt and Syria. This was a very disturbed period from the point of view of Mongol invasion. But there grew up a number of eminent scholars in different branches of Islamic learning. Among these, mention can be made of the following: Lisan al-Din al-Khalib, Ibu Khaldun, Safi al-Din Al-Hilli, Ibu Taba Taba Abu al-Fida, al-Safadi and Ibu Shaker al-Kutubi,

The third chapter brings into light al-Dhahabi's works. Some of his works have attained a high standard in the East and the west alike. His works on Ibu al-Rijal (The Science of Narrators)
have become very popular. His compilations, abridgements and exegeses are numbered about one hundred. His works on the science of Hadith Literature are great in numbers. Some of the important works are Tahdhib-al-Tahdhib, Mizan al-Itidal fi Naqd al-Rijal, Tarikh al-Islam Siyar A'lam al-Nubala Kitab Duwal al-Islam, Al-Ibar, Tadhkirat al-Huffaz, Tabmat al Ourr and Hujam al-Shuyukh etc.

The fourth chapter deals with al-Dhahabi's style and works on historical literature.

The fifth chapter provides a detailed study of Tarikh al-Islam and it is further divided into five sub-chapters.

The sixth and the last chapter deals with al-Dhahabi's position. At the end, a bibliography consisting of ten pages is given.
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1990
It is certified that Mrs. Sultana Razia Khanam, Enrolment No. R-4545 has completed her Ph.D. work entitled "A Critical Study of Shams Al-Din Al-Dhahabi's (1349/1347) Contribution to Arabic Literature with Special Reference to His Historical Work". The thesis concerned embodies the findings and results of investigations conducted under my supervision.

The work is original.

It is now forwarded for the award of Ph.D. Degree in Arabic.

Abd ul Bari
Reader & Supervisor
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Shams al-Din al-Dhahabi (673-748 A.H) 1274-1348 A.D) has made a significant contribution to the fields of History of Islam, Tradition of the Prophet Muhammad (s), Canon law of the theological Schools, Biographies of the traditionists, historians, theologians and Science of traditions (Ilm al-Hadith) and Science of narrators (Ilm Asma’al-Rijal). His writings embrace all the major aspects of history tradition and theology. Through my intensive study and research I have come to discover as many as one hundred important works of al-Dhahabi as his compilations, abridgments and exegeses. About half of his works are available in the form of published books and brochures, and more than half of his works are in manuscript form which are available in different libraries of the world. Like all the post-classical Arab authors al-Dhahabi’s works are also found in compilatory character.

Though there has been studies of al-Dhahabi’s individual works in the form of editing, translating, commentaries and criticism, no comprehensive study of the entire corpus of his literary and historical output has been attempted till to-date. And to my mind this is sufficient justification for the attempt into an assimilation and over all assessment of all the important extant literary and
and historical works of al-Dhahabi. The topic approved by the Committee of Advance Studies and Research (CASR) of the Faculty of Arts, Aligarh Muslim University for my research leading to Ph.D. degree is "A Critical study of Shams al-Din al-Dhahabi's (d.748/1347) contribution to Arabic Literature with special reference to his historical work." The meeting of the Committee held on 20.12.1983. Before this work the same University conferred to me M.Phil Degree under the topic,"The literary contribution of some Important Historians contemporary to Shams al-Din al-Dhahabi" on 1986.

In the preparation of this Ph.D. thesis, I received ungrudging help, enlightened guidance and constant assistance from my supervisor Dr. 'Abdul Bari M.A. Ph.D. (Patna), Reader, Department of Arabic, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. I register to him my deepest sense of gratitude and thankfulness for providing me with valuable suggestion and many books. He has gone through the manuscript of the thesis and made adjustment after necessary correction. In all phases of the work he extended utmost facilities which made the work to see the light of the day. I also register my sense of gratitude and thankfulness to Professor Mukhtar ud-Din Ahmad, ex-Chairman, Department of Arabic, Aligarh Muslim University for providing me with valuable
suggestion and manuscripts from his own personal collection.

For collection of materials for my research, I have been consulting the libraries of Aligarh, Delhi, Patna and Osmania Universities, and the National Library of Calcutta. I also consulted all the available sources in various libraries of Bangladesh. I am much thankful to the staff of these libraries.

My thanks are also due to Professor Muhammad Rashed, Chairman, Department of Arabic, Aligarh Muslim University who always encouraged and helped me with valuable suggestions and materials regarding the topic of my research work.

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Allah alone is besought for help and on Him alone we depend.

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INTRODUCTION

Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī (673-748 A.H/1274-1347 A.D) lived and worked between the later half of the 7th/13th and early half of the 8th/14th centuries when Arabic literature has been steadily losing its qualities of originality, creativeness, imagination and vitality and at last has completely been stagnant, with some exceptional Arabic literary contributions produced by a few historians, literary men and authors who may be considered as a beam of light in this age of darkness in the Muslim world. It is further noticed that in the vast new territories added to the Islamic world between the period under review, as indeed already in Persia and central Asia, the medium of belles-letters and poetry was no longer Arabic, but Persian and Turkish. These new literatures, while drawing to a greater or less extent on the traditions of Arabic literature not only contributed nothing to Arabic letters, but siphoned off the talents which might otherwise have rejuvenated Arabic literature or opened it up to new experiences. When it is recalled how much that had given variety and resilience to the literature of the preceding centuries was produced or imitated in the Persian Provinces, the effect of their loss to Arabic letters can be readily appreciated.¹

At the same time, the intellectual energy and literary taste that displayed themselves in this period must not be underrated. Original works of belles-letters may be few, but the same vigour and freshness of mind that broke through even in the scholastic disciplines found other fields of exercise, specially in the first four centuries.

It was in the continuing impulse of the Hellenistic tradition, in the immense development of historical composition, and under the growing stimulus of Sufism that they were most active, yet from time to time certain writers found ways and means to express their interests and personalities in works which bear an individual stamp. Amongst the travellers Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (d. 779/1377) of Tangier was famous. Even in al-Andalus (Spain) prose literature was largely or belated reflection of eastern models. Granada produced in the versatile Līsān Al-Dīn b. al-Khāṭib (d. 776/1376) one of the last all-round masters of Arabic literary art. Scientific geography which attained one of its peaks in the world-map and descriptive text compiled by the Sharīf al-Idrīsī for Roger II of Sicily in 548/1158, still survived to the time of Abū al-Fida', Sultān of Ḥamāh (d. 732/1331), but was already giving way to electric literary art of cosmography, exemplified by Zakariyyā al-Qazwīnī (d. 682/1283), Shams al-Dīn al-Dimashqī (d. 727/1327) and Sirāj al-Dīn b. al-Wardī (d. 850/1446). On a more restricted scale, the Hellenistic legacy entered into the encyclopaedic tendency, exemplified not only by al-Ṭūsī and al-Rāzī, but also by many lesser compilers. Encyclopaedism, prevailing emphasis on religious studies and philology, took many forms. The simplest and most compact was the alphabetical arrangement of data in a given field or fields, as in the dictionary of Nisbas (Kitāb al-Anṣāb) compiled by Tāj al-Dīn al-Samānī (d. after 551/1156), on the basis of which the Greek Yaqūt compiled his geographical dictionary (Kitāb al-Buldān). The field which offered the widest scope for this treatment was that of biography, whether general beginning with the Wafayāt al-Āyān of Ibn Khallikān (d. 681/1282), and followed by others, notably the
voluminous _al-Wafi bi al-Wafayat_ of Khalil b. Aybak al-Šafadi (d. 764/1363) or limited to particular classes of savants and men of letters: of Physicians by Ibn Abi'Uṣaybia (d. 668/1270); of men of letters by Yaqūt (MUjam al-ʿUdabāʾ in 20 volumes); of jurists of the different Schools, notably by Tāj al-Dīn al-Subki, the Ṣafāīite (d. 771/1370), Ibn Qutubagha, the Ḥanafite (d. 879/1474) and Ibn Farhūn, the Maliki (d. 799/1397); of traditionists by Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabi (d. 748/1348); and many others. The already established practice of compiling dictionaries of scholars and eminent men and women associated with a particular city or region was continued on an extensive, and sometimes massive scale, e.g. for Aleppo by Kamāl al-Dīn b. al-Admin (d. 660/1262); for Egypt by al-Maqrizī (d. 845/1442); for al-Andalus by Ibn al-Abbār (d. 658/1260); and for Granada by Ibn al-Khaṭīb. A novel principle, introduced by Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalani, was to organise biographical dictionaries by centuries; his dictionary of notabilities of the 8th/14th Century (al-Durar al-Kāmina) was followed for the 9th/15th and 10th/16th centuries.

A second direction taken by encyclopaedism was to combine several branches of learning in a single work. Al-Nuwayrī (d. 732/1332) dealt in Nihayat al-ʿArab with geography, natural science and, universal history; and the Egyptian Secretary al-Qalqashandi (d. 821/1418) combined and supplemented two works by his predecessor al-Umarī (d. 748/1348) in his Šubḥ al-ʾAṣḥāʾ, to serve as a manual of history, geography and chancery procedure, and to supply models of ʿInshāʾ for the Secretaries.
In the secular sciences, the most impressive production was in the field of history. The Sunni movement encouraged the revival of the Universal history began by al-Muntazam of Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597/1200) expanded in the magisterial Kamil of Ibn al-Athir (d. 630/1234), and continued with varying emphasis by Sibt Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 654/1257), al-Nuwayri, Abū al-Fidā', al-Dhahabī and Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373). Regional and dynastic chronicles were cultivated in every province from central Asia to West Africa, and more specially by the sequence of major historians in Mamlūk Egypt. Rashīd al-Dīn (d. 718/1318), the historian of the Mongols, produced an Arabic version of his work. It is noteworthy that after the brilliant works of ʿImād al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī (Kharīdat al-Qasr, etc.) the ornate style of rhyming prose chronicle was largely discarded in favour of plain annalistic, and is represented only by two later works of any importance in Arabic literature: a history of the Mamlūk Sulṭāns by Ibn Ḥabīb al-Dīmashqī (d. 779/1377). On a smaller scale, but also conceived primarily as a work of adab was the anecdotal history of the Caliphs and their viziers compiled under the title al-Fākhīrī by the ʿĪraqī Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqā (d. 709/1309) in 701/1301.

The growing fixation of the traditional literary arts bore with special weight upon the secular poetry of this period. Diwans abound, but few of the more classical poets gained more than a fleeting reputation except the Iraqi Safi al-Dīn al-Hillī (d. 749/1349), the Syrian Ibn Hijja al-Hamawi (d. 837/1434), and of the lyrical poets Baha al-Dīn Zuhayr of Egypt (d. 656/1258). A Panegyric on the Prophet, known as al-Burda composed in elaborate bādī by the Egyptian al-Busirī
(d. 696/1296), became and has remained one of the classics of religious poetry. An isolated attempt made by the ocalist and wit Ibn Daniyal (d. 710/1310) to give a place in literature to the popular shadow play \(^1\) seems to have met with no success \(^2\).

In this way when we study Arabic literature of the period under review we find that in the description of history there is hardly any separation between works on History mainly related to the political events and Biography taken as one of the branches of history. This is due to the two sources from which historical traditions are derived: The Si`rat literature (al-Maghāzī wa al-Siyar) dealing with the life of the Prophet Muḥammad (Peace be on him) and the semi legendary traditions related to the tribal warefare of the Jāhiliyya period known as Ayyām al-ʿArab and Ansāb al-ʿArab \(^3\). These two factors were actually responsible for the gradual built up of Arabic historiography. On the one hand, parallel to the Si`rat literature, there developed the Tabaqāt literature containing biographies (ʿIlm al-Rijāl) first on the companions of Muḥammad, then on all sorts of illustrious men arranged into classes (Tabaqāt) according to the year of their death. The kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubra of Ibn Sād al-Zuhrī (d.230/845) was the first standard work of this kind of literature, which flourished specially in the post classical period of Arabic literature in the increasing quantity of Tabaqāt works on rulers, theologians,


\(^3\) A good survey of the Ayyām al-ʿArab is given by Ibn al-ʿAthīr in his Kāmil, Vol.i, pp. 367-517 and by al-NAwawī in his Nihayat al-ʿArab fī Funūn al-ʿAdab, Fann V. Qism iv, Kitāb v.
jurisconsults and poets.

But parallel to this biographical literature there developed a historical literature *Stricte Sensu* treating of the struggles of Islam and the history of the caliphate. Originated in the works on the Ayyām al-'Arab, it dealt with the first wars of Islam: the Maghāzī and the rapid conquests on the new faith. The prototype of this literature on political history is the *kitāb al-Maghāzī* of al-Wāqidī (d. 207/823), but its real standard work was created by al-Ṭabarî (d. 310/923), whose *Tārikh al-Rusul Wa al-Mulūk* has ever since been considered all the later historians as a pattern and a reliable source as well.

But even in the post-classical period of Arabic historiography there had been no strict separation between political history and historical biography. The biographical element has pervaded the political history through all the stages of its development. This is clearly seen not only from the exterior arrangement of these works, which were divided into chapters relative to the rulers, whilst also retaining the annalistic form, but also from their subject matter, which is hardly anything else but the history of rulers. This is conspicuous in works both on the history of cities or provinces and on dynastic or general history. Such works as the *Tārikh Baghdād* of al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 403/1071) or the *Tārikh Madīna Dimashq* of Ibn ʿAsākir (d. 571/1176) or the *Kitāb Bughyat al-Fālib fī Tārikh Halab*

2. Ibid, P. 815.
of Ibn al-Adim (d. 660/1262) are in the strict sense of the word rather biographical collections than historical works. And one can hardly decide whether the Bayân al-Maghrib of Ibn al-Adhari (lived in the 4th century A.H) and many other works on Spanish and Maghribian history would not be better ranked among the biographical works than among those on political history. Again, in the works dealing with the history of dynasties or single rulers written in a panegyric style the predominance of the biographical element is manifest, as in the Kitâb al-Yamanî of al-Utbî (d. 427/1036) or in the Kitâb al-Rawdatayn fi Akhbâr al-Dawlatayn of Abû Shâma (d. 665/1268)1.

From the beginning of the 5th/11th century, a compilatory activity can be perceived in all branches of Muslim Science. A wellnigh endless variety of compendiums and concise text books and lexica are written on Philology, history and religious and natural science as well. This activity manifests itself both in political history and in biography. In political history the necessity of both the continuation and the abbreviation of al-Ţabarî’s work called into existence a host of voluminous compilations, as the al-Kâmîl fi al-Ţârikh of Ibn al-Âthîr (d. 630/1233), the Kitâb Mukhtâsâr al-Duwal of Barhabraeus (d. 688/1289), the Mukhtâsâr Târikh al-Bashar of Abû al-Fidâ’ (d. 732/1331) and the Kitâb al-Fâkhri of Ibn al-Ţiqâqâ (d. about 701/1301), which is one of the best compendiums of Muslim history written in Arabic. The same activity is to be seen in biographical literature also. The former local or professional biographies had grown into the great collections of general biography, from which the companions of the Prophet (S) and the first four Caliphs were excluded as being well-known from the Tabaqât works. The most famous

1. Ibid., P. 816.
work of this kind the Kitāb Wafayāt al-Āyān of Ibn Khallikān (d. 681/1282), with its continuation, the Fawāt al-Wafayāt of al-Kutubi (d. 764/1363), the Ṭarīkh al-Ḥukamāʾ of al-Qiftī (d. 646/1248), and the ‘Uyūn al-Anbāʾfi-Ṭabaqāt al-Āṭibbāʾ of Ibn Abī Usaybiyya (d. 668/1270) serve as reliable guides in this vast biographical literature.

But at the same time, the necessity arose of further compilations comprising both political history and biographies of the illustrious in the same work. As a matter of course, this style of historiography was chiefly cultivated by the encyclopaedists whose number rapidly increased from the 6th/12th century and who embraced the whole range of human knowledge of their time. The first scholar who compiled a symposium of both general history and historical biography in one work was the celebrated Baghdad Polyhistor Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1200). With this Kitāb al-Muntazām Ibn al-Jawzī initiated a new school of historiography in Arabic literature. Because, his work contains both general history in short annalistic form and also the obituary notices of all the persons of some consequence who died in the several years. The Kitāb al-Muntazām was considered as a standard work on general history by many illustrious later historians. Specially the Miyrāt al-Zamān of Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī (grand son of Ibn al-Jawzī, died in 654/1256) should be mentioned in this connection. Because, Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī exactly followed the method of his famous ancestor, whose Kitāb al-Muntazām he continued up to his own time and enlarged with


additional matters often disregarded by Ibn al-Jawzī, as the local
history of Syria, specially of Damascus. The system laid down by
the Kitāb al-Muntażam was adopted by numerous later authors, as by
Muḥammad b. Șākir al-Kutubī (d. 764/1363) in his general history
'Uyun al-Tawārikh and also by al-Taghribardi (d. 874/1469) in his
history of Egypt, entitled al-Najūm al-Zāhira fī Mulūk Miṣr wa al-
Qāhirah. The common feature of all these voluminous compilations is
the predominance of the biographical matter over the historical
narrative. With the possible exception of the period prior to their
own time and some matters of predilection these works mostly contain
shorter or longer vitae illustrorum virorum, preceded for the sake
of completeness by short, hardly sufficient and often biased surveys
of political narrative, so that but for the material contained in
the biographical records the res-gestae of a given later period of
Muslim history could not probably have been reconstructed. The
general character of these historical works has been described ex­
cellently by R.P.A. Dozy in speaking of the Spanish Arab historians:
"Hommes des letters, ces chroniqueurs enregistrent en outre le deces
des ... général de l'époque qua travers une Sorte de brouillard".1

With certain exceptions this characterization is generally good
also for the authors of the school of Ibn al-Jawzī, thus specially
for a prominent disciple of the famous Bāghdād Poly histor al-Dhahabī.
His name has ever been famous for his lesser works, some of which are
in general use both in the Orient and in the Occident, but his chief

Adharī (Leyden, 1949-51), P.19; Joseph de Somogyi, "The Tārīkh al-
Islām of al-Dhahabī", The Journal of Royal: Asiatic Society of
work, the Tārīkh al-Islām, has never yet been studied nor discussed as a hole, though it fully deserves our attention for its valuable data, which are in many cases nowhere else obtainable.

As a well-known Syrian historian, traditionist (Muhaddith) biographer, theologian, Islamic lawyer and a prolific writer, though he was not so prolific as Ibn al-Jawzi or Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505), al-Dhahabī lived and worked under the Bahri Mamlūk rule (648-792 A.H/1250-1390 A.D) in Egypt and Syria. His Tārīkh al-Islām is specially considered as an authority on the Mongol (Il-Khāns of Persia r. 654-750 A.H/1256 - 1349 A.D) invasion of the Caliphate. Scarcely ever has Islam experienced more tragical times and more hardships than during the Mongol invasion in the course of the 7th/13th century with the despite of the nomads, practitioners of the open-air life, for sedentary occupations, the people of Chingiz Khān Turned against and mercilessly destroyed the towns and works of civilization everywhere. Their disastrous campaign was only facilitated by the decomposition of the political unity of Islam at that time. In Baghdād the ‘Abbāsid caliphate still subsisted, but its splendour was on the wane; to the west of Baghdād in Egypt, Palestine, and a part of Syria, the Ayyūbids (564-648/1169-1250) reigned, and in Asia Minor the Seljuqs of Rûm or Hither Asia), while to the east of Baghdād the Turkish Princes from Khīva had a rather insecure hold on the vast stretch of the Khwārizmian empire from the Ganges to the Tigris and from Tarkistan to the Indian Ocean. This state of affairs was inviting to an enterprising invador of the sort of Chingiz Khān who, in 615/1218, crushed the Khwārizmian empire, while his grand son, Hulāgu Khān (r. 654-663/1256-1265) put an end to the ‘Abbāsid Caliphate in 656/1258.
The western provinces of Islam, including Egypt, were however spared from the devastating fury of the Mongols by the Bahri Mamluk Sultan's victory over Katbogha, Hulagu's general, at 'Ayn Talut, Palestine, in 659/1260, when in 699/1299-701/1301 his great grandson Ghazan Mahmud (r. 694-703/1295-1304) failed in conquering Syria, Islam was definitely safe from further Mongol attacks.¹

The Mongol period (i.e. Il-Khanids of Persia and Chagatay Khans and Timurids of Transoxiana r. 624-904/1256-1500) is generally considered as a curse period for Arabic literature. They destroyed all the unique and valuable books preserved in different libraries of the 'Abbasid empire. They also burnt all the big libraries and chased away the well-known scholars of the conquered lands. Egypt and Syria, on the other hand, remained safe fortunately from their atrocities and that is why these two countries were able to produce a large number of scholars, writers and poets in different fields of literature in the period under review and surpassed other Arab countries in Science and learning. The Mamluk Sultans of Egypt and Syria in this period were more lenient than the Mongols to the religious and linguistic attitudes of the people. Cairo, Alexandria, Usyut, Fayum, Damascus, Hims, Aleppo and Hamah became overcrowded with the libraries, Schools, Colleges, Universities, Mosques and all other architectures during the Mamluk rule. The scholars and men of letters from different corners of the world migrated to Egypt and Syria and following the predecessors they displayed there a literary movement.²


The special features of the poetry of the Mongol period are: the excessive use of the ornamented words with their variety of changes, showing of undesired efficiencies by the poets and composition of the poetical histories, which are more harmful to the meanings. The description of the known things and open speech in satire are manifested, and vulgar words and popular meter entered in poetry of this period. Al-Shabāb al-Zarīf (d. 688/1289), al-Būṣīrī (d. 696/1296), Ibn al-Wardī (d. 749/1348), Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥilli (d. 750/1349) and Ibn Nubāta (d. 768/1366) were the most important poets of this period. The other less important poets were Shihāb al-Dīn al-Talafīrī (d. 675/1276) and Sirāj al-Dīn al-Warrāq (d. 695/1296). As regards to prose literature of the period, the writers who composed secretarial writings, literary epistles and scientific prose were like Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAbdallah al-Ẓāhirī and his son Fatḥ al-Dīn, Tâj al-Dīn b. al-Aḥrīr, Shihāb al-Dīn al-Ḥalabī, al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418) and Badr al-Dīn al-Ḥalabī. There were also some writers who collected in book form the literature of the contemporary and previous periods like Jamāl al-Dīn al-Waṭwāṭ (d. 718/1318) who compiled Ghurar al-Khāṣaṣīq al-Waṭwīḥa and ʿAlā al-Dīn al-Bahāʾ (d. 615/1412) who compiled Maṭālīʿ al-Budūr ʿī Manāzīl al-Surūr. A few encyclopaedic works and religious books were also composed in this period, Shihāb al-Dīn al-Nuwayrī (d. 732/1332) composed Nihayat al-Arab in 30 volumes which begin from 732/1332, Ibn Faḍlallāh al-ʿUmarī (d. 748/1348) who wrote Masālik al-Abṣār ʿī Mamālik al-Aṃṣār in 20 volumes and al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418) who compiled Ṣubḥ al-ʾAḥā ʿī Ṣanāʿa al-Inshā which consists of a preface and an essay. Besides these works, a large number of books on linguistics and religious sciences were also compiled in the period under review. Ibn Manṣūr (d. 711/1311) wrote Lisān
al-'Arab on lexicography in 55 volumes, Muhammad b. 'Abdullah b. Malik (d. 672/1273) wrote al-Ulfiyya, 'Abdullah b. Hishām (d. 761/1360) wrote Qaṭar al-Nadiyya wa Ball al-Ṣadiyy and Muhammad al-Sanhajī b.Ajarrum (d. 723/1323) wrote al-Muqaddama al- Ajarrumiyya fī Mabādī 'Ilm al-‘Arabiyya on Grammar. In this way Ibn Timiyya (d. 728/1328) wrote about five hundred books and brochures including Risalat al-Fūrqān bayn al-Haqq wa al-Bāṭil and al-Jāmi' bayn al-'Aql, wa al-Naql and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyya (d. 751/1350) wrote Zād al-Ma'ād, Kitāb al-Qadr, etc. on religious sciences. Ibn Khallikān (d. 633/1282) compiled Wafayāt al-Ayān, a biographical dictionary, Ibn Shākir al-Kutubi (d. 703/1303) composed Fawāt al-Wafayāt, al-Qazwīnī (d. 682/1283) wrote 'Ajā'ib al-Makhlūqāt Wa Gharā'ib al-Mawjūdāt in two parts, Abū al-Fidā' (d. 632/1332) wrote Tuḥfat al-Nizār fī Gharā'ib al-Amsār, all are written on geographical, historical and biographical literatures.

The contemporary Spain in the West witnessed a renovating movement in the field of literature and sciences. Līsān al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb (d. 776/1374) was the most celebrated Spanish litterateur of the period. He was also a poet though in less calibre. He wrote al-Iḥāta ffī Tārīkh Garnata in 3 volumes. He also wrote al-Ḥulal al-Marqūma, etc., on history. He wrote many literary epistles including Rayhānāt al-Kuttāb wa Najāt al-Muntatāb. He has a Dīwān of poetry though not in high standard. His style of writing is mainly distinguished with his love of metaphorical beauties and excessive use of historical and scientific allusions in rhymed prose, which were not free from obscurity, artificiality and monotony.

1. Ibid, PP. 859-81.
2. Ibid, PP. 840-54.
As regards the Mamlūk dynasty it covers the period between 656/1258 and 1215/1800 of the Islamic history. The name Mamlūks refers to the Turkish and Circassian military caste, who were independent rulers of Egypt and its dependency Syria. The year 656/1258, as mentioned before, marks the end of an independent ‘Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad due to Mongol invasion which sacked the Capital and destroyed its political and cultural heritage. One of the poets of this period recorded the state of of the devasted city in the following lines:

"The pulpits and the thrones are empty of them,
I bid them, till the hour of death, farewell".

So, thousands of books were destroyed and thrown into the great rivers of Iraq by the Mongols. By then the Muslim world was divided into several states, and Arabic literature was greatly weakened in the Eastern part of it, specially in Persia, Anatolia and Northern India. The Bahri Mamlūks (r. 656-923/1258-1517) were independent and relatively prosperous. During this period Arabic literature was steadily losing its qualities of originality, creativeness, imagination and vitality. During the Burjī Mamlūks (r. 923-1215/1517-1800) the Ottoman Empire started to be expanded, and the historians of literature consider this time as a period of stagnation and decay. Thus Arabic literature was completely stagnant during this period which is known as the age of decadence in Arabic literature and sciences, and the Arabic studies apparently reached their lowest ebb. The great Arab

Muslim traveller Ibn Baṭṭūṭa was shocked when he arrived in the land of the early Arabic grammarians, Basra, in 728/1327 to find that even learned people committed mistakes in Arabic. Here is his account of this experience:\footnote{1}

"I was present once at the Friday Prayers in the Mosque, and when the Preacher rose to deliver his sermon, he committed many serious grammatical errors. I was astonished at this and spoke of it to the Qadi, who answered, in this town there is not one left who knows anything about grammar. Here indeed is a warning for man to reflect on—Magnified be He who changes all things and overturns all human affairs. This Basra, in whose people the mastery of grammar reached its highest whence it had its origin and whence it developed, which was the home of its leader Sibawayh whose pre-eminence is undisputed, his no preacher who can deliver a sermon without breaking its roles."

However, there are exceptions to every rule and the age of the Mamlūks produced a few literary men and authors whom may be considered as a beam of light in this age of darkness in the Muslim world. Al-Busiri was one of the most important poets who lived between 609/1212 and 696/1296. He was, and still is, well-known for his poem, the \textit{Qaṣīdat al-Burda} (the Mantle Ode) in which he praises the Prophet and he has always been considered as presenting the medieval view of the Prophet.\footnote{2} In geographical literature we also meet at Dimashqī\textsuperscript{1}(d.728/1327)

\begin{footnotesize}
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Abū al-Fidā'ī (d. 732/1331), Ibn Majīḍ of Najd who lived in the 2nd half of the 9th/15th century and who claimed that it was he who piloted Vasco da Gama from Africa to the Indian Coast, and al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418) wrote an encyclopaedic work which was addressed to writers and Secretaries to show them the technicalities and manners which must be observed in writing. Literary styles and precis writing were among other subjects which were also treated in this invaluable piece of work of the 8th/14th century which is still extant until the present. A number of important historians and biographers emerged during this age. Some of them are al-Dhahabī (d. 784/1384) who wrote Tārīkh al-Islām, the biographer al-Ṣafadī (d. 765/1363), the historian and biographer Ibn Ḥajar (d. 853/1449), al-Sakhāwī (d. 903/1497) who produced a 12 volume biographical work, the 12th volume of which is devoted to women, al-Damīrī (d. 808/1405) who compiled his Zoological Dictionary in the late 8th/14th century which is as much a literary work as it is a work on natural science, al-Maqrīzī (d. 846/1442) wrote his famous topographical work on the description of Egypt, Ibn 'Arabshāh (d. 854/1454) of Damascus wrote his biography of the Tāmūr (Timur) entitled Marvels of Destiny, Ibn Ṭaghribīrīdī (d. 874/1469) wrote the Annals of Egypt and al-Maqqārī (d. 1042/1632) wrote his monumental work on the political and literary history of Muslim Spain.

Ibn Tiṃīyya of Damascus (d. 729/1328) was one of the great religious thinkers of this age. The encyclopaedist Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī of Egypt (d. 911/1505) wrote 561 works, about 450 of which are still extant. Although many of these works are short treatises,

1. Ibid, P.182.
a few of them run into several volumes. Amongst his famous works are Itqān on the sciences of the holy Qurān, a number of books on Arabic Grammar, an autobiography, a dictionary of grammarians and literarymen, and a book entitled History of the Caliph. In Muslim Spain we meet also the politician Ibn al-Khaṭīb (d. 776/1374). He was one of the last Andalusian poets and writers of folk songs (Muwāṣḥasas) which seem to have died out in Spain by the end of the 8th/14th century.

In north Africa we meet the great Arab historian and sociologist Ibn Khaldūn of Tunis (d. 809/1406). His voluminous work on history is still invaluable to us in modern time. More interesting still is the book which was originally an introduction to his history, and it bears the title the Introduction. Here, Ibn Khaldūn summed up the principle of sociological thought, and the first account over of a philosophic conception of history. One must also mention here the great Muslim traveller, al-Wazzān of Fez (d. about 933/1526). He was captured by Christian corsairs and taken to Italy where he was converted and named John Leo Africanus. Later he returned to Africa. His work on the history of Africa was translated recently from Italian and French by Professor Hamidullah. Al-Wazzān’s book remained the chief reference for European works on Africa until the end of the 12th/18th century.

One of the characteristic features of the Mamlūk age is the interest in popular literature, both popular poetry and popular romances. It is during this period that Alī Layla wa Layla (Thousand and one Nights) was given its final shape. The legends and romance...
such as that of Antara and 'Abla were also given a special emphasis. Here the writers of this age were accomplished artists whose works displayed technical skill with which the old themes were varied and revived. Moreover, the literary styles used brilliantly the colloquial idiom and played with words and phrases. Ṣaff al-Dīn al-Ḥillī (d. 751/1350) of Hilla in 'Iraq was one of the most popular poets. He wrote a special treatise on the Arabian Folk songs. Let us quote here the Arabian Folksong in the following lines composed by Ṣaff al-Dīn al-Ḥillī:

"How can I have patience and thou mine eye's delight,
All the livelong year not one moment in my sight?
And with what can I rejoice my heart, when thou that art a joy;

Unto every human heart, from me hast taken flight?
I swear by Him Who made thy from the envy of the sun
(So graciously He clad thee with lovely beams of light):
As tho's it gleamed on Time's dult brow a constellation bright.

O thou Scornor of my passion, for whose sake I count as naught;

All the woe that I endure, all the injury and despite,
come regard the ways of God: for never He at life's last gasp,
Suffereth the weight to perish even of mite."

Shams al-Dīn Abū 'Abd Allah Muḥammad b. Ṭūḥmān b. ʿAbd Allah al-Turkumānī al-Fāriqī al-Dimashqī al-Shāfiʿī was an Arab Muslim-Turkish historian, traditionist (Muḥaddith) and theologian. As his surname al-Turkumānī implies, his family was of Turkish descent from the locality of Mayyāfāriqīn. Muḥammad b. Ṭūḥmān al-Dhahābī was born in the early seventies of the 7th A.H/13th A.D. century, that is on 1 or 3 Rabiʿa II (according to al-Kutubī in Rabiʿa I) 673/5 or 7 October 1274 either at Damascus or at Mayyāfāriqīn. This was the time when the Mamlūks were strengthening their control over and dominating the territories that were left by the Ayyūbīds and were deserted in indiscipline, divided among the provincial ambitious princes and rulers and devoid of order in their internal affairs. During the glorious reign of Nūr al-Dīn al-Zangī, al-Dhahābī's grand grand father Qaymāz migrated to Damascus which was one of the finest attractions for the knowledge-seekers. He began to dwell there as his homeland. He lived there till his death in 661/1261 at the age of more than one hundred.
Al-Dhahabi's grand father, 'Uthman (d.683/1284) found Damascus as a prosperous city for his livelihood. So he started living there. Neither knowledge nor the intellectual flourishing which glorified the age of the Ayyubids charmed him. So, he satisfied himself of carpentry, and therefore, remained illiterate. Al-Dhahabi's father Ahmad instead of carpentry, began to deal in gold by making the finished products out of it. He attained great efficiency and expertise in this profession. Thus he was called al-Dhahabi (Gold Dealer). At the same time, he developed a keen interest in hearing and searching the hadith (the science of Tradition). So he learned it by heart much. The riches he gained from his profession helped him immensely shine in this academic area. In addition, he freed two Muslim women as well as two boys and girls held captive by the Europeans in 'Akkā during the war of Crusades. By virtue of his great scholarship in the science of Tradition, he occupied a unique position among the dwellers of Damascus. They showed their best homage to his


2. Ibid.
departed soul on the day of his sad demise. Even the chief justice of Syria Ibn Jumāa led his funeral prayer (Janāzah)\(^1\).

When al-Dhahabī was born in the year of 673/1274, his foster brother 'Alā' al-Dīn al-ʿAtār hastened to the contemporary professors of Hadīth and sought their permission to celebrate his birthdays ceremony even before the former could move and talk.\(^2\) He was even permitted to narrate the Hadīth narrated by his Professor Muhammad b. Ali al-Sabuni in the year 673 A.H. when al-Dhahabī was born. The permitting scholars were not from Damascus alone, but the Imām of the Mosque al-Ṣākhrah at Bait al-Muqaddas, Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allah permitted him in writing in the second year of his birth.\(^3\) Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalānī in his al-Durar enlisted the name of the professors who permitted al-Dhahabī to narrate the Hadīth in his boyhood. As the boy began to grow up, he found his father busy with the gold business as well as absorbed in his meticulous study of the Hadīth till late hours at night. On the other hand his grand father, ʿUthmān devoted himself to utter the Arabic letter "Rā" and thereby was strengthening his tongue.\(^4\) He also saw

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his aunt Sitt al-Ahl (d. 729/1328) who was his foster mother too, searching the Hadith and narrating it. Moreover, he found that his maternal uncle, 'Ali (d. 736/1335) was studying the Hadith and dealing in gold simultaneously as his father did. So, he had no alternatives than to receive education from his boyhood and cultivate it.

The boy al-Dhahabī went to 'Ali b. Muhammad al-Basīs (d. about 690/1291) to be educated himself. He prolonged his stay in the institution of 'Ali for four years. We do not know the exact year of his departure from that institution. But he informed us that when he was nine his teacher read to him eighty two verses of al-Ḥarīrī in a certain year. Then he went to Maṣūd b. ʿAbd Allah (d. 720/1320), the Reciter of the holy Quran (al-Muqrī) and the Imam (who leads the prayers) of the Mosque at Shāghūr, to read the holy Qurān with him. He completed the recitation of the holy Qurān with him about forty times. While recalling his teacher, he mentioned that he wrote a good hand and he was the most experienced in teaching children. Besides he was no good

1. She was one of the Sheikhs of al-Dhahabī. Cf. al-Dhahabī, Mu'jam al-al-Shuyūkh, MS. P.57a.
2. He was one of the Sheikhs of al-Dhahabī, Ibid, P.96b.
3. Ibid., P.102a
4. Ibid. P.168 b.
in his dealing with the children that he had never beaten any one. But he was not so serious about religious rituals.

The youth al-Dhahabi was inclined to master the principles of the recitation of the holy Qur'an. So he found what he desired from Ibn Jibril of Egypt who temporarily settled at Damascus. Under his instruction al-Dhahabi recited the entire holy Qur'an following the schools of seven Qarîs (the distinguished Reciters) on which Kitâb al-Taisîr of al-Dâni and Kitâb Hirz al-Amâni of al-Shâtibî were based. Yet he remained unsatisfied. In 691/1291 al-Dhahabi came in contact with Ibrâhîm b. Dâud al-Asqalâni, the Sheikh of the Reciters at Damascus and started reading with him the Kitâb al-Jam' al-Kabîr and completed it when he reached to the last stories of it. Moreover, he acquired the knowledge of different aspects of Islamic Jurisprudence (al-Fiqh), Arabic language and other branches of learnings.

At the age of eighteen in 691/1291-692/1292, the youth al-Dhahabi felt much interested in learning the Hadîth. He did the hearings of countless books on the Hadîth, and was taught by a host of male and female scholars (Sheikhs) with distinction. He continued hearing the Hadîth and reading it, and also cultivated it throughout his life. Even he heard the Hadîth from those persons at whose devotion to religious he was

1. Cf. Al-Ḥusayni, Dhayl Tabaqât al-Mufâz, p. 36
not satisfied. In his biography on his Sheikh 'Alī b. Muẓaffar al-Iskanranī (d. 716/1316) al-Dhahabī writes, "he was not serious about religious rituals. But yeilded to my burning curiosity. I had to hear from such a man. May Allah pardon him. He was not regular in his prayers due to his involvement in worldly affairs..." Even al-Dhahabī heard the Hadīth from common people. He speaks of his Sheikh (Professor) Muḥammad b. al-Nāṣir (d. 715/1315). He was a common Sheikh of less repute from whom I heard". Sometimes his devotion to the Hadīth led him even to the deaf persons. He tells about one of his deaf teachers al-Khāriṯī al-Asamm (d. 716/1316), "I read out to him into his ears three hadithes loudly"... These are his great teachers inside Damascus and outside from whom he heard. These are also his female teachers following the theological school of Ima'm Ahmad b. Hanbal. He took Hadīthes from all of them. The number of his teachers were more than one thousand and two hundred³.

Then al-Dhahabī left Damascus for other cities with a view to hearing the Hadīth or reciting the holy Qurān. In case of searching for the Hadīth travelling was an important condition. Because, by travelling, a man could attain the vastness of knowledge of the Hadīth and proficiency in it. On his many journeys he visited the cities of Balaback, Homs (the ancient

Emesa, a city in central Syria), Ḥamāh (a city in West Syria), Aleppo, al-Māarrah & Tripoli (in Lebanon). He also visited the countries of al-Khalīl (Bibron, a town in Jordanian Palestine), Nablus (a town in West Jordan) and al-Ramlah. Then he travelled to Cairo, Bilbis and Alexandria, and also to the holy cities of Makka and Madīna. Al-Dhahabi's father accompanied him in some of his journeys. But we do not know the details of these journeys. So far we know from the available sources he visited Bālabak in 693/1293. It was his first visit there. On this visit he completed the recitation of the holy Qurān with al-Nuṣayrī and then he took Hadiths from many scholars. In 707/1307, al-Dhahabi made a second visit to the same Bālabak, and in 695/1295, he visited again the Jordanian Palestine city al-Khalīl (Bebron) and heard from al-Jabari his odes (Qaṣīdāt) composed on ten modes of recitation. He travelled to Egypt with his foster brother Dāūd b. Ibrāhīm al-ʿAṭṭār. From there the two brothers went to al-Ramlah where each of them heard Hadith from others. But we do not know the details of these journeys.

2. His father accompanied him in Bālabak and heard from him Hadith there.
not know the date or year of their visit. Perhaps, he visited Egypt just after his father's death in 699/1299. Immediately after his return to Damascus al-Dhahabī, in place of al-Shams al-ʻIrāqī, was appointed the Chairman of the Recital conference held in the University of Damascus near the Tomb of Zakariā.

It was the first mission al-Dhahabī performed at the age of 26. Very few personalities of tender age like him had been appointed to the prestigious post of the Chairmanship of the Recital conference, at the University of Damascus. This post earned him the esteem of the Scholar of the Ḥadīth and the Quranic Recitation everywhere, and people began to appreciate him highly for his memory and merit. The scholars of the Ḥadīth swarmed on to him to be benefited with his lectures. He collected, compiled, abridged and examined their discussions.

Al-Dhahabī was also encircled by a group of learned friends like al-Birzālī (d. 740/1339), Yusuf al-Mızzī (b. 654/1256) and Ibn Taimiyyah (b.661/1262). Al-Dhahabī was the youngest and al-Mizzi was the oldest of them. They used to consult each other what they studied. They were his contemporary teachers. On the one hand they were busy collecting Ḥadīth

1. Ibid, P.47a, P.13a.

and on the other they were getting inclined to the views
Of the Hanbali school of theology. In the early 8th/14th
century when al-Dhahabî was about forty, Ibn Taiyimiyyah was
endowed with great strength and power, and it was before
Tankiz's taking the responsibility of Damascus in 713/1313.
He propegated and conducted his Hanbali Futwa (formal legal
opinion) in 698/1298 and thereby let the scholars dwell upon
it minutely. He was also gifted with indomitable courage.
Even he had the boldness to execute the legal as well as so-
cial punishments. He would shave the boys' hair and pass the
legal opinions regarding which he proceeded so far as to
exceed the proper bounds of the judges. Moreover, he gained
such power that he forced into the prison to free his followers
without consulting any judge or his assistant. Ibn Taiyimiyyah
profoundly influenced his three friends. Even al-Subki opined,
"Abû al-Abbas b. Taimiyyah inflicted severe harms on his three
friends al-Mizzi, al-Dhahabî and al-Birzâlî, and induced them
to perform a great but troublesome task. Not only that he
dragged them to an awkward predicament which they should have
escaped."

Then al-Dhahabî sketched out a way of life for himself
with those verdicts that gained his entire satisfaction. He

1. Ibid., vol. i, p. 145
2. Cf. Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah, vol. 14; Ibn Hajar, al-
    Durar, vol. 1, p. 146.
    had taken out al-Mizzi from the prison by his own hand.
made a survey of the opinions of the Hanbali school of theology and those of Ibn Taimiyyah's friends. Al-Dhahabi seemed to have not only been influenced by Ibn Taimiyyah but also been influenced by those Hanbali teachers who affected him. If anybody sets down himself to make a thorough study of al-Dhahabi's teachers, he will simply fail because they were too many to be counted. The way of life he adopted is imprinted in his writings and that is why he was severely criticised by his contemporaries and successors.

Al-Dhahabi's return from Egypt at the down of 8th/14th century marks the age of his tremendous success as a writer. He began to abridge a good number of books on History and finished writing his renowned work on history, Tārīkh al-Islām (The History of Islam). He went on educating the children visiting him. In addition, he was honoured with the charge of lecturing in the Mosque of Kufr Butna, after the name of a village in the city of Ghūṭa, Damascus. He stayed there and turned it a centre of the Hadith where the great personalities like al-Taqī al-Subki would assemble either to teach him or be taught. He was gifted with three children: Ummat al-'Azīz, 'Abd Allah (b. 708/1308) and 'Abd al-Rahmān (b. 715/1315). Then after the expiry

of al-Shuraishī, a teacher of the Madrasah Umm al-Sālih in 718/1318, the people did not find anyone else except al-Dhahabi to replace him in his post. Al-Shuraishī was a great scholar and the institution he served was one of the greatest ones. He developed a great fascination for this esteemed institution. That is why he built a dwelling house in its campus and breathed his last there afterwards.

The name and fame of al-Dhahabi's friends gradually increased to the extent of being great personalities of the age in learning, memory and intelligence. Unfortunately, there occurred an unpleasant incident between al-Dhahabi and Ibn Taimiyyah which is worth mentioning. The incident happened after the year 720/1320, when the latter was in his seventies. Ibn Taimiyyah's life was full of anxieties and disturbance. He was repeatedly imprisoned. His formal legal opinions (futwa) acted like hurricanes that revolutionised the ideas of the scholars of Egypt and Syria. He had never shown any leniency and partiality in this respect. He was always serious when he debated, raged and became harsh. Al-Dhahabi was greatly mesmerised by his vastness of knowledge, the faculty of his wit, plainness in dress and food, his adherence to truth and his struggle in every sphere of life possible.

Al-Dhahabī appreciated him highly in his writings and overstating the flaws of those who spoke ill of him. But he disliked him for his pride, vanity, excessive greed for the leadership of the Sheikhdom, and his abhorence to his elders. He differed from him in many serious problems concerning the fundamentals of Islam and its subsidiary rules. Al-Dhahabī tried in vain to rectify him. Sometimes he threatened his enemies to his oral instructions and at other times he rebuked him. Annoyed with his aversion to his oral instructions, al-Dhahabī sent him a lengthy ode entitled "al-Nasihat al-Dhahabiyya" (Golden Admonitions) containing valuable suggestions. In it al-Dhahabī warned him, blamed him and criticised his followers.

Let us meditate on "al-Nasihat al-Dhahabiyya" for a while. Because it reveals the locus stand of al-Dhahabī among his friends and teachers and it also depicts the different angles of the personalities of Ibn Taimiyyah himself.

Al-Dhahabi asked his Sheikh Ibn Taimiyah "How long would you see the dust in your brother's eyes, forgetting your own restlessness? How long would you praise yourself, your words and sentences and blame the teachers and look for the secrets of people...? Oh, man! by God, keep aloof from us. You are argumentative and a linguist who neither takes rest nor sleeps... We become laughing stocks in this world. How long will you spread out intricate as well as baseless doctrines of philosophy that engages our minds...? The sword of Hajjaj b. Yousuf and the tongue of Ibn Hazam were like two brothers, and you have made friends with them. How long will you adore yourself and oppose the best...? How long will you think high of yourself and belittle others...? How long will you go on appreciating your sayings more than they deserve...? By God, if only you would stop attacking the Bukhari (a book on Hadith) and the Muslim (a book on Hadith)... Is it not the high time for you to repent, refrain from your malpractices and bow down your head to Allah while you are in your seventies and about to expire? By Allah I did not think that you remember your death. Rather you mock at those who remember death. I do not think you will accept my suggestions and follow them. I rather think you would be courageous enough to reject my page with voluminous works... Such appears to me your character while I am your friend beloved and sincere. Then how degraded does your character appear to your enemies...? Note that among your enemies there are God fearing, intelligent and learned men whereas among your friends there are sinners, liars and ignorant people...
I am pleased with you for rebuking me publicly and getting benefited with my sayings silently. I have many blemishes and am addicted to vices.¹

Thus al-Dhahabī treated Ibn Taimiyyah like a sincere friend and an admonisher on the one hand, and opposed him boldly on the other. But this stand of al-Dhahabī neither pleased Ibn Taimiyyah's admirers nor his opponents. Al-Dhahabī said, "He who associates and is acquainted with him accuses me of exaggerating his blemishes and similarly one who opposes him accuses me of belittling him. Thus I have been tortured by both groups -- his friends and foes."²

We do not know what Ibn Taimiyyah told in reply to the admonitory letter of al-Dhahabī as nothing is found regarding it in the sources of information.

On Ibn Taimiyyah's death in 728/1327, Al-Dhahabī succeeded him to the Sheikhdom of the Dar al-Hadīth al-Sukkariyyah (The centre of the Hadīth at Sukkariyyah),³ and became a towering personality of the age who had been naturally appointed to the post of a scholar whenever he died. In 729/1328, he succeeded Ibn Jahbal to the Sheikhdom of the Dar al-Hadīth al-Zāhiriyah and left his lectureship at the Mosque at Kufr Baṭnā.⁴ In 739/1338, he also succeeded his friend al-Birzālī (d. 739/1338) to the Sheikhdom of al-Nafsiyyah and its Imāmah (leadership).⁵ He

¹. Ibid, pp.32-34
⁴. Ibid, P.358.
was also entrusted with the teaching at al-Tankiziyyah\(^1\) and al-Fāḍilīyyah\(^2\). When his third friend al-Muzzī died in 742/1341, the Sheikdom of the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyyah lay vacant. Then the chief justice al-Subkī intended to appoint al-Dhahabī to that post. But the scholars commented that al-Dhahabī was not a follower of the school of Ashʿarite Theology. Al-Muzzī had never been appointed to the post till he wrote a letter and swore that he was an Ashʿarī. In this regard controversy spread out on large scale. Then the Vice-Governor sent for the Scholars and consulted them in this issue. Al-Subkī gave his opinion in favour of al-Dhahabī. But the other Scholars did not agree with him. The controversy continued up to the appointment of al-Subkī himself to the said post.\(^3\)

Thus, in spite of his being the Sheikhs al-Muḥaddithīn (the leader of all professors of Ḥadīth), al-Dhahabī lost the most prestigious Sheikdom of Dār al-Ḥadīth at Damascus because of his inclination to the theological school of Ḥanbali and his previous relationship with Ibn Taimiyyah. At that time he was about seventy years old. But he had not yet lost his working energy and therefore, continued propagating his opinions.\(^4\) In the meantime his name and fame reached everywhere. His dignity increased and soared to a greater extent. The knowledge-seeking

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4. We have seen him in 742/1341 that he presents the assembly of Dār al-Sādah, the abode of Nawāb al-Sulṭān and encourages to the killing of al-Zanadiqa. Cf. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya, vol.14, p.190.
students used to travel to him groups from different parts of the world to quench their thirst for knowledge. From all directions questions were put to him for getting appropriate answers. Finally, he became immortal as "a renowned author of the History of Islam (Tārīkh al-Islām) as well as the Muḥaddith of the age."

Then at that old age he did not exhausted and he did not lead a retired life either. But he lost his eyesight gradually till he became blind during his last years of his life. He died in his Madrasah Umm al-Ṣāliḥ in 748/1347 at the age of seventy five, and was buried in the graveyard of al-Bāb al-Ṣaghīr. In Aleppo his funeral prayer was offered in absentia.

Al-Dḥahabī's intellectual life can be discussed in these ways - the mode of the recitation of the holy Qur'ān, the narration and compilation of the Ḥadīth and his historical writings. Hence we should discuss him as a recitor, a muḥaddith (Professor of Ḥadīth) and a historian. In the field of the modes of recitation of the holy Qur'ān we find his utmost endeavour in his safeguarding the integrity of the holy Qur'ān. He integrated it in Damascus, Balabak, al-Khālīl and Alexandria till he was named al-Uṣṭādḥ al-Thiqa al-Kabīr (The Great Reliable Teacher). But we observe that under his supervision, only one student named Ahmad al-Tuhhan had graduated in this field. Because he left

1. Al-Subkī describes his death in al-Ṭabaq āt.
4. He was the Sheikh of Ibn al-Jāzārī, Ibid.
practising it earlier and concentrated himself on the study of the Hadith and History. So al-Dhahabi’s contribution to this branch of knowledge is minor. He wrote only Tabaqāt al-Qurra (The stages of the Reciters). But Ibn al-JazarI acknowledged his contribution to this branch of knowledge. Al-Dhahabi also wrote in this field. Mukhtasar fi al-Qardat (a short treatise on the modes of recitation). Of all the branches of learning al-Dhahabi studied, he gave the least attention to it. So his contributions to it are very poor.

Al-Dhahabi made his best contributions to the field of the Hadith and its science, and most of his works were compared to this field. We find his success in this area, his keen interest in hearing the Hadith and his eagerness to follow the scholars in taking Hadith from them. He surpassed the other professors of Hadith (Muhaddith) as he freed them from their intellectual barrenness. He had profound intellectual insight and a good understanding of the sayings of people of all walks of life. These qualities helped him perform his task. So he scrutinised the Hadith, modified and corrected it, and explained, reviewed the narrators of the Hadith and preserved the history of their lives. His works on the science of Hadith literature are innumerable. He started with the abridgement of different volumes of Hadith. His compilations which earned him name and fame, as we believe, are those works that deal with the biographies of the narrators of the Hadith and the preservation of their names. As we have already

mentioned that in 690/1291 he at the age of 18 began his studies in hadith in Damascus under the direction of 'Umar b. Qawwās, Aḥmad b. Ḥibat Allah b. 'Asākīr and Yūsuf b. Aḥmad al-Qāmulī. He continued his hadith studies in several Islamic centres under the best authorities of his time. Thus he studied in Baṣalabakh with ʿAbd al-Khāliq b. Ulwān, Zaynab bint ʿUmar b. al-Kindī and others; in Egypt with al-Abarquahi, ʿĪsā b. Abd al-Mumīn b. Shīhāb, the ḥāfiz Abū Muḥammad al-Dīnātī and Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Ẓāhirī, and chiefly with Ḥabīb Daqīq al-ʿIṣīd; in Makka with al-Tuzzari, in Ḥalab with Sawqar al-Zayāl; in Nabulus with al-Imād b. Badrān; in Alexandria with Abū al-Ḥasan al-ʿArīqī, and Abū al-Ḥasan Yahyā b. Aḥmad al-Ṣawwāf, and lastly in Cairo where he stayed longest with Ibn Manṣūr al-Ifriqī.

Al-Dhahabī also studied fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence or cannon of Law) with no less authorities then Kamāl al-Dīn b. al-Zamlikanī, Burhān al-Dīn al-Fazari and Kamāl al-Dīn b. Qādi Shuhba. He was an adherent of the Shāfiʿi School of Theology. He received Ijāza from Abū Zakariyya b. al-Ṣayraffī, Ibn ʿAlī al-Khayr, al-Qāsim al-Irbīlī, and others. The number of his teachers is said to have surpassed the thirteen hundred, the biographies of whom he collected in his Mujam al-ghuyūk. So al-Dhahabī had the reputation of a scholar of the first rank in history, hadith and fiqh (cannon of Law). In fiqh he belonged to the madhab of al-Shāfiʿī. He had

3. AMS of the book is in Cairo, see Cat., vol. I, 2nd ed., p. 252.
an indefatigable energy; having been at his studies day and night, even when he was struck by blindness which befell him, according to Abū al-Fidāʾ and 'Umar b. al-Wardī, in 743/1342-3, or, according to others, as early as 741/1340-1. He had a great many excellent pupils, among whom his chief biographer is to be specially mentioned, 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Subkī, author of the Tabaqāt al-Shāfiʿīyya al-Kubrā. Al-Dhahabī was an intimate friend of latter's father, Taqi al-Dīn al-Subkī, who was considered stronger than he in Shāfiʿite law as Taqi al-Dīn was the famous Shāfiʿite doctor of law 1.

We have already seen that Shams al-Din al-Dhahabi lived and worked between the later half of the 7th A.H/13th A.D. and early half of the 8th A.H/14th A.D. Centuries under the Bahri Mamluk rules (648 - 792/1250-1390) in Egypt and Syria. This was the time which was considered as the period of invasion of the Caliphate by the Mongol Il-Khans of Persia (r. 654-750/1256-1349). Scarcely ever has Islam experienced more tragical times and more hardships than during the Mongol invasion in the course of the 7th /13th century with the despite of the nomads practitioners of the open-air life, for sedentary occupations, the people of Chengiz Khan turned against and mercilessly destroyed the towns and works of civilization everywhere. Their disastrous campaign was only facilitated by the decomposition of the political unit of Islam at that time. In Baghdad the 'Abbasid Caliphate still subsisted, but its splendour was on the wane. To the west of Baghdad in Egypt, Palestine, and a part of Syria, the Ayyubids reigned (564-648/1169-1250), and in Asia Minor the Saljuqs (of Rume or Hither Asia), while to the east of Baghdad the Turkish princes from Khiva had a rather insecure hold on the vast stritch of the Khwarizmian empire from the Ganges to the Tigriz and from Turkestan to the Indian Ocean. This state of affairs was inviting to an interprising invader of the sort of Chengiz Khan who in 615/1218 crushed the Khwarizmian empire, while his grand son Hulaghu Khan (654-663/1256-1265) put an end to the 'Abbasid Caliphate in 656/1258. The western provinces 1. Cf. Mrs. Sultana Razia Khanam, The Literary contribution of some important Historians contemporary to Shams al-Din al-Dhahabi, (Type copy of the M.Phil Thesis in Aligarh Muslim University Library, 1986 which is now accepted for publication by the Islamic Foundation, Dhaka, Bangladesh). PP.79-82.
of Islam including Egypt were however spared from the devastating fury of the Mongols by the Bahri Mamluk Sultan's victory over Katbogha, Hulagu's general, at 'Ayn Talut, Palestine in 659/1260, when, in 699-701/1299-1301 his grand son Ghazan Mahmud (694-703/1295-1304) failed in conquering Syria, Islam was definitely safe from further Mongol attacks.¹

The Mongol period of the Il-khans of Persia, and Chagatary Khanids and Timurids of Transoxiana (624-906/1256-1500) are generally considered as a curse period for Arabic literature and learnings. They destroyed all the unique and valuable books preserved in different libraries of the 'Abbasid empire. They also burnt all the big libraries and chased away the well-known scholars of the conquered lands. Egypt and Syria, on the other hand remained safe fortunately from their atrocities and that is why these two countries were able to produce a large number of scholars, writers and poets in different field of literature in this period and surpassed other Arab countries in Science and Technology. The Mamluk Sultan's of Egypt and Syria in this period were more lenients than the Mongols to the religious and linguistic attitudes of the people. Cairo, Alexandria, Usyut, Fayum, Damascus, Hims, Alappo and Hamah became over crowded with the libraries, schools, colleges, universities, mosques and all other architectures during the Mamluk period. The scholars and men of letters from different corners of the world migrated to Egypt and Syria, and following the predecessors they displayed there

a literary movement in the period under review. The contemporary Spain in the west witnessed a renovating stage in the field of literature and sciences. Lisān al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb (d.776/1374) the politician was the most celebrated Spanish literatur of the period. He wrote al-Iḥāta fī Tārīkh Garnatā in 3 volumes. He also wrote al-Hulāl al-Marqūma, etc. on history. He wrote many literary epistles including Rayhānāt al-Kuttāb wa Najāt al-Muntatab. He was also a poet though in less calibre having a Diwān of poetry which is not of high calibre. His style of writing is mainly distinguished with his love of metaphorical beauties and excessive use of historical and scientific allusions in rhymed prose, which were not free from obscurity, artificiality and monotony. Ibn al-Khaṭīb was one of the last Spanish poets and writers of folk songs (Muashshahāt). In North Africa we meet the great Arab historian and Sociologist Ibn Khaldūn of Tūnis (d. 809/1406). His Kitāb al-Ibar on history consisting 14 volumes is still invaluable to us in modern time. More interesting still is the book which was originally an introduction to his history, and it bears the title al-Mugaddima (The Introduction). Here Ibn Khaldūn summed up the principle of sociological thought, and the first account over of a philosophic conception of history. Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī of ʿIrāq (d. 751/1350), was one of the most popular poets of al-Dḥahabi's age. This was the age when Arabic literature has been steadily losing its qualities of originality, creativeness, imagination and vitality and at last has

2. Ibid, pp. 840-54.
completely been stagnant, with some exceptional Arabic literary contributions produced by a few historians, literary men and authors who may be considered as a beam of light in this age of darkness in the Muslim World. Now I like to give a brief account of the life and works of some important historians contemporary to al-Dhahabî in the following:

Ibn Tabā Tabā: Jalāl al-Dīn (Ṣafī al-Dīn) Abū Jāfar Muḥammad b.Ṭāj al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. Ramadān b.Ṭabāṭabā called Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqa \(^1\) (d. 709/1309) was born at al-Mawṣil of ʿIrāq in the locality of al-Ḥilla in 660/1262 four years after the conquest of Baghdad by Hulāgu Khān of the Mongols, which he did not mention as having witnessed personally. He was an ʿIrāqi historian and critic. As a Sharīf he was the descendant of al-Ḥasan b.ʿAlī through Ibrāhīm al-Ṭabāṭabā. His grand father Ramadān earlier settled at al-Ḥilla, the Shiite Shrine cities where and perhaps also at Baghdad his family supplied the leading spokesmen and superintendents (muqabā) for the Alid cause. His father Ṭāj al-Dīn 'Alī was a tax collector in ʿIrāq and the chief Naqīb of the Alids, where he gained a great wealth and influence, and finally had been assassinated in 680/1281 at the instigation of Abagha Khān (663-680/1265-1280), the Mongol's ministers ʿAlā al-Dīn ʿAṣā Malik al-Jawaynī and brother Shams al-Dīn. Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqa also gained the office of Naqīb of the Shiites at al-Ḥilla, al-Najaf and Karbala, probably with


\(^2\) The word Tiqṭaqa apparently derives from the Persian "Tiktak" means, the noise made by the feet in running; also by the teeth in masticating; a noise in general. But the word is generally applied to a speech which bears the quickness and abundance of words, i.e. rapid speaker. Cf. al-Zabidi, Ṭāj al-ʿArūs, vol.vi, P.424.
more regionally limited authority. He married a woman from Khurāsān, and visited Marāgha in 697/1297. He was apparently back in Baghdad at the time of Ghazan Khān’s visit to the city in 698/1298 where we find him in relations with this Mongol Sultān and effective ruler. He travelled widely in ʿIrāq and Adharbayjan. On a winter journey to Tabriz, three years later of Ghazan Khan’s visit to Baghdad, Ibn al-Tiqtaqa was detained in al-Mawṣil by the unusually bitter weather during late winter and spring of 701/1301-2 and wrote his history of al-Fakhri fī Adab al-Sultāniyya wa al-Duwal al-Islāmiyya (al-Fakhri on the systems of Government and the Muslim dynasties) under the patronage of Ghazan Khān’s governor of al-Mawṣil, Malik Fakhr al-Dīn ʿIsā b. Ibrāhīm. And hence the book was named after him. Ibn al-Tiqtaqa supported the Mongols as being less anti-Alids than the ʿAbbāsids. He died either in 702/1202 or in 709/1309.

Ibn al-Tiqtaqa’s skillful choice of his largely anecdotal material, his reflective rather than factual approach to history, and the obvious love for his subject of an urbane and literate personality combine to make the Fakhri enjoyable and instructive reading to a degree uncommon in medieval scholarly historiography. It might be contended that Kitāb al-Fakhri has enjoyed a popularity rather greater than it deserves. Yet, familiar and well-scanned as the book has been, its two major claims to importance, in our opinion, have never given sufficient independent attention - a considerable amount

1. Edited by H. Derenbourg (Paris, 1895) and by 'Amar (Paris 1910).
of first hand and even eye-witness information it contains, and to its treatment of the fall of Baghdād in 656/1258. These two facts are elaborately discussed by James Kritzek. The first part of al-Fakhrī "al-Fasl fi al-Umūr al-Sūltāniyyah wa al-Siyasata al-Malakiyyah", is in the nature of a "mirror for princes". The second part, "al-Fasl fī al-Kalām 'alā Dawlatayn Dawlatayn" is an exceptionally well ordered history book, covering precisely the period of the caliphate from the election of Abū Bakr in 11/632 to the execution of al-Mustāsim in 656/1258. Ibn al-Tiqtaqa was very explicit about the intended functions of each of the two parts, as well as about the historical method he had adopted. He imposed two rules upon himself. One of them is that he inclined only towards the truth, that he spoke only justly, that he avoided being ruled by passion, and that he abstracted himself from the influence of environment and education, and regarded himself as a stranger to them and as an alien amongst them. The Second of them is that he expressed his idea by means of clear expressions which communicate to the intellects of his readers, avoiding those difficult expressions which oratorical display and rhetorical demonstration occasion, so that everyone might use them. The historical facts of al-Fakhrī is derived from lost works of al-Masūdī, from chronicles of Muḥammad


2. Ibid., p.163.

b. Yaḥyā al-Ṣūlī (d. 335/946) and Hilal b. al-Muḥassin al-Ṣābī (d. 448/1056), above all from the *al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh* of Ibn al-Aṭhīr. The *Fakhīr* is a very distinguished book. It is well and simply written, sufficiently critical and anecdotic, moderate practical minded, agreeable to read. It is also remarkably impartial inspite of the author's Shi'a convictions.

**Abū al-Fīdā:** Abū al-Fīdā Ṣamī'ul b. al-Afdāl 'Alī (or Muẓaffar 'Alī) b. al-Muẓaffar Maḥmūd b. al-Manṣūr Muḥammad b. al-Muẓaffar Tāqī al-Dīn 'Umar b. Nūr al-Dīn Shāhanshāh b. Najw al-Dīn Ayyūb, al-Malik al-Muṣayyad Ṣāḥib Ḥamāh 'Imād al-Dīn was a Syrian prince, well-known historian renowned geographer, of the family of the Ayyūbids. He was born in Damascus in 672/1273. He belongs to the family of the princes of Ḥamāh on the river Orontes (Nahr al-Asia), a branch of the Ayyūbid royal family created by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn. His family had been obliged to take refuge in Damascus from the Mongols. He received an elaborate education inspite of his being involved in all kinds of military campaigns throughout his youth. At the age of 12, in the company of his father al-Afdāl 'Alī and his cousin al-Muẓaffar Maḥmūd II, Prince of Ḥamāh, he was present at the seize and capture of the fortress al-Maqrab (Margat) from the knights of St. John in


2. The Ayyūbids had given place to the Rasūlids (626-858/1229-1454) in Arabia as early as 625/1228. But at Ḥamāh a branch of the family Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn continued to rule with slight intermission until 742/1342, and numbered in their line the well-known historian Abū al-Fīdā. Cf. Lane-Pool, *Mohammadan Dynasty* (Delhi: Idārat-i-Adabiyyat, 1977), pp. 74-77.
684/1285, when Baḥrī Mamlūk Sulṭān al-Malik al-Manṣūr Sayf al-Dīn al-Qalā‘ūn (678-89/1279-90) appeared before this fortress and conquered it. Ābu ṣīrūf al-Fīda was then on his first campaign with his father. He took part also in the later campaigns against the crusaders. On the suppression of the Ayyūbid principality of Ḥamāh in 698/1299, he remained in the service of its Mamlūk governors. He was one of the Amirs of Damascus and remained ingratiating himself with the Mamlūk Sulṭān al-Malik al-Nāṣir Naṣīr al-Dīn Māḥmūd b. Qalā‘ūn who promised the former to be appointed as the governor of Ḥamāh during latter's stay at Karak. Earlier Ābu al-Fīda tried several vain attempts to obtain the government of Ḥamāh. He entered the service of the Mamlūk Sulṭān al-Nāṣir in 698/1299 who finally appointed him as the governor of Ḥamāh in 710/1310 at the instance of the Kings of the Arabs, Ḥusām al-Dīn Muhanna, Shaykh of Āl Faḍl. From that time onward he continued to rule his hereditary principality, but as a fief of the Mamlūk empire. In 712/1312 his government was converted to a life principality in loyalty to his liege lord with the rank of a prince and the title of al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ. But two years later he, with the other governors, was made directly subordinate to the governor of Damascus, al-Amīr Sayf al-Dīn Tankez Arghūn al-Nā‘īb with whom his relations were for a time strained. In the following


years he strengthened his position by lavish patronage and generosity specially on the occasion of his visits to Egypt. In 719/1319 he accompanied the Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad on pilgrimage to Makka, and on their return to Cairo he was publicly invested with the insignia of Sultanate and the title of al-Malik al-Muayyad in 720/1320, and given precedence overall governors in Syria. He continued to enjoy the great reputation which he had acquired as patron and man of letters, as well as the friendship of the Sultan until his death. He died at Ḥamāh on 23 Muh. 732/27 Oct., 1331. He was buried in the mausoleum he had built there for himself. That mausoleum had gradually fallen into ruins, but in or after 1344/1925 it was restored. With the support of Tankiz, Abū al-Fidāʾ’s son al-Afdal Muḥammad (733-42/1332-41) was nominated as his successor, and was also granted the insignia of the Sultanate.

Abū al-Fidāʾ’s life was a long series of military campaigns and travels. He accomplished the great pilgrimage at least thrice, and was often obliged to report to Cairo. Inspite of these many activities and responsibilities, he was able to write considerably and he devoted much of his time to the embellishment of his capital and the patronage of learned men who gathered at his court. He was learned in many fields. He memorized the holy Qurʾān and a number of religious books. He earned reputation in Islamic jurisprudence.

(fiqh), principles of jurisprudence (Usul al-fiqh), Arabic language and literature, History, Medicine, commentary of the holy Qur'an (Tafsir), Miqat al-Hajj (the place where the pilgrims assemble, whence they proceed to perform the solemnities at Makka), Logic and philosophy having firm belief in Allah. He was more experienced in Astronomy in comparison to other branches of natural sciences. The summaries of his astronomy are contained in his Taqwim al-Buldan where the indications of latitudes and longitudes are given in Arabic letters and not in numbers. As he was learned in many fields, he had a good knowledge of Botany and materia medica. He wrote Kunnash in many volumes on medicine. He also wrote Kitab al-Mawazin in his early age on grammar. He was adorned with all the beauties of characters. He wrote the Mukhtasar Tarikh al-Bashar in 715/1315 which was continued by the author himself to 730/1329 during the 3rd time Sultanate of al-Malik al-Nasir. It is a universal history dealing with the pre-Islamic period and Islamic history down to 730/1329. He composed many poems and specially Al-Muwashshahat. Of various other writings on religions and literary subjects all most all have perished. His reputation rests on two works namely Mukhtasar and Taqwim which survive to us. He was an amateur historian, according to F. Rosenthal, the figure of which is not found frequently in Islam. Al-Dhahabi made a considerable selections from it.

Al-Safadi: Šalāḥ al-Dīn Abū al-Šafā Khalīl b. Ayback al-Šafādī al-Shāfi‘ī, a Palestinian man of letters and historian was born in 696-7/1296-7 at his native town of Šafad. According to Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalānī (d. 852/1441), Šafadī was born about the year 694/1294. Šafadī was of Turkish descent and according to his own statement, his father did not vide him a good education and it was only when he was 20 years of age that he began the pursuit of studies. He wrote a very nice hand and became an excellent calligrapher as is proved by several autographs which have come down to us. He attended the lectures of the very best teachers of his time, among whom are named the grammarian Abū Ḥayyān and the poets Shihāb al-Dīn Maḥmūd, Ibn Sayed al-Nās and Ibn Bubata. Later he became an important friend of the renowned authors Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabi and Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī. His first post was that of secretary in his native town of Šafad, then at Cairo and later he was secretary at Aleppo, al-Rahba (on the Euphrates modern al-Miyadin) and finally he was in charge of the treasury at Damascus. He was a pleasant manners but towards the end of his life became deaf. He died at Damascus on the 10th of Shawwāl 764/1362-3.

Al-Šafadī was a most prolific author and stated himself in his autobiography that his compositions would fill 500 volumes.

1. Šafad is one of the places where the Crusaders built fortresses to defend the strip of coast conquered by them against the amirs of Damascus and later against the Ayyubids. Cf. S.R. Khānam, unpublished M.Phil thesis, PP.86-89.

and that the amount he had written as secretary would come to at least double that quantity. His biographers content themselves with mentioning only the most important of his works, many of them being nearly worthless compilations of verse and prose from modern authors. Besides a prodigious quantity verse in his own anthologies and works of contemporary and later authors, the following works have come down to us either complete or in part. All 33 of his books are practically compilations, poetical and rhetorical exercises etc. from earlier authors, which he very frequently states faithfully:

1. Al-wāfi bi al-Wafayāt (the complete book of Necralogies): It is an enormous biographical dictionary in about 30 volumes of which some are found in many libraries, though we doubt whether the complete work has been preserved. Some volumes are numbered, but volumes with the same contents have at times different numbers, from which it appears that the material of the work was divided into volumes of varying size by different scribes. The book al-wāfi is the largest biographical collection in the Arabic language and in Islam. It included many thousands of biographies of people of all kinds and classes. The work is preserved practically complete, except for two gaps and the preserved parts contain over 14,000 biographies. Al-Ṣafadī's purpose was not to continue the


2. Cf. S.R. Khanam, unpublished M. Phil thesis, PP. 90-8; one volume of the wāfi is edited by Ritter and published in Istanbul in 1931 and 2 volumes of the same book are edited by Dedreng and published in Istanbul in 1949 and in Damascus in 1953 respectively.
Wafayāt al-Āyān of Ibn Khallikān, as was done by others, but rather to put together and complete all the biographies available in Arabic literature, most of which were restricted to special classes (Tabaqāt) and to constitute what would be called today a "National Biography of Islam". Like our national biographies it is comprehensive enough to include a number of strangers including non-Muslims who lived in Islamic countries and shared their activities. The arrangement of the book is alphabetical with the following curious exceptions: the first biography is a very elaborate one of the Prophet Muhammad; then follow all the men who themselves and whose fathers were called after the Prophet, i.e. all the men named Muḥammad b. Muḥammad (no less than 201), next comes the other Muḥammad, in the alphabetic order of their fathers' first names. Al-Ṣafadī was not simply a compiler but a methodical historian who took considerable pains to insure the accuracy of his notices. The introduction to the Wafi is devoted to the explanation of a number of historical difficulties.

2. Aʻyān al-ʻAsr wa Awan al-Nasr: It is an extract from the Wāffi in six volumes, containing biographies of his contemporaries, like a "Who's who". It is quoted in the printed edition (Cairo, 1305/1887) of the Tabaqāt al-Khirqa al-Ṣūfiya of ʻAbd al-Raḥim al-Wāsiṭe under the title of Tarājim Aʻyān al-ʻAsr.

3. Masālik al-Abṣār fī Mamālik al-Amṣār: It is on geography, a MS. of which is in the Sadiqiya Library in Tunis.


2. Ibid, P. 308.
4. **Tārikh al-Wafī**: It is probably another extract from the *Wafī*, which is also in MS. in the Sadiqiya Library.

5. **Tuḥfat Dhawī al-Albāb**: It is an urjuza on the rulers of Egypt to his own time, abbreviated from a work of Ibn Asakir.

6. **Nukat al-Himan fī al-Nukat al-‘Umyān**: It is written on the biographies of celebrated blind persons. This work has recently appeared in print in Egypt in a very careful edition based upon 4 MSS.

7. **Kitāb al-Şhu‘ūr fī al-‘Ur**: It is written on the biographies of persons who had lost one eye.

8. **Alḥān al-Sawājī min al-Nadī wa al-Rajī**: It is containing letters addressed by him and to him, giving in many cases the dates. The first letter in MS. (Brit. Mun. Or.1203) is dated 745 A.H.

9. **Al-Munṣaḥāt**: It is a collection of his own epistles.

10. **Al-Tadhkirat al-Ṣalabiya**: It is a collection of extract from another works with commentaries interspersed with his own compositions. It is difficult to ascertain of how many volumes the work consisted. The good old MS. (India Office, Arab 3799) contains 48/49 volumes. Each volume commenced with the exposition of some verses of the holy Quran, then was followed by extracts of the most varying character.

11. **Diwān al-Fuṣāḥa’ wa Tarjuma al-Bulaghā’**: It is an anthology composed for Malik al-Aṣḥāf.
12. *Lawat al-Shākī wa Damat al-Bākī*: It is the life sketch of a paederast with poems to the boy he loved. This worthless composition has been printed repeatedly in Tunis and Cairo. The book is appreciated in many countries of Islam. It is a tale of male homosexuality in prose and verse.

13. *Al-Husn al-Sanḥ fi Miʿāt Malīḥ*: It is another worthless anthology which contains a hundred poetical quotations by contemporary poets and the author himself upon pretty youths.

14. *Kashf al-Ḥāl fī wasf al-khāl*: It is another small collection of poems containing words treating in a literary manner which have different meanings if vocalised differently. It deals with an abundance of puns and allusions. It is a part of physiognomy. Moles were given different symptomatic or prophetic significance according to their situation on this or that organ, on the right, or the left.

15. *Ladhqhat al-Samʿī Sifat al-Dam*: It is a similar collection of verses of the author and contemporaries on tears in 37 chapters.

16. *Al-Rawḍ al-Nasīm wa al-Thaghr al-Bāsim*: It is a similar collection of erotic extracts.

17. *Kashf al-Tanbīḥ fī al-Wasf wa al-Tashbīh*: It is an anthology of metaphorical verses.


20. **Al-Ḥayth al-Musajjam fī ʿSharḥ Lamīyyat al-ʿAjam**: It is a commentary on the poem of Tughrāʾī. The book is printed at Cairo in 1305/1887 in two volumes.

21. **Kitāb al-ʿArab min Ghayth al-ʿAdab**: It is an extract of the preceding work.

22. **Kitāb Tawṣīq (or Tashnīf) al-Sām bi Inkwāṣ al-Dām**: The book is perhaps similar or identical with No. 15.

23. **Nuṣrat al-Thāʾir ʿAlā ʿAl-Maṭbāl al-Sāʾīr**: It is against the well-known work of Ibn al-Athīr entitled al-Maṭbāl al-Sāʾīr.

24. **Jinan al-Jinaṣ fī ʿIlm al-Badʾī**: It is written on paranomasia consisting principally of the author's own verses. It is printed at Constantinople in 1299/1881.

25. **Ikhtirāʾal-Khīra**: It is an explanation of obscure verses lexicographically and as to their rhetorical figure.

26. **Fadd al-Khitām ʿan al-Tawriyya wa al-Iṣtiṣāḥ**: It is on metalepsis and the use of words which can be altered so as to give different meaning.

27. **Al-Ṣḥajarat al-Numāniyya fī al-Dawlat al-ʿUṭmāniyya**: It is a commentary on the work of Ibn al-ʿArabī, prophecies about the Turkish dynasty.

28. **Tawq al-Ḥamāma**: It is an abbreviation of the commentary of Ibn ʿAbdūn on the poem of Ibn Badrūn.

29. **Tamām al-Mutūn fī ʿSharḥ Risālat Ibn Zaydūn**: It is a commentary on the celebrated epistle of Ibn Zaydūn, no doubt inspired by the work of his master, Ibn Nubāta.
30. **Kitāb Ghawāmid al-Sihāh**: It is a small work on the obscurities of the *Sihāh* of al-Jawahiri.

31. **Najd al-Falāh fī Mukhtaṣar al-Ṣahāh**: It is an abbreviation of the *Ṣahāh*, omitting the evidentiary verses and correcting errors.

32. **Haly al-Nawāhid fī al-Ṣahāh min al-Shawāhid**: It is an explanation of the evidentiary verses quoted in the *Ṣahāh*.

33. **Rashīf al-Lāali fī Waṣf al-Hilāl**: It is composed by al-Suyūṭī on the verses of al-Ṣafadī and his contemporaries on the new moon.

Ibn Shākir al-Kutubī: Salāh (Fakhr) al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Shākir al-Kutubī al-Ḥalabi al-Darrānī al-Dimashqi is a Syrian Muslim Arab historian and biographer. The only known sketch of his life is in the *Kitāb al-Durar al-Kāmina fī ʿAyān al-Miʿān al-Thāmina* of Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī¹, the source which is used by Brockelmann².

According to this source al-Kutubī was born in 686/1287 in a village of Damascus called Dariyā and died in Ramadan 764/June-July, 1363 in Damascus. He studied in Aleppo and Damascus under Abū al-Shiḥna al-Ḥalabī, al-Mizzi and others, and made a considerable fortune and became rich as a book seller (al-Kutubī). He was originally a poor man having no profession and service. The best known and the only one printed of his works, a continuation of Ibn Khallikān’s *Wafayāt* with the title *Fawāt al-Wafayāt*³, containing

3. Edited by Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd (Cairo, 1951), 2 volumes. (Būlāq, 1283/1866, 1299/1881).
a biography which gives the year of his death as 773 A.H., which caused the editor of the Būlāq edition to write a note on this doubtful point. The contradiction had already been satisfactorily explained in Wustenfeld, Die Geschichts Chreiber der Araber und idre Wekre that in the biography the date of the death should read 764 A.H. instead of 773 A.H. In the Fawāt there are 572 biographies, of which 7 are already mentioned in Ibn Khallikān's Wafayāt. Further works of al-Kutubī are:

(i) Rawdat al-Adhkār (al-Azhār) wa Ḥadīqat al-Ashār: It is a collection of ghazals².

(ii)UYūn al-Tawārīkh (Sources of the Histories): The whole book comprises 6 volumes according to Hājjī Khalīfa No.3463. In this book, as Ibn Kathīr says, the history till the end of the 760 A.H. or more is mentioned. An incomplete manuscript of the book is available in the libraries of al-Zahiriyya, Ghūṭa, Paris, British Museum and Vatican of Rome³. It is a history of the Caliphs and learned man centered upon Damascus. But al-Kutubī is best known because of his Fawāt al-Wafayāt.


Ibn Shākir al-Kutubī lived and worked under the Mamlūk rule (648-922/1250-1517) in Egypt and Syria. As regards the Mamlūk historiography in the Eastern Islam Sarton says that the great works of the first half of the 8th/14th century like histories of the Mamālik, histories of great cities, collections of biographies, historical compendia for civil servants were continued or rebuilt in a new way. So Ibn Shākir al-Kutubī continued the Wafayāt al-Ayān of Ibn Khallikān, and wrote a history of the Muslim world as seen from Damascus. The Mamlūk group of historiography is the most important which includes, as Sarton added, more men than the three other Eastern (Islam, groups (i.e. Arabia, ʿIrāq, Persia) put together. This is natural enough, for many of the cultural centres of Islam - Cairo, Alexandria, Jerusalem, Damascus, Aleppo, were under Mamlūk control. In this connection it may be mentioned that Ibn Khallikān's Wafayāt al-Ayān (compiled in 673/1274) was twice continued, firstly by al-Muwaffaq Fadlallah b.ʿAbī Muḥammad (d. between 661/1261 and 727/1325, and 2ndly by Muḥammad b. Shākir al-Kutubī (Book seller), who added a series of omitted biographies entitled Fawāt al-Wafayāt.

About the form and style of Ibn Shākir al-Kutubī's history writing Franz Rosenthal justly remarks that from the 7th/13th century onwards, there was a steady flow of Arabic and Persian universal

histories. Most of them were distinguished merely by the different emphasis they placed upon the one or other of the various components of Muslim world historiography. Whether the theological interest dominated historical writing, a quite notable development took place. Pre-Islamic history became pre-dominantly a collection of Muslim traditions concerning the creation of the world and Biblical history. The biography of Muḥammad, the treatment of which can serve, as has been shown, as an indication of the historian's intellectual outlook, was expanded beyond any reasonable limits. A typical representative of this tendency is Ibn Kāthīr's al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya. Or other way was found. Pre-Islamic history was unimportant for theology and the biography of Muḥammad was a sacred subject to be treated by itself the result was works such as the history of ʿAbd al-Dam (d. 642/1244) al-Kutubī's ʿUyun al-Tawārīkh, or al-Yāfī's (d. 768/1367) Mirāt al-Zamān, all of which began with year one of the hijrah.

CHAPTER-III

AL-DHABAHI'S WORKS

As an author, al-Dhahabi was not as prolific as Ibn al-Jawzî before him or al-Suyûtî after him. However, some of his works have attained a high standard in East and West alike. Like practically all the post-classical Arab authors he too was a compiler, but his works are distinguished by careful composition and constant references to his authorities. It is for these peculiarities that his works on Tradition (Hadîth) specially on the 'Ilm al-Rijâl (The Science of Narrators) have become very popular. It is not easy to mention al-Dhahabi's contributions to branches of knowledge in a very few pages. It needs a long description to enumerate his compositions and compilations. His compilations, abridgments and exegeses are numbered about one hundred. However, we will mention in brief his major works which has earned him name and fame as an intellectual personality. His works on the science of Hadîth literature are innumerable. He started with the abridgement of different volumes of the Hadîth. He made the abridged editions of al-Mustadrak by Abu 'Abd Allah al-Ḥakim al-Naysâbûrî and the Sunan al-Kabîr by Abû Bakr Ahmad b. al-Ḥusayn and the Sunan al-Kabîr by Abû Bakr Ahmad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Baihaqî (d. 458/1066) and his kitâb al-Qadîr. He, therefore, found his editions fruitful. He also made the abridged editions of Tadhhib al-Kamâl by his friend and teacher al-Mizzî and named it Tadhhib al-Tahdhîb. Then he produced another abridged version of it and named it al-Kâshîf. He also abridged al-Mizzî's work kitâb

al-Aṭrāf. He reviewed the Talīq Hadīth (suspended Traditions) composed by Ibn al-Jawzī. He also abridged the kitāb al-Ansāb by Tāj al-Islām Abū Sa‘d ‘Abd al-Karim al-Samānī (d. 562/1167) and many other books.

Al-Dhahabī's compilations which earned him name and fame, as we believe, are those works that deal with the biographies of the narrators of the Hadith and the preservation of their names. Of these the most famous are one Miṣān al-Itidāl fī Naqd al-Rijāl, which in the opinion of al-Husayn the best of his works. Al-Mughfī al-Du‘afā’ al-Muqtanā fī al-Kunā and al-Muṣhtaba fī al-Asmā’ are excellent books for al-Dhahabī. In the field of Historiography al-Dhahabī's voluminous work the Tārīkh al-Islām (The History of Islam) earned him a wide-spread repute. It was the greatest of all his works in its value and size. It comprises twenty one volumes. Al-Dhahabī was a famous student of history, fiqh and hadith, but, being struck with blindness in 743/1342, he then devoted his time to collecting biographical and other historical information by oral tradition.

Now I like to give a descriptive list of al-Dhahabī's famous works whether published or unpublished in the following:

1. Al-Muṣhtabih fī Asmā’ al-Rijāl wa al-Ansāb: The book is edited


2. Mizān al-Ītīdāl fī Naqd al-Rijāl: It is an alphabetical dictionary of apocryphal or weak traditionists or those suspected of being so and of unreliable ("weak") traditionists. The book is edited by Moulavi Muḥammad Khādim Ḥusain and published at Lucknow in 3 volumes in 1301/1883 and at Cairo in 1325/1907. The book is also found in MS. form in al-Zāhiriyya No.368. The MS is more reliable than the published one. The book is also published at Hyderabad in 1329/1911-1331/1913 and the letter hamza only at Istanbul in 1304/1886-7. It was extracted by Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqālī (d. 852/1448-9) in his Lisān al-Mīzān.

3. Tajrīd (fī) Asmāʾ al-Saḥāba: It is a dictionary of the prophet's companions, derived from the Usd al-Ḡāba of Ibn al-Aṭḥīr (d.630/1233). The book is also entitled as al-Iṣāba fī Tajrīd Asmāʾ al-Saḥāba based chiefly on the Usd al-Ḡāba of Ibn al-Aṭḥīr, which was printed at Hyderabad in 2 volumes in 1315/1897-8.

4. Taḍḥīb al-Taḍḥīb: It is a published book consists of 3 volumes on correction of the names in the traditions recorded in the six canonical books. It is an abridgment and an improved edition of the Taḍḥīb al-Kamāl fī ṣaḥīḥ al-Riḍā of al-Muzzī Abū ‘Abd Allah Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Najjār Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Shāfī (d. 643/1245-6) on the traditionists of the six canonical works. Excerpts from the Taḍḥīb were edited by A. Fisher in his Biographien von Gewahrmannen des Ibn Isḥāq, hausptachlich aus al-Dhahabi (Leiden, 1890). An abridgment of it entitled Khulāsah Taḍḥīb al-Taḍḥīb fī ṣaḥīḥ al-Riḍā was made by Aḥmad b. ‘Abd Allah al-Khazrajī, which is edited and published at Būlāq in 1301/1883. The origin of this compilation may be briefly told, as an example of many other bibliographic developments in Islam. Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Najjār had written a collection of biographies of the traditionists entitled Kitāb al-Kamāl fī Marifat al-Riḍā. About a century later abundant corrections and additions to this work were collected by Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf b. al-Zāki al-Mızzī (d. 743/1342) and ʿAlā al-Dīn Muḥḥaltān b. Qīlij (d. 763/1361) under the title Kitāb al-Taḍḥīb (Book of Correction or adjustment).

This enormous work which consists of 13 volumes was abbreviated and corrected by al-Dhahabī. This again corrected by Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 853/1449), who published a Kitāb Taḍḥīb al-taḍḥīb published (Hyderabad, 1348/1929). An abridgment of al-Dhahabī's work was made by Aḥmad b. Ḥāmid al-Khazrajī, entitled Khulāṣah Taḍḥīb al-Taḍḥīb.

tahdhib al-tahdhib fi Asma' al-Rijal (with various glosses which consists of 500 pages (Bulaq, 1884). Al-Dhahabi wrote various other works on Hadith, which was always his subject of predilection. A MS copy of the book is available in Dar al-Kutub of Egypt, No. 62 and 88 (Muṣṭalah).

5. Al-Kašif fi Ma'rifat Asma' al-Rijal: It is an extract of the former work of Tahdhib in one volume. A MS copy of it available at Taimuriyyah, No. 1936 (Tarih) at al-Zahiriyah, No. 320 (Hadith).

6. Al-Muqtaṣar fi Sirr al-Kunā: It is a dictionary of Kunyas.

7. Al-Mustarjil fi al-Kunā: A dictionary of names only used in Kunyas (Surnames).


10. Al-Muqiza: A treatise on the different sciences of hadith.


12. Al Tibb al-Nabawi (or Nabi): It is a treatise on medicine of the prophet(s) which has been ascribed to al-Dhahabi, but in my opinion unconvincingly. That title appears many times in Arabic literature; so much so that Ḥājjī Khalīfa devotes


2. Ibid, p. 966
a special section to it named, "İlm Tİbb al-Nabî". He ascribes
such treatises to Abü Nuṣair Ahmad b.ʿAbdallāh al-İṣfahānī (d.430/
1038), to Abü al-ʿAbbās Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad al-Muṣṭaqqfirī (d.432/
1040), to Jalāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al- Raḥmān b. ʿAbī Bakr al-Suyūṭī (d.911/
1505), and to four others, but not to al-Dhahabī. On the other
hand, the text translated by A. Perron (1277/1860) - the only one
we have examined ascribed by him to one Jalāl al-Dīn Abū Sulay-
mand Darūd is not the kind of text one would expect from a historian
and traditionist. It includes a few traditions concerning the
prophet, but not more than might be found in any general medical
book written by a Muslim. It is certainly not a book of medical
traditions concerning the Prophet(s), but an elaborate medical
treatise which can only have been composed by a physician. It
is divided into three parts: (i) medical generalities, hygiene;
(ii) medicines and foods, that is, an abundant materia medica
beginning with general views on practical medicine and the quali-
ties required in a physician; (iii) treatment of diseased and
prophylaxy. Of course al-Dhahabī may have written an entirely
different treatise bearing the same title, but such a treatise
has not yet been produced. 1

13. The apocryphal al-Tībb al-Nabawī in its first edition (120 P.
Cario 1870) is ascribed to al-Dhahabī. It was reprinted with the
same ascription in the margines of the Tasnīl al-Manāfī, a compendium
of medicine of Ibrāhīm b. ʿAbī al-Raḥmān al-ʿAzraqī (Cario, 1887). 2

1. Ibid
2. Ibid
French translation by A. Perron: La medicine du Prophête (Gazette médicale de l’Algérie; reprint 228 P., Alger 1860), who ascribed the text to Jalāl al-Dīn Abū Sulaimān Daūd.


18. Tarīkh al-Islām. (The History of Islām): This work, though well-known and much referred to by both oriental and occidental scholars, has never yet been edited as whole nor discussed at any length. The book consists of 21 volumes. The parts which have hitherto been edited and published are: (1) The biography of Ibn Rughd by J.B. Renan, Averroes et al Averroisme, Appendice iv, 2ème edition, Paris, 1861. (2) The biography of Abū al-‘Alā al-Ma‘arrī, which is more copious than that of Ibn Khallikān and also following different sources, has been edited from the MS. of the British Museum No. 1637 as an appendix to The Letters of Abū al-‘Alā of Ma‘arrat al-Nūmān, by D.S. Margoliouth in the Anecdota Oxoniniensia, Semitic series, Oxford, 1898, PP. 129-37. (3) The biography of Umarā’al-Yamanī in his ūmara du yemen, sa bie et son oeuvre, tome ii. Paris 1902, pp. 491-5. (4) Short excerpts are printed in the notes to the Dhayl Tarīkh Dimashq of Ibn al-Qalanis ed. H.F. Amedroz Beyrut, 1908. Al-Ziriklī mentions in his al-Ālām that the history of Islam consists of 36 volumes of which 5 volumes are published.


19. Kitāb Duwal al-Islām or Tārīkh al-Saghīr (Small History): The book is an abridgment of Tārīkh al-Islām which was made by al-Dhahabī himself. It is published in two volumes at Hyderabad in 1337/1918-9. The 2nd edition of the book is available in two volumes published from Hyderabad in 1364/1944.

20. Al-Ibar fī Akhbār al-Bashar Mimmar 'Abar (Muntakhab al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr): It is an abridgment of the biographical classes. The works No.19 and No.20 combined give a fairly good synopsis of the whole of the Tārīkh Islām. But the following are extractions from the biographical "classes" (Tabaqāt) only.


23. Al-Ibar fi Khabar man ‘Abar or Ghabar: It is a transcript enlarged in some passages of al-Dhahabi’s work under the same title (as in No. 20) by Ibn Ḥadī Shuhba (d. 85/1447-8). The book under the title al-Ibar fi Khabar Man Ghabar is edited by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid and published in 3 volumes at Kuwait: Dār al-Ma‘ārif wa al-Naḥrah in 1380/1960.

Al-Dhahabi divided the Siyar into about forty tabaqāt (classes). He preferred the biographies of the renowned traditionists of the Muslim world in this book from Spain to far East.¹

25. **Mukhtasar li Tārīkh Baghādād**: Al-Dhahabi abridged in 2 volumes the Tārīkh Baghādād of Ibn al-Dubaythî, a synopsis of the history of Baghādād according to Ibn al-Dubaythî (d. 637/1239-40) known al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī.

26. **Mukhtasar Akhbār al-Nahwiyyīn**: He abridged the History of the Grammarians, a synopsis of Ibn al-Qiftî (d. 646/1248-9).

27. **Al-Duwal al-Islāmiyyah**: Al-Dhahabi himself abridged his history and named it al-Duwal al-Islāmiyyah.

28. **Al-Iṣhārat illā wafayāt al-ʿĀyān**: It is a small abridgment made by al-Dhahabi himself. A Ms. copy of the book is available at Aleppo in al-Ahmadiyyah library No.328. It is the small abridgment of his history of Islām.

29. **Al-ʿIlām bi Wafayāt al-ʿĀlām**: It is also an abridgement of al-Dhahabi's history of Islām written by himself. A few Ms. of it are available in the libraries of al-Zāhiriyyah, No. Majmūʿ 117(183), Anis.

30. **Ahl al-Mi'at fasaidān**: A Ms. copy of it available in the library of Zāhiriyya, Am No. 4547.


32. **Tarjama al-Ḥallāj**: A Ms. copy of it is available in the library of Zāhiriyya, Majnū No. 12(202). The book is written on the biography of Mansūr al-Ḥallāj.

33. **Tarjama Sheikh Raslān**: It is a book written on Sufiism. A Ms. copy of it is available in the library of Zāhiriyya, Taṣāwwuf No. 20 (115).

34. **Talkhīs al-‘Ilal al-Mutanāhiyya**: Al-Dhahabī wrote a comment on this book of Ibn al-Jawzī.

35. **Tanqīḥ Ahādīth al-Tālīq**: He examined the suspended traditions of Ibn al-Jawzī in this book. A Ms. copy of it is available in the library of Faidallah, No. 296.


39. Dhayl Ālā al-Duʿafāʾwa al-Matrūkīn: A Ms. copy of this supplement is available in the library of Zāhirīyya No.369/228(Hadīth).

40. Dhayl al-ʿIbar: It is a supplement of al-ʿIbar written by al-Dhahabī himself. A Ms. copy of the book is available in the library of Ārif Hikma No.344,Tāriikh with Dhayl al-Ḥusaynī.

41. Al-Duʿafāʾwa al-Matrūkīn: The MSS. copies of the book are available in the libraries of Faiḍallah No.495, al-Zāhirīyya No.369 (145), Hadīth, Tub Qabū No.3053, 111,A.

42. Al-Kabāir wa Bayān al-Mahārīm: The book is written on Sufism consisting of 2 parts. A Ms. copy of the book is available in the libraries of Suhaj No.141, Dār al-Kutub No.953.

44. **Al-Muntaqā min al-Kunā**: It is also a selection of Kitāb al-Kunā of Hākim Abū ‘Abdallah al-Naysābūrī. A Ms. copy of the book is available in the library of al-Aḥmadiyyah at Aleppo No.228.

45. **Al-Mujarrad min Tahdhib al-Kamāl**: It is an abridgment of Tahdhib al-Kamāl of Sheikh Ḥāfiẓ Jamāl al-Dīn al-Muzzī in 3 volumes. A Ms. copy of the book is available in the libraries of al-Fātikhān No. 1032 and Berlin No.9938.

46. **Ikhtisār Kitāb al-Aṭrāf**: It is an abridgment of Kitāb al-Aṭrāf of al-Muzzī in 2 volumes.

47. **Ikhtisār Sunan al-Baihaqī**: It is an abridgment of al-Sunan al-Kabīr of al-Bayhaqī consisting of 5 volumes.

48. **Mujam al-Şuyūkh**: Al-Dhahabī has three Mujam of his sheikhs. The number of his Sheikhs are one thousand three hundred. Among his three Mujams only one is available in Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah No.918 Muṣṭalah.

50. Nubdhat min Fawā’id Tārīkh Ibn al-Jazarī: The book with the hand writing of al-Dhahabī himself is available in the Kuburuli Library, No.1147.

51. Al-Duwal al-islāmiyyah: It is an abridgment of al-‘ībar consisting of one volume. In some sources the title of the book is Duwal al-Islām.


55. Al-Arbā‘ūna al-Buldāniyya al-Mustakhraja Min Mu‘jam al-Ṭabarānī: It is a book written on Ḥadīth. It is a collection of forty Ḥadīth collected from the Mu‘jam of al-Ṭabarānī. A Ms. copy of the book

is available in the Taymūriyya library No. 438 Hadīth.

56. Al-Rāw′wa Adjāl Fī Baqā' al-Dajjāl: Al-Dhahābī wrote this book on Dajjāl and their terrorism.

57. Kitāb Kasr Wathan Ratan al-Hindi: Al-Dhahābī wrote this book on Ratan b. Kirbat b. Ratan al-Bīrāndi, a liar who appeared in India after 600 A.H. and thus claimed to be a companion of the Prophet Muḥammad(s).  


63. *Juz' Fi Faḍl Āyat al-Kursī*: Al-Dhahabī wrote this brochure on the merits of the holy "Āyat al-Kursī".

64. *Juz' Fī al-Shafāt*: Al-Dhahabī wrote this brochure on the Intercession on the Day of Judgement.


66. *Mas' alat al-Simā*: He wrote a brochure on the problem of hearing.


68. *Kitāb Rūyāt al-Barī*: He wrote a book on looking at Allah.

69. *Kitāb al-Maut Wa mā Badahu*: He wrote this book on the description of death and what to be happened after death in one volume.

70. *Turuq Ahādīth al-Nuzūl*: He wrote this book on the description of the revelation of the holy Qur'ān and its various methods by Hadīth.


73. Maṣ'alaṭ Dāwām al-Nār: He wrote this book on the problem of continuing punishment in the hell fire.

74. Kitāb al-Ṭamāssūk bi al-Sunnah: He wrote this book on devotion to the Sunnah.

75. Kitāb al-Talwih bīman Sabaqa wa Lahīqa: He wrote this book on hinting to a person who preceded and joined in the prayer.

76. Kitāb Mukhtasār fī al-Qara'āt: He wrote this book on shortening the recitation in prayer.


78. Ikhtisār Taqwīm al-Buldān: He abridged the Taqwīm al-Buldān of Abū al-Fidā, the Ṣāḥib Ḥumāt.

79. Kitāb Tarjama al-Salaf: He wrote this book on the biography of the predecessors.

1. Ibid.
80. **Du‘ā al-Makrūb**: He wrote this book on the prayer of sorrowful.

81. **Juz‘ Salāt al-Tasbīh**: Al-Dhahabi wrote this brochure on the prayer of al-Tasbīh.

82. **Fadl al-Ḥājj wa Afālihi**: Al-Dhahabi wrote this book on the merits and performances of pilgrimage to Mecca.

83. **Kitāb Mujam Shuyūkhīhi al-Kabīr**: Al-Dhahabi wrote this Dictionary on the biography of his senior Professors and teachers.

84. **Kitāb Mujam Shuyūkhīhi al-Awsat**: Al-Dhahabi wrote this Dictionary on the biography of his Middle aged Professors and teachers.

85. **Kitāb Mujam Shuyūkhīhi al-Saḥīr**: Al-Dhahabi wrote this Dictionary on the biography of his junior Professors and teachers.

86. **Kitāb al-Mu‘jam al-Mukhtass**: He wrote this biographical dictionary on the merits and biographies of his special teachers.¹

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¹ Al-Dhahabi mentioned in this book a group of contemporary professors and teachers of Hadīth where many of them lived after his death, like al-Ṣalāḥ al-ʿĀlī, al-ʿIzz Abī ʿUmar b.Jumā, al-ʿImād b.Kaṭhīr al-Taqī b.ʿAffī, al-Bahā b.Khalīl, al-Tāj al-Subkī, al-ʿAffī al-Maṭārī, al-Haiz al-Husaynī. Moreover, some of them lived more than forty years after the death of Al-Dhahabi like
87. **Ikhtisar Kitab al-Qadr**: Al-Dhahabi abridged kitab al-Qadr of al-Bayhaqi in 3 volumes.


89. **Tawqif Ahl al-Towfiq ala Manaqib al-Siddiq**: He wrote this book on the virtues of the caliph Abu Bakr Siddiq(R), in one volume.

90. **Nima al-Samar fi Sirat Umar**: Al-Dhahabi wrote this book on the good conversation in the biography of the caliph Umar(R) in one volume.

91. **Al-Tibyan fi Manaqib Uthman**: He wrote this book on the virtues of the Caliph Uthman(R) in one volume.


**Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b.Sanad (d. 792/1389)”, al-Inbā’il-Ghimar wa al-Durar al-Kāmina; al-Sayed Aḥmad Rāfiʿ al-Ṭahṭawi, al-Tanbih wa al-Īqāḏ al-Dhuyūl Tadhkira al-Huffāz.**

94. *Akhbâr Abî Muslim al-Khurâsâñî*: Al-Dhahâbî wrote this book about Abû Muslim al-Khurâsâñî, the Abbasi propagandist.

95. *Al-Nubalâ fi Shuykûh al-Sunnah*: Al-Dhahâbî wrote this book on the biography of his chosen Professor of *Hadîth* in one volume.

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Al-Dhahabî excelled most in historical literature. His principal and longest work on this subject is his great general history entitled Târîkh al-Islâm (The History of Islâm) in 21 volumes. This work, though well known and much referred to both Oriental and occidental scholars, has never yet been edited as a whole nor discussed at any length. The five volumes of the work are printed together with al-Dhahabî's other work entitled Tabaqât al-Masghâr wa al-Alâm at Cairo from 1367/1947 onwards. It is an extensive history of Islâm, beginning with the genealogy of the Prophet Muhammad (s) and ending with the year 700/1300. Al-Dhahabî in writing his history follows the system of the Kitâb al-Muntazam of Ibn al-Jawzî, containing both the general narrative (al-ḥawâdîth al-Kâîna) and the obituary notices of the persons who died (al-Mutawaffûn) in the several years. He completed the work in 741/1340. His method of exposition, however, as we mentioned, is not very different from that used by Ibn al-Jawzî in the Kitâb al-Muntazam except that he separates the biographies (al-Mutawaffûn) from the general history (al-ḥawâdîth al-Kâîna). The whole work as the history of those seven Muslim centuries (AH 1-700, AD 622-1300) is divided into 70 classes (tabaqât) of decades as 10 Muslim years each. In each decade
first comes the general narrative, subdivided into the several years; then follow the "classes" of the obituary notices, equally subdivided into the several years, and ended by the obituary notices of persons whose exact dates of death could not be stated. The relation of the extent of the general narrative to that of the obituary notices is, on an average, 1 to 6 or 7. In other words for each class the general history is given first, then the biographies, covering on the average six or seven times more space (in some MSS, all the biographies are put together). For the first three centuries, the account is largely a summary of the Tārīkh al-Rusūl wa al-Mulūk of al-Ṭabarî; for the following four centuries (A.H. 301-700, A.D. 913-1300), the account is much longer, and the authorities are duly quoted. For each decennial period the author relates the general history of Islam, then the local history of various centres, chiefly Baghdad and Damascus, then the curiosities (ajā'ib), finally the biographies of the people who died during that period. Al-Dhahabī was specially interested in the history of the Saljuq and Ayyubī dynasties, and he gave a very valuable account of the tragic events of the Mongol invasion. Though he had necessarily more and better information concerning Syria and Egypt than other countries, and was also
better informed concerning Eastern than Western Islam, yet he paid more attention to Western Islam than al-Ṭabarī and even Ibn al-Athīr. He was interested also in Islamic religious divergencies, such as Bāṭinīya and Shīʿa. He threw some light on the economic vicissitudes of Baghdad and Damascus, quoting prices of commodities, etc.

The curiosities or wonders (ʿajāʻib) include astronomical and meteorological events, droughts, famines, earthquakes (1067/68, 1157, 1169/70). His account of the terrible events of 1200-1 in the Near East, such as famines, plague, earthquake, is particularly full. Other curiosities are of the kind which always appeal to the man in the street, anywhere, such as the story of a sorcerer, the appearance of an elephant in Damascus, a Baghdad woman who had double twins, etc. The biographies are very abundant but vary considerably in length. Many are devoted to poets, theologians, and other scholars, but it is not known how many, if any, are devoted to scientists, such as astronomers or physicians.

Unlike his great predecessors al-Ṭabarī, al-Maṣūḏī, Ibn al-Jawzī, Ibn al-Athīr, whose histories though centered on Islam began with the creation, extending respectively to A.D. 915, 950, 1180 and 1231, al-Ḏahābī began his own account with the genealogy
of the prophet, completely neglecting earlier times. Besides these four historians he made full use also of the Kitāb Mirāt al-Zamān fī Tārīkh al-Āyān of Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, a chronicle from the creation to 1256 A.D. while Ibn al-Athīr stopped in 1231 A.D. His other sources are to abundant to be enumerated here. The whole work of his Tārīkh al-Islām is divided into classes (tabaqāt) of decades, so that it contains seventy classes altogether as mentioned above. In each decade first comes the general narrative, subdivided into the several years; then follow the classes of the obituary notices, equally subdivided into the several years, and ended by the obituary notices of persons whose exact dates of death could not be stated. The relation of the extent of the general narrative to that of the obituary notices is, on an average, 1 to 6 or 7. The system of the general narrative of the first three centuries is entirely different from that of the last four centuries. For the first three centuries is is very short, giving only the gist of the matter and being but a concise compendium of al-Ṭabarī's chronicle; it enumerates the notable persons who died in the year concerned, then the leaders of the annual pilgrimage, and last the political events. For the last four centuries the order is quite inverted. First come the detailed annual records of political history, with constant references to the
authorities consulted; then there follow those of local adminis­
tative history, specially of Bagh­dād and Damascus; then the strange
things (al-ajā'ib) i.e. the curiosities and striking phenomena of
the year are recorded; then comes the enumeration of the leaders
of the annual pilgrimage from Bagh­dād and Damascus, and last the
list of the names of the notabilities who died in the year concerned.
The literary value of the general narrative is in its recording of
events neglected by Ibn al-Athīr in his al-Kāmil fī al-Tārikh, such
as (1) the history of the Saljūqs, Ayyūbids, and the Mongol inva­
sion; (2) the internal development of Islām, specially the Bātīnis
and the Shiʿīs; (3) western Islām. Al-Dhahabī's tendency is,there­
fore, to record the development of the whole of Islām although his
narrative is more detailed for Syria and Egypt than for other coun­
tries.

The obituary notices record the biographies of all the Caliphs
and minor rulers of both the Eastern and the Western Islām; then the
viziers, generals, and functionaries of rank; then the jurisconsults
and theologians of all the schools of canon law as well as other
scholars; and last the poets, whose biographies contain numerous
quotations from their works. The obituary notices in general follow
the scheme of the tabaqāt works; they have for greater historical value than the general narrative has.

About al-Dhahabī's Tārīkh al-Islām Shaikh Kamāl al-Dīn Ibn al-Zamīlikānī, says that he stopped at al-Dhahabī's Tārīkh one after another parts till he completed the reading of its entire parts. Then he opines that, it is a book of learning and science which embraces all the Maghāzīs, Siyars and events till the end of 700 A.H. Al-Dhahabī's Tārīkh is so large that the MS. tradition is very irregular. Though there are over 50 MSS, most of them represent only parts of the work and among them they do not cover the whole text. The MSS of Aya Sophia nos. 3005-14 are autographs of the author. There are translations of the Tārīkh al-Islām, either partial or abridged, in Persian and Turkish.

Al-Dhahabī at the time of writing and preparing his Tārīkh al-Islām consulted the following books:

(1) Dalā'il al-Nubuyyah of al-Bayhaqī

(ii) Sīrat al-Nabī of Ibn Ishāq.

(iii) Kitāb al-Maghāzī of Ibn 'Aţīch al-Kātib.
(v) Tārīkh of Abū ʻAbdallāh al-Bukhārī
(vii) Ma‘rifat al-Tārīkh of Ya‘qūb al-Fasawi (d. 277/890).
(ix) The History of Abū Ḥafṣ al-Fallas (d. 249/863).
(x) The history of Abū Bakr b. Abī Shaiba.
(xi) The History of al-Wāqidi.
(xii) The History of al-Haytham b. ʻAdī.

1. He is Ya‘qūb b. Sufyān al-Fasawi of Persia. He was a great Persian Imam. He travelled from the East to the West. His numerous works are mainly based on Sufism and Piety. Cf. Ibn al-Athīr al-Lubāb fī al-Ansāb, vol.2, P.156.


(xv) Tārīkh Dimashq (The History of Damashq) of Abū Zur'ā al-Dimashqī.

(xvi) Al-Futūḥ of Sayf b. 'Umar.


(xviii) Al-Musnad of Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal.


(xx) Kitāb al-Jarḥ wa al-Tadhīl of Yaḥyā b. Muin. This Yaḥyā was the professor of Imām al-Bukhārī, Muslim and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal.

(xxi) Kitāb al-Jarḥ wa al-Tadhīl of 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Abī Ḥātim.

In the process of compiling his Tārīkh al-Islām al-Dhahabī also studied the following historical books:

(i) Tārīkh al-Tabarî

(ii) Tārīkh of Ibn al-Āthīr.

(iii) Tārīkh of Ibn al-Fardī

(iv) Šilāt of Ibn Bashkūl

(v) Takmilah al-Silāh of Ibn Abar in al-Īlān bi al-Tawbīkh li man
(vi) Al-Kāmil of Ibn ʿAdī


The Tārīkh al-Islām of al-Dhahabī was continued by at least six hands. Three of these continuations are extant: (1) from 701/1301-2 to 740/1339-40 by al-Dhahabī himself; (2) from 701/1301 to 786/1384-5 by ʿAbd al-Rahīm al-ʿIrāqī /Ifrīqī and his son Aḥmad (d. 826/1422-23) only the latter's work being extant; (3) from 701/1301-2 to 790/1388 by Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Qādī Shuhba (d. 851/1447-8) in his al-ʿIlām bi Tārīkh al-Islām.

Owing to the voluminous character of the Tārīkh al-Islām it was abridged many times. Six abridgments were made by al-Dhahabī himself. They are as follows:

(i) Kitab Duwal al-Islām or al-Tārīkh al-Saghīr (Small history), published at Hyderabad in 1337/1918-9.

(ii) Al-ʿIbar ff Akhbār al-Baṣḥar mimman ʿabar (Muntakhab al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr), an abridgment of the biographical classes. These two works combined give a fairly good synopsis of the whole of the Tārīkh al-Islām.

(iii) **Tadhkira al-Hufaz**. published at Hyderabad in 1332-3/1914-5 in five volumes. The best known abridgement and continuation of the work was done by al-Suyuti under the title **Tabagat al-Huffaz**, published by F. Wustenfeld at Gottingen in 1833-4. Al-Suyuti's (d.911/1505) continuation was also published at Damascus in 1347/1928-9. The **Tadhkira al-Huffaz** is also the basis of the **Tabagat al-Shafiyya** of Ibn Qadri Shuhba.

(iv) **Al-Islaba fi Tajrid Asma'al-Sahaba**, an alphabetical list of Muhammad's (s) companions based chiefly on the **Usd al-Ghaba** of Ibn al-Athir, printed at Hayderabad in 1315/1897-8.

(v) **Tabagat al-Kubra al-Mashhurin**, published in Seven parts in **al-Hidaya** (an Arabic periodical in Turkey), vol.iv, 1331/1912-3 and ff.

(vi) **Siyar Alam al-Nubala**, printed in 2 volumes at Cairo n.d.¹

(vii) **Al-'Ibar fi Khabar man'Abar**, a transcript, enlarged in some passages, of al-Dhahabi's work under the same title (as mentioned in No.2) by Ibn Qadri Shuhba(d. 851/1447-8).

(viii) A similar recension of the same work by Ibn al-Shamma al-Halabi (d. 936/1529-30), extending to 734/1323-4.

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Al-Mukhtasar min Tārīkh al-Islām wa Tabagāt al-Mashāhir wa al-Ālām, by Ibn Ildekiz al-Mu'azzamī al-ʿAdilī al-Ayyubī. These works on al-Dhahabi's Tārīkh abridgments are the extractions from the biographical "Classes" (Ṭabaqas) only.

Two other historical works of al-Dhahabi are extant. They are as follows:

(i) Mukhtasar li Tārīkh Baghdād li Ibn al-Dubaythī, a synopsis of the history of Baghdad according to Ibn al-Dubaythī (d.637/1239-40).


Al-Dhahabi also wrote some other works on historical literature. They are as follows:

(i) Al-Tārīkh al-Mumatta, in six volumes. The work is an manuscript form.

1. Ibid, pp. 215-16.
2. Ibid.
(ii) **Kitāb Duwal al-Islām**, published in two volumes.

(iii) **Kitāb al-'Ubayb** on history. The work is in MS. form.

(iv) **Al-İlān bi wafayāt al-Ālām**. The work is found in MS. form.

Al-Dhahabi also abridged a number of historical works. The following are to be mentioned:

(i) **Tārīkh Naysabūr** of Abū 'Abdallah al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, one volume.

(ii) **Tārīkh Mīsr** of Abū Sāid b. Yunus.

(iii) **Kitāb al-Mustadrak** written on ḥadīth literature by al-Ḥākim Abū ʿAbdallah, in 2 volumes.

(iv) **Tārīkh Baghdād** of Abū Bakr al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādi in 2 volumes.

(v) **Tārīkh Dimashq** of Abū al-Qāsim al-Ḥāfiz b. Asākir in 10 volumes.

(vi) **Tārīkh Abī Sād b. al-Sumānī**. It is a supplement of **Tārīkh Iḥbār al-Tabarī**.

(vii) **Kitāb al-Ansāb** of al-Sumānī.

(viii) **Tārīkh** of al-Qādī Shams al-Dīn b. Khallikān.

(ix) **Tārīkh** of al-Allāma Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Shāmma al-Ḥalabi.

(x) **Tārīkh** of al-Shaikh Qutb al-Dīn b. al-Yūnīnī. This work of al-yūnīnī is a supplement of **Tārīkh Mirāt al-Zamān** of Shams al-
al-Dīn Yūsuf known as Sibt Ibn al-Jawzī. These two books (Nos. ix & x) are written on the events and years

(xi) Tahdhīb al-Kamāl of al-Mizzī. Al-Dhahabī named his abridgement as Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb

(xii) Al-Dhahabī also abridged the Tahdhīb in one volume and named it as al-Kāshīf.

(xiii) He also abridged the Kitāb al-Aṭrāf of al-Mizzī.

(xiv) Al-Muḥallī of Ibn Ḥazam.

(xv) Kitāb al-Fārūq of Shaikh al-Islām al-Anṣārī and he corrected it.

(xvi) Al-Dhahabī also abridged the Wafayāts of al-Mundhārī and Sharīf al-Nassābah.


2. Ibid, PP. 6 - 7.
CHAPTER-V
AL-DHABABI'S TĀRĪKH AL--ISLĀM: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

As we know that al-Dhahabi's principal and longest work is his great general history entitled Tārīkh al-Islām (The History of Islam). This work, though well known and much referred to by both oriental and accidental scholars, has never yet been edited as a whole nor discussed at any length. The following parts of the Tārīkh al-Islām have hitherto been edited: (1) The biography of Ibn Rushd by J.E. Renan, Averroes el'Averroïsme, Appendice iv, 2nd edition, Paris, 1861. (2) The biography of Abū al-‘Alā al-Ma‘arrī, which is more copious than that of Ibn Khallikān and also following different sources, has been edited from the MS. of the British Museum, No. 1637 as an appendix to the Letters of Abū al-‘Alā of Ma‘arat al-Numān, by D.S. Margoliouth in the Anecdota Oxoniensia, Semitic Series (Oxford, 1898), pp. 129-37. (3) The biography of Umara al-Yamani is edited from the MS. of the British Museum, No. 1639, by H. Derenbourg in his Oumara du yemen, Sa vie et son ouvre, tome ii, Paris, 1902, pp. 491-5. (4) Short excerpts are printed in the notes to the Dḥayl tārīkh Dimashq of Ibn al-Qalānisī, ed. H.F. Amedros, Bayrut, 1908. Al-Dhahabi's Tārīkh al-Islām is printed together with his Tabaqāt al-Maṣḥūḥīn, wa al-Kitāb in 5 volumes at Cairo from 1367/1947 onwards by Ḥusām al-Dīn al-Qudsī. The entire book consists of 21 volumes. But al-Zirikli says that the book consists of 36 volumes. Ibn Shākir al-Kutubi says that the book consists of 20 volumes.

20 volumes. Salah al-Din al-Munajjid opines that the book consists of 21 volumes. It was al-Dhahabi's most ambitious work. It is so large a work that the MS. tradition is very irregular. Though there are over 50 MSS, most of them represent only parts of the work and among them they do not cover the whole text. The decades A.H.131-40, 231-60, 281-300 are still missing; the decades A.H.141-70, 261-80, are extent only in part. The MSS of Aya Sophia Nos. 3005-14 are autographs of the author. Now I like to evaluate and analysis al-Dhahabi's Tariikh al-Islam in the following sections:

SECTION-"A"

The Manuscripts of the Tariikh al-Islam

The Tariikh al-Islam consisted of 21 volumes. But according to Hajji Khalifa (No.2220) it consists of 12 volumes and Ibn Shakir al-Kutubi 20 volumes. It contains a general history upto A.H.700/A.D 1300, and was finished by al-Dhahabi by the year 741/1340, i.e. seven decades later. For further information see:


years before his death, which struck one of the later al-Dhahabi specialists, Ibn Qâdî Shuhba (d. 851/1447), who said, "It is strange that he (al-Dhahabi) stopped in his Târîkh al-Islâm at the year 700 A.H. and did not continue it to the year 740 A.H., as he did in his al-Ibar, for it was continued in his presence by both al-Yumînî to his own time and al-Jazâri. The work was discovered part by part by Kamâl al-Dîn b. Abd al-Wâhid b. Abd al-Karîm b. Al-Zamlikanî who said "It is an illustrious book." His opinion was certainly not shared by one of the most prominent pupils of al-Dhahabi, 'Abd al-Wahhâb Tâj al-Dîn al-Subkî according to whom "It would be an excellent work, if it were free from a certain bias." The work exists in a number of manuscripts contained in different European and Oriental libraries. The hitherto known manuscripts containing parts of the work are as follows.

(1) Cambridge (Browne), vol. i, No. 182: the beginning, down to the
death of the Prophet(s).

(2) Faydullah, No. 1480; Vol. i, A.H. 1-11.

(3) Aya Sophia, No. 3005; Vol. ii, A.H. 1-29.


(5) Paris, No. 1580: vol. i, A.H. 1-40, (and not 1880 as given by
Brockelmann, Loc. cit., and Horovitz, Loc. cit).

(6) Dr. Lœe, No. 71: vol. i, A.H. 1-40.

(7) Tunis (Mosque of Zaytuna, Catalogue of B. Roy), No. 4830: vol. i
the life of Muḥammad and the political narrative of A.H. 3-10,
copied from the autograph.

(8) Aya Sophia, No. 3016: A.H. 41-120.

(9) Bodleian Library (Ury), No. 652: A.H. 41-130.

(10) Tunis (Mosque of Zaytuna, Catalogue of B. Roy), No. 4831: vol. vi,
A.H. 40-130.


(12) Kopruluzade, No. 1018 (thus on the first page; in the margin
outside, No. 1019): A.H. 81-110, the biographies of the decade
A.H. 100-110 are only given as far as ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Jabir
b. Ṭabdallāh al-Anṣārī.

(13) Gotha (Pertsch), No. 1563: A.H. 143-5 (And not 1573, as given by
Brockleman, Loc. cit).

(14) British Museum, Or. 9256 (not yet catalogued): A.H. 151-70, from
the XVith Class only the biographies from the letter Za to the
end are given, from the XVIIth Class only the general narrative and
biographies as far as Daud al-Tay, according to a note on fol. 110 it
is an autograph of al-Ṣafāḍī.

15) Strasbourg (Spitta), No. 12: A.H. 161-80, of which A.H. 161-70 is
incomplete.

16) Aya Sophia, No. 3006: A.H. 180-200: the beginning is

17) Cairo, vol. v, P. 21: A.H. 181-200: according to fol. 162 it is an
autograph dated in A.H. 726.

18) Bodleian Library (Ury), No. 659: A.H. 191-200.


20) Kopruluzade, No. 1017: Pt. xiii, A.H. 266-80; the title and the beginning
are wanting, the biographies of A.H. 271-80 only extend to Muḥammad b.
Yūsuf b. Isa.


22) Kopruluzade, No. 1019: Pt. xv, A.H. 301-50, without the biographies
of A.H. 341-50.

23) Paris, No. 1561: vol. vi, A.H. 301-400 (but according to Brocklemann
and Horovitz, Loc. cit., only till A.H. 370).

24) Gotha (Pertsch), No. 1564: vol. vii, A.H. 351-400; it breaks off among
the biographies of A.H. 399.


26) Aya Sophia, No. 3008: vol. xii, A.H. 351-400; it only contains the
the biographies.
28) Aya Sophia, No. 3009: vol. xii (Sic 1), A.H. 401-50.
30) Umumiyya, No. 5015: A.H. 451-700 i.e. to the end of the work.
33) Aya Sophia, No. 3010: vol. xv, A.H. 501-50; the general narrative is complete, the biographies, however, extend only to A.H. 596.
34) Bodleian Library (Ury), No. 649: A.H. 531-80.
35) British Museum, Or. 5578: A.H. 551-70, copied from the autograph.
36) British Museum, No. 1639: Vol. xiv, A.H. 561-80; the first decade is incomplete, only comprising A.H. 563-70.
42) Bodleian Library (Ury) No. 654: A.H. 621-60.
44) Kopruluzade, No.1018 (continuation of the MS quoted under No.12): A.H.656-70, the general narrative of A.H.656 and the biographies of A.H.661-80 are not contained.

45) Bodleian Library(Ury), No.656: A.H.661-700, the general narrative only to A.H.680.


47) British Museum, No.1641: Vol.xxii, A.H.681-90, it only contains biographies.

48) Kopruluzade, No.1020: Pt. xxxvi, A.H.681-700, the biographies only from A.H.686 onwards.

49) British Museum, Supplement, No.486: A.H.681-700, the general narrative from A.H.691.

50) British Museum, Or. 7967 (not yet catalogued): four fragments containing biographies from A.H.687-88, 690,691-5, 691, corresponding to parts of British Museum, No.1641 and British Museum, supplement, No.486.

51) Seray, No.2910: in twenty-three volumes.

52) Damazdade Qadî 'Askar Muḥammad Murād, No.1433: an unidentified volume of the work.

Kopruluzade, No.1021, though denoted by a later hand as Ṭarīkh al-Īslām li al-Dhahabi which title is preceded by the word dhayl by a still later hand, is no part of our work, but as seen from its concluding words - part of the Mukhtasar fi Ṭarīkh al-bashar of Abū al-Fida

From the Mss, quoted above Aya Sophia, Nos. 3005-16 comprise parts of two copies: Nos. 3005-14 being parts of one copy and Nos. 3015-16 those of another copy. Nos. 3005-14 are autographs of al-Dhahabí himself and must therefore be considered in the first place for a possible edition of the Tārīkh al-Islām.

From the Mss hitherto known we can fairly well-reconstruct the whole Tārīkh al-Islām, except the decades A.H. 131-40, 231-60, 281-300. The decades A.H. 141-70 and 261-80 are extant only in part.

Like many other Arabic works on general history, al-Dhahabí's work was also continued by different later hands. We know of the following continuations of the Tārīkh al-Islām:

(1) A continuation comprising the biographies of A.H. 701-40 by al-Dhahabí himself; it is in Leiden, No. 765.

(2) A continuation by al-Yuniní (d. 726/1326): non-existing.

(3) A continuation by al-Jazari (d. 833/1429); non-existing.

(4) A continuation by Abū al-Fadl 'Abd al-Rahīm al-'Irāqī (d. 806/1404); non-existing, it comprised A.H. 701-61.

(5) A continuation of the work of 'Abd al-Rahīm al-‘Irāqi by his son Ahmad b. 'Abd al-Rahīm al-‘Irāqi (d. 826/1423), comprising A.H. 762-86; it is in Kopruluzade, No. 1051.

3. Ibid.
A continuation by Ibn Qādī Shuhba (d. 851/1447) entitled al-ʾIlām bi-Tārikh al-Islām, which exists in the following MSS: ¹ Bodleian Library (Ory), No.721: A.H.691-740; Paris, Nos.1598-1600: A.H 741-80; Kopruhzade, No.1027; A.H. 689-791; Faidullah, No.1403: A.H.600-90 ².

Owing to the voluminous character of the Tārikh al-Islām, many abridged editions were made of it. As a matter of fact, there is hardly any other Arabic work on general history which has more mukhtasar than the Tārikh al-Islām. These abridged editions were known even earlier than the great work itself and have always been in general use as concise and reliable works of reference. Some of them were made by al-Dhahabī himself and others by Ibn Qādī Shuhba, Ibn al-Shāamma and Ildukuz al-Ayyūbī. According to their subject matter, these compendiums are to be divided into two classes: (1) those containing both general narrative and obituary records, such as the Kitāb Duwal al-Islām known as al-Tārikh al-Saghīr (Little History) and the Kitāb al-ʾIbar fi Ākhbār man ʿabar (Ghabar) known as al-Tārikh al-Aswat or al-Mutawassīt (Medium History) by the author himself, or (2) biographical compendiums, such as the Tabaqāt al-Huffāz, Tabaqāt al-Qurrā, and Sīyar al-Nubalāʾ by al-Dhahabī himself.³

1. Cf.Hājī Khalīfa, Kashf al-Zunūn, Nos.951 and 2098; Spiesz, op.cit, P.71, Ammerkung I.
2. Spiesz, Op.cit, P.71, also quotes Kopruhzade, No.1189, as a continuation of the Tārikh al-Islām by al-Sakhāwī (d. 902/1497), but, as its title shows (Wajīz al-Kalām fī Dhayl Duwal al-Islām), it is a continuation of the Duwal al-Islām of al-Dhahabī.
3. For the compendiums of the Tārikh al-Islām, see, Joseph De Somogyi's paper in the Islamica, Leipzig (1932), Pp.334-53. O.Spiesz also mentions a Muntakhab al-Tārikh al-Kabīr, a MS of which is in Weli
The more enumeration of these well-known works can testify the great literary value of their source, the Tarikh al-Islam.

We may suppose that such an important work was also translated into other oriental languages. At least the existence of a Persian translation was proved by Petis de la Croix, who at the end of his work, Histoire du Grand Genghizcan (Paris, 1710), enumerates his authorities on the history of the Mongols, among which he mentions a Persian translation of an extract entitled Intikhab al-Salatin from the Tarikh al-Islam of al-Dhahabi. This extract treats of the fourth class of the second order of the Kings, i.e. of the Mongol Kings, "the first of whom had been the great Chengiz Khan and the Kings of Persia of the race, the first of whom had been Hulaku, his grandson." According to Petis de la Croix, this book was written in 757/1536. This date is evidently wrong, because it is the year A.D. 1536 and not 1536 that corresponds to A.H. 757. Supposed that this Hijra-date is correct, this Persian translation had been made at a very early date after the death of al-Dhahabi. It must have comprised only that part of the Tarikh al-Islam which included the history of the Mongols, i.e. roughly the seventh century A.H. Unfortunately we know nothing particular of this translation of the Tarikh al-Islam, except the reference of Petis de la Croix. But even

No. 2449, it treats in three classes: (1) of the compendiums of Muhammad and of the Tabi’un; (2) of the fuqahā’ and ʿulamā’; (3) of the ḥukamā’ and Atibbā’, including also the Greek philosophers, op. cit., p. 73.

this is significant of the great importance of al-Dhahabi's work.

SECTION A

An Analysis of the Tārīkh al-Islām

As its title implies, the Tārīkh al-Islām treats of the history of Islam only: it begins with the genealogy of Muhammad and does not deal with the earlier period of history. It therefore, does not follow the scheme of Arabic works on general history which start with the Creation, then proceed to the history of Adam, of the Prophets and of the ancient peoples (specially the Jews and the Persians), and then give the genealogy of Muḥammad and the history of Islām. This is the scheme adopted by al-Ṭabarî and followed by Ibn al-Athîr, al-Maṣūḏî, and other historians, and also by Ibn al-Jawzî; this latter expressly indicates in the title of his kitāb al-Muntazam that it is a general history (Akhbār al-Mulūk wa al-ʿUmaḥ) and not merely an Islamic history.

Notwithstanding this, al-Dhahabi adopted the general scheme of the Kitāb al-Muntazam in his Tārīkh al-Islām. His work, like that of Ibn al-Jawzî, is also both a general history and a collection of biographies, with this essential difference, however, that he does not give the biographical records in the same chapter together with the general narrative as Ibn al-Jawzî does, but he

1. Brockelmann, GAL, Vol. ii, p. 67 mentions also a Turkish translation of the Tārīkh al-Islām in Berlin (Turkischer Katalog, N° 192). This is, however, the Turkish translation of another work on general history, the al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya of Ibn Kathîr al-Dimashqî (d. 774/1372).
entirely separates both parts from one another. Both the general narrative (al-hawādith al-Ka‘īna) and the biographies (al-Mutawaffūn) are divided into classes (tabaqat) of ten years so that the whole work consists of seventy classes beginning with A.H.1 and ending with A.H.700. The classes of the general narrative come first, subdivided into the years of each decade, and followed as separate parts of the work by the classes of the biographies. These latter are equally subdivided into the years of each decade and completed generally by a separate chapter giving the biographies of those whose dates of death could not be stated exactly but can be approximately ranked into one decade (entitled Dhikru man tuwuffiya bāda sanatin... taqribān wa ilā Sanatin...). The relation of the general narrative to the biographies is rather unequal, the former comprises one-sixth or one-seventh of the thick manuscript volumes and the remaining space is devoted to the biographies.

SECTION 'C'

General Narrative (Hawādīth) of it

In the general narrative al-Dhahabī follows the example of the former historians, subdividing with the words "Wa fihā" ("and in this, Sc. year"). There is, however, a substantial difference between the subject matter of the general narrative of the first three centuries and that of the following four centuries. In the

1. In several manuscript volumes all the classes of the general narrative are grouped together and are followed by all the classes of the biographies.
first three centuries A.H. the records are very short, not detailed, and only give the gist of the matter. They can be styled a concise compendium of the Tārīkh al-Rusul wal-mulūk of al-Tabarī, the general use of which was so common and well-known that al-Dhahabi considered it superfluous to give a detailed narrative of the events in this period. Usually there is a short enumeration of the more notable persons who died in the year in question—they are always recorded in full among the biographies—then there follows, as a rule, the mention of the leaders of the annual pilgrimage, though sometimes this is put to the end of the general narrative. Last are recorded the political events well known from al-Ṭabarī.

Of a different character is the general narrative of the last four centuries (A.H. 301-700). The records are of considerable length, with constant references to the authority consulted by al-Dhahabi, which clearly shows his intention of writing a continuation of al-Ṭabarī's work. For this reason the scheme of the general narrative of this second post-Ṭabarī period of the Tārīkh al-Islām is different from that of the first period. First came the detailed records of political history, then follow, as a rule, those of local history and administrative affairs, those of Baghdad and Damascus are specially well recorded. Together with the latter are recorded the so-called aja'ib or strange things),: the curiosities and striking phenomena of the year and then the leaders of the pilgrimage from Baghdad and Damascus, followed by a short enumeration of the more notable persons who died in the year in question.

In drawing up this system al-Dhahabi entirely adopted that of Ibn al-Jawzi in his *Kitāb al-Muntazam*. Like his illustrious master, he also makes a point of quoting his authorities, whereby we can reliably state what sources he consulted in compiling his general narrative.

In order to present a clear account of the literary value of the *Tarikh al-Islam* we give a concise enumeration of the events which are either not recorded in Ibn al-Athir's *al-Kāmil fi al-tāriḵh* or are recorded also from 1-300, also recorded in al-Ṭabarī. The additional authorities mentioned in the narrative of al-Dhahabi are put in parenthesis; where none are mentioned the possible authorities are likely to be either Ibn al-Jawzi or Sibt Ibn al-Jawzi.

(a) Political history:

A.H.301: al-Khāqānī was taken prisoner by the Caliph al-Muqtadir. Ḥallāj was imprisoned (more detailed than al-Ṭabarī,iii, P.2289). Abū Sāʿīd al-Jannābī was murdered (Thābit b.Sinān). Al-Mahdī's army was sent to Egypt (al-Musabbiḥī).

A.H.302: Ibn al-Jassās was captured (Ibn al-Jawzi, al-Tanukhī).

A.H.305: al-Muqtadir received the legate of the Romans (Abū Bakr al-Ṣūlī).


1. The MSs consulted are those of the British Museum and the Bodleian Library.


A.H. 326: The hands of Ibn Muqla were cut off (Thābit b. Sinān).


A.H.339: the Black stone was taken back to Makka (al-Musabbihi).
A.H.340: the Black Stone was put back to its old place in Makka (Abū al-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. Nāfiʿ al-Khuzaī).
A.H.343: fight between Anujur b. al-Ikhshīd and Kāfūr.
A.H.352: day of jubilee ordered by Muʿizz al-Dawla (Ṭhābit b. Sinān, al-Tanūkhī).
A.H.355: Sayf al-Dawla's fights and truce with the Romans.
A.H.362: al-Damastaq was taken prisoner.
A.H.367: fight between Hafteghin (هفتگین) and the ʿUbaydis.
A.H.368: by order of al-Tai li Amr Allah honours were given to ʿAdud al-Dawlah (Ibn al-Jawzī).
A.H. 369: the legate of ʿAziz billah with ʿAḍud al-Dawlah; closer relations between the latter and al-Tai li Amr Allah (a Qaṣīda by Abū ʿIṣḥāq al-Ṣābi).


A.H. 395: a detailed account on the end of the Samanid dynasty from the time of the conquest of Bukhara by Ilek Khān till their end which is put by al-Dhahabī in this year (more detailed than Ibn al-Athīr, vol.ix, pp. 133-4, Abū Tammām).


A.H. 403: burial of the daughter of Abū Nūḥ al-Ṭayyib. The carriage of wooden crosses was ordered by al-Hākim bi amr Allah for the Christians.

A.H. 405 : al-Hākim's measures against women.


A.H. 410 : Maḥmūd b. Sabuktighin's campaign in India.


A.H. 413 : damage to the Kāba done by some Egyptians (Ḥilāl al-Ṣābī, Ibn al-Ṭurṣī).


A.H. 418 : Maḥmūd b. Sabuktighin's campaign in India.

A.H. 420 : reports on the Batinites in Khurāsān, Quarrels between Mutazilites and Rafidis (Abū al-Ḥasan al-Zaynabī).


A.H. 433: promulgation of the so-called itiqad al-Qādirī in the diwān.


A.H. 451: capture of Baghdād by al-Basāsīrī; flight of the Caliph al-Qā'im bi amr Allah.

A.H. 464: Nizām al-Mulk 's fight in Fāris.

A.H. 469: campaign of Atsiz in Egypt (Ḥibat Allah b. ʿAḥmad al-Ḵīānī), Ibn al-Qalanīsī.

A.H. 478: seize of Toledo by the Franks (more detailed than Ibn al-Ṭihīr, vol. x, PP. 92-3).


A.H. 495: fights of Sanjīl (St. Giles) (Ṣibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī).


A.H. 553 : fights with the Ghuzz in Khurāsān (Ibn al-Jawzī).


A.H. 575 : the Franks round Ramla. Tashteghin was invested with the khilā, Report on the Mamlūkūs (al-Buzuri, al-Tamīmī).


A.H. 608: Muslim Victory at Toledo.


A.H. 626: the Crusaders took Jerusalem (Abū Shāma).


A.H. 629: advance of the Tātārs in Adharbayjān.


A.H. 633: advance of the Tātārs from Arbil to Mawṣil. Cordoba was taken by the Franks (Abū Ḥayyān, Ibn Abbār).

A.H. 634: Pigeon post from Rukn al-Dīn in Mawṣil to Sharaf al-Dīn in Baghdad. Trace between al-Kāmil and the Romans.


A.H. 639: fights with the Tātārs (Ṣād Allah).


A.H. 641: Victory of the Tātārs over the Saljūqs of Rūm.


A.H. 645: The Sultan Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb took the fortress of al-Ṣabība (Ṣād al-Dīn Ibn al-Ḥamawiyya). The fortress of Ẓāḥhīmas was taken from al-Aṣghraf by the Sultan Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb.


A.H. 657: advance of the Tātārs to Ḩāmid and Ḥarrān, their crossing of the Euphrates.


A.H. 662: Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Shāma’s rule in Mashikān.

A.H. 663: Muslim Victory in Andalusia (Abū Shāma). The Tātārs attacked al-Bira, Hulāḵū’s death was reported, his son Abnā became king of the Tātārs.

A.H. 664: Solemn exit of the Sultān from Egypt to Jerusalem (Sād al-Dīn: Tārīḵ).
A.H.665: Victory of Burāq son of Jaghātāy over Abāqa near Hirāt.


A.H.667: The Sultān received the begates of Boghā.

A.H.668: Campaign of the Sultān in Syria his encounter with Sarim al-Dīn Mubarāk and the Ismailītes. Fight with the crusaders in Tunis.

A.H.669: the Sultān's campaign against Asqatās and Hisn al-Akrād. Al-Malik al-ʿAzīz was captured in Cairo. Revolt of Idrīs in Makka. The crusaders in Tūnis.

A.H.670: Campaign of the Sultān against the Kurks and the Tātārs (Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. al-Fakhr). His expedition to al-Jīza. The Tātārs in Harrān.


A.H. 675: fights of Badr al-Din al-Atabaki with the Tātārs in Palestine. The Sultan, after going to Derbend, defeated the Tātārs (Qūṭb al-Dīn: Tārīkh).


A.H. 679: fights of Sunqir al-Ashghair with the Tātārs.

A.H. 680: defeat of the Tātārs at Hims.

A.H. 691: Victory of the Sultan over the Romans.

A.H. 692: the Sultan demanded the fortress of Bahna from the prince of Sis.


A.H. 694: Ghasan, the grandson of Hulakū embraced Islam.

A.H. 698: movement of the Shafiite mutakallimūn.


A.H. 700: the Tātārs in Syria.

As it may be seen, al-Ṭahābī's special concerns are (1) the history of the Seljuqs, Ayyūbids and the Mongol invasion, (2) the internal development of Islam, specially the movement of the Bātînites and the Shiites; (3) the Western Islam, a territory which was neglected by al-Ṭabarī and also by Ibn al-Athīf to a certain
extent. As a whole, the Tārīkh al-Islām shows the tendency of al-Dhahabī to deal with the development of the whole of Islām though, as a matter of course, his records are more detailed for Syria and Egypt than for other Muslim territories.

(b) Local History:

Like his predecessors, Ibn al-Jawzī and Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Dhahabī also takes a special interest in the events of local importance. But whereas the main concern of Ibn al-Jawzī is directed to the history of Baghdad and that of Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī to the local history of Damascus, al-Dhahabī, by making use of both these works, records the local chronicle of both Muslim cities. Not considering the many accounts concerning these cities which are contained in his political narrative, it is peculiarly between A.H. 301 - 700 that he regularly records the changes in the administration of both Baghdād and Damascus and sometimes also of other cities, mentioning the names of the new qādis, Wālis and amils which are also found mostly in the works of Ibn al-Jawzī and Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, continuing them to his own time. These data are indispensable for the history of the administration of Baghdad and Damascus during the Ābbāsids, Ayyūbids, and Mongols. Similarly he is also interested in the changes in the external shape of these cities; the construction and enlargement of mosques, suqs, schools, hospitals and other public buildings are, as a rule, carefully recorded. He does not neglect the internal life of the Muslim centres either. The disputes between the different sects of Islām, between Sunnites, Shīites and Rāfiḍīs, as well as the seditions and robberies which
were very frequent during the period of the 'Abbāsids, are always remembered in the Tārīkh al-Islām. And finally, we can obtain some data on the economic life of both cities in the records on high prices in consequence of drought or other plagues: the prices per rattle of the main commodities (bread, flour, meat) are usually indicated. Thus the Tārīkh al-Islām is an excellent work of reference on the local history of Baghdad and Damascus, specially for the later period to which the works of Ibn al-Athīr, Ibn al-Jawzī do not extend.

(c) 'Ajā'īb (wonderful events):

One of the main characteristics of our work is its sometimes very detailed records on strange events and curiosities of the several years. In regard to these so-called 'ajā'īb, al-Dhahabī proves a good disciple of both Ibn al-Jawzī and Sibt Ibn al-Jawzī, to whose works he constantly refers in his narrative. Firstly he always mentions the astronomical phenomena; the strange sidereal constellations or the appearance of comets. Then he records also meteorological phenomena like violent winds, heavy rains or droughts, and the famines which appeared as a consequence of the latter. He also makes it a point to describe earthquakes and the panic called forth by them. Thus he gives detailed records of the earthquakes of A.H.460 with reference to Ibn al-Athīr, Ibn al-Qalanisī and al-Šābūnī of A.H.551-2, with reference to Ibn al-Jawzī, and of A.H.565 with reference to al-ʿAmmād al-Kātib and Sibt Ibn al-Jawzī. His narrative is peculiarly detailed on the year A.H.597, when great famines and elementary
Plagues occurred in both Egypt and Iraq, while Syria was laid waste by a terrible earthquake. Al-Dhahabī records all these events in a narrative of seven folio-pages on the authorities of Ābd al-Latīf and al-Baghdādī, Abū Šāma, Sibt Ibn al-Jawzī, and al-Buzurī, whereas Ibn al-Athīr devotes only some lines to the same events.

And finally, al-Dhahabī is fond of remembering all kinds of odd events which occurred in the several Muslim cities or provinces and which were "the fun of the fair" of those days. With the instinct of a modern journalist, al-Dhahabī, after relating the political and local events of the several years, does not leave without mention such oddities as the appearance in Nihāwand of a man practising sorcery (A.H.499), the appearance of an elephant in Damascus (A.H.610), a man who had ten daughters (A.H.643), a Baghdad woman who gave birth to double twins (A.H.646), another woman who gave birth to twins (A.H.647), the sinking of seven islands on the authority of the Tārikh of al-Muayyad Imād al-Dīn (A.H.660), or an elephant shaped lamb which was brought to the Sultan (A.H.663).

Thus the Tārikh al-Islām is a repository of all sorts of curiosities and gives us an insight also into the events which interested "the man in the street" of Baghdad or Damascus.
Biographies in the Tārīkh

But it is chiefly for its biographical value that the Tārīkh al-Islām has always been referred to and appreciated. Following the example of the Kitāb al-Muntazam of Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Dhahabī also gives obituary notices on the persons of some consequence who died in the respective years. These biographical records are for more elaborate and comprise a far greater on an average six or seven times as large a part of Tārīkh al-Islām as the Ḥawādith, which only appear to be prefixed to them for the sake of completeness and for the preservation of the tārīkh character of the work. The predominance of the biographical matter of his work can best be seen from its division into classes (tabaqāt) of ten years, which is carried through not only in the biographical parts, but also in the general narrative, though, as a rule, the technical term tabaqāt was only applied to biographical collections, like the Tabaqat al-
huffāz or the Tabaqat al-Qurra' of the same author. Thus al-Dhahabī adopted the system of the tabaqāt works for his Tārīkh al-Islām and retained the chronological division of the subject-matter as a mere subdivision.

But, in contrast to the tabaqāt - works, the biographies of the Tārīkh al-Islām include not only illustrious men of one madhhab only, like the Tabaqat al-Shafi'īya or Tabaqat al-Hanbaliyya of different authors, nor prominent people of one vocation only like the biographical collections on poets or scholars, but all sorts of people belonging to all the four madhhab of the Sunnite Islām or to
the shiites, though as a matter of course, preference is given to the madhhab of al-Dhahabi, the shafiites.

These biographical records include in alphabetical order all sorts of people, thus:

1. All the Caliphs and minor rulers as well, whose succession to the throne or death are generally remembered briefly also in the general narrative. A particular advantage of the Tarikh al-Islam is that the caliphs of the Spanish and Maghribi Islam are as well recorded as those of the Bast, among whom the biographies of the Ayyubid and Seljuk rulers specially deserve our attention.

2. The wazirs, generals and high officials (amirs, 'amils, walis).

3. The theologists and jurisconsults (qadis, faqis) of all the madhhabs.

4. The scholars other than theologists.

5. The poets.

The biographies vary in length from the mere mention of names to the very detailed biographical records on the most celebrated people; these latter also narrate some episodes of their lives. The style of al-Dhahabi's records is the same as that of Ibn al-Jawzi's. First comes the full name of the deceased person (alâm, kunya, laqab), then follow the date and place of his birth, appearance, and short characterization (of the more important men only), the names of his masters and of those who studied with him and...
reported on him, his career, the opinions of the leading autho-
rities concerning him, an enumeration of his literary works, the
date and place of his death, and possibly also the place of his
burial. In the biographies of poets many quotations, even poems
in full length, are frequently included in the records.

Al-Dhahabi, in compiling the biographies of the celebrities
of seven centuries, rendered an invaluable service to posterity
and in the first place to the scholars of Arabic literature and
the history of Islam who so often need data regarding prominent
figures of Muslim past. There is no better evidence of the great
biographical value of the Tārīkh al-Islām than the fact that some of
the biographical abstracts made from it by al-Dhahabi himself
were known earlier than the original works. If it has been nece-
sary to edit the short recensions of the work: the Kitāb duwal al-
Islām, the Tabaqāt al-Huffāz, or the Tajrīd fī asmāʾ al-Sahāba, it
would undoubtedly be important to publish the Tārīkh al-Islām too,
either as a whole or at least its latter half treating the years
A.H. 301-700, for which period we have no other work of the same
kind, comprising in itself both the political history and the
biographies of these four eventful centuries of Muslim history.

The sources of the Tārīkh al-Islām

The Tārīkh al-Islām, like many other Arabic works on general
history, is a compilation of all sorts of data excerpted by its
author from a vast number of sources. In reading the manuscripts
of the work one has to acknowledge al-Dhahabi's great versatility
in many branches of Arabic literature, specially in history, hadith, fiqh, and poetry. There is hardly any important work in these branches which was not consulted by him. In addition, he was careful in collecting his data concerning one even from all the sources available for him, which he always quoted conscientiously. Though, as we have been, he was reprimanded for a certain bias even by one his most famous disciples, yet his reliability becomes evident by reading the Tārikh al-Islām hand in hand with the sources referred to by him where this is feasible. Such a comparison proves his reliability in excerpting other works, which enables us to obtain trustworthy references to and extracts from works non-extent or data on authors unknown to us. Even if in reading the Tārikh al-Islām we came across such indefinite references as "wa qala ghayruhu" (and it was said by somebody else), these are not disturbing either, because the sources can well be deduced even in these cases from the context of the passage in question.

Thus the Tārikh al-Islām is an almost inexhaustible repository of earlier historical, biographical, and theological literature. In examining the authorities consulted by al-Dhahabī we can fairly well see which authorities were in common use at this time. First there were four sources of primary importance on general history.

(1) The Tārikh al-Rusul Wa Al-Mulūk of al-Ṭabarī for the general narrative of the first three centuries A.H., the common use of which was so well-known that al-Dhahabī did not trouble to refer to it, and could forego the detailed record of the events of this period.
(2) The *al-Kāmil fi al-Tārīkh* of Ibn al-Athīr is his main source for the years A.H. 301-628 of the general narrative. His name is nearly always mentioned.

(3) The *Kitāb al-Muntagam wa multaqat al multazam fī akhbār al-mulūk wal-Umam* of Ibn al-Jawzī was doubtless the most important source of al-Dhahabī, not so much as political history as on the local history of Baghdad, on the ajaib and on the biographical matter generally, and on the obituary notices on prominent Baghdad people specially for the period A.H. 302-597. We may justly call al-Dhahabī the most distinguished disciple of Ibn al-Jawzī, from whose work be borrowed the whole system of his *Tarikh al-Islam*.

The importance attributed by him to the *Kitāb al-Muntazām* can be seen also from his constant references for A.H. 575-631 to a hitherto unknown continuation of it by a certain Abū Bakr Maḥfūz b. Mātūq b. Abī Bakr b. Umar al-Baghādī b. al-Buzurī, who according to him, wrote a supplement to the *Kitāb al-Muntazām*.

(4) The *Kitāb mirāt al-Zamān fi Tārīkh al-Ayān* of Sibt Ibn al-Jawzī was used (1) for the general narrative of the years A.H. 629-54, i.e. from the time on whose Ibn al-Athīr’s work ends; (2) for the local history of Syria and specially of Damascus regarding which Sibt Ibn al-Jawzī is as reliable an authority as his grand father is on the local history of Mesopotamia and of Baghdad specially; (3) for the ajaib, which occurred in Syria.
Concerning what may be styled the lesser authorities of al-Dhahabi, for the History of the Ayyubids he used most the kitāb al-Rawḍatayn fī akhbār al-dawlatayn of Abū Shāma and the Kitāb Mufarrij al-Kurūb fī akhbār Bani Ayyūb of Ibn Wāsīl. For the history of the Mongols he made use of the Sīrat al-Sultān Jalāl al-Dīn Mangubirtī of al-Nasawī, and a hitherto unknown report of the famous Baghdad physician and Scientist ‘Abd al-Latīf al-Baghdādī, whose history and geography of Egypt are well known to scholars.

On the following pages we give an enumeration of the sources used by al-Dhahabi in the general narrative of his work, excluding al-Tabarī Ibn al-Athīr, Ibn al-Jawzī, and Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī. As for his biographies, it is almost impossible to give a short synopsis of al-Dhahabi’s authorities, so many are his references and quotations. Besides the works also used for his general narrative, it is chiefly the great biographical collections of Ibn Najjār, Ibn ‘Asākir, al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Ibn Khallikān, and al-Samānī that he mentions most frequently in his obituary notices.

Our list gives evidence of the scientific value of the Tāriḵ al-Islām, which has been considered an excellent symposium of Islamic lore by all the famous later authors. Thus Muḥammad b. Shākir al-Kutubī in his Ṣuyūn al-Tawārikh, al-Yāfi‘ in his Mirāt al-Janān wa ‘Ibrat al-Yaqūn, and al-‘Aynī in his ʿIqd al-Jumān ff Tāriḵ al-Zamān all drew a great deal on al-Dhahabi’s work.


Ibn Bâkûya al-Shirazi (d. 442/1050). A.H. 309.


Abû al-Fâth al-Bustî (d. 401/1010), A.H. 392.

Al-Mukhtar Buîlân (d. 455/1063), A.H. 446.

Ibn al-Tûnî (al-Tûnisî; perhaps identical with Hilal al-Shâbî), A.H. 413.

Al-Tamīmī A.H. 575.


Ibn Tumart (d. after 524/1130) A.H. 554.


Ḥātim, the poet. A.H. 586.


Ibn Hauqal (lived in the fourth century A.H.) A.H. 309.

Abū Ḥayyān Atṭīr al-Dīn (d. 745/1345). A.H. 633 (Spain).


Al-Dāraquṭnī (d. 385/995) A.H. 306.


Ṭāj al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan b. al-Sāi (d. 674/1275). A.H. 622, 625, 644, 647-8, 654 (Crusades, Mongols).

Sādallah. A.H.639 (Mongols).

Al-Sullamī (d. 412/1021) Tārīkh al-Ṣuḥayya (Perhaps identical with the anonymous work of the same title mentioned in Ibn Khall., No.2246) A.H. 309, 311.

Al-Simnānī. Tārīkh. A.H.317

Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sinjābī. A.H. 500


Bahā al-Dīn Yūsuf b.al-Shaddād. A.H. 565.


Ibn Abī Ṭayy (d. 630/1232). A.H. 569, 571.


ʿAbd al-Jabbār b.ʿAbd al-Jabbār al-Baṣrī (according to Ḥājjī Khalīfa, No. 7925, al-Asadābāḏī (d. 415/1024) A.H. 322.

ʿAbd al-Lāṭīf al-Baghdāḏī (d. 629/1231). A.H. 575, 582, 585, 597, 605 (Khabar al-Tātār), 617, 627.


Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. al-Fārīḫ (Perhaps identical with al-Jazarī, see above). A.H. 670.


Qutb al-Dīn (Perhaps the astronomer Qutb al-Dīn al-Shirāzī who died in 710/1312). Tārīkh, A.H. 658-9, 666-9, 675 (Damascus).


Al-ʿUsābīḥī (d. 420/1029). A.H. 301, 335, 339 (Fāṭimids).


Jamāl al-Dīn b. Maṭrūd (d. 649/1251-2), A.H. 648 (A Poem)


Al-Nadḥr al-Zīltī, A.H. 401.

Al-Nadhr al-Zilṭī, A.H. 401


Ibn Naṣīf (Perhaps the author of the Juma' Ibn Naṣīf mentioned in Ḥājī Khalīfa, No. 4028).


Taqī al-Dīn Ismā'īl b. Abī al-Yusr (according to al-Kutubi: Fawāt al-Wafayāt, Vol. i, PP. 11-13, was scribe to Naṣīr Dāūd). A.H. 656 (A Qasīda)


Hilāl b. al-Muḥassin al-Ṣābī (d. 448/1056). A.H. 369, 381, 413.


An anonymous Tārīkh al-Qayarwān (Perhaps by Abū ʿAlī Ḥasan b. Ṭaḥṣīḥ al-Qayarwānī who died in 463/1070-1) or by Abū ʿAbd al-Ḥāfīf al-Ḥasanī or by Ibrāhīm al-Rafīq, see Ḥājī Khalīfa, No. 2285), A.H. 322.
An importance of his Tārīkh

Al-Dhahabī’s Tārīkh al-Islām is an authority on the Mongol Invasion of the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate. As scarcely ever has Islām experienced more tragical times and more hardships than during the Mongol invasion in the course of the 7th/13th Century. With the despite of the nomads, practitioners of the open air life, for sedentory occupations, the people of Chengiz Khand turned against and mercilessly destroyed the towns and works of civilization everywhere. Their disastrous campaign was only facilitated by the decomposition of the political unity of Islām at that time. In Baghdād the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate still subsisted but its splendour was on the wane; to the west of Baghdād, in Egypt, Palestine and a part of Syria, the Ayyūbids reigned, and in Asia Minore the Seljūqs while to the east of Baghdād the Turkish princes from Khīva had a rather insecure hold on the vast stutch of the Khwārizmian empire from the Ganges to the Tigris and from Turkistan to the Indian Ocean. This state of affairs was inviting to an enterprising invader of the sort of Chengiz Khand who in 615/218, crushed the Khwārizmian empire, while his grandson, Hulāghū Khand put an end to the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate in 658/1258. The Western provinces of Islām, including Egypt, were, however, spared from the devastating fury of the Mongols by the Mamlūk Sultān’s Victory over Ketbogha, Hulāghū’s general, at ʿAyn Jālūt, Palestine in 659/1260. When in 699/1299-701/1301 his grandson Qazān failed in conquering Syria Islām was definitely safe from further Mongol
attacks ¹.

Small wonder that the terrified Muslims regarded the Mongol invasion as a veritable scourge. In writing of the Mongols or Tātārs as their primitive name was, they hardly ever omit the opposition al-malainu (the accused), and, referring to Chengiz Khān, they usually affix the phrase lā'ānahu Allah (may All curse him) to his name ².

No doubt this great horror of the Muslims alone accounts for the astonishing fact that in the hitherto edited texts of the vast Arabic historical and geographical literature, not excluding the very well-informed yāqūt, we find practically no reference to their original home, tribal organization and customs. Much better are we informed about their campaigns against Islām, though, as a matter of course, scores of works, both Arabic and Persian are to be consulted to sketch a detailed narrative of them. There is however, one work containing a rather detailed record of the principal events of the Mongol invasion, and this is the hitherto unedited Tārīkh al-Islām of al-Dhahabī (673/1274 to 748/1348). He needs no introduction to Arabic scholars, so well-known and much used are his works on hadīth and his historical compendium Kitāb Duwal al-Islām ³. His principal work, the Tārīkh al-Islām

combining both general and biographical history, finishes in 700/1300-1 and, therefore, includes the whole history of the Mongol invasion. The value of his narrative is enhanced by his careful gathering of all sorts of information pertaining to his subject, and by himself being an eye witness to the last phase of the Mongol invasion, Qāzān’s attack on Damascus.

It is owing to al-Dhahabī’s conscientious quotation of his authorities that we possess in his Tarikh al-Islām the only report on Chengiz K̄han’s Tātārs that is extant in the hitherto known works of Arabic literature. Al-Dhahabī begins his of the appearance of Chengiz K̄han’s people in 605/1208-9 with a reference to the Khabar al-Tātār of al-MuwaffaqʿAbd al-Latif b. Yusuf. We meet with the same name in the narrative of the year 617/1220-1. From this curtailed name it clearly appears that we have to do with the celebrated Egyptian Physician and naturalist, Muwaffaq al-Dīn Abū MuhammadʿAbd al-Latif b. Yusuf b. Muḥammad b.ʿAlī b.ʿAbī Sād al-Baghdādi, commonly known as Ibn al-Labbād (d. 629/1231-2). He is noted for his description of Egypt entitled Kitāb al-Ifāda wa al-Ītibār fī al-Umūr al-Mughāhada wa al-Hawādith al-Muāyana bi Miṣr. We have a list of his 166 works, which is appended to the biography of him by Ibn Abī Uṣaybia (d. 668/1269-70) in his lexicon of Arabian physicians and naturalists, ʿUyūn al-Anbāʾ fī Ṭabaqāt al-ʿAtibbā. These are works, mostly lost, on geography, natural

2. Edited separately by J.Mousley, Abdollatif Bagdadensis vita, auctore Ibn abi Osaiba, Oxford 1808, and for the list of his works see, Ibid, pp. 50-64.
history, and medicine, and include a history (Tārīkh)¹, there is, however, no indication of any separate report by him on the Tatars as given by al-Dhahabî². Perhaps his account formed part of one of his works lost which was luckily discovered by al-Dhahabî and inserted into his Tārīkh al-Islām. We have notwithstanding, some indications in 'Abd al-Latif al-Baghdādis autobiography included in Ibn Abī Uṣaybia's biography of him, from which we may gather that on his travels he had met people from Central Asia and had even actually been among the Tatars. Thus we read in his autobiography that he had an intercourse with famous shaykhs from Baghdad, Khurāsān, Syria and Egypt³; that he travelled from Ḥalab into the Bayzantine Empire and spent several years there⁴; that after making journey in Egypt, Syria, and Maghrib he went on the 7th Dhu al-Qa'ada 625/8th October, 1228, to Erzerum, then in Rabī' al-Awwal 626/28th January-26th February, 1229 to Kimâkh, in Jumada al-Ulā/28th March - 26th April, to Dairki⁵. Concerning Kimâkh we read in Yâqūt (ed. F. Wastenfeld, vol. iv, p. 334) that it is a wide province on the frontier of China and its inhabitants are Turks living in tents; it is also the name of the Tarkish people from which the tribe of the Qypchaq

1. Ibid., p. 56
2. We have no reference to such a report in the biography of him in al-Kutubî's Fawât al-wafâyât, vol. ii, pp. 7-8 and none even in al-Dhahabî's biography of him in the Tārīkh al-Islām, MS of the Bodleian Library, Cat. i, 654, fols. 76-77 b.
4. Ibid., p. 34.
had sprung. This indication furnishes evidence of his travel in Mongolia, and it is doubtless owing to his observations and experiences made on this and other journeys that we have his report which al-\(\text{Dhahabi}\) inserted into his great work and saked from persisting.

The report of 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī consists of or was divided by al-\(\text{Dhahabi}\) into, two parts, which are included in the records of the years A.H.605 and 617. The possible date of its composition must be put after 625/1227-8 because he repeatedly refers to the ravage of Ispahan by the Tātārs which occurred in 625/1227-8.

The general panic called forth by the rumours about the advance of Chengiz Khān's Tātārs in Central Asia is excellently characterized by al-\(\text{Dhahabi}\)'s introductory remark to the first part of 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī's report. He says that "this is a report that eats up all (similar) reports, an item of news that rolls up other news, a story that makes other stories to be forgotten, an accident in comparison to which other accidents appear slight, and a misfortune that extents over the whole surface of the earth," This remark which is certainly apt to rouse the reader's interest, is followed by a short description of the Tātārs. First 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī states


2. The first part of the report is in the MS of the British Museum, No.1640, from fol.173, 1.21 to fol.173 b, 1.18.
the language of the Tatars is similar to that of the Hindus because they live in their vicinity. Incorrect as this statement is, it is significative of the popular theory prevalent at that time which devoted all sorts of Northern and central Asiatic nomadic races with the common name of Tatars. They live at a distance of four months from Tangut. Anthropologically they are described as having broad faces, wide breasts, light buttocks, small members, brown complexion; they are agile and intelligent.

People know very little about them before meeting them, first because "they receive intelligence of them", that is why it is very difficult for any foreigner to spy out their conditions and secondly because they always conceal their intentions and surprise the foreign peoples with their attacks. "The inhabitants of no town know of them before they enter it and no army before they meet it". Their women fight like their men, sometimes carrying even their babies round their necks. First a small troop would appear in a foreign town, then, all of a sudden, the mass of the Tatars break in upon them, all of a sudden, the mass of the Tatars break in upon them unexpectedly and mercilessly murder all the women and children, but spare the lives of the artisans and able bodied men, whom they take

1. For the similar Chinese conception of the Tatars see, C.D Ohsson, Hiaire des Mongols, 2nd ed., La Haye et Amsterdam, 1837-52, vol. i, P. 93.

2. Tangut is, according to Yaqut (ed. F. Wustenfeld, vol. v, P. 880), "a town in Shāsh beyond (the river) Sayhūn"; according to Hamdallah Qazwīnī, Nuzhat al-qulub, ed. G. Le Strange, Persian text, P. 257, it is also "a country comprising many countries of the Fifth Zone, and called Qashin by the Mongols".
into their service. Most of their arms are arrows made by all
all of them. The points of the arrows are made of horn, iron, or
bone. Swords are used for stabbing rather than for beating. For
defence they use shields made of mole-skins and shins. Their
horses eat fresh and dry fodder and even foliage and wood that
they find. They use small and light saddles. Their nourishment
is the roasted flesh of any kind of animals.

‘Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī finishes the first part of his
report stating that they kill without an exception and mercilessly
and it seems that they tend not so much to possession and wealth
as to destruction.

The second part of his report treats of the invasion of
the Tātārs into the West in A.H.617 and subsequent years. Though
this is no continuous narrative of the campaign of Chengiz Khān —
as a matter of course such a record can hardly be expected dur­ing
the campaign — it is very important for all that because he
refers to his stay at Erzerum in 618/1221-2, i.e. during the Tātār
advance in the Caucasus. Hence it appears that what he relates in
the second part was either experienced by him or told to him by eye-
witnesses, which is, in all probability, responsible for the many
episodes his narrative includes.

1. Cf. The MS. of the British Museum, No.1640, from fol.190 b,
1.6 to fol.192, 1.16.
“Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi introduces the second part of his report with a characteristic remark: "Two groups were separated from the Tatars just as two tongues are separated (from each other) in Hell." We know from other authors also that the northern group advanced on Adharbayjan and Arran, then invaded Georgia; the southern group marched against Hamadan and Isfahan, and finally both groups united and advanced on Baghdad. The first group attacked Georgia by surprise, then, retreating on Sharwan, passed Derbend, and ravaged the territories of Qypchaq and Alan. At this juncture the report remembers the marriage of the Georgian king's sister to the son of the Seljuq of Erzerum, who embraced Christianity. After praising the country of Qypchaq for its temperate climate, abundance in water, good soil, and many sheep, 'Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi proceeds to the march of the southern group against Baghdad. The Kurds were induced to attack Derbend while the Caliph concentrated all his troops on Baghdad. The 'Abbasiid capital was, however, spared from the Tatar invasion because the Muslims received the Tatar legate, who was probably sent to spy out the enemy's camp.


2. For a detailed record of this event, see, Ibn al-Athir, vol. xii, pp. 270-1, under the significant title Haditha qitariba lam yujad mithluha, and F. Brosset, Histoire de la Georgie, St.Petersbourg, 1949-1857, vol. i, p. 495, it is also related by al-Dhahabî in the narrative of the year A.H.621: See the MS. of the Bodleian Library, Cat., vol. i, No.654, fols.1b-2.
with such a military parade and ceremony in Arbit, in the wilāyah of Daqūqa, and last in Baghdād that his visit discouraged and frightened the Tātārs who, this time, desisted from attacking Baghdād. This record of the Tatar legate's reception is not known to us from other authorities in print. The invaders also failed to take Isfahān.

Then 'Abd al-Latīf al-Baghdādī relates some cases illustrative of the cruelty and devastation of the Tātārs, which he heard from eye-witnesses in Armenia, such records terrorized the civilized world so much that the mere name of Tatar has become odious in East and West alike. The particular cases 'Abd al-Latīf al-Baghdādī relates were evidently all collected by him during his stay in Armenia, Al-Malik al-Ashraf, the eldest of the Ayyūbids (reigned from 578/1182-3 to 635/1237-8), when asked about the Tātārs, said: "What shall I say of a people of which no prisoner has ever been taken, since they fight as long as they are either killed or save themselves?" And the king of Georgia stated that people never used to tell how many were killed by them in a country, but rather how many were left safe. Nisābūr was also burnt down and completely destroyed, and 550,000 people were mercilessly massacred by them. The country of al-malahida and Farghana were also visited by them. They found a special pleasure in the gradual truncating

1. Al-malahida being a name of the Dahrīs, this passage refers to the environs of Alamūt and other fortresses of the Assassins in Iran.
of their victims, and are told to have even drunk the blood of
two children of a woman. The Tatars success was mainly due to the
circumstance that their enemy, the Sultan Khwârizmshâh Muhammad
b. Tukush (reigned from 589/1193 to 596/1200) was "a thief and
a burglar, his army was a rabble without care and organization:
most of them were infidel Turks or ignorant Muslims. He does not
know even the best soldiers in the ranks, and his officers are
accustomed to brutality only". They were attacked by the Tatars,
"the sons of one father, one word, and one heart, with one chief
whom they obey". After referring to their visit in Iṣfahān, ʿAbd
al-Laṭif al-Baghdād concludes his report remarking that no enemy
could ever have been more hostile than the Tatars, who had no
religion and no reason. Even their animals are of a bad sort.

A report of ʿAbd al-Laṭif al-Baghdādī is no connected account
of the Tatars, yet it fully deserves our attention as the narrative
of a trustworthy author and the only literary record in Arabic
descriptive of the Tatars. His authority is also referred to by
al-Dhahabī in recording the defeat of the khwârizmians at khilāṭ
in A.H.627. The other authorities of al-Dhahabī for chengiz Khân's
campaign are Ibn al-Athîr, Sibt Ibn al-Jawzî, Ibn Wâṣil, al-Nasawî,
and a certain al-Muwayyad ʿImâd al-Dîn, who wrote his Tārīkh supple-
menting al-Nasawî's work.

1. Cf. The MS. of the Bodleian Library, Cat. i, 654, fols. 7b-8b.
2. Cf. The MS. of the British Museum, No. 1640, fol. 182, 1.14
In the further record of the Tārīkh al-Islām we can follow the Tatar advance into Central Asia, Iran, and the Caucasus until the fatal year of Muslim history, 656/1258, when Bagdad was captured and plundered by Hūlāghū Khān. Into his narrative, based partly on the authority of a certain Ibn al-Kāzarūnī, al-Dhahabī inserted a qasida by Taqī al-Dīn Ismā'īl b. Abī al-Yusr on the destruction of Baghdad. More or less detailed reports inform us also of the subsequent campaigns of the Tātārs, thus of Hūlāghū Khān's invasion of Syria in 658/1260, of their battle on the Euphrates in 671/1272-3, of their fight with Badr al-Dīn al-Atābākī in Palestine in 675/1276-7, and their defeat at Derbend in the same year, until we come to the end of the Tārīkh al-Islām, where we find a continuous and very detailed description of the Tātārs' second invasion of Syria and destruction of Damascus in 699-700/1299-1301. This concluding narrative is particularly

2. Ibid, fol. 249 b, 1.3.
3. For its text and English translation, see Joseph De Somogy "A Qasīda on the destruction of Baghdad by the Mongols, Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies (1933), PP.41-8.
5. Cf. The MS. of the Bodleian Library, Cat.i, 656, fol.57b.
6. Ibid, fols. 60b -61.
7. Cf. The MS. of the British Museum Or. 1540, fols 123-134.
interesting because, well-known as this event is from the Khīḥāt of al-Maqrīzī and other sources, it is related by al-Dhahabi with the vivacity of an eye-witness who himself experienced the whole campaign against his city. With the exception of the testimony of a certain Dhau b. Sabāḥ al-Zubaydī, who witnessed the battle of Ḥims, we find no references to other sources in this narrative which is all the more remarkable as otherwise be regularly quotes his authorities throughout his work. For the general historian this concluding narrative is important for three reasons. First, it clearly appears from it that but for the rivalry between the Mamlūk Sultān of Egypt and his governor in Damascus the Tātārs would have never ventured upon such an attack on the most important city of Islām after the fall of Baghḍād. Then, it is evident from this report that the failure of the Tātār attempt was due to the heroic defence of the commander of the citadel, Arjawāsh, and not to the


2. Cf. The MS. of the British Museum Or. 1540, fol.124, 1.13.
military power of the Mamluks, which proved entirely inefficient after their defeat in the Wadi al-khaznadār on the 28th Rabīʿ al-Awwal 699/23rd December, 1299. Last, al-Dhahabi emphasizes the circumstance that, though the Tātārs favoured the non-Muslims, they were not hostile to the Muslims for all that. They proclaimed that their rules was a Muslim, and there can be no doubt that but for their atrocities they would have easily gained possession of Syria.

Moreover, al-Dhahabi's narrative is a very good sketch of the life of Damascus during the Tātār siege. It is of good use to anybody who is interested in the eventful past of this old city. We learn from it the names of the persons filling the posts at that time. In very lively tones our author depicts the general panic called forth by the cruelties of the Tātārs, and the relief felt at their withdrawal. He regularly records also on the rise in the prices of victuals and saddle-horses occasioned by the stringency during the assault.

Thus, the Tārikh al-Islām contains valuable material for the history of the Mongol invasion of the Caliphate. The fact that al-Dhahabi's narrative, as a whole, corroborates and in details, supplements our information obtained from other sources, testifies to his trustworthiness in gathering and quoting his references.
For this reason his great work can justly we considered as an important authority on this tragical period of the history of Islam.

Hardly ever has Islam survived a more disastrous and more mournful event than the destruction of Baghdad by the Mongols of Halâghû Khân in the middle of the month of al-Muḥarram of the year 656/January, 1258. The Mongol conqueror, after having subdued the Assassins, turned against the capital of the 'Abbâsids and captured it without any resistance. The fall of the 'Abbâsid Caliphate was followed by a veritable reign of terror which lasted for forty days. Baghdad was plundered during this dismal period, its entire population was massacred mercilessly with the exception of the Christians, the co-religionists of Halâghû Khân's wife and father. The Caliph al-Mustâṣim and his sons fell victims to the fury of the enraged conqueror, who put them to death. And to complete the disaster, a great conflagration destroyed many parts of the city.

But all the more remarkable is the fact that we possess only very scanty accounts of this veritable martyrdom of Islam in Arabic literary sources. The most reliable author on the history of the 'Abbâsids, Ibn al-Athîr, closes his al-kâmil fî al-Târîkh as

early as the year 628/1230-1. Among the later historians "neither
Abū al-Faraj nor Abū al-Fidāʾ affords much information on this
subject. Indeed, of the Mongol siege in the seventh century A.
H. we know for less than we do, thanks to Ṭabarī, of the first
seige in the time of the caliph Amīn in the Second century A.
H." ¹

So far as Arabic literature is concerned ², we possess only
three descriptions of some length of these disastrous days of
the history of Islām. One is by Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqā (d. 701/1301-2)
who wrote his famous Kitab al-Fakhri fi Adib al-Sultaniyya
wa dowal al-Islāmiyya, at the end of which ³ he describes the
Mongol siege. The second is by Ibn al-Furat, who lived one
century later (d. 807/1404-5), and records the same event in
his hitherto unedited Tārīkh al-Duwāl wa al-Mulūk ⁴. The third
is by al-Dhahabī's (d. 748/1348), who in his voluminous Tārīkh

¹. Ibid, P. 340
². As for Persian literature, the following historical works
contain narratives of this event: (1) The Tabaqāt al-Nāṣirī,
written shortly after 656/1258, is a contemporary authority
on the times of Hulāghū; (2) the Jāmiʿ al-Tawārīkh, Rashīd al-
Dīn's well-known work, finished in 710/1310-11, provides a
fairly clear account of the siege operations; (3) the history
of Waṣṣāf, the historiographer of Ghazān, the Īlkhān of Persia,
written in 700/1300-1, contains only the data related also
al-Islām devotes a separate chapter to the fall of Baghdad, which not only gives a detailed account of the event, but also includes a qasīda lamenting the decline of the glorious city.

The author of the qasīda mentioned above as called by al-Dhahabī is Taqī al-Dīn Ismā‘īl b. Abī al-Yusr. His name is not to be found in any European bibliographical work on Arabic literature, because no literary work bearing this name has come down to us. In oriental bibliographical works on Arabic literature we only find two references to this author. The one is contained in the Fawāt al-Wafayāt of Muḥammad b. Shākir al-Kutubī (d. 764/1362-3), the continuator of Ibn Khallikān’s Wafayāt al-Ayān. At the beginning of his work al-Kutubī gives a short biographical account on the author of our qasīda. His name is accordingly Taqī al-Dīn b. Abī al-Yusr Ismā‘īl b. Ibrāhīm b. Abī al-‘Usr, “musnīd al-Shām”. His uncle was a scribe of the chancery of the Ayyūbid Nūr al-Dīn, and he himself was scribe to al-Nāṣir Dāūd, who was also a good poet. He is characterized by al-Kutubī as being “distinguished in letter writing, letter writing,

2. Cf. The MS. of the Bodleian Library (Ory), No. 654, fols. 248-50, under the title Kāina Baghdad.
excellent in poetry and very eloquent in speaking”. He was charged with the prince’s Chancery, with the superintendence of the cemetery, and with other administrative affairs.

Al-Kutubi’s record is supplemented by a reference in al-Suyuti’s continuation of the Tabaqāt al-Huffāz of al-Dhahabi, where we read that it was from a certain Ibn Abī al-Yusr that the grammarian Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Aḥbās b. Abī Bakr b. Jāwān (d. 674/1275-6) learnt. As this scholar lived at the time of al-Nāṣir Dāud, this reference undoubtedly relates to our author, not to his father, who bore the same name of Ibn Abī al-Yusr. The author’s excellent qualities as recorded by al-Kutubi, and in particular his talent for poetry, were certainly well-known in his own time. Al-Kutubi quotes some lines from his poetical works, but does not mention any independent anthology or other work by him. This is probably due to the circumstances that his poems were read only by a limited number of courtiers and scholars in Damascus. In view of this, it is fortunate that al-Dhahabi, who lived about half a century later, could still recover a qasida by him and preserved it in his Tārīkh al-Islām, in the narrative of A.H.656. The qasida was composed by him on the destruction of Baghdad by the Mongols. The poem is owing to al-Dhahabi’s conscientious citation of his sources remains as the only work known to be extent of Taqī al-Dīn Ismāʿīl b. Abī al-Yusr. Considering the care shown by

1. Cf. Ed. Wustenfeld, xxi, 3
al-Dhahabī in quoting and copying his authorities, there can be no doubt that this poem also was rendered by him as accurately as possible.

Among the MSS. of the Tārikh al-Islām we possess two volumes containing our Qasīda. One is in the Bodleian Library, No.654 in the catalogue of Ury. In this MS., which was written by a hand later to al-Dhahabī, the qasīda is contained on folio 249-9b. The other MS. is in Istanbul in the Aya-Sophia library No.3013, and has not been yet catalogued. As, according to Professor O.Spiesz, who has been this MS., it is an autograph of al-Dhahabī himself, it is from this latter MS. the following lines of the qasīda have been copied:

The fast-flowing tears give tidings of (the fate of) Baghdad, why your stay, when the lovers have departed? Ye pilgrims to al-Zawrā' go not forth; for in that sanctuary and abode is no inhabitant... Truly the Day of Judgement has been held in Baghdad, and her term, when to prosperity succeeds adversity."


As regards the contents of the qasīda it can be divided into three nearly equal parts. The first part (11.1-6) after a short invocation, describes Baghdad as a revered centre of religion which was laid waste by the enemies of Islam, who are accused of promoting Christianity (1.6). The second part (11.7-14) poetically describes the sack and plundering of the once rich city and the slaughter of its inhabitants, and hints that these terrors are a punishment inflicted by Allah for the heedlessness of His people (11.13-14). The third part (11.15-21) is a mournful final accord which is not unlike the "Lasciate ogni speranza" of Dante: there is no hope left after the fall of the 'Abbāsids under whose rule the city flourished and the sciences were cultivated; even the poet himself had not hoped to remain alive after that veritable day of Judgement (1.21).

Our poem is consequently a funeral ode and belongs to a special class of qasida. In their development all the earliest varieties of Arabic poetry assumed the qasida-form and the dirge (mashthiya) also shared in this process. The sentiments felt at the death of the beloved were first expressed by the simple unpoetical niyāha, then by say' verses of which there developed short metric sayings of some length and finally the perfect mashthiya in the metric varieties of the qasīda. The qasīda consequently belongs to the class of the mashthiya - qasīda.

But whereas the marthiyya, as a rule, laments the loss of a prominent person or a tribe, enumerating his or its qualities, our qaṣida is a typical example of a funeral ode lamenting the fall of a city like Baghdād. Our poem, nevertheless, has all the necessary requisites and characteristic features common to every qaṣida. Short as it is consisting only of twenty one double verses - it is a fine piece of post classical Arabic poetry written in elegant language, and in the basit metre, the solemn rhythm of which is specially suited to the dirge. But, in addition to these common characteristics of the qaṣida, our poem also shows some peculiarities shared by the marthiyya-qaṣidas only:

1. The absence of the nasīb. whereas in the ordinary qaṣida opening nasīb is an essential requisite, it never occurs in the marthiyya-qaṣida, since the object of the funeral ode is quite different. Instead of the nasīb there are some constant formulae with which a marthiyya begins. Thus the poet sometimes refers to the tears shed on a tragic event, which is also to be seen in our qaṣida referring to the tears of those who lament the fall of Baghdād.

1. Ibid, PP.327-30, where we read that according to Ibn Rashīq in his Ṭuṣā, he could not find any nasībs in the marāthī with the exception of a qaṣida by Dūrayd b.al-Ṣimma. But even this exception is explained by the circumstance that this poem was written one year after the death of the lamented person, when the blood-ransom for his sake had been fulfilled already, so that the poet could employ a nasīb to express his other feelings with the deceased person.
2. The repetition of the name of the lamented person, which is represented here by some poetical names of Baghdād, as al-Zawzā' and Tāj al-Khilāfa.

3. The repetition of the same phrase at the beginning of several consecutive double verses. This had been regarded from the beginning as a peculiarity of the niyaha and, retained through its later poetical development, it was also used in the period of decadence as an archaistic rhetorical trick employed not only in the marthiyya qasīda but also in other classes of qasīdas. Thus we see in our qasīda the four fold repetition of the phrase wakam (and how many).

With these characteristic features our qasīda is a fine marthiyya-qasīda from the period of decadence of Arabic literature. It is worthy of our attention for two reasons:

Firstly, it is the only hitherto known work of Taqī al-Dīn Ismā'īl b. Abī al-Yusr and a specimen of post-classical Arabic poetry written in the refined style of the court poets.

1. Ibid, PP. 313–4.
2. Ibid, PP. 314–20
Secondly, it is to our knowledge the only poem lamenting the fall of Baghdad and is an excellent poetical expression of the contemporary sentiment felt at the fall of the 'Abbāsids and at the tragedy of their capital. Despite the decadence of the last Abbasids, their prestige was still so great throughout the Muslim world that even the court-poet of the then flourishing Ayyabid dynasty, in Damascus could not help lamenting that with them the splendour of Islam had passed away and that after the capture of the Prophet's family he could not hope either to remain alive. His presentiment was justified, because one generation later, in 699-700/1299-1301, his own city, Damascus, and the Ayyūbid empire were invaded by the same Mongols who, after destroying the "Crown of the Caliphate", Swept over all the Muslims Orient.
CHAPTER-VI

AL-DHAHABĪ'S POSITION

As an author al-Dhahabī was not as prolific as Ibn al-Jawzī before him or Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī after him. However, some of his works have attained a high standard in East and West alike. Like practically all the post-classical Arab authors al-Dhahabī was also a compiler. But his works are distinguished by careful compilation and constant references to his authorities. It is for these peculiarities that his works on Tradition, specially on the 'Ilm al-Riāl, have become very popular. But his name and fame spread far and wide due to his greatest work on History of Islam (Tārīkh al-Islām).

Al-Dhahabī's many-sided qualities were acknowledged both by his contemporaries and his later biographers. By the latter he was commonly referred to as Muhaddith al-Asr (The Traditionist of the Age) and Khātam al-Huffāz (The Seal or the Last of the hafīzs).

Ibn Shākir al-Kutubī mentioned a selected poetical phrases composed by al-Dhahabī himself as:

"If a man has studied Ḥadīth (Tradition) under me and open a place for the death of my image; He has not repayed with a charity giving, because I wish his living and he wishes my killing."

Ibn Shākir also quoted al-Dhahabi’s poetry as:

"The true knowledge is what Allah and His Messenger Muḥammad(s) said, and what is an unanimous resolution, so go on fighting for its cause; Beware of preparing a dispute between the Messenger(s), and the opinion of a theologian (jurisprudent) out of ignorance".

According to Salah al-Dīn al-Šafadī, "al-Dhahabi had nothing of the rigidness of the traditionists or the stupidity of the historians. On the contrary he was a lawyer of spirit (Faqīh al-Nafs), and was well experienced with the sayings (opinions) of the people. He was an expert in the opinions of Madhāhib of the Imāms, skilled in the essay writers and the style of the proceeding generations. Any kind of tradition comes to him he scrutinizes its weak, text or unknown chains of its narration or defamation of its narrators.

Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalānī adds to this statement and says, "I drank from the water of Zamzam in order to reach the rank of al-Dhahabi in hifzī" So, he composed a beautiful Qaṣīda (ode) in praise of Al-Dhahabi’s excellent qualities. So, he composed as:

1. Ibid, p.372.
your friend has no intention in that, so live like the sun in the high position; My fate is that you may live throughout the nights. You should not be tired although you are restless."

On the other hand, we also find opinions adverse to his reputation. His own most eminent pupil "Abd al-Wahhab b. Ali Taj al-Din al-Subki (d. 728-772/1327-1370) reproached him with reviling even his own Shafi'i School of theology in addition to the Hanafis and the Asharits, and extolling the theological tendency known as al-Mu'assima. Inspite of that al-Subki celebrated al-Dhahabi in an elegy as:

"After the death of al-Imam al-Hafiz al-Dhahabi there is no man for hadith (tradition) and there is no man for seekers of it who travel at night; There is also no man after him who can narrate the hadith and spread it among all mankind whether they are Arabs or non-Arabs."

But on the other hand, we also find opinions which tend to detract from the reputation of al-Dhahabi. Thus his contemporaries Abū al-Fidā' and ʿUmar b. al-Wardi, while admitting that he was an

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historian and traditionist of a high rank, state that towards the end of his life when he became blind in 743/1342-43, according to others as early as in 741/1340 he compiled biographies of some of his contemporaries, which they were still alive from biased and seeing his end approaching, information obtained from enthusiastic young men who gathered round him. Not being able to verify their statements himself, he quite unwillingly tarnished the good reputation of certain persons. Al-Dhahabī's vast knowledge of the narrators of hadith led his pupil al-Subki to comment that al-Dhahabī was a master of al-Jarḥ wa al-Tadīl and an expert in the knowledge of the science of Narrators. As if the whole nation assembled in one particular place which he observed and then began to narrate the biographies of those, present there.

Al-Dhahabī's intellectual life and position can be discussed in three ways - the mode of the recitation of the holy Qurān, the narration and compilation of the Hadīth and his historical writings. Hence we may rightly discuss him as a recitor, a traditionist and a historian of the first rank. In the field of the modes of recitation of the holy Qurān we find his utmost endeavour in his safe guarding the integrity of the holy Quran. Hence he was named al-ustādh al-Thīqa al-Kabīr (The Great Reliable Teacher).

Al-Dhahabī's contemporary and subsequent writers acknowledged
his honourable position in the fields of ḥadīth theology and history al-Ṣafadī, as we mentioned before, says that he is astonished at al-Dhahabī's precautions against errors in his compilations. He does not proceed with any ḥadīth till he explains its textual weakness or faults in the chain of its narrators or flows in its narration. Al-Ṣafadī also adds that he has never seen anybody else to be so cautious of a ḥadīth.

Al-Dhahabī's position remained unchallenged in the subsequent generations. In the 9th/15th century al-Suyūṭī mentioned that the Muḥaddithes of the Science of narration were dependant on four persons one of them was al-Dhahabī. Al-Dhahabī has a great many collections of books on history. His position and honour exalted in this field. We should mention two things for which al-Dhahabī was often criticised by his opponents.

First, he was not impartial while writing biographies on those who contradicted him in their beliefs. We know that al-Dhahabī was a Shāfi‘ī in the subsidiary rules, and a Ḥanbalī in the fundamentals. His inclination to the opinions of Ḥanbalī Theology led him to

believe that the Ash'arites were in the wrong. His student al-
Subki touched twice on this matter in his book Ma'id al-Ni'am and
once in his Tabaqat. While discussing the effect of a historian
on the general people al-Subki comments that often a historian
approaches harms from the nations of opposite beliefs. Because,
he believes that they are in the wrong. That is why either he is
critical of them or he fails to appreciate them. This is what has
frequently happened to our teacher Dhahabi in his dealing with
the Ash'arites. May Allah bless him. Al-Dhahabi is our teacher.
But what is true must be followed. He also adds that By God, al-
Dhahabi was undoubtedly pious and virtuous. But he was prejudiced
against his opponents and believed that they were in the wrong.¹

Al-Subki was one of the close students of al-Dhahabi. He
praised his teacher highly in his Tabaqat and graduated in the
field of Hadith under his supervision. But he criticised al-Dhahabi
as we stated above. It is important to note that al-Subki admits
the partiality of al-Dhahabi which was not at all whimsical; rather
it resulted from his established belief that his opponents were in
the wrong. He used to believe something as well as defend it with

¹. Ibid, P.28.
a reason. Owing to the diversity in beliefs an individual even
a group turned hostile to another in every age. Inspite of that
al-Dhahabi used to evaluate the people with his own reasons and
established beliefs. For example, he did not like chemistry. So,
he spoke of his companion and teacher 'Ali b. Ahmad al-Wasiti, "Our
companion was absorbed in chemistry and was thus a victim of a
hallucination". He was also discontented with Sufism. So, he made
a comment on his teacher 'Abd al-Muhsin b. al-Adim, He used to make
himself busy with the mockeries of Sufism". He also disliked phil-
losophy. So he told about his friend al-Hasan b. Ahmad b. Zafar, "He
was so indifferent to his religion and a philosopher in his faith".
But al-Dhahabi appreciated his other deeds and did justice to him.
This is how he wrote other biographies. He criticised the person
whose biography he writes for his demerits and praised him for his
merits. His biography on Ibn Taiymiyyah is an excellent example.
He praised him for some of his works he liked and criticised him
for some other works, he disliked during his lifetime and hereafter.
Thus he wrote the life history of Muhammad b. Irahim b. Jumaa and told,
"He is an Ashari Scholar." He praised him well and did not belittle
him for his being an Ashari.

1. Ibid, Pp. 29-30.
In the light of the above discussion we can come to the conclusion that al-Dhahabi was not so biased as his contemporaries alleged him to be. Despite being a Hanbali, his biographers did much, though not full, justice to him. It is a mark of honour and position shown to him when he was compared with other historians like al-Sakhawi who were intentionally biased and not motivated by any belief or reason. So they were far from being judicious.

Second, Ibn al-Wardi (d.749/1348) alone accuses that al-Dhahabi was very hasty. So, he wrote biographies on living personalities of his age depending on the youths visiting him frequently. Ibn al-Wardi lived first in Egypt and then in Aleppo where he died one year after al-Dhahabi's death. He did not have close association with al-Dhahabi unlike al-Birzali, al-Safadi, al-Husaini, Ibn Shakir al-Kutubi, Ibn Kathir and al-Subki who knew him well. Inspite of their close association with al-Dhahabi at Damascus none of them accused him of his dependence on the youths as Ibn al-Wardi did. Al-Dhahabi's biographies on the contemporary living personalities are, in our opinions, a great achievement for him. We find his originality in what he wrote about his age in his books excluding his biographical works and historical events. So, it is impossible
on his part to depend on the youths without verifying their reports and correcting them.

It is quite natural that al-Dhahabi's theological opponents used to hurt him with the words that he takes sides in favour of his own group of theology and depreciated the values of his opponents. This was an old practice in order to harm the compilers, but in order to make the renowned authors unknown to the people.

The Syrian Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Nāṣir al-Dīn (d.842/1438)² compared al-Dhahabi between al-Bīrzālī and al-Mīzzi. So, he pronounced a verdict in favour of al-Mīzzi that he is superior in learing the science of narrators (al-Rijāl) of the 1st century Tabaqāt. He also passed a judgement in favour of al-Bīrzālī that he is superior among the contemporay and predecessors of the nearer Tabaqāt (classes). Thereafter he commented that al-Dhahabi is superior in the middle Tabaqāt (Classes) as some of his professors remarked about him³.

Al-Dhahabi's position as a historian, traditionist and lawyer was acknowledged by his friends and foes alike. So, they remarked that

1. Ibid, P.30
2. Cf. Ibn Nāṣir al-Dīn, al-Tibyān, 21st class, Ms. available in the library of Arif Ḥikma at Madina.
he is a man of Ḥasan al-Rṣaid (The Science of Narration) in every path and circumstances. As if the sources of knowledge accomplished in a particular soil. So he meditated in them and began to give information about them. He served this art of hadith day and night till his legs penetrated in it. But his tongue and pen were not tired. He, therefore, became an example in this branch of knowledge. People are interested in his works and they began to travel to him for reading writing and hearing hadith from him.

Al-Dhahabi was a historian unlike other historians and a traditionist unlike other traditionists. He was a man who sided the intellect and became unparalleled in his writings and compilations. He deeply thought in different branches of knowledge which he embraced. Then he brought out a new thing adding to it an old one. Thereafter he filled up a vacuum which might remain vacant, if he was not. He founded a design which was considered by some traditionists as a supererogatory. He was an Imam who worked hard with his knowledge and the subsequent generations, therefore, got benefit from it. People used to say that when the prides of Hafiz Ibn 'Asākir are counted in the 6th/12th century, Damascus should get pride in...

1. Ibid, P.371.
considering the domain of knowledge of Ḥāfiz al-Dhahabī in the 8th/14th century. Their fame and getting benefit from their books cannot be stopped in the boundary of Damascus or the Syrian countries but it will go up to the East and West. So, both of them were greatest Muslim historians.¹

Al-Dhahabī was a poet, but not of high ranking. His talent for poetry was certainly well known in his own time. Al-Katibi quotes some lines from his poetical works, but does not mention any independent anthology or other work on poetry by him. This is probably due to the circumstances that his poems were read only by a limited number of courtiers and scholars in Damascus. Al-Dhahabī being a poet, was much interested in the poetry of others. He, therefore, included in his Tārīkh al-Islām a Qasīda comprised 21 lines lamenting the decline of the glorious city of Baghdād. The author of this Qasīda is called by al-Dhahabī Taqī al-Dīn Ismā‘īl b. ʿAlī al-Yusr.

The Qasīda begins thus:²

لا أُبِّئِ بِإِنْجِيَةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
فَمَا وَفُوِّضَ الْإِحْبَابُ فَدُسَّاهُ
فَمَا يَتَقَلَّبُ الْفِيَّةُ وَالْمُبَارَكُ
بَرَاءُونَ السَّاُرَاءِ لَا نُنَفَدُهَا

¹. Ibid, pp. 370-71.
"The fast flowing tears give tidings of (the fate of) Baghda'd; why your stay, when the lovers have separated?

O the pilgrims to al-Zawra! Go not forth; for in that sanctuary and adob is no inhabitant."

This Qasida is a fine marthiyya-qasida from the period of decadence of Arabic literature. It is worthy of our attention for two reasons.

Firstly, it is the only hitherto known work of Taqî al-Dîn Ismâm b. Abî al-Yusr and a specimen of post-classical Arabic poetry written in the refined style of the court poets.

Secondly, it is to our knowledge the only poem lamenting the fall of Baghda'd and is an excellent poetical expression of the contemporary sentiment fell at the fall of the 'Abbasids and at the tragedy of their capital.\(^1\)

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8. Barthold, W., "Qyipchaq", Encyclopaedia of Islām, vol. ii

9. Al-Dhahabi, Mu‘jam al-Shuyūkh, MS. Idem, Siyar Alam


11. Idem, Bayān Zaghīl al-‘ilm (Damascus, 1347/1928)


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32. Ibn al-rido, 'Umar b. Mu'azzafar (d.749/1348), Tarikh Ibn al-Wardi
(Cairo: al-Natba al-Wahbiyya, 1285/1868).

33. Idem, Fi Tadhilli Tarikh Abi al-Fida'.


35. Ibn Battuta, Rihlat fi Asia wa Africa (1325-1354 A.D)


41. Ilīyās Sarkīs, Majmūʿa al-Maṭbuʿāt al-`Arabiyya (Cairo, 1928)


47. Ibn Ḥajār, al-Iṣāba fī Tamīz al-Ṣahāba (Cariro 1329-1325/1905-1907)

49. Ibn Kathîr, Ismâ'il b.‘Umar al-Bidâya wa al-Nihâya (Cairo 1358/1939)


52. Ibn al-Alusi, Jalâ al-Aynayn fi Muḥâkamât al-Ahmadyan (Bulaq 1298/1880).


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64. Lane poole, *Mohammadan Dynasty* (Delhi: Idārat-i Adabiyyat, 1977)


82. Spiess, O., "Beiträge zur arabischen Literaturgeschichte", *Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, Leipzig (1932).


90. Al-Zayyāt, Ḥābīb, Khusain al-Kutub fī Dimashq wa Dāwahīhā (Cairo: Ma‘ārif Press, 1902), vol. i.