



UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)

Egyptian Arabic in the seventeenth century : a study and edition of Yusuf al-Magribi's 'Daf al-isr an kalam ahl Misr'

Zack, E.W.A.

Publication date

2009

Document Version

Final published version

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Zack, E. W. A. (2009). *Egyptian Arabic in the seventeenth century : a study and edition of Yusuf al-Magribi's 'Daf al-isr an kalam ahl Misr'*. [Thesis, fully internal, Universiteit van Amsterdam]. LOT.

General rights

It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations

If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: <https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact>, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

CHAPTER 1

Life and Works of Yūsuf al-Mağribī

1.1 Birth, family background and education

Yūsuf 'Abū al-Maḥāsīn Ġamāl al-Dīn b. Zakariyyā b. Ḥarb al-Mağribī al-Miṣrī al-'Azharī¹⁵ (±970/1562-1019/1611) was raised in Cairo. In two of his surviving manuscripts he refers to himself as Yūsuf al-Mağribī, and says the following in his book *Buğyat al-arīb wa ġunyat al-adīb* ("The desire of the skillful and the wealth of the cultured"):¹⁶

قاله الفقير المغربي نسبا * الأزهري موطننا وطلبنا

"so says the *sūfi* of North-African descent, an Azhari by residence and study."

The resources which might provide insight into Yūsuf al-Mağribī's life are, unfortunately, rather scarce. There are a few comments, which he makes about himself, in both *Daf al-iṣr* and his other work, *Buğyat al-arīb wa ġunyat al-adīb*, and we also have some remarks made by his biographers. The first biography of al-Mağribī was written by Šihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Ḥafāğī (979/1571-1069/1659).¹⁷ After being *qāḍī* in several Ottoman provinces, al-Ḥafāğī was appointed *qāḍī* in Cairo. He dedicated a chapter to al-Mağribī in his biographical work, *Rayḥānat al-'alibbā' wa zahrāt al-ḥayāt al-dunyā*.¹⁸ Al-Ḥafāğī's work is more a selection of some of al-Mağribī's verses than a real biography, since it does not provide us with many details of the subject's life. It does state al-Mağribī's full name was Abū al-Maḥāsīn Yūsuf Ġamāl al-Dīn al-'Azharī al-Mağribī,¹⁹ and that he was born in Egypt.²⁰ The book also mentions his *dīwān* entitled *al-Ḍahab al-Yūsufī*. Not only did al-Ḥafāğī know al-Mağribī personally, but they were also friends. Al-Ḥafāğī writes about his companion with affection, for instance: "He (= al-Mağribī) often praised me for my pleasant company, and treated me with friendly cordiality."²¹ They had many things in common: they were about the same

¹⁵ The name as given by 'Awwād (1968) p. 6, based on the information provided by the various biographers.

¹⁶ fol. 2a; more about *Buğyat al-arīb wa ġunyat al-adīb* will be said in §1.4.

¹⁷ See GAL II pp. 368-9, GAL S II p. 396 and *EF* IV p. 912a ff. (F. Krenkow).

¹⁸ Al-Ḥafāğī (1967) II pp. 32-37.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* p. 35-36.

²⁰ *Ibid.* p. 32.

²¹ Al-Ḥafāğī (1967) II p. 36.

Life and Works of Yūsuf al-Mağribī

age (he mentions that al-Mağribī was a bit older)²² and shared an interest in poetry and Arabic linguistics, especially the origins of (colloquial) Arabic words. In al-Ḥafāğī's case this is demonstrated in his book *Şifā' al-ğalīl fīmā fī kalām al-'arab min al-daḥīl* ("The gratification of the desire concerning the loanwords in the Arabic language").²³ He also wrote a commentary on the *Durrat al-ğawwāş* of al-Ḥarīrī,²⁴ which is interesting because al-Mağribī produced an arrangement of the same work (see §1.4).

Ḥāğğī Ḥalīfa (1017/1609-1067/1657),²⁵ historian, bibliographer and geographer, mentions al-Mağribī in his great bibliographical dictionary, *Kaşf al-zunūn 'an asāmī al-kutub wa al-funūn*. Although he only devotes two lines to al-Mağribī, he nevertheless provides some new information, i.e. the full title of his *dīwān*: *al-Dahab al-Yūsufī wa al-mawrid al-'ađib al-şafī*.²⁶

Al-Muḥibbī (1061/1651-1111/1699)²⁷ calls al-Mağribī *nazīl Mişr* "a stranger residing in Egypt" in his biographical work *Ḥulāşat al-'atar fī a'yān al-qarn al-ḥādī 'aşar*.²⁸ He also tells us when al-Mağribī died, which neither al-Ḥafāğī nor Ḥalīfa mention. We, therefore, know that al-Mağribī died on 18 *Dū al-Qa'da* 1019 AH (around 1 February 1611 AD) in Cairo.²⁹ Furthermore, al-Muḥibbī mentions the names of a few of al-Mağribī's teachers,³⁰ and this will be dealt with in more detail in §1.1.1.

Al-Mağribī provides the following information about his childhood in *Daf al-işr*:³¹ At the age of seven, he went with his father, whose profession is not known,

²² It can be deduced from this information that al-Mağribī was born at the end of the sixties or beginning of the seventies of the 10th century AH, which corresponds to the sixties of the sixteenth century AD.

²³ GAL II p. 369 and GAL S II p. 396.

²⁴ *Durrat al-ğawwāş fī awḥām al-ḥawāşş* by Abū Muḥammad al-Qāsim b. 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. 'Uṭmān b. al-Ḥarīrī al-Başrī (446/1054-516/1122), best known for his *Maqāmāt*, see *Ef*² III p. 221a (D.S. Margoliouth), GAL I p. 325ff. and GAL S I pp. 486ff. *Durrat al-ğawwāş* is a specimen of the *lahn al-'amma*-literature, see §3.3.1.

²⁵ Also known as Kātib Čelebī, real name Muştafā b. 'Abd Allāh, see *Ef*² IV p. 760b (O. Şaik Gökyay), GAL II pp. 563-5 and GAL S II p. 635-6.

²⁶ See Ḥāğğī Ḥalīfa (1941/1943) I p. 829.

²⁷ Muḥammad Amīn b. Fađl Allāh b. Muḥibb Allāh b. Muḥammad Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Dimaşqī; see *Ef*² VII p. 469b (C. Brockelmann), GAL II pp. 377-9 and GAL S II p. 403.

²⁸ Al-Muḥibbī (1975) IV p. 501.

²⁹ *Ibid.* p. 503. GAL II p. 367 and GAL S II p. 394 mentions that al-Mağribī died in 1019/1609. This, however, cannot be correct, since the Islamic year 1019 started in March 1610 and ended in March 1611, see Freeman-Grenville (1995).

³⁰ Al-Muḥibbī (1975) IV p. 501.

³¹ See fols. 70a-71a.

Life and Works of Yūsuf al-Mağribī

to al-Ḥiğāz, where his father later died. He was buried in *al-Baqī*, the cemetery of al-Madīna.³² After his father's death, Yūsuf returned to Egypt, where he stayed with his maternal uncles who were famous for manufacturing sword belts (*ḥamā'il al-suyūf*). He learned the craft from and worked for them. In *Daf al-iṣr*, al-Mağribī refers to a funny anecdote about his uncles: he used to go to the Ibn Ṭūlūn mosque in the evenings to learn the Qur'ān, the language of which awoke his interest in grammar. From that moment on, he started to learn the *'Alfiya*, the famous work about grammar by Ibn Mālik,³³ by heart when his uncles were asleep. He had to do this discreetly, because one of his uncles objected to his studies, stating that there were no scholars in the family, and there was no reason for him to become one, because it would only make him sleepy and affect his work. Each year, his uncles sold large numbers of their sword belts to the caravans which came from the Sudan. When, one year, the caravan did not arrive, the uncles decided to gather up their wares and travel to the Sudan. When they left Egypt, they set Yūsuf up in the fabric trade, as a way for him to provide for himself, and the women and children of the family who had been left behind. Soon after his uncles left, Yūsuf sold the shop, bought books with the proceeds, and joined al-Azhar University.³⁴ His uncles never returned, and some reports reached al-Mağribī that they had so many children over there, that in the evenings, they had to drive them into the house with sticks, like cattle.

From this anecdote, it is understood that al-Mağribī was, apparently, living in the Ibn Ṭūlūn quarter, since this is where he received his Qur'ān lessons. For centuries, this area had been a meeting point for North-African pilgrims, and a large concentration of North-Africans resided there (believed to be around a quarter of the population).³⁵ From there, they sold products such as burnouses, woolen *aḥrima*,³⁶ and fabrics, the latter being the trade in which al-Mağribī was set up by his uncles.³⁷ The name al-Mağribī “the North-African” does not, necessarily, imply that al-Mağribī himself was born in North Africa, but simply that his family originated from there. Indeed, as we have seen, al-Ḥafāğī mentioned that al-Mağribī was born in Cairo, while Muḥibbī stated that he was originally from

³² In his dictionary, al-Mağribī sometimes refers to colloquial words he heard in the Ḥiğāz during his stay there.

³³ See *GAL I* pp. 359-63 and *GAL S I* pp. 521-7.

³⁴ He belonged to the Mağribī *riwāq* at al-Azhar, mentioned in a lecture by Ḥusām 'Abd al-Mu'ī, IFAO, 24 January 2002.

³⁵ See Raymond (1983) p. 87.

³⁶ See Raymond (1995) p. 38.

³⁷ See Raymond (1983) p. 36.

somewhere else. Al-Ḥafāğī's information is more reliable, because he was a personal friend of al-Mağribī, while al-Muḥibbī was from a different generation. Moreover, as we can see from the anecdote from *Daf al-işr*, al-Mağribī's maternal uncles were well-established, famous artisans. This also supports the theory that he must have been born in Cairo.

1.1.1 Al-Mağribī's teachers

Al-Mağribī mentions a number of his teachers. He says that at the Ibn Ṭūlūn Mosque, he was encouraged to learn grammar by its *imām*, a certain šayḥ Šu'ayb.³⁸ His first teacher at al-Azhar was called sheikh Sağğar (*mu'addib al-aṭfāl*, "the educator of children"), who taught in the office of a šayḥ Ğa'far.³⁹ This šayḥ, Sağğar, is mentioned by al-Mağribī in relation to the strange way in which he used to greet his pupils, *allāh yikfīk šarr zibbak* "may God forgive you the evil of your prick", which embarrassed the young Yūsuf a great deal.⁴⁰ Another teacher who taught him *'ilm al-'arūd* (metrics) at al-Azhar was Muḥammad Rakrūk al-Ğazā'irī; although all that al-Mağribī tells about him is that he died in Medina.⁴¹ Two of al-Mağribī's teachers were brothers, namely Aḥmad al-'Alqamī, with whom he read part of al-Mutanabbī's *dīwān*, and Ibrāhīm al-'Alqamī, with whom he read the *Alfiya* of al-'Irāqī.⁴² The following information is available about his other teachers:

- Ibn al-Ğayṭī:⁴³ full name Nağm al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Ğayṭī al-Iskandarī al-Şāfi'ī (910/1504-981/1573).⁴⁴ He was head of the *şūfi*-monasteries al-Şalāḥiya and al-Siryāqūsīya in Cairo. One of his writings is *Qişşat mi'rāğ al-nabī*.⁴⁵ Al-Mağribī mentions that Ibn al-Ğayṭī pronounced the *qāf* as a *ṭā'*.⁴⁶

³⁸ See fol. 70b.

³⁹ See fol. 50b.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ See fol. 59a. See also the endnote there for additional information about Rakrūk.

⁴² See fol. 103a. Abū al-Faḍl 'Abd al-Raḥīm b. al-Ḥusayn b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān Zayn al-Dīn al-'Irāqī al-Kurdī (725/1325-806/1404) is the author of *al-Alfiyya fī uşūl al-ḥadīṭ*, also known as *al-Tabşira wa l-tadkira*. See GAL II pp. 77-8.

⁴³ See fol. 16a.

⁴⁴ See al-Ziriklī (1955) VI p. 234.

⁴⁵ See GAL II pp. 445-6 and S II p. 467-8. Al-Ğayṭī does not have a separate entry in Muḥibbī, but is mentioned as the teacher of Sālim b. Muḥammad al-Sanhūrī; his name is mentioned as al-Nağm Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. Abī Bakr al-Ğayṭī al-Iskandarī ṭumma al-Mişṭī and *al-Mi'rāğ* is mentioned as well, see al-Muḥibbī (1975) II p. 204.

⁴⁶ See *Daf al-işr* fol. 16a.

Life and Works of Yūsuf al-Mağribī

- Yaḥyā al-Aṣīlī:⁴⁷ full name Yaḥyā b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Aṣīlī al-Miṣrī, who was a famous poet at that time. He was born in 910/1504 and raised in Dumyāt, but later moved to Cairo. Muḥibbī provides some samples of his poetry. Al-Aṣīlī died in 1010/1601-2 in Mecca.⁴⁸

- Two ṣayḥs of the Bakrī-family: Abū al-Mawāhib b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Bakrī al-Ṣiddīqī al-Miṣrī al-Šāfi‘ī (973/1565-1037/1627-8),⁴⁹ and Zayn al-‘Ābidīn b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Bakrī (d. 1013/1604).⁵⁰ Both were sons of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Bakrī al-Ṣiddīqī al-Miṣrī al-Šāfi‘ī, called *al-ustād al-kabīr* by Muḥibbī.⁵¹ Of the second ṣayḥ, al-Mağribī reveals in an anecdote that when he got excited while speaking, some foam resembling the faucial bag of a camel came from his mouth.⁵²

- ṣayḥ ‘Alī al-Mağdisī,⁵³ full name Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Ġānim al-Mağdisī al-Ḥanaḥī (920/1514-1004/1596),⁵⁴ head of the *Ḥanaḥī* order and one of the greatest imams of his time.⁵⁵ Al-Mağribī dedicated his work *Muḍahhabāt al-ḥuzn fī al-mā’ wa al-ḥuḍra wa al-wağh al-ḥasan* to him, for which he received a reasonable some of money.⁵⁶ One of al-Mağdisī’s works is called *Buğyat al-murtād fī taṣṣīḥ al-ṣād*,⁵⁷ which probably inspired the title of al-Mağribī’s *Buğyat al-arīb*. It is also remarkable that al-Mağdisī has written a *Ḥawāšī ‘ala al-qāmūs*,⁵⁸ so he was, perhaps, also the one who kindled al-Mağribī’s interest in al-Fīrūzābādī’s *al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ*.⁵⁹

- Yūsuf al-Kurdī, who gave al-Mağribī his name Yūsuf.⁶⁰ He was a *ṣūfi* of the Al-Ḥawāṭirīya-order.⁶¹

⁴⁷ See fols. 29b, 89b, 104b, 122a. Also mentioned by al-Ḥafāğī (1967) II p. 35.

⁴⁸ See al-Muḥibbī (1975) IV p. 480-5.

⁴⁹ Mentioned in *Daf al-iṣr* on fols. 5b and 13a.

⁵⁰ See Kaḥḥāla (1961) IV p. 197.

⁵¹ See al-Muḥibbī (1975) I p. 117 and p. 145; Muḥammad al-Bakrī does not have his own entry but is mentioned in the entries of his sons.

⁵² See fol. 47a.

⁵³ Fols. 3a, 5b; he is the same person as ṣayḥ ‘Alī al-Qudsī, mentioned twice on fol. 19b.

⁵⁴ Such is his name in *GAL S II* p. 395; *EI² III* p. 772a (Eds.) mentions his name slightly differently: Nūr Dīn ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī Ibn Ġānim al-Mağdisī.

⁵⁵ See al-Muḥibbī (1975) pp. 180-5.

⁵⁶ See fol. 19b.

⁵⁷ *GAL S II* p. 395 has *dād* instead of *ṣād*.

⁵⁸ See *GAL S II* p. 395.

⁵⁹ *Al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ wa al-qābūs al-wasīṭ al-ğāmi’ li-mā ḍahab min al-‘arab ṣamaṭīṭ* by Abū al-Ṭāhir Muḥammad b. Ya’qūb b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm Mağd al-Dīn al-Šāfi‘ī al-Širāzī al-Fīrūzābādī (729/1329-817/1415), see *EI² II* p. 926a ff. (H. Fleisch), *GAL II* p. 231ff. and *GAL S II* p. 234ff.

⁶⁰ See *Daf al-iṣr* fol. 14b.

As well as the teachers mentioned by al-Mağribī in *Daf al-iṣr*, Muḥibbī mentions al-Badr al-Qarāfī (Muḥammad b. Yahyā b. ʿUmar Badr al-Dīn al-Qarāfī, 939/1533-1008/1600).⁶² The editor of al-Ḥafāğī (1967) II p. 104 mentions in a footnote that al-Badr al-Qarāfī learned *ḥadīṭ* from al-Mağribī, but this is unlikely because he was at least 30 years older than him. This information is probably taken from Muḥibbī (1975) IV p. 258 which states that al-Qarāfī heard *ḥadīṭ* from al-Ġamāl Yūsuf b. al-qādī Zakariyā. It is uncertain whether this is our Yūsuf al-Mağribī or not because, although we do not know what his father did, it is unlikely he was a scholar. To complicate matters further, according to al-Muḥibbī, al-Qarāfī was al-Mağribī's teacher.⁶³ Al-Muḥibbī also mentions al-Sanhūrī⁶⁴ as al-Mağribī's teacher, who in his turn was a pupil of Muḥammad al-Bakrī.

Al-Mağribī kept in touch with some of his teachers, as we can see in *Daf al-iṣr*, and al-Azhar remained a favourite place. He even mentions that part of *Daf al-iṣr* was written on the roof there.⁶⁵

1.1.2 Knowledge of Persian and Turkish

Al-Mağribī knew Persian and Turkish. We know this because he translated some works from these languages to Arabic (see §1.4). He also mentions in *Daf al-iṣr* that he once made-up a poem in Turkish on the spot.⁶⁶ He does not, however, reveal where or from whom he learnt these languages. He had Turkish and Persian friends, and mentions, for instance, a Persian dish, *ḥaška falāw* "dry rice"⁶⁷ which he ate at the home of his Persian friends, Muḥammad Riḍā and his brothers.⁶⁸ On fol. 10a, al-Mağribī translates a verse from the Persian *Gulistān* into Arabic, and then maintains that he mentions it there to demonstrate that *Daf al-iṣr* (at that point, still called *al-Faql al-ʿāmm*, see §2.3 for more information about the title) not only concerns Arabic. He goes on to say that he will limit the amount of Persian

⁶¹ For more information about this order, see the endnote to fol. 14b.

⁶² See al-Muḥibbī (1975) IV pp. 258-262.

⁶³ See al-Muḥibbī (1975) IV p. 501.

⁶⁴ ʿIzz al-Dīn Abū al-Nağā Sālim b. Muḥammad al-Sanhūrī al-Miṣrī (probably around 966/1558-9 - 1015/1606), a Mālikī jurist and *ḥadīṭ*-expert, head of the Mālikī school of Cairo, see *EF* IX p. 19b (S.A. Jackson). See also al-Muḥibbī (1975) II p. 204.

⁶⁵ See fol. 5a.

⁶⁶ This poem will be discussed in §4.3.

⁶⁷ From Persian خشکه *hushka*, "Boiled rice without butter" (see Steingass (1975) p. 463) and پالو *palāv*, "a rice dish" (ibid. p. 254).

⁶⁸ See fol. 10a.

Life and Works of Yūsuf al-Mağribī

used because he does not want to make it too difficult for those who have not mastered that language, of whom there are many. This indicates that although knowledge of Persian was not uncommon, it was not, necessarily, wide-spread:

وانما ذكرت مثل هذا هنا حتى يعلم ان هذا الكتاب اسم على مسمى وانه الفضل العام لا يخصّ
العربي الا انني لا اكثر من ذلك لئلا يصعب على من لا يعرف الفارسي وكثير ما هم

“I mentioned things like this here so it is known that this book has an appropriate title and that “The general benefit” does not only concern the Arabic language. However, I will not do this [e.g. mention words of Persian origin] in order not to complicate matters for those who do not know Persian, and these are many.”

1.2 Career

Little is known about al-Mağribī’s further career, although he mentions that he held a *wazīfa*, or official post, but he does not give any more details. He refers to the fact that he was once afflicted by *ḫāḫa*, i.e. a “death rattle”, and that one of his acquaintances who visited him thought he was at death’s door, and went to see a judge to ask about a job al-Mağribī held, claiming that he had already died, with a deed being drafted to that effect. This seems to indicate that al-Mağribī had some kind of job in the juridical system. So far as his health was concerned, al-Mağribī recovered from his illness on the same day. Soon after that incident, although still feeling weak, he attended the funeral of his acquaintance’s daughter, which caused him to wonder about the strange coincidence.⁶⁹

1.3 Personal life

Al-Mağribī refers to himself as *al-ḫāḫī* several times,⁷⁰ indicating that he was a *ḫāḫī*. As Raymond (1983) p. 33 argued, there were many links between the *ḫāḫī*-orders and “official” Islam as represented by al-Azhar. Being an Azhar-educated *‘ālim* and a *ḫāḫī* were two different things, but were not mutually exclusive. As discussed above, some of al-Mağribī’s teachers were *ḫāḫīs*, such as Ibn al-Ġayṭī. He also refers to a great number of books written by *ḫāḫīs*, such as Ibn al-‘Arabī,⁷¹ al-Ša‘rāwī,⁷² and

⁶⁹ See fol. 51a.

⁷⁰ On fols. 2a, 16a, 70a, 105a, 133a.

⁷¹ Muḫyī al-Dīn b. ‘Abdallah ibn al-‘Arabī (al-Šayḫ al-Akbar), 560/1165-638/1240, one of the greatest *ḫāḫīs* of Islam, often incorrectly referred to as Ibn ‘Arabi. See *EF* VII p. 707b-708b (A. Ateş). Mentioned on fols. 2a, 4b, 5a, 42b, 59a, 59b, 120b.

⁷² “Al-Ša‘rānī, ‘Abd al-Wahhāb b. Aḫmad (897-973/1492-1565), Egyptian *ḫāḫī* scholar, historian of *ḫāḫī*sm, and a prolific writer about many religious subjects during a period

Life and Works of Yūsuf al-Mağribī

al-Ġazālī,⁷³ to mention just the three most well-known. Al-Mağribī does not reveal to which *ṣūfī*-order he belonged, mentioning a few, such as the *Ḥawāṭirīya* who abstained from eating meat and fruit and other delicacies.⁷⁴

Al-Mağribī frequently visited *mağālis*, which were widespread social gatherings in the seventeenth century. The *mağālis* were held at people's homes, during which intellectuals used to discuss all kinds of topics. They had a variety of functions: some were religious meetings where *ḍikr* was practiced; others had a more literary character, the so-called *mağlis adab*.⁷⁵ Al-Mağribī gives us the impression that these *mağālis* could sometimes be rather merry events.

In *Daf al-iṣr*, al-Mağribī gives us a glimpse of the kinds of topics that were discussed in these meetings, such as a poem he recited in praise of coffee at the *mağlis* of a certain *amīr* Yūnis, to which a Turk answered with a similar poem in his language. The Turk insisted the word *qahwa* was pronounced *qaḥwa*, and the whole assembly made fun of him. Al-Mağribī tried to convince the Turk of his mistake, by quoting some verses in Turkish, but in the end despaired of such ignorance.⁷⁶ He also mentions other *mağālis* in which literary topics,⁷⁷ as well as linguistic issues,⁷⁸ were discussed.

1.4 Literary works

Al-Mağribī mentions in *Daf al-iṣr* a few of the other books he wrote. Only one of these survives, *Taḥmīs Lāmīyat ibn al-Wardī*. Not mentioned is another surviving work, which is called *Buğyat al-arīb wa ġunyat al-adīb* ("The desire of the skillful and the wealth of the cultured"). More will be said about this *Buğyat al-arīb* and the *Taḥmīs* in the next paragraph.

The following books are mentioned in *Daf al-iṣr* but have, apparently, not survived:

1. *Muḍahhabāt al-ḥuzn fī al-mā' wa al-ḥuḍra wa al-wağh al-ḥasan*⁷⁹

otherwise poor in distinguished figures of learning and piety in the Arab lands." *EI*² IX p. 316a (M. Winter). Also known as al-Ša'rāwī. Mentioned on fols. 5a, 21b, 42b, 52b, 59b, 75b, 114b.

⁷³ Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Ṭūsī al-Ġazālī (450/1058-505/1111), see *EI*² II p. 1038b (W. Montgomery Watt).

⁷⁴ See fol. 14b.

⁷⁵ See Hanna (2003) p. 72-73.

⁷⁶ See fol. 6a and §4.3.

⁷⁷ Fols. 9a, 28b, 129a.

⁷⁸ Fols. 12a, 78a.

⁷⁹ Fols. 9b, 19b, 19b, 40a.

Life and Works of Yūsuf al-Mağribī

2. *al-Muṭallatāt*⁸⁰
3. *Tarğamat al-murabba'āt al-turkīya*:⁸¹ a translation of Turkish *murabba'āt*, poems with the rhyme scheme *aaaa, bbba, ccca*, etc.
4. *al-Alma'īya fī al-alğāz al-adabīya*⁸²
5. *al-Badr al-munīr naẓm aḥādīṭ al-ğāmi' al-ṣağīr*:⁸³ an arrangement of *al-Ğāmi' al-ṣağīr*, a collection of traditions by the famous Egyptian scholar, Abū al-Faḍl 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr b. Muḥammad Ğalāl al-Dīn al-Ḥuḍayrī al-Suyūṭī (849/1445-911/1505); this collection in its turn was a summary of the great unfinished collection, *Ğam' al-ğawāmi*⁸⁴
6. *Azhār al-bustān tarğamat al-Gulistān*, a translation from Persian of Sa'dī's⁸⁵ *Gulistān*;⁸⁶ al-Mağribī also mentions this translation as *al-Gulistān al-'arabī*⁸⁷
7. *Tarğamat dībāğat al-būstān*,⁸⁸ a translation of the preface of Sa'dī's *Būstān*.
8. *Naẓm Durrat al-ğawāṣṣ*:⁸⁹ an 'arrangement' and appendix of al-Qāsim b. 'Alī al-Ḥarīrī's (446/1054-516/1122)⁹⁰ *Durrat al-ğawwāṣ fī awhām al-ḥawāṣṣ*, which is a specimen of the *Laḥn al-'amma* literature, of which more will be said in §3.3.1.
9. *al-Ağānī al-ṣağīr*,⁹¹ a collection of songs.

While writing *Daf al-iṣr*, al-Mağribī was also working on other projects, which he mentions on one of *Daf al-iṣr*'s final pages.⁹² They include the following:

- A commentary of al-Mutanabbī's *Dīwān*, partially finished
- Some quires of a commentary on the *Gulistān*, not in Arabic (although on fol. 109b he mentions that he is translating the *Gulistān* and has finished a third of it; it is unclear whether this is the same work or a different project; he again mentions on fol. 133a that he had finished up to the end of the second of a total of five chapters of the *Gulistān*)

⁸⁰ Fols. 56b, 66b, 69a, 101a.

⁸¹ Fol. 91b.

⁸² Fols. 60b and 91b.

⁸³ Fol. 101b.

⁸⁴ See *EF* IX p. 914b (E. Geoffroy), *GAL* II p. 180ff. and *GAL* S II p. 178ff.

⁸⁵ Abū 'Abd Allāh Muṣarrif al-Dīn b. Muṣliḥ Sa'dī, poet and prose writer of the 7th/13th century, one of the most renowned authors of Persia, see *EF* VIII p. 719a (R. Davis).

⁸⁶ Fols. 108a and 109b.

⁸⁷ Fols. 10a and 133b.

⁸⁸ Fol. 109b.

⁸⁹ Fols. 3a, 8b, and 9a.

⁹⁰ See *GAL* I p. 325ff., *GAL* S I p. 486ff., and *EF* III p. 221a (D.S. Margoliouth).

⁹¹ Fol. 16a.

⁹² Fol. 133a.

Life and Works of Yūsuf al-Mağribī

- Some treatises and introductions.

In addition to the work referred to above, al-Mağribī also copied some books. His next project would be the translation of *Nafahāt al-'uns* by Mullā Ğāmī.⁹³ He also states his intention to continue the history of al-Bā'ūnī,⁹⁴ which ends with the reign of Sultan Barqūq, until Sultan Aḥmad, who ruled in al-Mağribī's time.⁹⁵

We can conclude that al-Mağribī's works cover a variety of genres, including the translation of several works from Persian and Turkish, as well as commentary in a language other than Arabic. It is notable that al-Mağribī was fond of poetry. He immediately composed verses whenever the occasion so required it. He particularly liked the *mawwāl*, which is found quite often in *Daf al-iṣr*, and was also fond of verses containing puns and riddles.

1.4.1 A short note on *Buğyat al-arīb wa ğunyat al-adīb* and *Taḥmīs lāmīyat Ibn al-Wardī*

Buğyat al-arīb wa ğunyat al-adīb and *Taḥmīs lāmīyat Ibn al-Wardī*⁹⁶ are, to our knowledge, the only other of al-Mağribī's surviving works. Brockelmann describes *Buğyat al-arīb* as "Sammelwerk über die verschiedensten Dinge",⁹⁷ an accurate description indeed. It is a work in 39 chapters, although al-Mağribī had intended to write 55, and mentions the titles thereof in his introduction. We find that there are such topics as "Names of people called after plants", "The plural of the days", "The eyes of horses", "The feathers of wings", "Children", "Breasts" etc. The work was meant as an aid to composing poetry. The manuscript is kept at the Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, under the no. Ms. Orient. A 172. The work was completed in 1002/1593-4, and the manuscript was copied in *Ḍū al-Qa'da* 1102/August 1692.⁹⁸

⁹³ See fol. 133a. Mawlanā Nūr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān Ğāmī (817/1414-898/1492), great Persian poet with a passion for mysticism, born in the district of Ğām. His *Nafahāt al-uns* ("The breath of divine intimacy") contains biographies of mystics, preceded by a comprehensive study of Ṣūfism. See *EF* II p. 421b (Cl. Huart), *GAL* II p. 266-7 and *GAL* S II pp. 285-6.

⁹⁴ Šams al-Dīn Abū 'Alī Muḥammad b. Šihāb al-Dīn Abū al-'Abbās A. b. Nāšir al-Bā'ūnī (776/1374-871/1465), *Tuḥfat al-šurafā' fi tāriḫ al-ḥulafā'*. About the rulers of Egypt until Barsbāy (ruled 825/1422-841/1438), see *GAL* II p. 50. Note that Al-Mağribī mentions that the work goes no further than the reign of Barqūq (d. 801/1399). According to *EF* I p. 1109a (W.A.S. Khalidi) Muḥammad al-Bā'ūnī lived from 780/1378 to 871/1466.

⁹⁵ See fol. 36b.

⁹⁶ Mentioned on fol. 18a.

⁹⁷ *GAL* S II p. 395.

⁹⁸ See fol. 32a.

Life and Works of Yūsuf al-Mağribī

The *Tahmīs* is an adaption of the *Lāmīyat* (or *Waṣīyat* or *Naṣīḥat*) *al-ihwān wa muršīdat al-ḥillān*, “a moral poem of 77 verses in the *ramal* metre, long a classic”⁹⁹ by Abū Ḥafṣ ‘Umar b. al-Muẓaffar b. al-Wardī (689/1290–749/1349).¹⁰⁰ The manuscript is kept at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.¹⁰¹ An example from this *tahmīs* will be discussed in §4.2.2. The *tahmīs* was written in Šawwāl 1010 / March-April 1602. Al-Mağribī mentions that this was a difficult time, because his son had died, there was a plague in Egypt¹⁰² and he was suffering from disease and a lack of food and sleep.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ *EF* III p. 966b (M. Bencheneb).

¹⁰⁰ See *GAL* II pp. 175-176.

¹⁰¹ Slane (1883-1895) p. 562-3, no. 3200, no. 1.

¹⁰² Egypt was affected by the plague in the years 1601-1603. See *EF* XI p. 4a (D. Panzac).

¹⁰³ See fol. 2a of *Tahmīs lāmīyat Ibn al-Wardī*.