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## **Everything is on the Move**

The Mamluk Empire as a Node in (Trans-)Regional  
Networks

With 19 figures

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## Ego-Networks



## How to Create a Network: Zaynaddīn al-Āṭārī and his *Muqarrizūn*

### 1. Introduction

A *taqrīz* (pl. *taqārīz*) is a text that praises an author on one of his works. Gathering *taqārīz* was a practice that often served to create, consolidate and document a network. Despite growing interest in *taqārīz* in recent years, the practice of asking for and granting *taqārīz* might have been more important than the still small number of studies dedicated to it suggests. An extraordinarily successful collector of *taqārīz* was Zaynaddīn al-Āṭārī, who managed to induce fifteen renown scholars to grant him a *taqrīz*. This is a comparatively large number of *taqārīz* written for a single work and therefore reason enough to make al-Āṭārī the subject of this case study. I will introduce this scholar very briefly and dedicate the rest of the paper to an analysis of the *taqārīz* and the network they represent. Who were the scholars that praised al-Āṭārī and his work, what were the criteria of al-Āṭārī's selection, and how was his network related to others? Attention will also be given to the aspect of transregionality, which will appear several times.

### 2. Zaynaddīn al-Āṭārī (765–828/1364–1425)

The young scholar who received fifteen *taqārīz* around the year 796/1394 is Zaynaddīn Ša'bān ibn Muḥammad al-Āṭārī.<sup>1</sup> Despite the number of works preserved to this day, he is one of the lesser known figures among the *ʿulamāʾ* in the Mamluk period. This may be due to several reasons, among them his turbulent life, his inability to keep a stable network and the fact that for whatever reason he attracted the disdain of Ibn Ḥaḡar al-ʿAsqalānī, who wrote about him in an unusually deprecatory way. Because almost all other sources depend on the

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<sup>1</sup> See Bauer, al-Āṭārī, 119–120; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd*, 2:122–123; Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Inbāʾ al-Ġumr*, 8:82–84; as-Saḡāwī, *aḡ-Ḍawʿ*, 3:301–303; Ibn Fahd, *ad-Durr al-Kāmin*, 2:767–70.

latter's account, it is quite difficult to gain a more objective picture of al-Āṭārī's life and character. Fortunately, al-Āṭārī's works fill some of the gaps left by Ibn Ḥaǧar. Al-Āṭārī's father came from Mosul to Cairo where Ša'bān was born and also died.<sup>2</sup> By the year 796 – the year in which he received most of his *taqārīz* – his father had already died. Though his father is called *aš-šayḥ al-afḍal* in two of the *taqārīz* I could not find him in any of the biographical dictionaries. Obviously, he remained a scholar of lower rank and it is probable that Ša'bān al-Āṭārī did not inherit a network of considerable importance.

Al-Āṭārī was the author of some thirty<sup>3</sup> works, more than half of which are still preserved. In these works al-Āṭārī displays two interests: The prophet Muḥammad and *adab*. As for the first, he wrote a number of poems in praise of the prophet – a *taḥmīs* of Ka'b ibn Zuhayr's *burda*, a *taḥmīs* and a *mu'araḍa* of al-Būšīrī's *burda* etc. He is also the author of three *badī'yyāt*, the largest number of *badī'yyāt* ever composed by a single author, in which he could combine his interest in the prophet and in *adab*. As for *adab*, the term must be taken here not in the sense of belles-lettres, but as designating the scientific fields of penmanship, linguistics and rhetoric. One of al-Āṭārī's works is a didactic poem in the form of an *urǧūza* (a poem composed in the metre *raǧʿaz*), which is meant to provide an introduction to the field of *adab*. It is called *Maǧma' al-Arab fī Ulūm al-Adab* and gives the shortest possible introduction to all fields of *adab* in hardly more than sixty pages with the exception of lexicography (*ilm al-luǧa*). Its ten chapters deal with 1. morphology (*at-tašrīf*), 2. orthography (*al-ḥaṭṭ*), 3. syntax (*an-naḥw*), 4. phonetics (*maḥāriǧ al-ḥurūf*), 5. metre (*al-ʿarūd*), 6. rhyme (*al-qawāfī*), 7. poetic licenses (*ḍarūrat al-ašʿār*), 8. – 10. rhetorics and stylistics (*al-maʿānī*, *al-bayān*, *al-badī'*).

The work is characteristic for al-Āṭārī, as firstly, its comprehensive approach towards the disciplines of *adab* shows, and secondly, as demonstrated through its didactic intention. In addition to this summary of *adab*, al-Āṭārī authored separate works, mostly again didactic poems on each of these fields. Finally, he wrote a treatise on lexicography by which he finally managed to cover the entire field of scholarly *adab*. In a certain way, this is also a kind of a “network” in so far as he cast a net of works in order to cover a complete scholarly department (just as Ibn Ḥaǧar did in the field of Ḥadīṭ at the same time). I am sure that striving for completeness was a purposeful enterprise, meant to contribute to the scholar's

2 According to Hilāl Nāǧī (introduction to *al-Ināya ar-Rabbāniyya*, p. 221 and in other texts) al-Āṭārī was born in Mosul, but this cannot be corroborated from the sources, which claim that al-Āṭārī's father came from Mosul but he himself was born in Cairo (al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd*, 2:122 – 123 and others). My article in EI Three, for which I had trusted Nāǧī, has to be corrected accordingly.

3 See the introduction to al-Āṭārī, *al-Ḥayr al-Kaṭīr*, 15 – 18 and as-Saḥāwī, *aḍ-Ḍaw'*, 3:302.



distinction and certify him as a unique and universal authority for all linguistic matters.

### 3. Debut-Taqārīz

But let us go back to Cairo to the 790s, when al-Āṭārī still had a long way to go before he achieved universal expertise. In 790, aged 25, he had finished what was probably his first publication: a didactic poem on writing and penmanship (*al-Ināya ar-Rabbāniyya fī ṭ-Ṭarīqa aš-Ša'bāniyya*). As far as we know, he did not try to collect *taqārīz* for this work – and indeed – the age of 25 seems to be too young for such an initiative. Instead, he made his – so to say – ‘official’ debut with his second work, a didactic poem on prosody and rhyme in the meter *rağaz*. It is an *alfiyya fī l-arūd*, a “thousand-line-*urğūza* on metre”, as it is called in the colophon<sup>4</sup> and bears the title *al-Wağh al-Ġamīl fī Ilm al-Ḥalīl* “The Beautiful Face: On the Discipline of al-Ḥalīl.” The reference is to al-Ḥalīl ibn Aḥmad al-Farāhīdī (2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> century) who is credited with inventing the theory of metre.<sup>5</sup> A looser translation would be “A Nice Way to Learn the Principles of Prosody.” Al-Āṭārī finished the book in Rağab 793/June 1391<sup>6</sup> and it took exactly three years before the first of the fifteen *taqārīz* arrived. At this point, we have to distinguish between two different types of *taqārīz*. First, there is the ordinary *taqārīz*, which an author can get from anyone at any time, whether as a sign of friendship or esteem or because the person who writes the *taqārīz* wants to foster his relation with the person praised.<sup>7</sup> In addition to this, there is the institution of the debut-*taqārīz*. In this case, a young (but not too young) scholar who has not yet acquired an established place among elite ‘*ulamā*’ actively goes in search of *taqārīz*, sends around a recently completed work and asks his colleagues to write a *taqārīz* for him. Having collected a reasonable number of them, he would publish them either as a separate publication – as in the case of Ibn Nubāta – or as an appendix to the work itself – as in the case of Ibn ad-Damāmīnī and al-Āṭārī. One could consider these debut-*taqārīz* as a sort of initiation rite by which the aspirant is accepted as a full member of the ‘*ulamā*’ establishment.

The most spectacular (and perhaps even the first) case of debut-*taqārīz* are the eleven *taqārīz* Ibn Nubāta al-Miṣrī received for his *Maṭla‘ al-Fawā'id wa-Mağma‘ al-Farā'id* in the year 719 when he was 34 years old. Ibn Nubāta made

4 al-Āṭārī, *al-Wağh al-Ġamīl*, 148.

5 See EI<sup>2</sup>, 4:962–964 (R. Sellheim); GAS, 8:51–56.

6 al-Āṭārī, *al-Wağh al-Ġamīl*, 147.

7 Ġalāladdīn al-Bulqīnī wrote a *taqārīz*, praising *Kifāyat al-Ġulām fī Irāb al-Kalām* (as-Saḥāwī, *aḍ-Ḍaw*, 3:303), another *urğūza* by al-Āṭārī, which he had finished in Mecca in 809 (al-Āṭārī, *Kifāyat al-Ġulām*, 110). This is clearly a case of a single *taqārīz* which is not a debut-*taqārīz*.

these *taqārīz* the starting point for a new book called *Sağ' al-Muṭawwāq*.<sup>8</sup> In his thirties aṣ-Ṣafadī finished his *Ġinān al-Ġinās* and proudly mentions several *taqārīz* he had received for this book. It may well be another case of debut-*taqārīz*.<sup>9</sup> Badraddīn Ibn Ḥabīb was already praised by the two greatest living poets when he was only about 18 years old. This is probably not a real case of debut-*taqārīz* and Ibn Ḥabīb himself strove to receive more *taqārīz* for later works.<sup>10</sup> At the age of 33 Ibn ad-Damāmīnī gathered the same amount of *taqārīz* as Ibn Nubāta did. This case of debut-*taqārīz* has been analysed in detail by Franz Rosenthal.<sup>11</sup> It proves of primary significance for al-Āṭārī's debut-*taqārīz*, as we will see. Rosenthal's study from 1981 was the first ever study of the *taqārīz*. He had, however, not enough material to recognize the institution of the debut-*taqārīz*. And, contrary to Rosenthal, I do not believe that *taqārīz* were "solicited for the promotion of a newly published work,"<sup>12</sup> but rather to create or fasten network-relations. It is for this reason that I feel uncomfortable with his translation of *taqārīz* as "blurbs". Perhaps the expression "commendations" would fit better.<sup>13</sup> In the meanwhile, several studies have established the importance of *taqārīz* among Mamluk scholars and *hommes de lettres*. In 2003 Rudolf Veselý reported that he had come across about 59 *taqārīz*.<sup>14</sup> Fifteen of them can be found in his 2005 edition of Ibn Ḥiğġa's *Qahwat al-Inšā'*.<sup>15</sup> I myself edited and translated the two texts dedicated to Ibn Ḥabīb by Ibn Nubāta and Ṣafīyyaddīn al-Ḥillī and gave an overview of Ibn Nubāta's *Sağ' al-Muṭawwāq* in 2008 and 2013 respectively.<sup>16</sup>

#### 4. Structure and style of *taqārīz*

The length of a *taqārīz* may vary between a few words and a number of pages. A *taqārīz* of the average length of about a page or two consists of several clearly discernible parts. The average *taqārīz* would fit the following pattern:

- (1) *Ḥamdala*: The author may confine himself to two words or elaborate this part to greater length. In Mağdaddīn Ismā'īl al-Bilbaysī's (Q5)<sup>17</sup> *taqārīz* the

8 Bauer, *Mamluk Literature as a Means of Communication*, 46–50.

9 Bauer, *Ibn Ḥabīb im Spiegel seiner Zeitgenossen*, 38.

10 Bauer, *Ibn Ḥabīb im Spiegel seiner Zeitgenossen*, 37–55.

11 Rosenthal, *Blurbs*.

12 Rosenthal, *Blurbs*, 178.

13 I owe this suggestion to Adam Talib.

14 Veselý, *Das Taqārīz*.

15 Ibn Ḥiğġa, *Qahwat al-Inšā'*, nos. 34a, 34c, 67a, 112a, 112b, 121c.

16 Bauer, *Ibn Ḥabīb im Spiegel seiner Zeitgenossen* and idem, *Mamluk Literature as a Means of Communication*, 44–50.

17 The abbreviations refer to the list of al-Āṭārī's *muqarriḏūn* below. They consist of a letter or

*ḥamdala* amounts to half of the whole text. Longer *ḥamdalas* are regularly connected with the following part by the formula *wa-ba'du*.

- (2) *Introduction*: The introduction, in which the title of the book and its author are presented, starts with an introductory formula, most commonly *wa-qaftu 'alā* "I read...", followed by the title of the book and its author.
- (3) *Summary*: Syntactically connected to *wa-qaftu 'alā* is the formula that introduces the summary, which may be *fa-waḡadtuhā*, *wa-ra'aytuhā*, *fa-idā hiya* "and I found it to be ...", whereupon the author says that he found it to be good.
- (4) – (5) *Development I and II*: Longer *taqārīz* go on to elaborate the praise of the work and the praise of its author. After the appraisal of the work, the *muqarrīz* (= the commender) may lead to the praise of the author with a formula like *wa-kayfa lā wa* – "(a great work) and how could it be different, since its author is so-and-so." It is mostly here, where we find what I call the *superiority passages*, a feature rather indispensable for a longer *taqārīz*. In a superiority passage, the *muqarrīz* says that the author is superior or at least equal to famous poets or scholars from past times, that they would admire his work, it would render them speechless, it would make them disdain their own creations, they would wish to have written it themselves, etc.
- (6) *Blessing*: A blessing, in which the *muqarrīz* expresses his hopes for the author and thereby adds the future dimension to the dimension of the present (in the praise of the work) and the dimension of the past (in the superiority passages).
- (7) *Signature*: At the end, the *muqarrīz* mentions his name, continues with a formula of devotion and may add the date of his *taqārīz*. A typical example would be: "This has been written by X with his own hands, *ḥāmidan wa-muṣallīyan wa-musalliman* 'praising (God) and sending prayers and greetings to the Prophet', at day/month/year."

Parts 4 and 5 (Development I and II), sometimes also part 6 (the Blessing), may be omitted. Some *taqārīz* are short and show little ambition; others are carefully devised, beautiful and original works of literature. Al-Ġumārī's *taqārīz*, with which the series of the *taqārīz* dedicated to al-Āṭārī starts, is clearly one of the more ambitious. Here is the beginning of his *ḥamdala*:<sup>18</sup>

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two letters for the city (Q = Cairo, D = Damascus, Ḥl = Aleppo, Mk = Mecca, Md = Medina) and, if there is more than one *muqarrīz* from the same city, his number in the original sequence of *taqārīz*.

18 al-Āṭārī, *al-Waḡh al-Ġamīl*, 13. In my translation | separates colons, || separates rhyme groups.

أَمَّا بَعْدَ حَمْدِ اللَّهِ الطَّوِيلِ أَفْضَالُهُ \* الْمَدِيدِ نَوَالُهُ \* الْبَسِيطِ عَلَى خَلْقِهِ مِنْ  
رِزْقِهِ تَفْصِيلُهُ وَإِجْمَالُهُ \* وَالصَّلَاةِ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ الْوَافِرِ فِي صِفَاتِهِ \*  
الْكَامِلِ فِي ذَاتِهِ \* الْمُجْتَنَّبِ مِنَ الْأَنْسَابِ الشَّرِيفَةِ \* وَالْمُقْتَضَبِ مِنَ الْأَرْوَمَةِ  
الْمُنِيفَةِ \* ...

“Having praised God, whose benefits are persistent, | whose favors are spread out, | and  
who generously grants his creature’s subsistence in each single case and on the whole, ||  
and having evoked God’s blessing upon our Lord Muḥammad, whose attributes are  
abundant, | whose essence is perfect, || who was plucked from a highborn lineage | and  
cut from sublime roots, || ...”

The passage, which continues in this manner for quite a while, is a nice example of an elevated *inšāʾ* style. The first three colons form a rhyme group, the last colon being longer than the first two. The resulting rhythm seems to have had most appeal. Two rhyme groups, each consisting of two rather short colons, continue the text. The most conspicuous stylistic device in these lines is the use of *tawḡīh*, i. e. technical terminology that is used in its non-technical meaning. In this case it involves using the ordinary meanings of seven nouns, which otherwise serve to designate certain metres of Arabic poetry (*ṭawīl*, *madīd*, *basīṭ*, *wāfir*, *kāmil*, *muḡtatt*, *muqtaḍab*). This indirect reference to the terminology of metrics is not only fitting for the subject of the *urḡūza* being praised, it is also a direct intertextual reference to it since al-Āṭārī makes use of the same stylistic device in his introduction to his work. These few lines are already sufficient to show that a good *taqrīz* is not something that is left for a lazy afternoon, but that it is hard work and therefore a precious gift for the recipient.

Very characteristic for the Textsorte<sup>19</sup> *taqrīz* is the superiority passage, in which the commender states that the author of the work is superior or at least equal to his predecessors in the same field. Superiority passages constitute the very core of many *taqārīz* and may reach considerable length. I will give short examples from two superiority passages. It is no coincidence that both contain an allusion to al-Ḥalīl ibn Aḥmad, who, besides writing on metre, is also famous for conceiving of the first Arabic dictionary, the *Kitāb al-ʿAyn*.<sup>20</sup> Both texts allude

19 I use the theoretically well established German term ‘Textsorte’ (text type) in order to avoid the term ‘genre,’ which would be too broad.

20 See GAS, 8:52–56.

to this title, taking *ʿayn* in the sense of ‘eye,’ not as name of the letter *ʿayn*, which is its meaning in al-Ḥalīl’s title. Sibṭ Ibn at-Tanasī (Q3) writes:<sup>21</sup>

فَللَّهِ دَرُّ هَذَا النَّظْمِ وَالنَّاطِمِ الَّذِي تَجَمَّلَ مِنْهُ أَبْنَاءُ الْعَصْرِ بِالزَّيْنِ \* وَأَبْدَعَ مَا  
قَالَ - فَلَوْ رَأَى الْخَلِيلُ لَفَدَى نَظْمَهُ الْمُحَكَّمِ بِالْعَيْنِ \*

“By God, how excellent is this poetry and this poet who makes the people of this age adorn themselves with beauty | and is inventive in what he says. If al-Ḥalīl had seen him, he would have given his eye (or: his *Kitāb al-ʿAyn*) as ransom for his accurate verses! ||”

In his corresponding passage, Maḡdaddīn Ismāʿīl al-Bilbaysī (Q5) escalates from ‘seeing’ to ‘hearing’ to personal encounter:<sup>22</sup>

فَلَوْ رَأَى مُنْشِئَهَا النَّاشِءُ لِأَقْرَبِهِ عَلَى مَا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ \* وَلَوْ سَمِعَهُ الْخَلِيلُ لَقَبَّلَ  
بَيْنَ عَيْنَيْهِ \* وَلَوْ أَدْرَكَهُ الصَّاحِبُ بْنُ عَبَّادٍ لَجَلَسَ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ

“If an-Nāšī<sup>23</sup> had seen its author, he would have confirmed his rank; | if al-Ḥalīl had heard him, he would have kissed him between his eyes; | and if aṣ-Ṣāhib Ibn ʿAbbād<sup>24</sup> had lived long enough to meet him, he would have taken seat in front of him. ||”

As usual in *inšāʿ* texts, lines of poetry are interspersed among the colons of rhymed prose. These verses may be of the author’s own making, but more often are anonymous quotations from older poetry. In the following example, the line quoted is by ʿAlī ibn Ḡahm, a poet who died in 249/863.<sup>25</sup> This excerpt is also interesting because it incorporates the subject of transregionality. Here it is the praised work itself that transcends borders, a topos used by several *muqarriẓūn*. This example is from al-Qalqaṣandī (Q7):<sup>26</sup>

21 al-Āṭārī, *al-Waḡh al-Ġamīl*, 16.

22 al-Āṭārī, *al-Waḡh al-Ġamīl*, 17.

23 an-Nāšīʿ al-Akbar (d. 293/906), philosopher, Muʿtazilī theologian and poet, interested also in grammar and metrics, see EI<sup>2</sup>, 7:975 (J. van Ess); GAS, 2:564–566.

24 aṣ-Ṣāhib Ibn ʿAbbād (326–385/938–995), one of the greatest littérateurs of his time, see EI<sup>2</sup>, 3:671–673 (Cl. Cahen and Ch. Pellat); GAS, 2:636–637; he was also the author of a work on prosody (*al-Iqnāʿ fī l-Arūḍ wa-Tahrīḡ al-Qawāfī*), see GAL, S I 199 (no. 5).

25 See GAS, 2:580–581.

26 al-Āṭārī, *al-Waḡh al-Ġamīl*, 20.

وقد سارت بأخبارها الرُكبان \* وضجت بمدارستها البلدان \* وأحسن  
 تلقّيتها الأشياخ وبادرَ إلى دراستها الصبيان \*  
 فسارت مسيرَ الشمسِ في كلِّ بلدةٍ / وهبت هبوبَ الرياحِ في البرِّ  
 والبحرِ //

“Many a rider has spread news about this *urġūza*; | in every country reverberates the noise of students memorizing it; | sheikhs study it well and boys rush to learn it. ||

“So it travelled, like the sun, in every place / and moved, like the wind, around in land and sea.”

## 5. Al-Āṭārī’s *muqarrizūn*

Al-Āṭārī managed to persuade fifteen scholars and *hommes de lettres* to write *taqārīz* for him, more than Ibn Nubāta and Ibn ad-Damāmīnī had gathered. Among them are luminaries still famous today like Ibn Ḥaldūn and al-Qalqa-šandī, as well as those like Ibn ad-Damāmīnī and Ibn Ḥaṭīb Dārayyā, who are familiar to people interested in *adab* and poetry. Others are less famous, but it is quite significant that all of them can be found in the biographical dictionaries such as al-Maqrīzī’s *Durar al-Uqūd*, in which all fifteen are treated. In the order of their *taqārīz* they are:<sup>27</sup>

- Q1: Šamsaddīn al-Ġumārī, Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī (720 – 802/1320 – 1400) studied in the Maghrib with Abū Ḥayyān al-Ġarnāṭī and met Ibn Nubāta in Cairo. He transmitted Ḥadīṭ and became one of the leading scholars of grammar and lexicography.<sup>28</sup>
- Q2: Waliyyaddīn Ibn Ḥaldūn, ‘Abdarrahmān ibn Muḥammad (732 – 808/1332 – 1406), the famous historian, came to Egypt in 784/1382 and became Mālīkī chief qādī in 786/1384.<sup>29</sup>
- Q3: Nāširaddīn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, known as at-Tanasī or Sibṭ Ibn at-Tanasī (740 – 801/1339 or 1340 – 1399) was a scholar with a wide range of interests, author of commentaries on works of grammar. After he had been

27 The *taqārīz* are published in Hilāl Naġī’s edition of al-Āṭārī, *al-Waġh al-Ġamīl*, 12 – 29.

28 al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd*, 3:76 – 77; Ibn Ḥaġar, *Dayl ad-Durar*, no. 88; as-Sahāwī, *ad-Ḍaw’*, 9:149 – 150; Rosenthal, *Blurbs*, 186.

29 al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd*, 2:383 – 410; Ibn Ḥaġar, *Dayl ad-Durar*, no. 258; as-Sahāwī, *ad-Ḍaw’*, 4:145 – 149; Rosenthal, *Blurbs*, 185; EI<sup>2</sup>, 3:825 – 831 (M. Talbi).

- qāḍī* in his native town Alexandria, he held the office of chief Mālikī judge in Cairo from 794/1392 until his death.<sup>30</sup>
- Q4: Badraddīn (**Ibn**) **ad-Damāmīnī**, Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr (763–827/1362–1424), son in law of the preceding, was a famous poet and author of *adab* works, a number of which still exist.<sup>31</sup> He would play a decisive role in the creation of al-Āṭārī's network, as we will see.
- Q5: Mağdaddīn Ismā'īl ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad al-Kinānī **al-Bilbaysī** (729–802/1329–1399) was a Ḥadīṭ scholar and jurist, and was also interested in mathematics and the law of inheritance. He held the office of Ḥanafī chief judge for less than a year until he was deposed in Ša'bān 793/July 1391 on the pretext that he was too corpulent.<sup>32</sup>
- Q6: Šadraddīn **al-Abšīṭī**, Sulaymān ibn 'Abdannāšir (c. 730–811/c. 1329–1408 or 1409) was a scholar proficient in law and many other fields, as well as a *šūfī* and gifted preacher.<sup>33</sup>
- Q7: Šihābaddīn **al-Qalqašandī**, Aḥmad ibn 'Alī (756–821/1355–1418), jurist and secretary in the Cairene chancellery, author of several books of which *Šubḥ al-A šā* is the most famous.<sup>34</sup>
- Q8: Badraddīn **al-Baštakī**, Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm (748–830/1347–1427) earned his living as a copyist. Perhaps his best selling products were manuscripts of his teacher Ibn Nubāta's *Dīwān*, of which he produced several recensions. He was also a prolific poet in his own right.<sup>35</sup>
- Q9: Šihābaddīn **Ibn al-Hā'im** al-Qarāfī, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad (756–815/1355–1412) was especially interested in mathematics and the law of inheritance. A number of his publications have been preserved.<sup>36</sup>
- Q10: Šamsaddīn **al-Ġarrāqī**, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad (d. 816/1413), Ḥadīṭ scholar and *faqīh* who held several teaching posts in Mecca and Cairo.<sup>37</sup>

30 al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd*, 1:161–162 and 352–353; Ibn Ḥağar, *Ḍayl ad-Durar*, no. 7; as-Saḥāwī, *aḍ-Ḍaw'*, 2:192–193.

31 al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd*, 3:103–104; Ibn Ḥağar, *Ḍayl ad-Durar*, no. 599; as-Saḥāwī, *aḍ-Ḍaw'*, 7:184–187; Rosenthal, *Blurbs*, 180; GAL, II 26 f., S II 21. He is often referred to as 'ad-Damāmīnī' though the correct form is with 'Ibn'.

32 al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd*, 1:408–413; Ibn Ḥağar, *Ḍayl ad-Durar*, no. 63; as-Saḥāwī, *aḍ-Ḍaw'*, 2:286–288, GAL, S II 69.

33 al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd*, 2:107–108; Ibn Ḥağar, *Ḍayl ad-Durar*, no. 319; as-Saḥāwī, *aḍ-Ḍaw'*, 3:265–267.

34 al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd*, 1:312–313 (as Aḥmad ibn 'Abdallāh al-Qarqašandī); Ibn Ḥağar, *Inbā'*, 7:330–331; as-Saḥāwī, *aḍ-Ḍaw'*, 2:8; EI<sup>2</sup>, 4:509–511 (C.E. Bosworth).

35 al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd*, 3:81–82; Ibn Ḥağar, *Ḍayl ad-Durar* no. 608; as-Saḥāwī, *aḍ-Ḍaw'* 6:277–279; Rosenthal, *Blurbs*, 186–187.

36 al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd*, 1:295; Ibn Ḥağar, *Ḍayl ad-Durar* no. 398; as-Saḥāwī, *aḍ-Ḍaw'* 2:157–158; GAL, II 125–126, S II 154–155.

37 al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd*, 3:394; Ibn Ḥağar, *Ḍayl ad-Durar* no. 425; as-Saḥāwī, *aḍ-Ḍaw'*, 6:307–308.

- Mk: Nağmaddīn **al-Marğānī**, Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr (760 – 827/1359 – 1424) was born and died in Mecca. He became renowned for his expertise in the field of language.<sup>38</sup>
- Md: Abū ‘Abdallāh **al-Wānnūgī** al-Mağribī at-Tūnisī, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad (759 – 819/1358 – 1416), was a scholar interested in many fields. He was born in Tūnis and spent many years in Mecca and Medina.<sup>39</sup>
- D1: Ğālāladdīn **Ibn Ḥaṭīb Dārāyyā**, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad (745 – 810/1344 – 1407), the “most outstanding Syrian poet of his day”. Besides his poetry, for which he was famous, he also wrote books on lexicography and other fields.<sup>40</sup>
- D2: Burhānaddīn **al-Bā‘ūnī**, Ibrāhīm ibn Aḥmad (777 – 870/1375 – 1465), a prominent member of the famous al-Bā‘ūnī family, was especially known for his poetry and prose.<sup>41</sup>
- Hl: Abū l-Walīd Muḥibbaddīn **Ibn aš-Šihna**, Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad (749 – 815/1348 – 1412), kinsman of a dynasty of Aleppan scholars. He was an *adīb* and wrote a number of didactic poems (just as al-Āṭārī did), of which many have been preserved. He held the position of judge in Aleppo several times. In 793/1391 he was arrested and brought to Cairo, where he wrote his *taqrīz* on al-Āṭārī from prison.<sup>42</sup>

The following chart presents an overview of the fifteen *muqarriżūn*. In addition to their name, it also shows their *madḥab* affiliation, their age (according to the *hiğra*-calendar) in the year 796, and the length of their *taqrīz* in lines based on Hilāl Nāğī’s edition:

	Name	Maḥab	Age	Length
Q1	Şamsaddīn al-Ġumārī	Mālīkī	77	44
Q2	Walīyaddīn Ibn Ḥaldūn	Mālīkī	65	25
Q3	Nāşiraddīn (Sibt Ibn) at-Tanasī	Mālīkī	57	17
Q4	Badraddīn Ibn ad-Damāmīnī	Mālīkī	34	29
Q5	Mağdaddīn Ismā‘īl al-Bilbaysī	Ḥanafī	68	14
Q6	Şadraddīn al-Abşīṭī	Şāfi‘ī	67	31

38 al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd*, 3:124–125; Ibn Ḥağar, *Inbā’* 8:59–60; as-Saḥāwī, *aḍ-Ḍaw’*, 7:182–183.

39 al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd*, 3:206–207; Ibn Ḥağar, *Dayl ad-Durar*, no. 466; as-Saḥāwī, *aḍ-Ḍaw’*, 7:3–4.

40 al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd*, 3:138–144; Ibn Ḥağar, *Inbā’*, 6:80–81; as-Saḥāwī, *aḍ-Ḍaw’*, 6:310–312; GAL, II 15, S II 7.

41 al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd*, 1:67–68; as-Saḥāwī, *aḍ-Ḍaw’*, 1:26–29; EI<sup>2</sup>, 1:1109–1110 (W.A.S. Ḥalidi).

42 al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd*, 3:110–115; Ibn Ḥağar, *Dayl ad-Durar*, no. 409; as-Saḥāwī, *aḍ-Ḍaw’*, 9:3–6; Rosenthal, *Blurbs*, 186; GAL, II 141–142, S II 176–177.



(Continued)

	Name	Maḏhab	Age	Length
Q7	Šihābaddīn al-Qalqašandī	Šāfiī	41	47
Q8	Badraddīn al-Baštakī	Šāfiī	49	25
Q9	Šihābaddīn Ibn al-Hā'im	Šāfiī	41	6
Q10	Šamsaddīn al-Ġarrāqī	Šāfiī	?	10
Mk	Nağmaddīn al-Marġānī	Šāfiī	37	4
Md	Abū 'Abdallāh al-Wānnūġī	Mālikī	38	9
D1	Ġalāladdīn Ibn Ḥaṭīb Dārayyā	Šāfiī	52	109
D2	Burhānaddīn al-Bā'ūnī	Šāfiī	20	51
Ḥl	Muḥibbaddīn Ibn aš-Šiḥna	Ḥanafī	48	33

Apparently not only did al-Āṭārī carefully select the persons whom he asked for a *taqrīz*, he also arranged the list deliberately. In the following, I will try to detect the motifs for the sequence in which the commendations are arranged, thereby gaining more insight into the motives for collecting and offering *taqārīz*. First, it is not difficult to find a reason for the starting point: Šamsaddīn al-Ġumārī was al-Āṭārī's teacher in the field of prosody and he is mentioned as the first link in an *isnād* in which al-Āṭārī traces back his knowledge of the discipline to al-Ḥalīl.<sup>43</sup> Since he was kind of a 'Doktorvater,' it was only appropriate to start with him (otherwise he would have come probably as no. 6, as we will see). It is obvious, however, that no such reason is behind the arrangement of the rest of the *taqārīz*. They are not ordered according to the importance of the scholar or his closeness to al-Āṭārī. Instead, the main organizing principle is *geography*: the *taqārīz* are explicitly ordered according to location. The first group is constituted by ten *taqārīz* from Cairo, the second by five *taqārīz* from other places.<sup>44</sup> These "other places" are Mecca, Medina, Damascus and Aleppo. Damascus is represented by two *taqārīz*, the others by one each. The geographical sequence is self-evident. Cairo is the center of the empire, the place where al-Āṭārī lived, had studied and intended to pursue his career. The two Holy Cities follow Cairo, followed in turn by the two largest towns in Syria in order of their importance. In this way, al-Āṭārī's *muqarriẓūn* represent the five most important places in the Mamluk Empire. Transregionality was obviously a major concern for our author. In this respect he was not the first; he had a predecessor in Ibn Nubāta, who had also applied this criterion, albeit to a much more limited extent. Ibn Nubāta al-Miṣrī had intended to establish himself in Syria and therefore not only asked nine scholars from Damascus for a *taqrīz*, but also one each from Ḥamāh and Ṭar-ābulus. Both are unknown figures who neither made their way into the biblio-

43 al-Āṭārī, *al-Wağh al-Ġamīl*, 147 (line 1042).

44 al-Āṭārī, *al-Wağh al-Ġamīl*, 13 and 22.

graphical dictionaries nor did they play any role in Ibn Nubāta's later life. Their only function seems to be to represent Syria's smaller towns.<sup>45</sup> Al-Āṭārī was more ambitious and covered more or less the whole of the empire. Previous debut-*taqārīz* did not reflect a similar tendency. It is my impression that al-Āṭārī had a strong desire to cover entire fields, be it intellectually, as we have seen, or geographically.

Transregionality is obviously the main principle of organization and it explains completely the sequence of all *muqarrizūn* who represent towns other than Cairo. As for Cairo itself, the organizing principle for the second degree is *madhab*. The list starts with four Mālikīs, followed by a Ḥanafī. The Šāfi'īs, al-Āṭārī's own *madhab*, constitute the large final group. This was not a sign of politeness and humility (traits for which al-Āṭārī was not particularly known), but rather a consequence of his decision to start with his teacher al-Ġumārī, who was a Mālikī. This leads us to the third organizing principle, the *student – teacher relationship*. In general, the relationship between a student and a teacher is not at the forefront of the *taqārīz* since their main purpose is to establish a network which reaches beyond the already established connections between a student and his teachers. This is obviously also the case with al-Āṭārī's debut-*taqārīz*, in which only a few of his teachers are represented; those who are represented are given a place of honor, however. Al-Āṭārī himself gives a list of his most important teachers;<sup>46</sup> it intersects with the list of his *muqarrizūn* at only three points, but these are telling. As we have already seen, al-Ġumārī heads the list, followed by the rest of the Mālikīs; the next is al-Āṭārī's second teacher, Mağdaddīn Ibrāhīm al-Bilbaysī, proudly introduced as *qāḍī l-quḍāh al-Ḥanafī*, although he had held this office for less than a year and had already been deposed at the time he gave his *taqrīz*. The group of the Šāfi'īs is again headed by another teacher, al-Abšīṭī. As we see, al-Āṭārī had to start with the Mālikīs as a consequence of the prominent position of al-Ġumārī, and he had to place the only Ḥanafī in front of the Šāfi'īs because otherwise Mağdaddīn al-Bilbaysī would have come at the very end of the Cairenes. Obviously, the three parameters transregionality, *madhab* and teacher-student relationship explain a lot, but still not everything. Therefore other possible criteria have to be tested.

Seven of the *taqārīz* are dated. Most of them were presented in 796 or in the following year. The first *taqrīz* – unsurprisingly that of al-Ġumārī – was issued exactly three years after the completion of the *urğūza*. Only one *taqrīz* sticks out: this one is again by a teacher, the ex-chief Ḥanafī judge al-Abšīṭī, who did not deliver his text until 801. The retired *qāḍī* is also one of the eldest contributors, as the chart above shows. Not unsurprisingly, the three teachers, Q1, Q5 and Q6, are

45 Bauer, *Mamluk Literature as a Means of Communication*, 47 – 48.

46 See the introduction to al-Āṭārī, *al-Manhağ al-Mašhūr*, 600.

also the three eldest *muqarrizūn*. Most of the others are in their fifties or are a few years younger. Two are in their thirties and it is hardly a coincidence that they are the ones representing Mecca and Medina. It seems quite probable that al-Āṭārī had no contact with established scholars in these places and was therefore happy to be able to mobilize two of his peers in these towns. Most peculiar is the case of the 20-year old Burhānaddīn al-Bā'ūnī [D2]. At the age of 20, one would have not even be considered worthy of getting a *taqrīz*, let alone giving one. But there are exceptions to this rule. There are also two persons in their twenties among those who wrote commendations for Ibn ad-Damāmīnī: Ibn Ḥaḡar al-'Asqalānī and Ibn Makānis. For at least the last of these, Rosenthal gives a good reason for his inclusion. The Ibn Makānis who praises Ibn ad-Damāmīnī is not the famous poet Faḡraddīn Ibn Makānis, but his son Maḡdaddīn. Rosenthal assumes that Ibn ad-Damāmīnī did not get a *taqrīz* from the senior and by then more famous Ibn Makānis, so he therefore contented himself with the son who stepped in after his father's death.<sup>47</sup> In al-Āṭārī's case, a similar motivation may have been behind his choice of the young al-Bā'ūnī since he was the offspring of an already famous family of *'ulamā'* and *udabā'*. For al-Āṭārī, the prospect of securing his ties with this family may have seemed attractive and for the young Ibrāhīm, who wrote the second longest *taqrīz* of all, it might have been an early opportunity to display his skill in *inšā'*. We have to keep in mind that *taqārīz* were not a one-sided affair; they may have been more important for the recipient, but they could also be a means of distinction for the writers.

This brings us to the next point: length. The range is enormous. It is perhaps not too daring to assume a rather close mutual interest in the case of the three longest *taqārīz*, which were written by al-Qalqašandī and the two Damascenes, followed closely by al-Ġumārī. Equally interesting are the shortest *taqārīz*. I have little to say about Q9 and Q10, who were perhaps included only to complete the number of ten representatives from Cairo. The extraordinary brevity of the *taqārīz* from Mecca and Medina, however, corroborates the assumption that they were included only in order to represent the two Holy Cities.

## 6. From Ibn ad-Damāmīnī to al-Āṭārī

So far we have only considered relationships between individuals; but every individual is in turn part of a network. This leads us to the fourth and final organizing principle: the network of Ibn ad-Damāmīnī. Badraddīn Ibn ad-Damāmīnī was two years older than al-Āṭārī and life had granted him a better position to launch a career. He was the offspring of an old and influential family of scholars

<sup>47</sup> Rosenthal, *Blurbs*, 184.

and a relative of the chief Mālikī judge. Therefore, building a network was probably easier for him than it was for al-Āṭārī. Ibn ad-Damāmīnī and al-Āṭārī knew each other, as is proven by Ibn ad-Damāmīnī's *taqrīz* for him and they must have been friends at the time of the *taqārīz*, as the following will show. Ibn ad-Damāmīnī had almost simultaneously to al-Āṭārī collected eleven *taqārīz* in 795. It is interesting to see that both groups of commendations greatly overlap, as the following chart shows. It presents the eleven *muqarrizūn* of Ibn ad-Damāmīnī.<sup>48</sup> The right column indicates whether they also wrote a *taqrīz* for al-Āṭārī:

Ibn ad-Damāmīnī's *taqārīz* 795

1	Ibn Ḥaldūn	= Q2
2	(Sibṭ Ibn) at-Tanasī	= Q3
3	al-Ġazarī	-
4	Ibn aš-Šiḥna	= H1
5	Mağdaddīn al-Bilbaysī	= Q5
6	Šamsaddīn al-Ġumārī	= Q1
7	Ibn Makānis the younger	-
8	al-Baštakī	= Q8
9	Ibn Ḥağar al-ʿAsqalānī	-
10	Ibn al-ʿAğamī	-
11	az-Zarkašī	-

As we see from the chart, six scholars contributed both to the *taqārīz* for Ibn ad-Damāmīnī and al-Āṭārī. Thus, it is clear that al-Āṭārī benefited from the network of his peer. As a matter of fact, Ibn ad-Damāmīnī's *taqārīz*-network is the very basis of al-Āṭārī's as shall be demonstrated. First, let us take another look at the four shortest *taqārīz* for al-Āṭārī (Q9, Q10, Mk, Md): none was issued by a contributor to Ibn ad-Damāmīnī. The same is true for the three longest commendations (Q7, D1, D2). Instead, all Damāmīnī-contributors wrote *taqārīz* for al-Āṭārī that were 14 to 33 lines long, the only exception being the teacher al-Ġumārī. On the other hand, the only person who was not among those who praised Ibn ad-Damāmīnī to write a *taqrīz* of similar length is al-Abšīṭī (Q6), another teacher, who – as we have seen – is an outlier in several respects. The same picture evolves when we consider the age of the *muqarrizūn*. All contributors aged 41 or younger (Q7, Q9, Mk, Md, D2) are non-Ibn ad-Damāmīnī praisers (with the obvious exception of Ibn ad-Damāmīnī himself). On the other hand, all commenders of al-Āṭārī older than 55 were also *muqarrizūn* of Ibn ad-Damāmīnī. The only exception again was al-Abšīṭī. Obviously, the *taqārīz*-net-

<sup>48</sup> See Rosenthal, *Blurbs*.

work of Ibn ad-Damāmīnī was the basis for al-Āṭārī's, to which he added his own "special cases". Having gleaned this, we can reconstruct the genesis of al-Āṭārī's *taqārīẓ*-network in detail. By applying the following eight transformations to Ibn ad-Damāmīnī's *taqārīẓ* group, we arrive at al-Āṭārī's:

- (1) Take Ibn ad-Damāmīnī's network as starting point and cancel no. 3, 7, 9, 10 and 11. No. 10, Ibn al-‘Aḡamī, was already dead when al-Āṭārī asked for his *taqārīẓ*. Ibn Makānis junior and Ibn Ḥaḡar were still too young. The reasons why Ibn ad-Damāmīnī asked them for a *taqārīẓ* have been discussed by Rosenthal; al-Āṭārī did not share them. We can only speculate whether al-Āṭārī asked al-Ġazarī and az-Zarkašī and, if so, why they did not contribute.
- (2) Place Ibn aš-Šiḡna (Ḥl) at the end of the list in order to arrange it according to the principle of geography in which Aleppo comes last.
- (3) Put al-Ġumārī at the top of the Mālikīs and add Ibn ad-Damāmīnī's name at the end of them. Al-Ġumārī was al-Āṭārī's principal teacher and thus, has to lead the list; Ibn ad-Damāmīnī was the youngest of the Cairenes and a newcomer to the list so he is included at the end of the group of Mālikīs. The Ḥanafī Maḡdaddīn Ismā'īl al-Bilbaysī is already in the right place at no. 5.
- (4) Add the teacher al-Abšīṭī and let him lead the Šāfi'īs.
- (5) Add al-Qalqašandī and give him preference over al-Baštakī, who consequently remains at his place in the list.
- (6) Add the two contributors from Damascus.
- (7) Add two more Cairenes (Q9, Q10) to yield ten contributors from the capital in total, even if their contributions are short and insignificant.
- (8) Add a representative from each of the two Holy Cities, again with very short contributions.

The result of these transformations is exactly the list of al-Āṭārī's *taqārīẓ*. The names of those included and the order in which they come can be thoroughly explained by the parameters (1) geography, (2) *madḡhab*, (3) teacher-student relationship, and (4) transformation of al-Āṭārī's friend Ibn ad-Damāmīnī's group of *muqarriẓūn*.

## 7. Conclusion

In order to create a network at the beginning of his scholarly career, al-Āṭārī collected *taqārīẓ* for one of his early works. In order to do so, he began by asking those scholars who had already provided a *taqārīẓ* for his friend Ibn ad-Damāmīnī. In addition, he asked scholars from Damascus, Mecca and Medina in order to have the main cities of the Mamluk Empire represented. It can be shown with ample detail how he transformed Ibn ad-Damāmīnī's group of *muqarriẓūn*

into his own. With fifteen scholars, most of them of high renown, al-Āṭārī was able to boast an influential network from which he could have benefited a lot. He did so only for a short time, however. When he attained the post of *muḥtasib* in 799/1397, only three years after the first *taqārīz* were written, it was less thanks to his network than to the large sum of money he paid. Unable to pay back his debts, he was forced to flee Cairo in 801/1398–9. From then on, he led an uneven life and probably never met his erstwhile *muqarriẓūn*. The main stations in his life of ‘transregionality’, as one could say, were the court of the Rasūlids in Yemen, from which he was forced to flee once more, this time to Thana in India, from which he returned to the Arabian Peninsula, trading in foodstuffs from the Wādī Qanūnā<sup>49</sup> and settling in Mecca for most of the period between 808 and 820 / 1405–6 and 1417. He spent the last years of his life in Damascus and Cairo, where he died on 17 Ġumādā II 828 / 6 May 1425. One year before his death in 827/1424, the friend of al-Āṭārī’s youth, Ibn ad-Damāmīnī died in Gulbarga, India. Al-Āṭārī owed him for his assistance in helping to create a network. Though the two men may have never met again after their youthful networking efforts, their fates had remarkable parallels. Both Ibn ad-Damāmīnī and al-Āṭārī had to flee from their creditors, both earned money by trading, both lived a life of ‘transregionality’ that led them to India (obviously not too exotic a choice for a scholar from the Mamluk empire in those times), and both died rich, despite earlier bankruptcy. Their efforts as aspiring young scholars to get *taqārīz* from influential scholars have a lot to teach us about the creation of scholarly networks. It is an irony of history that neither of them seems to have profited very much from it.

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