

## A Portrait of ʿAbd al-Latīf al-Baghdādī's Education and Instruction<sup>1</sup>

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The scholar of the medieval Islamic world is variously characterised, but perhaps his most distinctive feature was the eclectic and dichotomous nature of his education.<sup>2</sup> Although many scholars specialized in the religious sciences, which covered many different disciplines, there were also many who devoted themselves to the foreign or ancient sciences. Study and teaching of the religious sciences were in general provided for by the institution of *waqf*, but *waqf* deeds excluded the foreign or ancient sciences.<sup>3</sup> Thus, it is all the more remarkable that some scholars managed to pursue both sets of disciplines. The exclusion of the foreign sciences did not prevent diligent and inquisitive scholars from seeking the knowledge of foreign sciences from numerous libraries (sometimes overseas or at great distance),<sup>4</sup> from masters "in the

<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to the Islamic Academy (Cambridge, UK) for permission to publish here a revised version of "The Educational Background of ʿAbd al-Latīf al-Baghdādī" which originally appeared in *Muslim Education Quarterly*, vol. 13, no. 3 (Spring 1996): 35-53.

<sup>2</sup> George Makdisi, *Rise of Colleges* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981), 77. Learning and the transmission of learning were dominated by madrasas, with notable exceptions: on Shuhdah bt. al-Ibārī, for instance, see note 25 below.

<sup>3</sup> The Islamic sciences are enumerated in Makdisi, *Rise of Colleges*, p. 84: *ʿilm al-tafsīr* (Qurʾanic exegesis), *ʿilm al-qirāʾah* (Qurʾanic recitation), *ʿilm al-hadīth* (the science[s] of Tradition), *fiqh* (law), and *uṣūl al-dīn* (dogmatic sciences). Anbārī, *Nuzhat al-alibbā* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1962), p. 55, names the *ʿilm al-lughah* (lexicology), *ʿarūd* (metrics), *qawāfiʿ* (rhetoric), *ʿilm al-tarīkh* (history), *ansāb* (Arab tribal genealogy), and *ʿilm al-naḥw* (science of grammar) as the divisions of knowledge in general, see Makdisi, *Rise of Colleges*, 75-80 and idem, *The Rise of Islamism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990), 54-59.

<sup>4</sup> On travel in search of knowledge (*al-riḥlah fī ṭalab al-ʿilm*); see e.g. Michael Lenker, "The Importance of the Riḥla for the Islamization of Spain," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 1982; *Golden Roads: Migration, Pilgrimage and Travel in Mediaeval and Modern Islam*, ed. Ian R. Netton (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1993); and the recent paper by Monique Bernards, "Talab al-ʿilm amongst the linguists of Arabic," delivered at the School of Abbasid Studies, Trinity Hall, Cambridge, 9 July 2002, in which she offers insight into how the *ṭalab al-ʿilm* actually took place in Arabic linguistic circles. On libraries, see the bibliography listed in *EP*, 6:199-200, especially Yūsuf al-

privacy of their homes, or in the *waqf* institutions, outside of the regular curriculum.”<sup>5</sup>

The prominent Muslim physician, grammarian, lexicographer, jurisconsult, sometime alchemist, and philosopher °Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī (557–629/1162–1231) was such a scholar. His *sīrah* (autobiography) formed part of a larger work entitled *Tārīkh* (History, or Diary), written for his son Sharaf al-Dīn Yūsuf. Extracts of the work survive in the notice devoted to °Abd al-Laṭīf by Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah (d. 668/1270) in his biographical dictionary of physicians, the *°Uyūn al-anbā° fi ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbā°* (Choice Information on the Classes of Physicians).<sup>6</sup> In these fragments, °Abd al-Laṭīf speaks of his *samā°s* (auditions), his resolve to master *ṭibb* (medicine) and *kīmiyā°* (alchemy), his diligence in learning the various *qirā°āt* (variant Qur°ānic recitations), and his devotion to the works of Ibn Sīnā (d. 428/1037). What is remarkable is that his education encompasses a vast span of knowledge, tremendous motivation, and memorization. And yet, °Abd al-Laṭīf is neither an isolated example of this sort of education, nor a unique product of his age. Indeed, by looking at the curriculum followed by °Abd al-Laṭīf, we can get “some insight into one of the best products of the Muslim educational system.”<sup>7</sup>

### *Early Life of °Abd al-Laṭīf*

*Name.* His name was Abū Muḥammad °Abd al-Laṭīf b. Yūsuf b. Muḥammad b. °Alī Sa°d al-Baghdādī, known as Ibn al-Labbād, Muwaffaq al-Dīn.<sup>8</sup> According to the chroniclers, he was known primarily as °Abd al-Laṭīf and as Ibn al-Labbād.

<sup>5</sup> Ishsh, *Les bibliothèques arabes publiques et semi-publiques en Mésopotamie, en Syrie et en Égypte au Moyen Age* (Damascus: Institut français de Damas, 1967); to that add M. M. Sibai, *Mosque Libraries: An Historical Study* (London and New York: Mansell, 1987), and Makdisi, *The Rise of Humanism*, 54–60.

<sup>5</sup> Makdisi, *Rise of Colleges*, 77.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, *°Uyūn al-anbā° fi ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbā°*, ed. Nizār Riḍā (Beirut: Maktabat al-Ḥayāt, 1965), 683–96; ed. Bāsil °Uyūn al-Sūd (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-°Ilmiyah, 1998), 634–48. See also Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, *Min °Uyūn al-anbā° fi ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbā°*, 4 vols., ed. Qāsim Wahb (Damascus: Manshūrāt Wizārat al-Thaqāfah, 1997), 4:271–312. Earlier editions include *Abdallatīphi Bagdadensis vita auctore Ibn abi Oseibia*, ed. J. Mousley (Oxford, 1808), and *°Uyūn al-anbā° fi ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbā°*, 2 vols., ed. A. Müller (Cairo-Königsberg, 1882–84), 2:201–13. For a résumé of the notice, see Samuel Stern, “A Collection of Treatises by °Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī,” *Islamic Studies*, 1 (1962): 53–70; for a paraphrase, see Makdisi, *Rise of Colleges*, 84–88; and for a translation of the autobiographical parts, see Shawkat M. Toorawa, “The Autograph Notes of °Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī,” in *Interpreting the Self: Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition*, ed. Dwight F. Reynolds (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 156–64. See also M. Silvestre de Sacy, *Relation de l’Égypte par Abd-Allatif...* (Paris: Imprimerie impériale, chez Dreuttel et Wurtz, 1810), 457–94, for a translation into French; Lucien Leclerc, *Histoire de la médecine arabe: exposé complet des traductions du Grec*, 2 vols. (New York: Burt Franklin [Paris, 1876]), 2:182–87, for an abridged translation into French; and Claude Cahen, “°Abdallatīf al-Baghdādī, portraitiste et historien de son temps. Extraits inédits de ses mémoires,” *Bulletin d’études orientales*, 23 (1970): 101–28, for fragments from works other than Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah’s *°Uyūn*. See also Cahen’s “°Abdallatīf al-Baghdādī et les Khwārizmiens,” in *Iran and Islam. Mélanges offerts à la mémoire de V. Minorski* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University °Uyūn ty Press, 1970), 149–66. Hereafter all citations to the *°Uyūn* notice will be as follows: Riḍā/ al-Sūd.

<sup>7</sup> Makdisi, *Rise of Colleges*, 84. For °Abd al-Laṭīf’s advice to students, see Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, 691–92/632–34, translated in Makdisi, *Rise of Colleges*, 88–91.

<sup>8</sup> al-Kutubī, *Fawāt al-wafayāt*, 2 vols. (Beirut: Dar al-Thaqāfah, 1973), 2:385 [385–88 (#300)].

*Date of birth and death.* All the chroniclers place °Abd al-Laṭīf's birth in 557/1162–63; Ibn Khallikān specifies Rabī° I. He died on 12 Muḥarram 629/19 November 1231.

*Early Life.* Though his ancestors came from Mosul in northern Iraq, °Abd al-Laṭīf was raised in the company of eminent scholars in Baghdad, where he was probably born. His father, Yūsuf b. Muḥammad, probably Shaykh Abū al-°Izz al-Mawṣilī, obtained certificates of audition (*ijāzāt*) from senior scholars of Baghdad, Khurasan, Syria and Egypt.<sup>9</sup> His uncle, whom he referred to as Sulaymān, was most likely the Abū al-Faḍl Sulaymān b. Muḥammad b. °Alī al-Mawṣilī al-Ṣūfī recorded in the *Shadharāt*; he died in 612/1215. He was born in 528/1133 and studied hadith under Ismā°il b. al-Samarqandī and other authorities.

At an early age °Abd al-Laṭīf was also put under the care of:

a. Abū al-Najīb, probably Diyā° al-Dīn Abū al-Najīb al-Suhrawardī °Abd al-Qāhir b. °Abd Allāh b. al-Bakrī.<sup>10</sup> He was a Sunni mystic, knowledgeable in Shāfi°ī law (*fiqh*), exegesis (*tafsīr*), and theology (*uṣūl al-dīn*). He was born in 490/1097 and died in 563/1168. °Abd al-Laṭīf mentions that under Abū al-Najīb's guidance he had little time for pleasure and leisure (*lu°b wa-lahw*), his efforts being spent entirely on the learning of hadith.

Among friends of °Abd al-Laṭīf's family was Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah. The latter wanted to meet °Abd al-Laṭīf but never got the chance; in the notice he devotes to °Abd al-Laṭīf, he includes a letter he wrote to him.<sup>11</sup> °Abd al-Laṭīf was apparently close to Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah's father, al-Qāsim, to his grandfather, Yūnus, and to an uncle of his whom he mentions as the man who introduced him to Aristotle.<sup>12</sup> Wüstenfeld identifies this unnamed uncle as Rashīd al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan °Alī b. Khalīfah and indicates that he was the head of a hospital.<sup>13</sup>

### Early Education

Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah records that °Abd al-Laṭīf studied hadith with the following:

b. Abū al-Faḥ Muḥammad b. °Abd al-Bāqī b. Muḥammad b. Sulaymān al-Baghdādī Ibn al-Battī. He was born in 477/1084 and died in 564/1169, at the age of eighty-seven.<sup>14</sup> He is identified by the biographers as the chief traditionist of Iraq (*musnid al-*

<sup>9</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °Uyūn, 683/635.

<sup>10</sup> Ibn al-°Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab fī akhbār man dhahab*, 8 vols. (Cairo: Maktabat al-Qudsi, 1931), 4: 218; *EF*, 9:778.

<sup>11</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °Uyūn, 690–91/641–42.

<sup>12</sup> See *Fī °ilm mā ba°d al-tabī°ah. Maqālat al-Lām. °Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādīs Bearbeitung von Buch Lambda der aristotelischen Metaphysik*, ed. and comm. A. Neuwirth (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1976).

<sup>13</sup> F. Wüstenfeld, *Geschichte der arabischen Ärzte und Naturforscher* (Göttingen: Dieterich, 1840), p. 132.

<sup>14</sup> Ibn Taghribirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhirah fī mulūk Miṣr wa'l-Qāhirah*, 14 vols. (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyah, 1929–1972), 4:218. All ages are given in years calculated according to a lunar calendar.

°*Irāq*). He heard hadith from Mālik b. °Alī al-Bāniyāsī, Ḥamad b. Aḥmad al-Ḥaddād, al-Tamīmī, and others.<sup>15</sup> His *samā*° is reported to have been sound (*ṣaḥīḥ*), according to Ibn al-°Imād, author of the *Shadharāt*.

c. Abū Zur°ah Ṭāhir b. Muḥammad b. Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī al-Hamadhānī. He was born in 481/1088 in Rayy and died in Hamadhān in 566/1170.<sup>16</sup> He is cited as one of the teachers of °Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥayy b. al-Rabī° (so too is Ibn al-Battī). His own teachers included °Abdūs, al-Sālarmakī, and al-Kāmikhī.<sup>17</sup>

d. Abū al-Qāsim Yaḥyā b. Thābit al-Wakīl identified by Subkī as Ibn Bundar in the entry devoted to °Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥasan b. °Alī b. Baslah, Abū Muḥammad al-Ṣūfī.<sup>18</sup> He heard hadith from a number of authorities.<sup>19</sup> He died in 566/1170, in his eighties, placing his birth around 480/1087.<sup>20</sup>

To these must be added another from whom °Abd al-Laṭīf studied in the Dār al-Dhabab, a second-story *madrāsah* (*madrāsah mu°allaqah*) founded by Fakhr al-Dawlah b. al-Muṭṭalib,<sup>21</sup> namely:

e. Ibn Faḍlān, i.e. Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Qāsim Yaḥyā b. °Alī b. Hibat Allāh al-°Allāmah al-Baghdādī, who was born in 513/1121 and died in 595/1199.<sup>22</sup> He studied *fiqh* from Abū Maṣṣūr b. al-Razzāz in Baghdad and from Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā, a disciple of al-Ghazālī in Niṣhapur. He studied hadith under Ismā°īl b. Aḥmad b. °Amr al-Samarqandī, Muḥammad b. Nāṣir, and Abū al-Karam Ibn al-Suhrawardī.<sup>23</sup> Ibn Faḍlān, particularly known for his expertise in disputation and dialectic, eventually became the professor of Shāfi°ī law at the Mustanṣirīyah Madrasah in Baghdad.

°Abd al-Laṭīf also studied grammar with:

f. Ibn al-Khashshāb, i.e. Abū Muḥammad °Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad Ibn al-Khashshāb al-Baghdādī, who was born in 492/1098–99 and died in 567/1172, when °Abd al-Laṭīf was ten. Many of °Abd al-Laṭīf's teachers also studied with him (e.g. Wajih al-Dīn, al-Qazwīnī, al-Kindī). He was one of the leading grammarians of his day, in addition to expertise in lexicography, geometry, philosophy, and chess, and wrote a number of commentaries on grammatical works as well as a commentary on the *Maqāmāt* of al-Ḥarīrī. The work °Abd al-Laṭīf mentions is:

<sup>15</sup> Ibn al-°Imād, *Shadharāt*, 4:213.

<sup>16</sup> Ibn al-°Imād, *Shadharāt*, 4:217.

<sup>17</sup> Ibn al-°Imād, *Shadharāt*, 4:217.

<sup>18</sup> al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-shāfi°īyah al-kubrā*, 11 vols. (Cairo: al-Maktabah al-Ḥusayniyah, 1905–6), 8:169.

<sup>19</sup> Ibn al-°Imād, *Shadharāt*, 5:218.

<sup>20</sup> Ibn al-°Imād, *Shadharāt*, 4:218.

<sup>21</sup> al-Nu°aymī, *al-Dāris fī tārikh al-madāris*, 2 vols. (Damascus: Publications of the Arab Academy, 1948–51), 1:277, 123, 125.

<sup>22</sup> Ibn al-°Imād, *Shadharāt*, 4:321.

<sup>23</sup> al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-shāfi°īyah*, 7:322.

1. *al-Ma°ānī* by al-Zajjāj. This is the *Kitāb fī ma°ānī al-Qur°ān* by Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Sarī al-Zajjāj.<sup>24</sup> °Abd al-Laṭīf studied this work according to the rescension/reading (*qirā°ah*) of Ibn al-Khashshāb (see above) who had studied it from the renowned female grammarian Shuhdah bt. Aḥmad b. al-Faraj b. °Amr al-Ibarī.<sup>25</sup>

Besides hadith, °Abd al-Laṭīf was occupied with the study of *khatt* (calligraphy), the memorisation of the Qur°ān, and the memorisation of other key texts, among them:

2. *al-Faṣīḥ*. This is the *Kitāb al-Faṣīḥ* of Tha°lab (d. 291/904), described in the *Wafayāt* as small in size but great in benefit (*ṣaghīr al-ḥajm kabīr al-fā°idah*).<sup>26</sup>

3. *al-Maqāmāt* of al-Ḥarīrī (d. 516/1122).

4. The *Dīwān* of al-Mutanabbī (d. 354/965).

g. Al-Anbārī. °Abd al-Laṭīf's father took him, when he was an adolescent, to Kamāl al-Dīn al-Anbārī, a schoolmate of his father's from his Niẓāmīyah days. Kamāl al-Dīn °Abd al-Rahmān b. Muḥammad b. °Ubayd Allāh Abū al-Barakāt al-Anbārī al-Naḥwī was born in 513/1119 and died in 577/1181.<sup>27</sup> He came to Baghdad where he studied in his youth law (*fiqh*) with Sa°id b. al-Razzāz and became accomplished in *khilāf*, the disputed questions of the law (in one's own *madhhab* and in the other *madhhabs*). He then became a repetitor (*mu°id*) in the Niẓāmīyah, as it was customary for the master-jurisconsult to have one in a college of law. He studied literature (*adab*) with Abū Maṣṣūr al-Jawālīqī, the professor of Arabic grammar (*shaykh al-naḥw*) at the Niẓāmīyah, and Ibn al-Shajarī. He studied hadith with his father whilst in Anbār and with °Abd al-Wahhāb al-Anmāṭī in Baghdad. Al-Anbārī eventually acquired the position of professor of Arabic grammar at the Niẓāmīyah. He was incredibly prolific. His works include *al-Inṣāf fī masā°il al-khilāf bayna al-baṣrīyīn wa'l-kūfīyīn* (The Just Treatment of Grammatical Differences between the Schools of Basra and Kufa), and commentaries (sing. *sharḥ*) on the *Dīwān* of al-Mutanabbī, on the *Maqāmāt* of al-Ḥarīrī, and on the *Adab al-Kātib* of Ibn Qutaybah. He is most famous for the *Nuzhat al-alibbā° fī ṭabaqāt al-udabā°*. °Abd al-Laṭīf read the introduction to the *Faṣīḥ* with al-Anbārī, but because he was still young al-Anbārī referred him to his disciple Wajih al-Dīn al-Wāsiṭī, who held his *ḥalqah* in the Zafarīyah Mosque (on him see below). °Abd al-Laṭīf writes that he later mastered al-Anbārī's one hundred and thirty works on *naḥw*, *fiqh*, *uṣūl al-fiqh*, *uṣūl al-dīn*, *taṣawwuf* and *zuhd* (asceticism).<sup>28</sup> He also

<sup>24</sup> al-Zajjāj, a disciple of al-Mubarrad, died in 310/922: Ibn al-°Imād, *Shadharāt*, 4:220.

<sup>25</sup> al-Suyūṭī, *Bughyat al-wu°āt fī ṭabaqāt al-lughawīyīn wa'l-nuḥāt* (Cairo: Maktabat °Isā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1964–65), 311. Shuhdah (d. 574/1178) had *samā°s* from her own father Abū al-Khaṭṭāb, al-Na°lī, Thābit b. Bundar, who seems to have been the father of the Abū al-Qāsim of item d, and others.

<sup>26</sup> Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a°yān wa-anbā° abnā° al-zamān*, 8 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Thaqāfah, 1968–72), 1:102.

<sup>27</sup> See al-Suyūṭī, *Bughyah*, #1507.

<sup>28</sup> Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, 3:463 (#504).

memorised with him:

5. The *Kitāb* of Sībawayh (d. between 177/793 and 180/796–97), the famous book that served as the basis for many later works in the tradition of grammatical study. A large work, of approximately one thousand leaves, it contains numerous examples from the Qurʾān and over a thousand verses of pre-Islamic poetry.

6. Al-Sīrāfī's commentary on the *Kitāb* of Sībawayh by Abū Saʿīd Ḥasan (al-Ḥasan) b. ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Marzubān, who was born 290/903 and died in 368/979.<sup>29</sup> He was very famous even during his own lifetime and Abū ʿAlī al-Fārisī (see above) was envious of him. It is reported that in 368/979, the latter bought a copy of the *sharḥ*<sup>30</sup> for two thousand dirhams in order to find fault with it but found none.<sup>31</sup>

Other famous commentators of the *Kitāb* include: al-Mubarrad (d. 315/927), Ibn al-Sarrāj (d. 316/928), al-Rummānī (d. 384/994), al-Maʿarrī (d. 449/1057), al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1143), and Ibn al-Ḥājib (d. 646/1248).

7. *Al-Muqtaḍab* of al-Mubarrad, the great philologist and author of *al-Kāmil*. He was born in Basra in 211/826 and died in Baghdad in 285/898.

h. Wajīh al-Dīn. Wajīh al-Dīn's full name is Abū Bakr al-Mubārak b. Abī Ṭālib al-Mubārak b. Abī al-Azhar Saʿīd Wajīh al-Dīn Ibn al-Dahhān al-Ḍarīr; his biography appears in Ibn Khallikān.<sup>32</sup> He had in his youth memorized the Qurʾān and all its variant readings on the authority of Abū Saʿīd Nūr b. Muḥammad b. Sālim al-Adīb and Abū al-Faraj al-ʿAlāʾ b. ʿAlī, the poet known as al-Sawādī. He then moved to Baghdad from Wāsiṭ, settled, and resided in the Zafarīyah Mosque. He attended the *majlis* of Abū Muḥammad Ibn al-Khashshāb al-Naḥwī and served as an advanced student (*ṣāhib*) of al-Anbārī. He studied hadīth with Abū Zurʿah (see above) and Ḥanafī *fiqh* too, though he had started out Ḥanbalī. He became professor of grammar at the Nizāmīyah; because of the *waqf* restrictions permitting only the tenure of a Shāfiʿī professor, he changed to this *madhhab* (according to Ibn Khallikān, he was reproached by some for his apparently indiscriminate inter-school movement). He was born in 532/1137 in Wāsiṭ and died in 612/1215.

ʿAbd al-Laṭīf's diligence is evidenced by his method of learning. He says that he would memorise and repeat his lessons even on his way home or to the mosque.<sup>33</sup> Wajīh al-Dīn would not only teach ʿAbd al-Laṭīf grammatical commentaries, but also take him along when he went to al-Anbārī for recitation and consultation. ʿAbd al-Laṭīf would then return home and re-read the lesson till he had it completely memorised, often spending most of the night doing so.<sup>34</sup> This he did for a long time at

<sup>29</sup> Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, 4:199 (#584).

<sup>30</sup> Published in Cairo in 1900.

<sup>31</sup> Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, 3:463.

<sup>32</sup> Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, 4:152–53 (#555).

<sup>33</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿah, *ʿUyūn*, 684/635.

<sup>34</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿah, *ʿUyūn*, 684/635.

the hands of his teacher and his teacher's teacher (*al-shaykh wa-shaykh al-shaykh*),<sup>35</sup> i.e. Wajīh al-Dīn and al-Anbārī. He became so accomplished that he had his own students and gave his own commentaries, on the grammar of Ibn al-Jinnī for instance.<sup>36</sup>

In this fashion, °Abd al-Laṭīf studied, learned and memorized very many books. He mentions specifically the following:

8. *al-Luma*<sup>c</sup>. In all probability, that of Abū al-Faṭḥ °Uthmān, Ibn Jinnī al-Mawṣilī, memorised by °Abd al-Laṭīf in eight months. Ibn Jinnī was the son of a Byzantine slave of Sulaymān b. Fahd al-Azādī al-Mawṣilī. He was prolific: among his works are a treatise on Arabic vowels and consonants entitled *Sirr al-ṣinā<sup>c</sup>ah* (The Secret of the Craft) and a commentary on the *Dīwān* of al-Mutanabbī. Al-Mutanabbī said of Ibn Jinnī that he was more knowledgeable than himself about his poetry (*Ibn Jinnī a<sup>c</sup>rafu bi-shi<sup>c</sup>rī minnī*).<sup>37</sup> Ibn Jinnī, whose principal teacher was Abū °Alī al-Fārisī, was born before 330/941 and died 392/1002.

The three commentaries of the *Luma*<sup>c</sup> mentioned by °Abd al-Laṭīf are those of:

9. Al-Thamānīnī (Abū al-Qāsim °Umar b. Thābit, d. 442/1050), a student of Ibn Jinnī.

10. Al-Sharīf °Umar b. Ḥamzah (d. ?), and

11. Ibn Barhān (d. 456/1064).

He also says that he read every commentary he could lay his hands on.<sup>38</sup>

12. *Adab al-kātib*,<sup>39</sup> a philologically-oriented handbook for chancery secretaries by the celebrated Ibn Qutaybah (d. 276/889). °Abd al-Laṭīf says he learned it by heart in less than six months.

13. *Taqwīm al-lisān*, attributed to Ibn Qutaybah, probably identical with one of the chapters of *Adab al-kātib*. °Abd al-Laṭīf says he learned it by heart in fourteen days, amounting to a fascicle a day.

14. *Mushkil al-Qur<sup>ʿ</sup>ān*, probably the *Kitāb ta<sup>ʿ</sup>wīl mushkil al-Qur<sup>ʿ</sup>ān* by Ibn Qutaybah,<sup>40</sup> a treatise on the variant readings of the Qur<sup>ʿ</sup>ān (*qirā<sup>ʿ</sup>āt*), rhetoric (*balāghah*) in the Qur<sup>ʿ</sup>ān, and the inimitability of the Qur<sup>ʿ</sup>ān (*i<sup>ʿ</sup>jāz al-Qur<sup>ʿ</sup>ān*).

15. *Gharīb al-Qur<sup>ʿ</sup>ān* by Ibn Qutaybah, its full title being *Kitāb tafsīr gharīb al-*

<sup>35</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi<sup>c</sup>ah, °*Uyūn*, 684/635.

<sup>36</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi<sup>c</sup>ah, °*Uyūn*, 684/635.

<sup>37</sup> Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, 1:313 (#423).

<sup>38</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi<sup>c</sup>ah, °*Uyūn*, 684/635.

<sup>39</sup> This has been published several times.

<sup>40</sup> (Cairo: Markaz al-Ahrām li'l-Tarjama wa'l-Nashr, 1989).

*Qurʾān*,<sup>41</sup> a philological commentary on the difficult vocabulary in the Qurʾān.

**16a.** *al-Īdāh*, a grammatical work by Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad b. Abān (d. 377/987),<sup>42</sup> divided into 196 chapters of which 1–166 are on *naḥw* and 167–196 on *taṣrīf*; ʿAbd al-Laṭīf read many commentaries on it too.

**16b.** *al-Takmilah*, also by Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥasan. Though some biographers list the *Takmilah* and the *Īdāh* as separate works, al-Qiftī suggests that the *Takmilah* (as the title suggests) was a completion of *Īdāh*.<sup>43</sup>

[On the *Muqtaḍab*, see (7) above.]

**17.** The *Kitāb* of Ibn Durustawayh (ʿAbd Allāh, d. 346/956–57). The mention simply of *al-Kitāb* suggests the *Kitāb al-kuttāb* (but a case might be made for the *Kitāb al-hadāyā* because of its similarity to works by al-Fārisī and Ibn Jinnī<sup>44</sup>). Ibn Durustawayh was a student of Thaʿlab, Ibn Qutaybah and al-Mubarrad.<sup>45</sup>

ʿAbd al-Laṭīf also read numerous *mabsūṭāt* (lengthy works) and *mukhtaṣarāt* (epitomes or short works).

**i.** Ibn ʿUbaydah al-Karkhī (d. 605/1208), whose full name was Abū ʿUbayd Allāh al-Ḥusayn b. Aḥmad.<sup>46</sup> ʿAbd al-Laṭīf studied several works under the guidance of this scholar, including: the *Kitāb al-uṣūl* by Ibn al-Sarrāj on grammar and *al-ʿArūd* by Ibn al-Khaṭīb al-Tabrīzī on prosody.

**18.** *Kitāb al-uṣūl*. ʿAbd al-Laṭīf read a copy of it that was in the *waqf* of Ibn Khashshāb (d. 567/1172) in the Ribāṭ al-Maʾmūniyah. This is the *Kitāb al-uṣūl al-kabīr* of Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. al-Sarī, Ibn al-Sarrāj (d. 316/929). He was the youngest pupil of al-Mubarrad and thus received his special attention. He taught Abū al-Qāsim al-Zajjāj, al-Rummāni, Abū Saʿīd al-Sīrāfi and al-Fārisī. He was an ardent admirer of Sībawayh's, as his work reveals.

**19.** *al-ʿArūd*. This is *al-Kāfi fī al-ʿarūd wa'l-qawāfi* by Abū Zakariyā Yaḥyā b. ʿAlī al-Shaybānī, Ibn al-Khaṭīb al-Tabrīzī (d. 502/1108).<sup>47</sup> He was a student of al-Maʿarrī and studied hadith under Abū al-Ṭayyib al-Ṭabarī, al-Tanūkhī and al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, among others. His other works include a commentary on the *Lumaʿ* (on which see above) and commentaries on the poetry of al-Mutanabbī, of Abū Tammām,

<sup>41</sup> (Cairo: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Kutub al-ʿArabīyah, 1958).

<sup>42</sup> al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt ʿalā anbāh al-nuḥāt*, 3 vols. (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1950–55), 1:274.

<sup>43</sup> al-Qiftī, *Inbāh*, 1:274.

<sup>44</sup> *EF*<sup>2</sup>, 3:758, s.v. Ibn Durustawayh.

<sup>45</sup> al-Suyūṭī, *Bughyah*, 279.

<sup>46</sup> Ibn al-ʿImād, *Shadharāt*, 5:14.

<sup>47</sup> al-Suyūṭī, *Bughyah*, 338 (#2129.)



of the *Ḥamāsāt*, and of al-Ma°arrī's *Saqṭ al-zand*.<sup>48</sup>

°Abd al-Laṭīf's formal education ends here.

### Later Education

#### Baghdad

At some point after the death of al-Anbārī in 577/1181, °Abd al-Laṭīf's education became primarily, though not exclusively, concerned with the foreign sciences.

j. The son of Amīn al-Dawlah Ibn al-Tilmīdh. °Abd al-Laṭīf says he learned a great deal from him.<sup>49</sup> Ibn Khallikān also highlights this teacher-student relationship.<sup>50</sup> This education was very likely medical.

k. °Abd Allāh Ibn Nā°ilī. °Abd al-Laṭīf praises highly this member of the Almoravid ruling family<sup>51</sup> who left the Maghrib upon the accession of °Abd al-Mu°min in 524/1130. He is not mentioned in the biographical works.<sup>52</sup> He did, we are told, receive Ḥaḍrat al-Raḍī al-Qazwīnī<sup>53</sup> and Ibn Sakīnah.<sup>54</sup> °Abd al-Laṭīf found Ibn Nā°ilī's teaching style strange (°ajīb)<sup>55</sup> but credits him with excellence in the fields of *al-kīmiyā°* (alchemy) and *al-ṭilasmāt* (onomatopoeia and numerology) and related fields. He was in possession of the works of two authors in particular: Jābir b. Ḥayyān and Ibn Waḥshīyah. By frequent mention of these, Ibn Nā°ilī inspired in °Abd al-Laṭīf a love for all knowledge (*shawqan li'l-°ulūm kullihā*).<sup>56</sup> With Ibn Nā°ilī, °Abd al-Laṭīf read:

20. The *Muqaddimah* of Ibn Bābushādh. This is Abū al-Ḥasan Ṭāhir b. Aḥmad al-Miṣrī, a jeweller by trade.<sup>57</sup> Besides the *Muqaddimah*, which is a grammatical work, he is credited with a commentary on the *Jumal* of al-Zajjāj and one on the *Uṣūl* of Ibn al-Sarrāj.

<sup>48</sup> Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, 6:192 (#800).

<sup>49</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °*Uyūn*, 685/636. Amīn al-Dawlah Ibn Tilmīdh is Abū al-Ḥasan Hibat Allāh b. Sa°d b. Hibat Allāh (d. 560/1165).

<sup>50</sup> Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, 6:77 (#304). Ibn Khallikān studied under °Abd al-Laṭīf and was between 19 and 20 years old when his teacher died.

<sup>51</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °*Uyūn*, 685/636: *min awlād al-mutalaththimah*.

<sup>52</sup> Makdisi, *Rise of Colleges*, p. 86, does not identify him; and Silvestre de Sacy opts for alternate readings: Ibn al-Tatalī (*Relation de l'Egypte*, 461), or Ibn al-Bābilī (483 n. 47).

<sup>53</sup> al-Qazwīnī is probably Raḍī al-Dīn Abū al-Khayr Aḥmad b. Ismā°il al-Ṭāliqānī (d. 590/1194) who taught in the Nizāmiyah and excelled in dialectic, disputation, *uṣūl*, exegesis and sermons (Ibn al-°Imād, *Shadharāt*, 4:300–1).

<sup>54</sup> Ibn Sakīnah is Ḍiyā° al-Dīn Abū Aḥmad °Abd al-Wahhāb b. al-Amīn al-Baghdādī (d. 607/1210) who studied Arabic philology under Ibn Khashshāb and disputation and dialectic under Abū Maṣū°ir al-Razzāz.

<sup>55</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °*Uyūn*, 685/636.

<sup>56</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °*Uyūn*, 685/636.

<sup>57</sup> Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, 5:105.

21. *Muqaddimat ḥisāb/Hassāb*. I have been unable to identify this work.<sup>58</sup>

When Ibn Nāʿilī left to join the Abbasid Caliph al-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh (r. 575–622/1180–1223), °Abd al-Laṭīf who would meet Ibn Nāʿilī again in Damascus (see below) pursued his studies without respite, “putting my shoulder to the wheel, setting myself to the task with utmost seriousness and earnestness.”<sup>59</sup>

He read four works of al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111), the great scholar and Niẓāmīyah professor of law and author of the magisterial *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*, namely:

22. *al-Maqāṣid*. This is the *Maqāṣid al-falāsifah* (Positions of the Philosophers);

23. *al-Miʿyār*, i.e. *Miʿyār al-ʿilm* (The Measuring Standard of Knowledge), on logic;

24. *al-Mīzān*, or *Mīzān al-ʿamal* (The Scale of Deeds); and

25. *Miḥakk al-naẓar* (The Whetstone of Inquiry).

He also read all the books of Ibn Sīnā (d. 418/1027),<sup>60</sup> large and small volumes. He also got hold of a copy of:

26. The *Kitāb al-taḥṣīl* of Bahmanyār. Abū al-Ḥasan Bahmanyār b. al-Marzubān (d. 456/1067) was a disciple of Ibn Sīnā. The *Kitāb al-taḥṣīl* is a comprehensive interpretation of Ibn Sīnā’s philosophy, including treatments of logic, metaphysics, physics and cosmology. He is also known for his *Kitāb fī marātib al-wujūd*. Ibn Sīnā’s *Kitāb al-mubāḥathah* reportedly consisted of answers to queries raised by Bahmanyār.

°Abd al-Laṭīf then studied books attributed to Jābir b. Ḥayyān and Ibn Waḥshīyah on alchemical transformation and experimentation. The legendary figure of Abū Mūsā Jābir b. Ḥayyān b. °Abd Allāh al-Kūfī (d. ca. 200/810) was reported to have been a great philosopher, alchemist and chemist. He is judged to have been the first man to suggest the transformation of lead and base metals into gold and is supposed to have written up to 500 works. These include *Asrār al-kīmiyāʾ* (The Secrets of Alchemy) and *Uṣūl al-kīmiyāʾ* (The Principles of Alchemy), the latter of which was widely translated into Latin. He is credited also with several discoveries, including *aqua regia*, sulphuric acid, nitric acid and nitrates of silver. The works attributed to him seem to have come out of Shiʿite and Muslim gnostic circles in the late third/ninth and early fourth/tenth centuries.<sup>61</sup> Abū Bakr Aḥmad [or Muḥammad] b. °Alī al-

<sup>58</sup>This title might be *Muqaddimat ḥisāb*, that is, an introductory work on arithmetic. It might also be read as *The Introduction of Hassāb* or as a copyist’s error for *Muqaddimat Ibn al-Khashshāb*, that is, the commentary by Ibn al-Khashshāb (see above) on *al-Muqaddimah al-wazīriyah fī al-naḥw* by the vizier Ibn Hubayrah (d. 560/1165). see De Sacy, *Relation*, 484 n. 52

<sup>59</sup>Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿah, *ʿUyūn*, 685/636.

<sup>60</sup>Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, 4:216–19.

<sup>61</sup>*EF*<sup>2</sup>, 2:357–59, s.v. “Djābir b. Ḥayyān.”

Nabaṭī Ibn Waḥshīyah is supposed to have been an alchemist and astronomer who wrote a number of works drawing from Syriac sources and died ca. 190/800. The consensus is that most of the works attributed include authentic Syriac and other material but were penned in Arabic quite a bit later, again in the late third/ninth and early fourth/tenth centuries.<sup>62</sup> The main works attributed to him include: *Kitāb al-filāḥah al-nabaṭīyah* (On Nabataean Agriculture), *Kitāb tankalūshā* (On Teucros), and *Kitāb al-sumūm* (On Poisons). °Abd al-Laṭīf devoted much time and effort to the study of alchemy, a field he was later to reject: "The most forcible of those who misled me was Ibn Sīnā, through his book on this 'Craft' with which he supposedly 'perfects' his philosophy."<sup>63</sup>

### Mosul

In 585/1189, °Abd al-Laṭīf, aged twenty-eight, left Baghdad because none of the intellectuals there were of any interest to him and went to Mosul, where he was also to be disappointed by the paucity of scholars. Fortunately for him, however, he came across a few men of learning, such as:

1. Kamāl al-Dīn b. Yūnus. Abū al-Faṭḥ Kamāl al-Dīn Mūsā b. Yūnus al-Mawṣilī was born in 551/1156 and studied at the Nizāmīyah in Baghdad beginning in 571/1175. He studied grammar under Ibn Sa°dūn al-Qurṭubī and Kamāl al-Dīn al-Anbārī.<sup>64</sup> After the death of his father Yūnus al-Mawṣilī, Kamāl al-Dīn b. Yūnus taught in the *madrasah* which eventually came to be named the Kamālīyah, after him, attached to the mosque of Amīr Zayn al-Dīn in Mosul. He died in Mosul in 639/1242.<sup>65</sup> In the person of Kamāl al-Dīn b. Yūnus, °Abd al-Laṭīf found an able mathematician and jurist who was also interested in alchemy.

After a year of vigorous independent study supported by a teaching position at the *madrasah* of Ibn Muhājir, °Abd al-Laṭīf heard about Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī (al-Maqtūl), whom people praised very highly, particularly with respect to ancient sciences. He, therefore, obtained some of his works from Kamāl al-Dīn, who was himself quite taken with al-Suhrawardī's writings.<sup>66</sup> His books studied by °Abd al-Laṭīf are:

27. *al-Talwihāt* [Intimations];

28. *al-Lamḥah* [The Glimmer]; and

29. *al-Ma°ārij* [The Ascending Steps]<sup>67</sup>

<sup>62</sup> *EF*<sup>2</sup>, 3:963, s.v. "Ibn Waḥshiyya."

<sup>63</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °*Uyūn*, 685/637.

<sup>64</sup> Ibn al-°Imād, *Shadharāt*, 5:206.

<sup>65</sup> Brockelmann, *GAL*, SI:859.

<sup>66</sup> Ibn al-°Imād, *Shadharāt*, 5:206, 153; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, 3:446. This is not Abū Ḥafṣ °Umar al-Suhrawardī (d. 632/1234).

<sup>67</sup> al-Isnāwī, *Ṭabaqāt al-shāfi°īyah*, 2 vols. (Baghdad: Maktabat al-Irshād, 1980), 2:63 (#651).

Al-Suhrawardī was executed by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn in 587/1191 for heretical beliefs.

### Damascus

°Abd al-Laṭīf left for Damascus in 586/1190. There he found a number of scholars who gathered through the generous patronage of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn; he identifies: Jamāl al-Dīn °Abd al-Laṭīf, the son of Abū al-Najīb; the Secretary, Ibn Ṭalḥah; members of the house of Ibn Juhayr; Ibn al-Aṭṭār, the vizier who was later executed; and the vizier Ibn Hubayrah.<sup>68</sup> °Abd al-Laṭīf writes also of meeting:

m. al-Kindī al-Baghdādī al-Naḥwī. This is Tāj al-Dīn Abū al-Yumn Zayd b. al-Ḥasan (d. 613/1217). He had studied under Ibn al-Khashshāb, Abū Maṣṣūr al-Jawālīqī and Abū al-Sa°ādah al-Shajarī. He first lived in Aleppo, where he traded in old clothes. He later befriended the Amīr °Izz al-Dīn Yūsuf b. Ayyūb (nephew to Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn) and accompanied him to Egypt where he was able to avail himself of the great libraries. He studied the *Kāmil*, the *Kitāb al-manhaj*, and works by Abū °Alī al-Fārisī under the guidance of Ibn Maṣṣūr, as well as the *Kitāb* of Sībawayh, the *Muqtaḍab*, the *Īdāḥ* and the *Takmilah* (see above). °Abd al-Laṭīf found him and his methods strange and thus left him.

During this time, °Abd al-Latif worked on several of his own books (see below). While in Damascus, he came across °Abd Allāh Ibn Nā°ilī again, who was now living in the Ma°dhanah al-Gharbiyah. He was the subject of some controversy and two factions had formed around him, one for him and one against him; the former included al-Khaṭīb al-Dawla°ī.<sup>69</sup> °Abd al-Laṭīf says that he (himself) spoke to Ibn Nā°ilī and reproached him for delving into alchemy and philosophy whereas he could rather have become someone without equal in his day in both the Islamic (*al-°ulūm al-shar°iyah*) and the rational (*°aqlīyah*) sciences.<sup>70</sup> Because of his interest in philosophy and alchemy, Ibn Nā°ilī was slandered by many.<sup>71</sup> Apparently he set out for Acre in order to complain to Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn about al-Dawla°ī but returned ill, was hospitalised, and died. Al-Mu°tamid, the governor of Damascus, who was a keen alchemist, took possession of all of Ibn Nā°ilī's books.

<sup>68</sup> Jamāl al-Dīn °Abd al-Laṭīf is identified by Riḍā (Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °Uyūn, 686, n. 3) as Ibn Labbād (coincidentally, the sobriquet of our °Abd al-Laṭīf), an expert in speculative theology, philosophy, medicine, and astrology. The identity of Ibn al-°Aṭṭār is unclear. Abū al-Ḥasan °Alī b. Thābit Ibn Ṭalḥah al-Kātib al-Baghdādī (d. 599/1202–3) was educated in Nishapur but settled in Damascus where he was a *kātib* to the *Ḥājib* of the Bāb al-Tawbī° (687, n. 41). The illustrious Ibn Juhayr family produced four °Abbāsīd viziers. °Izz al-Dīn Ibn Hubayrah briefly occupied the post vacated by his more famous father, °Awn al-Dīn Ibn Hubayrah (d. 560/1165): see *EF*, 3:802–3, and Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, 4:114–28; 6:230–44.

<sup>69</sup> Diyā° al-Dīn °Abd al-Malik b. Zayd al-Dawla°ī (d. 598/1202) studied law under al-Karkhī and taught in the Ghazālīyah (Ibn al-°Imād, *Shadharāt*, 4:336).

<sup>70</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °Uyūn, 687/638.

<sup>71</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °Uyūn, 686/637.

### Jerusalem

°Abd al-Laṭīf next set out for Jerusalem and Acre in order to join up with Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's camp. He first met Bahā° al-Dīn Ibn Shaddād who had heard of °Abd al-Laṭīf's fame in Mosul. Abū al-Maḥāsīn Yūsuf b. Rafī° al-Asadī al-Mawṣilī Bahā° al-Dīn Ibn Shaddād (d. 632/1234) was born in Mosul, studied there and then went to Baghdad where he subsequently became an assistant teacher at the Niẓāmīyah. He then travelled to Aleppo and Damascus and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, for whom he became judge of military personnel (*qāḍī °askar*) from 584/1188 until 589/1193.<sup>72</sup> The fame of Ibn Shaddād was considerable and he was visited by the likes of Ibn Khallikān, Abū Shāmāh and Ibn Wāṣil.<sup>73</sup> Ibn Shaddād is the author of a famous biography of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, *Kitāb Sīrat Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn*, known also as *al-Nawādir al-sulṭānīyah wa'l-maḥāsīn al-yūsufīyah*. It was at Ibn Shaddād's suggestion that °Abd al-Laṭīf went to visit °Imād al-Dīn al-Kātib, whose tent was adjacent to Ibn Shaddād's.

°Imād al-Dīn Abū °Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī (d. 597/1201),<sup>74</sup> son of another famous *kātib*, was born in Kashan, where he spent his early youth. In Damascus he was appointed *kātib* to Nūr al-Dīn and *mudarris* in a *madrasah* built in his honour; he also undertook diplomatic missions. In 569/1173, on Nūr al-Dīn's death, he abandoned office and went to Mosul where he became ill. When he recovered he went to join Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, from whom he gained favour and with whom he was to have great influence.<sup>75</sup> He is the author of the celebrated literary anthology *Kharīdat al-qaṣr wa-jarīdat ahl al-°aṣr*.

°Abd al-Laṭīf found al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī busily writing in the decorative *thuluth* script without so much as a rough draft, and al-Iṣfahānī questioned him on matters of *kalām*.<sup>76</sup> °Imād al-Dīn suggested a visit to al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil. This was Muḥyī al-Dīn Abū °Alī °Abd al-Raḥmān b. °Alī al-Lakhmī al-Baysānī al-°Asqalānī (d. 596/1200).<sup>77</sup> Born in °Asqalān, he was trained at the *Dīwān al-inshā°* in Cairo where he served as *kātib* to many Cairene vizier families. Taking over from Ibn Khallāl as *kātib* in 563/1169, he became *kātib* to Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn on the new Sultan's accession to the throne in 564/1171. Without interrupting the flow of his work, al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil questioned °Abd al-Laṭīf on a Qur°ānic verse. °Abd al-Laṭīf handled himself well and al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil told him to go to Damascus, for which he would receive a retainer. °Abd al-Laṭīf requested to be sent to Cairo, insisted (*wa-qultu urīdu miṣr [...] fa-qultu lā budda lī min miṣr*<sup>78</sup>), and finally obtained permission to do so, with a letter of introduction. This is testimony not only to al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil's influence but also to °Abd al-Laṭīf's reputation.

<sup>72</sup> Ibn al-°Imād, *Shadharāt*, 6:158.

<sup>73</sup> Ibn al-°Imād, *Shadharāt*, 6:158.

<sup>74</sup> Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, 7:84–100 (#842).

<sup>75</sup> Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, 5:547–53 (#705).

<sup>76</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °*Uyūn*, 687/638.

<sup>77</sup> *EP*, 3:863, s.v. "al-Kāḍī al-Fāḍil"; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, 3:158 (#374).

<sup>78</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °*Uyūn*, 687/638.

## Cairo

When he first arrived in Cairo °Abd al-Laṭīf was met by the *wakīl*, probably the agent of the treasury (*wakīl bayt al-māl*), Ibn Sanā° al-Mulk.<sup>79</sup> Ibn Sanā° gave °Abd al-Laṭīf money and provisions and introduced him to the various leaders (*arbāb*) of the region, from whom he received gifts and blessings.<sup>80</sup> His residence was the al-Ḥājjib Lu°lu° Mosque.<sup>81</sup> °Abd al-Laṭīf informs us that his intention of going to Cairo was to seek out three men: Yāsīn al-Sīmiyā°ī, Mūsā b. Maymūn, and Abū al-Qāsim al-Sharī°ī. We know that he also received instructions (*waṣīyah*) from al-Qādī al-Fāḍil every ten days or so, although the exact nature of this *waṣīyah* is not known.<sup>82</sup>

n. Yāsīn al-Sīmiyā°ī might be the Abū al-Ṭāhir Ismā°īl b. Ṣāliḥ b. Yāsīn al-Sā°ī mentioned in the *Shadharāt*,<sup>83</sup> but as °Abd al-Laṭīf mentions him in relation to alchemy, which he is said to have taught al-Shāqānī and in which he apparently surpassed Mūsā b. °Imrān, then perhaps he is Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-°Irāqī al-Sīmāwī to whom is attributed a book concerning the so-called cultivation of gold. °Abd al-Laṭīf did not like him, calling him a con artist (*musha°bidh*), a liar (*kadhḥāb*), and a sweet-talker (*muḥālī*).<sup>84</sup>

o. Mūsā b. Maymūn, whose full name was Abū °Imrān Ibn Maymūn b. °Ubayd Allāh (Maymūn) al-Qurṭubī, is better known as Maimonides, the famous Jewish theologian philosopher, and physician. He was born in Cordoba in 527/1135, but fled Spain with his family in 533/1149 because of persecution. After staying in Fez for ten years, he traveled east, arriving some time after 561/1166 in Egypt, where he worked first as a jeweler. Later, he became a physician as a protégé of al-Qādī al-Fāḍil, then of al-Malik al-Afḍal. He wrote twelve medical works in addition to brief monographs on such topics as asthma, haemorrhoids, personal hygiene, sexual intercourse, and pharmacology. He wrote in both Arabic and Hebrew and died in Fustat in 606/1208. °Abd al-Laṭīf informs us that one of his medical works was based on the sixteen books of Galen. This is probably the *Kitāb al-nabḍ al-kabīr*, in sixteen parts and four volumes. Mūsā also wrote *Ṣinā°at al-manṭiq* (The Craft of Logic) when he was sixteen, which draws heavily from Ibn Sīnā, al-Fārābī and al-Ghazzālī. In 587/1190 he wrote *Dalālat al-ḥā°irīn* (Guide of the Perplexed; Hebrew: *More Nevochim*) for fellow Jews and which °Abd al-Laṭīf read. His verdict is harsh: "I looked through it and found it an evil book that corrupted the articles of Law and Faith with elements he [Mūsā] thought would reform them."<sup>85</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Abū al-Qāsim Hibat Allāh b. Abī al-Faḍl Ja°far (d. 608/1211) is known primarily for his *Dār al-tirāz fī °amal al-muwashshahāt* (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1977).

<sup>80</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °Uyūn, 687/638.

<sup>81</sup> al-Ḥājjib Lu°lu° is Amīn Murr Riḍwān al-Saljūqī al-°Ādilī (d. 598/1202).

<sup>82</sup> Ibn al-°Imād, *Shadharāt*, vol. 4, p. 336.

<sup>83</sup> Ibn al-°Imād, *Shadharāt*, vol. 4, p. 323.

<sup>84</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °Uyūn, 687/638.

<sup>85</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °Uyūn, 687/638. *The Guide of the Perplexed* is translated by S. Pines (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963).

p. Abū al-Qāsim al-Sharī°ī is Abū al-Qāsim Hibat Allāh b. °Alī al-Anṣārī al-Buṣayrī (d. 598/1201).<sup>86</sup> He studied hadith under Abū Ṣādiq al-Madīnī and Muḥammad b. al-Barakāt al-Sa°idī. He is the author of a work entitled *Mukhtaṣar fī °ilmay al-nāsikh wa'l-mansūkh* (Epitome on the Science of Abrogating and Abrogated Scriptural Texts).<sup>87</sup> °Abd al-Laṭīf was very impressed with this man, whom he was apparently seeking in Cairo. From Sharī°ī, whom he met in a large gathering in a mosque, he learned of the works of the classical masters, in particular those of al-Fārābī,<sup>88</sup> al-Iskandar al-Afrūdīsī, and Thamīstiyūs (Themistius). °Abd al-Laṭīf explains that he had thought that Ibn Sīnā was in possession of all wisdom (*kuntu azunnu anna °l-ḥikmata kullahā ḥāzahā Ibn Sīnā*) but that Sharī°ī soon won him over.<sup>89</sup> Al-Fārābī (d. 339/950) was such a famed commentator on Aristotle that he earned the title *al-Mu°allim al-Thānī* "the Second Master," Aristotle being the first.<sup>90</sup> Though °Abd al-Laṭīf does not specify the works, he almost certainly read:

30. *Kitāb al-jam° bayna ra°yay al-ḥakīmayn Aflāṭūn al-ilāhī wa-Aristūṭālis.*

Al-Iskandar al-Afrūdīsī is Alexander Aphrodisaeus, regarded in medieval Europe and in the Islamic world as the most authoritative medieval commentator on Aristotle of his age (d. ca. 200 CE). There is speculation that Alexander met Galen ca. 180 CE and was subsequently appointed teacher of peripatetic philosophy in Athens.<sup>91</sup> His works were translated by Ḥunayn b. Ishāq (d. 260/873), Ishāq b. Ḥunayn (d. 289/910–11), and Abū Bishr Mattā (d. 328/940). His commentaries on Aristotle are only available in fragments or quoted in other works, most extensively in those of Ibn Rushd (d. 595/1198). Thirty-five small treatises are available in Arabic manuscripts.

°Abd al-Laṭīf very likely read two medical tracts attributed him:

31. *Fī al-mālankhūliyā* (On melancholia); and

32. *Fī al-°ilal allatī taḥduthu fī fam al-mi°dah* (On diseases afflicting the pylorus).

### Jerusalem

Upon Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's negotiation of a truce with the Franks (Sha°bān 588/August 1192), °Abd al-Laṭīf returned to Jerusalem and took the opportunity to visit him. He took with him as many of the books of the ancients as he could manage and sought out the ruler. He found him generous and perspicacious and remained in his company for a time. Indeed, his praise of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn is without reservation. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn

<sup>86</sup> Ibn al-°Imād, *Shadharāt*, 4:338.

<sup>87</sup> Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, 6:68–69.

<sup>88</sup> See *EI*<sup>2</sup>, 2:778 and the references cited there.

<sup>89</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °*Uyūn*, 688/639.

<sup>90</sup> He wrote commentaries on the *Categories*, *Hermeneutics*, the First and Second books of *Analytics*, *Sophistics*, *Rhetoric*, and *Poetics*. He also wrote on *Nichomachean Ethics*, *On Meteorology*, *On the Heavens*, and on Alexander Themistius' *On the Soul*. His original works are numerous and include works on Intelligence, Time, Substance, Unity, the Void, and similar topics.

<sup>91</sup> *EI*<sup>2</sup>, 4:129–30.

provided °Abd al-Laṭīf with a stipend of 30 dinars a month; this was supplemented by his sons to make a total of 100 dinars. This is a handsome salary; as Makdisi points out, "This amount, at the time, was ten times the normal monthly stipend of a college professor of law... . Ten dinars is half the amount paid to a physician of the fourteenth century."<sup>92</sup>

### Damascus

°Abd al-Laṭīf then returned to Damascus, where he took up studies and teaching in the Umayyad Mosque. He devoted himself to the study of the ancients and his desire to learn them increased the more he read. His affection for Ibn Sīnā seriously declined and he soon realised the fallacy of alchemy (*buṭlān al-kīmiyā*).<sup>93</sup> He goes on to say that he was saved from two great and ruinous errors: "My thanks to God were thus redoubled, for most intellectuals have followed the road to perdition simply through alchemy and the books of Ibn Sīnā."<sup>94</sup>

At Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's death (27 Ṣafar 589/3 March 1193), which °Abd al-Laṭīf blamed on the incompetent bloodletting of his physician, Damascus soon came under the rule of al-Malik al-Afdal, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's oldest son.

### Cairo

°Abd al-Laṭīf remained with him until al-Malik al-°Azīz went to Cairo to oppose his brother al-Afdal (592/1196). °Abd al-Laṭīf joined him; and was paid from the treasury.<sup>95</sup> In Cairo, he spent time again with Abū al-Qāsim al-Sharī°ī. During this time °Abd al-Laṭīf was teaching at the Azhar Mosque and he describes his daily routine. From dawn till the fourth hour,<sup>96</sup> he taught the Islamic sciences. Mid-day, students who wished to study medicine and other subjects, by which he probably means the foreign sciences, came to his house. He would return to the Mosque at the end of the day to teach other students. At night he would do his own studying.<sup>97</sup> He followed this pattern till al-Malik al-°Azīz's death in 595/1198. He then took up residence in town, supported by stipends from Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's remaining sons. It was at this time that Egypt suffered a plague. °Abd al-Laṭīf wrote about this plague and the inflation that followed it in his fascinating *Kitāb al-ifādah wa'l-i°tibār fī 'l-umūr al-mushāhadah wa'l-ḥawādith al-mu°āyanah bi-arḍ Miṣr* (Book of Utility and Reflection on the Conditions Observed and the Events Witnessed in the Land of Egypt), which survives.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>92</sup> Makdisi, *Rise of Colleges*, 87.

<sup>93</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °Uyūn, 688/639.

<sup>94</sup> Makdisi, *Rise of Colleges*, 87, and see Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °Uyūn, 688/639.

<sup>95</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °Uyūn, 689/640.

<sup>96</sup> The day and night were each divided up into twelve 'seasonal' hours (*sā°āt zamanīyah*). The fourth hour would have been ca. 10–11 a.m.

<sup>97</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °Uyūn, 689/640.

<sup>98</sup> See *Relation de l'Egypte par Abd-Allatif...* cited in note 6 above; and *The Eastern Key. Kitāb al-Ifādah wa'l-I°tibār of °Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī*, tr. J. A. Videan, I. E. Videan and K. H. Zand (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1964). For an example of the interest that his keen observations continue to generate, see P. Provençal, "Nouvel essai sur les observations zoologiques de °Abd al-Laṭīf al-



Al-Malik al-°Adil Sayf al-Dīn (Latin: Saphadin) Abū Bakr b. Ayyūb (d. 619/1218) then took over the sultanate (596/1199–1200) and dispersed Ṣalāh al-Dīn's sons (i.e. his own nephews).<sup>99</sup> He was recognised by the Abbasid Caliph in 604/1207.

### Jerusalem

°Abd al-Laṭīf went to Jerusalem again, where he stayed a while teaching a variety of subjects (*kathīr min al-°ulūm*) in the Aqṣā Mosque, and where he wrote a great deal.<sup>100</sup>

### Damascus

In 604/1207 he left for Damascus. He stayed in the °Azīziyah Mosque, where he taught law and studied independently. Many students came to him, not only to study grammar, in which he had previously distinguished himself, but also to study medicine, for which he was then renowned.

### Aleppo and Erzinjan

°Abd al-Laṭīf next went to Aleppo (after 609/1212), where he composed a number of works, thence to Anatolia (after 617/1220) where he stayed many years in the service of al-Malik °Alā° al-Dīn Dāwūd b. Bahrām (Dāwūd Shāh; d. 624/1225), the governor of Erzinjan, to whom he dedicated a number of works. Dāwūd Shāh was his patron until his defeat at the hands of °Alā° al-Dīn Kay-Qubādī (r. 616–634/1219–1237) in 625/1228.<sup>101</sup>

°Abd al-Laṭīf travelled widely between 17 Dhū al-Qa°dah 629/18 October 1228 and 9 Shawwāl 626/31 August 1229.<sup>102</sup> Aleppo was under the governorship of Shihāb al-Dīn Atābekī when he arrived there and he was treated very well by him. He wrote many works there, taught many students medicine and the ancient sciences; he also taught hadith and Arabic at the Friday Mosque. He was, Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah assures us, always studying, writing and composing. Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah had hoped to meet °Abd al-Laṭīf but the meeting never took place, though correspondence did continue.<sup>103</sup> °Abd al-Laṭīf speaks of coming to Damascus (where Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah and his family were resident) but first wanted to present the Caliph al-Mustaṣir some of his works.

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Baghdādī," in *Arabica* 42(3) (1995): 315–33. A complete listing of °Abd al-Laṭīf's works appears at the end of the Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah notice (693–96/645–48). See also *GAL*, GI:118, 481; S I:488, 826–27, 880.

<sup>99</sup> *EP*<sup>2</sup> 1:197; see also Abū Shāmah's *Kitāb al-Rawdatayn*.

<sup>100</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, °*Uyūn*, 689/640.

<sup>101</sup> *EP*<sup>2</sup>, 2:711.

<sup>102</sup> See Shawkat M. Toorawa, "Travel in the Medieval Islamic World: The Importance of Patronage as illustrated by °Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī (and other littérateurs)," in *Eastward Bound: Medieval Travel and Travellers 1050–1500*, ed. Rosamund Allen (Manchester: Manchester University Press) [forthcoming].

<sup>103</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah writes: "I saw [°Abd al-Laṭīf] when he was living in Damascus the last time he was there: a thin, elderly man, of medium height, sweet-voiced and expressive" (683/634–35).

*Baghdad*

°Abd al-Latīf died immediately after he arrived in Baghdad, on Sunday 12 Muḥarram 629/9 November 1231, and was buried next to his father in the Wardīyah Cemetery.

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The education of a polymath of the medieval Islamic world was a three-fold process. Besides the usual training in the Islamic sciences received at the hands of teachers qualified or certified (through *ijāzah*) to do so, the seeker of knowledge had to devote much time to independent study, and had also to seek masters outside the institutions for training in the so-called foreign sciences. °Abd al-Latīf's education is an example of this process, and the autobiographical excerpts preserved by Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah allow us to see it in some detail. A striking feature of °Abd al-Latīf's education is its combination of instruction in the institutional setting of the *madrasah* with instruction outside it, in private settings. Overall, his account provides only relatively limited information on the institutional part of his instruction. There seem to be significant omissions concerning his training in the Islamic sciences per se, particularly in law and theology.

°Abd al-Latīf's account, or what we have of it, provides great detail concerning his early auditions of hadith, his study of grammar and the Arabic language, and his studies in medicine, alchemy, and the other ancient sciences. We learn little of his studies in the Islamic sciences, yet he must have been well versed in them. Al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil questioned him about theology, he taught the Islamic sciences for the better part of the day at the Azhar when he resided in Cairo, and he even taught law in Damascus. °Abd al-Latīf may have neglected to provide detailed information on these topics because he considered himself first and foremost an expert in Arabic grammar and the ancient sciences, and only secondarily a scholar of the Islamic sciences. It is also possible that Ibn Abī Uṣaybi°ah, who, inasmuch as he was composing an entry for a biographical dictionary of physicians, was most interested in accomplishments in medicine and the ancient sciences, and accordingly omitted sections of °Abd al-Latīf's work that focused on the Islamic sciences in particular. In either case, it must be recognized that the account we have of °Abd al-Latīf's education reveals some important omissions that we may only begin to fill in by careful examination.

°Abd al-Latīf's adherence to one of the four Sunni legal *madhhabs* appears nowhere in the extant excerpts, and *madrasahs* appear only a handful of times in his account. Certainly, though, he was trained in Shāfi°ī law; al-Subkī and others included him in their biographical works devoted to Shāfi°ī jurists. Early on, he studied under Ibn Faḍlān at the Dār al-Dhahab Madrasah in Baghdad. He studied as a young man under Kamāl al-Dīn b. Yūnus at the Kamālīyah Madrasah in Mosul. Later on, he taught as a professor at the °Azīzīyah Madrasah in Damascus. The Dār al-Dhahab Madrasah, the Kamālīyah in Mosul, and the °Azīzīyah in Damascus were all Shāfi°ī institutions. Ibn Faḍlān, under whom he studied at the Dār al-Dhahab Madrasah in Baghdad, was one of the leading Shāfi°ī jurists of the time, and would become professor of Shāfi°ī law at the Mustanşirīyah. In addition, Şalāḥ al-Dīn was a great patron of Shāfi°īs in particular. These hints in °Abd al-Latīf's account show the

importance of a Shāfi'ī affiliation for °Abd al-Laṭīf's education and access to patronage and support.

In addition, °Abd al-Laṭīf clearly had important links with the Nizāmīyah Madrasah in Baghdad. °Abd al-Laṭīf's father had trained as a Shāfi'ī jurist at the Nizāmīyah, and °Abd al-Laṭīf's most important grammar teacher, Kamāl al-Dīn °Abd al-Rahmān al-Anbārī, had a long history at the Nizāmīyah. Al-Anbārī had studied Shāfi'ī law there, along with °Abd al-Laṭīf's father, under Ibn al-Razzāz and Arabic grammar and lexicography under the Nizāmīyah's grammar professor, Abū Manṣūr al-Jawālīqī. After serving as a repetitor (*mu'īd*), he eventually assumed the post as the Nizāmīyah's professor of grammar and probably held this position at the time when °Abd al-Laṭīf studied under him. Wajīh al-Dīn al-Mubārak al-Wāsītī, al-Anbārī's student, assumed the position of grammar professor after al-Anbārī's passing, and apparently had to adopt the Shāfi'ī legal *madhhab* in order to do so. It appears very likely that a significant part of °Abd al-Laṭīf's study of Arabic grammar, lexicography, and literature took place at the Nizāmīyah, and probable that he had studied Shāfi'ī law there as well.

In the end, though, while °Abd al-Laṭīf had certainly studied law, theology, and the other Islamic sciences and was well enough versed in them to teach these subjects, he apparently did not consider them his forte. As far as we know, he did not write any works on law or theology. He wrote several philologically-oriented works on hadith and the Qur'ān, including *Gharīb al-ḥadīth*, *Sharḥ sab'īn ḥadīthan* and *al-Radd °alā Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī fī tafsīr Sūrat al-ikhhlāṣ*, but the rest of his works are devoted to the language arts and the ancient sciences, especially medicine. His career shows how the Islamic and the ancient sciences continued to be studied and taught even though the institution of *waqf* did not support them directly. As °Abd al-Laṭīf's description shows, many scholars taught the ancient sciences in a private setting, usually in their homes, while at the same time being supported by a salary for teaching Arabic grammar or in the Islamic sciences in an endowed institution. Certainly, it was more difficult to acquire an education in the ancient sciences than in the heavily supported Islamic sciences, and °Abd al-Laṭīf's journeys and disappointments attest to those difficulties. Nevertheless, the transmission of knowledge in medicine, mathematics, philosophy, and other scientific fields was upheld and continued to flourish at the hands of outstanding individual scholars like °Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī.