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Ibn Ṭūlūn (d. 955/1548): Life and Works

With this article I wish to take up the suggestion offered by the editor in number 5 of *MSR* (2001) that it would be desirable to publish occasional biographical articles on one of the numerous ″polymaths″ of the Mamluk period in the journal. While Marlis J. Saleh contributed a portrait of al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505) in the above-mentioned issue,[1] my essay will deal with the life and works of the Damascene scholar Ibn Ṭūlūn. In doing so, I do not primarily intend to present a consistent and well-rounded biography, but rather a brief sketch of some possible areas of research. A short overview of the most important stages in the author´s life will form the beginning. This account will be somewhat more detailed than the entry in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*[2] by William M. Brinner. We are very fortunate because Ibn Ṭūlūn himself provided some basic information about his life in his autobiography *Al-Fulk al-Mashḥūn fī Aḥwāl Muḥammad ibn Ṭūlūn*.[3] The following information is therefore mainly based on a rereading of the text; most of the facts were already published in Henri Laoust´s biography of our Mamluk alim.[4]

Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʻAlī ibn Aḥmad Ibn Ṭūlūn al-Ṣāliḥī al-Dimashqī al-Ḥanafī lived from 880/1475 to 953/1546. He was a scholar and a very prolific writer whom his contemporaries acclaimed as a traditionist, legal scholar, and teacher —less as a historian. Ibn Ṭūlūn naturally was aware of the fact that he was a subject of the Mamluk rulers, particularly since he could trace his paternal roots back to a Mamluk called Khumārwayh ibn Ṭūlūn[5]. However, Muḥammad first and foremost felt a loyalty to his hometown Damascus and its changing rulers. It was there that he was born in the suburb of al-Ṣāliḥīyah in the Ḥikr al-Hajjāj neighborhood in 880/1475.[6] His birthplace thus was located south of the al-ʻUmarīyah Madrasah at Mount Qāsiyūn.[7] He emphasized in his autobiography

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[1]Marlis J. Saleh, ″Al-Suyūṭī and His Works: Their Place in Islamic Scholarship from Mamluk Times to the Present,″ *Mamlūk Studies Review* 5 (2001): 73–89.

[2]William M. Brinner, ″Ibn Ṭūlūn,″ *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 3:957–58.

[3]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Al-Fulk al-Mashḥūn fī Aḥwāl Muḥammad ibn Ṭūlūn* (Damascus, 1929).

[4]Henri Laoust, *Les gouverneurs de Damas sous les Mamlouks et les premiers Ottomans (658–1156/1260–1744)* (Damascus, 1952), IX–XXI.

[5]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 6.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibn Ṭūlūn describes this suburb in his *Al-Qalā'id al-Jawharīyah fī Tārīkh al-Ṣāliḥīyah,* ed.

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that he was born into a family with good connections to the scholarly world of Syria,[8] although this only applied to his paternal relatives, as we will see later on. According to his own information his mother Azzdān came from Anatolia *(rūmīyah)*.[9] Ibn Ṭūlūn´s statement that she spoke *lisān al-arwām*[10] leaves open whether she was a Turkish or a Greek woman from Anatolia. Usage in those days allows for both interpretations. The boy was half-orphaned at a very early age, because Azzdān fell victim to one of the numerous plague epidemics.[11] In the following years Muḥammad grew up in the bosom of his father´s family.[12]

His father together with his brother Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf (d. 937/1530–31), who was *muftī* and qadi at the *dār al-ʻadl* in Damascus at that time,[13] took care of educating young Muḥammad. But his paternal grandfather Shams al-Dīn ibn Ṭūlūn (d. 887/1482–83) apparently also played a significant part in Muḥammad´s intellectual training, as did Khwājah Burhān al-Dīn ibn Qindīl, the half-brother of his paternal grandfather, whose life as a merchant ended in Mecca in the year 887/1482–83.[14] Burhān al-Dīn became well known mainly because of a major foundation that he had established in Damascus.[15] His family´s ambitions meant that Ibn Ṭūlūn attended elementary school *(maktab)* at the al-Ḥājibīyah Madrasah[16] to learn reading and writing.[17] He studied the Quran at the *maktab* of the al-Kawāfī Mosque at the same time—or after school.[18] The author proudly tells us in his autobiography that he recited from the Quran in public for the first time when he was seven years old, i.e., in 887/1482–83, at a meeting held during the night of the 20th of Ramaḍān.[19]

Muḥammad Aḥmad Duhmān. (Damascus, 1949–56).

[8]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 6.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Ibid, 6–7.

[13]Aḥmad ibn Munlā, *Mutʻat al-Adhhān min al-Tamattuʻ bi-al-Iqrān bayna Tarājim al-Shuyūkh wa-al-Aqrān* [= extracts of Ibn Ṭūlūn´s *Al-Tamattuʻ bi-al-Iqrān bayna Tarājim al-Shuyūkh wa-al-Aqrān*], ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl al-Shaybānī al-Mawṣilī (Beirut, 1999), 843–44 (# 974).

[14]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 7.

[15]Ibid, 28.

[16]ʻAbd al-Qādir al-Nuʻaymī, *Al-Dāris fī Tārīkh al-Madāris,* ed. Jaʻfar al-Ḥasanī (Cairo, 1988), 1:501–2.

[17]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 7.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Ibid.

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Ibn Ṭūlūn was fortunate, by the way, to have grown up in times of peace.[20] Law and order generally prevailed in Syria during Qaytbāy's regency from 872/1468 to 901/1496. Abū al-Baqā' ibn Yaḥyá Ibn al-Ji'ān (d. 902/1496–97) presents quite authentic testimony on the conditions that characterized this epoch.[21] In his capacity as the deputy of Zayn al-Dīn Ibn Muzhir (d. 893/1487–88),[22] who was confidential secretary *(kātib al-sirr)* in those days, he kept a most interesting journal of the sultan's official visit to Syria and Palestine in 882/1477,[23] describing the living conditions of the people in the countryside and the cities in great detail.[24]

Ibn Ṭūlūn's intellectual powers were also stimulated in the following years: in 891/1486–87, at age 11, he was awarded a scholarship endowed by the *waqf* of the al-Māridanīyah Madrasah[25] to study jurisprudence *(fiqh).*[26] He subsequently pursued his studies at the educational institutions of the al-Manjak Mosque[27] and the Masjid al-Jadīd[28] after that.[29] While our protagonist's uncle Jamāl al-Dīn apparently was his most important teacher at the beginning, other respected scholars in the city, such as Nāṣir al-Dīn ibn Zurayq (d. 891/1486),[30] Sirāj al-Dīn al-Ṣayrafī (d. 917/1511–12),[31] Abū al-Fatḥ al-Mizzī (d. 906/1500–1),[32] and al-Suyūṭī,[33] took

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[20]The historical background is given in Carl F. Petry, *Twilight of Majesty: The Reigns of the Mamlūk Sultans al-Ashraf Qāytbāy and Qanṣūh al-Ghawrī in Egypt* (Seattle, 1993), and idem, *Protectors or Praetorians? The Last Mamluk Sultans and Egypt's Waning as a Great Power* (Albany, 1994).

[21]Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur* (Leiden, 1949), 2:38 and S2:26. Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍaw' al-Lāmi' li-Ahl al-Qarn al-Tāsi',* ed. Ḥusām al-Dīn al-Qudsī (Cairo, 1934–36), 11:10 (# 21).

[22]Al-Sakhāwī, *Ḍaw',* 11:88–89 (# 233).

[23]For this journey, see Ibn Ṭūlūn, *I'lām al-Wará bi-Man Wulliya Nā'iban min al-Atrāk bi-Dimashq al-Shām al-Kubrá,* ed. Muḥammad Aḥmad Duhmān (Damascus, 1964), 72–82 = Laoust, *Les gouverneurs de Damas,* 33–38.

[24]Ibn al-Ji'ān, *Al-Qawl al-Mustaẓraf fī Safar Mawlānā al-Malik al-Ashraf,* ed. R. V. Lanzone (Turin, 1878). French translation: R. L. Devonshire, "Relation d'un voyage du sultan Qaitbay en Palestine et en Syrie," *Bulletin d'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire* 20 (1922): 1–42.

[25]Al-Nu'aymī, *Dāris,* 1:592–94.

[26]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 24.

[27]Al-Nu'aymī, *Dāris,* 2:444–45.

[28]Ibid, 361–62

[29]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 24.

[30]Aḥmad ibn Munlā, *Mut'at al-Adhhān,* 48–49 (# 5).

[31]Ibid, 557–58 (# 617).

[32]Ibid, 770–71 (# 881).

[33]Elizabeth M. Sartain, *Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī,* vol. 1, *Biography and Background* (Cambridge, 1975).

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over later on. It was an honor to have been instructed by such an eminent personality as al-Suyūṭī, which is why the historian Najm al-Dīn al-Ghazzī (d. 1061/1651)[34] specifically mentions in his short biography that Ibn Ṭūlūn was awarded a teaching licence *(ijāzah)* by the master.[35]

The syllabus covered the usual subjects of those days: Hanafi law, hadith studies, exegesis of the Quran, grammar, theology, but also medicine and astronomy. In his autobiography Ibn Ṭūlūn provides us with a long list of all the ulama with whom he studied; he also recorded every single book that he worked through in the course of his studies.[36] He was particularly interested in history. Two individuals had a formative influence in this context: Yūsuf ibn ʻAbd al-Hādī (d. 909/1503), a Hanbali known by the name of Ibn al-Mibrad, who wrote several works on the history of Damascus,[37] and ʻAbd al-Qādir Nuʻaymī (d. 927/1521), a Shafiʻi, who left a comprehensive topography of Damascus to posterity.[38]

We have only a smattering of information about Ibn Ṭūlūn´s life after the completion of his studies. But his autobiography lets us know that he held various teaching positions and religious administrative jobs: in 902/1496–97 he was posted at the al-Khātūnīyah[39] and in 909/1503–4 at the al-Jawharīyah.[40] He earned some additional money by reciting from the Quran in a number of madrasahs: at the al-ʻIlmīyah and al-ʻIzzīyah in 901/1495–96,[41] at the al-Dulāmīyah in 902/1496–97,[42] at the al-ʻUmarīyah in 909/1503–4,[43] and at the Umayyad Mosque in 912/1506–07.[44] Moreover, he served as the imam of various Sufi congregations in Damascus: at the al-Ḥusāmīyah in 901/1495–96[45] and at the al-Yūnusīyah[46] and al-Suyūfīyah in

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[34]Najm al-Dīn al-Ghazzī, *Luṭf al-Samar wa-Qaṭf al-Thamar min Tarājim Aʻyān al-Ṭabaqah al-Ūlá min al-Qarn al-Ḥādī ʻAshar,* ed. Maḥmūd al-Shaykh (Damascus, 1981), 1:11–211 (introduction).

[35]Najm al-Dīn al-Ghazzī, *Al-Kawākib al-Sāʼirah fī Aʻyān al-Miʼah al-ʻĀshirah,* ed. Jibrāʼīl Sulaymān Jabbūr (Beirut, 1945), 2:52.

[36]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 7–18.

[37]*GAL* 2:107–08, S2:130–31; Stefan Leder, ″Yūsuf b. ʻAbd al-Hādī,″ in *EI*^{2}, 9:354; Aḥmad ibn Munlā, *Mutʻat al-Adhhān,* 838–840 (# 968).

[38]See note 16. *GAL* 2:133, S2:165.

[39]Nuʻaymī, *Dāris,* 1:507–18.

[40]Ibid, 498–501; Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 23.

[41]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 23; Nuʻaymī, *Dāris,* 1: 550–55, 558–60.

[42]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 23.

[43]Ibid, 22–23; Nuʻaymī, *Dāris,* 2:100–12; Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Qalāʼid,* 165–83.

[44]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 22; Nuʻaymī, *Dāris,* 2:371–416.

[45]Nuʻaymī, *Dāris,* 2:143–44.

[46]Ibid, 189–90.

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908/1502–3.[47] He became administrator of a small *zāwiyah* in al-Rabwah[48] in 909/1503–4.[49] After Ibn Ṭūlūn had made his pilgrimage in 920/1514[50] he worked as an assistant professor at the al-Muqaddamīyah[51] and at the Umayyad Mosque[52] on the eve of the Ottoman´s Syrian conquest.

The occupation of his hometown by the Ottoman Sultan Selīm (r. 918–26/1512–1520) in 922/1516[53] does not seem to have represented a break for our author. In his writings he only mentioned this event in passing and did not attach much importance to it.[54] Nor does the transition in power seem to have been detrimental to his career: in 924/1518 he was appointed imam and reader of the Quran at the Grand Mosque[55] that had been built in al-Ṣāliḥīyah by the new sultan next to the mausoleum of Ibn ʻArabī (d. 638/1240).[56] In the same year, Ibn Ṭūlūn also served as reader of the Quran at the *turbah* of Shāhīn al-Shujāʻī (d. 813/1411–12)[57] at the foot of Gabriel´s Cave *(kahf Jibrīl)*.[58] Ibn Ṭūlūn´s career reached a kind of pinnacle in 926/1520: this was the year that he taught at the al-ʻAdhrāwīyah Madrasah,[59] held the office of a supervisor at the al-Yūnusīyah Khānqāh,[60] and worked as a librarian in the library that ʻAlā' al-Dīn al-Bukhārī

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[47]Ibid, 202; Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 23.

[48]The part of Ibn Ṭūlūn´s *Dhakhā'ir al-Qaṣr fī Tarājim Nubalā' al-ʻAṣr* which deals with al-Rabwah has been edited separately by Aḥmad Taymūr as *Waṣf Rabwat Dimashq wa-Muntazahātuhā wa-Mīdān al-Qabaq* [in *Revue de l´Académie Arabe de Damas* 2 (1922): 147–52].

[49]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 25.

[50]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Iʻlām,* 208 = Laoust, *Les gouverneurs de Damas,* 139.

[51]Nuʻaymī, *Dāris,* 1:594–99.

[52]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 24.

[53]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat al-Khillān fī Ḥawādith al-Zamān,* ed. Muḥammed Muṣṭafá (Cairo, 1962–64), 2:32–36. The historical value of this source was first recognized by theViennese scholar Herbert Jansky. See Herbert Jansky, ″Die Chronik des Ibn Ṭūlūn als Geschichtsquelle über den Feldzug Sultan Selim´s I. gegen die Mamluken,″ *Der Islam* 18 (1929): 24–33. When Jansky wrote his study ″Die Eroberung Syriens durch Sultan Selīm I.″ [in *Mitteilungen zur Osmanischen Geschichte* 2 (1923–26): 173–241] he did not know of Ibn Ṭūlūn´s chronicle. Ibn Ṭūlūn´s *Mufākahat al-Khillān fī Ḥawādith al-Zamān* provides a good historian with much interesting information. See, for example, Bernadette Martel-Thoumian, ″Voleurs et assassins à Damas et au Caire (fin IX^{e}/ XV^{e}–début X^{e}/ XVI^{e} siècle*),″ Annales islamologiques* 35 (2001): 193–240.

[54]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Iʻlām,* 211, 212 = Laoust, *Les gouverneurs de Damas,* 143, 144.

[55]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 23.

[56]Ibid., and Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Iʻlām,* 226–27 = Laoust, *Les gouverneurs de Damas,* 149–50.

[57]Al-Sakhāwī, *Ḍaw',* 3:294; Nuʻaymī, *Dāris,* 1:313–15.

[58]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 23.

[59]Nuʻaymī, *Dāris,* 1:373–82.

[60]Ibid, 2:189–90.

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(d. 841/1437–38),[61] a Hanafi, built in the sepulcher of Sharaf al-Dīn ibn ʻUrwah (d. 620/1223) that is known by the name of ″Mashhad ʻUrwah.″[62]

Ibn Ṭūlūn´s favorable attitude towards the new rulers became quite apparent upon the revolt of the governor of Damascus, Jānbirdī al-Ghazālī (d. 927/1521),[63] shortly after Sultan Selīm´s death on the 8th of Shawwāl 926/21st of September 1520 and the accession to the throne of Sultan Sulaymān (r. 926–74/1520–66):[64] the author of the *Fulk al-Mashḥūn* harshly condemned the actions of the governor, regarding the event as a desertion *(fitnah)* that was potentially dangerous to Syrian society.[65]

We know very little about the next ten years of Ibn Ṭūlūn´s life. Sources dating from 931/1524–25 show that he taught Hanafi law at the al-ʻUmarīyah Madrasah, which I already mentioned above—at first he was an assistant and then from 935/1528–29 on a full professor.[66] In 946/1539–40, when Muḥammad Beg al-Isṭanbūlī, the Grand Qadi of Damascus appointed by the Sublime Porte, suggested that Ibn Ṭūlūn succeed the deceased Shafiʻi Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad and take on the office of preacher at the Umayyad Mosque[67] he declined because of his age. Nor did Ibn Ṭūlūn accept the offer made upon the death of Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad to become his successor as Hanafi *muftī* of Damascus.[68] To the end of his days Ibn Ṭūlūn held various teaching positions at different educational institutions in Damascus,[69] particularly at the al-Ẓāhirīyah Madrasah.[70] In the end, the committed bachelor died at an age of over 70 years on the 10th of Jumādá II 953/9th of August 1546.[71]

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[61]Al-Sakhāwī, *Ḍaw'*, 9:291–94.

[62]Nuʻaymī, *Dāris,* 1:82–89; Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 23–24.

[63]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Iʻlām,* 228–37 = Laoust, *Les gouverneurs de Damas,* 151–59.

[64]Muḥammad A. Bakhīt, *The Ottoman Province of Damascus in the Sixteenth Century* (Beirut, 1982), 19–34.

[65]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Iʻlām,* 231–37 = Laoust, *Les gouverneurs de Damas,* 154–59.

[66]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 24.

[67]Ibid, 25.

[68]Ibid.

[69]Ibid.

[70]Nuʻaymī, *Dāris,* 1:543–48.

[71]Al-Ghazzī, *Kawākib,* 2:53; Ibn Ayyūb, ″Kitāb al-Rawḍ al-ʻĀṭir,″ Berlin MS 9886, fol. 237a, has 955/1548.

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IBN ṬŪLŪN´S WORKS—PAST EDITIONS AND FUTURE TASKS

Ibn Ṭūlūn provides us with a list of his works in his autobiography. He mentions a remarkable total of 750 titles,[72] even though probably less than 100 have been preserved. Carl Brockelmann discovered some 75 works in the relevant catalogues,[73] but he also found some evidence that yet another 100 manuscripts of our author´s texts are to be found in the private library of Aḥmad Taymūr in Cairo.[74] Unfortunately, I was not in a position to verify this information. If it is true, and I am working on the assumption that it is, because some of the published texts evidently were taken from this source, then the collection should prove to be a goldmine with regard to future research on Ibn Ṭūlūn´s intellectual horizon. In his works Ibn Ṭūlūn deals with almost every known subject area, but his papers vary greatly in length: some of his articles are just a few pages long, whereas others take the form of voluminous monographs. The following works by our Damascene alim are presently available in print:[75]

1. *Al-Arba'īn fī Faḍl al-Raḥmah wa-al-Rāḥimīn,* ed. Muḥammad Khayr Ramaḍān Yūsuf (Beirut, 1995).
2. *Basṭ Sāmi' al-Musāmir fī Akhbār Majnūn Banī 'Āmir*, (Cairo, 1964).
3. *Ḍarb al-Ḥūtah 'alá Jāmi' al-Ghūṭah,* ed. Muḥammad As'ad Ṭalas, in *Majallat al-Majma' al-'Ilmī* 21 (1946): 149–61; 236–47; 338–51.
4. *Faṣṣ al-Khawātim fīmā Qīla fī al-Walā'im,* ed. Nizār Abāẓah (Damascus, 1983).
5. *Al-Fulk al-Mashḥūn* (Damascus, 1929).
6. *Ḥārāt Dimashq al-Qadīmah,* ed. Ḥabīb Zayyāt, in *Al-Mashriq* 35 (1937): 33–35.
7. *Inbā' al-Umarā' bi-Abnā' al-Wuzarā',* ed. Muhannā Ḥamad al-Muhannā (Beirut, 1998).
8. *I'lām al-Sā'ilīn 'an Kutub Sayyid al-Mursalīn* (Damascus, 1929).
9. *I'lām al-Wará bi-man Wulliya Nā'iban min al-Atrāk bi-Dimashq al-Shām al-Kubrá,* ed. Muḥammad Aḥmad Duhmān (Damascus, 1964).
10. *Al-Lam'āt al-Barqīyah fī al-Nukat al-Tārīkhīyah,* (1) (Damascus, 1929); (2) ed. Muḥammad Khayr Ramaḍān Yūsuf (Beirut, 1994).
11. *Al-Manhal al-Rāwī fī al-Ṭibb al-Nabawī,* ed. Z. 'Uthmān al-Ja'īd (Beirut, 1996).

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[72]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 26–48.

[73]*GAL* 2:481–83 and S2:494–95.

[74]Ibid, 494. Some catalogues are listed in Fuat Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums* (Leiden, 1967–2000), 6:325.

[75]This list makes no claim to be exhaustive.

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12. *Mufākahat al-Khillān fī Ḥawādith al-Zamān,* ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá (Cairo, 1962–64).
13. *Al-Mu'izzah fīmā Qāla fī al-Mizzah*, (1) (Damascus, 1929); (2) ed. Muḥammad 'Umar Ḥammādah (Damascus, 1983).
14. *Naqd al-Ṭālib li-Zaghal al-Manāṣib,* ed. Muḥammad Aḥmad Duhmān (Beirut, 1992).
15. *Al-Qalā'id al-Jawharīyah fī Tārīkh al-Ṣāliḥīyah*, ed. Muḥammad Aḥmad Duhmān (Damascus, 1949–56).
16. *Qayd al-Sharīd min Akhbār Yazīd,* ed. Muḥammad 'Azad (Cairo, 1986).
17. *Quḍāt Dimashq: al-Thaghr al-Bassām fī Dhikr Man Wulliya Qaḍā' al-Shām,* ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid (Damascus, 1956).[76]
18. *Qurrāt al-'Uyūn fī Akhbār Bāb Jīrūn,* ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid (Damascus, 1964).
19. *Al-Shadharāt al-Dhahabīyah fī Tarājim al-A'immah Ithnā 'Ashar 'inda al-Imāmīyah,* ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid under the title *Al-A'immah al-Ithnā 'Ashar* (Beirut, 1958).
20. *Al-Shadhrah fī al-Aḥādīth al-Mushtahirah,* ed. Kamāl Zaghlūl (Beirut, 1993).
21. *Al-Sham'ah al-Muḍī'ah fī Akhbār al-Qal'ah al-Dimashqīyah* (Damascus, 1929).
22. *Tabyīḍ al-Ṭirs fī al-Samar al-Layālīyah li-'Irs* (Damascus, 1929/30).
23. *Al-Taḥrīr al-Murassakh fī Aḥwāl al-Barzakh,* ed. Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Miṣrī (Tanta, 1991).
24. *Al-Tamattu' bi-al-Iqrān bayna Tarājim al-Shuyūkh wa-al-Aqrān*. Extracts are: Aḥmad ibn Munlā, *Mut'at al-Adhhān min at-Tamattu' bi-al-Iqrān bayna Tarājim al-Shuyūkh wa-al-Aqrān,* ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl al-Shaybānī al-Mawṣilī (Beirut, 1999).
25. *Tuḥfat al-Ṭālibīn fī I'rāb Qawlihi Ta'ālá 'Inna Raḥmata Allāh Qarībun min al-Muḥsinīn,'* ed. Jābir al-Sayyid Mubārak (Cairo, 1989).

An in-depth analysis of writings alone would already give us many new insights into the world view of their author. But finding and studying new texts composed by the scholar would inevitably have to be the first step before actually writing a more detailed account of Ibn Ṭūlūn´s life. We are very fortunate, after all, that many manuscripts are autographs and that obtaining them on microfilm or as a copy does not pose a serious problem, at least as far as all of the holdings in German libraries are concerned:

[76]Gerhard Conrad, *Die Quḍāt Dimašq und der Maḏhab al-Auzā'ī: Materialien zur syrischen Rechtsgeschichte* (Beirut, 1994), 11–17, 55–61.

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MANUSCRIPTS IN GERMANY[77]

1. ″Dhakhā'ir al-Qaṣr fī Tarājim Nubalā' al-'Aṣr ″ (Gotha 1779)
2. ″Ghāyat al-Bayān fī Tarjamat al-Shaykh Arslān″ (Berlin 10106)
3. [An essay on the various meanings of some important words] (Berlin 5105)
4. ″Al-Wāḍiḥah fī Waṣf al-Qarīnah al-Ṣāliḥah″ (Berlin 5595, 2)
5. ″Al-Nafḥah al-Zanbaqīyah fī al-As'ilah al-Dimashqīyah″ (Berlin 297)
6. ″Al-Naṭq al-Munabbi' 'an Tarjamat al-Shaykh al-Muḥyawī Ibn al-'Arabī″ (Berlin 10098)
7. ″Al-Ṭāri' 'alá Zallat al-Qāri'″ (Berlin 571)
8. [A *qaṣīdah* on different kinds of martyrdom] (Berlin 7936, 3)
9. ″Ramz al-Sālik li-'Ilm al-Madārik″ (Berlin 134)
10. ″Ta'līq Wajīz fī Tadwīn 'Ilm al-Kumūn wa-al-Burūz″ (Berlin 5104)
11. ″Al-Ibtihāj fī Aḥkām al-Ikhtilāj″ (Leipzig 843)

Perusal of Ibn Ṭūlūn's manuscripts kept at Leiden University Library or elsewhere in the Netherlands should be just as easy.[78]

MANUSCRIPTS IN THE NETHERLANDS

1. ″Al-Arba'ūnah Ḥadīthan al-Ṭūlūniyah″ (Or. 2519)
2. ″Al-As'ilah al-Mu'tabarah wa-al-Ajwibah al-Mukhtabarah″ (Or. 2520)
3. ″Fatḥ al-Qadīr fī al-Tanīth wa-al-Tadhkīr″ (Or. 2507)
4. ″Al-Ilmām bi-Sharḥ Ḥaqīqat al-Istifhām″ (Or. 2514)
5. ″Itḥāf al-Nubahā' bi-Naḥw al-Fuqahā'″ (Or. 2505)
6. ″Majlis al-Mukhāṭabah bayna al-Zajjāj wa-Tha'lab″ (Or. 2517)
7. ″Al-Masā'il al-Mulaqqabāt fī 'Ilm al-Naḥw″ (Or. 2503)
8. ″Minḥat al-Afāḍil li-al-Shurūṭ Allatī bi-hā Yataḥaqqaqu Tanāzu' al-'Āmilayn aw al-'Awāmil″ (Or. 2515)
9. ″Qā'idat al-'Iqyān fī Ajwibat Mas'alat 'Laysa fī al-Imkān Abda' mimmā Kān′″ (Or. 2510)
10. ″Tabyīn al-Munāsabāt bayna al-Asmā' wa-al-Musammayāt″ (Or. 2508)
11. ″Al-Talwīḥāt fī al-Wujūd al-Dhihnī wa-al-Khārijī″ (Or. 2513)
12. ″Tārīkh Aḥwāl Ifranj Bayrūt″ (Or. 2506)

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[77]Berlin = Wilhelm Ahlwardt, *Verzeichniß der arabischen Handschriften der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin* (Berlin, 1887–99); Gotha = Wilhelm Pertsch, *Die arabischen Handschriften der Herzoglichen Bibliothek zu Gotha* (Gotha, 1878–92); Leipzig = Karl Vollers, *Katalog der islamischen, christlich-orientalischen, jüdischen und samaritanischen Hds. der Universitätsbibliothek zu Leipzig* (Leipzig, 1906).

[78]P. Voorhoeve, *Handlist of Arabic Manuscripts in the Library of the University of Leiden and Other Collections in the Netherlands* (Leiden, 1957).

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13. ″Tashnīf al-Sāmi' fī 'Ilm Ḥisāb al-Aṣābi'″ (Or. 2511)
14. ″Tuḥfat al-Ḥabīb bi-Akhbār al-Kathīb″ (Or 2512)
15. ″Al-Ḥāwī 'alá Ṭuraf min al-Tanzīl li-Ẓuraf min al-Ta'wīl (Landb.-Br. 146)[79]
16. ″Laṭā'if al-Minnah fī Muntazahāt al-Jannah″ (Brill-H.[2] 1011)[80]

Accessing the manuscript sections of non-European libraries may prove to be somewhat more challenging. There seems to be a major collection of Ibn Ṭūlūn´s writings in Alexandria:

Manuscripts in Alexandria[81]
1. ″Laqs al-Ḥanak fīmā Qīla fī al-Samak″ (Alex. Fun. 183, 6)
2. ″Al-Mulḥá fīmā Warada fī al-Subḥah″ (Alex. Fun. 183, 11)
3. ″Al-'Uqūd al-Durrīyah fī al-Umarā' al-Miṣrīyah″ (Alex. Fun. 183, 14)
4. ″Al-Naḥlah fīmā Warada fī al-Nakhlah″ (Alex. Fun. 183, 2)
5. ″Al-Ta'rīf fī Fann al-Taḥrīf″ (Alex. Fun. 183, 13)
6. ″Araj al-Nasamāt fī A'mār al-Makhlūqāt″ (Alex. Fun. 183, 10)
7. ″Ibtisām al-Thughūr fīmā Qīla fī Naf' al-Zuhūr″ (Alex. Fun. 183, 8)
8. ″Ijāzah″ (Alex. Fun. 183, 1)
9. ″'Unwān al-Rasā'il fī Ma'rifat al-Awā'il″ (Alex. Fun. 183, 3)
10. ″Tuḥfat al-Aḥbāb fī Manṭiq al-Ṭayr wa-al-Dawāb″ (Alex. Fun. 183, 9)
11. ″Irtiyāḥ al-Khāṭir fī Ma'rifat al-Awākhir″ (Alex. Fun. 183, 4)
12. ″Nafaḥāt al-Zahr fī Dhawq Ahl al-'Aṣr″ (Alex Fun. 183, 12)
13. ″Risālat fī al-Fakhkh wa-al-'Uṣfūr″ (Alex. Fun. 183, 7)
14. ″Risālat fī al-Fīl″ (Alex. Fun. 183, 5)

The remainder of the manuscripts represent individual copies that can be found at various libraries in Europe, America, Egypt, and Syria:

[79]These data in *GAL* refer to C. Landberg, *Catalogue de manuscrits arabes provenant d'une bibliothèque privée à El-Medina et appartenant à la maison E. J. Brill* (Leiden, 1883). I am not sure about the whereabouts of this manuscript.

[80]Brill – H.[2] = M. Th. Houtsma, *Catalogue d'une collection de mss. Arabes et turcs appartenant à la maison E. J. Brill. à Leide*, 2nd., extended edition (Leiden, 1889). I do not know where this manuscript is kept now.

[81]Alex = A. Abū 'Alī, ed., *Fihrist Makhṭūṭāt al-Maktabah al-Baladīyah fī al-Iskandarīyah* (Alexandria, 1926–29). *GAL* 2:482–83.

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OTHER MANUSCRIPTS[82]

1. ″‘Arf al-Zaharāt fī Tafsīr al-Kalimāt al-Ṭayyibāt (Garr. 702)
2. ″Al-Fihrist al-Awṣaṭ min al-Marwīyāt″ (Taymūrīyah, Tārīkh No. 754)[83]
3. ″Al-Ghuraf al-‘Alīyah fī Tarājim Muta’akhkhirī al-Ḥanafīyah″ (Br. Mus. 645; Şehid Ali Paşa 1924; and Taymūrīyah, Tārīkh No. 631)
4. ″Kamāl al-Murūwah fī Jamāl al-Futūwah″[84]
5. ″Al-Kināş li-Fawā’id al-Nās″ (Esc.^{2} 545)
6. ″Al-Lu’lu’ al-Manẓūm fī al-Wuqūf ‘alá Mā Ishtaghaltu bi-hi min al-‘Ulūm″ (Br. Mus. 430, 6)
7. ″Ta‘līqāt fī al-Tarājim″ (Zah. 186)
8. ″Tuḥfat al-Kirām bi-Tarjamat Sayyidī Abī Bakr ibn Qiwām (b. 548)″ (Cairo^2 V, 415)

SOME PROPOSALS TOWARDS A BIOGRAPHY OF IBN ṬŪLŪN

The above-mentioned biographical data on Ibn Ṭūlūn can be regarded as the building blocks that might lay the factual groundwork for additional, more comprehensive studies. A study of our author′s life within the contemporary context, for example, seems to be a worthwhile initial research project. Viewing Ibn Ṭūlūn′s life in such a context would lend a potential biography depth of focus and significance. However, writing a historical biography is not an easy feat these days.[85] The protagonist of such a biography must be conceived of as a subject

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[82]Esc.^{2} = H. Derenbourg, *Les manuscrits arabes de L′Escurial,* vol. 1 (Paris, 1884); vol. 2/1, *Morale et politique* (Paris, 1903); Br. Mus. = W. Cureton und C. Rieu, *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum orientalium qui in Museo Britannico asservantur: Pars secunda, codices arabicos amplectens* (London, 1846–71); Cairo^2 = *Fihrist al-Kutub al-‘Arabīyah al-Mawjūdah bi-Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyah,* vols. 2–6 (Cairo, 1926–34); Garr. = Ph. K. Hitti et al., *Descriptive Catalogue of the Garrett Collection of Arabic Mss. In the Princeton University Library* (Princeton, 1938); Şehid Ali Paşa = this collection is now kept in the Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi—it has a card index; Taymūrīyah = *Fihris al-Khizānah al-Taymūrīyah* (Cairo, 1948–50); Zah. = *Fihrist Makhṭūṭāt Dār al-Kutub al-Ẓāhirīyah: al-Tārīkh wa-Mulḥaqātuh, wa-Da‘ahū Yūsuf al-‘Ish* (Damascus, 1947).

[83]*GAL* S2:495 (# 42) has ″Fihris al-Marwīyāt al-Akbar, al-Awṣaṭ, al-Ṣaghīr.″

[84]Ibid. (# 31). Joseph Schacht mentions this manuscript in his ″Einige Kairiner Handschriften über furusija und futuwa,″ *Islam* 19 (1931): 51.

[85]*La biographie, modes et méthodes,* ed. Robert Kopp (Paris, 2001); *Biographie und Geschichtswissenschaft,* ed. Grete Klingenstein (Vienna, 1979); *Problèmes et méthodes de la biographie: Actes du Colloque (Mai 1985)* (Paris, 1985); Jacques LeGoff, ″Comment écrire une biographie historique aujourd′hui?,″ *Le débat* 54 (1989): 48–53; idem, ″Whys and Ways of Writing a Biography: The Case of Saint Louis,″ *Exemplaria* 1 (1989): 207–25; Ernst Engelberg and Hans Schleier, ″Zu Geschichte und Theorie der historischen Biographie: Theorieverständnis-biographische Totalität-Darstellungstypen-und Formen,″ *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 38 (1990): 195–217; Jean-Claude Passeron, ″Le scénario et le corpus: Biographies, flux, trajectoires,″ in *Le*

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enmeshed in a complex web at the center of the entire field of cultural studies.[86] Is there any subject better suited to provide comprehensive information about all of its surroundings and the different aspects that a cultural scientist might select from the pool of historical knowledge than such a personality? In his lifetime, Ibn Ṭūlūn was active in every arena, be it economic, social, political, religious, or cultural. It is the biographer´s responsibility to illustrate these complex links in a vivid and coherent manner. In doing so, the quest for absolute knowledge of the respective individual will necessarily always be an elusive, utopian one. It is particularly in this area of research, and more so than in others, that one needs to respect the gaps and omissions in the reference sources. On no account should one attempt to uncritically restore the elements concealed by silence; reconstructing missing links is always a risky undertaking. When working on the subject it is also important to bear in mind that a biography is no closer to real events than any other topic that the researcher might be dealing with. Often one gets the mistaken impression that there is a contrast between a concrete biography and abstract political history. A biography frequently creates so-called reality effects, which is why one needs to take due care in this context. A historian must always bow to his sources, they dictate the scope and the limitations of his study. That is what distinguishes him from a novelist, although the latter might also try very hard to obtain information about the subject matter he wants to describe. It may appear trivial to point out, but writing a biographical account must invariably be preceded by a highly critical assessment of the sources. Personalities who were not at the forefront of attention fortunately were not idealized to the same extent as saints or exceptional rulers. Jean-Claude Passeron warns of the ″risk of exaggerated interpretation and complete coherence that is inherent in every biographical approach.″[87] A portrayal of a person´s life must always point out that it represents an ″illusion biographique″ (Pierre Bourdieu).[88] After all, a biography cannot be a reconstruction of an authentic life, but only an approximation at best. A biography always runs the risk of combining a well-ordered chronology with a consistent, stable personality, coherent actions, and logical decisions. But according to Giovanni Levi a biography, on the other hand, also represents ″le lieu idéal pour vérifier le caractère interstitiel—et néanmoins important—de la liberté dont disposent les agents, comme pour observer la façon dont fonctionnent concrètement des systèmes

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raisonnement sociologique (Paris, 1991), 185–206.

[86]Jacques LeGoff and Pierre Toubert, ″Une histoire totale du Moyen Age—est-elle possible?,″ in *Actes du 100e congrès national savantes (Paris 1975)* (Paris, 1977), 31–44.

[87]Passeron, *Le scénario,* 187.

[88]Pierre Bourdieu, ″L´illusion biographique,″ in *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 62–63 (1985): 69–72.

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normatifs qui ne sont jamais exempts de contradictions.″[89] The oft-proclaimed contrast between individual and society is nothing but an ostensible problem in this context. The individual only exists within a network of multiple social relationships and it is precisely this variety that permits him to unfold his lifestory. Sound knowledge of the respective society is a prerequisite for observing how a specific individual establishes himself in this society and how he organizes his life.

This is the backdrop against which one might ask, for example, how a scholar like Ibn Ṭūlūn experienced the transition of power in Syria in 922/1516 and how he dealt with it. At first glance there seems to be every indication that the event might have represented a turn of an era *(Zeitenwende),*[90] but the people concerned apparently faced it with seeming equanimity, particularly in Syria. It is therefore essential to consider the author´s point of view:[91] whereas Ibn Iyās (d. 930/1523)[92] and Ibn Zunbul (d. after 960/1552)[93] wrote from an Egyptian perspective, the authors of the large number of *Selīmnāmah*s regarded matters from the victorious Ottoman point of view.[94] This, of course, also holds true for the Ottoman historians

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[89]Giovanni Levi, ″Les usages de la biographie,″ *Annales, économies, sociétés, civilisations* (1989): 1325–36, esp. 1333–34.

[90]On *Zeitenwenden* see now *Zeitenwenden: Historische Brüche in asiatischen und afrikanischen Gesellschaften*, ed. Sven Sellmer and Horst Brinkhaus (Hamburg, 2002). Within this context, it is interesting to see how Muslim historians have interpreted the fall of Baghdad 656/1258. See Anja Pistor-Hatam, ″Ursachenforschung und Sinngebung: Die mongolische Eroberung Bagdads in Ibn Ḫaldūns zyklischem Geschichtsmodell,″ in *Die Mamluken: Studien zu ihrer Geschichte und Kultur: Zum Gedenken an Ulrich Haarmann (1942–1999)*, ed. Stephan Conermann and Anja Pistor-Hatam (Hamburg, 2003), 313–34.

[91]Still the best introduction is Peter Holt, ″Ottoman Egypt (1517–1798): An Account of Arabic Historical Sources,″ in *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt*, ed. idem (London, 1968), 3–12. For documentary sources see S. J. Shaw, ″Cairo´s Archives and the History of Ottoman Egypt,″ in *Report on Current Research* (Middle East Institute, Washington) (1956): 59–72, and A.-K. Rafeq, ″Les registres des tribunaux de Damas comme source pour l´histoire de la Syrie,″ *Bulletin d´études orientales* 26 (1973): 219–26. Cf. also Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Egypt´s Adjustment to Ottoman Rule: Institutions, Waqf and Architecture in Cairo (16th and 17th Centuries)* (Leiden, 1994), 1–19.

[92]Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr fī Waqā'i' al-Duhūr,* ed. Paul Kahle and Mohammed Mostafa (Wiesbaden, 1961–75).

[93]Ibn Zunbul, *Tārīkh Ghazwat al-Sulṭān Salīm Khān ma'a al-Sulṭān al-Ghawrī*, ed. 'Abd al-Mun'im 'Āmir (Cairo, 1997). See Benjamin Lellouch, ″Ibn Zunbul, un égyptien face à l´universalisme ottoman (seizième siècle),″ *Studia Islamica* 79 (1994): 143–55.

[94]On this genre, see Shehabeddin Tekindag, ″Selimnâmaler,″ *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi* 1 (1970): 197–231, and Ahmet Uğur, *The Reign of Sultan Selim I in the Light of the Selimnâme Literature* (Berlin, 1985).

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Muḥyī al-Dīn Meḥmed (d. 957/1550)[95] and Luṭfī Pāshā (d. 970/1562–63).[96] ʻAbd al-Ṣamad al-Diyārbakrī (d. after 945/1538–39)[97] is an interesting contemporary witness from Egypt. In his capacity as the Ottoman qadi he had arrived together with Selīm and continued working for the country´s Ottoman administration. As yet there are no in-depth studies of his *Tarjamat al-Nuzhah al-Sanīyah fī Fikr al-Khulafā' wa-al-Mulūk al-Miṣrīyah*[98] nor of his *Nawādir al-Tawārīkh*.[99]

A comparative study of Ibn Ṭūlūn´s *Mufākahat al-Khillān fī Ḥawādith al-Zamān* and *I'lām al-Wará bi-man Wulliya Nā'iban min al-Atrāk bi-Dimashq al-Shām al-Kubrá* with al-Ishbīlī´s (d. after 923/1517) *Al-Durr al-Muṣān fī Sīrat al-Muẓaffar Salīm Khān*[100] seems to be a worthwhile undertaking to learn more about the attitude of Syrian scholars towards the new rulers. After having spent his youth in North Africa, ʻAlī ibn Muḥammad al-Lahmī al-Ishbīlī al-Maghribī al-Dimashqī[101] moved to Damascus. He was a member of the Maliki community, which was extremely small in the Syrian capital at the beginning of the ninth/sixteenth century.[102] Apparently, he did not rise very far in the Maliki hierarchy, but rather had to make do with a number of humble and thus low-paid positions. When it became clear that Mamluk rule was drawing to a close in Syria, al-Ishbīlī obviously wished to accommodate himself to the changing times by writing a panegyric chronicle of the new ruler. He probably wanted to ingratiate himself with the new establishment and—as a result—climb the social ladder. Al-Ishbīlī therefore had to write such a chronicle as fast as possible in order to give it to the new ruler while he still was in the country. Our author´s behavior was in absolute agreement with a concept of Islamic law according to which any new conqueror was preferable to an old, weak, and corrupt regime if he maintained law and order and thus ensured the performance of religious duties.[103] One also believed that every century

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[95]Muḥyī al-Dīn Meḥmed´s *Tārīkh-i Āl-i ʻOthmān* is still available only in MS. See Franz Babinger, *Die Geschichtsschreiber der Osmanen und ihre Werke* [= *GOW*] (Leipzig, 1927), 72–74, and Theodor Menzel, ″Muḥyī l-Dīn Meḥmed,″ *EI*^{2}, 7:478–79.

[96]Luṭfī Pāshā, *Tevārīkh-i Āl-i ʻOthmān*, ed. ʻAlī Emīrī (Istanbul, 1922–23).

[97]*GOW,* 58–59.

[98]ʻAbd al-Ṣamad al-Diyārbakrī, ″Tarjamat al-Nuzhah al-Saniyah fī Dhikr al-Khulafā' wa-al-Mulūk al-Miṣrīyah,″ British Library MS Add. 7846.

[99]ʻAbd al-Ṣamad al-Diyārbakrī, ″Nawādir al-Tawārīkh,″ Millet Library Istanbul MS 596.

[100]Al-Ishbīlī, *Al-Durr al-Muṣān fī Sīrat al-Muẓaffar Salīm Khān,* ed. Hans Ernst (Cairo, 1962). See Michael Winter, ″A Seventeenth Century Arabic Panegyric of the Ottoman Dynasty,″ *Asian and African Studies* 13 (1979): 130–56.

[101]Al-Ishbīlī, *Durr,* 19.

[102]One finds a survey of this *madhhab* in al-Nuʻaymī, *Dāris,* 2:3–28.

[103]See Ulrich Haarmann, ″'Lieber hundert Jahre Zwangsherrschaft als ein Tag Leiden im Bürgerkrieg': Ein gemeinsamer Topos im islamischen und frühneuzeitlichen europäischen Staatsdenken,″ in

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brought forth an exceptional personality *(mujaddid al-ʻaṣr)* who would renew the faith that had been corrupted over time, restoring Islam to its pure and original form.[104] Of course, scholars hardly ever agreed as to who actually was the respective renewer. Al-Suyūṭī, for example, considered himself to be the *mujaddid* of the tenth century of the Muslim calendar,[105] whereas the Persian scholar Faḍl Allāh ibn Rūzbihān Khunjī (d. 927/1521) initially thought that the Uzbek ruler Shībānī Khān (d. 916/1510) represented the restorer of an ideal Islamic society.[106] Khunjī was a little fickle-minded, however, because he dropped the Uzbek ruler after Shībānī had been defeated by Shāh Ismāʻīl (d. 930/1524) at Chaldirān in August 920/1514 and, without further ado, declared the Ottoman sultan Selīm the true *mujaddid al-ʻaṣr* in two poems.[107] His opinion was shared by Luṭfī Pāshā, the Ottoman historian mentioned above, who described Selīm as the religious reformer of the tenth century in his chronicle *Tevārīkh-i Āl-i ʻOthmān*.[108] Al-Ishbīlī readily agreed with this pronouncement.[109] In his view the Ottoman ruler had not been motivated by power politics when he conquered Egypt and Syria, but rather had followed divine inspiration.[110] He felt that Selīm possessed a ″blessed soul,″[111] and as the ″keeper of the faith″[112] was not merely the successor of the ″righteous

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Gottes ist der Orient, Gottes ist der Okzident: Festschrift für Abdoldjavad Falaturi zum 65. Geburtstag, ed. Udo Tworuschka (Cologne, 1991): 262–69.

[104]For the *mujaddid* conception, see Ella Landau-Tasseron, ″The ′Cyclical Reform′: A Study of the Mujaddid Tradition,″ *Studia Islamica* 70 (1989): 79–113. The idea of a *mujaddid al-ʻaṣr* is based on the following hadith: ″God will send to this community at the turn of every century someone who will restore religion.″ Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī (d. 889/1484), *Kitāb al-Sunan,* ed. Muḥammad ʻAbd al-Ḥāmid (Cairo, 1951), 4:156.

[105]Al-Suyūṭī, *Kitāb al-Taḥadduth bi-Niʻmat Allāh,* ed. Elizabeth M. Sartain (Cambridge, 1975), 215, 227. See Ignaz Goldziher, ″Zur Charakteristik Jelâl du-dîn us-Suyûtî′s und seiner literarischen Tätigkeit,″ in *Gesammelte Schriften,* ed. Joseph Desomogyi (Hildesheim, 1967), 52–73.

[106]Faḍl Allāh ibn Rūzbihān Khunjī, *Mihmān′nāmah-′i Bukhārā,* ed. Manūchihr Sutūda (Tehran, 1962), 1, and Ursula Ott, *Transoxanien und Turkestan zu Beginn des 16. Jahrhunderts: Das* Mihmān-nama-yi Buḫārā *des Faḍlallah b. Rūzbihān Ḫunǧī* (Freiburg, 1974), 52.

[107]For the first poem, see Aḥmed Beg Ferīdūn, *Munshaʻāt al-Salāṭīn* (Istanbul, 1857), 1:416 ff, and Edgar G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia* (Cambridge, 1956–59), 4:78 ff. Erika Glassen has verified Khunjī′s authorship: idem, ″Krisenbewußtsein und Heilserwartung in der islamischen Welt zu Beginn der Neuzeit,″ in *Festschrift für Hans Robert Roemer zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Ulrich Haarmann and Peter Bachmann (Beirut and Wiesbaden, 1979), 166–79, n. 34.

[108]Luṭfī Pāshā, *Tevārīkh-i Āl-i ʻOthmān,* 11.

[109]Al-Ishbīlī, *Durr,* 1, lines 1–3.

[110]Ibid., 6, line 30.

[111]Ibid., 2, line 7.

[112]Ibid., 2, line 13.

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caliph″[113] but the caliph himself,[114] as he was also the ″imam,″[115] the ″shadow the Almighty casts on his earth″[116] and the ″sovereign of the faithful.″[117] But despite these divine directions al-Ishbīlī is hard put to justify the Ottoman invasion of the Sunni empire of the Mamluks. Finding reasons for the campaigns against the Shi'i Safavids was easy: after all, they were ″godless people and strayers from the flock of believers,″[118] ″Kharijite hordes,″[119] ″innovators,″[120] and ″the devil′s party″[121] in general. According to al-Ishbīlī, the Shāh and his followers had expelled themselves from the Islamic community by their activities. Being heretics, they had to be destroyed in the Holy War according to religious laws and regulations. Selīm′s campaign against Shāh Ismā'īl was, therefore, perfectly justified by the Sunnah and the Quran. But one could hardly criticize the Mamluks in the same manner, which is why al-Ishbīlī accused them of suppression[122] and tyranny[123] as a result of depraved religious conditions in the country.[124] In order to substantiate his arguments, the author resorted to dreams and number-symbolic interpretations of specific historical events in his *Al-Durr al-Muṣān* to demonstrate divine omens of Selīm′s destiny. From the fact that the battle of al-Raydānīyah had been fought on the 29th of Dhū al-Ḥijjah 922 [= 23 January 1517], the last day of the Islamic lunar year, he inferred the following: ″This portends the end of their rule. Because the month had passed and thus the year [9]22.″[125] These allusions are taken up in his dreams: in his first dream two moons rise and meet above Damascus. One tumbles down and the other one shines on the Umayyad Mosque.[126] The Angels Gabriel, Michael, and the four righteous caliphs appear in the following dream. One of them says: ″These [Mamluks] will disappear with the help of Salīm ibn 'Uthmān.″[127] Finally the Prophet Muḥammad appears, explaining that: ″Sulṭān Ibn 'Uthmān is

[113]Ibid., 3, line 21.
[114]Ibid., 3, line 9.
[115]Ibid., 6, line 11.
[116]Ibid., 6, lines 11–12
[117]Ibid., 6, line 3.
[118]Ibid., 4, lines 13–14.
[119]Ibid., 5, line 9.
[120]Ibid., 4, line 20.
[121]Ibid., 5, lines 18–19.
[122]Ibid., 7, line 12.
[123]Ibid., 15, line 15.
[124]Ibid., 7, line 13.
[125]Ibid., 12, lines 13–14.
[126]Ibid., 10, lines 7–8.
[127]Ibid., 11, lines 10–12.

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the ruler of Egypt and Cairo.″[128]

Al-Ishbīlī´s currying favor with the Ottomans appears to have been the normal behavioral pattern of many Syrian scholars in those days. A new ruler did not mean a new era to them, but simply a shift in the power structure of the whole Sunni community *(ummah)*. One did not owe the Mamluks any particular loyalty, because they represented a foreign elite too.

This may also explain why Ibn Ṭūlūn took little interest in the events in Damascus. A brief discussion of the methods Ibn Ṭūlūn used as a historian may be useful in this context: Richard Hartmann showed[129] that his *Mufākahat al-Khillān fī Ḥawādith al-Zamān* mainly consists of diary entries, unlike Ibn Iyās´ chronicle *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr fī Waqā'i' al-Duhūr,* written at the same time and composed of various diary-like records that were regrouped later on. There is no evidence in Ibn Ṭūlūn´s work that he edited or revised the diary-like material any further. In several instances he recorded a rumor spread in Damascus on one day and only added that it was false on another day, when this was found to be the case. He possibly intended to make major revisions. In fact he not only refers to other chroniclers in his text from time to time, but at the end of the year he sometimes also adds an entire appendix taken from other contemporary historians.[130] But the first part of the chronicle must be based on other works, because the text begins in 844/1440–41 and Ibn Ṭūlūn was only born in 880/1475–76. So we need to find out which models the historian used, a matter that has not been completely resolved until now. And when does the real diary actually begin? In reference to this problem Hartmann points to a break in continuity in the entry for the 5th of Ṣafar 921/21st of March 1515.

Ibn Ṭūlūn´s *Mufākahat al-Khillān fī Ḥawādith al-Zamān* is an extremely important source for the year 922/1516 and the following years because the author, clearly impressed by the unfolding events, kept his diary partly also offering detailed descriptions of the Ottoman camp. His firm neutrality also with respect to the decisive battle is evidenced by the fact that he uses the epithets ″hypocrite and Pharisee″ to characterize the people who prayed for the victory of the ruling Mamluk sultan together with the qadis before the Battle of Marj Dābiq (15th of Rajab 922/24th of August 1516).[131] One cannot help but suspect that Ibn Ṭūlūn,

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[128]Ibid., 17, lines 1–2. See also A. N. Asrar, ″The Myth about the Transfer of the Caliphate to the Ottomans,″ *Journal of the Regional Cultural Institute* 5 (1972): 111–20.

[129]See Richard Hartmann, *Das Tübinger Fragment der Chronik des Ibn Ṭūlūn,* Schriften der Königsberger Gelehrten Gesellschaft, Geisteswissenschaftliche Klasse, year 3, vol. 2 (Berlin 1926), 87–170, esp. 87–104.

[130]Ibid, 96.

[131]Ibid, 101.

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driven by opportunistic motives, also revised his observations later on to reflect a more pro-Ottoman stance. Al-Ishbīlī and Ibn Ṭūlūn are not the only ones to demonstrate eloquently that such turnabout loyalties were quite common in ulama circles; the Shafi'i qadi Walī al-Dīn al-Farfūr (d. 937/1530–31)[132] is another example. After Selīm's victory he gradually moved over to the Hanafi camp. He thus managed to become chief judge—after the Ottomans had reorganized the tiers of the civil service, replacing the formerly four qadis of the four law schools with one qadi and four deputies for the *madhāhib*. Eventually he had to flee because he was afraid of Governor Jānbirdī, whom he distrusted—and rightly so. For a while, Ibn Ṭūlūn—who of course already had been a Hanafi beforehand—had also aspired to a lucrative sinecure at the mosque at Ibn al-'Arabī's tomb, which had been newly constructed by Selīm. Seeing how disparagingly Jānbirdī's attitude is described in the chronicle one might be a bit suspicious: he is blamed for several murders in a rather thinly veiled manner.[133] On the other hand, the very case of Ibn al-Farfūr seems to prove that Ibn Ṭūlūn's depiction is probably not far removed from the truth. If any editing was done at all at a later stage, one would have to assume that it merely consisted of emphasizing a specific tenor of the text.

These are just a couple of ideas regarding the point of view from which one might approach a biography of Ibn Ṭūlūn. Placing this scholar in the historical context of his times in such a way that his biography will render an overall picture of the era is a task that needs to be completed in the future.

Autobiographical Writing as a Literary Genre of the Mamluk Period

A more detailed study of Ibn Ṭūlūn's *Al-Fulk al-Mashḥūn fī Aḥwāl Muḥammad Ibn Ṭūlūn* may also prove to be a worthwhile undertaking. As we know, autobiographical writing already existed in very early times and in every literary culture. When Wilhelm Dilthey's article entitled *Das Erleben und die Selbstbiographie*[134] was published at the beginning of the twentieth century, it triggered academic research into the manifold literary representations of a person's own life.[135] Right from the beginning it was very difficult to give a content-based

[132] Aḥmad ibn Munlā, *Mut'at al-Adhhān,* 607–9 (# 686), and Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, passim.

[133] Hartmann, *Das Tübinger Fragment,* 101.

[134] Wilhelm Dilthey, "Das Erleben und die Selbstbiographie," in *Die Autobiographie: Zu Form und Geschichte einer literarischen Gattung,* ed. Georg Niggl (Darmstadt, 1989), 21–32.

[135] Extensive bibliographies are given in Jürgen Lehmann, *Bekennen, Erzählen, Berichten, Studien zu Theorie und Geschichte der Autobiographie* (Tübingen, 1988), 251–81, and Niggl, *Die Autobiographie,* 539–68. Short research reports can be found in James Olney, "Autobiography and the Cultural Moment: A Thematic, Historical, and Bibliographical Introduction," in *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*, ed. idem (Princeton, 1980), 3–27, and Georg Niggl, "Einleitung," in idem, *Die Autobiographie,* 1–17.

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and formal definition of the genre since the borders between autobiography and memoirs, philosophical self-reflections, autobiographical novels, stories written in the first person, or fictitious autobiographies are rather fluid. Jürgen Lehmann nevertheless managed to present a concise working definition in his post-doctoral thesis *Bekennen-Erzählen-Berichten: Studien zu Theorie und Geschichte der Autobiographie* submitted to Göttingen University:

> Autobiography is a type of text in which an author expresses internal and external events experienced in the past as well as activities carried out by himself in a writing situation, summarizing all of this and articulating himself in such a narrative style that he actively puts himself into a specific relation to the environment.[136]

If one studies this type of autobiographical narrative more closely, however, one encounters some problems inherent in this genre. The fact that historical events have actually taken place and that the author consistently refers to reality merely represent external features of demarcation vis-à-vis imaginary stories. The crucial difference between a fictional account and an autobiography is its intention. The author presents the reciprocal influence of the own self and the extrapersonal environment as if it were a consistent and logical development. Subjective experience is thus judged *ex eventu* and placed in a higher time continuum. Autobiographical writers frequently attempt to present the complex, accidental web woven between the self and the external world as if it were the result of a deliberately controlled process. It will always be difficult for someone interpreting autobiographical accounts to deal with this problem. The fact that the author is both the subject and object of his writing poses another problem. He endeavors to order his previous life beyond all determining of historical and social factors. In view of his auctorial intention he cannot avoid stylizing his own past and inventing some elements either consciously or unconsciously. The mere—or possibly the particular—choice and emphasis of facts and experiences by the autobiographical narrator already is of crucial significance in this process of stylization. He arranges the selected facts in a meaningful manner in order to render a condensed account, presenting the reader with a life that is an integrated whole.

A whole set of spiritual, political, and academic works containing autobiographical material also exist in classical Arabic literature.[137] So nowadays

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[136]Lehmann, *Bekennen, Erzählen, Berichten,* 36.

[137]See Franz Rosenthal, ″Die arabische Autobiographie,″ *Studia Arabica* 1 (1937): 1–40; Carl Brockelmann (Brukilman), ″Mā Ṣanf ʻUlamā' al-ʻArab fī Aḥwāl Anfusihim,″ in *Al-Muntaqá min Dirāsāt al-Mustashriqīn,* pt. 1, *Dirāsāt Mukhtalifah,* ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid (Cairo, 1955);

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one can no longer make the same sweeping statement as Georg Misch, author of the monumental *Geschichte der Autobiographie,* did when he said that autobiographies were only ″testimony to the development of self-awareness of man in the Occident.″[138]

Until now, research has not focused on biographical accounts from the Mamluk period. The genre was not really established in the academic tradition of those days. This may be due to the fact that a Mamluk scholar occasionally must have shied away from publishing details about his own life in a vain manner. Abū al-Maḥāsin Ibn Taghrībirdī´s (d. 812/1415) opinion is characteristic of this attitude: although he did dictate his life story to his student Aḥmad ibn Ḥusayn al-Turkumānī al-Ḥanafī, known as al-Marjī,[139] he mentioned expressly that this actually ran counter to the conventions of his profession. According to Ibn Taghrībirdī it was by no means customary for scholars to write their own biographies. It was customary, however, to proceed like the learned Damascene Ibn Ayyūb (d. 1000/1592)[140] did in his biographical reference work *Al-Rawḍ al-'Āṭir*.[141] He very skillfully supplemented various suitable passages of his work—e.g., the end of the biographical sketches of his grandfather Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Ayyūb and of his cousin Muḥīb al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ayyūb—with information about his personal development.[142] Al-Sakhāwī found an equally elegant solution to the problem. He simply wrote his own biography, including it without any additional comments in his monumental biographical dictionary.[143]

Gustav E. von Grunebaum, *Der Islam im Mittelalter* (Zurich and Stuttgart, 1963), 329–75; Sartain, *Biography,* 137–41; S. M. Al-Ghamdi, ″Autobiography in Classical Arabic Literature: An Ignored Literary Genre,″ Ph.D. diss., University of Indiana, 1989; Stephen F. Dale, ″Steppe Humanism: The Autobiographical Writings of Zahir al-Din Muhammad Babur, 1483–1530,″ *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 22 (1990): 37–58; and Shawqī Muḥammad Mu'āmilī, *Al-Sīrah al-Dhātīyah fī al-Turāth* (Cairo, 1989).

[138]Georg Misch, *Geschichte der Autobiographie*, (Frankfurt am Main, 1949–69), 1:1:5.

[139]This text is an appendix to the second volume of the Viennese manuscript (Or. 1173) of his ″Al-Manhal al-Ṣāfī wa-al-Mustawfá ba'd al-Wāfī″ [= Gustav Flügel, *Die arabischen, persischen und türkischen Handschriften der Kaiderlich-Königlichen Hofbibliothek zu Wien*, vol. 2 (Vienna, 1865), 338–39], fol. 430v–432r. Ibn al-'Imād speaks in his *Shadharāt al-Dhahab fī Akhbār Man Dhahab* (Cairo, 1931–32) of an autobiography written by the Mamluk ″polymath″ al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1363). Cf. Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt,* 6:201. The text has not yet been discoverd.

[140]Ibn Taghrībirdī, ″Manhal,″ fol. 430v.

[141]See n. 75.

[142]See Ahmet Halil Güneş, *Das Kitāb ar-rauḍ al-'āṭir des Ibn Aiyūb: Damaszener Biographien des 10./16. Jahrhunderts, Beschreibung und Edition* (Berlin, 1981), 2–5.

[143]Al-Sakhāwī, *Ḍaw',* 8:1–32.

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Ibn Ṭūlūn´s autobiography is a different matter. The historian al-Nu'aymī urged him to write the story of his life as an independent account. This was done when our author already was quite advanced in years. At least, he observed that his strength was failing and complained that he was left with only a few friends but many foes.[144] Separate autobiographical accounts from the Mamluk period were also prepared by al-Suyūṭī[145] and Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406).[146] Dating the biographies is not easy because the circumstances surrounding the manuscripts of both works are a little complicated: Elizabeth M. Sartain proceeds on the assumption that al-Suyūṭī began writing down his autobiography *Al-Taḥadduth bi-Ni'mat Allāh* in 889/1484 after the dispute about his announced ability to exercise *ijtihād*.[147] Of course, he may have used some notes that he had taken previously. At any rate, he discontinued working on the project sometime in the 890s, never to resume it. Neither does Ibn Khaldūn seem to have written *Al-Ta'rīf bi-Ibn Khaldūn wa-Riḥlatihi Gharban wa-Sharqan,* the highly selective story of his life that was probably the product of his stay in Egypt, in one go after 784/1382, but rather with long breaks in between.[148] Comparing the content of the works of al-Suyūṭī, Ibn Khaldūn, al-Sakhāwī, and Ibn Ṭūlūn already points to some differences and commonalities of the genre:

Al-Suyūṭī ***(Al-Taḥadduth bi-Ni'mat Allāh)***	**Ibn Khaldūn** ***(Al-Ta'rīf bi-Ibn Khaldūn wa-Riḥlatihi Gharban wa-Sharqan)***
- opening quotations (pp. 1–3)	- name (pp. 3–6)
- earlier autobiographies (3–4)	- Andalusian ancestors (6–10)
- father´s genealogy (5)	- ancestors from Ifrīqiyah (10–17)
- Humām al-Dīn al-Khūḍayrī (5–6)	- education, teachers (17–56)
- view of Sufism (6–7)	- appointment as chief of chancellery in Tunis and travel to the Maghrib (57–67)
- other ancestors (7–11)	
- the name of al-Suyūṭī (12)	
- on Asyūṭ (12–19)	- appointment as secretary to Sultan Abū 'Inān (67–68)
- disagreement with his father (20–31)	

[144]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 5.

[145]Al-Suyūṭī, *Taḥadduth*.

[146]Ibn Khaldūn, *Al-Ta'rīf bi-Ibn Khaldūn wa-Riḥlatihi Gharban wa-Sharqan* (Cairo, 1979).

[147]Sartain, *Biography*, 142–46.

[148]Walter J. Fischel, *Ibn Khaldūn in Egypt, His Public Functions and His Historical Research (1382–1406): A Study in Islamic Historiography* (Berkeley and LosAngeles, 1967), 159–65.

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Al-Suyūṭī
(cont.)

- birth (31)
- name (31–38)
- literature studies (31–42)
- hadith studies, teachers (43–78)
- visit to the Ḥijāz (79–82)
- journey to Alexandria and Damietta - (83–84)
- students on his journeys (84–87)
- return and teaching (88)
- students (88–89), beginning of his work as *muftī* (89–90)
- hadith professor at al-Shaykhūnīyah (90–91)
- inaugural lecture (92–104)
- works (105–36)
- eulogies on his books (137–54)
- dissemination of his works outside Egypt (155–59)
- (discussion of other scholars (160–202)
- problems of *ijtihād* (203–14)
- theory of the *mujaddid* (215–27)
- legal decisions (228–34)

Ibn Khaldūn
(cont.)

- withdrawal of the sultan´s favor (69–70)
- appointment as secretary to Sultan Abū Salīm (70–83)
- journey to al-Andalus (84–99)
- journey to Bijāyah and appointment as treasurer (99–107)
- support of Abū Hammū, ruler in Tilimsān (107–44)
- support of Sultan ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz, ruler in the Maghrib, in opposing theʻAbdalwadids (144–66)
- [insertion] eulogy of the vizier Ibn al-Khaṭīb (167–231)
- return to the Maghrib (232–42)
- second journey to Andalusia and Tilimsān; stay with the Awlād ʻArīf (243–46)
- return to Sultan Abū al-ʻAbbās´ court in Tunis (246–63)
- eastward journey; qadi in Cairo (263–70)
- pilgrimage to Mecca (270–303)
- teaching positions and work at several *khānqāh*s (304–42)
- supervision of Baybars´ *khānqāh* (342–44)
- revolt by al-Nāṣirī (345–70)
- mediation in the exchange of gifts between the rulers in the Maghrib and al-Malik al-Ẓāhir (370–83)
- 2nd term of office as qadi in Egypt (383–87)
- sultan´s campaign into Syria to defend the empire against the Tartars (388–405)

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Al-Suyūṭī
(cont.)

Ibn Khaldūn
(cont.)

- talk with Tīmūr (406–20)
- return to Egypt (421–28)
- appointed qadi in Egypt for the third, fourth, and fifth times (429–30)

Al-Sakhāwī
(Al-Ḍaw' al-Lāmi' li-Ahl al-Qarn al-Tāsi')

- name, genealogy (p. 2)
- first *maktab* (2)
- first teachers (2–3)
- learning the Quran by heart (3)
- hadith studies, his teacher Ibn Ḥajar (3–5)
- further education, books (5–7)
- death of Ibn Ḥajar, studies at Mecca (7)
- journey to al-Shām (8–9)
- debates and discussions (9–13)
- hajj, visit to the Ḥijāz (14)
- back in Cairo (14–15)
- his works (15–20)
- praise of his knowledge (21–28)
- laudatory verses on him (28–32)

Ibn Ṭūlūn
(Al-Fulk al-Mashḥūn fī Aḥwāl Muḥammad Ibn Ṭūlūn

- introduction, earlier autobiographies (pp. 5–6)
- birth, parents, first years (6–7)
- education, books, teachers (7–14)
- sciences and scholars (14–18)
- teaching licences (18–20)
- his reservations about marriage (20–22)
- appointments (22–26)
- his works (26–49)
- laudatory verses on him (49–51)
- two books of Shams al-Dīn ʻUlwān (51–52)
- praise of his poetry (52–53)
- a poem in praise of work and in distrust of a seemingly fixed salary (53–54)

Just like the other authors, Ibn Ṭūlūn was fully aware of the genre´s traditions. He mentions famous autobiographies known to him on the first few pages of *Al-Fulk al-Mashḥūn fī Aḥwāl Muḥammad ibn Ṭūlūn*.[149] Although these four works tell us very little about the author´s personal life, they do represent excellent source material for studying the author´s intellectual development and traditional

[149]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Fulk,* 6.

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Islamic education in those days. In addition, the documents contain an almost exemplary portrayal of the background and the careers of legal scholars in the Mamluk period and—in Ibn Ṭūlūn´s case—also the early years of Ottoman rule in Egypt and Syria.

Jürgen Lehmann emphasized that these accounts obviously must be regarded as constructs that were composed in retrospect by individuals looking back on their own lives. This is why a comparison of such a personal interpretation of the narrator´s life with statements made by contemporaries would prove helpful. Obviously, one should give more credence to opinions expressed by independent minds than to those uttered by students. In al-Suyūṭī´s case, for example, his students simply copied their teacher´s autobiography, made some stylistic modifications, and added magnificent eulogies.[150] The spiteful and slanderous comments that al-Sakhāwī made about al-Suyūṭī are much more instructive in this context.[151]

The same applies to Ibn Ṭūlūn. In addition to two brief biographical sketches by Najm al-Dīn al-Ghazzī and Ibn al-'Imād,[152] a remarkable portrayal by Ibn Ayyūb has been preserved as well.[153] His estimation of Ibn Ṭūlūn´s personality is ambivalent: he calls him the Sībawayhī (d. approx. 180/776) of his times, praising him with the most favorable epithets on the one hand, and voices some rather harsh criticism of his works and scientific methods on the other. He reproaches Ibn Ṭūlūn for making linguistic mistakes, for using dubious traditions, even for untrue reporting. He also criticizes the fact that Ibn Ṭūlūn mixed verse and prose, and that he included both relevant and irrelevant information, making his works extremely tedious for the reader. This rather harsh critique basically can be traced back to Abū al-Fatḥ al-Mālikī (d. 975/1567),[154] a learned Damascene who originally came from Tunis. In his biography of Ibn Ṭūlūn, Ibn Ayyūb gives a lengthy account of the dogged disputes between the two. Abū al-Fatḥ al-Mālikī belonged

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[150]Sartain, *Biography*, 150–51. 'Abd al-Qādir al-Shādhilī´s (d. after 945/1538) *Bahjat al-'Ābidīn bi-Tarjamat Jalāl al-Dīn* [ed. 'Abd al-Ilāh Nabhān (Damascus, 1998)] and Shams al-Dīn al-Dāwūdī´s (945/1539) ″Tarjamat al-Suyūṭī″ [Berlin (Tübingen) MS 10134] do not add anything new. On al-Shādhilī, see Sartain, *Biography,* 146–47; *GAL* 2:391 S2:932, and S3:1261; and Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt,* 8:53. On al-Dāwūdī cf. Sartain, *Biography,* 148–149; *GAL* 2:289, S2:401; al-Ghazzī, *Kawākib,* 2:71; and Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt*, 8:264.

[151]Al-Sakhāwī, *Ḍaw',* 4:65–70. On the clashes between these scholars, see Sartain, *Biography*, 72–76, and William Popper, ″Sakhāwī´s Criticism of Ibn Taghrībirdī,″ in *Studi orientalistici in onore di Giorgio Levi della Vida* (Rome, 1965), 2:371–89.

[152]Al-Ghazzī, *Kawākib,* 2:52–54; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt*, 8:298–99.

[153]Ibn Ayyūb, ″Al-Rawḍ al-'Āṭir,″ Berlin MS 9886, fols. 235v–237r.

[154]On Abū al-Fatḥ al-Mālikī, see ibid., fols. 237a–239a [= Güneş, *Das Kitāb ar-rauḍ al-'āṭir*, 72–82 (Arabic text)], and Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt*, 8: 360–81.

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to a different circle of scholars than Ibn Ṭūlūn and overwhelmed his opponent with criticism and reproaches. Ibn Ayyūb actually must have had a favorable opinion of Ibn Ṭūlūn, also thinking highly of him as a historian, because he refers not only to al-Sakhāwī, Quṭb al-Dīn al-Hindī (d. 990/1582),[155] al-Nu'aymī, and Ibn al-Mibrad as role models in his introduction to *Al-Rawḍ al-'Āṭir,* but also to Ibn Ṭūlūn.[156] So it is hardly surprising that Ibn Ṭūlūn's *Mufākahat al-Khillān fī Ḥawādith al-Zamān* and *Tamattu' bi-al-Iqrān bayna Tarājim al-Shuyūkh wa-al-Aqrān* represent two of the more prominent sources cited by Ibn Ayyūb.[157]

This goes to show that a rather slim volume such as Ibn Ṭūlūn's *Fulk al-Mashḥūn* does indeed merit due consideration. One would have to undertake a detailed comparison of all known autobiographical accounts by Muslim scholars up to the days of Ibn Ṭūlūn to really accord his own autobiographical writings their proper rank and to define the genre of Arabic autobiography even further. Once that is done, it will also be possible to compile the requisite inventory of topoi, stereotypes, commonalities, and differences of these works.

From the vast number of available options I have selected only two avenues of research that one might explore for a better understanding of the life and works of Ibn Ṭūlūn. Of course, one will have to complete various individual studies to piece together an overall picture. But it may also make sense to tackle the project of a monograph before the task of analyzing the material takes on Sisyphean dimensions. If one did so, one would have to portray the typical features without neglecting the individual ones. Writing a biography will thus always resemble the squaring of the circle. The re-narration of a life will obviously always have to be a construct.

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[155]The Indian-Meccan scholar al-Nahrawālī is meant. On him, see J. R. Blackburn, "al-Nahrawālī," *EI*^{2}, 7:911–12.

[156]Ibn Ayyūb, "Al-Rawḍ al-'Āṭir, fol. 1v [= Güneş, *Das Kitāb ar-rauḍ al-'āṭir*, 1–2 (Arabic text)].

[157]Güneş, *Das Kitāb ar-rauḍ al-'āṭir*, 28–30.

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