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Teaching in 5th/11th-century Baghdad: Observations on the lectures of Abū l-Fawāris Ṭirād b. Muḥammad al-Zaynabī and their audience

Andreas Görke

Certificates of audition (in Arabic: *samāʿāt*) constitute an important source for a diverse range of issues. They proliferated especially in Damascus and Cairo from the 6th/12th to the 9th/15th centuries, with Baghdad, Mecca and Aleppo being other important centres.¹ However, there are hitherto no systematic studies on the development of these certificates or on their regional peculiarities.² While certificates of audition have long been used to reconstruct the transmission history of works and manuscripts, recent studies also demonstrated their value for the social history, historical topology, regional history, and the study of biographies of scholars.³ Nevertheless, the research on certificates of audition remains fragmented, and a large number of issues connected with these certificates have not yet been studied systematically. In the following it shall be demonstrated how certificates of audition can enhance our knowledge of the culture and the proceedings and practices of teaching.

To this end, a new approach to certificates was adopted. While the study of certificates has hitherto usually been confined to single copies or to a corpus of certificates of diverse sessions and by different scholars, the following study is based on the analysis of the certificates of several lecture series of the same teacher. Such lecture series became necessary when voluminous works were transmitted that could not be read in a single session, but were read in a series of consecutive sessions. As each session was documented through a certificate of audition, the reading of the whole book resulted in a series of certificates.

¹ Jan-Just Witkam, "The Human Element between Text and Reader: the Ijāza in Arabic Manuscripts", in: Yasin Dutton, ed. *The Codicology of Islamic Manuscripts: Proceedings of the second conference of al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation*, London 1995, 123-136, here 131; Stefan Leder, "Spoken Word and Written Text: Meaning and Social Significance of the Institution of Riwayā", *Islamic Area Studies Working Paper Series*, 31, Tokyo 2002, 10.

² For a discussion of some regional peculiarities from Yemen cf. the paper of Quiring-Zoche in this volume.

³ Stefan Leder, "Dokumente zum Hadith in Schrifttum und Unterricht aus Damaskus im 6./12. Jhdt.", *Oriens* 34 (1994), 57-75; idem, "Hörerzertifikate als Dokumente für die islamische Lehrkultur des Mittelalters", in: Raif Georges Khoury, ed. *Urkunden und Urkundenformulare im klassischen Altertum und in den orientalischen Kulturen*, Heidelberg 1999, 147-166; idem, "Eine neue Quelle zur Stadtgeschichte von Damaskus – Zur Alltagsgeschichte der Hadithwissenschaft", in: *Supplement XI der ZDMG* (26. Deutscher Orientalistentag Leipzig 1995), Stuttgart 1998, 268-279; see also the paper of Hirschler in this volume.

These series of certificates can provide answers to questions that cannot be attained through the study of single certificates, mainly concerning the course of teaching. Were lectures held on consecutive days or regularly over a longer period of time? Was the circle of participants stable, or was there a high degree of fluctuation? A manuscript may contain several lecture series by the same teacher. The comparison of different lecture series of the same teacher allows for the study of additional aspects such as the schedule of the lectures, the average sizes of the circle of participants and distinctions between the different series, indicating developments in the course of time.

The following observations are mainly based on the certificates of audition on an unpublished manuscript of Abū ‘Ubayd al-Qāsim b. Sallām’s *Kitāb al-Amwāl*.⁴ The manuscript consists of ten parts (*ajzāʿ*) of about 20 folios (40 pages) each. At the beginning and end of each part numerous certificates of audition are written, some on the respective title pages, some on the margins of the following pages, others on additional pages, probably added later to the manuscript. The second part (*juzʿ*) of the manuscript is missing and some pages at the beginning and the end of the first part have been added later. Apparently the original pages were lost, most probably they were damaged due to intensive use over a long period of time.

The manuscript has no colophon but it abounds with certificates of audition, many of which, though not all, are dated. The dated *samāʿāt* cover a time span from Muḥarram 402/August 1011 to Dhū l-Qaʿda 727/October 1327. Some of the undated *samāʿāt* are most probably even older and go back to the first half of the 4th/10th century.⁵ The manuscript itself probably dates from the 4th/10th century as well and was used for lectures over a period of some 300 to 400 years.

The bulk of the certificates of audition on the manuscript date from the period between 472/1080 and 491/1097, when the book was read with Abū l-Fawāris Ṭirād b. Muḥammad al-Zaynabī as the attending authority (*al-musmiʿ*). Ṭirād at this time was the owner of the manuscript. He must have acquired it at some point between 462/1070 and 472/1080. The manuscript was still in the possession of another scholar in 462/1070, as is documented by some notes of ownership.⁶

⁴ The manuscript is held by the Asad library in Damascus (Ms. Zāhiriya ʿamm 1096). A photographic copy of this manuscript is in the possession of the Staatsbibliothek Berlin (MS sim. or. 31). I could not access the manuscript in Damascus directly, but only a microfilm copy. Some parts are illegible, in both the microfilm and the photographic copy, but in general the reproductions are of a sufficient quality that most of the certificates could be read.

⁵ Andreas Görke, *Das Kitāb al-Amwāl des Abū ‘Ubayd al-Qāsim b. Sallām: Entstehung und Überlieferung eines frühislamischen Rechtswerks*, Princeton 2003, 48.

⁶ See page 208, left side. The page numbers refer to MS sim. or. 31 (see note 4 above). It consists of 228 photographs of double pages. As the page numbers on the manuscript conform to the numbers of the photograph but deviate from the folio numbers, page numbers are used.

On the title pages of parts 3 to 10, notes indicate that Ṭirād acquired the manuscript and heard the work, and that he had heard the entire work before with Ibn al-Bādī (d. 420/1029). There are slight variations in the wording, a sample on the title page of part 5 reads as follows (cf. Figure 1, second entry from the bottom):

صار ملكا وساعا للسيد الاجل الكامل ذي الشرفين ابي الفوارس طراد بن محمد بن علي الزينبي اطال الله بقاءه
وجميع الكتاب ساعه من ابي الحسن بن البادي رحمه الله.

([This manuscript] was acquired by the Sayyid, the Exalted, the Perfect, bearer of the two nobilities, Abū l-Fawāris Ṭirād b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Zaynabī, may God extend his continuance, who also acquired the right of transmission of the work by audition, and he had received this right [before] for the whole book from Abū l-Ḥasan Ibn al-Bādī, may God have mercy on him.)

Apparently the same hand wrote the pages at the beginning and the end of the first part as wrote the notes, and this is in all likelihood Ṭirād’s own handwriting (cf. Figure 2). The title page of the first part contains several certificates of audition, the oldest one dating from 472/1080. Ṭirād thus must have acquired the manuscript before this date. From this date until 491/1097 no other *musmi*^c appears in the certificates. Thus here we have a rare example of a manuscript that remained in the possession of one teacher and was not passed around.⁷ As the manuscript was the personal copy of the *shaykh musmi*^c, we may also assume that it records *all* the lectures of this book in this period in which he acted as the presiding authority. This gives us the opportunity to study in some detail the teaching activity of Ṭirād al-Zaynabī in so far as it relates to the *Kitāb al-Amwāl*.

In the time in question – the late 5th/11th century – Baghdad faced a number of significant changes, both in topography⁸ and as regards the social and political situation. In 447/1055, the Seljuk commander Ṭughril Beg had entered Baghdad, imprisoned the Būyid Amīr al-Malik al-Raḥīm and thereby brought to an end the Shī‘ī Būyid rule. The respective period has often been referred to as the “Sunni revival”, although this term may be considered to be somewhat misleading.⁹ In any case, with the help of the Seljuks, the caliph was able to ban certain specific Shī‘ī phrases from the call to prayer,¹⁰ to dismiss people from the post as preacher for their support of Shī‘ī positions during the turmoils that accompanied the rebellion

⁷ Cf. Leder, “Hörerzertifikate”, 158-160, for a similar example of the Damascene scholar Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Dashtī (634/1236-713/1313).

⁸ Cf. Makdisi, “The Topography of Eleventh-Century Bagdād: Materials and Notes”, *Arabica* 6 (1959), 178-197 and 281-306, reprinted in George Makdisi, *History and Politics in Eleventh-Century Baghdad*, Aldershot 1990.

⁹ On the term see Makdisi, “The Sunni revival”, in: D.H. Richards, ed. *Islamic Civilization*, 950-1150, Oxford 1973, 155-168, reprinted in George Makdisi, *History and Politics in Eleventh-Century Baghdad*, Aldershot 1990; Jonathan P. Berkey, *The Formation of Islam: Religion and Society in the Near East 600–1800*, Cambridge 2003, 189-202.

¹⁰ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī l-Tārīkh*, ed. C. J. Tornberg, 13 vols., reprint Beirut 1979-1982, IX, 632.

of the pro-Fatimid factionist al-Basāsīrī,¹¹ and to strip the mosque where al-Basāsīrī had preached from its status as congregational mosque as punishment for the support al-Basāsīrī had received from the Shīʿī inhabitants of the quarter.¹²

Baghdad saw the establishment of its first *madrasas*, the first and most famous being the Nizāmīya, founded by the Seljuk vizier Nizām al-Mulk in 459/1066. Other *madrasas* soon followed, and at the time when the teaching of Abū l-Fawāris ʿIṣṣāq is documented in the *samāʿāt* on the manuscript, at least three or four *madrasas* were established, all of them either Shāfiʿī or Ḥanafī.¹³ While the caliphs al-Qādir (r. 381/991-422/1031) and al-Qāʾim (r. 422/1031-467/1075) apparently were inclined to the Ḥanbalī *madhhab*,¹⁴ the Seljuk sultans adhered to and promoted the Ḥanafī *madhhab*. In contrast, their famous vizier Nizām al-Mulk was a Shāfiʿī and supported Shāfiʿī scholars, possibly because he intended to redress the balance of power between the Shāfiʿīs and the Ḥanafīs which had been disturbed by the exclusive patronage of the Ḥanafīs by the Seljuk sultans.¹⁵

The establishment of *madrasas* had great influence on the system of education. The teaching in *madrasas* at least in the beginning did not necessarily differ very much from the traditional ways of teaching in study circles (called *ḥalqab* or *majlis*) in mosques or private homes, with regard to the persons involved, the methods, and the topics.¹⁶ But the shift from private study circles to *madrasas* brought forward two developments in the system of education. On the one hand, it promoted the seclusion of the different *madhhab*, as usually the students would attend the *madrasas* of their own *madhhab*.¹⁷ On the other hand, it served the association of the scholars with the state, as they were working in institutions that were funded and partly controlled by state officials. It is likely that the establishment of *madrasas* was partly owed to the rulers' aim to gain control

¹¹ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, X, 9.

¹² George Makdisi, *The Rise of the Colleges. Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West*, Edinburgh 1981, 14.

¹³ Cf. Daphna Ephrat, *A Learned Society in a Period of Transition: The Sunni 'Ulama' of Eleventh-Century Baghdad*, Albany 2000, 28. For a detailed discussion of these and related institutions of learning at the time, see George Makdisi, "Muslim Institutions of Learning in Eleventh-Century Baghdad", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies (BSOAS)* 24 (1961), 1-56, 17-29.

¹⁴ Ira M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, Cambridge 1988, 172.

¹⁵ Omid Safi, *The Politics of Knowledge in Premodern Islam. Negotiating Ideology and Religious Inquiry*, Chapel Hill 2006, 93-95; Jürgen Paul, "Von 950 bis 1250", in: Albrecht Noth und Jürgen Paul, eds. *Der islamische Orient. Grundzüge seiner Geschichte*, Würzburg 1998, 217-252, here 226; Lapidus, *History*, 172f.

¹⁶ See A. L. Tibawi, "Origin and Character of 'al-madrasa'", *BSOAS* 25 (1962), 225-238, esp. 229-231, against George Makdisi, "Institutions"; cf. Ephrat, *Society*, 68-74; Jonathan P. Berkey, "The Transmission of Knowledge and Muslim Identity: Medieval Institutions and Modern Problems", *Nihon-Chūō-Gakkai-nenpō (Annals of Japan Association for Middle East Studies)* 21 (2005), 9-24, here 11.

¹⁷ Makdisi, "Institutions", 15; cf. Lapidus, *History*, 164-67, Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, 3 vols., Chicago 1974, III, 48.

of the urban elites,¹⁸ and that the increasing role of *madrāsas* in the system of education signified a departure from the traditional opposition of scholars to the state.¹⁹ We will come back to both aspects in the analysis of the certificates. The famous scholar Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (450/1058-505/1111), possibly the most prominent example for a scholar teaching at a *madrasa* while politically legitimizing his patrons and propagating their ideological interpretations,²⁰ happens to be a contemporary of the attending *shaykh* of our lecture series and at the time these series take place he himself teaches at the Nizāmiya.

While not reaching the fame of al-Ghazālī, the attending *shaykh* of our lecture series is by no means unknown, either. In his time, Abū l-Fawāris Ṭirād b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Zaynabī was renowned both as a scholar and as the chief syndic (*naqīb al-nuqabā*) of the Abbasids. In the literature he is sometimes also vocalised Ṭarrād, but Ṭirād seems to be the correct reading.²¹ He was born in 398/1008 as a member of the influential Zaynabī family, which for several generations had held the post of the chief syndic, among whose functions it was to supervise the syndics of the different cities. The syndics in turn had to keep registers of nobility in order to safeguard the purity of the lineage and prevent the intrusion of strangers and the exclusion of rightful members. They also were to prevent Abbasid women from marrying below their status, to care for the respectability of the members and to secure that no one was deprived of his rightful share in pensions. As the chief syndic, Ṭirād’s rights and duties also included the arbitration of conflicts within the Abbasid family, the imposition of legal penalties for crimes committed therein, and the allocation of stipends and pensions.²²

Ṭirād was first appointed to the office of the *naqīb* of Baṣrah, and in 453/1061 became the chief syndic of the Abbasids. The chief syndic was a state official, and he seems to have been one of the more important dignitaries, as he is regularly mentioned among the first to render homage to a new caliph.²³ Ṭirād once acted as deputy for the caliph, while the latter was on pilgrimage,²⁴ and he was

¹⁸ Paul, “950 bis 1250”, 226; Makdisi, *Institutions*, 55; Clara L. Klausner, *The Seljuk Vezirate. A Study of Civil Administration 1055-1194*, Cambridge 1973, 22-27.

¹⁹ Hodgson, *Venture*, III, 48; Safi, *Politics*, I-II.

²⁰ Safi, *Politics*, xxv, xxxi, xlii li, 90, 105-24.

²¹ Ibn Abi l-Wafā, *al-Jawābir al-muḍīya fī ṭabaqāt al-ḥanaḥīya*, ed. ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ Muḥammad al-Ḥulw, 5 vols., Cairo 1987-88, II, 282.

²² On the functions of the *naqīb*, see Axel Havemann, art. “Naqīb al-Ashraf”, in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new ed., vol. 7, Leiden 1993, 926; Abū l-Ḥasan al-Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām al-sultāniya wa-l-wilāyat al-dīniya*, Cairo 1380/1960, 96-99; Abū Ya‘lā b. al-Farrā’, *al-Aḥkām al-sultāniya*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Faqī, Beirut 1403/1983, 90-94; Louis Massignon, “Cadis et naqibs baghdadiens”, *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes (WZKM)* 51 (1948), 106-115, 111-112; Heribert Horst, *Die Staatsverwaltung der Grosselgüen und Ḥorazmšāhs (1038 - 1231). Eine Untersuchung nach Urkundenformularen der Zeit*, Wiesbaden 1964, 55, 96, 98, 166.

²³ E.g., Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, X, 96, 231.

²⁴ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, X, 168.

often employed as envoy of the caliphs to different rulers and officials.²⁵ He is seen intervening in conflicts, though his actions are not always helpful in settling them.²⁶ He is said to have been of the highest standing with the caliph.²⁷ Ṭirād adhered to the Ḥanafī *madhhab* and died in 491/1098.²⁸

Apart from his administrative and official capacities, Ṭirād b. Muḥammad is also known as a *muḥaddith* and a transmitter of numerous works. He is said to have given dictations on *ḥadīth* in the Mosque of Manṣūr,²⁹ (according to Ibn Abī l-Wafā these amounted to 25),³⁰ and is praised as the *musnid* of the Iraq.³¹ The Mosque of Manṣūr, one of the five congregational mosques in Baghdad in which the Friday prayers were held, was a stronghold of the Ḥanbalis, and they watched carefully who was to be allowed to teach there.³² That Ṭirād was able to teach there and possibly even had an own teaching circle (*ḥalqah*) in the mosque³³ shows the respect that he must have had among the Ḥanbalis.

Ibn Ḥajar lists him as transmitter of 19 works, among them three of his own and eleven works of Ibn Abī l-Dunyā.³⁴ His own works comprised a book on the merits of the Prophet's companions (*faḍā'il al-ṣaḥābah*), his dictations (*Amālī Ṭirād*) and a collection by his contemporary al-Bardānī³⁵ called *ʿAḥwālī Ṭirād*,³⁶

²⁵ E.g., Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, X, 35, 63, 79, 136f.; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya fī l-ta'rikh*, 14 vols., Cairo, n.d., XII, 91.

²⁶ George Makdisi, "Autograph Diary of an Eleventh-Century Historian of Baghdad", *BSOAS* 18 (1956), 9-31, 239-260, *BSOAS* 19 (1957), 13-48, 281-303, 426-443; references to Abū l-Fawāris Ṭirād are listed in part II (*BSOAS* 18 (1956)), 252, note 9. For his role in conflicts, see *BSOAS* 18 (1956), 252, *BSOAS* 19 (1957), 40, 292; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, X, 170.

²⁷ Al-Dhahabī, *Ta'rikh al-Islām wa-wafayāt al-mashāhīr wa-l-a'lām*, ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī, 53 vols., Beirut 1987-2004, 491-500, 96.

²⁸ On his life see al-Dhahabī, *Ta'rikh al-Islām*, 491-500, 95-97; idem, *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'*, ed. Shu'ayb al-Arnā'ūt et al., 25 vols, Beirut 1981-1988, XIX, 37-39; Ibn Abī l-Wafā', *al-Jawḥar*, II, 281-282; Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl b. Aybak al-Ṣafādī, *al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt* (= *Das biographische Lexikon des Ṣalāḥaddīn Ḥatīl ibn Aibak aṣ-Ṣafādī*), 30 vols., Beirut 1931-2004 (Bibliotheka Islamica, 6), XVI, 419; George Makdisi, *Ibn ʿAqīl et la résurgence de l'Islam traditionaliste of XI^e siècle (V^e siècle de l'Hégire)*, Damascus 1963, 183-86.

²⁹ Al-Dhahabī, *Ta'rikh al-Islām*, 491-500, 95; idem, *Siyar*, XVIII, 38.

³⁰ Ibn Abī l-Wafā', *al-Jawḥar*, II, 282.

³¹ Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, XIX, 37. Transmitters of *ḥadīth* who transmitted a very large number of sound *aḥādīth* sometimes were given the honorary title *musnid* (usually of a certain region, e.g. *musnid al-ʿIrāq*, *musnid al-Shām* etc.). Cf. Ignaz Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, vol. 2, Halle 1890, 226f. Apparently, a *musnid* usually had to be of high age and was thus able to serve as a link between different generations, which made him essential for creating short *asānīd* comprising only a few persons. Thus al-Dhahabī says of Ṭirād's brother Abū Ya'la Ḥamza b. Muḥammad al-Zaynabī (407/1016-504/1111) who lived for almost a hundred years that he could have become the *musnid al-dunyā*, had he only started hearing *aḥādīth* in his youth. Cf. al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, XIX, 352.

³² Makdisi, *Rise*, 15-16.

³³ Makdisi, *Ibn ʿAqīl*, 183.

³⁴ Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *al-Murʿjam al-muḥfabras*, ed. M. Sh. Amarīr al-Mayādīnī, Beirut 1418/1998, 466.

³⁵ Abū ʿAlī Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Bardānī (416/1025-498/1105); see al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, XIX, 219-222.

the latter probably being a compilation of *ahādīth* with short or “high” (*‘ālī*) *asānīd*. Manuscripts of Ṭirād’s dictations seem to have been preserved in the Zāhiriya library, now Asad library.³⁷ Ibn Ḥajar gives their number as 25, corresponding to the number of dictations mentioned by Ibn Abī l-Wafā’.³⁸

While the sources unanimously depict Ṭirād as a distinguished *muhaddīth* who transmitted a lot, they do not provide us with many details. This is where the certificates of audition come into play, allowing us to draw conclusions concerning Ṭirād’s role as a teacher, the course of lectures, the teaching culture and the participants in his lectures. The following observations are based on an analysis of about 100 certificates of audition, in which Ṭirād acted as the attending authority. Altogether, about 300 notes relating to the transmission are recorded on the manuscript, ranging from very basic *balāgh* notes, which indicate that a student reached a certain paragraph, to complete certificates of audition, in which the names of the attending authority, the reader, the writer of the certificate and the names of all the participants in the lecture are recorded together with the date of the session.

About 100 of the notes are written on separate pages at the beginning and the end of the respective parts. These are usually detailed certificates of hearing. In addition, there are about 100 notes distributed over the margins of the last pages of each part, including both detailed certificates and short notes. The title pages of each part also contain about 10 to 15 notes each, amounting to another 100. A large part of these latter notes is illegible. Many of them seem to record only the names of single listeners and do not bear a date, but there are also a couple of detailed certificates. Altogether, about half of the transmission notes constitute detailed certificates, the largest part of which is connected to the teaching activity of Ṭirād al-Zaynabī. The following analysis comprises almost all detailed certificates involving Ṭirād al-Zaynabī and thus provides a thorough insight into his teaching activities.

Most of the certificates belong to different lecture series in which the whole book or large parts of it were read to a certain group of participants during a specific time period. Certificates that belong to the same lecture series always shared the *qārī’* and at least part of the participants. The lectures were always held within a period of a couple of months. In some cases, in addition to the above, the writer of the certificates of a series also remained the same and thus the handwriting is similar. In this way, at least eleven different lecture series could be identified in which the whole book, or a large part of it, was read. In addition, there are at least ten certificates that do not belong to one of the above lecture series. Some of these may constitute additional lecture series while others may record single ses-

³⁶ Ibn Ḥajar, *Muḥjam*, 466, Nos. 488, 1337, 1338.

³⁷ Ibn Ḥajar, *Muḥjam*, 600.

³⁸ Ibn Ḥajar, *Muḥjam*, 315.

sions, in which only a certain part of the book was read. Due to the illegibility of part of the certificates some single lectures cannot be documented. However, it is unlikely that a complete lecture series of the whole book escaped my attention.

The role of Abū l-Fawāris ʿIṣrād

There are no *samāʿāt* on the manuscript in which Abū l-Fawāris is himself listed as a listener, which is not surprising, since he only acquired the manuscript sometime between 462/1070 and 472/1080 when he was already an elderly man. He had heard the complete book in 412/1021 with Ibn al-Bādī (d. 420/1029), as is mentioned in a note.³⁹ The first dated entry with his name as the attending *shaykh* (*al-shaykh al-musmiʿ*) dates from Ramaḍān 472/March 1080, the last from Muḥarram 491/December 1097, shortly before his death. Abū l-Fawāris figures as the attending *shaykh* in all the certificates that include his name, but he is never mentioned as reader (*qārīʿ*) or writer of the *samāʿ* record (*kātib al-samāʿ*) or in any other position.

In the certificates, usually several titles and offices of his are mentioned. Typically, he is addressed as

السيد اللاجل الاوحد نقيب النقباء الكامل ذي الشرفين شهاب الحضرتين ابو الفوارس طراد بن محمد بن علي
الزيني.

(The Sayyid, the Exalted, the Unique, the chief syndic, the Perfect, bearer of the two nobilities, shooting star of the two courts, Abū l-Fawāris ʿIṣrād b. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Zaynabī.)

Some certificates have *al-sharīf* instead of *al-sayyid*, but in at least one case both titles occur together.⁴⁰ The order may differ slightly from the above. The *laqab* al-Kāmil and the office *naqīb al-nuqabāʿ* occur on almost every certificate, while any other part may be left out. In some cases, his name is omitted and he is only referred to by his *laqab* al-Kāmil and some of his titles and offices.

The title *Dbū l-sharafayn*, the bearer of the two nobilities, refers to him combining erudition and scholarship with noble ancestry.⁴¹ The title *Shihāb al-Ḥaḍratayn*, shooting star of the two courts, is even more noteworthy, especially as it is not mentioned in the bibliographical literature on ʿIṣrād. It may be seen as an indication that ʿIṣrād held official positions both at the Abbasid court and the court of the Seljuk sultans, as the use of *al-Ḥaḍratayn* in titles in Seljuk times usually refers to the Abbasid and the Seljuk court.⁴² While the biographical

³⁹ Page 207, left side.

⁴⁰ Page 31, right side.

⁴¹ Ignaz Goldziher, "Ueber Dualtitel", *WZKM* 13 (1899), 321-329, 329.

⁴² *Ibid.*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
472									A	A		
473												
474												
475												
476												
477												BC
478	BC	BC	bC		D	D	D		D			E
479	E	E	E	F	FG	FG						
480					Hh	Hh		h				
481					i							
482						Jj						
483												
484						k						
485												
486						l						
487												
488					M	M		M		M		
489												
490			N	No								Q
491	R											

Of the lectures A, B, and C, most certificates record the exact date, and of lectures D and E at least one session is recorded with exact date. All these lectures took place on Saturdays. Of the following lectures (F to l), the certificates do not contain exact dates except for one lecture of h, which took place on a Tuesday. Of Lecture M three certificates record exact dates, one session was held on a Tuesday, two sessions on Saturdays. All certificates of series N record the day of the week and the sessions took place on Wednesdays, Saturdays and a Friday. Lecture o is dated to a Friday. Lectures of Series Q were held on Tuesday, Friday and Sunday.

Most of the lecture series begin either in Dhū l-Ḥijjah or in Jumādā l-ūlā or Jumādā l-ākhira. About half of all sessions take place in Jumādā l-ūlā or Jumādā l-ākhira, while only single sessions take place between Rajab and Dhū l-Qaʿda, apparently in most cases because the respective lecture series took longer than intended. While there is no apparent reason why lectures were preferably held in these two months, the disproportionate distribution of the lectures over the months is striking. It seems that the lectures were not held on demand, but rather regularly in certain months.

Except for the series that took place in 490/1097 and for the series J, the sessions seem to have taken place on a regular basis. Usually the parts (*ajzā'*) of the book were read in consecutive order, one part (*juz'*) of the book was read during a session, and the sessions were held once a week. A teaching of the complete book thus took about ten weeks or two to three months. In some cases, the sessions paused for about a month and were then resumed where they had stopped. This results in slightly longer periods for the reading of the complete book. Series J, N and Q differ from the above scheme. In these series usually two parts of the book were read in one session and at least in series N and Q the single lectures took place only a few days after each other. In both cases the lectures did not strictly follow the order of the book. At least in the case of the series N and Q, the motivation seems obvious: Ṭirād was already in his 90s, and those interested in hearing the book needed to hurry lest his death prevent the completion of the *samā'*.

The place of the lectures

Biographical dictionaries often tell us with whom a scholar studied, but almost never give an indication to where this took place or to which school a scholar may have been affiliated.⁴⁵ Certificates of hearing in many cases provide answers to these questions. From the *samā'āt* from Damascus, for instance, a lot can be learned about the use of school buildings and their role in the teaching culture.⁴⁶ In our case the certificates usually do not contain any information about the places of teaching. Of the 100 certificates analysed, only four mention a place. This is particularly striking when compared to the abundance of place names in the *samā'āt* from Damascus about a century later. The (few) certificates on the manuscript that date from 598/1202 and later, when the manuscript was transferred to Damascus by Ibn Qudāma al-Maḡdisī who had acquired it in Baghdad, usually contain place names, but it is difficult to decide at this point whether the inclusion of the place in the *samā'āt* became custom only in the course of the 6th/12th century, whether this was practiced more consistently in Damascus than in Baghdad or whether it was left to the discretion of the writer of the *samā'* record to include the place or not.

We have seen that Ṭirād held dictations on *ḥadīth* in the Mosque of Maṣṣūr. However, the *Kitāb al-Amwāl* is not a work on *ḥadīth* but a book of law, and we should not *a priori* assume that because Ṭirād gave lectures in the Mosque of Maṣṣūr all of his lectures were held there. According to the certificates, one session was held in a private home in the Bāb al-Baṣrah Quarter of Baghdad. How-

⁴⁵ Jonathan P. Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo*, Princeton 1992, 18; idem, *Formation*, 225; Ephrat, *Society*, 59.

⁴⁶ Stefan Leder, Yāsīn M. al-Sawwās, and Ma'mūn al-Ṣāgharjī, *Mu'jam al-samā'āt al-Dimashqīya al-muntakbaba min sana 550 ilā 750 h./1155 ilā 1349 m.*, Damascus 1996, English Introduction, 34.

ever, it is not entirely clear whether this is the home of Ṭirād, the *musmāʿ*, or the home of the writer of the *samāʿ*. The entry reads (the names of the participants are left out):⁴⁷

سمع هذا الجزء من اوله الى اخره على سيدنا السيد اللاجل الاوحد تقيب النقباء الكامل ذي الشرفين شهاب الحضرتين ادام الله سعاده بقراءة المعمر بن محمد بن الحسين البيع (...) وسمع كاتب السماع احمد بن عبدالله بن الحسين بن البناء البزاز الشافعي من اول الورقة الثالثة عشرة الى اخر الجزء وهو سبعة ورق (كذا) وذلك في يوم السبت سابع ذو الحجة سنة سبع وسبعين واربع مائة في منزله بباب البصرة.

((...)) heard this section from the beginning to the end under the supervision of the Sayyid, the Exalted, the Unique, the chief syndic, the Perfect, bearer of the two nobilities, shooting star of the two courts – may God prolong his prosperity – with al-Muʿammar b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Bayyīʿ (...) reciting the text; and the writer of the *samāʿ* note, Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh b. al-Ḥusayn b. al-Bannāʾ al-Bazzāz al-Shāfiʿī, followed the lecture from the beginning of the thirteenth page to the end of the section, this being seven pages. This happened on Saturday, 7 Dhū l-Ḥijja 477 in his home in the Bāb al-Baṣrah quarter.)

As we can see, the name of the attending authority, Ṭirād, is not given in the note, but he is referred to only by his *laqab* al-Kāmil (the Perfect) and by his titles and offices. The writer of the note, one of the few Shāfiʿī scholars mentioned in the certificates, missed about two thirds of the chapter in the beginning. While the place of the lecture is recorded (“his home in the Bāb al-Baṣrah quarter”), it is not entirely clear, whose house is meant. It may refer to the writer of the note, indicating the lecture took place in his house. However, the fact that he missed a large part of the lecture calls for an explanation if it was his home. Although he may have had other obligations, it seems rather hard to imagine that the lecture would have taken place without the host. A second *samāʿ* note from the same lecture series also refers to a house in the Bāb al-Baṣrah quarter, where the lecture took place:⁴⁸

سمع جميع من السيد اللاجل الاوحد الكامل تقيب النقباء ذي الشرفين طراد بن محمد بن علي الزينبي ادام الله سعاده الشيوخ (...) بقراءة المعمر بن محمد بن الحسين البيع وهو كاتب السماع في المحرم سنة ثمان وسبعين واربع مائة في منزله بباب البصرة.

(The shaykhs (...) heard all of it [i.e. of the respective part] under the supervision of the Sayyid, the Exalted, the Perfect, the chief syndic, bearer of the two nobilities Ṭirād b. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Zaynabī, with al-Muʿammar b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Bayyīʿ, who also wrote the *samāʿ* note, reciting the text in Muḥarram 478 [May 1085] in his home in the Bāb al-Baṣrah quarter.)

It is not impossible that the lectures of one and the same lecture series were conducted at different places, but it seems rather likely that it is Ṭirād’s home that is

⁴⁷ Page 49, right side.

⁴⁸ Page 97, right side.

referred to in these certificates. This view is supported by a third certificate from a different lecture series. In this certificate, dating from Saturday, 5 Rabi^c al-awwal 490/21 February 1097, it is stated explicitly that the lecture took place in the house of the *naqīb* (*fi dār al-naqīb bi-Bāb al-Baṣra*).⁴⁹

The last certificate that contains information on the place is a short notice, also dated to 490/1097:⁵⁰

سمع الجزء كله ابو بكر محمد بن عمر بن عبد العزيز بن طاهر البخاري الملقب بأديب كاك عن مولاه الكامل
 اللاجل الشريف نقيب النقباء شهاب الحضرتين ذي الشرفين يوم الجمعة تصفا في جامع المنصور ونصفا في ... (?)
 في ربيع الاخر سنة تسعين واربع مائة ومعه ... (?)

(Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Ṭāhīr al-Bukhārī, known by his *laqab* Adīb Kākk, heard the complete section from his patron, the Perfect, the Exalted, the Sharīf, the chief syndic, shooting star of the two courts, bearer of the two nobilities, on Friday, half of it in the Mosque of al-Manṣūr and half of it in ... [illegible] in Rabi^c al-ākhir 490 [March-April 1097] and with him ... [illegible].)

Muḥammad b. ʿUmar, known as Adīb Kākk, was a Ḥanafī scholar, originally from Bukhārā who during his travels also settled in Baghdad for a while and later served as Imām of the Ḥanafīs in the Holy Mosque of Mecca.⁵¹ He was born in 450/1058 or 451/1059⁵² and died in 525/1131.⁵³ From the notice above we can learn that he sojourned in Baghdad in 490/1097 and that he attended lectures of Ṭīrād, two details that cannot be found in the biographical literature. For our purpose, however, the important fact is that at least part of a lecture of the *Kitāb al-Amwāl* by Ṭīrād was held in the Mosque of Manṣūr.

Thus, the certificates document that at least part of the lectures took place in Ṭīrād's home, and that another part was given in the Mosque of Manṣūr. Often lectures in a mosque would be held on Fridays, after the service. As there are only two cases in our certificates in which it is mentioned that a lecture took place on a Friday, while at least 21 lectures took place on other days, it seems likely that a larger part of the lectures did not take place in the mosque. However, as lectures might also be held in the mosque on different days and in some series no exact date is mentioned at all, we cannot be sure where these lectures took place. In 489/1096, Ṭīrād made the *ḥajj* and taught in Mecca and Medina. As we have no certificates from this year and the subsequent lectures in 490/1097 are those that explicitly refer to Baghdad, we may conclude that Ṭīrād did not give lectures of the *Kitāb al-Amwāl* in Mecca or at least that he did not take along his own manuscript.

⁴⁹ Page 58, right side.

⁵⁰ Page 228, right side.

⁵¹ Al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi*, IV, 243.

⁵² Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-Islām*, 520-530, 137, informs us that he lived 74 years.

⁵³ In addition to the entries in al-Dhahabī and al-Ṣafadī, see Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntazam*, XVII, 268.

The size of the classes

The numbers of participants in the different lecture series differ considerably and vary from single participants to numbers of about 60 and more. In most lecture series, numbers of about 10 to 25 are the rule. Certificates which only record single participants usually are single copies and are not part of a series. Possibly in these cases the completion of single lectures was only indicated by *balāgh* notes that could not be identified and only the completion of the whole book was recorded in a *samāʿ* certificate.

An increase in the size of the classes can be observed. While until 481/1088 usually less than 30 participants attend the lectures, in 482/1089 and especially in 488/1095 and 490/1097 the number hovers around 60. As we have seen, this is not due to the lectures taking place in a mosque. Instead, we must assume that it was Ṭirād's growing age that led to this increase in the number of participants. The older Ṭirād grew, the better all the *asānīd* were becoming which he had acquired in his youth. As he had heard the *Kitāb al-Amwāl* from Ibn al-Bādī at the age of fourteen in 412/1021, people acquiring a transmission license from him in 490/1097 could bridge a gap of almost 80 years. This also accounts for the large number of children present in these latest lecture series (see below).

The group size may also vary in the course of the lecture. While some groups have a more or less stable size (although individual participants may change), in other groups the size varies a lot. For instance, there is a considerable increase in the number of participants over the course of series C. While in the first five or six sessions the number of participants remains constantly around fifteen (although there is some fluctuation), the number increases to around thirty in the last four sessions, reaching thirty-nine in the penultimate session. The fluctuation increases and while in the first five sessions about thirty persons take part altogether – ten of them regularly – in the last sessions this number increases to more than eighty. The increase may be related to the contents of the sections read in the different sessions. The *Kitāb al-Amwāl* consists of three main parts, the *kitāb al-fayʿ*, the *kitāb al-khums*, and the *kitāb al-ṣadaqah*. The increase in the number of participants roughly coincides with the beginning of the *kitāb al-ṣadaqah*. Eleven persons miss the first part of the lecture and start listening only with the chapter on the *ṣadaqah* on cows, shortly after the beginning of the *kitāb al-ṣadaqah*. Possibly, the traditions and explanations on *ṣadaqah* – the legal alms tax – were considered more relevant for the majority of the participants than the rulings on booty and its distribution. However, these considerations are only conjectural, and in general the last chapters of the book do not tend to be heard by more participants than any other part.

Procedures and practices in class

A lot can be learned from the certificates about the procedures and practices in class. The lectures appear to have been partly open to the public. While there is always a number of regular participants that attend all or almost all lectures of a series, other participants only take part in single sessions of a series or only take part for a couple of sessions.

The attendance of the participants is recorded very thoroughly, and persons who did not attend the whole session are mentioned at the end of the certificate with details concerning which parts they heard and which parts they missed. An example of this meticulous recording can be seen in Figure 3.⁵⁴ In lines six and seven, we find the name Abū l-ʿAbbās Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Muṭaḥhar al-Dūlijānī al-Khaṭīb crossed out. In the margin next to the name, we find a remark that al-Dūlijānī missed five pages at the beginning of the part. (*wa-fāta l-Dūlijānī l-Khaṭīb khamsa awwāq min awwal al-juzʿ*). And at the end of the *samāʿ* note, after the date, it is added that al-Dūlijānī and a Maṣṣūr al-Ḥamzī (or al-Ḥumrī) were present only from page six onwards. (*Wa-samiʿa min awwal al-waraqa al-sādisa ilā ākhiribi Abū l-ʿAbbās Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Muṭaḥhar al-Dūlijānī l-Khaṭīb wa-Maṣṣūr al-Ḥamzī wa-dhālika fī l-tārīkh.*)

The thorough recording of the absences gives evidence that participants coming late were a common sight in these lectures. At least one fourth of the certificates record participants that missed part of the lecture. That a participant missed part of a lecture did not disqualify him to act as the writer of the *samāʿ*, as we have seen above, and the certificates document a few incidents in which the writer of the *samāʿ* did not attend the whole session. It seems to have been common that one participant put down the certificates of several lectures of one series. However, in a couple of cases we can observe that the writer of the *samāʿ* changed although the “regular” writer of the *samāʿ* was present. Apparently the role of the *Kātib al-samāʿ* was not formalized.

The fact that it was not uncommon that participants missed parts of a lecture resulted in another phenomenon documented through the certificates. If they later intended to be able to transmit the whole work, participants who missed a lecture needed to catch up with the material. Therefore follow-up sessions were held for participants who missed some sessions or parts thereof. We find certificates which record lectures of the same part of the book with the same *qāriʾ* taking place only a month or two apart. In the latter of these lectures, people take part who usually attend the previous lecture series, but missed the respective parts. Thus, this seem to be no regular lecture series, but rather follow-up sessions that were held in order to enable some participants to catch up on the

⁵⁴ Page 72, right side, upper note.

parts they missed. The lectures b and h mentioned above seem to be of this nature and do not constitute lecture series of their own.

In other cases, participants later added a notice to a certificate in which they indicate that they had caught up on what they missed. An example of this can be seen in Figure 4.⁵⁵ Towards the end of the main certificate it is stated that the jurist Abū ‘Abdallāh Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Sālīm al-Hinī and al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ḥanafī al-Astarabādī⁵⁶ were only present from the fourth page onwards. The certificate is dated Tuesday, 15 Jumādā l-ūlā 480/17 August 1087. The additional lines say that Abū Yāsir, who is the *qārī*’ of the lecture series, recapitulated for Abū ‘Abdallāh Muḥammad the four pages that he had missed. This happened in Rajab 480/October 1087, two months after the regular session. (*A‘āda al-shaykh Abū Yāsir li-l-faqīh Abū ‘Abdallāh b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Sālīm al-Hinī mā fātabu wa-biya arba‘at awrāq wa-kataba fī Rajab min sanat thamanīn.*)

In a similar instance, ‘Alī b. Thābit b. ‘Alī al-Ḥarbī,⁵⁷ a regular participant in series B, in which also Abū Yāsir served as the *qārī*’, missed the first four pages of the lecture which took place in Muḥarram 478/May 1085. In a separate note on the margin it is declared that ‘Alī b. Thābit heard the whole part from Ṭirād with Abū Yāsir as the *qārī*’ in 478/1085 (as is documented in the other certificate) except for four pages on which he caught up in 480/1087. Thus in this case it took two years before the missing parts could be recapitulated.

Usually, it is assumed that the certificates of audition were written immediately after the session, and it is very likely that this was indeed the prevailing routine. However, there is at least one instance, where the certificate was written about a month after the session, as is indicated in the certificate itself:⁵⁸

وكتب السماع في شهر جمادى الأولى من سنة تسع وسبعين وأربع مائه وكان السماع في شهر ربيع الآخر من السنة المذكورة.

(He wrote the *samā‘* note in Jumādā l-ūlā 479 [August-September 1086], and the lecture had taken place in Rabi‘ al-awwal [June-July] of the said year.)

There is no strict order in which the participants appear in the *samā‘āt*, but there are some trends that can be observed. For instance there is a tendency to name people of high rank at the beginning of the certificate, and relatives are usually mentioned together and their degree of relationship is recorded (e.g. “and his brother”, “and his nephew”, “and his two sons”).

⁵⁵ Page 31, right side, upper certificate.

⁵⁶ Lived 455/1063-541/1146, came to Baghdad in 476/1073 and attended lectures of Ṭirād and his brother Abū Naṣr, among others. Cf. al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 541-550, 59.

⁵⁷ Died 512. Although he reached an old age, he transmitted little. Cf. Ibn al-Najjār, *Dhayl Tārīkh Baghdād*, ed. Qaṣar Farāḥ, 5 vols., Hyderabad 1398/1978-1406/1986, III, 226f.

⁵⁸ Page 49, left side.

In one entry we find the remark that one of the participants, Abū l-Su‘ūd Aḥmad b. Muḥammad, known as Ibn al-Bājisrā‘ī, used the session for a collation of his copy with the manuscript at hand (*wa-‘āraḍa bi-kitābibi*).⁵⁹ Apparently, it was possible to collate manuscripts during regular teaching sessions. This is also the only reference I found to suggest that participants in the lectures had their own manuscripts with them.

The qurrā’

From 472/1080 to 481/1088, one *qārī’* features very prominently, Abū Yāsir Muḥammad b. ‘Ubaydallāh b. Kādish al-‘Ukbarī, who died in 496/1103, five years after Ṭirād. He served as *qārī’* in at least five lecture series (A, C, E, G, H), in two follow-up series, each comprising a couple of sessions (c, h), and in some single sessions that could not be related to a specific lecture series. Altogether he is mentioned as *qārī’* in about 40 certificates. He was a Ḥanbalī *muḥaddith* and had a loud or strong voice, which of course made him ideally suited for working as a *qārī’*. In the biographical literature he is mentioned as being *qārī’ abl Baghdād* and *mustamlī*,⁶⁰ as well as *mufīd Baghdād* (on the *mufīdūn*, or teaching assistants, see below).⁶¹ After 481/1088, Abū Yāsir’s name does not occur on the certificates. As he is said to have heard lectures from Abū l-Ḥasan al-Māwardī, who died in 450/1058, he most probably was born before 430/1039 and was thus in his forties or fifties when he served as *qārī’*.

In the period of his activity, there are three other *qurrā’*, who each appear in one lecture series. In series B (Dhū l-Ḥijja 477 to Muḥarram 478/April to May 1085), the lecturer is al-Mu‘ammar b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Bayyī‘.⁶² Only three certificates of this series could be identified, and it is possible that the lectures did not comprise the whole book. The biographical literature designates him as reciter (*muqri’*) and as an elementary teacher. He died in 514/1120, aged 90, and thus was in his fifties when he worked with Ṭirād.

In series D, lasting from Jumādā l-ūlā to Ramaḍān 478/September 1085 to January 1086, the lecturer is Abū Sa‘d al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, whom I could not identify yet. In lecture series F, Rabī‘ al-ākhir to Jumādā l-ākhirā 479/July to September 1086, it is Abū l-Barakāt Hibat Allāh b. al-Mubārak b. Mūsā al-Saqāṭī. He died in 509/1115. He does not seem to have been a reliable transmitter,⁶³ but he is also referred to as teaching assistant (*mufīd*) in the biographical literature.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ Page 228, right side.

⁶⁰ Al-Dhahabī, *Ta’riḥ al-Islām*, 491-500, 240.

⁶¹ Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntazam*, XVII, 82.

⁶² Al-Dhahabī, *Ta’riḥ al-Islām*, 510-520, 377.

⁶³ Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntazam*, XVII, 144.

⁶⁴ Al-Dhahabī, *Ta’riḥ al-Islām*, 501-510, 235f.

In the last years of Ṭirād's activity, different *qurrā'* are employed. Four of them served as *qārī'* for one lecture series of the entire book. Of these I could not identify Abū l-Qāsim 'Abdallāh b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ruwaydashtī (series N, Rabī' al-awwal to Rabī' al-ākhir 490/February to March 1087) and Abū l-Faraj Muḥammad b. 'Abdallāh al-Labbān who together with his sons 'Abd al-Salām and Muḥammad acted as lecturer in series J (Jumādā l-ākhirā 482/August-September 1089).

Abū l-Ḥasan 'Alī b. 'Ubaydallāh b. Naṣr al-Zāghūnī (455/1063-527/1133)⁶⁵ was the *qārī'* of series M (Jumādā l-ūlā to Shawwāl 488/May to October 1095). Al-Zāghūnī was one of the eminent Ḥanbalī scholars of his time, jurist, imām, and writer of an annalistic history. The last lecture series that could be completed in Ṭirād's lifetime (series Q, Dhū l-Hijja 490/November 1097) was read by Abū 'Abdallāh al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad b. Khusrū al-Balkhī (d. 526/1132),⁶⁶ who was a Ḥanafī scholar and who is designated as *mufīd ahl Baghdād* in the biographical literature. There are a few other persons who appear as *qurrā'* in the certificates, but as they are all only mentioned once, they need not be discussed here. As we can see, several of the *qurrā'* are well-known scholars, and some are known as lecturers or assistant teachers in the biographical literature.

The assistant teachers (mufīd)

In addition to the three assistant teachers named above who served as *qurrā'*, at least one more of the participants mentioned in the certificates is designated as *mufīd* or *mufīd Baghdād* in the biographical literature: 'Abd al-Wahhāb b. al-Mubārak al-Anmāṭī (462/1070-538/1143).⁶⁷ This al-Anmāṭī appears in several certificates. He is recorded as listener to the *Kitāb al-Anwāl* in at least three different lecture series between 477/1085 and 481/1088 (C, E, H), the follow-up sessions b and h, and the session i, all under the direction of Ṭirād b. Muḥammad and all with Abū Yāsir Muḥammad b. 'Ubaydallāh as the lecturer. In 490/1097, al-Anmāṭī himself is listed as *qārī'* in a session that could not be related to one of the lecture series.⁶⁸

Another of the *mufīds* mentioned above also appears in the certificates apart from his function as *qārī'*. Al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad b. Khusrū al-Balkhī regularly takes part in the lecture series M (Jumādā l-ūlā to Shawwāl 488/May to October 1095) and at least once figures as the writer of the respective *samā'* note.⁶⁹ In a

⁶⁵ Al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi*, XXI, 294; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntazam* XVII, 144; al-Dhahabī, *Ta'rikh al-Islām*, 521-530, 154-56. On al-Zāghūnī see also George Makdisi, *Ibn 'Aqīl*, 265-267.

⁶⁶ Al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi*, XIII, 38-39; al-Dhahabī, *Ta'rikh al-Islām*, 521-530, 144.

⁶⁷ Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, XX, 134-137, idem, *Ta'rikh al-Islām*, 531-540, 466f. See also Ibn al-Najjār, *Dhayl*, I, 380-384, Ibn al-Jawzī, *Muntazam*, XVIII, 33f.

⁶⁸ Page 26, right side.

⁶⁹ Page 3, right side.

single certificate, a Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Maymūn is listed as *qārī*.⁷⁰ This may be Abū l-Ghanā’im Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Maymūn b. al-Narsī (424/1033-510/1116), who is also said to have been a *mufīd*.⁷¹

The task of teaching assistants (*mufīd* or *mu’īd*) was to help other students by repeating passages, listening to the students’ repetitions and explaining difficult parts of the lesson to them.⁷² In our case, the *mufīds* seem to have been assigned various tasks, from reading lectures to recording the names in the *samā‘āt*. Al-Anmāṭī, who in at least four lecture series is recorded as a listener without any particular function, most probably fulfilled his duty as *mufīd*, explaining and repeating the lesson to other participants. In the *samā‘āt* themselves, we find no indication as to who had the function or position of a *mufīd* or *mu’īd*. However, we may infer that persons who take part in several lecture series of the same work with the same presiding *shaykh* may have done so because of their responsibilities as assistant teachers and not only for reasons of piety.

The participants

The sheer amount of data makes an analysis of the composition of the audience and the backgrounds of the participants a tedious task, all the more as most of the names found in the certificates are not documented in the biographical literature and the handwriting often makes it impossible to establish the names with certainty. Taking into account the size of the different groups of participants and the fluctuation in the groups, the total number of students that heard at least part of the *Kitāb al-Amwāl* from Ṭirād can be estimated to amount to about 500 to 800. About 100 to 150 students may have heard the entire work.

Social background

Based on the titles, the occupation and the *nisbabs*, a substantial part of the participants belong to the scholarly and social elite. There are a several jurists and judges, which is not surprising, as the *Kitāb al-Amwāl* is a book of law. A number of preachers (*khaṭīb*) is also recorded. Other occupational designations in the certificates include broker (*dallāl*), clothes merchant (*bazzāz*), maker or seller of bed coverings (*anmāṭī*), book/papermaker or -seller (*warrāq*), cotton manufacturer or seller (*qaṭṭān*) and laundryman or bleacher (*qaṣṣār*). However, it is sometimes impossible to decide whether these designations indicate that these were the participants’ occupations or whether they refer to an ancestor and simply became part of the name.

⁷⁰ Page 3, left side, dated to Jumādā l-ākhirā 484/July - August 1091.

⁷¹ Al-Dhahabī, *Ta’rīkh al-Islām*, 501-510, 256f.; cf. al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi*, IV, 143f.

⁷² Berkey, *Transmission*, 39-42; Ephrat, *Society*, 109-110.

In the lecture series of the late 470s and early 480s/late 1080s, a number of prominent members of important families take part in the lectures. Some participants come from prominent families of Ḥanafī legal scholars, among them the Dāmaghānīs⁷³ and the Zaynabīs – Abū l-Fawāris Ṭirād himself belonged to the latter family. At least ten persons seem to belong to the House of the Abbasids, indicated by their titles (al-sharīf),⁷⁴ their *nishabs* (al-ʿAbbāsī, al-Hāshimī, al-Zaynabī), and regnal titles in their *nasab* (like al-Muhtadī bi-llāh, al-Wāthiq bi-llāh, or al-Mutawakkil ʿalā llāh). Only a few of these could be found in the biographical dictionaries. Among them is Abū l-Faḍl Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallāh b. Aḥmad b. al-Muhtadī bi-llāh (d. 537/1143), a descendant of the former caliph who had reigned from 255/869 to 256/870. Abū l-Faḍl b. al-Muhtadī figures as a transmitter of three works in Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī’s *Muʿjam al-Mufabras*.⁷⁵ Abū l-ʿIzz Muḥammad b. al-Mukhtār b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wāhid b. al-Muʿayyad bi-llāh, too, is listed as transmitter in Ibn Ḥajar’s *Muʿjam*, although not much seems to be known about him apart from this.⁷⁶ Abū l-ʿAbbās Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Samīʿ b. ʿAlī al-Hāshimī was a Ḥanafī jurist.⁷⁷ The proportion of prominent scholars or participants from social elites seems to be higher in the earlier lecture series than in the later ones.

Religious affiliation

Most participants that could be identified were either affiliated to the Ḥanbalī or to the Ḥanafī *madhhab*. Only two Shāfiʿī scholars could be identified, and so far no Mālikīs⁷⁸ or Zāhirīs. As no complete examination of all the participants recorded in the certificates was made, and the religious affiliation of a large part of the participants remains unknown, the results can only be provisional and should not lead to general conclusions. Nevertheless, the distribution of affiliations observed so far deserves closer attention. Abū ʿUbayd’s work must have been relevant for all *madhbāhib*, his juridical position was considered to be somewhere between Mālik’s and al-Shāfiʿī’s, and several authors rank him among the Shāfiʿīs.⁷⁹ Mālikīs and Zāhirīs only constituted a minority in Baghdad in the

⁷³ Ephrat, *Society*, 161.

⁷⁴ In this case, the title *al-sharīf* evidently encompasses members of the Abbasid family and is not confined to descendants of ʿAlī, as some of the persons so called in the *samāʿāt* can be identified and are direct descendants of al-ʿAbbās. Cf. C. van Arendonk, art. “Sharīf”, in: *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new ed., Leiden, vol. 9.

⁷⁵ Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Muʿjam*, 531.

⁷⁶ Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Muʿjam*, 544.

⁷⁷ Al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi*, VII, 62.

⁷⁸ The *nishab* of one participant may be read as al-Maghribī, in which case it is not unlikely that he was a Mālikī (page 3, left side).

⁷⁹ Görke, *Das Kitāb al-Amwāl*, 28f.

5th/11th century,⁸⁰ so their apparent absence from the certificates is hardly surprising, but the Shāfi'is constituted an important faction. As we have seen, Ṭirād, although himself Ḥanafī, must have held close ties to the ruling Seljuks. Although themselves adhering to the Ḥanafī *madbhab*, their vizier Niẓām al-Mulk strongly promoted the Shāfi'ī cause, *inter alia* through the establishment of colleges. The relative absence of Shāfi'ī scholars from Ṭirād's lectures therefore may possibly indicate that they rather followed lectures by other Shāfi'ī scholars, possibly in the emerging *madrasas*, which were primarily schools of law. The fact that Ḥanafī and Ḥanbalī scholars take part in the same sessions may also indicate that there were no irreconcilable differences between these two groups, while the differences to the Shāfi'is may have been more important. This is in sharp contrast to the results of Ephrat's research about the Sunni '*ulamā*' of 5th/11th century Baghdad. According to her, it was the Ḥanbalī scholars who usually acquired their entire education within their own *madbhab*,⁸¹ while scholars of other *madbāhib* were more inclined to engage in common scholarly pursuits.⁸² In addition, while in Nishapur violent struggles between Ḥanafīs and Shāfi'īs occurred,⁸³ the lines of conflict in Baghdad were rather between Ḥanbalīs on the one side and Shāfi'īs and Ḥanafīs on the other side,⁸⁴ or between different Shī'ī and Sunnī groups.⁸⁵ Leaving political considerations aside, Ṭirād's good reputation as regards scholarship and ancestry may well have attracted scholars from other affiliations to his lectures, all the more as his great age made him the last surviving transmitter of a number of famous teachers.

Age

For most of the participants in the lectures, the date of birth cannot be established. Those whose birth dates are known took part in the session at different stages of their lives. Some participants, as well as some of the lecturers, were already in their fifties, others in their twenties or thirties.

According to the *samā'* records, in most sessions a few persons are accompanied by their children or by their slaves (*fatā*). However, the age of the children is not recorded, and it is possible that the accompanying children themselves were adults already. Quite often they already bear a *kunyā*, which may (but does not necessarily) indicate that they already had children themselves. It seems already

⁸⁰ Ephrat, *Society*, 46-48; George Makdisi, *Ibn 'Aqīl*, 278f.

⁸¹ Daphna Ephrat, "Learning in the First Century of the Madrasah in Baghdad", *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review* 3 (1996) 77-103, here 94; idem, *Society*, 92.

⁸² Ephrat, *Society*, 91-93.

⁸³ Richard W. Bulliet, *The Patricians of Nishapur. A Study in Medieval Islamic Social History*, Cambridge 1972, 28-46, esp. 30f.; cf. Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, X, 251; Berkey, *Formation*, 144.

⁸⁴ Ephrat, *Society*, 92; Berkey, *Formation*, 144f.; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, IX, 614, X, 104f.

⁸⁵ E.g. Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, IX, 561, 575-578, X, 145

to have been common practice to give a *kunyā* to newborn children.⁸⁶ The children of Abū l-Fawāris himself were 24 years old when they attended a lecture series taking place in Jumādā al-ākhirā 486/July 1093.⁸⁷ Possibly they already attended a lecture in 472/1080, then being 10 years old.⁸⁸

While usually only a few children are recorded in the *samāʿāt* prior to 488/1095, in the lecture series M, N, and Q, which take place in 488/1095 and 490/1097, the number of accompanying children is considerably higher. In series Q, at least ten children take part, among them the famous Shuhdah bt. Abī Naṣr al-Ibarī (d. 568/1173), who became the most important transmitter from Abū l-Fawāris ʿIṣrād of the *Kitāb al-Amwāl*.⁸⁹ Not all the children take part in all sessions of this series. The relatively high number of children most probably is due to ʿIṣrād's advanced age – being already in his nineties – at that time, which presumably made him the last surviving transmitter from Ibn al-Bādī (d. 420/1029).

Conclusion

From at least the 470s/1080s, Abū l-Fawāris ʿIṣrād was highly sought after as a teacher. He combined learning, a high reputation, nobility and great age. Taking together all the *samāʿ* notes from the *Kitāb al-Amwāl*, several hundred people heard at least parts of the *Kitāb al-Amwāl* under his direction. ʿIṣrād b. Muḥammad, the *shaykh musmiʿ*, is already 74 (lunar) years old when the first lecture series recorded on the manuscript takes place. In the last lecture series, he has reached the age of 92. This is of major importance for the participants, because this way they have a short chain of transmitters. As the Ḥanafī scholar al-Zarnūjī at the turn of the 7th/13th stated in his instructions for the student, one should always choose the oldest teacher one can find.⁹⁰ Other scholars held similar positions.⁹¹

In the literature, the informal, flexible and open character of teaching in the Islamic world has often been emphasised.⁹² This view may need some modification or at least some clarification. The lecture series studied here were indeed open, insofar as participants could join or leave the circle at any time and take

⁸⁶ A.J. Wensinck, art. "Kunya", in: *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new ed., Leiden, vol. 5; cf. Makdisi, "Diary", *BSOAS* 19 (1957), 32, and Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, IX, 632 and X, 116, for examples from the time of Abū l-Fawāris.

⁸⁷ *Samāʿ* note on page 24, left side.

⁸⁸ *Samāʿ* note on page 3 left side.

⁸⁹ *Samāʿ* note on page 50, right side.

⁹⁰ Burhān al-Dīn al-Zarnūjī, *Taʿlīm al-Mutaʿallim - Ṭarīq at-Taʿallum*, trans. Gustave Edmund von Grunebaum, Theodora M. Abel, *Instruction of the Student: The Method of Learning*, New York 1947, 28: "Regarding the choice of a teacher, it is important to select the most learned, the most pious and the most advanced in years."

⁹¹ Berkey, *Transmission*, 22f.

⁹² Berkey, *Transmission*, 18; Tibawi, "Origin", 230; Ephrat, *Society*, 8, 71, 80, 102.

part in single sessions only if they so wished. Apparently, they were also open to scholars of different religious affiliation, but possibly only to a certain extent. In any case, the under-representation of Shāfi‘ī scholars calls for an explanation.

The lectures were flexible insofar as they did not necessarily all take place at the same place, and at least one session was partly held in a mosque and partly in a different place. But most of the lectures seem to have had a fixed schedule on a weekly basis with a fixed workload, and it is very likely that they were also held at a fixed time. On the other hand, it was possible to later follow up with parts one might have missed, and the lectures could be suspended – sometimes for a week, sometimes for about a month – possibly due to holidays or external circumstances.

The lectures don’t appear to be very informal, but rather seem regulated. The attendance of the participants is meticulously recorded. The *qārī* who actually performed the lectures apparently was not chosen from among the participants but was a professional reader. The most intensive and long-lasting cooperation took place with Abū Yāsir al-‘Ukbarī, who worked together with Ṭirād in at least five lecture series, two follow-up series and some single sessions over a period of ten years. Teaching assistants (*mufīd* or *mu‘īd*) regularly took part in the sessions, sometimes taking on the duties of the *qārī*.² Thus, the teaching culture seems to have been highly specialized and professionalized.

The character of the lectures changes over the course of time. While the lecture series of the 470s and early 480s apparently take place very regularly on a weekly basis and are characterised by small study groups of some 10 to 25, usually adult, participants, the lecture series in the last years of Ṭirād’s teaching activity are carried out in a much shorter period of time and are characterised by large groups, including many children. The aim of these series clearly is to enable children to later transmit the book with the best *isnād* possible. Ṭirād himself had benefited from this practice, as apparently he, too, was taken to lectures when he was still a child. Apart from Ibn al-Bādī, from whom Ṭirād heard the *Kitāb al-Amwāl* in 412/1021, as we have seen above, all of the teachers of Ṭirād’s who appear in the record of transmissions by Ibn Ḥajar died between 411/1020 and 415/1024.

The religious affiliation of the participants deserves further study. Apparently the composition of the study groups does not reflect the structure of the scholarly society (Shāfi‘īs are underrepresented), but is not focused on the affiliation of Ṭirād, either. In any case, Ḥanbalīs apparently did not constitute a self-contained group.

Catalogue of the lectures

In the following, the presumable lecture series (capital letters) and single lectures (lower case letters) in which Ṭirād al-Zaynabī acted as the *shaykh musmi* are documented with details about the *qārī*² (Q), the date (D), and the page numbers

of the manuscript on which the respective certificates can be found. The copy from the Staatsbibliothek Berlin consists of 228 photographs of double pages. As the page numbers on the manuscript conform to the numbers of the photograph but deviate from the folio numbers, page numbers are used.

The lecture series:

- A) Q: Abū Yāsir Muḥammad b. ʿUbaydallāh b. Kādish al-ʿUkbarī (d. 496/1103)
D: Ramadān - Shawwāl 472/March - April 1080
2 certificates: 3 l, 52 l
- B) Q: al-Muʿammar b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Bayyīʿ (424/1033-515/1120)
D: 7 Dhū l-Ḥijja 477 - Muḥarram 478/April - May 1085
3 certificates: 49 r, 97 r, 125 r
- C) Q: Abū Yāsir Muḥammad b. ʿUbaydallāh b. Kādish al-ʿUkbarī (d. 496/1103)
D: 28 Dhū l-Ḥijjah 477 - 2 Rabīʿ al-awwal 478/26 April - 28 June 1085
9 certificates: 24 l, 49 r, 72 r, 97 r, 125 r, 151 r, 155 l, 204 r, 228 r
- c) Q: Abū Yāsir Muḥammad b. ʿUbaydallāh b. Kādish al-ʿUkbarī (d. 496/1103)
D: Rabīʿ al-awwal 478/June - July 1085
2 certificates: 180 l, 204 r
- D) Q: Abū Saʿd al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb
D: Jumādā l-ūlā - Ramaḍān 478/September 1085 - January 1086
8 certificates: 3 l, 72 r, 75 l, 125 r, 151 l, 177 r, 180 l, 207 r
- E) Q: Abū Yāsir Muḥammad b. ʿUbaydallāh b. Kādish al-ʿUkbarī (d. 496/1103)
D: 22 Dhū l-Ḥijjah 478 - Rabīʿ al-awwal 479/11 April - June 1086
5 certificates: 60 r, 75 l, 124 l, 150 l, 177 r
- F) Q: Abū l-Barakāt Hibat Allāh b. al-Mubārak b. Mūsā al-Saqāṭī (d. 509/1115)
D: 8 Rabīʿ al-ākhir - Jumādā l-ākhirah 479/23 July - September 1086
8 certificates: 25 r, 49 l, 97 l, 100 l, 152 r, 177 l, 204 l, 228 l
- G) Q: Abū Yāsir Muḥammad b. ʿUbaydallāh b. Kādish al-ʿUkbarī (d. 496/1103)
D: Jumādā l-ūlā - Jumādā l-ākhirah 479/August - September 1086
4 certificates: 25 r, 49 l, 97 l, 125 r
- H) Q: Abū Yāsir Muḥammad b. ʿUbaydallāh b. Kādish al-ʿUkbarī (d. 496/1103)
D: Jumādā l-ūlā - Jumādā l-ākhirah 480/August - September 1087
7 certificates: 25 l, 94 r, 113 r, 150 l, 176 l, 180 l, 207 l
- h) Q: Abū Yāsir Muḥammad b. ʿUbaydallāh b. Kādish al-ʿUkbarī (d. 496/1103)
D: Jumādā l-ākhirah - Shaʿbān 480/September - November 1087
3 certificates: 25 l, 31 r, 227 l

- i) Q: Abū Yāsir Muḥammad b. ʿUbaydallāh b. Kādish al-ʿUkbarī (d. 496/1103)
D: Jumādā l-ākhirah 481/August - September 1088
1 certificate: 151 r
- J) Q: Abū l-Faraj Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallāh al-Labbān and his sons ʿAbd al-Salām and Muḥammad
D: Jumādā l-ākhirah 482/August - September 1089
7 certificates: 3 r, 30 l, 79 r, 149 l, 155 r, 203 r, 228 r
- j) Q: Abū l-Faraj Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallāh al-Labbān and his sons ʿAbd al-Salām and Muḥammad
D: Jumādā l-ākhirah 482/August - September 1089
2 certificates: 3 l, 227 l
- k) Q: Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. Maymūn
D: Jumādā l-ākhirah 484/July - August 1091
1 certificate: 3 l
- l) Q: Abū l-Qāsim ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad al-Ṭirāzī
D: Jumādā l-ākhirah 486/July 1093
1 Certificate: 25 l
- M) Q: Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. ʿUbaydallāh b. Naṣr al-Zāgūnī (455/1063-527/1133)
D: 29 Jumādā l-ūlā - 17 Shawwāl 488/6 May - 20 October 1095
7 certificates: 3 r, 31 r, 75 r, 126 r, 155 l, 200 r, 223 r
- N) Q: Abū l-Qāsim ʿAbdallāh b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ruwaydashtī
D: 2 Rabīʿ al-awwal - 2 Rabīʿ al-ākhir 490/18 February - 20 March 1097
8 certificates: 23 l, 44 l, 58 r, 116 r, 150 r, 158 r, 196 r, 212 r
- o) Q: not mentioned
D: Rabīʿ al-ākhir 490/March - April 1097
1 certificate: 228 r
- p) Q: Abū l-Barakāt ʿAbd al-Wahhāb b. al-Mubāarak al-Anmāṭī (462/1070-538/1143)
D: 490/1097
1 certificate: 26 r
- Q) Q: Abū ʿAbdallāh al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad b. Khusrū al-Balkhī (d. 526/1132)
D: 5 Dhū l-Ḥijjah - Dhū l-Ḥijjah 490/13 November - November or December 1097.
8 certificates: 26 r, 50 r, 74 l, 125 l, 129 r, 155 r, 180 r, 207 r

- r) Q: Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallāh al-Maghāfirī
D: Muḥarrām 491/December 1097
1 certificate: 4 r
- s) Q: al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Arbaqī
D: illegible
1 certificate: 49 r

Illustrations



Figure 1: Title page of the fifth part (*juz'*) of the *Kitāb al-Amwāl* of Abū 'Ubayd with the note of acquisition of Abū l-Fawāris Ṭirād (Staatsbibliothek Berlin, MS sim. or. 31)



Figure 2: Restored page at the beginning of part 1, probably by the hand of Abū l-Fawānis Tīrad (Staatsbibliothek Berlin, MS sim. or. 31)



Figure 3: Names crossed out and recorded absences from a hearing session (upper note) (Staatsbibliothek Berlin, MS sim. or. 31)



Figure 4: Space left free in a samā' note for later addition of names and note of repetition (upper note) (Staatsbibliothek Berlin, MS sim. or. 31)