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THE DIARY IN ISLAMIC HISTORIOGRAPHY: SOME NOTES

GEORGE MAKDISI

In the Western world, the earliest extant diary is the anonymous French *Journal d'un bourgeois de Paris de 1405 à 1449*.¹ The earliest extant diary in English is dated 1442.² No previous diaries are known to exist. It is generally believed that diaries, the product of a heightened sense of individualism and self-awareness, had to wait for the Renaissance, after the close of the Middle Ages. The individualism of the Renaissance, in contrast to the communalism of the Middle Ages, is said to have been needed in order to produce the personal diary, as differentiated from the keeping of daily *public* records.³ In striking contrast to the West, Islam developed the diary very early in its history, earlier than has heretofore been known. And there is reason to believe that it antedates and is related to, three genres of historiographical literature: the annalistic, the biographical, and the combination of both in two separate sections under the same year. The following pages will therefore treat the diary and its relation to these other forms of historiography.

THE DIARY OF IBN BANNA'

Some three decades ago, while researching manuscript sources for the history of eleventh-century Baghdad as background for the study of the Muslim intellectual Ibn 'Aqil (1041-1119),⁴ I came across a fragment of a historical document treating events in Baghdad for a brief interval in the third quarter of that century. The fragment, with neither title page nor colophon, was in one of the then 158 volumes of collectanea preserved in the National Library of Damascus, the Zahiriya. It was the thirteenth of fifteen different writings, all bound together in volume 17 of these collections. In spite of the writer's wretched handwriting, the name Ibn 'Aqil stood out clearly for me here and there in the first half of the fragment's fifteen folios. Once these passages were deciphered it became clear that they treated of some early details connected with the *cause célèbre* of Ibn 'Aqil. In 1072, after five years of hiding from his hostile pursuers, Ibn 'Aqil was to sign a retraction abjuring his ties with Mu'tazilism, a philosophical-theological movement, as well as his veneration for the great mystic Hallaj,⁵ who was accused of heresy and crucified in 922.

1. Paris, n.d.; modern French version by Jacques Mégret. This diary was by an anonymous curate of Paris written between 1405 and 1431, and by another hand up to 1449 (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th ed. [1910-1911], vol. 8, "Diary" [by Edmund Gosse]; cf. *EB* [1983], "Diary" [anon.]

2. See William Mathews, *British Diaries: An Annotated Bibliography of British Diaries Written Between 1442-1942* (Berkeley, 1950).

3. Cf. *EB* (1968), "Diary" (anon.).

4. See G. Makdisi, *Ibn 'Aqil et la résurgence de l'Islam traditionaliste au XI^e siècle (V^e siècle de l'Hégire)* (Damascus, 1963), 31, 33 n.2.

5. On this great mystic of Islam, see Louis Massignon, *La Passion d'al-Hallaj: martyr mystique de l'Islam*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1975); English translation by H. Mason, *The Passion of al-Hallaj*, Bollingen Series XCVIII (Princeton, 1982).

Besides providing intimate details unavailable elsewhere, the fragment clearly was of importance in itself as the earliest extant personal diary. The fragment has 16 folios. The first item is dated the 1st of Shawwal, 460 (= A.D. 3 August 1068) and the last the 14th of Dhu 'l-Qa'da, 461 (= 4 September 1069). This fragment consists mostly of the diarist's personal observations and experiences. Otherwise, his sources of information for Baghdad and its environs were personal acquaintances who would come to him with the news or from whom he solicited information. Reports from outside Baghdad and its environs, such as Palestine and Arabia, came in "letters from merchants." Often the information was introduced in terms indicating the source was anonymous; such as "I was informed . . ."; "I was told . . ."; "it was said that . . .". Despite the hurried and careless hand of the diarist, the fragment's importance required its decipherment and publication.⁶

Since the publication of the fragment, I have come to the conclusion that this autograph diary of Ibn Banna' (1005-1079) was not an isolated phenomenon peculiar to him alone, but was rather the product of a wide-spread practice not only in his eleventh century but also in the preceding one, with its origins hidden further back still. I began to suspect the existence of such diaries when gathering the materials for the chapter on sources for a study of Ibn 'Aqil and his period, particularly the biographical dictionary, a monumental *Who's Who* of Ibn Najjar (1183-1245). This biographer of Muslim intellectuals and other notables in Baghdad seldom failed to give the source of his notices, especially when citing the dates of birth and death of his biographees. What set him apart from all other biographers, with whose works I was acquainted, was the frequency with which he cited his sources, the autograph character of the greater part of them, and his direct knowledge and use of these autograph sources. To understand the reason for the proliferation of these autograph sources, a brief explanation of *hadith* criticism would be appropriate.

EXIGENCIES OF HADITH CRITICISM

A "hadith" is a record of deeds or words of the Prophet of Islam and his companions. It consists of two parts: the first contains the names of the persons who transmitted the report to one another; this part is called the *isnad*, meaning the "support" for the trustworthiness of the report. The second part consists of the statement itself, the text or substance (*matn*) of the report. "Hadith," as used here, may refer to a single narrative or communication, or to the science of hadith, a field of Islamic religious knowledge. The Koran and the hadith make up the sacred scripture of Islam.

Hadith criticism consisted in ascertaining the names and circumstances of transmitters in order to investigate when and where they lived, whether they were personally acquainted one with the other, and whether they were reliable, truthful and accurate in their transmission of the texts.⁷ To a great extent, historiography owes its existence in Islam to the exigencies of this hadith criticism. Dates of birth and death were of the first importance in determining the contemporaneity of one transmitter with another. More information was needed as the Islamic community was expanded, whence the early development of the biographical dictionary. This dictionary, sometimes partly a *Who's Who*, biographies of the living, was essentially a *Who Was Who*, and When, and Where. At its best, it en-

6. See note 19 below.

7. *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, ed. H.A.R. Gibb and J.H. Kramers (Leiden, 1953), "Isnad" and "Hadith." In *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* a great number of Arabic words are accurately explained; see also the *Oxford English Dictionary*, where the Arabic words, explained, are included in letters of the Arabic alphabet. F. Sezgin very judiciously treats of Islamic history after hadith in the first volume of his monumental *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, 9 vols. (to date) (Leiden, 1967-1984).

deavored to include all possible information that would characterize the person so as to minimize the possibility of fraud or error in the transmission of a hadith, by establishing whether a transmitter could have been a contemporary of another; and if contemporaries, whether their roads had crossed; and if so, whether one could have received his information from the other; and if so, whether he was trustworthy, and so on. This desire for all possible information which would serve to place the person in his environment and to follow him in his movements and record his relations with others — teachers, students, colleagues, friends, and their writings — called for the keeping of a dated record, a diary, with all those details which the diarist considered of importance.

In his excellent article "Islamic Biographical Literature" Sir Hamilton Gibb began with two important statements: first, that "the biographical dictionary is a wholly indigenous creation of the Islamic Community" and second, that "the composition of biographical dictionaries in Arabic developed simultaneously with historical composition."⁸ The diary, a record of dates of birth and deaths, and of events with their dates, was the source from which the materials were derived for two types of historiography: the biographical and the annalistic.

"TA'RIKH" AS DIARY

The central and most essential element of the diary was "dating" (= *ta'rikh*), the fixing of a date; and that date, for Islam, was the first day of the lunar month.

Prior to the discovery of the fragment of Ibn Banna' 's autograph manuscript, the earliest work believed to be a diary was that of Saladin's secretary, Baisani (1135-1200). Quotations from it are headed by the word *muyawamat*,⁹ meaning diary, "or, as a rule, by the title 'News (mutajaddidat) of the year n.'"¹⁰ The word *muyawamat* was no doubt used in the sense of diary, but appears to have been a neologism not used in the early period of the diary's development, nor exclusively for Baisani's period, nor thereafter.¹¹ Ibn Banna' 's diary is referred to in the period after, as well as before, that of Baisani, by the term *ta'rikh*. It is the term for the following four annalist-biographers: Ibn Jauzi (1116-1200), Ibn Najjar (1183-1245), Yafi'i (c. 1300-1372), and Ibn Rajab (1309-1393).¹² Ibn Najjar refers to Ibn Banna' 's diary simply as the latter's "*ta'rikh*," "*ta'rikh*-book," or "book." When referring to the writer's other works, he cites them by their titles, such as Ibn Banna' 's "*Classes of Jurisconsults*" and his "Catalogue of [His] Professors."¹³ Baisani's work, which gives "news of the year n," appears to have been not a diary, but an annalistic work, which

8. *Historians of the Middle East*, ed. B. Lewis and P.M. Holt (London, 1962), 54-58, esp. 54.

9. See F. Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography* (Leiden, 1952), 152, 2nd ed. (1968), 175. *Muyawamat*: used in contracts to mean daily, day by day (payment), as compared with *mushahara* (from *shahr*, month), meaning paid *monthly*, *by the month*, in reference to monthly rent or wages, and *mu'awama* (from *'am*, year) and *musanat* (from *sana*, year), paid yearly, by the year, and even *musawa'a* (from *sa'a*, hour), paid *hourly*, *by the hour*. Cf. E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, 8 parts (London, 1863-93), ("snw," "shhr," "wm," "ywm"). R. Dozy, *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes*, (snw, shhr, where *mushahara* meant also, by extension, yearly pay), ywm.

10. *Mutajaddidat*: news, events; cf. Rosenthal, *Muslim Historiography*, 152 and n.5.

11. Cf. the modern fictional narrative in diary form by Taufiq Hakim, *Yaumiyyat na'ib fi 'l-aryaf* (*yaumiyyat* being the term used for diary in modern times [cf. Hans Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*]).

12. The works of Ibn Jauzi, Yafi'i, and Ibn Rajab are published; that of Ibn Najjar has come down to us in a two-volume fragment.

13. Other works are also cited by title: the *Fihrist* of Ibn Nadim (Ms. Damascus, fol. 85a); Tahnhan's *Kitab Ta'rikh al-ghuraba' al-qadimin Misr* (Ms. Paris, fol. 103b); Ibn 'Aqil's *Kitab al-Funun* (Ms. Damascus, fol. 2b); *Tabaqat al-Hanabila* of Ibn Abi Ya'la (*ibid.*, fol. 104b); Ibn Hamdun's *Kitab at-Tadhhira* (*ibid.*, fol. 111b); etc.

could have been based on a diary — most likely one by Baisani himself, for it focuses on the year as a global dating unit, not on the month.

Most surprising of all are the sources Ibn Najjar cites as autograph works. He cites them in one of the following four ways: (1) "So-and-so related this in his *Ta'rikh*, I copied it from his handwriting;" (2) "I read in the *Ta'rikh-Book* of So-and-So, in his handwriting," (3) "I read in the *Book* of So-and-So in his handwriting;" or (4) "I read in the handwriting of So-and-So." Otherwise Ibn Najjar cites the title of the work. The autograph diaries had no title other than the word "dating" (*ta'rikh*) which was used to refer to them. It is clear that direct acquaintance with the autograph work of the witness had an authority which was second only to the oral testimony of the witness himself, the witness being the contemporary of the event he related. For instance, regarding the date of birth of a biographee, the best testimony was that of the biographee himself to a contemporary witness, which the latter transmitted orally to the diarist, or which the diarist read in the witness's handwriting. In a list of thirty-five sources which Ibn Najjar called *ta'rikh*, *ta'rikh-book*, *book*, or simply *his* (the author's) *own handwriting*, the biographee treated in the notice was a contemporary of the author of the source. The sources without titles, referred to in one of the four ways indicated above, were either diaries or annalistic histories (events of the year, followed by the year's death notices) which were based on diaries that dealt, as diaries do, with contemporary events.

Ibn Jauzi (1116-1200) in his annalistic history, a *ta'rikh* entitled the *Muntazam*, uses the diary of Ibn Banna' for the years 460 H.¹⁴ (11 November 1067 to 30 October 1068) and 470 H.¹⁵ (25 July 1077 to 13 July 1078). One item for this year had to do with the last will and testament of the wealthy Hanbali merchant Ibn Jarada. Ibn Banna' copied its text into his diary, and Ibn Jauzi copied it, in part, in his *Muntazam*. When copying from Ibn Banna' 's diary, Ibn Jauzi introduced the passages with these words: "I read in the handwriting of Abu 'Ali b. al-Banna', and this is what he said: . . ." ¹⁶ Thus the other essential element of the diary, next to *dating*, was *autography*, the next best thing to the oral testimony of the witness.

Now the question is, why was the term *ta'rikh*, generally taken to mean *history*, used as the word for *diary*? The term *ta'rikh* comes from a root common to Semitic languages. The verb (in Arabic, *arrakha*, *warrakha*) has the sense of "fixing of the month," "fixing of the period of an event," and, as has been suggested, "there is a vague consciousness that the word has something to do with fixing the *beginning* of the month."¹⁷ This last statement is fully supported by the diary of Ibn Banna', who was careful to fix the beginning of each lunar month according to the sighting of the new crescent; and he did this *even when he had nothing to record for that first day of the month*. He named the month and the day that was the month's first day; after the twelfth month of the year, he introduced the new year stating its hijra¹⁸ number, the name of the first month, and the name of the month's first day. The fixing of the first day of the month is the only dating which appears in the diary without necessarily being followed by the recording of an event other than the month's beginning.

The word *ta'rikh* was therefore used to designate a record of events the dates of which

14. For Saturday, 15 Jumada I/26 March 1068; for Sunday, 7 Jumada II/13 April 1068; and for Tuesday, Dhu'l-Qa'da/ 8 September 1068.

15. In connection with the death of Sharif Abu Ja'far, 15 Safar/ Thursday, 7 September 1077, and the latter's last will and testament.

16. Ibn Jauzi, *al-Muntazam fi tarikh al-muluk wa'l-umam*, 6 vols. (V-X), ed. Krenkow (Hyderabad, 1938-40), VIII, 248-250 and 316-317.

17. See the article of M. Plessner in *Encyclopedia of Islam*, first edition, *Supplement* (1934), 230, s.v. *ta'rikh*; emphasis added.

18. Hijra (hegira), the migration of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina, in A.D. 622, the beginning of the Muslim era. The letter H. following a number represents the hijra year.

were fixed. If we may use the diary of Ibn Banna' as a model, the date that was most essential to the diary, and upon which all others depended, was the first day of each month. This diarist never *consciously* omitted to fix that date. He forgot to record it in two instances, one of which he redressed by inscribing the date in the margin; for without that first day of the month accurately fixed, the diary could not be kept as an accurate record of daily events within each month. An Islamic diary was kept according to the lunar month; a date may be fixed within the month beyond doubt only when the month's first day is known. The extant fragment of Ibn Banna' 's diary fixes the beginning of fourteen lunar months, the first three of which belong to the year 460 of the hijra, and the rest to the year 461 H., as follows:¹⁹

- 1) *Sunday*, the 1st of Shawwal (460/3 August 1068) (§1)
- 2) *Tuesday*, the 1st of Dhu'l-Qa'da (460/2 September 1068) (§13; in the margin)
- 3) *Wednesday*, the 1st of Dhu'l-Hijja (460/1 October 1068) [(unconsciously omitted between §23 and §24)]
- 4) *Friday*, the 1st of Muharram (461/31 October 1068) (§36)
- 5) *Sunday*, the 1st of Safar (461/30 November 1068) (§50)
- 6) *Monday*, the 1st of Rabi' I (461/29 December 1068) (§64)
- 7) *Wednesday*, the 1st of Rabi' II (461/28 January 1069) (§83)
- 8) *Thursday*, the 1st of Jumada I (461/26 February 1069) (§105)
- 9) *Friday*, the 1st of Jumada II (461/27 March 1069) (§123)
- 10) *Sunday*, the 1st of Rajab (461/26 April 1069) (§135)
- 11) *Monday*, the 1st of Sha'ban (461/25 May 1069) (§151)
- 12) *Tuesday*, the 1st of Ramadan (461/23 June 1069) (§159)
- 13) *Thursday*, the 1st of Shawwal (461/23 July 1069) (§168)
- 14) *Saturday*, the 1st of Dhu'l-Qa'da (461/22 August 1069) (§174)

Within each month, events were generally given their fixed dates; and at the end of the month a number of items (whose dates were, for one reason or another, not fixed during the month) could be grouped together under the heading "in these days," i.e. days of the month in question.

Not only was the term "*ta'rikh*" used in the sense of diary, but the verb *arrakha* (of which *ta'rikh* is the infinitive noun) was used in the sense of "to keep a diary." Ibn Jauzi, in his biographical notice on Duhli (1038-1113), says: "he began to write a continuation of *Ta'rikh Baghdad* [by al-Khatib al-Baghdadi (1002-1071)], then he washed it [washed the pages clean, destroyed the work] before his death, *after having "kept a diary" after al-Khatib.*"²⁰ Khatib died in 463/1071; his biographical dictionary of eminent personalities was written up to and including the year in which he died.²¹ At the time of Khatib's death, Duhli was thirty-three years of age. He kept a diary which served as the basis for his own biographical dictionary. He washed the pages of his biographical dictionary, *but not those of his diary*, for we later find Ibn Najjar using it as a source in his own continuation of Khatib's work.²² The biographical notices in the two extant volumes of Ibn Najjar's work, in which Duhli's diary (= *ta'rikh*) is cited, cover a span of over three

19. See G. Makdisi, "Autograph Diary of an Eleventh-Century Historian of Baghdad" [Introduction, Arabic text, English translation and notes]. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 18 (1956), 9-31, 239-260 (§§1-49), 19 (1957), 13-48 (§§50-104), 281-303, (§§105-150), 426-443 (§§151-185).

20. See Ibn Jauzi, *Muntazam*, IX, 176 (lines 13-14): "ba'da an *arrakha* ba'da 'l-Khatib."

21. See Makdisi, *Ibn 'Aqil*, 31, 33 n.2.

22. See Ibn Najjar, *Dhail tarikh Baghdad*, Ms. National Library of Damascus (Zahiriya), fols. 3a, 36a, 135a, 163b, 175b; Ms. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Fonds arabe 2131, fols. 18a, 19b, 41a, 47a, 54b, 143a.

decades; the earliest date is the year 459 H., which year began 22 November 1100 and ended 25 October 1101. The earliest date shows that Dhuhli began his diary at least at the age of twenty-nine (an age consistent with that of a graduate student specializing in hadith), four years before Khatib's death. The biographical dictionary he destroyed was supposed to supplement Khatib's.

Dhuhli's biographical dictionary was not the only one to continue that of Khatib.²³ Several others wrote such continuations, among them Dhuhli's contemporary, Saqati (1053-1115). Ibn Najjar cites him as a source for a biographee who died in 1089;²⁴ the source may have been Saqati's biographical dictionary or his diary.

DATING AND REPORTING

"Dating" was an essential function of the graduate student specializing in hadith, as "reporting" was an essential function of the graduate student specializing in law. The activity of *ta'rikh* (=dating) was the counterpart of the activity of *ta'liq* (=reporting), in the education of the advanced hadith-student and law-student, respectively.²⁵ The graduate student of law "reported," made reports, took notes, of the lectures of his law professor(s); of the disputations on law in the classroom, or in the regular meetings of jurisconsults for the purpose of disputation; and of his extensive reading of legal works as well. On the other hand, "dating," in the sense of keeping a diary, was an essential function of the graduate student of hadith. He kept notes recorded day by day, or frequently within the month, gathered in his own town or in his travels to the various cities of Islam — data of use to the field of hadith, its study and its criticism. The student specializing in the study of hadith was interested not only in collecting authoritative hadiths, but also in acquiring an extensive knowledge of the masters of hadith, their dates of birth and death and as much information as possible on the course of their careers. It is therefore understandable that they kept notes and records which, in the course of time, developed into well-kept diaries, which some of them continued to keep after attaining the mastership. This function is amply illustrated in the fragment of Ibn Banna' 's diary, and in the numerous diaries that served as sources for Ibn Najjar's biographical dictionary.²⁶

Before reaching the point of transmitting hadith on his own authority, an advanced student of hadith was expected to have recorded extensively, to have assisted in the teaching of hadith, to have collected authoritative hadiths from the master — from as many of them as possible for him to do so on his travels for the purpose — and to have compiled a list of his own masters of hadith, a list which was often published later. In the biographical notices on hadith-experts there is a recurrent phrase: "he recorded extensively in his own handwriting." This apparently redundant phrase is merely meant to emphasize the fact that his collections of materials were not those written by others, which could be acquired through purchase or borrowing and copying, but rather the result of his own collections recorded in his own hand.

The following two examples will illustrate the cases of two specialized students of hadith who are said to have recorded extensively, but died "before reaching the point of transmitting hadith" on their own authority, i.e. authorized by duly authorized masters: Hazarab Harawi (d. 515/1121), and Ibn Shafi' al-Jili (1126-1169). Of the first, Ibn Jauzi said that "he recorded extensively, was docent of hadith (*afada*) to local and out-of-town students,

23. Cf. Makdisi, *Ibn 'Aqil*, 31ff.

24. Ibn Najjar, Ms. Paris 2131, fol. 40b-41a; for Saqati's biographical dictionary, see Ibn Rajab, *Dhail 'ala Tabaqat al-hanabila*, ed. M.H. Fiqi, 2 vols. (Cairo, 1953), I, 141 (line 6).

25. On the *ta'liqa*-report and the *reportatio* in medieval legal education, see G. Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West* (Edinburgh, 1981), IIIff., and 243ff., and the index, 375, *ta'liq* and *ta'liqa*.

26. For a list of these sources, see Makdisi, *Ibn 'Aqil*, 40ff.; this list is not exhaustive.

was orthodox, trustworthy, and good, *but death cut him off before the time was ripe for him to transmit hadiths.*²⁷ Nevertheless, Hazarab left what appears to have been his diary. Ibn Najjar cites it in one of his notices as follows: "I read in the *Book* of Hazarab Harawi, in his own handwriting"—here follows the obituary of a man who died in 493/1100.²⁸ We do not know how old Hazarab was at the time of his death. Not yet a master of hadith, he was still an advanced student, but he had a "book" with biographical information on transmitters of hadith.

The second case is more instructive, because we have a date of birth as well as a date of death. Of Ibn Shafī' al-Jili, Ibn Rajab said: "he *recorded* extensively in his own handwriting, acquired beautiful authorized works of hadiths, but he transmitted only a few hadiths *because he died before the time was ripe for him to become an authorized transmitter.*"²⁹ Jili was forty-five years of age when he died, not exactly a young boy; hadith expertise required long years and extensive recording and collecting. He was known as the "Docent of Baghdad" in hadith. We will have more to say about him presently.

SAKHAWI'S DEFINITION OF TA'RIKH

The above understanding of the term "*ta'rikh*" as primarily biographical, but also analytical in that it pertains to events as well as to persons, is corroborated by the definition that Sakhawi gives to this word:

As a technical term, *ta'rikh* is the indication of time that serves accurately to establish circumstances such as *the dates of birth of hadith-transmitters* and of religious leaders, *the dates of death*, soundness in mind and body, travels, pilgrimages, knowledge of hadiths and accuracy, *assessment of reliability and unreliability*, and similar things, all of which relate to research concerning *the circumstances of those personalities in the beginning of their careers, in their present condition, and in their future.*

Important *events and occurrences* that happen to take place are added to this. Such events are the appearance of a religion, the imposition of new (religious) duties, events concerning caliphs and wazirs, raids, battles, and wars, conquests of countries and their liberation from usurpers, and changes of dynasties. The term *ta'rikh* is also often extended to include the beginning of creation, the stories of the prophets, and the affairs of nations of the past as well as the circumstances of the Resurrection and the events preceding it which will take place in the future.

It may also be extended to minor matters such as the construction of mosques, schools, bridges, paved roads, and similar objects of general usefulness, matters that are well-known, observable, or obscure happenings, celestial ones, such as the appearance of locusts and eclipses of the sun and moon, or terrestrial ones, such as earthquakes, conflagrations, inundations, floods, droughts, pestilences, epidemics, and similar great signs and marvels.

In sum, the term *ta'rikh* signifies a branch of learning that is concerned with research regarding the occurrences which take place in time, in the intention to establish their character and their place in time. In fact, it is concerned with everything that was (and is) in the world.³⁰

27. See *Muntazam*, IX, 231.

28. Ibn Najjar, *Dhail*, Ms. Damascus, fol. 53a.

29. Ibn Rajab, *Dhail*, (ed. Fiqi), I, 312.

30. Sakhawi, *I'lan*, in Rosenthal, *Muslim Historiography*, 204-205; see also Sir Hamilton Gibb, "Islamic Biographical Literature," in *Historians of the Middle East*, 55, where the passage is partially translated, and does not differ substantially from that of Rosenthal. Likewise, the present translation is only slightly different.

TA'RIKH AS ANNALISTIC HISTORY

Sakhawi's (1427-1497) definition of *ta'rikh* may be taken as a description of what went into the diary and the two types of historiography which the diary served as a source: the biographical and the annalistic. It is a definition that fits (a) the diary, (b) the biographical dictionary in all its varieties, (c) annalistic history of events, and (d) annalistic history divided into "histoire événementielle," in a first section, and biographical notices in a second section. To this last genre belong the *ta'rikh* of the famous historian and jurisconsult of Baghdad Tabari (839-923)³¹ and the *ta'rikh* of Ibn Jauzi (1116-1200),³² as well as the *ta'rikhs* of their continuators. In order to distinguish between dated events recorded on the day the events took place and dated events recorded long after their occurrence, the need was felt for another term which would distinguish between diaries and annals. The fact is that, generally speaking, the term *ta'rikh* was used equivocally for the two types of historiography. But at least as early as the tenth century, and perhaps as early as the first half of the ninth or latter part of the eighth, a complement was added to the term *ta'rikh* in order to provide the needed distinction. The annalistic form was referred to as *ta'rikh 'ala 's-sinin*, which, in contrast to diaries, meant a recording of events whose dates are fixed according to the years. The earliest known work of this type, referred to as *Kitab at-ta'rikh 'ala 's-sinin*, is that of al-Haitham b. 'Adi (c. 747-821).³³ This work is not extant. The earliest known reference to it is by Ibn Nadim, who wrote his *Catalogue* in 375/985-86.³⁴ Unless Ibn Nadim used the term anachronistically as a description of the work, the term itself may have been used as early as Haitham's period in the eighth or ninth century. In any case, the use of the term *ta'rikh* may be safely considered as antecedent to its use with the qualifying complement *'ala 's-sinin*, "year by year."

The "biographical" and "annalistic" types of historiography are usually differentiated by their titles. For instance, when the word *ta'rikh* is coupled with a city (e.g. *Ta'rikh Baghdad*), it is a biographical dictionary of scholars and other leading figures of that city, including out-of-towners who visited it for a greater or lesser period of time. The *Tabaqat* or *Classes*, the *Ta'rikhs* of Cities, and the "Centennials" (i.e. biographical dictionaries covering one century) are also biographical works of scholars in one or another of the fields of specialization: Koranic science, hadith, grammar and the literary arts, and law. Other fields (such as the philosopher-physicians, the philosophical-theologians) are represented to a lesser degree. No doubt biographical works made use of diaries as sources; but diaries had annalistic data in addition to the biographical, as is evident in the diary of Ibn Banna' and in the quotations preserved from other diaries. The *ta'rikh 'ala 's-sinin* rearranges the data of the diary "according to the years," rather than according to the months fixed by their first day. The earliest extant work of this type is Ibn Jauzi's *Muntazam*, which divides the diarial data into two distinct sections: the first on the year's events, and the second on the year's biographical notices. When Ibn Jauzi attempts a monthly arrangement within the years, he is merely betraying his dependence on diarial sources, his own or those of others. Several works of this type predate the *Muntazam*; Ibn Jauzi was merely using a format that was already in existence. This annalistic type of historiography with its two distinct sections, appears to have been a development of the diary. The diary's two types of information, given day after day as they occurred during the month, appear rearranged into two separate sections under the year. Biographical notices in the second section are more or less elaborate according to the predilections of the writer; more detailed, for instance, in Ibn Jauzi's *Muntazam* than in the *Ta'rikh* of the Baghdadian Tabari or in that of his Syrian emulator Ibn Athir (1160-1233).

31. Sezgin, *Geschichte*, I, 323ff.

32. See note 16 above.

33. Sezgin, *Geschichte*, I, 323n.1.

34. Ibn Nadim, *Fihrist* (Cairo, 1348/1929), 146 (line 9); also Sezgin, *Geschichte*, I, 323n., and 272.

Heretofore it was thought that Ibn Jauzi's *Muntazam* was the first of its kind. Indeed it represented a break in the line of historiographical development as one could see it in the History of *Tabari* (839-923) and in that of Ibn Athir (1160-1233). Of the antecedents of Ibn Jauzi's (1116-1200) *Muntazam* nothing was known because such works were not known to exist. And although still not extant, such works may yet be clearly identified as annalistic-biographical through quotations in extant works, as will be done in the following pages. They are designated by the term *ta'rikh*, or *ta'rikh 'ala 's-sinin*; and some are described by both terms interchangeably.

FOUR CENTURIES OF TA'RIKH COMPOSITION IN BAGHDAD

Qifti (1172-1248), in the notice on the physician and historian Thabit ibn Sinan,³⁵ in his biographical dictionary of physicians, gives a list of historical works for the benefit of those who would like to have continuous historical reading down to the year 616 H. (A.D. 1219-1220).³⁶ The list begins with Tabari and ends with Qadisi. Hajji Khalifa's (1609-1657) bio-bibliographical work *Kashf az-Zunun* repeats the list beginning with Thabit ibn Sinan, omitting Tabari as well as some historians whose works coincide with those of the principal historians of the list. The principal historians are as follows: Tabari, Thabit ibn Sinan, Hilal Sabi, Ibn Hilal Sabi, Hamadhani, Zaghuni, Sadaqa ibn Husain, Ibn Jauzi, Qadisi. In Ibn Najjar's biographical dictionary, of which we have only a fragment in two volumes, all of these historians are represented as sources except the first-named, Tabari.

Thabit ibn Sinan (d. 975)—Thabit is the author of a *ta'rikh*-work which is described variously as beginning in the year 290/930,³⁷ or 295/907, and which is said to end in 360/971.³⁸ This work appears to be both annalistic and biographical, if one is to judge by the quotations in Ibn Jauzi's *Muntazam*, which cites Thabit's *Ta'rikh* as a source, the first quotation being for the month of Rabi' I, 296 (A.D. Nov.-Dec., 908), and the last, for the year 352/963. He cites this work for events, marvels, and biographies.³⁹ Ibn Najjar cites Thabit's *Ta'rikh* for a biographee's date of death giving the exact date, "on Thursday, the 23rd of Muharram, 358 [17 December 968], in Shiraz."⁴⁰

Hilal Sabi (969-1056), Thabit's nephew, is also cited by Ibn Jauzi for historical events as well as for biographical notices.⁴¹ Ibn Najjar used the *Ta'rikh* of Hilal in the autograph of the author and quoted him verbatim in the following biographical notices, for the years 361 H.,⁴² 363 H.,⁴³ 368 H.,⁴⁴ 391 H.,⁴⁵ 402 H.,⁴⁶ 423 H.,⁴⁷ and 442 H.⁴⁸

Ibn Hilal Sabi (1026-1088), Hilal's son, wrote a *Ta'rikh* cited in Ibn Jauzi's *Muntazam*⁴⁹

35. *Ta'rikh al-hukama'*, ed. J. Lippert (Leipzig, 1903), 110f.

36. Rosenthal, *Muslim Historiography*, 72-73; cf. Makdisi, *Ibn 'Aqil*, 14-15 ("La liste des chroniqueurs selon al-Qifti").

37. The first figure represents the Islamic year; the second, the corresponding Christian year.

38. See Makdisi, *Ibn 'Aqil*, 15, n.3; to the bibliography cited, add Sezgin, *Geschichte*, I, 327.

39. Ibn Jauzi, *Muntazam*, VI, 80, 89, 172, 215, and VII, 16.

40. Ibn Najjar, *Dhail*, Ms. Paris 2131, fol. 142b.

41. Ibn Jauzi, *Muntazam*, VII, 20 (events of 353 H.), 28 (obituary of poet Mutannabbi), 77 (in an obituary of 364 H.), 149 (a women's dream regarding the Prophet); for Hilal, see C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*, 2nd edn., 2 vols. (Leiden, 1943-9, 3 supplements, 1937-42), I, 323-324, Suppl. I, 556-557; Makdisi, *Ibn 'Aqil*, index.

42. *Dhail*, Ms. Damascus, 80a.

43. *Ibid.*, 214a.

44. Ms. Paris, 96b.

45. *Ibid.*, 57a.

46. Ms. Damascus, 78a.

47. Ms. Paris, 23b.

48. Ms. Damascus, 95b.

49. Vol. VIII, 188.

for biographical information on the famous poet Ma'arri, including some of his verses, and a dream concerning him after his death, interpreted as taxing him with heresy.

Hamadhani (1070-1127) is another source for Ibn Jauzi who cites him (using the term *al-mu'arrikh*, the writer of *ta'rikh*, as he does for Thabit b. Sinan, Hilal and Ibn Hilal, but does not mention a title or designation for his work) for details in the life of the Caliph al-Qadir (caliphate 991-1031);⁵⁰ in the life of Ibn Barhan (d. 1064);⁵¹ in the events of the year 429 H. regarding the celebrated al-Mawardi;⁵² in the biographical notice of Ibn al-Muslima (d. 1058), the Caliph's wazir, regarding an event in the beginning of his wazirate;⁵³ in events of the year 451 H. regarding the Caliph al-Qa'im;⁵⁴ and in the events of the year 474 H. regarding Muslim b. Quraish.⁵⁵ Ibn Najjar cites Hamadhani's work as his *Ta'rikh* and *Ta'rikh Book* for two biographical notices, one on Hamadhani's father, who died in 489 H.,⁵⁶ and another for the grammarian ath-Thamanini, who died in 422 H.⁵⁷

The four historians cited above, Thabit, Hilal, Ibn Hilal, and Hamadhani, are known to have written continuations to the work of the well-known historian Tabari. It is clear that their works were not only of the "events" type, but also biographical.⁵⁸ In each case Ibn Najjar refers to the work as being the author's *ta'rikh*. The following four authors wrote *ta'rikhs* of the same form as the first four, but their *ta'rikhs* have each been designated as "according to the years," quotations of each of which are extant. In other words, all eight authors wrote works that were annalistic-biographical like the *Muntazam* of Ibn Jauzi.

Zaghuni's (1063-1132) work is described by Ibn Rajab as being "according to the years" from the beginning of al-Mustarshid's caliphate to the time of the author's death,⁵⁹ a period of fifteen years. For an idea of the contents of *Zaghuni's Ta'rikh*, reference may be made to Ibn Jauzi, who quotes him for the year 513 H., where Zaghuni relates a case of false witness perpetrated by the Chief Justice Abu 'l-Hasan Damaghani against his own sister for a large sum of money, but she won the case against him.⁶⁰ Ibn Jauzi cites *Zaghuni's Ta'rikh* again for the year 522 H., involving large sums of money paid to the Saljuq Sultan Sanjar by the Marshall of the Nobility and by the Grand Master of the Sufis to be excused from a "visit" to the Sultan.⁶¹ For the year 526 H. Zaghuni is once again cited regarding a matter involving the Caliph Mustarshid, the Sultan Sanjar and others.⁶² Zaghuni died on the 16th of Muharram, first month of the year, 527 H.⁶³ The biographical notices wherein *Zaghuni's Ta'rikh* is cited for the dates of death in Ibn Najjar's biographical dictionary treat of learned men who died in 514 H. and 516 H.⁶⁴

Sadaqa ibn al-Husain's (1084-1177) work was an annalistic history that Ibn Najjar describes in the following terms:

he composed an annalistic history (*ta'rikh 'ala 's-sinin*), beginning it with the death

50. Ibn Jauzi, *Muntazam*, VII, 161.

51. *Ibid.*, VII, 195 (lines 13-14), and once again for the same information in *ibid.*, VIII, 237.

52. *Ibid.*, VIII, 97-98.

53. *Ibid.*, VIII, 201 (lines 1-8).

54. *Ibid.*, VIII, 211-212.

55. *Ibid.*, VIII, 331; for Hamadhani and his historical works, see Makdisi, *Ibn 'Aqil*, 17-23.

56. Ms. Damascus, 2b.

57. Ms. Paris, 95b.

58. Cf. Sibṭ b. al-Jauzi, *Mir'at az-Zaman*, Paris Ms. arabe 1506, sub anno 448, where he announces the end of Hilal's *Ta'rikh* and the beginning of Ibn Hilal's *Ta'rikh* as his sources.

59. Ibn Rajab, *Dhail*, I, 218 (3-4); cf. Makdisi, *Ibn 'Aqil*, 24.

60. Ibn Jauzi, *Muntazam*, IX, 206-207.

61. *Ibid.*, X, 9 (lines 5-7).

62. *Ibid.*, 27 (lines 19ff).

63. *Ibid.*, 32 (lines 8ff).

64. Ibn Najjar, *Dhail*, Ms. Damascus, fols. 60a, 112b, 168b; Ms. Paris, fol. 20b.

of his professor Zaghuni, in the year 527 [H.], making it a continuation of his professor's *Ta'rikh*, and he kept it up close to the time of his own death, recording in it the events of the year and biographical notices of those who died.⁶⁵

This *Ta'rikh* of Sadaqa was used by Ibn Najjar;⁶⁶ by Ibn Rajab in several notices, the first in 527 H. in the notice on Sadaqa's professor Zaghuni and the last, dated 564 H., in a notice on Ibn Dajaji;⁶⁷ (perhaps) by Ibn Jauzi;⁶⁸ and by Ibn Taghribirdi.⁶⁹

To the list of Qifti,⁷⁰ one more historian of annalistic *ta'rikh* should be added: *Ibn Buzuri (1234-1294)*.⁷¹ He was the continuator of Ibn Jauzi's work, carrying it further than Qadisi (d. 1235) could have done. Ibn Buzuri was only twelve years of age when Qifti died — which explains why he does not figure on Qifti's list — and only one year old when Qadisi died.

Ibn Jauzi (1160-1200) — As already mentioned, his *ta'rikh*-work, entitled *al-Muntazam fi ta'rikh al-muluk wa'l-umam*, is the only annalistic history of this list which has come down to us. It is significant that within some of the years' events, the author has information dated according to the months, betraying the arrangement of diary sources.

The following two writers of *ta'rikh*-works not found in the list of Qifti or Hajji Khalifa, are also sources of Ibn Najjar:

Ibn Shafi' al-Jili (1126-1169) — Jili's *Ta'rikh* was not confined to the author's period. We owe a description of it to Ibn Najjar, as preserved for us in Ibn Rajab's biographical dictionary:

(Ibn Shafi' al-Jili) composed an annalistic history (*ta'rikh 'ala 's-sinin*) in which he began with the year of Abu Bakr al-Khatib's death, namely the year 463 [H.], and continued it until after the year 560 [H.], stating the year and its events and those who died in it, and giving details of their circumstances. But he died without having made a fair copy of it. I have quoted extensively from this book.

Ibn Rajab then adds: "Ibn Najjar means by 'this book' his [= Ibn Shafi' 's] *Ta'rikh* which continues the *Ta'rikh of Baghdad* of [al-Khatib]." Ibn Rajab goes on to say: "And I, in turn, have copied from Ibn Shafi' 's *Ta'rikh*, in this book [= Ibn Rajab's], useful information I have come across in it, for I have come upon a number of volumes of Ibn Nuqta's *Selections* (of Ibn Shafi' 's *Ta'rikh*)."⁷² In the two extant volumes of his biographical dictionary, Ibn Najjar makes use of Ibn Shafi' 's *Ta'rikh* in notices on persons the first of whom died in 515 H. and the last in 563 H.⁷³

65. Ibn Rajab, *apud* Ibn Najjar, *Dhail* (ed. Fiqi), I, 339 (lines 16ff).

66. See his *Dhail*, Ms. Damascus, fol. 210a, in a notice dated 569 H. (although related to Ibn Najjar by a third party and without explicit mention of the *Ta'rikh*); also *ibid.*, Ms. Paris, fol. 137b, on the assassination of the Caliph al-Mustarshid, where Ibn Najjar states having read the *Ta'rikh* in the author's own handwriting.

67. See Ibn Rajab, *Dhail* ed. Laoust-Dahhan (Damascus, 1951), I, 218, and *Dhail* (ed. Fiqi), I, 182, 210, 230, 232 (in 2 notices), 236, 239, and 303.

68. See Ibn Jauzi, *Muntazam*, X, 197, where the name is given as 'Afif an-Nasikh, "the copyist," a function Sadaqa performed throughout his life as a means of livelihood.

69. See *an-Najum az-zahira*, 13 vols. (Cairo), [I-XII:] 1929-1956, [XIII:] 1970, V, 258, where Sadaqa's *Ta'rikh* is used in the events of the year 530 H.

70. See Qifti, *Ta'rikh al-hukama'*, 110-111; Hajji Khalifa, *Kashf az-Zunun*, 2 vols. (Istanbul, 1941-43), I, 290 (lines 13ff); see Makdisi, *Ibn 'Aqil*, the chapter on sources, esp. 14ff, and Rosenthal, *Muslim Historiography*, 72ff.

71. On Ibn Buzuri, see Sakhawi, *I'lan*, in the translation of Rosenthal, *Muslim Historiography*, 412 and n.4; see also Nu'aïmi, *ad-Daris fi ta'rikh al-madaris*, ed. Ja'far al-Hasani, 2 vols. (Damascus, 1948-1951), II, 227, and Ibn 'Imad, *Shadharat adh-dhahab fi akhbar man dhahab*, 8 vols. (Cairo, 1931), V, 427.

72. Ibn Rajab, *Dhail* (ed. Fiqi), I, 312 (lines 9ff).

73. Ibn Najjar, *Dhail*, Ms. Damascus, fols. 12a, 22a, 126a (515 H.), 155b; Ms. Paris, fols. 6a,

Abu Hafṣ Suhrawardi (1145-1234)—An annalistic history is attributed to this Sufi master, abbot of the riverside Monastery of Felicity, located on the banks of the Tigris. Ibn Najjar describes the work in a biographical notice on Suhrawardi⁷⁴ as an annalistic history (*ta'riḫh 'ala 's-sinin*) which Suhrawardi called *al-Mujahidi* and offered it to the person for whom it was dedicated, Mujahid ad-Din Bahruz (d. 1145) founder of the Monastery.⁷⁵ Suhrawardi begins his *Ta'riḫh* with the beginning of the world, according to Ibn Najjar, and ends it with the year 524 H., eight years before the author's death.⁷⁶ The genre *ta'riḫh 'ala 's-sinin* was therefore not only not a diary, but also not necessarily confined to the period of the author, as was the case with Zaghuni's work.

The character of the foregoing annalistic works suggests that *ta'riḫh*-works, whether diaries or "according to the years," dealt with events and biographical notices. Some historians like Tabari did not add a special second section to the year's events dealing with death notices. But at least with Thabit ibn Sinan such annalistic histories, with two sections, begin to be written as an extension of the diary. Diaries like that of Ibn Banna' give the deaths as they occurred in the monthly chronology of events. On the other hand, works "according to the years," like the *Muntazam* of Ibn Jauzi, give the events in the first of two sections for each year, and the deaths in the second section. The descriptions quoted above for the works of Ibn Shafi' and Sadaqa clearly indicate that they dealt with events as well as death notices; and although they do not allow us to conclude, one way or the other, whether, like the *Muntazam*, the former were separated from the latter, it is quite likely that they were, and that the authors would have applied the same description to the *Muntazam*.

Elsewhere I shall give, with details of interest to Islamists, a list of Ibn Najjar's sources as materials for the study of the diary and its relation to other forms of historiography, especially the biographical dictionaries and the annals. The list is based on the reading of the two extant volumes of Ibn Najjar's monumental biographical dictionary; one volume preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris (Fonds arabe 2131), the other in the National Library of Damascus (*Ta'riḫh* 42). Both manuscripts, of several hundred folios, constitute only one part of one letter of the twenty-eight letters of the Arabic alphabet. My reading resulted in eighty-six citations of diaries by thirty-five diarists. These diarists represent only those whom I could identify. Their dates are given together with the dates of death of their biographees who were their contemporaries.

CONCLUSION

The facts cited in the foregoing pages indicate that the composition of diaries was at least simultaneous with the composition of annalistic and biographical works. Indispensable tool of the scholars of hadith criticism, the diary goes back at least to the ninth century; and as a source for annalistic historiography, it may go back as far as the eighth, with the annalist Haitham b. 'Adi (c. 747-821). Islamic historiography developed in great measure as a function of the religious sciences, serving them and their ancillaries, the literary arts, as distinct from the sciences derived from the Greeks and referred to as the "foreign sciences." Thus there developed early in Islam great numbers of biographical dictionaries treating of hadith-experts, juriconsults, Koranic scholars, and Sufi mystics, as well as scholars of the ancillary literary arts, grammarians, poets, etc. On a much more modest

21a, 43b, 66b, 97a (563 H.). See also Ibn Rajab, *Dhail* (ed. Fiqi), I, 302 where the last citing of Ibn Shafi's work is in a notice of a person who died in 563 H.

74. This Suhrawardi is the paternal uncle of Abu Najib Suhrawardi (d. 1150).

75. On Bahruz, see Ibn Jauzi, *Muntazam*, X, 117; at his death he was buried in the monastery he had founded in Baghdad.

76. Ibn Najjar, *Dhail*, Ms. Paris, fol. 119a-b.

scale, biographical dictionaries were produced for the “foreign sciences” and related fields; as, for instance, those treating of the philosopher-physicians, or of the philosophical theologians.

Hadith criticism, which was concentrated mainly on the chain of transmitters, brought about the production of biographical dictionaries, as well as the diary, which was the depository of the materials from which the substance of the dictionaries and annalistic histories was drawn. Annalistic history, from early times a combination of the annalistic and biographical, developed from a preponderantly annalistic form of historiography (with such historical compositions as those of Tabari and later Ibn Athir) to a preponderantly biographical form, as those of Dhahabi (1274-1348) and Ibn ‘Imad (1622-1679). This is indicative of the trend towards traditionalism.

The term “*ta’rikh*” in Islamic historiography was used for the diarial, biographical, and annalistic types of historical composition. The distinction between one kind and another was made by qualifying the term *ta’rikh*. Other terms than those already mentioned were used to designate biographical works: *tabaqat* (classes of scholars in one of the different fields), *wafayat* (death dates, biographical notices in which the author endeavored to fix the dates of death). These biographical works were arranged according to the years of death, or the given names of the biographees, or their patronymics, or were individual works confined to a particular century, “centennials” from the thirteenth century (with Abu Shama [1203-1268]) to the twentieth.

There was, however, one qualifier for the term *ta’rikh*, already mentioned, which was used to distinguish historical composition, not as to contents, but rather as to the basic unit of time within which the events were to be recorded. *Ta’rikh*, alone, meant, among other forms of historiography, the recording of events according to the days of the month, a record of events kept, more or less, day by day. *Ta’rikh* qualified with *‘ala ‘s-sinin*, was, in contrast, a year-by-year record of events. To write a *ta’rikh ‘ala ‘s-sinin* was a simple matter of converting the *ta’rikh*-diary to a *ta’rikh*-annalistic history; one merely rearranged the “events” and “deaths” from the monthly chronology to an annual chronology divided into two sections. The term *ta’rikh* qualified as annalistic, *‘ala ‘s-sinin*, was a neologism adopted to distinguish this type of history writing from *ta’rikh*-ing proper, wherein the focal time unit was the lunar month fixed by the sighting of the new crescent. The earliest annalistic history may or may not have been divided into two distinct sections, but in order to be *‘ala ‘s-sinin* it had to be distinct from that of the monthly chronology. Such a history was perhaps that of Haitham b. ‘Adi (d. 821), long before that of the famous Tabari (d. 923).

The *ta’rikh*-diary in Islam was a diary kept for personal use, a dated record of notes kept by the author for use in writing other historical compositions. Like our own present-day research notes, the *ta’rikh*-diary was not meant to be published. This, at least, is the tentative conclusion one is led to when considering that only one of the diaries used by Ibn Najjar has come down to us — and that one, Ibn Banna’ ’s, reached us in a fragmentary state. Its sixteen folios, covering slightly more than one year of a possible forty years or so, remained in draft form. This conclusion is further strengthened when considering that Ibn Banna’ ’s *Diary* served its author as a historical record which he used in his other works. The *Diary* itself is written as though the author meant it for his eyes alone. Regarding members of his own socio-religious group, he recorded matters which were not meant for the eyes of members of other affiliations. He wrote mostly without diacritics that help to distinguish between the letters of the alphabet; and even the words often lost some of their letters which were slurred when the diarist’s hand moved swiftly across the page.