

Ḥadīth Commentary in the Presence of Students, Patrons, and Rivals: Ibn Ḥajar and *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* in Mamluk Cairo

Joel Blecher
Lexington, VA

Abstract

The following essay shows how commentaries on *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* in the Mamluk period were deeply embedded in the ethics and culture of live performance and vice versa. By focusing on the figure of Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 852/1449) and the composition of his *Fath al-bārī*, the primary objective is to make visible the complex web of institutional, political, economic, personal, and normative motivations that determined how the *Ṣaḥīḥ* was commented on, and who had the authority to comment in the first place. Parts one through three of this four-part essay examine the formulation of *Fath al-bārī* in the presence of students, patrons, and rivals respectively. Part four is a case study that compares a chronicle account of Ibn Ḥajar's commentary on a *ḥadīth* in the garden of the sultān on a summer afternoon with a section of *Fath al-bārī* concerning the same *ḥadīth*. While previous investigations of medieval reading and commentarial practices have often been limited to manuscript and printed commentaries or glosses as source material, this study draws on evidence from Mamluk era chronicles, biographical dictionaries and commentarial *prolegomena* to offer a “thick” history of the local times, spaces, and stakes of live and written commentary on the *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

Keywords

Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, Badr ad-Dīn al-ʿAynī, al-Muʿayyad Shaykh

The world at the height of the Arabic commentary tradition on *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* in the Mamluk period was a world where al-Bukhārī's compilation was revered as a kind of aural, oral and material scripture.¹ It was a world where public

*My thanks to Jonathan Brown, Michael Cook, Shaun Marmon and Muhammad Qasim Zaman for their sensitive comments on early drafts. I am also appreciative of Issam Eido, Jeff Stout and Mairaj Syed's insightful conversation and the detailed feedback of my colleagues Thomas Carlson, Cameron Moore and Christian Sahner. All shortcomings are my own. Joel Blecher, Department of Religion, Washington and Lee University, Lexington, VA 24450, blecherj@wlu.edu.

¹) For a general discussion of oral and aural scripture in the West and in the Islamic context, see

recitations of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* were thought to help resolve social crises.² Seafarers claimed that packing the collection's heavy volumes on their ship could protect them from harm.³ At celebrations honoring the completion of reciting the *Ṣaḥīḥ*, scholars delivered poems reflecting on the unique blessing (*baraka*) brought about by the act of reading the work.⁴ As Jonathan Brown recently put it, the *Ṣaḥīḥ* could function apotropaically as a textual relic or talisman because it was “a synecdoche for Muḥammad himself,” a part of the *ḥadīth* corpus that was symbolic of the Prophet's legacy as a whole.⁵

But what claims does a text of canonical status make on those who would interpret it? Where, when and how could the *Ṣaḥīḥ* be commented upon, and who had the authority to comment on it in the first place? The present study seeks to offer a thick history of a rarely observed world of commentary of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* as it was embedded in live study sessions and interactions with students, rivals, and patrons. I focus in particular on the figure of Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 852/1449)⁶ and the environment where he formulated his commentary, *Fath al-bārī*. While the sources I draw on are themselves contingent on their own social and historical circumstances, I argue that they nevertheless shine a light

William Graham, *Beyond the Written Word: Oral Aspects of Scripture in the History of Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 1–30, 81–110.

² One oft-quoted anecdote reports that, during the late seventh/late thirteenth centuries, as the Mongols were advancing upon Syria, a governor ordered the Shāfiʿī chief justice (*qāḍī l-quḍāt*) of Mamluk Cairo, Ibn Daqīq al-ʿĪd (d. 702/1302), to gather the *ḥadīth* scholars to quickly recite each volume of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* with the expectation of bringing about a miracle. Kamāl ad-Dīn al-Uḍfuwī, *Aṭ-Tāliʿ as-saʿīd: al-jāmiʿ li-asmāʾ al-fuḍalāʾ wa-r-ruwāḥ bi-ʿala ṣ-ṣaʿīd*, 1st ed. (Egypt: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Jamāliyya, 1914), 323–4; Shāh Walī Allāh ad-Dihlawī, *Bustān al-muḥaddithin*, trans. Muḥammad Akram an-Nadwī (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 2002), 252.

³ Presumably wealthy merchants and traders with access to a library. Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Hady as-sārī*, ed. by ʿAbd al-Qādir Shayba al-Ḥamad (Riyadh: Matktabar al-Malik Fahd al-waṭaniyya, 2000), 15. Jonathan Brown has highlighted some similar examples of the use of al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* in Islamic supplicatory, medicinal, calendrical and political rituals across geographic regions and historical periods in Jonathan A.C. Brown, *The Canonization of al-Bukhārī and Muslim* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 335–49.

⁴ Brown, *The Canonization of al-Bukhārī and Muslim*, 335–58. Of course, other genres of Islamic literature functioned apotropaically, namely, the Qurʾān and works containing descriptions (*ḥilya*) of Muḥammad's appearance. The difference is of degree and perhaps that the *Ṣaḥīḥ* is unusual among multi-volume *ḥadīth* compilations in functioning regularly in such a way.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ For biographical overviews in English, s.v. “Ibn Ḥadjar al-ʿAsqalānī,” *EI II* (Franz Rosenthal); Sabri Kawash, “Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī: A Study of the Background, Education, and Career of a ʿĀlim in Egypt,” (PhD Dissertation, Princeton University, 1968); R. Kevin Jaques, *Ibn Hajar* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009). Specialists will consult the more detailed biography in Shams ad-Dīn as-Sakhāwī, *al-Jawābir wa-d-durar* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 1999).

onto the complex spatial, temporal, and causal settings that motivated Ibn Hajar's commentary on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* in late Mamluk Cairo.

Part one of this four-part study examines the composition of *Fatḥ al-bārī* in the presence of Ibn Hajar's students. I begin by reconstructing the social context in which *Fatḥ al-bārī* was composed, and the extent of student participation in writing *Fatḥ al-bārī*. The contradictory needs and expectations of students placed Ibn Hajar in a dialectical bind: to complete the commentary on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* while leaving open the possibility that he could interpret it endlessly. Part two reflects on the composition of *Fatḥ al-bārī* in relation to Ibn Hajar's patrons. I investigate the extent to which Ibn Hajar's relationship with political patrons influenced his commentary, and why he decided to mention them by name in some sections of *Fatḥ al-bārī* but not others. Part three explores the composition of *Fatḥ al-bārī* in relation to Ibn Hajar's rivals. I suggest that the public nature of the live sessions left commentators especially vulnerable to challenges from their competitors and to unattributed borrowing. Focusing on a dispute that emerged between Ibn Hajar and Badr ad-Dīn al-'Aynī (d. 855/1451) during and after the composition of *Fatḥ al-bārī*, I examine how the accusation of unattributed borrowing and uncritical attribution was entangled in rivalries over patronage and prestige, as well as the intellectual values that were constitutive of the tradition itself.

In part four, I focus on a rare episode in an intimate setting for live *ḥadīth* commentary: a garden with fruit and sweets. Ibn Hajar's chronicle *Inbā' al-ghumr* tells of an afternoon discussion in the shade of the sulṭān's garden, prompted by a Cairene student's curiosity about the contradictory logic of a *ḥadīth* from *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Ibn Hajar used the impromptu live commentary to embarrass his rival and impress the sulṭān. While Ibn Hajar stated that deriving religious benefit (*istifāda*) from knowledge in the live commentary sessions was the ideal, his conspicuous commitment to *istifāda* in the garden session ironically served as a key credential in the pursuit of his patron's favor, and, as a consequence, a judicial and teaching appointment. In a rare crossover, Ibn Hajar retold this anecdote of the garden session in his written explication of the same *ḥadīth* in his multi-volume written commentary, *Fatḥ al-bārī*, but revealed a tradition of reasoning concerned with radically different stakes. By comparing chronicle accounts of the live commentary with the text of the written commentary, I hope to make visible the political and social conditions that make a commentary possible without losing sight of what normative commitments and beliefs were of grave concern in determining the meaning and application of these texts.

A Note on Sources

For the earliest commentaries on the *Ṣaḥīḥ*, such as al-Khaṭṭābī's (d. 388/998) and Ibn Baṭṭāl's (d. 449/1057), we have little more than inferences from the texts

themselves and off-hand remarks in biographies with which to reconstruct the process of composing and performing a commentary. The little evidence that exists suggests that authors of commentary on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* did comment on the compilation publicly for students. For example, Abū l-Walīd al-Bājī's (d. 474/1081) live commentary on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* in Denia led to a transregional controversy concerning his explication of a *ḥadīth* from the *Ṣaḥīḥ*'s Book of Expeditions (*Kitāb al-Maghāzī*).⁷ The Mālikī commentator, Ibn Rushayd as-Sabtī (d. 761/1321), was also reported to have explained two *ḥadīths* of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* per day to his students at a mosque in Granada.⁸

Since the Mamluk period witnessed a popularization of “writerly culture and reading practices,”⁹ made possible by the transformative growth of institutions of learning in Damascus and Cairo, we can reconstruct a more detailed account of the place of live study sessions and their students within the Mamluk era commentarial writing process. Because of the fame of Ibn Ḥajar's *Fath al-bārī* in particular, later biographers, such as Ibn Ḥajar's closest student, Shams ad-Dīn as-Sakhāwī (d. 902/1497), preserved specifics on the process of composing this commentary in greater detail than for previous commentaries on the *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

There is one caveat for parts one and three of this study. As-Sakhāwī relied heavily on Ibn Ḥajar's autobiographical description of his writing process in the introduction to a work called *Intiqād al-i'tirād*, which Ibn Ḥajar wrote after he had formally completed writing *Fath al-bārī*. This autobiographical passage was not without an ulterior motive. Ibn Ḥajar had sought to prove that Badr ad-Dīn al-'Aynī (d. 855/1451), a commentarial rival who was simultaneously producing a commentary on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* in Cairo, had “borrowed without attribution” from Ibn Ḥajar's *Fath al-bārī*. Due to the polemical motivations behind the introduction to *Intiqād al-i'tirād*, it may not be possible to extrapolate based on Ibn Ḥajar's and as-Sakhāwī's account alone, so I will try, wherever possible, to draw on other sources. Nevertheless, their accounts provide a window, albeit tinted, into the culture that produced pre-modern commentaries on canonical Islamic texts.

⁷ Abū l-Walīd al-Bājī, *Tahqīq al-madhbhab*, ed. Abū 'Abd ar-Rahmān Ibn 'Aqīl (Riyadh: 'Ālam al-kutub, 1983), 115–18; Maribel Fierro, “Local and Global in *Ḥadīth* Literature: The Case of al-Andalus,” in *The Transmission and Dynamics of the Textual Sources of Islam: Essays in Honour of Harald Motzki*, ed. by Nicolet Boekhoff-van der Voort, C.H.M. Versteegh, et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 82.

⁸ Abū 'Abd Allāh Ibn Rushayd, *Tarjumān at-tarājīm 'alā abwāb Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'ilmīyya, 2008), 17.

⁹ For a monographic treatment of this phenomenon, see Hirschler, *The Written Word in the Medieval Arabic Lands* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 3.

I. Composing *Fath al-bārī* in the Presence of Students

Making a *ḥadīth* commentary on a major compilation such as the *Ṣaḥīḥ* was not the work of a young scholar hoping to prove his virtuosity. Muslim scholars in the Mamluk period typically undertook a *sharḥ* of a major *ḥadīth* compilation near the end of their life, after they had studied abroad and accumulated a plethora of reading licenses (*ijāzāt*; s. *ijāza*), written extensively in related areas, had served as high-ranking judges or advisors, or entertained offers of such positions. A prolegomenon to and commentary on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* was one of the last works Muḥyī ad-Dīn Abū Zakariyyā an-Nawawī composed before his death in 676/1277.¹⁰ Ibn Ḥajar and his rival, Badr ad-Dīn al-‘Aynī, began their commentaries on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* after two decades of teaching, intermittently serving as chief justice (*qāḍī al-quḍāt*) in Cairo for their respective legal schools.¹¹

Often commentators would publish an independent or conjoined work on language or *isnād* criticism before undertaking a commentary. Ibn Ḥajar did so in his earlier work *Ta’līq at-tagħliq*, an annotated description of the chains of transmission contained in the *Ṣaḥīḥ*.¹² Ibn Ḥajar had also spent several years composing a comprehensive prolegomenon to the study of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* titled *Hady as-sārī* that introduced students to the study of Bukhārī’s techniques in authenticating and compiling *ḥadīth* in the *Ṣaḥīḥ*.¹³ Having earned a reputation already, students could then trust that a commentator like Ibn Ḥajar would be competent to draw on a lifetime of accumulated knowledge to elaborate on any given point or aspect of the text.

According to Ibn Ḥajar’s own description of composing *Fath al-bārī*, at first the writing process was overwhelming. Not unlike his previous commentarial effort on at-Tirmidhī’s *Sunan*,¹⁴ Ibn Ḥajar tells us that he filled an entire volume with commentary on just a short selection of the compilation, to the point

¹⁰ Abū Zakariyyā Yahyā an-Nawawī, *at-Talkhīṣ [fi] sharḥ al-Jāmi‘ aṣ-ṣaḥīḥ li-l-Bukhārī*, 2 vols. (Riyadh: Dār at-Ṭayba li-n-nashr wa-t-tawzī‘, 2008), 1: 146. For more biographical information, see Ibn al-‘Aṭṭār, *Tuḥfat at-tālibīn fi tarjamat al-Imām Muḥyī-d-Dīn* (Riyadh: Dar aṣ-Ṣumay‘ī, 1994).

¹¹ Ibn Ḥajar had been teaching *ḥadīth* since 808/1406 at the Shaykhūniyya, and taught in several prominent centers of learning throughout Cairo, including al-Khānqāh al-Baybarsiyya, al-Madrasa al-Jamāliyya, al-Jāmi‘ at-Ṭulūnī, al-Qubba al-Manṣūriyya, al-Madrasa al-Mahmūdiyya, and the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafīyya in Damascus in 836/1433. See as-Sakhāwī, *al-Jawābir wa-d-durar*, 2:591–6; also *EI II*, s.v. “Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī,” (Rosenthal) and s.v. “al-‘Aynī, Badr al-Dīn,” (W. Marçais).

¹² For a longer description of Ibn Ḥajar’s *Ta’līq at-tagħliq*, and its warm reception by his teachers and peers, see Kawash, “Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalānī,” 196–7.

¹³ Muhammad Fadel, “Ibn Ḥajar’s *Hady al-Sārī*: a Medieval Interpretation of the Structure of al-Bukhārī’s *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*: Introduction and Translation,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 54 (1995): 161–95.

¹⁴ as-Sakhāwī, *al-Jawābir wa-d-durar*, 2: 675–6.

where he dreaded the exhaustion of finishing his commentary in such a way.¹⁵ Ibn Ḥajar, echoing a previous comment made by an-Nawawī,¹⁶ claimed to recalibrate his approach and compose a mid-size commentary (*sharḥ mutawassit*) but nevertheless produced a thirteen-volume work that was written continuously over the course of twenty-nine years.¹⁷ This is our first glimpse into an implicit code of commentarial ethics in which commentators weighed their responsibility of explaining for the benefit of others with the desire to devote themselves entirely to the never-ending work of interpreting a sacralized text.

Ibn Ḥajar composed the first quarter of this mid-size commentary on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* by dictating it for approximately five years, from 813/1410 to 818/1415. Following this period, Ibn Ḥajar took greater control over the physical labor of writing the commentary, dropping the dictation sessions.¹⁸ Nevertheless, the written document still emerged amidst the discussion of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* in the live presence of his students.¹⁹ Ibn Ḥajar would add to the document little by little during informal meetings with them, as well as once every week, probably on a Thursday, during a larger meeting for the study of the *Ṣaḥīḥ*.²⁰ In these larger meetings, the outline or draft of Ibn Ḥajar's commentary would have been recited out loud by a reading assistant, almost always Ibn Ḥajar's longtime companion and highly skilled reader Ibrāhīm ibn Khidr (d. 852/1448).²¹ The precision of Ibn Khidr's pronunciation was highly respected among Muslim scholars in

¹⁵ See Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Intiqād al-iʿtirād* (Riyadh: Maktabat Rushd, n.d.), 1:7. Ibn Ḥajar's unfinished mega-commentary on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* may have initially been titled *Huda as-Sārī*, a voluminous commentary to match a voluminous introduction. See ad-Dihlawī, *Bustān al-muḥaddithīn*, 234.

¹⁶ Norman Calder translates an-Nawawī's description of the process: “[an-Nawawī's] commentary [on Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*] would be of intermediate size avoiding excessive concision and excessive expansion (neither *mukhtaṣar* nor *mabsūṭ*).” See Norman Calder, *Islamic Jurisprudence in the Classical Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 107.

¹⁷ al-ʿAsqalānī, *Intiqād al-iʿtirād*, 1: 7.

¹⁸ as-Sakhāwī, *al-Jawābir wa-d-durar*, 2: 675–6.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 2: 675; al-ʿAsqalānī, *Intiqād al-iʿtirād*, 1:7.

²⁰ The commentary was completed on a Thursday, the first of Rajab, 842 / the twelfth of December, 1438 and it would be unusual if the final session of his commentary on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* had been delivered at any time other than the regularly appointed time. Ibn Ḥajar had a highly regular teaching schedule during this period, instructing *ḥadīth* at the *khānqāh* of Baybars each week on Tuesday with little interruption. See as-Sakhāwī, *al-Jawābir wa-d-durar*, 2:675. For greater description of Ibn Ḥajar's weekly routine, see Kawash, “Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalānī,” esp. 126 and 144–6. Hirschler also points out that “Thursday also had strong religious connotations on which fasting was enjoined and the gates of paradise said to be opened. Accordingly, normative treatises particularly encouraged scholars to study *ḥadīth*” on Thursday. Hirschler, *The Written Word in the Medieval Arabic Lands*, 39.

²¹ Shams ad-Dīn as-Sakhāwī, *ad-Ḍawʿ al-lāmiʿ li-ʿabl al-qarn at-tāsiʿ* (Beirut: Dār al-Jil, 1992), 1: 43–5.

Cairo, no doubt enhancing the *Fath al-bārī*'s *gravitas* at this early stage of the commentary process. In fact, as-Sakhāwī notes that Ibn Khidr's reading performances maintained their superior quality despite the fact that Ibn Ḥajar's handwritten outlines could be very difficult to read, considering that some had been hastily written by candlelight.²² Ibn Khidr would have paused to allow time for Ibn Ḥajar to intervene with fuller commentary and the larger audience to join in with discussion questions and comments.²³

How much input his students had in explicitly shaping the commentary is a difficult question to answer with any precision. Of the many voices included in the commentary the one voice conspicuously absent is that of the student. There is no anonymous or rhetorical questioner prompting the commentator, as might be found in influential works of other Islamic scholars, such as ash-Shāfi'ī's *Risāla*.²⁴ The various instances of the phrases "if you were to say ..." (*in qulta*) or "if one said" (*in qāl*) tend to reflect the potential objections of other commentators rather than a transcription of an inquisitive student culture.

Nevertheless, students were heavily involved in the process of copyediting the written copies of *Fath al-bārī*. Ibn Ḥajar reported that in 818/1415, his most proficient students gathered around him and persuaded him to begin the process of writing down the rest of the commentary on quires (*kurrās*) so they could assist him in editing it.²⁵ Ibn Ḥajar would write a copy on a quire, and then each student would receive a copy, reciting it out loud to a companion sitting oppositely, scrutinizing the draft with the original and proofreading it for errors.²⁶ Each volume became subject to this slow process, which was not pronounced complete until the winter of 842/1438,²⁷ at a *khatm* celebrated with a rich feast, costing five hundred *dinārs*, or nearly 3.8 pounds of gold.²⁸ Although the work was declared finished in the winter of 842/1438, as-Sakhāwī points out that Ibn Ḥajar continued to add to the work for the ten years that followed its "completion" (*farāgh*

²² Ibid., 1: 45. Ibn Ḥajar's "candlelight" handwriting is evidence that he wrote before dawn or after dusk, but does not indicate whether he wrote at those times in solitude or in the company of students.

²³ See as-Sakhāwī, *al-Jawāhir wa-d-durar*, 2: 675; al-'Asqalānī, *Intiqād al-i'tirād*, 1: 7.

²⁴ For a prominent example of this phenomenon, see Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Idrīs ash-Shāfi'ī, *ar-Risāla* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'arabī, 2006), 315–18.

²⁵ "[T]aḥrīr hādihā ash-sharḥ." See as-Sakhāwī, *al-Jawāhir wa-d-durar*, 2: 675–6.

²⁶ This change in the editing process may explain some stylistic differences between the first quarter of the work and the last three quarters.

²⁷ as-Sakhāwī, *al-Jawāhir wa-d-durar*, 2: 675–6; al-'Asqalānī, *Intiqād al-i'tirād*, 1: 7.

²⁸ as-Sakhāwī, *ad-Daw' al-lāmi'*, 2:38. For relative values of *dinārs*, consult Wan Kamal Mujani, "The Fineness of Dinar, Dirham and Fals during the Mamluk Period," *Journal of Applied Sciences Research* 7, no. 12 (2011): 1895–900.

or *khatm*) until he died in 852/1449.²⁹ In this sense, Ibn Ḥajar never considered the work of his commentary truly finished.

Ibn Ḥajar's feeling of incompleteness, despite his having penned some thirteen volumes over twenty-nine years, was not a personal idiosyncrasy, but is in line with what theorist Hans Gumbrecht has argued is the principal drive towards *copia* in the figure of the commentator. For Gumbrecht, a commentator writes endlessly to anticipate, but never fully anticipating, the questions of students.³⁰ But we can detect another important audience-oriented motivation at work here: Ibn Ḥajar displayed an encounter with excess to signal his capability as a commentator. Ibn Ḥajar's account of coming up against his physical limitation to comment, and facing the risk of incompleteness, is consistent with a larger *topos* in commentarial prolegomena, signaling to students that the commentator's intellectual ability to comment exceeded his physical ability to do so.

II. *Fatḥ al-bārī* in the Eyes of Patrons

Ibn Ḥajar would have been accountable to political patrons who requested volumes of the work as it was underway. This would have included the Mamluk sultān, who changed several times over the course of the writing of the commentary, from al-Mu'ayyad (r. 814–24/1412–21) to Barsbāy (r. 825–41/1422–38) to Jaqmaq (r. 843–57/1438–53), but also international patrons who sought copies of the work more than ten years prior to its completion.³¹ Rulers would have heard of Ibn Ḥajar's *Fatḥ al-bārī* through their domestically appointed judges and *ḥadīth* scholars who had studied the *Ṣaḥīḥ* in Cairo with Ibn Ḥajar or who had heard or encountered sections of the work's famous prolegomenon, *Hady as-sārī*.³² This was the case with the *ḥadīth* scholar Zayn ad-Dīn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān al-Birishkī (d. 839/1435–6), a Mālikī judge from Tunis, who was permitted to transcribe a third of the *Fatḥ al-bārī* to present as a gift to the Tunisian ruler Abū Fāris (r. 796–837/1394–434).³³ Likewise, the renowned

²⁹ *Farāgh*: as-Sakhāwī, *al-Jawābir wa-d-durar*, 2: 675–6; al-'Asqalānī, *Intiqād al-i'tirād*, 1: 7. *Khatm*: as-Sakhāwī, *ad-Daw' al-lāmi'*, 2: 38.

³⁰ Gumbrecht writes: “[Commentary] appears to be a discourse which, almost by definition, never reaches its end. Whereas an interpreter cannot help extrapolating an author-subject as a point of reference for his or her interpretation (and while he cannot help giving shape to this reference as the interpretation progresses), a commentator is never quite sure of the needs (i.e. of the *lacunae* in knowledge) of those who will use the commentary.” See Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, *The Powers of Philology: Dynamics of Textual Scholarship* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 42.

³¹ These transregional requests for *Fatḥ al-Bārī* arrived in 833/1429–30. Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Inbā' al-ghumr bi-abnā' al-'umr fi-t-tārīkh*, ed. Ḥasan Ḥabashī, 5 vols. (Cairo: al-Majlis al-A'lā li-sh-shu'ūn al-islāmiyya, 1969), 3: 434; al-'Asqalānī, *Intiqād al-i'tirād*, 1: 8.

³² al-'Asqalānī, *Intiqād al-i'tirād*, 1: 8.

³³ *Ibid.* For a biography of al-Birishkī, see as-Sakhāwī, *ad-Daw' al-lāmi'*, 4: 132–3.

expert on Qurʾān readings (*qirāʾāt*), Shams ad-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn al-Jazarī (d. 833/1429), a native of Damascus who was captured by Timur and brought to serve as a judge at the Timurid court, copied a part of the work as a gift for Timur's successor, Shāh Rukh (r. 807–50/1405–47), a potentate of Transoxania and Persia.³⁴ Shāh Rukh was later given a complete copy.³⁵ This was no minor gift, as *Fath al-bārī* was reported to have been sold for a whopping three hundred *dinārs*, or nearly 2.3 pounds of gold.³⁶

Unlike the students in attendance, who were never explicitly identified in the written commentary, political patrons were mentioned by name. They were not named frequently, but any mention is significant since invoking the names of Mamluk *sulṭāns* would have been unprecedented in the commentary tradition. A search of *Fath al-bārī* reveals that sulṭān al-Muʾayyad is mentioned by name in Ibn Ḥajar's commentary on four *ḥadīths*, and sulṭān Ashraf Barsbāy and Shāh Rukh are mentioned in the commentary on one *ḥadīth*. It is worth noting that Ibn Ḥajar cultivated a particularly close relationship to al-Muʾayyad, attaining a level of trust and influence he was never able to replicate with al-Muʾayyad's successors, although he was appointed Shāfiʿī chief justice under Barsbāy and, intermittently, under Jaqmaq.³⁷

Ibn Ḥajar often invoked al-Muʾayyad's name when he explained *ḥadīth* that reference the repair, maintenance and decoration of the Kaʿba. The Kaʿba was a symbolic site of transregional politics, and in the midst of his commentary concerning a *ḥadīth* on the cloth draped over the Kaʿba (*kiswat al-Kaʿba*), Ibn Ḥajar took time to narrate how the *ḥadīth* was applied by each governor who controlled Mecca throughout Islamic history to Ibn Ḥajar's own day.³⁸ When his description arrived at the Mamluk period, Ibn Ḥajar provided details on the endowment (*waqf*) of the cloth used to drape the Kaʿba, and even praised al-Muʾayyad's appointment of a colleague to oversee the *kiswa*'s beautification.³⁹ When discussing another *ḥadīth* on the destruction of the Kaʿba, Ibn Ḥajar noted that al-Muʾayyad took an interest in repairing the Kaʿba, and he prayed that God will facilitate al-Muʾayyad in such maintenance.⁴⁰

³⁴ al-ʿAsqalānī, *Intiqād al-i-tirād*, 1: 8; s.v. “Ibn al-Djazarī, Shams al-Dīn,” *EI II* (M. Bencheneb).

³⁵ al-ʿAsqalānī, *Intiqād al-i-tirād*, 1:8. For a competing account, consult Anne Broadbridge, “Academic Rivalries and the Patronage System in Fifteenth-Century Egypt: al-ʿAynī, al-Maqrīzī, and Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī,” *Mamlūk Studies Review* 3 (1999): 85–107.

³⁶ as-Sakhāwī, *ad-Dawʾ al-lāmiʿ*, 2: 38; Mujani, “The Fineness of Dinar, Dirham and Fals during the Mamluk Period,” 1895–900.

³⁷ For a fuller discussion, see Jaques, *Ibn Hajar*, 11–2.

³⁸ See Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Bāz, 13 vols., vol. 1 (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifā, 1970), 3: 458–60 (*Kitāb al-Ḥajj: Bāb Kiswat al-Kaʿba*).

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 3: 460 (*Kitāb al-Ḥajj: Bāb Kiswat al-Kaʿba*).

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 3: 448–9 (*Kitāb al-Ḥajj: Bāb Faḍl makkā wa-bunyānihā*).

Ibn Ḥajar commended al-Muʿayyad when discussing a *ḥadīth* that pertained to the politics of pilgrimage and transportation to Mecca. When discussing a *ḥadīth* regarding the path the Prophet took when entering and leaving Mecca, Ibn Ḥajar noted that al-Muʿayyad cleared the path to Mecca the Prophet was said to have taken: the higher route descending from the mountain of Kadāʾ in the direction of Mecca's cemetery.⁴¹ Al-Muʿayyad was not the first ruler to have undertaken this task, and Ibn Ḥajar compares him favorably with renowned figures from the Umayyad and ʿAbbāsīd period who had also cleared the path.

Lastly, Ibn Ḥajar praised al-Muʿayyad when discussing a *ḥadīth* that pertained to Medina. Ibn Ḥajar prayed that God might thank al-Muʿayyad for sending a new pulpit (*minbar*) there.⁴² Al-ʿAynī, “borrowing” (*istiʿāra*) from Ibn Ḥajar's commentary—a phenomenon that I will address in the next section—repeated Ibn Ḥajar's mention of al-Muʿayyad sending a new *minbar* to Medina, but, in an intriguing omission, neglected to include Ibn Ḥajar's prayer asking God to thank the sulṭān for the donation.⁴³ This omission may indicate the special relationship between Ibn Ḥajar and al-Muʿayyad. An alternative explanation is that al-ʿAynī completed his commentary of the *ḥadīth* long after the reign of al-Muʿayyad, and felt such praise was no longer necessary. Considering that this *ḥadīth* was explicated in the first quarter of Ibn Ḥajar's work, a portion that was first dictated rather than drafted on quires for his student-editors, such overt praise of a political patron may have been included when it would have ordinarily been edited out. While it cannot be said for certain what accounts for this particular omission, it nevertheless shows that Ibn Ḥajar overtly thanked al-Muʿayyad when it was not a requirement of the period.

Sulṭān Barsbāy did not receive as high marks from Ibn Ḥajar. Near the end of his systematic explication of the *ḥadīth* on the *kiswat al-Kaʿba*, Ibn Ḥajar told of a dispute that arose between Shāh Rukh and the sulṭān Barsbāy over who had the honor of dressing the Kaʿba.⁴⁴ The biographical sources can help clarify this case, which, as it turns out, was an important incident in which Ibn Ḥajar himself was involved. According to as-Sakhāwī, Shāh Rukh had pleaded with Barsbāy to allow him to dress the Kaʿba to satisfy a vow (*nadhḥ*) he had made.⁴⁵ After refusing him several times, Barsbāy sought to halt Shāh Rukh's requests by acquiring a favorable legal opinion from the leading jurists. Ibn Ḥajar ruled in

⁴¹ Ibid., 3: 437 (*Kitāb al-Ḥajj: Bāb Min ayna yakbruju min makka*).

⁴² Ibid., 2: 399 (*Kitāb al-Jumuʿa: Bāb al-Khuṭba ʿalā l-minbar*).

⁴³ Badr ad-Dīn al-ʿAynī, *ʿUmdāt al-qārī fi sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿilmiyya, 2001), 6: 311 (*Kitāb al-Jumuʿa: Bāb Khuṭba ʿalā l-minbar*).

⁴⁴ al-ʿAsqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, 3: 460 (*Kitāb al-Ḥajj: Bāb Kiswat al-Kaʿba*).

⁴⁵ as-Sakhāwī, *al-Jawāhir wa-d-durar*, 2: 616–17.

favor of Shāh Rukh, despite the pressure of the other jurists who issued *responsa* in favor of Barsbāy.⁴⁶ That Ibn Ḥajar later gave Shāh Rukh a complete copy of *Fatḥ al-bārī* over Barsbāy's objection should thus come as little surprise.⁴⁷ The dispute between Barsbāy and Shāh Rukh may explain the pattern of Ibn Ḥajar's mentioning of political authorities when discussing *ḥadīths* on the Ka'ba. These were matters upon which Ibn Ḥajar advised the sultān, who controlled Mecca and Medina, as legal counsel.

But Ibn Ḥajar's willingness to mention his patrons in commentaries on certain thematic *ḥadīths* makes the omission of their names in his commentaries on other *ḥadīths* all the more interesting. Ibn Ḥajar does not mention political figures when he comments on overtly political *ḥadīths*, for example, *ḥadīths* that mention a "just ruler" or "disobedience to ruler." Ibn Ḥajar would have been too cautious or too indebted to the political élite to measure the reality of the political rulers against the theoretical ideals presented in the *ḥadīth*. But Ibn Ḥajar's commentary on *ḥadīths* that concerned Mecca and Medina show there was no generic prohibition against discussing politics or the political application of certain *ḥadīths*, even in the pre-modern period. There was a time and a place, and the discussion of politics and patrons was appropriate for some *ḥadīths* but not others.

III. *Fatḥ al-bārī* in the Eyes of Rivals

Because commentary sessions were performed for live audiences, students could take notes and share them with rival commentators who were working in other parts of the same city. Commentators were thus expected to conform to authorized practices of attribution, which, if transgressed, could amount to intellectual theft, an accusation that could diminish a commentator's reputation in the eyes of his colleagues. To be clear, this intellectual theft was not related to the more nuanced conceptions of literary borrowing as it was theorized by Arab literary critics in treatises on "thefts" (*sariqāt*), especially as it related to the unattributed borrowing of motifs and phrases among *littérateurs* and poets.⁴⁸ Rather, the concern articulated by commentators, including Ibn Ḥajar, was maintaining the integrity of the intellectual tradition. While our own conception and regulation of plagiarism is surely different than that of the Circassian Mamluk period,

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ See Jaques, *Ibn Hajar*, 106.

⁴⁸ See G.E. von Grunebaum, "The Concept of Plagiarism in Arabic Theory," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 3 (1944): 234–53; Franz Rosenthal, *The Technique and Approach of Muslim Scholarship*, *Analecta Orientalia*, vol. 24, (Rome: Pontificum Inst Biblicum, 1947), 46–8.

borrowing without attributing was far from a positive commentarial practice. Unattributed borrowing may not have been an academic violation that could be enforced with some kind of disciplinary action by administrators or patrons, nor was it a copyright violation in which a suit could be brought before a judge's court. However, unattributed borrowing reflected very poorly on a scholar's reputation in the eyes of his peers.

The most memorable example is an accusation of plagiarism that developed between Ibn Ḥajar and Badr ad-Dīn al-ʿAynī as they wrote their respective commentaries on the *Ṣaḥīḥ*.⁴⁹ Although Ibn Ḥajar and al-ʿAynī served as chief justice for their respective legal schools intermittently during the writing of their commentaries, it should be noted that Ibn Ḥajar's position as the Shāfiʿī chief justice was more powerful than al-ʿAynī's Ḥanafī chief judgeship in both practical and symbolic ways.⁵⁰ Noteworthy for our purposes was the fact that the Shāfiʿī chief justice typically had the honor of commenting on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* during Ramaḍān at the citadel in the presence of the sulṭān, the amīrs and other members of the scholarly and judicial élite. Thus, we should expect that al-ʿAynī and Ibn Ḥajar's commentarial rivalry would be driven in part by this asymmetry of and competition over legal jurisdiction, political influence, and symbolic capital.⁵¹ Evidently, the acrimony became so unworkable that al-ʿAynī and Ibn Ḥajar were summarily dismissed from their respective chief judgeships on the basis of accusations that they "would not cease fighting, or [ever] agree, such that the interests of Muslims were lost between them."⁵²

Al-ʿAynī began his own commentary, *ʿUmdat al-qārī*, in 820/1417, some three years after the initial writing down of Ibn Ḥajar's work.⁵³ After a year of continued work on the first two parts of *ʿUmdat al-qārī*, al-ʿAynī took a hiatus until after Ibn Ḥajar's *Fatḥ al-bārī* was completed.⁵⁴ Ibn Ḥajar claimed that he and al-

⁴⁹ Vardit Tokatly briefly discusses this accusation near the end of her dissertation. See Vardit Tokatly, "The Early Commentaries on al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ*," (PhD diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2003), 242–9.

⁵⁰ See Yossef Rapoport, "Legal Diversity in the Age of Taqlīd: The Four Chief Qāḍīs under the Mamluks," *Islamic Law and Society* 10, no. 2 (2003): 210. For a monographic treatment of Islamic legal authority in practice during the Burjī period, see Kristen Stilt, *Islamic Law in Action: Authority, Discretion, and Everyday Experiences in Mamluk Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). For theoretical discussions of the status of Shāfiʿī judges in the Bahrī Mamluk period, see Sherman Jackson, *Islamic Law and the State: The Constitutional Jurisprudence of Shihāb al-Dīn al-Qarāfī* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 53–6; Joseph H. Escovitz, "Patterns of Appointment to the Chief Judgeships of Cairo during the Bahrī Mamlūk Period," *Arabica* 30, no. 2 (1983): 165 ff.

⁵¹ See Broadbridge, "Academic Rivalries," 85–107.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 98–9.

⁵³ al-ʿAsqalānī, *Intiqād al-iʿtirād*, 1: 10.

⁵⁴ The dates in which al-ʿAynī's commentary was completed are documented in a colophon transcribed in Rashīd Aḥmad Gangūhī and Muḥammad Zakariyyā al-Kandhilawī, *Lāmiʿ ad-darāri ʿalā*

‘Aynī shared students during this period, and some of them made notes during Ibn Ḥajar’s commentarial sessions. Ibn Ḥajar claimed that those students then shared those notes with al-‘Aynī, who incorporated them into his work without attribution.

The Arabic phrase Ibn Ḥajar employed suggestive of plagiarism is *isti‘āra*, which can mean borrowing, adopting or taking on, and “*yanqulubu ilā sharḥibi min ghayr an yansubahu ilā mukhtar‘ihi*” or “transferring to his commentary without attributing it to its originator.” Ibn Ḥajar stopped short of accusing him of theft, or *sariqa*, a harsher term, but the condemnation is clear, especially with Ibn Ḥajar stressing, by contrast, the creative task of the commentator as a *mukhtari‘* (originator), a role that would imply more than borrowing and transferring.

Forgoing an elaborated polemic against al-‘Aynī, Ibn Ḥajar opted to collect in an unfinished two-volume work called *Intiqād al-i‘tirād* all passages where al-‘Aynī duplicated Ibn Ḥajar’s *Fath al-bārī* word for word.⁵⁵ Several other chief justices and commentators, contemporary with these two rivals weighed in on the charges of plagiarism, siding with Ibn Ḥajar.⁵⁶ Ibn al-Mughulī, with his usual flare, came down particularly harshly against al-‘Aynī, in addition to criticizing his grammar.⁵⁷ It is hard to imagine that Ibn Ḥajar’s unfinished reply would have been effective unless an exposé of al-‘Aynī’s borrowing was serious cause for embarrassment. Such accusations were thus a potent tool contemporaries in competition employed to diminish their respective rivals and display their own commentarial authority.

But these competitions over prestige and status were intertwined with competitions over exegetical norms, for instance, the degree an ideal commentator ought to be critical of prior authorities in his interpretation of the *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Ibn Ḥajar alerted his audience to the fact that he was not afraid to challenge his predecessors. He pointed out an-Nawawī’s reliance on another scholar’s opinion that had miscalculated the total number of *ḥadīths* contained in the *Ṣaḥīḥ*

Jāmi‘ al-Bukhārī, 10 vols. (Mecca: al-Maktaba al-Imdādīyya, 1975), 1: 404. See also al-‘Asqalānī, *Intiqād al-i‘tirād*, 1: 10.

⁵⁵ al-‘Asqalānī, *Intiqād al-i‘tirād*, 1:12–3. Many examples in which al-‘Aynī took Ibn Ḥajar’s original phrasing, not found in earlier commentaries such as al-Kirmānī’s, without acknowledging a citation can be found. For one example in which al-‘Aynī quoted himself (*qultu*) but instead offered Ibn Ḥajar’s opinion without attribution, compare al-‘Aynī, ‘*Umdāt al-qārī*, 24: 35 (*Kitāb al-Muḥāribīn min abl al-kufr wa-r-ridda: Bāb Kam at-ta‘zīr wa-l-adab*); al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, 12: 177 (*Kitāb al-Hudūd: Bāb Kam at-ta‘zīr wa-l-adab*). As Vardit Tokatly has pointed out, al-‘Aynī incorporated huge swaths of text from an-Nawawī’s prolegomenon to the *Ṣaḥīḥ* in the introduction to his ‘*Umdat al-qārī*; compare al-‘Aynī’s introduction with an-Nawawī, *at-Talkhīṣ*, 1:183–285; Tokatly, “The Early Commentaries on al-Bukhārī’s *Ṣaḥīḥ*,” 242–9.

⁵⁶ al-‘Asqalānī, *Intiqād al-i‘tirād*, 1: 9–10.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

altogether.⁵⁸ While the intended target was probably still al-‘Aynī, who cited an-Nawawī uncritically, Ibn Ḥajar went on to complain of tralatitious commentarial practices in general:

I wanted to take a count [of the number of *ḥadīth* reports] to show that many of the *ḥadīth* specialists and other [experts] slack off by relating (*naql*) the discussions of their predecessors, adhering to them as followers (*muqallidūn*). The earliest [commentator] is not perfect or safe [from error], nevertheless they follow him blissfully supposing [him to be so].⁵⁹

The appearance of a commentary’s continuity within the tradition buttressed a commentator’s interpretive privilege, and, as a result, Muslim scholars of this period often guarded against appearing innovative.⁶⁰ Thus, it is significant that Ibn Ḥajar’s authority is partly grounded in his explicit valuation of innovation and internal criticism within the tradition.

It is not difficult to find examples of textual traditions in which it is acceptable to cite uncritically or to reference without attribution. Indeed, the liberal borrowing of motifs and phrases among classical Arab littérateurs and poets, like the citation standards of contemporary American “recombinant” novelists, are an excellent illustration of a literary culture that celebrates unattributed references.⁶¹ But Ibn Ḥajar’s valuing of critical attribution laid claim to how commentary ought to be practiced. In expanding the temporal, spatial and causal settings in which we narrate a thick history of the commentary, we see how the accusation of uncritical attribution was not only entangled in rivalries over patronage and prestige, but also reflected an argument over the values that were constitutive of the tradition itself.

IV. *Fatḥ al-bārī* and a Commentary in the Garden of the Sulṭān

Commentators not only attacked one another from the safety of their written texts but also face to face during commentary sessions on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* in the presence of the political and judicial élite. These were not quarter-century long undertakings that happened only once near the end of a lifetime. Rather, they would appear in shorter recitation sessions in which impromptu debate among high court judges would bubble up over the clarification of a *ḥadīth*.

⁵⁸) al-‘Asqalānī, *Hady as-sāri*, 489 ff.

⁵⁹) Ibid.

⁶⁰) See Michael Cook, “On Islam & Comparative Intellectual History,” *Daedalus* 135, no. 4 (Fall 2006); Rosenthal, *The Technique and Approach of Muslim Scholarship*, 48–53.

⁶¹) See von Grunebaum, “The Concept of Plagiarism in Arabic Theory,” 234–53; Michiko Kakutani, “Texts without Context,” *The New York Times*, March 17, 2010.

Although Ibn Ḥajar wrote many anecdotal descriptions of combative debates in live commentary on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* at the citadel during Ramaḍān, we will instead turn to his account of a more intimate setting: the garden of the sultān. In this impromptu session, Ibn Ḥajar offered commentary on a *ḥadīth* found in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* in part to discredit a rival for the Shāfiʿī chief judgeship, Shams ad-Dīn al-Harawī (d. 829/1426). This case illuminates the social and institutional pressures that shaped the commentary tradition, while bringing into relief certain norms that were both constituted by and constitutive of the commentary tradition. Moreover, since this event is described in Ibn Ḥajar’s chronicle *Inbāʾ al-ghumr* and his *Fath al-bārī* we can compare how time, space and interpretive authority were constructed in the chronicle genre with their construction in the genre of commentary.

It was the heat of summer, Rabīʿ al-Ākhir, 818/June, 1415. Al-Harawī had just arrived at the sultān al-Muʿayyad’s court in Cairo. Aware that al-Muʿayyad was vetting him for the high court judgeship, al-Harawī claimed that he had memorized the *Ṣaḥīḥ*s of al-Bukhārī and Muslim, in addition to 12,000 *ḥadīth*s.⁶² After a morning of raucous scholarly debate, al-Harawī, Ibn Ḥajar, al-Muʿayyad and others from the scholarly and judicial élite enjoyed sweets and fruit in the afternoon in a secluded part of the Sultān’s garden attached to his residence. A reciter incanted a phrase from the Qurʾān, *Sūrat ar-Raʿd*, verse 35: “... the food of paradise is everlasting, as is its shade.”⁶³ One scholar, Nūr ad-Dīn at-Talwānī,⁶⁴ wondered how there could be everlasting shade in paradise. “Shade cannot be without light,” he reasoned, “and heaven has no sun or moon!”⁶⁵ Some of the scholars in attendance grappled with the puzzle, consulting authenticated *ḥadīth* that mention otherworldly shade, especially a famous *ḥadīth* mentioned in the *Ṣaḥīḥ*: “[There are] seven [kinds of people whom] God will shade in his shade [or, in another recitation, by his throne] on the day when there is no shade but his shade.”⁶⁶ The narrative continues:

[Ibn Ḥajar] asked, “Is there anyone among you who remembers [in addition] to the seven, an eighth [type of person]?”

They replied, “No.”

[Ibn Ḥajar] said, “Not even this one who claims that he memorized twelve-thousand *ḥadīth*s?” He gestured to [Shams ad-Dīn al-Harawī] who was silent.

One of them said to him, “Have you memorized an eighth?”

⁶² al-ʿAsqalānī, *Inbāʾ al-Ghumr*, 3: 56–7.

⁶³ al-ʿAsqalānī, *Inbāʾ al-ghumr*, 3: 62.

⁶⁴ Death date unknown.

⁶⁵ al-ʿAsqalānī, *Inbāʾ al-ghumr*, 3: 62.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

Ibn Ḥajar said, “Yes, I know an eighth and a ninth and a tenth. But more amazing than this is that in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim—which [al-Harawī] claims to have memorized in its entirety—there is an eighth for the aforementioned seven.”

It was said to him, “Acquaint us with that [*ḥadīth*], so that we may derive benefit from it.”

[Ibn Ḥajar] replied, “This setting is a testing ground, not a place of seeking benefit (*istifāda*) [from *ḥadīths*]. If you rearranged this to be a place of seeking benefit, then I would acquaint you [with it].”

After that, [Ibn Ḥajar] collected what was mentioned on the subject [of the types of people that God will shade on the Day of Resurrection] and imparted more than ten in addition to the seven [types] mentioned in the *ḥadīth*. Abū Shāma versified the seven famous types in two famous lines of poetry. And [Ibn Ḥajar] collected seven—mentioned with good chains of transmission—and versified them in two lines of poetry. Then he collected a third [group of] seven—while saying their chains of transmission—and versified them in two other lines of poetry.

And the session broke for the evening prayer. When [the scholars] wanted to take off, [Ibn Ḥajar] said to the sulṭān [al-Muʿayyad]: “Your eminence (*yā khawand*), I accuse [al-Harawī] of owing me a debt!”

“What’s that?” the Sulṭān [al-Muʿayyad] replied.

“Twelve-thousand *ḥadīths*.” The Sulṭān [al-Muʿayyad] smiled and left.⁶⁷

This live session contained not only food but humor. We also get a picture of how Ibn Ḥajar might have interacted with his colleagues and students. From a sensual experience of tasting the food and enjoying the shade to the versification of chains of transmission, the conversation meanders through a variety of questions and multiple genres of texts. The ideal *ḥadīth* scholar, modeled by Ibn Ḥajar, was expected to be so masterful he could play in the intertextuality of multiple genres of Islamic religious literature, moving from the Qurʾān, to a famous *ḥadīth*, to less well-known *ḥadīths*, their chains of transmission, and finally to the extemporization of verse that might aid the memory of students and advance the circulation of these *ḥadīths*.

The movement from technical *ḥadīth* questions to poetry would not have been unusual for Ibn Ḥajar or the culture from which he emerged. Shāh Walī Allāh recalls one such correspondence where Ibn Ḥajar was asked a question about the trustworthiness of an *isnād* in verse, and Ibn Ḥajar responded spontaneously in verse, describing the *isnād* and grading it, in poetic meter. Again, the spontaneity of his response highlighted his memory and facility with language.⁶⁸ Ibn Ḥajar

⁶⁷) Ibid.

⁶⁸) ad-Dihlawī, *Bustān al-muḥaddithin*, 235.

was not unprecedented in this activity. Shams ad-Dīn al-Mawṣilī (d. 774/1372), a Shāfiʿī *ḥadīth* scholar of the generation prior to Ibn Ḥajar’s, composed verse on the authenticity of the *ḥadīth* contained in an abridgment of al-Qāḍī ‘Iyād’s (d. 544/1149) popular compilation *Mashāriq al-anwār*.⁶⁹

While Ibn Ḥajar’s autobiography is well known for its dry, impersonal and at times self-deprecatory narrative of his study of *ḥadīth*,⁷⁰ this passage in his chronicle is anything but. Ibn Ḥajar’s punch line to the Sulṭān was meant to malign al-Harawī’s trustworthiness. But in the passage that follows, it was al-Mu’ayyad who ultimately paid the debt. He instructed his private secretary to reinstate Ibn Ḥajar as the Shaykh at the Baybarsiyya after having his been ousted by another rival “who wrongly wrested it away from him.”⁷¹ Ibn Ḥajar’s successful live performance was thus linked to his winning of a prestigious judgeship.

That Ibn Ḥajar won an appointment returns us to the commentarial dialectic we observed in part one of this essay. When Ibn Ḥajar was asked to prove his own memory, he said that he would not recite and transmit *ḥadīth* in an examination setting, but only if the setting was one of students seeking benefit (*istifāda*). For Ibn Ḥajar, one ought not recite *ḥadīths* for the sake of showing off or passing a test—even if it may appear he was doing exactly that—but only in the service of explaining the Prophet’s guidance to the community. Just as Ibn Ḥajar was dialectically bound by the need to interpret the *Ṣaḥīḥ* endlessly with the need to complete his commentary, he was likewise bound to compete for appointments while explicitly refusing to compete for them.

I initially hypothesized there would be no evidence for a direct correlation between the intimate “garden” session and the content of *Fath al-bārī*. The genre constraints of a systematic written commentary, I assumed, focused on explicating the biographies of the transmitters, grammatical questions and legal matters. Written commentaries, after all, are supposed to appear to be a timeless encounter with tradition, insulated from mundane local events, even if they are structured by them in fundamental ways. Studying a written commentary might equip one for a live contest in the garden, but not the other way around.

To my surprise, however, Ibn Ḥajar retold the story of the garden session in his written commentary on the same *ḥadīth*, the text of which is partially translated here:

⁶⁹ Shams ad-Dīn al-Mawṣilī, *Lawāmi‘ al-anwār ‘alā ṣiḥāḥ al-āthār*, Garrett Yehuda MS. 1731 (Princeton Rare Books Library).

⁷⁰ Dwight F. Reynolds, ed. *Interpreting the Self: Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 82–3. This finding ought to encourage future research on autobiographical material in Arabic literature to be sought in chronicles in addition to biographical dictionaries.

⁷¹ al-‘Asqalānī, *Inbā‘ al-ghumr*, 3: 63.

Yaḥyā narrated to us on the authority of Abū Hurayra ... [There are] seven [kinds of people whom] God will shade in his shade on the day when there is no shade but his shade:

- [1] A just imam.
- [2] A youth raised worshipping his lord.
- [3] A person whose heart is attached to places of prayer.
- [4] Two people who love one another for the sake of God, meeting and parting for the sake of that [love].
- [5] A man who is [sexually] pursued by a[n illicit] woman of nobility and beauty, [but refuses by] stating, “I fear God.”
- [6] A person who gives charity (*sadaqa*), concealing it so that his left hand knows not what his right hand spends.
- [7] A person who remembers (*dhakara*) God in seclusion and his eyes overflow [with tears].

Ibn Ḥajar comments:

[al-Bukhārī’s] statement: “Yaḥyā narrated to us”

[A discussion of the narrator]

[al-Bukhārī’s] statement: “On the authority of Abū Hurayra”

[A discussion of the narrator and variants]

[al-Bukhārī’s] statement: “Seven”

Its apparent [meaning] is the singling-out of the aforementioned [seven types of persons] with the aforementioned reward.

Regarding that [reward] which was obtained, [the commentator] al-Kirmānī [(d. 786/1384)] addressed the concept of obedience, either in service to God or in service to [other] human beings (*khalq*).

The former is [performed] by the tongue through “remembrance (*dhikr*);” [it can be performed] by the heart through being “attached to the places of worship;” [it can be performed] by the body, and that is the “youth raised (*an-nāshī*) in [acts of] worship (*ibāda*).”

The latter is, at a general level, [performed by] the “just [imam]” (*al-‘ādil*). At an individual level, [it is performed] by the heart, which is “loving [another for God’s sake] (*at-taḥābb*);” or [performed] through [expenditure of] money, which is “charity (*aṣ-ṣadaqa*);” or [performed] by the body, which is “chastity (*al-‘iffa*).”

The learned Abū Shāma ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Ismā‘īl [(d. 665/1266)] put the seven [types of people] into verse, according to what Abū Ishāq at-Tanūkhī recited (*anshada*) to us on the licensed authority (*idhnan ‘an*) of Abū l-Hudā, Aḥmad ibn Abī Shāma, who heard (*samā’an*) on the authority of his father in his phrasing (*lafzihi*), saying:

[meter: *at-Ṭawīl*]

wa-qāla n-nabiyyu l-muṣṭafā inna sabʿatan
yuzilluhumu ʿllāhu l-karīmu bi-ḥillih

the chosen Prophet said, there are seven
whom the Generous God will shelter in His shade

muhibbun ʿafḥun nāshīʿun mutaṣaddiqun
wa-bākin muṣallin wa-l-imāmu bi-ʿadlih

a loving friend, a chaste man, a youth, a charitable person
a weeper, one who prays, and the imam in his justice

Located in the *ḥadīth* of Abū l-Yasar in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim [Ibn al-Ḥajjāj] by an elevated (*marfūʿ*) chain of transmission to the Prophet is “Whosoever provides [financial] assistance to the hard up, or writes off a debt, God will shelter him in His shade on the day in which there is no shade but His shade.” And these two attributes are not included in the previous seven. This is evidence that the aforementioned number [seven] is not to be understood in the literal sense (*lā maḥḥūm labu*).

And I tossed this issue to the scholar Shams ad-Dīn ibn ʿAṭāʾ ar-Rāzī, known as al-Harawī, when he came to Cairo and alleged that he had memorized the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim. I asked him in the presence of the sovereign al-Muʿayyad on this [matter] and other [attributes that lead to shading] but he did not recall anything. After that, I sought, one after another, the aforementioned *ḥadīths* that were similar in [listing other attributes that make a person worthy of being shaded], and it exceeded ten attributes. Among those [ten] I selected seven reported by excellent chains of transmission, and versified them into couplets supplementing Abū Shāma. They are:

[meter: *at-Ṭawīl*]

wa-zid sabʿatan: izlāla ghāzin wa-ʿawnabu
wa-inzāra dhī ʿusrin wa-takhfifa ḥimlih

add to the seven: shading a war hero and aiding him
and granting a reprieve to the hard-up and lightening his load

wa-irfāda dhī ghurmin wa-ʿawna mukātibin
wa-tājiri ṣidqin fi l-maqāli wa-fiʿlih

and aiding a debtor, and supporting a slave working to free himself
and the merchant who is honest in words and deeds

As for sheltering a warrior, Ibn Ḥibbān and others narrated it from a *ḥadīth* of ʿUmar. As for the warrior (*mujāhid*)’s aid, Aḥmad and al-Ḥākim narrated it from a *ḥadīth* of Sahl ibn Ḥunayf. As for the provider to the hard-up and the one who writes off his [debt], that is in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim, as we mentioned [already]. As for the debtor’s aid and the supporter of a slave (*mukātib*) [who has a contract with his owner in which he pays for his freedom in installments] Aḥmad and al-Ḥākim narrated those from the *ḥadīth* of the aforementioned Sahl ibn Ḥunayf. As for the honest trader, al-Baghawī narrated it in *Sharḥ as-Sunna* from the *ḥadīth* of Salmān and Abū t-Taymī from the *ḥadīth* of Anas, and God knows best.

And I put it into verse a second time, and I said, concerning the seven [types of people], a second [verse] ...⁷²

Ibn Ḥajar carried on like this, quipping a second verse, citing a *ḥadīth* of Abū Hurayra with a weak chain transmission, of which aṭ-Ṭabarānī listed the full sources (i.e. his *takbrīj* of the *ḥadīth*). Ibn Ḥajar found and grouped another set of seven, and versified another couplet, and yet another. The final couplet, Ibn Ḥajar noted, is sourced in weak *ḥadīths*. Lastly, he wrote that “I mentioned all of these in *al-Amālī*, and I sectioned it off in a part which I titled, ‘Knowledge of the Attributes Leading to the Shade.’”⁷³

Prior to comparing these two versions of the garden *ḥadīth* session, I would first like to reiterate how rarely a live event in time made its way into the explication of a *ḥadīth* in Ibn Ḥajar’s *Faṭḥ al-bārī*. The stated impetus for Ibn Ḥajar’s explication of this *ḥadīth* was the coming of his rival to Cairo and alleging the authority to comment in the presence of the Sulṭān. Ibn Ḥajar not only explicitly mentioned the name of his rival but also his own patron.

A comparison between these two versions of the *ḥadīth* commentary illuminates some key differences between the chronicle genre and the commentary genre. While Ibn Ḥajar’s chronicle offers drama, humor, and references to food, the commentary is, by comparison, rather dry. Even mention of the space of the garden and the time of the afternoon are omitted. Al-Harawī and al-Mu’ayyad are there, but peripherally. Gone is the sensory, the taste of the food and the relief of the shade that inspired the intellectual curiosity of the students. Gone is the test in which an appointment was at stake and gone is the smile of the sulṭān who apparently got the joke.

While much is lost in the translation from history to commentary, much is also gained. Ibn Ḥajar offered a summary of al-Kirmānī’s commentary on the *ḥadīth*, as well as Abū Shāma’s couplet versifying it, by a chain of transmission to the poetry. We also hear the exact couplets he formulated, their chains of transmission, and the grades of the chains’ authenticity, all of which he omitted in the chronicle. While the verse from the Qur’ān has been left out, the emphasis on intertextuality is otherwise heightened, since Ibn Ḥajar drew on the commentarial and critical work of al-Kirmānī, al-Baghawī and aṭ-Ṭabarānī.

What this comparison brings into greatest relief, however, is an engagement with a reason-giving practice of a different causal, spatial and temporal order, with thoroughly different stakes. In the written commentary, Ibn Ḥajar critiqued

⁷² See al-ʿAsqalānī, *Faṭḥ al-bārī*, 2: 143–4 (*Kitāb al-Adhān: Bāb Man jalasa fī l-masjid yantaḥiziru aṣ-ṣalāt, wa-faḍl al-masājid*).

⁷³ Ibid., 2: 144 (*Kitāb al-Adhān: Bāb Man jalasa fī l-masjid yantaḥiziru aṣ-ṣalāt, wa-faḍl al-masājid*).

commentators who might read the seven to be saved on the Day of Resurrection as a limit: there were literally no more than the seven kinds stipulated in the *ḥadīth*. The seven types are intended to be moral exemplars: a chaste man, a just ruler, one who prays, and so on. The fact that Ibn Ḥajar offered an explanation for the *ḥadīth* that extends the possible number of attributes was not only meant to display the quantitative superiority of his memory in a competitive environment where an appointment was at stake, but opens up the canon—indeed, it opens up heaven!—for present and future students justifiably concerned about what kinds of people will be sheltered on the Day of Resurrection. Drawing on his memory of the textual tradition, the preferred tool of Shāfiʿī commentators,⁷⁴ Ibn Ḥajar showed that many other kinds of people beyond the seven will be sheltered on the Day of Resurrection, including a war hero, an honest merchant, a benevolent lender, and many others. In other words, this *ḥadīth*'s interpretation was not only about the power struggles among scholars over who will be appointed the most powerful chief justice in Egypt. It was also entangled in a debate over norms definable only in relation to the commentary tradition that are no less pressing, in this case, on what basis one can determine how many kinds of people will be protected on the Day of Resurrection.

The extent to which this particular explication widened Islamic conceptions of salvation is beyond the scope of this short study. We can say, however, that this explanation greatly influenced other Islamic texts, influencing commentaries on other *ḥadīth* collections and spawning its own literary genre. Jalāl ad-Dīn as-Suyūṭī would go on to quote Ibn Ḥajar's *Fath al-bārī* verbatim regarding al-Harawī in his commentary of the *ḥadīth* of attributes leading to God's shade in his commentary on another famous *ḥadīth* compilation, the *Muwattaʿ* of Mālik.⁷⁵ Moreover, as-Suyūṭī then wrote a book in which he collected one hundred such attributes, and then composed an abridgment of it.⁷⁶ Even the 20th century South Asian commentator and glossator, Muḥammad Zakariyyā (d.

⁷⁴ While both Ḥanafīs and Shāfiʿīs of Ibn Ḥajar's period tended to weigh some sources over others, the Ḥanafīs claimed expertise in rhetoric and language, often applying those tools when clarifying an ambiguity, while the Shāfiʿīs preferred to research how a similar phrase or term was employed in other *ḥadīths* to clarify a problem. This is particularly true with respect to "finding the 'implied' (*iḥbāt al-muqtaḍā*)" in the phrasing of a *ḥadīth*. While this topic has generated a great deal of scholarly debate, a general overview can be found in 'Abd al-Wāḥḥāb Khallāf, *ʿIlm uṣūl al-fiqh* (Damascus: n.p., 1992), 140–91. A more detailed discussion in English can be found in Wael Hallaq, *A History of Islamic Legal Theories* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 40–58.

⁷⁵ Mālik ibn Anas and Jalāl ad-Dīn as-Suyūṭī, *Muwattaʿ al-Imām Mālik: wa-sharḥuhu Tanwīr al-hawālik*, 2 vols. (Egypt: Sharikat Maktaba wa-Maṭbaʿat Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1951), 2: 234–6.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 2: 236.

1402/1982), continued to summarize these growing lists of attributes, although he no longer felt required to mention Ibn Ḥajar's initial interaction with al-Harawī in the presence of the sultān.⁷⁷ Through his interpretation of this *ḥadīth*, Ibn Ḥajar thus provided an avenue for future generations of scholars to overcome the limits set by the canon.

Does this comparison clarify what Ibn Ḥajar meant when he stated to al-Harawī and his colleagues that “[t]his setting is a testing ground, not a place of seeking benefit”? Ibn Ḥajar may have been distinguishing between a discussion of *ḥadīth* that is oriented towards an appointment, which could be obtained independently of an excellent performance within the tradition, and a commentarial practice oriented towards a good defined by the shared tradition, to extend the applied meaning of a *ḥadīth* for the benefit of present and future audiences. Yet the production of this distinction itself is entangled in the politics of commentary. Ibn Ḥajar can be read as a social critic in so far as he excoriated the lack of a necessary relationship between right-intending and benefit-oriented *ḥadīth* commentators and those commentators who end up being appointed by the sultān. According to Ibn Ḥajar, this is partly because those individuals who are not practitioners of *ḥadīth* commentary heavily influence the decision behind the appointment of commentators, and could potentially take matters external to the practice of *ḥadīth* commentary into consideration when making an appointment.

Even if, or especially if, this anecdote is skewed in favor of Ibn Ḥajar's own interests, it tells us that the construction of the *ḥadīth* expert in this period was far more complex than we previously understood it to be. It was not only built on the collection of quantitatively documented credentials such as reading licenses. It was also intertwined with the cultivation of political networks, and the persuasion of a living and easily divided inexpert audience who witnessed live debates of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* and read written explications of its meaning.

Conclusion

It has been almost thirty years since Jonathan Z. Smith initially called for a redescription of the canon. “[W]ork remains to be done,” he wrote, on “an examination of the rules that govern the sharp debates between rival exegetes and exegetical systems I look forward to the day when courses and monographs

⁷⁷ Muḥammad Zakariyyā al-Kāndhilawī, *Awjaz al-masālik ilā Muwaṭṭa' Mālik*, 18 vols. (U.A.E.: n.p., 2003), 17: 78. For more on Muḥammad Zakariyyā, his background and context, see Muhammad Qasim Zaman, “Commentaries, Print and Patronage: ‘Ḥadīth’ and the Madrasas in Modern South Asia,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 62, no. 1 (1999): 65 ff.

exist in both comparative exegesis and comparative theology, comparing not so much conclusions as strategies through which the exegete seeks to interpret and translate his received tradition to his contemporaries.”⁷⁸ By the end of the 1990s and the early 2000s, scholars had produced a bevy of monographs and collected volumes comparing exegetical and commentarial strategies across religious, classical and scholastic traditions.⁷⁹ A contemporary scholar of Tibetan Buddhism, José Cabezón, as he reflected on a collected volume he edited on the subject, asked what might be learned by defining the attributes of a decontextualized commentator.⁸⁰ In listing what cross-cultural and cross-temporal tendencies, strategies, and assumptions scholars have identified in ideal typical scholastic practices, Cabezón recognized the limits of approaching the problem in such a way. Looking towards the future, he articulated the need for what he called a “sociocultural analysis” of the phenomenon of commentary and scholasticism. He described this kind of analysis as the study of “institutions ... the day to day processes of religious education ... the political, economic and material factors that influence and are influenced by scholasticism ... the lived lives of scholastics as individuals, their influence on the broader communities in which they are located, and in turn the pressures exerted on, and the rewards offered to them, by those communities.”⁸¹ In other words, Cabezón called for a turn to recontextualize commentary on canonical texts in their local political and historical cultures.

The first three parts of this essay, in solidarity with Cabezón’s call for greater political and social context, has made use of sources that might offer a snapshot of the day-to-day times, spaces, actors, and institutions that shaped and were shaped by the process of commentary. Indeed, the site of commentarial authority was not relegated to the quiet surfaces of the written tradition, but was performed by living bodies in the limits of space and time. While future research can make greater use of manuscript sources and codicology to understand the role played by handwritten media in these sessions, some preliminary conclusions

⁷⁸ J.Z. Smith, “Sacred Persistence: Toward a Redescription of the Canon,” in *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 52.

⁷⁹ To name only few, see John Henderson, *Scripture, Canon, Commentary* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Glenn Most, ed. *Commentaries—Kommentare* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999); Paul Griffiths, *Religious Reading: The Place of Reading in the Practice of Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); José Ignacio Cabezón, *Buddhism and Language: A Study of Indo-Tibetan Scholasticism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994); Christina Shuttleworth Kraus, “Reading Commentaries/Commentaries as Reading,” in *The Classical Commentary: Histories, Practices, Theory*, ed. Roy K. Gibson and Christina Shuttleworth Kraus (Leiden: Brill, 2002).

⁸⁰ José Ignacio Cabezón, ed., *Scholasticism: Cross-Cultural and Comparative Perspectives* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 237 ff.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 248.

can be drawn already from the existing biographical and chronicle sources. The medium of the written commentary, its length, form and rhetorical strategies, reflected and inflected the times, spaces, and economic pressures in which commentaries could be performed live for audiences. The competition we observe in commentarial writings, quarrels over unattributed borrowing, can often be linked to the reality that patrons and rivals would be present in the live sessions. Ibn Ḥajar characterized his commentarial predicament as one that was simultaneously beyond and beholden to the constraints of the market for students, books, and jobs.

Yet, as part four of my study suggested, this tradition of commentary was not only a site in which commentators' bold personalities clashed in competition over patrons, appointments, and renown among transregional audiences. If that were so, it would reduce the arguments over the explication of *ḥadīth* to mere quarrels over power, prestige and material wealth, and diminish our understanding of why *ḥadīth* were worth commentary at all. Ibn Ḥajar's ability to give more persuasive explications of the *Ṣaḥīḥ*, a text that made normative claims on the audiences who heard them, must have influenced how audiences chose to act. In other words, certain kinds of norms, such as deriving benefit from *ḥadīths* (*istifāda*) by extending the legal or theological application of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* for present and future audiences, while contingent on instrumental kinds of power or social capital, is not reducible to them. These kinds of norms can only be defined and attained by the performance of excellence as it would have been recognized within the shared living tradition of *ḥadīth* commentary itself. In this way, commentary on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* was not merely a proving ground for the quantitative superiority of memory, but an argument about the text's normative claims that stretched across time.

While a fuller account of commentary on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* as a diachronic reasoning tradition awaits, this essay, in providing a thick history of a formative moment in the tradition, has laid the groundwork for such future research. What now lies ahead are longer-term cross-temporal studies of this commentary tradition that make visible the force of social institutions and competitions over power and prestige, while articulating the normative commitments at stake in explicating the *Ṣaḥīḥ* for diverse audiences and interpreters.

Bibliography

- ‘Asqalānī, Ibn Ḥajar al-. *Fath al-bārī*. Edited by ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Bāz. 13 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Ma‘rifa, 1970.
- . *Hady as-sāri*. Edited by ‘Abd al-Qādir Shayba al-Ḥamad. Riyadh: Matktabat al-Malik Fahd al-waṭaniyya, 2000.
- . *Inbā’ al-ghumr bi-abnā’ al-‘umr fi-t-tārīkh*. Edited by Ḥasan Ḥabashī. 5 vols. Cairo: al-Majlis al-A‘lā li-sh-shu‘ūn al-islāmiyya, 1969.
- . *Intiqād al-i‘tirād*. Riyadh: Maktabat Rushd, n.d.
- ‘Aṭṭār, Ibn al-. *Tuhfat aṭ-ṭālibīn fi tarjamat al-Imām Muḥyi-d-Dīn*. Riyadh: Dar aṣ-Ṣumay‘ī, 1994.
- Asad, Talal. “The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam.” *Occasional Papers*. Washington DC: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, 1986.
- ‘Aynī, Badr ad-Dīn al-. *‘Umdāt al-qārī fi sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘ilmiyya, 2001.
- Bāji, Abū l-Walīd al-. *Tahqīq al-madhhab*. Edited by Abū ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān Ibn ‘Aqīl. Riyadh: ‘Ālam al-Kutub, 1983.
- Broadbridge, Anne. “Academic Rivalries and the Patronage System in Fifteenth-Century Egypt: al-‘Aynī, al-Maqrīzī, and Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī.” *Mamlūk Studies Review* 3 (1999): 85–107.
- Brown, Jonathan A.C. *The Canonization of al-Bukhārī and Muslim*. Leiden: Brill, 2007.
- Cabezón, José Ignacio. *Buddhism and Language: A Study of Indo-Tibetan Scholasticism*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994.
- , ed. *Scholasticism: Cross-Cultural and Comparative Perspectives*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998.
- Calder, Norman. *Islamic Jurisprudence in the Classical Era*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Cook, Michael. “On Islam & Comparative Intellectual History.” *Daedalus* 135, no. 4 (Fall 2006): 108–11.
- Dihlawī, Shāh Walī Allāh ad-. *Bustān al-muḥaddithīm*. Translated by Muḥammad Akram an-Nadwī. Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-islāmī, 2002.
- Escovitz, Joseph H. “Patterns of Appointment to the Chief Judgeships of Cairo during the Bahri Mamlūk Period.” *Arabica* 30, no. 2 (1983): 147–68.
- Fadel, Muhammad. “Ibn Ḥajar’s *Hady al-Sāri*: a Medieval Interpretation of the Structure of al-Bukhārī’s *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*: Introduction and Translation.” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 54 (1995): 161–95.
- Fierro, Maribel. “Local and Global in Ḥadīth Literature: The Case of al-Andalus.” In *The Transmission and Dynamics of the Textual Sources of Islam: Essays in Honour of Harald Motzki*, edited by C.H.M. Versteegh Nicolet Boekhoff-van der Voort, Joas Wagemakers, 63–90. Leiden: Brill, 2011.
- Gangūhī, Rashīd Aḥmad, and Muḥammad Zakariyyā al-Kandhilawī. *Lāmi’ ad-darāri ‘alā Jāmi’ al-Bukhārī*. 10 vols. Mecca: al-Maktaba al-Imdādiyya, 1975.
- Graham, William. *Beyond the Written Word: Oral Aspects of Scripture in the History of Religion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- Griffiths, Paul. *Religious Reading: The Place of Reading in the Practice of Religion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

- Grunebaum, G.E. von. "The Concept of Plagiarism in Arabic Theory." *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 3 (1944): 234–53.
- Gumbrecht, Hans Ulrich. *The Powers of Philology: Dynamics of Textual Scholarship*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003.
- Hallaq, Wacl. *A History of Islamic legal theories*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Henderson, John. *Scripture, Canon, Commentary*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.
- Hirschler, Konrad. *The Written Word in the Medieval Arabic Lands: A Social and Cultural History of Reading Practices*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012.
- Ibn Anas, Mālik, and Jalāl ad-Dīn as-Suyūṭī. *Muwattaʿ al-Imām Mālik: wa-sharḥuhu Tanwīr al-ḥawālik*. 2 vols. Egypt: Sharikat Maktaba wa-maṭbaʿat Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1951.
- Ibn Rushayd, Abū ʿAbd Allāh. *Tarjumān at-tarājim ʿalā abwāb Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿilmiyya, 2008.
- Jackson, Sherman. *Islamic Law and the State: The Constitutional Jurisprudence of Shihāb al-Dīn al-Qarāfī*. Leiden: Brill, 1996.
- Jaques, R. Kevin. *Ibn Hajar*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Kakutani, Michiko. "Texts without Context." *The New York Times*, March 17th, 2010.
- Kāndhilawī, Muḥammad Zakariyyā al-. *Awjaz al-masālik ilā Muwattaʿ Mālik*. 18 vols. U.A.E.: n.p., 2003.
- Kawash, Sabri. "Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalānī: A Study of the Background, Education, and Career of a ʿĀlim in Egypt." PhD diss., Princeton University, 1968.
- Khallāf, ʿAbd al-Wahhāb. *ʿIlm uṣūl al-fiqh*. Damascus: n.p., 1992.
- Kraus, Christina Shuttleworth. "Reading Commentaries/Commentaries as Reading." In *The Classical Commentary: Histories, Practices, Theory*, edited by Roy K. Gibson and Christina Shuttleworth Kraus, 1–27. Leiden: Brill, 2002.
- MacIntyre, Alisdair. *After Virtue*. 3rd ed. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007.
- Mawṣilī, Shams ad-Dīn al-. "Lawāmiʿ al-anwār ʿalā ṣiḥāḥ al-āthār." Garrett Yehuda MS 1731, Princeton Rare Books Library.
- Most, Glenn, ed. *Commentaries—Kommentare*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999.
- Mujani, Wan Kamal. "The Fineness of Dinar, Dirham and Fals during the Mamluk Period." *Journal of Applied Sciences Research* 7, no. 12 (2011): 1895–900.
- Nawawī, Abū Zakariyyā Yahyā an-. *at-Talkhīṣ [fi] sharḥ al-Jāmiʿ aṣ-ṣaḥīḥ li-l-Bukhārī*. 2. Riyadh: Dār at-Ṭayba li-n-nashr wa-t-tawzī, 2008.
- Rapoport, Yossef. "Legal Diversity in the Age of Taqlīd: The Four Chief Qāḍīs under the Mamluks." *Islamic Law and Society* 10, no. 2 (2003): 210–28.
- Reynolds, Dwight F., ed. *Interpreting the Self: Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.
- Rosenthal, Franz. *The Technique and Approach of Muslim Scholarship*. Analecta Orientalia, vol. 24. Rome: Pontificum Inst Biblicum, 1947.
- Sakhāwī, Shams ad-Dīn as-. *ad-Dawʿ al-lāmiʿ li-ahl al-qarn at-tāsiʿ*. Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1992.
- . *al-Jawābir wa-d-durar*. Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 1999.

- Shāfi'ī, Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Idrīs ash-. *ar-Risāla*. Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'arabī, 2006.
- Smith, J.Z. "Sacred Persistence: Toward a Redescription of the Canon." In *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988, 36–52.
- Stilt, Kristen. *Islamic Law in Action: Authority, Discretion, and Everyday Experiences in Mamluk Egypt*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Tokatly, Vardit. "The Early Commentaries on al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ*." PhD diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2003.
- Udfuwī, Kamāl ad-Dīn al-. *Aṭ-Ṭālī' as-sa'īd: al-jāmi' li-asmā' al-fudalā' wa-r-ruwāḥ bi-a'la ṣ-ṣa'īd*. 1st ed. Egypt: al-Maṭba'a al-Jamāliyya, 1914.
- Zaman, Muhammad Qasim. "Commentaries, Print and Patronage: "Ḥadīth" and the Madrasas in Modern South Asia." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 62, no. 1 (1999): 60–81.