

3. Three authors of the Prophet's medicine

I have selected the texts of three authors for closer study. All three—Shams al-dīn Muḥammad al-Dhahabī, Ibn Qayyim al-Jauzīya and Shams al-dīn Ibn Mufliḥ—lived in Damascus in the early Mamluk period. Two of them—Ibn al-Qayyim and Ibn Mufliḥ—were Hanbalite scholars, whereas al-Dhahabī was a Shafi'ite, but in theological issues he preferred the traditionalist doctrines. All three were pupils of Ibn Taimīya and agreed with his demands for closer adherence to *sharī'a*.

Their treatment of medical issues was comprehensive. They did not confine themselves to quoting and analysing medical hadiths, but also included an extensive discussion on medical theory. They further took up issues of theological importance such as the permissibility of medicine and contagion. Each of the three texts also includes an alphabetical list of medicaments.

The way the three authors chose to present the subject was not identical. Muḥammad al-Dhahabī's book *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* is constructed like a regular medical book treating all the basic issues of medical theory in a concise manner. In discussing medical theory and the treatment of various illnesses Muḥammad al-Dhahabī exceeded the limitations set by the hadith material by including issues not mentioned therein. In contrast, Ibn Qayyim al-Jauzīya and Ibn Mufliḥ to a much greater degree confined themselves to presenting issues that were mentioned in the hadiths. Of the three, Ibn al-Qayyim was most concerned with the religious implications of the medical theory. al-Dhahabī and Ibn Mufliḥ show a more unquestioning acceptance of the authoritative Graeco-Islamic medical views and do not discuss theological problems in such detail.

3.1. *al-Dhahabī*

Shams al-dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Uthmān ibn Qāimāz al-Dhahabī was born in Damascus 673/1274 and died there in 748/1348. He was a hadith scholar and a historian. He had collected and studied hadiths since he was 18 years old. Among his first teachers in Damascus was the Shafi'ite hadith specialist Yūsuf al-Mizzī (d.742/1341). In his pursuit for learning more hadiths, al-Dhahabī travelled to Ba'labakk, Cairo, Mecca and other centres of Muslim learning. After returning to Damascus he became a professor of tradition at the *madrasa* of Umm al-Ṣāliḥ and *madrasa* al-Nafīsīya, where he also functioned as the imam.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfi*, vol. 2, pp. 164 and 166. Ibn al-ʿImād, *Shadharāt*, vol. 6, pp. 154f. Ben Cheneb and de Somogyi 1965, p. 214.

He excelled in the studies of the Prophet's traditions and is said to have been among the four leading hadith experts of the time. The three others were Yūsuf al-Mizzī, 'Alam al-dīn al-Birzālī (d. 739/1339) and Taqī al-dīn al-Subkī (d. 756/1355). Tāj al-dīn al-Subkī (d. 771/1370) described his persistence in hadith studies by saying: "The night and day wearied, but his tongue and pen did not tire".⁷⁰

al-Dhahabī belonged to the Shafi'ite school of law but was a traditionalist in theological issues and an outspoken anti-Ash'arite. Ṭāshköprüzāde described him as a Shafi'ite in law and a Hanbalite in dogma (*shāfi'ī al-madhab ḥanbalī al-mu'taqad*).⁷¹ al-Dhahabī knew the Hanbalite Ibn Taimīya and followed courses given by him⁷². He further wrote abridged versions of Ibn Taimīya's *al-Radd 'alā al-rāfiḍa* and *al-Minhāj al-sunna*.⁷³

His major works were compilations, but, in contrast to many other compilers, he exerted himself in analysing his sources. His thorough research on the chain of transmitters and the content of the hadiths was admired.⁷⁴ The information he gave in his writings was usually considered reliable. al-Dhahabī's pupil Tāj al-dīn al-Subkī did not, however, share this opinion, but blamed al-Dhahabī for being partial and unreliable.⁷⁵ The very severe criticism Tāj al-dīn al-Subkī directed at his teacher seems to have stemmed from their theological disagreements. As a Shafi'ite-Ash'arite, Tāj al-dīn al-Subkī considered al-Dhahabī an obstacle to the progress of Ash'arism within the Shafi'ite school and therefore wanted to discredit him.⁷⁶ The opinion of al-Subkī survived the theological dispute and is echoed at least in one later biography dating from the 10th/16th century.⁷⁷

al-Dhahabī's main works on traditions were either biographical such as *Mizān al-i'tidāl fī naqd al-rijāl* or lexicographical like *Tadhīb al-tahdhīb al-kamāl fī asmā' al-rijāl*. In the field of history his best-known work is *Ta'rikh al-islām* of which he himself made several abridged versions many of them biographical in character, e.g. *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz* and *Ṭabaqāt al-qurrā'*.⁷⁸

al-Ṭibb al-nabawī is an independent text dealing only with medical and relevant religious issues. The material is arranged systematically and divided into three sections. The first section deals with medical theory, the second consists of an alphabetical list of medicaments and foodstuffs presenting their qualities and uses. The third part gives details of the symptoms and cures of about twenty illnesses. Short references to a large number of illnesses are made in other parts of the book, but without any diagnostic or aetiological details. The work gives the impression of a medical

⁷⁰ al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-shāfi'īya*, vol. 5, pp. 216f.

⁷¹ Ṭāshköprüzāde, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, vol. 2, p. 358.

⁷² Laoust 1939, p. 484. al-Dhahabī is described as the true follower of Ibn Taimīya in Schreiner 1899, p. 60.

⁷³ Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt*, vol. 6, p. 156. Laoust 1971b, p. 954.

⁷⁴ al-Ṣafādī, *al-Wāfi*, vol. 2, p. 163 and also Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar*, vol. 3, p. 298.

⁷⁵ al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-shāfi'īya*, vol. 1, pp. 190f and vol. 5, p. 217.

⁷⁶ Makdisi 1962, pp. 70-73.

⁷⁷ Ṭāshköprüzāde, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, vol. 1, p. 261.

⁷⁸ A list of his major works is given in Ben Cheneb and de Somogyi 1965, pp. 215f.

handbook, in which the basic theoretical issues and some common illnesses are dealt with.

3.1.1. *al-Dhahabī's authorship of al-Ṭibb al-nabawī*

al-Ṭibb al-nabawī cannot with absolute certainty be ascribed to al-Dhahabī, even though modern sources seem to be convinced of it.⁷⁹ To my knowledge, the earliest reference to al-Dhahabī as the author is in *al-Manhal al-rawī fī al-ṭibb al-nabawī* written by Shams al-dīn Muḥammad ibn 'Alī Ibn Ṭūlūn al-Dimashqī (d. 953/1546). In the book Ibn Ṭūlūn gives several quotations from al-Dhahabī's *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī*. These quotations always begin with the words "qāla al-Dhahabī". There are also some manuscripts of *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* which give al-Dhahabī as the author.⁸⁰ In spite of this, his authorship has not been undisputed. In presenting *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* in *Kashf al-zunūn*, Ḥājjī Khalīfa quoted its opening sentence ("al-ḥamd li-llāh alladhī a'ṭā kull nafs khuluqahā") but omitted al-Dhahabī's name as the author and instead ascribed the text to Jalāl al-dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505).⁸¹ Jalāl al-dīn al-Suyūṭī wrote a book about the Prophet's medicine called *al-Manhaj al-sawī wal-manhal al-rawī fī al-ṭibb al-nabawī*, which is also listed by Ḥājjī Khalīfa with an opening sentence and description of the text different from those of *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī*.⁸² Apparently Ḥājjī Khalīfa's ascription of both titles to al-Suyūṭī led Carl Brockelmann to conclude that the two texts, i.e. *al-Manhaj al-sawī* and *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* must be identical,⁸³ although, in fact, they are different texts as has been shown by Maḥmūd Nāzīm al-Nasīmī and Altaf Ahmad Azmi.⁸⁴

In Berlin there are two identical manuscripts, namely ms. no. We 1199 (Ahlwardt 6297: *Mukhtaṣar min kitāb al-ṭibb al-nabawī*) and ms. no. We 1200 (Ahlwardt 6298:

⁷⁹ al-I'ṭām, vol. 5, p. 326 and al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, pp. 77f and 100f.

⁸⁰ al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, p. 77: Dār al-kutub al-zāhirīya, Damascus, ms. no. 166/ṭn (old number 4590); Ma'had al-makḥṭūṭāt al-'arabīya, Cairo, two manuscripts, whose numbers he does not give. These two are probably identical with the ones mentioned by Recep 1969, p. 11, item 17: Dār al-kutub, Cairo, mss. ṭibb 64 and 65. Ömer Recep also mentions the manuscript al-Zāhirīya, Damascus, giving the old number 4590. In addition to these Ömer Recep further lists Ṭal'at al-ṭibb, Cairo, mss. 488 and 522; and al-Maḥṭaf al-'irāqī, Baghdad, ms. 584. al-Nasīmī, op. & loc. cit. also says that the text was printed in Cairo 1380/1961 by Maktabat wa-maṭba'at Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī wa-aulādihi. I have used the edition of al-Sayyid al-Jumailī, Cairo s.a. This edition is based on the same manuscript at Ma'had al-makḥṭūṭāt al-'arabīya, Cairo as the earlier above mentioned printed edition. al-Sayyid al-Jumailī has consulted both the manuscript and the edition printed earlier.

⁸¹ Ḥājjī Khalīfa, *Kashf al-zunūn*, vol. 4, p. 132.

⁸² *ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 221.

⁸³ GALS, vol. 2, pp. 182f.

⁸⁴ al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, pp. 78-81: content of *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* (al-Dhahabī) and pp. 102-106: content of *al-Manhaj* (al-Suyūṭī). His description of the content of *al-Manhaj* is based on manuscript no. 168/ṭn (old number 3127 ṭibb 1) at Dār al-kutub al-zāhirīya. al-Suyūṭī's *al-Manhaj* has also been described in Azmi 1985, pp. 100-106. Azmi's description is based on a ms. in the Institute of History of Medicine and Medical Research, Delhi (no number is given). The Zāhirīya ms. and the Delhi ms. are clearly different from the one ascribed to al-Dhahabī, but there are also differences between the Zāhirīya ms. and the Delhi ms. (see Chapter 5 below).

al-Ṭibb al-nabawī). Of these, ms. no. We 1199 is ascribed to al-Suyūṭī, whereas ms. no. We 1200 is ascribed to Dā'ūd ibn Abī al-Faraj al-Mutaṭabbib. I compared their contents to the printed edition of al-Dhahabī's *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* which I have used and to the description of al-Dhahabī's text given by al-Nasīmī. I have reached the conclusion that the manuscripts We 1199 and We 1200 are identical with *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* ascribed to al-Dhahabī.

The confusion increases when a book titled *al-Ṭibb min al-kitāb wal-sunna* is compared to the text ascribed to al-Dhahabī. The book is an edition of the manuscript in the Cambridge University Library and its author is given as Muwaffaq al-dīn 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī (d. 629/1231).⁸⁵ Also this text is identical with the one ascribed to al-Dhahabī. So is the translation that Cyril Elgood has made of what he considers, on the basis of the information given by Ḥājjī Khalīfa, to be al-Suyūṭī's *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī*, although the manuscript he has used gives Jalāl al-dīn Abū Sulaimān Dā'ūd as the author. The same Abū Sulaimān Dā'ūd is also the author of the manuscript which A. Perron translated over a century ago. Perron's text is also similar to the one ascribed to al-Dhahabī.⁸⁶ All this leaves us one text with four possible authors: Muḥammad al-Dhahabī (on several mss. and in Ibn Ṭūlūn's book), Jalāl al-dīn al-Suyūṭī (on one ms. and in Ḥājjī Khalīfa's *Kashf al-ẓunūn*), 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī (on one ms.), Dā'ūd ibn Abī al-Faraj al-Mutaṭabbib (on one ms.) and Jalāl al-dīn Abū Sulaimān Dā'ūd (on two mss.).

In order to determine the identity of the author I have tried to discover when and where the text was written. The oldest of the manuscripts seems to be ms. no. We 1200, which gives 793/1391 as the year of copying. If the date is correct, the original text must have been written before 793/1391 and therefore al-Suyūṭī could not have written it, because he was not born until 849/1445. Further, the Bodleian Library has a manuscript (ms. no. Marsh 89), which is—according to Ahlwardt—identical with ms. no. We 1200.⁸⁷ The manuscript is undated⁸⁸ but Ahlwardt assumed it to date approximately from 850/1446, which would again exclude al-Suyūṭī from being the author.

I also tried to find evidence in the text itself and so I studied the two published editions of the text, ascribed to al-Baghdādī and al-Dhahabī, and Elgood's translation. Firstly there was one chapter which referred to the author and his acquaintance with other scholars. The passages were almost identical in both of the Arabic editions:

⁸⁵ 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī, *al-Ṭibb min al-kitāb wal-sunna*, ed. 'Abd al-Mu'ṭī Amīn al-Qal'ajī, Beirut 1986. It is based on manuscript no. 99.161 in the Cambridge University Library. The title is also mentioned in GALS, vol. 1, p. 881, where the ms. number is given Cambridge 904.

⁸⁶ Elgood 1962, pp. 44f; Elgood also compares his own text to Perron's translation, Perron 1860.

⁸⁷ Ahlwardt 1893, Band 5, p. 559. Ahlwardt gives the manuscript the number Uri 638, which is the entry number of J. Uri's Latin catalogue of 1787.

⁸⁸ The manuscript lacks both date and the name of the author. This information was given to me by Mr Colin Wakefield, the Senior Assistant Librarian of the Bodleian Library who checked the manuscript for me. Basing his judgement on the paper and ink used, he further estimated that the manuscript dates from the 14th or 15th century.

al-Dhahabī:

Yaqūlu al-kātib: wa-ra'aitu shaikhanā al-shaikh Ibrāhīm al-Raqqī baṣīran bil-ṭibb, wa-kadhālika shaikhanā al-shaikh Taqī al-dīn Ibn Taimīya, wal-shaikh 'Imād al-dīn al-Wāsiṭī raḥimahu Allāh.⁸⁹

The same passage in the edition ascribed to al-Baghdādī begins with "yaqūlu al-mu'allif" and leaves out "raḥimahu Allāh" after al-Wāsiṭī.⁹⁰ Cyril Elgood translated the passage:

The author of this book (upon whom may God have mercy) here remarks: I once saw our shaykh Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Rūmī who was highly skilled in Medicine. So also were Shaykh-ul-Islām Taqī-ul-Dīn Aḥmad bin Taymiah and Shaykh 'Imād-ul-Dīn al-Wāsiṭī (upon both of whom may God have mercy).⁹¹

Here the name of Ibrāhīm al-Raqqī is replaced by Ibrāhīm al-Rūmī, which is obviously a corruption.

The persons mentioned in the text all lived in Damascus in the latter part of the 7th and early 8th centuries: Ibrāhīm al-Raqqī died in 703/1303,⁹² Ibn Taimīya in 728/1328⁹³ and 'Imād al-dīn Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Wāsiṭī in 711/1311.⁹⁴ The wording of the passage indicates that the author had actually met at least Ibrāhīm al-Raqqī and therefore had to be his contemporary. Of the possible authors, al-Baghdādī had already died in 629/1231 and could not have referred to any of these three persons. Thus he is excluded from being the writer of the book. al-Suyūṭī was born in 849/1445 and could not have met any of the three. In contrast to al-Suyūṭī and al-Baghdādī, al-Dhahabī can be connected with each of the three persons mentioned in the passage. They all lived in Damascus and al-Dhahabī seems to have known at least two of them. I mentioned Ibn Taimīya's connection with al-Dhahabī above. As to al-Raqqī, he was al-Dhahabī's teacher. Furthermore, the biographer Ibn Rajab quotes al-Dhahabī as having said that al-Raqqī was advanced in the science of medicine.⁹⁵ Also al-Wāsiṭī frequented the same circles as al-Dhahabī: he was a companion of Ibn Taimīya.⁹⁶

One of the transmission chains of hadiths quoted in the book includes Yūsuf al-Mizzī. The chain shows that al-Mizzī had personally transmitted the tradition in question to the author of *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī*. As mentioned above, Yūsuf al-Mizzī was al-Dhahabī's teacher from whom al-Dhahabī heard traditions and therefore it points to him as the author of the book. The relevant passage in the printed edition ascribed to

⁸⁹ DH, p. 156.

⁹⁰ al-Baghdādī, *al-Ṭibb min al-kitāb wal-sunna*, p. 187.

⁹¹ Elgood 1962, p. 129.

⁹² Ibn Rajab, *Kitāb al-dhail*, vol. 2, p. 349. *al-I'lām*, vol. 1, p. 29. *GAL*², vol. 2, p. 38 (*ar-Rāqī*'ī) and *GALS*, vol. 2, p. 26 (*ar-Raqqī*).

⁹³ Ibn Taimīya is also mentioned in DH, p. 152; al-Baghdādī, *al-Ṭibb min al-kitāb wal-sunna*, p. 181 and Elgood 1962, p. 125.

⁹⁴ Ibn Rajab, *Kitāb al-dhail*, vol. 2, pp. 358-360.

⁹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 349 "wa-taqaddama fī 'ilm al-ṭibb."

⁹⁶ *ibid.*, p. 359.

al-Dhahabī is as follows:

Akhbaranī al-imām al-ḥāfiẓ Jamāl al-dīn Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf ibn al-Zakī ‘Abd al-Rahmān al-Mizzī ... [Then follows the chain of transmitters ending with Salmā bint Qais as the first reporter.] ‘an Umm al-Mundhīr Salmā bint Qais al-Anṣārīya, qālat: Dakhala rasūl Allāh ṣallā Allāh ‘alaihi wa-sallama wa-ma‘ahu ‘Alī, wa-‘Alī nāqih, wa-lanā dawālī mu‘allaqa, qālat: fa-qāma rasūl Allāh ṣallā Allāh ‘alaihi wa-sallama ya’kulu wa-qāma ‘Alī ya’kulu fa-qāla al-nabī ṣallā Allāh ‘alaihi wa-sallama: Mahlan yā ‘Alī, fa-innaka nāqih ...⁹⁷

In the edition ascribed to al-Baghdādī, the chain of transmitters is omitted and Umm Salama is erroneously given as the first reporter of the Prophet’s words.⁹⁸

Elgood’s translation shows that his manuscript contained the whole chain, but al-Mizzī’s name has been written al-Mazanī:

Says the author of this book: I was told by the Imām al-Ḥāfiẓ Jamāl-ul-Dīn abu Ḥajjāj Yūsuf bin al-Zakī ‘Abd-ul-Rahman Yūsuf al-Mazanī [the chain of transmitters] from Umm-ul-Manzir Salmi bint Qayis al-Anṣārīyya. And verily she said: The Prophet entered my tent⁹⁹ and with him came ‘Alī. ‘Alī was convalescing from some sickness. Now, we had there a palmtree with some clusters hanging from it.¹⁰⁰ And she continued her story: the Prophet stood eating and ‘Alī too stood there eating. Then said the Prophet: Gently, gently, you are convalescent ...¹⁰¹

Moreover, all three versions of the text contain two lengthy references to the Syrian hadith scholar Muḥyi al-dīn al-Nawawī, who lived 631/1233-676/1277, well after al-Baghdādī.¹⁰²

On the basis of these references it seems certain that the author of *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* cannot be either ‘Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī or Jalāl al-dīn al-Suyūṭī. The ascription to al-Suyūṭī probably arises from the confusion apparent in Ḥājji Khalīfa’s *Kashf al-ẓunūn*. The error of ascribing the text to al-Baghdādī may be based on the fact that he, or actually one of his students, has written a book on the Prophet’s medicine.¹⁰³ This book was used extensively as a source for *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* and in consequence ‘Abd al-Laṭīf’s name is mentioned on several occasions in the text.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁷ DH, pp. 154f.

⁹⁸ al-Baghdādī, *al-Ṭibb min al-kitāb wal-sunna*, p. 185. The hadith collections give Umm al-Mundhīr bint Qais as the first reporter (Ibn Māja, *al-Sunan*, vol. 2, p. 1139 (hadith 3442) and ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, vol. 6, p. 364).

⁹⁹ al-Dhahabī’s and al-Baghdādī’s texts do not mention the word ‘tent’.

¹⁰⁰ al-Dhahabī explained *dawālī mu‘allaqa* to mean bunches of unripe dates that were hung for ripening (DH, p. 155).

¹⁰¹ Elgood 1962, p. 127.

¹⁰² DH, pp. 170 and 210, al-Baghdādī, *al-Ṭibb min al-kitāb wal-sunna*, pp. 201 and 244 and Elgood 1962, pp. 138 (the name is rendered as Muḥyi-ul-Dīn al-Tawawī) and 163.

¹⁰³ The book is called *al-Arba‘īna al-ṭibbīya al-mustakhraja min sunan Ibn Māja wa-sharḥuhā*. See Chapter 5 below.

¹⁰⁴ ‘Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī’s book *al-Arba‘īn* is mentioned once in DH, p. 201 (“qāla al-Muwaffaq

According to al-Nasīmī the text of *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* also shows the profound influence of al-Kaḥḥāl Ibn Ṭarkhān's book on the Prophet's medicine,¹⁰⁵ even though his book is not mentioned in the text. After comparing the two texts al-Nasīmī concluded that the author of *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* sometimes summarized al-Kaḥḥāl Ibn Ṭarkhān's medical explanations.¹⁰⁶ Because al-Kaḥḥāl Ibn Ṭarkhān lived 650/1252-720/1320, al-Baghdādī cannot have used his book as a source and this also means that he could not have been the author of *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī*.

This discussion leads me to conclude that *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* seems to have been written either in the late 7th/13th century or in the first half of the 8th/14th century. The above quotations show that the author must have been acquainted with the prominent scholars in Damascus. The content of the book further indicates that the author himself had an extensive knowledge of the hadith material and other relevant literature. This indicates that he must himself have been a hadith scholar. After excluding al-Suyūfī and ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī as the authors, there remain three persons: Dāʿūd ibn Abī al-Faraj al-Mutaṭabbib, Jalāl al-dīn Abū Sulaimān Dāʿūd and Muḥammad al-Dhahabī. I have been unable to find any information concerning Dāʿūd ibn Abī al-Faraj al-Mutaṭabbib or his possible knowledge of the hadiths. His name indicates that he was a medical practitioner. He may have copied the text for his own use and his name was later confused with that of the author. I have not been able to establish the identity of the other Dāʿūd, either. However, the similarity in their names leads me to suspect that the two Dāʿūds might be one person. It may be that at some point Dāʿūd ibn Abī al-Faraj's patronymic was dropped and replaced with Abū Sulaimān, the name Dāʿūd Abū Sulaimān possibly connoting the biblical David and lending the text the authority of a prophet who had received his knowledge and wisdom from God.

All in all it seems most likely that Muḥammad al-Dhahabī is the actual author of the text, because he not only possessed the required knowledge of the hadiths but was also a scholar who shared the view of the traditionalists in stressing the importance of following the example of the Prophet and his companions; a view which is clearly expressed in the text of *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī*.

3.2. *Ibn Qayyim al-Jauzīya*

Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr ibn Ayyūb ibn Saʿd al-Zarʿī al-Dimashqī known as Ibn Qayyim al-Jauzīya was born in Damascus in 691/1292 and died there in 751/1350. His father was the cleaner (*qayyim*)¹⁰⁷ of the Hanbalite *madrassa*, al-Jauzīya, which

ʿAbd al-Laṭīf fī Kitāb al-Arbaʿīn"), correspondingly al-Baghdādī, *al-Ṭibb min al-kitāb wal-sunna*, p. 234 and Elgood 1962, p. 158.

¹⁰⁵ The book is called *al-Aḥkām al-nabawīya fī al-ṣināʿa al-ṭibbīya*. See Chapter 5 below.

¹⁰⁶ al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, p. 83.

¹⁰⁷ There are different opinions regarding the duties and the status of the *qayyim*. He has been interpreted as being the manager (*mudabbir*) of the *madrassa* (Sharaf al-dīn 1967, p. 67) and the superintendent (Laoust 1971a, p. 821). Another opinion is that the *qayyim* was employed to water, sweep and clean the *madrassa* (al-Baqarī 1979, p. 13). Leonor Fernandes has published two lists specifying the salaries of the appointees at two Mamluk *madrassas*. The lists show that the salary

served as the main Hanbalite court of law in Damascus. He received a profound education in the traditional disciplines. He studied exegesis of the Koran, traditions and law. In these subjects he had several teachers, among them his own father, who taught him the law of inheritance.¹⁰⁸ Ibn al-Qayyim was also interested in Sufism and one of his teachers in this field was Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Wāsiṭī (d. 711/1311), a Hanbalite mystic and a companion of Ibn Taimīya.¹⁰⁹

Ibn al-Qayyim's most significant teacher was Ibn Taimīya. They did not meet each other before 712/1313, when Ibn Taimīya returned to Damascus from Egypt. Then Ibn al-Qayyim became his most devoted disciple. Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī says that Ibn al-Qayyim was so attached to Ibn Taimīya that he never challenged a word Ibn Taimīya had said but sided with him in everything.¹¹⁰

Ibn Taimīya was imprisoned several times during his career. The last time occurred in 726/1326, after he had condemned the popular practice of visiting saints' graves. He was imprisoned in the citadel of Damascus and, after a couple of days, his disciples were also arrested. Among them was Ibn al-Qayyim, who was detained in prison, even though the other disciples were released after receiving a severe reprimand. Ibn al-Qayyim was kept in prison but separated from his master, and was not released until Ibn Taimīya died in 728/1328.¹¹¹ Ibn al-Qayyim spent his time in prison in reading the Koran and meditating, which led him to ecstatic experiences and he gained a deeper understanding of Sufism.¹¹²

Ibn al-Qayyim was known for his piety and he made several pilgrimages to Mecca, where he was known and admired for his religious zeal.¹¹³ Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī tells that when Ibn al-Qayyim performed his dawn prayers, he continued invoking God until the sun was well up and said: "This is my breakfast. If I do not get it, my strength declines."¹¹⁴

Ibn al-Qayyim's career was modest, and it may well be that his close association with Ibn Taimīya and his adherence to the *shaiikh's* doctrines prevented him from getting the necessary support from the government circles for the advancement of his career.¹¹⁵ In 743/1342 Ibn al-Qayyim gave his inaugural lecture at the *madrasa* al-

of the *qayyim* was either the same or lower than that of the servant (*farrāsh*) and the gatekeeper (*bawwāb*) (Fernandes 1987, pp. 90, 92). The low salary indicates that the status of the *qayyim* cannot have been that of a manager. Furthermore, Maya Shatzmiller has listed *qayyim* among the unskilled occupations and identified it as a mosque cleaner (Shatzmiller 1994, p. 146).

¹⁰⁸ Ibn Ḥajar, al-Durar, vol. 3, p. 354. The teaching activity is not in conflict with the father's non-scholarly status. There are several examples of lower functionaries who used the possibility to study in the *madrasa* in which they worked. Some of them even got the opportunity to teach and issue *ijāzas*: cf. Berkey 1992, pp. 200f.

¹⁰⁹ Ibn al-Qayyim's interest in Sufism is mentioned in Ibn Rajab, Kitāb al-dhail, vol. 2, p. 448. Ibn al-Qayyim referred to al-Wāsiṭī's teachings in his book *Shifā' al-ʿalīl*, pp. 29-32. For the life of al-Wāsiṭī see Ibn Rajab, Kitāb al-dhail, vol. 2, pp. 358-360.

¹¹⁰ Ibn Ḥajar, al-Durar, vol. 3, p. 354.

¹¹¹ Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya, vol. 14, pp. 123 and 140.

¹¹² Ibn Rajab, Kitāb al-dhail, vol. 2, p. 448.

¹¹³ *ibid.*, p. 448.

¹¹⁴ Ibn Ḥajar, al-Durar, vol. 3, p. 355.

Ṣadrīya, where he remained as teacher until he died and where his son succeeded him in this capacity. In addition to his teaching activities he led the prayers at al-Jauzīya and gave sermons. As a jurisconsult he also gave legal opinions (*fatwā*) and followed the teachings of Ibn Taimīya in his decisions, which led him to dispute with Ibn Taimīya's opponents. In spite of these controversies, Ibn al-Qayyim was respected for his learning and had eminent persons as pupils.¹¹⁶

Ibn al-Qayyim was a prolific writer and produced a considerable number of writings on various topics: religious sciences, jurisprudence, political theory and mysticism.¹¹⁷ His writings reflect the ideas of Ibn Taimīya, which he had absorbed and which he endeavoured to popularize. He was, however, more interested in mysticism than his master and that is also evident in his literary work. His major work on mysticism is *Madārij al-sālikīn*, which is considered to be the masterpiece of Hanbalite mystical literature. Ibn al-Qayyim is generally considered a talented writer and he does, indeed, write very clear and fluent prose. Now and then his style is rhetorical and reveals his abilities as a preacher. In the opinion of Henri Laoust his style is far more eloquent than the dry and succinct prose of Ibn Taimīya.¹¹⁸

Even though there are several independent editions of Ibn al-Qayyim's book *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī*, it is actually part of a larger book in four volumes called *Zād al-ma'ād fī hady khair al-'ibād Muḥammad* (Provisions of the hereafter in the guidance of the best of servants, Muḥammad).¹¹⁹ *Zād al-ma'ād* is a hadith book, in which Ibn al-Qayyim relates occurrences in the life of the Prophet and uses them to formulate general rules of proper conduct both in daily life and ritual. He also took up medical issues with the intention of showing that the Prophet's example could be accepted in these questions as well.

The medical part contains a cursory presentation of general medical theory and a more detailed discussion of those aspects of the theory that have theological implications. Ibn al-Qayyim did not arrange his material as clearly in sections as al-Dhahabī, but most of the theoretical issues are presented in the beginning. They are followed by descriptions of individual diseases and their cures. The list of drugs and foodstuffs is placed at the end. Like al-Dhahabī, Ibn al-Qayyim also dealt with approximately twenty diseases in detail, but made short references to several others.

¹¹⁵ Laoust 1971a, p. 822.

¹¹⁶ Ibn Rajab, *Kitāb al-dhail*, vol. 2, p. 449. Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, vol. 14, pp. 202 and 234f. Laoust 1971a, p. 822. Ibn al-Qayyim's two major disputes with Ibn Taimīya's opponent, the Shafī'ite chief judge, Taqī al-dīn al-Subkī (d. 756/1355) are mentioned in Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, vol. 14, pp. 216 and 235.

¹¹⁷ A list of his literary works is given by Ibn Rajab, *Kitāb al-dhail*, vol. 2, pp. 449f and GAL², vol. 2, pp. 127-129 and GALS, vol. 2, pp. 126-128.

¹¹⁸ Laoust 1971a, p. 821.

¹¹⁹ Ibn Qayyim al-Jauzīya, *Zād al-ma'ād fī hady khair al-'ibād Muḥammad*, vols. 1-4, Cairo, s.a. The chapters on Prophet's medicine are in vol. 3, pp. 63-199.

3.3. Ibn Muflīḥ

Shams al-dīn Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Muflīḥ al-Maqdisī was born in Jerusalem in the first decade of the 8th/14th century. When he grew up he moved to Damascus, where he studied Hanbalite jurisprudence. Later he acted as a deputy to the Hanbalite *qāḍī al-quḍāt*. He died in Damascus in 763/1362.¹²⁰

Among his teachers was Ibn Taimīya and he is said to have been, together with Ibn al-Qayyim, one of the best informed on Ibn Taimīya's writings and doctrines.¹²¹ Ibn Muflīḥ's deep knowledge in the Hanbalite *fiqh* was recognized, and Ibn al-Qayyim has been reported as saying: "There is no one under the stars more knowledgeable in the doctrines of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal's school than Ibn Muflīḥ".¹²²

Ibn Muflīḥ was a prolific writer. His major works were *Kitāb al-furūʿ* and *Kitāb fī uṣūl al-fiqh*, two books on Hanbalite jurisprudence and legal methodology. The former, *Kitāb al-furūʿ*, established the true legal doctrine of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal.¹²³ A third important book was *al-Ādāb al-sharʿīya wal-minaḥ al-marʿīya* (Morals based on *sharīʿa* and gifts that deserve to be respected) in three volumes. This was a book on ethics, advising on the correct norms in religious and public life. *al-Ādāb al-sharʿīya* was profoundly influenced by the ideas of Ibn Taimīya.¹²⁴

al-Ādāb al-sharʿīya contains a fairly large section on medicine. The medical chapters are in the second and third volume and consist of nearly 300 pages. The material is not well organized and some of the subjects are treated repeatedly in different contexts. Sometimes it is impossible to discern Ibn Muflīḥ's own views on a subject, because he quotes extensively from the hadiths and from other authorities without adding any comments of his own. His presentation of diseases is not as detailed as that of al-Dhahabī of Ibn al-Qayyim. In most cases Ibn Muflīḥ only mentions the illness, when describing the uses of medicaments. There are about ten diseases that he explains more thoroughly. His main interest is on the prevention of illnesses and on the properties of drugs and foodstuffs.

¹²⁰ Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar*, vol. 4, pp. 261f; *al-Iʿlām*, vol. 7, p. 107.

¹²¹ Laoust 1960, p. 68.

¹²² Ibn ʿImād, *Shadharāt*, vol. 6, p. 199.

¹²³ Laoust 1960, p. 69.

¹²⁴ Laoust 1939, p. 495.