From the Banks of the Tigris to Circumambulating *al-Kaʿba*

The Fate of a Manuscript from the Last Abbasid Caliph's Library during the Mongol Invasion

Ghasem Gharib*

Compared to previous nomadic incursions from the Eurasian Steppes into western Islamic lands, the Mongol invasions that conquered Transoxiana and Iran are considered the largest. The speed and extent of the three waves of Mongol invasions surprised the rulers of West Asia and the Abbasid Caliphate. The Mongol invasions brought deep, long-term changes to Islamic political ideology and legitimacy, while also causing immediate cultural destruction in Iran and the broader Islamic world. The raiders' destruction of libraries exemplifies their vengeful actions after conquering cities. Besides accounts from primary sources, manuscript evidence confirms the destruction of books and libraries during this crisis. This article aims to demonstrate that marginal notes in manuscript No. 16388 from the Marʿashī Library in Qum provide evidence of this destruction. The notes contain direct information about the Mongol invasion of Baghdad and the damage suffered by the library of the last Abbasid caliph. Beyond their political significance, these marginal notes also reveal how scientific and educational use of surviving manuscripts persisted, indicating that although the Mongol invasion disrupted scientific institutions, the scientific traditions of schools and daily life continued after the catastrophe.

Keywords: Marʿashī manuscript No. 16388, ʿAbd Allāh al-Qazwīnī, Muḥammad ibn Suleymān, Kitāb al-Sunan, Ibn Mājah, al-Mustaʿṣim bi-'llāh, Mongols, Baghdad

Introduction

Islamic manuscripts are not only an essential part of the material heritage of human history, but they also played different roles in pre-modern societies than they do today. For past authors and readers, they primarily served as vessels for editing or publishing a particular work. Today, however, these manuscripts also provide valuable sources of information as they can help uncover the "unwritten parts of history" and recall events not found in traditional narrative sources. They are particularly insightful for social and cultural issues often overlooked in political history, such as those revealed through marginal notes.

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* Correspondence details: Dr. Ghasem Gharib, Lecture, History Department, Dr. Ali Shariati Faculty of Letters and Humanities, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran / ghasem.gharib@mail.um.ac.ir.

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Some manuscripts contain annotations about book circulation, providing insights into how these books were bought or sold, as well as information on manuscript movement across various territories. Tracking the movement of manuscripts can explain how certain ideas, beliefs, or religions migrated from one region to another. For instance, the transmission of hadiths from one narrator to another across cities was often accompanied by the transfer of manuscripts. Individuals who received permission (*ijāza*) from a hadith scholar to transmit particular hadith would usually document that permission on the manuscript itself, highlighting the specific scholar from whom they acquired the knowledge. The *ijāza* system, a recognized component of Islamic pedagogical traditions, served as a significant mechanism for the authoritative transmission of hadith. This mode of hadith instruction was widely adopted by the Iranian ʿulamāʾ from the early Islamic centuries until the late pre-modern period, encompassing both hadith and fiqh studies.[1]

The manuscript under analysis in this article is a unique copy of a hadith initially written in Hamadān, a city in western Iran, before it traveled to Damascus, Baghdad, and the Hijaz. The original manuscript no longer survives, but a copy, now housed in the Marʿashī Library in Qum,[2] was created centuries later and includes marginal notes documenting the original's journey. One of these marginal notes in the Marʿashī copy indicates that the original manuscript became part of the library of the last Abbasid caliph, al-Mustaʿṣim bi-'llāh, after it was transferred to Baghdad in 635 AH/1237 CE.[3] Although the Mongols destroyed the caliph's library during their invasion, the original manuscript allegedly survived because someone fleeing Baghdad managed to take it with them.

Marginal notes in manuscripts constitute valuable historical and cultural documentation of Islamic societies, offering a diverse range of information relevant to scholarly inquiry.

> Due to the wide range of content that we find in such notes, they are a rich source for a number of fields, from the history of ideas, to social, economic, an urban history, historical topography, and biographical studies. We encounter the names of persons, dates, topographical information, the names of buildings, links of kinship, prices, historical events, and terms for various crafts and trades.[4]

This study will first introduce the Marʿashī manuscript and its codicological features to identify what can be learned about the original manuscript from the marginal notes in this extant copy. Then, it will analyze these marginal notes in relation to their historical context, arguing that they offer evidence of Baghdad's fall and the destruction of the last Abbasid caliph's

1 Idriz, Educational tradition of ijāzah, 179-195.

2 The Āyat Allāh Marʿashī Najafī Library, situated in Qum, Iran, constitutes a prominent repository of Islamic manuscripts, holding a position of significant importance within both Iranian and broader Islamic scholarly circles. Its collection of old manuscripts exhibits a scale and historical depth comparable to that of the Āstān Quds Raḍawī Library in Mashhad, Iran. The provenance of the library's holdings traces back to Najaf, Iraq, with their subsequent relocation to Qum occurring in conjunction with the migration of its founder, Āyat Allāh Shihāb al-Dīn Marʿashī Najafī (1897-1990).

3 Fol. 127b.

4 Görke and Hirschler, Introduction, 10.

Figure 1: Fol. 127, Qum, Marʿashī Library, No. 16388, including the marginal notes

library. Lastly, by examining these notes, the study seeks to shed light on the manuscript's journey, providing insight into the pre-modern Islamic world's manuscript circulation and how Islamic knowledge was transmitted through these codices.

Manuscript No. 16388 of the Marʿashī Library

Manuscript No. 16388, preserved at the Marʿashī Library in Qum, contains the first volume of *Kitāb al-Sunan*, authored by the renowned hadith scholar Ibn Mājah (d. 273 AH/887 CE). This copy, consisting of 127 folios in the naskh script, spans from the beginning to the end of chapter 23, *Kitāb al-waṣāyā*.[5] On the first folio, a brief note records Ibn Mājah's birth, death, and burial location, based on the book *al-Taqyīd* by Ibn Nuqṭa. Written by the manuscript's primary copyist, it is positioned in the upper left corner of the first folio and reads:

> The biography of the author ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad al-Qazwīnī: He was born in the year 209 AH and died on Monday, 22 Ramaḍān 273 AH, and was buried on Tuesday. God's peace be upon him. This was stated by Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Ghanī ibn Abū Bakr ibn Nuqṭa al-Baghdādī in his book *al-Taqyīd li-maʿrifat al-ruwāt wa-l-sunan wa-l-masānīd*.[6]

5 Marʿashī, *Fihrist-i nuskhah hā-yi khaṭṭī-i Kitābkhānah-i Āyat Allāh Marʿashī Najafī*, vol. 41, 531-533.

6 Fol. 1a:
"ترجمة المؤلّف لأبى عبدالله محمّد القزوينى ولد 902 هجرى و توفّى يوم الإثنين ثمان بقين من شهر رمضان سنة 372 و دفن يوم الثّلثاء رحمه الله تعالى. قاله محمّد بن عبدالغنى بن أبى بكر بن نقطة البغدادى فى كتابه التقييد لمعرفة السنن و المسانيد."

According to the colophon, the manuscript's copyist was ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ḥaydar ibn Abū al-Qāsim al-Qazwīnī, who completed the work in 562 AH/1167 CE:

> And the completion of *Kitāb al-waṣāyā* was … the ninth of the month of Rabīʿ al-Awwal, five hundred and sixty-two of the hegira. May God bless its founder and reader. Grateful to God, ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ḥaydar ibn Abū al-Qāsim al-Qazwīnī.[7]

Further information about the scribe is found in a note on the first folio, which clarifies that al-Qazwīnī was a jurist (*faqīh*) from Hamadān who died there in 582 AH/1186 CE:

> Biography of the scribe: ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ḥaydar ibn Abū al-Qāsim al-Qazwīnī, the jurist, died in Hamadān in the year five hundred and eighty-two of the hegira.[8]

Figure 2: Fol. 1, Qum, Marʿashī Library, No. 16388, including the ijāza

Other sources confirm that his full name was ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ḥaydar ibn Abū al-Qāsim al-Qazwīnī, a prominent jurist and hadith scholar (*muḥaddith*) who passed away in 582 AH/1186 CE. Many Iranian hadith scholars traveled from various cities to Hamadān to hear hadith from al-Qazwīnī.[9] For instance, ʿAbd al-Muḥsin ibn ʿAbd ʿAmīd al-Ṣūfī al-Abharī, originally

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7 Fol. 126b:
"و كان الفراغ من الوصايا … تاسع من شهر ربيع الاول إثنين و ستين و خمسمائة أحسن الله القائمة فيها و فيما تليها بمنّه و كرمه على يد أقلّ عباد الله تعالى عبدالله بن حيدر بن ابى القاسم القزوينى حامد الله تعالى."

8 Fol. 1a:
"ترجمة الكاتب: ابوالقاسم عبدالله بن حيدر بن ابى القاسم القزوينى الفقيه المتوفّى بهمدان سنة اثنين و ثمانين و خمسمائة 285."

9 Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh-i Baghdād*, 15, ed. al-Qādir ʿAṭā, 276.

from Zanjān, went to Hamadān to listen to hadith recitation by al-Qazwīnī and became a jurist after learning about hadith and Islamic jurisprudence from him.

Similarly, Al-Ṣafadī recounts a story involving Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, a hadith scholar and author of *Tārīkh-i Baghdād*, who died in 463 AH/1071 CE.[10] Other scholars, such as al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Mūsā al-Hazemī al-Hamadānī, a famous hadith scholar from Hamadān who died in Baghdad in 584 AH/1189 CE, studied under al-Qazwīnī during the second half of the 6th century.[11] Maḥmūd ibn Asʿad al-ʿAqili and al-Khalīl ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Ismāʿīl al-Qazwīnī also heard hadiths from him in Hamadān.[12] Based on these accounts, it is plausible that the manuscript written by al-Qazwīnī was originally copied in Hamadān.[13]

Despite appearances, the Marʿashī copy contains an *ijāza* (reading permission) that changes the perspective on its origins. This permission, transcribed by the Marʿashī copy's scribe, actually dates to the first half of the 9th century AH and not to the 6th century, when al-Qazwīnī lived.[14] We can date the *ijāza* because some individuals mentioned in it are known to have lived during the 8th and 9th centuries AH. For instance, Abū Zurʿa al-ʿIrāqī, mentioned in the *ijāza*, died in 826 AH/1422 CE, indicating that the Marʿashī copy was produced not before the first half of the 9th century AH.

According to the *ijāza*, the Marʿashī copy was transcribed from Muḥammad ibn Suleymān's copy, and the scribe claimed permission (*al-majāz*) for hadith transmission from Muḥammad ibn Suleymān. However, the copyist of the Marʿashī manuscript cannot have been Muḥammad ibn Suleymān since whoever it was had permission from him. Unfortunately, the Marʿashī copyist did not reveal his identity, though he clearly transcribed the copy from Muḥammad ibn Suleymān's codex. Muḥammad ibn Suleymān himself copied his manuscript from ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ḥaydar ibn Abū al-Qāsim al-Qazwīnī's original, and while he did not record his own date of transcription, he included the date of al-Qazwīnī's original (9 Rabīʿ al-Awwal 562 AH [1167 CE]). The identity of the copyist and date of transcription of the Marʿashī copy remain unknown.

The high prestige of ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ḥaydar ibn Abū al-Qāsim al-Qazwīnī likely motivated subsequent hadith scholars to preserve the details of his original manuscript. His reputation stemmed from being one of the main narrators of Ibn Mājah's hadiths and for transcribing a personal copy in his own handwriting.

However, Muḥammad ibn Suleymān chose to use al-Qazwīnī's manuscript as a source not solely because of al-Qazwīnī's prestige but also due to the significance of the manuscript itself. The Marʿashī copy's unknown scribe replicated the colophon verbatim, preserving Muḥammad ibn Suleymān's name. Without the inclusion of his *ijāza* at the manuscript's outset, it would have been challenging to recognize that the Marʿashī copyist was not the primary scribe.

10 Al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfī bi-l-wafayāt*, 19, ed. Ritter, 137.

11 Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-islām*, 41, ed. al-Tadmurī, 199.

12 Al-Rāfiʿī al-Qazwīnī, *al-Tadwīn fī akhbār Qazwīn*, 1, al-ʿAṭāridī, 223.

13 Al-Rāfiʿī al-Qazwīnī, *al-Tadwīn fī akhbār Qazwīn*, 2, al-ʿAṭāridī, 498.

14 Fol. 1a.

The *ijāza* of Muḥammad ibn Suleymān[15] lists several hadith narrators, some of whom are identifiable while others remain obscure. Abū ʿUthmān Saʿīd ibn Ibrāhīm al-Jazāʾirī appears in a local Algerian hadith book,[16] although his death date is unknown. Another, Abū ʿUthmān Saʿīd ibn Muḥammad al-Maqqarī, was a Nayshapur-based narrator who died in 427 AH.[17] Meanwhile, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿAṣimī and Abū Zayd ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Thaʿālibī are mentioned in a North African *ijāza*, but their death dates remain uncertain.[18]

Muḥammad ibn Suleymān seems to have combined multiple *ijāzas,* as he includes narrators spanning various time periods, like Abū Zurʿa al-ʿIrāqī, who died in 826 AH, and Abū Isḥāq Nābulusī, who died in 772 AH.[19] The last narrator mentioned, ʿImād al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Hāfiẓ ibn Badr, died in 678 AH.[20] Thus Muḥammad ibn Suleymān may have amalgamated different permissions in his *ijāza* without paying attention to chronological order, or perhaps the Marʿashī copy's scribe mistakenly reversed their order. Either way, the presence of a 9th-century scholar in the Marʿashī manuscript shows that its date of copying is not 562 AH, and the scribe is not ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ḥaydar ibn Abū al-Qāsim al-Qazwīnī. In addition to the names mentioned in the *ijāza*, which prove that the manuscript belongs to the first half of the 9th century AH, the type of paper in the manuscript also testifies that the manuscript does not date back to the 6th century AH.

Moving al-Qazwīnī's manuscript from Hamadān to Damascus

During the Umayyad period (661-750 CE), the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus was the Caliphate's central mosque. After the Umayyad dynasty's fall, the Abbasid caliphs expanded it, with Faḍl ibn Ṣāliḥ, a relative of Caliph Abū Jaʿfar Manṣūr, constructing the Qubbat al-Māl dome on the mosque's western side.[21]

Hadith readings continued in the Umayyad Mosque under Abbasid ideology. In the latter half of the 5th century AH, Khaṭīb al-Tibrīzī participated in sessions conducted by Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī.[22] Although the mosque's Sunni focus was disrupted during the Fatimid rule, the Great Seljuq conquests restored Damascus to Abbasid influence.[23]

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15 Fol. 1a:
"نقلت من ظهر نسخة شيخنا العلامة محمد بن سليمان المنقولة منها هذه النسخة فالصحة بخطه الحمدلله. أخبرنا أبى عبدالله محمد بن يزيد بن ماجه ابوعثمان سعيد بن ابراهيم الجزائرى سماعا بعدها و اجازة لجميعها عن أبى عثمان سعيد بن محمد المقرى عن أبى يزيد عبدالرحمن بن على بن أحمد العاصمى الشهير بسقين عن ولى الله تعالى أبى العباس أحمد و يروى عن أبى زيد سيّدى عبدالرحمن الثعالبى عن ابى زرعة أحمد بن عبدالرحيم العراقى عن أبى اسحاق ابراهيم بن عبدالله بن أحمد بن بدران النابلسى عن عمادالدين عبدالحافظ بن بدر المذكور. اوّل هذا الاصل به. قال محمد بن سليمان كان الله له مصليا مسلما انتها. و لى منه اجازة عامة فى جميع مروياته."

16 Ḥifnāwī, *Taʿrīf al-khalaf bi-rijāl al-salaf*, 1, ed. Abū al-Ajfān and Baṭīkh, 151.

17 Fārisī, *Tārīkh Naysābūr*, ed. Ṣarīfīnī, 363.

18 Ḥifnāwī, *Taʿrīf al-khalaf bi-rijāl al-salaf*, 1, ed. Abū al-Ajfān and Baṭīkh, 151.

19 Fāsī, *Taʿrīf dhawī al-ʿulā bi-man lam yadhkuruhu al-Dhahabī*, ed. Arnāʾūṭ and Būshī, 207.

20 Al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfī bi-l-wafayāt*, 18, ed. Ritter, 58.

21 Al-Naʿīmī al-Dimashqī, *al-Dāris fī tārīkh al-madāris*, 2, ed. Shams al-Dīn, 296.

22 Al-Dhahabī, *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāẓ*, 3, ed. ʿUmairāt, 222.

23 Burns, *Damascus: A History*, 166.

Hadith reading and hearing and the composition of new hadiths in the Umayyad Mosque were well documented between the 3rd and 6th centuries AH.[24] Scientific activities persisted even after the 7th-century Mongol invasion, as noted by Ibn Battuta, who in 726 AH/1325 CE observed many Qur'an and hadith teaching sessions in the mosque.[25]

To facilitate these sessions, the Umayyad Mosque maintained a vast library for scholars. Medieval Islamic mosques functioned as centers of learning, particularly for Qur'anic and hadith studies. They were key venues for copying, storing, and accessing books, often used by both scholars and the public. For instance, the 5th-century AH hadith scholar Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Faḍl donated his books to the Umayyad Mosque's library.[26]

Considering that al-Qazwīnī's manuscript was a copy of the *Kitāb al-Sunan* by Ibn Mājah, did this book's content influence its transmission? To answer this question, it is essential to understand more about *Kitāb al-Sunan* and its author.[27] The author, Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Yazīd al-Rabaʿī al-Qazwīnī, known as Ibn Mājah (209-273 AH/824-887 CE), was one of the greatest Sunni *muḥaddith*s and wrote the last book of *al-Siḥāḥ al-sitta* (Sunni collections of hadiths). Like other prominent hadith scholars, he traveled to different cities, listening to the Prophet's hadiths from various narrators. He began learning hadiths from narrators in his hometown, Qazvīn, before traveling to Ray, Nayshābūr, Baghdad, and other cities to collect stories about the Prophet's life.[28] The *Kitāb al-Sunan* is the culmination of the knowledge he gathered during his travels and through listening to hadith narrations.

It took about 300 years for *Kitāb al-Sunan* to be recognized as one of the books of *al-Siḥāḥ al-sitta.* Initially, its hadiths were narrated only in Qazvīn before gradually spreading to other cities in Iran.[29] The first people to propose *Kitāb al-Sunan* by Ibn Mājah as the sixth book of *al-Siḥāḥ al-sitta* were Ibn-ʿAsākir and Muḥammad ibn Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī.[30] The similarity between the isnād (chain of transmission) in *Kitāb al-Sunan* and those in hadith collections from the 6th century AH onwards indicates that Ibn Mājah's hadiths first became widely known in Iran, followed by Iraq and Syria, and eventually in Egypt. Once *Kitāb al-Sunan* was acknowledged as one of the primary compilations of Sunni hadiths, scholars began writing commentaries on it. The most prominent commentaries are by ʿAlī ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Niʿma al-Anṣārī (566 AH/1171 CE), ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī (557-629 AH/1162-1231 CE), Ibn al-Mulaqqin (723-804 AH/1323-1401 CE), and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Ṣūyūṭī (849-911 AH/1445-1505 CE).

24 Ibn ʿAsākir, *Tārīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 5, ed. Shīrī, 128, 202; 11, ed. Shīrī, 119; 14, ed. Shīrī, 24, 28, 38; 41, ed. Shīrī, 292; 43, ed. Shīrī, 237.

25 Ibn Baṭūṭa, *Riḥlat Ibn Baṭūṭa*, 1, ed. al-Hādī Tāzī, 314.

26 Ibn ʿAsākir, *Tārīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 5, ed. Shīrī, 66.

27 The best and most accurate edition of *Kitāb al-Sunan* was done by Bashshār ʿAwwād Maʿrūf in 1998. Based on Maʿrūf's edition, the *Kitāb al-Sunan* has 4,341 hadiths arranged in 38 chapters. The book of Ibn Mājah is written based on the subjects of Islamic jurisprudence, so starts with the *Kitāb al-ṭahāra* and ends with the *Kitāb al-Zuhd*.

28 Al-Rāfi al-Qazwīn, *al-Tadwīn fī akhbār Qazwīn*, 2, al-ʿAṭāridī, 49; Ibn Nuqṭa, *al-Taqyīd li-maʿrifat al-ruwāt wa-l-sunan wa-l-masānīd*, 1, ed. al-Tashādī, 281.

29 Ibn Nuqṭa, *al-Taqyīd li-maʿrifat al-ruwāt*, 1, ed. al-Tashādī, 282.

30 Kâtip Çelebi, *Kashf al-ẓunūn ʿan asāmī al-kutub*, vol. 1, 103.

According to Iranian manuscript catalog statistics, only two copies of *Kitāb al-Sunan* have survived in Iranian libraries,[31] both held in the Ayatollah al- Marʿashī al-Najafī Library in Qum.[32] Manuscript No. 16388, which is the focus of this article, was previously dated to 562 AH/1167 CE, but this research suggests it actually belongs to the 9th century AH. The catalogers of the Marʿashī Library were misled by the manuscript's marginal notes, most of which date to before the Mongol invasion era and the looting of Baghdad. Al-Qazwīnī's manuscript's significance is partly due to the status of ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ḥaydar ibn Abū al-Qāsim al-Qazwīnī, who was not only a narrator but also the scribe of Ibn Mājah's hadiths, which made this manuscript valuable enough to be transferred from one city to another.

Another reason for transferring al-Qazwīnī's manuscript from Hamadān to Damascus was the superior status of hadith studies in Damascus compared to Hamadān. This is supported by the *ijāzas* (licenses) for transmitting hadiths copied by Damascus scholars, which are present in the Marʿashī manuscript but originate from the original al-Qazwīnī's manuscript. Several marginal notes copied on the last folio differ in script from the main text and appear to have been written later. These notes, dated between the late 6th century AH and the late 8th century AH, were written continuously in a spiral form, appearing on the back of al-Qazwīnī's manuscript.

The Marʿashī copy, like many medieval Islamic manuscripts, includes a number of additional folios following the main text. The scribe who wrote notes on the last folio, perhaps worried that these additional pages could be lost, chose to record all the information about reading sessions on this final folio's margin. This may explain why the scribe wrote the notes consecutively, making full use of the available margin space.

Among these notes are various certificates of listening and reading (*al-samāʿ* and *al-qirāʾah*) from different occasions involving al-Qazwīnī's manuscript. However, two particular notes stand out, as they reveal the manuscript's journey from Damascus to Baghdad. Before examining its broader circulation, let us first consider how the manuscript was utilized in Damascus, as evidenced by the surviving certificates.

The first *qirāʾa* of al-Qazwīnī's manuscript occurred in 595 AH/1199 CE. The note is written on the last folio, starting from the upper-right corner and extending to the left. This annotation informs us that in 595 AH/1199 CE, Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh ibn Aḥmad ibn Aḥmad al-Khashshab al-Khaṭīb, Abū al-Ḥasan Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-ʿAbbāsī, Abū ʿAbd Allāh ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ibn Hibat Allāh ibn al-Maʾmūn, Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī, and Abū al-Ḥasan Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-ʿAbbāsī all read al-Qazwīnī's manuscript under Abū Zurʿa Ṭāhir ibn Muḥammad ibn Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī.[33]

31 Dirāyatī, *Fankhā*, vol. 18, 419.

32 The other copy of the *Kitāb al-Sunan* is manuscript No. 15861 in Marʿashī Library; see Marʿashī, *Fihrist-i nuskhah hā-yi khaṭṭī-i Kitābkhānah-i Āyat Allāh Marʿashī Najafī*, vol. 40, 295.

33 Fol. 127a. The note is:
"سمع و جميع هذا الجزء على الشيخ الصالح ابى زرعه طاهر بن محمد بن طاهر المقدسى بقراءه الشيخ الأجل ابى محمد عبدالله بن احمد بن احمد بن احمد الخشاب الخطيب العالم ابوالحسن احمد بن محمد بن احمد بن على بن عبدالعزيز العباسى و ... ابومحمد عبدالله بن احمد بن على بن هبة الله بن المأمون و ابوالحسن على و كتب حمزه بن على بن حمزة فى يوم من سنة 595ق."

The date of this *samāʿ* is 33 years after the original al-Qazwīnī's manuscript was copied. The manuscript was recited to Abū Zurʿa Ṭāhir ibn Muḥammad ibn Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī, a hadith scholar in Hamadān like al-Qazwīnī and the narrator of al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū Bakr al-Ḥāzimī al-Hamadānī.[34] Thus, Abū Zurʿa narrated both *Kitāb al-Sunan* by al-Nasāʾī and *Kitāb al-Sunan* by Ibn Mājah, which had previously been recited to him by ʿUmar ibn ʿAlī al-Qurashī, from whom he received an *ijāza*.[35] Given that Abū Zurʿa al-Maqdisī died in 564 AH/1169 CE[36] and ʿAbd Allāh ibn Aḥmad died in 586 AH/1190 CE,[37] it is plausible that the Hamza ibn ʿAlī ibn Hamza who wrote the certificate note 31 years after the recitation of al-Qazwīnī's manuscript may have been Hamza ibn ʿAlī ibn Hamza al-Fāris al-Baghdādī, who died on 18 Dhū al-Hijja 602 AH/26 July 1206 CE.[38]

Another marginal note, located in the top left corner of fol. 126b of the Marʿashī copy, reveals that the original manuscript was recited by al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū Mūsā ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Maqdisī to Abū Muḥammad ibn Qudāma on Sunday, 7 Jumādā al-Awwal 619 AH/19 June 1222, at the Umayyad Mosque of Damascus.[39] This note indicates that al-Qazwīnī's manuscript was being used by Syrian hadith scholars at the beginning of the 7th century AH. The scribe mistakenly wrote "Ibn Mūsā" instead of "Abū Mūsā" in this *samāʿ* note. Abū Mūsā ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Maqdisī was known for his skill in reciting texts, as evidenced by a manuscript that al-Dhahabī read and noted was recited by al-Maqdisī in 624 AH/1227 CE.[40]

Finally, another note, dated 25 Rajab 631 AH/26 April 1234 CE, mentions that a group of narrators listened to the hadiths of al-Qazwīnī's manuscript from Muḥammad ʿĪsā, and Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad subsequently heard it from one of those listeners. He then recorded this testimony on the back of the copy and certified it. This *samāʿ* was held in multiple gatherings (*majlis*), though the note does not specify where. Nevertheless, the manuscript likely remained in Damascus at that time.

These marginal notes in the Marʿashī copy contain valuable information from earlier manuscripts, reflecting events involving al-Qazwīnī's manuscript over various periods. A scribe incorporated them into the margin of the Marʿashī copy's last folio, ensuring their authenticity. Consequently, these notes accurately document events related to the original manuscript of al-Qazwīnī, which were later recorded by Muḥammad ibn Suleymān and then reflected in the current Marʿashī copy.

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34 Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-islām*, 41, ed. al-Tadmurī, 199.

35 Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-islām*, 39, ed. al-Tadmurī, 247.

36 Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 20, ed. Arnāʾūṭ, 504.

37 Al-Dhahabī, *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāẓ*, 41, ed. ʿUmairāt, 235.

38 Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 21, ed. Arnāʾūṭ, 442.

39 Fol. 127a. The certificate states: "I got the certification of listening in my handwriting, and it is from the chapter 'Remembrance of death and preparation for it' from Shaykh Abū Muḥammad ibn Qudāma, read by al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū Mūsā ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Maqdisī on Sunday, the seventh of Jumādā al-Awwal in the year six hundred and nineteen of the hegira, in the Mosque of Damascus. Praise be to God only."
"بلغت سماعا من البلاغ بخطی و هو من باب و الذکر الموت و الإستعداد له عن الشیخ ابومحمد بن قدامه بقراءة الحافظ ابن موسی ابن عبدالغنی المقدسی فی الیوم الاحد السابع جمادی الاولی سنة تسع عشرة و ستمائه بجامع دمشق الحمدلله وحده ن."

40 Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 20, ed. Arnāʾūṭ, 570.

Moving al-Qazwīnī's manuscript from Damascus to the library of the last Abbasid caliph

While the surviving certificates in the final folios of the Marʿashī copy detail how al-Qazwīnī's manuscript traveled from Hamadān to Damascus in the early 13th century CE, additional evidence in the paratext suggests that its journey did not stop there. The earlier notes pertained to hadith readings at the Great Mosque of Damascus, while two other notes in the Marʿashī copy's margins reveal not only that al-Qazwīnī's manuscript was transported to Baghdad but also provide intriguing insights into the political history of that period.

One of these notes, "[This book] entered the library of Amīr al-Muʾminīn al-Mustaʿṣim bi-'llāh in the year six hundred and thirty-five of the hegira",[41] reveals that al-Qazwīnī's manuscript became part of the last Abbasid caliph's library in 635 AH/1237 CE. This demonstrates that the manuscript remained in the Umayyad Mosque of Damascus until 1237 CE, after which its value and significance led to its transfer to Baghdad. The question arises: why was al-Qazwīnī's manuscript moved to Baghdad from Damascus, especially given that Damascus was a prominent center of Islamic scholarship and hadith studies?

Baghdad, as the center of the Islamic world in the early 13th century, had a long-standing tradition of receiving valuable manuscripts from other Islamic cities. For instance, Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb al-Tājir, a renowned hadith scholar from Damascus, requested that his children donate his manuscripts to the library of the al-Zaidī Mosque in Baghdad after his death.[42] Similarly, Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī donated his manuscripts to the same mosque and entrusted them to ʿIzz al-Dīn ibn al-Athīr, who transported them from Damascus to Baghdad.[43]

Baghdad's significance led to the establishment of vast libraries during the Abbasid era, some of which were private collections belonging to scholars. For instance, the library of Ibn al-Māristānīyya was a prominent public library that became the main library in Baghdad during Ilkhanid rule.[44] The city's elite, including court officials, dignitaries, and wealthy individuals, also maintained personal collections. For example, Ibn al-ʿAlqamī, vizier to al-Mustaʿṣim, had over 10,000 books in his personal library.[45]

Hadith sessions were especially popular in Baghdad, surpassing those in Damascus, because Baghdad was the seat of the Islamic Caliphate and a focal point of scholarship.

The Seljuq dominance over the Abbasid Caliphate's political structure bolstered Sunni hadith scholars. Notable figures from Baghdad, like ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Jawzī[46], ʿAlī ibn ʿUbayd Allāh al-Zāghūnī[47], and Muḥammad ibn Mūsā Hāzimī[48], advocated for the Abbasid Caliphate's ideology by disseminating Islamic knowledge through hadith readings.

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41 Fol. 127b. The text is:
"دخل بخزانة أمير المؤمنين مستعصم بالله حفظه الله فى السنة خمس و ثلاثين و ستمائه."

42 al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh-i Baghdād*, 15, ed. al-Qādir ʿAṭā, 285.

43 Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-aʿyān*, 6, ed. ʿAbbās, 139.

44 al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh-i Baghdād*, 17, ed. al-Qādir ʿAṭā, 66; Biran, Libraries, books, and transmission of knowledge, 472.

45 Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqā, *al-Fakhrī fī al-ādāb al-sulṭāniyya*, ed. Māyo, 321.

46 Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-aʿyān*, 3, ed. ʿAbbās, 140.

47 Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 20, ed. Arnāʾūṭ, 278.

48 Yāfiʿī, *Mirʾāt al-janān*, 3, ed. Manṣūr, 325.

This hadith transmission relied on manuscripts, increasing the demand for hadith literature in Baghdad.

Additionally, the presence of the Crusaders in Syria likely expedited the relocation of valuable manuscripts to Baghdad, as some feared their destruction in Damascus. While this is speculative without explicit evidence from the Marʿashī copy, the marginal note does state that al-Qazwīnī's manuscript was housed in al-Mustaʿṣim's library. According to historical sources, pre-Mongol Baghdad had several types of libraries, with the most significant being the libraries of the caliphs. Al-Qalqashandī, as cited by Michal Biran, indicated that the largest libraries in Baghdad before the Mongol invasion belonged to the Abbasid caliphs.[49]

> The first, the library of the Abbasid Caliphs in Baghdad, which included books beyond measure that were valuable beyond anything else. It had been like this until the Mongols destroyed Baghdad and their king Hulāgū killed al-Mustaʿṣim, the last of their Caliphs in Baghdad, and the library went as all the earth, its traces were gone, and its remnants distributed.[50]

The Abbasid caliphs maintained opulent personal libraries, often dedicating them to madrasas or other large libraries in Baghdad. For instance, al-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh divided his personal collection among the libraries of the al-Musanāt School, the al-Rubāt al-Khātūnī Library, and the al-Madrasa al-Niẓāmiyya.[51] In another report, it is claimed that Caliph al-Mustanṣir bi-'llāh amassed 140,000 manuscripts, donating 80,000 of them to the library of the al-Madrasa al-Mustanṣiriyya.[52] Al-Dhahabī reported that he transferred 180 packages of manuscripts from his palace to this library, intending to equip it with ample resources, as he had built it across from the al-Madrasa al-Niẓāmiyya.

Al-Mustaʿṣim was a caliph with a great passion for books. He spent much of his time in libraries, often reading and signing official request letters there.[53] According to Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqā, Al-Mustaʿṣim established a personal library to house his exquisite collection of books and entrusted its management to Ṣafī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Muʾmin ibn Yūsuf Urmawī, who copied valuable books for him.[54] After this new library was set up, Al-Mustaʿṣim never returned to the previous one, which remained in the care of Shaykh Ṣadr al-Dīn ʿAlī ibn al-Nayyār.[55] This indicates that there were two libraries in the Dār al-Khilāfa (the caliphal palace): a public library of the former caliphs and a private collection maintained by Al-Mustaʿṣim.

Al-Mustaʿṣim likely later appointed Ibn al-Nayyār as the head of his personal library because, according to Ibn al-Fuwaṭī's account, he initially entrusted Ibn al-Nayyār with his library. Al-Mustaʿṣim ascended to the caliphate on Friday, 10 Jumādā II 640 AH/5 December

49 Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshā fī ṣināʿat al-inshā*, 1, ed. Shams al-Dīn, 537.

50 Biran, Libraries, books, and transmission of knowledge, 467.

51 Qifṭī, *Tārīkh al-ḥukamāʾ*, ed. Dārāʾī, 370.

52 Ibn ʿInaba, *ʿUmdat al-ṭālib fī ansāb Āl Abī Ṭālib*, ed. Āl Baḥr al-ʿUlūm, 187.

53 Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqā, *al-Fakhrī fī al-ādāb al-sulṭāniyya*, ed. Māyo, 319.

54 Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqā, *al-Fakhrī fī al-ādāb al-sulṭāniyya*, ed. Māyo, 318.

55 Ibn al-Fuwaṭī, *al-Ḥawādith al-jāmiʿa*, ed. Maʿrūf, 192.

1242 CE, the day his father, Al-Mustanṣir, passed away, and appointed the head of his personal library on the same day.[56] Given this context, it is puzzling that the marginal note indicates that the manuscript entered the caliphal library in 635 AH/1237 CE, which was before Al-Mustaʿṣim's ascension.[57]

Ibn al-Fuwaṭī provides a clear timeline for the establishment of Al-Mustaʿṣim's personal library, reporting that it was ordered for construction in 641 AH/1243 CE.[58] If the scribe accurately transcribed the date from al-Qazwīnī's manuscript to the Marʿashī copy, there are two plausible explanations for the discrepancy. The first is that al-Qazwīnī's manuscript might have been in Al-Mustaʿṣim's possession before his accession to the caliphate, only moving to the main library at Dār al-Khilāfa after his coronation. However, this theory remains problematic because it is unclear why Al-Mustaʿṣim is referred to as "Amīr al-Muʾminīn" in the note, a title he would not have earned until becoming caliph.

The second possibility is that the note represents an *ʿarḍ-i did*, or "re-inspection of the library books", written by Abbasid librarians. A key duty of these librarians was to date the books entering the library and detail their conditions of endowment. For instance, a book from Mashhad Abū Ḥanīfa in Baghdad includes a detailed description of the manuscript's endowment, dated to 604 AH/1207 CE.[59] Thus, the librarian responsible for al-Mustaʿṣim's personal library knew the manuscript's original entry date and likely recorded the note during a later re-inspection. Examples of such *ʿarḍ-i did*s exist in manuscripts from Āstān-i Quds-i Raẓavī (Mashhad), Golestān Palace, and the National Library of Iran (Tehran).

Therefore, al-Qazwīnī's manuscript traveled from Damascus to al-Mustaʿṣim's personal library in Baghdad. The lack of information in the marginal notes of the Marʿashī copy about the purchase or sale of the manuscript suggests it was not bought from book dealers. Although it is unclear how it was transferred, it was undoubtedly used in the Umayyad Mosque in the 6th century AH and then located in Baghdad by the 7th century AH.

Saving al-Qazwīnī's manuscript from the banks of the Tigris

A marginal note in the Marʿashī copy records a unique incident not typically found in such annotations. According to this note, a person named Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Abū Bakr ibn Abū al-Fawāris saved al-Qazwīnī's manuscript after the Mongols discarded it on the banks of the Tigris River:

> I picked this book up from the bank of the Tigris after the Mongols threw it away in the year six hundred and fifty-six of the hegira. I'm the one in need of God, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Abū Bakr ibn Abū al-Fawāris.[60]

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56 Ibn al-Fuwaṭī, *al-Ḥawādith al-jāmiʿa*, ed. Maʿrūf, 192.

57 Al-Sūyūṭī, *Tārīkh al-khulafāʾ*, ed. Ṣāliḥ, 547-549.

58 Ibn al-Fuwaṭī, *al-Ḥawādith al-jāmiʿa*, ed. Maʿrūf, 212.

59 Ibn al-Sāʿī, *al-Jāmiʿ al-mukhtaṣar*, ed. Jawād, 236.

60 Fol. 127b. This note is:
"لقد انتشلت هذا الكتاب من مصرف دجلة بعد أن رماه التتر و ذلک سنة ست و خمسين و ستمائة الهجرة. و أنا الفقير إليه تعالى محمد بن احمد بن ابى بكر بن ابى الفوارس بن شعيب."

The date of the note is 656 AH/1258 CE, so it likely references an incident at the beginning of that year. According to historical sources, Baghdad fell at the end of Muharram 656 AH/ January 1258 CE, and the destruction and killings reportedly persisted for forty days after that.[61] The Mongol conquest of Baghdad was extremely violent, devastating institutions like schools and libraries. However, historians have traditionally emphasized the death toll over the cultural destruction.[62]

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61 Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, 13, ed. Shehadeh, 202.

62 While Baghdad endured previous sieges by Turkic forces, the Mongol conquest inflicted a level of carnage and destruction that remains unparalleled in the city's history. In an unprecedented event the caliph was killed and for the first time in the history of Baghdad after Islam, a non-Muslim (Hulāgū) ruled there. Initially Baghdadi institutions suffered greatly and a considerable number of people were killed in Baghdad. Muslim historians paid attention to the number of dead rather than describing the severity of the destruction. However, based on the number of dead in Baghdad, the amount of destruction can be guessed. Primary sources have reported the number of casualties in Baghdad from several hundred thousand to two million people (Mustawfī Qazvīnī, *Tārīkh-i guzīdah*, ed. Nawāʾī, 369; Ibn al-Fuwaṭī, *al-Ḥawādith al-jāmiʿa*, ed. Maʿrūf, 360; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, 13, ed. Shehadeh, 202). The sheltering of many fugitives from the eastern cities, who had come to the capital of the Islamic world as a result of the Mongol invasion, had led to a further increase in the population of Baghdad (Saunders, *The History of the Mongol Conquests*, 231). It is clear that the claim that all or even the majority of the inhabitants of Baghdad were killed could have been a great exaggeration on the part of the Muslim historians who were nostalgic about the caliphate. Naturally, if the majority of the people of the city had been killed, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Abū Bakr ibn Abū al-Fawāris could not have taken the al-Qazwīnī's manuscript from the banks of the Tigris and preserved it. Moreover, after establishing his rule over Baghdad, Hulāgū ordered its reconstruction, ordering public buildings to be repaired and the al-Madāris and the al-Masājid and the caravanserais to reopen (Ibn al-Fuwaṭī, *al-Ḥawādith al-jāmiʿa*, ed. Maʿrūf, 362). Some researchers in recent years have tried to minimize the destruction of Baghdad and other Islamic cities by the Mongols. For example, Bernard Lewis doubted the scale of the destruction by the Mongols in Islamic lands. He believed that 20th-century researchers could judge history better than the 19th-century orientalists. Lewis considered the great orientalists of the 19th century, such as Edward G. Browne and Wilhelm Barthold, to be influenced by the earlier Romantic School. To justify his claim against the research of these orientalists, Lewis even cited articles by some unknown Iraqi researchers about the economic effects of the Mongol invasion in Baghdad (Lewis, *Islam in History*, 179-198). In this belief, Lewis is similar to Michal Biran, who attributes the origin of the idea of widespread destruction in Baghdad to "popular and semi-popular works in both Arabic and Western languages" (Biran, Libraries, books, and transmission of knowledge, 465). However, David Morgan rightly criticized Lewis's opinion and attributed it to a contemporary looking at the events of the Middle Ages. He believed that Lewis, because he had seen two world wars and the devastation caused by them, underestimated Genghis's devastation. According to Morgan, it is not convincing that just because Hitler had more lethal weapons, Genghis was unable to carry out an equally dreadful massacre (Morgan, *The Mongols*, 79). But other researchers are inclined to agree with Lewis due to the rapid reconstruction of Baghdad after the Mongol invasion. For example, Biran considers the narratives of the destruction of Baghdad to be born from the minds of Arab, Iranian, and Turkish nationalists to create a theory of the decline of Islamic civilization against the growth of Western civilization, the last example of which was the Muslim attempt to compare the Mongol invasion of Baghdad with the American occupation of Iraq (Biran, Libraries, books, and transmission of knowledge, 495). In other words, the Mongol conquest of Baghdad has been used as a metaphor for the US military occupation of Iraq. She says that the migration of the international elite to Baghdad and its scientific and industrial prosperity, the circulation of goods by land and sea to Baghdad to transfer them to the east and west, the production of more manuscripts in various disciplines in Baghdad after the domination Mongols over this city, and finally the continuation of intellectual and religious conflicts and sectarian disputes in the Ilkhanid era show that Baghdad was not destroyed on a large scale (Biran, Ilkhanid Baghdad, 185-205). For her, the view has arisen because of the belief that the devastating invasion of the Mongols ended the flourishing of Arab civilization (Biran, Baghdad under Mongol rule, 286). In other words, because Muslims think that the

Michal Biran's research provides a detailed list of public and private libraries in Baghdad during the Ilkhanate era, highlighting the richness of the city's literary heritage under Mongol rule.[63] She contends that the reported scale of destruction was exaggerated by Muslim historians because reconstruction began quickly, with Baghdad's economy and culture rapidly reviving.[64] Other researchers studying Baghdad's manuscripts note that scholarly activity during the Ilkhanate period contradicts claims of widespread devastation.[65]

Certainly, some Muslim historians' descriptions of the Mongol conquest of Baghdad appear fictional. For instance, al-Nahrawānī's account claims that the Mongols threw so many books from Baghdad's schools into the Euphrates that a bridge was formed for soldiers to cross, and that the river turned black from ink. This legend-like report, particularly the confusion of the Euphrates with the Tigris, undermines its reliability.[66]

While some researchers rightly argue that the survival of public libraries and private collections, alongside the continued production of manuscripts, demonstrates resilience,[67] it does not imply that Baghdad's libraries were unscathed. Michal Biran acknowledges that the Mongols damaged the city's book collections.[68] Primary sources confirm that the invasion severely impacted cultural institutions, stalling their operations for an extended period. For instance, the Madrasa al-Mustanṣiriyya only reopened at the end of 657 AH/1259 CE,[69] and its library resumed operations at the same time.

No one has argued that the Mongol invasion led to the total destruction of Baghdad's libraries. Reconstruction of Baghdad began immediately after the conquest, and cultural institutions resumed their activities because the Mongols did not want to govern over ruins. However, this does not imply that the Mongol impact on Baghdad and its libraries was insignificant. The vitality of scientific circles in Ilkhanid-era Baghdad does not mean that the city was left undamaged during the invasion, since the initial conquest was followed by Mongol rule.[70]

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golden age of their civilization ended with the invasion of the Mongols (Biran, Ilkhanid Baghdad, 71), they have developed such narratives. However, non-Islamic sources also have reports similar to the Islamic ones. For example, a letter sent by the Mongols themselves to the king of France after their occupation of Baghdad refers to a high number of casualties (Meyvaert, An unknown letter of Hulagu, 256). The account of Chang-Te, the ambassador of Möngke Khān to Hulāgū, is another example of such a report (Bretschneider, *Medieval Researches from Eastern Asiatic Sources*, 138). Similarly, Ibn al-ʿIbrī, as a non-Muslim historian whose book is in Arabic, reports that the majority of the population of Baghdad was killed, without mentioning the number of losses (Ibn al-ʿIbrī, *Tārīkh mukhtaṣar al-duwal*, 279).

63 Biran, Libraries, books, and transmission of knowledge, 476-480.

64 Biran, Baghdad under Mongol rule, 309-310.

65 Biran, Ilkhanid Baghdad, 72.

66 Al-Nahrawānī, *Kitāb al-iʿlām*, ed. ʿAṭā, 206.

67 De Nicola, A manuscript witness, 73.

68 Biran, Libraries, books, and transmission of knowledge, 471.

69 Ibn al-Fuwaṭī, *Majmaʿ al-ādāb fī muʿjam al-alqāb*, 2, ed. Maʿrūf, 139.

70 The Ilkhans made Baghdad flourish by employing prominent Persian officials, including members of the Juwaynī family and Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, and by attracting members of the elite to Baghdad; see Biran, Libraries, books, and transmission of knowledge, 491-493.

The marginal note in the Marʿashī manuscript can be seen as a report documenting the destruction of the library of the last Abbasid caliph. During crises in Baghdad, the destruction of cultural institutions was not unusual, so the city experienced significant devastation. In other words, this manuscript note provides new data on events in Baghdad that are not detailed in primary historical sources. Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Abū Bakr ibn Abū al-Fawāris's account in the margin of al-Qazwīnī's manuscript seems to recount the same story: the Mongols allegedly threw books from al-Mustaʿṣim's library into the Tigris during the destruction of the caliphal palace, Dār al-Khilāfa, which was located on the riverbank.[71] After the Mongol soldiers entered the palace and looted the treasury, they likely disposed of some of the caliph's manuscripts in the river. The note was not added to the margin to inflate the manuscript's value or glorify Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad.

If some manuscripts from the caliph's library were thrown into the Tigris by the Mongols while others were preserved, one surviving work might be al-Qazwīnī's manuscript of *Kitāb al-Sunan* by Ibn Mājah. In his note, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Abū Bakr ibn Abū al-Fawāris used the verb *ramī* (رمى), meaning "to throw", indicating that Mongol soldiers did not intentionally discard all the library's books into the river. They likely threw some manuscripts out of windows or similar places out of anger or revenge. Since the library was near the Tigris, the books ended up on the riverbank. If the soldiers had deliberately thrown the books into the river, none would have survived.

Therefore, al-Qazwīnī's manuscript is possibly one of the books that were discarded near the caliphal palace, on the bank of the Tigris. The people of Baghdad may have rescued these books from the shoreline. Without Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad's account of saving this book, the Mongol destruction of the caliph's library might not have been documented as clearly. Considering that the copy No. 16388 of the Marʿashī reflects the notes of al-Qazwīnī's manuscript, this current copy we are studying is intact and has not been damaged.

However, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad's note does not imply that all the manuscripts in the Baghdad libraries were destroyed, as some members of the elite sought to protect valuable texts amid the political turmoil in Iraq. For instance, Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī amassed many astronomy texts from Baghdad, Wasit, Basra, and the Jazira for the library of the Marāghah Observatory.[72]

Continuation of the scientific use of al-Qazwīnī's manuscript

After Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad allegedly rescued al-Qazwīnī's manuscript from the Tigris, it continued to serve as a source for hadith recitation and transmission. This is confirmed by a *samāʿ* note in the margins, written by Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, which indicates that ʿAbd al-Hādī heard the manuscript on 16 Ramaḍān 725 AH/26 August 1325 CE.[73] As the note does not specify where this reading took place, it is unclear whether the manuscript remained in Baghdad at that time or had been relocated.

71 Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, 11, ed. Shehadeh, 68.

72 Ibn al-Fuwaṭī, *al-Ḥawādith al-jāmiʿa*, ed. Maʿrūf, 382; Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-islām*, 50, ed. al-Tadmurī, 114.

73 Fol. 127 b.

Nonetheless, 69 years after the Mongol invasion of Baghdad, manuscripts like this one were once again used for scholarly purposes in Iraq's Islamic institutions.[74] Another marginal note states that the manuscript was heard again 60 years after the earlier *samāʿ*, by Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad. This note reveals that between 725 AH/1325 CE and 785 AH/1383 CE, the manuscript was moved from Iraq to the Hijaz. In particular, ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad listened to al-Qazwīnī's manuscript from ʿAfīf al-Dīn al-Nayshābūrī on 24 Rajab 785 AH (22 September 1383) in Mecca. The certificate states:

> I listened to this book from the beginning to the end from the shaykh, the imam, the hadith scholar, the *ḥāfiẓ*, Shaykh ʿAfīf al-Dīn al-Nayshābūrī on the twenty-fourth of Rajab in the year seven hundred and eighty-five of the hegira in Holy Mecca. May God increase His glory and honor. Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad.[75]

It is plausible that one of the Iraqi hadith scholars brought al-Qazwīnī's manuscript to Mecca during pilgrimage (*al-ḥajj*), and after that, it may have been used there, possibly at the Masjid al-Ḥarām. This is the last evidence we have regarding the use and movement of the original manuscript of al-Qazwīnī. As mentioned earlier, in the first half of the 9th century, Muḥammad ibn Suleymān copied that original manuscript, meticulously including all the marginal notes.

The unknown scribe of the Marʿashī copy then transcribed Muḥammad ibn Suleymān's version, again transferring all the paratextual information. Later, a subsequent owner of the Marʿashī copy moved the information preserved by this scribe from the additional folios to the margin of the final folio of the Marʿashī copy itself.

These notes are maintained to verify the chain of narration, which is crucial in hadith studies. However, their importance for codicologists lies in tracing the journey of a manuscript from one region to another. Additionally, references to political and daily events in these notes provide valuable insights into issues often overlooked in primary historical sources.

Conclusion

Manuscript No. 16388 in the Marʿashī Library is one of the few available manuscripts of *Kitāb al-Sunan* by Ibn Mājah in Iranian libraries. Although the colophon identifies the scribe and copying date, marginal annotations reveal a more intricate history. The Marʿashī copy was transcribed from a 9th-century manuscript that itself was copied from the original. The original was produced in 562 AH/1167 CE by the notable ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ḥaydar ibn Abū al-Qāsim al-Qazwīnī. Thus, the significance of the manuscript lies not only in its content but also in its association with a renowned hadith scholar. This could explain why later scribes who copied

74 For a useful study on the revival of the use of manuscripts in Baghdad after the Mongol invasion, see De Nicola, A manuscript witness, 70-108.

75 Fol. 127b:
"سماعا من الاول هذا الكتاب الى آخره عن الشيخ الامام المحدث الحافظ شيخ عفيف الدين النشابورى فى اليوم الرابع و العشرين من شهر رجب المرجب من سنة خمس و ثمانين و سبعمائه فى المكة المكرمة زاد الله تعظيما و تشريفا احمد بن على بن محمد."

this manuscript chose to only record their names and the date without including their details in the colophon.

Muḥammad ibn Suleymān is known as one of the scribes who copied al-Qazwīnī's manuscript due to a reading certificate note written by an unidentified scribe. Based on the hadith narrators listed in this *ijāza*, Muḥammad ibn Suleymān's manuscript was copied in the first half of the 9th century AH, suggesting that the Marʿashī copy was also likely produced in that century.

The historical significance of al-Qazwīnī's manuscript can be reconstructed from marginal notes on extra folios incorporated into Muḥammad ibn Suleymān's copy. The manuscript traveled from the shelves of a notable hadith scholar in Hamadān to being used in the Great Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, before finding its way to the Abbasid caliph's library in Baghdad. There, it encountered the Mongol invasion and was reportedly rescued by Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Abū Bakr ibn Abū al-Fawāris from the Tigris riverbanks, eventually making its way to Mecca to serve once more as a source for hadith studies. The Marʿashī copy is significant not only because of its attribution to ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ḥaydar ibn Abū al-Qāsim al-Qazwīnī but also for its preserved marginal notes. These provide invaluable evidence that manuscripts are not just containers of textual knowledge but also privileged witnesses to the rich history of the Islamic world.

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