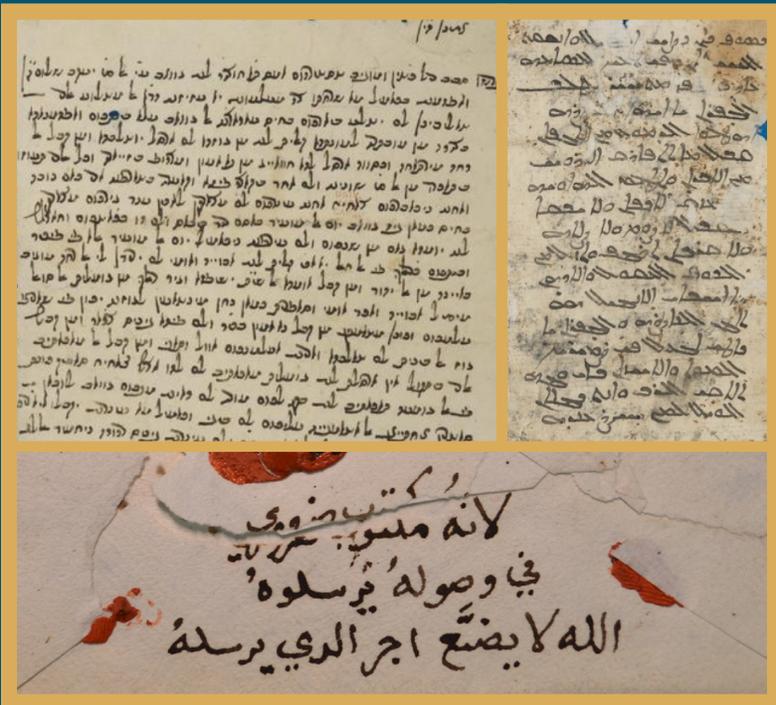


A Handbook and Reader of Ottoman Arabic

EDITED BY ESTHER-MIRIAM WAGNER





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2. FROM MEANS TO GOAL: AUXILIARY DISCIPLINES IN THE OTTOMAN MADRASA CURRICULUM

Necmettin Kızılkaya

1.0. Introduction

The Ottoman Empire established madrasas since its formation. It met the needs of these madrasas, first, by inviting teachers from adjacent regions and, soon after, by employing their students. Thus, students who successfully graduated from the madrasa then became the teachers, who would in turn become the pioneers in systemising the Ottoman madrasa (Āşıkpaşazāde 1332). The curriculum became methodised in a short time. To ensure the continuation of this system, it was continually revised and developed by the Ottoman scholars.

There were many factors that facilitated this constant revision of the Ottoman madrasa system. The most important of these was that the madrasa was an institution in which qualified individuals were produced in every area needed by the Empire. The madrasa curriculum, which had been structured to respond to a wide range of expectations and issues, from bureaucracy to *ilmiye* institutions, had to be continually developed. That being said, the effort to develop the curriculum does not mean that there were

no fixed disciplines within the madrasa system. On the contrary, in some fields there were books that were taught for centuries throughout the Empire. Therefore, there were constants and variables in the madrasa curriculum; and the variables were shaped according to the needs of each period.

Despite this, we still do not have much knowledge about the books taught in the Ottoman madrasa system, as there has not yet been much scholarly attention by researchers in the field of history and education on the subject. Studies regarding the madrasa mainly focus on its structures, its architecture, its relations with politics, teacher-student relationships, and *ilmiye* hierarchy. Many issues, such as the curriculum, the range of the courses taught, the differences encountered within different regions, and the reasons for changes to the curriculum have not been elucidated as of yet. The absence of specific scholarship regarding this subject in Western languages, with the exception of a few general studies, has led to a lack of understanding regarding the nature of the Empire's educational system among modern researchers. Although some Turkish studies partially fill the gap on this subject,¹ a significant number of them provide only general information about the curriculum, and more detailed studies are needed.

The Ottoman madrasa curriculum was structured in different stages, with different disciplines taught at each step. The main aim of the curriculum was to understand the Islamic disciplines and to meet the needs of society. Therefore, the madrasa

¹ For details see Hüseyin 1983; İsmail 1984; Cevat 1997; Murat 2019.

curriculum focused on understanding three disciplines. These disciplines are *fiqh* 'deep understanding', *kalām* 'theology', and *taṣawwuf* 'mysticism', which are called *al-ʿulūm al-ʿāliyya* 'the high disciplines'. However, the discipline of *fiqh* stands in a central place among them. It is not an exaggeration to posit that the madrasa education was designed for the discipline of *fiqh*. There was a preparatory process that trained students for these three disciplines, in general, and *fiqh*, in particular. In this process, the auxiliary disciplines, which are *ʿulūm āliyya*, were taught and the students were provided with the necessary knowledge and sophistication to understand the Islamic disciplines. The preparatory/auxiliary disciplines are mostly Arabic disciplines. The auxiliary disciplines, which serve as the key for students to comprehend texts written in various branches of the Islamic disciplines that emerged in Muslim societies, especially the texts of the Qurʾān and the Sunna, are *ṣarf* 'morphology', *naḥw* 'grammar/syntax', *manṭiq* 'logic', *ādāb al-baḥṭh wa-l-munāẓara* 'dialectic', *wadʿ* 'philosophy of language', and *balāgha* 'rhetoric'.

There are many classical sources about the disciplines taught in Ottoman madrasas. Both the divergent sources and the teaching of various works in different centuries in the Empire, which lasted for six centuries, make it difficult to draw a unified picture of the curriculum. However, the fact that the disciplines taught did not undergo much change in these periods, together with the continuity of some of the utilised texts, allows us to make general comments on some points. Three types of sources are available to investigate the taught courses. The first of these

are books dealing with the *tartīb* 'organisation' and *tasnīf* 'classification' of disciplines. I will examine the curriculum based on these sources. The second of these are biographies and autobiographies of scholars. In these sources, the books that a scholar read and taught give a particular idea to the reader about which books were in circulation, accepted, and included in to the curriculum. The third type are *ijāza* 'diplomas'. These diplomas reveal to us the lessons and from whom those lessons were taken. Yet, in general, they do not mention the names of the books studied. In this article, I will briefly examine the works taught in the field of auxiliary disciplines in the Ottoman madrasa curriculum. Although different works were taught in different periods and regions, I will focus on the most widely read books.

2.0. Auxiliary Disciplines in the Madrasa Curriculum

Kawākib-i Sab'a Risālesi is an anonymous work authored in 1155/1741 as a response to an inquiry by the French ambassador to Bāb-i Ali (High Porte) about the character of the Ottoman madrasa curriculum. It consists of important material regarding the pre-madrasa education. I will briefly summarise the information about the pre-madrasa process in the *risāla*. According to this *risāla*, upon starting his education, a student first learned the Arabic alphabet and then began reading the Qur'ān from 'amma *juz*'.² Then, under the supervision of a teacher, the student would

² A *juz*' is one of the thirty parts of the Qur'ān.

read the whole Qurʾān along with a book of *tajwīd*.³ Later, the process continued with memorising the Qurʾān and Birgili Mehmed Efendi's (d. 981/1573) *ʿAqāʿid Risālesi*, which was written in Turkish. After the ceremony of completing the memorisation of the Qurʾān, a dictionary—such as the poetic dictionary of Ibn al-Farishta (d. after 821/1418)—was taught to impart familiarity with Arabic words. Additionally, in order to get used to Persian, brāhīm Shāhidī's (d. 957/1550) Persian verse dictionary *Tuḥfa-i Shāhidī*) was taught. Having completed this process, the student was able to begin the auxiliary disciplines (Cevat 1997). The disciplines taught in the madrasa were divided into three main parts: the auxiliary disciplines, Islamic disciplines, and *juzʾiyyāt* 'particular cases, details', such as mathematics, geometry, and astronomy). The main purpose was to learn the Islamic disciplines; the auxiliary disciplines were taught in support of understanding them. Of course, this never demoted the auxiliary disciplines to a secondary position. On the contrary, in some periods and madrasas, they were given equal importance to the Islamic disciplines.

2.1. Morphology (*Şarf*)

The first discipline taught in auxiliary disciplines was the discipline of morphology (*şarf*). The *Amthila* (*Amthila-i Mukhtalifa wa-Muttarida*) was the first book read in this discipline. This text examines words and their forms. The students first memorised the text. An interesting feature of this text is that it is an anonymous

³ *Tajwīd* is a set of rules for the correct pronunciation of the letters with all their qualities.

text/or that its author is unknown. After this, *Binā' al-af'āl*, also anonymous, was studied. This book was written to afford basic knowledge of morphology based on the sound, structure, and semantic variation of the past and present tenses of Arabic verbs. In this respect, the basic education given in *Amthila* is deepened in the *Binā'* by taking Arabic verbs as the core of the discussion. The *Maqṣūd*, which is read at the next stage, is, like *Amthila* and *Binā'*, also anonymous. In this book, after emphasising the importance of the discipline of morphology, the patterns of verbs, conjugations of verbs and the declension of nouns, the rules to be applied in these conjugations and declensions and their explanations are all expounded upon and the kinds and descriptions of the verbs are elucidated (Khalīfa 2007, 1:255; 2:1078, 1806–7).

Al-ʿIzzī fī l-taṣrīf is one of the five classical works known as the *sarf cümlesi* and taught in the Ottoman madrasas. It is an important book written by ʿIzz al-Dīn al-Zanjānī (d. 660/1262) on the discipline of Arabic morphology. Because of its importance, scholars like Saʿd al-Dīn al-Taftāzānī (d. 792/1390), Sayyid Sharīf al-Jurjānī (d. 816/1413), ʿImād al-Dīn Ibn Jamāʿa (d. 819/1416), Niksārī Ḥasan Pasha (d. 827/1424), Khoja Zāda Musliḥ al-Dīn (d. 893/1488), Khatīb al-Shirbīnī (d. 977/1570), and ʿAlī al-Qārī (d. 1014/1605) have written commentaries on it. Among them, the commentary by Taftāzānī became famous and dozens of sub-commentaries were written on it (Khalīfa 2007, 2:1139–40). Like other books of morphology, Aḥmad b. ʿAlī b. Masʿūd's (d. 8th/14th century) comprehensive work *Marāḥ al-arwāḥ* was widely taught in Ottoman madrasas. This book consists of seven chapters and provides detailed information first on

infinitives and then on the different forms and types of verbs (Khalifa 2007, 2:1651).

Ibn al-Ḥājjib's (d. 646/1249) *al-Shāfiya fī l-Taṣrif*, was written on Zamakhsharī's (d. 538/1144) *al-Mufaṣṣal fī ṣan'at al-i'rāb*, which is a summary (*khulāṣa*) of Abū Bishr Sībawayhi's (d. 180/796) *al-Kitāb*. This was a key text in morphology within the madrasa curriculum. Ibn al-Ḥājjib combined the subjects related to morphology in Zamakhsharī's *al-Mufaṣṣal* by making the necessary additions as well as sorting, correcting, and summarising them in his *al-Shāfiya*. This book is considered the first concise work on morphology, covering almost all subjects of the discipline. Another significant feature of this text was that the author, Ibn al-Ḥājjib, though based in an Ottoman and Ḥanafī tradition madrasa, was a Mālikī scholar. *Al-Shāfiya* explains the rules of morphology in a concise yet systematic way. It has been taught as a textbook for centuries in madrasas throughout the Ottoman and Islamic world. Many studies from commentaries, sub-commentaries, poeticisation, and translation have been added to it. Moreover, not only the text itself, but also its commentaries were taught in the Ottoman madrasas (Khalifa 2007, 2:1021).

2.2. Grammar/Syntax (*Naḥw*)

The second discipline taught was Arabic grammar/syntax (*naḥw*). The first book that was used as a textbook in Arabic grammar was the *ʿAwāmīl*. Although there were several books that bore this title, two of them were widely used for teaching in the Ottoman madrasas over the centuries. The first one was ʿAbd al-Qāhir bin ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Jurjānī's (d. 471/1078) *al-ʿAwāmīl*, which

was called *al-‘Awāmil al-‘atīq*; the second one was Muḥammad Birgiwī’s (d. 981/1573) *al-‘Awāmil*, which was referred to as *al-‘Awāmil al-jadīd*. However, there are significant differences between these two books in terms of a number of factors (*‘āmils*) and the way they were treated. Al-Jurjānī’s *al-‘Awāmil* was taught in some parts of Anatolia, though mainly in Arab regions, Iran, and the Indian Subcontinent. As for Birgiwī’s text, it was taught in the madrasas of Istanbul and the Balkans for a long period (Durmuş 1991). After memorisation of Birgiwī’s *al-‘Awāmil*, students moved to another book, *Izhār al-asrār*, which was written based on the principles of the Basran language school of grammar, i.e., to teach the main subjects of Arabic grammar in a concise way and in a short time. The grammatical rules that were mentioned only by name and with a single example in the *‘Awāmil* were extended in *Izhār al-asrār* by giving their definitions, conditions, and detailed examples (Khalīfa 2007, 1:117).

Ibn al-Ḥājjib’s *al-Kāfiya* is one of the main texts that was used in the Ottoman madrasas. It is, along with Sībawayhi’s *al-Kitāb* and Zamakhsharī’s *al-Mufaṣṣal*, one of the three most recognised books written on Arabic grammar. Although Sībawayhi’s *al-Kitāb* contains rich material and examples, its contents are unclassified. Zamakhsharī classified its subjects and summarised it in his *al-Mufaṣṣal*. Ibn al-Ḥājjib’s *al-Kāfiya* relied on *al-Mufaṣṣal*. All of the subjects of *naḥw* were studied to allow students to understand complex topics. Thanks to the accomplishment of *al-Kāfiya*, it was used as a text book in Ottoman madrasas for centuries (al-Zamakhsharī 2004; Khalīfa 2007, 2:1370–76). Ibn al-Ḥājjib’s *al-Kāfiya* was used not only as an independent textbook

in the madrasa curriculum, but also as the main text and subject of commentary by Nūr al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī’s (d. 898/1492) *al-Fawā’id al-Dhiyā’iyya*. *Al-Fawā’id*, which is also known as *Jāmī* or *Molla Jāmī*. It was one of the main grammar books that was taught at the advanced level. *Molla Jāmī* was not the only advanced textbook that students studied in madrasa; other books were also taught, such as Ibn Hishām’s (d. 761/1360) *Mughnī al-labīb* and *Alfiyyat Ibn Mālik* (Ibn Khaldūn 2005, 5:297–98).

Besides some other features, *Mughnī al-labīb* is original in terms of its classification of subjects. By that time, grammar books had come to classify subjects based on *‘āmil-ma‘mūl-i‘rāb, marfū‘āt-mansūbāt-majrūrāt-majzūmāt*, but Ibn Hishām followed a different method, which made his book renowned and one of the most circulated since his time. He divided its eight sub-chapters into two main chapters, which are *mufradāt* ‘propositions’ and *jumal* ‘sentences’ (Ibn Hishām 1964; Khalifa 2007, 2:1751–54). As for the *Alfiyyat Ibn Mālik fi l-naḥw wa-l-taṣrīf*, it was composed of thousands of grammatical rules explained using examples from Qur’ānic verses, Prophetic traditions, and Arabic poems. It was memorised by students at the advanced level (Khalifa 2007, 1:151–55).

2.3. Logic (*Manṭiq*)

After completing grammar, students would study logic (*manṭiq*). Most of the *manṭiq* books taught in Ottoman madrasas belonged to the last period of the pre-Ottoman era, which is denominated

the *muta'akhhirūn* period. The first textbook taught in the madrasa on logic is Asīr al-Dīn al-Abharī's (d. 663/1265), *al-Risāla al-Aṭiriyya fī l-mantiq*, with a condensed version known as *Īsāgūcī*, along with its commentaries and the glosses written on it. *Īsāgūcī* is an abridgement that contains all the subjects of classical logic. Because of this feature, it became the first textbook taught in the discipline of logic in the madrasa curriculum and many commentaries and sub-commentaries written on it have received the attention of scholars. The first of these commentaries is Ḥusam al-Dīn Ḥasan al-Kātibī's (d. 760/1359) *Ḥusam-i Kātibī* and Muḥy al-Dīn al-Tālishī's (d. 887/1482) sub-commentary on it are famous. Mullā Fanārī's (d. 834/1431) *al-Fawā'id al-Fanāriyya*, which is the second well-known commentary, and its sub-commentary, Aḥmad Ibn Khizir's (d. 950/1543) *Qūl (Qawl) Aḥmad*, were also central textbooks in the madrasas (İzgi 1997). These two books differ from the other logic books taught in the madrasa in the way that both, especially the latter, employ tight and comprehensive language. By reading these texts, the student not only learned logic, but also had to grapple with difficult phrases of the Arabic language.

At a higher level, students were taught 'Alī Ibn Omar al-Kātibī al-Qazwīnī's (d. 675/1277) *al-Risāla al-Shamsiyya fī l-qawā'id al-mantiqiyya* and Sa'd al-Dīn al-Taftāzānī's *Tahdhīb al-mantiq wa-l-kalām*, with its commentaries and super commentaries. In the following period, Qutb al-Dīn al-Rāzī's (d. 766/1365) *Tahrīr al-qawā'id al-mantiqiyya fī sharḥ al-Risāla al-Shamsiyya*, a famous commentary on al-Qazwīnī's *al-Risālat al-*

Shamsiyya, was taught. Along with *Tahrīr al-qawā'id al-mantiqiyya*, its sub-commentaries in Sayyid Sharīf al-Jurjānī's (d. 816/1413) *Tahrīr al-qawā'id* and in Kara Dāwūd Izmiti's (d. 948/1541) *Hāshiya 'alā Hāshiya Küçük (Kuçek) 'alā Tahrīr al-qawā'id al-mantiqiyya* were studied. The student who read and completed these books proved his scientific talent and desire. Finally, in the discipline of logic Qutb al-Dīn al-Rāzī's commentary, *Lawāmi' al-asrār Sharh Maṭāli' al-anwār fī l-mantiq* on Sirāj al-Dīn al-'Urmawī's (d. 682/1283) *Maṭāli' al-anwār*, was taught (al-Rāzī 1384; Sāçaklızāde 1988).

2.4. Dialectic (*Ādāb al-baḥth wa-l-munāzara*)

After logic, dialectic (*ādāb al-baḥth wa-l-munāzara*) was studied to help students avoid inconsistency and contradiction in debate. At the elementary level, Taşkuprizāde Aḥmed Efendi's (d. 968/1561) *Sharḥ 'alā Risāla fī 'ilm ādāb al-baḥth wa-l-munāzara*, which is his commentary on his own *al-Risāla*, was taught. After that, students studied Kamāl al-Dīn Mas'ūd al-Rūmī's (d. 905/1499) commentary on Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn Ashraf al-Samarqandī's (d. 722/1322) *al-Risāla al-Samarqandiyya fī ādāb al-baḥth*, which has around twenty-one super commentaries. At the same time, they were studying Shah Ḥusayn Efendi's (d. 1130/1718) *al-Risāla al-Ḥusayniyya fī fanni ādāb al-baḥth* with its commentaries and sub-commentaries. Following this stage, students studied Qādī 'Aḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī's (d. 756/1355) *Ādāb al-baḥth* and its commentary *Sharḥ Ādāb al-baḥth*, written by Muḥammad al-Ḥanafī l-Tabrīzī (d. around 900/1494) and its sub-

commentary, Mīr Abū al-Faṭḥ Muḥammad Ibn Amīn's (d. around 875/1470) *Hāshiyat al-Mīr* (İzgi 1997).

2.5. Philosophy of Language (*Waq'*)

One of the important disciplines taught in madrasas was *‘ilm al-waq'*. *Waq'*, which deals with the origins and nature of language, focuses on the relationship between utterance and meaning and the circumstance/state of indication of utterance to meaning. The subjects of *waq'*, whose history did not go as far back as that of other disciplines, were examined in the context of the relationship of utterance and meaning in the works of philology, logic, and legal theory before becoming an independent discipline. ‘Aḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī's *al-Risāla al-waq'īyya* is the first independent work written on the relationship of words and meaning by focusing on the *waq'*. *Al-Risāla al-Waq'īyya* became famous soon after it was written, and many commentaries and sub-commentaries were written on it. The discipline of *al-waq'* reached a certain depth due to discussions between Sa‘d al-Dīn al-Taftāzānī and Sayyid Sharīf al-Jurjānī, in particular on the relationship between utterance and meaning. Alī Kuşçī's (b. 879/1474) *Unqūd al-zawāhir fī l-şarf* systematised *waq'* and changed its subjects, shifting the focus from utterance meaning to *waq'*. The subjects were newly systematised under the chapters *waq'*, *wāḍi'*, *mawḍū'*, *mawḍū' lahu*, and *hikma al-waq'* and were made more advanced. In this way, the process which deals with language from a philosophical perspective was followed at various stages in numerous texts throughout the Ottoman Empire (Kuşçī 2001; Fazlıoğlu 2012).

In the discipline of *al-waḍʿ*, whilst commentaries and glosses were being written within Ottoman lands, so too were independent works being written and taught within the madrasa. The first commentary on al-Ījī's *al-Risāla al-Waḍʿiyya* was Abū al-Qāsim al-Laythī al-Samarqandī's (d. 888/1483) *Sharḥ Risāla al-Waḍʿiyya*. It was one of the main texts taught in the Ottoman madrasa. Another commentary written on *al-Risāla al-Waḍʿiyya* and taught in the Ottoman madrasa was ʿIṣām al-Dīn al-Isferāyīnī's (d. 951/1544) *Sharḥ Risāla al-Waḍʿiyya*, which was known in madrasa circles as *ʿIṣām al-waḍʿ* or *ʿIṣām al-waḍʿiyya*. This commentary by al-Isferāyīnī was usually taught with the commentary of al-Samarqandī, but found comparatively more space in the curriculum relative to that book. Another work that was studied in this field was *Risāla fī l-waḍʿ*, which was penned by Ibrāhīm Ibn Khalīl al-Aḡīnī (d. 1311/1894), who lived in the last period of the Ottoman Empire (Özdemir 2006, 203, 206, 212; Khalifa 2007, 1: 898).

2.6. Rhetoric (*Balāgha*)

Rhetoric (*balāgha*) examines the rules and methods of *mot juste* and proper speech. It examines the pronunciation of the word in a clear, understandable, and beautiful manner in accordance with the situation required by the interlocutor. It is divided into three sub-sections: *ʿilm al-maʿānī* 'semantics', *ʿilm al-bayān* 'figures of speech', and *ʿilm al-badīʿ* 'embellishments'. Rhetoric as a discipline is as old as morphology and syntax. This discipline emerged and was developed in order to cultivate appreciation of the style

and subtle meanings of the Qur'ān (al-Qazwīnī 1932, 36–37; al-Sakkākī 1987, 161–62).

In the Ottoman madrasa, Muḥammad Ibn 'Alī al-Sakkākī's (d. 626/1228) *Miftāḥ al-ulūm* was the main text taught. The third part of this work—which examines various disciplines, such as morphology, syntax, poetry—bears the title *'ilmā al-ma'ānī wa-l-bayān*. In this chapter, Sakkākī expands on the discipline of rhetoric as a discipline, using rational methods of knowledge that were employed in the fields of theology, philosophy, and logic. With this approach, he transformed rhetoric from being an individual experience and pleasure to a discipline with its own rules and principles. In this respect, Sakkākī introduced an innovation no one else initiated before him, and seriously influenced those who came after. Therefore, *Miftāḥ al-'ulūm* was the basis for almost all of the books written on *balāgha* (Ibn Khaldūn 2005).

Khaṭīb al-Qazwīnī's (d. 739/1338) *al-Talkhīs fī 'ulūm al-balāgha* comes first among the books taught in the discipline of rhetoric, which has an important place in the madrasa curriculum. This book, which is the summary of Sakkākī's *Miftāḥ al-'ulūm*, is still read in the discipline of rhetoric in today's madrasas. Because of its importance, numerous studies have been made on Khaṭīb al-Qazwīnī's *al-Talkhīs*. Among these studies, two commentaries written by Sa'd al-Dīn al-Taftāzānī are especially important. Of these, *al-Sharḥ al-Mukhtaṣar* was short and taught after *al-Talkhīs* in Ottoman madrasas. He wrote the second commentary, *al-Sharḥ al-Muṭawwal*, after examining the books written in the discipline of rhetoric, especially Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī's (d. 471/1079) *Dalā'il al-i'jāz* and *Asrār al-balāgha* (al-

Taftāzānī 2013). In some madrasas, instead of *al-Muṭawwal*, Khaṭīb al-Qazwīnī's *Īdāḥ al-ma'ānī* which is the author's own commentary on the *al-Talkhīs fī 'ulūm al-balāgha* was studied. In some madrasas, as a final book, Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm Ibn Muḥammad al-Halabī al-Qabāqībī's (d. 850/1446) *al-Alfiyya li l-ma'ānī wa-l-bayān* was memorised (İzgi 1997).

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