From *Kitāb al-ḥadāʾiq* to *Kitāb al-dawāʾir*:
Reconsidering Ibn al-Sid al-Baṭalyawsi’s
Philosophical Treatise

Del *Kitāb al-ḥadāʾiq* al *Kitāb al-dawāʾir*: replanteamiento del tratado filosófico de Ibn al-Sid al-Baṭalyawsi

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The philosophical treatise known as *Kitāb al-ḥadāʾiq* is generally ascribed to the 12th century Andalusian author Ibn al-Sid al-Baṭalyawsi, although this attribution is sometimes contested. This paper offers a new interpretation of the title, textual history, authorship, sources, and literary genre of this treatise, on the basis of new textual evidence, a reexamination of known evidence, and a comparison between the treatise and Baṭalyawsi’s works. The conclusions of this study are first, that *Kitāb al-ḥadāʾiq* was not the treatise’s original title, and therefore it should be renamed *Kitāb al-dawāʾir*; second, that *Kitāb al-dawāʾir* was originally part of (one of the versions) of Baṭalyawsi’s *Kitāb al-masāʾil*; and third, that the textual and stylistic similarities between this treatise and Baṭalyawsi’s other works prove the authenticity of the treatise’s attribution to Baṭalyawsi. In addition, new findings regarding Baṭalyawsi’s use of formulas from the *Rasāʾil Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ* in *Kitāb al-dawāʾir* and *Kitāb al-masāʾil* provide further evidence for the deep impact of the *Ikhwān* on Baṭalyawsi’s thought, as well as for the close connection between *Kitāb al-dawāʾir* and *Kitāb al-masāʾil*. This connection is further highlighted according to the attribution of both treatises to the genre of questions and answers in Arabic literature. The evidence gathered in this paper generally reflects the impact of the *Rasāʾil* on Baṭalyawsi’s thought, as well as the close connection between both treatises. In conclusion, this study proposes, in the first place, that the attribution of both treatises to Baṭalyawsi has been discussed in occasions. This article offers a new interpretation of the title, the history of the text, the author, the sources and even the genre literary al que se asocia al autor andalusí del siglo XII Ibn al-Sid al-Baṭalyawsi, aunque esta atribución ha sido discutida en ocasiones. Este artículo ofrece una nueva interpretación del título, la historia del texto, la autoría, las fuentes e incluso del género literario al que se adscribe este tratado, teniendo en cuenta su texto, una revisión de los datos ya conocidos y la comparación entre este tratado y el resto de la producción de al-Baṭalyawsi. Como conclusión se propone, en primer lugar, que *Kitāb al-ḥadāʾiq* no es el título original del tratado, sino que debe ser *Kitāb al-dawāʾir*. Por otro lado, *Kitāb al-dawāʾir* era originalmente parte (una de las versiones) del *Kitāb al-masāʾil* de al-Baṭalyawsi. En tercer lugar, las similitudes textuales y estilísticas entre este tratado con otras obras de al-Baṭalyawsi prueban la autoría. Además, el uso de al-Baṭalyawsi hace de fórmulas que ya encontramos en las *Rasāʾil Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ* y que aparecen en sus *Kitāb al-dawāʾir* y *Kitāb al-masāʾil*, profundizan en la hipótesis del impacto que las *Rasāʾil* causaron en el pensamiento del autor, así como en la estrecha conexión que existe entre *Kitāb al-dawāʾir* y *Kitāb al-masāʾil*. De hecho, esta conexión resulta más clara cuando se atribuyen ambos tratados al género de «preguntas y respuestas» en la literatura árabe. Este articu-
supports the claim that Baṭalyawsi’s Kitāb al-dawāʾir should be seen as an integral part of his literary oeuvre, as well as of Andalusian philosophical literature in general.

Key words: Ibn al-Sīd al-Baṭalyawsi; Philosophy; Grammar; Kitāb al-ḥadāʾiq; Kitāb al-dawāʾir; Sefer ha-agullot ha-raʿonyiyot; The Book of Imaginary Circles; Kitāb al-masāʾil wa-l-ajwiba; The Book of Questions and Answers; Rasāʾil Ikhwān al-Ṣafā’

Introduction

The treatise known as Kitāb al-ḥadāʾiq, commonly designated as The Book of Imaginary Circles, is considered to be the main philosophical treatise of the Andalusian thinker Ibn al-Sīd al-Baṭalyawsi (d. 521/1127).1 Baṭalyawsi is mainly known in Islamic biographical sources for his multiple contributions to the fields of linguistics, grammar, poetry and adab. These sources do not mention his philosophical treatise, despite its being one of the first Islamic philosophical treatises written in al-Andalus. Interestingly, Kitāb al-ḥadāʾiq has left a significant mark especially on Jewish thought. The treatise’s popularity among Jewish thinkers is attested to by several Hebrew translations between the 12th and the 16th centuries. Through these Jewish thinkers, the treatise also reached Christian Renaissance thinkers. The decisive influence of this treatise on Jewish thought has been

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1 This paper is based on my doctoral thesis, which is dedicated to Kitāb al-ḥadāʾiq’s place in Muslim and Jewish thought. See Eliyahu, Ibn al-Sīd al-Baṭalyawsi and his place in Medieval Muslim and Jewish Thought, including an edition and a translation of Kitāb al-dawāʾir al-wahmiyya known as Kitāb al-ḥadāʾiq. I wish to express my gratitude to prof. Sarah Stroumsa, who supervised my thesis and gave me extraordinary support and advice, to prof. Sara Sviri who stimulated and supported my research, and to prof. Godefroid de Callataÿ who made valuable suggestions for this article. Any remaining errors are of course only mine. I would also like to thank Prof. Tzvi Langermann, Prof. Richard Taylor, and Yossi Soffer, as well as the Bodleian Library in Oxford, the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin, El Escorial Library, the Berlin State Library and the Leiden University Library for providing me with copies of manuscripts which were essential for this research. My thanks also go to the Mandel Scholars program at the Mandel Scholion Interdisciplinary Research Center in the Humanities and Jewish Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, for supporting the preparation of this paper for publication.

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described in detail by David Kaufmann in 1880, as well as in subsequent studies by other scholars.  

Among Islamic thinkers, however, this treatise was much less influential. It is preserved in several Arabic manuscripts, where it is sometimes attributed to others thinkers, such as Ibn Rushd. Some Islamic mystics mention the treatise, while Islamic philosophers almost completely ignore it. Muslim historians do not ascribe any philosophical treatises to Baṭalyawsī and leave almost no record of his philosophical activity.

Despite the popularity of the treatise in Jewish tradition, the identity of its author was not always faithfully preserved. In the manuscripts of the treatise’s most popular Hebrew translation, by the prolific translator Moses Ibn Tibbon, the work is faithfully attributed to Baṭalyawsī. However, in quotes by Jewish authors from this translation and from other translations, the author’s name is often distorted or replaced. The name al-Baṭalyawsī is sometimes confused with Baṭalmayus (i.e. Claudius)

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Ptolemy, both for phonetic reasons and because the circle motif of the treatise was mistakenly linked to astronomical speculations), or changed to Baţalyawi. The treatise is often attributed by Jewish thinkers to al-Ghazâlî and Ibn Rushd (in part due to the similarity between this treatise and Mo‘zenei ha-‘iyyunim [The Balance of Examinations], a treatise that is mistakenly attributed to these authors), and sometimes even to al-Fârâbî.

There are several scholarly approaches to Baţalyawi’s treatise in the Islamic-Andalusian context. Some scholars, primarily Miguel Asín Palacios (who authored the first edition of the text), have devoted studies to Baţalyawi’s philosophical treatise without questioning its attribution to him. Other scholars, such as Salvador Peña Martín, express doubts regarding Baţalyawi’s authorship of the treatise and grant it a limited significance among Baţalyawi’s writings.

In the scholarship on Baţalyawi and his treatise in the Jewish context, the attribution of the treatise to Baţalyawi is generally accepted. However, some scholars, such as Hartwig Derenbourg, argued that Baţalyawi copied portions of it from al-Ghazâlî, a claim that was correctly rejected by Kaufmann. Others, like the authors of the entry on

\footnote{On Mo‘zenei ha-‘iyyunim, a Hebrew treatise including a partial translation of Baţalyawi’s treatise, see Eliyahu, Ibn al-Sîd al-Baţalyawi, chapter 2, section 1, and chapter 7, sections 3.1-4-5.}

\footnote{See Kaufmann, Die Spuren al-Batalyousi’s, pp. 9-10; Eliyahu, Ibn al-Sîd al-Baţalyawi, “Introduction to the edition.”}

\footnote{Asin distinguishes between perceptions of Baţalyawi in Islamic tradition and in scholarship. Asín Palacios, “Ibn al-Sîd de Badajoz,” pp. 53-54. The other editions of the text are the 1947 Cairo edition by ‘Izzat al-‘Aṭṭâr al-Ḥusayni and Muhammad Zâhid b. al-Ḥasan al-Kawthari (I had no access to this edition and obtained the information about it from al-Dâya’s edition [see: al-Batalyawi, al-Ḥadî‘iʿa fī l-maṭālib al-‘ālîya al-falsafîyya al-ʿawisa, pp. 26-27]; I hope I will be able to access this edition in the Princeton library in the future. My thanks to the anonymous referee for bringing its existence to my attention) and the 1988 Damascus edition by al-Dâya (al-Batalyawi, al-Ḥadîʿiʿa). For the Italian and Portuguese translations of the text see Serrano, “Ibn al-Sîd al-Batalyawi (444/1052-521/1127),” p. 87 n. 148.}

\footnote{Derenbourg (“Al-Batalyousi,” p. 278) concluded that Baţalyawi copied parts of Mizân al-‘amal, but he actually meant Mo‘zenei ha-‘iyyunim (see n. 5), which is wrongly attributed to al-Ghazâlî. Kaufmann has already pointed out Derenbourg’s confusion between the two treatises (Kaufmann, “Les cercles intellectuels de Batalyousi,” pp. 132-133). Derenbourg’s claims regarding Batalyawi’s copying from al-Ghazâlî fit into his general contempt for Batalyawi, expressed in his statement that Batalyawi did not innovate in philosophy just as he did not innovate in grammar, poetry, or law (Derenbourg, “Al-Batalyousi,” p. 279).}

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Batâlyawi in the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, argue that the treatise must have been written by a 13th century Jewish scholar, and attempt to explain why it was nonetheless attributed to a 12th century Muslim scholar.9

In this article I offer new interpretations of several properties of Batâlyawi’s philosophical treatise: the treatise’s title, its textual history, its attribution to Batâlyawi, its sources, and its literary genre. I claim, first, that *Kitâb al-ḥadâ’iq* is not the original title of the treatise; second, that the treatise was originally part of another treatise of Batâlyawi, *Kitâb al-masâ’il*; third, that its attribution to Batâlyawi is authentic; fourth, I present new evidence for the treatise’s indebtedness to the philosophical encyclopedia *Rasâ’il Ikhwân al-Ŝafâ’*, evidence which also serves as additional proof of its revised textual history and its authentic attribution; and fifth, I claim that the treatise should be considered as belonging to the genre of questions and answers in Islamic literature. Throughout this study, which examines a large quantity of textual evidence, I also argue that it is advantageous to use both Muslim and Jewish sources in order to get a full understanding of Batâlyawi’s thought, and that Batâlyawi’s treatise can be considered as belonging to the Arabic Neoplatonist philosophical tradition.

1. The Title of the Treatise

Batâlyawi’s philosophical treatise is unequivocally named by scholars *Kitâb al-ḥadâ’iq* (*The Book of Gardens*). However, several factors might induce us to question this title’s authenticity. First, a treatise by this name is never attributed to Batâlyawi in Islamic biographical sources. Second, this title is nowhere documented in Jewish tradition, despite the treatise’s great popularity among Jewish thinkers. Third, this title has a general meaning, which does not reflect the distinctive contents of the treatise (the words ḥadâ’iq [gardens] or ḥadiqa [garden] do not appear in the treatise itself).10

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9 See “Batâlyusi” in *Jewish Encyclopedia* (by Kaufmann Kohler and Isaac Broydê).
10 It is possible, however, that the title was originally composed of a general expression like *Kitâb al-ḥadâ’iq*, and a more specific description of the treatise’s contents (*fi*...). That would be in line with the common structure of titles of medieval Arabic (and Judaeo-Arabic) treatises. Take, for example, the title of Moses b. Ezra’s treatise, *Maqâlat al-ḥadiqa fi ma’nâ al-majâz wa-l-ḥaqiqa* (see below, and Eliyahu, “Muslim and Jewish Philosophy in..."
An examination of the treatise’s Arabic manuscripts reveals that this title appears in only one of them, the Berlin manuscript, on the title page, where it may have been added by the copyist and therefore cannot automatically be accepted as the original title of the treatise. The other manuscripts bear different titles, or no title at all. There are very few records of the treatise’s title in the writings of Islamic thinkers due to the treatise’s limited impact in Muslim thought. Even those who know the treatise only rarely mention its name and author.

The Jewish sources, however, agree upon naming the treatise *Sefer ha-agullot ha-ra'yoniyot* (*The Book of Imaginary Circles*), a name which fits the contents of the treatise well, in contrast with the Arabic title.

There is one extant manuscript of the treatise in Judeo-Arabic, MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Neubauer 1334, which was known to Kaufmann. In this manuscript, the title *Dā‘irāt wahmiyya* (*Imaginary Circles*) appears in the upper left corner of the first page of the treatise, in a handwriting different from that of the text itself. This title, nonetheless, matches the content and style of the treatise, since it expresses the treatise’s specific theme, and uses a term similar – but not identical – to those appearing in the text (*dā‘ira wahmiyya* and *dawā‘ira wahmiyya*). The plural *dā‘irāt* is grammatically incorrect in standard Arabic (where only the plural *dawā‘ira* is accepted), but it fits Judeo-Arabic, in which sound plural (especially in the female form) may appear instead of broken plural.

The title *Dā‘irāt wahmiyya* is reminiscent of the title of Moses Ibn Tibbon’s Hebrew translation, *Sefer ha-agullot ha-ra'yoniyot* (*The Book of Imaginary Circles*). The phrases *'agulla ra'yoniit* (“imaginary
circle”) or ‘agullot ra’yoniyyot (“imaginary circles”) are used by Moses Ibn Tibbon to translate the phrases dā’ira wahmiyya or dawā’ir wahmiyya. This title appears in slightly different versions in all of the translation’s manuscripts. It is probable that the title was given by Moses Ibn Tibbon himself (as Moritz Steinschneider believed), but even if it is an early copyist’s addition, it was unanimously accepted and became the translation’s authoritative title thereafter.

It appears that the Hebrew title and the Judaeo-Arabic title are the most appropriate titles for the treatise. This is in contrast to the title based on the Berlin manuscript, Kitāb al-ḥadā‘iq, which has no connection to the contents of the treatise. The scholarly approach to this title is, however, very confused. Scholars tend to translate the Arabic title Kitāb al-ḥadā‘iq as The Book of Imaginary Circles, without noting the discrepancy between the meaning of the Arabic title and its translation. They do not explain that the titles in English, French, Spanish or German meaning The Book of Imaginary Circles are in fact derived from the Hebrew title or based on the content of the treatise itself. The only exception known to me is Alain de Libera’s translation of the title according to its original meaning in Arabic, “Le Livre des jardins.”


16 Steinschneider, Die hebräischen Übersetzungen, p. 287.
17 Additional evidence regarding the title, coming from the Jewish reception of the treatise, can be found in another treatise, Mo’zenei ha-iyyunim (see n. 5).
18 From Peña’s mention of the work as “Kitāb al-Ḥadā‘iq («El libro de los cercos,” según la traducción de M. Asín Palacios)” it seems that he has some awareness of this problematic issue, although he does not say so explicitly (Peña Martín, “Gramática y verdad: tiempo y tiempo verbal según Ibn al-Sid,” p. 218).
19 In Hebrew ‘agulla ra’yoni (Dukes, “Ha’ataqot mi-Mo’zenei ha-iyyunim le-Abū Ḥānid al-Ghazālī,” pp. 195-196); in German Die bildliche Kreise (Kaufmann, Die Spuren al-Batlajusi’s, p. 9); in Spanish Libro de los cercos (Asín Palacios, “Ibn al-Sid de Badajoz y su ’Libro de los cercos’”); in French Le livre des cercles (Corbin, Histoire de la philosophie islamique, p. 326.). Kaufmann also quotes Dukes’s translation of the phrase as “Gendankenkreise” and the various translations by Steinschneider: “speculative (oder imaginare) Spharen,” “intellectuelle Spharen,” “imaginare Cirkel.”
20 De Libera, La philosophie médiévale, p. 147. Kaufmann and Steinschneider suggest only once an exact translation of ḥadā‘iq to German – “Die Baumgärten,” “Obstgärten” – but in practice refer to the translation with different versions of the title Imaginary Circles.
If we combine this evidence with the fact that a treatise called Kitāb al-hadā‘iq is never mentioned in Batālayawṣi’s biographical information, we cannot escape the conclusion that the treatise was not originally known under this name, which is found only in the Berlin manuscript and could have been given to it by a copyist. Nevertheless, the title was unequivocally accepted in scholarship following its acceptance by Kaufmann and Asín.

We do not know, however, the treatise’s original title, if there was one. In fact, there is evidence that the treatise lacked a title altogether, as will be presented below. The Jewish versions of the treatise preserve more adequate titles, whether in Judaeo-Arabic or in Hebrew, all with a similar meaning – The Book of Imaginary Circles. Scholars call the treatise in accordance with this meaning preserved in the Jewish versions. Indeed, scholars writing in Arabic have even translated it back into Arabic as Kitāb al-dawā‘ir, on the basis of the treatise’s titles in European languages. This name is appropriate for the treatise in terms of its content, since the phrase dawā‘ir wahmiyya appears in the treatise itself and is its central theme. It seems, therefore, appropriate to stop using the inadequate title Kitāb al-hadā‘iq, and to adopt instead the title Kitāb al-dawā‘ir. This is how it will be called in this paper from here on – Kitāb al-dawā‘ir.

21 See Kaufmann, Die Spuren al-Batlaṭwṣī’s, p. 10; Asín Palacios, “Ibn al-Sīd de Badajoz,” p. 53.

22 Several studies in Arabic credit Baṭalaywṣī with a treatise called Kitāb al-dawā‘ir. This is not, however, an authentic title found in Arabic sources. It is based on studies in French that do not call the treatise by its accepted Arabic title, Kitāb al-hadā‘iq, but by its French title “Le livre des cercles,” translated from the Spanish version by Asín. On this basis, the title was (re)translated into Arabic as Kitāb al-dawā‘ir (See Peña Martín, Corán, palabra y verdad, p. 68; Abū Janāḥ, “Ibn al-Sīd al-Batlaṭwṣī – ḥayāṭuḥu, minḥajuḥu fī l-nahw wa-l-lughā, shīrīḥu,” p. 85). Thus, Sa‘īd ‘Abd al-Karim Sa‘ūdi, in his edition of Batlaṭwṣī’s Kitāb al-ḥulāf fī islāḥ al-khilāf min kitāb al-jumal, mentions Kitāb al-dawā‘ir (p. 33) on the basis of Corbin’s Histoire de la philosophie islamique (p. 326); In the same way, Uthmān Yahyā, in his edition of Ibn al-‘Arabi’s al-Futūḥat al-makkīyya (vol. III, p. 195), mentions Kitāb al-dawā‘ir according to Gauthier’s French title (Gauthier, Ibn Rochd, p. 176).

23 See De Callataÿ, “From Ibn Masarra to Ibn ‘Arabi: References, Shibboleths and Other Subtle Allusions to the Rasā’il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā’ in the Literature of al-Andalus,” p. 26. One example of a treatise which was known under a particular title that turned out to be incorrect and was later replaced by a different one, is the treatise by Abū l-Ḥasan Al-Ashʿari which was first published under the name Risālat istihbsān al-ḥawd fī ‘ilm al-kalām. Richard Frank published the treatise again based on new manuscripts, proving that the treatise’s original title was Kitāb al-ḥāthth ‘alā l-buḥth. According to Frank, the old title was not authentic, and was given to it by the copyist or the editor, either because they did
2. The Textual History of Kitāb al-dawā'ir

Before turning to the question of authorship, I will address the issue of the textual history of Kitāb al-dawā'ir, a topic insufficiently treated in scholarship. Scholars consider Kitāb al-dawā'ir to be an independent treatise standing on its own; however, on the basis of new evidence presented here, I argue that the treatise was originally part of the anthology of Baṭalyawsi’s writings, Kitāb al-masā’il. This evidence will also shed new light on the questions of title and authorship.

The new piece of evidence presented here is one of the treatise’s manuscripts, MS Dublin, Chester Beatty, 4325. This manuscript’s contribution to the textual history of Kitāb al-dawā’ir has not been studied yet (al-Dāya uses this manuscript in his edition of Kitāb al-dawā’ir, without mentioning its source).24 The Dublin manuscript includes Kitāb al-dawā’ir as part of an anthology (majmū’a), comprised of eighteen treatises by Baṭalyawsi. Each treatise is called risāla, epistle, according to the table of contents of the manuscript, or mas’ala, question, according to the text. One of these masā’il is our treatise, Kitāb al-dawā’ir. This is the only manuscript of Kitāb al-dawā’ir which was copied together with other texts by Baṭalyawsi. It shows that in addition to the perception of Kitāb al-dawā’ir as an independent treatise, it was also considered and copied as part of a collection of Baṭalyawsi’s treatises.

The Dublin collection of Baṭalyawsi’s treatises, which includes short treatises called masā’il, is reminiscent of Baṭalyawsi’s treatise Kitāb al-masā’il wa-l-ajwiba (The Book of Questions and Answers – henceforth Kitāb al-masā’il). Kitāb al-masā’il is a collection of epistles in the form of questions and answers, mainly addressing grammatical issues, but also philosophical ones. It is a well-known work by Baṭalyawsi, properly documented in biographical sources. A comparison of the Dublin collection and Kitāb al-masā’il (according to MS Escorial, 1518),25

not know the vocabulary of Al-Ash’ari well, or because they were fundamentally opposed to the position expressed in the treatise and wanted to describe it in a derogatory way. See: Frank, “Al-Ash’ari’s Kitāb al-Ḥathth ‘alā l-Baḥth,” pp. 83-84.

24 See al-Baṭalyawsi, al-Ḥadā’iq, p. 26; Eliyahu, Ibn al-Sid al-Baṭalyawsi, “Introduction to the edition.” Ahmad Fārāq studied this manuscript only with regard to its contribution to the text of Al-Im wa-l-musammā. See al-Baṭalyawsi, al-Im wa-l-musammā, pp. 327-328.

reveals that these are in fact two different versions of the same collection.26 Most of the chapters in the Dublin collection, 10 out of 18, also appear in the Escorial manuscript, albeit in a different order. Although it includes many more chapters than the Dublin collection, the MS Escorial does not include Kitāb al-dawā‘ir or Kitāb al-intiṣār, another treatise of Baṭalyawsi which was copied separately and in MS Dublin.27 This finding indicates that we have two collections of Baṭalyawsi’s writings, known under similar names, and partially overlapping in their contents. From the introduction to the Kitāb al-masā‘īl it seems that Baṭalyawsi himself edited the collection, as he says: “and I called it the book of questions and answers.”28 The Dublin collection does not include an introduction from which we could learn about its editor, but in terms of contents and character it is very similar to Kitāb al-masā‘īl. In its title page it says: “This is an anthology (majmū‘a) including eighteen treatises (muṣannaf) from the works of […] al-Baṭalyawsi.”29

Kitāb al-masā‘īl is well-documented in Baṭalyawsi’s biographical sources. It is mentioned by al-Ṣafadī as Masā‘īl manthūra ‘arabīyya (Various Questions [in] Arabic),30 and by al-Suyūṭī and al-Maqqari as al-Masā‘īl al-manthūra fi l-nahw (Various Grammatical Questions).31 These different titles could indicate either a lack of clarity regarding the title, or the existence of two (or more) slightly different collections.32 The Dublin collection is a distinct example of such a “slightly different” collection.

26 Al-Dā‘ay, who edited Kitāb al-dawā‘ir using the Dublin collection (as can be seen from the page copied from the manuscript in al-Dā‘ay’s edition, although he never specifies its source), describes it as al-Masā‘īl wa-l-ajwiba (see al-Baṭalyawsi, al-Hadā‘iq, p. 26). It is probable that he was aware of the similarities between the Dublin collection and Kitāb al-masā‘īl without stating so explicitly.
27 See the table in Eliyahu, Ibn al-Sūd al-Baṭalyawsi, chapter 2, section 3.4, which includes a comparison between the Dublin collection and other manuscripts of Kitāb al-masā‘īl, as well as partial editions of the collection.
28 Wa-samaytuhu Kitāb al-masā‘īl wa-l-ajwiba (MS Escorial, 1518, f. 2b); al-Baṭalyawsi, “Min Kiṭāb al-masā‘īl wa-l-ajwiba,” pp. 113-114.
30 Al-Ṣafadī, Kiṭāb al-wāfī bi-l-wafayāt, p. 569 (it should probably be fi l-arabiyya).
32 Peña believes that Al-Masā‘īl al-manthūra fi l-nahw might be the same composition as Kitab al-masā‘īl, or that it could include different questions. See Peña Martín, Corán, palabra y verdad, p. 68.

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It should not surprise us, therefore, that Baṭalyawsī’s philosophical treatise is not mentioned in his biographical sources, since it was most likely known as part of a collection. While we are used to considering this treatise as a separate philosophical treatise, it is in fact also quite natural to view it as part of a collection of questions and answers: the introduction to Kitāb al-dawāʾīr presents it as a response to seven questions on philosophical topics, which Baṭalyawsī answers in the seven chapters of the treatise. This conclusion is also true for other treatises in the Kitāb al-masāʾīl which were copied separately, such as Kitāb al-intīsār and al-Īsm wa-l-musammā.33 The fact that they too are not mentioned by the biographers as separate treatises demonstrates that they were originally part of a collection (although these treatises do not include questions and answers).

The inclusion of Kitāb al-dawāʾīr in a collection can supply a key to the problem of the treatise’s title. If the treatise was part of a collection, it is likely that it did not have a title of its own. Later, when it was copied separately because of its special contents (similar to other chapters from the collection), the need for a title became evident. The fact that Kitāb al-dawāʾīr has different titles in various manuscripts supports this argument.

The inclusion of Kitāb al-dawāʾīr in a collection of Baṭalyawsī’s treatises, alongside treatises whose connection to Baṭalyawsī is well documented in other sources, supports Baṭalyawsī’s authorship of the treatise. True, Kitāb al-dawāʾīr appears only in the Dublin collection and not in the collection named Kitāb al-masāʾīl. The same is true for Kitāb al-intīsār. The exclusion may be coincidental, or it could be due to the length of these two treatises, which are significantly longer than most of the other epistles in the Dublin collection.34 The pronounced philosophical nature of the two treatises, however, does not seem to be


34 These two treatises in the Dublin collection cover about 16 pages, while the other treatises are of 1-2 pages, and some of 5-6 pages.
the reason they were not copied in the MS Escorial, since it includes
philosophical epistles as well.35

References by the biographers to the collection as al-Masāʾil
al-manthūra fī l-naḥw, without specifying that the epistles also relate
to non-grammatical contents, are due to the grammatical nature of most
of the epistles, which makes the collection in its entirety appear gram-
matical at first glance. Another sign of the biographers’ superficial ac-
quaintance with Kitāb al-masāʾil is that they do not call it by its
accurate title, Kitāb al-masāʾil wa-l-ajwība, which is mentioned by
Baṭalyawṣi himself in his introduction to the treatise.

The limited acquaintance with Kitāb al-masāʾil persists among
modern scholars: most are generally not aware of the full contents of
the treatise, which moreover, has yet to be edited in its entirety (only
small sections of the treatise have been published in a scattered way).36
Peña is one of the few scholars to stress the importance of Kitāb
al-masāʾil, and the need for a complete edition of the treatise.37

Finally, Kitāb al-dawāʾir’s inclusion in a collection of treatises can
explain its limited impact on Muslim thought. The commonly accepted
grammatical character of the collection contributed to the fact that it was
overlooked by thinkers who were specifically interested in philosophy.38

3. Baṭalyawṣi’s Authorship of Kitāb al-dawāʾir

The above discussions of the original title and of the textual history
of Baṭalyawṣi’s treatise are connected to the question of Baṭalyawṣi’s

35 In the Dublin collection there are more questions on grammar than on any other
topic. However, the grammatical questions are very short, and the questions that are not
grammatical are much longer. Kitāb al-dawāʾir and Kitāb al-intiṣār include 32 pages al-
together, constituting 40% of the 79 page of the collection. In MS Escorial the grammatical
portion is higher because the philosophical questions are short as well.

36 This attitude is partly due to Asín’s description of the treatise. Asín mentioned only
six short and non-grammatical answers out of the whole work, which caused most subse-
quent scholars to conclude that the treatise consisted of these six answers alone. See Se-
rrano, “Ibn al-Sīd al-Baṭalyawṣi (444/1052-521/1127),” p. 89; Ramón Guerrero,
“Influencia de al-Fārābī en Ibn al-Sīd de Badajoz,” p. 374. For a list of the published sec-
tions from the treatise see Eliyahu, Ibn al-Sīd al-Baṭalyawṣi, pp. 31-33.

37 Peña Martín, Corán, palabra y verdad, p. 63.

38 For other factors explaining the lack of interest of Andalusian philosophers in Kitāb
al-dawāʾir see Eliyahu, “Muslim and Jewish Philosophy,” pp. 57-58.
authorship of the treatise. The postulation that Baṭalyawṣi is not the author of the treatise could explain why the sources do not attribute any philosophical work (no matter by what title) to him. The fact that in Jewish tradition the treatise is also attributed to other authors could also serve as a foundation for questioning its attribution to Baṭalyawṣi.

Kitāb al-dawā'ir is not the only treatise whose attribution to Baṭalyawṣi’s has been questioned. Back in Baṭalyawṣi’s time he was accused by a certain Muḥammad Ibn Khalaṣa of copying his work al-Iqtīdāb from another author.39 In modern scholarship, doubts concerning Baṭalyawṣi’s authorship of Kitāb al-dawā’ir were expressed in the Jewish Encyclopedia’s entry on Baṭalyawṣi,40 and by Salvador Peña. Peña does not naturally accept the treatise as part of Baṭalyawṣi’s writings,41 and finds a contradiction between Kitāb al-dawā’ir and some of Baṭalyawṣi’s grammatical writings over the conception of time. After suggesting that this contradiction could be attributed to a separate authorship of the treatises, Peña prefers, however, to reconcile the different views, and does not openly exclude the treatise from Baṭalyawṣi’s works.

The study of the textual history of Kitāb al-dawā’ir recounted above has revealed that it was originally part of a compendium of treatises, Kitāb al-masā’il, written by the same author. Considering the fact that Kitāb al-masā’il is widely accepted as a work by Baṭalyawṣi, it can therefore be concluded that Kitāb al-dawā’ir was also written by Baṭalyawṣi. In the following section, I proceed to a textual comparison between Kitāb al-dawā’ir and Baṭalyawṣi’s other writings. This comparison yields thematic and stylistic similarities, thereby offering decisive evidence in support of the conclusion that the treatises were penned by the same author.

40 See above.

Al-Qantara XXXVI 1, 2015, pp. 165-198  ISSN 0211-3589  doi: 10.3989/alqantara.2015.006
A. The Epistle on Religion and Philosophy in Kitāb al-masā’il

In *The Epistle on Religion and Philosophy,*42 which is part of *Kitāb al-masā’il,* Baṭalyawṣī defends the Orthodoxy of the Andalusian scholar Abū l-Walīd al-Waqqašī (d. 1095) against accusations of heresy.43 In the epistle, Baṭalyawṣī’s interlocutor argues that philosophers are heretics. One of the main arguments that Baṭalyawṣī presents against this claim is that a distinction should be made between the “true” philosopher, who is honest and virtuous, and the “untrue” philosopher, who does not possess these traits. To strengthen his argument Baṭalyawṣī quotes the great philosophers, Aristotle and Plato, who emphasize the importance of morality and virtue, as well as express the philosopher’s recognition of the superiority of religion over philosophy and the philosopher’s commitment to religious laws.

The question of the philosophers’ attitude to the prophets is also addressed in *Kitāb al-dawā‘ir,* especially in the first chapter, where Baṭalyawṣī discusses the various parts of the soul.44 In describing the characteristics of the philosophical soul and the prophetic soul, Baṭalyawṣī offers a definition of the true philosopher and provides quotes from Plato and Aristotle, which are almost identical to those mentioned in *The Epistle on Religion and Philosophy.*45 At first glance, it is surprising to find literal parallels between *Kitāb al-dawā‘ir* and *The Epistle on Religion and Philosophy,* since the two treatises appear in the two versions of the same collection. However, this is understandable given the anthological nature of *Kitāb al-masā’il,* which includes various treatises dealing with different topics.

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42 This is the title I suggest for this epistle which has no title in the manuscript I examined (Escorial 1518 f. 71b-73a). Asín published the epistle under the name: “Opinión de Ibn al-Sīd de Badajoz sobre la incredulidad del poeta al-Waqqāšī” (Asín Palacios, “La tesis de la necesidad”).


44 On Baṭalyawṣī’s unique division of the soul, see Pines, “‘Shi‘ite Terms and Conceptions in Judah Halevi’s Kuzari,’” p. 184 n. 144; Eliyahu, *Ibn al-Sīd al-Baṭalyawṣī,* chapter 4, section 2.3.

B. The Epistle on the Immortality of the Soul in Kitāb al-masā’il

In *The Epistle on the Immortality of the Soul* Batālyawṣī is asked whether according to the philosophers, “the special universal, which is the species of man” continues to be a living intellect when it leaves the individual body, after reaching perfection during life. The formulation of the question is quite strange, because the question of the immortality of the soul is generally asked in relation to the rational soul, not in relation to the human species. Indeed, in his response Batālyawṣī refers to the immortality of the rational soul:

One who is sensitive in his essence and self is essentially alive, and one who is living in his essence cannot be deprived of life. The philosophers adduced significant additional evidence as to the immortality of the rational soul, but I have avoided mentioning all of it, because what I have mentioned is sufficient and convincing.

The same topic is discussed in the last chapter of *Kitāb al-dawā‘ir*, which includes eight proofs for the immortality of the rational soul after the body’s death. In the final proof of the chapter, Batālyawṣī offers an argument he identifies with more strongly than with the previous ones. This argument is literally almost identical to his response in *The Epistle on the Immortality of the Soul*:

It has been proven that the soul is sensitive in its essence and self, and a being sensitive in its essence and self cannot be deprived of life. Therefore the soul, after it leaves the body, lives on. The philosophers adduced further evidence for the immortality of the rational soul, but what we have mentioned is sufficient.

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46 This is the title I suggest for this epistle which has no title in the manuscript I examined (Escorial 1518 f. 77b-78a). It was published by Tornero (“Cuestiones filosóficas,” Arabic p. 23, translation p. 29), who refers to it as “sobre la inmortalidad del alma” (p. 18).


C. The Epistle on the Evil Eye in Kitāb al-masā’il

Another example of the close link between the contents of Kitāb al-dawā’ir and other parts of Kitāb al-masā’il can be found in The Epistle on the Evil Eye.50 Baṭalyawsī first notes that one should refrain from dealing with this topic. However, for those who insist on contending with it, such as the questioner of this specific question, he offers a variety of opinions: popular, philosophical, physical and astrological.51 According to Baṭalyawsī, the philosophers argue that the evil eye is a wondrous human trait. In this context, he offers a distinction between philosophers and prophets:

Philosophy only deals with general matters, while the particulars, which relate to each one of the particular beings, are truly known only to those who are inspired by divine power, and connected to prophetic essence.52

A similar distinction appears in Kitāb al-dawā’ir, where Baṭalyawsī says that one of the faculties of the prophetic soul is “to communicate the things that the philosophical soul is not able to know, since the philosophical soul is only engaged in considering the general terms.”53 Thus, both Kitāb al-dawā’ir and The Epistle on the Evil Eye share the notion that one of the differences between the philosophical soul and the prophetic soul is that the philosophical soul can only know universals, while the prophetic soul has knowledge of particulars as well.

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50 This is the title I suggest for this epistle which has no title in the manuscript I examined (Escorial 1518 f. 23b-24b). The epistle presents the subject as ḫisābat al-lā‘in bi-‘aynīhī. It was published by Tornero (“Cuestiones filosóficas,” Arabic pp. 19-21, translation pp. 25-27), who translates the subject as “el mal de ojo” (pp. 17, 25).
D. Al-Iqtiṣāb fi sharḥ adab al-kuttāb

Baṭalyawsi’s *al-Iqtiṣāb fi sharḥ adab al-kuttāb*⁵⁴ is a commentary on Ibn Qutayba’s (d. 889) famous treatise *Adab al-kātib*. Ibn Qutayba’s treatise, which is a manual of philology for the court clerk, is characterized by a hostile approach to philosophy. In his commentary, Baṭalyawsi sets out to defend philosophy against Ibn Qutayba’s attack by claiming that the philosophical ideas denounced by Ibn Qutayba should not be rejected automatically, but examined objectively. Baṭalyawsi also claims that Ibn Qutayba’s attack against philosophy stems from ignorance, or from a wish to justify himself against accusations of a sympathy towards philosophy.⁵⁵ Baṭalyawsi adopts a similar approach in defense of philosophy in *Kitāb al-dawāʿir* and in *The Epistle on Religion and Philosophy*.

In addition to this similar attitude towards philosophy, there are thematic and stylistic affinities between *Kitāb al-dawāʿir* and *al-Iqtiṣāb*. As mentioned above, Peña found a contradiction regarding the subject of time between *Kitāb al-dawāʿir* and Baṭalyawsi’s grammatical writings, including *al-Iqtiṣāb*.⁵⁶ However, as suggested by Peña himself, this seeming contradiction can be reconciled in several ways.⁵⁷ Other examples, as presented below, show, on the contrary, the similarity between the two treatises.

In *Adab al-kātib*, Ibn Qutayba condemns several philosophical opinions. Baṭalyawsi’s interpretation of one of these sayings bears a clear semblance to *Kitāb al-dawāʿir*. The statement in *al-Iqtiṣāb* is: “the point is the beginning of the line, and the point is indivisible.”⁵⁸

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⁵⁴ In the title of Baṭalyawsi’s work the word appears in the plural (kuttāb), while in the title of Ibn Qutayba’s work it generally appears in the singular (kātib). See al-Baṭalyawsi, *al-Iqtiṣāb fi sharḥ adab al-kuttāb*, vol. 1, p. 18.


⁵⁷ Peña assumes that the metaphysical approach, detected by him in *Kitāb al-dawāʿir*, is esoteric, and the grammatical approach, found in the grammatical writings, is exoteric, and suggests to reconcile these approaches through grammatical analysis (Peña Martín, “Gramática y verdad,” p. 220). To Peña’s propositions I would add the possibility that the different treatises were intended for different audiences and different purposes.

According to \textit{al-Iqti\textbar d}, then, one can imagine that the point is the first level in the existence of sizes.\textsuperscript{59} When it receives the dimension of length, it becomes a line; when it receives the dimension of width, it becomes a surface; and when it receives the dimension of depth it becomes a body: “In this respect, the point is the foundation to the line, and the line is the foundation of the surface, and the surface is the foundation of the body.”\textsuperscript{60}

This explanation is similar to Ba\textsuperscript{\textbar}tal\textsuperscript{\textbar}aw\textsuperscript{\textbar}si’s words in \textit{Kit\textbar b al-daw\textbar a\textbar ir}, where he says that the least material bodies start in the point, which lacks any dimension, and from there a line is created, and then a surface, and then a body:

Because the foundation of sizes is the point, which is the foundation of the line and has no dimension. This is followed by the line which is the foundation of surface, and then surface which is the foundation for the body.\textsuperscript{59}

In another passage in \textit{al-Iqti\textbar d}, Ba\textsuperscript{\textbar}tal\textsuperscript{\textbar}aw\textsuperscript{\textbar}si compares the point to the One and says that the point in geometrical sciences is similar to the One in numbers theory: “As oneness is not a number, but is the foundation of the number and the cause of its existence, so too the point is not a dimension or a size, but is the foundation of dimensions and sizes, and the cause of their existence.”\textsuperscript{62}

This comparison of the point to the One resembles, both in concept and in formulation, the comparison between the One and God in \textit{Kit\textbar b al-daw\textbar a\textbar ir}. There Ba\textsuperscript{\textbar}tal\textsuperscript{\textbar}aw\textsuperscript{\textbar}si states that understanding the formation of numbers from the One leads to understanding the creation of the world by God: “Just as the one is the cause of the existence of the number, but is not part of the number, so too the almighty creator is the cause of existence of the world and not

\textsuperscript{59} The expression “the first level” (\textit{awwal mar\textbar tib}) also appears in \textit{Kit\textbar b al-daw\textbar a\textbar ir}. See Eliyahu, \textit{Ibn al-S\textbar i d al-Ba\textsuperscript{\textbar}tal\textsuperscript{\textbar}aw\textsuperscript{\textbar}si}, part 2, edition, paragraph 71; As\textsuperscript{\textbar}ln Palacios, “Ibn al-S\textbar i d de Badajoz,” p. 78.

\textsuperscript{60} Al-Ba\textsuperscript{\textbar}tal\textsuperscript{\textbar}aw\textsuperscript{\textbar}si, \textit{al-Iqti\textbar d}, vol. 1, p. 57: \textit{Fa-\textbar s\textbar r\textbar at al-nu\textbar q\textbar a bi-h\textbar d\textbar h\textbar a al-i\textbar t\textbar b\textbar \textbar \textbar h\textbar a al-kh\textbar a\textbar t, wa-l-kh\textbar a\textbar t mabda\textbar a al-sa\textbar t\textbar h, wa-l-sa\textbar t\textbar h mabda\textbar a al-jism.}

\textsuperscript{61} Eliyahu, \textit{Ibn al-S\textbar i d al-Ba\textsuperscript{\textbar}tal\textsuperscript{\textbar}aw\textsuperscript{\textbar}si}, part 2, edition, paragraph 46; As\textsuperscript{\textbar}ln Palacios, “Ibn al-S\textbar i d de Badajoz,” p. 72: \textit{Li-an mabda\textbar a al-a\textbar z\textbar \textbar \textbar h\textbar a al-nu\textbar q\textbar a al-lat\textbar i hiya mabda\textbar a al-kh\textbar a\textbar t, wa-l\textbar a\textbar d la\textbar h\textbar a, thumma al-kh\textbar a\textbar t al-ladhi huwa mabda\textbar a al-sa\textbar t\textbar h, thumma al-sa\textbar t\textbar h al-ladhi huwa mabda\textbar a al-jism.}

\textsuperscript{62} Al-Ba\textsuperscript{\textbar}tal\textsuperscript{\textbar}aw\textsuperscript{\textbar}si, \textit{al-Iqti\textbar d}, vol. 1, p. 57: \textit{Fa-kam\textbar a an al-wah\textbar da laysat ‘adadan, in-nam\textbar a hiya mabda\textbar a li-l\textbar ’adad wa\textbar ’illa li-wuj\textbar \textbar dih\textbar a, ka-dh\textbar a\textbar lika al-nu\textbar q\textbar a laysat bu’dan wa\textbar l\textbar a ‘iz\textbar \textbar \textbar \textbar \textbar \textbar aman, in-nam\textbar a hiya mabda\textbar a li-l-ab\textbar d wa-l-a\textbar z\textbar h, wa\textbar ’illa li-wuj\textbar \textbar dih\textbar a.}

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part of the world.” The comparison between the One and God, and between the numbers and the world, is a central theme in Kitāb al-dawāʿir, and it is a major aspect of Rasāʾil Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ’s impact on the treatise, which will be discussed below.

E. Kitāb al-tanbih

Baṭalyawṣi’s Kitāb al-tanbih ‘alā al-asbāb al-latī awjabat ikhtilāf al-fuqahā’ fi raʾyihim wa-iʿtiqādātihim (The Book of Notification on the Causes for Disagreement among the Jurists Concerning Opinion and Doctrines) discusses the causes for disagreements among scholars of Islamic law and theology. The guiding principle of the treatise is that many of the disagreements stem from an incorrect understanding of the language of the Scriptures. Baṭalyawṣi believes that a better knowledge of the Arabic language could considerably reduce these disagreements.

Before turning to the textual similarities between the two treatises, we should note that Kitāb al-masāʿil is explicitly mentioned in Kitāb al-tanbih, as noted by Peña. Since Kitāb al-dawāʿir can be considered part of (one of the versions of) Kitāb al-masāʿil, and since Kitāb al-masāʿil and Kitāb al-tanbih were written by the same author, Kitāb al-dawāʿir can also be considered to have been written by the same author. In addition to this reference, Kitāb al-tanbih and Kitāb al-dawāʿir have several themes in common. Similar formulations can also be found between Kitāb al-tanbih and other parts of Kitāb al-masāʿil. The

65 This is the title as mentioned by Baṭalyawṣi in Kitāb al-masāʿil (MS 1518, f. 32b). Other versions of the title can be found in biographical sources and in other editions of the text. See Peña Martín, Corán, palabra y verdad, pp. 65, 69; Serrano, “Ibn al-Sid al-Baṭalyawṣi (444/1052-521/1127),” pp. 90-91.
66 The word raʾyihim appears in the singular form in Kitāb al-masāʿil (MS 1518, f. 32b).
67 See Peña Martín, Corán, palabra y verdad, pp. 65, 69; a slight correction to Peña’s reference (instead of f. 33b in MS Escorial, 1518 it should be f. 32b) is made in Eliyahu, Ibn al-Sid al-Baṭalyawṣi, p. 31 n. 117.
following topics are examples of similar ideas found in Kitāb al-tanbih, Kitāb al-dawāʿir and other parts of Kitāb al-masāʿil.

The unity of truth: In Kitāb al-tanbih, Bāṭalawṣī accepts the possibility of the multiplicity of opinions in Islam while simultaneously stating that there is only one truth. Bāṭalawṣī’s discussion of this topic is reminiscent of his discussion in The Epistle on Religion and Philosophy, where he emphasizes that religion and philosophy have one common purpose. In both treatises, Bāṭalawṣī states that there is only one truth with a variety of ways to reach it.68

Disagreements among human beings: According to Kitāb al-tanbih, disagreement is inherent to human nature, because human beings were created different from one another.69 A similar idea appears in Kitāb al-dawāʿir, where Bāṭalawṣī states that there is a wide range of levels in human nature. There are people with an inferior nature, close to animals, and people with a perfect nature, close to angels.70 A similar argument regarding disagreements appears in The Epistle on Religion and Philosophy.71

Language as a tool for understanding theology: Bāṭalawṣī claims in Kitāb al-tanbih that an improved knowledge of the Arabic language can help reduce the legal disputations that are often due to an incorrect understanding of the texts. Bāṭalawṣī also uses more forceful formulations of the argument, for example when he says that Islamic legal methodology is based on the foundations of the Arabic language.72 In Kitāb al-dawāʿir this principle is not explicitly stated, but the integration of examples from the field of grammar in several theological discussions indicates a similar approach.73

Opposition to Anthropomorphism: The dependence on the Arabic language as a means for reducing legal and theological disputations

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68 See al-Baṭalawṣī, al-Inṣāf, p. 27; Asín Palacios, “La tesis de la necesidad,” p. 381. For a discussion of the tension between Bāṭalawṣī’s attitude on this topic and Ibn Ḥazm’s, see Serrano, “Ibn al-Ṣid al-Baṭalawṣī y su obra sobre la discrepancia entre los musulmanes,” pp. 225-226.
71 See Asín Palacios, “La tesis de la necesidad,” p. 381.
72 Al-Baṭalawṣī, al-Inṣāf, p. 29.
leads Bāṭalaywāsi to focus on scriptural exegesis in Kitāb al-tanbih.\textsuperscript{74} Bāṭalaywāsi’s main adversaries in Kitāb al-tanbih are the mujassima, anthropomorphists who interpret the text literally,\textsuperscript{75} thus expressing anthropomorphic opinions. Similarly, in Kitāb al-dawā’ir Bāṭalaywāsi expresses opposition to the mujassima, and considers their opinions as heretical.\textsuperscript{76}

The Levels of reality: Kitāb al-tanbih and Kitāb al-dawā’ir both point to the multiple levels of reality created by God. In explaining the hadith “wa-nazalnāhu tanzilān” in Kitāb al-tanbih, Bāṭalaywāsi says that it refers to God who “organized [reality] by its levels, and situated it according to its places.”\textsuperscript{77} This position is one of the central motifs in Kitāb al-dawā’ir, where the author says:

> Since God Almighty ... emanated the creatures, and gave every creature its own place in existence; and since not all of them can logically be on the same level – some became elevated over the others, and some were lowered below the others.\textsuperscript{78}

The Prophetic Soul: Kitāb al-dawā’ir and Kitāb al-tanbih present similar positions regarding the existence of the prophetic soul. In Kitāb al-tanbih, concerning the hadith “Allāh khalāqa ādām ‘alā șūrātihī”\textsuperscript{79} (God created man in his/His form), Bāṭalaywāsi states that the pronoun of șūrātih can refer either to ādam or to Allāh.\textsuperscript{80} If the pronoun refers to Allāh, it is not meant to serve as a comparison, but rather to suggest a sense of respect given by God to man and not to other creatures. This is due to the animals being more important than inanimate objects, man being more important than animals, prophets being more important

\textsuperscript{74} Since Kitāb al-dawā’ir hardly deals with Qur’ān exegesis, it is interesting to read these treatises together: Kitāb al-dawā’ir adding a philosophical dimension to Kitāb al-tanbih, and Kitāb al-tanbih adding an exegetical dimension to Kitāb al-dawā’ir.

\textsuperscript{75} According to Serrano, it is possible that Bāṭalaywāsi hints at the Zāhirīte school and specifically Ibn Hazm. See Serrano, “Ibn al-Sid al-Bāṭalaywāsi y su obra,” pp. 226-227.

\textsuperscript{76} See Elyahu, Ibn al-Sid al-Batalaywāsi, chapter 4, section 8.3.

\textsuperscript{77} Al-Baṭalaywāsi, al-Insāf, pp. 85-86: Ratabnāhu marātibihi wa-waḍa’ānāhu mawād’ihi.

\textsuperscript{78} Elyahu, Ibn al-Sid al-Batalaywāsi, part 2, edition, paragraph 6; Asín Palacios, “Ibn al-Sid de Badajoz,” p. 64: Innu al-bārī’ ta ’ālā... lamā kāna huwa al-ladhi afāda al-mawjūd, wa-a’tā kull mawjūd minḥā qistihi min al-wujūd; wa-lamā lam yajuz fi l-hikma an takāna kulluhā fi marṭaba wāḥida, šāra ba’dūhā arfā’ min ba’din, wa-ba’dūhā aḥaṭṭ min ba’din.

\textsuperscript{79} The biblical idea “and God created man in His image” (Genesis 1:27) does not appear in the Qur’ān.

\textsuperscript{80} Al-Baṭalaywāsi, al-Insāf, p. 181.
than people, and ādam being more important than them all. This is how Baṭalyawsi expresses the idea, which is prominent in Kitāb al-dawā’ir, of hierarchy between the creatures, as well as the idea that prophets belong to a separate human (or super-human) level.81

4. The sources of Kitāb al-dawā’ir

Some aspects of the contents and style of Kitāb al-dawā’ir, originating in the use of specific philosophical sources, provide additional evidence for the strong connections between Kitāb al-dawā’ir and Kitāb al-masāʿiʿi, and confirm Baṭalyawsi’s authorship of Kitāb al-dawā’ir. These aspects are related to the main source of inspiration of Baṭalyawsi’s philosophy, the Neoplatonic encyclopedia Rasāʾil Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ.

Many scholars have noticed the substantial influence of Rasāʾil Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ on Kitāb al-dawā’ir.82 Mauro Zonta has even described the treatise as “a sort of compendium of the Brethren’s doctrines.”83 However, some scholars, such as Peña, tend to minimize the impact of the Ikhwān on Baṭalyawsi’s thought.84

I agree with the former position, namely that the Ikhwān have undoubtedly had a far-reaching impact on Baṭalyawsi’s philosophical thought (although we should not ignore the other philosophical sources of Kitāb al-dawā’ir).85 I wish to reinforce this position by providing further evidence in its support.

This impact of the Ikhwān on Kitāb al-dawā’ir is reflected in Baṭalyawsi’s adoption of many philosophical ideas from the Ikhwān,86 as well as by stylistic similarities. For example, Baṭalyawsi introduces

83 Zonta, “Influence of Arabic and Islamic Philosophy on Judaic Thought.”
84 See Peña Martín, Corán, palabra y verdad, pp. 148-149; 425-427.
86 In addition to the references mentioned above, see Eliyahu, Ibn al-Sid al-Baṭalyawsi, pp. 67-69; De Callataŷ, “From Ibn Masarra to Ibn ’Arabi,” pp. 26-29.
his exegesis to philosophical – very often Ikhwanian – doctrines with the words “the meaning of the philosopher’s teaching that…” (ma’nā qawl al-ḥukamā’ an…), a typical Ikhwanian formula.87

Godefroid de Callataÿ has located additional stylistic similarities between the Ikhwān and Kitāb al-dawā’ir, reflected in the use Batalyawsī makes of the classical formula of the Ikhwān – “Know, my brother – may God stand by you, as well as by ourselves, with a spirit coming from Him – that…”89 This formula, which has many variations in the Ikhwān, has been identified by De Callataÿ in the beginning of chapter two of Kitāb al-dawā’ir:

On the [philosophers’] doctrine that man’s science is like an imaginary circle… I have looked attentively – may God guide us as well as you to what is right in terms of words and actions and may He safeguard us from the mistake and the error – at what they have said, and I have pondered what they have mentioned, and I have found that it admits two interpretations…90

Actually, we can provide additional evidence to support De Callataÿ’s claim, since this formula appears in Kitāb al-dawā’ir in many instances, almost in every chapter. In addition to the beginning of chapter 2 identified by De Callataÿ, it appears in the beginning of chapter 1,91 the beginning of chapter 3,92 the beginning of a section in

87 See for example Eliyahu, Ibn al-Sid al-Batayawsi, part 2, edition, paragraph 3; Asín Palacios, “Ibn al-Sid de Badajoz,” p. 63, and in other instances.
89 I’lam yā akhi ayyadaka Allāh wa-ttyānā bi-rūhin minhu anna… I would like to thank Prof. De Callataÿ for providing me a copy of his article before its publication. See De Callataÿ, “From Ibn Masarra to Ibn ‘Arabi,” p. 9.
chapter 5,93 and in chapter 6.94 This observation makes the impact of the Ikhwān on Baṭalyawṣī even clearer, and the suggestion that Baṭalyawṣī’s references to al-falāsifā or al-ḥukamā’ are directed to the Ikhwān even more probable.95

This leads us to another finding which strengthens even further the close links between Kitāb al-dawa’ir and Kitāb al-masā’il: this Ikhwānian shibboleth is not only found in Kitāb al-dawa’ir, but also in other epistles of Kitāb al-masā’il, which have no philosophical contents at all. For example, the epistle which deals with different kinds of adjectives opens with this exclamation: “I have seen your question – may God encourage you, as well as ourselves, to please him, and may He give us success in understanding the contents of the unequally – may God take you, as well as ourselves, to the right way, and may He place us among those who pursue the right way – about their saying…”96 Similarly, the epistle which deals with the Qur’ānic verse “Shahida Allāh innahu lā ilāh illā huwa” opens with the exclamation: “You have asked – may God take you, as well as ourselves, to the right way, and may He give us success in understanding the contents of the unequivocal part of the [holy] book – about His words…”97 Variations on this formula appear very frequently in the other epistles of Kitāb al-masā’il98 and show that despite the topical variety, it has a stylistic coherence.

These findings constitute additional evidence for the deep impact of the Ikhwān on Baṭalyawṣī’s writings, not only the philosophical

96 Waqaftu ’alā su’ālika – waafaqanā Allāh wa-’iyyāka li-mā yurdihi wa-ja’alana mimān yataharrat al-sawāb – fi mā yaqūluhu… (MS Dublin, Chester Beatty, 4325, f. 37b; MS Escurial 1518, f. 60b).
97 Sa’ alta – saradānā Allāh wa-’iyyāka ilā al-sawāb wa-waafaqanā li-fahm ma tadammunahu muhkam al-kitāb – ‘an qawlīhim ta’ālā… (MS Dublin, Chester Beatty, 4325, f. 54b; MS Escurial 1518, f. 26a).
98 In MS Dublin see epistles 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 15, 16, 18.
ones, but also those which do not have a philosophical character. This
evidence also reinforces the links between Kitāb al-dawāʿir and Kitāb
al-masāʾil, supporting the authentic attribution of Kitāb al-dawāʿir to
Baṭalyawṣī. These findings, in addition to the many textual parallels
between Kitāb al-dawāʿir and the Ikhwān that we have not detailed
here, show that Baṭalyawṣī adopted and elaborated upon the philosophy
of the Ikhwān, as did so many of his Jewish and Muslim Andalusian
contemporaries. Additional elucidations of the Ikhwān’s role in
Baṭalyawṣī’s thought are presented in the following section.

5. The Treatise’s genre

The connection between Kitāb al-dawāʿir and Kitāb al-masāʾil con-
tributes to highlighting our understanding of Kitāb al-dawāʿir as a trea-
tise constructed in the form of questions and answers. This aspect of
the treatise, which has not been thoroughly examined in scholarship,
will be analyzed below, in order to show the treatise’s deep integration
into the Andalusian Muslim and Jewish philosophical literature.

Compositions in the form of questions and answers are a common
genre in Arabic literature in various fields, including philosophy. In his
article on this literary genre, Hans Daiber mentions al-Masāʾil al-Ṣiqil-
līyya (The Sicilian Questions) by the Andalusian mystic Ibn Sabīn
(d. 1270) as an example of philosophical questions and answers.99
Daiber does not mention Kitāb al-masāʾil or Kitāb al-dawāʿir, or pro-
vide other Andalusian examples. However, an additional example of
treatises of this genre is the work by Baṭalyawṣī’s Andalusian contem-
porary Abū l-Ṣalt al-Dānī (d. around 1134), which deals with various
scientific topics and is also written in the masāʾil format.100

Two important examples of this genre in non-Andalusian literature
are the famous debate between animals and humans in the Ikhwān,
whose impact on Kitāb al-dawāʿir and Kitāb al-masāʾil has been
described above,101 and Abū Hayyān al-Tawḥīdī’s (d. 1023) rendering
of the debate between the grammarian al-Sirāfī and the philosopher

99 See “Masāʾil wa-Ajwiḥa” in EF (H. Daiber).
100 On Abū l-Ṣalt al-Dānī see EF (J.M. Millas).
Abū Bishr Mattā b. Yūnus, a debate which inspired the debate between Baṭalaywši and Ibn Bājja recorded in Kitāb al-masāʾīl.102

From the Judaeo-Arabic literature in Andalus, mention should be made of the Fons Vitae by Ibn Gabirol (d. c. 1058), Moses b. Ezra’s (d. 1138) two prose treatises, Kitāb al-muhāḍara wa-l-mudhakara (Book of Conversation and Recollection) and Maqālat al-hādiqa fi ma’nā al-majāz wa-l-haqqā (Treatise of the Garden of Literal and Metaphorical Meaning), and al-Kitāb al-khazārī by Judah Halevi (d. 1141), all written in the questions and answers genre.103

Sometimes, treatises in the form of questions and answers deal with real questions, but often the use of questions and answers is a literary technique designed for rhetorical purposes. Daiber considers Ibn Sab’in’s work to be a depiction of a historical dialogue between Ibn Sab’in and Frederick II of Hohenstaufen, as was previously accepted in scholarship.104 However, Anna Akasoy raised serious doubts as to the authenticity of this dialogue.105 Ibn Gabirol’s Fons Vitae and Judah Halevi’s al-Khazārī are clear examples of the use of the questions and answers genre as a literary technique.106

In the cases of Baṭalaywši and Moses b. Ezra, however, the questions may well reflect real questions, rising out of the milieu of the literary majlis whose atmosphere is so influential in their writings.107 In
the introduction to *Kitāb al-masāʾil*, Baṭalyawi states: “My aim in this treatise is to address questions I have been asked to answer ... and I answered them to the best of my knowledge.” The questions of *Kitāb al-masāʾil*, to which *Kitāb al-dawāʾir* belongs, deal with a broad range of issues that do not have a common motif, which could further indicate that they were addressed to Baṭalyawi by different people. Many of the questions are composed of a sequence of short questions on various topics. For example, one of the questions concerns the interpretation of poetic verses, human nature and the effect of the planets, and alchemy. The peculiar terminology of the question in the above mentioned *Epistle on the Immortality of the Soul*, combined with the discrepancies between its terminology and that used by Baṭalyawi in *Kitāb al-dawāʾir*, may serve as further evidence that this question and the others are indeed authentic.

If the questions in *Kitāb al-dawāʾir* (being part of *Kitāb al-masāʾil*) are authentic, they can teach us about Baṭalyawi and his environment’s relationship to philosophy. Apparently, Baṭalyawi did not only deal with philosophy on a personal level, but was also involved in teaching it. This indicates that there was a demand for philosophy within his surroundings, despite public hostility towards the subject. If we combine the assumption that Baṭalyawi is responding to philosophical questions by students, with the great impact of Rasāʾil Ikhwān al-Šafā on *Kitāb al-dawāʾir*, we can suggest that this treatise might reflect the result of the joint study of the *Ikhwān* by Baṭalyawi and his students.

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108 MS Escorial 1518, f. 2b: Gharadī fī hādha al-kitāb dhikr masāʾil ūlibtu ‘anha bi-l-jawāb... fa-ajabtu ‘anha bīna aḥāta bihi ‘ilmī wa-ittabā’a [this word is not clear to me] lahu faḥmī. Regarding the unclear reading, see al-Baṭalyawi, “Min Kitāb al-masāʾil,” p. 113, which reads wa-iqtada ha.

109 Kitāb al-masāʾil, MS Escorial, 1518, ff. 52a-54a. The answer on alchemy was published by Tornero (“Cuestiones filosóficas”) as a separate answer, despite its being part of a larger inquiry.

110 Asín and Tornero do not address this question. Peña seems to support the position that the questions are authentic (Peña Martín, “Gramáticos en al-Andalus: de Ibn Sīdah al-Mursi a Ibn al-Baṭalyawi,” p. 48).


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Conclusion

The interpretation of Kitāb al-dawā’ir offered here provides us with a new perspective on Kitāb al-dawā’ir in particular, and on Baṭalyawsi’s works in general. I argue, on the one hand, that the treatise’s original title was not the one commonly accepted; and on the other hand, I show that there is no reason to doubt Baṭalyawsi’s authorship of the treatise.

Additional textual evidence, based on a previously unexamined manuscript of the treatise, shows that Kitāb al-dawā’ir should be considered a part of (one of the versions of) Kitāb al-masā’il, a work which has yet to receive the place it deserves amongst Baṭalyawsi’s writings. More than any other of Baṭalyawsi’s works, Kitāb al-masā’il reflects the essence of his literary oeuvre, being a collection of discussions on a wide range of topics. While most of the epistles deal with grammar, the collection also includes epistles on many other subjects, from magic and alchemy to theology and philosophy. This work thus reflects the interest Baṭalyawsi had in a wide variety of fields, which co-existed in his spirit and his writings.

When looking at Kitāb al-dawā’ir as a part of Kitāb al-masā’il, it becomes clear that Baṭalyawsi did not intend to create a comprehensive philosophical treatise, nor an introductory treatise for philosophy students, as has been suggested by some scholars.112 Rather, Baṭalyawsi assembled a collection of answers to questions concerning several philosophical topics. Looking at Kitāb al-dawā’ir in the context of the philosophical genre of questions and answers anchors the treatise in the Arabic philosophical literature in general, and the Andalusian literature in particular. Since the questions it addresses might be authentic, the treatise might possibly reflect the actual experiences of Baṭalyawsi’s lessons and discussions of philosophy.

The new evidence presented here regarding the impact of the Rasā’il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā’ on Kitāb al-dawā’ir (and on Kitāb al-masā’il) provides additional support for the deep impact of the Rasā’il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā’ on Baṭalyawsi’s thought. I do not share some scholars’ hesitation to assimilate Baṭalyawsi’s thought with Neoplatonic philoso-

112 This was the opinion of Asín (Asín Palacios, “Ibn al-Sid de Badajoz,” p. 54) and others in his wake such as Ramón Guerrero, “Influencia de al-Fārābī,” p. 377.
From Kitāb al-jadā'iq to Kitāb al-dawā'ir

phy, and thereby, the assumption that he was discussing philosophical ideas to which he did not adhere. Understanding Baṭalyawsi’s thought as inspired by the Rasā‘il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā‘, like so many other Andalusian systems of thought in his period, allows us to situate Kitāb al-dawā‘ir as a link in the chain of transmission of Neoplatonic philosophy from the eastern Muslim world to its west, and also, based on the deep impact of Kitāb al-dawā‘ir on Jewish thought, from Andalusian Muslim circles to Andalusian and European Jewish (and Christian) circles.

Baṭalyawsi’s decision to write his philosophical treatise in the style of questions and answers had far-reaching implications. It is possible that Baṭalyawsi presented the treatise as a collection of questions and answers rather than as a purely philosophical treatise in order to escape the watchful eyes of the Murabbiṭūn, who were not always tolerant towards philosophical speculations. Indeed, this stylistic choice contributed to making the treatise less philosophical, at least externally. However, it also contributed to the limited acquaintance of readers with Baṭalyawsi’s philosophical contribution, as can be seen in the attitude of his biographers who were familiar with Kitāb al-masā‘il, but did not know that it contained philosophical content as well.

Baṭalyawsi integrates the genre of questions and answers with the exegetical genre. He presents his arguments in response to questions asked about particular philosophical statements that he then interprets. His fondness for the interpretive genre, which was remarked upon by Ibn Khāqān,113 is also widely reflected in his grammatical and literary writings, as can be seen in his commentary on al-Zajājī’s Kitāb al-jumal (the Book of sentences), on Abū l-‘Alā‘ al-Ma‘arī’s poetry, and on Ibn Qutayba’s Adab al-kātib. This element contributes to demonstrating that Baṭalyawsi’s philosophical work does not deviate from his grammatical and literary works, but rather harmonizes with them.

Accordingly, scholarship should attempt to address Baṭalyawsi’s writings holistically, overcoming the compartmentalization of his writings into separate fields (philosophy, grammar, poetry, etc.). Likewise, research should not separate the Muslim reception of Baṭalyawsi’s writing from its Jewish reception, but should rather consider both of them

in order to draw a full picture of his production and reception. This is similarly the case, in many ways, with regards to other Andalusian thinkers.

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114 Scholars who have attempted to use this approach include Dominique Urvoy (“Le rapport entre *adab* et falsafā”) and J. Vahid Brown (“Andalusi Mysticism: A Recontextualisation,” pp. 76, 80-81).
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