

Dirassat & Abhath
The Arabic Journal of Human
and Social Sciences



مجلة دراسات وأبحاث
المجلة العربية في العلوم الإنسانية
والاجتماعية

EISSN: 2253-0363
ISSN : 1112-9751

The Configuration of the Religious Dimension in al-Qazwīnī's Travelogue

تَشَكُّلُ البُعْدِ الدِّينِيِّ فِي رِحْلَةِ الْقَزْوِينِيِّ

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تاريخ النشر: 2026/10/15

تاريخ القبول: 2026/09/05

تاريخ الاستلام: 2026/06/24

Abstract:

Travel literature constitutes a significant source for the study of peoples' cultures, owing to its capacity to represent diverse aspects of life in a clear, accessible, and engaging manner. Al-Qazwīnī's travelogue stands as one of the rich textual models marked by a varied epistemic content. This study seeks to investigate the configuration of the religious dimension in this work,. Despite the scholarly value of this work, research devoted to it remains limited. The study concludes that al-Qazwīnī's concern with the religious dimension reveals an important aspect of his intellectual and spiritual personality. He does not restrict his attention to the representation of sacred places and pious figures; rather, he interprets the wondrous and marvelous elements in some of his observations through a metaphysical and unseen-oriented perspective. Accordingly, this travelogue constitutes an important source for scholars seeking to examine the significance of the spiritual dimension in shaping a balanced human personality

Keywords: configuration; feature; religion; travelogue; Abbasid period.

الملخص:

يعد أدب الرحلات رافدا هاما للتعرف عن ثقافات الشعوب ويمتاز بقدرته على تمثّل مختلف نواحي الحياة بأسلوب سهل وممتع، وتعد رحلة القزويني واحدة من النماذج الغنية بالمادة المعرفية المتنوعة، ونسعى في هذا البحث إلى الكشف عن تشكّل ملامح البعد الديني في هذا العمل، وبالرغم من قيمة عمله إلا أنّ الدراسات حوله جاءت قليلة. ومما تم التوصل إليه في البحث هو أنّ اهتمام القزويني بالجانب الديني قد عكس لنا جانبا هاما من شخصيته فهو لم يكتف بالتركيز على صورة الأماكن المقدسة والشخصيات المتدينة فحسب بل إنه فسّر كل ما هو عجائبي في بعض المشاهدات إلى البعد الغيبي، وتعد هذه الرحلة مصدرا هاما لكل من يحاول أن يتعرف على أهمية الجانب الروحي في خلق شخصية متوازنة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تشكّل، الملمح، الدين، الرحلة، العصر العباسي.

1. INTRODUCTION

Islam is distinguished by its combination of the material and spiritual dimensions. Belief in the unseen is a fundamental pillar of faith, indeed its essence and core, since it confirms the servant's certainty in his Creator. It also brings tranquility to the soul. The jurist Abū Zakariyyā al-Qazwīnī is one of the most prominent men of letters and travelers who were able to depict daily events and occurrences that he captured spontaneously and documented in detail in his unique book entitled *Āthār al-Bilād wa-Akhhbār al-'Ibād*. What concerns us here is to trace the images he drew of religious figures whom he met during his travels or heard about, especially ascetics and Sufis. His marked interest in their states reveals a considerable aspect of his own personality.

The choice of this topic stems from an attempt to reaffirm the richness of the Arab literary heritage, particularly in its

adventurous and travel-related dimensions.

This heritage was not confined to the expression of emotion; it also expanded to encompass various forms of cultural and social life, without diminishing the artistic value of literary creativity. What drew our attention, in particular, was al-Qazwīnī's interest in ascetics and righteous figures, whose distinctive modes of thought and ways of life attracted travelers and storytellers, while their positive influence within their communities gave them further narrative significance.

This study therefore addresses the following problem: To what extent was al-Qazwīnī able to harmonize the aesthetic dimension of the narrative text with the representation of the metaphysical/unseen dimension in this travelogue? From this central question emerge several subsidiary questions, the most important of which are: what contribution did al-Qazwīnī make to the field of travel writing in Arabic

literature? And what artistic features shaped his work? To answer these questions, the study adopts the descriptive method, together with analytical tools, in order to identify the religious contents and artistic features that marked this work and distinguished it from others.

2. The Relationship between Literature and the Religious Dimension

The relationship between literature and society is a deeply rooted one, marked by reciprocal influence. The writer who produces artistic texts is, fundamentally, a member of society, interacting with the environment to which he belongs. This environment becomes a major source in shaping his personality, for it provides him with his religion, values, knowledge, daily practices, and language¹. Language itself is the vessel of thought and culture, and its aesthetic potential is perhaps most fully manifested in literary creativity. This suggests the presence of an indirect yet significant connection between anthropology and literature.

The writer draws on literature at times to articulate his stance toward society, and at other times to affirm the importance of its values, principles, and ideas. He also employs it to describe society's conditions, including its beliefs, customs, traditions, and other manifestations that constitute its identity and distinguish it from others. Such expression usually assumes an imaginative form and is directed toward the writer's own community, which inspires him either directly or indirectly.

This community may also shape the course of his creative production by imposing conditions that frame it. Indeed, the circulation and reception of a literary work often depend on the extent to which it expresses the concerns of its nation and embodies its spirit and identity. This identity is commonly manifested in a set of inherited activities and practices transmitted from one generation to another, which are gradually sacralized and transformed into forms of popular culture. They are produced by human beings and addressed to human

beings, which places them at the very heart of anthropology. Anthropology has increasingly demonstrated its relevance because of the space it occupies within certain literary arts, whether poetry or prose, under the broader concept of heritage. This is evident in the novel, for instance, as well as in travel literature and in other forms that have relied on narration and storytelling from ancient times to the present day.

From another perspective, religion is closely bound to literature, since it provides writers with diverse themes and contributes to shaping the conventions of writing, as occurred in the early Islamic period. Islam brought about a qualitative transformation that led to the emergence of new poetic purposes and the decline of others.

It also supplied writers and poets with images, imaginative patterns, and symbolic resources, while enriching their poetic lexicon through expressions derived from scriptural and transmitted religious texts. Literature may therefore be regarded as an effective medium for refining conduct, urging people to adhere to the teachings of Islam, implanting these teachings in the souls of the subjects, calling for noble moral qualities, and encouraging virtue. Poetry, in particular, attained such authority that a poem could enthrone one ruler and depose another, owing to the ability of literary discourse to charge language with meanings that penetrate the recipient's unconscious². This effect becomes even stronger when the discourse is endowed with a mythical or extraordinary dimension, or when it is woven into an engaging narrative form that enchants souls and captivates minds through the combination of wisdom and edifying exhortation.

In prose, narrative forms played a major role in guiding individuals, owing to their capacity to keep belief alive in the souls of Muslims and to teach them how religion could be properly practised. They did so by employing narrative elements such as characters, plot, and events, all of which are crucial in mediating between imagination and reality. These elements also

possess a powerful ability to stir emotion, especially when they are cast in a refined artistic form and carefully crafted by an eloquent writer, as is the case in al-Qazwīnī's Travelogue.

3. Introducing al-Qazwīnī and His Travelogue

Before addressing the accounts of religious figures in the book, it is useful to provide a brief overview of the author's biography and to introduce the subject and content of his work.

3.1 An Overview of al-Qazwīnī's Biography

He is Zakariyya ibn Muḥammad ibn Maḥmūd, descended from Anas ibn Mālik al-Anṣārī. He was a historian, geographer, and judge. Scholars differed regarding the date of his birth. Some considered him to have been born in 606 AH, while others placed his birth earlier, in 600 AH³. They agreed, however, that his birthplace was the city of Qazwīn. He then moved with his family during his childhood to Syria and Iraq, where he later assumed judicial office in some of its cities during the reign of the Abbasid caliph al-Mustaʿsim, until his death in Iraq in 682 AH⁴.

Among his most famous works are *ʿAjāʾib al-Makhlūqāt* "The Wonders of Created Beings", which is regarded as one of the most important Arab contributions to astronomy and physical geography; *Khiṭaṭ Miṣr* [The Topography of Egypt]; and *Āthār al-Bilād wa-Akḥbār al-ʾIbād* [The Monuments of Lands and Reports of God's Servants], the subject of this study. The diversity of the topics he addressed contributed to his being regarded as one of the greatest Arab scholars to describe the universe and simplify the sciences for medieval readers. He was often called "Herodotus,"⁵ after the famous Greek historian and traveler.

Despite the scarcity of information about his life, culture, and intellectual background, the effect of his religiosity is clear. It was reflected in his choice of subjects, especially in works that affirm the greatness of the Creator⁶. He appears to have

been deeply drawn to contemplation and reflection on God's creation. He devoted himself to studying the wonders of created beings and tracing their signs on earth in order to understand the wisdom behind their existence. Contemplation is an act of worship, and also a trait that distinguishes the human being from other creatures. Al-Qazwīnī strengthened this quality through reading and travel, driven by curiosity and exploration.

3.2 An Overview of the Content of al-Qazwīnī's *Āthār al-Bilād wa-Akḥbār al-ʾIbād*

The book consists of approximately 669 pages. It is divided into four introductions followed by seven chapters, each devoted to one of the regions of the inhabited world. Strikingly, Dar ʿAdir did not allocate space at the beginning of the work to introduce the author or present the scholarly material. The reader therefore finds himself directly before what al-Qazwīnī chose as the opening of his work.

The work is classified within the field of travel literature. Its information is connected to history, the description of countries, and their reports. It is the product of some personal adventures and narratives that he read, heard about from trustworthy men, or learned through transmitted reports. He began his first introduction by praising God Almighty, emphasizing His greatness, and invoking blessings upon His noble Prophet, peace be upon him, and upon his Companions, may God be pleased with them. He sought for the book to be an ongoing charity from which he would benefit and through which he would be remembered after his death. He then ended the book by asking God for forgiveness. The traits of humility and devotional orientation are therefore evident in the work.

He then moves to discussing the reason for composing the book, saying in this regard: «I have gathered in this book what occurred to me, what I came to know, what I heard, and what I witnessed of the subtle signs of God Almighty's creation and the wonders of His wisdom deposited in His

lands and His servants. [...] It acquaints you with the conditions of past nations and with the noble morals and admirable manners they possessed, and it reveals the conditions of lands as though you were seeing them»⁷ He thus relies on his work's ability to transmit an accurate image of his narratives through his narrative style, the precision of his observations, his fidelity in gathering information, and his skill in connecting it.

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In this introduction, the author does not mention the year in which he began composing the work or the circumstances surrounding it, as writers often do in their introductions. Instead, he begins by discussing the human need to gather in groups, the properties of regions, and then elaborates on kings, extinct nations, and the features that distinguish each region he passed through or heard about.

Al-Qazwīnī did not set aside, at the prologue of his book, a specific section in which he listed the sources of the narratives he had heard or transmitted. Instead, he left them dispersed throughout the work, where they become identifiable only as the reader moves through the text.

These sources included several works by earlier travelers, such as al-Mas'ūdī, Mis'ar ibn Rabī'a, Abū Hāmid al-Gharnāṭī, al-Khwārizmī in his *al-Āthār al-Bāqiya* [*The Remaining Traces*], al-Ṭurṭūshī, and Ibn al-Faqīh al-Hamadhānī, from whom he

transmitted a description of the city of Rūmiyya [Rome] and its inhabitants. He also drew on reports attributed to some of the Companions and the righteous predecessors. In addition, he relied on the Persian epic *Shāhnāma* [*The Book of Kings*], composed by Ferdowsī, which helped acquaint him with Persian poets and kings.

He was careful to name those from whom he transmitted, although he sometimes used the phrase "they mentioned that" a formula that may suggest that the information came through direct contact, without the need for an intermediary source.

After prologue, he added another introduction in which he discussed the need that led to the construction of cities and villages, together with the manner of their establishment. He then included a third introduction on the properties of countries, their distribution across the four directions of the earth, and the variation of their climates, as well as the effects of such variation on the bodies and temperaments of their inhabitants. In a fourth introduction, he turned to the regions, their diversity, their division into four parts, and the rivers, oceans, mountains, and deserts they contain, recording their areas with precision.

The book is of considerable importance, particularly for the history of countries and the reports of nations, which al-Qazwīnī follows through precise description and a smooth style. He included reports and information that made the work one of the indispensable sources for researchers and scholars, especially in relation to narratives concerning the conditions and affairs of human communities. In this respect, it is difficult to find another work that rivals it among the texts later authors drew upon and relied on, whether Arab or non-Arab. Among those who benefited from it was the German orientalist **Jacob**, who used it in his discussion of the relationship between Muslims and merchants from Central and Northern Europe⁹.

4. Manifestations of the Religious Dimension in *Āthār al-Bilād wa Akhbār al-*

Ibād

It should be noted that the mention of strange places and the narration of the reports and saintly miracles of righteous people constituted a dominant feature in al-Qazwīnī's discussion of the peoples and nations mentioned in his book. His interest in this aspect of observation may have stemmed from his concern to show the greatness of the Creator, exalted be He, as manifested in His creatures. These manifestations cannot be known except through contemplation and travel across God's vast earth, where one can witness the secrets deposited in created beings. These secrets differ according to places and periods, and they are also important in broadening cognitive, cultural, and intellectual horizons.

What is striking in al-Qazwīnī's book is that he did not restrict himself to his own observations only. As previously indicated, he relied on many narratives that he had read in the books of trustworthy travelers who preceded him, which reflects his fidelity and epistemic humility.

It should also be noted that, in his discussion of Sufis, ascetics, and hermits, he was distinguished by his focus on their *karāmāt*, or saintly miracles. These miracles made them extraordinary figures because of the dominance of the unseen dimension over their characterization. They violate reality and draw the recipient into the realm of aesthetic astonishment and artistic taste, while also breaking monotony and the familiar. At times, they also unsettle latent cultural assumptions¹⁰.

4.1 the figures: Among marked by these traits in *Āthār al-Bilād wa-Akḥbār al-ʿIbād* are the following:

4.1.1 Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm ibn Aḥmad al-Khawwās

He was a religious man known for his saintly miracles. He used to travel through the earth without provisions. Once, he accompanied a priest on a journey, and they spent a week without food. The priest then asked him to bring food if he possessed saintly miracles. Al-Khawwās prayed to

God, and suddenly they found a dish containing bread, roasted meat, dates, and water. They ate, then walked for another week. He then said to the priest: now it is your turn. They were then provided with a dish containing more than that of al-Khawwās. He became confused and feared eating from it. The priest then said to him: I give you two pieces of good news. The first is that I have pronounced the testimony of faith. The second is that I prayed to God and said: if this man is among the righteous, then grant us food. God answered me.

The purpose of narrating many accounts about figures similar to this shaykh may have been al-Qazwīnī's attempt to consolidate moral values in his society, so that people might imitate hermits and ascetics and thus be rewarded with the honor and blessing that accompany them wherever they go.

4.1.2 Al-Hasan al-Basri:

He was a devout and pious ascetic, and one of the shrewdest figures among the Arabs. He was known for his skill in debate and for the sharpness of his replies. Numerous accounts were transmitted about him, confirming his intelligence and quick presence of mind. One such account is reported by al-Qazwini, who writes: "It was said that a man told al-Hasan: 'So-and-so has spoken ill of you.' Al-Hasan then sent that man a dish of sweets and said: 'I have heard that you transferred your good deeds to my record, so I have rewarded you with this.'¹¹" This statement contains a subtle paradox with a deep moral dimension. Through it, al-Hasan warned the man of the danger of backbiting, while responding to harm with kindness in an attempt to correct his conduct

4.1.3 Sahl ibn Abd Allah al-Tustari:

He came from the city of Tustar, a place known for its abundance, fertile produce, and the many crafts practiced by its inhabitants. Al-Qazwini mentions that Sahl al-Tustari was known for his manifest saintly miracles. Among them was that, whenever he touched a sick person, that person would be healed. Wild beasts would

also come to his house, and he would shelter them. He was a pious man, constant in supplication and remembrance, devoted to fasting, and he rarely broke his fast. One sign of his blessing was that a single dirham was enough for him to buy bread for an entire year¹².

4.1.4 Abū al-Khayr Aḥmad ibn Ismāʿīl, Known as Raḍiyy al-Dīn

He was an ascetic man, famous for possessing saintly miracles. People would crowd around him on the day he delivered his sermon, and the wealthy would buy the place of the poor person who had arrived before them. On the day of his death, while he was being carried on the bier, a light shone in the sky in seven places. This astonished and terrified those present, and their voices rose in fear. Their states varied between those prostrating themselves before God and those remaining motionless in their places, unable to move. When he was placed in his grave, the sky returned to its previous condition and the air to its former state.

It is worth noting that al-Qazwīnī often focused on the saintly miracles of Sufis and righteous people whom God had singled out because of the purity of their inner selves and their sincerity in worship. His mention of numerous models of such figures and his narration of their stories may have been intended to affirm their sainthood. These miracles also serve as evidence of their righteousness. He was certain that such accounts had strong acceptance in the collective unconscious of Muslim peoples.

4.1.5 The Zanj

His mention of the Zanj served to draw attention to the control of superstition over the beliefs of some simple peoples who had been deprived of the blessing of faith in God. He gave many examples in this respect. Returning to the Zanj, they are peoples from Africa known for their constant joy, untouched by grief. He explained this by the moderation of their climate and the appearance of a star over them every night, which produces and brings joy. They were also known for using iron as ornament and preferring it to gold

because of their belief that it repels the devil. There is no doubt that this report about the Zanj tribes is useful for understanding the nature of the thought prevailing among them, since superstition and the extraordinary form part of their local culture.

4.1.6 Ashtarubin:

A large village among the villages of Qazwin, known for the abundance of its produce. Shaykh Nur al-Din Muhammad ibn Khalid al-Jili settled there. He was a man associated with signs and extraordinary acts. He married in the village, and blessing descended upon it, turning it into a flourishing settlement. He would cultivate only a small plot, yet harvest from it enough to sustain himself, his family, and the guests who came to him from every direction. Among the wonders attributed to this man is that locusts once overran all the crops of that region, and nothing survived except the shaykh's crop and yield. Before long, however, the villagers turned against him and cut off the water with which he irrigated his field¹³. He then left the village in anger, after which ruin befell it.

Al-Qazwīnī repeatedly suggested that some cities and villages derive their blessing from the righteousness of their inhabitants. He gave the example of a place called Sabrān, distinguished by its mountains, from which springs and fountains burst forth. These waters do not accept impurities. If something impure is thrown into them, they expel it and cast it outside¹⁴. They accept only what is pure and clean, which gives the place a sense of sanctity and sacredness.

Among the other examples that support his view is what he mentioned about the island of ʿAbbādān, located near Basra. It is triangular in shape, and one of its wonders is that it has neither cultivation nor livestock. Its people rely upon God, and sustenance comes to them by His permission. It contains sacred places and ribāṭs, and its inhabitants are devoted to worship¹⁵. The author focused on such places, which become blessed either because righteous people reside there or because

sacred traces abound in them. The reader senses that al-Qazwīnī is conveying an indirect discourse urging the necessity of relying upon God, exalted be He, in all matters. Glad tidings will then come in ways that astonish creation and make them marvel at the excellence of the Creator's governance, confirming that sustenance does not always come through effort and toil, but is determined and apportioned by God, the Provider.

4.2 the cities : Among the cities that acquired sanctity through the righteousness of their inhabitants are the following:

4.2.1 Abadan:

It is an island situated below Basra and is triangular in shape. One of its marvels is that it has neither cultivation nor livestock. Its inhabitants rely wholly upon God, and sustenance comes to them by His permission. It also contains sacred sites, ribats, and people devoted entirely to worship¹⁶.

Al-Qazwini focused on such places because they become blessed either through the presence of righteous people or through the abundance of sacred traces within them. The reader senses that he is conveying an indirect discourse that urges reliance upon God Almighty in all matters. Glad tidings then arrive in ways that astonish people and lead them to marvel at the Creator's perfect ordering of affairs, confirming that sustenance does not always come through labor and toil, but is divinely apportioned and predetermined.

4.2.2 Asfarayin:

A city located in the land of Khurasan. Its people were known for their piety, among the most famous of them Abu al-Futuh Muhammad. He was a virtuous imam, marked by scrupulous piety, quick intelligence, sound belief, and commendable qualities. He was also among those whose supplications were accepted. He prayed to God to be buried beside one of the worshippers whom he had taken as a model of righteousness and benevolence. When he reached that man's grave, he died there¹⁷ and

was buried beside him.

Al-Qazwini continues to mention cities and urban centers made blessed by the righteousness of their inhabitants. The book contains many examples of this kind. Despite the tolerant spirit and religious personality that we perceive in al-Qazwīnī, he may be criticized for not verifying the truthfulness of the sources from which he transmitted. Perhaps the most he does in this regard is to attribute the narratives to their owners faithfully and honestly, leaving the reader free to believe or disbelieve them, while exempting himself from suspicion. It should be noted that some of his sources are not open to doubt, such as what he transmitted on the authority of the Companions, may God be pleased with them. One example is the report he narrated from the noble Companion 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ in the context of his discussion of Rome and its people¹⁸. He also attributed other similar reports to the Companions; may God be pleased with them.

The traveler's reliance on the unseen to interpret unfamiliar observations is clear, especially those that sometimes tended toward superstition, which he traced back to a religious origin. This endowed the figures with an aura of sanctity and reverence. One example is his discussion of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in Iraq.

He explained their appearance and emergence in that land through what he narrated from the noble Companion Ibn 'Abbās, may God be pleased with him: that God, exalted be He, revealed to His prophet Daniel, peace be upon him, that he should cause two rivers to flow from which the servants would drink, and that he should make their outlet into the sea. God commanded the earth to obey him. The Prophet, peace be upon him, took a piece of wood and began dragging it, and the water followed him. Whenever he passed by a woman or an orphan who implored him by God to turn away from them, he did so¹⁹. Thus, the Tigris and Euphrates emerged from this divine revelation, which became a

miracle of the Prophet Daniel, peace be upon him, not open to doubt or challenge. He then mentioned the merits of these two rivers over other rivers, because they are among the rivers of Paradise. He cited evidence from the sayings of the Companions; may God be pleased with them. He also emphasized their health benefit for those who drink from them and the sweetness of their taste. The book is full of accounts concerning the miracles of prophets and messengers.

What must be emphasized is that what distinguishes al-Qazwīnī's compendium and makes it easy to engage with, despite its large size, is its simple and smooth style and the precision of description that dominates its material, far from affectation and complexity. He was careful to transmit information and deliver it in the simplest possible ways. When reading his book, one senses the breadth of his culture and his great ability to limit himself to what is useful and beneficial for the reader, in addition to the pleasure and curiosity that characterize the work at the same time²⁰, despite occasional exaggeration and generalization.

5. CONCLUSION

After this study of Zakariyya ibn Muḥammad al-Qazwīnī's *Āthār al-Bilād wa-Akḥbār al-'Ibād*, in which we focused on the features of religious figures, whether ascetics or Sufis, we were able to reach the following results

-The author's personality was reflected in his work through his focus on the biographies of religious figures and sacred places, as well as on the saintly miracles with which God favored His friends among worshippers, Sufis, and ascetics.

He affirmed that much of the wonder and astonishment that may dominate the mind disappears when one believes in the greatness of the Creator and His unlimited capacity to give beyond description.

- Sufis and ascetics were characterized by their saintly miracles and by the blessing they brought to the places where they settled. Al-Qazwīnī described their strange

rituals.

- His purpose in focusing on them in the book was to encourage readers to imitate these figures, who were marked by sainthood on earth.

-The writer's work occupies an intermediate position between geographical and literary writing. He succeeded in building a bridge between scientific description and the worlds of imagination, which are not separate from the cognitive function of the text.

-The work establishes a connection between religion and knowledge. We often feel that he attempts to highlight the greatness of the Creator, exalted be He, through his documentation of marvelous observations that are difficult to believe, were it not for what was known of his religiosity and upright conduct

-The author succeeded in attracting the reader's attention, prompting questions, and arousing curiosity to discover new worlds and unfamiliar creatures, thereby broadening the reader's understanding of the universe, nature, and humanity.

-His style is simple and engaging, closer to a cultivated scientific register than to affectation, because of his concern to record information rather than embellish expressions.

-The work combines pleasure and suspense, in addition to its value in documenting people's lives and describing their temperaments on the one hand, and its educational and moral function on the other.

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¹¹-See Ibid., p. 171.

¹² -See Ibid., p. 311.

¹³- See Ibid., pp. 290–291.

¹⁴- Ibid., p. 390.

¹⁵-See Ibid., p. 419.

¹⁶-See see see Ibid., p. 419.

¹⁷See Ibid., p. 295.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 594.

¹⁹See Ibid., p. 419.

²⁰-See Ahmad Ramadan Ahmad, *Travel and Muslim Travelers*, Dar al-Bayan al-Arabi li-l-Tibaa wa-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzi, Cairo, Egypt ,n.ed., n.d, p. 298.

¹ -See Aziz al-Batyawi, The Dialectic of the Unseen and Culture in Contemporary Islamic Anthropological Thought, *Journal of the Anthropology of Religions*, nos. 17–18, 2015–2016, p. 294.

² -See Butrus al-Bustani, Arab Men of Letters in the Jāhiliyya and Early Islam: Their Lives, Works, and the Criticism of Their Works, Hindawi Foundation, United Kingdom, n.ed. 2012,p328.

³-See Hasan Zaki Muḥammad, *Muslim Travelers in the Middle Ages*, Hindawi Foundation for Publishing and Distribution, United Kingdom n.ed ,2013, p. 92.

⁴ -See Zakariyya ibn Muḥammad ibn Maḥmud al-Kuḥfī al-Qazwini, *The Wonders of Created Beings, Animals, and the Marvels of Existing Things*, Mu'assasat al-A'lamī li-l-Maṭbū'āt, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st ed, 2000, p. 5.

⁵- See Abd al-Raḥmān Badr al-Din, Al-Qazwīnī: Zakariyya ibn Muḥammad, *The Arab Encyclopedia*, available at: <https://mail.arab-ency.com.sy/>. Accessed February 10, 2026, at 22:20.

⁶ -See ibid., p. 8.

⁷- Zakariyya ibn Muḥammad ibn Maḥmud al-Qazwini, *The Monuments of Lands and Reports of God's Servants*, Dār Ṣādir, Beirut, Lebanon, n.ed, n.d., p. 5.

⁸ ibid., p. 9.

⁹- See Hasan Zaki Muḥammad, *Muslim Travelers in the Middle Ages*, Hindawi Foundation for Publishing and Distribution, United Kingdom, n.ed, 2013, p. 94.