



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Section: *Literature, Linguistics & Criticism*

The art of correspondence by Abdul Rahim Al-Baisani (The Righteous Arbiter)

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ABSTRACT

The research situates Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil's output within a historical and literary perspective that highlights the traits of his contemporary period, characterized by the wars fought by Muslims against the Crusaders and Franks. The research shows that Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil, in his works in the Diwan al-Insha, had a leadership and administrative role; he inspired the army and built their morale psychologically to face the enemy. He served as a full scholar before the intrigues of the Crusades and his homeland entered the gauntlet; Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil's Correspondences provided, more than anything else, the most thorough documentation of this country's events, artistically directing requests for influence and agreement on the viewpoint he desired others to espouse. Accordingly, Al-Fadhil varied his language to achieve the result he sought. This study selected two original materials from Al-Fadhil's letters as core material to examine the letters' objectives and achieve their purposes.

KEYWORDS: Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil's, correspondence, the art

Research Journal in Advanced Humanities

Volume 6, Issue 4, 2025

ISSN: 2708-5945 (Print)

ISSN: 2708-5953 (Online)

ARTICLE HISTORY

Submitted: 08 August 2025

Accepted: 28 October 2025

Published: 03 November 2025

HOW TO CITE

Meqdad, S. A. A., Albayyari, M. R., AbuGharbiah, E. E., Terrisi, A., & Dello, A. M. (2025). The art of correspondence by Abdul Rahim Al-Baisani (The Righteous Arbiter). *Research Journal in Advanced Humanities*, 6(4). <https://doi.org/10.58256/e7b06656>



Published in Nairobi, Kenya by Royallite Global, an imprint of Royallite Publishers Limited

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Introduction

The outstanding judge became a figure in numerous literary and historical works for his considerable role in achieving paramount political and social achievements. His pen is a multifaceted instrument: sometimes he used his pen to motivate the army and soldiers to rise against the adversaries and boost their morale; sometimes he wrote to praise them for their victories and achievements; other times, he sent his condolences or called for interventions about many matters that preoccupied this remarkable leader and administrator. All this occurred during times of turbulence and unrest in the Islamic state. He, upon him be God's mercy, was the personification of the Saladin state; he was its secretary, minister, comrade, advisor, bearer of its burdens, overseer of its affairs, and, indeed, was the very chord that held all of its missions together. (Dajani,1993) Hence, I fell to its sharp letters and followed the peace that was in its eloquent tongue. He traveled by horse alongside the sultan, maintaining the appearance of a traveler from a throne. Whenever the sultan turned from any site in his kingdom, he himself would appoint a representative there or support someone representing him among his brothers or sons. He would be the power governing the kingdom, determining matters of life and death.

Saladin recognised the significant intellectual and administrative role of the virtuous judge in the reclamation of the holy lands and his impact on governance, as evidenced when he addressed his soldiers and leaders following the turmoil of the Battle of Acre: "Do not presume that I conquered the lands with your swords; rather, I achieved this with the pen of the virtuous judge." (Ibn al-Jawzi's, 1907)

The term "Virtuous Judge" was actually conferred upon him during his time in the Egyptian administration; "Virtuous" specifically conveys a moral significance that reflects the exemplary principles he upheld in the course of his administrative duties.

Al-Qadi al-Fadhil served in the Egyptian administration in Alexandria and Cairo from 549 AH to 565 AH. He swiftly moved through a cascade of lesser positions and thus rose to the status of the minister par excellence in the realm of Saladin in 567 AH. (Dajani,1993)

Regarding the qualifications that existed in Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil at that elite level, many historians and scholars hastened to provide information about him, enumerating his achievements. Poets and researchers criss-crossed his literature, which wanders between poetry and prose. This provides a far-reaching account of an extraordinary man ruling for nearly 50 years beyond his age.

The Life of the Righteous Magistrate

His name is Abdul Rahim bin Ali bin Muhammad bin Al-Hassan Al-Lakhmi. He was born on Monday, the fifteenth of Jumada Al-Akhira in the year 526 AH, or according to another version, in the year 529 AH. The probable date is 526 AH, as he states in one of his letters that he had surpassed seventy years, declaring: "I have crossed the threshold of seventy and overcome its challenges, and I beseech God for benevolence in drawing near to Him and compassion when in His presence." He was born in Ascalon, the son of a sizable family of three sons and one daughter. (Ibn Khallikan, 1972)

Major Milestones in his Life

Abdul Rahim Al-Baisani has lived in Ashkelon, on the southern coast of Palestine, under his parents' protection for about 17 years. (Al-Hamawi, 1968) He studied the Quran, the Hadith, Diwan Al-Hamasah, and other disciplines in the mosques of the city, which became a haven for scholars from Palestine and elsewhere who yearned for jihad and martyrdom. In that dramatic time when the spirit of Ashkelon's inhabitants and the Muslims of the Levant and Egypt was dampened by a long list of defeats and disappointments, it was all directed to one saviour: someone to lead them to victory. It was then that Imad ad-Din Zengi called to arms the Muslims, defeated the Crusaders at Edessa, and liberated that city in the year 539 hijri. He revived expectations of improving fortunes and solidified a little self-assurance among the Muslims who gathered around him, supported him, and publicized his victory.

At that age, Abdul Rahim was about thirteen, and he was just like the other citizens of Ascalon - enthusiastically responded to the victories of Imad al-Din. The Mujahid commander, in his view, projected the character of Imad al-Din Zengi, who later on in history would be succeeded by Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi. For this reason, Abdul Rahim Al-Baysani gradually transformed his perception of jihad into a whole new scheme, covering much more than mere defense of one's own city or capturing another. It became, indeed, a

whole intellectual and military endeavor calling, on all sides, for the reclaiming of territories for their actual proprietors, cleansing them from the usurpers and instituting the tenets of truth and justice therein. As Crusader fronts in the Levant increasingly crumbled and diminished under the successes of Imad ad-Din Zengi and, later, his son Nur ad-Din Mahmoud, Crusaders recognized that seeking another front to extend their predominance and increase the area of their territory was, indeed, necessary. Ascalon had to be secured as a necessary step to engaging Egypt. The intensification of the siege became more. During such periods, he studied and absorbed the current accounts of jihad and the battle of Ashkelon against the Franks, in which he might also have participated. There was virtually never a time when Ascalon fell into disunity among its loyal citizens, because they would come together to fight.

This virtuous judge had views on jihad and resistance that were grounded in a comprehensive experience, both practical and theoretical, that spanned much of his life and, per chance, in all circumstances. His religious and literary upbringing, coupled with the agitational and dynamic environment in Ascalon during that phase, greatly enhances his leadership image. (Dajani, 1993)

Abdul Rahim Al-Baisani then reached that mature point of career where he was fifteen, indeed, which would send him in that year to Egypt to be educated at the Diwan of Correspondence directed then by Al-Muwafiq Yusuf bin Al-Khalal. (1), 1972. Now that Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil had arrived in Egypt in 548 AH and had joined the Diwan Al-Insha in Cairo, five years had not been completed when his ambition propelled him to a righteous position. He reached out to Ibn Hadeed, the judge and administrator of Alexandria, who put him under his wing and set his wages. Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil stayed in Alexandria for about eight years until Al-Adil Raziq (Ibn Khallikan, 1972) bin Al-Salih Talai took over the ministerial position in Cairo. Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil communicated from Alexandria, which is why he urged the governor of Alexandria to transfer Him to Cairo, whereupon he assigned him to the head of the Diwan Al-Jaysh. But time did not allow Raziq to realize his dreams through him, as Shawar quickly fell victim to the sword. Of course, Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil lamented the death of both Raziq and his family out of loyalty.

He left Damascus and now has returned to Cairo, where he will serve the king of Egypt, Al-Aziz. Conflict quickly developed between the two brothers, Al-Aziz and Al-Afdal. When Al-Aziz died, he left behind minor children, and Al-Afdal took them in; however, things worsened under his rule. The just judge, seeing all this jarring in the very family whose blood is royal and a futile contest for power, resigned from politics. The reason is that Al-Adil was coming from the Levant towards Egypt in order to wrest it from Al-Afdal. The night that Al-Adil entered Cairo, the judge died on Tuesday or Wednesday, the sixth or seventh of Rabi' al-Awwal in the year 596 AH. Al-Adil was entering Bab al-Nasr while the funeral of the esteemed judge was departing from Bab Zuweila. (Al-Maqdisi, n.d)

Testimonials and Commendations

The virtuous judge was praised by all contemporaries for his eloquence, most notably the writer Al-Imad Al-Isfahani, who described him in these words: "Master of the pen and eloquence, tongue and speech, brilliant mind, discerning insight, miraculous quick wit, exquisite creativity, and peerless striving for excellence among ancients..." Comparison is made with Muhammadan Sharia, which abolished prior rules and established trades. He generates concepts, devises innovations, illuminates, and cultivates flowers. (Al-Asfahani 1962). Al-Imad Al-Isfahani's statements appear to have hyperbolic tones in describing, admiring, and praising Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil, so much so that he almost equates him with the zenith of divine revelations distinct from others. We are not aware of the cause for this hyperbole despite our conviction of Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil's exceptionalism and scarcity of his attributes; however, this does not attain stature as demonstrated by the author of "Al-Kharida."

His historians affirm that he distinguished himself in prose and poetry, as Ibn Hujjah al-Hamawi says: "His poetry and prose are akin to two suckling infants and two racing horses" (Al-Dibaji, 1978).

Al-Nuwairi praises him in the diwan thus: "Maximally concluded the art of composition with him, and by his merit, the events of the time were substantiated and derived." In his presence, the virtue relented and gave way to eloquence and its control became his. He was the best amongst the writers of his time, a moralist in this city and beyond the borders, an unavoidable champion of eloquence, and almighty virtue that could never be delayed. Some writers rightly declared him the greatest in his fields, as one wrote, "Any virtuous person following the virtuous embodies a virtue, and all know his goodness" (Al-Nuwayri, 1993)

By Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil, The Art of Composing Writing

The literature student seeks to unearth the myriad truths lying in the sundry raw materials of literature traced out from various origins. This research focuses on two primary texts from the prose works of Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil to pave the way for understanding the contents and specifics of this literature. Of the above, Al-Durr Al-Nazim Min Tarassul Abdul Rahim was selected by Muhyi Al-Din Ibn Abd Al-Zahir, and Letters on War and peace was selected by Muwaffaq Ibn al-Dhibaji. Each brought forth a collection of diwani and ikhwani letters purportedly from the famous judge.

According to the research schema plan, we will provide a succinct description of writers of these two books to authenticize all details.

The Book of Al-Durr Al-Nazim from the Correspondence of Abdul Rahim (Compiled by: Muhyi al-Din Ibn Abd al-Zahir, d. 692 AH)

The credit for this scholarship rests with Al-Muhyi al-Din ibn Abd al-Zahir who is an eminent author during the Mamluk period. This anthology containing the correspondence of Judge al-Fadhil is titled as “The Radiant Pearl from the Correspondence of Abd al-Rahim”. Letters of different forms, formal and informal, are inseparable parts of this compilation relating to events that turn the Ayyubid kingdom into a golden age. The telegraphic communication sent to Baghdad after the conquest of Jerusalem and the letters from Banu Ja’far and Talha at the time of Minister Shawar are important examples. He possesses various unofficial communication channels by which he expresses thanks, congratulates or mourns, and many other emotions.

Some publications have the characteristics of excellent extension according to the event, and some have very short but well-argued and well-explained thoughts.

The editor of the book commented on how the arrangement of many pages was disturbed, as many messages were mixed, which caused the copyist to interfere with the coherence of the single messages. As a result, it has been reorganized in an orderly manner by referring to the specific books containing the relevant messages so structuring, elucidating, and improving the content. (Ibn Abd al-Zahir, 1959)

One of the main objectives that Ibn Abd al-Zahir notes in his introduction for the present book is to benefit beginners and to act as a reminder for the advanced (Ibn Abd al-Zahir 1959). The book of Ibn Abd al-Dhaher ends without a conclusion, and this may be the most debated point. The chosen person consisted of twenty-six letters altogether, most of which were fraternal.

The way of Book: On Letters about War and Peace (Selected Works of Muwaffaq al-Din Ibn al-Dhibaji, d. 617 AH)

Inside this book, Al-Dibaji found a collection of letters from Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil that far exceeds that compiled by Muhyi al-Din ibn Abd al-Zahir. He maintains that these letters are quite important materials concerning the Crusades, giving a very good picture of many fights undertaken by the Arabs in search of their country and sacred sites. These letters not only exemplified military conflicts but also, in a very precise and articulate manner, represented many facets related to the economic, social, and administrative life during the Ayyubid period in Egypt under Saladin, the original founder of the Ayyubid kingdom, and his son Al-Malik Al-Aziz. (Al-Dibaji, 1978)

Mostly, these letters were official letters written during the Ayyubid period, unlike Muhi al-Din ibn Abd al-Zahir’s collection, which was primarily of brotherly correspondences.

It was clear that the editor worked hard to put this book together, but likely even in these endeavors, he was lacking in some areas, such as: - The numerous typographical errors, especially in the diacritics, which presented considerable obstacles for the researcher. - The bibliography was missing at the back of the book. - The selected introduction by Ibn al-Dibaji, as included in the book, was omitted by the editor. - The editor neglected to address Al-Mukhtar Ibn Al-Dibaji’s remark in the book’s conclusion that this comprises the first section of the letters, and he failed to address the later sections. - The editor provided an incomplete list of typographical faults included in the book, a fact noticed by the researcher.

In spite of all these defects, the work has certainly given a major piece of literary and historical artifact from that period.

The importance of these letters, according to the investigator, lies in the fact that they were written by

Muwaffaq al-Din Ibn al-Dibaji in his own hand during the contemporary period of Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil. Thus, these letters are considered the oldest manuscripts available pertaining to the correspondence of Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil surviving to this day. (Al-Dibaji, 1978)

Within the researcher discoveries from this book is the matter related to the theme (Letters on War and Peace...). All these letters seem randomly catalogued under the title because there was no systematic distinction of correspondence concerning war and others concerned with peace. Ibn al-Dibaji seems to have chosen for this book a title that would sum up the correspondence exchanged by the honored judge: the letters he wrote in wartime and peacetime, through which he extended his messages of condolence, intercession, congratulation, promise keeping, and other expressions of goodwill. It is also likely that letters of peace included agreements and treaties signed at that time, which are inaccessible due to other missing second portion text of the book. This does not give a fair way to gauge the issues by the researcher since this is a rather hypothetical -conjectural- perspective on the case. Ibn al-Dibaji's correspondence reached up to about one hundred and fifty-one letters in his book, evidently greater than that of Muhyi al-Din ibn Abd al-Zahir and thus explaining the contents more lucidly and preserving the relevant historicity in that period.

Content Analysis

In correspondence to all the two chief categories of letters from a virtuous judge, one is the Diwani letters while the other letters are the Ikhwani letters. The diwani letters were the majority of the research materials for this study, which have been derived primarily from the works of Ibn Abd al-Zahir and Ibn al-Dhibaji. The particulars are as follows:

First, The Fraternal Letters

Mukhtar prefaced into his treatise, "Al-Durr Al-Nazim", a combination of fraternal correspondence written by the renowned judge Abdul Rahim. This comprises letters of longing, condolence, exhortation, greeting, well-wishing on returning from pilgrimage, thanking and reproaching, etc., all of which are meticulously listed in the index of the book editor. Included is a longing letter that he may have addressed to Saladin Al-Ayyubi, wherein he employs the title "Your Excellency"; he stated: "Regarding the one who, if He so desired, would not have instituted separation." (Ibn Abd al-Zahir, 1959)

Nevertheless, though you may be invisible, you will always be present in my heart. Longing leads me astray, creating the delusion that I am talking to you from afar, though absent in flesh. To His Majesty, may God prolong his reign and increase his grace, that he may have available at all times and in all directions the credit of much and frequent praise; and the blessings which the Almighty has bestowed upon us: the universal favors, the extensive gifts, and gratitude to God for His abundant generosity, descending like clouds, with hearts longing for those sources, and the foundations of goodness being fulfilled and secured,... (Ibn Abd al-Zahir, 1959) This is contained by way of Ibn al-Dibaji's resume of a letter he wrote to the great judge in response to a letter about longing, in which he says: "With respect to statements on longing and complaints over the pain of separation, I have that yearning alive and blazing with embers that smolder, bondage that presses, yet does not break nor degenerate, while the heart remains trapped in a memory that stirs it to unrest..." (Al-Dibaji, 1978). If the soul were not held up from closeness, then the longing would today have reached higher and deeper, and that which the eye was to receive of sleeplessness would have been greater and more.

The righteous judge's emotions sounded genuine enough, with his need like blazing coals in his breast, and his love unfading. The words had the plasticity necessary for expressing thought and feeling in an incomparably touching and beautiful way connoisseurs would find hard to articulate.

Second, the Diwani Letters

Most of the letters types from the judge of the Deewani are on the subject matter of battle: the standing, as ethical preparation, of the Islamic force before the battle, and important jihad with its divine reward. His engagements with the Franks are well detailed where he accounts the triumph of the Muslims and the thrust of disbelief, with its subjection of those who followed it. At this point, the honourable judge did not stop; rather, he stood to send letters to the governors of provinces on the command of Sultan Saladin to mobilise their soldiers together to the particular land for fighting with their fellow men on opposing sides. He had letters talking about

the aftermath of winning from enemies and that he sent greetings and good wishes for these wins with the expression of hope for further successes.

To buoy the spirit of his army and encourage them, as he wrote of the fort Shobak, he stated: "This letter to the gentleman of the instances signifies our satisfaction with God's blessings, and by His grace, we achieve victory, exulting in His support, extolling His generosity, and combating His foes." Our actions are dedicating towards God and pure in whatever motives, and our determination is still steadfast in His progress. The besieged fortress has some solidity, although its stones lie cracked, and construction efforts made using it will one day be destroyed. It will be possible for catapults to hit their target effectively. If the enemy hesitates in offering support, victory is rapid, the stronghold and its inhabitants are condemned, and hearts are imbued with the elation of triumph. All of us know that our profession yields profit; thus, none among us, by God's grace, will bear ennui or fatigue, and this endeavor will ultimately lead to success and victory, God willing. (Al-Dibaji, 1978)

Containing letters from his diwan is also the Jerusalem letter which was directed to Al-Nasir Li-Din Allah, the caliph in Baghdad at that time and which was written in the last part of the month of Sha'ban in 583 AH by the Sultan, Salah al-Din Yusuf ibn Ayyub, as a congratulatory message on the conquest of Jerusalem, liberation from the Franks, and restoration to an Islamic-state. He stated: "May God lengthen diwan life, that esteemed Nasir al-Din, and may he continue to triumph over every adversary, abundant in success without the guidance of any leader, ... The servant composed this work in accordance with what was proclaimed as a precursor to the advent of this significant event, and the title of the book delineating this blessing, for it is an ocean into which pens must navigate for an extended duration, and the grace of truth carries the substantial weight of appreciation inside it, ... For Allah, the Most High, renewal of thanks brings joy, and the current blessing endure, for none asserts to have passed. Indeed, the matters of Islam are at their optimum resolution, ... and the faith was once a foreign thing, now it dwells within its native territory, with victory given, as lives have been spent on its cause, ... and the holy but untainted land was previously empty, while the sole deity worshipped was the singular God and, to that, they had a secondary one, thus the places of polytheism are dismantled, and the jaws of disbelief are shattered ... (Al-Dibaji, 1978)

Al-Hamdulillah for the Almighty, in the reiteration of His Praise, there is happiness, and in the present bounty, there is permanence, and no one can say: this has gone. Indeed Islam is then made fully clear, ... whereas in the early stage, the Faith stood unrecognized; now it is home again, for the triumph has been given since lives gave way for it ...the revered and sacred land was not fertile; the God worshipped by them was one, whereas the temporary one was theirs; thus, all abodes of polytheism are no more, while the powers of disbelief are vanquished. (Ibn Abd al-Zahir, 1959)

The learned judge provided an extensive account of the conflict, its current stage, and its consequences, saying: "Those leaders were... On that day, their leaders were seized, their commanders were vanquished, and alone Al-Qomus managed to escape." (Ibn Abd al-Zahir, 1959) May God condemn him! He was truly clever on the day of great victory, but treacherous on the day of treachery, and so he endured-but how?! In dread of being impaled by spear or cleaved by sword, he fled; God seized him by the hand a few days later and put him to Death at the appointed hour. And thus, he passed, from the Sultan of Death to the Sultan ... (Ibn Abd al-Zahir, 1959)

There is also included in the letters a letter of intercession from an unnamed scholar who served the deceased prince to the illustrious king. The scholar wants to keep control over his mosque and requests help to fulfil this ambition: "May God prolong the reign of the sultan, and may his time live on as a rejuvenation to the blasted ambition and as a safeguard for the elevated Islam under which his governance thrives..." This is being rendered by the scholar names so-and-so, a servant of the late prince, on whom may God have pity. The late prince was highly devoted to the said service and would therefore have cared for his friends after his demise, as he did within his lifetime. The Sultan - may his victory be exalted - granted the aforementioned scholar a decree in his very excellent handwriting, permitting him to keep his mosque. He prays for the favour of carrying out his decree through authoritative obedience, fulfilling this intercession, and protecting against retraction what has been bestowed by the Sultan, may God elevate it, during the lifetime of this owner by ensuring it against partiality and misappropriation. (Al-Dibaji, 1978)

Now, we have seen the letters of the virtuous judge of the Crusades and differentiated them in two

types of correspondence. The first bunch contained letters from Sultan Saladin to the Abbasid Caliph and such Muslim princes about the conditions of their Muslim combatants on the battlefield, while the second was from the virtuous magister himself to Saladin Al-Ayyubi.

For the case in the earlier style, Al-Qalqashandi commented that the authors employing this form usually began their correspondence by glorifying God Almighty for the gift of victory and then proceeded to discuss the courage of the Muslims against the foe, outlining the two parties to the fight and their deeds on the battlefield themselves before pondering over the outcome of the war and its impact. Al-Qalqashandi (n.d.) On their way to closing their works, they gave glory to God and pray blessings upon His Prophet. However, they differed in their openings at times: while some referred to the caliph and immediately invoked blessings upon him with the name of God, some opened with relevant Quranic verses on the occasion and followed that with their first invocation for the caliph. (Al-Qalqashandi, n.d.)

If one analyzes the official note from the virtuous judge to Saladin, addressed to the caliph and the Muslim princes, that turns out to have much in common with what Al-Qalqashandi has said. Some began their letters by invoking the caliph and offering him prayers, for instance: “May God extend the days of the court (the noble and victorious one) and may he prevail over every ingrate...” (Al-Dibaji, 1978) Some began with verses of the Qur’an related to an occasion, then invoked the caliph and offered prayers for him such as in the message dispatched to king Al-Mu’ayyad congratulating him on his return from pilgrimage. In this message, he states: “Then they returned with the grace of Allah and His bounty, unscathed by any evil, and pursued the pleasure of Allah.” And Allah is the Lord of immense generosity. all praise be to God, who has founded the foundation of Islam, enlightened the days, and mandated the commitments of His slaves, with the return of the great king; God has exalted his triumph, perpetuated his grace, and conferred His might. (Al-Dibaji, 1978)

Having served as the backdrop for an exposition on the artistic presentation of epistles addressed to the righteous judge, the authorship of “Al-Durr Al-Nazim” and “Letters on War and Peace” is made to jump in. To notify others about the magnitude of the event for which this letter is written is the importance of the letter. The occasion was critical for it restored rights to their proper owners and instilled an immense feeling of pride for the restoration, thus triggering celebrations turned into their dissemination across the wide region. This letter conveyed the righteous judge’s information to the Abbasid caliph on the defeat of the Franks on the Battle of Hattin, as well as on the reclamation of Jerusalem and its surroundings. (Ibn Abd al-Zahir, 1959)

He launches into a wide-ranging promotional introduction, talking of the Abbasid caliph as an intellectually admirable character, endowed with charity, resolve, and majesty. He instills dread in his adversaries with fear, wins over them, and comes out victorious and successful against them in all his wars. The virtuous man proclaims, “... May God prolong the days of the esteemed court of Nasir; may he remain undeterred by the ingratitude of those who triumphs, unendingly successful without anyone leader’s advice, tireless in his effort to achieve the highest honour with alertness achieved by victory while sword remains in its sheath, showering generosity and raindrops on lands unwilled, deft in virtues regardless of it is being met with only a single word of gratitude, and resolute in his judgments founded solely on a legacy of virtue and principles...” (Ibn Abd al-Zahir, 1959)

He carefully chose whichever of these Arabic and Islamic traits he assigns to the caliph seem appropriate, in his mind; to fit into what he hoped to be the content and martial theme of his message. Having given the caliph the overview of Saladin’s victory over the invaders at Hattin, he then outlined the associated conflicts and events depriving the Crusaders of Jerusalem and adjacent territories. This victory needed to be offset in significance to uplift Saladin and his forces and that was the purpose of comparing the condition of the Muslims before and after the victory. (Ibn Abd al-Zahir, 1959)

The first to be conspicuously presented was the valor of the Franks and the valiance by which they defended their cities and castles that were attacked by the Muslims. Therefore, the noble judge with utmost ingenuity proceeded to state the principal aim of his message: the accounts of the warfare Saladin fought against the Crusader invaders from the Battle of Hattin and its aftermath. (Ibn Abd al-Zahir, 1959)

Al-Fadil preserved the organic coherence in this letter, characteristic of his correspondence, centering entirely on the singular theme of the Franks’ defeat at Hattin and its aftermath.

Artistic qualities natural to the verbal fluency of the righteous judge

He, who reads the letter of the noble judge to the Abbasid caliph, congratulating him on his conquest of Jerusalem for pardon, must hear many things, of which the greatest is his punishing love for linguistic terminology, imaginatively appointing words according to the subject in their esteem position to emphasize intended meaning, speaking as it should-have been, added-on with sentiment for those meanings used.

He carefully chooses his words trying to give them a balanced and harmonious manner, thus creating a style which is homogenous and melodious concerning intonation and resonance. Among those are: "...". Indeed, the issues of Islam have reached their high points, and now the faith of its followers has become clearer than in previous times; the loathing dreams of the infidel have long gone; and God has fulfilled His promise to His followers, thus when the condition was satisfied, the anticipated outcome ensued... (Ibn Abd al-Zahir, 1959). In other words, the virtuous employed all manner of embellishment: rhetoric, poetry, figurative language; with allusions to rhyme and assonance, with antithesis and sundry devices so held in the aesthetics of his day, augmenting his prose with nicety of elegance and artistic flair, thereby rendering his texts formidable due to the various layers of meanings and connotations they posed. Here, therefore, we can see traces of his reliance on the use of Quranic texts from which he borrowed many words, ideas, and idioms to great effect. He was a class apart in the way he poetically fitted some poem with the topic he was dealing with and garnished its discussion to show- genius at work along with scholarship and rare a sense of humor.

His own way of working with Quranic material would begin with the citation of the verse textually and its interpretation and then to weave that citation seamlessly into the fabric of his discourse. Among others he would say: "The sacred, pristine, and immaculate land; Almighty God became their third witness - One for whom edifices of polytheism were dismantled, severed teeth of disbelief united in marching to this land, and were among its safeguarding groups. The brave once vanquished heroes succumbed unto their hopes... They saw not even in iron water any power, nor any victory in courtyards. They were trampled, and God turned their evil deeds into good deeds. From the realm of the left he transferred His abode unto the realm of the right... (Ibn Abd al-Zahir, 1959)

The repetition and expansion of ideas are some noteworthy features of the writings of Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil. He goes into lengthy elaboration, giving opinions that have been repeated far too many times with varying wording, especially while discussing the defeat of the Franks and the looting of their walled cities, as well as voicing his joy in triumph. This might serve to underline and reinforce his meanings. For instance, he declares: "And this servant's book, and God bestowed triumph over the adversary whose bowstring broke, resulting in their disarray, their ranks dispersed, their sword fractured and reduced to a mere stick, and their fortifications, which were the most abundant and fortified, were demolished, and their campaigns faltered..." His foot faltered, and the ground aided it; his vision dimmed, and the blades of the swords loomed behind him like his own weapon. The eyelid of his sword rested, while his alertness shed the remnants of slumber from his eyelids. The tips of his spears were fractured, often elevated with aspiration or lifted by demise...(Ibn Abd al-Zahir, 1959).

This is the foremost artistic feature of this letter, as of others by the virtuous judge referred to: personification and embodiment, as when he states: ... And religion was a stranger, but now it is in its homeland... (Ibn Abd al-Zahir, 1959). The judge longs for such an abstraction, the concepts, and inanimate objects to come forth in strong, sensory images endowed with human traits and actions, energizing his ideas and carrying forth his meaning, especially toward cities taken from their rightful owners, means of punishing miscreants, and so forth. Conspicuous is his skill in exactness and exactness in portrayals. (Ibn Abd al-Zahir, 1959).

Plainly enough, with all the argumentative verbosity of the day, Al-Fadhil was clear as his language was simple and the meanings were obvious. Rarely do students meet with terms so obscure in jihadist communications as to need explanations as these terms are relatively free from convolutions and ambiguities due to the genuine sentiments and intense emotions inspired by the letters, especially since Al-Fadhil expressed joy over victory in the return of Islamic cities into the Islamic fold.

The Personalization of Style: It is said that man is style; thus, how does Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil's style manifest in his writings? From his letters, the style and approaches employed by Al-Fadhil diverged in different parts of his writing. His letters on the wars are characterized by hyperbole along with redundancy with several terms like jurisprudential, pre-Islamic, etc. Most of the time, they tie him to some jurisprudential thinking, as an

accompanying justification of what these letters were meant for.

Al-Fadhil has employed a narrative style rich in declamatory, interrogatory and interjectional kinds of sentences. Descriptive sections greatly colour many letters through which he relays triumphs, the nature of victories and anything related to restoring cities visited by someone. This is a common way souls pen at Al-Fadhil: "Straightway, out came their oppressor, the one who had abandoned them and wielded authority over them, Ibn Barzan, demanding they surrender the city peacefully, not by force, and with security, not by tyranny. He plunged into ruin, enveloped in the humiliation of royalty following the splendour of monarchy. He lowered his forehead to the ground, and for a period, no one dared approach him..." (Ibn Abd al-Zahir, 1959).

His texts uphold a virtuous style among which astronomical, grammatical, and jurisprudential terms have always been graced. These expressions impart his ideas to a reader without unduly distracting him and indicate deep familiarity with contemporary science. For instance, he says: "...And the adherents of his faith were honest, thus when the requisite was satisfied, the stipulated condition was realized ...". Plus, he states, "... And the adherants of the Quran will assume their positions after the followers of the crosses to contend for the faith of God, and the eyes of the Islamic community will rejoice to witness that triumph is associated with him and his forces through a preposition and a noun..." (Al-Dibaji, 1978).

He had a penchant for narrative writing; on several occasions, he would tell a story in some of the letters, as in the account of Al-Fadl about Saladin's attempts to unify the Islamic forces against the Franks and their intrigues, when he said: "... And he considered reports from the land of Egypt, with grave implications for anarchy and breakdown, owing to the subjugation of the major by the minor: Further, there existed no capacity in Islam to uphold any semblance of order within. For the Franks required their manager who would give the most respectable amount of money, and although the Sunnah emerged in unison, it was choked... God is above any analogy with His creatures, and indeed, one might lament for those led astray by the whims of infidels in the land. Our ambitions exceeded humanity's, until we collapsed barriers, reclaimed forgotten time, and restored the former glory of religion... at each other, we have had to confront the enemy, hidden from the hypocrite and afflicted by the dual specter of the infidel, until the act of God brought His decree and gave us victory-the thwarting all expectation of the Egyptians and the Franks" (Al-Dibaji, 1978).

Artistic representation as mentioned in literature of Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil

Al-Fadhil's letters had visual imagery that created a personality of its own and a very profound presence. He had similes, metaphors, metonymies, and allegories all working to create harmonious imagery for his intended expression of feelings and thoughts within him. Al-Fadhil's imagery has numerous varied sources, with the religious legacy as the most important. Al-Fadhil found within the religious legacy a plethora of imagery that resonates and touches the very soul of the listener. Therefore, his very writings are filled with images taken from the Holy Quran: "The disbelievers fled from us like ants fleeing from Solomon, and God gave them to defeat the factions of Satan." (Al-Dibaji, 1978) Al-Fadhil derived his imagery from the context of warfare, which characterized his era distinctly; for example: "And when the tips of the spear met the necks, and the spearheads pierced the chests, God gave us victory, and they fled in terror." (Al-Dibaji, 1978)

His art draws upon natural and other phenomena-Night and day, thunder and lightning, the sea, forests, the sky, stars, and somewhat. Thus, he says:~~"Perhaps they defended themselves against the sword's fire with the firewood of an enemy, and through the fire torrent severed ties with the Muslims'.~~The castle served as their vessel, not as a means of rescue but as a vessel of destruction...~The judge's writings often included that of women in an active way. Thus, his images of...

The conquered Islamic lands under the Crusaders were like menstruating women purified upon restoration to Islam's protection. "He states: ~"

Consequently, the holy land was sanctified, and it pertained to the menstrual lady, the singular God, and they possessed the third...." (Al-Dibaji, 1978)

The righteous were not negligent to show the tools of warfare and fighting in close regard to the essence of his messages. These tools are portrayed through animalistic imagery full of blood and life; the bow represents a

predatory animal that opens its jaws to consume its enemy. He states: ~”...And how many Persian bows, with their riders charging upon them, were captured by the very arrow meant for themselves, and how many of those bows opened their mouths, but behold, their mouths were consumed by the horn after full distance....” (The castle served as their vessel, not as a means of rescue but as a vessel of destruction... Al-Dibaji, 1978)

A Study in the Linguistic Features of Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil's Correspondence

The discourse of the virtuous judge was characterized by exactness and sincerity, striving towards his purpose in the most exquisite manner. Indeed, the judge was mindful of his evenness in words; his sentences were coherent and harmonic. Upon viewing the messages' length, one finds them filled with various forms of eloquence, giving the researcher a hard time in pinpointing any area that comes near to being free of such eloquence.

The elements of rhyme, which mark and mostly practiced the technique of that time, are clearly present in Al-Fadhil's works. Officially, he was the public voice of the state on top of a lot of heavy work, sending messages of both war and peace to the Caliph in Baghdad. This was in line with the normal and well-known style of bureaucratic writing, so Al-Fadhil was also an adherent of rhyme in his letters due to the taste of the time. Evidence of this is seen in his correspondence with the Caliph (Al-Dibaji, 1978) over the liberation of Jerusalem, of which a part we referenced in the study; thus, repetition is avoided. These rhymes were frequently brief and concise, perhaps characteristically to bring the image nearer and to excite the listener and reader to move with the history and to expect his message.

A distinguished judge made extensive use of full and incomplete puns where one complete form of the pun is: “We have reassured them of retribution against a transgressor and deprived them of the final determination of a prisoner because of another prisoner released... “. (Al-Dibaji, 1978) The pun from the terms (نَاج and نَاج) and (عَاج and عَاج) is found in his unfinished pun; it is evident in expressions such as: “... And it is time for the lord of the wall to cease being a wall and for the one imprisoned by it to become constrained, just as stones were amassed in the descent between summits of towers and heads of adversaries.” (Al-Dibaji, 1978)

About antithesis and parallelism, the said acknowledged utilized this rhetorical device to convey a desired meaning and, in a way, comprehension, like in this speech: “... My yearning to encounter the presence of my lord, my master, my support, my right hand, my left hand, my southern left hand..” (Ibn Abd al-Zahir, 1959), equally celebrated among these using oratory diversions. But all these do the mean that those who, in their rhetorical contexts and ornaments, have not hindered the intention.

Conclusion

The correspondences of Al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil, so far, are very much literary documents and political writings, mirror the ideological conflicts in which he lived, and they also serve as records of the state, shaping morale and collective memory. Rhetorically, he crossed the range-from psychological encouragement to strategic persuasion-in common with the greater academic hearings on discourse, translation, and linguistic framing in Arabic and cross-cultural contexts (Al Saideen, Haider, & Al-Abbas, 2022; Haider & Hussein, 2022; Haider, Saideen, & Hussein, 2023; Haider, Tair, & Dagamseh, 2025; Hassan & Haider, 2024; Saed et al., 2024; Saed, Haider, & Tair, 2023; Saed et al., 2021; Saed et al., 2022; Samha, Haider, & Hussein, 2023; Yassin, Jaradat, & Haider, 2025). The study has consistently concluded that the honorable judge deserves to be awarded the title of eminent writer after a thorough assessment of his works and creations in an extraordinarily significant historical era. The virtuous judge considerably advanced the rule of Saladin to the extent that Saladin himself acknowledged it and attributed his military achievements to the writings of the virtuous judge.

The rank achieved by Al-Qadi Al-Fadhil comes as part of the rational outcome of a person endowed with intelligence, good management, widespread culture, a mastery of the principles of artistic writing, and noticeable talent as a poet, as proved by his collected diwan of poetry. The correspondence of the virtuous judge serves as historical document expressed in an elegant style signifying the social, economic, and political conditions of the Islamic people at a time which is marked by wars and conflicts against the invading Franks. The researcher finds it puzzling that there are no official records preserved from the Diwan al-Insha, which was, one may say, akin to the modern Ministries of Information or Foreign Affairs and, otherwise, finding papers would not have been so difficult during that period. Can we state that these letters were not a composition in the lifetime of the virtuous judge?

He was writing in different ways, taking a more or less dominant methodology of his time. His expression could have rightly conveyed a meaning, an illustration of an instance, an articulation of an ambition, or the concern for his nation and faith.

The culture of Al-Fadhil became more widely practiced, and his letters provide the evidence. Its culture was mainly oriented by the religious, the historical, and other legacies.

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