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## Al-Maqrīzī as a Historian of the Early Mamluk Sultanate (or: Is al-Maqrīzī an Unrecognized Historiographical Villain?)

It can be argued that al-Maqrīzī's chronicle *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Ma'rifat Duwal al-Mulūk* is the best known historical work from the Mamluk period, contributing in no small way to its author's reputation as the most famous historian writing in the Mamluk Sultanate. The pride of place of this work can easily be understood. Al-Maqrīzī's treatment of the early sultanate in the *Sulūk* was the first Mamluk chronicle to be translated into a European language.<sup>1</sup> I am referring, of course, to the fine translation by Quatremère, published in Paris in the years 1837–45.<sup>2</sup> The extensive notes and appendices, still valuable today, greatly increased the value of this translation, and it indeed served as a bedrock for the study of the early sultanate, as well as the waning years for the Frankish entity in the East. A second reason for al-Maqrīzī's ubiquity and prominence in most studies on the period under discussion is the exemplary edition initiated by Ziyādah in 1934 and finally completed in 1973.<sup>3</sup> When publishing began in the 1930s, this was one of the first Mamluk chronicles to see the light of day in a competent scholarly edition, and thus it is not a surprise that the *Sulūk* continued to serve as a major source for the study of the period, even after the publication of various editions (some better than others) of chronicles and other sources which covered this period. In the present discussion, my focus will be only on the first volume (published in three parts), which deals with the sultanate up to the beginning of the eighth/fourteenth century.

I will suggest in this article that for the first decades of the Mamluk Sultanate, al-Maqrīzī was a summarizer of primarily one work, and not always an accurate one at that. I will propose, therefore, that for this early period of the sultanate's history, he should be seen as an auxiliary source of only secondary importance. A

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<sup>1</sup>Parts of the chronicles by Abū al-Fidā' and Ibn al-'Amīd were published and translated long before this, but these were sections related to the early history of Islam, and therefore are not relevant to the discussion here.

<sup>2</sup>M. E. Quatremère, *Histoire des sultans mamlouks de l'Égypte* (Paris, 1837–45), 2 volumes in 4 parts.

<sup>3</sup>Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Ma'rifat Duwal al-Mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafā Ziyādah and Sa'īd 'Abd al-Fattāḥ 'Āshūr (Cairo, 1934–73), 4 volumes in 12 parts.



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few modern scholars have already mentioned al-Maqrīzī's derivative and summary character in his account of the early sultanate, as well as his overall refusal to cite the names of his sources.<sup>4</sup> But al-Maqrīzī's carelessness in rendering his material has not, as far as I am aware, been explicitly noted. At the same time, some historians of the early sultanate and the late Frankish East have continued citing the *Sulūk* as if it was an independent source, in spite of the plethora of recently-published contemporary and near contemporary sources, as well as the much greater source-critical sophistication of Mamluk historiography.<sup>5</sup>

As I hope to demonstrate, for the first decades of the Mamluk Sultanate (up to 696/1296–97), al-Maqrīzī's *Sulūk* should be read in conjunction with his main, and at times exclusive (particularly for 658–80/1260–81), source. I am referring to the chronicle of the Egyptian historian Nāṣir al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad Ibn al-Furāt (d. 807/1405), *Kitāb al-Duwal wa-al-Mulūk*, parts of which have been published, and others are available still only in manuscript form.<sup>6</sup> I will show that the use of al-Maqrīzī as an independent source without

<sup>4</sup>Donald P. Little, "Historiography of the Ayyūbid and Mamlūk Epochs," in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, ed. Carl F. Petry, vol. 1, *Islamic Egypt (640–1517)* (Cambridge, 1998), 436–37; idem, *An Introduction to Mamlūk Historiography: An Analysis of Arabic Annalistic and Biographical Sources for the Reign of al-Malik an-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalā'ūn* (Wiesbaden, 1970), 77–78; Linda S. Northrup, *From Slave to Sultan: The Career of al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn and the Consolidation of Mamluk Rule in Egypt and Syria (678–689 A.H./1279–1290 A.D.)* (Stuttgart, 1998), 51. Peter Thorau, "The Battle of 'Ayn Jālūt: A Re-examination," in *Crusade and Settlement*, ed. Peter W. Edbury (Cardiff, 1985), 237, writes that "[al-Maqrīzī's] account of earlier centuries cannot always serve as a primary source," but proceeds to use him as an independent source for the reconstruction of the battle.

Scholars from an earlier generation held al-Maqrīzī in high regard. For the views of Hitti, Ziyādah, etc., see the citations and references found in: Little, *Introduction*, 77; idem, "Historiography," 436. Little, *Introduction*, 76, writes: "The grand scope of that work [i.e., *Sulūk*], its accessibility both in Arabic and translated versions, the praise it has received, have combined to secure al-Maqrīzī the hackneyed but apt title of dean of Egyptian historians." Little himself challenges that view by showing that at least one of al-Maqrīzī's contemporaries, Badr al-Dīn al-'Aynī, wrote a chronicle whose scope (let alone accuracy) is no less comprehensive than the former's. See F. Rosenthal, "Maqrīzī," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 4:193–94, for some discussion of criticism from al-Maqrīzī's contemporaries.

<sup>5</sup>The following recent studies, for example, use al-Maqrīzī's *Sulūk* for their discussion of the early sultanate as if it was an independent source: 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Khuwayṭir, *Baibars the First: His Endeavours and Achievements* (London, 1978); Peter Thorau, *The Lion of Egypt: Sultan Baybars I and the Near East in the Thirteenth Century*, tr. P. M. Holt (London and New York, 1992); Stefan Heidemann, *Das Aleppiner Kalifat (AD 1261): vom Ende des Kalifates in Bagdad über Aleppo zu den Restaurationen in Kairo* (Leiden, 1994). My historiographical reservations do not detract from the overall value of these studies.

<sup>6</sup>The annals of these years are found in the following volumes: (a) Vatican MS AR. 726 (years



recourse to Ibn al-Furāt can be misleading, since at best the former gives only a succinct rendering of his source, and as will be seen, a not always accurate one at that. Whereas al-Maqrīzī never names his source, Ibn al-Furāt is generally scrupulous in naming those historians whose works he cites. At this point, it might be noted that for Baybars's reign, Ibn al-Furāt relies heavily on the royal biography by Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir, who is often cited by name.<sup>7</sup> To this central source, Ibn al-Furāt adds material from other writers, some of whose works are now lost. Some modern scholars have discussed in general al-Maqrīzī's reliance on Ibn al-Furāt for the annals describing the early decades of the sultanate,<sup>8</sup> but to the best of my knowledge, no one has yet explicitly noted that the former's almost complete dependence on the latter, and the frequent sloppy and inaccurate way in which this was done.

As I hope to show in the following discussion, Ibn al-Furāt reveals himself to be a master historian of tremendous significance for the study of the early Mamluk Sultanate,<sup>9</sup> while it will be suggested that al-Maqrīzī's role is merely that of a writer who has provided us with a convenient precis of events, which should be

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639–59); (b) Vienna MS Staatsbibliothek 814 (years 660–71); (c) *Tārīkh Ibn al-Furāt*, vol. 7, ed. Qustantīn Zurayk (Beirut, 1942) (years 672–82); (d) *Tārīkh Ibn al-Furāt*, vol. 8, ed. Zurayk and Nejla M. Abu Izzeddin (Beirut, 1939) (years 683–96). Some of the material of these years, relevant to the Franks, has been published in *Ayyubids, Mamlukes and Crusaders: Selections from the Tārīkh al-Duwal wa-al-Mulūk of Ibn al-Furāt*, tr. U. and M. C. Lyons, intro. and notes J. S. C. Riley-Smith (Cambridge, 1971), 2 volumes.

<sup>7</sup>Published as Muḥyī al-Dīn 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir, *Al-Rawḍ al-Zāhir fī Sīrat al-Malik al-Zāhir*, ed. 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Khuwayṭir (Riyadh, 1396/1976).

<sup>8</sup>See the general comments in Claude Cahen, "Ibn al-Furāt," *EF*, 3:769. Northrup, *From Slave to Sultan*, 51–52, notes that al-Maqrīzī's annals are generally a summary of Ibn al-Furāt's for the period that she discusses, but does not mention the former's sloppiness. Little, *An Introduction to Mamluk Historiography*, 77–78, notes the dependence of al-Maqrīzī on Ibn al-Furāt (along with additional sources) for the annal of 694/1294–95. He is unable to make such a comparison for the other two annals which he checked (699/1299–1300 and 705/1305–6, on pp. 78–80), since that part of Ibn al-Furāt's work is not extant. In his important article on Mamluk historiography in general ("Historiography of the Ayyūbid and Mamlūk Epochs," 436–37), Little does not note any dependence between the two historians, writing only: "As far as Bahrī Mamlūk history is concerned, al-Maqrīzī had to rely completely, of course, on earlier sources, and these he adapted freely, and sometimes indiscriminately without identifying them."

<sup>9</sup>For an earlier appreciation of Ibn al-Furāt's importance for the study of early Mamluk history, see Eliyahu Ashtor, "Some Unpublished Sources for the Bahrī Period," in *Studies in Islamic History and Civilization*, ed. Uriel Heyd (published as *Scripta Hierosolymitana*, vol. 9) (Jerusalem, 1961), 13–24. There is no discussion, however, of al-Maqrīzī's use of his work. Cf. Claude Cahen, *La Syrie du nord à l'époque des Croisades et la principauté franque d'Antioche* (Paris, 1940), 88: "Autant dire que pour le viie/xiiie siècle l'intérêt d'Ibn al-Furāt est pour nous des plus réduits."



consulted with care. I will first attempt to demonstrate al-Maqrīzī's almost complete dependence on Ibn al-Furāt for these years, and then will give several examples of the former's shoddy summary of his earlier contemporary. I must add, however, that here and there, al-Maqrīzī does provide a snippet of information—sources usually unnamed—not given by Ibn al-Furāt, showing that he had at his disposal other sources, and indicating that he was capable of writing a synthetic work when he chose.

My first task will be to demonstrate that al-Maqrīzī indeed based his chronicle for the early sultanate on that of Ibn al-Furāt. I will employ the method used by Donald Little in his introductory study on Mamluk historiography, i.e., a comparison of subjects covered by both historians in a particular annal; later on, I will compare the language of selective short passages. Where Ibn al-Furāt mentions the name of *his* source, this will be noted also. I will provide two examples, both being significant chunks from two annals. The first will be that of 658 (1259–60), i.e., the year of the battle of 'Ayn Jālūt, while the second will be from 663 (1264–65), describing Baybars's conquest of Caesarea and Arsūf. In the following comparison **IF** stands for Ibn al-Furāt, and **Maq** for al-Maqrīzī. If the latter author provides only a parallel text, even if somewhat shortened, then generally only the page number is given.

### **I. YEAR 658 (1259–60)**

#### **EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE BATTLE OF 'AYN JĀLŪT**

1. **IF:** Hülegü takes Aleppo (MS Vat., fols. 226v–227r).  
**Maq:** 1:422.
2. **IF:** Cites Qirṭāy al-Khaznadārī quoting Šārim al-Dīn Özbek al-Ḥimšī on his experiences and the fate of Aleppo (227r–231v = Levi della Vida,<sup>10</sup> 358–64).  
**Maq:** Not in *Sulūk*.
3. **IF:** More on the fate of Aleppo; capture of seven members of the Baḥrīyah (231v).  
**Maq:** 1:422–23.

<sup>10</sup>G. Levi della Vida, "L'Invasione dei Tartari in Siria nel 1260 nei ricordi di un testimone oculare," *Orientalia* 4 (1935): 253–76.



4. **IF:** Actions of al-Nāṣir Yūsuf, ruler of Aleppo and Damascus; his fleeing from Damascus, and end of his rule (231v–233r).  
**Maq:** 1:423.
5. **IF:** Mongols occupy Damascus (233r–234v).  
**Maq:** Hülegü comes to Damascus [wrong, and not in Ibn al-Furāt]; Mongols gain possession of city (1:423).
6. **IF:** Arrival of Mongol governors in Damascus (234r).  
**Maq:** 1:423–24 [governors together with Kitbughā; see below].
7. **IF:** Mongols raid Palestine (234r–v).  
**Maq:** 1:425.
8. **IF:** Christian “outrages” against Muslims in Damascus (234v).  
**Maq:** 1:425.
9. **IF:** Arrival of Kitbughā and Baydarā; rebellion of citadel in Damascus; communications with the Franks on the coast; Ayyubid ruler of Homs arrives at Damascus after having submitted to Hülegü (234v–235v).  
**Maq:** 1:425.
10. **IF:** Battle in Nablus between Mongol advance force and Ayyubid rear guard; latter defeated (235v–236r).  
**Maq:** Not in *Sulūk*.
11. **IF:** Citadel in Damascus subdued; Baalbek taken, as is al-Ṣubaybah (236r–v).  
**Maq:** 1:426.
12. **IF:** Mongols keep eye on Franks on coast and send advance force to Gaza to watch Egypt; destroy fortresses in southern Syria (236v).  
**Maq:** No mention of Franks at this point in *Sulūk*. Short mention of force that goes to Gaza and destruction of fortresses (1:426).
13. **IF:** Baybars returns to Syria on Rabī‘ I (236v).  
**Maq:** 1:426.



14. **IF:** Mongol siege of Mārdīn (236v–237r).  
**Maq:** Very short mention (1:426).
  
15. **IF:** Fate of al-Nāṣir Yūsuf (237r–v).  
**Maq:** 1:426.
  
16. **IF:** Quṭuz strengthens his position in Egypt (237v–238r).  
**Maq:** 1:426–27.
  
17. **IF:** Al-Nāṣir Yūsuf's capture by Mongols (238r).  
**Maq:** 1:427.
  
18. **IF:** Cites Sibṭ Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir (=Shāfi' ibn 'Alī), author of *Naẓm al-Sulūk fī Tārīkh al-Khulafā' wa-al-Mulūk* (now lost), with more details about al-Nāṣir Yūsuf's capture (238r–v).  
**Maq:** Not in *Sulūk*.
  
19. **IF:** Yet another version of this story (238v).  
**Maq:** Not in *Sulūk*.
  
20. **IF:** Hülegü communicates with al-Mughīth 'Umar, ruler of Karak, to get him to submit. Al-Malik al-Qāhir ibn al-Mu'aẓẓam 'Īsā flees to Cairo (238v).  
**Maq:** Not in *Sulūk*.
  
21. **IF:** Al-Qāhir goes with Baybars to Quṭuz to strengthen his resolve to fight the Mongols (238v).  
**Maq:** Not in *Sulūk*.
  
22. **IF:** Cites Ibn Duqmāq's *Nuzhat al-Anām fī Tārīkh al-Islām* about al-Nāṣir Yūsuf telling Hülegü not to take the Mamluks seriously. Hülegü plans to go east, since he heard about conflict between brothers (238v–239r).  
**Maq:** Not in *Sulūk*.
  
23. **IF:** Discussion of Mongol religious beliefs (239v–240v).  
**Maq:** Not in *Sulūk*.





24. **IF:** Hülegü decides to return to east, but not before ordering Kitbughā and Baydarā to move south and invade Egypt (240r–241v).

**Maq:** 1:427.

25. **IF:** Again, cites Qirṭāy al-Khaznadārī citing Ṣārim al-Dīn Özbek al-Ḥimṣī, who describes his adventures with the Mongols, and reports that the Mongol commanders Kitbughā and Baydarā were sent south (241v–242v = Levi della Vida, 364–65).

**Maq:** Cites line from this section (without mentioning source): “wa-ja‘ala Kitbughā nuyan nā’iban bi-Ḥalab wa-Baydarā nā’iban bi-Dimashq” (1:428).<sup>11</sup>

26. **IF:** Resistance of Ayyubid ruler of Mayyafāriqīn, and its eventual conquest by the Mongols (242v–243r).

**Maq:** Not in *Sulūk*.

27. **IF:** Quṭuz kills Mongol envoys and sets off for Syria, in spite of opposition among amirs; battle of ‘Ayn Jālūt (243r ff.).

**Maq:** 1:427ff.

This comparison shows that there is a great probability that Ibn al-Furāt’s *Tārīkh* served as the model for al-Maqrīzī’s *Sulūk* in this annal at least. The former writer built a narrative drawn from various sources, three of which he names here. The sequence of events (with a not-insignificant number of omissions) in the *Tārīkh* is found in the parallel text in *Sulūk*. The only explanation can be that al-Maqrīzī used Ibn al-Furāt’s text as a model. The former’s (unattributed) citation of the line given in item 25 (derived from Qirṭāy al-Khaznadārī, quoting Ṣārim al-Dīn Özbek) in exactly this place as found in Ibn al-Furāt is a further indication of the connection between the two works. This correlation between the two texts can also be seen in the second example:

## II. YEAR 663 (1264–65)

### EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE MAMLUK CONQUEST OF CAESAREA AND ARSŪF

1. **IF:** At the beginning of the year, Baybars leaves Cairo to hunt (MS Vienna, fol. 62r).

**Maq:** 1:523.

<sup>11</sup>This information is actually incorrect. See the discussion in Reuven Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-Īlkhānīd War, 1260–1281* (Cambridge, 1995), 30–35.



2. **IF:** News received that Mongols besieging al-Bīrah (62r).  
**Maq:** 1:523.
3. **IF:** Order sent to Cairo for lightly-equipped contingent to be sent off from Egypt to Syria immediately (62r).  
**Maq:** 1:523.
4. **IF:** Sultan returns to Cairo from hunting (62r).  
**Maq:** 1:523.
5. **IF:** Mamluk horses at pasturage, causing a delay; this information conveyed by unspecified Franks to Mongols (62r).  
**Maq:** 1:523, but no information about Franks sending intelligence to Mongols.
6. **IF:** More Mamluk contingents sent to Syria (62r–v).  
**Maq:** 1:523–24.
7. **IF:** Sultan sets off from Cairo (5 Rabī‘ II); hadith quoted; reaches Gaza (20 Rabī‘ II) (62v).  
**Maq:** 1:524, but hadith not quoted.
8. **IF:** News from al-Bīrah; Baybars writes to commander of expeditionary force to hurry (62v).  
**Maq:** 1:524.
9. **IF:** Baybars reaches Qaratayyah,<sup>12</sup> goes hunting (“wa-lammā nazala al-sulṭān fī Qaratayyah rakiba lil-ṣayd”) and gets hurt. Castellan of Jaffa arrives with gifts (62v–63r).  
**Maq:** 1:524, but the text is corrupt: “fa-nazala qarīban min Ṣaydā” [!]. Whether this is in the manuscript or a mistake of the editor is unclear.
10. **IF:** Sultan arrives at Yubnā; report comes that Mongols have withdrawn from al-Bīrah; Mamluk force arrived at al-Bīrah; orders sent out by sultan to repair that fort (63r–64v).  
**Maq:** 1:524–25 [very terse description].

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<sup>12</sup>This was a village in the region of Jerusalem, in the vicinity of Bayt Jubrīn; Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Kitāb Mu‘jam al-Buldān* (=Jacut’s *geographisches Wörterbuch*) (Leipzig, 1866–70), 4:35.





11. **IF:** Money is collected for the repair project of al-Bīrah; details of work and arrangements there (64v–65r).  
**Maq:** 1:525.
12. **IF:** Sultan meets commoners on bridge over al-‘Awjā’ and treats them well (ed. Lyons, 84).  
**Maq:** Not in *Sulūk*.
13. **IF:** Sultan leaves al-‘Awjā’, after battalions hunt in forest of Arsūf; Sultan scouts out Arsūf and Caesarea (ed. Lyons, 84–85).  
**Maq:** 1:526.
14. **IF:** Mangonels and ladders built (details of types of mangonels) (ed. Lyons, 85).  
**Maq:** 1:526 [without details of the mangonels].
15. **IF:** Sultan goes to ‘Uyūn al-Asāwir (ed. Lyons, 85).  
**Maq:** 1:526 [adds detail about location of ‘Uyūn al-Asāwir].
16. **IF:** Army receives order to don equipment and marches to Caesarea (ed. Lyons, 85).  
**Maq:** 1:526–27.
17. **IF:** History of Caesarea up to battle (ed. Lyons, 86–87=MS Vienna, 66r–67v; not all of the text is in the edition).  
**Maq:** Not in *Sulūk*.
18. **IF:** Caesarea attacked on the morning of 9 Jumādā I. City taken by assault; citadel put under siege. Raids sent out against Baysān and Acre (ed. Lyons, 87).  
**Maq:** 1:527.
19. **IF:** Role of sultan during siege of Caesarea (ed. Lyons, 87).  
**Maq:** 1:527.
20. **IF:** Mamluks take citadel and destroy the city (ed. Lyons, 87–88).  
**Maq:** 1:527.



21. **IF:** Hadith cited (ed. Lyons, 88).  
**Maq:** Not in *Sulūk*.
22. **IF:** Mamluk raid against ‘Athlīth and Haifa; Sultan visits ‘Athlīth (ed. Lyons, 89).  
**Maq:** 1:527–28.
23. **IF:** Long panegyric to sultan (ed. Lyons, 89).  
**Maq:** Not in *Sulūk*.
24. **IF:** Sultan goes back to Caesarea; arrival of mangonels from al-Ṣubaybah; refugees from the Franks arrive; breakout of disease among the troops (ed. Lyons, 90).  
**Maq:** Not in *Sulūk*.
25. **IF:** History of Arsūf, derived from Ibn Shaddād al-Ḥalabī’s *Al-A‘lāq al-Khaṭīrah*, which is mentioned by name (ed. Lyons, 91).  
**Maq:** Not in *Sulūk*.
26. **IF:** Sultan arrives at Arsūf on 1 Jumādā I; siege commences; role of sultan in fighting is lauded. Ibn ‘Abd al-Zāhir mentioned twice as source. Initial tunnels to citadel walls are constructed; Franks counterattack. Mamluks dig trench parallel to outside moat of city (ed. Lyons, 91–94).  
**Maq:** 1:528–29.
27. **IF:** Presence in Mamluk camp of *al-‘ubbād wa-al-zuhhād wa-al-fuqahā’ wa-al-fuqarā’*. Sultan’s largess to certain shaykhs is described (ed. Lyons, 94–95).  
**Maq:** 1:529 [but only *al-‘ubbād wa-al-zuhhād wa-al-fuqahā’* are mentioned].
28. **IF:** Continued bombardment of Arsūf by mangonels; final attack on city (taken 8 Rajab); hadith cited. Sultan visits tomb of local shaykh. Attack on citadel on 11 Rajab. First barbican taken; citadel surrenders (ed. Lyons, 95–96).  
**Maq:** 1:529 [confused account: see below].

Note: The text of Ibn al-Furāt in items 1–16 is derived almost completely from Ibn ‘Abd al-Zāhir, *Rawḍ*, 221–30. For items 17–28, the parallel text is in *Rawḍ*, 230–43.



From the above, we can note that apparently the model of al-Maqrīzī was also the parallel passage in Ibn al-Furāt's *Tārīkh*. Although it is theoretically possible that al-Maqrīzī had Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir's *Rawḍ* (Ibn al-Furāt's main source here) as a direct model, the fact that al-Maqrīzī had based himself on Ibn al-Furāt for the year 658 leads to the conclusion that he was working from Ibn al-Furāt's text also for 663.

The above observations have been strengthened by a systematic comparison of 22 years of annals, described above. Of course, in the framework of a short article, it is impossible to demonstrate a 100% correlation between the two texts, but I hope that the examples adduced will be convincing. It is now my wish to give several examples of al-Maqrīzī's carelessness in rendering a summary of his source.

My first example will be from the above-mentioned annal of 658, to wit, the events of 'Ayn Jālūt. If nothing else, I hope to strengthen my assertion that al-Maqrīzī's description of the battle is taken directly from that of Ibn al-Furāt. The latter author writes about the opening stages of the battle (citing Ṣārim al-Dīn Özbek al-Ḥimṣī, whose words were first conveyed by Qirṭāy al-Khaznadārī, who in turn is cited by name by Ibn al-Furāt). This is Ibn al-Furāt's text:

. . . wa-hum munḥadirūn min al-jabal . . . thumma taṭāba'at al-aṭlāb  
awwalan fa-awwal wa-inḥadarū min safḥ al-jabal wa-duqqat al-kūsāt  
wa-al-ṭablk[ān]āt. . . thumma inna al-tatār inḥāzū ilā al-jabal. . .  
[. . . They (the Mamluks) descended from the hill . . . then the  
squadrons followed each other one by one, and descended from the  
foot of the hill. The drums and orchestras were played . . . Then  
Mongols headed for the hill.]<sup>13</sup>

Now compare the parallel, but much shorter, passage from al-Maqrīzī:

Wa-taṭāba'a ḍarb kūsāt al-sulṭān wa-al-umarā' fa-taḥayyaza al-tatar  
[sic] ilā al-jabal [The beating of the sultan's and amirs' drums was  
continuous, and the Mongols headed for the hill.]<sup>14</sup>

A number of points can be noted: First, something which may not be obvious from my shortened rendition of Ibn al-Furāt's passage is that his text is about four times as long as al-Maqrīzī's. Secondly, also not apparent from the passage that I

<sup>13</sup>Ibn al-Furāt, *Tārīkh*, MS Vatican, fol. 247r (= ed. Levi della Vida, "L'invasione dei Tataři," 366).

<sup>14</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 1:430.



have cited, is that Ibn al-Furāt names his source. Thirdly, al-Maqrīzī has conflated two matters, slightly changing the wording in the process: Ibn al-Furāt writes that the "squadrons followed (*taṭābaʿat*) one another," and then "the drums and orchestras were played (or beaten)," while al-Maqrīzī has "the beating of the sultan's and amirs' drums was continuous (*Wa-taṭābaʿa ḍarb kūṣāt al-sulṭān wa-al-umarāʾ*). This "editing" is innocuous enough, though al-Maqrīzī's use of *taṭābaʿa* is a useful telltale sign of the origins of this passage. More seriously, al-Maqrīzī completely omits the twice-told information of the Mamluks coming off a hill or height of some type; his final remark, that "the Mongols headed for the hill"<sup>15</sup> is perhaps inexplicable without the information which his source provides, i.e., that the Mamluks were advancing down the slope of the unnamed hill.<sup>16</sup>

Al-Maqrīzī's version so far is thus somewhat confusing, but even without recourse to Ibn al-Furāt (or his source), it does not present an insurmountable problem in reconstructing the battle. A much more significant problem is found in the continuation of the passage by al-Maqrīzī, where he writes:

Wa-marra al-ʿaskar fī athar al-tatar ilā qurb Baysān fa-rajaʿa al-tatar wa-ṣāffū maṣāffan thāniyan aʿẓam min al-awwal [The (Mamluk) army moved to the vicinity of Baysān on the heels of the Mongols. They came back (or regrouped), and they fought a second battle greater than the first.]<sup>17</sup>

This statement has given rise in several modern renditions of the battle to the suggestion that a second battle took place near Baysān (Beit Shan), after the defeated Mongols regrouped, only to be routed yet again.<sup>18</sup> Yet an examination of Ibn al-Furāt's passage, derived he says from Ibn Duqmāq's *Nuzhat al-Anām* (in a now non-extant section), shows that this was not the case:

Wa-kasara [Quṭuz] al-ʿadūw al-makhdhūl kasratan qawīyan ilā qarīb madīnat Baysān thumma ʿādū wa-iltaqaw maʿa al-muslimīn wa-kānat al-thāniyah aʿẓam min al-ūlā [(Quṭuz) dealt the (God-)forsaken

<sup>15</sup>This particular sentence was misread by Quatremère, *Histoire*, 1:2:104: "Les Tatars monterent alor à cheval," evidently reading *al-khayl* for *al-jabal*; Thorau, "The Battle of 'Ayn Jālūt," 238, cites this mistaken translation without comment.

<sup>16</sup>For the possible location of this "hill" and a detailed reconstruction and analysis of the battle, see R. Amitai-Preiss, "'Ayn Jālūt Revisited," *Tārīḥ* 2 (1991): 119–50.

<sup>17</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 1:431.

<sup>18</sup>See, e.g., Joshua Prawer, *Histoire du royaume latin de Jérusalem*, tr. G. Nahon (Paris, 1970), 2:435.



enemy a great defeat near the city of Baysān, then they came back, and encountered the Muslims (again). The second (defeat) was greater than the first.]<sup>19</sup>

What Ibn al-Furāt is saying is that the battle which we know as ‘Ayn Jālūt was fought *near* Baysān, which is certainly true, Baysān being the largest town in the vicinity of the battlefield. At this battle there were two rounds of fighting. After an initial Mamluk success, the Mongols regrouped *at the same spot*; in the second round, the Mongols were again, and finally, defeated.<sup>20</sup>

Al-Maqrīzī’s account of this battle contains other careless renderings of Ibn al-Furāt’s detailed and careful narrative, which misleads the historian if consulted without reference to his source. I will note here only a couple of illustrations of al-Maqrīzī’s haphazard method in rendering the details given by Ibn al-Furāt, from the account of the events which led up to the fighting itself. For example, Ibn al-Furāt has only that commissioners of some type (called here *nuwwāb*) of Hülegü entered Damascus on 16 Rabī‘ I 658 (1 March 1260),<sup>21</sup> while al-Maqrīzī writes that it was the commissioners *and Kitbughā*, then commander of the Mongol advanced forces in central and southern Syria, who entered Damascus on this date.<sup>22</sup> One might comment that perhaps al-Maqrīzī knew something that his source did not, and added it accordingly. While this is theoretically a possibility, it can be discounted here. No other Mamluk (or pro-Mongol) writer mentions Kitbughā entering the city at this time, and contemporary Damascene writer Abū Shāmah explicitly says that the *nuwwāb* arrived alone (albeit on 17 Rabī‘ I/2 March).<sup>23</sup> In addition, Ibn Kathīr writes that Kitbughā had arrived in the city as early as the last day of Šafar 658 (14 February 1260), and he left the city a few days later for points south, evidently not returning to Damascus until late April.<sup>24</sup> This is of course a small detail, but indicative of al-Maqrīzī’s working method of summarizing Ibn al-Furāt, conflating here, skipping there, and occasionally adding a little extrapolation from his imagination.

With this growing skepticism, we may now look at another example of al-

<sup>19</sup>Ibn al-Furāt, *Tārīkh*, MS Vatican, fol. 248r.

<sup>20</sup>Actually, the course of the battle was even more complicated; see the article cited above in note 16.

<sup>21</sup>Ibn al-Furāt, *Tārīkh*, MS Vatican, fols. 233r, 234r–v.

<sup>22</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 1:424.

<sup>23</sup>Shihāb al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Ismā‘īl Abū Shāmah, *Tarājim Rijāl al-Qarnayn al-Sādis wa-al-Sābi‘ al-Ma‘arūf bi-al-Dhayl ‘alā al-Rawḍatayn*, ed. M. al-Kawtharī (Cairo, 1947), 203.

<sup>24</sup>Abū al-Fidā’ ‘Abd Allāh Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-Nihāyah fī al-Tārīkh* (rpt., Beirut, 1977), 13:219. For details of Kitbughā’s itinerary during this period, see Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks*, 30–33.



Maqrīzī's additions to his source, again from the events leading up to the battle of 'Ayn Jālūt: he writes that after the final conquest of Aleppo and north Syria in February 1260, Hülegü himself is reported to have advanced to Damascus.<sup>25</sup> Not only is this not found in the parallel passage in Ibn al-Furāt,<sup>26</sup> but all the other Mamluk and Persian sources state that Hülegü remained in the north of the country. Again, we have caught al-Maqrīzī trying to improve upon his source whilst attempting to summarize it.

So much for the Mongols in Syria; what about Mamluk reactions to events there? Ibn al-Furāt reports that the Egyptian army was swelled by Turcomans, bedouins (*al-'urbān*), and Shahrāzurīyah Kurds.<sup>27</sup> This information is given by al-Maqrīzī, but without the Kurds,<sup>28</sup> a minor but telling omission. Once the Mamluk army has set out from Cairo and has established camp at Šālīḥīyah, Qutuz encounters opposition from many of the amirs who were less than enthused about continuing on to Syria and confronting the Mongols. Ibn al-Furāt, citing the now lost *Naẓm al-Sulūk* by Shāfi' ibn 'Alī, provides several anecdotes showing how the sultan was eventually able to convince these recalcitrant commanders to follow him to Syria.<sup>29</sup> Al-Maqrīzī conflates these stories in a disjointed way: he stops one anecdote in the middle and begins the next also in the middle, leading to confusion on the part of the unwary reader.<sup>30</sup>

To summarize so far, the best policy for the would-be historian of this crucial year in the history of the Mamluk Sultanate, and arguably the Middle East as a whole, would be to lay the *Sulūk* aside and concentrate on other works, starting with the Vatican manuscript of Ibn al-Furāt's *Tārīkh*. I have found the relevant pages of *Sulūk* useful only as a rough guide of events and a serviceable precis for my students.

I have concentrated so far on the events of 658/1260, since during my research on the battle of 'Ayn Jālūt, I have devoted much attention to a detailed comparison of all of the sources, most of which are in Arabic. Yet, I have found additional examples of al-Maqrīzī's imprecise summations of Ibn al-Furāt's chronicle. For example, Ibn al-Furāt gives a detailed break-down of the Mongol army which invaded Syria in 680/1281, based on intelligence reports which Sultan Qalāwūn received. He gives the total figure of 80,000 "pure" Mongols (referred to here as *al-mughul*); the rest was composed of "Georgians, [Saljuq troops from] Anatolia,

<sup>25</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 1:423.

<sup>26</sup> Ibn al-Furāt, *Tārīkh*, MS Vatican, fol. 233r.

<sup>27</sup> Ibn al-Furāt, *Tārīkh*, MS Vatican, fol. 244v.

<sup>28</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 1:423.

<sup>29</sup> Ibn al-Furāt, *Tārīkh*, MS Vatican, fol. 244r–245r.

<sup>30</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 1:429–30.





Armenians, Franks, and renegades";<sup>31</sup> the last mentioned term is *murtaddah*, literally "apostates," but in the Mamluk Sultanate this expression was applied to Muslim troops in the service of the Mongols. Al-Maqrīzī condenses this report, leaving out in the process the *murtaddah*,<sup>32</sup> an interesting and important tidbit of information.

Al-Maqrīzī's imprecision in rendering Ibn al-Furāt's text is not limited to the realm of Mamluk-Mongol relations. Thus, in 659/1261, the latter writes—deriving his information from Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir—that Baybars met with unnamed bedouin chiefs (*umarā' al-'urbān*) and gave them some type of allowance or livelihood (*arzāq*).<sup>33</sup> This is changed by al-Maqrīzī to *iqṭā'āt*,<sup>34</sup> i.e., revenue granting lands, which for all we know may or may not have been his source's intention.

Another example is taken from the realm of building. Ibn al-Furāt cites (almost exactly, I might add) Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir in the description of Baybars's reconstruction works in various fortresses in Syria, as follows: "Their moats were cleaned out, their curtain walls (*badanāt*) were widened, and they were filled with equipment."<sup>35</sup> Al-Maqrīzī renders this with a difference: instead of *badanāt*, the word *abrāj* (towers) is found.<sup>36</sup> Ibn al-Furāt, however, has made one important change in the text, or rather where he has placed it. Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir had given his information as part of a general description of Baybars's good qualities, just after the report of his accession to the sultanate. Ibn al-Furāt, on the other hand, puts this in the course of events *sub anno* 659. Al-Maqrīzī does the same, thereby showing that he was not working with Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir's biography of the sultan as his direct model, but rather Ibn al-Furāt's chronicle.

I must admit that these examples are really small change: our view of the early Mamluk Sultanate is not going to be radically altered were we just to consult al-Maqrīzī on the above matters. A more egregious error is found in al-Maqrīzī's description of the siege of Arsūf, and particularly the final successful attack on the city and the citadel. He writes:

Fa-lamma tahayya'a dhālika waqa'a al-zaḥf 'alā Arsūf fī yawm al-khamīs thāmin Rajab, fa-fataḥahā Allāh fī dhālika al-yawm 'inda mā waqa'at al-bāshūrah fa-lam yash'arū illā bi-al-muslimīn qad tasallaqū wa-ṭala'ū ilā al-qal'ah [When this (preparation for the

<sup>31</sup>Ibn al-Furāt, *Tārīkh*, 7:215. For the matter of these figures, see Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks*, 189–95.

<sup>32</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 1:692.

<sup>33</sup>Ibn al-Furāt, *Tārīkh*, MS Vatican, fol. 277v; Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir, *Rawḍ*, 119.

<sup>34</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 1:465.

<sup>35</sup>Ibn al-Furāt, *Tārīkh*, MS Vatican, fol. 266r; Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir, *Rawḍ*, 119.

<sup>36</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 1:446.





attack) was organized, the assault took place against Arsūf on Thursday, the eighth of Rajab. Allāh conquered it on this day, when the barbican (of the citadel) fell. Before the Franks knew it, the Muslims had climbed and ascended to the citadel.]<sup>37</sup>

It can be noted that al-Maqrīzī has conflated two discrete episodes from Ibn al-Furāt's text, the first reporting that the Mamluks took the city, and the second the taking of the citadel *three days later*. Over a page of text in the printed edition of Ibn al-Furāt's chronicle separates the two pieces of evidence:

Wa-faragha min al-sarābāt allatī ilā janīb al-khandaq min al-jihatayn wa-futiḥat fihā abwāb muttasi'ah ḥaṣala al-zaḥf 'alā Arsūf fī nahār al-ithnayn thāmin shahr Rajab al-fard min hādhihi al-sanah wa-futiḥat fī dhālika al-nahār<sup>38</sup> . . . fa-lammā qadara Allāh wuqū' al-bāshūrah fī al-sā'ah al-rābi'ah min nahār al-khamīs ṭala'a al-muslimīn ilayhā taslīqan wa-mā aḥassa al-faranj bi-al-muslimīn ilā wa-qad khālatūhum min kull bāb<sup>39</sup> [The ditches which were to the side of the moat on two sides were completed, and the wide gates were opened. The assault against Arsūf was carried out on Monday, the eighth of the holy month of Rajab in this year. (The city) was conquered this day. . . . When Allāh decreed the falling of the barbican in the fourth hour of Thursday, the Muslims went up (the citadel) by climbing. Before the Franks noticed them, the Muslims were among them from every entrance.]<sup>40</sup>

I believe that this comparison speaks for itself: al-Maqrīzī has failed completely to summarize accurately his source and has conveyed a false impression of what happened. If we had only al-Maqrīzī's *Sulūk* to go on here, we would have a mutilated and confused picture of the conquest of Arsūf.

On occasion, however, al-Maqrīzī inserts some information that is not found in Ibn al-Furāt, but need not be rejected out of hand. One outstanding example for this is from the battle of 'Ayn Jālūt: in the midst of the fighting, Quṭuz's horse was shot out from under him. The sultan, therefore, was in the dangerous position of walking around in the midst of a cavalry battle, until a spare horse was brought

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., 529.

<sup>38</sup>Ibn al-Furāt, *Tārīkh*, ed. Lyons, 95; Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir, *Rawḍ*, 239.

<sup>39</sup>Ibn al-Furāt, *Tārīkh*, ed. Lyons, 96; Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir, *Rawḍ*, 242.

<sup>40</sup>I am currently preparing a study of the Mamluk conquest of Arsūf, where this passage is analyzed in detail.



up and he remounted. An additional detail is told: the horse was shot by a young Mongol, who had accompanied Mongol envoys several months before to Cairo, and had been pressed into the sultan's mamluks; he was trying to kill Quṭuz, missed, and was then cut down himself.<sup>41</sup> The whole story is not found in Ibn al-Furāt's extensive account of the battle. Given al-Maqrīzī's record, we might be justified in wondering about the credibility of this story. But a somewhat similar version appears in *Iqd al-Jumān* by al-'Aynī,<sup>42</sup> so whatever its ultimate veracity, al-Maqrīzī cannot be blamed for conjuring it up.

Here and there in the annals for Baybars's reign we find other snippets of information added by al-Maqrīzī to his summary of Ibn al-Furāt's chronicle. One interesting example is in the account of events leading up to the campaigns against Caesarea and Arsūf. Ibn al-Furāt writes that Baybars stopped at a location called 'Uyūn al-Asāwir.<sup>43</sup> Al-Maqrīzī adds at this point that these springs were in "Wādī 'Ārah and 'Ar'arah,"<sup>44</sup> names still used today. This is important information; although it is unclear from whence al-Maqrīzī received it and it would be desirable to have independent confirmation, this detail does point to his wide geographical knowledge.

Of greater interest and significance is information provided in the obituary of Sultan Baybars, *sub anno* 676. Here al-Maqrīzī cites *inter alia* two passages by name.<sup>45</sup> As far as I can tell this is a unique occurrence for his annals of the first decades of the sultanate's existence. In the first of these, the source is Baybars al-Manṣūrī's *Zubdat al-Fikrah*;<sup>46</sup> the second passage is from Quṭb al-Dīn al-Yūnīnī's *Dhayl Mir'āt al-Zamān*.<sup>47</sup> It is important to note that the evidence derived from al-Yūnīnī is not from the last-mentioned obituary of Baybars, but rather from that of an Ayyubid scion, al-Malik al-Qāhir 'Abd al-Malik ibn al-Mu'aẓẓam 'Īsā, whose death is reported to have been intertwined with that of the sultan. What this

<sup>41</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 1:431.

<sup>42</sup> Badr al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn 'Alī al-'Aynī, *Iqd al-Jumān fī Tārīkh Ahl al-Zamān*, ed. M. M. Amīn (Cairo, 1407/1987), 1:244–45, who cites al-Nuwayrī. But in the published version (at least) of the latter's work, the account is less full: it indeed says that Quṭuz's horse was shot out from under him, and the sultan was in danger until a spare was brought. There is, however, no mention of the role of the Mongol captive. See Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab*, vol. 29, ed. M. M. Ziyādah and M. Ḍiyā' al-Dīn al-Rayyis (Cairo, 1992), 485.

<sup>43</sup> Ibn al-Furāt, *Tārīkh*, ed. Lyons, 85.

<sup>44</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 1:526.

<sup>45</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 1:635–36.

<sup>46</sup> Baybars al-Manṣūrī al-Dawādār, *Zubdat al-Fikrah fī Tārīkh al-Hijrah*, ed. D. S. Richards (Beirut, 1998), 160–61.

<sup>47</sup> Quṭb al-Dīn Mūsā ibn Muḥammad al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl Mir'āt al-Zamān fī Tārīkh al-A'yān* (Hyderabad, 1954–61), 3:273–74.



and the previously mentioned examples show is that al-Maqrīzī had other works in front of him besides Ibn al-Furāt's *Tārīkh al-Duwal wa-al-Mulūk* when he was composing the history of the early sultanate. We see that he was capable of dipping into different sources, even once using a report that was not in the parallel passage in one of them. Why al-Maqrīzī relied almost exclusively on Ibn al-Furāt's work remains an unsolved matter.

With the advent of Qalāwūn's reign (1279–90), matters begin to change, albeit slowly. Linda Northrup has already noted the "great dependence" of al-Maqrīzī on Ibn al-Furāt's chronicle, the former being a summary of the latter, mentioning that in the process many of the important documents which Ibn al-Furāt cited *in extenso* were omitted.<sup>48</sup> She also gives two examples of information that al-Maqrīzī provides which is not found in the earlier chronicle. The first mentions that soon after his accession Qalāwūn refrained from riding out in a traditional sultanlic procession for a while because some Ṣāliḥī and Zāhirī amirs had turned against him and were corresponding with Sunqur al-Asqar, the rebel governor of Damascus. Qalāwūn was therefore fearful for his life.<sup>49</sup> A second example is that in 1268 Qalāwūn turned to several Sufi shaykhs to pray for his son's recovery from his eventually fatal illness.<sup>50</sup>

Additional evidence indicates that although Ibn al-Furāt remained the model for al-Maqrīzī's chronicle in the post-Baybars era, the latter author shows an increasing tendency to insert additional information, the sources for which are not always clear. Thus, in the events before the battle of Homs in 680/1281, al-Maqrīzī describes the arrival of the splendidly attired Syrian bedouin, seeking to join the Mamluk army.<sup>51</sup> This information is not relayed by Ibn al-Furāt, but may have its origin in the chapters on the bedouin in Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-'Umarī's *Masālik al-Aḥṣār*, where this information is found.<sup>52</sup> This, then, is a further indication of al-Maqrīzī's wide reading in earlier sources, which only occasionally finds expression in the annals of these years.

Of greater significance for the history of the battle of Homs is a unique piece of information found, as far as I can tell, only in al-Maqrīzī's *Sulūk*. While several sources provide in great detail the Mamluk order of battle, evidently based on

<sup>48</sup> Northrup, *From Slave to Sultan*, 51.

<sup>49</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 1:672.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 744–45.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 690–91.

<sup>52</sup> Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā ibn Faḍl Allāh al-'Umarī, *Masālik al-Aḥṣār fī Mamālik al-Amṣār: Qabā'il al-'Arab fī al-Qarnayn al-Sābi' wa-al-Thāmin al-Hijriyayn*, ed. Dorothea Krawulsky (Beirut, 1985), 142, who is cited by Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A'shā fī Ṣinā'at al-Inshā'* (Cairo, 1913–19), 4:209–10.



Baybars al-Manṣūrī's *Zubdah*,<sup>53</sup> only al-Maqrīzī gives the following evidence: originally Qalāwūn had near him 800 royal mamluks and 4000 *ḥalqah* troopers. Then the sultan took up position on a nearby hill with 200 of his mamluks. If he saw that a squadron was encountering difficulties, he planned to reinforce it with a force of 200 royal mamluks.<sup>54</sup> This is truly a significant bit of evidence. One wishes for confirmation from another writer, preferably a contemporary one. I would have been satisfied had al-Maqrīzī mentioned his source, but here he has not changed his habit of not providing a reference. There is, however, no *a priori* reason to reject this evidence out of hand.

The comparison of al-Maqrīzī and Ibn al-Furāt's annals for Qalāwūn's reign is facilitated by the existence of printed editions for the two volumes in question. Volume 8 concludes with the annal of 696/1296–97, and the manuscript containing the subsequent annals has not been found. We are fortunate, however, to have the analysis of D. P. Little for the annal of 694/1295, which shows the dependence, with some additional information, of al-Maqrīzī on Ibn al-Furāt's text. Little, of course, was unable to make such a comparison for the other two annals (699/1299–1300 and 705/1305–6), which served as the basis for his research on the methods and interdependence of the Mamluk sources for Bahri history. We can suppose that if indeed al-Maqrīzī had at his disposal parallel manuscripts by Ibn al-Furāt for these years, and these manuscripts would have been extant, that we would probably have seen a continued reliance on this latter writer, but perhaps with increasing references to other sources.

By way of conclusion, a number of points can be made. Al-Maqrīzī has revealed himself in the annals examined to have been an often careless summarizer of the work of Ibn al-Furāt. His chronicle for the early Mamluk Sultanate should not be ignored, but it should always be remembered that generally he is not an independent source, and must be read in conjunction with the parallel parts of Ibn al-Furāt's *Tārīkh*. On the whole, as I have pointed out above, he should be seen mainly as a general guide to the events of the period, and as an appropriate text for students to cut their teeth on early Mamluk historiography.

Al-Maqrīzī's sloppiness that has been revealed here should turn on red lights for all students of Mamluk history and in fact anyone who uses his many works. We have seen, through a detailed comparison with Ibn al-Furāt's chronicle in several places, that he cut corners and was careless in his attempt to be terse for the early history of the sultanate. Might he have been equally slipshod in his other

<sup>53</sup> Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdah*, 196–97.

<sup>54</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 1:693. Mention is also made that Kurdish amirs were present at the battle, but their exact position is not specified.



works for which we do not have a control? It seems to me that all scholars using his works should take this possibility into account.

My focus has been on al-Maqrīzī's carelessness and imprecision when he summarizes earlier work. There does not appear to be an ideology behind this, and there is no indication that he deliberately manipulated material for some unknown end. Even so, it is worthwhile at this juncture to remember that al-Maqrīzī was capable of such historical machinations, as the late David Ayalon showed in his study of the Mongol Yasa. There, it can be remembered, it was demonstrated that al-Maqrīzī had taken information from Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-'Umarī on the Yasa, and deliberately added to it, in order to achieve the effect he desired, i.e., an attack on the Mamluk *ḥujjāb* (chamberlains) and the system of Mamluk administrative justice.<sup>55</sup> While I am far from accusing al-Maqrīzī of such fabrications in the present context, it may be that his carelessness, on the one hand, and creative additions, on the other, are two facets of the same intellectual personality. In any case, an appraisal of the man's works must take both traits into account.

It is an exaggeration to have called al-Maqrīzī a villain in my subtitle, even in the historiographical sense. Sloppiness in the reporting of history, annoying as it might be, is not normally a crime; no one, as far as I am aware, has died or been injured as a result of al-Maqrīzī's slipshod methods of summarizing. But the use of the term was not just to gain the attention of the reader. I also hoped to emphasize the unwarranted dependence that modern historians of both the early Mamluk Sultanate and the Frankish East have placed on his chronicle. My hope, then, is that henceforth al-Maqrīzī will be reduced to his proper stature for the period in question, and will be seen only as an auxiliary source for the first decades of the sultanate.

But while the expression "unrecognized villain" was overdrawn, it would certainly be appropriate to look for the "unsung hero" of the historiography of the early Mamluk Sultanate. This is, so it seems to me, Ibn al-Furāt, whose careful method of compilation, his many sources, and judicious judgment put him up there with the greatest of Mamluk historians and even Arabic historical writers of all time. Certainly, without him, our knowledge of the early sultanate would be much more meager than it is now. Without a doubt, a complete scholarly edition of the manuscripts of volume 5 and 6, found in the Vatican and the Staatsbibliothek in Vienna respectively, is a desideratum.

<sup>55</sup>David Ayalon, "The Great Yāsa of Chingiz Khān: A Reexamination," part C2, *Studia Islamica* 38 (1973): 121–23, 140–42 [This article has been reprinted in D. Ayalon, *Outsiders in the Lands of Islam: Mamluks, Mongols and Eunuchs* (London, 1988), art. no. IV]. Ayalon took a more charitable view of al-Maqrīzī in "The Mamluks of the Seljuks: Islam's Military Might at the Crossroads," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 3rd series, 6 (1996): 318, note 43.

