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Climbing the Ladder: Social Mobility in the Mamluk Period

It is often said that the civilian sector of Mamluk society was relatively egalitarian with no strong barriers to social advancement. The social group of ulama (scholars) has been considered a particularly open group, whose membership was based on scholarly merit, whereas social origin played a less significant role.¹ This view was modified by Ulrich Haarmann, who showed that the ulama were not very eager to accommodate descendants of mamluks into their ranks. The sons of mamluks were wealthy enough to devote time to scholarship, but the established scholars tended to hold their foreign background against them.²

This article examines how difficult it was for sons of commoners to gain fame as scholars or to be included among the civilian notables through other merits. Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī’s biographical dictionary *Al-Durar al-Kāminah fī A’yān al-Mi’ah al-Thāminah*³ describes the lives and careers of notables of the eighth/fourteenth century. Among them there are individuals who were of commoner origin, but their number is quite small, which indicates that even though upward social mobility was possible, a commoner only rarely reached the status of a notable.

The fact that Ibn Ḥajar makes it a point to mention commoner origin of the person described clearly shows that the information was considered relevant. Especially the inclusion of the father’s non-scholarly occupation shows that lineage did indeed matter. Why else should he mention that someone’s father is “said to have been a porter?”⁴ In addition, I found three occasions where Ibn Ḥajar describes the commoners in a way that shows clear prejudice. First, in his entry on the poet Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Alī al-Mi‘mār Ghulām al-Nūrī, Ibn Ḥajar states that “even

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¹Michael Chamberlain, *Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus, 1190–1350* (Cambridge, 1994), 64: “the recruitment of the learned elite was relatively open, and the circulation of individuals . . . was rapid.” Also Ira Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, MA, 1967), 107–10, describes the ulama as a group that was open to anyone devoted to learning.

²Ulrich Haarmann, “Arabic in Speech, Turkish in Lineage: Mamluks and their Sons in the Intellectual Life of Fourteenth-Century Egypt and Syria,” *Journal of Semitic Studies* 33 (1988): 81–114; and idem, “Ideology and History, Identity and Alterity: The Arab Image of the Turk from the ‘Abbasid to Modern Egypt,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 20 (1988): 175–96.

³Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Al-Durar al-Kāminah fī A’yān al-Mi’ah al-Thāminah*, ed. al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Wārith Muḥammad ‘Alī (Beirut, 1997); idem, *Dhayl al-Durar al-Kāminah fī A’yān al-Mi’ah al-Thāminah*, ed. al-Shaykh Aḥmad Farīd al-Mazīdī (Beirut, 1998).

⁴Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 4:158.



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though he was a commoner, Ibrāhīm was intelligent and talented and had a pleasant character.”⁵ Similarly, the poet Yūsuf ibn ‘Abd al-Ghālib is characterized as “a good poet, though a commoner.”⁶ Finally, an obviously unpopular *muḥtasib* Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī is described as “a commoner, uncouth and boorish.”⁷

This leads to the question: how did the commoners manage to overcome social barriers and enter the ranks of the notables? To examine the individual strategies of social advancement, I looked into the career patterns of persons who started their lives as commoners or whose fathers had belonged to the common people.

THE COMMONERS IN IBN ḤAJAR’S DICTIONARY

‘Āmmah, the commoners, were a broad social group that Ira Lapidus has further subdivided into three categories. The first category consisted of respectable shopkeepers, physicians, craftsmen, and workers. Below them were the disreputable: those who engaged in trades that were considered to be morally suspect or were connected with substances seen as impure, for example usurers, money changers, butchers, tanners, etc. The lowest strata consisted of vagabonds, prostitutes, beggars, and others who lived on the fringe of society.⁸

In sifting through Ibn Ḥajar’s material and selecting relevant biographical entries, I followed certain parameters. First, I limited my selection to persons living in Mamluk Syria and Egypt. Second, I picked out persons who themselves or whose fathers had earned their livelihoods by a trade, placing them in the social class of commoners. It must be underlined that I only selected the persons whose trades are explicitly mentioned by Ibn Ḥajar.⁹ The same applies to the fathers’ trades. I excluded the cases where the trade is only given as a patronymic forming a part of the person’s name rather than mentioning the actual profession of the father.

It was easy to include the various artisans: the tailors (*khayyāṭ*), carpenters (*najjār*), stonemasons (*ḥajjār*), and porters (*ḥammāl*) clearly belong to the commoners. In addition, I selected those who worked as doorkeepers (*bawwāb*), sweepers (*farrāsh*), or caretakers (*qayyim*) in mosques, tombs, or madrasahs. They were the lowest paid employees of the religious institutions, but even though they worked among the scholars, they were not necessarily scholars themselves. I also included muezzins, when it is the only occupation given or when it occurs together with a craft.

Merchants (*tājir*) form a problematic group because the social status of a merchant depended on his wealth, and that again depended on what was traded. A

⁵ Ibid., 1:35, no. 129.

⁶ Ibid., 4:285, no. 5244.

⁷ Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Dhayl*, 212, no. 538.

⁸ Ira Lapidus, *Muslim Cities*, 80–85.

⁹ The trade appears together with verbs such as *kāna*, *iktasaba*, *ta‘ānā*, etc.



spice merchant or jeweler could easily be counted among the notables, whereas a trader in cotton or soap was less likely to become wealthy enough. I included as shopkeepers the merchants who were said to work in shops or who were reported to sell daily necessities, but I omitted the entries where Ibn Ḥajar does not specify the merchant's activities. Physicians (*ṭabīb*) and oculists (*kaḥḥāl*) are equally problematic because, like the merchants, they could belong either to the common people or the elite. Their social status depended on their clientele: those treating members of the elite had a higher status than those whose patients represented a more modest segment of the population. As Ibn Ḥajar does not usually give any details on the type of patients, I decided to exclude the two medical professions.

In this way, I managed to find ninety relevant biographies among the 5,962¹⁰ persons portrayed in the dictionary. This number is not an exact figure, partly due to my own exclusions and partly due to the fact that Ibn Ḥajar does not always provide information on the livelihoods of the persons. However, even though the quantification remains inexact, the very small number clearly indicates that upward social mobility was difficult and infrequent. This is consistent with the conclusion presented in my earlier study of contemporary popular literature. The stories analyzed portray a rather rigid social system in which advancement was rare and social ambition was seen as a negative characteristic.¹¹

BASIS OF FAME: LONGEVITY

The overwhelming majority of the commoners included in Ibn Ḥajar's dictionary were *muḥaddiths*, transmitters of traditions. Their fame rested in their ability to memorize hadiths and to pass them on to others. To memorize hadiths was considered a religious merit, and according to one of the hadiths, the Prophet had said: "Anyone who preserves forty beneficial traditions for my *ummah* will be asked to enter paradise from any door he wishes."¹²

A *muḥaddith* needed a good retentive memory but, apart from basic literacy, no further learning was necessary. However, memorization alone was not enough to guarantee fame; to become truly successful, a *muḥaddith* needed an appreciative audience that found him or her worth listening to. Ibn Ḥajar mentions that Egyptian scholars crowded around Ḥasan ibn 'Umar,¹³ listening avidly to his transmission. They had realized his value as a transmitter in 713, when he had reached the age of eighty or eighty-one. According to Ibn Ḥajar, some students had come across Ḥasan's name in *isnāds* and, after ascertaining his advanced age, set out to find him.

¹⁰ The four volumes of *Al-Durar* contain 5,323 entries, and *al-Dhayl* contains 639 entries.

¹¹ Irmeli Perho, "The Arabian Nights as a Source for Daily Life in the Mamluk Period," *Studia Orientalia* 85 (1999): 139–62.

¹² Khalid Alavi, "Concept of Arba'īn," *Islamic Studies* 22, no. 3 (1983): 75–78.

¹³ Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 2:18–19, no. 1546: Ḥasan ibn 'Umar ibn 'Īsā ibn Khalīl ibn Ibrāhīm al-Kurḏī Abū 'Alī, d. 720/1320.



The scholars began frequenting Ḥasan, and for the last years of his life, he became a focus of scholarly attention.

The foundations for Ḥasan's fame were laid in his childhood by his father, a sweeper and a caretaker at a mausoleum (*turbah*) in Damascus. The father was aware of the prestige in being a *muḥaddith*, and he took care to introduce his son, at a very early age, to scholars. Ibn Ḥajar mentions 'Alī ibn al-Lātī as the boy's first teacher and, according to al-Ṣafadī, Ḥasan was only three years old when he heard hadiths from al-Lātī.¹⁴ Ḥasan not only learned hadiths but also memorized works on *fiqh* and *tafsīr*. Ḥasan's studies in these subjects also seem to have begun very early. Ibn Ḥajar informs us that Ḥasan learned al-Mālik's *Al-Muwatta'* from Mukarram ibn Muḥammad, who died in 635/1238 when Ḥasan was not more than five or six years old.¹⁵

It was important for an aspiring *muḥaddith* to listen to already-famous *muḥaddiths* and to secure an *ijāzah* to transmit the texts further. The teacher should preferably be a very old shaykh because this limited the number of transmitters included in the *isnād* of the hadiths. The length of the *isnād* was seen as an important factor guaranteeing the reliability of the transmission: the shorter the *isnād*, the closer the text was to the original. To reach this goal, old renowned *muḥaddiths* gave *ijāzahs* to very young children even though it is obvious that the children could not have earned them by actually memorizing the texts. In spite of this, the practice was considered acceptable because it was seen to enable the direct transmission of hadiths from a passing generation to an emerging one. The child who gained the *ijāzah* was expected to memorize the hadiths when growing up.¹⁶ This must also have been the case with Ḥasan because he cannot have been able to learn any texts at the age of three, when he became a pupil of al-Lātī's.

As an adult, Ḥasan moved from Damascus to Cairo and opened a paper shop in Giza at the gate of the main mosque (*jāmi'*). He also functioned as a muezzin in a minor mosque. Then finally, he was "found" by the Egyptian scholars and gained a large scholarly audience. He had outlived many of his contemporaries and had become the last person in Egypt to transmit directly from the old Damascene shaykhs

¹⁴ According to Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī, *Kitāb al-Wāfi bi-al-Wafayāt*, vol. 12, ed. Ramaḍān 'Abd al-Tawwāb (Wiesbaden, 1979), 195, the father took his son to hear Ibn al-Lātī when the son was in his fourth year (*fi al-rābi'ah*).

¹⁵ Ḥasan ibn 'Umar was born 629 or 630. Mukarram ibn Muḥammad's date of death (Rajab 2, 635/1238) is mentioned in Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, ed. Bashshār 'Awād Ma'rūf and Muḥyī Hilāl al-Sirḥān (Beirut, 1998), 23:34, no. 85.

¹⁶ Asma Sayeed, "Women and Hadīth Transmission: Two Case Studies from Mamluk Damascus," *Studia Islamica* 95 (2002): 88. Sayeed refers to al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463/1070) and Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ al-Shahrazūrī (d. 643/1245) as scholars who had considered the practice acceptable.



that he had listened to when he was still a child.¹⁷ Ḥasan is a typical example of a famous *muḥaddith*: he started very young and had a very long life.

Ḥasan's *kunyah* was Abū 'Alī, but Ibn Ḥajar does not record 'Alī's biography. One of the problems in using a biographical dictionary as a source is the difficulty in finding the children. The biographies are organized according to the first name of the person, followed by his father's name, grandfather's name, etc. It is easy enough to go backwards along the lineage, whereas going forwards is practically impossible if the entry does not give the first name of the son or sons. The *kunyah* is sometimes given, but that is only helpful if it really does refer to the son who earned fame enough to be included in the dictionary. If one of the other sons became famous, or if the *kunyah* was just a cognomen that did not refer to any actual son, it leads to a blind alley.¹⁸

In Ḥasan's case, 'Alī's biography is not included in the dictionary, and I skimmed the dictionary for sons with a different first name but found none. Ḥasan may—like his own father—have introduced his son or sons, at an early age, to scholars, but it seems that the sons were not as lucky as the father had been in combining longevity with interesting *ijāzahs*, a circumstance that would assure fame and prestige.

GRADUAL MOBILITY

Sometimes Ibn Ḥajar gives enough information to enable us to establish a family line of several generations and to examine the developments in the social status of the family members. In Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad's case, it is possible to follow a family of *muḥaddiths* from Ibrāhīm to his son Muḥammad and grandson 'Abd Allāh. The biographies attest that the social advancement attained by the family in the three generations was modest, and that a family member's notability continued to rest on his activities as a *muḥaddith*. The slowness of the process and the very small steps taken presumably reflect the reality for most families attempting to climb the social ladder.

Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad¹⁹ was the head of the muezzins in the Umayyad mosque of Damascus and was famous for his beautiful voice. Apart from his professional duties as a muezzin, he memorized hadiths and obviously managed to get some

¹⁷ Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 2:18.

¹⁸ According to A. J. Wensinck, "Kunya," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 5:396, the *kunyah* could be given by parents to a child and therefore did not necessarily correspond to reality. Richard W. Bulliet, *The Patricians of Nishapur: A Study in Medieval Islamic Social History* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 87, notes that euphony and historical connections often governed the choice of *kunyah*.

¹⁹ Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 1:38–39, no. 149: Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Wānī al-Khallāṭī al-Hamdānī Burhān al-Dīn al-Dimashqī. Year of death is not given here, but in the entry of the son (*ibid.*, 3:178), the year 735/1334 is given as the year of death of both father and son.



fame as a transmitter because he is associated with some well-known scholars. Ibn Ḥajar mentions that his own teacher, Burhān al-Shāmī,²⁰ had gained an *ijāzah* from Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad.

Ibrāhīm's contacts with scholars enabled him to assure that his son, Muḥammad,²¹ began to learn hadiths quite early. He is known to have attended transmission sessions in 694 when he was ten years old. Later, he travelled to Aleppo, Mecca, Medina, and Cairo to learn from the local *muḥaddiths*. Muḥammad gained a reputation as a hard-working student, and Ibn Ḥajar quotes Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī's positive comments on Muḥammad's intelligence and cheerful nature. Muḥammad seems to have acted as a muezzin like his father but, in addition, he broadened his scholarly activities by serving as *shāhid* (notary) for a short time. Muḥammad did not live to be very old but died at the age of fifty, in 735, only a month after his father's death. Ibn Ḥajar reports that, after his death, Muḥammad appeared to someone in a dream informing him about the situation of some others in heaven. The fact that this type of report is included in the biographical entry indicates that Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm had managed to gain a fair amount of prestige in his lifetime. A further indication of Muḥammad's fame is that al-Maqrīzī included an obituary about him in his chronicle *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Maʿrifat Duwal al-Mulūk*.²²

Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm's son ʿAbd Allāh²³ followed in the footsteps of his father and grandfather and built up a career as a *muḥaddith*, first by memorizing hadiths transmitted by local authorities and later by increasing his repertory through independent study. Ibn Ḥajar praises ʿAbd Allāh's keen wit and ability as a fast and fluent reader. Ibn Ḥajar's entry on ʿAbd Allāh is very short and gives little information, but there is some indication that ʿAbd Allāh occupied himself as a copyist.²⁴ Copying was a respectable scholarly occupation and may be considered an advancement if compared to the father's temporary employment as *shāhid*. In spite of this advancement, the extreme brevity of Ibn Ḥajar's entry indicates that ʿAbd Allāh's fame did not reach the level of his father's.

ʿAbd Allāh's *kunya* is Abū Muḥammad, but no son of that name is included in Ibn Ḥajar's biography, nor can he be found in the dictionary covering the ninth/fif-

²⁰ Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm ibn Dāʿūd al-Shāmī (d. 797/1395); his biography is in *ibid.*, 1:22, no. 61.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 3:178–79, no. 3416: Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Wānī Amīn al-Dīn thumma al-Dimashqī al-Ḥanafī al-Muʿadhdhin Abū ʿAbd Allāh, d. 735/1334.

²² Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Maʿrifat Duwal al-Mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafā Ziyādah (Cairo, 1942), 2:388.

²³ Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 2:172, no. 2197: ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad al-Wānī Sharaf al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥanafī, d. eighth century. Only the century is given for the death year.

²⁴ Ibn Ḥajar, *ibid.*, mentions that ʿAbd Allāh “*amila Arbaʿin Buldānīyah*,” which must mean that he made a copy of the book. Ibn Ḥajar does not explicitly mention that he made copying his trade.



teenth century written by Ibn Ḥajar's pupil, Muḥammad al-Sakhāwī.²⁵ 'Abd Allāh was less famous than his father, but his son seems to have totally dropped out from the ranks of the notables.

The three biographies show a slow change in the status of the family, but for all of them—father, son, and grandson—the most important aspect of their careers was their activity as *muḥaddiths*. The shift from being employed as *shāhid* to occupying oneself as a copyist can be described as a slight advancement, but none of them took steps towards more demanding branches of scholarship, which could have led them to endowed positions within the madrasah system or judiciary. The reason cannot have been a lack of talent because Ibn Ḥajar has recorded the scholars' explicit praise for Muḥammad and 'Abd Allāh.

The reason may have been that the family lacked the necessary network to secure appointments. As *muḥaddiths*, they had contacts with the scholarly world and even enjoyed some fame, but this was obviously not enough to attract the attention of patrons who would have promoted their scholarly careers. The necessity of such patronage is amply attested by a large number of biographies included in Ibn Ḥajar's dictionary. Further, the established scholarly families were able to promote their members; other studies have shown that some families formed dynasties that in practice monopolized certain high-status appointments.²⁶ Those common people able to enter the scholarly circles had to invest time in forming the necessary connections in order to move from the margins to more prestigious positions. The case of Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad and his son and grandson shows that even the span of three generations was not enough to create an effective scholarly network that would have secured the upward mobility of the family and finally established it as one of the scholarly families. As it is, the second generation—represented by Muḥammad—was the one to gain the highest acclaim, and the status was to some extent kept up by the third generation, whereas the fourth generation again disappears into anonymity.

THE IMPORTANCE OF NETWORKS: FROM TURNER TO QADI

The biography of Muḥammad ibn Salmān²⁷ presents a case where the information is detailed enough to explain how he managed to create a scholarly career in spite of his modest starting point as an artisan. According to Ibn Ḥajar, Muḥammad ibn Salmān came to Ḥamāh from the east as a child, together with his father. Muḥammad learned the trade of a turner (an artisan who crafts objects on a lathe) but later be-

²⁵ Muḥammad al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Daw' al-Lāmi' li-Ahl al-Qarn al-Tāsi'* (Cairo, n.d.).

²⁶ A well-known scholarly family dynasty was Banū Jamā'ah, who held the office of Shāfi'i *qādī al-quḍāh* in Egypt for more than half a century; see Kamal S. Salibi, "The Banū Jamā'a: A Dynasty of Shāfi'ite Jurists in the Mamluk Period," *Studia Islamica* 9 (1958): 98.

²⁷ Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Dhayl*, 96–97, no. 214: Muḥammad ibn Salmān ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Ḥamawī thumma al-Ḥalabi Shams al-Dīn al-Kharrāt, d. 806/1403.



came interested in scholarship. Ibn Ḥajar reports that he became a proficient scholar in a short time. He married the sister of one of his teachers, Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf ibn al-Ḥasan al-Ḥamawī (d. 809/1407).²⁸ He studied law and was appointed assistant judge (*nā'ib al-qāḍī*) in Aleppo in 776. After serving in that capacity for some time, he was appointed judge (*qāḍī*). He was also an overseer (*wālī*) of several madrasahs. Ibn Ḥajar mentions further that Muḥammad ibn Salmān had two famous sons. Both of them, Muḥammad and 'Abd al-Raḥmān, were known as skilled poets, and one of the sons, 'Abd al-Raḥmān, inherited his father's position as a judge when the father died in 806.

Muḥammad ibn Salmān's remarkable advancement from artisan to judge deserves closer study. Ibn Ḥajar gives Muḥammad's name as Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Salmān ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Ḥamawī thumma al-Ḥalabī. Al-Sakhāwī mentions Muḥammad ibn Salmān in *Al-Daw' al-Lāmi'*, where he adds the *nisbahs* al-Ḥarrānī and al-Shāfi'ī to his name.²⁹ Further information on Muḥammad's ancestors is found in al-Sakhāwī's entries for Muḥammad's two sons. According to al-Sakhāwī, 'Abd al-Raḥmān was the eldest son, and his mother was Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf's sister. 'Abd al-Raḥmān's great-grandfather's father is given as al-Qāḍī al-'Allāmah Shams al-Dīn al-Marwazī.³⁰ The genealogy shows the family's origin in the east, first in Merv and then in Ḥarrān, and places it socially among the scholarly families. The advance of the Mongols must have forced the family to move westward and brought Muḥammad's father to Ḥamāh.

It is likely that Muḥammad's career was assisted by the fact that he belonged to a scholarly family. His father was a newcomer, and Muḥammad had to begin with learning an artisan trade but was soon able to devote himself to scholarship. His career was boosted by his marriage into a local scholarly family, an occurrence indicating that he was accepted as a member of the scholarly class. Otherwise, such a marriage between an artisan and a sister of a scholar would have been unlikely. It may well be that the scholarly credentials of Muḥammad's family were recognized and helped him to attain the marriage connection.³¹ The new family alliance must have played a part in securing him his appointments in the judiciary.

²⁸ Ibid., 129, no. 298. In Muḥammad ibn Salmān's biography, Ibn Ḥajar states only that he became related by marriage to Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf (ṣāharahu), but al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Daw' al-Lāmi'*, 7:255, no. 643, mentions that Muḥammad married Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf's sister.

²⁹ Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Daw' al-Lāmi'*, 7:255.

³⁰ Ibid., 4:130, no. 343. The great-grandfather is given as Abū al-Faḍl Zayn al-Dīn 'Abd Allāh in *ibid.*, but as Shams al-Dīn 'Abd Allāh in *ibid.*, 9:83, no. 234.

³¹ It is interesting to note that the earlier source, Ibn Ḥajar, does not mention the scholarly ancestry of Muḥammad ibn Salmān, but it is found in al-Sakhāwī's *Al-Daw' al-Lāmi'*, a later source. It is possible that the family tree grew backwards only later and Muḥammad's marriage depended only on his personal relationship to Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf.



The importance of family relationships is further underlined by the fact that Muḥammad's eldest son, 'Abd al-Raḥmān, inherited his father's position at the latter's death. 'Abd al-Raḥmān was also a poet and earned fame by his literary activities. He eventually settled in Cairo, and Ibn Taghrībirdī mentions that 'Abd al-Raḥmān recited a *qaṣīdah* celebrating the conquest of Cyprus to Sultan al-Malik al-Ashraf Barsbāy in 829. In Cairo, 'Abd al-Raḥmān was able to attain high administrative positions,³² but his fame seems to have rested mainly on his poetic talents; in the obituary, Ibn Taghrībirdī focuses on his abilities as a great poet.³³

The younger son, Muḥammad, gained fame as a poet after settling in Cairo in 815.³⁴ Al-Sakhāwī's entry on Muḥammad is relatively short, but he reports that Muḥammad's poetry was appreciated by the scholars. He also mentions that Muḥammad entered into the administration in Cairo and gained a position in the *dīwān al-inshā'*. Muḥammad died of the plague in 823/1420.³⁵

Presumably due to their family connections in Syria, the brothers were able to attain the notice of the Shafi'i scholar Nāṣir al-Dīn Ibn al-Bārizī (d. 823/1420). He was a friend of Amir al-Shaykh al-Maḥmūdī, who became sultan al-Malik al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh in 815/1412.³⁶ According to al-Sakhāwī, the younger of the two brothers, Muḥammad, came to Cairo together with Ibn al-Bārizī and was his close companion (*muqarrab*). It must have been Ibn al-Bārizī who used his connections with the Mamluk elite to secure Muḥammad's first administrative appointment in Cairo.³⁷ When 'Abd al-Raḥmān, the elder brother, arrived in Cairo, Ibn al-Bārizī seems to have also helped him to launch his administrative career in the *dīwān al-inshā'*.³⁸

None of the sources that I have used mention the names of 'Abd al-Raḥmān's and Muḥammad's children, and this has prevented me from finding out information on the next generation. However, the children must have received a good education

³² Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah*, ed. Fahīm Muḥammad Shaltūt et al. (Cairo, 1963–72), 14:296, mentions that 'Abd al-Raḥmān was *muwaqqi' al-dast*. Maya Schatzmiller, *Labour in the Medieval Islamic World* (Leiden, 1994), 155, translates the title *muwaqqi' al-dast* as "scribe for Royal Bench in the Palace of Justice."

³³ Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm*, 15:205–6.

³⁴ Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍaw' al-Lāmi'*, 9:138.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 9:83–84, no. 234.

³⁶ Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Ibn al-Bārizī's biography is in al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍaw' al-Lāmi'*, 9:137–38, no. 350. His friendship with Amir al-Shaykh is mentioned in Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm*, 13:80; and al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍaw' al-Lāmi'*, 9:137–38, mentions that Ibn al-Bārizī came to Cairo in the company of Amir al-Shaykh in 815.

³⁷ Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍaw' al-Lāmi'*, 9:83–34.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 4:130, no. 343. Al-Sakhāwī mentions that 'Abd al-Raḥmān entered the *dīwān al-inshā'* "in the days of Nāṣir al-Dīn Ibn al-Bārizī."



and had ample opportunities to benefit from their fathers' networks and to continue in their footsteps in the scholarly world.

TALENT COMBINED WITH PATRONAGE

Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf³⁹ represents a case where talent, initial wealth, and timely patronage formed the ingredients of success. Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf was born in al-Jazīrah as a son of a money changer (*ṣayraftī*). The trade of a money changer was one of the disreputable professions, carrying the taint of illegal gain. Ibn Ḥajar mentions the father's trade but then underlines that Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf came to Egypt alone (*mujarrad*), obviously leaving his disreputable father behind in al-Jazīrah. He settled in Qūṣ and began to pursue studies in various fields. Ibn Ḥajar is silent on Muḥammad's finances and does not mention his having any employment or learning any trade. Presumably, his father's trade had provided Muḥammad with enough wealth to enable him to concentrate on studies. Only when Muḥammad moved to Cairo did he attain endowed teaching appointments at various madrasahs. Muḥammad seems to have been quite a versatile scholar who was not only interested in religious sciences but also in *adab*, logic, and mathematics. It must have been these three last-mentioned subjects that he was teaching to Christian and Jewish students as well as to Muslim students.

In Cairo, Muḥammad became a companion of Amir Baybars al-Jāshnakīr (d. 709/1310), and Ibn Ḥajar mentions that Baybars' patronage improved Muḥammad's status. It must have been due to Amir Baybars that Muḥammad was appointed preacher at the Citadel's mosque. Patronage was often a necessary requirement for securing high-status appointments, but patrons could prove fickle. Amir Baybars had another favorite, Naṣr ibn Salmān al-Manbijī, who had founded a *zāwiyah* at Bāb al-Naṣr in Cairo. Naṣr was originally a *faqīh* but came to prefer the life of a Sufi ascetic, and according to Ibn Ḥajar, Naṣr had an influence over Baybars, who relied on him. Naṣr became very influential during the short period when Baybars was sultan (708–9/1309–10).⁴⁰ Ibn Ḥajar informs us that Naṣr conspired against Muḥammad. It may well be that Muḥammad's interest in non-religious subjects such as logic and mathematics, combined with the denominational diversity of his pupils, led Naṣr to dislike him. Naṣr's influence caused Baybars to abandon his protégé, and as a consequence Muḥammad was expelled from his position as the preacher at the Citadel's mosque. When Baybars's reign ended, Muḥammad's fortunes again improved, and he was appointed preacher at the mosque of Ibn Ṭūlūn.

³⁹ Ibid., 4:183, no. 4810: Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Jazarī.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 4:240, no. 5056.



‘Alī ibn Muḥammad’s⁴¹ biography forms another case where Mamluk patronage explains at least some of the success. ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad was born in Baalbek as a son of a butcher (*lahḥām*). The father died when ‘Alī was a baby, and he was raised by his maternal uncle, who taught him to work with linen. According to Ibn Ḥajar, ‘Alī later became interested in scholarship and began to study Hanbali law. Ibn Ḥajar does not tell how it was possible for a linen worker to change his career in this way, but it can be assumed that ‘Alī had managed to gain enough wealth to be able to devote his time to studying. ‘Alī excelled in his studies, and he is known to have written books on *uṣūl al-fiqh*.⁴² His talents were obviously recognized by the Damascene scholarly community because Ibn Ḥajar reports that he functioned both as a teacher and *muftī*. At some point, ‘Alī was appointed assistant judge (*nāba fī al-ḥukm*). He was therefore already a well-established scholar when Timur Lenk’s occupation of Aleppo in 803 made him leave Damascus and settle in Cairo. Upon his arrival in Cairo, he gained a teaching position at al-Manṣūrīyah, and a few months later, shortly before his death,⁴³ he was offered a position as judge, which he declined.

This last stage of his career is described by al-Maqrīzī, who reports that ‘Alī was acquainted with the Mamluk amir Yashbak al-Dawādār, who acted as his patron in Cairo, but he does not give any information on how ‘Alī had been able to attract the amir’s attention.⁴⁴ Ibn Ḥajar does not mention any Syrian patrons or family connections that would explain ‘Alī’s obvious success in Syria, but he reports that ‘Alī gave sermons (*wa‘āza*) at the Umayyad mosque. It may well be that his preaching activities attracted the attention of local Mamluk notables, who then helped him to gain the appointment as assistant judge. These Mamluk contacts would then later have secured him the attention of Amir Yashbak.

Not all talented commoners were fortunate enough to attract the attention of well-connected patrons. Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar⁴⁵ was the son of a baker, but he had a paralyzed hand, a condition that prevented him from learning his father’s trade. Instead, Muḥammad turned to scholarship at an early age. Muḥammad chose to study Shafi‘i law⁴⁶ and, like the above-mentioned ‘Alī, became so accomplished that he

⁴¹ Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Dhayl*, 62, no. 121: ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abbās ibn Fityān al-Ba‘lī thumma al-Dimashqī al-Ḥanbalī ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Ibn al-Laḥḥām, d. 803/1401.

⁴² Khayr al-Dīn al-Ziriklī, *Al-‘Alām* (Beirut, 1995), 5:7.

⁴³ According to Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Dhayl*, 62, he died on *‘Īd al-Aḍḥā*, whereas al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 3:1072, places the death two months earlier, on *‘Īd al-Fiṭr*.

⁴⁴ In al-Maqrīzī, *ibid.*, 1059, his arrival to Cairo is noted as coming “*ilā ‘indi al-amīr Yashbak al-Dawādār*.” The Amir was Yashbak al-Sha‘bānī who was Lālā of Sultan Faraj.

⁴⁵ Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 4:72, no. 4293: Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Khabbāz al-Dimashqī, d. 752/1352.

⁴⁶ Ibn Ḥajar does not specifically mention the law school, but Muḥammad studied with the Shafi‘i scholars Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī Kamāl al-Dīn al-Zamlakānī (d. 727/1327) and ‘Abd al-Wahhāb ibn



was given permission to issue fatwas. Ibn Ḥajar further mentions that Muḥammad wrote books and praises the good quality of his work. In spite of these obvious assets, Muḥammad does not seem to have functioned as a teacher or judge, thus never attaining endowed positions. Muḥammad may just have been less lucky, or he may not have had as likeable a personality as ‘Alī and thus remained unable to form the connections required for gaining appointments. A possible reason for this could be Muḥammad’s fame as a good impersonator, noted by Ibn Ḥajar (*la-hu qudrah ‘alá al-muḥākāh*). This must have been a significant characteristic because Ibn Ḥajar includes it in the few lines that constitute the entry on Muḥammad’s life. Muḥammad’s impersonations may have caused offense and formed an impediment to his career.

ACQUIRED WEALTH AS THE SOURCE OF FAME

In some cases, the accumulation of wealth secured a commoner a place among the notables. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Maṣṣūr⁴⁷ was the son of a Jewish convert to Islam, and he began his career as a tailor. It was a profession that he may have learned from his father, though Ibn Ḥajar does not mention the father’s occupation. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s customers seem to have been rather wealthy because tailoring brought him into contact with silk merchants. According to Ibn Ḥajar, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz realized that he would have a chance to improve his status if he involved himself in the silk trade; he therefore took up an offer to join a trade caravan traveling from Aleppo to northern China.⁴⁸ The tour was successful, and ‘Abd al-‘Azīz returned with a large quantity of silk, which formed the foundation of his subsequent wealth. The risk ‘Abd al-‘Azīz had taken in joining the trade expedition paid off; instead of remaining a poor tailor, he became a wealthy man, as evidenced by the fact that his income tax (*maks*) from one year amounted to forty thousand dinars. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz lived up to the expectations that society had of wealthy members by giving generously to charities, paying his *zakāt* dutifully, and establishing various pious foundations (*waqf*).

Muḥammad ibn Musallim⁴⁹ also made his large fortune on trade. The foundations of Muḥammad’s success were laid by his father, who started as a porter but managed somehow to gain some wealth and marry into a wealthy merchant family. Muḥammad was raised in circumstances that Ibn Ḥajar describes as respectable; as an adult he established himself as a merchant, obviously benefiting from his moth-

Muḥammad Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah (d. 726/1326).

⁴⁷ Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 2:233, no. 2452: ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Maṣṣūr al-Karīmī ‘Izz al-Dīn, d. 713/1313–14.

⁴⁸ The goal of the expedition is given as “*bilād al-Kh[i]tā*.” According to C. E. Bosworth, “Ḳarā Khīṭāy,” *EF*, 4:581, Khīṭā and Khaṭā are used in Muslim sources to refer to northern China.

⁴⁹ Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 4:158, no. 4692: Muḥammad ibn Musallim ibn Aḥmad al-Bālisī, d. 776/1374–75.



er's family connections. Muḥammad was successful in commerce and became one of the notable merchants of the century. His generosity increased his fame, and he gained the respect of scholars by establishing a madrasah in al-Fuṣṭāṭ. Muḥammad died in 776, and his sons—grandsons of a modest porter—inherited a huge fortune.

THREE COMMONERS AS ADMINISTRATORS

The position of the market inspector (*muḥtasib*) was precarious because he could easily become a focus of popular discontent. He was the person whom the sultan appointed to oversee and control the markets; in situations where food became scarce and prices high, the population tended to blame the *muḥtasib* for their hardships.⁵⁰ The *muḥtasibs* were often established *faqīhs*, but also lesser scholars, and sometimes even commoners, could be appointed to the office.

One of the *muḥtasibs* of commoner origin was Muḥammad ibn Ṣubayḥ,⁵¹ who seems to have gained his appointment through Mamluk patronage. Muḥammad ibn Ṣubayḥ began his career as the chief muezzin in Damascus. He was famous for his beautiful voice, and it was presumably this characteristic that caught the attention of the *nā'ib al-salṭanah* and caused Muḥammad to become the *nā'ib's* imam. He was obviously able to build on this relationship because he was subsequently appointed as the *muḥtasib* of the Ṣāliḥīyah district in Damascus. Ibn Ḥajar's succinct entry does not give any information on Muḥammad's abilities as *muḥtasib*, but he must have been relatively competent because Ibn Ḥajar does not connect him with any scandals.

Muḥammad ibn 'Alī,⁵² who was the son of a seller of beverages, got the opportunity to purchase the office of *muḥtasib*. Muḥammad ibn 'Alī learned his father's trade and seems to have had some education, even though Ibn Ḥajar does not mention it. However, the fact that Muḥammad was appointed an agent at the Maliki deputy court (*wakīl fī bāb nā'ib al-ḥukm al-mālikī*)⁵³ indicates that he must have acquired at least some basic scholarly skills. According to Ibn Ḥajar, the occupation led Muḥammad into trouble, and he ended up in prison. Ibn Ḥajar does not specify the nature of the trouble, but al-Maqrīzī reports that Muḥammad was

⁵⁰ About the relationship between *muḥtasibs* and the population, see Irmeli Perho, "Al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Taghrībīrdī as Historians of Contemporary Events," in *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt (c. 950–1800)*, ed. Hugh Kennedy (Leiden, 2001), 110–14.

⁵¹ Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 3:278, no. 3864: Muḥammad ibn Ṣubayḥ ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Tiflīsī al-Dimashqī, d. 725/1325.

⁵² Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Dhayl*, 211–12, no. 538: Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Ḥibrī al-Sharrābī, d. 823/1420.

⁵³ Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 4:543, reports that Muḥammad was *nā'ib al-qāḍī*. One of his *nisbahs* was al-Sharrābī, which refers to his father's trade as beverage seller; his other *nisbah* was al-Ḥibrī, which could refer to his own profession: someone who uses ink. Maya Schatzmiller, *Labour in the Medieval Islamic World* (Leiden, 1994), 168, translates *wakīl bi-abwāb al-quḍāh* as "agent in court."



accused of *kufṛ* and was threatened with death. In the end, his life was spared, and he was punished through beating and imprisonment.⁵⁴

After being released from prison, Muḥammad opened a shop and began to sell sugar. He was obviously a good businessman because he prospered, but this did not satisfy his ambition. He seems to have been determined to obtain a public office and, finally, he managed to buy himself an appointment to the office of *muḥtasib* in 808/1405. Al-Maqrīzī expresses his abhorrence of the practice of selling offices,⁵⁵ and his description of Muḥammad himself is unflattering: he was stupid and impudent.⁵⁶ Ibn Ḥajar is equally negative in his portrayal, and according to him Muḥammad was not only impudent but also uncouth, boorish, and shameless. Ibn Ḥajar concludes his entry by stating: “and in this year [823] God freed [us] from him.”⁵⁷

It is possible that Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī really was an unpleasant person, but it is also possible that al-Maqrīzī’s and Ibn Ḥajar’s statements reflect their prejudice against a commoner’s occupying a relatively important public office, which was usually held by scholars of law. To make things worse, the commoner had purchased the office, which was a practice that the Mamluks condoned but the scholars abhorred.

To some extent, Muḥammad bears a resemblance to a fictional character in the Arabian Nights. In the Hunchback cycle, there appears a one-eyed butcher who managed to prosper in his trade and began to invest in property. His financial and social advancement was cut short by the authorities, who confiscated his property on the basis of some false accusations. Later, the king had him beaten because he could not abide people who had only one eye. Soon he was caught and beaten again because the scars of the earlier beating were a proof that he was guilty of something.⁵⁸ Both the fate of the fictional butcher and the historical Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī show how difficult it was to advance socially; even if a person succeeded to climb up the ladder, it was very easy to fall down again. Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī’s case shows that it was indeed possible to achieve a higher social status, but the scholarly elite did not necessarily view the achievement positively.

Some commoners were able to attain powerful administrative positions through personal relationships to members of the Mamluk elite. The Cairene dancer Khālīd ibn al-Zarrād⁵⁹ is an example of a person who was able to use his status as the amirs’ favorite to make a career. Ibn Ḥajar’s entry does not give Khālīd any ge-

⁵⁴ Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 4:543, The incident took place in 796.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 4:11.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 4:543.

⁵⁷ Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Dhayl*, 212, “*arāḥa Allāh minhu fī hādhihi al-sanah.*”

⁵⁸ *Alf Laylah wa-Laylah*, ed. Muḥsin Maḥdī (Leiden, 1984), 358–60.

⁵⁹ Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 2:47, no. 1643: Khālīd ibn al-Zarrād al-Muqaddam, d. 745/1344.



nealogy but only the patronymic Ibn al-Zarrād, son of the chainmail maker. The father's name is not given, nor is his trade specifically mentioned, but in this case the patronymic might actually refer to the father's profession. As the son of a chainmail maker, Khālid would have had a good opportunity to form contacts with the Mamluk amirs. Khālid became a dancer and performed in the *wālī's* house in Cairo (*dār al-wilāyah*). Amir Sanjar—the *wālī* of Cairo⁶⁰—took a liking to him and promoted him to the position of the overseer (*muqaddam bayt al-wālī*). After Sanjar, another amir, Ibn Hilāl al-Dawlah, took over the patronage of Khālid, and with his support Khālid's career advanced further; eventually, he was appointed *muqaddam al-dawlah*. Ibn Ḥajar notes that with this upward mobility both Khālid's wealth and corruption increased, and soon he became associated with Mamluk notables who stole state funds. Together with other offenders, Khālid was arrested in 735 and was ordered to pay a huge fine; still he seems to have had protectors because he was quickly released from prison. Khālid lost his position as *muqaddam al-dawlah* but managed to regain some of his earlier status by becoming the *wālī's* overseer again. This was his title in 742, when he once again got into trouble. According to al-Maqrīzī, Khālid's greed and oppressive actions led the governor to confiscate his wealth. Three years later, in 745, he managed to bargain with the sultan and was reappointed *muqaddam al-dawlah*. The success was short-lived, however; only a few months later, Khālid was arrested and accused of oppression. He was punished, and this time the punishment was so harsh that he did not survive it.⁶¹

According to Ibn Ḥajar, Muḥammad ibn 'Alī was an uncouth and boorish *muhtasib*, but he does not seem to have been caught in any misconduct, whereas Khālid was punished both for stealing and oppression. The fact that he was able to pay the huge fines required of him indicates that Ibn Ḥajar's assessment of him as corrupt was accurate.

NOTORIOUS RATHER THAN NOTABLE

Ibn Ḥajar not only recorded persons whose career, wealth, or learning made them notables, but he also included persons who had become famous through some exceptional action. One of these persons is a commoner, a tailor called Waḍḍāḥ,⁶² who was a native of Aleppo. Waḍḍāḥ became notorious in 753 when, according to Ibn Ḥajar, the Devil made him err and proclaim that he was a prophet. He was imprisoned for some days and was encouraged to repent. He did repent and was pardoned and released from prison. The occurrence obviously did not improve the

⁶⁰ Ibn Ḥajar gives only the name Sanjar, but he was presumably 'Alam al-Dīn Sanjar ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Khāzān (d. 735/1335). Ibn Taghribirdī, *Al-Nujūm*, 9:67–68, reports Sanjar as the *wālī* in 721 and Sanjar seems to have held the position until his death (cf. the obituary, *ibid.*, 9:305).

⁶¹ Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:370, 381–82, 565, 664, 670. Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 2:47.

⁶² Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 4:251, no. 5102: Waḍḍāḥ al-Khayyāt al-Ḥalabī.



tailor's social status, but his action guaranteed him fame and immortalized him in an entry in Ibn Ḥajar's biographical dictionary.

CONCLUSIONS

Presumably, many commoners had modest successes and may have improved their social status within the ranks of the commoners, but their careers remain unrecorded and only the histories of those whose prestige, fame, or wealth earned them a notable status are included in Ibn Ḥajar's dictionary. This gives us only a partial view of the careers of the commoners and their chances of social advancement in Mamluk society. Even if the material does not give us the full picture, the very low number of entries portraying people of common origin clearly indicates that social advancement cannot have been easy, and a successful climb up the social ladder was an exception rather than a rule.

Social historians tend to view the scholarly class as an open career track, where individual merits weighed more than lineage or wealth, but my findings in Ibn Ḥajar's dictionary do not support this view. Theoretically, the scholarly world was indeed open to everybody, and merits were important; if one lacked the invaluable network of contacts, however, the prestigious appointments remained elusive. A baker's son could find a way to study with some of the well-known scholars of his day, but this did not secure him an endowed position in the madrasah system or the judiciary.

Ibn Ḥajar's dictionary shows that most of the commoners who gained prestige in scholarly circles were *muhaddiths*. A literate person endowed with a good memory could gain a position as an authority on hadiths. This led the person into scholarly circles, and the possibilities of social advancement increased. Rubbing shoulders with esteemed scholars was a beginning in forming the network that was indispensable for building up a career. The scholars might recommend one's talents as a notary, or they could request one to prepare copies of books, or they could patronize one's paper shop; the records show, however, that even three generations were not necessarily enough to establish a family as one of the recognized scholarly families.

The number of commoners who managed to enter the scholarly circles was not very large, but Ibn Ḥajar's records show some examples of remarkable advancement within one generation. A son of a carpenter could first learn carpentry and then turn to studies and finally be promoted to an assistant judgeship. It seems that the positions of judge or assistant judge were the highest occupations in the judiciary reached by a commoner. Ibn Ḥajar reports on two artisans who were appointed assistant judges, whereas the only judge with a commoner origin proved to be a scion of an eastern scholarly family that had fled to Syria. The lists of scholars' occupational posts given in Carl Petry's study on the scholars in Cairo point in the same direction. An assistant judge was more likely than a judge to have had an artisan



occupation. It is also significant that none of those appointed as *qāḍī al-quḍāh*, the highest legal office, had ever had an occupation belonging to the artisan group.⁶³

Moving from modest artisan professions to the circles of wealthy merchants seems to have been rare as well. Ibn Ḥajar mentions only one case where an artisan was able to build a large fortune through trade and one case where initial accumulation of wealth was combined with a judicious marriage, securing the next generation an economic head start. It may well be that a much larger number of commoners became affluent through trade, but their wealth did not reach the level of exceptional opulence that would have merited their inclusion among the dictionary entries.

Some commoners were able to attain powerful administrative positions through personal relationships with members of the Mamluk elite. The Cairene dancer is an example of a person who was able to use his status as the amir's favorite to make a career. The dancer's career was obviously a spectacular single occurrence and as such caught the attention of both chroniclers and biographers, who recorded it in their books.

It can be concluded that Ibn Ḥajar's biographical entries show a society in which lineage and networks were important ingredients of social advancement. Individual merits played an important role but did not suffice to guarantee any upward social mobility.

⁶³ Carl Petry, *The Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton 1981), 362–67, list of Category IV occupations in the artisan group: the numbers of artisans among *nā'ib al-qāḍīs* is 57, among *qāḍīs* 32, and among *qāḍī al-quḍāḥ* 0.

