Book Reviews

Mathieu Eychenne, *Liens personnels, clientélisme et réseaux de pouvoir dans le sultanat mamelouk (milieu XIIIe-fin XIVe siècle)* (Damas-Beyrouth: Presses de l'Ifpo, 2013). Pp. 605.

Reviewed by Bernadette Martel-Thoumian, Université Pierre Mendès-France (Grenoble)

Dans son ouvrage intitulé *Liens personnels, clientélisme et réseaux de pouvoir dans le sultanat mamelouk (milieu XIIIe-fin XIVe siècle)* Mathieu Eychenne propose une réflexion sur les liens et les réseaux mis en œuvre par les élites militaires, religieuses et administratives à l'époque des Mamlouks bahrites (1250-1382), démarche menée à partir de concepts empruntés pour l'essentiel au sociologue P. Bourdieu et à l'historien moderniste J-P. Dedieu. C'est donc un projet ambitieux que propose M. Eychenne, car les thèmes étudiés par l'auteur, en particulier ceux du clientélisme et de la vénalité des charges ont déjà fait l'objet d'études ou d'articles. Les trois mouvements qui constituent l'ouvrage, « Constitution et formes de liens personnels », « Pratiques sociales et clientélisme », « La dynamique des réseaux de pouvoir », reposent sur un important corpus prosopographique complété par quatre annexes et un glossaire.

On regrette que l'auteur n'ait pas consacré ne serait-ce que quelques lignes aux diverses sources qui lui ont permis de retracer les biographies très fouillées des divers acteurs qui guident son propos, que ces notices s'inscrivent dans une famille ou qu'elles figurent à titre individuel dans l'ouvrage. En effet, une classification des genres (biographies, chroniques historiques, relations de voyage, recueils de topographie historique, cadastre, …) s'imposait d'autant que tous les auteurs ne furent pas des contemporains des personnages évoqués. Leur distanciation vis-à-vis des faits qu'ils évoquent est souvent discutable et doit être systématiquement contextualisée.

Lors de la première partie, dans le premier chapitre, M. Eychenne établit une intéressante taxinomie linguistique sans toutefois préciser quels critères ont présidé à l'ordre de présentation: son classement est-il aléatoire ou renvoie-t-il à une finalité? Quoi qu'il en soit, cette typologie est par la suite rarement corrélée avec les chapitres suivants, ce qui lui confère un côté quelque peu artificiel, ce qui est dommage.

Le chapitre 3 consacré à la pratique linguistique appelle également quelques réflexions. Peut-on suivre M. Eychenne dans ses généralisations sur le sujet? En ef-

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fet, il ne dit rien sur le nombre, même approximatif, d'individus parfaitement bilingues à l'instar de l'émir Arghūn al-Nāṣirī (p. 161). Quels critères permettaient à al-Maqrīzī d'affirmer qu'untel maîtrisait une langue seconde ? Dans le cas des individus passerelles, tel Ibrāhīm al-Zuʿrī censé avoir appris la langue turque grâce à ses esclaves féminines, M. Eychenne ne précise pas ce que l'on doit entendre par langue turque (p. 171). Les esclaves en question avaient probablement un bon niveau syntaxique et un vocabulaire étendu pour endosser le rôle de professeur. Quant aux maîtres éduquant leurs esclaves dans la langue arabe, il fallait préciser si tous les esclaves étaient concernés et dans quel but. S'il ne s'agissait que des consignes relevant du quotidien, éducation semble alors un bien grand mot.

M. Eychenne écrit également qu' « il est donc certain que les *ʿulamāʾ* ont constitué l'un des plus importants vecteurs de la dissémination de la langue turque dans les milieux cultivés » (p. 178), or le milieu des savants n'a jamais été monolithique. L'auteur aurait dû préciser, voire définir, ce qu'il entendait par « milieu cultivé ». En effet, qui étaient les personnes concernées? Tel auteur pouvait dire le plus grand bien d'un savant alors que tel autre le dénigrait. Quelle part de subjectivité, d'appréciation personnelle voire relationnelle entrait dans le jugement porté sur le savoir des oulémas, sur leurs personnalités ou sur leurs agissements?

Ce qui suit laisse également perplexe et pose la question de l'utilité de l'annexe 1 intitulée « Les secrétaires employés par les émirs *mamlūk*-s. » L'auteur écrit que « leur enseignement [celui des *ʿulamāʾ* connaissant le turc] aurait sans doute eu un plus grand impact sur les administrateurs civils, si ceux-ci n'avaient été massivement recrutés parmi les coptes » (p. 178). L'auteur estime donc que les divers édits sultaniens, le sac d'Alexandrie en 1365, les pressions exercées par les émirs sur leur personnel chrétien ou juif pour les amener à adopter l'islam ainsi que les conversions opportunistes n'auraient eu aucun impact ou du moins qu'un impact si peu significatif qu'il n'y aurait pas eu de « changement confessionnel » dans les bureaux du milieu du XIIIe à la fin du XIVe siècle. Cette affirmation, que l'on peut juger radicale d'autant qu'elle n'est pas étayée, renvoie à une sous-exploitation de l'annexe 1. En effet, sur les 95 secrétaires répertoriés, un seul est [toujours] copte. Parmi les convertis, on compte 29 coptes, un chrétien, deux juifs et un samaritain. Quarante-et-un secrétaires sont musulmans. Pour les vingt personnages restants, il n'y a aucune indication religieuse. On déplore par ailleurs que cette intéressante annexe soit quasiment réduite au rôle de figurante dans cet ouvrage: en effet, 70 individus n'ont pas d'entrée dans l'index des noms de personnes, ce qui signifie qu'ils sont absents des diverses analyses. Or un certain nombre d'enseignements pouvaient être tirés de cette liste et ils auraient permis à l'auteur d'affiner sa pensée, mais il est vrai que ce dernier a surtout été attiré par ceux qui occupaient le devant de la scène. On peut faire une remarque identique pour l'annexe 2 intitulée, « Les émirs *mamlūk*-s et leurs administrateurs ».

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Dans la deuxième partie de l'ouvrage, M. Eychenne emploie de manière récurrente les expressions « liens d'estime et d'affection, grande affection » (pp. 210, 286), oubliant que le pragmatisme des émirs les conduisait à être aimables envers des savants ou des administrateurs prompts à leur apporter leur soutien. Cet opportunisme relationnel était également de mise chez les civils tel ce Sharaf al-Dīn Khālid « qui se mettait au service de tout le monde » (p. 286). Même si des relations d'amitié ont pu voir le jour, rares sont celles qui ont résisté au temps (cf. spoliations, mises à mort évoquées par l'auteur), ce que les chroniqueurs s'empressent de mentionner. Qui plus est, rappelons que la générosité, quelle que soit la forme qu'elle ait pu revêtir (cadeaux, postes) est une attitude fréquente en politique pour s'attacher une clientèle, dans tous les milieux et à toutes les époques (p. 316). Les Mamlouks n'en ont jamais eu l'exclusivité.

Certains points auraient demandé quelques éclaircissements, et notamment ceux qui suivent et qui sont directement en lien avec le sujet. On aurait aimé savoir comment l'émir Shaykhū avait pu octroyer un *iqṭāʿ* au shaykh al-Hirmās et si la pratique était courante, voire antérieure aux Mamlouks (p. 228). Pourquoi Shams al-Dīn Ghibriyāl se réfugie-t-il dans sa *turba,* alors qu'il est enterré dans celle de son maître (p. 280)? De la même manière, pourquoi Quṭb al-Dīn Mūsá ibn Shaykh al-Sallāmīyah est-il « enterré dans sa *turba,* construite à al-Ṣāliḥiyya, dans la mosquée de l'émir Āqūsh al-Afram » (p. 285) et que signifie *turbah*?

Les parties sur la vénalité et le népotisme traitées avec le plus grand soin n'apportent rien de bien neuf; toutefois, il manque dans la bibliographie deux travaux de référence sur le sujet: l'ouvrage de A. Abd al-Raziq, *al-Badhl wa-al-barṭalah zamān salāṭīn al-mamālīk (dirāsah ʿan al-rishwah)* (Le Caire, 1979) ainsi que l'article de C. Petry « A Paradox of Patronage during the Later Mamlūk Period » (*Muslim World* 73 [1983]).

On ne peut que saluer le patient travail de prosopographie entrepris par l'auteur dans le cadre des parcours familiaux et individuels, travail méticuleux s'il en est. Toutefois, il extrapole parfois la pensée d'un auteur, par exemple dans l'anecdote suivante extraite du *Tālī Kitāb al-Wafayāt* d'Ibn al-Ṣuqāʿī. D'après M. Eychenne, le vizir Hibat Allāh al-Fāʾizī aurait choisi comme *nāʾib* le *ṣāḥib* Yaʿqūb ibn ʿAbd al-Rafīʿ ibn al-Zubayr, car ce dernier « connaissait la langue turque ce qui lui permettait d'espionner les émirs » (p. 168). Or « ce qui lui permettait d'espionner les émirs » ne figure ni dans le texte arabe ni dans la traduction française de J. Sublet.[1] Par ailleurs, on signalera quelques curiosités de traduction: par ex. *bayt al-māl* est traduit par « trésor des musulmans » (p. 193) et dans le glossaire par « maison du trésor » (p. 540) et *mushidd al-ṣuḥbah* par « inspecteur militaire » (p. 75, note 30) et dans le glossaire par « responsable de la comptabilité » (p. 547). Une recherche dans le *Subḥ al-Aʿshá* d'al-Qalqashandī (absent de la bibliographie) aurait permis

[1] *Tālī* n° 273. L'auteur ne précise que rarement s'il utilise le texte arabe ou la traduction.

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d'expliciter ces différences. Certaines traductions littérales sont maladroites: ainsi « il était entré dans son œil et avait empli son cœur (p. 286), « Lū'lū' al-Ḥalabī dépasse les limites dans la torture des personnes spoliées (p. 459) et « L'émir Alākuz al-Nāṣirī, chargé d'appliquer les ordres, fait toutefois preuve d'une certaine conciliation à son égard [Ibn Hilāl al-Dawla] et ne l'applique que très légèrement à la torture. » (p. 461).

On regrettera l'abus de vocables et d'expressions anachroniques, voire erronés dont voici un court florilège: apanage (pour *iqṭāʿ*, p. 199, par ailleurs emprunté à E. Quatremère, *Histoire des sultans mamlouks,* I/2, p. 17), réseaux interconnectés (p. 248), *homines novi* (p. 433), bénéficiant de ce label (p. 478) et contrat social (quatrième de couverture), ainsi qu'une savoureuse curiosité, l'expression « organigramme fonctionnel » (p. 540). En effet, ce vocabulaire ne renvoie ni à la réalité ni aux pratiques de l'époque mamlouke.

En résumé, on déplore que ce gros ouvrage au titre prometteur et dont l'introduction laissait entrevoir un renouvellement dans l'étude des liens personnels entre les élites turques et les civils n'ait pas fait l'objet d'une réflexion plus approfondie, l'aspect proposographique l'emportant trop souvent sur l'analyse. Il manque également dans cet ouvrage quelques lignes de mise en perspective qui auraient permis d'inscrire les Mamlouks bahrides dans la chaîne de l'Histoire. En effet, ces derniers succèdent aux Ayyoubides, or rien n'est dit sur un éventuel héritage sociétal alors que les premiers souverains bahrides furent au service des derniers Ayyoubides. De la même manière, on ne saura pas si les usages étudiés ont perduré à l'identique sous les Circassiens. Quoi qu'il en soit, on saluera la patience et l'art de l'auteur dans sa reconstitution minutieuse des pratiques pour ne pas dire des codes mis en place par les divers groupes et individus appartenant à l'élite ou ayant réussi à s'y arrimer pendant la période bahride.

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Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Practising Diplomacy in the Mamluk Sultanate: Gifts and Material Culture in the Medieval Islamic World* (London-New York: I. B. Tauris, 2014). Pp. xxi +242.

Reviewed by Valentina Vezzoli, University Ca' Foscari Venice

The inspiration for a book dedicated to Mamluk diplomacy and its material culture arose during the participation of the author in an international conference organized in Liège by Prof. Frédéric Bauden in 2012, *Mamluk Cairo: a Crossroad for Embassies.* This event, combined with the recent growth of studies focused on the history of diplomacy in Europe and in the Islamic world, brought Doris Behrens-Abouseif to undertake this new project on the reconstruction of Mamluk diplomacy. The Mamluk Sultanate played, in fact, a prominent role in international diplomacy, being not only an important political power but also a unique commercial authority, which stipulated alliances and treaties with the main political partners of the contemporary world. The book investigates gift-giving practices in the Mamluk world, presenting the objects that were offered, but also the role they played in this process, their economic and social value, and their iconography. The author traces the evolution of Mamluk diplomacy over time and underlines the incongruity existing between the image of Mamluk art that emerged from this study and our common definition of it. The data presented in this book are based on a rich assortment of examples and episodes issued from written sources, both from Mamluk and European chronicles, compared, where possible, to the existing material culture of the Mamluk period.

With this publication, Behrens-Abouseif adds, as she has done in the past, another important contribution to the knowledge of Mamluk history, culture, and art, revealing a rich and inestimable source of information exploitable also for future studies on the Mamluk world.

The volume is organized in three parts. The first part is dedicated to "The Culture of Gifts" in Mamluk society. Chapter 1 (The World of the Mamluks) provides a general introduction to Mamluk history, emphasizing the role that this dynasty played in a significant moment of the Islamic world, marked by the Crusaders' presence in the Holy Land and Syria, and by the destructive arrival of the Mongols from Central Asia. It emerges that the Mamluks not only promptly reacted to this complex political situation but also established themselves as main characters in the international political and economic scene, controlling the commerce of spices with the Far East, supervising the Muslim and Christian pilgrimage routes, and intensifying diplomatic relations worldwide.

After this historical introduction, Chapter 2 (Protocol and Codes of Gift Exchange) focuses on rules and protocols related to gift-giving as a medium of dip-

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lomatic strategy. The Mamluk protocol implies, in fact, a rigid behavior regarding ambassadors and emissaries' reception in Egypt: these personalities should be treated with respect, hospitality, and protection. The practice of welcoming foreign delegations with precious gifts and reception parades was already known in the Roman, Byzantine, and Sasanian traditions, and the Mamluks perpetrated this code of honor. The author provides several examples documenting how foreign ambassadors and their retinues were welcomed at the citadel of Cairo with parades, musical performances, and crowds of curious spectators. The *dār al-ḍiyāfah* (palace of hospitality) was arranged in order to receive these delegations and to display their gifts (precious textiles, slaves, animals, gems and gold, spices and perfumes). Gifts (known in Arabic chronicles as *hadīyah* and *taqdīmah*) were considered an essential element of diplomatic relations: a code used to promote alliances and to show the strength and richness of the Mamluk Sultanate. Mamluks also used to receive presents from their vassals, which were actually tributes paid to ensure protection (money, animals, precious objects), and used to send them robes of honor *(khilʿah),* ceremonial belts, and textiles, symbolizing their political supremacy. Chronicles report detailed lists indicating the value of diplomatic gifts, which was estimated on the basis of their price but also of the political role of their emissaries. The practice of offering "second-hand" gifts was also common, and owning these objects, in fact, had added value, since they previously belonged to eminent personalities or came from exotic places.

In the second part of the volume, "Gifts in Geo-Political Contexts," the author discusses the use of diplomatic gifts in specific political situations, mentioning how the Mamluks dealt with their neighbors, allies, and enemies. Particularly well documented is Chapter 3, dedicated to "The Red Sea and Indian Ocean Connection" and especially to Yemen. Given their interests in the spice trade, the Mamluks had a particular relation with Yemen, which had to regularly offer a kind of tribute to the Egyptian sultans, comprised of luxurious and exotic goods (textiles, slaves, animals, spices and scents, precious objects from China and Africa), in order to assure their protection and help. This tax caused several controversies and the Yemeni Rasulids did not always respect their agreement, provoking the fury of the Mamluks. Less information has been collected regarding the Indian embassies, even if diplomatic gifts sent from that region were particularly rich.

The Mamluks also maintained regular political and commercial connections with Christian and Muslim kingdoms of "Africa" (Chapter 4). Ethiopia, which played an important role in the Red Sea trade, sent diplomatic embassies to Cairo, frequently with the Coptic patriarch of Alexandria as intermediary, in order to ensure commercial affairs but also the protection of Christians in lands under Mamluk control. North Africa, and the Maghrib in particular, was the major

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source of horses, black slaves, and leather for the Egyptian Sultanate, which were frequently sent as diplomatic gifts. One of the most beautiful and impressive embassies that ever reached Cairo, according to Mamluk chronicles, came from the Maghrib: a Merinid princess, planning to go on pilgrimage to Mecca, stopped in Cairo in 1338 and brought with her gifts "unheard of in East and West": horses, falcons, bejeweled belts and swords, pearls and gemstones.

Given the extremely critical political situation in Eastern regions, the Mamluks entertained continuous diplomatic relations with "The Black Sea, Anatolia, Iran and Central Asia" (Chapter 5). Their strategic alliance with the Golden Horde promoted the exchange of impressive diplomatic gifts. In 1263, a special Mamluk embassy sealed the alliance between Baybars and Berke Khan. As described by many Mamluk authors, it included a beautiful Quran manuscript penned by the Caliph ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān, wrapped in red gold-brocaded textile and encased in an ivory and ebony box, but also Venetian gowns, rugs, gilded lamps, horses and camels, porcelains, and sugar. The Golden Horde's presents had a completely different composition, whose diplomatic value was not inferior to Mamluk gifts: animals, fur, leather, mamluks, and slave girls. The Ilkhanids were another important political authority in the region and although their initial relations with the Mamluks were tense, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's diplomacy allowed for a détente between them. One of his amirs, Aytamish, played an important role by conducting several impressive and advantageous embassies to Tabriz, which not only improved the political relations between the two sultanates, but also promoted artistic and cultural influences as evidenced by developments in Mamluk architecture, ceramic production, and the art of the book. Equally complex was the Mamluks' diplomatic relations with the Timurids, who considered themselves as Chinghiz Khān's descendants and rulers of the Muslim world, and judged the Mamluks as their vassals. The nature of the diplomatic gifts they exchanged with the Mamluk court was frequently provocative and controversial. In later periods, the Mamluks also had to deal with the Safavids of Iran. The diplomatic relations between the two sides were complicated and the Safavids showed a lack of respect toward the Mamluks. Nevertheless, in 1512 they sent to Cairo an impressive embassy, offering to the sultan silver and golden vessels, horses and leopards, silks and precious textiles.

The more dangerous and powerful rival of the Mamluks in the East were, however, the Ottomans, despite the friendly façade and the good diplomatic relations existing between the two sides. The Ottomans sent rich and gorgeous gifts to the Mamluk sultan to celebrate their alliance or on the occasion of important events. Following the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, for instance, they sent to Cairo captured Byzantine dignitaries, mamluks, furs, textiles, golden swords, an elephant, and a zebra. They respected a strict gift protocol, sending for every

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embassy sets of nine pieces, called *tuquzat,* usually composed of textiles (mostly from Bursa), silver vessels, mamluks, female slaves from conquered territories, animals, and rugs. The Mamluks, on their side, offered textiles, horses, arms, and imported goods from India and the Far East. The Ottoman military conquests of Mamluk territories cracked this relation and brought the two armies to a military confrontation. Nevertheless, until the very last moment of his reign, the Mamluk sultan al-Ghawrī tried to maintain good diplomatic relations in order to forestall the invasion of Syria and Egypt. In September 1516, a few days before his death on the battlefield near Aleppo, al-Ghawrī sent a gift package of ten thousand dinars and a message asking for peace, which remained unheeded.

Behrens-Abouseif also investigates the rich diplomatic relations developed between the Mamluks and "Europe" (Chapter 6), focusing on their connections with Spain, Italy, France, and Cyprus. The Mamluks entertained diplomatic contacts with Latin kingdoms since the reign of Baybars (r. 1260–77), who is considered the founder of Mamluk diplomacy, in order to promote trade and facilitate the export of Egyptian products to Europe. Beyond the economic relations developed with Spanish kingdoms and with France (since the mid-fifteenth century) and the complex political interests in Cyprus, which became a vassal of the sultanate in 1427, the main commercial partner of the Mamluks in Europe was the city of Venice. Even though the Mamluk chronicles rarely mentioned embassies and gifts sent to the *Serenissima,* the Italian archives are rich with texts describing these events. The exchange of gifts with Venice occurred especially during the fifteenth century, becoming more substantial at the end of it, when conflicts between Europe and the Mamluks and the advance of the Portuguese commercial fleet threatened the established Mediterranean trade. Mamluks sent to the Doge a standard gift package, made of Chinese porcelains, spices, scents, balsam oils, and textiles. When the Venetian ambassador Domenico Trevisan arrived in Cairo in 1512 he brought with him crystal vessels mounted with gold, luxury textiles, furs, and cheese blocks. Another Italian city, Florence, tried to obtain the Mamluks' favor for commercial purposes by arranging a treaty with the sultan in 1496. Behrens-Abouseif focuses in particular on the description of the outstanding Mamluk embassy that arrived in Florence in 1487 and on the impact that it had on the Italian people and artists. Among the Egyptian gifts (porcelains, textiles, balsams and drugs, animals), the giraffe sent by Qāytbāy stoked the imagination of Florence's inhabitants and had the privilege to be depicted by many famous Italian painters.

In Part Three, "The Gifts," Doris Behrens-Abouseif focuses on the material culture associated with diplomatic relations, presenting in Chapter 7 (Tradition and Legacy) the use of gifts in Middle Eastern and Muslim tradition. Also employing references from specific literature, such as the *Book of Gifts and Rarities* (eleventh century), she traces the history of gifts offered by Muslim sultans to their

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commercial partners or allies (spices, textiles, ceremonial tents, horses, exotic items, and animals), comparing this picture to the European diplomatic tradition. Mamluk diplomacy was partially influenced by its predecessors, the Fatimids and Ayyubids, whose legacy is discussed by the author. If the Fatimids' tradition was mainly based on opulence and extravagance, including the offering of precious gems and jewelry, the Ayyubids' diplomatic customs were more similar to the Mamluks' as they also conferred a more important role to gifting exotic animals and horses.

Chapter 8 is devoted to the description of offered and received objects and the role they played in Mamluk diplomacy. The Mamluks did not follow a strict diplomatic protocol for gift-giving, instead adapting their presents to the political and cultural situation of their counterpart. The author provides a detailed description of the most common and valuable diplomatic gifts appearing in Mamluk diplomacy: spices and porcelains, mamluks and craftsmen, exotic animals, balsams and theriacs, religious gifts, textiles, military and equestrian gifts. Behrens-Abouseif pays particular attention to textiles, which played a relevant role in Mamluk diplomacy. She provides a documented discussion of the importance of the royal manufacture *Dār al-Ṭirāz* for the Mamluks and their predecessors, tracing the different stages of this production in Egyptian history. The use of lavish inscribed gowns and, later, golden belts and furs in Mamluk costumes and diplomacy displays the new dimension of gift practices adopted by the Mamluks, who were trying to represent their political and economic supremacy through the celebration of their sultanate. Additionally, the author presents the existing material evidence of Mamluk textiles preserved in museum collections, and emphasizes the influence that Islamic patterns had on Italian art.

The final chapter of Part 3 (Chapter 9, Gifts and Mamluk Identity) includes a reflection on what the role of gifts in Mamluk diplomacy was and how it evolved from the early to the late Mamluk period, providing a new look at the aesthetic taste of the Mamluk upper class. It emerges that, unlike other countries, Mamluk Egypt preferred to offer to its allies and partners precious and original objects rather than products they exported. The author underlines the importance of the concept of *tuḥaf,* unusual, special, or exclusive objects. Diplomatic gifts, even if selected to please the recipient, were also intended to represent the Mamluks abroad and were thus decorated with inscriptions, mentioning the name of the sultan or amirs, and blazons. They represented the greatness of the Mamluk Sultanate and they reflected the taste of a society oriented to an international sphere.

Behrens-Abouseif's conclusion is a summary of the three parts composing this book. The author underlines here how, even if there was a shared culture of diplomatic gifts between the Oriental and Western worlds, Mamluk diplomacy was

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able to express its own identity, showing peculiar and distinctive characteristics that distinguished it from its predecessors and contemporaries.

This volume provides a unique insight into Mamluk diplomacy and its material culture, gathering an impressive amount of documentation issued from written evidence (from Arab and European chronicles), which will constitute an important source of information for scholars and students approaching the history of the Mamluk world. The author wisely employs this data in order to discuss different topics related to Mamluk diplomacy: protocols of gift-giving, political and commercial strategies, tradition and legacy, and definition of art. She thus succeeds in describing the complex world of Mamluk society, emphasizing both its inner features as well as its international connections. Behrens-Abouseif's book exhorts scholars to approach the rich material culture of the Mamluk period preserved in museum collections, and to interpret it in the light of this new evidence.

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Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ al-Ṣarāyirah, *Al-Nuqūd al-Fiḍḍīyah al-Mamlūkīyah min Qalʿat al-Karak* (Al-Zarqa: Ministry of Culture, 2010). Pp. 232.

Reviewed by Warren C. Schultz, DePaul University

This book contains two types of material. One is a catalogue with descriptions of the 135 Mamluk dirhams housed in the Karak Citadel Museum in Jordan. The other is the background information needed to contextualize these coins. This latter material takes up the first 152 pages of the volume and includes short and very basic discussions of the Mamluk Sultanate, the history of money, the organization of the mint, metallic purity, metrology, and the like. Anyone familiar with the Mamluks or their coinage may skip this section. The catalogue, on the other hand, is very useful for its contribution to the expanding corpus of published Mamluk coins. The coins are thoroughly described with inscriptions identified and diameters and weights provided. This is very helpful for two reasons. The first is that the quality of the plates included in the volume is so poor as to render them essentially useless. The second is that the specimens described here are not linked to the standard typology used in Mamluk numismatics, that developed by Paul Balog in his *Coinage of the Mamluk Sultans of Egypt and Syria* (New York: American Numismatic Society, 1964). The descriptions provided, however, allow the attentive reader to tentatively attribute these coins to the corresponding Balog number when that is possible. The latter qualification is made necessary by the fact that Balog's typology is outdated. For example, awareness of Mamluk dirhams from the northern Syrian city of Lādhiqīyah—one of which is included here—came well after Balog's work was published.

Since this volume may be inaccessible to some, it is useful to summarize its numismatic evidence. Of the 135 specimens, 122 date from the Kipjak period and 13 from the Circassian. Some of the earlier dirhams included in this book are from the huge hoard of 2244 dirhams dating from the reigns of Sultans Quṭuz to Kitbughā found in 1963. (For more on that hoard, see Saleh Khaled Sari, "A Critical Analysis of a Mamluk Hoard from Karak," Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Michigan, 1986.) The first table identifies the sultans whose names appear on these coins as well as the number of specimens linked to each ruler (p. 37).

Sultan	Number of coins	Sultan	Number of coins	Sultan	Number of coins
Baybars	40	Muḥammad	22	Ḥasan	3
Berke Qān	6	Kitbughā	5	Ṣāliḥ	1
Salāmish	1	Baybars II	2	Shaʿbān	2
Qalāwūn	30	Aḥmad	1	Aynāl	4
Khalīl	5	Ismāʿīl	4	Qāytbāy	9
				Total	**135**

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The second table provides the mints of the 135 dirhams (pp. 119–20).

Sultan	Cairo	Damascus	Aleppo	Ḥamāh	Lādhiqīyah	MM
Baybars	11	4		2		22
Berke Qān	3					3
Salāmish						1
Qalāwūn	7	9		2		12
Khalīl	1	1				3
Muḥammad	3	2	7	4	1	5
Kitbughā	1	1				3
Baybars II	1					1
Aḥmad				1		
Ismāʿīl		1	1			2
Ḥasan			1			2
Ṣāliḥ						1
Shaʿbān				1		1
Aynāl	1	2				1
Qāytbāy	2		4			3
	31	**20**	**13**	**10**	**1**	**60**

There are some production problems to be aware of. The content of the list of design ornaments *(al-zakhārif al-nabātīyah)* found on pp. 155–56 indicates that those two pages are in reverse order. Similarly, the correct order of the list of border designs *(al-zakhārif al-handasīyah)* found on pp. 157–59 should be 158, 159, 157. Also, page 188 is reprinted on page 189, and page 209 is repeated on 210.

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Julien Loiseau, *Reconstruire la maison du Sultan: ruine et recomposition de l'ordre urbain au Caire, 1350–1450*. Études urbaines 8 (Le Caire: IFAO, 2010). 2 vol., 660 p. dont 25 planches de photographies et plans en noir et blanc.

Reviewed by Bernadette Martel-Thoumian, Université Pierre Mendès-France (Grenoble)

Le gros ouvrage de Julien Loiseau s'intitule *Reconstruire la maison du Sultan: ruine et recomposition de l'ordre urbain au Caire, 1350–1450*. Les quatre parties qui le composent sont:

Volume I : Archéologie d'une crise urbaine (pp. 13–140), Le sultanat à l'épreuve de la crise ou l'aggiornamento de l'ordre mamlouk (pp. 143–214) ;

Volume II : Le cœur de la fabrique urbaine, acteurs et enjeux d'un nouveau siècle (pp. 217–406), Gouverner Le Caire, le sultanat au défi de sa capitale (pp. 409–82).

L'ouvrage comprend également des annexes très complètes (tableaux, cartes) ainsi qu'un lexique et deux index. On a là un travail intéressant et bien documenté qui suscite toutefois quelques interrogations et remarques.

Ce travail s'appuie essentiellement sur trois auteurs, al-Maqrīzī (1364–1442), Ibn Taghrībirdī (1409–70) et Ibn Khaldūn (1332–1406). Si les œuvres de ces trois auteurs sont dûment mentionnées, celles d'autres auteurs sont absentes, en particulier celles d'al-Sakhāwī, *Wajīz al-kalām fī al-dhayl ʿalá Duwal al-islām* (4 vols., Beyrouth, 1995), d'Ibn Ẓahīrah, *al-Faḍā'il al-bāhirah fī maḥāsin Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah* (Le Caire, 1969), et de ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ ibn Khalīl al-Ẓāhirī, *Nayl al-amal fī dhayl al-duwal* (9 vols., Beyrouth, 2002). Il manque également l'édition des années 815–823 du *ʿIqd al-jumān* d'al-ʿAynī (éd. al-Ṭanṭāwī, Le Caire, 1985).

Un grand nombre de textes sont désormais à la disposition des chercheurs et on ne peut plus affirmer que l'historiographie de la fin du XVe et du début du XVIe siècle se limite aux œuvres d'al-Ṣayrafī et d'Ibn Iyās, même si leur intérêt n'est plus à démontrer (p. 7). Rappelons qu'à l'instar de leurs prédécesseurs, tous les auteurs ont abondamment puisé dans les travaux de leurs devanciers pour écrire les leurs, remarque qui s'adresse également aux *Khiṭaṭ* d'al-Maqrīzī, pierre angulaire de la présente recherche, même si le savant égyptien a été « promu au patrimoine de la République arabe » (p. 7). On s'étonnera par ailleurs que dans un ouvrage traitant pour l'essentiel d'urbanisme les deux revues pionnières dans le domaine de la conservation du patrimoine égyptien que furent le *Bulletin de l'Institut d'Égypte* et le *Comité de conservation des monuments arabes du Caire* ne figurent pas dans la bibliographie. Seule la seconde est créditée d'une occurrence (figure 3, p. 110).

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Un autre point interpelle: les bornes temporelles retenues par l'auteur. En effet, 1350 ne renvoie à aucune prise ou fin de règne (al-Nāṣir Ḥasan perd le trône en 1351, remplacé par son frère al-Ṣāliḥ Ṣāliḥ) et en 1450 le sultan Jaqmaq est encore sur le trône: il ne décède qu'en 1453. Choisir 1450 est d'autant plus curieux que dans les annexes (p. 531-536), c'est l'année 1453 qui est mentionnée. Une explication de l'auteur eût été la bienvenue, car ces dernières sont suivies par la liste des mosquées du vendredi au Caire construites entre 1454 et 1517 (pp. 537–41).

Par ailleurs, on notera une curieuse utilisation de la concordance des temps. Dans le texte, l'auteur a visiblement fait le choix d'ignorer les dates hégiriennes alors qu'il les mentionne dans certaines notes ainsi que dans l'index dédié aux noms de personnes (mais uniquement quand il répertorie les sultans). J. Loiseau a par ailleurs une vision particulière du siècle retenu (1350–1450), car il fait débuter le prologue de son ouvrage intitulé « Le Caire à l'heure des événements » en 1399, date correspondant à la mort de Barqūq et au début du règne de son fils Faraj (pp. 13–15). Le règne des six derniers Qalāʾūnides est escamoté alors que le dernier d'entre eux perd le trône en 1382. Or ces informations n'arrivent qu'à la p. 179 de son ouvrage. Dans le cadre d'un tel sujet, un rapide aperçu de la situation politique entre 1350 et 1399 était indispensable dès les premières pages.

À ce propos, l'auteur aurait dû dès l'introduction préciser ce qu'il entendait par « Maison du sultan », expliquer le sens de la majuscule d'autant que d'un point de vue politique et urbanistique, les souverains n'ont pas été les seuls à bâtir, tous ceux qui ont disposé de moyens financiers ont également eu à cœur d'imprimer leur marque dans le paysage du Caire, cette remarque étant par ailleurs valable pour tout le territoire de l'État mamlouk. Si on prend l'angle d'attaque politique, l'auteur considère que des administrateurs civils ont appartenu à la Maison du sultan, mais d'après quels critères? Par ailleurs, ont-ils fait jeu égal avec les militaires composant cette entité?

Quasiment toute la démonstration de l'auteur repose sur les épaules d'un personnage, l'*ustādār*. J. Loiseau met en valeur le rôle de ce dernier qui, il faut le souligner, n'occupait que le neuvième rang dans l'organigramme des fonctions militaires (Popper, *Egypt and Syria,* I, p. 93). On aurait aimé savoir combien d'individus ont détenu cette fonction pendant la période prise en considération et pendant combien de temps, de quel milieu ils étaient issus (militaire ou civil) et surtout si tous ont œuvré dans le domaine urbain à l'instar d'un Jamāl al-dīn Yūsuf al-Bīrī ou d'un ʿAbd al-Ghanī ibn Abī al-Faraj. En effet, écrire dans la conclusion que le héros de l'histoire est l'intendant de la Maison du sultan, alors que dans le tableau intitulé « Les demeures des grands commis civils dans l'espace urbain », sur 37 individus seuls 9 sont étiquetés *ustādār,* c'est opérer une confusion entre la fonction et son titulaire. Tous les *ustādār* n'ont pas été des émules des deux hommes précédemment évoqués. Il y a donc là une généralisation qu'il eût fallu démontrer.

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Par ailleurs, J. Loiseau traduit le mot *amīr* par officier (cf. traduction de G. Wiet), et définit les gens de l'administration comme étant des commis civils, certains étant qualifiés de grands commis (cf. à ce propos la définition et l'emploi du terme "grand commis" dans le Robert). Or tous les personnages répertoriés dans le tableau intitulé « Les demeures des grands commis civils dans l'espace urbain » ne peuvent être mis sur un même pied. D'abord parce que certains appartiennent à des familles de notables (Les Bārizī, les Kuwayz), d'autres n'ont détenu leur fonction que peu de temps (al-Bashīrī). Enfin, d'aucuns ont occupé la fonction de vizir. Or celle-ci n'avait plus aucun lustre après les réformes d'al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalā'ūn et de Barqūq (si Ibrāhīm ibn al-Hayṣam est considéré comme un notable, c'est moins par sa fonction que par la situation de sa famille).

Si le tableau intitulé « Les mosquées du vendredi au Caire au début du XVe siècle » (pp. 520–36), est des plus intéressants, on déplore que les bâtiments construits pendant la fourchette chronologique qui intéresse l'auteur ne fassent pas l'objet d'un traitement à part, ou du moins d'une signalétique. En effet, l'auteur répertorie des bâtiments construits aux Xe–XIe (par ex. n° 17, p. 521), XIIe (n° 18, p. 521), XIIIe (n° 3, p. 520) et XIVe siècles (n° 1, p. 520). Il eût été pertinent de donner au lecteur un aperçu concret de la situation. Cette façon de procéder est d'autant plus curieuse qu'elle entre en contradiction avec les graphiques 2 et 3 de la p. 386.

Enfin, il est regrettable que de temps à autre, ce travail soit défiguré par des expressions inadéquates flirtant avec le vocabulaire commercial, par exemple « nombreuses sont les mosquées dont la fondation servit de produit d'appel au développement d'un quartier » (p. 32). Dans son enthousiasme, l'auteur évoque « de véritables monuments urbains et des édifices plus modestes (sic) » (p. 76), puis plus loin « une grande architecture sultanienne » (on aurait aimé comprendre ce que l'auteur entend éventuellement par « une petite architecture sultanienne », p. 244), alors que les adjectifs « formidable » et « prodigieux » jouent le rôle de leitmotiv : « la formidable étendue » (p. 39), « une formidable mue urbaine » (pp. 139 , 143), « le prodigieux éclatement de la croissance urbaine » (p. 52), « une prodigieuse floraison d'institutions religieuses » (p. 121), et ainsi de suite…

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ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah, *The Principles of Sufism,* edited and translated by Th. Emil Homerin (New York University Press, 2014). Pp. xx +200.

Reviewed by Nathan Miller, University of Chicago

Thomas Emil Homerin's edition and translation of ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah's previously unpublished *Principles of Sufism (Kitāb al-Muntakhab fī Uṣūl al-Rutab fī ʿIlm al-Taṣawwuf)* represents a fine addition to the Library of Arabic Literature (LAL) series, and to the growing body of translations of Mamluk texts. The translation is fluid, readable, and literary, and the Arabic text is handsome and accurate, although in accordance with LAL editorial policy, there is little apparatus. Homerin provides a brief introduction to the translation, a glossary of names and terms, endnotes, a bibliography, and an index. The endnotes mostly explain allusions to Quran verses, hadith, and classic Sufi texts. As the *Principles of Sufism* is a highly intertextual work, these endnotes and the glossary of names and terms are particularly helpful for navigating the expansive world of medieval Arabic Sufism.

Although she was not as towering a figure of Sufism and Islam as some of her contemporaries such al-Suyūṭī, al-Sakhāwī, or Zakarīyā al-Anṣārī, the life and works of ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah (d. 923/1517) are nevertheless of great interest, and are highly representative of a number of important trends of her period, particularly her fervent devotion to the figure of the Prophet. Her most famous poem, *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn fī Madḥ al-Amīn,* is a *badīʿīyah,* a poem illustrating rhetorical devices, in praise of the Prophet. Besides *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn,* however, only a handful of her works have been published, and nearly twenty other manuscripts remain unedited. Indeed, she enjoys the probable distinction of having published more than any other woman writing in Arabic before the twentieth century. Her biography and a detailed summary of the *Principles* have been laid out by Homerin elsewhere,[2] but some main points are salient here.

ʿĀʾishah was born sometime in the mid-fifteenth century into a prominent Damascene family of Shafiʿi jurists, receiving an extensive religious education. She and her family were also strongly affiliated with the Qādirī Sufi order, prominent in the Levant. Having been widowed, and no doubt affected by the troubled state of Syria at the end of the Mamluk dynasty, she moved with her son, ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (897–925/1489–1519), to Cairo in 919/1513. They were robbed of all their possessions on the way, but in Cairo were supported by the Mamluk minister Maḥmūd ibn Muḥammad ibn Ajā (d. 925/1519). In 1516, ʿĀʾishah and ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, now in the service of Ibn Ajā, returned to Syria. Shortly before the de-

[2] Emil Homerin, "'Recalling You, My Lord': ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah on *Dhikr,*" *Mamlūk Studies Review* 17 (2013): 130–54; idem, "Living Love: The Mystical Writings of ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah (d. 922/1516)," *MSR* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 211–34.

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cisive defeat of the Mamluks at Marj Dābiq in 922/1516, the penultimate Mamluk sultan, al-Ghawrī, met with the highly-regarded ʿĀʾishah, no doubt as part of his ineffective plan to shore up Sufis' support before the decisive battle for pious and political reasons. ʿĀʾishah died in Damascus the following year.

The *Principles,* whose date of composition does not seem to be known, is divided into four chapters, representing the most fundamental mystical stations: repentance *(al-tawbah),* sincerity *(al-ikhlāṣ),* remembrance *(al-dhikr),* and most importantly, love *(al-maḥabbah).* An epilogue *(khātimah)* on love concludes the work. Each chapter adheres to a structure of first citing relevant Quranic verses, followed by hadith, then quotations from early Muslims and famous Sufis. Each chapter then ends with some of ʿĀʾishah's own poetry and observations, although these are also scattered throughout. There is a logical progression structuring the text, although the linkages are not thematized and may not be evident on a first reading.

The chapter on repentance begins with a detailed etymology of the word for "repentance," *tawbah,* from *tāba* meaning "to return." This is not pedantry; although there are distinct levels of repentance—common folk regret sin and fear Hell, while the elect, who have a sense of God's nearness, seek to turn entirely towards him, and away from anything else—these degrees are to be seen as part of a sequence of returning, ultimately entirely, towards God. Stories of famous Sufis' repentance illustrate true *tawbah,* and ʿĀʾishah concludes, as she often does, by offering practical markers of true repentance: that it is sealed with good works.

The chapter on sincerity picks up on the theme of God's absolute uniqueness and oneness, as well as the importance of good deeds; the trait running through all of the hadith, anecdotes, and verses in this chapter is that one ought to act only for the sake of God, not out of any baser motive. Then, as true remembrance of God, in Sufism, consists not of words on the lips, but of the presence of God to the heart, the third chapter on *dhikr* describes a turning inward from the discussion of external repentance and actions of the first two chapters. The dual nature of "remembrance" is also emphasized: when the servant remembers her Lord, he remembers her. Remembrance is thus a reciprocal spiritual act, the basis of a relationship between the servant and God. In the fourth and final chapter, this reciprocal relationship is seen to culminate in love, *maḥabbah,* the distinguishing markers of which ʿĀʾishah poetically describes. Thus, over the course of the text, a movement from external isolation from God is converted into an internalized relationship with him.

The text of the *Principles* falls squarely within the tradition of moderate, Sunnah-friendly Sufism embodied since at least the fifth/eleventh century by Abū al-Qāsim al-Qushayrī, whose manual, the *Risālah,* and Quranic exegesis, the *Laṭāʾif al-Ishārāt,* are very frequently cited by ʿĀʾishah. The controversial Ibn ʿArabī is

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nowhere to be seen, nor is the influence of the often elliptical Egyptian Ibn al-Fāriḍ discernible in the straightforward diction of ʿĀʾishah's verse. However, as with other late-Mamluk figures, ʿĀʾishah does not draw exclusively on figures from any one Sufi path *(ṭarīqah* or *ṭāʾifah).* For example, in addition to Qādirī texts, some Shadhilī figures such as Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh are cited fairly often. On a final note, one might ask whether ʿĀʾishah's text differs in any way from one penned by a man from the same period. It does not seem to, but as Homerin points out, it is striking that in the conclusion of the chapter on love (pp. 127–41), four anecdotes given almost in a row, drawn from the famous classical Sufis Sumnūn, Dhū al-Nūn, and al-Shiblī, are all about women's spiritual experiences.

I would suggest a handful of emendations to the translation and to the Arabic text. In the translation, for *inna la-hū lladhī yanwī* (p. 34), I would read "he [God's servant] receives what he intends," not "so the One is there to Protect him"; for *idhā khalawtum bī,* "when you were alone with Me," not, "when you forsook Me"; for *ghaybat al-dhākir ʿan al-dhikr* (p. 81), "the absence of the one who remembers from remembrance [itself]," not "the absence of the one who remembers in the remembrance"; for *wa-min al-dalāʾil an tará mutabassiman,* "among the signs is to see a smiling [lover]," not "from these signs, you will see him smile"; for *man sārarūhu fa-abdá al-sirra mujtahidan, lam yuʾminūhū* (p. 131), the *man* is probably conditional, so "Whomever they tell a secret to, if he reveals it openly (reading *mujtahiran* for *mujtahidan*), they won't believe him," not "They told him a secret,/ and he tried but could not keep it./ So they'll never trust him." In the Arabic, *al-kilāyah* (p. 138) seems to be a misprint for *al-wilāyah; yaṭfa,* or *yuṭfa* (p. 142), should be written with the *hamzah* on an *alif.* On the same page I would be inclined to read *ilāhī* for *ilī* and similarly on p. 162 *ilahīyah* (shortening the *alif* of *ilāhīyah* for metrical necessity) for *alīyah.*

These are perhaps cavils compared to the otherwise high quality of the edition and translation of this carefully crafted and lovely work of ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʾūnīyah. *The Principles of Sufism,* especially with its notes, will be helpful for researchers dealing with late Mamluk Sufism, but the book will also be accessible to general readers and undergraduates. Hopefully more scholars of Mamluk literature, particularly those working with the massive body of unedited secular literature deserving attention, will propose further works to the Library of Arabic Literature.

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Bernadette Martel-Thoumian, *Délinquance et ordre social: L'état mamlouk syro-égyptien face au crime à la fin du ixe–xve siècle,* Scripta mediaevalia 21 (Bordeaux: Ausonius, 2012). Pp. 293.

Reviewed by Carl F. Petry, Northwestern University

Publication of Martel-Thoumian's incisive monograph marks a signal advance in the analysis of subjects heretofore regarded as either peripheral to the so-called "main" currents of pre-modern Islamicate History (elite politics and social structure, formal religious doctrines, inter-regime rivalries), or irretrievable due to alleged inadequacies of coverage in primary sources. Investigation of crime, or transgressive behavior more generally, for decades the object of wide-ranging research with regard to pre-modern European societies, has been neglected for the central Islamic lands in this era (a defect undiscussed by the author in this work), despite its rich—if uneven—treatment in period texts. Martel-Thoumian considers the issue of crime as depicted in narrative chronicles compiled in Syria and Egypt (specifically, Damascus and Cairo) during the final half-century of the independent Mamluk Sultanate (from the ascension of al-Ashraf Qāytbāy in 872/1468 to the defeat of Qānṣawh al-Ghawrī by the Ottomans in 922/1517).

Following a brief overview of the sultanate's political trajectory (noteworthy for rising tensions between regional powers and irresolvable fiscal shortfalls internally), the book opens with a discussion of the diverse social cadres from which persons portrayed as criminal were drawn (Ch. 1, part II: *Sociologie du délinquant*). Martel-Thoumian acknowledges the consequences resulting from the confinement of sporadic criminal coverage to commentaries appearing in surviving chronicles. The earliest criminal registers in Egypt or Syria date from the Ottoman period. Despite the biases and selectivity evident in narratives provided by these chronicles, their range of detail and nuance offers insights about perspectives of offenders and attitudes of contemporary observers lacking in terse formulaic entries of registers, given their statistical gain.

The author proceeds with an outline of the institutions formally charged with controlling and penalizing transgressive acts (Ch. 2, *Institutions judicaires et pouvoir politique*). The officials discussed figure prominently in well-known secondary surveys of judicial systems in medieval Islamic societies (the magistrate *[qāḍī]* and market inspector *[muḥtasib]*), juxtaposed against the agents of enforcement (the sultan, prefect of police *[wālī al-shurṭah],* chamberlain *[ḥājib],* and executive adjutant *[dawādār]*) who possessed the effective means of suppressing crime. The author dwells on political realities of this period that witnessed the progressive supplanting of formal judicial procedures by interests of the military oligarchy,

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and consequent waning of autonomous implementation of shariʿah on the part of those ideally charged with its custodianship.

The monograph subsequently examines several categories of crime, which the author ranks according to their prominence in the narrative texts (Ch. 3, *Les délits*): violation of property (brigandage, robbery, theft) or of person (assault, homicide, rape); insurgency against ruling authorities (troop rebellions, civilian mob riots); and deviance from religious doctrines or prescribed social norms (apostasy, blasphemy, vices and forbidden pleasures). The reviewer's comments on the author's omission of several criminal categories follows. Martel-Thoumian continues with a detailed analysis of punishments and sanctions, noteworthy for its alertness to the context of intended objectives and actual effects (Ch. 4: *Les châtiments*). Perhaps the monograph's most perceptive section is its graphic depictions of punishments—in their grisly variety—which are not presented principally for "shock value," although this vividly comes across. Their arrangement persuasively conveys the ruling authorities' own scale of relative gravity, counterpoised against a diminishing scale of efficacy in terms of genuine prevention.

The monograph concludes with a discussion of regime stratagems and tactics aimed at forestalling transgressions, guarding property assets, and upholding public security (Ch. 5: *Prévenir et lutter contre la criminalité*). In light of endemic fiscal crises and tensions between rival competitors for regional hegemony, measures sporadically applied by the authorities during the sultanate's final decades to limit the populace's access to weapons or consumption of alcohol, for example, were conspicuous for their ineffectiveness. Continuous frequency of reported incidents implies ubiquitous recurrence rather than effective suppression.

With regard to geographical range, the study's focus and original findings center on the provincial capital, Damascus, under the late Mamluks. The author's previous research and accumulation of data have concentrated on the social structure of that city during the Circassian period. A quantitative check of references to primary sources cited in the notes confirms Damascus's consistent primacy of place (in a similar vein, the bibliography lists a copious range of secondary sources, intrinsically valuable as a general reference, but minimally cited with relevance to arguments raised in the text). By contrast, the imperial metropolis, Cairo, is discussed essentially in its context as the center of regime power and base of the sultanate's higher authority (as in Chapter 2). The author's detailed discussions of theft, brigandage, Bedouin predation, homicide, personal assault, and vice are limited to their Damascene milieus for the most part. This partiality of place may to some extent account for the striking absence of several prominent categories of transgression from the study. Crimes of fiscal corruption and fraud (bribery, asset confiscation on false charges, abusive taxation, embezzlement) are not considered. No reference to manipulation of charitable trusts *(waqf, awqāf),* a

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ubiquitous practice regarded as particularly egregious as a violation of shariʿah by chroniclers of the period, appears (the term is listed in neither the glossary nor index). The crimes of espionage by foreigners or domestic agents, or treason on the part of militarists at several ranks (feared by the ruling establishment as a capital threat, and prosecuted ruthlessly) receive minimal attention. These omissions may reflect the relative marginality of Damascus from the epicenter of fiscal and political power in Cairo. In contrast with their Egyptian counterparts, Damascene chroniclers focused their commentaries on modes of transgression noteworthy in their home town: endemic gang rivalry; mob resistance to local authorities; assaults, homicides, and thefts among the civil populace; and a plethora of indigenous vices.

These preferences of topical coverage are especially evident in the myriad observations offered by Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Ṭawq (d. 915/1509), author of *al-Taʿlīq*, a voluminous daily journal of Damascene events, set down between 885/1480 and 906/1500. Affirmed by Martel-Thoumian as the source providing many of the most illuminative glimpses into transgressive activity—on a consistent basis—during the interval under consideration, Ibn Ṭawq was likely not positioned to say much about the areas of transgression bypassed in the study.

Absence of these criminal categories limits the scope of Bernadette Martel-Thoumian's analysis, but does not detract from its numerous discerning insights on the topics addressed in depth throughout the work. The monograph contributes significantly to the investigation of criminality and behavior traditionally depicted as deviant from norms prescribed in religious canons of the central Islamicate world during the Late Middle Ages. Its author is to be commended for enriching an ongoing conversation about subjects that are central to enhancing our understanding of dimensions of social behavior long neglected in this discipline.

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