MAMLŪK STUDIES REVIEW

XXVII



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MAMLUKS AND MONGOLS

STUDIES IN HONOR OF REUVEN AMITAI

Editors
Or Amir, Michal Biran,
and Jonathan Brack

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Introduction

We are thrilled and honored to present this volume in tribute to our esteemed teacher, colleague, and friend, Professor Reuven Amitai, upon his retirement from teaching.

Reuven was born and raised in Philadelphia, and the city's distinctive accent as well as the experiences of his upbringing remain deeply embedded in his identity, even after decades in Israel. In 1973, he graduated from Central High School, and began his public activity, serving as the Secretary-General of *Ha-Shomer Ha-Tzaʿir* Zionist Youth Movement of North America (1975–76). Completing his undergraduate studies at the University of Pennsylvania in 1976, Reuven moved to Israel with his *Ha-Shomer Ha-Tzaʿir* cohort. After working for several years at Kibbutz Harel, he returned to academic life to complete his M.A. at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (1985). He also spent a year in SOAS, where he had the opportunity to study with experts on the Mongol Empire and the Islamic East including David Morgan, Peter Jackson, Alexander Morton, and Jonathan Riley-Smith. Returning to the Hebrew University, he pursued his Ph.D. in Middle Eastern Studies under the supervision of David Ayalon and Peter Jackson, completing it in 1990. Following a year as a post-doctoral fellow at Princeton University, he returned to the Hebrew University where he was appointed lecturer at the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies in 1993.



Over the next thirty years, Reuven had a key role in the department, the Faculty of Humanities, and the Hebrew University more broadly, serving a host of academic positions including department chair (1997–2001), Director of the Institute for Asian and African Studies (2001–4, 2008–10), Founding Director of the Nehemia Levtzion Center for Islamic Studies (2004–7), Dean of the Faculty

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of Humanities (2010–14), Chairperson of the Library Authority of the Hebrew University (2017–23), and Academic Head of the Havazalot Program (2019–22). Reuven filled all these roles (and many more) with unwavering dedication, invariably leaving his significant mark while striving to meet the academic goals of each institution. Reuven was always able to attend to minute details while never losing sight of the bigger picture. And he always treated his colleagues with the genuine kindness and respect of a true Mensch.

During his tenure at the Hebrew University, Reuven was also a visiting scholar in several prestigious institutions including St. Antony's College, Oxford (1996–97), l'École Pratique des Hautes Études at the Sorbonne in Paris (2007), Bonn University (2004, and 2014–16 at the Annemarie Schimmel Kolleg), and Villa I Tatti, the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies in Florence (2019). During the past few decades Reuven also dedicated his time to promoting Israeli-German academic relations, leading joint research projects and summer schools, heading academic committees and serving on Bonn University's Scholarly Advisory Board since 2018. At these and many other endeavors, Reuven was always successful in forging a host of amicable and fruitful cooperations with colleagues worldwide, from his native United States, across Europe, to Mongolia and further east.

Reuven's contagious enthusiasm captivated students at the Hebrew University for almost four decades. The courses he taught ranged from his mythic Introduction to the History of the Muslim Peoples, to the Crusades, the Ayyubids, the Mamluk Sultanate, the Mongols, military history, Islamization, and the history of Palestine in the Middle Ages. Reuven inspired numerous students to focus on the topics he was passionate about, and thousands of students to appreciate the importance of the Turkish-nomadic peoples in world history. Reuven's teaching transcended the confines of the classroom. He took hundreds of students and colleagues to ʿAyn Jālūt (Maʿayan Ḥarod), where he never got tired of reconstructing the Mamluk victory over the Mongols in 1260. His students gained first-hand familiarity with Mamluk and Crusader sites all over Israel, and some of the luckiest among them also joined the traveling seminars he held in Mongolia. Reuven mentored 14 Ph.D. and numerous M.A. students, many of whom now hold academic positions. As a devout student of David Ayalon, the founding *sultan* of Mamluk studies at the Hebrew University and worldwide, Reuven brought the *sultanate* to new heights, establishing his own regiment to carry out the mission of expanding Mamluk and Mongol studies. As his former students, we have proudly retained our bonds of *khushdāshīyah,* living in harmony even as some of us also retained a dual loyalty to the Mongol *ulūs,* under the aegis of our benevolent *ustādh*. The many contributions to this special issue demonstrate Reuven's impact as mentor, advisor, and member in dissertation committees, not



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only on his own students at the Hebrew University but also in other academic institutions in Israel and worldwide.

The working title for this special issue, *Mongols and Mamluks,* refers to Reuven's groundbreaking first monograph, based on his Ph.D. dissertation, *Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-Īlkhānid War, 1260–1281* (Cambridge University Press, 1995; Mongolian translation, 2006). In this study, as in his numerous articles and chapters, Reuven examined the great war between the Mamluks and the Ilkhanid Mongols, beginning at the inception of this rivalry in the Mongol conquest of Bilād al-Shām and the battle of ʿAyn Jālūt, through its unfolding into a decades-long "cold war" interrupted by several ill-fated or short-lived Mongol attempts to conquer Syria, finally formally ending with the 1323 peace treaty. Reuven's scholarship combined an expertise in military history, an exceptional grasp of the related political, social, and diplomatic aspects, knowledge of Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and Mongolian, and a meticulous attention to historiography as well as material evidence, from numismatics to epigraphy. Through this unique combination of skills, erudition, and source criticism, Reuven's works presented an unparalleled understanding of this watershed moment in Middle Eastern history. Reuven made profound contributions to the study of the history of the Mamluk Sultanate, the *mamlūk* institution, and the Mamluk military system, tactics, and strategy. His scholarship on Mamluk warfare and military system also touched upon a range of additional themes, including the Mamluks' nomadic background, diplomatic and espionage histories, and border strategies under Baybars and his successors. Additionally, Reuven has dedicated scholarly attention to the historiography of the Mamluk Sultanate, Mamluk diplomatic and commercial relationships with Europe and European city states, focusing on the slave trade, as well as Crusader and Byzantine histories, and Mamluk cultural relations with the Mongols.

Concomitantly, Reuven made significant contributions to the study of the Ilkhanate and the Mongol Empire more broadly. His major intervention in the field involved demonstrating and advocating for the historical value of the Arabic sources, primarily from the Mamluk Sultanate, as an essential resource for enhancing our understanding of Mongol history, particularly the Ilkhanate and the Golden Horde. Beginning with *Mongols and Mamluks,* Reuven's scholarship opened a new phase in Mongol Empire studies by substantially expanding the pool of available sources; it established the "Jerusalem School" of Mongol studies which followed his lead.

Moreover, by combining Arabic and Persian sources with material evidence, Reuven studied aspects of Mongol and Ilkhanid military histories, and Mongol social and political culture. Focusing on the Ilkhanate, he traced shifts in Mongol political ideology, from Hülegü's adoption of the title Īlkhān to Ghazan's Is-



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lamization and its ideological and political ramifications. Several of these contributions were re-published in his Variorum volume, *The Mongols in the Islamic Lands: Studies in the History of the Ilkhanate* (Aldershot and Burlington, 2007). Reuven's works have also been translated into several languages including Mongolian, Persian, and Turkish. In 2018, Reuven was awarded an honorary doctorate from the National University of Mongolia, formally marking his contribution to the field and reputation in the Mongolian academy. Explaining the decision to provide Reuven this honor, the committee wrote:

> Professor Reuven Amitai...has been admitted to the degree of doctor honoris causa for his outstanding academic achievement in Mongolian studies, contribution to promoting of scholarship development and cooperation between Israeli and Mongolian universities, and his groundbreaking work in the field of Mongolian History.

In his second monograph, *Holy War and Rapprochement: Studies in the Relations between the Mamluk Sultanate and the Mongol Ilkhanate (1260–1335)* (Brepols, 2013), Reuven revised and updated some of his previous studies of the Mamluk-Ilkhanid war and its ultimate peaceful conclusion, and addressed the ideological-religious elements of the conflict, which began as a clash of Mamluk Islamic *jihad* vs. the Mongol concept of a Chinggisid mandate from Heaven, but had to be reframed in light of Ghazan's conversion to Islam. This concise volume, in many ways, summarized thirty-some years of research on the topic, although several more articles have appeared since, and we expect more to come.

In the past decade, Reuven turned his attention to the history of Palestine, or southwest Bilād al-Shām, during the late Middle Ages. His research explored processes of Islamization, urbanization, and economic aspects of Mamluk rule, mainly in Gaza. Here again, Reuven combines a meticulous reading of Arabic sources with epigraphic and archeological evidence, presenting a vivid portrait of a peripheral region in the Mamluk Sultanate and its development through the Crusader, Ayyubid, and Mamluk eras. One key contribution of this research is showing that the sources call into question the predominant scholarly narrative of economic and social decline during the fifteenth century.

Reuven co-edited seven collective volumes on a variety of topics ranging from Mongol and Mamluk-related themes to the history of Eurasian nomads and Islam in Europe. Some of these volumes have already become classics in their respective fields. In total, Reuven authored more than a hundred chapters and articles, including dozens of encyclopedic entries and book reviews.

Aside from his teaching, research, and administrative roles, Reuven is first and foremost a Mensch, known for his collegiality, unpretentious wisdom,



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strong sense of volunteering, and dedication to every task he shoulders. He has always had the rare ability to create *ʿaṣabīyah* (comradeship, group solidarity) among the various groups he headed or was a member of. Reuven has always shown great concern for his colleagues and students, taking deep interest in the story of each undergraduate and making every effort to assist his graduate students. He took pride in his students' successes, even when they challenged his views, and was always the first to initiate events celebrating the achievements of his colleagues and commemorating his teachers.

Reuven was also a close friend to the Armenian community in Jerusalem, working toward the commemoration in Israel of the Armenian genocide and serving as ambassador of the community in face of contemporary challenges.

It is these qualities that have made it such an easy task to gather contributions for this festschrift. The willingness and enthusiasm of so many scholars to offer their tribute to Reuven demonstrates the respect he commands in the field and the affection of his peers, teachers, and students, who represent his primary research areas: the Mamluk Sultanate, the Mongol Empire, and the history of Palestine under the Mamluks.

We extend our gratitude to Frédéric Bauden for suggesting *Mamlūk Studies Review* as the venue for publishing this festschrift. Indeed, *MSR,* where Reuven has served on the editorial board since 2003 and has published various articles and reviews over the years, is the perfect setting to celebrate his achievements. Our deepest thanks go to Marlis Saleh for her incredible efficiency and patience in managing the review and editing process of the articles.

We wish Reuven many more years of good health, productive research, and peaceful enjoyment.

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The Dynastic Impulse: Mamluk Husbands, Nomadic Wives, and Family Ambitions in the Early Sultanate

This article is an investigation of the importance of family to the early mamluks. I contend that mamluk desires to connect with their natal families at times countered the mamluk system itself with its creation of bonds between men who were not genetically related to one another. To begin this work, some years ago I discussed the "Extended Family Impulse," which I saw as the tendency among politically prominent mamluks to contact the biological (usually natal) families they had left behind when they entered slavery. One way mamluks did this was through the slave merchants who had brought them to Cairo, who thereafter brought the families as free persons.[1] In the present article, which is my first attempt at a larger project, I begin to address the related idea of a "Dynastic Impulse" in the period 648–89/1250–90. By "Dynastic Impulse," I mean the attempts by the first mamluk rulers and their rivals, especially the initial generation of "Bahris," to attach themselves to existing dynastic families, to create new families, or to do both, in response to political pressures in the early sultanate. Among those who engaged in some form of dynastic impulse were the Bahri mamluks Baybars, Qalāwūn, and Fāris al-Dīn Aqṭāy; their Turkish ally, the concubine-turned-wife Shajar al-Durr; and their mamluk rival Aybak and his own slave-turned-ruler, Quṭuz.

In many cases, mamluks tried to achieve their political goals by using strategic marriages. (By contrast, and by virtue of her gender, Shajar al-Durr used somewhat different techniques from those of her male counterparts.) Although some scholars have suggested that mamluks preferred to wed enslaved women hailing from their own geographic and ethnic backgrounds,[2] my research suggests that the most prominent early mamluks used a wider range of marriage strategies. At times, they sought brides from local dynasties. At other times, they married free nomadic women who had recently arrived in the region with their natal families. In either case, husbands and wives together sought to create new dynasties through their children. Although the factionalism of the mamluk system meant that a sultan's offspring might never actually rule, the

[1] Anne F. Broadbridge, "Sending Home for Mom and Dad: The Extended Family Impulse In Mamluk Politics," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 15 (2011): 1–18.

[2] David Ayalon, "Mamlūk: Military Slavery in Egypt and Syria," reprinted in *Islam and the Abode of War* (Aldershot, 1994), II:16.

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intent of individual sultans and their female partners nevertheless remained focused on dynasty, as seen in clear, specific, and repeated behaviors, meaning not only the marriages themselves, but key symbolic practices around their children. Furthermore, all of these marriages, whether with existing dynasties or new arrivals, created in-law connections between the mamluk and the wife's family, and provided new personnel to contribute to family stability and status. For mamluk sultans in particular, male in-laws were likely to work in the auxiliary wing *(ḥalqah)* of the Egyptian army and support the family from there.

A Central Asian Model?

Scholars have theorized about the influence of Islamic family patterns on Mamluk behavior, such as the norm of having up to four wives, (theoretically) unlimited concubines, and children from a range of mothers.[3] Given that so many early mamluks and concubines were raised in a Central Asian Turkic cultural milieu, however, it is reasonable to ask whether medieval Turkic views of strategic marriage also influenced behaviors in the sultanate.

Perhaps they did: Current scholarship on Central and East Asian nomadic society has identified a model of strategic marriage based on a partnership between two families. In this model, a wife assumed managerial duties over her own and her husband's property. If she was the senior wife, her children enjoyed higher status than the children of lesser wives or concubines. A wife could provide personnel for her husband's endeavors: her male relatives could work for her husband, and her female relatives could enter the family as additional spouses, managers, and childbearers.[4]

Among those Turkic families whose patterns fit this model, we see the reasonably well-documented royal dynasty of the Khwarazm-Shahs, which slightly predated the Mamluk period. This family included the powerful queen, Terken Khatun, who was a Qangli, Kipchak, or Yemek Turk, and who became the senior wife of the Khwarazm-Shah Sultan Tekish (r. 1172–1200). Terken Khatun's son, Muḥammad (r. 1200–20), succeeded his father, with Terken as Queen Mother. During both her husband's and son's reigns, Terken ran parts of the empire and had her own sources of income. At least four of Terken's male relatives worked in the empire as governors or army commanders, while their male nomadic subjects served in the imperial armies as troops. Terken also found places for several female relatives in the empire, one of whom married Muḥammad and produced Terken's grandson, whom she successfully chose as Muḥammad's heir even though he was relatively young

[3] David Ayalon, "Mamlūk Military Aristocracy: A Non-Hereditary Nobility," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 10 (1987), 208–9; reprinted in his *Islam and the Abode of War.*

[4] Anne F. Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire* (Cambridge, 2018), Chapter 1.

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(the oldest son, the famous prince Jalāl al-Dīn, came from a mother unrelated to Terken).[5] The Khwarazm-Shahs were in no way unique: nearly identical patterns appeared later among the Temürids, especially with the well-connected and influential queen Gawharshad, senior wife of the Sultan Shāh Rukh (r. 1411–47), who helped her husband run his empire, whose brothers worked for him, and whose actions shaped royal succession.[6] These Turkic patterns of influential wives and their natal families also resembled those used among the Chinggisid Mongols who dominated the continent.[7]

The point here is that Turkic slaves in the Mamluk Sultanate, both male and female, might have held a common model of partnership in their minds as one possibility for marriage behaviors. Although we cannot read those minds now, we can at least deduce from Mamluk activities that Turkic ideas about family may have shaped the first sultans' choices of wives and influenced the expectations that husbands and wives had for themselves, for one another, and for their mutual offspring.

Bahri Rulers and Local Dynasties

The Bahri mamluks were a corps of military slaves working for the Ayyubid sultan al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ Najm al-Dīn Ayyūb (r. 637–47/1240–49). They established the Mamluk Sultanate in 648/1250 after the death of their master, al-Ṣāliḥ, in 657/1249, and their own murder of al-Ṣāliḥ's son, Turānshāh, a few months later. After the murder they allied politically with al-Ṣāliḥ's widow, Shajar al-Durr (lit., "tree of pearls," a slave name), a former concubine and a Turk who shared the Bahris' cultural background and language, and who ruled independently as sultana *(sulṭānah)* for a brief period with Bahri support.[8] Many Bahris rose to prominence in the early sultanate, including several who became sultans in their own right, among them Baybars (r. 658–76/1260–76), Qalāwūn (r. 678–89/1280–91), and the commander Fāris al-Dīn Aqṭāy, who never ruled. Other seekers of dynastic legitimacy were Aybak al-Turkumānī (r. 648–55/1251–57), who was also a former mamluk but opposed the Bahris energetically, and Aybak's own mamluk, Quṭuz (r. 657–58/1259–60).

Although the Bahris inaugurated what scholars today recognize as a unique political mechanism, they themselves did not have the benefit of scholarly hindsight

[5] Broadbridge, *Women,* 95–100.

[6] Anne F. Broadbridge, "The Temürids and Their Extra-Dynastic Affairs," in *The Temürid Dynasty: A Handbook,* ed. Evrim Binbash and John E. Woods (Leiden, forthcoming).

[7] Broadbridge, *Women,* Chapters 4 and 5.

[8] D. Fairchild Ruggles, *Tree of Pearls: The Extraordinary Architectural Patronage of the 13th-Century Egyptian Slave-Queen Shajar al-Durr* (Oxford, 2020), 68–70.

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or knowledge of the sultanate's future longevity. They therefore could not necessarily envision the peculiar system they were creating, and thus simply sought to set up a workable government in the face of political pressure from Egypt, Syria and points east. In terms of legitimacy in particular, some evidence suggests that in fact both the male sultans and the one female sultana tried to adopt a more familiar, near-universal model of justification for rule: the dynasty, meaning various systems of inheritance where eligibility is determined by membership in a specific biological family, rather than the actual one-generation factional Mamluk system that ultimately emerged from their ad hoc efforts.

The dynasties to which they turned to enact this vision were local and familiar. Foremost among these was the Ayyubid dynasty, whose members continued to rule Syria in the 650s/1250s even as the Mamluks established themselves in Egypt. The Bahris' Ayyubid master in Egypt, al-Ṣāliḥ, provided an example of rule that both his widow and the early Mamluks carefully emulated. The Ayyubid family at large followed earlier Zangid dynastic traditions of male military leadership, active patronage of Muslim scholars, poets, and artists, a strong commitment to the establishment of Islamic public architecture, and an overt recourse to the concept of defensive jihad as justification for military action.[9] Shajar al-Durr's behavior was shaped by her status in relation to the Ayyubids as a widow and mother, but for early Mamluk men, the most important part of the dynasty was the women of the family—the Ayyubid princesses—who were already intermarrying with their male Ayyubid cousins and with Anatolian Seljuk princes. It was with these women that ambitious Mamluks could seek marriage, with all its dynastic symbolism and the accompanying practical in-law relationships with Ayyubid men.

A distant second was the nascent Luʾluʾid dynasty in Mosul. Their founder, Badr al-Din Luʾluʾ (lit., "pearl," another slave name), was a freedman of the Zangid dynasty in Iraq, which he replaced by taking over the city of Mosul as an independent ruler, al-Malik al-Raḥīm, in 629/1232 with caliphal approval.[10] Badr al-Dīn prudently allied himself with the advancing Mongols as early as the 640s/1240s and remained their vassal for decades.[11] By the 650s/1250s he had three grown sons and several daughters, the most famous and most marriageable of whom is known here as the Luʾluʾid Lady because her name is unrecorded. After their father's death in

[9] The limitations of space here preclude discussion of these well-known topics.

[10] Claude Cahen, "Luʾluʾ, Badr al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍāʾil al-Malik al-Raḥīm," *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., 5:821.

[11] He sent ambassadors with a message of submission to the coronations of both Great Khāns Güyük (in 1246) and Möngke (in 1252). Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Rashiduddin Fazlullah's Jamiʿu't-tawarikh = Compendium of Chronicles: A History of the Mongols,* trans. and annotated Wheeler M. Thackston (Cambridge, 1998–), 392, 398; idem, *Jāmiʿ al-Tavārīkh,* ed. Muḥammad Rawshan and Muṣṭafá Musavī (Tehran, 1994), 805, 815.

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657/1259, Badr al-Dīn's children were far less inclined to maintain his alliance with the Mongols. This fluid situation provided unexpected opportunities for political and marital rapprochements with the Mamluks.

A third dynasty, the Khwarazm-Shahs, demonstrated a powerful draw despite no longer being entirely intact. Although in 1218–23 the Mongols had destroyed the Khwarazm-Shah empire, killed the royal men, and enslaved the royal women, the existence of refugees and survivors—princes, princesses, commanders, soldiers—helped keep the dream of a Khwarazmian royal family alive, even in Mamluk territory. That said, the early Mamluks did not seek connections with the oldest Turkic dynasty in the region, the Anatolian Seljuks, even though some Bahris did flee to the Seljuk court during periods of exile, and even though the Ayyubids had been intermarrying with them for years.[12] The reasons for this are unknown.

Finally, the terrifying Mongol armies arrived in the region in the late 650s/1250s under Chinggis Khān's grandson, Hülegü. Despite their defeat by the Mamluks at the Battle of ʿAyn Jālūt (lit., "Goliath spring") in Ramaḍān 658/September 1260, the Mongols soon settled into the Ilkhanate in Iraq, Iran, Anatolia, Azerbaijan, and Khurasan. Hülegü and his wives and family brought with them the awesome prestige of the newest nomadic dynasty: the Golden Lineage or Chinggisids, but the Mamluks sought no marital connections with them,[13] instead eagerly marrying into families of non-Chinggisid Mongols and Turks who arrived with Hülegü's armies and then emigrated into the sultanate.

Dynasty I: The Ayyubids and Shajar al-Durr

The first person to invoke the Ayyubid heritage was Shajar al-Durr. She was a Turkish slave, first the property of the Abbasid caliph al-Mustaʿṣim billāh, who gave her to al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb some time between 633/1236 and 635/1238.[14] With al-Ṣāliḥ, she produced a son, Khalīl, who died very young. Thereafter, al-Ṣāliḥ freed and married her, which was a significant elevation in her status.[15] Shajar

[12] P. M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusades: The Near East from the Eleventh Century to 1517* (London, 1986), 85 (flight to the Seljuks). For an undated marriage between the Ayyubids and the Anatolian Seljuks see Taef El-Azhari, *Queens, Eunuchs and Concubines in Islamic History, 661–1257* (Edinburgh, 2019), 351. For another in 652/1254–55 see Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij al-Kurūb fī Akhbār Banī Ayyūb* (Beirut, 2004), 4:180, 182–83; al-Makīn Ibn al-ʿAmīd, *Chronique des Ayyoubides, 602–658/1205–6–1259–60,* tr. Anne-Marie Eddé and Françoise Micheau (Paris, 1994), 97–98.

[13] The single attempt came in the 720s/1320s from the sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, who wedded a Golden Horde princess. Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology in the Islamic and Mongol Worlds* (Cambridge, 2008), 131–37.

[14] Ruggles, *Tree of Pearls,* 19, 103–4.

[15] Ibid., 18–19.

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al-Durr herself was, therefore, obviously not an Ayyubid by birth, but she used her marriage to and widowhood from al-Ṣāliḥ, as well as her motherhood of Khalīl, to claim the dynasty's legitimacy. When she became sultana in 648/1250, therefore, she employed titles that referred explicitly to them both: "Companion of al-Ṣāliḥ *(al-jihah al-Ṣāliḥīyah),* Mother of the Victorious Prince, Khalīl . . . *(wālidat al-malik al-manṣūr Khalīl)* . . . Wife of al-Ṣāliḥ *(ṣāḥibat al-malik al-Ṣāliḥ).*" These appeared on coins, in her correspondence, and in Friday sermons.[16] Shajar al-Durr also appealed to the Ayyubid model of architectural patronage of public buildings: she added a prominent tomb chamber for her husband to the madrasah that he had constructed in the heart of Cairo, then sponsored her own complex—in which her titles figured verbally and pictorially in her mausoleum, and possibly also in the accompanying mosque, madrasah, public bathhouse, and gardens—south of the citadel.[17]

Despite her own membership in the Ayyubid dynasty and her appeals to that family's ideas of sovereignty, Shajar al-Durr acted as sole ruler for just under three months (Muḥarram to Rabīʿ II 648/May to July 1250), during which the Ayyubid al-Nāṣir Yūsuf of Aleppo opposed her, first in correspondence and then by capturing Damascus from her Bahri allies.[18] Nor was she supported by the Abbasid caliph in Baghdad, al-Mustaʿṣim, whose slave she had once been.[19] After the capture of Damascus, therefore, and despite their apparent respect for Shajar al-Durr herself, the Bahris in Cairo demanded a male sultan who could lead them in battle. Shajar al-Durr abdicated in favor of a mid-level mamluk commander, Aybak al-Turkumānī (r. 648–55/1251–57), though her Bahri allies forced him—after a mere five days—to rule in the name of an Ayyubid puppet, al-Ashraf Mūsá, aged 10. This was a transparent appeal to the symbolic power of the dynasty, and perhaps also an attempt to appease the remaining Ayyubids in Syria. But if so the strategy did not work, since al-Nāṣir Yūsuf of Aleppo then unsuccessfully attacked Egypt.[20] Nevertheless, Shajar al-Durr remained the real power behind the throne throughout these rapid political changes, according to the chroniclers, and she continued to issue and sign decrees and make decisions.[21] At some point between Rabīʿ II 648/July 1250 and

[16] Ibid., 30, 72; Paul Balog, *The Coinage of the Mamluk Sultans of Egypt and Syria* (New York, 1952), 51–52; Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij,* 4:100.

[17] Ruggles, *Tree of Pearls,* 78–88, 94, 97, 111–40; see 123 for the titles and her son; 139 for the visual references to a tree of pearls. Most of her structures have not survived, so her use of her titles and pictorial references to herself can only be verified in her mausoleum.

[18] Ibid., 72, 103–4; Holt, *Age,* 84.

[19] Ruggles, *Tree of Pearls,* 19, 103–4.

[20] Holt, *Age,* 84.

[21] Aḥmad al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab,* ed. Saʿīd ʿĀshūr (Cairo, 1985–92), 29:456; Gregorius Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronography of Gregory Abû'l Faraj, the Son of Aaron, the Hebrew Phy-*

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Dhū al-Qaʿdah 648/February 1251, she and Aybak married on the condition that he divorce his other wives—including the mother of his son ʿAlī—so that Shajar al-Durr could be his only partner.[22]

Dynasty I: The Ayyubids, Fāris al-Dīn Aqṭāy, and Aybak

Shajar al-Durr was not alone in trying to claim Ayyubid legitimacy. Another contender for the dynasty's lustrous prestige was the Bahris' chief commander, Fāris al-Dīn Aqṭāy, who became the first formerly enslaved man to forge a connection to the Ayyubid family through a marriage proposal. This he did by sending a representative in 651/1253 to negotiate with the Ayyubid ruler of Hama, al-Malik al-Muẓaffar, about wedding his daughter. Al-Muẓaffar was amenable to a connection with an important commander in Egypt, and the contract *(nikāḥ)* was duly performed. The Ayyubid princess bride—whose name is unrecorded—then went from Hama to Damascus, with all appropriate pomp, to wait for her groom.[23]

Aqṭāy's strategic marriage must be understood in light of his already considerable political clout: he and his fellow Bahri officer Baybars had been the ones to pressure Aybak, Shajar al-Durr's new husband, to step down for the 10-year-old Ayyubid puppet after those mere five days as sultan.[24] This marriage produced new horizons for Aqṭāy. The chroniclers report that his status increased among the Baḥrīyah and other troops after his union with the princess (legally if not yet in person), while the status of Sultan Aybak and his mamluks decreased.[25] Aqṭāy then handed out largesse to the troops, as a powerful man was expected to do, and finally asked for the city of Alexandria as a grant *(iqṭāʿ)* for himself from Aybak.[26] Aqṭāy also used his new role as an Ayyubid son-in-law to claim the right to royal insignia—perhaps the royal saddle-cover *(ghāshīyah)*—and adopted some kind of royal title for himself, along the lines of an Ayyubid prince.[27] Next, he requested that he and his bride (whom he still had not met) move into the Cairo citadel, which, he argued, was her right since her famous Ayyubid

sician, Commonly Known as Bar Hebraeus, tr. (from Syriac) A. W. Budge (London, 1932), 455; Bar Hebraeus, *Tārīkh mukhtaṣar al-duwal,* ed. Fr. Anton Salaḥānī (Beirut, 1890), 418; al-Makīn Ibn al-ʿAmīd, *Chronique,* 99; Baybars al-Dawādār al-Manṣūrī, *Al-Tuḥfah al-mulūkīyah fī al-dawlah al-turkīyah,* ed. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Ṣāliḥ Ḥamdān (Cairo, 1987), 26, 27.

[22] Al-Makīn Ibn al-ʿAmīd, *Chronique,* 89, gives 29 Rabīʿ II 648/31 July 1250, but no other source is as precise on the date. See Ruggles, *Tree of Pearls,* 106–7, and n. 26.

[23] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 29:430.

[24] Holt, *Age,* 84.

[25] Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdat al-fikrah fī tārīkh al-hijrah,* ed. D. S. Richards (Beirut, 1998), 10.

[26] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 29:430.

[27] Holt, *Age,* 85.

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ancestor—Saladin himself—had had it constructed.[28] Aybak clearly felt threatened: his response was to summon Aqṭāy to the citadel on a plausible pretext on 3 Shaʿbān 652/18 September 1254 and have him murdered by his mamluk Quṭuz. Aybak then convinced the rioting Bahris below the walls to stand down by showing them Aqṭāy's decapitated head. Thereafter most of the corps fled to the Ayyubids in Syria or to the Seljuks in Anatolia, while Aybak shipped the Ayyubid child puppet to Damascus and took rule in his own name, albeit with Shajar al-Durr still behind him.[29]

It is evident that Aybak had a very firm grasp of the symbolic potential of Aqṭāy's marriage, since next he made overtures to the newly widowed Ayyubid princess for himself, although nothing seems to have come of this.[30] He was also negotiating a match with the Luʾluʾid Lady of Mosul by 655/1257.[31] At least according to the chroniclers, this behavior made Shajar al-Durr angry and fearful, while Aybak himself resented her power over him and the realm, and soon each of them began plotting to assassinate the other.[32] Shajar al-Durr struck first, in Rabīʿ I 655/April 1257, by having some mamluks kill Aybak in her presence as he prepared to bathe after his weekly Tuesday polo game.[33] She then tried to find a commander to step into Aybak's place, but none would do so out of fear of Aybak's mamluks and of the factionalism set loose by the murder. After two days, Aybak's fifteen-year-old son by the other woman, ʿAlī, was hastily made sultan by Aybak's mamluks. Within a week, Shajar al-Durr had disappeared; the next week her corpse was found below the citadel and she was interred in her beautiful tomb.[34] Thus ended her innovative engagement with Ayyubid prestige and the symbolic power of the dynasty to which she had been given as a concubine, for which she had produced a son, and into which she had ultimately married.

Dynasty II: The Luʾluʾids with Aybak, Baybars, and Bilik

Aybak was not the only one seeking connections to the Luʾluʾid dynasty in Mosul. Quṭuz, his trusted mamluk, also engaged creatively with them, albeit through

[28] Ibid., 84–85.

[29] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 29:430–31.

[30] Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdah,* 39.

[31] Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Tuḥfah,* 39; Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij,* 4:194.

[32] Al-Makīn Ibn al-ʿAmīd, *Chronique,* 99, also cited in Ruggles, *Tree of Pearls,* 109; Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij,* 4:194.

[33] Ruggles, *Tree of Pearls,* 109–10.

[34] Ibid., 110–11; Holt, *Age,* 85. One source claims it was Aybak's son, ʿAlī, and Aybak's mamluk, Quṭuz, who killed her. See Ibn Aybak al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar wa-jāmiʿ al-ghurar,* ed. Ulrich Haarmann (Cairo, 1971), 8:32.

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patronage, not marriage; the marriage connections came later. It might not be obvious why anyone would express political interest in the Luʾluʾids, since Badr al-Din Luʾluʾ had been a loyal vassal to the Mongols for years. Worse yet, in late winter 656/1258 he let Mongol forces use a bridge at his city of Mosul to join the attack on Baghdad, then sent his heir, al-Ṣāliḥ Ismāʿīl, to participate in the sack in person. Thereafter Hülegü, the Chinggisid prince, made al-Ṣāliḥ marry a Khwarazmian princess living in the Mongols' care, as was common for the Chinggisids, who positioned women from their own or other dynasties as wives and agents in their vassals' households.[35] None of this would seem to suggest that the family could be interested in connections to Cairo.

But then in 657/1259 Badr al-Dīn died of old age.[36] His offspring's reactions varied. As the new lord of Mosul, al-Ṣāliḥ continued his father's policies by joining the Mongols in their 657/1259 invasion of Anatolia and Syria, and personally commanded an attack on Amid.[37] It is unclear whether a second son, al-Mujāhid of Jazīrat Ibn ʿUmar, cooperated with the Mongols. The third brother, al-Muẓaffar ʿAlī of Sinjar, defected to Cairo and joined Quṭuz, who had now become sultan (r. 657–58/1259–60), and accompanied him to Syria in 658/1260 to fight the Mongols at ʿAyn Jālūt.[38] Quṭuz rewarded this third Luʾluʾid prince with the governorship of Aleppo, even though he had also promised that position to the Bahri commander Baybars. Quṭuz further gave the prince a new title, al-Malik al-Saʿīd, and asked him to correspond with his brothers in Iraq about Mongol movements.[39] Quṭuz's intelligence strategy soon failed, however: in Aleppo this Luʾluʾid botched a response to a new Mongol advance and was imprisoned by the Aleppan commanders for incompetence.[40]

[35] Broadbridge, *Women,* 107–9, 125–29. For this particular incident see Quṭb al-Dīn al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl Mirʾāt al-Zamān* (Hyderabad, 1955), 2:106; Bar Hebraeus, *Mukhtaṣar,* 492, and idem, *Chronography,* 440; Rashīd al-Dīn, *Compendium,* 502, and idem, *Jāmiʿ al-Tavārīkh,* 1025. She was a daughter of Jalāl al-Dīn Khwarazm-Shah. Given that he died in 628/1231 but she married over 20 years later in the 650s/1250s, she is likely to have been raised among the Chinggisids from infancy or early childhood and may have actually been loyal to them, as her later behavior suggested.

[36] Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Tuḥfah,* 42; Abū Shāmah, *Tarājim rijāl al-qarnayn al-sādis wa-al-sābiʿ al-maʿrūf bi-al-dhayl ʿalá al-rawḍatayn,* ed. Muḥammad Zāhid ibn al-Ḥasan al-Kawtharī (Cairo, 1947), 203; Rashīd al-Dīn, *Compendium,* 509, and idem, *Jāmiʿ al-Tavārīkh,* 1040, but in 659/1261; Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij,* 4:245, 247, 261, but in 656/1258 and 657/1259.

[37] Rashīd al-Dīn, *Compendium,* 502, and idem, *Jāmiʿ al-Tavārīkh,* 1025–26.

[38] Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij,* 4:296–97.

[39] Ibid., 4:296–97; al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl,* 1:374; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 30:39; also Peter Thorau, *The Lion of Egypt: Sultan Baybars I and the Near East in the Thirteenth Century,* tr. P. M. Holt (London, 1992), 95–96.

[40] Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij,* 4:302–4.

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Meanwhile, Quṭuz was murdered by a coalition of mamluk commanders, including Baybars, who became the next sultan (r. 658–76/1260–76). Six months later, in summer 659/1261, the other two Luʾluʾid princes, al-Ṣāliḥ of Mosul and al-Mujāhid of Jazīrat Ibn ʿUmar, followed their brother by fleeing towards Syria, one after the other.[41] They brought their families, children, retainers, some soldiers, their best-known unmarried sister—the Luʾluʾid Lady—and other sisters.[42] Al-Ṣāliḥ left his Khwarazmian wife in Mosul, where she behaved true to her position as a Mongol agent by alerting the Mongols of her husband's defection. They immediately sent an army in pursuit, but it failed to intercept him.[43]

The Luʾluʾids joined a stream of refugees, arriving in Cairo in summer 659/1261 close behind an Abbasid fugitive that Baybars inaugurated lavishly as the caliph al-Mustanṣir billāh. Thereafter the sultan welcomed the Luʾluʾids with food, stipends, costly robes, horses, and tack. He assigned them luxurious temporary housing in side-by-side mansions in Cairo and invited the princes to ride and play cavalry games with him.[44] At their request, Baybars summoned their imprisoned brother from Aleppo to join them. After hosting everyone in Cairo, Baybars outfitted both the new caliph and the Luʾluʾid princes for a return to Iraq, and left with them in Shawwal/September for Syria, from which he saw them off. Baybars later boasted that he spent over a million gold dinars on his guests,[45] but he did not send enough men with either the princes or the caliph to successfully oppose the Mongols.[46] Ultimately, the caliph was killed by Mongol forces, while al-Ṣāliḥ suffered a lengthy siege in Mosul, surrendered, and was executed horribly.[47] The other two brothers—al-Mujāhid of Jazīrat Ibn ʿUmar

[41] Ibid., 4:313, 320; al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl,* 2:106; Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Al-Rawḍ al-zāhir fī sīrat al-Malik al-Ẓāhir,* ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Khuwayṭir (Riyadh, 1976), 114; Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdah,* 65; Ibn Aybak al-Dawādārī, *Kanz,* 8:81; Abū Shāmah, *Dhayl,* 212–13; Bar Hebraeus, *Mukhtaṣar,* 492, and idem, and *Chronography,* 440; Rashīd al-Dīn, *Compendium,* 509, and idem, *Jāmiʿ al-Tavārīkh,* 1040–41; Thorau, *Lion,* 114–15.

[42] Al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl,* 2:156, for the additional sisters.

[43] Rashīd al-Dīn, *Compendium,* 509, and idem, *Jāmiʿ al-Tavārīkh,*1040–41; Bar Hebraeus, *Mukhtaṣar,* 492, and idem, *Chronography,* 440.

[44] Al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl,* 2:106; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 30:26.

[45] Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Tuḥfah,* 47; Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Rawḍ,* 112.

[46] Scholars have discussed this poor strategic decision elsewhere. Thorau, *Lion,* 115–16; ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Khuwayṭir, *Baibars the First: His Endeavours and Achievements* (London, 1978), 36; Holt, *Age,* 92–93.

[47] Details (sheep's fat, sun, maggots) are in Rashīd al-Dīn, *Compendium,* 510–11, and idem, *Jāmiʿ al-Tavārīkh,* 1043. Otherwise see Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdah,* 68; al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl,* 1:494–95; Ibn Aybak al-Dawādārī, *Kanz,* 8:90.

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and al-Muẓaffar of Sinjar (aka al-Malik al-Saʿīd of Aleppo)—fled with their remaining dependents back to Baybars in Cairo, where they settled for good.[48]

As for the marital connection, it was agreed during the initial Luʾluʾid visit that the Luʾluʾid Lady, who had previously been considered as a bride for the sultan Aybak, would now marry Baybars's commander and protégé, a mamluk named Bilik al-Khāzindār. This was arguably a step down for her from Aybak, since Bilik was only an officer, not a ruler. Nevertheless Baybars assured her brothers of his favor for Bilik and described him as being like his own son.[49] (Also, since her family had become exiles and supplicants, this may have been the best they could do for her.) The sources are not entirely clear on the timing, but the contract *(nikāḥ)* is said to have been signed in Shawwāl 659/September 1261 and featured a lavish party that the Lady's brothers attended before heading off to Syria and then Iraq. The full celebration then followed in Muḥarram 660/December 1261, by which point Bilik had become the vicegerent in Egypt, the second position after the sultan himself.[50] Later, however, the family disappeared from historical view after Bilik's early death.[51]

Dynasty III: The Khwarazm-Shahs and Quṭuz

A third appealing dynasty was the ruling house of the Khwarazm-Shah Empire, even though the Mongols had dismembered it in 1218–23. In the 650s/1250s, in rumors in Damascus and Cairo that were reproduced in the Mamluk chronicles, this family became linked to the sultan Quṭuz (r. 657–58/1259–60), the former mamluk of Aybak. As noted above, Quṭuz had helped murder Fāris al-Dīn Aqṭāy for Aybak; then, after Aybak's own murder in the bath, Quṭuz usurped power from Aybak's son ʿAlī not long before the Mongols arrived in Syria. Finally, as al-Malik al-Muẓaffar, Quṭuz led the Mamluk defeat of the Mongol forces at ʿAyn Jālūt before his assassination at the hands of some of his own commanders.

Two stories circulated about his ancestry. Some Mamluk sources claim that Quṭuz had been owned by a civilian in Damascus before being sold to Aybak. One day, Quṭuz's first owner slapped him and insulted his parents and grandfather.

[48] Al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl,* 2:156.

[49] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 30:53.

[50] Ibid. Bilik and the Lady had two daughters together. See Mufaḍḍal Ibn Abī al-Faḍāʾil, *Histoire des sultans mamlouks,* ed. and trans. E. Blochet (Paris, 1919–29), 454, albeit naming him as "Baysara"; also, Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The Early Mamluk Sultanate, 1250–1382* (London, 1986), 55.

[51] He was allegedly poisoned by Baybars's senior wife, the Khwarazmīyah, out of fear of him as a rival to her son. Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 30:370 (poison); Mufaḍḍal, *Histoire,* 453–54.

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Quṭuz wept all day, refused to eat, and would not be consoled. When finally asked by a servant, Ḥajj ʿAlī al-Farrāsh, why he was crying, Quṭuz answered that his family was superior to his owner's family and did not deserve the insults. When Ḥajj ʿAlī scoffed at Quṭuz as a Turkish slave, unbeliever *(kāfir),* and the son of unbelievers *(kāfirīn),* Quṭuz retorted that not only was he actually a Muslim and son of Muslims, but his family was royalty: he was prince Maḥmūd, the son of Mamdūd, a son of the sister of the Khwarazm-Shah [i.e., Sultan Muḥammad (d. 1220)].[52] According to this story, Quṭuz's father had been captured young and sold in the 620s/1220s.[53]

The second story concerned a North African fortune-teller who met with Quṭuz and a few of his associates during Aybak's reign. While prognosticating, the fortune-teller declared that a man with a five-letter name, whose father also had a five-letter name, would rule after Aybak, then defeat the Mongols. The fortune-teller was confused by this result, since Quṭuz had only a three-letter name (q-ṭ-z). But Quṭuz cleared up the mystery by explaining that he was really Maḥmūd son of Mamdūd (both of which have five letters in Arabic), and that he would finally avenge his maternal uncle, the Khwarazm-Shah.[54]

Although we are in no position to determine what Quṭuz thought of these rumors, to say nothing of whether there could possibly be a scrap of truth in them, we may at least deduce from the way some chronicles repeated them, while others pointedly did not (probably for ideological reasons),[55] that they were known in both Egypt and Syria. We also cannot determine whether these stories circulated during Quṭuz's lifetime or only after his death. Regardless, they illustrate the way yet another heroic warrior was linked, certainly by others and possibly by himself, to a royal dynasty, implying justification of his rule in Egypt, whether during that rule or posthumously.

Furthermore, although it is well known that Baybars, the next real sultan, helped assassinate Quṭuz in Dhū al-Qaʿdah 658/October 1260 and then took over from him,[56] it is scarcely known at all that Baybars's own son and heir could

[52] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 29:479–80; Ibn Aybak al-Dawādārī, *Kanz,* 8:39–41; al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl,* 1:368.

[53] "He" was captured young; obviously the story only works if it is Quṭuz's father, "Mamdūd," who was captured as a child and sold in the 1220s, thus reaching adulthood by, say, the mid-1230s, in time to produce a son, Quṭuz, who himself could be sold as a child or teen in the late 1240s or 1250s.

[54] Al-Nuwayrī (citing al-Jazarī), *Nihāyah,* 29:480–81; Ibn Aybak al-Dawādārī, *Kanz,* 8:39–40; al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl,* 1:368–69.

[55] Note the omission of these stories, which made Quṭuz look like a potentially legitimate ruler, in Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Rawḍ* (a pro-Baybars text); Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdah* (a pro-Qalāwūnid text); Shāfiʿ ibn ʿAlī Ibn ʿAsākir, *Ḥusn al-manāqib al-sirrīyah al-muntazaʿah min al-sīrah al-Ẓāhirīyah,* ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Khuwayṭir (Riyadh, 1989) (pro-Baybars again); and Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij* (pro-Ayyubid). For chronicles that *do* mention them, see note 49 above.

[56] Thorau, *Lion,* 79–85; Holt, *Age,* 88–89; Irwin, *Middle East,* 34.

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perhaps also have claimed royal Khwarazmian forebears through his mother (see below). Scholars have not yet considered whether the rumors about Quṭuz's ancestry might have influenced Baybars's decision to participate in the murder as a means of eliminating both an actual and ideological rival for himself and his heir. It should be noted that once he became sultan, Baybars not only forbade pilgrimage to Quṭuz's tomb but later had the body moved so the populace could not find it to venerate it, suggesting at the very least that he sought to contain Quṭuz's posthumous reputation.[57]

New Dynasties: Baybars, Qalāwūn, and the Immigrants

Unlike Shajar al-Durr; unlike those Bahris who tried to harness the symbolic power of the Ayyubid or Luʾluʾid dynasties; unlike even the allegedly royal Quṭuz and the Khwarazm-Shahs, the next Bahris who became sultans—Baybars (r. 658–76/1260–77) and Qalāwūn (r. 678–89/1279–90)—sought marriage partners mostly from among a new population: the immigrants *(wāfidīyah)* who entered the region as refugees fleeing in front of, or escaping from within, Hülegü's Mongol armies. These immigrants included Turks, Kurds, and Mongols who were not from the Chinggisid royal family.

Baybars as a Bridegroom

Baybars was well known in his own time and after as an ambitious ruler, a brilliant military strategist, an able politician, and a pugnacious warrior who made critical contributions to the survival of the sultanate in the face of outside threats, especially from the Mongols.[58] He was a Kipchak Turk and former mamluk of al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb, and upon his own ascension to the position of sultan became deeply concerned with his legitimacy, taking active steps to establish and promote himself as a ruler.[59]

Baybars was also a married man, who had five (technically six[60]) wives over the course of his lifetime. Without exception, all of these women were free persons from nomadic populations that emigrated into Syria or Egypt from points north and east: the Khwarazmians in the 640s/1240s, the Shahrazūrīyah Kurds

[57] Al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl,* 2:29; also see P. M. Holt, "The Position and Power of the Mamluk Sultan," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 38 (1975): 245.

[58] See Thorau, *Lion,* especially Chapter 3, and Holt, *Age,* 90.

[59] See Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology,* Chapter 2, with extensive references in the notes.

[60] The sixth wife was the third daughter of Karmūn and sister of Qalāwūn's senior wife, Fāṭimah. Baybars married "Fāṭimah's sister," then repudiated her after a very short time. Later "Fāṭimah's sister" married Qalāwūn after Fāṭimah died. See Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdah,* 164, 228–29.

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in 655/1257–58, and three groups of Mongols in the 660s/1260s.[61] These nomadic women—plus perhaps concubines, although none are clearly recorded[62]—produced ten children: three boys and seven girls.[63] In other words, for his wives Baybars sought out free (not enslaved) women with origins similar to his own.

Baybars's wives	**Baybars's children**
1. "al-Khwarazmīyah" or Umm al-Malik al-Saʿīd (name unrecorded)	al-Malik al-Saʿīd Berke Khān Muḥammad
2. "al-Shahrazūrīyah"	
3. Daughter of Nokia	
4. Daughter of Karāy	
5. Daughter of Tumaji	
6. Daughter of Karmūn	
It is unknown precisely which women were the mothers of Khiḍr, Sülemish, and seven daughters.	

Baybars probably married (1) his first wife, a Khwarazmian Turk of unrecorded name (here called "al-Khwarazmīyah"), in the 640s/1240s or early 650s/1250s. She became his senior wife, which was common in the Turkic societies from which she and Baybars originated for the first woman a man married.[64] Her status could also have contributed to her seniority: her father was Husām al-Dīn Berke Khān, son of Dawlat Khān al-Khwarazmī al-Yemkī.[65] Berke Khān was the

[61] David Ayalon, "The Wafidiya in the Mamluk Kingdom," *Islamic Culture* 25 (1951): 89–104.

[62] One account of Baybars's role in the murder of Quṭuz has Baybars approaching him on the pretext of requesting a woman from among the Mongol captives from the Battle of ʿAyn Jālūt, then kissing his hand to thank him, which allowed him to stab Quṭuz. Although Baybars probably indicated a real woman (to make it believable), we do not know whether he actually acquired her later, or whether she simply provided a convenient pretext to approach Quṭuz. See al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl,* 1:371. Other accounts have Baybars interceding on behalf of an unknown person, or asking about the governorate of Aleppo, or being interceded for by the commander Anas in regard to weapons.

[63] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 30:368.

[64] On the senior wife in Altaic society in general see Broadbridge, *Women,* 14–18.

[65] There is some confusion over him in the historical sources, where two different Berke/Barakah Khāns appear, both said to be the leader of the Khwarazmian immigrant forces. The earlier sources, including Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Rawḍ,* 178, and Shāfiʿ ibn ʿAlī, *Ḥusn,* 137–38, say this man died in 664/1265. But Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Maqrīzī (*Kitāb al-sulūk li-maʿrifat duwal al-mulūk,* ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá Ziyādah [Cairo, 1956], 1:324), writing over a hundred years later, puts his death about 20 years earlier at the (second) Khwarazmian-Ayyubid battle in 644/1246.

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commander-in-chief of the armies of the last Khwarazm-Shah ruler, Sultan Jalāl al-Dīn (d. 628/1231). Berke's title of "Khān," his father's name of "Dawlat Khān," and his command of a large Khwarazmian unit all implied a connection to the royal family of the Khwarazm-Shahs, perhaps as cousins or a collateral line.[66] (It also, perhaps, established them later in the sultanate as ideological rivals to the "Khwarazmian royal" mamluk Quṭuz.)

Berke Khān and his forces were living in Diyarbakr by the 630s/1230s, albeit without a ruler to support.[67] Then the Ayyubid al-Ṣāliḥ invited the Khwarazmians to work for him, and they fought a joint battle with his army against an Ayyubid-Frankish coalition in 642/1244.[68] The Khwarazmians were incredibly destructive in their victory, however, and were themselves defeated and dispersed by a different Ayyubid coalition in 644/1246.[69] It was around this time that Baybars entered al-Ṣāliḥ's service.[70] Later Berke Khān and his son (i.e., Baybars's wife's brother), Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad Bay ([*sic*], Beg), worked as commanders in the Mamluk armies, probably in the auxiliary troops *(ḥalqah)* where non-mamluks were assigned.[71] It was a typical practice in Central Asian Turkic families to find military positions for a wife's male relatives in her husband's army, and this accords with that practice.[72]

In 658/1260, al-Khwarazmīyah had the good political and personal fortune to give birth to the oldest of Baybars's sons, whom the happy couple named Berke Khān (after her father?) Muḥammad (perhaps after her brother?) and entitled al-Malik al-Saʿīd (the Joyful King). He became Baybars's publicly acknowledged

[66] See Ayalon, "Wafidiya," 96 and n. 44 (referring to a section of Ibn Shaddād's biography of Baybars that I do not have), identifying him as Berke Khān ibn Dawlat Khān al-Khwarazmī al-Yemkī. The Yemek were a Turkic group identified as possibly that of the Khwarazm-Shah Queen Mother, Terken Khatun, and finding a place for her own relatives as commanders in the armies would have been entirely consistent with practices in that empire. See Broadbridge, *Women,* 96–98.

[67] Holt, *Age,* 66; J. A. Boyle, "Djalāl al-Dīn Khwārazm-Shāh," *EI2,* 2:392–93.

[68] Holt, *Age,* 65–66; Ayalon, "Wafidiya," 94, relying on al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 1:315, 316–17. Berke Khān allegedly tried to marry the Ayyubid daughter of al-ʿĀdil (d. 625/1227–28), who was also the mother of al-Nāṣir in Aleppo, but he was refused; see Rashīd al-Dīn, *Compendium,* 398, and idem, *Jāmiʿ al-Tavārīkh,* 815. It has also been suggested that Berke Khān did marry a half-sister of al-Ṣāliḥ (on his mother's side), but this marriage has not been widely verified. Ayalon did not mention it. See al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 1:280.

[69] Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 1:324; Holt, *Age,* 66.

[70] Thorau, *Lion,* 29.

[71] When her son arrested her brother at the very beginning of his own reign, she angrily interceded and he was released and returned to his station within eleven days. See al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 30:373.

[72] Broadbridge, *Women,* 136–37, 227, 261–63, 265–67.

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heir in 662/1264 at the age of about four.[73] When Berke Khān (the grandfather) died in Dhū al-Ḥijjah 662/September 1264, he was given a public funeral procession in Cairo. Baybars walked in the procession as sultan, as was appropriate for his father-in-law and the grandfather of the heir. The funeral was also attended by important Mamluk and emigrant Mongol commanders (the latter from the *ḥalqah*), some wearing robes provided by Baybars for the occasion.[74]

A few years later, in 667/1269, Baybars's wife, now known as Umm al-Malik al-Saʿīd (i.e., Mother of the Joyful King), went on the pilgrimage to Mecca with due pomp and splendor.[75] This kind of public, well-funded journey was a statement to Muslims at home and abroad about Baybars's power as a ruler and as a husband; it also highlighted her status as the senior wife and a mother, since it is unlikely that a childless or junior wife would go on such an expensive, prestigious, and logistically challenging trip. Umm al-Malik al-Saʿīd later displayed the vigor and decisiveness associated with royal women elsewhere in Turkic society when she became an active, important, and controversial political figure during her son's short sultanate in Egypt.[76]

Baybars's second wife (2) "al-Shahrazūrīyah" came from the 3,000-strong immigrant community of Shahrazūrīyah Kurds who fled to Syria from the Kurdish mountains in 655/1257–58 after a battle with Hülegü.[77] This marriage was more overtly political in nature: the Shahrazūrīs allied themselves with Ayyubid rulers in Syria, just as Baybars did as leader of the Bahris, and the two groups connected in part through the wedding.[78] There is no evidence, though, that the Shahrazūrī wife bore children; furthermore, Baybars divorced her after becoming sultan in 658/1260.[79] Thereafter, in 669/1270–71, Baybars imprisoned all the Shahrazūrī

[73] Ayalon, "Wafidiya," 96; for making him the heir see Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Rawḍ,* 203–8.

[74] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Rawḍ,* 178; Shāfiʿ ibn ʿAlī, *Ḥusn,* 137–38, noting that the great Mongol emigrant commanders, including Qalāwūn's father-in-law, Karmūn, attended while wearing robes that Baybars had given them.

[75] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Rawḍ,* 353; note the later connections among women, representation, and (sometimes) waste on the pilgrimage in Tara Stephan, "Waste, Excess, and Obsession in the Mamluk Harem," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 24 (2021): 197–99.

[76] This will be further developed in the next version of this project. Her dubious renown came from allegedly poisoning her husband's mamluk Bilik, whom she saw as a threat to her son. She also accompanied her son on campaign to Syria in 677/1278. Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 30:370 (poison); 385 (campaign); Mufaḍḍal, *Histoire,* 453–54.

[77] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 29:383 (the battle); Thorau, *Lion,* 62–63; V. Minorsky and C. E. Bosworth, "Shahrazūr," *EI2,* 9:218–19.

[78] Many Bahris fled Egypt for Syria in 652/1254 after the murder of Fāris al-Dīn Aqṭāy.

[79] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 30:368.

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commanders in the auxiliary forces on rumors of a plot to assassinate his heir from his Turkic first wife (al-Khwarazmīyah/Umm al-Malik al-Saʿīd).[80]

Baybars's other wives (3, 4, 5, 6) were also immigrant nomads, but in this case Mongols who had arrived in the sultanate with their relatives. Three waves came: a group of 200 in late 660/fall 1262;[81] a second group of 1,300 in fall 661/1263,[82] and finally a third (unnumbered) group in spring 662/1264.[83] The second group in particular was composed of subjects of the Jochid Mongols in Central Asia and Russia (i.e., the so-called Golden Horde), who had fled Hülegü's armies after hostility developed between him and their own prince, Berke Khān.[84] Its leaders included men named Karmūn Āghā, Nokia, Karāy, and many others.[85] Baybars welcomed each of these three waves personally and oversaw their conversion to Islam.[86] He gave the leaders land-based stipends (*iqṭāʿ*s) and military ranks as commanders (*ṭablakhānah*s), in the non-mamluk cavalry units *(ḥalqah),* as well as robes of honor, other gifts, and a place to settle with their families in the al-Lūq area of Cairo.[87]

Then Baybars intermarried extensively with the new arrivals, including (3, 4, 6) daughters of Nokia, Karāy, and (briefly) Karmūn.[88] At the same time, Qalāwūn, Baybars's colleague and successor, also married a daughter of Karmūn (see below). Thereafter some of these immigrant fathers-in-law participated in Mamluk military endeavors: Karmūn partnered with Qalāwūn to oversee a strategic trench at the siege of Arsūf in spring 663/1265, and was rewarded after its fall with income from half a village.[89] Although Nokia fell afoul of Baybars and spent time in prison

[80] Ibid., 175; also see Thorau, *Lion,* 231.

[81] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 30:62–64; Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Rawḍ,* 136–38; Ibn Aybak al-Dawādārī, *Kanz,* 8:91–93; Baybars al-Manṣūrī. *Zubdah,* 89; al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl,* 1:496–97, 2:156. This group does not appear in Shāfiʿ ibn ʿAlī, Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Tuḥfah,* or Mufaḍḍal.

[82] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 30:89; Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Rawḍ,* 177–180; al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl,* 1:534, 2:156.

[83] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 30:99; Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Rawḍ,* 198; Shāfiʿ ibn ʿAlī, *Ḥusn,* 159.

[84] Not to be confused with Baybars's father-in-law *or* his son, both of whom were also Berke Khāns. See also Ayalon's pioneering work in "Wafidiya," 98.

[85] For the names see especially Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Rawḍ,* 177–80.

[86] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 30:89–90; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 1:501; Ayalon, "Wafidiya," 98–99, although he had to rely on tricky later sources like al-Maqrīzī, since that is what was available to him in the 1950s.

[87] Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdah,* 84; also Ibn Abd al-Ẓāhir, *Rawḍ,* 180.

[88] For the wives see Ibn Aybak al-Dawādārī, *Kanz,* 8:211; for their father's names see al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 30:89–90; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 1:501. For Baybars's brief sixth marriage, to the daughter of Karmūn in perhaps the 670s/1270s, see Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdah,* 164; she later married Qalāwūn, the widower of her sister Fāṭimah.

[89] He died in Dhū al-Qaʿdah 664/August 1266. Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 1:528, for the trench, 542 for Karmūn's death; see also Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdah,* 99. See Thorau, *Lion,* 161–62, on trenches at Arsūf.

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in Alexandria, he was released and made a commander of 1,000 under Qalāwūn, whose sons married two of Nokia's daughters (see below).[90] Karāy's career is mostly unknown, though he seems to have remained loyal to Baybars.[91] At some point Baybars also wedded (5) a daughter of the Mongol commander Tumaji, although it is unclear when she and her father arrived in the sultanate.[92] Nevertheless, Baybars's senior wife, al-Khwarazmīyah/Umm al-Malik al-Saʿīd, maintained her status as mother of the heir despite these additions to the household and despite the subsequent births of two more sons to Baybars from women other than herself, along with seven daughters.[93] In sum, therefore, Baybars had multiple wives, all of whom came into his household as free persons from recent immigrant groups of nomadic origin, most of them Turkic or Mongol.

Qalāwūn as a Bridegroom

Qalāwūn's wives	Qalāwūn's children
1. Fāṭimah, daughter of Karmūn	al-Ṣāliḥ ʿAlī
2. Q-t-q-tīyah (?)	al-Ashraf Khalīl
3. Ashlūn, daughter of Sektay	al-Nāṣir Muḥammad
4. Daughter of a commander	Aḥmad
5. Fāṭimah's sister, daughter of Karmūn	
The exact mothers of Ghāziyah, Altunmish, and a third daughter are unknown.	

[90] Nokia later died of wounds from the Battle of Homs with the Ilkhan Ghazan in 699/1299. Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 1:888, 905; Badr al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd al-jumān fī tārīkh ahl al-zamān,* ed. Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn (Cairo, 1992), 4:17.

[91] References are scant and at times seem to designate other men named Karāy, including one of Qalāwūn's mamluks. Nevertheless, late historians like al-ʿAynī and al-Maqrīzī suggest that the Mongol Karāy was in a group of Ẓāhirī Bahris and Wāfidī Mongols who rebelled against Qalāwūn in 680/1281 and took refuge in Sahyun with Baybars's old friend, the commander Sunqur al-Ashqar, who had been a captive with the Ilkhanids for some years, and surely spoke Mongolian. All were reconciled to Qalāwūn two days before joining him at the battle of Homs. See al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd,* 2:265–66, 271; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 1:691, 697.

[92] Ibn Aybak al-Dawādārī, *Kanz,* 8:211.

[93] The sons were Salamish (aka Sülemish) and Khiḍr, each from a different mother; the daughters' names are unknown, except for Tidhkārbay, who left a building. See Howyda al-Harithy, "Female Patronage of Mamluk Architecture in Cairo," *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review* 1, no. 2 (1994): 164.

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Qalāwūn was another Bahri officer, a Kipchak Turk and former mamluk, a respected and seasoned commander in his own right, a staunch ally to Baybars during his lifetime, but then an ambitious and able sultan who adeptly sidelined Baybars's family and nascent dynasty in order to establish the rule of his own sons. Like Baybars, Qalāwūn married multiple wives; also like Baybars, these were (largely) recent immigrants of nomadic origin who had entered the sultanate with their families.

Foremost in rank, if not first in order, was (1) a daughter of Karmūn [Āghā], who arrived in the second Mongol immigrant wave in fall 661/1263. Her wedding to Qalāwūn in 664/1265–66 was a lavish affair held in the Horse Market and attended by Baybars, who distributed extensive gifts.[94] As mentioned, Qalāwūn went on to work militarily with his father-in-law at Arsūf. Thereafter the lady was the mother of Qalāwūn's heir, al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ ʿAlī. She acquired the Muslim name of Fāṭimah, by which she is known in the historical sources and in reports about her mausoleum and madrasah complex.[95] After Fāṭimah's death in 683/1284, Qalāwūn married (5) her sister, who was then living in his household as a widow.[96] Fātimah's Sister (as she will be known here) later guided Qalāwūn to choose suitable brides for his son ʿAlī (Fātimah's child) and for ʿAlī's half-brother, al-Ashraf Khalīl.

Meanwhile (2) a different Turkic or Mongol woman, Q-ṭ-q-ṭīyah, seems already to have married Qalāwūn as early as 659/1260–61, but she did not produce his second son, al-Ashraf Khalīl, until after ʿAlī's birth, and is otherwise almost entirely unrecorded in the sources or the architectural record. Q-ṭ-q-ṭīyah may therefore have been a lesser personage than Fāṭimah and her sister, and her status and origins are enigmatic.[97]

Then in 681–82/1282–83 Qalāwūn married (3) Ashlūn, the daughter of a Mongol commander named Sektay, the son of Qarajin. They had arrived in Egypt from Anatolia in 674/1275–76 with Sektay's brother (i.e., Ashlūn's uncle), other commanders, and their families. Sektay's and Ashlūn's claims to ancestry were illustrious: They were said to be Besüt Mongols, and Sektay's grandfather, Jighan (or Jayghan), was rumored to have been a weaponskeeper *(silāḥdār)* to Chinggis Khān before going to Anatolia with the Mongol commander Baiju. There, one of Jighan's female relatives had allegedly married the Parvanah, who worked for the Anatolian Seljuks, which—if true—created important in-law connections for the family in its new home. Turbulent politics among the Parvanah, Anatolians,

[94] Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdah,* 102.

[95] Al-Harithy, "Female Patronage," 156.

[96] She had previously married Baybars, then the commander Kunduk, before returning to Qalāwūn's household. Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdah,* 164.

[97] Her name appears only in ibid., 71.

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and Mongols caused several other Mongol and Turkic families to flee to the Mamluk Sultanate in the 670s/1270s.[98] Among these were Sektay, his brother, and Ashlūn. Her father had died by the time she reached the age of maturity in 681/1282–83, so her uncle prepared her for her wedding with Qalāwūn. Within a short time Ashlūn became the mother of Qalāwūn's third—and politically most successful—son, the future three-time sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad.[99]

Qalāwūn's fifth and final marriage, to (4) the daughter of one of his commanders, was contracted immediately after the deaths of his heir, ʿAlī, and daughter, Ghāziyah, in 687/1288. It is to be wondered whether he was motivated at least partly by grief, especially since the marriage ended in divorce soon after this wife—who was badmouthed in one source[100]—had produced his fourth son, Aḥmad.[101] In total, Qalāwūn had five marriages, most to women of nomadic origin; he also had four sons and three daughters.[102]

After the Marriages: Establishing the Heir

Once a Bahri sultan married, the next step in establishing a new dynasty was for the senior wife to produce a live son that the sultan could proclaim as his heir.[103] In the early days of the sultanate this proclamation seemed to happen shortly after news of an invading Ilkhanid force, which was probably not a coincidence. The ceremonies of inheritance may have been meant to leave a clear chain of family authority in case the sultan failed to return from the battle, though we cannot be sure. We can say that the early Mamluks derived these ceremonies from Ayyubid traditions. They included a public procession for the heir through the streets of Cairo, which were decorated for the purpose. The prince was shaded by the royal parasol (*jitr),* accompanied by the atābak (commander of the armies), and preceded by the other commanders, some of whom carried

[98] Ibid., 151–52.

[99] Ibid., 229; Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Tashrīf al-ayyām wa-al-ʿuṣūr fī sīrat al-Malik al-Manṣūr,* ed. Murād Kāmil (Cairo, 1961), 110–11; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 31:90.

[100] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 31:156, claiming she was arrogant and her family was composed of social climbers.

[101] Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdah,* 263; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 31:156, 173, 331.

[102] The sons were: ʿAlī, from Fāṭimah; Khalīl, from Q-ṭ-q-ṭīyah; Muḥammad, from Ashlūn; and Aḥmad, from the daughter of Qalāwūn's commander. The daughters, whose mothers are unknown, are one unnamed daughter, Altunmish, and Ghāziyah, who married Baybars's son Berke Khān Muḥammad. See al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 31:173–74 (inexplicably leaving out Ghāziyah, for whom see al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 30:223); Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdah,* 149; also see 102, 229.

[103] Holt, "Position and Power," 238, 239, describing the procedures used by Baybars for his son Berke Khān, and then by Qalāwūn for al-Ṣāliḥ ʿAlī and al-Ashraf Khalīl.

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the royal saddle-cover (*ghāshīyah*[104]). Next came a banquet (for men, but there was surely another for women) and a ceremony in which loyalty was sworn to the heir, all financed, presumably, by significant expenditures. The chancellery produced a diploma of investiture, which was read aloud in the presence of religious and military personnel like judges, scholars, and army commanders in Cairo and Damascus.[105]

Thus, for example, in 662/1264, upon hearing that a group of Mongols was arriving in Syria from the Ilkhanate (the previously mentioned third immigrant wave), Baybars designated as heir al-Malik al-Saʿīd Berke Khān Muḥammad, his oldest son (with al-Khwarazmīyah/Umm al-Malik al-Saʿīd). The public procession took place in Cairo on 13 Shawwāl 662/8 August 1264, and the diploma of investiture was read aloud on the 17th/12th.[106] The armies were mustered and reviewed, this last in the presence of Golden Horde envoys (who were in Cairo at the time), and a costly ceremony of investiture followed.[107] Moods relaxed when news arrived that these "invaders" were immigrants seeking peaceful settlement in the sultanate.[108] A month later, in Dhū al-Qaʿdah/September, the prince and the sons of several commanders were circumcised in a lavish ceremony, for which Baybars magnanimously paid.[109] Although the sources do not mention women's celebrations, we must assume that Berke Khān's mother was honored as befit her station and that the expenditures were probably comparable.

Twenty years later, in 679/1280, Qalāwūn engaged in almost the same behavior. In his case, when reports arrived of an approaching Ilkhanid army, Qalāwūn established his oldest son, the teenaged al-Ṣāliḥ ʿAlī, as heir on 11 Rajab 679/6 November 1280 with a public procession and diploma of investiture.[110] Although this invasion turned out to be just a raid near Aleppo, a year later Qalāwūn rout-

[104] Holt, "Position and Power," 238; 243.

[105] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Rawḍ,* 203–4; for the protocol see Holt, "Position and Power," 238.

[106] It noted that Berke Khān was a branch of the royal tree represented by Baybars, and promised on Baybars's behalf that he would bring his son up properly to be a king for the sake of the Islamic community *(ummah).* It also referred explicitly to the idea that only Baybars or his son held or could hold the authority of rule in those lands. Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Rawḍ,* 203–8; he was the author of the document, and included it in his work.

[107] Ibid., 205–8.

[108] Ibid., 209.

[109] Ibid., 209, 213–14.

[110] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 31:68; Ibn Aybak al-Dawādārī, *Kanz,* 8:238, Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Tashrīf,* 200–3; Shāfiʿ ibn ʿAlī, *Al-Faḍl al-maʾthūr min sīrat al-Malik al-Manṣūr,* ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī (Beirut, 1998), 162–63; al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl,* 4:46 (the Damascus reading); Holt, "Position and Power," 239.

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ed the Ilkhanids at the Battle of Homs on 14 Rajab 680/29 October 1281.[111] When ʿAlī died in 687/1288 of illness, Qalāwūn repeated these ceremonies with his second son, al-Ashraf Khalīl, child of the mysterious Q-ṭ-q-ṭīyah.[112]

Negotiating Further Marriages

The next step in establishing a dynasty was to make well-publicized, strategic marriages for the younger generation, which Baybars, Qalāwūn, and the royal mothers did. Thus Baybars's son Berke Khān married Qalāwūn's daughter Ghāziyah in a lavish wedding on 12 Dhū al-Ḥijjah 674/28 May 1276.[113] The backdrop of the wedding was the pressure of frequent Ilkhanid incursions, followed by Baybars's victory at the Battle of Abulustayn (Elbistan) a year later (Dhū al-Qaʿdah 675/April 1277). But it also seems likely that Baybars and al-Khwarazmīyah/Umm al-Malik al-Saʿīd were motivated by the fact that Ghāziyah was a member of the rising Qalāwūnid family. Unfortunately, as we do not know the name of her mother, we cannot be sure of her maternal lineage.

With the exception of Ghāziyah, the Qalāwūnid weddings came after the Battle of Homs in 680/1281. First, Qalāwūn married his third wife, the abovementioned Besüt Mongol Ashlūn (daughter of Sektay and soon-to-be mother of the third son, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad).[114] The weddings of Qalāwūn's two older sons were facilitated by Qalāwūn's other wife, the Mongol immigrant we are calling Fāṭimah's Sister. She suggested two daughters of the Mongol commander Nokia as brides, whom she chose for their ethnic origin and because, having emigrated with them twenty years earlier, she knew the family. (Presumably the brides came from a new generation of Nokia's children, born in Egypt and appropriate in age for the grooms).[115] Thus in 681/1281–82, ʿAlī wedded M-b-l-bek (?), and she later produced a son.[116] A few months later, in 682/1282–83, ʿAlī's half brother al-Ashraf Khalīl wedded M-b-l-bek's sister Urdukin, who became the mother of

[111] Reuven Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-Ilkhānid War, 1260–1281* (Cambridge, 1995), 187–200; Holt, *Age,* 102.

[112] Liver disease in al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 31:159–60; dysentery in Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdah,* 263–64, and idem, *Tuḥfah,* 119; Ibn Aybak al-Dawādārī, *Kanz,* 8:282; Shāfiʿ ibn ʿAlī, *Faḍl,* 164. For the document on Khalīl's accession see Ibn Abd al-Ẓāhir, *Tashrīf,* appendix, p. 246, document 24.

[113] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 30:223–29; Shāfiʿ ibn ʿAlī, *Ḥusn,* 326, and idem, *Faḍl,* 28–35; Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdah,* 149, including the document written by Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, and idem, *Tuḥfah,* 83.

[114] Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdah,* 152, 229.

[115] *Ikhtārat lil-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ bint Sayf al-Dīn Nūkya . . . wa-mālat ilayhim li-jinsīyatihim wa-li-annahum wafadū fī waqtin wāḥidin ilá al-diyār al-miṣrīyah . . .* Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdah,* 229.

[116] This was al-Manṣūr Mūsá.

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two daughters.[117] The father of the brides had been imprisoned in Alexandria under Baybars, but under Qalāwūn he was freed, brought to Cairo, welcomed lavishly, and given a grant *(iqṭāʿ)* and a position as a commander.[118]

Conclusion

Although the early Bahri sultans may have created the complex, faction-infused, single-generation political system that so interests scholars today, I suggest that this was an inadvertent act on their part. Close examination of the historical record instead reveals that they seem to have admired the concept of a traditional dynasty, formed through a combination of marriage and biology. Thus, Mamluks sought partners from among existing dynasties in the region, like the Ayyubids, Luʾluʾids, and even the remnants of the Khwarazm-Shahs, or from nomadic immigrants whose backgrounds resembled their own. Turkic mamluks may have understood marriage through the lens of a Turkic and Mongolian model characterized by partnership between two families, as is suggested by the way Mamluk sultans employed male in-laws in the auxiliary forces of the sultanate while their wives produced offspring and helped arrange strategic marriages for them. Furthermore, all ambitious parents used ceremonies of rule to reinforce their sons' claims to leadership, in opposition to the actual Mamluk political system. We may call this a Dynastic Impulse on the part of the early Bahris and their partners, and it helps us better understand the early Mamluk mindset, even if it failed more often than it succeeded.

Postscript

In addition to what has been covered here in this preliminary article, dynastically-minded Mamluk sultans and royal wives could promote their families with the help of the chancellery officials who wrote explicit statements of dynastic ideology in wedding contracts and diplomas of inheritance of rule. Both parents also expressed themselves and their dynasties by sponsoring the construction of Islamic architecture, particularly buildings for public use like madrasahs, mosques, hospitals, public baths, and Sufi lodges. Finally, while sultans' participation in politics is obvious, it is important to remember that royal wives also politicked for their sons when necessary. As space here is limited, I will take up these topics in subsequent writings.

[117] Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdah,* 228–29, 232–33; Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Tashrīf,* 20, 44; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 31:91, 99.

[118] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah,* 31:99.

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The Term *Turkī Khāliṣ* in Mamluk Sources

Introduction

We have all enjoyed and benefited from Reuven Amitai's extensive studies exploring the relationship between the Mamluks and their Mongol neighbors.[1] In several of his studies, Amitai also discussed the phenomenon of mamluks of Mongol origin. In his article "Mamluks of Mongol Origin and Their Role in Early Mamluk Political Life,"[2] he discussed in detail the lives of several Mongol mamluks during the early Mamluk period, expanding on David Ayalon's preliminary and cursory observations on this phenomenon.[3] It is, therefore, appropriate that we further discuss the mamluks of Mongol origin in the Mamluk Sultanate in a volume compiled to honor Amitai's scholarship and achievements.

While several scholars have touched on or discussed in detail the phenomenon of mamluks of Mongol origin during the early Mamluk period (roughly 648–741/1250–1341),[4] mamluks of Mongol origin during later periods have hard-

[1] See, for example, Reuven Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-Īlkhānid War, 1260–1281* (Cambridge, 1995); idem, *Holy War and Rapprochement: Studies in the Relations between the Mamluk Sultanate and the Mongol Ilkhanate (1260–1335)* (Turnhout, 2013); Reuven Amitai, *The Mongols in the Islamic Lands: Studies in the History of the Ilkhanate* (Aldershot, 2007).

[2] Reuven Amitai, "Mamluks of Mongol Origin and Their Role in Early Mamluk Political Life," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 12, no. 1 (2008): 119–37. For other studies by Amitai touching on Mongol mamluks, see, for example, idem, "The Mongol Occupation of Damascus in 1300: A Study of Mamluk Loyalties," in *The Mamluks in Egyptian and Syrian Politics and Society,* ed. Amalia Levanoni and Michael Winter (Leiden, 2004), 21–41; idem, "A Mongol Governor of al-Karak in Jordan? A Re-examination of an Old Document in Mongolian Arabic," *Zentralasiatische Studien* 36 (2007): 263–75; Amitai-Preiss, "Northern Syria between the Mongols and Mamluks: Political Boundary, Military Frontier, and Ethnic Affinities," in *Frontiers in Question: Eurasian Borderlands, 700–1700,* ed. Naomi Standen and Daniel Power (New York, 1999), 128–52; idem, "Echoes of the Eurasian Steppe in the Daily Culture of Mamluk Military Society," *Journal of The Royal Asiatic Society* 26, nos. 1–2 (2016): 262, 269.

[3] See, most conspicuously, David Ayalon, "The Great Yāsa of Chingiz Khān: A Re-examination (Part C1)," *Studia Islamica* 36 (1972): 124–26; idem, "Mamlūk: Military Slavery in Egypt and Syria," in *Islam and the Abode of War* (Aldershot, 1994), 2:7–9.

[4] See, for example, Donald P. Little, *An Introduction to Mamlūk Historiography: An Analysis of Arabic Annalistic and Biographical Sources for the Reign of al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāʾūn* (Wiesbaden, 1970), 126–28; idem, "Notes on Aitamiš, a Mongol Mamlūk," in *Die islamische Welt zwischen Mittelalter und Neuzeit: Festschrift für Hans Robert Roemer zum 65. Geburtstag,* ed. Ulrich Haarmann and Peter Bachmann (Beirut, 1979), 387–401; idem, "Circassians," in *Dictionary of the Middle Ages,*

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ly received scholarly attention.[5] This must be mostly due to the decline in the number of Mongol mamluks after the early period,[6] but it is also due to terminological difficulties. The two main labels in Mamluk sources that were, in all likelihood, used in the early period to refer exclusively or largely to mamluks of Mongol origin (or mamluks who arrived from Mongol Central Asia or were

ed. Joseph R. Strayer (New York, 1983), 399; Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The Early Mamluk Sultanate 1250–1382* (London, 1986), 91–92; Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Ashqar, *Salār, al-Amīr al-Tatarī al-Muslim nāʾib al-salṭanah al-Mamlūkīyah fī Miṣr (660–710 H/1260–1310 M)* (Cairo, 2000); Koby Yosef, "Ethnic Groups, Social Relationships and Dynasty in the Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517)" (Ph.D. diss., University of Tel-Aviv, 2011) [in Hebrew]; idem, "Cross-Boundary Hatred: (Changing) Attitudes towards Mongol and 'Christian' Mamlūks in the Mamluk Sultanate," in *The Mamluk Sultanate from the Perspective of Regional and World History: Economic, Social, and Cultural Development in an Era of Increasing International Interaction and Competition,* ed. Reuven Amitai and Stephan Conermann (Göttingen, 2019), 149–72; idem, "The Names of the Mamlūks: Ethnic Groups and Ethnic Solidarity in the Mamluk Sultanate (648–922/1250–1517)," in *Egypt and Syria under Mamluk Rule: Political, Social and Cultural Aspects,* ed. Amalia Levanoni (Leiden, 2022), 59–94; Julien Loiseau, *Les Mamelouks (XIIIe–XVIe siècle): Une expérience du pouvoir dans l'islam medieval* (Seuil, 2014), 32–41, 160–73; Amir Mazor, *The Rise and Fall of the Muslim Regiment: The Manṣūrīyah in the First Mamluk Sultanate, 678/1279–741/1341* (Bonn, 2015), 33–40; idem, "*Sayf al-Dīn Qipchaq al-*Manṣūrī: *Defection* and *Ethnicity between Mongols* and *Mamluks*," in *Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia: Generals, Merchants and Intellectuals,* ed. Michal Biran, Jonathan Brack, and Francesca Fiaschetti (Oakland, 2020), 102–19; Anne F. Broadbridge, "Careers in Diplomacy among Mamluks and Mongols, 658–741/1260–1341," in *Mamluk Cairo, a Crossroads for Embassies: Studies on Diplomacy and Diplomatics,* ed. Frédéric Bauden and Malika Dekkiche (Leiden, 2019), 265, 278; Josephine van den Bent, "Mongols in Mamluk Eyes: Representing Ethnic Others in the Medieval Middle East" (Ph.D. diss, University of Amsterdam, 2020), 207–60; idem, "Mongols in the Mamluk Sultanate," in *The Mongol World,* ed. Timothy May and Michael Hope (London, 2022), 855–64; and see also Nasser O. Rabbat, *The Citadel of Cairo: A New Interpretation of Royal Mamluk Architecture* (Leiden, 1995), 132, 289; idem, "The Changing Concept of *Mamlūk* in the Mamluk Sultanate in Egypt and Syria," in *Slave Elites in the Middle East and Africa: A Comparative Study,* ed. Toru Miura and John Edward Philips (London, 2000), 95–96; Nobutaka Nakamachi, "The Rank and Status of Military Refugees in the Mamluk Army: A Reconsideration of the *Wāfidīyah*," *MSR* 10, no. 1 (2006); Jo Van Steenbergen, "Caught between Heredity and Merit: The Amir Qūṣūn and the Legacy of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalāwūn (d. 1341)," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 78, no. 3 (2015): 6; Ishayahu Landa, "Oirats in the Ilkhanate and the Mamluk Sultanate in the Thirteenth to the Early Fifteenth Centuries: Two Cases of Assimilation into the Muslim Environment," *MSR* 19 (2016); Hannah Barker, *That Most Precious Merchandise: The Mediterranean Trade in Black Sea Slaves, 1260–1500* (Philadelphia, 2019), 50.

[5] For a discussion of Mongol (or Central Asian) mamluks during the later period, see Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 173–80. On mamluks from Central Asia in the later period, see Michal Biran, "The Mamluks and Mongol Central Asia," in *The Mamluk Sultanate from the Perspective of Regional and World History: Economic, Social, and Cultural Development in an Era of Increasing International Interaction and Competition,* ed. Reuven Amitai and Stephan Conermann (Göttingen, 2019), 375.

[6] See Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 171–72; idem, "The Names of the Mamlūks," 92.

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annexed to the Mongol Khanates of the East)—namely *Mughul* (sing. *Mughulī*) or *Tatar* (sing. *Tatarī*)—would later fall out of use in this context (in the case of *Mughul*) or gradually shift semantically (as happened with *Tatar*).[7] This article makes a modest contribution to the discussion of mamluks of Mongol origin (or mamluks from [Timurid] Central Asia) during the later period of the Mamluk Sultanate by examining the term *Turkī khāliṣ* ("a pure Turk") in Mamluk sources.

Half a century ago, Ayalon noted that whereas al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1363) and other Mamluk historians mention that Aytamush al-Muḥammadī (d. 736/1336), a Mamluk amir of Mongol origin, was knowledgeable in the Mongols' language *(kāna yaʿrifu bi-al-Mughulī lisānan wa-kitābatan/yaʿrifu bi-lisān al-Mughul),*[8] Ibn Taghrībirdī (d. 874/1470), who paraphrased (and distorted) al-Ṣafadī's text, says that Aytamush was proficient in Mongolian and adds that "the Mongol language is the pure Turkish" *(kāna yaʿrifu bi-al-Mughulī wa-huwa al-Turkī al-khāliṣ).*[9] Ayalon stated that Ibn Taghrībirdī had attempted to show off his knowledge but "his assertion about the Mongol language is without foundation."[10] Somewhat later, Donald Little noted that when Ibn Taghrībirdī wrote that "the Mongol language is pure Turkish," he "was speaking out of ignorance."[11] Even if Ibn Taghrībirdī's comment is linguistically unfounded, however, we should not ignore the possibility that some Mamluk authors used the expression "pure Turk/pure Turkish" *(Turkī khāliṣ)* as equivalent to "Mongol." In fact, Joo-Yup Lee recently noted that following the usages of pre-Modern Muslim writers in whose writings "*Turk* was often used as a generic term meaning all Inner Asian nomads" including also the

[7] For some preliminary notes on the relevant terminology, see Ayalon, "Mamlūk: Military Slavery," 8–9; for a detailed discussion, see Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 156–60, 173–87; and see also the section "*Turkī Khāliṣ* as 'Mongol': Context and Explanation" below. On the terms *Mughul* and *Tatar,* see also Marie Favereau, *La Horde d'Or et le sultanat mamelouk: naissance d'un alliance* (Cairo, 2018), 78–99; van den Bent, "Mongols in Mamluk Eyes," 33–38.

[8] See David Ayalon, "The Great Yāsa of Chingiz Khān: A Re-examination (Part C2)," *Studia Islamica* 38 (1973): 138, n. 3; see also Little, "Notes on Aitamiš," 394–95; and see Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr wa-aʿwān al-naṣr,* ed. ʿAlī Abū Zayd et al. (Beirut, 1998), 1:634, 2:636; idem, *Al-Wāfī bi-al-wafayāt,* ed. Josef van Ess (Wiesbaden, 1991), 9:440; Mūsá ibn Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyá al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat al-nāẓir fī sīrat al-Malik al-Nāṣir,* ed. Aḥmad Ḥuṭayṭ (Beirut, 1986), 329–30; Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-muqaffá al-kabīr,* ed. Muḥammad al-Yaʿlāwī (Beirut, 1987–91), 2:342; Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Al-Durar al-kāminah fī aʿyān al-miʾah al-thāminah,* ed. ʿAbd al-Wārith Muḥammad ʿAlī (Beirut, 1997), 1:248.

[9] Ayalon, "The Great Yāsa (Part C2)," 136, n. 1; and see Abū al-Maḥāsin Yūsuf Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal al-ṣāfī wa-al-mustawfá baʿda al-wāfī,* ed. Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn (Cairo, 1984–2006), 2:291.

[10] Ayalon, "The Great Yāsa (Part C2)," 136, n. 1.

[11] Little, "Notes on Aitamiš," 395.

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Mongols,[12] "Mamluk historians also used the term *Turk* in a broad sense that included non-Turkic groups" including Mongols,[13] so "it is no wonder why a Mamluk historian [i.e., Ibn Taghrībirdī] even described the Mongol language as being 'pure Turkish.'"[14] Moreover, it is well known that the Mongols were perceived as (ethnically) related to the Turks,[15] "if not a subgroup of the latter,"[16] and as Josephine van den Bent has recently demonstrated, ethnographic descriptions of the Mongols by Muslim writers starting from the seventh/thirteenth century relied on earlier Islamic descriptions of the Turks.[17] More specifically, Mongol mamluks are sometimes referred to in Mamluk sources as "Turks,"[18] and the Mongol language may be even referred to in Mamluk sources on some occasions as "the Turkish Mongol language" *(al-Turkīyah al-Mughulīyah).*[19] Still, this alone is insufficient to prove that Mamluk authors used the expression *Turkī khāliṣ* as an equivalent for "Mongol," and if it was indeed used in such a manner, this does not clarify when and why.

[12] Joo-Yup Lee, "The Historical Meaning of the Term *Turk* and the Nature of Turkic Identity of the Chinggisid and the Timurid Elites in Post-Mongol Central Asia," *Central Asiatic Journal* (2016): 101–2; and see also ibid., 108–10, 113; idem, "Some Remarks on the Turkicisation of the Mongols in Post-Mongol Central Asia and the Qipchaq Steppe," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hung.* 71, no. 2 (2018): 123, n. 10; idem, "*The Timurid View of the Mongols: An Examination of the Mongol Identity of the Timurids," Iran Namag 6, nos. 3–4 (2021): 209, 215*; idem, *The Turkic Peoples in World History: A Concise History* (New York, 2024), 10, n. 6, 24. For a discussion of the term *Turk* in the Islamic world, and specifically on its application to Mongols, and for references to previous relevant studies, see idem, "Turkic Identity in Mongol and Post-Mongol Central Asia and the Qipchaq Steppe," in *The Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Asian History,* ed. David Ludden (New York, 2019): 3–9, 14–16. On the term *Turk* in European and Mamluk sources, see also Hannah Barker, "What Caused the 14th Century Tatar-Circassian Shift?" in *Slavery in the Black Sea Region, c. 900–1900: Forms of Unfreedom at the Intersection between Christianity and Islam,* ed. Felicia Roşu (Leiden, 2022), 341, 343; idem, *That Most Precious Merchandise,* 49.

[13] Lee, "The Historical Meaning," 110–11.

[14] Ibid., 111.

[15] See, for example, Amitai, *Holy War and Rapprochement,* 28–29; Little, "Notes on Aitamiš," 394, n. 49; Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the Islamic World: From Conquest to Conversion* (New Haven, 2017), 68–69; Lee, "Turkic Identity," 5; Van den Bent, "Mongols in Mamluk Eyes," 12, 18; Favereau, *La Horde d'Or,* 89. For more references, see Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 150, n. 5.

[16] Van den Bent, "Mongols in the Mamluk Sultanate," 856, n. 9; idem, "Mongols in Mamluk Eyes," 76; Lee, *The Turkic Peoples,* 10, n. 2.

[17] Van den Bent, "Mongols in Mamluk Eyes," 63–80.

[18] See Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 151, n. 7.

[19] Al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418) mentions that if a letter arriving in the sultanate is written in the "Turkish Mongol language…such as the letters arriving from some of the khans of the kings of the East *(bi-al-Turkīyah al-Mughulīyah…ka-al-kutub al-wāridah ʿan baʿḍ al-qānāt min mulūk al-Sharq)*" it should be translated by someone knowledgeable of this language. See Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshá fī ṣināʿat al-inshāʾ* (Beirut, 1987), 6:207.

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In what follows, I survey the few usages of the expression *Turkī khāliṣ* that are relevant for the Mamluk period and show that *Turkī khāliṣ* indeed denoted "Mongol" or "of (Timurid) Central Asia," starting at some point during the first half of the ninth/fifteenth century (following section). Next, in the section following that I offer context and an explanation for the usage of the term in accordance with this meaning.

Turkī Khāliṣ in Mamluk Sources

Prior to the Mamluk Sultanate, there are only rare references of a linguistic nature to "a pure Turkish" language spoken by some of the Turkish people. The Qarakhanid scholar Maḥmūd al-Kāshgharī, who, around 464/1072 in Baghdad compiled *Dīwān lughāt al-Turk* ("Compendium of the languages of the Turks"), the first comprehensive dictionary of Turkish languages,[20] extoled the people who spoke only "pure Turkish" as opposed to those whose speech was corrupted by contact with speakers of other languages in the cities.[21] He noted that some people, including the Qipchaqs, "speak pure Turkish"[22] as their only language *(la-hum Turkīyah maḥḍah lughah wāḥidah),*[23] that others, such as the Uyghurs, "have a pure Turkish language and also another language which they speak among themselves"[24] *(wa-li-Uyghur lisān Turkīyah maḥḍah wa-lughah ukhrá mimmā yatakallamūna bi-hā fīmā baynahum),*[25] that the language of other people, such as the Bashkirs, is "approaching the pure Turkish"[26] *(yaqrubu lisān...Bashghirt*

[20] G. Hazay, "al-Kāshgharī," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., 4:699–700; J. Eckmann, "Qāmūs: iii. Turkish Lexicography," *EI2,* 4:527.

[21] Peter B. Golden, "The Turkic Peoples: A Historical Sketch," in *The Turkic Languages,* ed. Lars Johanson and Éva Á. Csató (London, 2022), 19; and see Maḥmūd al-Kāshgharī, *Compendium of the Turkic Dialects (Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk),* ed. and trans. Robert Dankoff in collaboration with Kames Kelly (Harvard, 1982), 1:83 ("The most elegant of the dialects belongs to those who know only one language, who do not mix with Persians, and who do not customarily settle in other lands"); and see idem, *Kitāb dīwān lughāt al-Turk* (Istanbul, 1915–17), 1:29.

[22] Peter B. Golden, "The Turkic World in Maḥmūd al-Kāshgharī," in *Complexity of Interaction along the Eurasian Steppe Zone in the First Millennium CE,* ed. Jan Bemmann and Michael Schmauder (Bonn, 2015), 522, 535; al-Kāshgharī, *Compendium,* 1:83.

[23] Al-Kāshgharī, *Dīwān,* 1:30.

[24] Peter B. Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples: Ethnogenesis and State-Formation in Medieval and Early Modern Eurasia and the Middle East* (Wiesbaden, 1992), 157; idem, "Toghuzghuz," *EI2,* 10:557; idem, "The Turkic World," 526; al-Kāshgharī, *Compendium,* 1:83.

[25] Al-Kāshgharī, *Dīwān,* 1:30.

[26] Golden, *An Introduction,* 263; idem, "The Turkic World," 535; István *Zimonyi, "Why Were the Hungarians Referred to as Turks* in the Early Muslim Sources?" in *Neptörténet-Nyelvtörténet: A 70 éves Róna-Tas András Köszöntese,* ed. László Károly and Éva Nagy Kincses (Szeged, 2001), 207; al-Kāshgharī, *Compendium,* 1:83.

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min lughat hāʾulāʾi),[27] and that the language of others, such as the Volga Bulgars, while being Turkish, had been altered by foreign influences.[28] However, I have not come across a reference in chronicles or biographical dictionaries written before the Mamluk period describing a specific person or the language of a specific people as *Turkī khāliṣ*.

Al-Kāshgharī's work served as a model for the Qipchaq Turkish dictionaries produced in Egypt and Syria in the eighth/fourteenth and ninth/fifteenth centuries.[29] In fact, in the introduction to *Kitāb majmūʿ tarjumān Turkī wa-ʿAjamī wa-Mughulī wa-Fārisī*—one of the first Arabic-Qipchaq dictionaries of the Mamluk period, completed in 743/1343[30]—the author mentions that "the pure Turkish Qipchaq language *(al-lisān al-Turkī al-Qifjāqī al-khāliṣ)* is devoid of eight letters... therefore, if one hears a word containing one of these letters he should know that the word is not of the pure Turkish language *(laysat min al-lughah al-Turkīyah al-khāliṣah)* but rather borrowed from another language." Then the author mentions that he will discuss the differences between "the pure Turkish language *(al-lughah al-Turkīyah al-khāliṣah)* and the language of the Turkmens [i.e., Oghuz] *(al-lughah al-Turkmānīyah)* and what is borrowed by the people in our days from the Persian language and other languages."[31] However, the author does not say, as some scholars have mentioned, that the Turkish Qipchaq language is *the* pure Turkish language,[32] and, although the Qipchaq language in Mamluk times may have been considered closer to the "pure Turkish,"[33] we cannot infer from his

[27] Al-Kāshgharī, *Dīwān,* 1:30.

[28] *Victor Spinei, The Romanians and the Turkic Nomads North of the Danube Delta from the Tenth to the Mid-Thirteenth Century* (Leiden, 2009), 181; Golden, "The Turkic World," 534–35; al-Kāshgharī, *Compendium,* 1:84.

[29] Eckmann, "Qāmūs: iii. Turkish Lexicography," 4:527.

[30] Ibid; K. K. Aubakirova, A. A. Mustafayeva, and G. A. Kamisheva, "Comparative Study of the Manuscript 'Tarjuman' with Dictionaries in the Mamluk-Kipchak Language," *Bulletin of Toraigyrov University* 2 (2022): 21.

[31] Martijn Theodoor Houtsma, *Ein türkisch-arabisches Glossar* (Leiden, 1894), 2–3 (Arabic text); and see also Samīr Maḥmūd al-Durūbī, "Ḥarakat al-tarjamah wa-al-taʿrīb fī dīwān al-inshāʾ al-mamlūkī (al-bawāʿith wa-al-lughāt wa-al-mutarjamāt)," *Majallat Majmaʿ al-Lughah al-ʿArabīyah al-Urdunī* 26, no. 62 (2002): 46.

[32] Kunduzay Aubakirova et al., "Written Manuscripts in Ancient Kipchak Language of 13–15th Centuries and Their Research Problems in Kazakhstan," *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 6, no. 5 (2015): 578 ("The author tells that he knows several Turkic languages, including pure Turkish language or the Turkic-Kipchak language").

[33] See, for example, Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-ʿuqūd al-farīdah fī tarājim al-aʿyān al-mufīdah,* ed. Maḥmūd al-Jalīlī (Beirut, 2002), 1:433 ("their [i.e., the inhabitants of the Qipchaq Steppe] language is the most eloquent among the languages of the Turks" *[lughatuhum afṣaḥ lughāt al-Turk]*); and see perhaps also al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfī,* 15:341 (al-Ṣafadī mentions that a

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words, as has been suggested, "that Kipchak was considered as *the* 'pure Turkic'... by the Mamluk scholars during the earlier period of the kingdom."[34] He seems to claim only that there was some layer of the Qipchaq language that could be deemed "*a* pure Turkish" language.[35] In any case, during the early Mamluk period, as in previous periods, references to a "pure Turkish" are very rare and apparently limited to linguistic treatises. In fact, to the best of my knowledge, extant chronicles and biographical dictionaries written during the Turkish period of the Mamluk Sultanate (648–784/1250–1382) do not employ the expression *Turkī khāliṣ,*[36] and neither any specific person from the Mamluk period nor any language of a specific people is described as *Turkī khāliṣ* in them.[37] It is evident therefore that during this time period, *Turkī khāliṣ* was not used as a specific technical term by Mamluk historians.

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member of the civilian elite "was speaking eloquent Turkish, the Qipchaq language" *[ḥadīthuhu bi-al-Turkī faṣīḥ Qibjāqī]*).

[34] Fikret Turan, "*The Mamluks and Their Acceptance* of Oghuz Turkic as a Literary Language: Political Maneuver or Cultural Aspiration?" in *Einheit und Vielfalt in der türkischen Welt: Materialien der 5. Deutschen Turkologenkonferenz, Universität Mainz, ed.* Hendrik Boeschoten and Heidi Stein (Wiesbaden, 2007), 39.

[35] Also note that the anonymous author of *Al-Qawānīn al-kullīyah li-ḍabṭ al-lughah al-Turkīyah,* who flourished in the ninth/fifteenth century, mentions in the introduction that he will survey some rules of the Turkish language *(al-lughah al-Turkīyah),* and then mentions that "this language" is devoid of several letters, so "if you hear someone using one of these letters you should know that he is not eloquent or not one of the pure Turks *(laysa min al-Turk al-khullaṣ).*" See anonymous, *Al-Qawānīn al-kullīyah li-ḍabṭ al-lughah al-Turkīyah,* ed. Mehmet Fuat Köprülü (Istanbul, 1928), 3–4. Jamāl al-Dīn ʿAbd Allāh al-Turkī, who flourished in the second half of the eighth/fourteenth century or the beginning of the ninth/fifteenth century, simply mentions in his *Bulghat al-mushtāq* that the Arabic language has a few letters that do not exist in the Turkish language *(al-lisān al-Turkī nāqiṣ ʿan al-ʿArabī).* See Ananiasz Zajaczkowski, *Manuel arabe de la langue des Turcs et des Kiptchaks (époque de l'état mamelouk)* (Warsaw, 1938), 1 (Arabic text).

[36] Although, as will be discussed below, one Circassian-period author uses the expression when (allegedly?) quoting a Turkish-period author.

[37] However, Mamluk chronicles or biographical dictionaries from the Turkish period employ twice the expression *min khāliṣ al-Turk,* but in reference to periods preceding the Mamluk period. Al-Yūnīnī (d. 726/1326) mentions in the obituary of the Ayyubid amir Ḥusām al-Dīn Abū ʿAlī al-Hadhabānī (d. 658/1260) several poems he had composed including the line "I love an elegant young gazelle who is of pure Turkish origin" *(ahwá rashaʾ min khāliṣ al-Turk rashīq).* See Quṭb al-Dīn Mūsá ibn Muḥammad al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl mirʾāt al-zamān* (Hyderabad, 1954–61), 1:384; and see also ibid., 2:84; and see Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad Ibn Duqmāq, *Nuzhat al-anām fī tārīkh al-Islām (628 H/1230 M–659 H/1261 M),* ed. Samīr Ṭabbārah (Beirut, 1999), 272. Al-Ṣafadī mentions in the biographical entry of Abū al-Khaṭṭāb Ḥamzah ibn Ibrāhīm (d. 419/1028–29) that "a Turk of pure Turkish origin" *(Turkī min khāliṣ al-Turk)* was serving the Buyid ruler. See al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfī,* 13:178. In both cases, the exact origin of the persons mentioned as being "of pure Turkish origin" cannot be determined.

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During the Circassian period (784–923/1382–1517), on the other hand, Mamluk historians employed the expression *Turkī khāliṣ* on several occasions, though in one of these uses the expression is (allegedly?) taken from a text written by a Turkish-period author (this case will be discussed last). At about the same time as Ibn Taghrībirdī's assertion that "the Mongol language is the pure Turkish" *(al-Mughulī wa-huwa al-Turkī al-khāliṣ),*[38] al-ʿAynī (d. 855/1451) mentions in the obituary of the amir Manklībughā al-Ṣalāḥī al-Ẓāhirī (d. 836/1432)—a mamluk of al-Ẓāhir Barqūq (r. 784–91/1382–89 and 792–801/1390–99)—that he spoke Persian *(kāna yatakallamu bi-al-ʿAjamīyah)* and "pure Turkish" *(wa-al-Turkīyah al-khāliṣah).*[39] Fortunately, earlier than this, Ibn al-Furāt (d. 807/1405) mentions that in 799/1396 a letter arrived in Cairo from Tīmūr Lank (d. 807/1405) demanding the release of one of his relatives and one of his companions that were imprisoned in Cairo. Al-Ẓāhir Barqūq ordered the two to write a reply, which they did in the Mongol language *(kitāb bi-al-Mughulī).* Since none of al-Ẓāhir Barqūq's companions could read the letter, he summoned Manklībughā, "as he knew how to read some Mongolian" *(wa-huwa yuḥsinu yaqraʾu baʿḍ shayʾ bi-al-Mughulī).* Manklībughā met with the two and instructed them to write in the Mongol language what al-Ẓāhir Barqūq had wanted *(wa-katabā la-hu mā aḥabba bi-al-Mughulī).*[40]

This anecdote suggests that al-ʿAynī was referring to the Mongol language as "pure Turkish," which implies that Ibn Taghrībirdī's usage of the term was not unique. Other contemporary historians used the expression "pure Turkish" as a term denoting "Mongol." It is likely that "pure Turkish" came into use as a reference to "Mongol" at some point during the first half of the ninth/fifteenth century, between the times of Ibn al-Furāt and al-ʿAynī. As Manklībughā knew the Mongol language, he was very likely a Mongol mamluk. This is also suggested by the fact that some Mamluk sources described him negatively *(lam yakun mashkūr al-sīrah),*[41] which is typical for Mongol mamluks of the early period and apparently also for the later periods.[42] In any case, as he knew the Persian lan-

[38] See at n. 9 above.

[39] Badr al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn Aḥmad al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd al-jumān fī tārīkh ahl al-zamān,* ed. ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṭanṭāwī al-Qarmūṭ (Cairo, 1989), 438; and see also Samīr Maḥmūd al-Durūbī, "Aṣnāf al-tarājimah fī dīwān al-inshāʾ al-mamlūkī," *Majallat Majmaʿ al-Lughah al-ʿArabīyah al-Urdunī* 65, no. 1 (2003): 22–23. According to Ibn Taghrībirdī, Manklībughā memorized poems in the three languages: Arabic, Persian, and Turkish *(al-ʿArabīyah wa-al-ʿAjamīyah wa-al-Turkīyah).* See Abū al-Maḥāsin Yūsuf Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-zāhirah fī mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah* (Cairo, 1963–72), 15:179.

[40] Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥīm Ibn al-Furāt, *Tārīkh al-duwal wa-al-mulūk,* ed. Qusṭanṭīn Zurayq and Najlā ʿIzz al-Dīn (Beirut, 1936–42), 9:453.

[41] Al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd al-jumān,* 438; and see also Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ li-ahl al-qarn al-tāsiʿ* (Beirut, 1966), 10:173; and see Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 179.

[42] Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 161–71, 173–80.

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guage and was even known as "the Persian" *(al-ʿAjamī),* and since he was sent in 805/1402–3 as an envoy to Tīmūr,[43] he was likely related to the Timurid territories of Central Asia.[44]

Al-ʿAynī also mentions in the obituary of the amir Baybughā al-Muẓaffarī al-Ẓāhirī (d. 833/1430), another mamluk of al-Ẓāhir Barqūq, that he was "a pure Turkish man" *(kāna rajul Turkī khāliṣ).*[45] There are several indications that Baybughā was Mongol: in addition to his negative depiction in several Mamluk accounts *(sayyiʾ al-khuluq)*[46] and his characterization as naive *(salāmat bāṭin),*[47] both of which are typical of the depictions of the Mongol mamluks in Mamluk sources (at least in the early period),[48] he is also referred to by Ibn Taghrībirdī as "Tatar." This appears in the description of the events of the year 817/1414, when Baybughā was arrested alongside two other amirs of "Tatar stock" *(wa-al-thalāthah jinsuhum Tatar).*[49] The label *Tatar* was undergoing a semantic shift in the Mamluk sources of the ninth/fifteenth century (see below). However, in his description of the events of the early ninth/fifteenth century, Ibn Taghrībirdī appears to have still used the label to refer to Mongols.[50] Moreover, Baybughā is described as holding the Mongol Empire's founder, Chinggis Khan, in high regard and to have even considered him the Prophet Khiḍr's equal *(wa-ʿindahu Jinkiz Khān al-Mughulī bi-manzilat al-Khiḍr ʿalayhi al-salām).*[51] He excessively praised Chinggis Khan *(akhadha Baybughā fī taʿẓīm malik al-Tatār Jinkiz Khān wa-zāda wa-amʿana).* When a Circassian amir disrespected Chinggis Khan in front of him, Baybughā wished to kill him, and accused him of blasphemy *(qāla lahu kafarta).*[52]

[43] Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ,* 10:173; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal al-ṣāfī,* 11:286; idem, *Al-Nujūm,* 15:178; ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ ibn Khalīl ibn Shāhīn al-Malaṭī, *Nayl al-amal fī dhayl al-duwal,* ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī (Beirut, 2002), 4:321; Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-sulūk li-maʿrifat duwal al-mulūk,* ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá Ziyādah and Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ ʿĀshūr (Cairo, 1934–73), 4:900; anonymous, *Ḥawlīyāt Dimashqīyah 834–839 H li-muʾarrikh Shāmī majhūl,* ed. Ḥasan Ḥabashī (Cairo, 1968), 49; and see also Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 179.

[44] And see Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 178–80.

[45] Al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd al-jumān,* 391.

[46] Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal al-ṣāfī,* 3:492; and see Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 174, 176.

[47] Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal al-ṣāfī,* 3:492; idem, *Al-Nujūm,* 14:320.

[48] Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 167; and see at n. 58 below a reference to "Tatars" as especially naïve persons in the description of events of the early ninth/fifteenth century.

[49] Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm,* 14:23; and see also Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 175.

[50] Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 173–74, 178, 184; and see below.

[51] Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal al-ṣāfī,* 3:492.

[52] Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm,* 14:320. In this anecdote that appears in the description of events of the year 831/1428, it is also reported that when Sultan al-Ashraf Barsbāy wanted to mess with Baybughā's head he used to send to him a Circassian that would disrespect the "Tatars" and praise the Circassians, and Baybughā would start cursing him and counting the merits of the

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Baybughā must have been Mongol, so we have here a case of a Mongol mamluk being referred to as "pure Turk" *(Turkī khāliṣ)* by al-ʿAynī.

Timrāz al-Nāṣirī al-Ẓāhirī (d. 814/1412), another mamluk of al-Ẓāhir Barqūq, is also said to have been "a pure Turk" *(Turkī khāliṣ)* in his obituaries in Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī's (d. 852/1449) *Inbāʾ al-ghumr* and consequently in al-Sakhāwī's (d. 902/1497) *Al-Dhayl al-tāmm*.[53] Ibn al-Ṣayrafī (d. 900/1495) apparently refers to him as "one of the naïve Turks" *(min al-Atrāk al-sādhajīn)*.[54] As far as I know, the only other Mamluk amir mentioned as a *Turkī sādhaj* ("a naïve Turk") is Burulghay Amīr Silāḥ,[55] who was a Mongol and a maternal relative of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (d. 741/1341). As noted above, naivety *(salāmat bāṭin)* was considered a typical characteristic of Mongols in the early period of the Mamluk Sultanate.[56] Even as late as the description of events of the year 824/1421, Ibn Taghrībirdī mentioned a group of "Tatar" mamluks *(min jins al-Tatar),* i.e., Mongols,[57] led by the amir Qujqār al-Qardumī (d. 824/1421). Al-Qardumī was characterized by "naivety, as Tatar people usually are" *(salāmat al-bāṭin ka-mā hiya ʿādat jins al-Tatar)*.[58] Timrāz al-Nāṣirī al-Ẓāhirī appears to have been therefore another Mongol mamluk of al-Ẓāhir Barqūq referred to as "a pure Turk" *(Turkī khāliṣ)* by a Mamluk historian who flourished during the first half of the ninth/fifteenth century (Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī).

Another example is provided by the historian ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ ibn Khalīl ibn Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī al-Malaṭī (d. 920/1514). He mentions that in 844/1440 the envoy of the Timurid ruler Shāh Rukh (d. 850/1447) arrived in Cairo with presents

"Turks" over the Circassians. One gets the impression that by "Tatars" the Mongols are meant, although it is not exactly clear what is meant by "Turks." And see the note on Ibn Taghrībirdī's usage of the term "Tatar" in the description of events of the early ninth/fifteenth century at n. 50 above.

[53] Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Inbāʾ al-ghumr bi-anbāʾ al-ʿumr,* ed. Ḥasan Ḥabashī (Cairo, 1969–72), 2:490; Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Dhayl al-tāmm ʿalá duwal al-Islām lil-Dhahabī,* ed. Ḥasan Ismāʿīl Marwah (Beirut, 1992), 1:475. In *Al-Ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ,* al-Sakhāwī writes that he was "of pure Turkish origin" *(min khāliṣ al-Turk)*. See idem, *Al-Ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ,* 3:38 *(min khāṣ [!] al-Turk)*.

[54] Ibn al-Ṣayrafī, *Nuzhat al-nufūs wa-al-abdān fī tawārīkh al-zamān,* ed. Ḥasan Ḥabashī (Cairo, 1970–94), 2:297.

[55] Shams al-Dīn al-Shujāʿī, *Tārīkh al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn al-Ṣāliḥī wa-awlādihi,* ed. Barbara Schäfer (Wiesbaden, 1978), 221.

[56] See at n. 48 above.

[57] See above at n. 50 the note on the label "Tatar" as referring to "Mongols" in the description of events of the early ninth/fifteenth century by Ibn Taghrībirdī.

[58] Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm,* 14:108; and see also Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 174–75.

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including many boxes of "pure Turkish musk" *(al-misk al-Turkī al-khāliṣ).* In this case, the term "pure Turkish" likely related to Timurid Central Asia.[59]

Finally, in the biographical entry of Aqbirdī al-Tamāsīḥī al-Ẓāhirī Jaqmaq (d. 900/1495), a mamluk of al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq (r. 842–57/1438–53), al-Sakhāwī mentions that he was "a pure Turk" *(Turkī khāliṣ).*[60] Unfortunately, his specific ethnic or geographic origin cannot be determined.

We may have concluded at this point that the expression *Turkī khāliṣ* started to be used by Mamluk historians as a term denoting "Mongol" or "of (Timurid) Central Asia" during the first half of the ninth/fifteenth century (the earliest historians employing the term for this meaning are al-ʿAynī and Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, and both died around the middle of the ninth/fifteenth century), but another author that was active at about the same time used the expression *Turkī khāliṣ* when quoting an early Turkish-period author and in reference to an early Turkish-period Mamluk amir. In the biographical entry of the amir Bāshqurd al-Nāṣirī (d. 702/1302), originally a mamluk of the Ayyubids, Ibn Khaṭīb al-Nāṣirīyah (d. 843/1440) quotes al-Birzālī (d. 739/1339) from his largely lost *Muʿjam al-shuyūkh (dhakarahu...al-Birzālī fī muʿjamihi fa-qāla).* The latter had quoted Kamāl al-Dīn Ibn al-Zamalkānī (d. 727/1327) *(qāla* (i.e., al-Birzālī) *wa-qāla al-Shaykh al-Imām Kamāl al-Dīn Ibn al-Zamalkānī)* writing that Bāshqurd "composed poetry...and he did it naturally without mastering its principles as he was a pure Turk" *(kāna yanẓimu al-shiʿr...wa-kāna dhālika minhu bi-al-ṭabʿ lā yataʿāṭá asbābahu fa-innahu kāna Turkī khāliṣ).*[61] Unfortunately, not only do the meager extant parts of al-Birzālī's *Muʿjam al-shuyūkh* not include a biographical entry for Bāshqurd,[62] but Ibn al-Zamalkānī's work, from which al-Birzālī apparently quoted, is not extant. Therefore, Ibn Khaṭīb al-Nāṣirīyah's words cannot be examined against the original source. Moreover,

[59] ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ ibn Khalīl ibn Shāhīn al-Malaṭī, *Al-Rawḍ al-bāsim fī ḥawādith al-ʿumur wa-al-tarājim,* ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī (Beirut, 2014), 1:176. In the third/ninth century, Ibn Khurdādhbah notes in his survey of the lands of the Turks that the musk is found in the land of the Central Asian Kyrgyz people. This statement was repeated by later authors. See *Zimonyi, "Why Were the Hungarians,"* 205; and see, for example, Ibn al-Faqīh, *Kitāb al-buldān,* ed. Yūsuf al-Hādī (Beirut, 1996), 634.

[60] Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ,* 2:315.

[61] ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad Ibn Khaṭīb al-Nāṣirīyah, *Al-Durr al-muntakhab fī takmilat tārīkh Ḥalab,* ed. Aḥmad Fawzī al-Hayb (Kuwait, 2018), 2:659.

[62] I thank Tarek Sabraa for going through the extant folios of the manuscript of al-Birzālī's *Muʿjam al-shuyūkh.* Al-Birzālī does not quote Ibn al-Zamalkānī in the obituary of Bāshqurd in his history book. See ʿAlam al-Dīn al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Birzālī, *Al-Muqtafī ʿalá kitāb al-rawḍatayn al-maʿrūf bi-tārīkh al-Birzālī,* ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī (Beirut, 2006), 3:200. In the extant parts of al-Birzālī's *Wafayāt* there is no entry for Bāshqurd. See idem, *Al-Wafayāt lil-Birzālī,* ed. Abū Yaḥyá ʿAbd Allāh al-Kundarī (Kuwait, 2005), 10.

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to the best of my knowledge, the only historian except Ibn Khaṭīb al-Nāṣirīyah that quotes Ibn al-Zamalkānī in the biographical entry for Bāshqurd is Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī,[63] who, like Ibn Khaṭīb al-Nāṣirīyah, apparently also quoted Ibn al-Zamalkānī through al-Birzālī's *Muʿjam al-shuyūkh.* Ibn Ḥajar in fact mentioned in Bāshqurd's biographical entry in *Al-Durar al-kāminah* that both al-Birzālī and al-Dhahabī (d. 748/1348) had noted Bāshqurd in their *Muʿjam*s, and then immediately reported that "Ibn al-Zamalkānī said: he composed poetry naturally without mastering the principles of poetry" *(wa-qāla Ibn al-Zamalkānī kāna yanẓimu bi-al-ṭabʿ lā yataʿāṭá qawāʿid al-shuʿarāʾ).*[64] This does not, however, appear in Bāshqurd's short biographical entry in al-Dhahabī's *Muʿjam al-shuyūkh,* so the source must have been al-Birzālī's *Muʿjam*. As can be seen, after mentioning what Ibn al-Zamalkānī had to say about Bāshqurd's poetry, Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī did not add that this was because he was "a pure Turk."

There are two possible options in this regard. The first is that Ibn al-Zamalkānī did not refer to Bāshqurd as "a pure Turk" and Ibn Khaṭīb al-Nāṣirīyah, using the terminology of his time, i.e., the first half of the ninth/fifteenth century, added information that he had learned from some other, earlier source, which had pointed to Bāshqurd being Mongol (or of Mongol Central Asia), or, more likely, because he simply assumed so.[65] The second and more likely option is that Ibn al-Zamalkānī indeed used the expression "a pure Turk" but only in a literal meaning referring to Bāshqurd's cultural orientation and not as a specific term referring to his ethnic or geographical origin. Bāshqurd is reported to have said of himself that "I spent 20 years not speaking the Turkish language because I was eager to master the Arabic language" *(baqītu ʿishrīn sanah lā atalaffaẓu bi-al-lughah al-Turkīyah ḥirṣan minnī ʿalá itqān al-ʿArabīyah).*[66] Furthermore, it is said that when composing poetry (in Arabic) he did not master the principles of poetry that are related naturally to the rules of the Arabic language. It seems that Ibn al-Zamalkānī simply meant to describe Bāshqurd's strong inclination to the

[63] I thank again Tarek Sabraa for directing me to some potentially relevant manuscripts of historical works by Syrian authors that are known to have quoted Ibn al-Zamalkānī and for providing me with the relevant folios.

[64] Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Al-Durar al-kāminah,* 1:277.

[65] As far as I know, al-Dhahabī is the only historian, except perhaps for Ibn Khaṭīb al-Nāṣirīyah, that refers to the origin of Bāshqurd; he simply labels Bāshqurd "al-Turkī" in the title of his entry in his *Muʿjam al-shuyūkh.* See Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Dhahabī, "Muʿjam shuyūkh al-Dhahabī," Topkapı MS Ahmet III A462, fols. 45v–46r. I again thank Tarek Sabraa for directing me to this manuscript and providing me with the relevant folios. See also Ibn Khaṭīb al-Nāṣirīyah, *Al-Durr al-muntakhab,* 2:659.

[66] Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr,* 1:676; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Al-Durar al-kāminah,* 1:277.

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"Turkish" culture which could be overcome only after 20 years and with great effort, and, even then, only with limited success.[67]

Yet, cultural orientation and origin are not unrelated. As I demonstrate elsewhere, in contrast to the Qipchaqs, the Mongol mamluks (as well as Central Asian mamluks that were not Western Qipchaqs) were less inclined to learn the Arabic language, and thus to acculturate. A probable explanation is that the Mongols had to learn the Qipchaq *lingua franca* before studying Arabic.[68] We can conclude therefore that individuals described as "pure Turks" because they were apparently less acculturated and more inclined to stick to the "Turkish" culture are more likely to have been Mongols or Central Asians and not Western Qipchaqs. Of course, the literal meaning of the expression "pure Turk" may well have not been totally unrelated to the specific meaning that it acquired during the ninth/fifteenth century. This leads us to discuss the context for the appearance of the term "pure Turk" in the meaning of "Mongol" or "of (Timurid) Central Asia" and explain why the term was chosen to denote this meaning.

Turkī khāliṣ as "Mongol": Context and Explanation[69]

During the early Mamluk period, until the third reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (709–41/1310–41), quite a few Mongol mamluks arrived in the Mamluk Sultanate, mainly from the Ilkhanid lands in the east, often as war captives, but occasionally also from the northern Golden Horde. During this period, a Mongol mamluk would be labeled in Mamluk sources as a "Mongol" *(Mughulī)* or "Tatar"

[67] That some mamluks are described as "Turks" followed by mention of their incompetence in the Arabic language seems to suggest that the "Turk" description is meant to refer to their strong orientation towards the "Turkish" culture. Ulmās al-Nāṣirī (d. 733/1333), who is described in the sources as a typical Mongol, is said to have been an "an inarticulate Turk who did not understand Arabic" *(kāna Turkī ghutmī lā yaʿrifu bi-al-lisān al-ʿArabī),* and some add that he did not use Arabic out of respect (apparently for the Mongol Yāsa). So, his description as "Turk" is rather clearly referring to his cultural orientation. See Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 168; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk,* 2:176. For another example involving a mamluk, see Baybars al-Manṣūrī al-Dawādār, *Kitāb al-tuḥfah al-mulūkīyah fī al-dawlah al-Turkīyah,* ed. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Ṣāliḥ Ḥamdān (Cairo, 1987), 103 ("illiterate Turk" *[ummī Turkī]*). In addition, al-Nuwayrī (d. 733/1333) has the Khwārazmian king say of himself that he is "a Turkish man that does not understand much Arabic" *(rajul Turkī qalīl al-maʿrifah bi-al-lughah al-ʿArabīyah).* See Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab,* ed. Ibrāhīm Shams al-Dīn et al. (Beirut, 2004), 27:161. [This note referenced in next note]

[68] Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 168–71; and see n. 67 above.

[69] I have discussed elsewhere the semantic shift of the term "Tatar" in Mamluk sources during the ninth/fifteenth century. See ibid., 173–87. While examining the term *Turkī khāliṣ,* I had the chance to look again at the data on the term "Tatar," and my findings on the term *Turkī khāliṣ* allowed me to reassess and refine the chronology of the semantic shift of the term "Tatar."

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(Tatarī), labels that were used exclusively or mainly to refer to mamluks of Mongol origin, but sometimes also as a "Turk," a vaguer and broader label.[70] However, the resolution of the conflict with the Mongol Ilkhans in 723/1323 ended the influx of Mongol war captives from the Ilkhanate to the Mamluk Sultanate. Therefore, during the third reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, the dominance of mamluks originating from the Golden Horde in the Mamluk Sultanate grew. At that time, the Mongols already intermingled with the Qipchaqs in the Golden Horde and the population of that area became a mixture of Qipchaqs and Mongols (Turco-Mongols) that Mamluk authors perceived as "one people" *(jins wāḥid).* From that point onward, mamluks arriving from the Golden Horde were largely called "Turks" in Mamluk sources. Due to these changes, from the 1320s (and until the late Turkish period), mamluks who arrived in the Mamluk sultanate were no longer referred to as "Mongol" or "Tatar."[71]

Some mamluks who arrived in the Mamluk Sultanate starting in the late Turkish period were once again referred to as "Tatar" *(Tatarī/Tatar),* but the label "Mongol" *(Mughulī/Mughul)* was no longer used by Mamluk historians to refer to mamluks arriving in the sultanate.[72] Mamluks who arrived in the sultanate starting from the late Turkish period that are labeled "Tatar" surface mostly in the writings of two historians, Ibn Taghrībirdī and al-Malaṭī. Except for one, all mamluks labeled "Tatar" by Ibn Taghrībirdī arrived in the sultanate in the late eighth/fourteenth century, mostly during the reign of al-Ẓāhir Barqūq. Importantly, all mamluks labeled "Tatar" who have biographical entries or obituaries in the *Nujūm* or the *Manhal* and arrived in the late eighth/fourteenth century are labeled so by Ibn Taghrībirdī in the *Nujūm,* in the description of events that took place in 817/1414 and 824/1421, or in their own description of past events (in 803/1400) in the *Manhal,* but they are not labeled so by Ibn Taghrībirdī himself in their biographical entries in the *Manhal* or their obituaries in the *Nujūm,* where they are labeled as "Turks."

This suggests that we are dealing with two layers of reference, one ("Tatars") reflecting the time of the events, and the other ("Turks") reflecting a later period,[73] but no later than the middle of the ninth/fifteenth century, since the

[70] Ibid., 151, 153, 156–60.

[71] Ibid., 171–72.

[72] Ibid., 172, n. 154, 173. One does find, however, references to "Mongol" *(Mughul/Mughulī)* mamluks in models of a sales contract in *shurūṭ* manuals of the ninth/fifteenth century. See Van den Bent, "Mongols in the Mamluk Sultanate," 857; idem, "Mongols in Mamluk Eyes," 209; and Muḥammad ibn Shihāb al-Dīn al-Asyūṭī, *Jawāhir al-ʿuqūd wa-muʿīn al-quḍāh wa-al-muwaqqiʿīn wa-al-shuhūd,* ed. Musʿad ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Muḥammad al-Saʿdanī (Beirut, 1996), 1:79–80, 119.

[73] Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 173–77. We may add that Baybughā al-Muẓaffarī al-Ẓāhirī, who was in all likelihood a Mongol, is referred to as a "Tatar" by Ibn Taghrībirdī explicitly in

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Manhal was composed around that time.[74] Since many of these mamluks that are called "Tatar" and had arrived during the late eighth/fourteenth century are portrayed negatively and/or characterized in the same fashion as were the Mongols during the earlier period, we may assume that these mamluks were Mongols or from Timurid Central Asia. Their arrival in the sultanate was likely related to the Timurid westward military expansion (roughly 1370–1402), which would have resulted in an influx of Mongol and Central Asian slaves in the slave markets, from where they would have arrived at the sultanate.[75] However, the arrival of Mongol mamluks or mamluks of Timurid Central Asia was limited to the late eighth/fourteenth century and the Timurid westward expansion. After the turn of the century, it seems that mamluks of this origin seldom made it to the sultanate.[76]

the events of 817/1414 and implicitly in the events of 831/1428. See at n. 49 and n. 52 above.

[74] The bulk of the entries in the *Manhal* are until 855/1451, and an autograph is dated to 855/1451. It may be added that at first, the *Nujūm* went only until 857/1453. See William Popper, "Abū al-Maḥāsin Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf ibn Taghrībirdī," *EI2,* 1:138; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal al-ṣāfī,* 1:12.

[75] Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 173, 178–80, 187.

[76] Ibn Taghrībirdī never labels mamluks who arrived after the days of al-Ẓāhir Barqūq (d. 801/1399) as "Tatars" in his description of events of the early ninth/fifteenth century. Also note that three of the four mamluks who arrived starting from the late eighth/fourteenth century and are mentioned as "pure Turks" or as speaking "pure Turkish" were al-Ẓāhir Barqūq's mamluks, and only one arrived later. See at nn. 39–60 above. It may be added that Ibn Taghrībirdī mentions that "the soldiers of our time do not know the Mongol language and do not speak it" *(lisān al-Mughul al-ān lā yaʿrifuhu jund zamāninā hādhā wa-lā yataḥaddathūna bi-hi).* See Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm,* 1:61. In the description of events of the year 836/1433 in the *Nujūm,* Ibn Taghrībirdī mentions a dialogue between a Turkmen amir and a Mamluk judge, in which the Turkmen amir points at a "Tatar" mamluk *(kāna al-mamlūk...Tatarī)* and says that Sultan al-Ashraf Barsbāy does not have in his court amirs of this origin *(min jins hādhā).* The judge replies that there are a few *(jamāʿah),* but the Turkmen amir says that this is not true as al-Ashraf Barsbāy had only one such amir and he was expelled to Jerusalem, referring to the amir Qarā Murād Khujā al-Shaʿbānī al-Ẓāhirī Barqūq. See ibid., 15:27–28. As in the description of events of the early ninth/fifteenth century, the label "Tatar" seems to refer mainly to Mongol mamluks or mamluks of the Timurid realm (see above), and as there were still quite a few Turco-Mongol amirs of the Golden Horde in al-Ashraf Barsbāy's days (though by then they were also in serious decline—see, for now, Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 189, n. 259), we may assume that the label "Tatar" here refers to Mongols, which suggests that by this time there were only a few Mongol amirs in the sultanate, and they were mostly remnants from the days of al-Ẓāhir Barqūq (Qarā Murād, who has no biographical entry, may be added to this short list). Van den Bent suggested that as al-Asyūṭī (d. 880/1476) mentions "Mongol" mamluks in models of a sales contract, "apparently a Mongol mamluk was a sight common enough for al-Asyūṭī to make an example out of it." See Van den Bent, "Mongols in Mamluk Eyes," 209; and see also idem, "Mongols in the Mamluk Sultanate," 857 ("The prevalence of Mongol mamluks in the sultanate is underlined in a model of a sales contract given by Shams al-Din Muhammad al-Asyuti"). However, the evidence from biographical dictionaries and chronicles strongly sug-

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Ibn Taghrībirdī continued to refer to mamluks who arrived in the late eighth/fourteenth century and were apparently Mongols or of Timurid Central Asia as "Tatars" in the description of events of the early ninth/fifteenth century until about the thirties of that century.[77] In their biographical entries or obituaries, however, the same mamluks are labeled as "Turks." Therefore, it seems that during the thirties or forties of the ninth/fifteenth century,[78] Ibn Taghrībirdī (and probably other historians as well) found the label "Tatar" for Mongol mamluks or mamluks of Timurid Central Asia who arrived in the late eighth/fourteenth century awkward or unfitting.[79] This must have been because "Tatar" in reference to mamluks acquired a new meaning during the ninth/fifteenth century: it came to be understood as referring to the Turco-Mongol mamluks of the Golden Horde.

While the inhabitants of the Golden Horde did not identify themselves as "Turks" and the inhabitants of the western Golden Horde eventually adopted "Tatar" as a self-designation,[80] and while slaves from the Golden Horde were labeled mainly as "Tatars" by Europeans at least from the middle of

gests that by the days of al-Asyūṭī, not only Mongol mamluks but also Turco-Mongol mamluks of the Golden Horde were hardly sold in the sultanate.

[77] Elsewhere (Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 178, 184) I suggested that the label "Tatar" stopped referring to mamluks of (Timurid) Central Asia around 1420, but now I see that the *Nujūm* apparently contains such references in the description of events of the years 831/1428 and 836/1433. See n. 73 and n. 76 above.

[78] See at n. 74 above.

[79] One case is apparently somewhat exceptional. In *Ḥawādith al-duhūr,* in the obituary of Yalkhujā Min Māmash al-Nāṣirī (d. 850/1446), originally a mamluk of al-Ẓāhir Barqūq, Ibn Taghrībirdī indirectly refers to Yalkhujā as a "Tatar" when he mentions that he was characterized by "naivety, as his people, the Tatars, usually are" *(salāmat bāṭin ʿalá qāʿidat abnāʾ jinsihi al-Tatār).* See Abū al-Maḥāsin Yūsuf Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Ḥawādith al-duhūr fī madá al-ayyām wa-al-shuhūr,* ed. Muḥammad Kamāl al-Dīn ʿIzz al-Dīn (Beirut, 1990), 1:147. Unfortunately, Ibn Taghrībirdī does not refer to him as "Tatar" in the description of events of the early ninth/fifteenth century, but as naivety was traditionally associated with the Mongols (see nn. 56–58 above), we may assume that Yalkhujā was a Mongol or of Timurid Central Asia. (We may add that he is also described very negatively in the sources: see Ibn al-Ṣayrafī, *Tatimmat kitāb nuzhat al-nufūs wa-al-abdān fī tawārīkh al-zamān [tatimmat ḥawādith wa-tarājim sanatay 849–850 H],* ed. Muḥammad Jamāl al-Shūrbajī [Damascus, 2021], 166; al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd al-jumān,* 661.) In fact, we may assume that Ibn Taghrībirdī was using the label "Tatar" here in reference to Mongols who arrived in the late eighth/fourteenth century, although he would normally refrain from doing so in their obituaries, only because he did it when mentioning general stereotypical attributes that were traditionally related to the "Tatars" and not the "Turks."

[80] Lee, "Turkic Identity," 11–13.

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the eighth/fourteenth century,[81] Turco-Mongol slaves from the Golden Horde were generally labeled "Turks" in Mamluk sources throughout the eighth/fourteenth century. This was likely due to the negative connotations the term "Tatar" had in the Mamluk Sultanate because of the animosity between the "Tatar" Ilkhans and the Mamluks during the early period of the sultanate and later in the late eighth/fourteenth century between the "Tatar" Timurids and the Mamluks.

The Mamluk Sultanate was deemed a "Turkish state" *(dawlat al-Atrāk)* and its "Turkishness" was an important component of its identity. While some late eighth/fourteenth century Mamluk authors acknowledge that the Golden Horde was the "Land of the Tatars," once a slave arrived from there to the sultanate he was labeled a "Turk."[82] While there are perhaps some rare indications that around the turn of the eighth/fourteenth century the label "Tatar" could be used in Mamluk sources in reference to the Turco-Mongol mamluks from the Golden Horde,[83] we find the label in common use for this meaning only in the writing of al-Malaṭī in the late ninth/fifteenth century, mostly when he refers to mamluks who arrived after the turn of the eighth/fourteenth century.[84] Al-Malaṭī himself (like other historians) continued to commonly refer to the Turco-Mongol mamluks from the Golden Horde who arrived in the ninth/

[81] See discussion and references in Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 184–86. On the label "Tatar" in reference to slaves from the Golden Horde in European sources, see Barker, "What Caused," 341, 347; and see also Jong Kuk Nam, "Tatar Slaves in Late Fourteenth Century Florence," *Mediterranean Review* 15, no. 1 (2022): 1–24. I thank Hannah Barker for referring me to this article. See also *Lorenzo Pubblici*, "*Some Remarks* on the *Slave* Trade in the Heart of the Golden Horde (14th Century) in the Wake of C. Verlinden's Research," *Golden Horde Review* 5, no. 3 (2017): 569; Michel Balard, "Slavery in the Latin Mediterranean (Thirteenth to Fifteenth Centuries): The Case of Genoa," in *Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean (C. 1000–1500),* ed. Christoph Cluse and Reuven Amitai (Turnhout, 2017), 239–40; Danuta Quirini-Popławska, "The Venetian Involvement in the Black Sea Slave Trade (Fourteenth to Fifteenth Centuries)," in *Slavery and the Slave Trade,* ed. Cluse and Amitai, 256, n. 4, 267; Roman Hautala, "The Jochid *Ulus,*" in *The Mongol World,* ed. Timothy May and Michael Hope (London, 2022), 247; Favereau, *La Horde d'Or,* 96–98; idem, *The Horde: How the Mongols Changed the World* (Cambridge, 2021), 166.

[82] Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 186–87.

[83] Ibid., 183.

[84] Ibid., 180–83. Elsewhere, I suggested that circa 1400, it became common in Mamluk sources to label Turco-Mongol slaves from the Golden Horde as "Tatars," and at that time it became uncommon to label slaves of Timurid Central Asia as "Tatars" (ibid., 184). However, references to slaves of Timurid Central Asia as "Tatars" linger until about the thirties of the ninth/fifteenth century, and references to Turco-Mongol slaves from the Golden Horde as "Tatars" are common only in the writings of al-Malaṭī.

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fifteenth century as "Turks" as well.[85] While the label "Tatar" in reference to Turco-Mongol mamluks from the Golden Horde is common only in al-Malaṭī's writings, as the label "Tatar" in reference to Mongol mamluks or mamluks of Timurid Central Asia apparently generally fell out of use in the thirties or forties of the ninth/fifteenth century, we may assume that about this time it became commonly understood by the readership of the Mamluk historians as referring to Turco-Mongol mamluks from the Golden Horde. Mamluk historians would, therefore, have found it awkward to use it to refer to Mongol mamluks or mamluks of Timurid Central Asia who arrived in the sultanate starting from the late eighth/fourteenth century.[86]

It is in this context that we should understand the appearance of the term "pure Turk/Turkish" *(Turkī khāliṣ)* with the meaning of "Mongol" or "of (Timurid) Central Asia." As the term "Tatar" could no longer be used in that meaning without causing confusion, and as the term "Turk" was unspecific, another term had to be devised to refer specifically to Mongol mamluks or mamluks of (Timurid) Central Asia. That the earliest historians using the term "pure Turk" in this meaning died around the middle of the ninth/fifteenth century supports the argument that it was only around this time period (i.e., in the thirties or forties of the ninth/fifteenth century) that the semantic shift in the label "Tatar" reached its zenith (we may imagine, however, a gradual process of a shift in the meaning of the term during the first half of the ninth/fifteenth century).

Why then was the term "pure Turk" chosen to denote "Mongol" or "of (Timurid) Central Asia"? The territory "of what has been known for the past 800 years as *Mongolia,* was actually in the 6th–9th centuries *Turcia,* i.e., the core territory of the formation of the strongest early Turkic states in history."[87] Lee has recently discussed the history of Turkish identity in detail. Turkish identity first emerged as the self-identity of the Kök Türk of the Mongolian steppe, who founded the Türk Kaghanate (551–745 CE), the first Turkish nomadic empire. Türk then had a narrow meaning encompassing only the nucleus of the empire, and the "Türks reserved the name *Türk* for themselves and did not employ it for other Turkic-speaking groups that they subdued." After the collapse of the Türks, while some of their direct descendants may have preserved Türk identity, in general "the

[85] Ibid., 180–82. On the "Turkishness" of the Golden Horde, see, for example, Favereau, *La Horde d'Or,* 136.

[86] Mamluk historians of the ninth/fifteenth century could still use the label "Tatar" when referring to Mongol mamluks from the early period of the sultanate, as it must have been clear to their audience that this was its meaning in the context of the early Mamluk period.

[87] István Vásáry, "The Role and Function of Mongolian and Turkic in Ilkhanid Iran," in *Turks and Iranians: Interactions in Language and History,* ed. Éva Á. Csató et al. (Wiesbaden, 2016), 146.

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name *Türk* was not adopted as a self-appellation by the Turkic-speaking peoples who succeeded them," and the various Turkish-speaking groups in pre-Mongol Central Asia and the Qipchaq steppe did not share a Türk identity. Accordingly, "medieval Chinese historians also reserved the name *Türk...* for the Türks."[88]

While some Muslim writers used the term *Turk* in its narrow meaning, in general it was used with a broader meaning in the Islamic world.[89] As the Muslims met—in the second/eighth century—the remnants of the Türk empire in battles in Transoxiana, the term *Turk* was used by Muslims to refer to all the people of the Türk empire at that time, and, in the third/ninth century, the terms *Bilād al-Atrāk* or *Turkistān* ("the Land of the Turks") came to denote the steppe of Inner Asia, i.e., the steppe belt east of the Volga river, or northeast of the Syr Darya or Amu Darya rivers. Strictly speaking, the steppe region of Eastern Europe, i.e., west of the Volga, was not then considered part of the Turkish world.[90] In the fifth/eleventh century, the Western Qipchaqs living on the western fringes of the Turkish world settled in the steppe between the lower Danube and the lower Volga, and according to Muslim concepts East Europe came under the power of the Turks.[91] While in Mamluk sources, the Qipchaqs are considered "Turks," and while the term "the Land of the Turks" may occasionally have been employed by Mamluk authors in a loose meaning also encompassing the "Land of the Qipchaqs,"[92] one observes also a general distinction between the Land of the Qipchaqs and that of the Turks, and sometimes also a differentiation between Qipchaqs and "Turks." For example, when Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī (d. 749/1349) enumerates the "kingdoms of Islam" *(mamālik al-Islām),* the kingdoms of the Chingissids *(mamālik Bayt Jinkīz Khān),* or the kings of the "Turkish world" *(Tūrān),*[93] he differentiates between *Turkistān,* that spreads from the east of the Amu Darya river to China, and "the Land of the Qipchaqs" *(Bilād al-Qibjāq/Bilād al-Khifjāj).* He refers to Turkistan as the historical kingdom of the Turks *(Mamlakat al-Khāqānīyah/Mamlakat al-Turk*

[88] Lee, "Turkic Identity," 2; idem, "The Historical Meaning," 103–8; idem, "Some Remarks," 128–31, 139; idem, *The Turkic Peoples,* 3, 24–25, 35. On the ethnonym *Türk,* see Peter B. Golden, "Reflections on the Ethnonym *Türk,*" in *From the Khan's Oven: Studies on the History of Central Asian Religions in Honor of Devin DeWeese,* ed. Eren Tasar, Allen J. Frank, and Jeff Eden (Leiden, 2022), 1–50.

[89] Lee, "Turkic Identity," 3–4; idem, "The Historical Meaning," 108–9; idem, *The Turkic Peoples,* 24.

[90] *Zimonyi, "Why Were the Hungarians*," 204–6; and see Lee, "Turkic Identity," 3; idem, "The Historical Meaning," 109; idem, *The Turkic Peoples,* 7.

[91] *Zimonyi, "Why Were the Hungarians*," 208.

[92] The Qipchaq sultan al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn (d. 689/1290) is said to have been brought from "the Land of the Turks" *(Bilād al-Turk).* See Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm,* 7:325.

[93] Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-abṣār fī mamālik al-amṣār,* ed. ʿAbd Allāh ibn Yaḥyá al-Sarīḥī et al. (Abu Dhabi, 2001–4), 3:26, 93; idem, *Al-Taʿrīf bi-al-muṣṭalaḥ al-sharīf,* ed. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Shams al-Dīn (Beirut, 1988), 65.

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al-qadīmah) that was once in the hand of "the king of the Turks" *(malik al-Turk)* and adds that "strictly speaking, this [i.e., Turkistan] is the Land of the Turks" *(ammā Turkistan...Bilād al-Turk ḥaqīqatan),* and "this is what is meant by the term the Land of the Turks" *(wa-hiya al-murādah bi-qawlihim Bilād al-Atrāk).* The Chaghadaids ruling Turkistan are referred to as "the kings of the Turks" *(mulūk al-Turk)* and the ruler of the Golden Horde as "the ruler of the Qipchaqs" *(ṣāḥib al-Qibjāq).*[94] Al-ʿUmarī sometimes even differentiates between "Turkish" and "Qipchaq" slaves.[95] Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406) writes that Chaghadai (d. 639/1242), the son of Chinggis Khān, was made a ruler in "the heart of the Land of the Turks *(kursī al-Turk)* beyond the Amu Darya river *(mā warāʾ al-nahr),* that is, in Kāshghar and Turkistan," and that Jochi (d. 624/1227), the son of Chinggis Khān, was made a ruler in Sarai and "the Land of the Turks" *(Bilād al-Turk),* then writes that Jochi was the ruler "of the Land of the Qipchaqs, among it Sarai, and the Land of the Turks until Khwarazm" *(Bilād Qibjaq wa-minhā Sarāy wa-Bilād al-Turk ilá Khawārizm),*[96] which means that Ibn Khaldūn differentiated between the Land of the Western Qipchaqs under the control of the ruler of the Golden Horde and lands under his control east of the Volga which were part of the "Land of the Turks." Finally, administrative manuals mention that in letters sent to the ruler of the Golden Horde Uzbek (d. 742/1341) he was addressed as "the sultan of the Mongols, the Qipchaqs, and the Turks" *(sulṭān al-Mughul wa-al-Qibjāq wa-al-Turk).*[97]

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[94] Al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-abṣār,* 3:26–27, 92–93, 97–98, 121, 141, 170; idem, *Al-Taʿrīf,* 65; and see also al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshá,* 4:428, 438, 449. For further examples of al-ʿUmarī's differentiation between "the Land of the Turks" *(Bilād al-Atrāk)* and the "Qipchaq Steppe" *(Barr al-Qibjāq),* see his *Masālik al-abṣār,* 3:351. For earlier differentiations, see, for example, Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mirʾāt al-zamān fī tawārīkh al-aʿyān,* ed. Muḥammad Barakāt et al. (Beirut, 2013), 1:52.

[95] Al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-abṣār,* 3:75. Al-Nuwayrī writes that the armies of Chinggis Khān attacked the northern lands and sold as slaves the children of the "Turks" and "Qipchaqs" *(dharārī al-Turk wa-al-Qifjāq),* and he also mentions that Jochi (d. 624/1227), the son of Chinggis Khān and ruler of the Golden Horde, annihilated the tribes of the "Turks" and "Qipchaqs" *(ṭawāʾif al-Atrāk wa-qabāʾil al-Qifjāq).* See al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab,* 29:268; 27:229. Ibn al-Dawādārī (d. after 736/1335), quoting Ibn al-Athīr (d. 630/1233), mentions that one of the Ayyubid rulers received "Turkish" and "Qipchaq" slave girls *(waṣīfah Turk wa-Qifjāq).* See Abū Bakr ibn ʿAbd Allāh Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar wa-jāmiʿ al-ghurar* (Cairo, 1960–92), 7:178.

[96] ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn al-musammá kitāb al-ʿibar wa-dīwān al-mubtadaʾ wa-al-khabar fī ayyām al-ʿArab wa-al-ʿAjam wa-al-Barbar wa-man ʿāṣarahum min dhawī al-sulṭān al-akbar,* ed. Suhayl Zakkār and Khalīl Shaḥādah (Beirut, 2000–1), 7:725, 740; idem, *Riḥlat Ibn Khaldūn,* ed. Muḥammad ibn Tāwīt al-Ṭanjī (Beirut, 2004), 283, 298.

[97] Taqī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ibn Nāẓir al-Jaysh, *Kitāb Tathqīf al-Taʿrīf bi-al-muṣṭalaḥ al-sharīf par Taqī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥibb al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Taymī al-Ḥalabī appelé Ibn Nāẓir al-Ğayš,* ed. Rudolf Veselý (Cairo, 1987), 12; al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshá,* 7:317; Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Saḥmāwī, *Al-Thaghr al-bāsim fī ṣināʿat al-kātib wa-al-kātim,* ed. Ashraf Muḥammad Anas (Cairo,

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That the terms "the Land of the Turks," and sometimes even *Turk,* were used by Muslim and, more specifically, Mamluk authors as referring more or less to the lands of the Central Asian steppe and its inhabitants (including the lands ruled and inhabited by the Mongols) but excluding the Western Qipchaqs inhabiting the steppe region of Eastern Europe, is very likely to have been the main factor behind the adoption of the term "pure Turk" *(Turkī khāliṣ)* to mean "Mongol" or "of (Timurid) Central Asia," but two other factors may have also played a role. First, as noted by Lee, "[t]he Muslim view of the Turks as Inner Asian nomads was adopted by the Mongols of the Ilkhanate and the Mongol successors in Central Asia," among them the Timurids who also identified themselves as Turks. In that context, *Turk* was a term relational to *Tajik,* a name denoting "the Iranian-speaking sedentary population," so the Turkish identity of the Mongols of the Ilkhanate and Central Asia "was a non-Tajik, Inner Asian nomadic identity, not a non-Mongol, Türk-related identity."[98] On the other hand, in the Qipchaq steppe, where the Iranian population was absent, "a Central Asian type of Turkic identity was non-existent...during the Mongol and post-Mongol period. Apparently, the term *Turk* had not been used as a self-appellation among...non-Türk groups of the Qipchaq Steppe as the Qipchaqs," and the inhabitants of the western Golden Horde eventually adopted "Tatar" as a self-designation.[99] Thus, the fact that the term *Turk* was used as a self-appellation in Timurid Central Asia but not in the Qipchaq steppe may have also contributed to the adoption of the term "pure Turk" meaning "Mongol" or "of (Timurid) Central Asia." Second, as mentioned, there is evidence that Mongol or Central Asian mamluks were less inclined than Western Qipchaqs to learn the Arabic language, and thus acculturate, and were, therefore, more inclined to stick to the "Turkish" culture,[100] which may also have contributed to the adoption of the term "pure Turk" in the meaning of "Mongol" or "of (Timurid) Central Asia."

To conclude, one or a combination of these factors very likely contributed to the adoption of the term "pure Turk" *(Turkī khāliṣ)* in the meaning of "Mongol" or "of (Timurid) Central Asia" around the thirties or forties of the ninth/fif-

2009), 2:771. Also note that al-Nuwayrī writes that the ruler in Sarai controlled the "lands of the Turks and Qipchaqs" *(nawāḥī al-Turk wa-al-Qifjāq)* and when Möngke Temür (d. 681/1282) sat on the throne in Sarai, "he became the ruler of the land of...the Turks and Qipchaqs" *(ṣāra ilayhi mulk Bilād...al-Turk wa-al-Qifjāq).* See al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab,* 27:243, 246.

[98] Lee, "Turkic Identity," 1, 6–8; and see also idem, "*The Timurid View," 209*, 215; idem, "The Historical Meaning," 103, 121.

[99] Lee, "Turkic Identity," 1, 11–13; and see also idem, "The Historical Meaning," 121–22; idem, *The Turkic Peoples,* 24; and see at n. 80 above.

[100] See at n. 68 above.

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teenth century, as around that time the term "Tatar" was understood (or could be understood) by the audience of the Mamluk historians as referring to the Turco-Mongols of the Golden Horde. The investigation of the terms "pure Turk" and "Tatar" also allows us to identify some Mongol mamluks or mamluks of Timurid Central Asia in the later period of the Mamluk Sultanate, a group that had, until now, received only scant attention from modern scholars.



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Social Mobility and Political Power: Turkification Processes in the Mamluk Sultanate

> *If you want to live an exalted life*
> *and people to find your bad deeds good*
> *you have to wear the garment of the Turks and learn their language;*
> *and if not, then stay away from them and be pious*[1]

Written by a fourteenth-century Muslim scholar in the Mamluk Sultanate, this poem sheds light on the opportunities for social advancement of individuals who adopted Turkish cultural features. This phenomenon, which may be designated *Turkification* or *Mamlukization,* has received little attention in Mamluk studies, even though it played a significant role in social mobility throughout the Mamluk Sultanate.

The term Turkification, which I use in this article, is semantically derived from the terminology used by the medieval Muslim historians to indicate the Mamluk elite: "Turks" *(atrāk).* This designation refers to the members of the foreign military-political rulers, originating from several ethnic groups, most of them from the peoples of Central Asia, and representing the cultures of that region. Thus, Turkification in the context of this article applies to the embracing of cultural markers and practices that were common among the ruling elite—the *atrāk*—and identified with it.

The sultanate was definitely a society based on class. Contemporaneous Muslim authors schematically divided Mamluk society into four main strata: (1) *al-khāṣṣah:* the ruling class, namely the foreign Mamluk military-political elite; (2) *al-aʿyān:* the native or immigrant notables consisting mainly of the ulama (who served as qadis, jurists, *mudarrisūn,* hadith scholars, Sufi practitioners, preachers, and the like), as well as bureaucrats and distinguished merchants and doctors; (3) *al-ʿāmmah:* the common people; and (4) the bottom stratum: the *arādhil* or *awbāsh al-ʿāmmah* (the mob of the common people) who, according to Marxist terminology, we may denote as lumpenproletariat. Representatives of Islam, the

[1] Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Inbāʾ al-ghumr bi-abnāʾ al-ʿumr,* ed. Ḥasan Ḥabashī (Hyderabad, 1967–76), 5:28; also mentioned by Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ li-ahl al-qarn al-tāsiʿ* (Cairo, 1935–36), 1:323. Translation of the poem is taken from Koby Yosef, "*Dawlat al-Atrāk* or Dawlat al-Mamālīk? Ethnic Origin or Slave Origin as the Defining Characteristic of the Ruling Elite in the Mamluk Sultanate," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 39 (2012): 391.

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ulama, and other *aʿyān* constituted an intermediate class between the masses *(al-ʿāmmah)* and the ruling elite *(al-khāṣṣah).*[2]

In this hierarchical structure of Mamluk society, professional, scholarly, familial, and especially ethnic affiliations were crucial factors in defining the social status and class of an individual. From a cultural standpoint, the main dividing line ran between the members of the ruling "Turkish" elite—those who "had the last word"—and the civilians, whom we may designate as Arab. The mamluks, members of the Mamluk elite, in all likelihood consciously and zealously maintained their Central Asian traditions and customs in order to distinguish themselves from the local population and signify their membership in the ruling class, perhaps to support an ideology of otherness that reaffirmed their political legitimacy.[3] The practices maintained by the ruling elite included external, intellectual, and religious features. In addition to adopting Turkish names, the Mamluk elite spoke in a Turkish dialect. Furthermore, the mamluks enjoyed the prerogative of horseback riding and sword bearing, while their subjects were confined to mules or donkeys.[4]

The mamluks also distinguished themselves by their dress, which was considered to be much more honorable than that of any other class. Like the mamluks' names and spoken language, this distinctive raiment goes back to the Mamluk regiment of al-Muʿtaṣim (the Abbasid caliph) in the ninth century. However, new Asian garments were introduced to the Mamluk elite during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Imported from Central Asian regions, these sartorial elements increased social stratification. The new Central Asian fashions included caps, coats, and belts.[5] There were different kinds of headgear, the most prominent of which were the *kallawtāh* or *kallaftāh* caps. As for Asian coats, jackets,

[2] Ira M. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages,* (Cambridge, 1967), 79ff.; Jonathan P. Berkey, "Culture and Society during the Late Middle Ages," in *The Cambridge History of Egypt,* vol. 1, *Islamic Egypt, 640–1517,* ed. Carl F. Petry (Cambridge, 1998), 386–87.

[3] Ibid., 391–92; David Ayalon, "The Muslim City and the Mamluk Military Aristocracy," *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities* 2 (1968): 322–24.

[4] Riding on horseback, which may be interpreted as related more to status than ethnicity, symbolizes a fundamental concept in the Mamluk mentality, which has its roots in the Central Asian way of life. As noted by Ayalon, the close ties between the Mamluk and his horse began in his early childhood "while he was still amid the steppes or wild mountains of his country of origin, where, both peace and war, the horseman was the backbone of society." See: David Ayalon, *Gunpowder and Firearms in the Mamluk Kingdom: A Challenge to a Mediaeval Society* (London, 1956), 61–63. On *furūsīyah* practices and its connection to Mamluk culture, see note 8 below.

[5] Norman A. Stillman, "Costume and Clothing," in *Medieval Islamic Civilization: An Encyclopaedia,* ed. Josef Meri (New York, 2006), 1:162. On the import of clothing from Central Asia, see: Michael D. Dols, *The Black Death in the Middle East* (Princeton, 1979), 56–57.

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and vests, the so-called *qabāʾ al-turkī* or *qabāʾ al-tatarī* bear noting. Military belts called *ḥiyāsah* were worn over the outer garment.[6]

Other traditional aspects of the Mamluk elite encompassed dietary habits and even religious customs.[7] *Furūsīyah* exercises were another distinguishing feature of the mamluks from which Arab natives were excluded. This military training included archery, handling a lance and sword, riding horses in the hippodrome, playing polo, wrestling, and hunting. Identified with the Turks from a very early stage, *furūsīyah* was also called *funūn al-atrāk*. These exercises combined genuine Turkish and Middle Eastern warlike traditions.[8]

The fact that the elite had distinct characteristics does not mean that the boundary separating this class from the lower strata was impenetrable. Relative to the medieval world, the Mamluk Sultanate's populace enjoyed a substantial degree of social mobility.[9] For the most part, social advancement initiatives started with a native actively forging professional and friendly contacts with a patron, who was usually a member of the Mamluk military elite. From the tens of cases documented in the sources, the following instructive example warrants attention. Ibrāhīm ibn Khālid ibn ʿAbbās al-Anṣārī (d. 713/1314) was a coppersmith who worked with his father in the coppersmiths' market in Damascus. He supplied amirs with copper products. Owing to his immense ambition, Ibrāhīm ibn Khālid's business thrived. One of his main patrons was the amir Aqqūsh al-Afram. When al-Afram became governor of Greater Syria, he appointed the smith to the office of *wālī al-ḥarb* (the prefect of police) of Damascus. Ibrāhīm received an amirate and the *laqab* (honorific) Jamāl al-Dīn. Al-Ṣafadī summarizes

[6]The *kallawtāh* or *kallaftāh* were small yellow or red caps that were worn without a turban wrapped around them. See: R. Dozy, *Supplément aux Dictionnaires Arabes*)Leiden, 1881), 2:482; L. A. Mayer, *Mamluk Costume* (Geneva, 1952), 28–29. On the costume of the Mamluk amirs, see ibid., esp. 21–35.

[7]On some of the Central Asian practices preserved by the Mamluks, see Reuven Amitai's recent study: "Echoes of the Eurasian Steppe in the Daily Culture of Mamluk Military Society," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,* third series, 26, nos. 1–2 (2016): 261–70, esp. 264–67. On food habits: Amalia Levanoni, "*Food and Cooking* during the Mamluk Era: Social and Political Implications," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 9, no. 2 (2005): 201–22; On "pagan" shamanistic practices: Amitai, "Echoes," 265, n. 20. Nevertheless, as noted by Amitai, these Eurasian steppe rituals were rare.

[8]Sultan al-Ẓāhir Baybars introduced *furūsīyah* on a large scale to the Mamluk Sultanate and it was developed especially by the mamluks of Qalāwūn. See Amir Mazor, *The Rise and Fall of a Muslim Regiment: The Manṣūriyya in the First Mamluk Sultanate, 678/1279–741/1341* (*Göttingen*, 2015), 45–46.

[9]Lapidus, *Muslim Cities,* esp. 185. Berkey, "Culture and Society," 395. Social mobility within the ulama sector seems to have been more limited; see: Irmeli Perho, "Climbing the Ladder: Social Mobility in the Mamluk Period," *MSR* 15, no. 2 (2009): 9–34.

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this commoner's meteoric rise thus: "He who jumped from the copper market up to the status of one whose hand is kissed."[10]

In other instances, Turkification played a crucial role in the social advancement of members of the *ʿāmmah* and *aʿyān* classes. The main practices adopted by native members of these classes were Mamluk dress codes, riding habits, and spoken language.

Dress, Costume, and Riding Prerogatives

The external features of Turkification are exceedingly manifest, for they could be observed by everyone in the public sphere. Concerning individuals of different social status, several studies clearly demonstrate that appearance functions as the most effective mode of communication, establishing identities and selves, on the one hand, and attributing identities to others, on the other.[11] The malleable dimension of these undertakings is most telling. An individual could manipulate the impressions formed of him by others via deliberate self-presentation, using quasi-theatrical performances of appearance.[12] In so doing, an individual could deliver information to other people who were inclined to decode aspects of appearance *in terms of social class or profession*. In other words, it is through *social interaction* that people learn to interpret, utilize, and modify socially constructed meanings of dress within their cultural settings. Moreover, clothing and costume have a priority over verbal discourse in communicating identity, for these elements can be discerned in social encounters before a conversation is initiated.[13]

In Mamluk society, dress and costume signified class, ethnic, religious, and professional affiliations in the most explicit way. However, it does not seem as though there were strict "state regulations" concerning the dress code. Mamluk-era historians often point out that a Mamluk subject who aspired to get closer to the elite "began to dress in the clothes of the Turks" or "the military." At the very least, the Mamluks evidently turned a blind eye to this phenomenon; and

[10] Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr wa-aʿwān al-naṣr,* ed. ʿAlī Abū Zayd et al. (Beirut, 1998), 1:71–72; al-Birzālī, *Tārīkh al-Birzālī,* ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī (Beirut, 2006), 119–20.

[11] Mary Ellen Roach Higgins and Joanne B. Eicher, "Dress and Identity," *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal* 10 (1992): 1–8, esp. 7.

[12] See Ervin Goffman's doctrine of self-presentation in: *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Edinburgh, 1956).

[13] Michael Argyle, *Bodily Communication* (London, 1988), 233–54, esp. 233–37; G. P. Stone, "Appearance and the Self," in *Human Behavior and the Social Processes: An Interactionist Approach,* ed. Arnold M. Rose (New York, 1962), 86–118.

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at most, civilians were given a free hand to wear Turkish apparel.[14] The sources mention cases in which civilians did not wear clothes that accorded their social position, preferring to don others for various reasons. Al-Ṣafadī mentions an amir of *ṭablakhānāh* in Damascus (d. 723/1323), who did not wear the requisite garment.[15] Another case in point is a certain *kātib inshāʾ* (correspondence secretary) who used to replace his official clothes with those of a Bedouin or mamluk soldier *(jundī)* on his travels, apparently for safety reasons.[16] Moreover, there is testimony that even Jews could occasionally dress up as Muslims, due to temporary needs, wearing a white (instead of yellow) turban.[17] It seems that adopting a sartorial style was sometimes an effective manipulation intended to publicly convey one's desired social, professional, and even religious status.

The phenomenon of Turkification in terms of one's external features is illustrated by two commoners who managed to attain one of the highest state positions—the vizierate of Egypt. Muḥammad ibn al-Shaykhī, known as Dhubyān, started his career sewing head shawls and skullcaps in a Cairo market. He traveled to Mardin as a Sufi, where he managed to make connections with senior officials. Dhubyān returned to the Mamluk Sultanate as part of an expedition of Ilkhān Aḥmed Tegüder (r. 678–80/1280–82), son of Hülegü. Upon his arrival, the sources indicate, "he began to dress in the clothes of the *ajnād*" (simple mamluk soldiers) and managed to associate himself with the top-ranking amir Baybars al-Jāshnakīr (r. 1309–10), who would go on to become sultan. Thanks to these steps, Dhubyān received an amirate of *ṭablakhānāh*. He was appointed to high state positions, like *shādd al-dawāwīn* (supervisor of the financial system), *wālī* (governor) of Cairo, *nāẓir al-khāṣṣ* (controller of the privy purse), and finally, the vizierate of Egypt. Dhubyān strengthened his ties with the Turkish elite even more by marrying the daughter of a senior amir, Bahādur Raʾs Nawbah.[18]

A more revealing case involves Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Babāwī (d. 869/1465), member of the mob of commoners *(awbāsh al-ʿāmmah)* who rose to

[14] However, in some cases garment objects such as the *kallaftāh* turban were bestowed by the Mamluk ruler on a civilian. See, for instance, al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 1:81–82.

[15] Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfī bi-al-wafayāt,* ed. *Helmut Ritter* et al. (Beirut, 2008–13), 4:89.

[16] Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 1:336. For other instances see: Mayer, *Mamluk Costume,* 54–55.

[17] Dotan Arad, "Being a Jew Under the Mamluks: Some Coping Strategies," in *Muslim-Jewish Relations in the Middle Islamic Period: Jews in the Ayyubid and Mamluk Sultanates (1171–1517),* ed. Stephan Conermann (Göttingen, 2017), 29.

[18] The details about Dhubyān in the different sources are sometimes contradictory; see: Mazor, *The Rise and Fall,* 184, n. 249. See also: Donald S. Richards, "The Office of Wilāyat al-Qāhira," in *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras IV, Proceedings of the 6th, 7th and 8th International Colloquium,* ed. Urbain Vermeulen and Jo Van Steenbergen (Leuven, 2001), 447–48; idem., "Baybars al-Manṣūrī's *Zubdat al-Fikra,*" in *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt (c. 950–1800),* ed. Hugh Kennedy (Leiden, 2001), 43.

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become a vizier in Egypt. At every stage of his climb up the social ladder, his advancement was expressed and symbolized in clothing and riding practices. Al-Babāwī had initially filled the role of watchman, shepherd, or another job of this ilk in the Upper Egyptian village of Babā al-Kubrá. At some point, he moved to Cairo and began serving as a kitchen worker under a leading cook. Thereafter, al-Babāwī landed a position as an apprentice to one of the meat merchants. Soon after, he became a meat merchant himself. As Ibn Taghrībirdī notes, "his condition improved, and he rode a donkey." Al-Babāwī grew very rich while his business thrived. In fact, the vizier appointed him meat supplier of the Royal Mamluks. At this point, the upstart "was riding a mule with a saddlecloth made of sheep fur, and he wore a blue shirt *(qamīṣ)* as is customary among the senior merchants." Due to his great wealth, Sultan Khushqadam (r. 1461–67) appointed him *nāẓir al-dawlah*—the director of the financial offices. At this juncture, al-Babāwī abandoned the *zafūrīyah*—dress of the merchants and the butchers of the market—and started to don upper-class accoutrements. Specifically, he began regularly wearing a turban *(ʿimāmah)* and an upper coat with long sleeves *(al-farajīyah),* which was associated with the ulama, as well as the raiment of the scribes *(tazayyā ziyy al-kuttāb).* Additionally, the parvenu began to ride a horse, sporting boots *(khuff)* and a *mihmāz* (an iron spur above the boot).[19] These trappings publicly demonstrated his high status. Some notables looked suspiciously at this, however, since al-Babāwī was, according to Ibn Taghrībirdī, illiterate and completely ignorant. Nevertheless, the sultan continued to promote him, appointing him vizier of Egypt. Despite the displeasure of Ibn Taghrībirdī and others about al-Babāwī's dress and riding practices, one may conclude that external signs identified with the upper classes played a key role in the establishment of self-identity, on the one hand, and class representation *vis-a-vis* the people, on the other, by manipulating the public impression.[20]

Another native who managed to reach the position of vizier towards the end of the fifteenth century was Tāj al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Razzāq. Unlike the previous two subjects, he came from a family of bureaucrats and served as a financial officer *(mustawfī)* in Qaṭyā. After netting the position of the city's *wālī* and *nāẓir,* he was subsequently appointed vizier, *ustādār,* and then supervisor of the districts of northern Egypt *(al-wajh al-baḥrī).* As governor of Qaṭyā, al-Maqrīzī writes, "he took off the clothes of the scribes *[ziyy al-kuttāb]* and put on a *qabāʾ* and *kallaftāh* headgear, girded a sword around his waist, and people started calling him amir."

[19] Most of these garments were worn by the ulama; see: Mayer, *Mamluk Costume,* 52–54; Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshá fī ṣināʿat al-inshāʾ,* ed. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Shams al-Dīn (Beirut, 1987), 2:144.

[20] Abū al-Maḥāsin Yūsuf Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-zāhirah fī mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah,* ed. Fahīm Muḥammad Shaltūt et al. (Cairo, 1929–72), 16:278, 640–42.

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It seems that ʿAbd al-Razzāq's Turkish outfit and manners were appropriate to a senior Mamluk amir, above his status as governor of the provincial town of Qaṭyā. In any case, they contributed to raising his status in the eyes of those around him and to his appointment, eventually, as vizier.[21]

The adoption of external Mamluk trappings was not only prevalent among the lower strata and bureaucrats, but among the ulama as well. The competition among the latter for status and remunerative positions was both horizontal and vertical. To advance beyond the ulama ranks, one had to gain patronage and forge ties with members of the Mamluk elite.[22] Therefore, it is not surprising that some ulama dressed as mamluks in an apparent attempt to integrate to a greater extent among the *khāṣṣah* class. Of the four professors *(mudarrisūn)* at Shaykhū al-ʿUmarī's *khānqāh* in Cairo, al-Maqrīzī notes that Khalīl, the Maliki professor of the institution, adopted the garb of a mamluk soldier *(mutajannad al-shakl).* Not coincidentally, this same professor had an *iqṭāʿ* in the *ḥalqah* military unit.[23] Besides his knowledge of *furūsīyah,* the scholar, Sufi, and *muftī* of Gaza, Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf ibn Bahādur al-Iyāsī (d. 852/1448), used to wear the garment of the Turk *(kāna bi-ziyy al-turk).*[24] Another notable scholar from Damascus, al-Badr Ḥasan ibn Abī Bakr (d. 891/1486), embraced the Mamluk sartorial style.[25]

Learning and Knowing the Turkish Language

Learning and/or knowing the Turkish language was another effective strategy for ulama and bureaucrats eager to shore up their status, capital, or influence mainly on the basis of their intellectual abilities. In this context it should be emphasized that language is not only a means of communication, but also an expression of identity and culture. Thus, shared language provides a reassuring quality relating to a sense of familiarity, trust, social capital, and cultural

[21] Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-sulūk li-maʿrifat duwal al-mulūk,* ed. Muṣṭafá Ziyādah and Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ ʿĀshūr (Cairo, 1934–73), 3:924–25; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal al-ṣāfī wa-al-mustawfá baʿda al-wāfī,* ed. Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn (Cairo, 1984–2009), 7:314–18; idem., *Al-Nujūm,* 2:41–42.

[22] Joseph Escovitz, "Patterns of Appointment to the Chief Judgeships of Cairo During the Bahri Mamluk Period," *Arabica* 30 (1983): 147–68.

[23] Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Mawāʿiẓ wa-al-iʿtibār bi-dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-al-āthār fī Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah* (Cairo, 1854), 2:421. The *ḥalqah* unit was composed of non-mamluks and mamluks. During most of the fourteenth century it was no longer considered an elite unit; see: Mazor, *The Rise and Fall,* 22–23.

[24] He was among the *awlād al-nās* since his grandfather's name was Bahādur; see: ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ al-Malaṭī, *Nayl al-amal fī dhayl al-duwal,* ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī (Beirut, 2002), 5:266–67; al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ,* 10:91.

[25] *wa-kāna bi-ziyy al-atrāk fī malbasihi* (al-Malaṭī, *Nayl,* 8:27).

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identification.[26] Similar to external characteristics such as clothing, language choice serves to construct a self-identity and contributes to greater integration of an individual into other social groups. Put another way, "speaking a given language in different spatial contexts can define individuals as 'in place' or 'out of place' and affect their sense of identification and belonging."[27]

Several studies have indicated that the knowledge of Arabic among the mamluks was superficial and that they spoke Turkish—most likely in a Qipchaqi dialect in the first period, and Oghuz Turkish during the second.[28] The ability to communicate with members of the ruling elite in the language of their culture enabled members of the ulama to gain and nurture intimate ties with the elite. With respect to the case at hand, proficiency in the Turkish language often afforded greater opportunities for political influence and social status. In fact, knowledge of this tongue was crucial for penetrating the upper echelons. The importance of the Turkish language in Mamluk politics and administration was recently emphasized in several studies. Discussing the knowledge of Turkish among non-mamluks, Yosef argued that "the defining characteristic of the ruling elite was ethnic-linguistic and not slave origin."[29] Eychenne concluded that "on peut admettre que la plupart des administrateurs civils, au contact des élites mameloukes disposaient de rudiments de turc leur permettant d'avoir des échanges usuels dans cette langue."[30] Moreover, Eychenne demonstrated the crucial role of the Turkish language in creating and strengthening personal relations between military and civilian elites.[31]

Indeed, there were a few instances of civilians who tried to secure high positions in the religious, political, or bureaucratic establishments, but their efforts were hindered by their inadequate knowledge of Turkish. For instance, after being selected amir and *ustādār* in 846/1442, Ibn al-Kuwayz's appointment

[26] Alberto Chong, Jorge Guillen, and Vanessa Rios, "Language Nuances and Socioeconomic Outcomes," *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 69, no. 2 (2010): 693–95.

[27] Gill Valentine, Deborah Sporton, and Katrine Bang Nielsen, "Language Use on the Move: Sites of Encounter, Identities and Belonging," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers,* new series 33, no. 3 (2008): 385.

[28] Mazor, *The Rise and Fall,* 42–45, and see references for studies on this issue, esp. 44 n. 80. For more recent studies: Amitai, "Echoes," 264; Koby Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred: (Changing) Attitudes towards Mongol and 'Christian' Mamluks in the Mamluk Sultanate," in *The Mamluk Sultanate from the Perspective of Regional and World History,* ed. Reuven Amitai and Stephan Conermann (Göttingen, 2019), esp. 155, 168–71, 201–3; Mathieu Eychenne, *Liens personnels, clientélisme et réseaux de pouvoir dans le sultanat mamelouk (milieu XIIIe–fin XIVe siècle)* (Damascus, 2013), 157–58, 186–87.

[29] Yosef, "Dawlat al-Atrāk," esp. 390.

[30] Eychenne, *Liens personnels,* 186.

[31] Ibid., 160–88.

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was considered by Ibn Taghrībirdī a big mistake mainly due to his lack of Turkish.[32] Another case in point is Muḥammad al-Ḥalabī, a native of rural Aleppo (d. 855/1451). He managed to attain the position of second *ḥājib* in Aleppo by dint of appreciable exertions and wearing military attire. However, the fact that he "did not know a single word of Turkish," as Ibn Taghrībirdī noted in his condemnation, and spoke in the peasant dialect of his birthplace, facilitated his downfall.[33]

It is no coincidence, then, that we find chief judges and senior shaykhs in the Mamluk Sultanate who were highly skilled in the Turkish language. In fact, amirs inclined to favor the Turkic-speaking ulama, both in their personal relations and in their appointments to teaching and preaching positions.[34] In several cases, these ulama hailed from Anatolia or the eastern regions of the Muslim world. Hence, they probably did not learn Turkish on their own. According to Nasser Rabbat and Barbara Flemming, it was during the Circassian period that native Turkish speakers from Anatolia, Iraq, and Azerbaijan came to the Mamluk Sultanate in search of employment and patronage. Rabbat claims that the learning of Turkish by natives was an extremely rare phenomenon in the sultanate.[35] However, ulama members occupying high positions in the sultanate who had arrived from the above-mentioned regions can be found in the sources as early as the second half of the thirteenth century and throughout the 1300s. In addition, there were native civilians who learned the Turkish language on their own.

The Shafiʿi qadi of Damascus and *shaykh al-shuyūkh* in Egypt, ʿAlī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Qūnawī al-Tabrīzī (d. 729/1329), was born in Konya in 668/1270 and arrived in Damascus in 693/1294.[36] Due to his knowledge of Turkish (along with Persian and Arabic), he gained the esteem of the sultan, who appointed him to prestigious religious positions.[37] Similarly, the Hanafi chief qadi Ḥusām al-Dīn Ḥasan al-Ghūrī, who was trained in Baghdad and reached the sultanate in 738/1337–38,

[32] Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm,* 15:354; Yosef, "Dawlat al-Atrāk," 390.

[33] Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm,* 16:6; Yosef, "Dawlat al-Atrāk," 391.

[34] Eychenne, *Liens personnels,* 160–88, esp. 187.

[35] Nasser Rabbat, "*Representing the Mamluks* in *Mamluk* Historical Writing," in *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt, c. 950–1800,* ed. Hugh Kennedy (Leiden, 2000), 69; Barbara Flemming, "Literary Activities in Mamluk Halls and Barracks," in *Studies in Memory of Gaston Wiet,* ed. Myriam Rosen-Ayalon (Jerusalem, 1977), 251–53.

[36] Ismāʿīl ibn ʿUmar Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah,* ed. ʿAlī Shīrī (Beirut, 1993), 14:169; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Al-Durar al-kāminah fī aʿyān al-miʾah al-thāminah,* ed. Muḥammad Sayyid Jād al-Ḥaqq (Cairo, 1966), 3:93–97.

[37] Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 3:288–89; Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah,* 14:169; Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar,* 3:93.

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used to speak in Turkish with Sultan al-Manṣūr Abū Bakr (r. 741–42/1341) for the purpose of gaining an advantage over bureaucrats and judicial rivals.[38]

Another episode reflects the immediate impact of communication in Turkish with members of the Mamluk elite. During the riots that swept through Lower Egypt in 754/1353, a Muslim mob attacked Christians, destroyed a church, and built a mosque in its place. Chaired by the senior amir, Shaykhū, and the four chief judges, an inquiry on this matter was held in the Cairo citadel. When it appeared as though the tide of the proceedings was turning in favor of the Christians, the Sufi shaykh and Hanafi scholar Akmal al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Bābārtī (d. 786/1384) appealed to amir Shaykhū *in Turkish* and convinced him to back the Muslims on this issue. Al-Bābārtī was born in al-Bābārt in the Erzurum district of eastern Anatolia and was therefore a native Turkish speaker.[39]

Turkish speakers who arrived at the sultanate during the Circassian period enjoyed close relations with the sultans and amirs. Among them were Isḥāq ibn Ismāʿīl al-Qirimī (d. 880/1475) and his nephew Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm (d. 888/1484), who were appointed *qāḍī al-ʿaskar* (chief judge of the army) and to other religious posts.[40] The sultan reportedly accepted Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm's request to be named *qāḍī al-ʿaskar* after the candidate, who was fluent in Turkish, exchanged "some words with him in" that tongue *(wa-kallamahu baʿḍ kalimāt bi-lughat al-turk).*[41]

There are several cases of individual ulama and clergy families who reached Cairo or Damascus from Aleppo and filled senior positions in the bureaucratic, political, or scholarly spheres thanks to their knowledge of Turkish. Due to the geographic proximity between Aleppo and Anatolia (al-Rūm), it is likely that they were native speakers of Turkish. However, we are hard-pressed to clearly determine whether they knew Turkish from childhood or subsequently learned the tongue to advance their careers. ʿImād al-Dīn Ismāʿīl al-Qaysārānī (whose *nisbah* alludes to the fact that he may have originated from al-Qaysārīyah in Anatolia) arrived from Aleppo with his two sons—Sharaf al-Dīn Khālid (d. 759/1358) and Shihāb al-Dīn Yaḥyá (d. 753/1352–53). They developed close relations with top-ranking amirs in Syria and held senior bureaucratic positions in Damascus, like *muwaqqaʿ al-dast* (scribe responsible for responding to petitions), *kātib al-inshāʾ, kātib sirr* (confidential secretary to the governor), and *wakīl bayt*

[38] These efforts, however, were not always successful; see al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:555–56, 611.

[39] Ibid., 2:900–1; Tamer el-Leithy, "Coptic Culture and Conversion in Medieval Cairo, 1293–1524" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton, 2005), 69–70. Akmal al-Dīn is mentioned sometimes by the *nisbah* (geographical attribution) al-Rūmī (al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:864).

[40] Al-Malaṭī, *Al-Majmaʿ al-mufannan bi-al-muʿjam al-muʿanwan* (Kuwait, 2011), 1:532–35; al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ,* 2:276.

[41] Al-Malaṭī, *Al-Majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 1:103–5.

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al-māl (supervisor of the treasury). Khālid is said to have spoken Turkish as eloquently as a nightingale sings *(wa-kāna faṣīḥan fī al-lughah al-turkīyah ka-annahu bihā bulbul).*[42] Another Shafiʿi qadi from Aleppo, an Arab according to his name and *nisbah*—ʿAlī ibn Sālim al-Kinānī (d. 747/1346–47)—managed to intervene in the affairs of the ruling elite by virtue of his Turkish skills.[43] The same can be said for Ghāzī ibn Aḥmad Ibn al-Wāsiṭī (d. 1312)—an administrator best known for his polemical treatise against the Jews and Christians.[44] A Sufi shaykh from the Shaykhūnīyah *khānqāh,* he merited admiration, sympathy, and immense popularity among the amirs owing to his superb Turkish.[45] Another scholar from Aleppo, whom al-Sakhāwī considered "stupid" *(aḥmaq ahwaj),* was nevertheless fluent in Turkish. He formed close bonds with members of the Mamluk elite and obtained senior religious positions at a very early age, such as that of shaykh al-Shaykhūnīyah.[46] It also seems that the grammarian Ibn al-Naḥḥās (d. 698/1299) was appointed professor of Quran exegesis *(tafsīr)* in the madrasah of Sultan Qalāwūn's new Manṣūrīyah complex on account of his own knowledge of the Turkish language.[47]

Also pertinent to this discussion are native officials who *evidently* acquired Turkish on their own. For instance, Sulaymān ibn Ibrāhīm (d. 744/1343–44), known by the nickname Ibn Kātib Qarāsunqur, was a senior bureaucrat who learned the Qipchaqi dialect. He served in a number of top jobs, foremost among them *sāḥib al-dīwān* (head of the ministry) of Damascus's governor and vizier.[48] The deputy of the Hanbali qadi in Damascus (d. 741/1340–41), Burhān al-Dīn

[42] Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 2:308–11, 5:550–60; Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar,* 5:189; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm,* 10:328; idem., *Al-Manhal,* 5:199. On this family, see also: Eychenne, *Liens personnels,* 169.

[43] Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 3:373; idem., *Al-Wāfī,* 21:127. "He spoke Turkish and had a tremendous ability to intervene in the affairs of the respectable people and to gather with the military and the bureaucracy" *(wa-kāna yataḥaddathu bi-al-turkī wa-lahu qudrah ʿaẓīmah ʿalá mudākhalat al-nās wa-al-ijtimāʿ bi-arbāb al-suyūf wa-arbāb al-aqlām).*

[44] Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:28: "He knew Turkish and intervened in the affairs of the amirs" *(yaʿrafu bi-al-turkī wa-yudākhil al-umarāʿ).* For another instance of a Turkish speaker who became a high administrator thanks to his knowledge of this language, see: al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 1:333–40; Eychenne, *Liens Personnels,* 169–70.

[45] Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ,* 2:115–16.

[46] Ibid., 8:235–36.

[47] According to al-Ṣafadī, Amir Sanjar al-Shujāʿī, who was the supervisor of the Manṣūrīyah complex building, summoned Ibn al-Naḥḥās and was pleased to reveal that he knew Turkish. Al-Shujāʿī informed him that the Sultan had decided to appoint him as a *tafsīr* professor at the *qubbah* of the complex and immediately ordered him to enlarge his turban (al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 4:197).

[48] Al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfī,* 15:340–42; Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar,* 2:335; Rabbat, "Representing," 69; Eychenne, *Liens Personnels,* 172–73.

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Ibrāhīm ibn Aḥmad ibn Hilāl, learned the language from Turkish concubines that he had purchased in the slave market.[49] Lastly, Ibn Malīḥ al-Muqrī (a Cairo native born in 818/1415) was a Hanafi scholar and Sufi who excelled at reciting from the Quran. The fact that he was proficient in Turkish evidently contributed to his appointment as the Royal Mamluks' Quran teacher in the barracks *(ṭibāq)* of the Cairo Citadel.[50]

The final three cases revolve around ulama and officials who were well integrated into the Mamluk elite and gained enormous power. While all of them adopted external and symbolic Mamluk trappings, the main factor behind their social advancement was mastery of the Turkish language.

Shaykh Burhān al-Dīn Ibn al-Karakī managed to build a relationship with the amir Qāytbāy before the latter became sultan. Upon his master's ascension to power, Ibn al-Karakī was appointed *imām* of the sultan's palace. As an expression of his high status, this man changed his riding habits and garb. "At the beginning of his *ustādh*'s reign," al-Malaṭī writes, Ibn al-Karakī "rode a she-mule with a camel saddle, then advanced to riding his mule on a horse saddle," before shifting to a horse. Ibn al-Karakī also dressed in the luxurious clothes of the Turks, rather than the vesture of the ulama. However, it was his knowledge of Turkish that endeared him to the ruling elite and paved his path to obtaining countless religious positions, including muezzin, preacher, and shaykh of many respected institutions, despite being (according to al-Malaṭī) a mediocre scholar and having an arrogant-cum-lustful character.[51]

Jamāl al-Dīn Ibrāhīm, also known as Jamāl al-Kufāh (d. 745/1344), came from a family of Coptic officials who had converted to Islam. He served as *nāẓir al-dawlah, nāẓir al-jaysh,* and *nāẓir al-khāṣṣ.* In so doing, his purview unprecedentedly covered the administration of the state, the military, and the treasury, to the point of becoming "tantamount to the state" *(wa-ṣāra huwa ʿibārat[an] ʿan al-dawlah).* Accordingly, Jamāl al-Kufāh received the title *mushīr al-dawlah* (state counsellor) and vizier. The Turkification that this figure went through paved the way for his success. He became popular among the Mamluk elite due to, above all, the fact that he spoke Turkish *fluently and eloquently.* He received an amirate of a hundred, wore the clothes of the Turks and the *kallawtāh,* acquired mamluks, and even used to play polo with the sultan at the hippodrome.[52]

[49] Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 1:45; Eychenne, *Liens personnels,* 171–72.

[50] Al-Malaṭī, *Al-Majmaʿ al-Mufannan,* 1:394–95.

[51] See his biography in ibid., 1:61–73: on his riding, 62; his knowledge of Turkish, 63; his Turkish costume, 70.

[52] Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 1:142–46, esp. 144; idem., *Al-Wāfī,* 6:180; Shams al-Dīn al-Shujāʿī, *Tārīkh al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn al-Ṣāliḥī wa-awlādihi (Die Chronik Aš-šuǧāʿīs),* ed. Barbara Schäfer (Wiesbaden, 1977), 1:275; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm,* 10:11; Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar,* 1:82; al-

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The most striking example is that of Saʿd al-Dīn Ibrāhīm ibn ʿAbd al-Razzāq, known as Ibn Ghurāb (d. 808/1406), who hailed from a family of Alexandrian Coptic bureaucrats. He acquired the Turkish language at an early stage in his life and career, while serving his first patron—Amir Maḥmūd the Ustādār. In addition, Ibn Ghurāb learned to understand the "mentality" of the Turkish elite and their "insidious" political conduct.[53]

These qualifications facilitated Ibn Ghurāb's assimilation into the Mamluk ruling class and his ability to cultivate intimate friendships with the sultans and amirs. Consequently, he attained highly influential positions at a young age under the reign of the first Circassian sultans, Barqūq and his son Faraj. Above all, his case epitomizes social mobility from the *aʿyān* to the *khāṣṣah* classes. Ibn Ghurāb was deeply involved in political intrigues among the Mamluks, and was responsible for laying the groundwork for Barqūq's second tenure as sultan. At the zenith of this upstart's power, he simultaneously held the offices of *ustādār,* vizier, *nāẓir al-khāṣṣ, nāẓir al-jaysh,* and *kātib al-sirr.* Ibn Ghurāb reached such heights that a number of observers expected him to assume the sultanate itself. Near his death at the age of 30, the official received an amirate of 100 and the honorable position of *rāʾs al-mashūrah.*[54] Befitting his status, Ibn Ghurāb dressed in the Turks' customary military attire *(ziyy al-jundī/ziyy al-atrāk).* He even set up an orchestra at the entrance to his house, as was the practice of senior Mamluk amirs. He also wore the Mamluks' *kallaftāh* turban on his head. Near his death, this figure rode alongside the sultan while equipped with the Mamluk symbols of war, not least a sword and a *qarqal* brigandine.[55]

Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:675–76. See also: Rabbat, "Representing," 69–70; Ulrich *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, no.1 (1988): 92; Eychenne, *Liens personnels,* 161–62. On the role of the polo game in Mamluk court culture see: Amitai, "Echoes," 266–67 and notes 25–28.

[53] As al-Sakhāwī puts it: "He was knowledgeable in the Turkish language, the cunning, deception, and moral characters of the rulers" *(ʿārifan bi-al-lughah al-turkīyah maʿa al-dahāʾ wa-al-makr wa-al-maʿrifah al-tāmmah bi-akhlāq ahl al-dawlah). Al-Ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ,* 1:67. For his Turkish learning: 1:66.

[54] *Rāʾs al-mashūrah* was the head of the supreme council of high-ranking amirs, mainly in the Turkish period. See: David Ayalon, "Studies on the Structure of the Mamluk Army III," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 16, no. 1 (1954): 69.

[55] Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ,* 1:65–67; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm,* 13:48–49, 156–57; al-Malaṭī, *Nayl,* 3:88, 130. On the *qarqal* armor see: Mayer, *Mamluk Costume,* 40–41.

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Conclusions

In his pioneering study on medieval Muslim cities, Ira Lapidus persuasively concludes that "barriers of class stratification" in Mamluk society "were reduced by relative ease of mobility."[56] Being a male and a Muslim constituted the key prerequisites for social advancement, followed by lineage and social networks. However, the case studies here reveal that the adoption of Turkish or Mamluk cultural trappings on the part of natives from the *awbāsh, al-ʿāmmah,* and *al-aʿyān* classes was another significant factor behind social mobility, which could lead to integration with the *khāṣṣah* ruling class.

Embracing Turkish or Mamluk dress codes, riding habits, court culture, and the spoken language of the elite served as both *means* and *manifestations* of the native subjects' advancement. In other words, the relation between Turkification and social mobility was not always a case of chronological cause and effect. Several cases indicate that it was a vicious circle interaction between the two processes, in which each process strengthened the other. The adoption of Turkish practices bolstered self-identity on the one hand, and indicated one's social position on the other. At the same time, it encouraged the continuation of social climbing. Such Turkification led to the assimilation and integration of individuals into the ruling elite. Moreover, it enabled them to achieve and maintain effective political and bureaucratic power and ascend the ranks of scholarly society.

It would be speculative to come to any clear-cut conclusions concerning the phenomenon of Turkification based on the unsystematic collection of the twenty or so case studies discussed above. Issues such as the relationship between personal relations and elements of Turkification, changes and developments of the phenomenon during the Mamluk period, or mobility trends toward certain positions deserve further research. However, some findings can be pointed out: all the practices of Turkification discussed in this article were adopted by native subjects throughout the entire Mamluk period, both Turkish and Circassian; intellectual practices were mainly pursued by members of the *aʿyān* educated class; among the fifteen Turkish speakers discussed in the article, it seems that at least half of them learned the rulers' spoken language, to one degree or another; the initiative required for intellectual efforts such as learning Turkish or improving already existing skills in the language created greater options for social advancement and achievement of political influence; a combination of several elements of Turkification resulted in the accumulation of the greatest political power and influence.

[56] Lapidus, *Muslim Cities,* 185.

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From a broader perspective, another conclusion from this short article is instructive. Considering the medieval Christian West's highly segmented urban fabric, where the ruling nobility was a caste above the rest,[57] the opportunities for social mobility within the Mamluk Sultanate for those who actively pursued Turkification is further evidence of the major differences in the structure and dynamics between Islamicate and European societies.

[57] See: ibid., esp. 4–8; 185–192.

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"Rex Corum" and the Archbishop of Khanbaliq in the Letter of Pope John XXII (1333)

Introduction

The news that John of Montecorvino (1247–1328), the first archbishop of Khanbaliq (the capital of the Mongol Empire and present-day Beijing), had passed away probably reached Pope John XXII (r. 1316–34) as early as 1333. As soon as he heard the news, he appointed and dispatched a Franciscan friar, Nicolas de Botras, as the new archbishop. Five years later, however, in 1338, an embassy sent by the Mongol emperor Toghon Temür (r. 1333–70) arrived in Avignon and delivered his message, along with a letter written two years earlier—in 1336—by a group of Alan chiefs in the Khanbaliq region. They wrote that Montecorvino's successor had not yet arrived and asked the pope to hurry the dispatch of a new archbishop. This shows that Nicolas did not reach his final destination. We know that he visited Almaliq sometime in 1335–36, but after that we lose track of him, and it seems that he disappeared somewhere in Central Asia or Mongolia.[1]

Before Nicolas departed, the pope gave him five letters, copies of which are stored in the Vatican. Among these letters, the one addressed to a certain "Rex Corum" (i.e., the "King of Corum") has drawn special attention from scholars.[2] In the letter, he was also referred to as "Soco de Chigista," though in copies of the letter, the first part of his name was variously rendered as "Socho de," "Sece," "Secede," etc. Regarding this puzzling title and name, the French scholar Jean Richard proposed in 1948 that Corum represents "Gori," i.e., Koryŏ (Korea), and "Soco" should be read as "Soc," the title of a Koryŏ king, "Chung-suk."[3] Since then, most scholars have followed this interpretation.[4]

[1] Girolamo Golubovich, *Biblioteca bio-bibliografica della Terra Santa e dell'Oriente francescano* (Karachi, 1906–27), 3:422.

[2] The copy of this letter is in the Archivum Secretum Vaticanum (MS A.S.V. Reg. Vat. 106f, 176r–v, no. 164).

[3] Jean Richard, "Un texte latin du XIVe siècle concernant le Corée," in *Actes du XXIe congrès international des Orientalistes, Paris, 23–31 juillet 1948* (Paris, 1949), 349–50; idem, *La papauté et les missions d'Orient au Moyen Age (XIIIe–XVe siècles)* (Rome, 1977).

[4] Folker Reichert, *Begegnungen mit China: Die Entdeckung Ostasiens im Mittelalter* (Sigmaringen, 1992), 94; James D. Ryan, "Preaching Christianity Along the Silk Route: Missionary Outposts in the Tartar 'Middle Kingdom' in the Fourteenth Century," *Journal of Early Modern History* 2, no. 4 (1998): 368; Alexander Toepel, "Ein Brief Papst Johannes' XXII. an den koreanischen König,"

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This theory, suggesting that in the early fourteenth century Pope John XXII sent a letter to a Koryŏ king, has triggered diverse reactions in Korea. Korean Catholics seem to welcome and publicize this theory as evidence that the first arrival of Christianity in Korea occurred much earlier than previously thought. Some scholars, such as An Jaewon and Nam Jongguk, however, have criticized Richard's proposal and put forward new hypotheses. We will explain their criticisms later in detail.[5]

In this article, I will examine the primary sources and historical circumstances related to the dispatch of the new archbishop Nicolas and attempt to solve the mystery surrounding the identity of "Rex Corum" in the pope's letter. At the same time, I hope to provide new information on religious exchanges between the Christian West and East Asia during the Mongol era, as well as shed light on the political situation of the ruling circles in the Yuan Empire during the 1330s.

The Pope's Letters

In September 1333, Pope John XXII gave at least five letters to Nicolas when he appointed him as the archbishop of Khanbaliq. We know of at least five leaders whom the Pope addressed in his letters:

1. Leone, the king of Armenia (Leo IV, r. 1320–41)
2. Giacomo, the patriarch of Armenia
3. Özbek Khan, the ruler of the Qipchaq and Khazars (r. 1313–41)
4. "Soco (or Sece) de Chigista," the king of Corum
5. The Great Khan, ruler of the Tatars[6] (i.e., Toghon Temür)

The recipients of these letters were all political or religious leaders in the regions Nicolas was supposed to pass through. The pope asked them to provide protection and care for the Christians under their rule and to assist the new archbishop on his way to his destination.

The first two letters were written on 1 October 1333, while the others were written on 31 October. Nicolas could not leave immediately after he received these letters, but departed five months later, on 13 February 1334, with twenty

Scrinium 7–8, no. 2 (2011): 307–13; idem, "Was There a Nestorian Mission in Korea?" *Oriens Christianus* 88 (2004): 29–35.

[5] An Jaewon, "Gyohuang Yohan 22ga bonaen pyeonji e naoneun Regi Corum eun Goryeo eui Chungsuk Wang inga [Can Rex Corum be King Chungsuk of Goryeo?]," *Gyohoe sahak* 14 (2016): 129–63; Nam Jongkuk, "Who is Rex Corum in the Letter of 1333 by Pope John XXII?" *Mediterranean Review* 12, no. 2 (2019): 23–51.

[6] For the Latin text, see Luke Wadding, *Annales Minorum* (Lugduni, 1625–54), 7:138 ff; I. L. Mosheim, *Historia Tartarorum Ecclesiastica* (Halle, 1741), 154–60; Golubovich, *Biblioteca bio-bibliografica,* 3:419–23.

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friars and six laymen belonging to the Franciscan order, whom the pope had selected to accompany him. For some reason, however, the pope cancelled Nicolas's mission on 10 October and died two months later, on 4 December 1334. We cannot find any papal bull ordering Nicolas to resume his journey.[7]

However, his mission does not seem to have been completely revoked, because we find an interesting remark in the letter dated 13 June 1338 by the next pope, Benedict XII (r. 1334–42), which was addressed to "Magnifico Principi Chansi Imperatori Tartarorum de medio imperii" (The great ruler Chansi, Tatar emperor of the Middle Empire). Here, "the Middle Empire" denotes the Chaghadai Ulus, which were also called in contemporary Mongolian sources "Dumdadu Mongghol Ulus,"[8] and Chansi is none other than Changsi (r. 1335–37), the ruler of that ulus. In this letter, the pope mentions:

> We have perceived with joy that you have graciously received our venerable brother Nicolas, Archbishop [of Cambalech], and the beloved friars of the Franciscan Order, who were sent to those parts by the happy memory Pope John XXII, our predecessor. You have extended to them a generous and bountiful hand, and for the sake of God, you have granted them permission to repair destroyed churches, to construct new ones, and to freely preach the word of God to those who are willing to listen.[9]

This letter apparently shows that before his death Pope John had again commanded Nicolas to depart. In 1338, Pope Benedict entrusted this letter to an embassy of Toghon Temür Qa'an who were set to return to Khanbaliq, most likely passing through Almaliq, the capital of the Chaghadai Ulus. Having arrived at the papal court on 1 March of that year, this embassy presented, as mentioned earlier, a letter from the qa'an and another from the Alan chiefs, both of which were written in 1336. The qa'an expressed his desire for papal blessings and a resumption of friendly relations with the pope, while the Alan chiefs requested a new leader and spiritual comforter, as they had not received a new archbishop, after more than eight years had passed since Montecorvino's death. In response, Pope Benedict likely informed them that a new Franciscan bishop—Nicolas—had already departed for the East at the end of 1334 and that he was known to be in Almaliq at that time.

[7] Golubovich, *Biblioteca bio-bibliografica,* 3:420.

[8] Matsui Dai, "Dumdadu Mongγol Ulus 'the Middle Mongolian Empire'," in *The Early Mongols: Language, Culture and History: Studies in Honor of Igor de Rachewiltz on the Occasion of His 80th Birthday,* ed. V. Rybatzki et al. (Bloomington, 2009), 111–19.

[9] Golubovich, *Biblioteca bio-bibliografica,* 3:422.

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Now, one can ask: why did Nicolas visit Almaliq? This question is justified because, in the list of five papal letters above, we cannot find any letter addressed to someone in or around Almaliq. Thus, we can assume that Nicolas and his party were initially going to take the northern route, crossing straight through the steppe to the east. They had no intention of going through Almaliq, which is a more southern passage, but they must have changed their plans along the way. It is possible that they obtained new information while staying in Saray about the situation in Almaliq and were encouraged to change their route. We cannot, however, confirm any of these assumptions due to the lack of relevant evidence.

So, what became of Nicolas and his companions, who were reportedly staying in Almaliq? The answer may lie in the report of John of Marignolli (d. after 1355), a Franciscan friar who led a return embassy following the visit of Toghon Temür's envoys in 1338.[10] Pope Benedict designated him as a papal ambassador and enlisted three other friars—Nicolas de Maiano, Gregory of Hungary, and Nicolas Boleti—to join him on the mission. While the ultimate goal of the embassy was to reach the ulus of the qa'an, they were expected to pass through the uluses of the Jochids and the Chaghadaids along the way. Their mission was to present papal gifts and extend friendship to the rulers of these regions in order to strengthen ties and pave the way for more active evangelical work.

In December 1338, the Marignolli embassy came to Naples and awaited the arrival of the qa'an's envoys. They then crossed the Mediterranean together, arriving in Constantinople at the beginning of March 1339. From there, they traveled through the Black Sea to Caffa on the Crimean peninsula before continuing on to Saray, where Özbek Khan was staying. It was there that they presented the pope's letter and gifts. After spending the winter of 1339–40 in Saray, they departed in May and traveled through Urgench before arriving at Almaliq, the capital of the Chaghadai Ulus at the end of 1340.

In Almaliq, the embassy was able to carry out religious works without hindrance, including the erection of churches and the performance of baptisms. They also discovered that just a year earlier, in 1339, friar Ricardo from Burgundy had been martyred along with four other friars who were assisting him: Francis of Alexandria, Pascal a Spaniard, Laurence of Ancona, and Peter. An Indian friar-cum-interpreter and a merchant named Gilotto were also killed. The embassy reported that, as a result of this massacre, no Catholic friars were present in Almaliq when they arrived. The fanaticism had diminished, however,

[10] For more information on the embassy of John of Marignolli and his report, see Henry Yule, *Cathay and the Way Thither: Being a Collection of Medieval Notices of China* (London, 1866), 3:175–269. See also A. C. Moule, *Christians in China before the Year 1550* (London, 1930), 252–60; Igor de Rachewiltz, *Papal Envoys to the Great Khans* (Stanford, 1971), 191–201.

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and non-Islamic religious activities were again permitted.[11] What is striking in Marignolli's report is that he does not mention Nicolas by name when he lists those who were martyred, including even the names of an Indian interpreter and a merchant. It is highly unlikely that Marignolli would omit Nicolas, the new archbishop of Khanbaliq, if he had truly been martyred just a year prior.

In 1341, the Marignolli mission departed from Almaliq and headed for Khanbaliq. A year later, they reached their destination and were granted an audience with Toghon Temür Qa'an on August 19, 1342, where they presented him with the pope's gifts and letters. According to Chinese sources, the "kingdom of the Franks" sent an awe-inspiring tribute to the emperor: a majestic horse that measured an impressive eleven feet three inches in length and six feet four inches in height. This "heavenly horse," with its striking black body and two white hind hooves, captured the imagination of the Chinese contemporaries, who were mesmerized by its uniqueness. It was none other than a giraffe, which they hailed as a "heavenly horse," inspiring odes and praises to be composed in its honor.[12]

Marignolli and his company spent almost four years in Khanbaliq, but they were forced to leave due to widespread rebellions and rapidly deteriorating political conditions in China. Prior to their departure, the qa'an entrusted them with a present for the pope, as well as a letter requesting a priest with the rank of cardinal to come and stay in his realm with full powers. Accompanied by two hundred royal guards, they traveled across the land of "Manzi" (southern China) and reached the seaport of Quanzhou. On 26 December 1346, they embarked on a voyage across the Indian Ocean and finally arrived in Avignon in 1353, where they presented the qa'an's letter to Pope Innocent VI (r. 1352–62).[13]

Despite staying in Khanbaliq for almost four years, Marignolli made no mention of Nicolas in his report, despite describing the church and other buildings belonging to the archbishopric in detail. If Nicolas had been present and actively engaged in missionary activities, it is difficult to understand why Marignolli would have failed to mention him. This strongly implies that Nicolas was not in Khanbaliq when Marignolli and his colleagues were there, and suggests, again, that he likely disappeared or died on his way from Almaliq to Khanbaliq.

It is impossible to confirm what actually happened to Nicolas, as there is no evidence at all. We do, however, have a clue that might help us speculate about where he went after leaving Almaliq: the letter addressed to the King of Co-

[11] Moule, *Christians in China,* 252–57; Regina Müller, "Jean de Montecorvino (1247–1328): Premier Archevêque de Chine (III)," *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* 44 (1988): 269–70.

[12] *Yuanshi* [Yuan dynastic history, hereafter *YS*], ed. Song Lian et. al., Zhonghua Shuju critical edition (Beijing, 1976), 864; Rachewiltz, *Papal Envoys,* 193–95; Saguchi Tōru, *Mongoru Teikoku to Seiyō* (Tokyo, 1970), 241–43.

[13] Rachewiltz, *Papal Envoys,* 196–201.

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rum. As previously mentioned, Pope John XXII gave Nicolas five letters, and if we mark their locations on a map, we can easily see that they all relate to Nicolas's travel routes.

First, there is the king of Armenia, Leone or Leo IV, the last Hethumid ruler in Cilicia or "Little Armenia." At that time, his capital was Tarsus, an important seaport on the eastern Mediterranean. Undoubtedly, Nicolas sailed across the sea and disembarked in Tarsus to take the route over the Caucasus Mountains. It would have been indispensable for him to have support and protection from the ruler and the patriarch of the Armenian kingdom.

Having crossed the Caucasus, he probably headed north to the Qipchaq steppe. At the time, Özbek Khan, the ruler of the Jochid Ulus, was nomadizing along the middle and lower Volga, which flows into the Caspian Sea. Only a few years earlier, Ibn Baṭṭūṭah had visited his capital, "al-Sarā," also known as "Sarā Barka," and met with Özbek Khan. Scholars, including H. A. R. Gibb, have regarded this "Sarā Barka" or "Saray Berke" as "New Saray" *(Saray al-jadīd),* located in modern Tsarev, about 225 miles north of Astrakhan.[14] It turns out, though, that both Saray Batu and Saray Berke are in fact the "Old Saray," and the "New Saray" became the new capital only in the early 1340s when Janibek came to power.[15] Thus, we can assume that Nicolas passed through Tarsus, crossed over the Caucasus, and went to this Old Saray; in other words, his route differs from the one taken by Ibn Baṭṭūṭah in 1333 and Marignolli in 1339, who went via Constantinople.

Therefore, we are certain that, of the five letters entrusted to Nicolas, the aforementioned three letters were addressed to political and religious leaders on his way to Khanbaliq. The remaining two letters included one to be presented to the qa'an upon his arrival in Khanbaliq. It is reasonable to assume that the recipient of the last letter, the King of Corum, was located between Saray Berke and Khanbaliq. In fact, we can find the following solicitation from the pope:

> . . . when the aforesaid Archbishop and Brothers arrive at your kingdom, you receive them with a serene countenance, and cause them to be received by your subjects and command that they be treated with benevolent affection, and that you treat them kindly.[16]

Upon leaving Özbek Khan's domain, we have confirmed from Marignolli's report that Nicolas journeyed to Almaliq, and after having spent some time there,

[14] Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325–1354,* trans. H. A. R. Gibb (London, 1972), 2:515.

[15] See Thomas T. Allsen, "Saray," *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., 9:41–44.

[16] For the Latin text, see Mosheim, *Historia Tartarorum,* 157–59, and An Jaewon, "Gyohuang Yohan," 137–43.

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departed shortly before the notorious massacre of 1339. While one might be inclined to consider the possibility of the King of Corum being the ruler of the Chaghadai Ulus, no historical or linguistic evidence exists to support this claim. Hence, it appears that we must explore alternative candidates located further to the east.

WHO IS REX CORUM?

As mentioned earlier, Jean Richard took notice of the letter to the King of Corum. He gave a short paper at the 1948 International Congress of Orientalists convened in Paris and published a revised version in 1977.[17] Explaining the phrase *"magnifico viro Soco de Chigista, regi Corum,"* he interpreted Corum as Gori (Korea), and Soco as Soc (a part of the name of King Chungsuk). With regard to Chigista, admitting its ambiguity, he suggested that it might be related to the word Sol'go, an ancient native name for Korea. His theory was quite widely accepted by scholars like Folker Reichert, James D. Ryan, Alexander Toepel, and others.[18]

However, upon examining the body of past research regarding the identity of Corum, it becomes evident that the theory of Corum-cum-Korea has a much longer history than previously thought. In fact, as early as 1837—almost a century before Richard's proposal in 1948—a book was published in Paris that suggested a link between Corum and "Solho" or "Korei." This argument was first found in Conrad Malte-Brun's (1775–1826) *Précis de la géographie universelle, ou description de toutes les parties du monde,*[19] which was later cited by P. Maracellino da Civezza in his book *Storia universale delle missioni francescane*.[20] Another book published in 1895 also repeated this argument.[21]

Richard may not have known of these preceding works, since he did not quote them. Nevertheless, his new hypothesis differed significantly from the previous one. Unlike the former opinion that connected Corum to Solho, Richard interpreted Corum as Gori. He identified Soco as Soc, a name found in the title of Koryŏ king Chungsuk, and, last, he linked Chigista to Solho, also called Sol'go, an old name of Korea. His theory is more refined than the earlier one. It is, therefore, not surprising that a number of scholars have accepted it without criticism.

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[17] Richard, "Un texte latin"; idem, *La papauté et les missions*.

[18] See note 4.

[19] (Paris, 1862), 9:254.

[20] (Rome, 1859), 3:623.

[21] On these, see Golubovich, *Biblioteca bio-bibliografica,* 3:421; Charles de La Roncière and Léon Dorez, "Lettres inédites et mémoires de Marino Sanudo l'ancien (1334–1337)," *Bibliothèque de l'Éclole des chartes* 56 (1895): 30.

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Richard's arguments suffer from a serious defect, however, since all three equations—Corum = Gor, Soco = Soc, and Chigista = Solho—rest solely on phonetic similarities without solid linguistic and historical evidence to support them. Of particular concern is Richard's identification of Soco with King Chungsuk (r. 1313–30, 1332–39), which is erroneous. In reality, "Chungsuk," meaning "Loyal and Virtuous," was merely a title bestowed by the Yuan court after the king's death in 1339, making it impossible for the pope to have known it six years before his passing. We must, therefore, reject Richard's theory and start anew with a fresh inquiry.

Recently, two articles by Korean scholars have shed light on this topic. The first, published in 2016 by An Jaewon, challenges Richard's argument and proposes a new theory. An argues that Corum is the plural genitive case of "Ci" in Latin, which sounds similar to "Khitan." Thus, "Rex Corum" could mean "King of the Ci (=Khitan) people." He also suggests that the name of this king, which can be read as Saca, Sece, Soco, Sace, or Secede, implies that he belongs to the Saca family.[22] Although I am not a Latin specialist and cannot evaluate the validity of An's interpretation of Corum, I find his hypothesis of Ci being related to Khitan unconvincing. The only tribe that sounds somewhat similar to Ci is the Qi or Qai tribe, which inhabited Manchuria in the tenth century. However, there is no evidence that this tribe migrated to Central Asia in the early twelfth century or played any role in the formation of the Qara Khitay kingdom. Moreover, there are no historical records of a Saca or Sece family among the Khitans.

In 2019, Nam Jongguk also published an article challenging Richard's theory. Nam strongly argues that the king of Corum cannot be the king of Koryŏ and proposes that the king of Corum was a ruler of the Chaghadaid Ulus, as Archbishop Nicolas passed through Almaliq. Nam makes an interesting interpretation of the word Corum, suggesting that it is a misspelling of the word "eorum," which means "their" in Latin. Thus, the phrase "Rex Corum" should be understood as "their king," "their" referring to the Tatars or the Mongols.[23] I cannot accept Nam's new hypothesis either, however, as it seems awkward for the pope to address the person receiving the letter as "their king" at the top of the letter. There is no evidence of such a case in the papal letters addressed to Mongol rulers. Moreover, Nam fails to provide any historical evidence linking this "Rex Corum" to the king of the Chaghadaid Ulus.

Thus, to solve this mystery, let us start from scratch and consider a few preconditions. First, we must locate the King of Corum along the route taken by Nicolas to reach Khanbaliq. As he passed through Cilicia, the Qipchaq steppe, and Almaliq, we need to find a suitable candidate along this passage. We cannot

[22] An Jaewon, "Gyohuang Yohan," 129–63.

[23] Nam Jongkuk, "Who is Rex Corum."

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find any suitable candidate up to the point of Almaliq, so it is possible that the King of Corum was situated between Almaliq and Khanbaliq.

Second, the kingdom of Corum should be a region where a significant number of Christians lived. The papal letter given to the king of Corum states:

> By the living and true God, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, you render pleasing obedience when you treat with kindness and gentleness *the Christians, whether ancient or new, dwelling in your kingdom*, which we have joyfully heard you have done. Therefore, as this adds good reputation and honor to your name, may you kindly continue to do so in the future, lifting up the eyes of your mind to the Divine Omnipotence, which you have so praiseworthily done thus far. For your throne in the said kingdom will be strengthened in glory by this, and if you believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, are baptized, and receive and fulfill the Christian law, without which no one is saved, you will be saved.[24]

The two groups of Christians mentioned in the letter—"ancient" and "new"—probably denote Nestorians and Catholics, respectively. Additionally, it is clear that the pope had received information about this kingdom, as he wrote that "you treat [Christians] with kindness and gentleness . . . [as] we have joyfully heard you have done."

The third and final precondition is that we need to find a name—either regional or tribal—that is phonetically similar to Corum.

My proposal for a candidate fulfilling these three conditions is none other than Qaraqorum, the capital of the Mongol Empire established by Ögödei Qa'an that was later moved to Shangdu and Dadu. European missionaries and merchants had been visiting Qaraqorum since the 1240s, and there were several routes from Europe to this imperial capital. One of the most common routes passed through the Crimean Peninsula and the capital of the Jochi Ulus on the Volga River, then went over the Ural Mountains and, via the Irtysh River, reached Qaraqorum. This is known as the "steppe route" and was, along with the "desert route," one of the two most important arteries of the Silk Road. At the same time, as Rubruck describes in detail, Christians belonging to the Nestorian and Armenian churches, as well as Catholics, resided there. This was a place where "ancient" and "new" Christians were found. Thus, Qaraqorum meets at least two of the three preconditions I proposed earlier: both old and new Christians were present there and it is located on the route that many travelers, including Nicolas, would have taken to go to Khanbaliq.

[24] Mosheim, *Historia Tartarorum,* 157 (italics added).

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Qaraqorum also satisfies the final precondition, phonetic correspondence. The word Qaraqorum consists of two parts: *qara* means "black" and *qorum* means "rolled stone" or "boulder." Historical usage shows that both Qaraqorum and Qorum interchangeably referred to the Mongol Empire's capital during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Let us delve further into the details of this name.

Upon investigating European and Muslim records from that time, it becomes clear that the term Qaraqorum was used almost exclusively, whereas the shorter Qorum was rarely employed. For instance, Carpini and Rubruck, the earliest two Europeans to visit the city, referred to it as "Caracoron" and "Carachorum." Marco Polo, who spent considerable time in China and was well acquainted with the city, also referred to it as "Caracorom" (or "Caracoran" and "Caracoron," depending on the manuscript). On a map drawn by the Venetian friar Fra Mauro around 1450, the city is labeled as "Charocharā" and "Characoracur." Armenian historian Kirakos used the term "Tarayoum."[25] All these examples suggest that the Mongol capital was known as "Qaraqorum," not "Qorum," in Europe. Muslim writings do not differ much in this regard, with Juvaynī and Rashīd al-Dīn using spellings that are similar to "Qaraqorum," with only minor variations.[26]

If we shift our focus to East Asian and Chinese sources, we discover a striking difference in the way Qaraqorum is referred to compared to Western accounts. Here, the city name, fully transcribed as "Hala Helin," is frequently rendered as simply "Helin," i.e., Qorum. In fact, "Helin" appears at least two hundred times in *Yuanshi,* whereas the form "Hala Helin" is used only three times. Even in the literary works of the Yuan period, such as *Yuan Wenlei* or *Guochao mingchen shihlueh,* the city is primarily referred to as Helin. Therefore, it is evident that among the Han Chinese in the Qa'an Ulus, the old imperial capital was commonly known as Qorum, rather than as Qaraqorum. The Chinese practice of calling this old capital "Helin" is certainly reflecting and transcribing contemporary Mongolian usage. In other words, it suggests that the Mongols in China commonly called their old capital just "Qorum."

Next, can we find any evidence of this city being called simply "Qorum" and not "Qaraqorum"? While the available evidence is not definitive, we can make an informed guess based on a few sources. In the *Secret History of the Mongols,* likely written in the first half of the thirteenth century, we find Qaraqorum mentioned only once and no reference to Qorum. In paragraph 273, it notes that after Ögödei subdued cities in North China, he "peacefully returned home, set-

[25] See Paul Pelliot, *Notes on Marco Polo* (Paris, 1959), 1:165–69.

[26] ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn ʿAtā Malik Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-i Jahān Gushā,* trans. J. A. Boyle as *The History of the World-Conqueror* (Cambridge, MA, 1958), 1:54, 213, 217, 220.

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ting up camp at Qara Qorum."[27] A century later, however, in 1347, a Sino-Mongol bilingual stele called "*Chici Xingyuange bei* [The Stele of Xingyuan Pavilion Erected by the Imperial Edict]" was erected in Qaraqorum. In the Mongol text, the name of the city was written as Qorum. For instance, on line 2, it reads: "Cinggis qan yeke or-a sayuysan arban tabuduyar on ging luu jil-dür Qorum-a sayuju balayasun orosiyuluysan ajuyu" ("In the year of *gengchen,* the fifteenth year after Cinggis Qan had mounted the great throne, he established the capital city at Qorum"). The form "Qorum" is also found on lines 7, 18, 22, and 27.[28]

The stele offers two important insights. First, it suggests that the form "Qorum," without "Qara," was in use among the Mongols in the first half of the fourteenth century, though we do not know how prevalent this form was. Second, the stele indicates that "Qorum" referred not only to the name of the old capital but also to the wider region of northern Mongolia. This region was known as *Lingbei Xingsheng,* or Lingbei Province, in Chinese, and Qorum-šing in Mongolian. Lines 27 and 28 of the stele state, "As for Qorum, formerly it was the district by the name of *On cang luu (Yuanchang lu).* Afterwards again it became *Jon yin si (Zhuanyun si).* Afterwards again it became *Son ui si (Xuanwei si).* Afterwards again it became *Ling bui qing Jungsu sing* (*Lingbei Xing Zhongshusheng,* Lingbei branch secretariat)."[29]

To summarize the analysis above, while Europe and West Asia tended to use the name "Qaraqorum" for the first capital of the Mongol Empire, the form analogous to "Qorum" was more commonly used in China and Mongolia. The fact that a stele erected in the 1340s, around the time of Archbishop Nicolas's journey to Mongolia, revealed that Qorum referred not only to the city but also to the northern Mongolian region known as Lingbei could mean that when Pope John XXII referred to the King of Corum in his letter, he may have been alluding to a ruler of a much larger region that encompassed the Mongolian steppe.

Our proposal that Corum is none other than [Qara-]Qorum is supported by another piece of evidence. In the papal letter, the king of Corum was called "Sece (Saca or Soco)." We have made it clear that Richard's earlier identification with the Koryŏ king Chungsuk is implausible. Scholars have struggled to interpret the name Sece and its relation to "de Chigista." If we are correct in our conjecture that Corum is the Qaraqorum region, then its king should have been in northern Mongolia around the 1330s and 1340s. Since the pope referred to

[27] *The Secret History of the Mongols: A Mongolian Epic Chronicle of the Thirteenth Century,* ed. and trans. Igor de Rachewiltz (Leiden, 2004), 1:205.

[28] Francis W. Cleaves, "The Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1346," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 15, nos. 1–2 (1952): 25–26, 29–30, 69, 95; Matsukawa Takashi, "Chokusi Kōgenkakuhi Mongoru bunmen yakuchū," *Nairiku Azia gengo no kenkyū* 23 (2008): 40–41.

[29] Cleaves, "The Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1346," 81.

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him as a king, he was probably a Chinggisid with the status called *köbegün* (son) in Mongolian or *wang* (king) in Chinese.

Our search through the sources led us to a Chinggisid prince named Secetü or Chechetü. He was the great-grandson of Möngke Qa'an (r. 1251–59) and was given the titles of Wuning wang and Tan wang, ruling the city of Qaraqorum and a wider region of northern Mongolia in the 1320s and the 1330s. One can find the etymological origin of the word Secetü/Chechetü in the Mongol-Turk word *seceg/čečeg* (flower). Thus, the name Secetü/Chechetü means "flowery, of flower." Phonetically, the name of the King of Corum, "Sece de," is very similar to Sechetü.[30]

Therefore, based on the discussion above, we can hypothesize that Corum is the Qaraqorum region in northern Mongolia, and its king, Sece de, is Sechetü, the Chinggisid prince who ruled the northern Mongolian steppe. To determine whether he was a powerful enough monarch to receive a papal letter, we need to examine his activities more closely, especially in the region of Qaraqorum. Though scholars have only sporadically mentioned him in later Yuan political history works, it is worthwhile to explore more about his biographical data.

Sechetü, Prince Tan

The first mention of Sechetü, Prince Tan, in the *Yuanshi* dates to the seventh month of 1324.[31] It was during this time that Yisün Temür Qa'an (r. 1323–28) directed the inheritance of the "people" that his father Öljei had administered, and bestowed upon Sechetü his father's "old seal."[32] Öljei was the son of Ürüngtash, who in turn was the son of Möngke Qa'an. After Möngke's demise, Ürüngtash participated in the *quriltay* in Mongolia where Ariq Böke was elected as the next qa'an in 1260.[33] Later, when Ariq Böke's power waned, he submitted to Qubilai Qa'an (r. 1260–94), who granted him the Circuit of Weihui (in the Henan province at present) as his fief *(fendi)* in the third month of 1266. He also received a golden seal adorned with a camel ornament *(jinyin tuoniu),* which ranked third

[30] J. Deny, "Un soyurgal du Timouride Šāhruḥ den écriture ouigoure," *Journal asiatique* 245, no. 3 (1957): 260–61. I would like to express my gratitude to the reviewer of this article, whose insights enlightened me regarding this article and the etymology of Secetü/Chechetü.

[31] In *YS* (27:601) we find another Chinggisid prince named Sečetü or Čečetü, who is the son of Kököčü, who is in turn the son of Qubilai. He was granted the title of Ningyuan Wang in 1320 and subsequently elevated to Ning Wang. However, his actions are quite obscure in the *YS* and do not extend beyond the era of Yisün Temür Qa'an, who died in 1328. Hence, it appears reasonable for us to exclude him as a candidate for our Sečetü.

[32] *YS,* 29:649.

[33] Kim Hodong, *Mongol jeguk gwa Goryo* (Seoul, 2007), 26.

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in the hierarchy of various princely seals.[34] Although Möngke Qa'an had an elder son named Baltu, the latter passed away in 1259 during the campaign that his father led against the Southern Song. Consequently, Ürüngtash became the sole surviving son of Möngke and inherited his *ulus*.

Following the passing of Ürüngtash, Qaishan Qa'an appointed his son Öljei as the Prince of Wei in 1310, a title befitting his fief in the Weihui Circuit. Öljei probably inherited the "old seal' during this time. As previously mentioned, Sechetü inherited his father's "people," which presumably referred to Möngke Ulus. But where exactly was this *ulus* located? The Weihui Circuit, with its appointed officials to collect dues and tributes, was not an ideal place for nomads to reside. It is necessary to explore the Mongolian steppe to locate Möngke Ulus.

A *Yuanshi* record from the seventh month of 1322, two years before Sechetü inherited the office of his father Öljei, mentions that Sidebala Qa'an (r. 1321–23) sent Prince "Chechetü" to the northern frontiers to command a comprehensive military force. At the end of the same year, Sidebala Qa'an enfeoffed him as Wuning Wang and presented him with a golden seal.[35] Evidently, this "Chechetü" is Sechetü, which proves Sechetü's enormous military power and influence in Mongolia. This fits with a recent study, attesting that the pasture of Ürüngtash and his descendants was in the Khangghai region near Qaraqorum.[36] Thus, the military power and influence of Sechetü was closely connected with that of the Möngke Ulus around that region.

At the beginning of 1326, Sechetü visited the court alongside Prince Qonggho Temür, receiving lavish gifts of gold, silver, paper money, and silk.[37] Qonggho Temür, the son of Sirigi, Möngke's son born from a concubine and Ürüngtash's brother, accompanied him. Their joint presence at court indicates that Sirigi's descendants also resided in the Qaraqorum vicinity, the primary base of the Möngke Ulus.

Subsequently, Sechetü's military influence grew considerably. Following the death of Yisün Temür Qa'an in 1328, two factions emerged: the Dadu group, which supported the family of Qaishan, and the Shangdu faction, which endorsed Yisün Temür's young son Aragiba. This led to a civil war, ultimately resulting in the triumph of the Dadu faction. Tuq Temür, Qaishan's second son, initially assumed the throne, but he ceded power to his elder brother Qoshila

[34] *YS,* 6:110, 108:2745; Li Zhi'an, *Yuandai zhengchishi yanjiu* (Beijing, 2003), 301–2.

[35] *YS,* 28:623, 626.

[36] Muraoka Hitoshi, "Monke Kaan no kōzokutachi to Karakorumu," in *Mongoru koku genson Mongoru Teikoku Genchō hibun no kenkyū: Bichiēsu purojekuto seika hōkokusho,* ed. Matsuda Kōichi and Ayudai Ochir (Osaka, 2013), 97.

[37] *YS,* 30:688.

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when the latter arrived from the west, where he had been in exile, with the support of the Chaghadai Ulus.[38]

According to the *Yuanshi,* upon Qoshila's arrival in the Altai region heading toward Qaraqorum, Sechetü went there and welcomed him. Qoshila was later enthroned as qa'an during a *quriltay* held in Qaraqorum. He appointed his brother Tuq Temür as the crown prince and, in the fourth month of 1329, dispatched Sechetü to deliver his edict to Tuq Temür in Dadu. The events of 1328 and 1329, after Yisün Temür's death, clearly indicate Sechetü's political and military stature in Qaraqorum and northern Mongolia.[39]

Although Sechetü showed his loyalty to Qoshila by welcoming him, he was shrewd enough to maintain a cordial relationship with Tuq Temür, probably foreseeing potential conflicts between the two brothers. Thus, in 1329, when Sechetü was staying in Qaraqorum before Qoshila dispatched him to Dadu, he sent his own man to Tuq Temür, informing him of Qoshila's itinerary going to the capital city of Dadu.[40]

In the fourth month of 1329, Sechetü met Tuq Temür and delivered Qoshila's message that he would appoint Tuq Temür as the crown prince. In response, Tuq Temür bestowed upon Sechetü a generous reward of five hundred *liang* of gold.[41] After Qoshila's abrupt death due to poisoning in Ongghuchatu, which lies midway between Shangdu and Dadu, in the eighth month of 1329, Sechetü, thanks to his previous efforts, had won the confidence of the new qa'an Tuq Temür and received lavish cash rewards.[42] Finally, in 1331, Sechetü's princely title was elevated from Wuning wang to Tan wang. This title was reserved only for the highest-ranking Chinggisids.[43] Sechetü had truly established himself as an influential figure within the Qa'an Ulus.

The stele fragments discovered at the site of Erdeni Juu, the Buddhist monastery at Qaraqorum, shed light on the activities of Tan wang Sechetü, confirming his power and influence in the region of Qaraqorum.[44] The stele was erected to

[38] After Ayurwarwada (Renzhong) became emperor in 1311, succeeding his elder brother Qaishan (Wuzong), he, in order to secure the future succession of his own son Shidebala, appointed Qaishan's eldest son Qoshila as Prince of Chou in 1316 and expelled him to a southern remote region of Yunnan. Qoshila, on his way to Yunnan, fled to the west and defected to the Chaghadai Ulus, where he hoped to win support.

[39] *YS,* 31:695, 697–98; 33:733.

[40] Ibid., 33:727.

[41] Ibid., 33:734

[42] Ibid., 33:740.

[43] Ibid., 35:777.

[44] Muraoka Takashi and Taniguchi Aya, "Karakorumu San-kōbyō zanhi to Monke Kaan no kōzokutachi," Nairiku Ajia sho gengo shiryō no kaidoku ni yoru Mongoru no toshi hatten to

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commemorate the repair of the Shrine of The Three Emperors, where sacrificial rites for the legendary emperors Fuxi, Shennong, and Huangdi were performed. During the Yuan period, these rites became a state service in 1295. The two figures depicted in the fragments are identified as Tan wang and Bin wang, who are Sechetü and Qonggho Temür respectively. This identification allows us to date the stele to after Sechetü's enfeoffment as Tan wang in 1331. Further evidence of Sechetü's influence can be found in another source, which records that during the reign of Taiding (Yisün Temür, r. 1324–27), a need to repair the Shrine of The Three Emperors arose. The repair work was carried out with the permission of a certain Chechetü, who we can safely assume is Sechetü, Tan wang.[45] All these pieces of evidence confirm Sechetü's importance and power in the region of Qaraqorum, which he likely inherited from his father when Yisün Temür ascended the throne in 1324.

In the biography of Xiahou Shangyuan, there is evidence of Sechetü's remarkable military power in Mongolia.[46] Xiahou served Shidebala Qa'an until his assassination at Nanpo. Later in 1328, when Qoshila marched towards the east, Xiahou went as far as Qaraqorum to welcome him. It is highly likely that Sechetü was present there for the same purpose, given that Xiahou probably knew him well. In Xiahou's aforementioned biography, we come across the following statement: "Prince Tan commanded an army of 48 *tümen* [i.e., 480,000], and all the army's generals had confidence in him on the whole."

However, Sechetü's power was not long-lived. His relative and colleague Qonggho Temür, Prince Bin, suddenly collapsed amid the political conflicts between Tankish, El Temür's son, and Bayan, the majordomo in the court of Toghon Temür Qa'an. At first he had supported Tankish, but when Tankish attempted a coup but failed and was arrested, Qonggho Temür decided to kill himself in the sixth month of 1335.[47] Sechetü sided with Bayan and accused Tankish. In other words, the two princes of Möngke's family chose different political camps. As Bayan won the conflict and took full power, Sechetü's career seemed to be on a smooth path.

However, when Bayan proposed a marriage between his son and Sechetü's daughter, the latter could not accept it because Bayan was from the Merkits, and his pride would not tolerate a marriage between the Chinggisids and a family of "slave" origin. Enraged by this refusal, Bayan made an accusation against

kōtsū ni kansuru sōgō kenkyū (Osaka, 2008), 137–89; Taniguchi Aya, "Karakorumu San-kōbyō zanhi," in *Mongoru koku genson Mongoru Teikoku Genchō hibun no kenkyū: Bichiēsu purojekuto seika hōkokusho,* ed. Matsuda Kōichi and Ayudai Ochir (Osaka, 2013), 61–90.

[45] See the works cited in the previous note.

[46] "Xiahou Shangyuan zhuan," *Wei Xueshi Quanji,* juan 10 (Jinan, 1992).

[47] *YS,* 138:3334.

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Sechetü in front of Toghon Temür Qa'an and submitted a petition to execute him. When the qa'an did not grant the sanction, he fabricated an edict and killed Sechetü. Later, when Yuan minister Toqto eliminated Bayan and took power, he put forward a number of reforms, one of which was "to cleanse the grievance of Tan wang Sechetü."[48]

We have now examined the career and activities of Sechetü, who, as the leader of Möngke Ulus, wielded enormous military power and influence in Qaraqorum's region as well as northern Mongolia in general. He was a great-grandson of Möngke Qa'an and was commissioned to command the entire northern army, which consisted of about 48 *tümen*s. His power reached its zenith in 1331 when he was appointed Tan wang, but it came to a halt abruptly in 1339 with Bayan's persecution. Sechetü's existence as a powerful prince in the Qaraqorum region was probably transmitted to Europe and reached the Pope's ear. This was probably why Pope John XXII wrote him a letter of recommendation on behalf of the new archbishop of Khanbaliq, whose route lay across his kingdom.

Conclusion

We have delved into the intricacies surrounding Pope John XXII's 1333 letter to the "King of Corum," which was entrusted to Nicolas, the new Archbishop of Khanbaliq, following the passing of his predecessor, John of Montecorvino. Scholars have put forth several hypotheses regarding the letter's intended recipient, a king named "Sece (or Soco) de Chigista."

Although the previous hypotheses were intriguing, they fall short both phonetically and historically and lack concrete evidence. Consequently, I propose a new hypothesis, suggesting that Corum refers to (Qara)qorum, the old capital of the Mongol Empire, and "Sece de" to Sechetü, a Chinggisid prince who held extensive power and dominion in northern Mongolia during the 1320s and 1330s.

My hypothesis stems from Nicolas's probable eastward route, which we can infer from the list of letters he received from the pope. This list includes two letters addressed to leaders of the Armenian kingdom, a letter to Özbek Khan of the Jochi Ulus, a letter to the mysterious King of Corum, and finally, a letter to the great khan. Other sources reveal that Nicolas also visited Almaliq, the capital of the Chaghadai Ulus, departing just before the Christian massacre in 1339. Although a ruler of the Chaghadai Ulus could have potentially been the King of Corum, no evidence supports this claim. Therefore, we must look further east to uncover the identity and dominion of this enigmatic king.

After careful consideration, we have arrived at the conclusion that Qaraqorum fulfills the necessary criteria to be identified as Corum. Firstly, its strategic

[48] Ibid.

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location along the primary route across Eurasia during the fourteenth century is well documented by the accounts of travelers such as Carpini and Rubruck. Secondly, the presence of various Christian denominations, including Catholics, Nestorians, and Armenians, in Qaraqorum aligns with the pope's statement in the letter that the king treats Christians, both ancient and new, with kindness and gentleness. Finally, the name "Corum" is a perfect match for (Qara)qorum, the old imperial capital of the Mongol Empire. In China, the city was more commonly referred to as "Helin (Qorum)," which not only denotes the city but also a much larger region in northern Mongolia.

We also identified a Chinggisid prince named Sechetü or Chechetü, who is a strong contender for the "Sece de (Chigista)" mentioned in the letter. Although we do not have a clue to solve what "Chigista" is, "Sece de" corresponds well with Sechetü. This Sechetü was the great-grandson of Möngke Qa'an and was entrusted with full command of the northern frontier in 1322. He inherited his father's status as the leader of the Möngke Ulus, which centered around Qaraqorum and the Khangghai region, in 1324. Sechetü supported Qaishan's two sons and won the full confidence of the new qa'an, Tuq Temür, who elevated him to "Prince Tan." According to a Chinese record, he commanded an army of 48 *tümen*s in Mongolia. Additionally, fragments of a stele discovered near the site of Erdeni Juu in Qaraqorum in 2007 suggest that he had considerable power and influence as Prince Tan, particularly in the restoration of the Shrine of The Three Emperors. Unfortunately, he later fell victim to the tyranny of Bayan and was killed in 1339.

In the twenties and thirties of the fourteenth century, Sechetü had reached the peak of his political and military power, particularly in the Qaraqorum region, which was commonly referred to as Qorum. Thus, it is not unlikely that when Pope John XXII sent Nicolas as the new archbishop to Khanbaliq, he provided him with a letter intended for the "King of Qorum" requesting his kind reception and support. If our hypothesis is correct, Nicolas likely journeyed towards Qaraqorum after departing from Almaliq before 1339. However, we have no records of his arrival or whereabouts thereafter, and thus his fate remains shrouded in mystery.

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Some Reflections on Timur's Invasion of Mamluk Syria

The Central Asian conqueror Timur-*i lang* (Temür "the Lame"; hence "Tamerlane") entered the Mamluk dominions at the head of a formidable Chaghatay[1] army in the autumn of 803/1400. He had recently captured and sacked Delhi (801/1398), a goal that had eluded the Chaghadayid khans from Duʾa (d. 706/1307) to Tarmashirin (d. 735/1334). Prior to that, he had deprived the Jalayirids of the former Ilkhanid residences of Tabriz and Sulṭānīyah, eliminated the Kartid dynasty based at Herat (791/1389) and the Muzaffarid rulers of Fārs, Kirmān, and ʿIrāq-i ʿAjam (795/1393), and conducted two massive campaigns in the Pontic-Caspian steppes (793/1391 and 797/1395) which effectively shattered the power of his Chinggisid Mongol rival, the Jochid khan Toqtamish.[2] The invasion of Mamluk Syria would have a less drastic impact. A number of cities were sacked and significant numbers of the inhabitants transported to Timur's chief residence, Samarqand, but Timur made no attempt to advance further, withdrawing across the Euphrates in Shaʿbān 803/March-April 1401. The Mamluk sultan al-Nāṣir Faraj subsequently forwarded gifts and included the conqueror's name (and that of his nominal Chinggisid khan) on the coinage and in the *khuṭbah;* and Timur appears to have been satisfied with these attentions, which reduced the sultan to a tribute-paying governor. But this vassal status would lapse following Timur's death in Shaʿbān 807/ February 1405.

This paper arises out of research for my forthcoming book *From Genghis Khan to Tamerlane: The Reawakening of Mongol Asia* (Yale University Press). It is a great pleasure to dedicate it to Reuven Amitai, who has made the theme of Mamluk-Mongol relations in an earlier period so much his own.

[1] I employ this form for the nomadic cavalry raised by Timur from Transoxiana, as opposed to the form "Chaghadayid," which appears in the next sentence and denotes the dynasty founded by Chinggis Khan's second son, Chaghadai, and the Central Asian *ulus* ruled by his progeny.

[2] For good, succinct surveys of Timur's campaigns of conquest, see Beatrice Forbes Manz, *The Rise and Rule of Tamerlane* (Cambridge, 1989), 69–73, and Maria E. Subtelny, "Tamerlane and His Descendants: From Paladins to Patrons," in *New Cambridge History of Islam,* vol. 3, *The Eastern Islamic World, Eleventh to Eighteenth Centuries,* ed. David O. Morgan and Anthony Reid (Cambridge, 2010), 174–78. A more detailed account of those in Iran is given by Hans Robert Roemer, "Tīmūr in Iran," in *Cambridge History of Iran,* vol. 6, *The Timurid and Safavid Periods,* ed. Peter Jackson and Laurence Lockhart (Cambridge, 1986), 42–97.

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The sources available for Timur's activity in Syria—and in Damascus especially[3]—are more numerous and more diverse than for any of his other military operations, encompassing as they do not only the Timurid historians Niẓām al-Dīn Shāmī, Sharaf al-Dīn Yazdī, and Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū, but also chronicles and biographical dictionaries emanating from within the Mamluk territories. In addition, we have the hostile biography of the conqueror by Ibn ʿArabshāh: although he can have remembered little of his abduction from Damascus by the Chaghatay forces as a child of six, following his return to the Near East he drew upon the recollections of others who had witnessed the cataclysm. We also have two accounts from individuals who met Timur in person (and lived to record the experience): the Syrian scholar Zayn al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn al-Shiḥnah (d. 815/1412), who was part of a deputation to Timur from Aleppo and whose report was later reproduced, in a slightly different form, by Ibn ʿArabshāh, and the Maghribī savant Ibn Khaldūn, who was stranded in Damascus when Faraj and his army retreated to Egypt in Jumādá I 803/January 1401 and was received in audience by Timur more than once during a sojourn of some weeks in the Chaghatay encampment. Lastly, the Sienese merchant Beltramo di Mignanelli, an inhabitant of Damascus who was fortunate enough to be absent in Jerusalem when Timur invested the city, gathered information on the episode—most probably from his Muslim fellow-citizens—after his return home in 1402 and composed his *Vita Tamerlani* (also called *De ruina Damasci*).[4]

I do not intend here to provide a narrative of the Syrian campaign, which has been dealt with very competently elsewhere.[5] Instead I shall focus upon a number of incidents during the course of the invasion that may shed light upon the conqueror's character, outlook, and methods, and on his indebtedness to Mon-

[3] Stefan Heidemann observed long ago that the siege of Damascus is one of the best documented among those of Timur and of the Middle Ages as a whole: "Tīmūr's Campmint during the Siege of Damascus in 803/1401," in *Matériaux pour l'histoire économique du monde iranien,* Studia Iranica cahier 21, ed. Rika Gyselen and Maria Szuppe (Paris, 1999), 180. Timur's *fatḥ'nāmah* for Syria, dated 8 Rabīʿ I 803/27 Oct. 1400 and found in BNF MS arabe 3423, fols. 398a–400a, covers events only down to the fall of Aleppo.

[4] On the author, see Angelo Michele Piemontese, "Beltramo Mignanelli senese biografo di Tamerlano," in *La civiltà Timuride come fenomeno internazionale,* Oriente Moderno 76, n.s. 15, part 2, ed. Michele Bernardini (Rome, 1996), 1:213–26; also the lengthy biographical notice in the recent edition by Nelly Mahmoud Helmy, *Tra Siena, l'Oriente e la Curia: Beltramo di Leonardo Mignanelli e le sue opere* (Rome, 2013), 3:87.

[5] E.g., by Anne F. Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology in the Islamic and Mongol Worlds* (Cambridge, 2008), 187–92; Tilman Nagel, *Timur der Eroberer und die islamische Welt des späten Mittelalters* (Munich, 1993), 325–34; and Michele Bernardini, *Tamerlano* (Rome, 2022), 253–75. On the fall of Aleppo, see Élodie Vigouroux, "Comment Tamerlan a pris Alep en 803/1400," *Annales Islamologiques* 55 (2021): 303–25.

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gol tradition. Timur proved himself to be highly resourceful in his ideological and diplomatic maneuvers, and one premise of this article is that his confrontation with the Mamluk regime involved various motives and aspirations that are specific to the Syrian theatre.

At one level, of course, the assault on Syria was simply yet another stage in a series of campaigns designed to humble potentially rival monarchs, to secure recognition of Timur's paramountcy, to acquire copious plunder, and to extract guarantees of future tribute and military support. Can we discern any other objectives? In the secondary literature we repeatedly encounter statements that Timur was endeavoring to recreate the Mongol empire or at least that he proclaimed this as his aim. I have tried to show elsewhere that these assumptions rest on no hard evidence and that it would be more realistic to see his primary purpose in less specific terms, as the revival of a "Mongol order": the suppression of lawlessness and banditry, the creation of optimal conditions for trade and pilgrimage, and the elimination of non-Chinggisid—and indeed non-Mongol—potentates who had usurped sovereignty in Greater Iran, especially, since the death of the Ilkhan Abū Saʿīd (736/1335).[6]

What, then, were the goals of the invasion of Syria? Faraj's father and predecessor, the first Circassian Mamluk sultan, al-Ẓāhir Barqūq (d. 802/1399), had undoubtedly given Timur sufficient grounds for opening hostilities. He had put to death Timur's envoys in 796/1394 and had imprisoned the conqueror's foster brother and emissary, *Atlamish. He had further offered a warm welcome to Timur's defiant enemies, the Jalayirid ruler Sulṭān Aḥmad and Qarā Yūsuf, chief of the Qarā-Qūyūnlū Türkmen.[7] Was the campaign designed merely to punish Faraj for his father's offenses? It seems unlikely that Timur aimed to assert his own direct rule over Syria and Egypt. His career shows that he was content to maintain a raft of client princes, where possible. Over the years, moreover, the choices he made for his field of operations display a marked flexibility—opportunism, in fact—rather than reflecting any predetermined program. Ibn Khaldūn and Ibn ʿArabshāh both say that he had broken off his campaign in India on hearing the news of Barqūq's death;[8] and similarly he would retire from

[6] Jackson, *From Genghis Khan to Tamerlane,* chap. 14. On the restoration of a Mongol order, see Beatrice Forbes Manz, "Tamerlane and the Symbolism of Sovereignty," *Iranian Studies* 21, nos. 1–2 (1988): 106, 111, 114.

[7] For relations between Timur and Barqūq, see Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology,* 177–87.

[8] Aḥmad Ibn ʿArabshāh, *ʿAjāʾib al-maqdūr fī nawāʾib Tīmūr,* ed. ʿAlī Muḥammad ʿUmar (Cairo, 1399/1979), 107 (hereafter Ibn ʿArabshāh, *ʿAjāʾib,* ed. ʿUmar); ibid., ed. Aḥmad Fāʾiz al-Ḥimṣī (Beirut, 1407/1986–87), 169–70 (hereafter Ibn ʿArabshāh, *ʿAjāʾib,* ed. al-Ḥimṣī); and idem, *Tamerlane or Timur, the Great Amir,* trans. J. H. Sanders (London, 1936), 100 (hereafter Ibn ʿArabshāh, *Tamerlane*), adding news of the death of Burhān al-Dīn, the ruler of Sivas. Walī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad Ibn Khaldūn, *Al-Taʿrīf bi-Ibn Khaldūn wa-riḥlatihi gharban wa-sharqan,*

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Damascus in some haste in 803/1401 in order to deal with Jalayirid *revanchisme* in Baghdad.

In this context of war aims, we should probably not be misled by Timur's demand, while quartered outside Damascus, that Ibn Khaldūn furnish him with a written report on the tracts between Egypt and the Maghrib, deserts and water supplies, the Arab tribes domiciled there, and the distances involved.[9] Some authors have assumed in consequence that Timur envisaged a military expedition along the North African coast.[10] This was possibly a danger of which Ibn Khaldūn was conscious when, in writing to the Marinid sultan of Morocco after his return to Egypt, he justified his visit to Timur's headquarters on the grounds that he had been summoned and thus had no choice but to comply.[11] If an advance beyond Egypt was ever in Timur's mind, however, it was somewhat impractical, in view of the situation to the rear of the Chaghatay army and the need to complete the subjugation of Jalayirid Iraq. Doubtless the demand for Ibn Khaldūn's report sprang from Timur's well-attested interest in commercial opportunities rather than from plans of conquest.

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ed. Muḥammad ibn Tāwīt al-Ṭanjī (Cairo, 1370/1951), 365, mentions only Barqūq's death in this context.

[9] Thus Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-ʿuqūd al-farīdah fī tarājim aʿyān al-mufīdah,* ed. Maḥmūd al-Jalīlī (Beirut, 1423/2002), 2:397. Ibn Khaldūn, *Taʿrīf,* 370, 374; idem, *Ibn Khaldūn and Tamerlane: Their Historic Meeting in Damascus, 1401 A.D. (803 A.H.): A Study Based on Arabic Manuscripts of Ibn Khaldūn's "Autobiography," with a Translation into English, and a Commentary,* trans. Walter J. Fischel (Berkeley, 1952), 35, 38 (hereafter Ibn Khaldūn/Fischel, *Historic Meeting*) is less specific. Ibn ʿArabshāh (*ʿAjāʾib,* ed. ʿUmar, 317–18; ibid., ed. al-Ḥimṣī, 453–54; idem, *Tamerlane,* 297) alleges that Timur was merely trying to test Ibn Khaldūn's knowledge, but in his *Fākihat al-khulafāʾ wa-mufākahat al-ẓurafāʾ* (ed. Muḥammad Rajab al-Najjār [Kuwait, 1997], 366; ibid., ed. Ayman ʿAbd al-Jābir al-Buḥayrī [Cairo, 1421/2001], 357), Ibn ʿArabshāh invests the commission with a strategic purpose.

[10] Rafael Valencia, "Ibn Jaldún y Tamerlán," in *Ibn Jaldún: El Mediterráneo en el siglo XIV: Auge y declive de los Imperios,* ed. Jesús Viguera Molins, vol. 1, *Estudios* (Seville, 2006), 179; Muhsin al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters: Arabic Knowledge Construction* (Notre Dame, IN, 2015), 29 (suggesting designs even on Spain); Stephen Frederic Dale, *The Orange Trees of Marrakesh: Ibn Khaldun and the Science of Man* (Cambridge, MA, 2015), 149.

[11] Ibn Khaldūn, *Taʿrīf,* 380, *"samiʿtu anna sulṭānahum Timur saʾala ʿannī fa-lam yasaʿ illā liqāʾuhu"* (Ibn Khaldūn/Fischel, *Historic Meeting,* 45). The story of Timur's enquiry about Ibn Khaldūn may reflect nothing more than the Maghribī scholar's desire to inflate his own importance. Elsewhere, Ibn Khaldūn gives the impression that he left for the invaders' camp from fear of an attempt on his life by those in Damascus who were opposed to surrender merely on the basis of Timur's oral assurances: Ibn Khaldūn, *Taʿrīf,* 368 (Ibn Khaldūn/Fischel, *Historic Meeting,* 31). On the circumstances of his departure for Timur's encampment, see Walter J. Fischel, *Ibn Khaldūn in Egypt: His Public Functions and His Historical Research: A Study in Islamic Historiography* (Berkeley, 1967), 44–46.

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Let us next consider the economic aspects of the invasion. Our sources testify that Timur's practice was to levy an indemnity on the population of cities that capitulated—what Sharaf al-Dīn Yazdī terms, in the context of Isfahan, "horseshoe money" *(naʿl-i bahā).*[12] But one account describes in unusual detail the unscrupulous method by which Timur maximized the quantity of wealth extracted from Damascus. Mignanelli learned that initially, in his dealings with the four qadis who had been sent out to negotiate with him, Timur professed to be interested only in confiscating the goods of Sultan Faraj and those who had fled prior to the invaders' arrival; his agents also compiled inventories of the citizens' property, purportedly as a precaution against looting by his men. Once the citadel had fallen, however, Timur claimed to be disappointed that so little of the sultan's wealth had been unearthed there and demanded monetary compensation for the exertions of his troops. A large quantity of money having been produced, he found fault with the coins, which were of debased silver (in sharp contrast with the Chaghadayid issues), and required a still larger sum. When this was agreed, he raised two fresh issues in succession: the need to compensate the Khurasanian troops in his army and the expenses he would incur in leaving the city and marching home to Samarqand. Spurred on by the expectation of seeing Timur depart at last, the qadis collected a further contribution, only to be confronted with a sudden and unexpected change of tactic. The conqueror handed the city over to his troops, who entered Damascus armed with the inventories and proceeded to extort wealth from the citizens by means of various torments. Finally, he had the young men and women and skilled craftsmen gathered and brought to his camp prior to his departure for Iraq.[13] These details are sufficiently corroborated in the reports of the Arabic sources—notably al-Maqrīzī's *Sulūk*[14]—for us to regard Mignanelli's narrative as trustworthy in its essentials. They agree on the successful extortion of enormous sums from the Damascenes, and Timurid authors tell us that the alloyed silver was melted down in Timur's camp and reminted in purer metal for ease of

[12] Sharaf al-Dīn ʿAlī Yazdī, *Ẓafarnāmah,* ed. Muḥammad ʿAbbāsī (Tehran, 1957), 1:312; ibid., ed. Saʿīd Mīr Muḥammad Ṣādiq and ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Nawāʾī (Tehran, 2008), 1:586. Examples in Jean Aubin, "Comment Tamerlan prenait les villes," *Studia Islamica* 19 (1963): 97–104. For "horseshoe money" in an earlier period, see ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn ʿAṭā Malik Juvaynī, *Tarīkh-i jahān-gushā,* ed. Mīrzā Muḥammad Qazwīnī (Leiden, 1912–37), 2:147, and trans. J. A. Boyle, *The History of the World-Conqueror* (Manchester, 1958, repr. in 1 vol. [Manchester, 1997]), 415 and n. 14.

[13] Mignanelli, *De ruina Damasci,* Latin text in Helmy, *Tra Siena,* 322–31, and trans. Walter J. Fischel, "A New Latin Source on Tamerlane's Conquest of Damascus (1400/1401) (B. de Mignanelli's 'Vita Tamerlani' 1416)," *Oriens* 9 (1956): 217–25. Timur's treatment of Damascus is also examined in Aubin, "Comment Tamerlan," 100, 106–7 and *passim*.

[14] Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk li-maʿrifat duwal al-mulūk,* ed. Muṣṭafá Ziyādah and Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ ʿĀshūr (Cairo, 1934–72), 3:3:1039–46; summarized in Heidemann, "Tīmūr's Campmint," 182–85.

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transportation back from Syria[15]—an expedient not encountered in the context of the conqueror's other sieges. Whether we can take Timur's conduct on this occasion as otherwise typical, however, is hard to judge. It was rare, certainly, for a city that had surrendered peaceably and offered an indemnity to then suffer a violent sack.[16] Perhaps we need to entertain the possibility that Damascus received harsher treatment in view of Timur's marked antipathy towards its people, which will be noticed below.

Though Timur is known to have had a strong interest in history,[17] he was first and foremost a Mongol amir, and Beatrice Forbes Manz has demonstrated how (like the Jochid Toqtamish) he acted out his career on a stage set by Chinggis Khan.[18] It is noteworthy that his biographers point out the parallel between the execution of Timur's envoys and the detention of *Atlamish, on the one hand, and the murder in ca. 1219 of Chinggis Khan's envoys at the instigation of the Khwārazmshāh Muḥammad ibn Tekish, on the other.[19] Unlike Chinggis Khan, however, Timur was a Muslim, and the sources also compare him, as a warrior on behalf of the faith, with the celebrated eleventh-century Muslim conqueror Maḥmūd of Ghazna.[20] Whereas it is an established fact that Timur's son and effective successor, Shāhrukh, would take the Muslim convert Ilkhan Gha-

[15] Yazdī, *Ẓafarnāmah,* ed. ʿAbbāsī, 2:243; ibid., ed. Ṣādiq and Nawāʾī, 2:1081. Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū, *Zubdat al-tawārīkh,* ed. Sayyid Ḥājj Kamāl Sayyid Jawādī (Tehran, 2001), 2:926, is briefer. Heidemann, "Tīmūr's Campmint," 190–96.

[16] Aubin, "Comment Tamerlan," 97, asserts categorically that there were *no* exceptions to this rule.

[17] Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū, *Zubdat al-tawārīkh,* 1:15; Ibn ʿArabshāh, *ʿAjāʾib,* ed. ʿUmar, 316, 318, 319; ibid., ed. al-Ḥimṣī, 452, 453, 455; idem, *Tamerlane,* 296, 297, 299.

[18] Beatrice Forbes Manz, "Mongol History Rewritten and Relived," in *Figures mythiques des mondes musulmans,* ed. Denise Aigle, Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée 89–90 (Aix-en-Provence, 2000), 129–49.

[19] Niẓām al-Dīn Shāmī, *Ẓafarnāmah,* ed. Felix Tauer as *Histoire des conquêtes de Tamerlan intitulée Ẓafarnāma par Niẓāmuddīn Šāmī, avec des additions empruntées au Zubdatu-t-tawārīḫ-i Bāysunġurī de Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū* (Prague, 1937–56), 1:221–22; Yazdī, *Ẓafarnāmah,* ed. ʿAbbāsī, 2:199; ibid., ed. Ṣādiq and Nawāʾī, 2:1040–41; Nagel, *Timur der Eroberer,* 322–23; Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology,* 180 and n. 64.

[20] Shāmī, *Ẓafarnāmah,* 1:283. Michele Bernardini, *Mémoire et propagande à l'époque timouride,* Studia Iranica, cahier 37 (Paris, 2008), 90, 95–100. For Maḥmūd's posthumous reputation, see C. E. Bosworth, "Maḥmūd of Ghazna in Contemporary Eyes and in Later Persian Literature," *Iran* 4 (1966): 85–92 (esp. 87–90), and repr. in idem, *The Medieval History of Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia* (London, 1977); and Charles Melville, "The Royal Image in Mongol Iran," in *Every Inch a King: Comparative Studies on Kings and Kingship in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds,* ed. Lynette Mitchell and Charles Melville (Leiden, 2013), 355–56.

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zan Maḥmūd as a model,[21] what tends to be ignored is that Timur had himself looked back to Ghazan. In 806/1404, troops he had sent to escort the pilgrimage to Mecca stayed behind after the conclusion of the rites in order to measure the Kaʿbah for a cover he planned to donate, and he reportedly intended to send a force of ten thousand with the *maḥmil*.[22] Ghazan had made a similar donation in 702/1303.[23] Sharaf al-Dīn ʿAlī Yazdī even included details of Timur's boyhood games reminiscent of those of Ghazan as they are recounted by Rashīd al-Dīn.[24]

It was important for Timur—and his panegyrists—that he be depicted as greater than his exemplars. Early Timurid authors took care to point out that his exploits in India surpassed those of the Chaghadayid khan Tarmashirin, who had invaded the subcontinent in ca. 1330,[25] and to proclaim his superiority even over Chinggis Khan.[26] In much the same way as Timur's capture of Delhi falls within the context of long-standing Chaghadayid aspirations, so one impulse behind his campaign against the Mamluks, perhaps, was to realize Ilkhanid ambitions unfulfilled a century earlier, when Ghazan had presided over no fewer than three invasions of Syria. Of these, only one, headed by the Ilkhan in person in 699/1299–1300, had resulted in the (short-lived) subjugation of the country and it had, in any case, failed to establish a tributary relationship.[27]

[21] Manz, "Mongol History," 143–45; İlker Evrim Binbaş, *Intellectual Networks in Timurid Iran: Sharaf al-Dīn ʿAlī Yazdī and the Islamicate Republic of Letters* (Cambridge, 2016), 262–64, 265.

[22] Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 3:3:1166. Timur's plan was possibly prompted by overtures from the rulers of Mecca and Medina in 801/1398, on which see n. 67.

[23] See Charles Melville, "'The Year of the Elephant': Mamluk-Mongol Rivalry in the Hejaz in the Reign of Abū Saʿīd (1317–1335)," *Studia Iranica* 21 (1992): 199.

[24] Yazdī, *Ẓafarnāmah,* ed. ʿAbbāsī, 1:11–12; ibid., ed. Ṣādiq and Nawāʾī, 1:238; passage translated in Bernardini, *Mémoire et propagande,* 64–65. See also Beatrice Forbes Manz, "Family and Ruler in Timurid Historiography," in *Studies on Central Asian History in Honor of Yuri Bregel,* ed. Devin DeWeese (Bloomington, 2001), 62. For Ghazan, cf. Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh, *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh,* ed. Muḥammad Rawshan and Muṣṭafá Mūsawī (Tehran, 1994), 2:1210; ibid. (as *Dzhāmī-at-tavārīkh*), a partial edition by A. A. Alizade (Baku, 1957), 251–52; and ibid., trans. Wheeler M. Thackston, *Classical Writings of the Medieval Islamic World: Persian Histories of the Mongol Dynasties* III (New York, 2012), 417.

[25] Ghiyāth al-Dīn ʿAlī Yazdī, *Rūznāmah-ʾi ghazavāt-i Hindūstān,* ed. L. A. Zimin (Petrograd, 1915), 72, 133, 136; ibid., ed. Īraj Afshār as *Saʿādat'nāmah yā rūznāmah-ʾi ghazavāt-i Hindūstān dar sālhā-yi 800–801 hijrī* (Tehran, 2000), 80, 126, 128; and trans. A. A. Semenov as *Dnevnik pokhoda Tīmūra v Indiiu* (Moscow, 1958), 84, 129, 131; Shāmī, *Ẓafarnāmah,* 1:194; Yazdī, *Ẓafarnāmah,* ed. ʿAbbāsī, 2:45, 99–100; ibid., ed. Ṣādiq and Nawāʾī, 1:893, 944, 946.

[26] Yazdī, *Ẓafarnāmah,* facsimile edition by A. Urunbaev (Tashkent, 1972), fol. 82a; ibid., ed. ʿAbbāsī, 2:41; ibid., ed. Ṣādiq and Nawāʾī, 1:221, 887; Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū, *Zubdat al-tawārīkh,* 1:13–14; cited (from the Istanbul ms. of Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū's *Majmūʿah*) by Manz, "Family and Ruler," 64.

[27] Reuven Amitai, *Holy War and Rapprochement: Studies in the Relations between the Mamluk Sultanate and the Mongol Illkhanate (1260–1335)* (Turnhout, 2013), 27–28. On the first of these invasions, see

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In certain other respects, Timur's campaign in Syria strikingly evokes memories of Ghazan's dealings with the Mamluk regime. The Mamluk sultan had affected to believe that the Ilkhan's conversion to Islam was spurious, and the celebrated Hanbali scholar Ibn Taymīyah had issued no fewer than three fatwas enumerating the shortcomings of the Ilkhanid Mongols as Muslims.[28] Ghazan for his part had impugned the Mamluks' faith.[29] In much the same way, Barqūq denounced Timur and his soldiers as infidels and Timur riposted with the charge that the Mamluks were bad Muslims.[30] In the confrontation with the sultanate, Timur further drew upon the Ilkhanid rhetoric that had denied the Mamluk sovereigns' qualifications to rule on the grounds that they were slaves (and the Mongols' "runaway" Qipchaq slaves at that).[31] He could do so all the more plausibly since Barqūq, a Circassian slave, had recently supplanted the dynasty founded more than a century before by the Qipchaq slave Qalāwūn (d. 689/1290)—though Barqūq had not in fact murdered his Qalawunid predecessor as Timur alleged.[32] Timur frequently expressed his contempt for the slave rulers in Cairo in his correspondence with other princes.[33] He had manifested this same prejudice with regard to the former slave officers of Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq who had become the effective masters of the Delhi Sultanate since that ruler's death in 790/1388.[34]

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idem, "The Mongol Occupation of Damascus in 1300: A Study of Mamluk Loyalties," in *The Mamluks in Egyptian and Syrian Politics and Society,* ed. Michael Winter and Amalia Levanoni (Leiden, 2004), 21–41.

[28] Denise Aigle, "A Religious Response to Ghazan Khan's Invasions of Syria: The Three 'Anti-Mongol' *Fatwā*s of Ibn Taymiyya," in *The Mongol Empire between Myth and Reality: Studies in Anthropological History,* ed. Denise Aigle, (Leiden, 2015), 283–305 (esp. 287–302). See also Amitai, *Holy War and Rapprochement,* 78–80.

[29] Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology,* 75–78.

[30] E.g., ibid., 178–79, 182, for Timur's accusations, 184–85 for Barqūq's.

[31] On Ilkhanid disdain for the Mamluk sultans as slaves, see ibid., 13, 29–30, 33–34, 74–75, 79; Amitai, *Holy War and Rapprochement,* 50. For the Mamluks as runaways, see Charles J. Halperin, "The Kipchak Connection: The Ilkhans, the Mamluks and Ayn Jalut," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 63 (2000): 229–45.

[32] On Barqūq's rise to power, see Carl F. Petry, *The Mamluk Sultanate: A History* (Cambridge, 2022), 23–25; and for Timur's attitude, Yazdī, *Ẓafarnāmah,* ed. ʿAbbāsī, 2:201–2; ibid., ed. Ṣādiq and Nawāʾī, 2:1042–43; cited in translation by Michele Bernardini, "Niẓām al-Dīn Shāmī's Description of the Syrian Campaign of Tīmūr," in *Mamluk Cairo, a Crossroads for Embassies: Studies on Diplomacy and Diplomatics,* ed. Frédéric Bauden and Malika Dekkiche (Leiden, 2019), 386–87.

[33] Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology,* 170, 174, 179–80, 188, 194.

[34] Timur's *fatḥnāmah* for Delhi, sent to his grandson Pīr Muḥammad ibn ʿUmar Shaykh, in *Asnād wa mukātabāt-i tārīkhī-yi Īrān az Taymūr tā Shāh Ismāʿīl,* ed. ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Nawāʾī (Tehran, 1962), 70.

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No less importantly, Timur's conduct in Syria yields insights into his perspectives as a Muslim. He professed veneration for the fourth caliph, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib;[35] and on more than one occasion he is said to have voiced anger at the usurpation of the caliphate by the Umayyad Muʿāwiyah in 40/661 and the killing of the Prophet's grandson al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī at the hands of the caliph Yazīd's representatives at Karbala in 60/680.[36] Timur broached these matters in discussion with the ulama at Aleppo, where he was mollified, we are told, by the response of Ibn al-Shiḥnah.[37] The ulama at Damascus, whose history was more intimately linked with the Umayyads, had a rougher passage, despite Timur's initial declarations of esteem for the city.[38] Here a delegation of local scholars, headed by the Hanbali chief qadi, Ibn Mufliḥ, who visited his headquarters to negotiate terms, were first grilled about the martyrdom of al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī at the hands of Umayyad forces and were told that as Syrians they were of the same persuasion as the perpetrators. When Timur next put to them the question whether knowledge or birth was the more important, they sensed that they were being drawn still further onto hazardous terrain and fell silent. Only the Hanbali Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Nābulusī had the courage to stand his ground, asserting the superiority of the caliph Abū Bakr over ʿAlī. He further declared that Timur's forces included Shiʿis and those who "contrived innovations" *(ibtadaʿū bidaʿ)* and voiced his readiness to suffer death and martyrdom at the hands of those who were Shiʿis in reality. Timur ordered that al-Nābulusī be excluded from his presence henceforward.[39]

The conqueror's sentiments on the subject of the Prophet's family, the *ahl al-bayt,* had dire consequences indeed for Damascus. Falling gravely ill shortly after the city's surrender, he denounced the Syrians for supporting the Umayyads against ʿAlī and others of the Prophet's family. Yazdī says that Timur's loathing for the Umayyads and their Syrian supporters was thereupon transferred, by some kind of contagion *(sirāyat),* as it were, to his troops and sparked the wholesale looting and burning of the city, in which the Umayyad Great Mosque

[35] E.g., ibid., 69.

[36] Ibn al-Shiḥnah, *Rawḍat al-manāẓir fī ʿilm al-awāʾil wa-al-awākhir,* printed in the margin of Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh* (Būlāq, 1873), 9:216–17, 221–22. Hence Ibn ʿArabshāh, *ʿAjāʾib,* ed. ʿUmar, 140, 141–42, 159–60; ibid., ed. al-Ḥimṣī, 216, 217, 261; idem, *Tamerlane,* 129, 130, 147.

[37] Ibn al-Shiḥnah, *Rawḍat al-manāẓir,* 216, 217. Hence Ibn ʿArabshāh, *ʿAjāʾib,* ed. ʿUmar, 140, 141–42; ibid., ed. al-Ḥimṣī, 216, 217; idem, *Tamerlane,* 129, 130.

[38] Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 3:3:1049.

[39] Ibn ʿArabshāh, *ʿAjāʾib,* ed. ʿUmar, 159–62; ibid., ed. al-Ḥimṣī, 261–65; idem, *Tamerlane,* 147–49. For "innovation," see J. Robson, "Bidʿa," *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., 1:1199; the rendering by Sanders (Ibn ʿArabshāh, *Tamerlane,* 149) is somewhat free.

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caught fire and suffered considerable damage.[40] Ibn ʿArabshāh blames the fire specifically on "the Refusers *(rawāfiḍ)* of Khurāsān" (i.e., Shiʿis), seeking revenge for al-Ḥusayn's death;[41] indeed, the desecration of the Umayyad tombs at Damascus is known to have been the work of a contingent from Khurāsān under Shiʿi Sarbadār leadership, who hailed Timur as al-Ḥusayn's avenger.[42] The same author says that Timur executed those responsible for the city's sack, but Mignanelli (or his Damascene informants) put a different construction on the episode, alleging that those executed were Muslim peasants dressed up as Chaghatay troopers to fool the populace into believing in Timur's justice.[43] In Shāmī's account, which says nothing of Timur's illness, the conqueror merely expresses disgust that the Damascenes had neglected their duty to care for the tombs of the Prophet's wives; unidentified persons are blamed for the conflagration.[44] Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū, who otherwise follows Shāmī, repeats Timur's fulminations against the Umayyads.[45]

Ibn Khaldūn confirms that Timur's views regarding al-Ḥusayn and his killing by the Umayyads gave rise to the imputation of Shiʿi leanings *(rafḍ),*[46] and Timur had been taken for a Shiʿi by one of the groups from Aleppo whom he received in audience along with Ibn al-Shiḥnah,[47] but we should recall that in the reigns of

[40] Yazdī, *Ẓafarnāmah,* ed. ʿAbbāsī, 2:243–45; ibid., ed. Ṣādiq and Nawāʾī, 2:1082–83. The extent of the damage to the mosque is unclear: see Elodie Vigouroux, "La Mosquée des Omeyyades de Damas après Tamerlan: Chronique d'une renaissance (1401–1430)," *Bulletin d'Études Orientales de l'Institut Français de Damas* 61 (2012): 125–27.

[41] Ibn ʿArabshāh, *ʿAjāʾib,* ed. ʿUmar, 171–72; ibid., ed. al-Ḥimṣī, 285; idem, *Tamerlane,* 158; Robert McChesney, "A Note on the Life and Works of Ibn ʿArabshāh," in *History and Historiography of Post-Mongol Central Asia and the Middle East: Studies in Honor of John E. Woods,* ed. Judith Pfeiffer and Sholeh A. Quinn (Wiesbaden, 2006), 210–11.

[42] Muʿīn al-Dīn Naṭanzī, *Muntakhab al-tawārīkh,* partial edition by Jean Aubin, *Extraits du Muntakhab al-tavarikh-i Muʿini (Anonyme d'Iskandar)* (Tehran, 1957), 379; cited by Aubin, "La fin de l'état sarbadâr du Khorassan," *Journal Asiatique* 262 (1974): 115; repr. in Aubin, *Études sur l'Iran médiéval, géographie historique et société,* ed. Denise Aigle (Paris, 2018), 327; see the more recent edition of Naṭanzī by Parwīn Istakhrī (Tehran, 2004), 280. For the Sarbadār presence at the siege of the citadel, see Yazdī, *Ẓafarnāmah,* ed. ʿAbbāsī, 2:241; ibid., ed. Ṣādiq and Nawāʾī, 2:1079; and for their views, Kazuo Morimoto, "An Enigmatic Genealogical Chart of the Timurids: A Testimony to the Dynasty's Claim to Yasavi-ʿAlid Legitimacy?" *Oriens* 44 (2016): 169–70, citing Jean Calmard.

[43] Fischel, "A New Latin Source," 220. Cf. Ibn ʿArabshāh, *ʿAjāʾib*, ed. ʿUmar, 159; ibid., ed. al-Ḥimṣī, 260; idem, *Tamerlane,* 146.

[44] Shāmī, *Ẓafarnāmah,* 1:235–36; Bernardini, "Niẓām al-Dīn Shāmī's Description," 403–4.

[45] Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū, *Zubdat al-tawārīkh,* 2:924.

[46] Ibn Khaldūn, *Taʿrīf,* 382 (Ibn Khaldūn/Fischel, *Historic Meeting,* 47).

[47] Ibn al-Shiḥnah, *Rawḍat al-manāẓir,* 218. Hence Ibn ʿArabshāh, *ʿAjāʾib,* ed. ʿUmar, 140; ibid., ed. al-Ḥimṣī, 216; idem, *Tamerlane,* 129.

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Ghazan and his successor Öljeitü, who for some years embraced Twelver Shiʿism, Shiʿis had played upon Mongol veneration of the imperial dynasty. They dexterously drew a parallel between the status of the *ahl al-bayt* and that of the *altan urugh,* and reasoned that Sunni Muslims, in recognizing the Umayyad caliphs and even the Abbasids (descended, of course, not from the Prophet but from his uncle), had chosen to give their allegiance to the equivalent of a mere *noyan.*[48] There are signs that this analogy with the *altan urugh* had previously been presented to Ghazan, who voiced his determination to right the wrongs done to the Prophet's line. If he made use of Shiʿi symbolism, however, he probably stopped short of becoming a Twelver Shiʿi.[49] Timur's diatribe at Damascus echoes Ghazan's sentiments and is also redolent of the antipathy towards Yazīd and the Syrians expressed by Ghazan's *noyan* Mulai in conversation with Ibn Taymīyah following the capture of the city,[50] but Timur was no more a Shiʿi than Ghazan was. His championship of ʿAlī and al-Ḥusayn was surely the devotional counterpart of his political allegiance to the *altan urugh.*[51]

The treatment meted out to many of the Syrian ulama sits ill with Timur's reputation as one who favored the company of learned men and enjoyed debate with them.[52] It further throws into sharp relief the hardships undergone by the many scholars whom he carried off to Samarqand from captured cities in Iran

[48] Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Qāsim ʿAbd-Allāh ibn ʿAlī Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Uljāytū Sulṭān,* ed. Mahin Hambly (Tehran, 1969), 99; Judith Pfeiffer, "Confessional Ambiguity vs. Confessional Polarization: Politics and the Negotiation of Religious Boundaries in the Ilkhanate," in *Politics, Patronage and the Transmission of Knowledge in 13th–15th Century Tabriz,* ed. Judith Pfeiffer (Leiden, 2014), 145, 159, and idem, "Conversion Versions: Sultan Öljeitü's Conversion to Shiʿism (709/1309) in "Muslim Narrative Sources," *Mongolian Studies* 22 (1999): 40, 41; Nagel, *Timur der Eroberer,* 71–73.

[49] Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Uljāytū Sulṭān,* 93; ibid., 99, Öljeitü is told that Ghazan had chosen Shiʿism. See Pfeiffer, "Confessional Ambiguity," 143–48, and idem, "Conversion Versions," 40. On Ghazan's views, see Michael Hope, *Power, Politics, and Tradition in the Mongol Empire and the Īlkhānate of Iran* (Oxford, 2016), 174–77; more briefly, Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology,* 68.

[50] Abū Bakr ibn ʿAbd-Allāh ibn Aybak Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar wa-jāmiʿ al-ghurar,* part 9, ed. Hans Robert Roemer (Cairo, 1960), 36; Quṭb al-Dīn Abū al-Fatḥ Mūsá ibn Muḥammad al-Yūnīnī, *Early Mamluk Syrian Historiography: Al-Yūnīnī's Dhayl Mirʾāt al-Zamān,* ed. and trans. Li Guo (Leiden, 1998), 1:163–64 (trans.), 2:124 (text); K. V. Zetterstéen, ed., *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Mamlūkensultane in den Jahren 690–741 der Hiǵra nach arabischen Handschriften* (Leiden, 1919), 78–79; Aigle, "Religious Response," 295.

[51] This is possibly what underlies Ibn ʿArabshāh's somewhat inapposite analogy (in *ʿAjāʾib,* ed. ʿUmar, 16; ibid., ed. al-Ḥimṣī, 56; idem, *Tamerlane,* 13) between the status of the Chinggisids and that of the Quraysh tribe in Islamic society.

[52] For examples, see Yazdī, *Ẓafarnāmah,* ed. ʿAbbāsī, 2:268, 396; ibid., ed. Ṣādiq and Nawāʾī, 2:1105, 1229. Cf. also Ibn ʿArabshāh, *ʿAjāʾib,* ed. ʿUmar, 318; ibid., ed. al-Ḥimṣī, 454; idem, *Tamerlane,* 298; John of Sulṭānīyah, *Mémoire sur Tamerlan et sa cour par un Dominicain, en 1403,* ed. H. Moranvillé, *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 55 (1894): 461: "*et se delicte moult en argumens et questions.*"

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and elsewhere and whose situation is recounted in laconic and neutral terms by the Timurid sources. Ibn ʿArabshāh describes the cruel beating, in Timur's presence and on his orders, of the Shafiʿi qadi Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Munāwī, apprehended while attempting to follow Sultan Faraj in flight to Egypt.[53] The Hanafi qadi Taqī al-Dīn ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Kafrī died as a prisoner after suffering all manner of humiliations.[54] Many of the ulama had perished in the course of the city's sack. Ibn Ḥijjī names several lawyers and scholars in Damascus who were tortured or killed during the occupation and furnishes a list of those who were later found to be missing.[55] Ibn ʿArabshāh names the Hanbali chief qadi, Ibn Mufliḥ, who had headed the negotiations with the conqueror, as one of those slain during the crisis, but adds that he was killed in error.[56] Persuaded by Timur's professions of good will to work for a negotiated settlement, Ibn Mufliḥ had continued to travel back and forth between the city and Timur's encampment, and Ibn Ḥajar pays tribute to his unsuccessful efforts, drawing a parallel with Ibn Taymīyah's visits to Ghazan's headquarters in 1299.[57]

[53] Ibn ʿArabshāh, *ʿAjāʾib,* ed. ʿUmar, 157–58; ibid., ed. al-Ḥimṣī, 256–57; idem, *Tamerlane,* 145.

[54] Abū al-Maḥāsin Yūsuf Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-zāhirah fī mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah* (Cairo, 1929–72), 13:21, and ibid., trans. William Popper as *History of Egypt 1382–1469 A.D.* (Berkeley, 1954–63), 2:109; idem, *Al-Manhal al-ṣāfī,* ed. Muḥammad Amīn, Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ ʿĀshūr, et al. (Cairo, 1984–2002), 7:131 (no. 1353). Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Inbāʾ al-ghumr bi-ibnāʾ al-ʿumr fī al-tārīkh,* ed. Ḥasan Ḥabashī (Cairo, 1969–72), 2:166, and ibid., ed. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Muʿīd Khān et al. (Hyderabad, 1967–76), 4:285, says that he died after the ordeal *(miḥnah)* of Timur; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 3:3:1072, that he died when it was underway. The former testimony is supported by the late dates given for his death, Dhū al-Qaʿdah or Dhū al-Ḥijjah 803 [June or July 1401], in al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-ʿuqūd,* 2:342 (no. 664), and Taqī al-Dīn Abū Bakr ibn Aḥmad Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah,* ed. ʿAdnān Darwīsh (Damascus, 1977–97), 4:217.

[55] Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad Ibn Ḥijjī, *Tārīkh Ibn Ḥijjī,* ed. Abū Yaḥyá ʿAbd Allāh al-Kundarī, (Beirut, 2003), 1:483–85, 487–88, 490–91, and 509–10 for those missing. Others are named by Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʾ al-ghumr,* ed. al-Ḥabashī, 2:167, 189; ibid., ed. Khān, 4:285, 329–30; Badr al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad Maḥmūd ibn Aḥmad al-ʿAynī, "ʿIqd al-jumān fī tārīkh ahl al-zamān," BNF MS arabe 1544, fol. 52a; Ibn ʿArabshāh, *ʿAjāʾib,* ed. ʿUmar, 174–75; ibid., ed. al-Ḥimṣī, 293; idem, *Tamerlane,* 160; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 4:240; and al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 3:3:1071.

[56] Ibn ʿArabshāh, *ʿAjāʾib,* ed. ʿUmar, 175; ibid., ed. al-Ḥimṣī, 291–93; idem, *Tamerlane,* 160–61. Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʾ al-ghumr,* ed. Ḥabashī, 2:150–51; ibid., ed. Khān et al., 4:248, refers briefly to Ibn Mufliḥ's death in the Biqāʿ region towards the end of Shaʿbān 803/early April 1401. Al-Maqrīzī (*Sulūk,* 3:3:1075, and *Durar al-ʿuqūd,* 1:125 [no. 43]) and Ibn Taghrībirdī (*Nujūm,* 13:25; ibid., trans. Popper, 2:111; and idem, *Al-Manhal al-ṣāfī,* 1:165) likewise date his death in that month.

[57] Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʾ al-ghumr,* ed. Ḥabashī, 2:150; ibid., ed. Khān et al., 4:248; hence Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 4:196–97. For Ibn Mufliḥ's efforts, see al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 3:3:1046–47; Joseph Drory, "Maqrīzī in *Durar al-ʿuqūd* with regard to Timur Leng," in *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras,* vol. 7, *Proceedings of the 16th, 17th and 18th International Colloquium Organized at*

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We learn, too, of other ulama who died during the journey east as captives in the conqueror's train. Ibn ʿArabshāh includes in his list al-Nābulusī and al-Munāwī,[58] each of whom had offended Timur but whose lives had been temporarily spared. Al-Munāwī drowned in the Zāb River during the march.[59] But it seems that Ibn ʿArabshāh was mistaken regarding al-Nābulusī, who was certainly carried off but escaped from the Chaghatay army after its sack of Baghdad and returned to Damascus in late Muḥarram 804/early September 1401 to report his colleague's fate.[60] On leaving Syria in Shaʿbān 803/March–April 1401, Timur is said to have ordered the release of some of his prisoners, among them the qadi of Aleppo, Mūsá ibn Muḥammad al-Anṣārī; he was, however, in poor health and died the following month.[61] According to al-Maqrīzī, a number of individuals for whom Ibn Khaldūn had interceded accompanied him back to Egypt in Shaʿbān,[62] but they surely constituted a minority of the captives.

Whatever his opinions on the denial of ʿAlid rights to the caliphal throne, it is conceivable that in attacking Mamluk territory Timur contemplated turning the fortunes of the caliphate to his own advantage. One particular distinction enjoyed by the Mamluk regime was the presence in Cairo from 659/1261 of a nominal Abbasid caliph installed by the sultan and in turn providing legitimation for his rule. During his negotiations with al-Nāṣir Faraj, if we can believe Ibn ʿArabshāh, Timur asserted his own right, as the paramount ruler within the *dār al-Islām,* to appoint the caliph.[63] It is difficult to judge how this might have played out. Would the appointee have lent additional legitimacy to Timur (and his khan)? Or would the Great Amir have been affronted by that very sugges-

Ghent University in May 2007, 2008 and 2009, ed. Urbain Vermeulen, Kristof D'Hulster, and Jo Van Steenbergen (Leuven, 2013), 397.

[58] Ibn ʿArabshāh, *ʿAjāʾib,* ed. ʿUmar, 174; ibid., ed. al-Ḥimṣī, 291–93; idem, *Tamerlane,* 160, states that both al-Munāwī and al-Nābulusī drowned, but cf. below and n. 60. Both appear in the list in Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 4:183, of those removed from Damascus.

[59] Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 3:3:1073; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 4:234–35; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 13:25; ibid., trans. Popper, 2:111; idem, *Al-Manhal al-ṣāfī,* 9:215–16 (no. 1990). Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-ʿuqūd,* 3:31–32 (no. 914), gives a fuller account of al-Munāwī's treatment.

[60] Ibn Ḥijjī, *Tārīkh,* 1:515; hence Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 4:255. See al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-ʿuqūd,* 3:324 (no. 1249), for his return and his death in Muḥarram 805/August 1402; also Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal al-ṣāfī,* 9:280 (no. 2043), with 22 Muḥarram; more briefly, Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Inbāʾ al-ghumr,* ed. Ḥabashī, 2:250; ibid., ed. Khān et al., 5:116, 119. Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 3:3:1108, records merely the date of his death, as 12 Muḥarram (11 August).

[61] Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʾ al-ghumr,* ed. al-Ḥabashī, 2:195; ibid., ed. Khān et al., 4:345; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 4:249–50; Shams al-Dīn Abū al-Khayr Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ li-ahl al-qarn al-tāsiʿ,* ed. Ḥusām al-Dīn al-Qudsī (Cairo, 1934–36), 10:190 (no. 796).

[62] Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 3:3:1056.

[63] Ibn ʿArabshāh, *ʿAjāʾib,* ed. ʿUmar, 130; ibid., ed. al-Ḥimṣī, 198; idem, *Tamerlane,* 119.

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tion? Timur's claim could betray jealousy of the prerogative enjoyed by Barqūq and Faraj of nominating the caliph, and perhaps also an uncharacteristic sense of inferiority, reinforced by his enemies' charge that he was an infidel.

In 803/1401, Ibn Khaldūn tells us, a scion of the Abbasid line presented himself to Timur at Damascus and claimed for himself a better right to the caliphate than al-Mutawakkil ʿalá Allāh, the figurehead in Cairo. His argument rested primarily on a hadith of the Prophet whereby (he alleged) the office of caliph was to remain with the Abbasids. Timur delegated the case to a committee of jurists, including Ibn Khaldūn, putting them in an uncomfortable situation, but at the instigation of Timur's imam and chief adviser, ʿAbd al-Jabbār Khwārazmī, they found against the claimant on the pretext that the hadith itself was spurious, rather than by weighing his right against that of the incumbent.[64]

Given Timur's known views on the history of the caliphate, it is hard to imagine that he would have found any Abbasid acceptable. Perhaps he wished to keep his options open; perhaps he was reluctant to jeopardize the chances of success against the Mamluks by challenging the highly popular al-Mutawakkil. In a letter to Bayezid, he drew attention to the caliph's sufferings at Barqūq's hands.[65] He may have hoped that al-Mutawakkil—banished, imprisoned and twice deposed[66]—might be ready to accept his protection. This would have enhanced Timur's prestige considerably, further offsetting his status as a mere *qarachu* (commoner) and lieutenant to a Chinggisid khan. Such a hope would not have been by any means unrealistic if we can trust Sharaf al-Dīn Yazdī's assurance that in early Muḥarram 801/late September 1398 Timur had received an embassy from the rulers of Mecca and Medina (hitherto under the Mamluk sultan's protection) expressing the desire to be brought under his guardianship.[67] The fact that in recent decades a wider circle of Muslim monarchs (among them the Muzaffarid Shāh-i Shujāʿ, the Jalayirid Sulṭān Aḥmad, and the Ottoman Bayezid)

[64] Ibn Khaldūn, *Taʿrīf,* 374–76 (Ibn Khaldūn/Fischel, *Historic Meeting,* 39–41). On this episode, see Mona Hassan, *Longing for the Lost Caliphate: A Transregional History* (Princeton, 2016), 125–26.

[65] Sarī ʿAbd-Allāh Efendi, *Munshaʾāt,* in Zeki Velidi Togan, "Timurs Osteuropapolitik," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 108/n.s. 33 (1958): 298.

[66] On the vicissitudes of al-Mutawakkil's career and on his growing popularity, see Hassan, *Longing,* 89–93; more briefly, Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology,* 150, 171 and n. 12. There is a biography of this caliph in al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-ʿuqūd,* 3:292–95 (no. 1234). For the functions of the later caliphs in general, cf. Mustafa Banister, "'Nought Remains to the Caliph but His Title': Revisiting Abbasid Authority in Mamluk Cairo," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 18 (2014–15), 219–45.

[67] Yazdī, *Ẓafarnāmah,* ed. ʿAbbāsī, 2:41; ibid., ed. Ṣādiq and Nawāʾī, 1:887. Authority over the two Hijaz cities would be disputed between the Mamluk sultans and Timur's successor Shāhrukh: Malika Dekkiche, "New Source, New Debate: Re-evaluation of the Mamluk-Timurid Struggle for Religious Supremacy in the Hijaz (Paris, BnF MS ar. 4440)," *MSR* 18 (2014–15), 247–71.

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had sought the caliph's recognition and sanction[68] could have furnished a rationale for bringing al-Mutawakkil within Timur's orbit—and perhaps, equally, another disincentive to antagonize him unnecessarily. Even had Timur contemplated taking al-Mutawakkil under his protection, however, we might well doubt that he would have permitted the caliph to reciprocate with confirmation of his rulership.

Much of the foregoing paper is speculative. We cannot, of course, be certain what was in Timur's mind when he entered the Mamluk dominions. Indeed, both Beatrice Manz and Anne Broadbridge have shown how the appeals he made to Mongol history, for instance, were not merely distorted but inconsistent and self-contradictory.[69] He may in fact have aimed primarily at establishing his paramountcy through the insertion of his name in the *khuṭbah* and on the coinage and mulcting the Syrians of as much of their property as possible, but I have tried to demonstrate that certain episodes during Timur's operations in Syria seem to betray a wider range of motives than can be detected in his other campaigns. Even if we discount the conversations related in Ibn Khaldūn's autobiography, this expedition throws fresh light on the inspiration that Timur drew, as a Mongol amir, from the Chinggisid past and on his outlook as a Muslim potentate. In particular, his letters and propaganda demonstrate that he was deeply conscious of following in the steps of the Ilkhans, notably Ghazan Maḥmūd. Most obviously, he borrowed from Ghazan the denunciation of the Mamluk sultans as disqualified for rule by their slave status. Additionally, however, the presence in Cairo of a nominal caliph under the sultan's protection can be seen to have constituted a distinct challenge to Timur's own perception of his role as the paramount Muslim monarch (and of course a challenge without parallel in his dealings with other Muslim realms), and the conqueror's views regarding early Islamic history (which in turn might be seen as echoing those of Ghazan) may have determined the unenviable fate of Damascus. It is no exaggeration to suggest that the rich trove of sources for his invasion of the Mamluk

[68] Hassan, *Longing,* 97; Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology,* 150, 175, and n. 40. Ibn Khaldūn (*Kitāb al-ʿibar,* ed. Yūsuf Asʿad Dāghir as *Tārīkh al-ʿallāmah Ibn Khaldūn* [Beirut, 1956–61], 3:1113) was aware of princes in India having done so. Foremost among them were the Delhi sultans Muḥammad ibn Tughluq (d. 752/1351) and his successor Fīrūz Shāh (d. 790/1388). The idea of obtaining caliphal endorsement (and thereby effectively flouting the Chinggisid dispensation) was even mooted after 1405 at the court of Timur's grandson Pīr Muḥammad in Shiraz: Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū, *Zubdat al-tawārīkh,* 3:44 (vol. 3 [Tehran, 1380/2001] was first issued in 1372/1993 as vol. 1); John E. Woods, "Timur's Genealogy," in *Intellectual Studies on Islam: Essays Written in Honor of Martin B. Dickson,* ed. Michael M. Mazzaoui and Vera B. Moreen (Salt Lake City, 1990), 115.

[69] Manz, "Tamerlane and the Symbolism of Sovereignty," 113–14; Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology,* 168–69, 178–79, 181.

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realm can furnish us with opportunities for a fuller understanding of Timur than we can hope to find in any of his other campaigns.



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Ilkhanid Sources in the Mamluk Sultanate: The Use of Juvaynī's *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā* by al-ʿUmarī and Ibn Kathīr

Arabic sources are of great relevance to historians of the Mongols, in particular texts from the Mamluk Sultanate. The authors of many histories, geographical works, biographical dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other sources paid ample attention to the history of the Mongol conquests and developments in the successor khanates. This is especially true of the Ilkhanate—as their neighbor and, for a long time, primary enemy, the Mamluks had a clear interest in events there. Consequently, these sources also reveal much about Mamluk-Mongol relations, about how the sultanate positioned itself vis-à-vis the Ilkhanate and the Golden Horde, and about how Mamluk-era authors actively tried to make sense of the initial arrival of the Mongols in the Islamic world as well as the later conflicts with the Ilkhanids. Especially for the first Mongol conquests in Islamic territory, Mamluk-era authors largely relied on the reports in the earlier Arabic histories by Ibn al-Athīr (d. 630/1233) and al-Nasawī (d. 647/1249–50). For later periods, however, their source material is varied. In addition to using written texts, some authors were eyewitnesses of battles and occupations, of embassies and diplomatic letters, and so on. Other important sources of information for some authors were traders, envoys, and other travelers.[1]

Through these routes, material originating in a Mongol cultural context made its way into some of these works as well, especially from the Ilkhanate. A well-known example is the anecdote related by al-Nuwayrī (677–733/1279–1333), in which he reports that Chinggis Khan, at the prompting of a Jewish teacher, spent some time as an ascetic in the mountains. Reuven Amitai, who analyzed the story, pointed out that Chinggis Khan is portrayed as a sort of "Mongol *ḥanīf*" and is given a Muslim patina of sorts. The story probably arrived in the Mamluk Sultanate from the Ilkhanate, where it was likely part of attempts to integrate older Mongol ideas with the recent Ilkhanid adoption of

[1] For an extensive overview and discussion of Mamluk and other Arabic sources on the Mongols, see Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran, "Arabic Sources," in *The Cambridge History of the Mongol Empire,* ed. Michal Biran and Hodong Kim (Cambridge, 2023), 1007–45. See also Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the Islamic World: From Conquest to Conversion* (New Haven, 2017), 14–45. On Mamluk-Mongol relations, see for example Reuven Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-Īlkhānid War, 1260–1281* (Cambridge, 1995); Anne F. Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology in the Islamic and Mongol Worlds* (Cambridge, 2008).

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Islam.[2] Another Mamluk-era author, Ibn al-Dawādārī (ca. 686–735/1289–1336), included two elaborate and connected origin stories of the Turks and Mongols, respectively, which he claimed to have encountered in a Turkish book owned by an acquaintance.[3] While both the book—for which Ibn al-Dawādārī gives three variant titles—and one of its purported narrators—a certain Sulaymān ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq ibn al-Bahlawān al-Ādharbayjānī—remain shrouded in mystery for now, I have argued elsewhere that the Mongol origin story contains several echoes of other narratives dealing with the history of the Mongols, including the *Secret History* and Rashīd al-Dīn's (ca. 645–718/1247–1318) *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh*.[4] The Mongol story of the miraculous impregnation of Chinggis Khan's foremother Alan Qo'a was also known by at least some Mamluk-era authors, although they tend to identify the woman in question as Chinggis Khan's own mother.[5] It is noteworthy that in these renditions of the story the claim is always that the pregnancy was induced by the sun's rays, rather than—as the *Secret History* states—a mysterious yellow man who left in the shape of a dog. Denise Aigle and Michal Biran have pointed out that in Rashīd al-Dīn's rendition of the story the dog has already disappeared, in a shift to a more monotheistic interpretation of the myth (although the author himself remained doubtful).[6] Rather, the pregnancy

[2] Reuven Amitai, "Did Chinggis Khan Have a Jewish Teacher? An Examination of an Early Fourteenth-Century Arabic Text," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 124, no. 4 (2004): 691–705; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab,* ed. Najīb Muṣṭafá Fawwāz and Ḥikmat Kashlī Fawwāz (Beirut, 2004), 27:207–8. On the "monotheisation" of Chinggis Khan, see also Michal Biran, *Chinggis Khan* (Oxford, 2007), 112–21.

[3] Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar wa-jāmiʿ al-ghurar,* ed. Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ ʿĀshūr (Cairo, 1972), 7:217–37; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Durar al-tījān wa-ghurar tawārīkh al-azmān,* ed. in *Die Epitome der Universalchronik Ibn-ad-Dawādārīs im Verhältnis zur Langfassung: Eine quellenkritische Studie zur Geschichte der ägyptischen Mamluken*, ed. Gunhild Graf (Berlin, 1990), 54–72. For an elaborate discussion of these stories see the various articles by Ulrich Haarmann, especially "Alṭun Ḫān und Čingiz Ḫān bei den ägyptischen Mamluken," *Der Islam* 51 (1974): 1–36; "Turkish Legends in the Popular Historiography of Medieval Egypt," in *Proceedings of the VIth Congress of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Visby 13–16 August, Stockholm 17–19 August, 1972,* ed. Frithiof Rundgren (Stockholm/Leiden, 1975), 97–107; "'Großer Vater Mond' und 'Schwarzer Löwenjunge'—eine mongolisch-kiptschakische Ursprungssage in arabischer Überlieferung," in *Die Mongolen in Asien und Europa,* ed. Stephan Conermann and Jan Kusber (Frankfurt, 1997).

[4] Josephine van den Bent, "Mongol Origins in Mamluk Texts: An *Origo Gentis* in Ibn al-Dawādārī's *Durar al-Tījān* and *Kanz al-Durar,*" *Mamlūk Studies Review* 24 (2021): 59–66.

[5] Al-Ṣafadī, *Kitāb al-wāfī bi-al-wafayāt,* ed. Aḥmad al-Arnāʾūṭ and Turkī Muṣṭafá, (Beirut, 2000), 11:154; Ibn Taymīyah, *Majmūʿ al-fatāwá,* ed. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn Qāsim (Riyadh, 1995), 28:521; Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah* (Beirut, 1966), 13:117.

[6] Denise Aigle, *The Mongol Empire between Myth and Reality: Studies in Anthropological History* (Leiden, 2015), 127; Biran, *Chinggis Khan,* 116.

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is caused by a more abstract "luminous shape" or light going into her belly.[7] It would seem that it was this "light" version of the story that made its way to the sultanate. Al-ʿUmarī's (700–49/1301–48/49) version of the narrative is especially conspicuous in this regard. A number of details in his text (suspicious family members, Alan Qo'a's predictions, an etymology) are strongly reminiscent of Rashīd al-Dīn's text.[8] Al-ʿUmarī does not mention *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh* as a source for his work,[9] so it may well be that this was narrated to him by one of his informants. What all these examples show is that in the Mamluk Sultanate there was clearly not only an elaborate interest in the Mongols, but that there was an active exchange of ideas and information between the sultanate and Mongol territories, especially the Ilkhanate.[10] Although many of these exchanges appear to have been through oral informants, it is not always exactly clear how information reached the sultanate.

That is also the case in what is perhaps the best known case of incorporation of Ilkhanid material in Mamluk literature: the use of information from ʿAṭā Malik Juvaynī's (623–81/1226–83) *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā* by al-ʿUmarī in his encyclopedic work *Masālik al-abṣār fī mamālik al-amṣār.* In the early 1970s, David Ayalon showed that the Mamluk official based his section on the Mongol Yasa on the work by the Persian author, who worked in the service of the Mongols.[11] Ayalon's study mainly focused on the Yasa, and resolved a number of important issues in that regard, but a major question he raised in his first article remained unresolved: how did al-ʿUmarī—there is no indication that he knew Persian—obtain

[7] Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh, *Rashiduddin Fazlullah's Jami'u't-Tawarikh: Compendium of Chronicles: A History of the Mongols,* trans. W. M. Thackston (Cambridge, MA, 1998), 1:117; Biran, *Chinggis Khan,* 116. There is also a connection to light in Rashīd al-Dīn's explanation of the meaning of *Niru'un* (the Mongol elite descending from Alan Qo'a); see Jonathan Z. Brack, *An Afterlife for the Khan: Muslims, Buddhists, and Sacred Kingship in Mongol Iran and Eurasia* (Oakland, 2023), 160, n. 54.

[8] Al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-abṣār fī mamālik al-amṣār,* ed. Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Shādhilī (Abu Dhabi, 2003), 3:100–1). For the similarities in content and differences in approach between Rashīd al-Dīn's and al-ʿUmarī's texts, see Josephine van den Bent, "Mongols in Mamluk Eyes: Representing Ethnic Others in the Medieval Middle East" (Ph.D. diss., University of Amsterdam, 2020), 87–89.

[9] Klaus Lech, *Das mongolische Weltreich: Al-ʿUmarī's Darstellung der mongolischen Reiche in seinem Werk Masālik al-abṣār fī mamālik al-amṣār* (Wiesbaden, 1968), 174–75.

[10] See also Amitai, "Jewish Teacher," 705.

[11] David Ayalon, "The Great Yāsa of Chingiz Khān: A Reexamination (Part A)," *Studia Islamica* 33 (1971): 97–140; idem, "The Great Yāsa of Chingiz Khān: A Reexamination (Part B)," *Studia Islamica* 34 (1971): 151–80; idem, "The Great Yāsa of Chingiz Khān: A Reexamination (Part C1), The Position of the Yāsa in the Mamluk Sultanate," *Studia Islamica* 36 (1972): 113–58; idem, "The Great Yāsa of Chingiz Khān: A Reexamination (Part C2), Al-Maqrīzī's Passage on the Yāsa under the Mamluks," *Studia Islamica* 38 (1973): 107–56.

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this information? Interestingly, there is another Mamluk-era author who used Juvaynī's chapters to make a list of Yasa rules: the famous historian Ibn Kathīr (700–74/1300–73). His discussion of the Yasa appears to have gone largely unnoticed, but it provides the opportunity to take another look at how Juvaynī's information ended up in the histories of the Mamluk Sultanate.

The Yasa in the Mamluk Sultanate: The Juvaynī–al-ʿUmarī–al-Maqrīzī Triangle

Al-ʿUmarī and Ibn Kathīr used Juvaynī's text for a specific part of their discussion of the history of the Mongols: the rise of Chinggis Khan and "his Yasa." The question of the "Great Yasa of Chinggis Khan" has long been debated by historians of the Mongol Empire. What exactly was it and what did it contain? Did it even exist? Traditionally, historians considered it a sort of written code promulgated by Chinggis Khan,[12] but no document of this sort has been found. Some have suggested it might have been for Chinggisid eyes only.[13] More recently, scholars have argued that non-Mongol authors were confused and mistakenly envisioned recorded edicts (*yasa*s in plural and lowercase) and customs as forming the "Great Yasa."[14] At the same time, there are echoes in the sources of some kind of greater thing that is traced back to Chinggis Khan.[15] While what precisely the "Great Yasa" was remains unclear, "there was certainly something," to quote David Morgan.[16]

The existence of this "something" did not go unnoticed by the authors of the Mamluk Sultanate, who observed that this "Yasa" was a matter of quite some

[12] See D. O. Morgan, "The 'Great Yāsā of Chingiz Khān' and Mongol Law in the Īlkhānate," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 49, no. 1 (1986): 163–66.

[13] E.g., Paul Ratchnevsky, "Die Yasa (Jasaq) Činggis-khans und ihre Problematik," in *Sprache, Geschichte und Kultur der Altaischen Völker: Protokollband der XII: Tagung der Permanent International Altaistic Conference 1969 in Berlin,* ed. Georg Hazai and Peter Zieme (Berlin, 1974), 480–81; idem, "Die Rechtsverhältnisse bei den Mongolen im 12.-13. Jahrhundert," *Central Asiatic Journal* 31, nos. 1–2 (1987): 84–85.

[14] E.g., Morgan, "The 'Great Yāsā of Chingiz Khān'"; David Morgan, *The Mongols* (Oxford, 1986), 96–99; Denise Aigle, "Le grand jasaq de Gengis-Khan: L'empire, la culture mongole, et la sharīʿa," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 47, no. 1 (2004): 31–79; idem, *The Mongol Empire between Myth and Reality: Studies in Anthropological History* (Leiden, 2015), 134–56.

[15] Igor de Rachewiltz, "Some Reflections on Činggis Qan's J̌asaγ," *East Asian History* 6 (1993): 91–104; David Morgan, "The 'Great Yasa of Chinggis Khan' Revisited," in *Mongols, Turks, and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World,* ed. Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran (Leiden, 2005), 303–4.

[16] Morgan, *The Mongols,* 98. For other contributors to this debate, see for instance de Rachewiltz, "Some Reflections"; Morgan, "Revisited."

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importance to the Mongols. They strongly connect it to the person of Chinggis Khan, and in general depict it as un-Islamic, and even anti-Islamic.[17] Mamluk treatment of the Yasa ranges from brief mentions—such as the one made by the historian Ibn Wāṣil (604–97/1208–98) contrasting the Yasa with the shariʿah[18]—to exaggerated stories like those recounted by al-Ṣafadī (696–764/1297–1363).[19] Some authors even included lists of rules supposedly found in the Yasa, and it was in this context that Ayalon first noticed the use of Juvaynī's *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā* in the Mamluk Sultanate. The best known examples of such lists are those reported by al-ʿUmarī and al-Maqrīzī (766–845/1364–1442), and in the traditional approach to study of the Yasa, scholars attempted to use these to reconstruct the "legal code."[20] In his seminal series of articles, however, Ayalon showed that that approach needed to be abandoned. Taking the well-known section on the Yasa by al-Maqrīzī as a point of departure,[21] he demonstrated that al-Maqrīzī based his text on that of al-ʿUmarī, and also adapted it to better serve his argument against what he considered the increased use of administrative judgment by Mamluk chamberlains at the expense of shariʿah law as applied by the qadis.[22] More importantly for the matter at hand, Ayalon also demonstrated that al-ʿUmarī's text was based on Juvaynī's *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā*.

[17] See, e.g., Aigle, *The Mongol Empire,* 151–56; Robert G. Irwin, "What the Partridge Told the Eagle: A Neglected Arabic Source on Chinggis Khan and the Early History of the Mongols," in *The Mongol Empire and Its Legacy,* ed. Reuven Amitai-Preiss and David O. Morgan (Leiden, 1998), 8–11; van den Bent, "Mongols in Mamluk Eyes," 120–52.

[18] Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij al-kurūb fī akhbār Banī Ayyūb,* ed. Ḥasanayn Muḥammad Rabīʿ and Saʿid ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ ʿĀshūr (Cairo, 1972), 4:36.

[19] Al-Ṣafadī, *Kitāb al-wāfī,* 11:153. For a discussion of al-Ṣafadī's treatment of the Yasa and Chinggis Khan, see van den Bent, "Mongols in Mamluk Eyes," 142–46.

[20] They would also use Persian authors, European travellers, and the Syriac historian Bar Hebraeus (also known as Ibn al-ʿIbrī, [1226–86]). For an example of such an attempt at reconstruction, see George Vernadsky, "The Scope and Contents of Chingis Khan's Yasa," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 3, nos. 3–4 (1938): 337–60. For a discussion of this approach, see for instance Morgan, "The 'Great Yāsā of Chingiz Khān.'" Another interesting list of "Yasa rules" is given by Ibn ʿArabshāh, *Fākihat al-khulafāʾ wa-mufākahāt al-ẓurafāʾ,* ed. in *Liber Arabicus seu Fructus imperatorum et jocatio ingeniosorum,* ed. Georg. Guill. Freytag (Bonn, 1832), 233–34. See Irwin, "What the Partridge Told the Eagle."

[21] Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Mawāʿiẓ wa-al-iʿtibār bi-dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-al-āthār,* ed. Muḥammad Zaynuhum and Madīḥah al-Sharqāwī (Cairo, 1998), 3:82–87.

[22] Ayalon, "The Great Yāsa (Part A)," 99–115; idem, "The Great Yāsa (Part C2)," 107–23. Ayalon also demonstrated that it is highly unlikely that the Yasa was ever used in the Mamluk Sultanate in the manner presented by al-Maqrīzī. Other authors have also pointed out problems with al-Maqrīzī's copying tendencies. Amitai, for instance, has shown that there are problems with the reliability of al-Maqrīzī's work for the early Mamluk sources. Not only does he not identify his sources, he is also careless in his summaries, leading to factual inaccuracies. See Reuven

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In his section on the history and the lands of the Mongols, al-ʿUmarī included his famous list of Yasa rules, information about the rise to power of Chinggis Khan, and other information about him and the Mongols in general, all based on Juvaynī's history. Juvaynī, who was appointed governor of Baghdad after Hülegü's conquest of the city in 1258, completed the *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā* in 1260. The text has been very influential in the study of Mongol history, both in the present time and among medieval authors.[23] In the standard edition by Mīrzā Muḥammad Qazvīnī (1912–37), as in many of the manuscripts he used in preparing said edition, the text is divided into three parts.[24] It is in the first section, on the rise and exploits of Chinggis Khan and his immediate successors, that Juvaynī included a chapter entitled "Mention of the rules *(qawāʿid)* that Chinggis Khan promulgated after his rise, and the *yasa*s that he ordered," which drew the interest of near-contemporaries and modern scholars alike.[25] It is this chapter and the two following, on Chinggis Khan's rise to power and on his sons, that mostly served as the source for al-ʿUmarī and Ibn Kathīr, but they also used material from elsewhere in Juvaynī's text.

In his article series, Ayalon noted first that al-ʿUmarī's passage on the Yasa is not a translation of Juvaynī's chapter on rules and *yasa*s promulgated by Chinggis Khan, nor a good summary thereof; and second that although Juvaynī's chapter was his main source, al-ʿUmarī also used other sections of Juvaynī's text. Here Ayalon noted that al-ʿUmarī occasionally included details that appear to be added or changed. This last point is important for the present article, as is his third remark: al-ʿUmarī incorporated various rules and customs "which he ascribes to al-Juwayni, but which are not found in the latter's chronicle at all."[26] To explain this, Ayalon raised the question of the provenance of al-ʿUmarī's information, offering three possible explanations: (1) Juvaynī's chronicle has not survived in its entirety; (2) al-ʿUmarī was misled by his Persian-speaking informants who helped him make sense of Juvaynī's original text; and (3) al-ʿUmarī used additional sources without acknowledging them, yet attributed their in-

Amitai, "Al-Maqrīzī as a Historian of the Early Mamluk Sultanate (or: Is al-Maqrīzī an Unrecognized Historiographical Villain?)," *MSR* 7, no. 2 (2003): 99–118.

[23] Charles Melville, "Persian Sources," in *The Cambridge History of the Mongol Empire,* ed. Michal Biran and Hodong Kim (Cambridge, 2023), 884–85.

[24] Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā,* ed. Mīrzā Muḥammad Qazvīnī (Leiden/London, 1912), lxi–lxxix; فا–قی; Charles Melville, "Jahāngošā-Ye Jovayni," in *Encyclopaedia Iranica Online,* 2020, https://doi.org/10.1163/2330-4804_EIRO_COM_3819.

[25] On the translation of *qawāʿid* here, see Morgan, "Revisited," 295–96. Another author who drew on Juvaynī's text in his discussion of the Yasa is Bar Hebraeus in his Syriac *Chronography* (Ayalon, "The Great Yāsa [Part A]," 127). See Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronography of Gregory Abu'l Faraj,* trans. Ernest A. Wallis Budge, (London, 1932, repr. Amsterdam, 1976), 1:354–55.

[26] Ayalon, "The Great Yāsa (Part A)," 116–22, quotation on p. 116.

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formation to Juvaynī. Ayalon considered the second option to be the most likely possibility.[27]

However, as mentioned above, Ibn Kathīr also used Juvaynī's text. In his report on the year 624 (1226–27) in his extensive history *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah,* Ibn Kathīr included a biographical notice *(tarjamah)* of Chinggis Khan, as one of the notables *(al-aʿyān)* who died that year. He briefly introduces him as the great ruler of the Mongols and the ancestor of the Mongol rulers of his own day, and states that Chinggis Khan was the one to introduce the Yasa[28] to which they adhere.[29] He then gives an account of the rise of Chinggis Khan, offers more information about the Yasa, and provides a list of Yasa rules and Mongol customs. This is followed by a number of anecdotes, and he ends with some comments about the sons of Chinggis Khan.

In what follows, based on a comparison between the accounts by Juvaynī, al-ʿUmarī, and Ibn Kathīr, I will first argue that al-ʿUmarī and Ibn Kathīr seem to have independently used the same source material, and that this source would appear to have been a written text. Ayalon's observation that there are significant divergences between al-ʿUmarī's text and Juvaynī's original consequently also applies to *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah,* which again raises the question of the provenance of these differences. This is of course connected to the form in which Juvaynī's material was available in the sultanate. Ayalon gave a number of possible explanations for al-ʿUmarī's deviations, but I consider two other possible explanations to be more likely. The first is that an Arabic translation of (part of) Juvaynī's work was circulating in the Mamluk Sultanate and used by both al-ʿUmarī and Ibn Kathīr. Alternatively, their accounts may have been based on a Persian version after all, but one that differed significantly from Juvaynī's text as we have it today. Future research may offer a more definitive answer to this question, but for now both options underline that Ilkhanid material made its way to the sultanate not only in oral form through informants, but also as written texts.

[27] Ibid., 122–25.

[28] Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah,* 13:117. The 1966 edition reads *siyāsah,* which is not uncommon in Mamluk-era sources, but the 2010 Damascus edition reads *"al-yāsā"* (Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah,* ed. Riyāḍ ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Marād and Bashshār ʿAwwād Maʿrūf [Damascus, 2010], 15:159), as does an early, fifteenth-century manuscript I consulted (Bibliothèque nationale de France MS Arabe 1516, fol. 23r).

[29] The relevant section in Ibn Kathīr is *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah,* 1966, 13:117–21; idem, *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah,* 2010, 15:159–65.

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Al-ʿUmarī and Ibn Kathīr: Independent Dependence upon Juvaynī

In his biographical notice of Chinggis Khan, Ibn Kathīr immediately introduces Juvaynī as the source for his material, writing: "I have seen a volume composed by the vizier of Baghdad, ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Juvaynī, on his biography and in which he relates his life" *(qad raʾaytu mujalladan jamaʿahu al-wazīr bi-Baghdād ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Juwaynī fī tarjamatihi fa-dhakara fīhi sīratahu).*[30] It is important to emphasize that he speaks of *seeing* a volume. Whereas al-ʿUmarī was vague about how he received his knowledge about Juvaynī's text, simply stating he "related" the information *(ḥaká al-ṣāḥib ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Juwaynī),* Ibn Kathīr is decisively clear that he used a written account. It thus appears that some kind of physical copy of Juvaynī's text was present in the Mamluk Sultanate, and based on the many parallels between this text and that of al-ʿUmarī, it seems likely that the same text was used by both authors. An overview of the three texts and parallels between them is presented next, followed by an analysis of their relationship.

[30] Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah,* 1966, 13:117–18.

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Table 1. Al-ʿUmarī's and Ibn Kathīr's renditions of their respective sections on the Yasa and Chinggis Khan, with parallels in Juvaynī. Thematically (and content-wise) corresponding passages have been marked by color. Italics denote information that is unique to either al-ʿUmarī or Ibn Kathīr. If the information has a parallel in Juvaynī, it is also underlined.[31]

al-ʿUmarī	Ibn Kathīr	Juvaynī
Chinggis Khan (CK) as ancestor of current Mongol rulers; lawgiver by means of Yasa (99–100)	CK as the great king of the Mongols; ancestor of the current Mongol rulers; the one who laid down the Yasa for them. Most of the Yasa contradicts God's laws *(sharāʾiʿ Allāh taʿālá)*. He invented the Yasa himself. (117)	
Ancestor of CK, Alan Qo'a, got pregnant from sun's ray, was taken to court. Lineage of CK given (100)	CK's mother claimed to have gotten pregnant from sun's rays, his father therefore unknown (117)	
Condemnation of story of Alan Qo'a (101)		
(Mention of Juvaynī as source [102])	(Mention of Juvaynī as source [117–18])	
	His name was Temüjin (Timurjī) first, called himself CK when he became powerful. (118)	His name was Temüjin (Timurjīn) first, until he became powerful and it became Chinggis Khan. (Q26/B35)
CK is close to Ong Khan (Unk Khān), is promoted. Those around the ruler become jealous and pit him against CK. Ong (Uzbek) Khan upset with two young mamluks who flee to CK, who warn him of Ong Khan's plans against him. CK leaves with followers, fight with Ong Khan; youths made *tarkhān*. CK is generous to those who join him of Ong Khan's people. He fights Ong Khan, kills him, and seizes his kingdom. (102–5)	CK is close to "Uzbek Khān" (Ong Khan), but those around the ruler become jealous and pit him against CK. Ong (Uzbek) Khan upset with two young mamluks who flee to CK, who warn him of Ong (Uzbek) Khan's plan to kill him. CK keeps distance, gathers following of Mongol tribes and many of Ong (Uzbek) Khan's followers. He fights Ong (Uzbek) Khan, kills him, and seizes his kingdom. (118)	CK is close to Ong Khan, is promoted. Those around the ruler become jealous and pit him against CK. Ong Khan plots against CK. Two youths leave Ong Khan and warn CK of the plans against him. CK leaves with followers; battle between CK and small army against Ong Khan. CK wins booty. Youths made *tarkhān;* others who took part in the battle rise to high positions. Army reinforced, CK fights Ong Khan, kills him. (Q26–28/B35–38)

[31] Page numbers for al-ʿUmarī refer to the 2003 edition (the corresponding passage in Lech's edition is found on pages ٢–١٤/92–99). Page numbers for Ibn Kathīr refer to the 1966 edition (the corresponding passage in the 2010 edition is found on pages 159–65). Page numbers for Juvaynī refer to the 1912 edition by Qazvīnī (indicated with a Q) and Boyle's translation (B). I would like to thank Sima Zolfaghari for her advice on the Persian. All remaining errors are, of course, my own.

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al-ʿUmarī	Ibn Kathīr	Juvaynī
CK sends to tribes to inform them of his situation and power. Among the most important and large tribes to answer his call and submit to him are the Oirat and the QNQWRāT (Qonggirat). Most famous and largest tribe, from which he is descended, called Qiyāt (104–5)	More people join and surrender to CK. Key tribe was his own, the "Qayān" (Qiyāt). After that, two large tribes, the "Azān" (Oirat; the BNF MS has "Ūyrāt") and QNQWRāN (Qonggirat) (118)	Most noble and greatest tribe is the Qiyāt, tribe of CK. He was originally called Temüjin (Timurjīn), until he became powerful. [Moves to story of Ong Khan; see above] (Q25–26/B34–35) CK sends to tribes. Those who submitted, such as the Oirat and the QNQWRāT (Qonggirat), were favored. (Q28/B38)
His name was Temüjin (Timūjīn) first, called himself CK when he became powerful (105)		
	CK would hunt three months of the year, rest for war and government. *Ḥalqah* would have three months between both ends, and then would close in and gather innumerable kinds of animals within it. (118; 1.5 lines)	Hunt considered good training for war. Hunting ring formed for one to three months, ring contracted with animals inside. If any animals break through, those responsible are punished, perhaps even killed. Khan goes into ring first, then watches sons, then rests. After that, old men intercede for the lives of remaining animals. Large numbers of prey; if it is impossible to count all kinds of animals, they just count beasts of prey and onagers. Story that once, animals gathered turned towards the Qa'an[32] and let out cry, like asking for mercy; he released them (Q19–21/B27–29)
	War with Khwārazm Shāh, "as we mentioned in the ḥawādith." (118)	
Juvaynī: They believe in unity of God, creation, etc. In his Jahānkushāy he said that some of CK's children were Christians or Jews, some reject all, some revere idols; no religious fanaticism. CK had at least some faith in God (105–6)		CK did not adhere to specific religion, but respected all religions. (Grand)children have chosen Islam, Christianity, revering idols, old custom of forefathers (Q18–19/B26)

[32] This story appears to have been about Ögedei. Juvaynī, *Genghis Khan: The History of the World Conqueror,* trans. J. A. Boyle (Manchester, 1997), 29, n. 9.

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al-ʿUmarī	Ibn Kathīr	Juvaynī
	CK died in 624. His body was put in an iron casket and hung between two mountains (118)	
	His book the Yasa written up in crude writing in two volumes and carried on camel (118)	
Regarding his Yasa: among it is what agrees with Shariʿah. He [Juvaynī] said: CK did not use lives of kings or books, but rules he set for everything all came of his own mind (106)		All that was written about older rulers CK invented from his own mind, did not use records (Q16/B23–24) CK Established rules from own mind. Many ordinances agree with Shariʿah (Q17/B25)
Rules recorded in book called The Great Yasa (al-yāsā al-kabīrah), *must be taught to youngsters and obeyed, put in treasury and inherited by closest relatives* (106)		Mongol children should learn writing from Uyghurs; yasas and ordinances to be written on rolls. Those called Great Yasa (*yāsānāmah-yi buzurg*), kept in treasury and produced upon ascension of khan (Q17–18/B25)
	According to "one of them," CK would repeatedly climb mountain until he became fatigued and fell unconscious, and he would order to write down what he said then. (118)	
	States that Juvaynī related that someone went to worship on a mountain, and heard a voice say: "We have made CK and his offspring king on the face of the earth." According to Juvaynī, high-ranking Mongols believed this and became Muslim. (118)	A man would walk naked through desert and mountains and return, and say that God had said to him: "I have given all of the face of the earth to Temürjin and his children, and given him the name Chinggis Khan and told him this and this is justice." This person is then identified as Teb-Tengri, who was eventually executed. (Q28–29/B39)

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al-ʿUmarī	Ibn Kathīr	Juvaynī
List of rules: adultery; sodomy; lying; sorcery; spying; meddling in fight; urinating in water; immersing in standing water; *receiving goods and losing them;* feeding prisoners; returning fugitives; animal slaughter; slaughtering Islamic way; *helping fellow soldier;*[33] old yasa: immersing in water [see Table 2]. (106–7)	"Then al-Juwaynī mentioned a little of the Yasa." List of rules: adultery; lying; sodomy; sorcery; spying; meddling in fight; urinating in standing water; immersing in standing water; feeding prisoners; returning fugitives; throwing food; eating first from offered food; sharing food; animal slaughter [see Table 2]. (118–19)	CK put down laws *(rusūm),* abolished disagreeable customs such as theft and adultery. (Q28/B39) Animal slaughter: yasa made in beginning of Mongol rule that slaughter should not be done in Islamic way *(tasmiyah),* but by "splitting the breast according to their custom." (Q163/B206) Chaghatai forbade slaughter in Muslim manner (Q227/B272)
	Contrariness of Yasa to Sharīʿah (119)	
CK good for all religious communities, abrogated taxes for religious officials (107)		They encourage all religions. Most learned of all religions do not have to pay taxes and may not be spoken ill off. (Q11/B15–16)
Customs *(ādabihim):* eating first from offered food; sharing food; throwing food; no stepping over fireplace or plate of food; passer-by may join in with eating people; *no putting hands in water; no urinating on ashes;* no stepping on threshold of tent. Unfamiliar with washing clothes, *no differentiation between pure/impure like Muslims; no fanaticism between madhhabs*. Call ruler by his name; no meddling with money of the deceased (107–8)	Customs *(ādabihim):* extreme obedience to ruler; he can freely choose among their virgins; call ruler by his name; passer-by may join in with eating people; no stepping over fireplace or plate of food; no stepping on threshold of tent; no washing of clothes until visibly dirty; no meddling with money of the deceased (119)	Khan receives additional name, other royalty addressed by birth name. In correspondence referred to by that name (Q19/B26) Man may not join another unit. "Moonlike" girls found in the army are gathered. Men select them and take them to the khan/princes for them to choose from. *Yams* (relay stations) established in territory. Everyone divided into tens, hundreds, and thousands. No meddling with money of deceased. (Q24–25/B32–34) Yasa and Mongol custom say that in summer and spring no one may sit in water during the day, wash hands in running stream, draw water in silver/gold vessels, or lay out washed garments on the plain. (All for fear of thunder and lightning) (Q161/B204)
	Juvaynī gives a lot of information on CK's character; he was an associator and killed many (119)	

[33] Denise Aigle has pointed out that this might go back to paragraph 190 of the *Secret History*. Aigle, *The Mongol Empire,* 149.

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al-ʿUmarī	Ibn Kathīr	Juvaynī
	On cause for conflict with Khwārazm Shāh (119)	
Never an army like that of the Mongols in size, power, patience, obedience; never so many soldiers with a ruler, great obedience. After battle, pay taxes without complaint. When they prepare for war, commanders check their equipment to the smallest detail; punishment if things are not in order. Stranger is that their women take up their men's tasks for the ruler when the latter are away. Every pretty girl gathered at the start of each year and brought before the ruler, who picks freely for himself and his sons. *System of thousands, hundreds, tens.* (108–9)		Never an army like that of the Mongols, in patience, gratefulness, obedience. After battle, pay taxes without complaint. When they prepare for war, commanders check their equipment to the smallest detail; punishment if something is missing. Service men have to do devolves onto their wives and others who remain behind when they are away fighting. Everyone divided into tens, hundreds, thousands, ten thousands. (On the girls, see above.) (Q21–23/B29–31)
Some more Yasa: khan can punish over great distance; amirs may not visit/change position; postal system (109–10)		Khan can punish over great distance (Q23/B31) See above.
CK (and offspring) had great love for hunting whenever he was free from battle. Would cover a three-month distance, *ḥalqah* would then close in. He also considered hunt good practice for war. If any prey break through, those responsible are punished, perhaps even killed. Khan, his sons, and his entourage go into the ring first; Khan then watches sons' horsemanship and archery from high place. After that, youngsters (!) intercede for the lives of remaining animals. Story that once, animals gathered turned towards him and let out cry, like asking for mercy; he released them. (110–11; 16 lines)		See above.

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al-ʿUmarī	Ibn Kathīr	Juvaynī
	A selection of stories that Juvaynī narrated about Ögedei, but which Ibn Kathīr relates as being about CK (119–21): • *Farmer comes to CK with watermelons, is given CK's wife's valuable earrings* • *Buying jujube in market* • *CK giving money for glass from Aleppo (second part of the story as related by Juvaynī is missing)* • *Man lies about existence of treasure in order to see the khan* • *Breaking of pomegranate, handing out money like seeds* • *Unbeliever sees CK in dream, ordering the murder of Muslims* • *Three men to be executed, saved by statement of their wife/mother/sister* • *Wrestler abstaining from intercourse*	Stories about Ögedei, nos. xi, xxv, xxxiii, xxxiv, xxxix, xl, xliv, xlv (as numbered in Boyle's translation; the stories appear in order). (Q168–69, 174, 177–78, 181, 183–84/B211, 217–18, 221–23, 225, 227–28.)
CK had many children. Most important wife was Ūbūljīn Bīkī; importance of children depends on mother. With her he had four sons. The oldest was "Jochi (Tūsh) father *(wālid)* of Orda (Q-rdū), Batu (Bātuh), Berke, and Berkecher (Tarakjār)." Responsibilities: Jochi (hunt), Chaghatai (execution of rules: *al-yāsāt wa-al-arghū*'[34]), Ögedei (reason and government and army) [no mention of Tolui]. (111)	CK urged sons to harmony and against division, by means of arrow parable (121)	CK had many children. Most important wife was Yesünjin Beki;[35] importance of children depends on mother. With her he had four sons, each had a responsibility: Jochi (hunt), Chaghatai (execution of rules: "*yāsā va siyāsat*"); Ögetei (reason and administration of kingdom); Tolui (army). (Q29/B40)

[34] The *yārghū* was a Mongol court. Aigle, *The Mongol Empire,* 4, 150–51.

[35] Chinggis Khan's chief wife was called Börte. Boyle suggests that Juvaynī may be confusing her with Hülegü's wife Yesünjin (Juvaynī, *Genghis Khan,* 40, n. 1), and Anne Broadbridge suggests that he might have confused her with Yisuï, another wife of Chinggis Khan, of the Alchi Tatars (Anne F. Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire* (Cambridge, 2018), 58, n. 59, 83–89).

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al-ʿUmarī	Ibn Kathīr	Juvaynī
CK urged sons to harmony, against division, by means of arrow parable (112)	CK had many children; four sons most important: *Yūsī wa-HRYWL* [BNF MS: HRTWL, fol. 25r] *wa-Bātū wa-Barkah wa-Tarakjār*. They all have their own position (121)	CK urged sons to harmony and against division, by means of arrow parable (Q30/B41) Death of CK. From the Kipchak steppe come "the sons of Tūshī, Orda and Batu and Shībaqān (Sibaqan) and Tankūt and Berke and Berkecher and Togha-temür." (Q144–45/B183–84)
Division of territory. More than ten thousand descendants. (112–13)		Division of territory. More than ten thousand descendants. (Q31–32/B42–43)
"This is what al-ṣāḥib ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn [Juvaynī] related." (113)	*Juvaynī continues about the rule of his offspring until Hülegü, who he calls* pādshāh-i zādah, *and what happens in his day* (121).	

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There are many striking similarities between al-ʿUmarī's account in his *Masālik al-abṣār* and Ibn Kathīr's version in *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah,* and both, as noted, claimed that Juvaynī was their source. The first question that comes to mind is whether it is possible that one is the source of the other: did Ibn Kathīr use al-ʿUmarī as an intermediary to Juvaynī's work, or vice versa? This seems unlikely. Al-ʿUmarī's section on Chinggis Khan's dealings with Ong Khan is significantly more elaborate and about four times longer than Ibn Kathīr's. Al-ʿUmarī included details he obtained from Juvaynī that are lacking from Ibn Kathīr's version. For example, he related that Chinggis Khan raised the two youths who informed him of Ong Khan's plot to the status of *tarkhān*.[36] On the other hand, Ibn Kathīr, unlike al-ʿUmarī, included Juvaynī's story about the divine voice on a mountain that proclaimed Chinggis Khan "king on the face of the earth."[37] Ibn Kathīr also included a selection from a large number of stories that Juvaynī related about Ögedei;[38] yet he mistakenly interpreted them as being about Chinggis Khan. These stories relate various occurrences in his dealings with his subjects, and are absent from *Masālik al-abṣār.* In Juvaynī, these stories are found in the same chapter ("On the deeds and actions of the Qa'an") in which the information on the Mongol *yāsāt* and/or customs regarding open water and slaughter are related (see below).[39] Both authors, then, incorporated information that can be traced back to Juvaynī but is absent in the other's work. It therefore seems more plausible that they both relied independently on Juvaynī.There are some conspicuous differences between the Arabic and Persian texts, both in content and in structure. It should be noted that there is a large number of surviving manuscripts of the popular *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā,*[40] and only some of these were

[36] Al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-abṣār,* 3:104–5; Lech, *Das mongolische Weltreich,* ٤–٥; Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā,* 27; idem, *Genghis Khan,* 37–38. The status of *tarkhān* exempted the person from taxes and allowed them the freedom to travel. It was used by the Chinggisids as a reward for loyal support. See for instance Marie Favereau, "Tarkhan: A Nomad Institution in an Islamic Context," *Revue des Mondes Musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 143 (2018), http://journals.openedition.org/remmm/10955.

[37] Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah,* 13:118; Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā,* 28; idem, *Genghis Khan,* 39.

[38] Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā,* 158–91; idem, *Genghis Khan,* 201–36. Al-ʿUmarī gives a significantly different version of one of those stories, no. xxxiii in Boyle's translation, but names Möngke Khan as the benefactor, and gives his source as al-Fāḍil Niẓām al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍāʿil Yaḥyá ibn al-Ḥakīm al-Ṭayyarī (al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-abṣār,* 3:124–25 [ed. Lech, *Das mongolische Weltreich,* ٢٣–٢٤/106–7]). He ends his short selection of stories by saying that this shows the extent of generosity in Möngke Khan. On al-Ṭayyarī, a former employee of the *dīwān* of Abū Saʿīd, see Lech, 36–37.

[39] Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā,* 158–91; idem, *Genghis Khan,* 201–36.

[40] Melville, "Jahāngošā-Ye Jovayni."

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used in preparing the Qazvīnī edition. It is possible, especially for some of the smaller differences, that one or more of these manuscripts do contain (some of) the information currently unique to the Mamluk sources.[41] Nevertheless, the shared differences are significant and telling. For one, it suggests that al-ʿUmarī and Ibn Kathīr used the same or a very similar source text. Second, as they did for Ayalon, these divergences raise a number of questions about the transmission of this and other Ilkhanid texts to the sultanate.

As discussed above, Ayalon mentioned not only al-ʿUmarī's addition of rules that were not listed in Juvaynī's account (see below), but further remarked that al-ʿUmarī's text contained details that are absent from Juvaynī. One example he gave is al-ʿUmarī's list of Muslim religious functionaries who are exempted from paying taxes, which Juvaynī did not mention;[42] another one is al-ʿUmarī's remark about the religious convictions of the (grand)children of Chinggis Khan. Some of them, according to al-ʿUmarī, adopted Christianity and Judaism, while others rejected all religions or revered idols. Ayalon pointed out that not only did al-ʿUmarī add Judaism, he also left out Islam.[43] While this bit of information is absent from *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah,* Ibn Kathīr's text also contains details not found in Juvaynī. For example, when he related the story about someone worshiping on a mountain (identified as Teb Tengri in Juvaynī), he added that "al-Juwaynī says that high-ranking Mongols *(mashāyikh al-Mughūl)* believed this and became Muslim."[44] This might echo the information on the religious convictions of the Chinggisid offspring as related by Juvaynī and al-ʿUmarī, but that seems unlikely to be the origin given the direct connection to the story of Teb Tengri, as indicated by Ibn Kathīr, and the fact that this information appears in an entirely different section in Juvaynī's text.

These details are unique to each of the respective works, but the two Arabic texts share elements that are not found in the Qazvīnī edition of the *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā*. For instance, al-ʿUmarī and Ibn Kathīr both reported that Ong Khan was upset with the two youths, and that was why they fled to Chinggis Khan. Juvaynī simply reported that they fled to Chinggis Khan and warned him due to the latter's good fortune. There is no mention of Ong Khan's anger.[45] In the same narrative, the Mamluk-era authors reported that Chinggis Khan showed generosity toward those who fled from Ong Khan and allowed them to join his troops.

[41] I look forward to the publication of Jan Jelinowski's dissertation, which will shed more light on the manuscript tradition of the *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā,* and I thank him for his insightful responses to my questions.

[42] Ayalon, "The Great Yāsa (Part A)," 121.

[43] Ibid., 116–17. See also Amitai, "Jewish Teacher," 698.

[44] Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah,* 13:118.

[45] Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā,* 27; idem, *Genghis Khan,* 36–37.

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While there is indeed ample information on the generosity he showed to the two youths, as well as troops present at the battle, Juvaynī did not mention the latter coming from Ong Khan's entourage.[46] The narrative continues to describe how many tribes join Chinggis Khan, and both Arabic texts emphasize the large size of the Oirat and Qonggirat tribes, unlike Juvaynī.[47] Yet another example is found in a different passage: when discussing Mongol slaughtering practices, the Mamluk-era authors described that the animal's chest is split (which is indicated by Juvaynī), and that the butcher then reaches in to either take out the heart (both Mamluk-era authors) or crush it within the chest cavity (al-ʿUmarī). Again, this does not appear in the Persian text.[48]

That both Mamluk-era authors present similar information that is absent from Juvaynī's account is also evident from the "Yasa rules" that al-ʿUmarī and Ibn Kathīr relate, as Ayalon already pointed out. As Table 1 shows, although there are slight differences in content and in the order of paragraphs, the two Arabic texts offer similar material. Not only do both Arabic texts contain actual lists of rules in a way they are not present in the Persian text, but many of the rules they include are not found there at all. These include elements such as the bans on sorcery; on feeding, dressing, or offering drinks to prisoners without permission; on sodomy; and on meddling in other peoples' fights; as well as many others I have not been able to trace back to the *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā.* For those that I have found, it is striking that they are gathered from all over the book (see Table 1): information found on pages 19 and 24–25 of the Qazvīnī edition is inserted among information that is derived from page 161. Additionally, the "Yasa" regulations were rephrased in a much more "rule-like" manner. Juvaynī wrote simply that Chinggis Khan established new rules and abolished "reprehensible customs" like adultery and stealing.[49] The two Mamluk-era authors, on the other hand, commented that "he who commits adultery, married or unmarried, is killed."[50] The two texts are very similar in this example (see also Table 2 below), while this section is among the farthest removed from the Persian text. These examples all suggest that al-ʿUmarī and Ibn Kathīr had the same source material before them.

[46] Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā,* 27–28; idem, *Genghis Khan,* 37–38. These details also do not appear in Bar Hebraeus's discussion of this episode, also based on Juvaynī. Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography,* 1:352–53; Ibn al-ʿIbrī, *Tārīkh mukhtaṣar al-duwal,* ed. Anṭūn Ṣāliḥānī (Beirut, 1890), 394–95 (the Arabic version does not mention rewards to others than the two youths).

[47] Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā,* 28; idem, *Genghis Khan,* 38–39.

[48] Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā,* 163; idem, *Genghis Khan,* 206. On the discrepancies in the slaughter rule between al-ʿUmarī and Juvaynī, see also Ayalon, "The Great Yāsa (Part A)," 118–20.

[49] Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā,* 28; idem, *Genghis Khan,* 39.

[50] Al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-abṣār,* 3:106; Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah,* 1966, 13:118.

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This is further indicated by the similar structure of the Arabic texts. Both open with the introduction of Chinggis Khan as the ancestor of the current Mongol rulers, followed by mention of Chinggis Khan's ancestress claiming to have been impregnated by the sun's rays.[51] They both then identify Juvaynī as their source for the following account. In what follows, their narratives sometimes diverge (see Table 1), but generally maintain a shared sequence. Whereas the order of the main topics in Juvaynī's history is "Yasa—Ong Khan—offspring of Chinggis Khan," the Arabic versions follow the sequence "Ong Khan—Yasa—offspring of Chinggis Khan." This rearrangement could, of course, be coincidental. There are also differences: Ibn Kathīr's discussion of the hunt appears earlier in the text than in al-ʿUmarī's version, and the mention of Temüjin as Chinggis Khan's original name occurs at opposing ends of the section on Ong Khan (with Ibn Kathīr adhering to Juvaynī's order). Overall, however, there is a strong suggestion of a shared sequence. Moreover, this is supported by two key examples of smaller yet shared divergences from Juvaynī's structure.

The first occurs in the narrative about different tribes joining Chinggis Khan. In addition to the added information about the size of the tribes, both al-ʿUmarī and Ibn Kathīr include a mention of the Qiyāt tribe. At the very beginning of his description of Chinggis Khan's rise to power, before relating his conflict with Ong Khan, Juvaynī noted the Qiyāt tribe as superior over numerous other Mongol tribes, and as the tribe from which Chinggis Khan descended, with his forefathers as its chiefs.[52] The two Syrian authors, however, included Chinggis Khan's descent and the Qiyāt tribe in their sections on how Chinggis Khan was joined by many tribes. So, information from a different part of Juvaynī's text appears in the same place in the two Arabic accounts.

In this instance, the information can still be traced back to the same chapter in Juvaynī's history, but that is not always the case. When the three authors turn to Chinggis Khan's offspring, Juvaynī and al-ʿUmarī first discuss his sons and then his speech urging them to combine forces in harmony via the arrows' parable. Ibn Kathīr reverses that order. In the discussion of Chinggis Khan's sons, however, an interesting similarity appears again in the texts by al-ʿUmarī and Ibn Kathīr. Like Juvaynī, al-ʿUmarī points out that among the Mongols the position of the mother determines the position of the children. Like Juvaynī, he then mentions Chinggis Khan's most important sons and their responsibilities, although he leaves out Tolui (his army-related responsibilities are connected to Ögedei instead). After mentioning Jochi as the eldest, however, he adds that Jochi was "the father of Orda (Qurdū), Batu (Bātuh), Berke (Barka), and Berkecher

[51] Al-ʿUmarī's account is more elaborate and correctly identifies her as Alan Qo'a (while Ibn Kathīr relates that it was Chinggis Khan's own mother).

[52] Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā,* 25–26; idem, *Genghis Khan,* 34–35.

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(Tarakjār)."[53] This information does not appear in that chapter in Juvaynī, but rather appears to originate from a significantly later section concerning the death of Chinggis Khan.[54] That this information was clearly presented together in the source used by the Mamluk-era authors is evident from Ibn Kathīr's rendition. He wrote that Chinggis Khan had many children, among whom four sons were the most important, and continues: "the oldest of them is Jochi and HRYWL and Batu and Berke and Berkecher (Tarakjār) *(wa-akbaruhum Yūsī [Jochi]*[55] *wa-HRYWL wa-Bātū wa-Barkah wa-Tarakjār).* Each of them was assigned his own duties."[56] It is clear that some confusion arose here. The text lists five names rather than the aforementioned four sons, and Ordu's name has become rather mangled. Moreover, Orda, Batu, Berke, and Berkecher appear as Chinggis Khan's sons rather than Jochi's. At the current point in this research, it is impossible to determine where this went wrong: was the source text correct and did Ibn Kathīr (or his interpreter) get confused, or was the source text already corrupted and had al-ʿUmarī—who was generally well-informed about the Mongols[57]—(or his interpreter) corrected it? Regardless, the incorporation of this bit of information in this specific section of both al-ʿUmarī's and Ibn Kathīr's texts, in a very different location than in the Persian original, suggests again that they had a shared source: al-ʿUmarī did not, after all, arrange his information arbitrarily, as Ayalon thought.[58]

An Arabic Translation?

Based on the analysis presented above, it would seem that al-ʿUmarī and Ibn Kathīr, independently from one another, used the same primary source material. Consequently, I think we can definitively rule out Ayalon's third option to explain the differences between Juvaynī's text and al-ʿUmarī's version, i.e., that al-ʿUmarī used additional sources and presented the information as being derived

[53] Al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-abṣār,* 3:111; Lech, *Das mongolische Weltreich,* ١٣/99.

[54] Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā,* 144–45; idem, *Genghis Khan,* 183–84. Alternatively, it might be derived from yet another section, on the death of Jochi (idem, *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā,* 221–22; idem, *Genghis Khan,* 266). Given the general focus on Chinggis Khan, the former appears more likely, perhaps supported by the phrasing, which is closer to the Arabic on page 144–45 *(...pisarān-i Tūshī [Jochi] Hordū va Bātū va Shībaqān va Tankūt va Berke va Berkechār va Tughātīmūr)* than on 221–22 *(...va pisarān-i ū BMḤL* ["Boghal," Boyle 266, n. 2] *va Hordū va Bātū va Shībaqān va Tankūt va Berke va Berkechār...).*

[55] The 2010 edition has "Tūlī" (164), based on two manuscripts; the BNF manuscript similarly reads "Tūlī wa-HRTWL wa-Bāqū wa-Barkah wa-Tarakjār," fol. 25r.

[56] Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah,* 13:121.

[57] Lech, *Das mongolische Weltreich,* 18–21, 29–41.

[58] Ayalon, "The Great Yāsa (Part A)," 131.

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from Juvaynī's text. That is not to say that both authors may not have used additional sources. For one, I have been unable to trace the burial story in Ibn Kathīr and I feel like it would have been too good for al-ʿUmarī to pass up. However, the similarities in their information and repeated references to Juvaynī suggest that both authors genuinely believed that the text they used was Juvaynī's history of Chinggis Khan. An interesting detail that can be considered as supporting evidence is Ibn Kathīr's remark that Juvaynī relates that high-ranking Mongols converted to Islam because they were convinced by the voice heard by the worshiper on the mountain. This correlation between events does not appear in the *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā,* although—as mentioned above—Juvaynī does mention Mongol adoption of Islam earlier in his text. As I have argued elsewhere, Ibn Kathīr's depiction of the Mongols, Chinggis Khan, and the Yasa is overall very negative, so it would seem unlikely that he would add this redeeming snippet of information on his own initiative. It does not tie in with his general program of depicting the Mongols, Chinggis Khan, and the Yasa as un-Islamic as possible.[59] It is much more likely that this came from the text that Ibn Kathīr described as being written by Juvaynī, "the vizier of Baghdad."

Some form of the *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā* was clearly used by these two Mamluk-era authors, but what form was that? It would seem that the exchange of information between the Ilkhanate and the Mamluk Sultanate in this case constituted actual written material making its way to the latter. After all, Ibn Kathīr explicitly mentions that he "saw a volume."[60] Whether al-ʿUmarī had in front of him the exact same text or a closely related one in the same tradition is impossible to determine at this point. There is some reason to doubt that they used the exact same material, specifically based on the section on the origin of the rules of the Yasa. While thematically the two texts share clear parallels here—the rules come from Chinggis Khan's own mind, they are written down—the respective elaborations are surprisingly divergent. The sudden appearance of a camel instead of a treasury is especially noteworthy. This may have originated from a slightly different copy in the same tradition, but there are other potential explanations as well. Perhaps it comes from the same source as the story about the burial; perhaps Ibn Kathīr added it, together with the "crude writing," to defame the Mongols and their Yasa; or perhaps an interpreter somewhat mis-

[59] See van den Bent, "Mongols in Mamluk Eyes," 137–42.

[60] Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah,* 13:117–18. Ibn Kathīr's text also confuses the name Ong Khan with the better known name Uzbak, or Öz-beg, Khan. (The Golden Horde was ruled by Öz-beg Khan 712–42/1313–41). In the fifteenth-century BNF manuscript, the spelling "Ortak" dominates. It is likely that this was a copyist's mistake, but if it was Ibn Kathīr's mix-up, this also suggests a written text rather than oral information. I thank Reuven Amitai for pointing out that this mistake is worth commenting on.

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understood the text. Overall, however, the existence of Ibn Kathīr's text makes Ayalon's second suggestion, that al-ʿUmarī was misled by interpreters who distorted the *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā* as we know it today and thereby caused the divergences from Juvaynī's text, considerably less likely. If both authors were present at the same "translation session" it remains a possibility, but that raises the same questions regarding the aforementioned divergences.

It appears more likely, therefore, that Ibn Kathīr and al-ʿUmarī both had access to a volume that contained a version of Juvaynī's history that was somewhat different from the text we know now as the *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā*. The question then is: was this a Persian text, accessed via interpreters, or was this an Arabic translation of (part of) the *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā*? Overall, the two texts are not particularly similar in phrasing, which may suggest they were not using an Arabic text as their source—if that were the case, one might expect more textual similarities caused by copying. However, we can certainly not rule it out, especially in light of the first passage on Yasa rules. Table 2 shows how many of these regulations are almost identically worded. There is only one significant difference in this passage between the two: the rule found in al-ʿUmarī about receiving goods and losing them three times[61] is absent in Ibn Kathīr, who instead relates that "whoever immerses in [water] is killed"(both underlined). This rule is mentioned by al-ʿUmarī a little further down.

[61] This might reflect a thoroughly distorted interpretation of one of Juvaynī's stories on Ögedei (Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā,* 167; idem, *Genghis Khan,* 209–10).

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Table 2. A comparison of the wording of the first section on the rules of the Yasa by al-ʿUmarī (p. 106 in the 2003 edition or p. ٨/96 in the Lech edition) and Ibn Kathīr (pp. 118–19 in the 1966 edition), followed by a combined translation in which text unique to either author is placed in parentheses and attributed to its author with his initial in brackets.

al-ʿUmarī	Ibn Kathīr	Combined translation
fa-min dhālika anna	*(thumma dhakara al-Juwaynī nutafan min al-yāsā) min dhālika annahu*	(then Juvaynī mentions some details from the Yasa [K]) among which are that
man zanā sawāʾun an kāna muḥṣanan aw ghayr muḥṣan qutil,	*man zanā qutil, muḥṣanan kāna aw ghayr muḥṣan,*	he who commits adultery is killed, whether he is married or unmarried,
wa-man lāṭa qutil,	*wa-kadhālika man lāṭa qutil,*	and (similarly [K]) he who commits sodomy is killed,
wa-man taʿammada al-kidhb qutil,	*wa-man taʿammada al-kidhb qutil,*	and he who lies on purpose is killed,
wa-man saḥara qutil,	*wa-man saḥara qutil,*	and he who performs witchcraft is killed,
wa-man yatajassasa ʿalá qawm qutil,	*wa-man tajassasa qutil,*	and he who spies (on people [U]) is killed,
wa-man dākhila bayna ithnayn yakhtaṣimāna fa-aʿāna aḥadahumā qutil,	*wa-man dakhala bayna ithnayn yakhtaṣimāna fa-aʿāna aḥadahumā qutil,*	and he who comes between two quarrelling people and supports one of them is killed,
wa-man bāla min al-māʾ qutil,	*wa-man bāla fī al-māʾ al-wāqif qutil,*	and he who urinates in (standing [K]) water will be killed,
wa-man uʿṭiya biḍāʿah wa-khasira thumma uʿṭiya thaniyatan wa-khasira ilá al-thālithah qutil,	*wa-man inghamasa fīhi qutil,*	(and he who receives goods and loses them and then is given goods again and loses them until the third time is killed [U])/(and he who immerses in [water] is killed [K]),
wa-man aṭʿama asīr qawm aw kasāhu aw saqāhu[62] *bi-ghayri idhnihim qutil,*	*wa-man aṭʿama asīran aw saqāhu aw kasāhu bi-ghayri idhn ahlihi qutil,*	and he who feeds a prisoner (of people [U]) or clothes him or gives him to drink without their permission is killed,
wa-man wajada hāriban aw asīran aw ʿabdan wa-la yarudduhu qutil	*wa-man wajada hāriban wa-lam yarudduhu qutil*	and he who encounters an escapee (or a prisoner or a slave [U]) and does not return him is killed

[62] The 2003 Abu Dhabi edition has *shakāhu*, but Lech (*Das mongolische Weltreich*, ٨) has *saqāhu*.

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The strong similarities between these paragraphs make the existence of an Arabic summary or translation of (at least part of) Juvaynī's *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā* a serious option (although a similar list of rules in Persian translated literally by an interpreter could have yielded a comparable result). If there was indeed an Arabic text, various questions remain. Who would the translator have been, and where was it produced? Ayalon has pointed out that there was no real tradition in the Mamluk Sultanate of producing Arabic translations of Persian texts.[63] Such a translation was more likely produced in Baghdad or elsewhere in the Ilkhanate. Given the multilingual environment of the Ilkhanate, this was not uncommon: in addition to some authors writing in both Persian and Arabic, translations between the two languages were made frequently.[64] Rashīd al-Dīn famously stipulated in his endowment deed that his works, including those on the Mongols, were to be copied in both their original Persian and in Arabic translations, allowing them to reach a larger audience.[65] The production of an Arabic version of Juvaynī's text, which may well have been more like a digest than a complete translation, could account for the differences, both in content and in structure, between the Mamluk texts on the one hand and the *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā* on the other. A translator-*cum*-summarizer could have introduced additional information and details and could also have rearranged the order in which some of the material appears (the appearance of Jochi's sons in the section on Chinggis Khan's offspring, for instance).

Alternatively, al-ʿUmarī and Ibn Kathīr may have used a Persian text, but one that was somewhat different from the *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā* as we know it today. In a sense, this echoes Ayalon's "option 1," that we do not have a complete version of Juvaynī's chronicle. Ayalon himself argued that this seemed unlikely, at least to the extent necessary to explain all of the differences.[66] Moreover, there is much more material in Juvaynī's history that al-ʿUmarī and Ibn Kathīr do not use than the other way around, so, based on the evidence presented here, Ayalon's first option is not the most compelling conclusion. It is, however, possible that the two Mamluk-era authors had access to a different Persian text, such as a digest or summary of Juvaynī's work. They could also have used another Persian source, the author of which relied heavily on the *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā* or even incorporated significant sections of it with minimal alterations. If that is the case, however, both Mamluk-era authors were clearly aware that the original source of information was Juvaynī, given their many explicit references to

[63] Ayalon, "The Great Yāsa (Part A)," 124.

[64] Amitai and Biran, "Arabic Sources," 1030–31.

[65] Stefan Kamola, *Making Mongol History: Rashid al-Din and the Jami' al-Tawarikh* (Edinburgh, 2019), 112–15.

[66] Ayalon, "The Great Yāsa (Part A)," 122–23.

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him. If they indeed used a text by another author, it would seem that at least Ibn Kathīr did not recognize that it was written by someone *using* Juvaynī rather than by Juvaynī himself, given his statement that he "saw a volume composed by the vizier of Baghdad." Perhaps, however, such a text served as an intermediary for the transmission of part of Juvaynī's material to the sultanate, where it was presented or interpreted as Juvaynī's own history. Whatever the form of this theoretical Persian text—a Persian summary, a transmission via another Persian text using Juvaynī, or even (part of) a manuscript version of the *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā* that looked somewhat different from the text as we have it today—al-ʿUmarī and Ibn Kathīr would have required the help of interpreters. The input of those interpreters could be another possible source for some of the diverging information between al-ʿUmarī and Ibn Kathīr, such as Ibn Kathīr's mention of Chinggis Khan's burial and their differing portrayals of the Yasa in book form. Their presence could also explain Ibn Kathīr's confused interpretation of some of the information, especially his interpretation of the stories about Ögedei as being about Chinggis Khan.[67]

Concluding Remarks

Two Mamluk-era historians appear to have independently used the same (or very similar) version(s) of Juvaynī's *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā,* which contained some conspicuous differences in both content and structure compared to the Persian text as we have it today. From a Mamlukist's point of view, this is relevant first because it allows for a thorough comparison of al-ʿUmarī's and Ibn Kathīr's respective utilizations of the text. Such a comparison reveals their differing intentions in their representation of the Yasa—that vague "something" that was clearly important to the Mongols and in which many Mamluk-era authors took an interest. Al-ʿUmarī, with his fairly impartial approach to the text, and Ibn Kathīr, with his recurring censure and rebuke, exhibited diverging interpretations of the Yasa's contents, made different choices in their respective selections, and had different messages they wanted their audiences to take away from it, which I have explored elsewhere in more detail.[68] Their shared use of this text

[67] Ibn Kathīr's identification of Chinggis Khan as the protagonist of these stories actually causes an issue in one of them as it becomes illogical. Ibn Kathīr relates: "An unbeliever came to him [Chinggis Khan] and said: 'While sleeping, I saw Chinggis Khan. He said: "Say to my son [*li-ibnī,* 2010 edition, 164]/father [*li-abī,* 1966 edition, 120] to kill the Muslims."' He [Chinggis Khan] said to him: 'This is a lie.' And he ordered him to be killed." The confusion is reflected in the differences between the editions, and some manuscripts have a slightly different text, along the lines of "he said to me once *(qāla lī marrah)* to kill the Muslims" (BNF Arabe 1516, fol. 25r). See also Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah,* 2010, 15:164, n. 1.

[68] Van den Bent, "Mongols in Mamluk Eyes," 137–42.

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thus sheds light on the way in which different Mamluk-era historians thought and wrote about the Mongols and their history, what messages they wanted to convey, and why.

Moreover, the use of this source by al-ʿUmarī and Ibn Kathīr also demonstrates that historical material originating in a Mongol cultural context not only entered the sultanate via oral transmission—such as through al-ʿUmarī's and al-Nuwayrī's many informants[69]—but also in written form. Although most "Mongol material" appears to have entered the sultanate through oral reports, this text can be added to Ibn al-Dawādārī's still somewhat mysterious "Turkish book." It should be noted that neither of these texts appear to have seen widespread use: I have not been able to identify the use of Juvaynī's text in the work of another Mamluk-era author, nor have I found any traces of Ibn al-Dawādārī's Mongol story elsewhere. Nevertheless, these written sources were present in the sultanate and they were used, and readers there could satiate their curiosity about Mongol history and culture through the works of these Mamluk-era authors. Both al-ʿUmarī and Ibn Kathīr clearly felt that their Arabic-speaking audiences would be interested in what Juvaynī had to say on the Mongols in general and on the Yasa in particular. Together with other Mamluk-era authors writing on the topic, they set the stage for a significant *Nachleben* of the Yasa in the Mamluk Sultanate, perhaps best illustrated by al-Maqrīzī's cunning use of it in voicing his own political grievances.

A number of questions about the exact form(s) in which Juvaynī's text circulated in the sultanate remain. Why did this version include information not found in today's *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā* and why does it have some significant structural differences from the Persian text? Future research will need to consider how these variations speak to the channels of transmission into the sultanate. One option was that they used an Arabic translation, summarized and with some changes and additions, that circulated in the sultanate. Alternatively, it could have been a Persian text mediated by interpreters that these Syrian authors used—perhaps a Persian summary, another Persian text using Juvaynī, or even (part of) a divergent manuscript version of the *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā*. Until more research is done (or, ideally, the Persian or Arabic volume used by these authors emerges), a definitive answer to these questions remains elusive. More research on both the Ilkhanid and Mamluk historiographical traditions and especially on their interrelationship is bound to shed new and revealing light on the exchanges of ideas and information between the sultanate and Mongol territories.

[69] Amitai, "Jewish Teacher."

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The *Qara'ul* in the Mongol Empire

Despite being arguably the most important institution in the Mongol Empire, there is still much that remains unknown about the Mongol military. One such component is the *qara'ul* (also seen as *qaraghul* or *qaraγul* and in Persian, Arabic, and Turkic as *qarāwul* or *qarāvul*), which Reuven Amitai highlighted on a few occasions in his studies of the Ilkhanid-Mamluk conflict.[1] From his reading of the sources, this unit "combined the function of frontier guards and highway patrol, but little is known of its actual structure and numbers."[2] Aside from Professor Amitai's discussion of it, little other scholarly work has appeared on the *qara'ul.* This contribution will explore the *qara'ul* military unit and discuss its actual use and difference from other units that have often had overlapping functions. In this work, I shall use *qara'ul* as that was the Mongolian term, except where it is transliterated differently in a quote. What follows is a brief discussion of the *qara'ul* and connections with other similar military formations, such as the *algincin*. Space limitations prevent me from a full exploration of the *qara'ul* units, but this will serve as an appetizer (one hopes) for a more complete discussion in the future.

Perhaps the first recorded encounter in the Middle East with a unit specifically called *qara'ul* took place in mid-December 1260/late Dhū al-Ḥijjah 658 at

It is my pleasure to dedicate this paper to Reuven Amitai, my friend, colleague, and erstwhile Yiddish instructor, whom I first met over breakfast when he spoke at the University of Wisconsin-Madison circa 1999. What I appreciate most about Reuven, when not discussing Mongols and medieval warfare, is that the rest of our conversation is generally about the Three Stooges, Marx Brothers, and other old comedies. While we unfortunately see each other infrequently, I can always count on a "Have you heard the one about . . ." instead of a hello. The only characteristic that can rival his intellect is his sense of humor. I would also thank the members of the Tom Allsen Seminar for their suggestions, particularly Anne Broadbridge and Ruth Dunnell for their detailed comments on this paper as well those of the anonymous reviewer. Any errors remain my own.

[1] Reuven Amitai, "Whither the Ilkhanid Army? Ghazan's First Campaign into Syria (1299–1300)," in *Warfare in Inner Asia (500–1800),* ed. Nicola Di Cosmo (Leiden, 2002), 244; idem, "Northern Syria between the Mongols and Mamluks: Political Boundary, Military Frontier, and Ethnic Affinities," in *Frontiers in Question: Eurasian Borderlands, 700–1700,* ed. Daniel Power and Naomi Standen (New York, 1999), 144; Reuven Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-Īlkhānid War, 1260–1281* (Cambridge, 1995), 62, 147.

[2] Amitai, "Northern Syria," 144.

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Fallujah. At this time, al-Ḥākim Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥasan, a claimant to the Abbasid caliphal throne, collected an army from the Āl Faḍl Bedouins in Syria and challenged Mongol rule in Iraq. Taking the title Caliph al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh, he marched along the Euphrates and allegedly conquered ʿĀna, al-Ḥadīthah, Hīt, and al-Anbār as he headed toward Baghdad. Amitai is rightly skeptical of these conquests.[3] Before arriving at Baghdad, however, Caliph al-Ḥākim encountered the *qara'ul.* Per al-Yūnīnī, Caliph al-Ḥākim defeated the *qara'ul,* inflicting heavy casualties by killing 1,500 of them.[4] Amitai suggests that these claims are dubious, as allegedly the Muslims lost only six. While we have no information on the size of Caliph al-Ḥākim's army, considering it was formed of Bedouin (and perhaps augmented by others as he marched), it is unlikely to have been more than a few thousand at most. Another reason for skepticism is that 1,500 seems large for a *qara'ul* unit. Caliph al-Ḥākim's grand conquest came to naught, however, as news of his invasion reached Qarābughā, the Mongol regional commander in Baghdad, who then approached with an army. Caliph al-Ḥākim made a strategic withdrawal to the safety of Syria.[5]

This encounter leads to several questions. Here, Amitai has defined the *qara'ul* as a road patrol. A unit of 1,500 (perhaps more) seems quite large to patrol a highway, logistically speaking. Thus, we must question whether it was truly a road patrol or if it was perhaps a regular military unit. If the latter, however, why would al-Yūnīnī have used the term *qara'ul?* While the term is mentioned in several sources, it is not used on a regular basis.

Chronologically, the next mention of the *qara'ul* took place during the reign of the Ilkhan Aḥmad Tegüder (r. 680–83/1281–84). As Amitai noted, the *qara'ul* had captured a Mamluk spy *(jāsās)* disguised as a *faqīr.*[6] In this, we can see that the *qara'ul* were effective. Not only did they have the capability to intercept or identify invaders, as was the case with Caliph al-Ḥākim, but they also had the authority to investigate incidents and apprehend suspicious individuals traveling along their patrol routes.

These are not the only mentions of the *qara'ul* in the Ilkhanid sources. This Mongolian term is also mentioned in a letter of safe conduct from Abaqa Ilkhan (r. 1265–82).[7] In their discussion of this letter Mostaert and Cleaves used Professor Kowalewski's *Dictionnaire Mongol-Russe-Français* for their definition, "senti-

[3] Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks,* 61–62.

[4] Quṭb al-Din Mūsá ibn Muḥammad al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl mirʾāt al-zamān fī tārīkh al-aʿyān* (Hyderabad, 1954–61), 1:485–86.

[5] Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks,* 62; al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl mirʾāt al-zamān,* 1:485–86.

[6] Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks,* 147.

[7] Antoine Mostaert and Francis Woodman Cleaves, "Trois documents mongols des Archives secretes vaticanes," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 15, no. 3 (1952): 433–34.

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nelle, garde, piquet, corps de garde."[8] In this letter, Abaqa instructs his governors and commanders to grant safe conduct to the bearer. He specifically mentions the patrols *(qarayul-a).*[9]

Based on these two incidents and despite the scant details, I concur with Professor Amitai's definition of the *qara'ul* as a frontier guard and highway patrol. Unfortunately, he is also quite correct about the lack of information on the actual structure and/or numbers of the *qara'ul.* In this regard, the contemporary Arabic and Persian sources are deficient.

Linguistic Approach

Scholars have defined the term variously, although there is frequent overlap with Kowalewski's definition. Nonetheless, the differences demonstrate disagreement, or at least difference in interpretation for certain situations, which may also be influenced by use of the word during different historical eras and in different places. Virtually all agree that *qara'ul/qarayul/qarāvul/qarāwul* meant "patrol." Beyond that, slight variations in meaning occur often due to changes in how the units were used over time and with regional variations.

The Mongolist John C. Street defined it as "patrol, scouting party, scout."[10] Meanwhile, Paul Ratchnevksy defined it as "*schutztruppen* [protection troops]."[11] Nikolas Poppe defined *qara'ul* as "*wachposten* [guard post]."[12] The Hungarian Mongolist Louis Ligeti translated it from the Chinese to mean "sentinel, patrol or guard," but recognized that in other languages the term took on some new, yet related, meanings: in Chaghatay Turkic it also meant "guard or watchman," while Manchu added the definition of a "picket."[13] Mostaert and Cleaves also noted that *qara'ul/qarayul* stems from the verb *QARA-* "to watch or observe," but remarked that *The Secret History of the Mongols* uses the word in the sense of "guetteurs, éclaireurs [lookouts, scouts]."[14] Furthermore, they noted that the term continued to be used in the post-imperial period and in other states in the region, albeit with slightly changed meanings. Indeed, in the Qing Empire,

[8] Ibid., 437; Joseph Etienne Kowalewski, *Dictionnaire Mongol-Russe-Français* (Kazan, 1844–49), 832

[9] Mostaert and Cleaves, "Trois documents mongols," 434.

[10] John C. Street, "The Middle Mongolian Demonstratives *ene* and *tere* in the Secret History," *Mongolian Studies* 13 (1990): 187.

[11] Paul Ratchnevsky, "Šigi-Qutuqu, ein Mongolischer Gefolgsmann im 12–13 Jahrhundert," *Central Asiatic Journal* 10, no. 2 (1965): 104.

[12] Nikolaus Poppe, "Eine Viersprachige Zamxšarī—Handschrift," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 101 (n.F. 26) (1951): 318.

[13] Louis Ligeti, "Glossaire supplémentaire au vocabulaire Sino-Ouighour du Bureau des Traducers," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientarum Hungaricae* 22, no. 1 (1969): 29–30.

[14] Mostaert and Cleaves, "Trois documents mongols," 437.

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qarayul were the guards along the Qing-Russian border (Manchu: *karun;* Chinese: *k'a-liun*) with the meaning of picket or "watch-tower in important passages."[15] Thus, in the Qing period, it is apparent that the *qarayul,* regardless of their definition in Mongolian, Manchu, or Chinese, have a more stationary role and the patrol aspect is much more limited, which also reflects the changing nature of the state that used the institution. Curiously, there seems to have been a similar transformation in other parts of the former Mongol Empire as well. Gerhard Doerfer demonstrates the changing definition in his *Türkische und mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen.* His definition is "Spähtrupp, berittene Patrouille [scouting party, mounted patrol]."[16] While this initial definition is brief, his discussion of the term and how it enters numerous languages (approximately 30) with slight changes in meaning continues for 4 pages.

The term and definition of *qara'ul* stayed constant through the Mongolian literature, derived from *qara-* (modern ХАРАХ), meaning "to look at, glance, watch, observe, to regard, consider, to look after, to face."[17] *Qara'ul* "patrol or scout" did not use the standard *nomen actoris* suffix "-ci"; *qaraci* does exist, but it means a messenger in a government office, a scribe, or a clerk.[18] This, however, appears to be a modern usage, as *bicigci* (literally, one who writes) was the term in use through the imperial period. The suffix *-γul* (the γ was not vocalized in imperial-period Middle Mongolian) also refers to an occupation. Indeed, the first example of this given by Poppe in his study of Mongolian grammar is *qarayul.*[19] It is curious, however, that this suffix is used instead of *-ci,* as so many other imperial terms designating occupations used the latter: *darquaci, jarquci, tammaci, alginci, bichigci,* etc.

Qara'ul/qarayul does have a modern equivalent: ХАРУУЛ, meaning "watch, sentry; guard, scout." In classical Mongolian (seventeenth-eighteenth century), we also see a verbal form (*-yarγaqu,* to send out scouts), as well as a variety of related terms, both as verbs and nouns.[20] Additionally, the *nomen actoris* form

[15] Ibid.

[16] Gerhard Doerfer, *Türkische und mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen* (Wiesbaden, 1963), 1:399–404.

[17] Ferdinand D. Lessing, ed., *Mongolian-English Dictionary* (Bloomington, 1995), 932; also see Gombjab Hangin et al., *A Modern Mongolian-English Dictionary* (Bloomington, 1986), 618; Tserendorjiin Altangerel, *Mongol-Angli Toli Bichig saka utgatai xiigeed xolboo ügiin* (Ulaanbaatar, 2012), 532.

[18] Kaare Grønbech and John R. Krueger, *An Introduction to Classical (Literary) Mongolian,* 2nd ed. (Wiesbaden, 1976), 46; Lessing, *Mongolian-English Dictionary,* 932.

[19] Nicholas Poppe, *Grammar of Written Mongolian* (Wiesbaden, 1954), 46. Also see the footnote for §142 in *The Secret History of the Mongols: A Mongolian Epic Chronicle of the Thirteenth Century,* ed. and trans. Igor de Rachewiltz (Leiden, 2004), 527.

[20] Lessing, *Mongolian-English Dictionary,* 933; also see Hangin, *Modern Mongolian-English Dictionary,* 623; Altangerel, *Mongol-Angli Toli Bichig,* 535.

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does appear in a relation to the modified verb *qaraγul: qaraγulci* (modern form ХАРУУЛЧ), meaning watchman or guard. This form demonstrates a slight difference from the imperial *qara'ul* and the modern meaning. While a watchman or guard patrols a limited area, the scouting function is no longer included in the definition.[21] Thus, the term retained much of its Mongolian and imperial-era meaning over the centuries, while also acquiring some additional meanings.

During the imperial era, the *qara'ul* entered Persian as *qarāvul* and retained the Mongolian definition for these special units. Even after the end of the Ilkhanate, *qarāvul* continued to have the definition of "sentinel, watchman, guard," but also (over time) acquired new meanings such as "the sight of a gun."[22] Two verbs also evolved. One is the relatively obvious *qarāvul kardan* (to mount guard), but, related to the gun sight definition, we see *qarāvul raftan* (to take aim at), which clearly recognizes the Mongolian root verb of *qara-,* meaning to observe, look at, etc.

More importantly, Steingass also recorded a noun that more clearly shows the duties of the *qarāvul. Qarāvulī* is a skirmish or a running fight.[23] This is clearly connected to the actual role of the *qarāvul/qara'ul*'s function as a scout or patrol, yet it can also mean "the duty of acting as scouts and sentinels to camp or out-post."[24] While different, the terms are still directly connected to their traditional duties.

It is important to note that *qara'ul* was not the only type of scout that existed. There were also the *algincin* (sing. *alginci*). While it is unclear how their duties differed, the fundamental difference was that the *algincin* were associated and mentioned in conjunction with the *tamma* units that were stationed on the frontiers of the expanding empire. Like the *tamma,* the *algincin* were stationed in a region for years, even decades.[25] In this capacity, the *algincin* served as the reconnaissance wing of the *tamma,* but, like the *qara'ul,* their numbers and the nuances of the institution remain vague. The main point to remember is that although they were both scouts, they were separate and distinct units.

[21] Lessing, *Mongolian-English Dictionary,* 933.

[22] F. Steingass, *Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary* (New Delhi, 1996), 962.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Paul D. Buell and Francesca Fiaschetti, *Historical Dictionary of the Mongol Empire,* 2nd ed. (Lanham, MD, 2018), 239. Also see Paul D. Buell, "Kalmyk Tanggaci People: Thoughts on the Mechanics and Impact of Mongol Expansion," *Mongolian Studies* 6 (1980): 41–59.

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Scouts and Vanguards in *The Secret History of the Mongols*

The best source for our understanding of the actual functions and purpose of the *qara'ul* and *algincin* is *The Secret History of the Mongols.* Here we see these terms used on a frequent basis and in context, so we can see not only the precise circumstances of how the *qara'ul* and *algincin* were used, but also gain insight into their nuances.

The first appearance of the term is in the context of Temüjin (Chinggis Khan) and Toghril, the Kereit Khan and Temüjin's suzerain, marching against Jamuqa (Temüjin's *anda* and Toghril's former leading general) and his Gur-Khanid confederation in 1201. Per the *Secret History* §142:

> They set out downstream along the Kelüren River. Činggis Qa'an sent Altan, Qučar and Dāritai as vanguard *[manglai]*; Ong Qan for his part sent as vanguards *[manglai]* Senggüm, Jaqa Gambu and Bilge Beki. Patrols *[qara'ul]* were also dispatched ahead of the vanguard, at Enegen Güiletu they set up *[talbiba]* an observation post *[niken s'urin qara'ul]*; beyond that, at Mount Čekčer, they set up another observation post.[26]

Here we see two components of Toghril and Temüjin's army—the *manglai* and the *qara'ul. Manglai,* literally "head," is used as vanguard. While the passage indicates that each leader sent three men, it is assumed by the Secret Historian that the reader understands that Toghril and Temüjin sent those men with their units (ostensibly a *minggan* or unit of 1000). These were then screened by the *qara'ul.* In this instance, *qara'ul* were sent in advance to establish observation posts to watch for Jamuqa's army and to ensure the *manglai* did not march into an ambush. The positioning of the *qara'ul* at Mount Čekčer is particularly significant, as from this vantage point they had a better view for observing any enemy forces.

Prior to this action (but situated later in §158 of *The Secret History*), we find a *qara'ul* skirmish as the *qara'ul* of Toghril and Temüjin pursued those of Buyiruq Qan, a Naiman leader. While a minor incident in history, it is nonetheless significant for our understanding of the *qara'ul.* "A chief named Yedi Tubluq, who was patrolling *[qara'ul yabuju]* was pursued by our patrol *[bidan-u qara'ul hüldekdejü].*"[27] Here we see *qara'ul* becoming a verb. *Yabuju* means "to go" in Mon-

[26] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* §142. I use the section numbers so it may be found in any translation. Where the section symbol (§) is not used, it indicates the page number in De Rachewiltz's commentary. The Middle Mongolian terms and text here and henceforth for the *Secret History* are taken from idem, *Index to The Secret History of the Mongols* (Richmond, UK, 1997), §142.

[27] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* §158; idem, *Index to the Secret History,* §158.

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golian. Thus, we have a literal translation of "to go to the duties of the *qara'ul*." While in §142 we see the *qara'ul* setting up observation posts, here the *qara'ul* are actively scouting and engaging in combat, thus indicating that they could engage in violence in addition to collecting intelligence.

Qara'ul, thus far, have been involved only in active military operations—the conflict against the Gur-Khanid confederation and the Kereit-Mongol operations against the Naiman. In another instance, however, we find that the *qara'ul* did not exist solely in times of war. This incident occurs after the defeat of Toghril Ong-Qan by Temüjin in 1203, after the Kereit-Mongol alliance fractures as described in §188:

> Ong Qan and Senggüm escaped with their bare lives and went away, unwilling to submit to Činggis Qan. Ong Qan, who was suffering from thirst, was going to drink at the Nekün Usun of Didak Saqal when he came across the Naiman patrolman *[qara'ul]* Qori Sübeči.[28]

The mention in the *Secret History* makes it appear that Qori Sübeči is a solitary *qara'ul.* From Rashīd al-Dīn, we learn that Qori Sübeči was accompanied by Titig Sa'al, and both were commanders (امرای) of the Naiman leader, Tayang Khan.[29] Thus, the *qara'ul* that Toghril encounters is not a lone patrolman or even two patrolmen, but a patrol troop. Indeed, the two Naiman commanders are identified by Rashīd al-Dīn as *qarāvul.*[30] Unfortunately for him, Qori Sübeči did not recognize (or perhaps did not care) the undoubtedly bedraggled yet protesting Kereit khan and killed him, particularly as he was an outsider attempting to drink water at a spring in Naiman territory, although in Rashīd al-Dīn's account, Qori Sübeči did recognize Toghril but killed him because he was an enemy.[31] Upon hearing about the incident, Gürbesü, the mother of the Naiman ruler, Tayang Khan, ordered Qori Sübeči to retrieve the head. She then venerated it. After-

[28] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* §188; idem, *Index to the Secret History,* §188.

[29] Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh,* ed. Muḥammad Rawshan and Muṣṭafá Musavī (Tehran, 1994), 120, 126, 395, 397, 416; idem, *Jamiʾu't-Tawarikh: Compendium of Chronicles,* vol. 3 *of Classical Writings of the Medieval Islamic World: Persian Histories of the Mongol Dynasties,* trans. Wheeler M. Thackston (London, 2012), 46, 48, 135, 136, 142; idem, *Rashiduddin Fazlullah's Jamiʿu't-tawarikh = Compendium of Chronicles: A History of the Mongols,* trans. and annotated Wheeler M. Thackston (Cambridge, 1998), 1:65, 68, 192; idem, *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh,* ed. Bahman Karīmī (Tehran, 1983), 92, 96, 291. Also see De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* 676.

[30] Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh,* ed. Rawshan and Musavī, 1:397; idem, *Jamiʾu't-Tawarikh,* 136; idem, *Rashiduddin Fazlullah's Jamiʿu't-tawarikh,* 1:192; idem, *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh,* ed. Karīmī, 291.

[31] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* §188; also see De Rachewiltz's commentary on p. 676. Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh,* ed. Rawshan and Musavī, 1:120; idem, *Jamiʾu't-Tawarikh,* 46; idem, *Rashiduddin Fazlullah's Jamiʿu't-tawarikh,* 1:65; idem, *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh,* ed. Karīmī, 92.

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wards, the skull laughed, which so unnerved Tayang Khan that he promptly stomped on it until it shattered. This led the Naiman general Kökse'ü Sabraq to criticize both the beheading of Toghril by Qori Sübeči and Tayang Khan's desecration of the head.[32] In Rashīd al-Dīn's rendition of the event, Kökse'ü Sabraq is absent, but Tayang Khan criticizes the murders and tells his commanders they should have brought Toghril as a captive.[33] While Kökse'ü Sabraq's criticism may have been warranted, there was no punishment. Thus, we learn that the Naiman patrolled their frontiers and that even individuals of high rank undertook this task. Furthermore, they had the authority to eradicate potential threats and trespassers. As Qori Sübeči did not face any consequences for his murder of the Kereit leader, one can deduce that Kökse'ü Sabraq's comments expressed frustration at the mistreatment of an elite, not at a violation of the scope of the *qara'ul*'s duties.

We learn more about the *qara'ul* during that pivotal moment in the Mongolian steppe when Temüjin, the future Chinggis Khan, encountered the Naiman at Chakirma'ut (1204) in a battle that determined the fate of the Mongolian steppe and led to the rise of the Mongol Empire. Here, the *qara'ul* played a key role, with twelve mentions. In this instance we have *qara'ul* at observation posts, scouting, skirmishing with each other, and even eventually joining the main force. In these instances, the terminology is the same as in the previous ones. We also have a curious appearance of the term *alginci,* albeit as a verb. For the latter, when Chinggis Khan set out to fight the Naiman, "He rode upstream along the Kelüren River and sent Jebe and Qubilai ahead to reconnoitre *[algincilaju yabu'at].*"[34] Additionally, when they attack the Naiman, "Činggis Qa'an in person formed the vanguard *[algincilaju].*"[35] The *alginci* as a military component will be discussed below.

It is unclear why *algincilaju* is used instead of *manglailajü,* which also means to form a vanguard.[36] In the second instance, with Chinggis Khan leading the vanguard, it is the context of his assignment of the command of the center to his brother Qasar *[qasari qol jasa'ulba]* and the rear guard to his youngest brother Temüge Otcigin *[otcigin-noyan-i kötöt jasa'ulba].*[37] There are a few other instances

[32] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* §189; idem, *Index to the Secret History,* §189. As De Rachewiltz comments, the laughing was probably *rigor mortis* causing a death grin. See the commentary in De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* 680–81.

[33] Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh,* ed. Rawshan and Musavī, 1:397; idem, *Jamiʾuʾt-Tawarikh,* 136; idem, *Rashiduddin Fazlullah's Jamiʿuʾt-tawarikh,* 192; idem, *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh,* ed. Karīmī, 291.

[34] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* §193; idem, *Index to the Secret History,* §193.

[35] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* §195; idem, *Index to the Secret History,* §195.

[36] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* 705.

[37] Ibid., §195; idem, *Index to the Secret History,* §195.

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prior to 1204 where *alginci* appears in *The Secret History.* The earliest deals with Bodončar, an ancestor of Chinggis Khan and the founder of the Borjigid Mongols. When he and his brothers decide to attack a group, Bodončar rode ahead as an *alginci* or "scout," as De Rachewiltz translates it.[38] In his commentary on this incident, he notes that the derivative verbal form *algincila-* means "to reconnoiter." This use occurs again in §38: "Bodončar, as he was riding ahead reconnoitering... *[bodončar alginci ha'ulju...].*"[39]

Alginci ha'ulju appears again when, early in Chinggis Khan's career, after separating from Jamuqa's tutelage, his uncles Altan, Sača, and Qučar elect Temüjin as Khan.[40] Here they swear an oath: "We shall make you *qan*. When you, Temüjin, become *qan,* we

> As vanguard *[alginci ha'ulju]* shall speed
> After many foes: for you
> Fine-looking maidens and ladies *of rank,*
> Palatial tents, and from foreign people
> Ladies and maidens with beautiful cheeks,
> And geldings with fine croups
> At the trot we shall bring"[41]

In this passage, the Secret Historian again uses *alginci ha'ulju.* It is not clear why De Rachewiltz uses "vanguard" in this instance, though in his commentary on Bodončar he notes that in some cases *alginci* can mean "advance guard or party, vanguard."[42] Urgunge Onon's translation of the text also uses "vanguard."[43] Thus, we find *alginci ha'ulju* and *algincilaju* carrying meanings of "reconnoitering or scouting" or "serving as the vanguard" in different circumstances, but it is not clear in which circumstances one should be used over the other.

Other uses of *alginci* occur in the final sections of the *Secret History* covering the reign of Ögödei Qa'an and his conquest of the Jin Empire: "Having established scouts *[alginci]* and garrison troops *[tammacin]*, and having resident commissioners *[daruqachin]* in Namging, Jungdu and in cities everywhere, he peacefully returned home, setting up camp at Qara Qorum."[44] *Alginci* is again paired

[38] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* §37; idem, *Index to the Secret History,* §37.

[39] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* 276; idem, *Index to the Secret History,* §38.

[40] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* §123; idem, *Index to the Secret History,* §123.

[41] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* §123; idem, *Index to the Secret History,* §123.

[42] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* 276.

[43] *The Secret History of the Mongols: The Life and Times of Chinggis Khan,* ed. and trans. Urgunge Onon (London, 2001), §123, p. 100.

[44] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* §273; idem, *Index to the Secret History,* §273.

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with the *tamma* when Ögödei berates his son Güyük for his conduct on the Western Campaign and says:

> We shall place him in the vanguard *(alginci talbiju)*
> We shall make him climb the town walls
> *Which are as high* as mountains
> Until the nails of his ten fingers are worn away;
> We shall place him in the garrison army:
> We shall make him climb the town walls
> *Which are made* of hard-pounded *earth*
> Until the nails of his five fingers are ground down.[45]

Here again, *alginci* is translated as vanguard by De Rachewiltz. The final appearance of *alginci* (alongside the *tammacin*) comes when Ögödei lists his achievements: "Further, I established scouts and garrison troops *[algincin tammacin talbiju]* among the people of cities everywhere and so I let the people live in peace, causing them to rest."[46]

We see both *qara'ul* and *alginci* referring to scouts and vanguards, two very different military roles. Are these Mongolian terms synonymous? From their usage, it is doubtful. Regarding the *alginci,* it is usually glossed as "scout," though, as discussed, "vanguard" and even "spy" have been proposed.[47] When either *qara'ul* or *alginci* is used, the other term is not, and when both do appear (such as at Chakirma'ut), they are used in very different contexts, not as synonyms. It is also curious that *alginci* is not in the plural form in §273 but is plural in §281. Was this an orthographic error in the text, or does it have some other meaning? De Rachewiltz does not discuss this variation, leaving this question unanswered. The usage however, leaves me unconvinced that "vanguard" is a proper interpretation for either *qara'ul* or *alginci.* Indeed, Nicholas Poppe first raised doubts about "vanguard" as a definition for *alginci.*[48] While he noted that "it can be connected tentatively with Turkic"[49] languages, with *alïn* or *algï* (the one in the front, frontal, initial), he remained skeptical. In the English translations of *The*

[45] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* §276; idem, *Index to the Secret History,* §276.

[46] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* §281; idem, *Index to the Secret History,* §281.

[47] Buell, "Kalmyk Tanggaci People," 46; Timothy May, *The Mongol Art of War* (Barnsley, 2016), 36–38. For "spy" see De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* 1015.

[48] Nicholas Poppe, "On Some Military Terms in the Yüan-Cha'ao Pi-Shih," *Monumenta Serica* 26 (1967): 509.

[49] Ibid.

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Secret History, all three possible definitions are used: scout, vanguard, and spy. The following table lists the uses of *alginci* (as a noun and as a verb).[50]

Translations of *alginci* in *The Secret History of the Mongols*					
	§37	**§38**	**§123**	**§276**	**§281**
Atwood	outrider	outrider	outrider	scout	outrider
Cleaves	spy	spy	spies	spy	spies
De Rachewiltz	scout	reconnoitering	vanguard	vanguard	scout
Dorjgotov & Erendo	vanguard (van of the raid)	vanguard (van of the raid)	vanguard (van of battling)	scout	administrators?[50]
Onon	scout	omitted[50]	vanguard	scout	scouts

From the examples found in the *Secret History,* we can deduce that *qara'ul* went in advance of the vanguard *(manglai),* and set up observation points at strategic locations. They also patrolled territory and were on guard for interlopers and threats. Finally, they could engage the enemy if they encountered them, but it is also clear that the *qara'ul* only attacked other *qara'ul*. There are no mentions of them attacking larger forces. Indeed, if one was encountered, the *qara'ul* (both Naiman and Mongol *qara'ul*) returned to the main force and reported its location, as occurred at Chakirma'ut.[51] So, how do the *qara'ul* and *alginci* differ? Both were engaged in intelligence gathering as part of their duties. In both cases, it is difficult to ascertain the numbers of *qara'ul* or *alginci* troops involved in any operation. A key function of the *qara'ul* was patrolling a region, and they eventually become a sort of highway patrol during the imperial period. There is no clear evidence that *alginci* ever performed this role. In his classic study of the *tamma,* Paul D. Buell was, to my knowledge, the first to understand the *alginci* in relation to the *tamma,* with which it is frequently linked. He wrote:

[50]Translations used in the table are: *The Secret History of the Mongols,* trans. Francis W. Cleaves (Cambridge, 1982); De Rachewiltz, *Secret History;* Onon, *Secret History; The Secret History of the Mongols,* trans. Christopher P. Atwood (New York, 2023); *The Secret History of the Mongols,* trans. N. Dorjgotov and Z Erendo (Ulaanbaatar, 2007). In §38, Onon passes over the phrase. Curiously, Dorjgotov and Erendo translated passage §281 as "Further, I appointed administrators, and assigned garrison troops..."

[51]De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* §195.

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> Well forward of the main striking force, stationed at various strategic locations actually within the conquered domains were small groups of "scouts" (alginci?), assigned the function of supporting local forces directly where possible and of warning the main force in the event of a major crisis.[52]

Buell's comments, however, are in relation to *alginci* being deployed in conquered areas with the *tamma,* which is the "main force" in the passage above, while the local forces are those clients who have submitted. In this regard, the *alginci* appear to have some other functions, and in some ways seem more comparable to what in modern parlance might serve similarly to a FOB (forward operating base) or perhaps a fire base, albeit a very mobile one. Like a FOB, the *alginci* aided in tactical operations as well as intelligence gathering, and, like a fire base, provided offensive capability and protected local clients.[53] In the table above, Atwood's "outrider" seems the most accurate for the *alginci* in terms of functionality, as they screened the *tamma,* providing an offensive capability but not simply patrolling or scouting ahead.

At Chakirma'ut, the two noyans who commanded the reconnoitering *[alginci ha'ulju]* troops are Jebe and Qubilai, leading commanders that Chinggis Khan had designated as two of his *dörben noqas* (Four Hounds: Jebe, Qubilai, Sübedei, and Jelme). These *dörben noqas,* as well as the *dörben külü'üd* (Four Steeds: Muqali, Bo'orchu, Boro'ul, and Chila'un), were Chinggis Khan's elite commanders and at least during the wars of unification in Mongolia, often operated as what might be considered brigades.[54] The *qara'ul,* even those led by the notable Qori Sübeči, do not appear to have been specialists or elite troops. They were assigned as needed. Some members might have specialized as *qara'ul* due to certain abilities (keen eyesight, endurance, horsemanship), but the sources unfortunately fail to indicate this. As with the future association of *alginci* with the *tamma,* the *alginci* would (like the *tamma*) be a unit specially designated for service, though selection was more of a draft or lottery and not necessarily based on identifiable skills.[55] As evinced by the oath of Altan, Qučar, and Sača given above, the *alginci* undertook more aggressive actions in addition to scouting, and the acquisition

[52] Buell, "Kalmyk Tanggaci People," 46–47.

[53] These concepts are explored in more detail in Timothy May, "The *Tamma* Institution and the Creation of a Mongol Diaspora," in *The Cross Roads of the Steppe and the Sea,* ed. Timothy May (Leiden, forthcoming).

[54] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* §195.

[55] For the formation of the *tamma* and the *alginci,* see Buell, "Kalmyk Tanggaci People," 45; May, *Mongol Art of War,* 36–38.

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of booty was certainly on their mind.[56] Thus, while the *qara'ul* scouted, gathered intelligence, and provided security by patrolling and watching over areas, the *alginci* had an offensive function beyond skirmishing with other scouts. The *alginci* were also raiders in addition to being scouts; they were the ones who sowed chaos ahead of the army by raiding and perhaps disseminating misinformation, which also tied into their later functions with the *tamma* that were stationed on the frontier of the expanding empire. Defensively, as outriders, the *alginci* screened the army on the move, serving as first contact with the enemy, but not necessarily as a large body like the vanguard. In essence they were a tripwire or skirmishers.

Still, the question remains as to why *alginci* is sometimes translated as vanguard, but we also see this later with *qara'ul* after it enters other languages such as Persian *(qarāwul).* I believe that for both *qara'ul/qarāwul* and *alginci,* "vanguard" is an incorrect definition that springs from a misunderstanding of what they actually did, which was primarily to gather intelligence, with the latter also engaging in a bit of light pillaging when possible. Additionally, it is clear from previous examples that the Mongols had a clear term *(manglai)* for vanguard. This is best demonstrated not only in §142 of the *Secret History,* but also in its descriptions of the invasions of the Jin and Khwārazmian empires. Regarding the Jin Empire, Chinggis Khan assigned Jebe and Güyigünok ba'atar as vanguard *[jebe güyigünek-ba'atar qoyar-i manglai ileba].*[57] For the Khwārazmian Empire, "He sent Jebe as vanguard. He sent Sübe'etei in support of Jebe and sent Toqučar in support of Sübe'etei *[jebe-yi manglai ileba jebe-yi gejige sübe'etei-yi ileba sübe'etei-yin gejige toqucar-i ileba . . .]."*[58] Additionally, when the Mongols moved against Jalāl al-Din and Malik Khan, "Šigi Qutuqu went as vanguard before Činggis Qa'an *[Cinggis-qa'an-u urida sigi-qutuqu manglai yabuju-ui]."*[59]

Manglai is certainly not synonymous with *alginci* or *qara'ul.* While the *qara'ul* in the post-dissolution period (after 1260) did patrol the frontiers, as demonstrated by Amitai, this seems to have evolved from their traditional role of patrolling the liminal pastures and territories and warding off raiders and other intruders. Furthermore, the *qara'ul* as a highway patrol may reflect a transformation from imperial *Yeke Monggol Ulus* institutions that drew upon the resources of a transcontinental empire to regional empires that despite their size still needed to husband their resources. Without expansion, the *tamma* and *alginci* ceased to have a *raison d'être*. To be sure, the *tamma* and corresponding *alginci* did not van-

[56] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* §123; idem, *Index to the Secret History,* §123.

[57] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* §247; idem, *Index to the Secret History,* §247.

[58] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* §257; idem, *Index to the Secret History,* §257.

[59] De Rachewiltz, *Secret History,* §257; idem, *Index to the Secret History,* §257.

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ish overnight but slowly ceased to exist by those terms, perhaps transforming into the *qara'ul* in some areas.

As I've suggested, there is some overlap between the two terms, with the *alginci* perhaps merging or disappearing as the *qara'ul* becomes the standard term for scouts and patrols. In later periods, *qara'ul* (rather *qarāwul,* as used in the Persian sources), acquired additional definitions. As Doerfer and Steingass demonstrate, *qarāwul* was used in Persian beyond the Mongol period. It survived as a functioning institution in the Timurid (circa 1370–1500), Safavid (1501–1736), and Qajar periods (1789–1925). During the Safavid period, it functioned as an advance guard of the army. The Qajars also used it in this capacity as a vanguard.[60] While Rabi and Ter-Oganov suggest that the Qajars used the *qarāwul* as a vanguard, this definition might be misleading. While the *qarāwul* was undoubtedly sent ahead, it more likely performed a scouting function, serving as the eyes and ears of the army rather than that of traditional vanguard which operated as a larger and more coherent body. Evidence for this is found in the Timurid and Safavid periods, and at this point it is necessary to abandon the Middle Mongolian *qara'ul* and use the transliterated terminology found in the sources and scholarship, as it represents not only a regional and chronographical shift, but also some institutional changes.

The *Qara'ul* in the Post-Mongol World

Some of what we know of the Timurid *qarāvul* comes from the *Tuzūkāt-i Tīmūrī* ("The Institutes of Timur").[61] In this source, *qarāvul* appears three times. While the question remains as to whether the text is truly Timurid or is really a Safavid construct, since it was edited and revised during the Safavid period, the work nonetheless provides a glimpse into both the Timurid and Safavid military worlds. The *Tuzūkāt-i Tīmūrī* draws heavily on the *Ẓafarnāmah* of Sharaf al-Dīn ʿAlī Yazdī (d. 1454), demonstrating the importance of the *Ẓafarnāmah* as a source for later Timurids, and contains sections that discuss not only military ranks, but also battle formations.[62]

After the collapse of the Mongol Empire, we know that the Timurids drew heavily from Mongol institutions, including the *qarāvul*. Indeed, the *qarāvul* was

[60] John R. Walsh, "The Revolt of Alqās Mīrzā," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde de Morgenländes* 68 (1976): 69; Uzi Rabi and Nugzar Ter-Oganov, "The Military of Qajar Iran: The Features of an Irregular Army from the Eighteenth to Early Twentieth Century," *Iranian Studies* 45, no. 3 (2012): 338.

[61] For more on this source see Gergely Csiky, "The *Tuzūkāt-i Tīmūrī* as a source for Military History," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientarium Hungaricae* 59, no. 4 (2006): 439–91.

[62] Ibid., 440–41.

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associated with specific command titles in Turkic *(qaravul begi)* and in Persian *(amir-i qarāvul).*[63] These titles reflect not only the institution's incorporation into the dominant languages of the region but also the creation or use of new nomenclature for its commanders. Thus far, I have not found a Mongolian equivalent, although one would presume it was *qara'ul-u noyan.* This is different from *tammaci,* which referred not only to the commander of the Mongol *tamma* unit but also to individual members of the *tamma.* While *qara'ulci/qaraγulci* does exist in Mongolian, it has a slightly different meaning than *qara'ul* ("watchman, guard") and is the *nomen actoris* of the Mongolian verb *qaraγul-* (modern Mongolian *харуулах*) as opposed to *qara-* (modern Mongolian *харах*).[64] Csiky translates *qarāvul begi* as "head of reconnaissance," which seems appropriate not only in relation to the *qarāvul*'s Mongolian meaning, but also the Timurids' and Safavids' use of the *qarāvul* as scouts.[65] The context clearly marks the *qarāvul* as a scout. Csiky notes that in the battle formation, the *qarāvul* "were positioned to the right and the left side of the advance-guard *(hirävül).*"[66] The Timurids and Safavids viewed the *qarāvul* as a separate reconnaissance unit that proceeded ahead of the vanguard *(hirävül).* Furthermore, it should be noted that the Timurids also maintained the basic Mongol formations of a center *(qol)* and the right and left wings (*barangār* and *javangār* respectively).[67] Thus, based on the description provided by Csiky, the *qarāvul* during the Timurid and Safavid periods served as scouts and not as true fighting or battle formations that one might expect from a vanguard.[68]

Conclusion

While it is risky to project onto the past, I think it is misleading to define *qara'ul* or *alginci* as vanguard. While "scout" covers part of their roles, it also does not do it justice. I have advanced ideas for the true role of the *alginci*, particularly regarding it being described as "vanguard," but I hope that this study has demonstrated that, in addition to providing a definition, scholars must also examine how the units functioned to understand the words' true meanings. Also, it is important to remember that many terms exist in the sources but are not always mentioned by name, as they were not recognized as such by outside sources,

[63] Ibid., 449.

[64] Lessing, *Mongolian-English Dictionary,* 933.

[65] Major Davy, ed. and trans., *Institutes Political and Military written originally in the Mogul Language by the Great Timour, improperly called Tamerlane* (Oxford, 1783), 65–66, 103–4. This text has the English translation on the odd pages and the Persian text on the even.

[66] Csiky, "The *Tuzūkāt-i Tīmūrī,*" 449.

[67] Ibid., 483.

[68] Ibid., 484–85.

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who either used their own terminology or did not perceive a particular group's unique function.

For instance, the *qara'ul* existed not only in the Ilkhanate but also in the Jochid Ulus.[69] Undoubtedly it existed in the Chaghatayid and Yuan Empires as well. With the Jochids, it retained the meaning of sentry or guard. From the Jochid use, it entered Russian and several Turkic languages. Vásary suggests that the continued use of *qarāvul* and other Mongolian terminology rather than Turkic synonyms is a symbol of Mongol dominance and a display of the prestige of those terms (such as *daruga* from *daruqaci*). I would venture that it also indicates that such positions and institutions possessed enough difference (either from their inception or due to transformation over time) that they merited keeping the Mongol terminology as no native term adequately fit. A demonstration of this is how the synonyms *shāḥnah* (Arabic and Persian), *basqaq* (Turkic), and *daruqachi* (Mongolian) changed over time so that in the later Jochid era *basqaq* and *daruga (daruqaci)* were different positions.[70] In the Jochid Ulus, a tax or levy known as the *qaraqolloq* or *qaravallaq* also existed, and travelers paid it directly to the *qarāvul* who patrolled the trade routes.[71] The fee undoubtedly helped sustain the *qarāvul,* as there is no indication of a regular salary to provide for their needs. It is unclear what amount was paid or how frequently a traveler would pay it. It does not appear frequently in the sources, which suggests it was an initial payment and one would assume that some form of receipt may have been given to prove it had been paid. Still, one wonders if this levy stems from the practice noted by John de Plano Carpini and William of Rubruck, who frequently encountered Mongol units whose commanders demanded gifts.[72] As they were travelling, these units might well have been *qara'ul.* If so, then Plano Carpini paid the *qaraqolloq* frequently, though it is likely that his "gifts" preceded the formal establishment of that fee. This is, however, a topic for future exploration. It should be noted that in the mid-thirteenth century, these units, which might have been *qara'ul* did not force payment but simply requested a "gift." In both cases, the Franciscans were approached by a force of Mongols that was not

[69] István Vásary, "Mongolian Impact on the Terminology of the Documents of the Golden Horde," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 48, no. 3 (1995): 479.

[70] See István Vásary, "The Origin of the Institution of *Basqaqs,*" *Acta Orientalia Hungaricae* 30 (1976): 205–6.

[71] István Vásáry, "Taxation in the Jochid Ulus," in *The Mongol World,* ed. Timothy May and Michael Hope (New York, 2022), 474–75.

[72] John de Plano Carpini, "History of the Mongols," in *Mission to Asia,* ed. Christopher Dawson (Toronto, 1980), 52–55; William of Rubruck, "The Journey of William of Rubruck," in ibid., 107–9; William of Rubruck, *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck: His Journey to the Court of the Great Khan Möngke 1253–1255,* trans. Peter Jackson (Indianapolis, 2009), 97–101.

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unusually large but was attached to a larger camp.[73] This, then, links us back to Caliph al-Ḥākim's victory over the *qara'ul,* suggesting that his encounter was at least possible.

[73] Plano Carpini, "History of the Mongols," 54; William of Rubruck, "The Journey," 108; idem, *Mission,* 100–1.



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Medieval Quibbling: *Yāsā* as Legal Concept between Mongols, Mamluks, and Ottomans

Introduction

I first met Reuven Amitai over twenty years ago—at a time when we still had cold winters in Germany—at a conference at the Marksburg in Braubach, a romantic thirteenth century castle high above the Rhine river. I had known the place since childhood, as I had visited it with my grandfather more than once. It was an unlikely setting to encounter Israeli scholars, but the European Castle Institute had invited international experts on Crusader castles and towns to this medieval town while it snowed quite heavily outside.

I was thrilled to meet one of the great scholars of Mamluk Studies, and it turned out that he knew about me, though I had just published my thesis on the Syrian Palestinian coast in Mamluk times after the expulsion of the Crusaders. We had a good time there, as Reuven is a very lively and straightforward person as long as you do not criticize the works of David Ayalon too much. I remember as well that during Reuven's presentation on Mamluk epigraphy in Palestine I heard for the first time the English phrase "without further ado." It has stayed with me since. After this remarkable encounter I was thankful that he invited me to Israel several times to give talks. That meant a lot to me as a young German, given the atrocities committed toward Jews in the twentieth century. But unease was never felt among Mamlukists and when we moved to our new house in Marburg, Reuven presented me with a Hebrew Hamza amulet to protect it; so far the house is still standing, so it worked. I am thankful to have met and to know Reuven Amitai.

Now, without further ado, I will switch to the actual topic of the paper: the colorful history of the *yāsā* across the centuries and regions of the Middle East. Why write another article on the impact of Mongol *yāsā* in the Mamluk realm? Much has been written about it already.[1] We have a pretty good idea of how the

[1] To name just a few remarkable articles on the topic: David O. Morgan, "The 'Great "yāsā" of Chingiz Khan' and Mongol Law in the Īlkhānate," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 49 (1986): 163–76; idem, "The 'Great Yasa of Chinggis Khan' Revisited," in *Mongols, Turks, and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World,* ed. Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran (Leiden, 2005), 291–308; Robert Irwin, "What the Partridge Told the Eagle: A Neglected Arabic Source on Chingis Khan and the Early History of the Mongols," in *The Mongol Empire and its Legacy,* ed. Reuven Amitai-Preiss and David Morgan (Leiden, 1999), 5–11; David Ayalon, "The Great Yāsa of Chingiz Khān: A Reexamination," *Studia Islamica* 33 (1971): 97–140; 34 (1971): 151–80; 36 (1972): 113–58;

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negative Mamluk discussion about the *yāsā* was heavily influenced by anti-Mongol sentiments during the Mamluk-Ilkhanid wars and then further cemented by the "dishonest" al-Maqrīzī (d. 1442), as summed up recently by Reuven himself.[2]

The goal of this article is to come up with some new angles on the Mamluk-Mongol *yāsā* discussion and, hopefully, to add to points raised by Reuven in his work. Thus, it will put the discussion of *yāsā* in the Mongol context before turning to the negative image of it in the Mamluk sources up to the mid-fifteenth century.

Lately, research has shown that *yāsā*—as a Turkish-Mongol legacy term—lived on outside the Arab territories with a positive connotation. With this more positive meaning, *yāsā* made a reappearance in Egypt in late Mamluk and Ottoman sources. This might have to do with the fact that the Ottomans, unlike the Mamluks, had not been militarily or politically challenged by the Mongols. The period of Mongol rule was over when the Ottoman sultanate was at its peak in the early sixteenth century. For the Ottomans, as will be shown, *yāsā* was just one legal term out of a toolbox of Turkish-Mongol legal terminology, whereas for the Arabic-speaking Mamluk legal scholars it might have come across as more foreign and intrusive in the Arab-Islamic legal context, thereby threatening the holy language of the Quran. Mamluk scholars were, therefore, opposed to the term—whether it was used by Mongols in the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries or by Ottomans in the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries—as they deemed it contrary to Islamic principles and diminishing the role of legal scholars. This development will constitute the subject of the second part of the article.

The aims of the article are to offer a comprehensive overview of the history of the term *yāsā* and its interpretation through time and space and to show how important Turkish and Mongol legal and political concepts shaped the Middle East and complemented Arab and Persian perspectives. In doing so it will be following in the footsteps of Reuven Amitai, who wrote: "Without taking into account the role of the Turks and the Mongols in the Middle East, we cannot fully comprehend the political, social, economic, religious and cultural developments of this region: The Turks and Mongols have a decisive impact on it all."[3]

38 (1973): 107–56; reprinted in idem, *Outsiders in the Land of Islam: Mamluks, Mongols, and Eunuchs* (London, 1988); Igor de Rachewiltz, "Some Reflections on Činggis Qan's Jasaγ," *East Asian History* 6 (1993): 91–104; Denise Aigle, "Mongol Law versus Islamic Law: Myth and Reality," in *The Mongol Empire between Myth and Reality, Studies in Anthropological History by Denise Aigle* (Leiden, 2015), 134–56.

[2] Reuven Amitai, *From Turks to Mongols: David Ayalon's Vision of the Eurasian Steppe in Islamic History,* Ulrich Haarmann Memorial Lecture 19, ed. Stephan Conermann (Berlin, 2019), 19–24.

[3] Ibid., 28.

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The Mongol *Yāsā*

For someone who is more acquainted with Mamluk sources it is quite a tricky task to explain what the Mongol *yāsā* could have been without being too biased by Mamluk legal discussion. The aim here, however, is to first summarize the Mongol information available on the *yāsā* before bringing into play the Mamluk evidence in the next section.

About the literal meaning, we read in the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* that *yāsā* (Turkish *Yasaq*; Mongolian *jasagh*) means "law, decree, order."[4] Something has to be put in order or organized through the *yāsā* and the one issuing the orders needs to have the necessary authority to do so. A major obstacle for looking at the term seems to be that we lack primary Mongolian sources on the subject.

The major Mongol source for the early history of Chinggis Khan is *The Secret History of the Mongols,* which might have been written in the thirteenth century but survives only in Chinese transcription of the original Mongolian from the late fourteenth century. This means that changes could have been introduced in the transmission of the original text into the Chinese language and the Chinese cultural context. The term *yāsā (jasaq)* occurs nine times in the text in definite legal contexts, which shows that it is not frequently used. According to its English translator, Igor de Rachewiltz, however, these references indicate that at some stage there was in fact a coherent written legal document, i.e., the Great *Yāsā* of Chinggis Khan.[5] David Morgan, on the other hand, argues that *yāsā* as a term means more specific decrees or orders. According to Morgan, the absence of an original written legal text suggests that *yāsā* rules were orally transmitted or only partially collected in writing.[6] Whatever the case, the Mongols had a set of written or orally transmitted rules that were called *yāsā* and, moreover, became known as the Great *Yāsā* of Chinggis Khan after the huge success of the Mongol conquests.

De Rachewiltz argues, based on *The Secret History of the Mongols,* that the *yāsā* had been elaborated during the lifetime of Chinggis Khan. Around 1206 at the famous Mongol assembly *(quriltai)* of 1206, where Chinggis Khan was proclaimed leader of all Mongols, a kind of binding law system was already in place that should then have been "closed" at the death of the Mongol leader in 1227.[7] He suggests, based on examination of Chinese sources, that these laws were then probably written down under Chinggis Khan's heirs.[8]

[4] Peter Jackson, "Yāsā," *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (2013), http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/yasa-law-code.

[5] de Rachewiltz, "Some Reflections," 97.

[6] Morgan, "'Great Yasa' Revisited," 300.

[7] de Rachewiltz, "Some Reflections," 102.

[8] Ibid., 94.

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Morgan counters that there is no convincing evidence that such a law collection existed as a written codex in 1206. He opts for a definition of *yāsā* as a loosely connected set of laws that were well known to the administration of the emerging Mongol Empire.[9]

What we can deduce, however, is that the Mongols started their conquests with specific rules that can be called *yāsā* regulations or a *yāsā* system, whether written or oral. Glimpses of this system can be reconstructed by identifying a few scattered mentions in the sources, but we cannot expect to gain a complete picture.

As will be seen in the next part of this article, we also have to be aware that some of this information comes from sources hostile to the Mongols, whose aim was not to praise Mongol legal regulations but rather the contrary.

A central author in our context, who was favorable to the Mongols, is the Persian Juvaynī (d. 1283), who, as an official of the Mongol Empire, wrote the *Tārīkh-i Jahān-gushā* (History of the world-conqueror). As a high-ranking official and governor of Baghdad after its fall to the Mongols in 1258, Juvaynī certainly had considerable insight into internal matters of the empire.

He states, regarding the law-making process under Chinggis Khan, that "In accordance and agreement with his own mind he established a rule for every occasion and a regulation for every circumstance; while for every crime he fixed a penalty . . . and that those *yasas* and ordinances should be written down on rolls. These rolls are called the *Great book of Yasas* and are kept in the treasury of the chief princes."[10] When the great khan Güyük, a grandson of Chinggis Khan, followed his father, Ögedei, on the throne after a troublesome succession process in 1246, Juvaynī recalls that "first of all he made a *yasa* that such ordinances and commands as had previously been issued by Chingiz-Khan should be maintained, and secured, and protected against the evils of change, and alteration, and confusion."[11] This suggests that *yāsā* regulations were a factor in the legal continuity of the Mongol Empire and had such an important role that their maintenance became part of the dynastic protocol at the coronation of new rulers.

As for the use and contents of the *yāsā,* Michael Hope argues that it "was used to stratify the Mongol polity and regulate its internal relationships in accordance with the perceived will of Chinggis Khan."[12] Hope then mentions the

[9] David Morgan, *The Mongols* (Oxford, 2007), 83–87.

[10] ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn ʿAṭā Malik Juvaynī, *The History of the World-Conqueror,* trans. John Andrew Boyle (Manchester, 1958), 1:25; see as well: Aigle, "Mongol Law," 138.

[11] Juvaynī, *History,* 1:189.

[12] Michael Hope, *Power, Politics, and Tradition in the Mongol Empire and the Ilkhānate of Iran* (Oxford, 2016), 54.

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following fields that were important for the Mongol legal discourse and where the society should be shaped through laws: the military system, taxation, and property rights. He argues as well that the *yāsā* regulations privileged especially members of the Chinggisid household but contained general social elements as well. The appropriation of the property of a deceased person was forbidden, for example, as the inheritance was used to provide for widows and children. Hope says that the *yāsā* created some kind of "collegial" rule to the government.[13]

In his review of Hope's book, however, Amitai is not convinced by this. He contends that the recurrent use of *"jasaq (yasaq)* and *yosun"* or "'law(s) and tradition(s)'" in Ilkhanid contexts does not hint at a collegial approach, since it was often used to discredit an opponent by saying that the person would not follow *"jasaq (yasaq)* and *yosun"* (in contrast, of course, with the person making the accusation).[14]

With the Mongol conquest came contact with a variety of religions and sects among the conquered peoples. The Mongols' own practices and beliefs are usually classified as Shamanistic. According to Chinggisid concepts, their khans ruled through the will of *Möngke-Tenggeri* (Eternal Heaven) who had a superiority over other spiritual and human beings.[15] Still, as Brack puts it, "Divine favor was revealed only through empirical proof in the form of political and military success." Heaven had places for many religious stars as long as the Mongols were advancing.[16]

It was, however, not a concept that could be easily translated into the monotheistic frame of the Abrahamic religions. In any case, the Mongols were not religious missionaries. They expected conquered peoples and governments to obey the khan. John of Plano Carpini, an Italian Franciscan who travelled in the service of the pope to the Mongols in 1246, noticed that they would not force anyone to renounce their faith and follow the creed of the Mongols, which for him had to do with the fact that they had no written (religious) book. The Mongols were perceived as religiously tolerant or indifferent as this was the best way to get along with the many different ethnicities and religious groups they ruled.[17]

Once they had conquered Baghdad in 1258, though, things started to become more complicated. The Mongols had not only ended the Abbasid caliphate but

[13] Ibid., 55, 56.

[14] Reuven Amitai, review of *Power, Politics, and Tradition in the Mongol Empire and the Ilkhānate of Iran,* by Michael Hope," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 139, no. 3 (2019): 738.

[15] Hope, *Power,* 33; Morgan, *Mongols,* 37.

[16] Jonathan Brack, "Theologies of Auspicious Kingship: The Islamization of Chinggisid Sacral Kingship in the Islamic World," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 60 (2018): 1161–62.

[17] Aigle, "Mongol Law," 152.

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also killed the highest representative of Sunni Islam without replacing him adequately, so their Muslim subjects were quite confused. At first, end of the world scenarios became popular among Muslims, which was, of course, not favorable to the operation of a functioning state, and even less so when the ties of the Ilkhanate in Iran with the central Mongol authority in northern China under Qubilai Khan (r. 1264–94) loosened in the following years.

When the Ilkhans and their army became a minority ruling newly conquered Muslim territory, it at first resulted in the dichotomy of an urban capital—i.e., Baghdad—and a mobile one—the camp of the khan and the military *(ordo)*. Baghdad maintained its role as official capital while the khan exercised military authority from his tent city. This also kept the judicial and religious spheres apart and separated the nomadic Turco-Mongol population from the sedentary non-Mongols.[18] In the following years the role of Baghdad improved as it developed into a favorite winter pasture of the Mongol camp.[19]

Overall, a process of acculturation took place which led to increased intermingling of different layers of the society. Many rank-and-file Mongol soldiers did convert to Islam, which convinced the Ilkhanid nobility and the rulers to do the same and to blend into the cultural fabric of the society.[20] When Ghāzān Khan converted to Islam in 1295 he let the Mamluks know that there was no longer any religious impediment to recognizing the Mongols as superior.[21]

Despite their conversion, however, the Mongols still used older models of government and judicial administration like the *yāsā* regulations, while also combining these with Islamic law and Muslim concepts of sovereignty. When the two norms came into conflict, it seems that they dealt with it practically.

Needless to say, the Mamluks could never agree to the speech allegedly given by Mongol army commander Quṭlugh-Shāh Noyan to the Mamluk scholar Ibn Taymīyah (d. 1328) in 1299 when the Mongols had invaded Syria. According to Quṭlugh-Shāh, "God had sealed the line of prophets with Muḥammad and Chingiz Khan and . . . anyone who did not obey him was considered a rebel."[22]

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[18] See: Hend Gilli-Elewy, "The Mongol Court in Baghdad: The Juwaynī Brothers between Local Court and Central Court," in *Court Cultures in the Muslim World: Seventh to Nineteenth Centuries,* ed. Albrecht Fuess and Jan Peter Hartung (London, 2011), 168–81.

[19] Michal Biran. "Baghdad under Mongol Rule," in *Baghdad: From Its Beginnings to the 14th Century,* ed. Jens Scheiner and Isabel Toral-Niehoff (Leiden, 2022), 285–315.

[20] Charles Melville, "Pādshāh-i Islām: Conversion of Sultan Mahmūd Ghāzān Khan," *Pembroke Papers* 1:159–77; See also: Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and The Islamic World: From Conquest to Conversion* (New Haven, 2017).

[21] Hope, *Power,* 160.

[22] Ibid., 161.

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Ilkhanid rule based itself henceforth on both *yāsā* and shariʿah, but this was not acceptable to the Mamluks.

Mamluk Discussion of the *Yāsā*

The Mamluks, of course, had their own ideas about the Mongols' self-declared superiority. Through their victory at ʿAyn Jālūt in 1260 they had shown the Muslim world that they could defeat the Mongols, but the Mongols continued to pressure the Mamluks militarily and claim overlordship. For our purpose, the exchange of letters between the Ilkhan Abaqa (r. 1265–82) and the Mamluk sultan Baybars (r. 1260–77) found in Mamluk sources is quite telling. Baybars refuses to submit to the Mongol ruler: "How can accord come about? Today the *yāsāh* which we have is greater than the *yāsāh* of Chinggis Khan. God has given us the rule over 40 kings."[23]

The obvious question that arises here is what to do with this idea of a Mamluk *yāsā*. I think we should not have to take it literally. I suggest that it was meant to signify that the Mamluk sultan's rule was based on a superior system of governance and that Islam and shariʿah were the superior law.

It was, of course, also a special figure of speech used by rulers in general and Baybars in particular. By doing so he connected the Mamluk *yāsā* (shariʿah) to the Mongol *yāsā* and claimed the superiority of the former. In another example of such a method of argumentation, Baybars wrote a letter to Hugh III of Lusignan (r. 1235–84), the king of Cyprus, referring to the Mamluk military successes on land in Palestine against the Crusaders while conceding Mamluk naval weakness. Baybars argued that it was much easier to conquer ships than fortresses. His message culminated with the following statement: "Your horses are ships, but our ships are horses."[24] Like the idea of a Mamluk *yāsā,* this phrase should not be taken literally; it clearly meant that the Mamluks had a better military than the Cypriots.

The most well-known refutation of the Mongols in the Mamluk period was presented by the Damascene scholar Ibn Taymīyah, who had been actively involved in the fights against the Mongols at the turn of the fourteenth century and encountered the Mongols in Damascus.

Ibn Taymīyah praised the Mamluks for their victories against the Mongols and the defense of the community of believers, the *ummah:* "In respect to the group which governs Egypt and Syria in the moment, one has to acknowledge

[23] Reuven Amitai-Preiss, "An Exchange of Letters in Arabic between Abaγa Īlkhān and Sultan Baybars (A.H. 667/A.D. 1268–69)," *Central Asiatic Journal* 38, no. 1 (1994): 30; Aigle, "Mongol Law," 135.

[24] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Al-Rawḍ al-zāhir fī sīrat al-Malik al-Ẓahir,* ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Khuwaytīr (Riyadh, 1976), 376.

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that it is them who fight for the religion of Islam. . . . Their power is the power of Islam and their degradation is the degradation of Islam. If the Tatars [Mongols] would become their masters, there would be no more power in Islam."[25]

Ibn Taymīyah's anti-Mongol propaganda was later adjusted due to Ghāzān's conversion. Ghāzān had declared that he, as a new Muslim, wanted to end the Mamluks' unjust and tyrannical rule and he initiated several military campaigns. In 1299, Mongol forces crossed the border into Syria, inflicted defeats on the Mamluk army, and occupied Damascus but had to retreat in February of 1300 due to a lack of provisions. It seems that Ibn Taymīyah was chosen to be a member of a delegation of citizens who went to meet the Ilkhan in order to beg him to spare the lives of the Damascenes.[26] Amitai indicated that Ibn Taymīyah overcame his disdain for the Mongols in order to help secure the lives of the local Muslims against the Mongol intruders.[27]

Still, Ibn Taymīyah subsequently continued his preaching against the Ilkhanids and commented negatively on their alleged adherence to Islam. In a legal fatwa he explained why Muslims should continue to fight the Mongols. He presented them as one of the groups against which Islam needed to fight, despite their—in his view disingenuous—conversion. According to him, there were still infidels *(al-kuffār),* polytheists *(al-mushrikūn),* and Christians among their ranks.[28] How, he asked, could this mixed Mongol army pretend to be Muslim?

Concerning the *yāsā,* Ibn Taymīyah said that Chinggis Khan had developed the *yāsā* according to "his reason *(ʿaqlihi)* and his own opinion *(dhihnihi).*"[29] This was, for Ibn Taymīyah, inconceivable, as law needed divine origin and could not be based on human reasoning. According to Ibn Taymīyah, the limits of *al-siyāsah al-sharʿīyah* ("shariʿah politics"), which he developed in one of his main works, were clearly defined by the stipulations of the Quran and Sunnah. He argued that the exercise of government was an act of religion, the sultan being

[25] Yahya Michot, "Textes spirituels d'Ibn Taymiyya, XIII: l'état du monde musulman vers 709/1310 (fin)," *Le Musulman* 26 (1995): 26. See on Ibn Taymīyah: Albrecht Fuess, "A 'Medieval Islamist' versus an 'Arab Machiavelli'? The Legacy of the Mamluk Scholars Ibn Taymīya (1263–1328) and Ibn Nubāta (1287–1366)," in *Order into Action: How Large-Scale Concepts of World-Order Determine Practices in the Premodern World,* ed. Klaus Oschema and Christoph Mauntel (Turnhout, 2022), 97–125.

[26] Denise Aigle, "The Mongol Invasions of Bilād al-Shām by Ghāzān Khān and Ibn Taymīyah's Three 'Anti-Mongol' Fatwas," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 11, no. 2 (2007): 102.

[27] Reuven Amitai, "The Mongol Occupation of Damascus in 1300: A Study of Mamluk Loyalties," in *The Mamluks in Egyptian and Syrian Politics and Society,* ed. Michael Winter and Amalia Levanoni (Leiden, 2004), 34–35.

[28] Aigle, "Mongol Invasions," 98–99.

[29] Ibid., 116.

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"God's Shadow on Earth."[30] Therefore, he concluded, "the rules of the associationists *(aḥkām al-mushrikīn)*—such as the *yāsā (ka-yāsā)* of Chinggis Khan, king of the polytheists—is most gravely contrary to the religion of Islam."[31]

Ibn Taymīyah is not the only author depicting Ghāzān as wolf in sheep's clothing. Amitai has shown that the famous biographer al-Ṣafadī (d. 1363) wrote that Ghāzān, despite his conversion, upheld the Mongol *yāsā (al-yāsā al-mughūlīyah)* as a basis for his decisions.[32]

No wonder that the term *yāsā* was given "bad press" in subsequent Mamluk times. Still, given the Mamluk-Mongol rivalry, it is remarkable how the narrative developed that even Mamluk sultans were allegedly using the *yāsā*.

This brings us to the main Mamluk historian of the early fifteenth century, al-Maqrīzī (d. 1442). Remarkably, al-Maqrīzī managed to put all the criticism he had toward apparently un-Islamic behavior and ordinances of the mostly Turkish-born Mamluk officials by suggesting that they would secretly follow the Mongol *yāsā.* To support this claim he introduces and relies on a supposed witness from within the administration. However, David Ayalon compellingly dismantled all these accusations, showing that, in fact, when al-Maqrīzī depicts the *yāsā,* he repeats information from the aforementioned text by Juvaynī about the Mongol administration. Nothing hints at any application of the *yāsā* by Mamluk officials.[33] The reason for these accusations is still unclear, but given the negative attitude of the Mamluk establishment toward anything Mongol, such criticism would certainly "shock" readers and enable them to demand changes in some governmental practices. Still, al-Maqrīzī and his comments seemed to have shaped the internal discourse within the Mamluk Empire to some extent, since later scholars would continue to perceive the *yāsā* as negative.

As Robert Irwin has shown, another Mamluk author and contemporary of al-Maqrīzī who wrote about the *yāsā* was Ibn ʿArabshāh (d. 1450). Borrowing from Juvaynī as well, he describes the Mongol *yāsā* in the context of accounts of animal fables. According to Irwin, however, Ibn ʿArabshāh's goal was to show how the *yāsā* differed from good Islamic practice, not to describe the functioning of a Mongol legal system.[34]

Thereafter, the term *yāsā* apparently became less used in Mamluk sources until the arrival of the Ottomans, when it experienced a renaissance, as will be shown below. It is interesting that, apparently during the fifteenth century,

[30] Fuess, "Medieval Islamist," 112.

[31] Aigle, "Mongol Invasions," 96.

[32] Reuven Amitai-Preiss, "*Ghazan,* Islam and Mongol Tradition: A View from the Mamlūk Sultanate," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 59, no. 1 (1996): 5.

[33] Amitai, *From Turks to Mongols,* 19–22.

[34] Irwin, "What the Partridge," 10.

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Arab authors increasingly rendered the term as *yasaq* instead of *yāsā,* as noted by David Ayalon, who wrote that Ibn Taghrībirdī (d. 1470) explained that the Turks had changed the spelling from *yāsā* to *yasaq* and that it remained so until his own times.[35]

However, if we look at the context in which *yasaq* is used in Mamluk sources of the fifteenth century we still see, content-wise, a connection with descriptions of the practice of the Mongol thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, despite using a Turkic spelling.

Yāsā in the Turco-Mongol Context of the Post-Ilkhanid Period

Before turning to the Ottoman use of *yāsā/yasaq,* we need to take a brief look at subsequent occurrences in the former Ilkhanid territories. As seen above, the Ilkhanids used a combined *yāsā*-shariʿah system after Ghāzān Khan's conversion to Islam. Apparently, it was important to know both and to show Mongol and Muslim adherence. To administer the *yasaq* well was also used as a qualifier for one's personal ability. One example for this was that Sultan Öljeitü (r. 1304–16) kept a close eye on the *yasaq* and *yosun* (customs and habits) of his brother Sulṭān Saʿīd Ghāzān and had his orders checked officially.[36]

Islamisation of the Golden Horde took off more seriously under Özbek Khan (r. 1313–41). When Özbek was still only a candidate to the throne, a high ranking amir warned him about his inclination to Islam: "'O pādshāh, you demand that we convert, but how can we obey and comply with this demand? What grievance do we have with the *yāsā* and *yosūn* of Chinggis Khan that you summon us to the old *sharīʿa* of the Arabs?'" The amir was then apparently killed by Özbek and Islamisation was carried out. Nevertheless, this account highlights the complex legal situation in Mongol regencies once their rulers turned to Islam.[37] As Michal Biran has pointed out, the contradictions between *yāsā* and shariʿah, "such as the elevated position of Chinggis Khan among the Yasa's adherents and the rules of ritual slaughter," were mostly not perceived as fundamental and coexisted peacefully for centuries with each having its own sphere of application.[38]

[35] Ayalon, "The Great Yāsa" (1973): 117.

[36] István Vásáry, "Yāsā and Sharīʿa: Islamic Attitudes toward the Mongol Law in the Turco-Mongolian World (from the Golden Horde to Timur's Time)," in *Violence in Islamic Thought from the Mongols to European Imperialism,* ed. Robert Gleave and István T. Kristó-Nagy (Edinburgh, 2018), 72.

[37] Ibid., 67.

[38] Michal Biran, *Chinggis Khan,* Makers of the Muslim World (Oxford, 2007).

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For example, in a diploma from 1453 of the founder of the Crimean Khanate, Hacı I Giray (r. 1441–66), we read that the decree was issued "by the strength of the Eternal Heaven *(Mängü tängri)* and the authority of Muḥammad, the messenger of God."[39] Combining Chinggisid sacral kingship with the prophethood of Muḥammad was an idea that had already been used by the Ilkhanids.[40]

The same holds true for the Timurid Empire. The approach to the *yāsā* was quite ambiguous, and even more so as Timur (r. 1370–1405) used Chinggisid legitimacy alongside Islamic legitimacy. He was hailed by contemporary sources as guardian of the *yāsā.* Moreover, he had both Mongol-Chaghatay amirs and regional descendants of the Prophet swearing their allegiance to him in 1370.[41] His son Shāh Rukh (r. 1405–47), in contrast, seems to have rejected the *yāsā* and implemented only Islamic law. Still, he did relate officially to the Mongol heritage.[42]

In 1489 the Aq-Qoyunlu sultan Yaʿqūb (r. 1478–90), son of the mighty Uzun Ḥasan, decreed the eradication of the *yāsā* and the following only of shariʿah legislation. This was met with resentment by his contemporaries and his death a year later under mysterious circumstances could be placed in the context of this legislation.[43]

With the emergence of the Safavids and their Shiʿite Iranian legacy, however, the Mongol *yāsā* seems to have retreated as a state concept to the Uzbek Sultanate. After Shaybani Khan (r. 1500–10) captured Samarqand from the Timurids in 1500, he apparently ruled by applying the *yāsā* and the shariʿah in their distinct spheres.[44]

The Ottomans and the *Yasaq/Yāsā*

The Ottomans did not perceive themselves as heirs to the Mongols but as dynastic descendants of Turkish tribes and guardians of Sunni Islam, and, therefore, as adherents of the shariʿah. Still, their legal approach was flexible when it came to state interests: reigning sultans legally had a say in state affairs and religious scholars did try to make adjustments. The role of the ruler in law-making seems

[39] Vásáry, "Yāsā and Sharīʿa," 78.

[40] Brack, "Theologies of Auspicious Kingship," 1167.

[41] Tilman Nagel, *Timur der Eroberer und die islamische Welt des späten Mittelalters* (Munich, 1993), 119.

[42] Jackson, "Yāsā"; see also: Beatrice Manz, *Power, Politics and Religion in Timurid Iran* (Cambridge, 2010); Evrim Binbaş, "The Timurids and the Mongol Empire," in *The Mongol World,* ed. Timothy May and Michael Hope (London, 2022), 936–52.

[43] David Morgan, *Medieval Persia 1040–1797* (London, 1997), 106.

[44] Ken'ichi Isogai, "Yasa and Shariʿa in Early 16th Century-Central Asia," *Cahiers d'asie centrale* 3, no. 4 (1997): 91–103.

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to have been greater in the Ottoman Sultanate than in other Islamic entities like the Mamluk Sultanate. A famous example of a legal understanding that puts the state's interests first is the so-called law book *(Qānūn-nāmah)* of Sultan Mehmed II (r. 1444–46 and 1451–81), which stipulated fratricide as an obligation for Ottoman rulers.[45] This regulation was found in neither the *yāsā* nor the shariʿah.

This creative and autonomous law giving process as sign of the sultan's sovereignty led to Ottoman laws which were called *yāsā* or *qānūn.*[46] For example, when the author Abdülvasi Çelebi writes about Mehmed I's (r. 1413–21) campaign in Thrace, he states: "Everywhere he went, he made laws (yasağ) for justice."[47] This does hint at the fact that within the fifteenth-century Ottoman Empire *yāsā* or *qānūn* were used as laws in addition to shariʿah legislation or as part of an overarching shariʿah. However, there is no hint of any Great *Yāsā* of the Ottomans.

When the Ottomans conquered the Mamluk Sultanate in 1516–17 they brought their terminology with them and the term *yasaq* made a re-appearance in late-Mamluk/early-Ottoman sources, but this time it was clearly connected to the Ottomans and not to the Mongols.

For example, when Ibn Ṭūlūn (d. 1546) wrote that in 1518 the Ottomans abolished a regulation which some had thought was from the *yasaq al-Jarākisah* (the law of the Mamluks), though in fact it had been from the *yasaq al-Akrād* (the law of the Ayyubids), and the people rejoiced.[48] Here the attitude toward the term is neutral.

Ibn Iyās (d. after 1524) depicts the introduction of new Ottoman regulations and sees them quite negatively. He reports that after 1518 all judges had to follow the *yasaq* of the Ottomans concerning the introduction of marriage fees and the need to conclude or dissolve marriage contracts exclusively in the offices of the four qadis. Ibn Iyās calls this a great hardship for the Muslims.[49] He complains of the rising costs of the procedures and also that this custom was alien

[45] Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire: The Structure of Power* (London, 2002), 109. The authenticity of the law book was questioned, but its rules were applied.

[46] *Qānūn* is another colorful legal term. It derived from Greek *kanōn* (κανών), "measure," which was used in pre-Islamic papyri in the context of taxation. "Under the Ottoman sultans, the term ḳānūn came to be applied mainly to acts in the domain of administrative and financial law and of penal law" and scholars tried to make sure that *qānūn* and shariʿah should not oppose each other. See Y. Linant de Bellefonds, "Ḳānūn," *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_0439.

[47] Guy Burak, "The Second Formation of Islamic Law: The Post-Mongol Context of the Ottoman Adoption of a School of Law," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 55, no. 3 (2013): 596.

[48] Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat al-khilān fī ḥawādith al-zamān,* ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá (Cairo, 1964), 2:84; Guy Burak, "Between the Ḳānūn of Qāytbāy and Ottoman Yasaq: A Note on the Ottomans' Dynastic Law," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 26, no. 1 (2015): 15.

[49] Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-ẓuhūr fī waqāʾiʿ al-duhūr,* ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá (Wiesbaden, 1961), 5:418, 424.

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to the actual practice. It is not presented as having any Chinggisid connection but is clearly linked to the Ottomans.

In another instance, Ibn Iyās cites a satirical poem by a member of the official legal witnesses *(shuhūd)* against an Ottoman judge comparing him to an ugly, half-blind monster who "puts the *qānūn* before the shariʿah of Aḥmad (Muḥammad)." The context of this was that this judge forbade women to visit graves, their relatives, and the public bath. Only after intervention did he allow women to circulate, though only in presence of their husbands.[50] The comments and the poems clearly show a disdain for these regulations introduced by the Ottomans, which seem to be called either *qānūn* or *yasaq* and which went against the usual practices of Mamluk days, which were perceived as being nearer to the shariʿah.

Other Egyptian scholars apparently even went so far as to declare the Ottoman *yasaq* the *yasaq* of nonbelief *(yasaq al-kufr)* and went to prison for this. Others criticized the *yasaq* for not being based on the four traditional sources of Islamic law (the Quran, the Sunnah, consensus [*ijmāʿ*], and syllogism [*qiyās*]).[51]

As to why Mamluk scholars of the early sixteenth century were so opposed to Ottoman *qānūn* and *yasaq,* Burak argues that the scholars saw them as grounded in the practices of the Ottoman dynasty and not in the legal practices of the shariʿah from the Mamluk period. It must have been a threat to their legal authority if the sultans could make and interpret the rules without asking the scholars for their legal opinions.

In Mamluk times, sultans made use of the more flexible concept of *siyāsah* (political statecraft, see above) in their decision making, but they could not act as "lawgivers" like the famous Ottoman Sultan Süleyman (r. 1520–66).[52] The role and influence of Mamluk scholars was now at stake.

As a personal comment I would add as well that the term *yasaq* had, over the whole period of Mamluk rule, gained such a negative connotation —as a horrible, un-Islamic, Mongol concept —that it must have been very hard to accept it entering the former Mamluk realm in an Ottoman disguise.

Modern Turkey and Turkish Use

Without pushing it too far, I would now like to complete this discussion of the *yāsā* with a short glimpse at the career the term has had in the context of twentieth-century Turkey. After the revolution of the Young Turks and the end of the Ottoman Empire, a new constitution was drafted to replace the Ottoman *Teşkilât-ı Esasiye Kanunu* (Compilation of fundamental laws). Because *qānūn*

[50] Ibid., 5:467.

[51] Burak, "Ḳānūn," 16–17.

[52] Ibid., 20.

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sounded too Arabic (although it is actually a derivative from Greek κανών/rule), the officials choose to use *yāsā* (as an allegedly Turkish term and concept) and combine it with "ana," the Turkish word for mother. Thus, the 1921 constitution got the name *Türk Anayasası* (Motherlaw of the Turks), known since 1961 as *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Anayasası* (Motherlaw of the Turkish Republic). One might guess that it was the peculiar un-Islamic, nonreligious, secular meaning of the term *yāsā* that made it attractive to the fathers of the Turkish constitution.

A second point can be mentioned here. Since 2009 there has been a Kurdish-German NGO in Bonn named "YASA" (http://www.yasa-bonn.de/), whose logo has a double-s section symbol, as seen in legal documents, in place of the S. It offers legal assistance in matters of integration and refuge for Kurds living in or coming to Germany. It also represents the successful longevity of a Mongol law term.

If only Chinggis Khan could have known about that.



Conclusion

In tracing the history of a colorful law term from the thirteenth century to the present this contribution may have raised more questions than it answered. In particular, the relationships between religious laws and secular laws in Muslim societies need more research in order to understand how norms and practices intertwined. Be that as it may, the main aim of this article was to follow Reuven Amitai's lead as stated in the introduction: "There is no Middle Eastern History without looking at Turks and Mongols."

By looking at descriptions and uses of *yāsā* outside of the Mamluk realm and Mamluk sources, especially in neighboring countries and the early Ottoman period in former Mamluk lands, we get a better grip on the history of the Mamluks and can refine our understanding of Mamluk society and the Mamluks' relations with Turks and Mongols.

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Ibn Kammūnah Is Going to Hell! Muslim-Jewish Polemics at the Ilkhanid Court

The Ilkhanid vizier, physician, and theologian Rashīd al-Dīn (ca. 1247–1318) has figured prominently in Professor Reuven Amitai's scholarship. Amitai explored descriptions of Rashīd al-Dīn in Arabic histories and biographical dictionaries from Mamluk Egypt and Syria, demonstrating that they can offer new insight on his career and character.[1] As for the Mamluks' perceptions of Rashīd al-Dīn, Amitai noted that while Mamluk authors "generally express only positive opinions as to his orthodoxy and commitment to his adopted faith," they also highlight Ilkhanid individuals who besmirched Rashīd al-Dīn's reputation. These scholars claimed that Rashīd al-Dīn, a Jewish convert to Islam, continued to adhere to his Jewish faith despite his conversion. They especially expressed their disapproval of his philosophically-oriented exegesis of the Quran, where, according to their accusations, he had falsified *(tabdīl)* God's word. According to Mamluk authors, after Rashīd al-Dīn's execution, his body was mutilated, his head was paraded throughout Tabriz, and his profane writings were burned.[2]

While Rashīd al-Dīn is best known for his world history, *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh* (The compendium of chronicles), one of the earliest examples of Islamic world histories and one of the most important sources for the history of the Mongol Empire,[3] he also authored extensive treatises on other subjects, including scientific topics such as medicine and agriculture,[4] but mainly on Islamic theology *(kalām)* and Quranic commentary *(tafsīr)*. Written during the decade following the Mongol ruler Öljeitü's (r. 1304–16) enthronement in 1305, Rashīd al-Dīn col-

[1] Reuven Amitai-Preiss, "New Material from the Mamluk Sources for the Biography of Rashid al-Din," in *The Court of the Il-khans, 1290–1340,* ed. Teresa Fitzherbert and Julian Raby (Oxford, 1996), 23–37. Amitai has also studied Rashīd al-Dīn's own attitude toward the Mamluks: Reuven Amitai, "Rashīd al-Dīn as an Historian of the Mamluks,"in *Rashīd al-Dīn: Agent and Mediator of Cultural Exchange in Ilkhanid Iran,* ed. Anna Akasoy, Charles Burnett, and Ronit Yoeli-Tlalim (London, 2013), 71–88. See also: idem, "Jews at the Mongol Court in Iran: Cultural Brokers or Minor Actors in a Cultural Bloom?" in *Cultural Brokers at Mediterranean Courts in the Middle Ages,* ed. Marc von der Nöh et al. (Paderborn, 2013), 33–45.

[2] See: Amitai-Preiss, "New Material," 32–33; Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr wa-aʿwān al-naṣr,* ed. ʿA. Abū Zayd (Beirut, 1998), 4:42–43.

[3] On this work, see Stefan Kamola, *Making Mongol History: Rashid al-Din and the Jamiʿ al-Tawarikh* (Edinburgh, 2019).

[4] Thomas Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (Cambridge, 2001).

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lected these treatises into several compilations.[5] Rashīd al-Dīn's theological and philosophical works are embedded within broader intellectual currents that shaped the eastern Islamic world. His writings were informed by the thirteenth-century reconciliation of Greek-derived reason and Islamic theology and *tafsīr,* following in particular the influential work of twelfth-century Ashʿarite theologian and exegetist Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1210).[6]

Rashīd al-Dīn's earliest theological writings, especially his exegesis of specific Quranic verses, collected in the *Kitāb al-tawḍīḥāt* (Book of clarifications), were the subject of some controversy in the Ilkhanate. One Ilkhanid intellectual whose critical remarks regarding Rashīd al-Dīn's theological writings appear in Mamluk accounts is the judge, physician, philosopher, and astronomer Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (d. 710/1311). In her article comparing the Mamluk attitude toward the two Ilkhanid physicians—al-Shīrāzī and Rashīd al-Dīn—Leigh Chipman drew attention to al-Shīrāzī's reproach of Rashīd al-Dīn.[7] Al-Shīrāzī's comments on the vizier were reported in Ibn Rāfiʿ al-Salāmī's biographical dictionary of Ilkhanid-era Baghdadi scholars, in which the author transmitted the story from the Ilkhanid librarian Ibn al-Fuwaṭī's (642–723/1244–1323) now lost biographical dictionary.[8] Ibn al-Fuwaṭī, who had started his career as a librarian and copyist in the Maragha observatory, had studied with al-Shīrāzī. According to Ibn al-Fuwaṭī (as transmitted by Ibn Rāfiʿ), when al-Shīrāzī was told that Rashīd al-Dīn had composed a Quranic commentary, al-Shīrāzī "said to his friends: 'And I had intended to comment on the Torah' and he began doing so; and when he heard that he [Rashīd al-Dīn] had composed a treatise on the verse in which the angels say 'We have no knowledge save what Thou hast taught us' [Quran 2:32], he [al-Shīrāzī] said [about Rashīd al-Dīn]: He should have stopped with 'We have no knowledge.'"[9]

[5] On these works, see: Joseph van Ess, *Der Wesir und seine Gelehrten* (Wiesbaden, 1981), 12–21; Dorothea Krawulsky, *The Mongol Īlkhāns and their Vizier Rashīd al-Dīn* (Frankfurt, 2011), 77–86; and Jonathan Brack, *An Afterlife for the Khan: Muslims, Buddhists, and Sacred Kingship in Mongol Iran and Eurasia* (Oakland, 2023).

[6] Brack, *An Afterlife,* 12–19.

[7] Leigh Chipman, "The ʿAllāma and the Ṭabīb: A Note on Biographies of Two Doctors, Rashīd al-Dīn and Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī," in *Rashīd al-Dīn: Agent and Mediator,* ed. Akasoy et al., 115–26.

[8] Only a few volumes of his *Majmaʿ al-ādāb fī muʿjam al-alqāb* have survived. On Ibn al-Fuwaṭī as a valuable source for Ilkhanid intellectual life, see Devin DeWeese, "Cultural Transmission and Exchange in the Mongol Empire: Notes from the Biographical Dictionary of Ibn al-Fuwaṭī," in *Beyond the Legacy of Genghis Khan,* ed. Linda Komaroff (Leiden, 2006), 11–29; and Michal Biran, "Libraries, Books, and Transmission of Knowledge in Ilkhanid Baghdad," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 62 (2019): 464–502.

[9] Muḥammad Abū al-Maʿālī Ibn Rāfiʿ al-Salāmī, *Tārīkh ʿulamāʾ Baghdād al-musammá muntakhab al-mukhtār,* ed. ʿAbbās al-ʿAzāwī (Beirut, 2000), 177.

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Ibn al-Fuwaṭī reported that al-Shīrāzī showed contempt for the Muslim convert Rashīd al-Dīn and his Quranic commentary, suggesting that it is akin to having him, a Muslim, write a commentary on the Jewish scriptures. Yet, strangely, al-Shīrāzī is also listed among the endorsers of Rashīd al-Dīn's Quranic commentaries. Rashīd al-Dīn had collected endorsements *(taqrīẓāt)* and praises from about ninety reputed scholars for his "Book of clarifications."[10] He provided their enthusiastic "testimonies" at the start of his "Majmūʿah Rashīdīyah" (Rashidi collection), his collected theological works. The first two endorsements in this long list were penned by al-Shīrāzī himself, indicating perhaps the vizier's high regard for al-Shīrāzī and his interest in gaining the latter's approval. Both endorsements were written during al-Shīrāzī's stay in Tabriz and exceedingly praised Rashīd al-Dīn's commentaries and observations.[11] How do we reconcile these two conflicting representations of al-Shīrāzī's attitude toward Rashīd al-Dīn? Had al-Shīrāzī praised the vizier's work simply to gain his patronage and support after relocating to Tabriz, or was he acting out of fear of Rashīd al-Dīn's retribution were he not to enthusiastically endorse his work as other scholars in Tabriz were doing? Alternatively, is it possible that the dismissive comments he made to some unidentified colleagues (and then reported by Ibn al-Fuwaṭī) were designed to curry favor with those in the Ilkhanate or the Mamluk Sultanate holding animosity toward Rashīd al-Dīn, especially considering his Jewish background?

While there are no certain answers to these questions, al-Shīrāzī may have contributed more to Rashīd al-Dīn's collected theological works than his official approval. Al-Shīrāzī seems to have played a pivotal role in facilitating Rashīd al-Dīn's access to the religious refutation of the Baghdadi Jewish philosopher ʿIzz al-Dawlah Saʿd ibn Manṣūr Ibn Kammūnah (d. in or after 1284), which the Ilkhanid Muslim convert appears to dispute in his anti-Jewish apologetics in two treatises in his "Book of clarifications." Thus, al-Shīrāzī, whose disparaging comments derided the vizier's Jewish heritage, may have also aided (perhaps unintentionally) Rashīd al-Dīn's attempt to distance himself from his pre-conversion past.

In honor of Professor Amitai's retirement, this article offers some initial findings concerning the triangular relationship between three Ilkhanid intellectuals: the convert and vizier Rashīd al-Dīn, the Muslim polymath al-Shīrāzī, and

[10] On the "Book of clarifications," see Brack, *An Afterlife,* 15–18. On the *taqrīẓāt,* see Van Ess, *Der Wesir,* 22–38; Krawulsky, *The Mongol Īlkhāns,* 127–30.

[11] Al-Shīrāzī's first endorsement is dated to Rajab 706 (1307) and the other to the month of Shaʿbān that same year. "Majmūʿah Rashīdīyah," Bibliothèque nationale de France MS arabe 2324, fols. 4v–5r; Van Ess, *Der Wesir,* 22. Al-Shīrāzī seems to be the only individual who provided two endorsements.

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the Jewish philosopher Ibn Kammūnah. By exploring these links, it also sheds light on one of the least studied aspects of Rashīd al-Dīn's engagement with this Jewish heritage: his Muslim polemics against Judaism and the Jews. In this way, the article seeks to contribute to another topic Amitai has explored in his influential scholarship: the place of Jews and Judaism at the Ilkhanid court.

Ibn Kammūnah and His "Examination of the Three Faiths"

A Baghdadi Jewish and Ilkhanid official with close ties to the powerful al-Juwaynī family, Ibn Kammūnah and his philosophical writings had a major role in the development of Islamic philosophy in the eastern Islamic world.[12] His commentaries—especially his commentary on Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī's (d. 586/1191) *Talwīḥāt*—gained popularity among Muslim scholars during the fourteenth century, but especially in subsequent centuries.[13] Furthermore, as Sabine Schmidtke and Reza Pourjavady showed, Ibn Kammūnah's writings influenced al-Shīrāzī's philosophical works. The two were contemporaneous, and while there are no concrete indications that they ever met in person, al-Shīrāzī spent some time in Baghdad during the 1260s when Ibn Kammūnah was likely there as well.[14]

Another important connection between al-Shīrāzī and Ibn Kammūnah is found in the codex copied by hand by al-Shīrāzī in Konya in 685/1286. This manuscript is currently part of the Marʿashī collection in Qum (MS 12868).[15] The codex comprises some miscellany, unidentified fragmentary texts, poems in Persian and Arabic, and also several significant works. These include a unique early Ilkhanid chronicle titled "Akhbār-i Mughūlān" (Mongol news), which has been attributed to al-Shīrāzī but was likely only copied by him,[16] "Ifḥām al-

[12] Sabine Schmidtke, "Ibn Kammūna, Saʿd," in *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World,* ed. Norman Stillman (Leiden, 2010), 504–7.

[13] Reza Pourjavady and Sabine Schmidtke, *A Jewish Philosopher of Baghdad: ʿIzz al-Dawla Ibn Kammūna (d. 683/1284) and His Writings* (Leiden, 2006), 25.

[14] Ibid., 29–34.

[15] Reza Pourjavady and Sabine Schmidtke, "The Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (d. 710/1311) Codex (Ms. Marʿashī 12868) (Studies on Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī II)," *Studia Iranica* 36 (2007): 279–301 (283–85, for the manuscript and its copies).

[16] On "Akhbār-i Mughūlān," see George Lane, "Mongol News: The *Akhbār-i mughulān dar Anbāneh Qutb* by Quṭb al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn Masʿūd Shīrāzī," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,* series 3, 22, no. 3–4 (2012): 541–59. The work has been edited and published as Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī, *Akhbār-i Mughūlān dar anbānah-'i Mullā Quṭb,* ed. Irāj Afshār (Qum, 2010). For its translation: *The Mongols in Iran: Quṭb Al-Dīn Shīrāzī's Akhbār-i Moghulān,* trans. and ed. George Lane (Abingdon, 2018).

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yahūd," the refutation of Judaism by the Muslim convert Samawʾal al-Maghribī (d. 576/1180), and two texts by Ibn Kammūnah. The first is a philosophical treatise and the second is the *Tanqīḥ al-abḥāth lil-milal al-thalāth* (Examination of the three faiths), which he completed in Jumādá II 679/September–October 1280.[17]

The "Examination" is not a religious refutation in the "classical" sense. It sets out from the premise that Islam, Christianity, and Judaism all agree on one single theory of prophecy that, moreover, fits a philosophical mold, and thus frames the debate within a well-demarcated field. Ibn Kammūnah systematically compared the arguments particular to each faith, and elaborated on specific charges made against each religion and the "alleged" responses of each religion's adherents. While the work claimed to represent each dogma fairly and without bias, Ibn Kammūnah's pro-Jewish inclination is clearly evident, especially in his critical remarks on the Muslims.[18] Barbara Roggema observed that the work was animated by Jewish-Muslim rivalry.[19]

Indeed, shortly after its completion, the "Examination" became the cause of much uproar in Baghdad. According to the Ilkhanid Baghdadi chronicle "Al-Ḥawādith al-jāmiʿah," when reports about the book spread through the streets of the city in 1284, a riled-up mass gathered to avenge Islam's reputation and kill the Jewish author. Baghdadi authorities—both religious and civil—assembled at the Mustanṣirīyah madrasah to investigate the controversy and Ibn Kammūnah went into hiding. To appease the agitated crowds, they ordered that he should be burned alive. Hiding inside a coffin, Ibn Kammūnah fled to the Shiʿi center of al-Ḥillah, where his son was a scribe.[20] Ibn Kammūnah's downfall might, how-

[17] On this work: Moshe Perlmann, "The Medieval Polemics between Islam and Judaism," in *Religion in a Religious Age,* ed. S. D. Goitein (New York, 1974), 103–38; Barbara Roggema, "Epistemology as Polemics. Ibn Kammuna's Examination of the Apologetics of the Three Faiths," in *The Three Rings: Textual Studies in the Historical Trialogue of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam,* ed. B. Roggema, M. Poorthuis, and P. Valkenberg (Leuven, 2005), 47–70. For its manuscripts, dating, and its refutations: Pourjavady and Schmidtke, *Jewish Philosopher,* 106–13. For the work's English translation: *Ibn Kammūna's Examination of the Three Faiths: a Thirteenth-Century Essay in the Comparative Study of Religion,* tr. Moshe Perlmann (Berkeley, 1971).

[18] Barbara Roggema notes that the work was "animated by the rivalry between Judaism and Islam." Roggema, "Epistemology as Polemics," 65. On the work's relation to the Islamic (kalām-informed) genre of the "Proofs of Prophethood," see ibid., and idem, "Ibn Kammūna's and Ibn al-ʿIbrī's Responses to Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī's Proofs of Muḥammad's Prophethood," *Intellectual History of the Islamicate World* 2 (2014): 193–213.

[19] Roggema, "Epistemology as Polemics," 65.

[20] Anonymous, *Kitāb al-ḥawādith li-muʾallif min al-qarn al-thāmin al-hijrī wa-huwa al-kitāb al-musammá wahman bi-al-Ḥawādith al-jāmiʿah wa-al-tajārib al-nāfiʿah,* ed. Bashshār ʿAwwād Maʿrūf (Beirut, 1997), 476–77.

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ever, also have been due to the execution of his chief patron in Baghdad, Shams al-Dīn al-Juwaynī (d. 1284), shortly beforehand.[21]

Schmidtke and Pourjavady suggest that "given the intimate familiarity of Shīrāzī with the oeuvre of Ibn Kammūna," the al-Shīrāzī Codex, which was completed roughly six years after Ibn Kammūnah finished his "Examination," is not only the earliest surviving manuscript of this important work, but also represents its most original version.[22] The al-Shīrāzī Codex seems to have changed ownership early on, as it was also owned by the library of Rashīd al-Dīn. Stamps marking the codex as the property of the Rashīdī library *(waqf-i kitābkhānah-yi Rashīdī)* in Tabriz[23] appear on four separate folios throughout the codex.[24] Al-Shīrāzī seems to have resided in Tabriz from around 1306 until his death in 1311.[25] While it is uncertain when exactly the manuscript passed into Rashīd al-Dīn's possession—that is, whether it was during al-Shīrāzī's period of residence in the city, or only after his death in 1311—the codex provides clear evidence that Rashīd al-Dīn had access to Ibn Kammūnah's "Examination." What, then, did Rashīd al-Dīn know about Ibn Kammūnah? And did he address the Jewish philosopher's anti-Muslim (and anti-Christian) polemical arguments in his own theological and polemical writings, as he had done in the case of the Buddhist monks in the Ilkhanate?[26]

Rashīd al-Dīn and Ibn Kammūnah: Refuting Judaism at the Ilkhanid Court

To the best of my knowledge, Ibn Kammūnah is mentioned only once in Rashīd al-Dīn's theological collections, in a treatise in his "Book of Clarifications."[27] In this instance, Rashīd al-Dīn described a court debate between the Ilkhan Öljeitü

[21] Pourjavady and Schmidtke, *Jewish Philosopher,* 10, 14, 17.

[22] Pourjavady and Schmidtke, "Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (d. 710/1311) Codex," 290.

[23] Ibid., 284–85. On the Rashīdī library stamps on other manuscripts, see for example, Asīd Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ḥakīm, "Sih nuskhah dīgar az Kitābkhānah-yi Rabʿ-i Rashīdī," *Āyinah-yi Pazhūhish* 31, no. 5 (2020–21): 111–31.

[24] Pourjavady and Schmidtke, "Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (d. 710/1311) Codex," 284.

[25] At some point after he departed Maragha, al-Shīrāzī arrived in Anatolia and, after spending some time in Konya, became chief judge of Malaṭya and Siwās. He served as an Ilkhanid emissary to the Mamluks in 1282. After 1290, he moved to Tabriz, where he focused on writing. F. Jamil Ragep, "Shīrāzī: Quṭb al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn Masʿūd Muṣliḥ al-Shīrāzī," in *The Biographical Encyclopedia of Astronomers,* ed. Thomas Hockey et al. (New York, 2007), 1054–55.

[26] For Rashīd al-Dīn's refutation of Buddhism: Brack, *An Afterlife,* 42–57.

[27] Faḍl Allāh Abū al-Khayr al-Hamadānī Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tawḍīḥāt-i Rashīdī,* ed. Hāshim Rajabzādah (Tehran, 1394 [2015]), 2:759–64. I am grateful to Yusuf Chaudhary for having initially drawn my attention to this reference to Ibn Kammūnah.

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(r. 1304–16) and several scholars attending the court. The discussion revolved around the question of the superiority of reason over transmitted knowledge, a topic that Rashīd al-Dīn revisited often in his theological writings.[28] He frequently depicted such religious and intellectual exchanges at the Ilkhanid court. Many of his treatises start as answers to questions that were presented to him during or following such court settings at the rulers' camps, where Sunni and Shiʿi Muslim scholars, Christians, and Buddhist monks, as well as Mongol kings—Ghazan or, most often, his brother and successor Öljeitü—presented questions and challenges to the vizier Rashīd al-Dīn.[29]

According to Rashīd al-Dīn, the exchange mentioned above took place while he was absent from the court. The discussion started when Öljeitü asserted that the rational individual was superior to the knowledgeable, learned individual. Some scholars disputed the king's observation; they noted that while rational individuals might be preoccupied with matters of the state or "this world," those with knowledge are preoccupied with matters related to religion and salvation, or the "next world," which is superior to this material world. The debate continued for a while until Öljeitü made the comment that "there are no rational individuals who are not Muslim." The scholars responded that all people have some level of "reason," though their capacity for reason varies. Thus, "other religions too have rational individuals, for example, Ibn Kammūnah, who is a knowledgeable and rational individual among the Jewish sect during this age." Öljeitü disagreed with their answer, however, and related it to Rashīd al-Dīn when he arrived at the court during this discussion. Rashīd al-Dīn confirmed the Ilkhan's harsh verdict concerning the Jewish philosopher, saying that if, despite his abundant knowledge and wisdom, Ibn Kammūnah had failed to tell the difference between the true and false religion, and had, therefore, not converted to Islam and saved his soul from the torments of hell, then the Jewish philosopher's reason was lacking. He reinforced this conclusion with hadith and poetry, as he often did in his theological writings.[30]

Rashīd al-Dīn's contempt for Ibn Kammūnah as "irrational" since he did not convert from Judaism to Islam naturally also reaffirmed his own "rational" choice to embrace Islam. Rashīd al-Dīn further noted that, in addition to Ibn Kammūnah's infidelity, the Jewish philosopher increased his misery in hell by brazenly making unsubstantiated accusations against the religion of Islam. Rashīd al-Dīn expressed, therefore, his certainty that Ibn Kammūnah's soul would suffer in hell.[31] His comment here seems to refer to Ibn Kammūnah's "Ex-

[28] Brack, *An Afterlife,* 16–17, 81–85.

[29] Ibid., 14–15.

[30] Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tawḍīḥāt-i Rashīdī,* 2:759–61.

[31] Ibid., 764.

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amination," which, as noted above, had reached his library in Tabriz as part of the al-Shīrāzī Codex (although we are uncertain exactly when).

Rashīd al-Dīn, however, appears to have also engaged with some of the arguments made by Ibn Kammūnah in this work. We find indications of this in his lengthy commentary on Surah 109, "The Unbelievers" *(al-Kāfirūn),* in the "Book of Clarifications." In this surah, which is dated to the Meccan period, the Prophet addresses Mecca's polytheists, arguing that the "unbelievers" and the nascent Muslim community should keep apart in religious matters, declaring "To you your religion, and to me mine" (verse 6). Since the verse does not command the suppression of polytheism, it has been considered as evidence of Islam's tolerant attitude toward the Meccans and forms of polytheism more broadly. The verse was referenced when truces were concluded between Muslims and other parties.[32] Alarmed by the possibility of interpreting 109:6 to mean that the Prophet condoned polytheism, some Muslim exegetes argued that it was meant as a threat rather than implying the Prophet's disposition toward compromise with the Meccans. Others, however, argued that verse 109:6 was abrogated by the Verse of the Sword (*Āyat al-Sayf,* 9:5), which states, "Slay the idolaters, wherever you find them."[33]

Dorothea Krawulsky discussed Rashīd al-Dīn's arguments in this treatise against the abrogation *(naskh)* of 109:6. She situated Rashīd al-Dīn's arguments in the context of his broader opposition to the utilization of the exegetical practice of abrogation of Quranic verses to resolve apparent contradictions within the Quran. Rashīd al-Dīn identified grades of infidelity, arguing that each of the verses—109:6, with its seemingly "tolerant" and amicable attitude toward the infidels, and verse 9:6, with its harsher, more violent message against polytheism—addressed different groups of infidels and types of infidelity and, therefore, related to different situations and moments in the history of the Muslim community. Krawulsky suggested, furthermore, that the treatise's background was the Mongols' conversion to Islam. Rashīd al-Dīn, she concluded, used this discussion to express his belief in employing persuasion instead of force to induce infidel conversion. Reading this treatise as part of Rashīd al-Dīn's defense of the Mongols' conversion to Islam, Krawulsky moreover situated it in relation to other Muslim voices that were critical of the conversion and claimed that the Mongols remained polytheists.

This accusation emerged especially in the Mamluk Sultanate, a major adversary of the Ilkhans. One of its main propagandists, Ibn Taymīyah (d. 728/1328), had accused Rashīd al-Dīn of infidelity, highlighting in this regard Rashīd al-

[32] Yohanan Friedmann, *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam: Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition* (Cambridge, 2003), 88.

[33] Ibid., 95–96.

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Dīn's discussion of Surah 109 and his arguments against its abrogation as proof of his profane views. According to Ibn Taymīyah, Rashīd al-Dīn claimed in this treatise that the Prophet had condoned Judaism and Christianity.[34] It is important to note, however, that Rashīd al-Dīn had not made such a claim; to the contrary, he had argued in the treatise in favor of the Prophet's abrogation *(naskh)* of Christianity and Judaism.[35]

While Krawulsky situated Rashīd al-Dīn's commentary on Surah 109 in relation to the Ilkhanid-Mamluk rivalry, viewing the treatise in the context of religious polemics and interfaith exchanges within the Ilkhanid court, both prior to and following the Ilkhanate's official embrace of Islam under Ghazan (in 1295), and especially in relation to Ibn Kammūnah's religious refutations, sheds new light on this important work. I argue that, rather than defending the converted Mongols from Mamluk jihad, Rashīd al-Dīn's treatise constituted a defense of Islam against polemical arguments presented by religious contenders *inside* the Ilkhanate such as the Ibn Kammūnah. Rashīd al-Dīn was especially committed to fending off any argument against Islam that might weaken the religion's position and standing among his patrons, the recent Mongol converts.

Rashīd al-Dīn not only argued that the "Verse of the Sword" did not abrogate the final verse of "The Unbelievers," but also reinterpreted the "Verse of the Sword" in a more restricted sense. He claimed that it referred to a specific type of infidel *(kāfir):* the polytheist *(mushrik)* who refused to submit to Islam despite multiple pleas and warnings and, moreover, despite being presented ample and decisive evidence of Islam's veracity and the invalidity of his own belief system.[36] Rashīd al-Dīn disputed the abrogation of the final verse of "The Unbelievers" and, more broadly, opposed the practice of abrogation to resolve what appear to be contradictions between verses of the Quran, but he also argued in favor of Islam's abrogation of other religions. Early in the treatise, he stated that while Muslim scholars expressed divergent opinions about abrogation in the scripture, they all agreed about the "absolute *(muṭlaq)* abrogation" (all previous revelations being superseded by Islam), with which "the Jews disagreed."[37] Rashīd al-Dīn extensively addressed this matter. He provided evidence for Islam's abrogation of Judaism and Christianity (not only from the Quran but also from the Old and New Testaments) that he claimed the *ahl al-kitāb* would be unable to deny.[38] In fact, the final third of his lengthy treatise on "The Unbeliev-

[34] Krawulsky, *The Mongol Īlkhāns,* 87–97.

[35] For example, Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tawḍīḥāt-i Rashīdī,* 2:376.

[36] Ibid., 2:386–89.

[37] Ibid, 2:376.

[38] Ibid., 2:380.

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ers" focuses almost entirely on invalidating Judaism (and, to a lesser degree, Christianity) as abrogated religions.[39]

In his chapter on the Jews in the "Examination of the Three Faiths," Ibn Kammūnah responded to arguments about the abrogation of the Torah by other religions. According to Jewish faith, the Torah will not be superseded or abrogated by another religion.[40] Ibn Kammūnah here criticized the Muslims, arguing that Islam had no independent standing without its dogma of the abrogation of Judaism. He stated that "this is the reason the Muslims had to impugn the transmission of the Jews and adopt the tenet of the distortion of the Torah, lest the Torah, including its indications of perpetual validity and non-abrogation, should be binding upon them."[41] In the chapter on Islam, Ibn Kammūnah further highlighted contradictions between verses in the Quran, arguing that "a dissenter can contest any verse with another verse or put on it a construction that will negate the original interpretation." According to Ibn Kammūnah, this raised the possibility that the Quranic revelation was inaccurately transmitted, in obvious contrast to Muslim dogma.[42]

In his treatise on "The Unbelievers," Rashīd al-Dīn presented similar arguments made by a hypothetical opponent. He suggested that this contender might argue, for example, that the practice of *naskh* in the Quran indicated the weakness of the revealed text and Islam's deficiency *(nuqṣān).* Whereas in the case of Judaism and Christianity, their alleged abrogation by Islam took place only after a long period during which their revealed laws were "in effect" and following changes in the circumstances, in the case of abrogation of Quranic verses, the verses were nullified very shortly after they were revealed. Another argument the hypothetical opponent might present, according to Rashīd al-Dīn, is to ask why Jews or Christians must accept the full abrogation of their religions if Muslims accept the validity of their prophets and revelations, and moreover, acknowledge the possibility of voiding certain verses or laws, instead of annulling entire religions.[43]

Interestingly, one of the main points of Jewish-Muslim contention in both Rashīd al-Dīn's and Ibn Kammūnah's work on this subject, was the question of anthropomorphism, with each side simultaneously accusing the other religion

[39] Ibid., 2:426–55.

[40] Ibn Kammūnah, *Saʿd b. Manṣūr ibn Kammūna's Examination of the Inquiries into the Three Faiths: A Thirteenth-Century Essay in Comparative Religion,* ed. Moshe Perlmann (Berkeley, 1967), 27, 45; Ibn Kammūnah, *Ibn Kammūna's Examination* (tr. Perlmann), 47, 70.

[41] Ibn Kammūnah, *Examination,* 49; idem, *Ibn Kammūna's Examination* (tr. Perlmann), 76; Roggema, "Epistemology as Polemics," 65–66.

[42] Ibn Kammūnah, *Examination,* 71–72; idem, *Ibn Kammūna's Examination* (tr. Perlmann), 106–8.

[43] Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tawḍīḥāt-i Rashīdī,* 2:428.

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and its scriptures of entertaining anthropomorphist exaggerations while fending off similar accusations from the opposing party. Ibn Kammūnah presented and answered the accusations against the Torah, noting that Jewish scripture forbids anthropomorphism.[44] In fact, he argued that the essence of Judaism is "the denial of anthropomorphism *(tashbīh)*" and that Muslim scriptures and traditions contained far greater numbers of more definitive anthropomorphist expressions than Jewish scriptures.[45] One of the main cases of anthropomorphism in the Torah addressed by Ibn Kammūnah is the passage about Moses's ascension to Mount Sinai with the elders and being granted sight of God. Ibn Kammūnah explained that Moses and the elders beheld God not in a normal sense but as if in a dream, through the internal eye (which he defined as the imagining power that serves the rational capacity).[46]

From Rashīd al-Dīn's perspective, the question of whether Moses was granted the sight of the divine bore additional significance. As elsewhere in his theological writings, in his treatise on "The Unbelievers" he was invested in promoting the Prophet Muhammad's superior standing in comparison to other prophets, particularly Moses. Muḥammad's heavenly ascension *(miʿrāj)*[47] and his sight of God was a focal point in this regard. Rashīd al-Dīn argued, supposedly in contrast to a common Jewish view, that although Moses was granted the high prophetic rank of conversing with God, he was denied the sight of God, which *was* granted to Muḥammad. This indicated that Muḥammad had ascended beyond any rank of human and prophetic perfection.[48] Rashīd al-Dīn provided evidence that Moses was denied the sight of God from both the Quran and the Torah.[49]

The vizier also addressed the issue of anthropomorphism, specifically regarding Muḥammad's sight of God. He set out the divergent Muslim approaches to this issue, from the views of the traditionalists to those of the *mutakallimūn,*

[44] Ibn Kammūnah, *Examination,* 33–35; idem, *Ibn Kammūna's Examination* (tr. Perlmann), 54–57.

[45] Furthermore, he argues that the Jews interpreted such expressions in a far less literal way than the Muslims, some of whom believed the most literal meanings of anthropomorphist verses in the Quran. Ibn Kammūnah, *Examination,* 99–100; idem, *Ibn Kammūna's Examination* (tr. Perlmann), 145–46.

[46] Ibn Kammūnah, *Examination,* 35–36; idem, *Ibn Kammūna's Examination* (tr. Perlmann), 55. The miracles performed by Moses receive special attention in the work: Roggema, "Epistemology as Polemics," 63.

[47] On the Prophet's ascension and its central place in the vizier's writings, see Brack, *An Afterlife,* 53, 77, 83, 88.

[48] Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tawḍīḥāt-i Rashīdī,* 2:394, 413. The discussion starts with the vizier's interpretation of verse 109:3: "Neither do you worship Him Whom I worship." He argues that the verse reaffirmed the idea that the Prophet's own worship diverges from and supersedes all the other prophets that came before him. Ibid., 2:392.

[49] Ibid., 2:411–12.

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aiming to present a compromise *(tawfīq)* between those who claimed such sight was impossible and those who held a literal understanding of the relevant verses in the Quran.[50] He attempted to resolve this argument by explaining that the Prophet had seen God through a special form of non-physical sight or perception, the "eye of wisdom" *(chashm-i dānish),* which he compared to a state of dreaming, like Ibn Kammūnah had done.[51]

That Rashīd al-Dīn's anti-Jewish apologetics in this treatise were focused on demonstrating Muḥammad's superiority to Moses as a prophet is also related to Ibn Kammūnah's "Examination." While Ibn Kammūnah's general discussion of prophecy draws on a variety of Muslim and Jewish thinkers, including Avicenna, al-Ghazzālī, and Maimonides, his chapter on the Muslim dogma of prophecy relies heavily on, and disputes, the twelfth-century Ashʿarite theologian and exegete Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1210),[52] who infused his studies on *kalām* with Avicennian philosophical concepts.[53] Under Ilkhanid rule, al-Rāzī's influence transgressed sectarian and confessional boundaries, inviting the responses of Jewish and Syriac Christian authors as well.[54] His works further

[50] Ibid., 2:416–26. The discussion revolves around the divergent interpretations of *ḥadīth al-ruʾyā* (beatific vision in the afterlife). On the hadith and divergent versions, see: Livnat Holtzman, *Anthropomorphism in Islam: The Challenge of Traditionalism (700–1350)* (Edinburgh, 2018), 28–29, 33–38, 68–119. Regarding the vizier's attempt to avoid scholarly disagreements by reconciling and harmonizing *(muwāfaqah, ṣulḥ)* a range of oppositional religious doctrines, schools, and views, see Brack, *An Afterlife,* 110–11; Robert Wisnovsky, "Avicennism and Exegetical Practice in the Early Commentaries on the Ishārāt," *Oriens* 14 (2013): 349–78; Felix Klein-Franke, "Rashīd al-Dīn's Treatise 'On Free Will and Predestination': An Attempt to Overcome Inner-Islamic Differences," *Le Muséon* 117, nos. 3–4 (2004): 527–45.

[51] Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tawḍīḥāt-i Rashīdī,* 2:403–4, 416–18, 422–23. One of the main points he makes regarding this aptitude that appears in different capacities among humankind is the speed with which the eye of knowledge perceives certain insights. The incapable individual, he explains, would not be able to grasp, even given a thousand years, what the knowledgeable individual can gain within a single day using the eye of knowledge.

[52] Roggema, "Ibn Kammūna's and Ibn al-ʿIbrī's Responses," 200–1; idem, "Epistemology as Polemics," 52.

[53] See: Gerhard Endress, "Reading Avicenna in the Madrasa: Intellectual Genealogies in the Chains of Transmission of Philosophy and the Sciences in the Islamic East" in *Arabic Theology, Arabic Philosophy: From the Many to the One: Essays in Honour of Richard M. Frank,* ed. James E. Montgomery (Leuven, 2006), 397; Ayman Shihadeh, *The Teleological Ethics of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī* (Leiden, 2006); idem, "From al-Ghazālī to al-Rāzī: 6th/12th Century Developments in Muslim Philosophical Theology," *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 15 (2005): 70–77; Tariq Jaffer, *Rāzī: Master of Qurʾānic Interpretation and Theological Reasoning* (Oxford, 2015), 68–69; Heidrun Eichner, "The Post-Avicennian Philosophical Tradition and Islamic Orthodoxy: Philosophical and Theological Summae in Context" (habilitation thesis, Halle, 2009).

[54] For al-Rāzī's influence on Shiʿi authors: Sabine Schmidtke, *The Theology of al-ʿAllāma al-Ḥillī (d. 726/1325)* (Berlin, 1991). On West Syrian (Jacobite) Christian theology: Hidemi Takahashi, "Re-

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shaped the interreligious polemics and apologetics of the thirteenth century.[55] Ibn Kammūnah's chapter on Islam is aimed largely at refuting al-Rāzī's proofs of Muḥammad's prophethood and arguments on Muḥammad's abrogation of all previous religions.[56]

Regarding Judaism specifically, al-Rāzī accused the Jews of belonging to "the religion of anthropomorphism *(tashbīh),* making forgeries, and propagating lies," accusations that Ibn Kammūnah addressed head-on in his "Examination" (above). Al-Rāzī further argued that Moses's prophetic mission *(daʿwah)* was particular and thus limited to the Israelites, unlike Muḥammad's universal revelation.[57] Rashīd al-Dīn makes a similar argument concerning Jewish particularism as proof of the inferiority of Judaism. In one instance in the treatise on "The Unbelievers," he compares Muḥammad's universal mission to Moses's mission to one of "the tiniest groups of people in the world" and proceeds to suggest that the fact that Mongols converted to Islam under the Ilkhan Ghazan in far greater numbers ("ten times more") than the Children of Israel embraced Judaism is proof that Muḥammad's revelation supersedes that of Moses.[58]

Intellectual engagement with al-Rāzī's oeuvre likewise flourished in the court-sponsored intellectual centers of the Ilkhanate during Rashīd al-Dīn's tenure.[59] Al-Rāzī's reformulation of an Avicennized *kalām* formed the basis of much of Rashīd al-Dīn's theological thought. He innovatively experimented with al-Rāzī's appropriation of Avicennian principles for his theory of the prophetic hierarchy of ethical-intellectual perfection as the basis for a new political theology of Islamic-Chinggisid sacral kingship.[60] This hierarchical model of human souls also came under Ibn Kammūnah's scrutiny. He argued that al-Rāzī's division of mankind into commoners, saints, and prophets omitted the learned, and

ception of Islamic Theology among Syriac Christians in the Thirteenth Century: The Use of Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī in Barhebraeus' *Candelabrum of the Sanctuary,*" *Intellectual History of the Islamicate World* 2 (2014): 170–92; Bert Jacobs, "Unveiling Christ in the Islamicate World: Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's Prophetology as a Model for Christian Apologetics in Gregory Bar ʿEbrōyō's Treatise on the Incarnation," *Intellectual History of the Islamicate World* 6 (2018): 187–216.

[55] Roggema, "Ibn Kammūna's and Ibn al-ʿIbrī's Responses"; Salam Rassi, *Christian Thought in the Medieval Islamicate World: ʿAbdīshoʿ of Nisbis and the Apologetic Tradition* (Oxford, 2022), 84–89.

[56] Roggema, "Ibn Kammūna's and Ibn al-ʿIbrī's responses," 203.

[57] For al-Rāzī's discussion of *naskh,* see, for example: Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn ʿUmar al-Rāzī, *Al-Maṭālib al-ʿāliyah* (Beirut, 1987), 8:121–22.

[58] Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tawḍīḥāt-i Rashīdī,* 2:453.

[59] Bruno de Nicola, "The 'Kāmūsī Corpus': A Case Study in Manuscript Production and Knowledge Transmission in Ilkhanid Iran," *Iranian Studies* 55 (2022): 439–61.

[60] Brack, *An Afterlife,* 16–17, 81–84, 88.

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it was the learned, not the prophets, who, according to Ibn Kammūnah, were the verifiers *(muḥaqqiq)* who perfected the souls of the commoners.[61]

Considering Rashīd al-Dīn's own reliance on al-Rāzī, we should consider the possibility that he had engaged with Ibn Kammūnah's work to provide a rebuttal of his robust criticism of al-Rāzī.[62] Rashīd al-Dīn, however, might have also learned from Ibn Kammūnah's arguments, just as the latter had based his discussion of Islam on al-Rāzī's work. For example, Ibn Kammūnah explained that "the idolaters . . . feel that idol worship brings one closer to God."[63] And Rashīd al-Dīn similarly stated that polytheists could claim that their belief was not idol worship and that they acknowledged the one God but used their worship of idols to come closer to this one true God.[64] For Ibn Kammūnah, however, this example demonstrated the proximity between idolatry and Islamic modes of worship, specifically the Muslim rituals revolving around the Black Stone in the Kaʿbah. Rashīd al-Dīn, on the other hand, used this example for an entirely different end: to further reduce the "pool" of idol worshippers to which the "Verse of the Sword" is applicable. He sought to argue that, in contrast to the critical remarks made against Muslim dogma, Muslims are commanded to use force to convert only in the rarest instances.[65]

Rashīd al-Dīn's interpretation of the two verses and his discussion of the issue of abrogation furthermore relate to the interfaith debates that were carried out at the Mongol courts, and specifically to the strategies employed by religious agents to gain favor with the khans while presenting competing religions in a negative light. The question whether the Prophet Muḥammad had called to violently oppress the idolaters seems to have been a topic vividly debated at the Ilkhanid court. Buddhist monks involved in the inter-religious interactions at the Ilkhan Arghun's court during the 1280s used this argument to present Islam as inimical to the Mongols' religious pluralism and thus to Chinggis Khan's example. They deployed these and other arguments to cultivate anti-Muslim sentiment and reinforce Buddhism as the religion best fitted to accommodate the Mongols' perspective.[66]

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[61] Ibn Kammūnah, *Examination,* 99; idem, *Ibn Kammūna's Examination* (tr. Perlmann), 145.

[62] The vizier refers to al-Rāzī's Quranic commentary, *Al-Tafsīr al-kabīr,* throughout his treatise on "The Unbelievers": Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tawḍīḥāt-i Rashīdī,* 2:372, 375, 378–79.

[63] Ibn Kammūnah, *Examination,* 101–2; idem, *Ibn Kammūna's Examination* (tr. Perlmann), 148.

[64] Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tawḍīḥāt-i Rashīdī,* 2:389.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Jonathan Brack, "Chinggisid Pluralism and Religious Competition: Buddhists, Muslims, and the Question of Violence and Sovereignty in Ilkhanid Iran," *Modern Asian Studies* 56 (2022): 815–39.

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According to Rashīd al-Dīn's *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh*, similar strategies were used at the court of the Great Khan Qubilai (r. 1260–94) in China. The vizier writes that the Christian (probably Syrian) party at the Yuan court attempted to turn Qubilai against the Muslims and enrage the ruler by referring him to the "Verse of the Sword" and its call for the Muslims to kill all polytheists. The Christians told him that they had learned about this verse from a letter from the Ilkhan Abaqa (r. 1265–82) in Iran. According to the account, Qubilai was enraged by this information and discussed the existence of the verse with several Muslim scholars. However, one scholar who was summoned to court to address the ruler's concerns managed to save the Muslims from his wrath by claiming that Qubilai and the Mongols were not polytheists since they acknowledged the one God *(khudā)* and invoked his name on their edicts.[67]

Rashīd al-Dīn's Continuation of "The Unbelievers"

The transition of Rashīd al-Dīn's treatise on "The Unbelievers" from a *tafsīr*-oriented work to an anti-Jewish apologetic comes full circle in the work's *dhayl,* its follow-up treatise in the "Book of Clarifications." There the vizier seeks to refute Judaism by providing evidence from the Jewish scriptures, including verses from the Torah. According to the preface to the *dhayl*, he had planned to have the verses appear in Hebrew script first, then transliterated into Arabic script, and finally in a literal ("word for word") translation into Persian.[68] As far as I can tell, no surviving manuscript includes the Hebrew script, but some manuscripts do retain the transliterated verses alongside their literal translations.[69] Rashīd al-Dīn not only interpreted these verses but also explained Jewish traditions and key concepts such as *gematria* and *shmita*.[70]

[67] Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh,* ed. Muḥammad Rawshan and Muṣṭafá Mūsavī (Tehran, 1373/1994), 2:922–23; idem, *Rashiduddin Fazlullah's Jamiʿu't-Tawarikh: A History of the Mongols,* trans. W. M. Thackston (Cambridge, 1998–99), 3:452.

[68] Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tawḍīḥāt-i Rashīdī,* 2:457–508.

[69] The Tehran Golestan manuscript of the "Rashidi Collection" *(Majmūʿah Rashīdīyah)*—the main copy used for the modern edition of the *Tawḍīḥāt-i Rashīdī* (published in 2015), dated to Dhū al-Qaʿdah 708/1309, i.e., shortly after the composition of the treatises—provides the Hebrew verses in transliteration and translation, but not the original Hebrew (Tehran Golestan MS 2235, pp. 116–32/fols. 69r–77r). The Arabic version of the *Majmūʿah,* on the other hand (Bibliothèque nationale de France MS arabe 2324, fols. 111r–117v), has only the translation (into Arabic).

[70] *Gematria* (from Gr. γεωμετρία) is the computation of individual letters, words, or entire sentences utilizing their numerical equivalence (each of the 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet is correlated with a specific number). *Shmita* is the seventh year of the agricultural cycle, when the farmer must leave his land to lie fallow without plowing or harvesting.

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While it is clear that the treatise's author or the scribe had difficulty transcribing the Hebrew verses into Persian/Arabic script—which may be interpreted in several ways[71]—overall the author's engagement with Jewish tradition and his understanding of biblical verses is strongly indicative of an individual with a rich background in Judaism and a deep acquaintance with key Jewish concepts.[72] The vizier's main arguments against the Jewish faith are familiar from earlier polemical works. They fall roughly into three types: first, that the Jews—specifically the Prophet Ezra/ʿUzayr—falsified the Torah; second, there was internal evidence in the biblical text that predicted the Prophet Muḥammad's arrival; and, finally, that the Jews themselves had negated and abrogated certain edicts from God's word, proving that the Torah had been nullified, an argument which Ibn Kammūnah addressed as well (above).

Rashīd al-Dīn took full credit for the idea of including verses directly from the Torah. He claimed that he was the first author to incorporate Hebrew verses to refute Judaism and convince the Jews to convert to Islam.[73] Not only is this statement not true, but, in fact, he likely had an example in front of him. The al-Shīrāzī Codex—which includes Ibn Kammūnah's "Examination" and was in the possession of Rashīd al-Dīn's library in Tabriz—also included a copy of "Ifḥām al-yahūd," the refutation of Judaism by Samawʾal al-Maghribī. This refutation, which, moreover, appeared after Ibn Kammūnah's "Examination" in the manuscript, also included verses in Hebrew script: the codex copied by hand by al-Shīrāzī in 685/1286 (Marʿashī MS 12868) presents these verses that were written by someone skilled in writing the Hebrew script.[74] Rashīd al-Dīn's *dhayl* to the

[71] The verses may have been read aloud by an individaul versed in Hebrew but written down by a Persian scribe (from hearing) with no knowledge of Hebrew. Therefore, the scribe had difficulty distinguishing the words in each verse properly (among other issues with the transcription). Another option is that we are dealing with a single individual who had memorized the verses (or had read the verses via a transliterated version) but had a limited understanding of written Hebrew and was non-conversant in Hebrew. This option could fit what we know about Rashīd al-Dīn. One more option is that the verses were corrupted by the copyist of the treatise.

[72] Judith Pfeiffer, on the other hand, expressed her doubts about Rashīd al-Dīn's knowledge of Jewish traditions and Hebrew, arguing that his views on Jewish chronology in the Israelite chapter in the vizier's world history were "neither special nor new among Muslim scholars by his time." Judith Pfeiffer, "In the Folds of Time: Rashīd al-Dīn on the Theories of Historicity," *History and Theory* 57 (2019): 32.

[73] Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tawḍīḥāt-i Rashīdī,* 2:458.

[74] It is unlikely that al-Shīrāzī knew Hebrew, and more plausible that he asked a Jew to fill out the space left for the quotations after completion of the manuscript. Pourjavady and Schmidtke further note that later sources claim that al-Shīrāzī had dwelt for a certain period among Jews. Pourjavady and Schmidtke, "Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (d. 710/1311) Codex," 293–98. Ibn Kammūnah relied on "Ifḥām al-yahūd" in his chapter on Judaism. Roggema, "Epistemology as Polemics," 65.

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treatise on "The Unbelievers" may have constituted his attempt to author his own version of "Ifḥām al-yahūd" without acknowledging earlier precedents of such refutations by Jewish converts to Islam.

Not everyone was pleased with Rashīd al-Dīn's discussion of abrogation in his treatise on "The Unbelievers." According to another of his writings titled "The States of the Haters and Slanderers," his "Book of Clarifications" was favorably accepted and acclaimed by all the scholars of Tabriz except for one preacher. In "The States of the Haters and Slanderers," Rashīd al-Dīn writes that since the scholarly community of Tabriz had a favorable reputation for respectfully providing valuable and beneficial feedback to its members, he had his "Book of Clarifications" sent to all the famous scholars of the city along with a personal letter asking them to review the work in detail and identify mistakes so he could correct them. According to Rashīd al-Dīn, each of the scholars who read the "Book of Clarifications" commended it, encouraging the vizier to continue with his theological inquiries. Moreover, without his having had to request it, each of them recorded lavish praise of him in writing, demonstrating their commitment to siding with Rashīd al-Dīn.[75]

Among the scholars, however, there was an unidentified preacher (to whom Rashīd al-Dīn assigns degrading epithets such as hypocrite, envious, and demagogue), who, despite having initially exalted him in the company of other dignitaries, started spreading vicious lies about him. This preacher accused Rashīd al-Dīn (and his supporters in the religious community) of infidelity, initially hiding behind others but subsequently voicing his opposition to Rashīd al-Dīn openly, using his access to the pulpits of Tabriz.[76] While Rashīd al-Dīn did not name him, the individual seems to be Tāj al-Dīn al-Afḍalī (d. 718/19), whom Mamluk authors identified as a well-known preacher from Tabriz, and who was also an ardent critic of Rashīd al-Dīn. According to Mamluk accounts, al-Afḍalī accused Rashīd al-Dīn of falsifying the Quran in favor of his Jewish faith, then went into hiding fearing his vengeance.[77] If al-Afḍalī was indeed the Tabrizi nemesis in Rashīd al-Dīn's account, it appears that he was especially enraged by Rashīd al-Dīn's approach to the question of the abrogation of verse 109:6.

In "The States of the Haters and Slanderers," Rashīd al-Dīn explained that such detractors were bound to arise because of his prominence at court. He drew a comparison between himself and the earlier theologians al-Ghazzālī (d.

[75] Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tawḍīḥāt-i Rashīdī,* 2:509–85.

[76] Ibid., 521–22.

[77] Krawulsky, *The Mongol Īlkhāns,* 90, 113; Amitai-Preiss, "New Material," 32. According to al-Ṣafadī, al-Afḍalī hid from the vizier until someone interceded for him with the vizier and the latter sought to appease al-Afḍalī. Al-Afḍalī, however, continued to loathe Rashīd al-Dīn. Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr,* 4:42–44.

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1111) and al-Rāzī (d. 1209), who, he notes, despite suffering similar attacks, were considered among the most important Muslim scholars. To resolve the dispute with al-Afḍalī, a fatwa addressing the permissibility of holding various attitudes regarding the abrogation of verse 109:6 and countering the accusation of infidelity against Rashīd al-Dīn was requested on behalf of Rashīd al-Dīn. In "The States of the Haters and Slanderers," Rashīd al-Dīn provided both the *istiftāʾ* and the rulings/fatwas that were written by twenty-five of the chief religious scholars throughout the Ilkhanate, from Tabriz to Yazd and Shiraz, all reporting to have examined his treatise on "The Unbelievers" in much detail.[78] The fatwas unanimously *(ijmāʾ)* confirmed his discussion of the question of *naskh* in the case of Surah 109 and declared the preacher an apostate *(murtadd)* and infidel for making such vile accusations against Rashīd al-Dīn despite his great efforts to refute Judaism, Christianity, and the Buddhist belief in reincarnation.[79]

Al-Afḍalī's assault on Rashīd al-Dīn may have also motivated him to add the "endorsements" *(taqrīẓāt)* that the scholars had written earlier for his "Book of Clarifications" (by their own volition, as Rashīd al-Dīn stresses) in later copies of his work. As we noted at the start of this paper, the first two endorsements in these affirmations were penned by the Ilkhanid polymath al-Shīrāzī, from whom Rashīd al-Dīn seems to have also gained a copy of Ibn Kammūnah's refutations.

Conclusion

In one of his recent contributions, Amitai suggested that Rashīd al-Dīn's liminal position at "the meeting place between Islamic Iran, the Mongol Empire and his own Jewish background" contributed to his openness and cultural curiosity, making him the closest we have to an Ilkhanid-era "cosmopolitan intellectual."[80] Earlier scholarship has also connected the vizier's background as a convert from Judaism to the inclusion of a separate chapter on the history of the "Children of Israel" *(Banī Isrāʾīl),* based almost exclusively on Jewish—biblical and rabbinic—sources, in his world history, The "Compendium of Chronicles" *(Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh).*[81] Art historians have similarly attributed some of the picto-

[78] Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tawḍīḥāt-i Rashīdī,* 2:525–40.

[79] Ibid., 517, 524–25, 542.

[80] Amitai, "Jews at the Mongol Court in Iran," 44.

[81] For the Israelite chapter: Karl Jahn, *Die Geschichte der Kinder Israels des Rašīd ad-Dīn: Einleitung, Übersetzung, Kommentar und Texttafeln* (Vienna, 1973). On the chapter as an indication of the vizier's Jewish background, see also: Charles Melville, "Jāmeʿ al-Tawārik̲," *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (2008), 14:462–68. This commonly held view that Rashīd al-Dīn's Jewish background and education informed his inclusion of the Israelite chapter has, however, been recently challenged. New research on the "Compendium"'s authorship has shown that Rashīd al-Dīn borrowed ex-

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rial choices in the illustrations of the "Compendium," specifically the emphasis on biblical themes, to Rashīd al-Dīn's religious background.[82]

Rashīd al-Dīn's treatises discussing theology and Quranic commentary present a different aspect of his multifaceted engagement with his Jewish heritage. While he was likely motivated by his wish to distance himself from this background and reaffirm his commitment to Islam, his efforts to refute the Jewish faith seem to have had the opposite result, underscoring instead his position as a convert and providing his adversaries with leverage against him. Part of this appears to have resulted from his discussion of the question of abrogation in the Quran, in which he attempted to defend Islam from polemical arguments presented by religious contenders such as the Jewish philosopher Ibn Kammūnah. His discussion of the question of the abrogation of the final verse of "The Unbelievers" (109:6) seems to have also been part of an attempt to offer an interpretation of Muslim dogma that could be reconciled with the worldview of his Mongol overlords, particularly the Chinggisid principle of religious pluralism. Thus, he sought to fend off any attempt to undermine his Mongol patrons' commitment to their new faith by depicting Islamic law as incongruent with Chinggisid tradition. This might explain Rashīd al-Dīn's great frustration with critics who accused him of infidelity due to his discussion of abrogation. He aired this frustration in his treatise on "The States of the Haters and Slanderers."

Rashīd al-Dīn situated his anti-Jewish apologetics alongside his other polemical treatises against the Buddhist dogma of reincarnation and the Christian trinity, suggesting that he considered himself to be engaging in a broader and more ambitious endeavor of defending Islam in the competitive religious arena of the Ilkhanid court.[83] One aspect of this religious arena related to the circulation of religious polemical works between Ilkhanid scholars and to and from the Ilkhanid court. The transfer of Ibn Kammūnah's "Examination of the Three Faiths"—as part of the codex copied by the Muslim scholar al-Shīrāzī—into Rashīd al-Dīn's library and his (likely subsequent) response to the Jewish

tensively, often with only minor changes, from another, Shiʿi author, ʿAbd Allāh Qāshānī, for the "Compendium"'s second volume—the world history. This includes the Israelite chapter as well. See Osamu Otsuka, "Qāshānī, the First World Historian: Research on his Uninvestigated Persian General History, *Zubdat al-tawārīkh,*" *Studia Iranica* 47 (2018): 119–49; and Kamola, *Making Mongol History,* 95–103.

[82] Natif argued that the paintings maintain a connection to biblical source materials, and Hillenbrand linked the attention to biblical themes to Rashīd al-Dīn's Jewish heritage. Mika Natif, "Rashīd al-Dīn's Alter Ego: The Seven Paintings of Moses in the *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh,*" in *Rashīd al-Dīn: Agent and Mediator,* ed. Akasoy et al., 15–37; Robert Hillenbrand, "The Arts of the Book in Ilkhanid Iran," in *The Legacy of Genghis Khan: Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256–1353,* ed. Linda Komaroff and Stefano Carboni (New Haven, 2002), 135–67.

[83] Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tawḍīḥāt-i Rashīdī,* 2:555–56.

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philosopher's arguments, demonstrate how polemical tracts circulated across religious boundaries and triggered responses and engagement. It further shows that the Mongol court in Iran formed an important node within the wider network of inter-religious exchange.

Another dimension of this competitive religious arena was the interfaith debate at the Ilkhanid court. The Mongol rulers were keen on orchestrating inter-religious disputations.[84] While Ilkhanid sources mostly record debates between Buddhists and Muslims or between Shiʿis and Sunnis,[85] there are also indications that Jews participated, or were at least present, at these interfaith exchanges.[86] In this regard, Rashīd al-Dīn's anti-Jewish apologetics represent the continuation of the culture of interfaith exchange and disputation under Mongol rule that included Jews and Judaism alongside Islam and Buddhism.

Postscript

Tzvi Langermann's important summary and discussion of Rashīd al-Dīn's continuation *(dhayl)* for "The Unbelievers" (based on the Arabic translation of the Persian text) was published in *Religions* shortly after the revisions for this article were completed.[87] On the question of the relationship between Samawʾal al-Maghribī's *Ifḥām al-yahūd* and Rashīd al-Dīn's work, Langermann saw "no direct connection between Samawʾal's tract" and the vizier's treatise.[88] After completing my article, I found indications that Rashīd al-Dīn did rely on *Ifḥām al-yahūd*. This supports the argument that for his refutations of Judaism and the Torah, Rashīd al-Dīn consulted Marʿashī MS 12868, which includes both Ibn Kammūnah's *Tanqīḥ* and *Ifḥām al-yahūd* and bears the stamps of the Rashīdī library.

[84] George Lane, "Intellectual Jousting and the Chinggisid Wisdom Bazaars," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 26 (2016): 235–47; Jonathan Brack, "Disenchanting Heaven: Interfaith Debate, Sacral Kingship, and Conversion to Islam in the Mongol Empire, 1260–1335," *Past & Present* 250 (2021): 11–53.

[85] Brack, *An Afterlife*.

[86] The Sufi shaykh Simnānī (d. 1336), for example, described his conversations with an unidentified Jewish ascetic rabbi whom the Ilkhan Arghun (r. 1284–91), an avid supporter of Buddhism, greatly respected. Devin DeWeese, "'Alāʾ al-Dawla Simnānī's Religious Encounters at the Mongol Court Near Tabriz," in *Politics, Patronage and the Transmission of Knowledge in 13th–15th century Tabriz,* ed. Judith Pfeiffer (Leiden, 2014), 35–76. And the Jewish vizier Saʿd al-Dawlah (d. 1291) used these debates between Buddhists and Muslims to convince Arghun to embrace a new policy. Brack, "Chinggisid Pluralism," 832–34.

[87] Y. Tzvi Langermann, "*Naskh* ('Abrogation') in Muslim Anti-Jewish Polemic: The Treatise of Rashīd al-Dīn Hamadanī (1247–1318)," *Religions* 15, no. 5 (2024): 1–13.

[88] Ibid., 4.

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The evidence is found in Samawʾal's discussion of the allusions in the Jewish scripture to the Prophet Muḥammad and parallel sections in Rashīd al-Dīn's treatises. Samawʾal deduces from Deuteronomy 2:4 ("You are about to travel through the territory of your brothers, the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir") that the "brothers" in Deuteronomy 18:15 ("The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers") allude to the children of Esau, the Ishmaelites, and thus this verse anticipates the rise of the Prophet Muḥammad among the Ishmaelites.[89] While earlier Muslim authors referenced Deuteronomy 18:15 in arguing that the Torah alludes to Muḥammad, Samawʾal appears to have been the first to use Deuteronomy 2:4 to further support this argument and refute Jewish counterarguments.[90] On two separate occasions in his treatises, Rashīd al-Dīn makes the same argument as Samawʾal based on the same two verses from Deuteronomy.[91] Furthermore, like Samawʾal, Rashīd al-Dīn too follows this with additional evidence from Genesis 17:20. *Gematria,* the practice of assigning numerical value to a letter, name, or word, is used by both Samawʾal and Rashīd al-Dīn to interpret the Hebrew term *bi-me'od me'od* ("exceedingly," equivalent to the number ninety-two) as an allusion to Muhammad's name.[92] It seems, therefore, safe to conclude that Rashīd al-Dīn used Marʿashī MS 12868 and that Ibn Kammūnah's *Tanqīḥ* and Samawʾal's *Ifḥām al-yahūd* both influenced his decision to write polemical tracts against the Jews.

[89] See Moshe Perlmann, ed. and trans., "Samauʾal Al-Maghribī: Ifḥām Al-Yahūd: Silencing the Jews," *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 32 (1964): 45 (translation), 29–31 (Arabic).

[90] Haggai Mazuz, "The Identity of the Apostate in the Epistle of Yemen," *AJS Review* 38, no. 2 (2014): 367.

[91] Rashīd al-Dīn's presentation here is more detailed than Samawʾal's; in fact, he seems to slightly elaborate the argument, adding Deuteronomy 34:10 ("And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses") to the discussion and explaining why Deuteronomy 18:18 cannot refer to Jesus. Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tawḍīḥāt-i Rashīdī,* 2:430–33, 482–86.

[92] Mazuz, "The Identity," 368–69; Perlmann, "Samauʾal Al-Maghribī," 46–47 (translation), 31–34 (Arabic); Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tawḍīḥāt-i Rashīdī,* 2:486–87.

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The King of the Tatar in Jerusalem: A Note in Hebrew on the Mongol Advance South

On the road northward from Egypt, northeast of Gaza, a great bridge rises over a brook with no water. The method of construction dates it to the Mamluk era, and textual evidence backs this up: the Mamluk writer Ibn Shaddād al-Ḥalabī (d. 1283) listed it among the bridges built by Sultan Baybars (r. 1260–77).[1] In their fascinating study of the bridges and roads to Mamluk Gaza, Reuven Amitai and Kate Raphael examined and described this bridge, built over al-Ḥaṣī/Shiqma stream near the medieval village Dayr Sunayd and present-day Nativ ha-'Asara. They analyzed it alongside three other Mamluk bridges, built over nearly dry riverbeds in the southern coastal plain of modern Israel: Jisr Jindās, north of modern Ludd, built over the Ayalon river in 1273; a bridge over the Soreq river, near Yavne/Yubnā, built in 1272–73; and a bridge near Ashdod/Isdūd, dated to the Mamluk era, and possibly to the rule of Sultan Baybars, due to its similarity to Jisr Jindās.[2] In these four cases, the two researchers noted, the Mamluks were not adding a layer to earlier construction, but were the original builders.[3] These construction endeavors were meant to facilitate communication and military movement and to develop trade.[4] The present article will focus on the military aspect.

Mongol forces crossed the Euphrates to invade the Ayyubid and, later, Mamluk, domains numerous times. Twice—in 1260 and in 1299–1300—they reached as far south as Gaza, raiding and ruling cities and countryside from the Golan Heights throughout the Jordan Valley to Jerusalem, Hebron, and more, in the land called by medieval Jewish writers *Eretz Yisra'el,* or the Land of Israel. Yet the Mongols never did stay long. In an early study, Amitai concluded that their con-

[1] Kate Raphael and Reuven Amitai, "Bridges and Roads to Mamluk Gaza and Beyond" (forthcoming in *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*), 1–2, and n. 6. The bridge was built of uniformly cut local stones, in this case *kurkar,* characteristic of the Mamluk method (ibid., 11). I thank Dr. Raphael for sharing this article.

[2] Ibid., 10.

[3] Ibid., 7; see also Andrew Peterson, "Medieval Bridges of Palestine," in *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras,* vol. 6, *Proceedings of the 14th and 15th International Colloquium organized at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in May 2005 and May 2006,* ed. Urbain Vermeulen and Kristof D'hulster (Leuven, 2010), 297–98 (with no mention of the bridge near Dayr Sunayd).

[4] Raphael and Amitai, "Bridges and Roads," 12–16.

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trol over the southern areas was loose.[5] His later examination located traces of Mongol administration, formed during their seven-month rule in 1260, at Banyas and al-Ṣubaybah/Namrūd fortress in the Golan and at Karak in Transjordan. Although a small force was stationed at Gaza, no Mongol administration was established there.[6]

A nearly forgotten Hebrew text forms a bridge between the Mamluk roads and the short-lived Mongol rule. It is part of an exegesis of the Torah, written in the early fourteenth century by Rabbi Nissim ben Moshe of Marseilles. The entire text was edited and published by Kreisel, and the part touching on the Mongols was published by Ḥazani and referred to in several studies.[7] No English translation of it has been made previously. This article intends to fill this lacuna, and to further develop our knowledge of the seasonal pattern of Mongol activity in *Eretz Yisra'el*.

The Author

Nissim is known only from his essay *Ma'ase Nissim* ("Miracle Deed")—an exegesis of the Torah with a lengthy philosophical introduction.[8] He referred to himself as "Nissim ben Rabbi Moses ben Rabbi Solomon ben Rabbi Moses of blessed memory, of the diaspora exiled to the state of Marsillia, exiled by Titus from Jerusalem."[9] The emphasis he put on Marseilles and the ancient roots of its Jewish community, related to the direct exile from Jerusalem by the Roman commander who conquered and destroyed it in 70 CE, led Sirat to assume it was Nissim's birthplace as well as his place of activity.[10] His exegesis follows the path

[5] Reuven Amitai-Preiss, "Mongol Raids into Palestine, A.D. 1260 and 1300," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 2 (1987): 247.

[6] Reuven Amitai, "Mongol Provincial Administration: Syria in 1260 as a Case-study," in *In laudem hierosolymitani,* ed. Iris Shagrir, Ronnie Ellenblum, and Jonathan Riley-Smith (Aldershot, 2007), 123, 137.

[7] *Ma'ase Nissim,* ed. Ḥaim Kreisel (Jerusalem, 2000) [in Hebrew]; Israel Ḥazani, "A Hebrew Source on the Mongol Incursion into the Land of Israel and Jerusalem in 1299," *Zion* 47 (1982): 344–46 [in Hebrew]; Amitai-Preiss, "Mongol Raids," 245; Joshua Prawer, *Jews in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Jerusalem, 2000), 172 [in Hebrew]; Na'ama O. Arom, "Hebrew Sources," in *Cambridge History of the Mongol Empire* (Cambridge, 2023), ed. Michal Biran and Hodong Kim, vol. 2.

[8] The text is found in seven MSS. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS 720 was copied ca. 1370, and formed the basis for Kreisel's edition. Other MSS include MS Oxford, Bodleian, 1294; MS Florence, Laurentian Library, 50; MS Moscow, Russian State Library, Ginzburg collection 572; MS Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, 1418; MS New York, Jewish Theological Seminary of America Library, 2462; and MS London, British Library, 378. See Kreisel, *Ma'ase Nissim,* 49–50.

[9] Kreisel, *Ma'ase Nissim,* 53.

[10] Colette Sirat, "The Political Ideas of Nissim ben Moshe of Marseilles," *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* 9 (1990): 54 [in Hebrew].

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of the great (and controversial) philosopher and leader Maimonides (1138–1204), and sails the sea of the Greek philosopher Aristotle (384–322 BCE). Writing with a rationalist approach, Nissim explained the miracles described in the Torah not as direct interventions by God on earth, but as natural or historical phenomena, propelled by the Divine Will.[11]

Dating the Work

Nissim's philosophical approach aided in estimating the date of writing, for many historical events are mentioned in his commentary. The scholar and critic Schorr, the first to publish a part of the text, dated it to the early fourteenth century based on the mention of a volcanic eruption on the island of Ischia (1302) that formed a part of Nissim's commentary on the divine destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.[12] In later studies, Sirat dated the text to shortly after 1315, and Kreisel added the surmised date of 1324.[13]

Ma'ase Nissim on the Mongol Advance

The same historically-tuned approach allowed the Mongols to invade Nissim's text in his commentary on the Torah portion of *Be-ḥuqqotai* (Leviticus 26:3–27:34). This portion describes the blessings that the people of Israel will receive if they obey God's laws and the curses that will befall them if they do not. Thus, Lev. 26:32 pictures a predicted desolation of the land of Israel: "and I will bring the land into desolation, and your enemies that shall dwell therein shall be desolate in it."[14] Nissim commented that this divine threat was fulfilled by human hands;

[11] For Nissim's commentary as a bridge between the rationalist and Jewish traditional points of view, see Kreisel, *Ma'ase Nissim,* 7; idem, "The writing and rewriting of *Ma'ase Nissim* by R. Nissim of Marseilles," in *Écriture et réécriture des texts philosophiques médiévaux,* ed. Jacqueline Hamesse and Olga Weijers (Turnhout, 2006), 312. For Nissim's unique usage of Aristotle's *Politics* as a basis for understanding the Torah, see Sirat, "The Political Ideas," 73–74, 76.

[12] Osias Heschel Schorr, "R. Nissim B.R. Moshe of Marseilles," *haḤalutz* 7 (1865): 103 [in Hebrew]; Kreisel, *Ma'ase Nissim,* 281–82.

[13] Sirat, "The Political Ideas," 57–88; the possible date of 1324 is based on a suggested reading of a colophon on a now lost MS; see Kreisel, "The Writing and Re-writing," 311–12, and n. 4.

[14] Note that in many English translations of this verse, the second verb is rendered as "astonished" instead of "desolate," since the two verbs derive from the same root; yet Nissim, like other medieval and modern commentators, took the "desolation" meaning. See, for example, Nahmanides' exegesis: Moshe ben Naḥman, *Commentary on the Torah,* trans. Charles B. Chavel (New York, 1971), 3:473.

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listing the numerous political upheavals that occurred in the land of Israel—and in the city of Jerusalem in particular—he wrote:[15]

> While no [people of] Israel dwell in it, our enemies who dwell in it become desolate, and could not settle it, since the days of the Destruction[16] to this day. And how many ruined lands and towns have been greatly rebuilt and resettled following their destructions, and these [lands and towns] are inferior to the land of Israel by ten thousand times!
>
> And wars are constantly wrought on the dwellers of the land of Israel. Rome who had exiled us held it for a time, but not for long. Then the hand of the Ishmaelites [i.e., Muslims] overpowered and defeated them, and held it for a while. Then the Christians awakened to attack, and banished them, and held it. And then the hand of the Ishmaelites overpowered, and they settled in their stead. Then the hand of the Christians overpowered and held it. And after a short while the Ishmaelites overpowered and defeated them, and hold it to this day. Thrice reigned the Christians in the land, and thrice the Ishmaelites, from the day of the Second Destruction to this time.[17] And even when each of these two nations held it, never did they live peacefully, for the sound of fear was constantly in their ears and the terror of wars, each fearing the other. For the Ishmaelites envy the Christians, and the Christians envy the Ishmaelites, for settling the chosen land. Thus, it had never been properly settled until now.[18]
>
> And beside this, other nations from the south and the east of the land long for the land and desire it. And once every fifty years, at least, the King of the Tatar[19] ventures with many people and

[15] This translation is based upon Kreisel, *Ma'ase Nissim,* 396–97, alongside the MS referred to online at gallica.bnf.fr: Nissim ben Moise ben Salomon de Marseilles, "Seper haNisiym," BNF MS Hebreu 720, fol. 98.

[16] The Roman destruction of the Second Temple, 70 CE.

[17] Byzantine rule officially began with the conversion of Emperor Constantine in 312 CE; the Caliph ʿUmar invaded the land, conquering Jerusalem in 638; the First Crusade overran the city in 1099; Saladin conquered most of the land, including Jerusalem, in 1187; Jerusalem, except for the Temple Mount, was handed to Emperor Friedrich II in the treaty of Jaffa/Tel al-ʿAjjul in 1229; and was conquered again for the Muslim side by the Khwarazmians in 1244.

[18] Kreisel, *Ma'ase Nissim,* 396; BNF MS Hebreu 720, fol. 98.

[19] For this term, see below.

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> a great host to hold Jerusalem. And then all the inhabitants of the land of Israel flee from the very sound of them, hiding in the caves and in the clefts of the rocks, until the passing of this great host. They leave their homes with no resident, and the city with no man, until the passing of this great host.
>
> For they cannot remain, for the water of the rivers and springs are not enough for them, with their horses, and their camels, for the multitude of their host, nearly as numerous as the host of Sennacherib.[20] You will not believe that which is told to you about what I heard and what was related to me from the host of the Tatars as it came to Jerusalem.[21]
>
> And all that is a reason for the desolation of the land, until God wills it and restores his people, and rebuilds the ruins of Jerusalem, and restores his divine presence into the city, and then it shall be inhabited as in the days of old.[22]

MA'ASE NISSIM AND THE "KING OF THE TATAR"

While Kreisel and Brayer understood "Tatar" to mean the Khwarazmians, Ḥazani, Prawer, and Amitai took this name to mean the Mongols.[23] This possibility is sustained by the wide usage of the name "Tatar" to refer to the Mon-

[20] King of Assyria (705/704–681 BCE), who led a campaign into Judea, besieging Jerusalem and leaving it untouched—either because of a heavy indemnity paid (Henry W. F. Saggs, "Sennacherib," *Encyclopedia Britannica,* https://www.britannica.com/biography/Sennacherib) or because of a divine force striking his forces at night (2 Kings 18:13 for the siege, 19:35–36 for its end).

[21] Whether Nissim was actually in Jerusalem at the time remains an open question. This phrase might intend to emphasize the above description; and it might have been an introduction to a paragraph that was lost before the earliest copy was made, ca. 1370, for there is no lacuna at this point in any of the MSS.

[22] Kreisel, *Ma'ase Nissim,* 397; BNF MS Hebreu 720, fol. 98. This rather optimistic view of the curse of the land's desolation was expressed by earlier Jewish exegetists as well. Both Rashi (1040–1105) and Nahmanides (1194–1270) saw it as an element that could assist a future Jewish return to Zion. See Rashi (Shlomo Yitzchaki), *Commentary of the Pentateuch,* ed. Aharon Samet (Jerusalem, 1990), 3:628 [in Hebrew]; Nahmanides (Moshe ben Nahman), *Commentary of the Torah,* ed. Haim D. Chavel (Jerusalem, 1960), 190 [in Hebrew].

[23] Kreisel, *Ma'ase Nissim,* 397, n. 258; Meir I. Brayer, "Nissim of Marseilles' Commentary on the Pentateuch" (Ph.D. diss., Yeshiva University, 1970), 34; Ḥazani, "A Hebrew Source on the Mongol Incursion," 345; Prawer, *Jews in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem,* 172; Amitai-Preiss, "Mongol Raids," 60.

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gols in Arabic as well as Hebrew texts; moreover, associating the Tatars with the Mongols would agree better with Nissim's commentary, for the Khwarazmians were officially Sunni Muslims when they invaded the land, and their one major incursion would not apply the recurring pattern described in the text at hand. That being said, it is interesting to note that Nissim's description of the Mongols lacks the negative, and often dramatic, phrases used by many writers of the time. The Mongols are referred to here as an element that lays waste to the land, but are not listed as "enemies"; their designation as "other nations," neither Christian nor Muslim, defines them as alien, or new to the region, but human, and not necessarily hostile.[24]

"Hiding in Caves and in the Clefts of the Rocks. . ."

This paragraph has an interesting archaeological echo. In a large karstic cave about 11 kilometers south of Nablus that was studied by a team headed by Dvir Raviv, five identifiable coins from the late Ayyubid-early Mamluk periods were discovered. The nature of the cave—its hidden entrance and its relative inaccessibility, alongside its proximity to populated areas—and the findings from at least eight periods, from the Late Chalcolithic to the Mamluk—led the researchers to surmise it was used for generations as a refuge in troubled times.[25]

"For They Cannot Remain. . ."—*Ma'ase Nissim* and the Halt of the Mongol Advance

Nissim's commentary flows into a discussion of the reasons for the halt of the Mongol advance in the trans-Euphrates front. Alongside internal reasons—the death of the Great Khan Möngke (r. 1250–59), followed by an intense domestic struggle that ended, or severely transformed, the unity of the Mongol Em-

[24] For a similar attitude toward the Mongols, as expressed in other Hebrew texts, see Na'ama O. Arom, "No Fear—Different Images of the Mongols in Three Mediaeval Hebrew Texts," *Acta Mongolica* 10 (2010): 151–56; for a graphic expression of the same, see the outline of the Mongol lands in the fourteenth-century map of Elisha ben Abraham Cresques: Katrin Kogman-Appel, *Catalan Maps and Jewish Books: The Intellectual Profile of Elisha ben Abraham Cresques (1325–1387)* (Turnhout, 2020), 221–22; discussion, 231–35. I thank Prof. Amitai for bringing this research to my attention.

[25] For the Mongol attack near Nablus in 1260, see Amitai-Preiss, "Mongol Raids," 237; for a general description of the cave and the periods represented in it, see Dvir Raviv et al., "An Archaeological Survey at el-Janab Cave, Central Samaria," *Jerusalem Journal of Archaeology* 3, no. 2 (2022): 233; for a historical discussion of the Ayyubid-Mamluk finds, see ibid., 270–72. For a detailed catalogue of the coins, see Dvir Raviv et al., "The Numismatic Finds from el-Janab Cave in Central Samaria," *Israel Numismatic Research* 17 (2022): 165–80, esp. 168–71. I thank Dr. Raviv for sharing this research.

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pire[26]—there remained the geographical factor. The core of the Mongol army invading Syria consisted of mounted archers riding steppe ponies; this was true in both 1260 and in 1299, as Amitai has convincingly shown.[27] Their reliance on pasture, in the Middle East as well as in eastern Europe, was one of their advantages, for they needed no supply lines, so long as pasture and water were available.[28] Ghazan Khan (r. 1295–1304), in his invasion of Syria in 1299, challenged the reliance on pasture, accompanying his forces with camels carrying fodder,[29] but the problem of water remained. Thus, an ecological boundary arose in the path of this unstoppable army, a boundary that was broken only on fronts that greatly mattered for the Mongols—such as in southern China—and even then, only after years' long endeavors, and not by traditional steppe warfare.

Southern Syria and the land of Israel are a "grey" area within this ecological boundary, green and watered during most winters but hot and dry from springtime onward. The eastern winds of the spring, blowing from the desert areas, carry waves of heat and drought;[30] while in most years spring lasts from mid-March to mid-June,[31] heat waves can strike in February as well. These climatic observations were made in modern-day Israel but may offer insight for medieval times as well. Masson-Smith, dedicating a detailed study to the logistical aspect of the Mongol invasion of Syria, concluded that during the summers, only the Orontes/ʿĀṣī River in northern Syria would meet the water needs of a large Mongol army.[32] While the outcome of battles was greatly influenced by the strength of the commanders and the motivation of their forces, it might be possible, as Amitai argued,[33] that the overall outcome of the Mongol invasions was affected by water and sun.

[26] See Peter Jackson, "The Dissolution of the Mongol Empire," *Central Asiatic Journal* 22 (1978): 186–244; Hodong Kim, "The Unity of the Mongol Empire and Continental Exchanges over Eurasia," *Journal of Central Eurasian Studies* 1 (2009): 15–42.

[27] Reuven Amitai, "Whither the Ilkhanid Army? Ghazan's First Campaign into Syria (1299–1300)," in *Warfare in Inner Asian History (500–1800),* ed. Nicola Di Cosmo (Leiden, 2002), 223, 253.

[28] For eastern Europe, see Denis Sinor, "Horse and Pasture in Inner Asian History," *Oriens Extremus* 19 (1972): 171–84. For Syria, see John Masson-Smith Jr., "ʿAyn Jālūt: Mamlūk Success or Mongol Failure?" *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 44, no. 2 (1984): 307–45; David O. Morgan, "The Mongols in Syria, 1260–1300," in *Crusade and Settlement,* ed. Peter W. Edbury (Cardiff, 1985), 231–35.

[29] 50,000 camels, according to Waṣṣāf; see Amitai, "Whither," 230.

[30] Yair Goldreich, *The Climate of Israel* (Ramat Gan, 1998), 160, 164 [in Hebrew].

[31] Ibid., 35.

[32] Masson-Smith, "ʿAyn Jālūt," 340.

[33] Amitai, "Whither," 250, 258; Reuven Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-Īlkhānid War, 1260–1281* (Cambridge, 1995), 234.

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Apparently aware of these factors, the major Mongol operations in Syria seem to have taken place in autumn and winter.[34] The two invasions southward into the land of Israel began in Syria in winter and ended by early spring. In 1260, the Mongol army of Hülegü Khan attacked Aleppo on 18 January;[35] Kitbuqa, sent south by Hülegü, wreaked havoc in the regions of the Ḥawrān and the Nablus countryside, reaching Jerusalem, Hebron, and as far as Gaza, then returned to Damascus with most of his force by March-April.[36] The two invasions initiated by Hülegü's son and heir, Abaqa Khan (r. 1265–81), both took place during early fall. The first invading force reached as far as Aleppo, attacked and looted the city on 28–29 October 1280, and retreated in November;[37] in the second attempt, the Mongol force reached northern Syria in October 1281 and met a bitter end in the battle near Homs at the end of the month.[38] Abaqa's grandson, Ghazan Khan, crossed the Euphrates River at the head of his army on 7 December 1299;[39] the forces he sent south, led by Mulai, raided the Jordan valley, Jerusalem, and numerous places across the land, reaching Gaza, and returned to Damascus in the middle of March 1300.[40] Ghazan himself had left Damascus earlier, in February, heading back to the northeast, but his intentions to reconquer the land were clear. Upon leaving Damascus on 5 February 1300, Ghazan issued a royal proclamation, translated by Amitai: "We will return to [this] country in the autumn, and we intend to go to Egypt."[41]

This promise Ghazan indeed fulfilled: he led two additional invasions into Syria, both of them during autumn and winter. In the first attempt, Ghazan crossed the Euphrates on 30 December 1300; in the second, he crossed the river on 29 January 1304.[42] Ghazan's brother and heir, Öljeitü Khan (r. 1304–16), initiated the last major Mongol invasion into Syria; his forces crossed the Euphrates to lay an unsuccessful siege on Raḥbat al-Shām beginning on 23 December 1312, only to retreat at the end of February 1313.[43]

[34] Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks,* 228.

[35] See Amitai-Preiss, "Mongol Raids," 236.

[36] According to Abū Shāmah (d. 1267), translated and discussed by Amitai-Preiss, "Mongol Raids," 237.

[37] Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks,* 184–85 for the first invasion; 189 for the second.

[38] The battle took place on 29 October 1281; ibid., 195.

[39] Amitai, "Whither," 230.

[40] According to Baybars al-Manṣūrī (d. 1324/5), translated and discussed by Amitai-Preiss, "Mongol Raids," 244, 247.

[41] Amitai, "Whither," 260; the date is on 259.

[42] J. A. Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Il-Khāns," in *The Cambridge History of Iran,* ed. J. A. Boyle (Cambridge, 1968), 5:303–422; see 389 for the first attempt and 393 for the second.

[43] Ibid., 403.

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Conclusion

Coming back to the bridge over the dry brook. . . In their research, Raphael and Amitai noted that all four rivers in the southern coastal plan over which Mamluk bridges were built are known to flood during winter.[44] Each of the aforementioned Mongol operations, however unsuccessful, caused the Mamluk army—whose heart was on the Nile—to rush north to Syria across a wintery, flooded land. Thus, Mongol activity might have contributed to the area's desolation but was also a catalyst for its development, for it caused the Mamluk sultans to adjust for winter campaigns, to fight when the rivers and streams were full and flooded, and to build bridges where no one had built them before.

[44] Raphael and Amitai, "Bridges and Roads," 7.



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The Story of Moses in Mamluk Cairo

Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī (906–22/1501–16),[1] the penultimate Mamluk sultan of Egypt and Syria, portrayed himself as a learned, multilingual, wise king.[2] His courtiers hailed him as a cyclical renewer of Islam *(mujaddid),*[3] imparting a sacred aura to his reign. The present article deals with *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ,* or legends/stories/histories of biblical prophets,[4] that were performed in his court in the Citadel of Cairo, particularly the story of Moses found in two unpublished Arabic texts from Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī's "library."[5]

My working hypothesis is that reception and transmission of these texts befitted the political discourse of the time and served to strengthen the sultan's prestige. The performance of *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* and other literary productions in the royal court was part of the sultan's efforts to reinforce his image and reaffirm his legitimacy.[6] Following a condensed account of *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ,* I will depict the outlines of two unique manuscripts. One, preserved at the National Library of Israel, is a collection of legends and exegeses that were discussed during meetings at the sultan's court.[7] The second, a two-volume work titled

[1] Christian Mauder, *In the Sultan's Salon: Learning, Religion, and Rulership at the Mamlūk Court of Qānisawh al-Ghawrī (r. 1501–1516)* (Leiden, 2021); Carl F. Petry, *The Mamlūk Sultanate: A History* (Cambridge, 2022).

[2] Robert Irwin, "The Political Thinking of the 'Virtuous Ruler,' Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 12, no. 1 (2008): 37–49.

[3] Ella Landau-Tasseron, "The 'Cyclical Reform': A Study of the Mujaddid Tradition," *Studia Islamica* 70 (1989): 79–117; Hamid Algar, "The Centennial Renewer: Bediüzzaman Said Nursi and the Tradition of 'Tajdīd,'" *Journal of Islamic Studies* 12, no. 3 (2001): 291–311; Maya Yazigi, "A Claim of Tajdīd for the Sixth/Twelfth Century? al-Samʿānī, his Kitāb al-Ansāb and a Legacy Contested," *Oriens* 39, no. 2 (2011): 174–76.

[4] This genre encompasses the stories of biblical prophets. It usually starts with the creation and ends with Muḥammad, who is the sole hero of the *sīrah,* a literary genre that is devoted exclusively to the Prophet of Islam. Roberto Tottoli, *Biblical Prophets in the Qurʾān and Muslim Literature* (London, 2002); and idem, *Studies in Islamic Traditions and Literature* (New York, 2023).

[5] Kristof D'hulster, *Browsing through the Sultan's Bookshelves: Towards a Reconstruction of the Library of the Mamlūk Sultan Qānisawh al-Ghawrī (r. 906–922/1501–1516)* (Göttingen, 2021).

[6] Cf. Jonathan Brack, "Theologies of Auspicious Kingship: The Islamization of Chinggisid Sacral Kingship in the Islamic World," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 60, no. 4 (2018): 1143–71.

[7] Jerusalem, National Library of Israel Yahuda collection MS Arab 294. See Efraim Wust, *Catalogue of the Arabic, Persian, and Turkish Manuscripts of the Yahuda Collection of the National Library of*

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"Al-ʿUqūd al-jawharīyah fī al-nawādir al-Ghawrīyah," is preserved in the Süleymaniye Library in Istanbul.[8] In the third part of this article, I will speculate on the role of these texts in evolving the sultan's image.

Introduction

Islam is a biblical religion.[9] Narratives of biblical prophets can be traced in the Quran, which serves as the foundation of a well-developed Islamic literary tradition.[10] Stories *(qiṣṣah)* of the prophet Moses *(Mūsá)* are among the most popular.[11] His legend, which has been told in various ways by Jews,[12] Christians, and Muslims,[13] portrayed him as a true believer who confronted idolaters[14] and an intimate companion of God, who drew near him and spoke directly *(kalīm)* with him.[15]

Dozens of Quranic verses[16] about Moses serve as the departure points for literary activities as far back as the early and middle Islamic periods (c. 750–1500).

Israel, vol. 1, ed. Raquel Ukeles with Sagit Butbul, Khader Salameh, and Yusuf al-Uzbeki (Leiden, 2016), 448–49.

[8] Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, MSS Aya Sofya 3312 and 3313 (microfilm Arşiv no. 3991). See Christian Mauder and Christopher Markiewicz, "A New Source on the Social Gatherings (*Majālis*) of the Mamluk Sultan Qānṣawh al-Ghawrī," *Al-ʿUṣūr al-Wusṭā* 24 (2016): 145–48.

[9] Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, for example, compares the advance of the Mongols with the story of the villain-Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar and his conquest of Jerusalem. Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyá Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī (700–50/1301–49), *Masālik al-abṣār fī mamālik al-amṣār,* ed. K. Jabūrī and M. al-Najm (Beirut, 2005), 27:152.

[10] Cf. Quran 2:87–88, 18:60–82; Gabriel Said Reynolds, *The Qurʾān and Its Biblical Subtext* (New York, 2010).

[11] The Mamluk period's major collection is Ismāʿīl ibn ʿUmar Ibn Kathīr (701–74/1301–73), *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ,* ed. ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Farmāwī (Cairo, 1997). This is an anthology of stories of the prophets, even though Ibn Kathīr criticized the attractiveness of biblical stories among his fellow brethren; and see below.

[12] Samuel Krauss, "A Moses Legend," *The Jewish Quarterly Review,* n.s., 2, no. 3 (1912): 339–64.

[13] Brannon M. Wheeler, *Moses in the Quran and Islamic Exegesis* (London, 2002); Cornelia Schöck, "Moses," in *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān,* ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Leiden, 2003), 3:419–26; Vernon K. Robbins and Gordon D. Newby, "A Prolegomenon to the Relation of the Qurʾān and the Bible," in *Bible and Qurʾān: Essays in Scriptural Intertextuality,* ed. John C. Reeves (Leiden, 2004), 34 (they mention 137 references).

[14] Quran 4:164; 19:51–53; 20:80; ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUmar al-Bayḍawī al-Shīrāzī (685/1286?), *Anwār al-tanzīl wa-asrār al-taʾwīl,* ed. M. al-Marʿashlī (Beirut, 1989), 4:34.

[15] Quran 7:143–45; cf. Julian Obermann, "Koran and Agada: The Events at Mount Sinai," *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 58, no. 1 (1941): 23–48.

[16] Moses's name is attested 136 times in the Quran. Surah 28 recites his history in detail. Cf. Ḍiyāʾ al-Dīn Abū al-Fatḥ Naṣr Allāh ibn Muḥammad Ibn al-Athīr al-Jazarī al-Shāfiʿī (558–637/1163–

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These verses are especially prominent in the popular *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* compilations.[17] Generations of Muslim scholars,[18] historians, transmitters, and exegetes interpreted and disseminated these legends,[19] and Mamluk authors were no exception.[20] Their literary production attests that Mamluk audiences were exposed to numerous, detailed legendary accounts of Moses's direct communication with God, as well as other tales.[21]

The appended translation of one of the manuscripts that I discuss[22] illustrates the contents of the *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* that Mamluk audiences received. It enables us to focus on two aspects of this genre: interpretation of the Bible in the late middle Islamic period and the role of biblical tales among late middle-period Muslims in Egypt and Bilād al-Shām.

Biblical Stories and *Isrāʾīlīyāt* under the Mamluks

Muslim writers gave the label *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* to stories—transmitted by chroniclers and literati—that presented legends of pre-Islamic prophets and people. How extensive the transmission of legends of prophets was can be deduced from the fact that they appear in exegeses of the Quran and hadith, chronicles, *adab* anthologies, *mirabilia* (*ʿajāʾib/gharāʾib),* and, of course, collections of *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ*. From the first centuries of the Islamic era, such legends were disseminated by storytellers *(quṣṣāṣ)* and popular preachers *(wuʿʿāẓ)*[23] to common people who gathered to listen to hortatory storytelling, which transmitted a rich tissue

1239), *Al-Mathal al-sāʾir fī adab al-kātib wa-al-shāʿir,* ed. Aḥmad al-Ḥūfī and Badawī Ṭabānah (Cairo, 1972), 3:131–32.

[17] Roberto Tottoli, *Vita di Mosè secondo le tradizioni islamiche* (Palermo, 1992), tells the story of Moses and Aaron and their deaths. He uses the accounts of Ibn Kathīr (both his *tafsīr and qiṣaṣ*), al-Kisāʾī *(qiṣaṣ),* Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (both his history and *tafsīr*), and al-Thaʿālibī *(qiṣaṣ).*

[18] Al-Muṭahhar ibn Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī (fl. ca. 350/960), *Al-Badʾ wa-al-tārīkh* [Le livre de la création et de l'histoire; erroneously attributed to Abū Zayd Aḥmad ibn Sahl al-Balkhī], ed. Cl. Huart (Paris, 1903), 3:81; on this writer see C. Adang, *Muslim Writers on Judaism and Hebrew Bible: from Ibn Rabban to Ibn Hazm* (Leiden, 1996), 48–50.

[19] ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad Ibn Muṭarrif al-Ṭarafī (387–454/997–1062), *The Stories of the Prophets,* Islamkundliche Untersuchungen Band 253, ed. Roberto Tottoli (Berlin, 2003), 131–60, composed a long chapter on Moses but does not narrate his death.

[20] Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn al-Walīd al-Turtūshī (451–520/1160–26), *Sirāj al-mulūk,* ed. M. F. Abū Bakr (Cairo, 1994), 1:287.

[21] Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ,* 379; in line with his anti-*isrāʾīlīyāt* stand, rejects the Jewish interpretation of the story *(wa-ʿinda ahl al-kitāb . . . [wa-huwa] bāṭil).*

[22] Jerusalem, National Library of Israel Yahuda collection MS Arab 294.

[23] Jonathan Porter Berkey, *Popular Preaching and Religious Authority in the Medieval Islamic Near East* (Seattle, 2001).

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of verses from the Quran, hadith, and anecdotes *(nuktah).*[24] That subjects of the Mamluk Sultanate were very familiar with such biblical stories[25] is supported by examination of contemporary literary production.

Another indication of the reputation of biblical "heroes" for Muslim audiences in Egypt and Bilād al-Shām from the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries are short epistles that focus on the story of a single prophet, which supplemented the comprehensive anthologies of the prophets' miracles. Among others, Mamluk society was exposed to texts narrating the merits of Moses. As will be shown below, Moses and his tomb often appeared in such works. The "evergreen" legends of al-Khiḍr provide a comparable demonstration.[26] Joseph's story is another example that testifies to the familiarity of Mamluk society with biblical fables *(isrāʿīlīyāt).*[27] The diffusion and reception of his myth can be traced even through Mamluk political discourse, serving as a popular explanation for the exclusive political system of the Mamluk Sultanate.[28] It provided a biblical precedent to the role of newcomers in the political discourse of the Mamluk military aristocracy.[29]

Muslim scholars often used literary "evidence" to establish the theory of *kerygma,* namely that biblical prophets "knew" about the future coming of the

[24] A colorful account is provided on night 757 of the *Arabian Nights,* which narrates: "there is an excellent sheikh here who takes his seat every day at about this time and tells splendid stories. . . . He found him to be an old man with a handsome face who was seated on a chair telling his stories to the people. The attendee *(mameluke)* sat down close to him to listen, until at sunset, when the storyteller had finished and the audience had dispersed." Malcolm C. Lyons with Ursula Lyons, trans., and Robert Irwin, intro. and anno., *The Arabian Nights: Tales of 1,001 Nights* (London, 2010), 3:93 (although a-historical, the story merits attention).

[25] Walid A. Saleh, *In Defense of the Bible: A Critical Edition and an Introduction to al-Biqāʿī's Bible Treatise* (Leiden, 2008); Josef W. Meri, *The Cult of Saints among Muslims and Jews in Medieval Syria* (Oxford, 2002); Awad Halabi, *Palestinian Rituals of Identity: The Prophet Moses Festival in Jerusalem, 1850–1948* (Austin, 2023), 5–9.

[26] Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (773–852/1372–1449), *Al-Zahr al-naḍir fī ḥāl al-Khiḍr* (Kuwait, 2004); and see n. 92, below.

[27] For a popular tale, presumably from Mamluk Egypt, see R. Y. Ebied and M. J. L. Young, ed. and trans., *The Story of Joseph in Arabic Verse: The Leeds Arabic Manuscript 347* (Leiden, 1975). On a French map from the nineteenth century, the grand hall *(al-īwān al-kabīr)* of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad in the citadel on the hill is identified as *le Palais divan de Joseph*. Nasser O. Rabbat, *The Citadel of Cairo: a New Interpretation of Royal Mamlūk Architecture* (Leiden, 1995), 45; idem, "Mamlūk Throne Halls: Qubba or Iwan?," *Ars Orientalis* 23 (1993): 201–18.

[28] Koby Yosef, "Mamluks and Their Relatives in the Period of the Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517)," *MSR* 16 (2012): 55–69.

[29] This metaphor continued to be in use centuries after the sultanate had been defeated by the Ottomans. Bernard K. Freamon, *Possessed by the Right Hand: The Problem of Slavery in Islamic Law and Muslim Cultures* (Leiden, 2013), 239.

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prophet Muḥammad. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah, for example, transmits Islamic exegetical traditions concerning the biblical verse "The Lord came from Sinai, and dawned from Seʿir upon us; He shone forth from Mount Paran,"[30] as prophesying the missions of Moses, Jesus, and Muḥammad. Sinai (Sīnā; Ṭūr Sīnīn) is the mountain where God spoke with Moses.[31]

Polemical works too cast light on the popularity of *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* among Mamluk audiences.[32] For example, the thirteenth-century scholar al-Ṭūfī[33] states that

> Muslim scholars who dealt with the story [qiṣṣah] of Moses strictly followed the narrative of the Quran. They communicated with the People of the Book and profited from their wisdom. Indeed, some among these Jewish and Christian savants converted to Islam and they confirmed the Muslims' ideology.[34]

Al-Ṭūfī's text projects the author's profound knowledge of the Bible and of early Islamic texts onto Judaism and Christianity.[35] Taking the verses of the Quran that narrate the story of Moses and his encounter with the daughters of Jethro (Shuʿayb)[36] at the waters of Midian,[37] he tells of the relations between

[30] Deuteronomy 33:2.

[31] Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah al-Dimashqī al-Ḥanbalī (691–751/1292–1350), *Hidāyat al-ḥayārá fī ajwibat al-yahūd wa-al-naṣārá,* ed. Bakr ibn ʿAbd Allāh Bū Zayd (Mecca, 2008), 123–24, 155–57; and see Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Ibn Taymīyah al-Ḥaranī (661–728/1263–1328), *Al-Jawāb al-ṣaḥīḥ li-man baddala dīn al-masīḥ,* ed. ʿAlī Ḥasan Nāṣir (Riyadh, 1999), 5, 197–99.

[32] This polemical approach reflects Muslims' efforts to spread the word of Islam among the People of the Book *(al-kitābīyūn).* Lejla Demiri, "Ḥanbalite Commentary on the Bible: Analysis of Najm al-Dīn al-Ṭūfī's (d. 716/1316) *al-Taʿlīq,*" in *The Bible in Arab Christianity,* ed. David Thomas (Leiden, 2007), 295–313.

[33] Demiri, "Ḥanbalite Commentary on the Bible," 304.

[34] Najm al-Dīn Abū al-Rabīʿ al-Ṭūfī al-Ḥanbalī (657–716/1259–1316), *Al-Intiṣārāt al-islāmīyah fī kashf shabh al-naṣrānīyah,* ed. Sālim ibn Muḥammad al-Qarnī (Riyad, 1999), 328–29.

[35] Lejla Demiri, *Muslim Exegesis of the Bible in Medieval Cairo: Najm al-Din al-Tufi's (d. 716/1316) Commentary on the Christian Scriptures—a Critical Edition and Annotated Translation with an Introduction* (Leiden, 2013).

[36] Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Ibn Taymīyah al-Ḥaranī, *Jāmiʿ al-rasāʾil,* ed. M. R. Sālim (Cairo, 1969), 63, states categorically that "in the Jews' Torah and the Christians' Gospels he was called Yithrun, and they have no record of the prophet Shuʿayb in the Torah"; Clifford Edmund Bosworth, "The Qurʾānic Prophet Shuʿaib and Ibn Taimiyya's Epistle concerning him," *Le Muséon* 88 (1974): 425–40 (reprinted in his *Medieval Arabic Culture and Administration* [London, 1982], art. V); Roberto Tottoli "Shuʿayb," in *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān,* 4:605–6.

[37] Quran 28:22–28.

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the refugee and the elderly messenger.[38] In another work, he narrates Moses's vision of the burning bush on the side of the mountain and reports also on God's exchange with Moses during the forty nights on Mount Sinai,[39] as well as on the story of the Children of Israel and the golden calf.[40] By discussing the story of Moses in the Bible and by airing critical views regarding the authenticity of the Torah version in the hands of the Jews, al-Ṭūfī assumed that the tale was advancing the ultimate victory of Islam over the other biblical religions.[41]

These various accounts of the lives and miraculous deeds of revered prophets had a dual significance, as they offered both entertainment and organization of the records of the past.[42] Taken as a whole, the stories served as a powerful medium through which ideas could be projected and sacred figures idealized.[43] The narrators often named their sources. This literary technique indicates that the Muslim audiences who were exposed to the tales had a certain degree of knowledge, even if vague, of the biblical legends.[44] The transmission of these legendary stories was employed as a vehicle to convey social and religious messages and disseminate and inculcate Islamic ethical and cultural values in society.[45] Sufis, for example, depicted Moses as a prototype of the spiritual wayfarer.[46]

Despite the popularity of these biblical stories, or indeed because of it, they were often received skeptically by highly admired Muslim scholars.[47] The ris-

[38] Najm al-Dīn al-Ṭūfī, *Al-Intiṣārāt al-islāmīyah,* 325–26.

[39] Quran 2:51–54; cf. Exodus 32:19–24.

[40] Demiri, *Muslim Exegesis,* 474 (Arabic)/475 (English), 478 (Arabic)/479 (English).

[41] Ibid., 270 (Arabic)/271 (English); and see our notes on the *isrāʾīlīyāt* below.

[42] In line with a narrative strategy that can also be identified in Mamluk sacred biographies of the Prophet Muḥammad these compilations often named their sources and earlier works. ʿAbd al-Raḥīm ibn al-Ḥusayn al-ʿIrāqī (725–806/1325–1404), *Al-Bāʿith ʿalá al-khilāṣ min ḥawādith al-quṣṣāṣ* (Beirut, 2001), 209–10 (quoting Jalāl al-Dīn Abū al-Faraj ʿAbd al-Raḥman ibn ʿAlī Ibn al-Jawzī [510–97/1117–1201], *Kitāb al-quṣṣāṣ wa-al-mudhakkirīn* [Beirut, 1988], 329).

[43] Berkey, *Popular Preaching,* 5, 89.

[44] Abū al-Fatḥ Shihāb al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Ibshīhī (790–850/1388–1466), *Al-Mustaṭraf fī kull fann mustaẓraf,* ed. Ibrāhīm Ṣāliḥ (Beirut, 1999), 1:340 *(nuqila fī al-āthār al-isrāʾīlīyah).*

[45] H. E. Boeschoten and J. O'Kane, eds., *Al-Rabghuzi's The Stories of the Prophets Qiṣaṣ al-Anbiyāʾ: An Eastern Turkish Version* (Leiden, 2015), XIII.

[46] Paul Nwyia, *Exégèse Coranique et Langage Mystique Nouvel: Essai sur le Lexique Technique des Mystiques Musulmans* (Beirut, 1970), 83, 180–81; Annabel Keeler, "Moses from a Muslim Perspective," in *Abraham's Children: Jews, Christians and Muslims in Conversation,* ed. Norman Solomon, Richard Harries, and Tim Winter (New York, 2005), 61–63; Th. Emil Homerin, "Another Prophetic Paradigm: Moses in Sufi Verse," in *A Legacy of Learning: Essays in Honor of Jacob Neusner,* ed. Alan J. Avery-Peck, Bruce Chilton, William Scott Green, and Gary G. Porton (Leiden, 2014), 360–71.

[47] Boaz Shoshan, *Popular Culture in Medieval Cairo* (Cambridge, 1993), 23–24, 34–38; Jonathan Porter Berkey, "Storytelling, Preaching, and Power in Mamluk Cairo," *MSR* 4 (2000): 53–73; idem,

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ing wave of writings directed against the circulation of extra-biblical prophetic legends provides further evidence for the popularity of the *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* in Mamluk society.[48] Prominent Damascene authors, including Ibn Taymīyah[49] and Ibn Kathīr,[50] sought to delegitimize this genre.[51]

Ibn Kathīr, for example,[52] repeatedly implored storytellers to stop transmitting stories that were not corroborated by the "correct" (i.e., his) interpretation of the Quran and supported by what he argued were "reliable" hadith traditions. He stressed the damaging potential of distorted *(taḥrīf)* legends disseminated by Jews and Christians. According to him, the Jews' current version of the Torah was not identical with the scripture that was sent down to Moses.[53] Dealing with a tradition that explains a line in Āyat al-Kursī (Quran 2:255), for example, he dismissed the hadith that connects the Quranic verse with Moses's personal conversation with God, bluntly stating:

> This is clearly an inadequate hadith [*gharīb,* i.e., with only a single reporter at some stage of the *isnād*], and it is almost certainly an *isrāʾīlīyah* [fairy tale].[54]

Such anti-*isrāʾīlīyāt* positions actually affirm the popularity of legends of the prophets across all echelons of Mamluk society.[55] Moreover, the positive reception of "Tales of the Prophets" despite scholars' critical views of the narrators of these stories indicates that their transmission and performance served as a link between the religious establishment and the urban masses. It is also evident that, while some Mamluk Muslim jurists loudly voiced their opposition to the

Popular Preaching, 32, 40–43.

[48] For earlier voices see al-Maqdisī, *Al-Badʾ wa-al-tārīkh,* 3:82 (ll. 3–6, Arabic).

[49] The story of Shuʿayb in Ibn Taymīyah, *Jāmiʿ al-rasāʾil,* 65–66.

[50] Erik S. Ohlander, "Ibn Kathīr," in *Essays in Arabic Literary Biography: 1350–1850,* ed. Roger M. A. Allen, Joseph Edmund Lowry, and Devin J. Stewart (Wiesbaden, 2009), 154.

[51] Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah al-Dimashqī al-Ḥanbalī, *Iʿlām al-muwaqqiʿīn ʿan rabb al-ʿālamīn,* ed. M. Al Salmān (Dammam, 2002), 2:168 *("raʾayt fī baʿḍ al-tawārīkh al-qadīmah ʿan aḥd quḍāt al-ʿadl min banī isrāʾīl").*

[52] Abū al-Fidāʾ Ismāʿīl Ibn Kathīr (701–74/1301–73), *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah,* ed. ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbd al-Muḥsin al-Turkī (Cairo, 1998), 2:436.

[53] Compare with Najm al-Dīn al-Ṭūfī in Demiri, *Muslim Exegesis,* 438 (Arabic)/439 (English); Najm al-Dīn al-Ṭūfī, *Al-Intiṣārāt al-islāmīyah,* 300, 328.

[54] Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah,* 2:162, idem, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿaẓīm,* ed. S. M. Qamīḥah (Mecca, 1999), 2:678–79.

[55] Jonathan P. Berkey, "Popular Culture under the Mamluks: A Historiographical Survey," *MSR* 9 (2005): 140.

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isrāʾīlīyāt,[56] they largely failed to win over the masses[57] or convince the authorities. The construction of shrines that carried the names of legendary icons further supports this argument. Thus, at this stage of our knowledge, we may conclude that stories of the prophets "migrated" during the Mamluk period from the religio-historical texts to a "worldlier" sphere.

Moses's Tomb

The reputation of pre-Islamic prophets can be traced not only in literary sources but also in the construction of shrines and other architectural relics, which cast light on biblical sacred topographies within the Mamluk realm.[58] Mamluk authors transmitted early (i.e., Abbasid period) legends about biblical prophets who addressed the pre-Islamic people of Bilād al-Shām. The sacred geography of this territory that they portrayed reflects the popular adoration of these figures and informs the pilgrimages to their shrines. In addition to Moses's tomb, one might mention in this regard the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron,[59] the Nebi Rubin shrine south of Jaffa,[60] and sacred sites associated with his father, Jacob.[61] Baybars, the de facto founder of the Mamluk sultanate, initiated the construc-

[56] Jalāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī (849–911/1445–1505), *Tahdhīr al-khawwāṣ min akāthīb al-quṣṣāṣ,* ed. Muḥammad L. al-Ṣabbāgh (Beirut, 1984), 209–10 (quoting Ibn al-Jawzī, *Kitāb al-quṣṣāṣ,* 329). This technique indicates not only the reception of past tradition; it was manipulated to voice critical remarks that were not always received favorably.

[57] ʿAbd al-Raḥīm ibn Ḥusayn al-ʿIrāqī (725–806/1325–1404), *Al-Bāʿith ʿalá al-khalāṣ min ḥawādith al-quṣṣāṣ,* ed. Muḥammad Luṭfī al-Ṣabbāgh (Beirut, 2001), 70–71 (argues that storytellers should obtain permission from the rulers); al-Suyūṭī, *Tahdhīr al-khawwāṣ min akāthīb al-quṣṣāṣ,* 73–74 (who was familiar with al-ʿIrāqī's book, calls them the common people, rabble, women and riffraff).

[58] Baybars, to provide a single example here, ordered the construction of a commemoration monument at ʿAyn Jālūt, a place associated with biblical symbolism: it was said to be the location where David had killed Goliath. Exegeses of the Quran linked the location also to the battle that Gideon had fought to deliver the Israelites from Midian and his people. Denise Aigle, "Legitimizing a Low-Born, Regicide Monarch: The Case of the Mamlūk Sultan Baybars and the Ilkhans in the 13th Century," *in Representing Power in Ancient Inner Asia: Legitimacy, Transmission and the Sacred, ed.* I. Charleux, R. Hamayon, and G. Delaplace (Bellingham, WA, 2009), 61–94; I will consider this last point in the next section.

[59] Ellen Kenney, *Power and Patronage in Medieval Syria: The Architecture and Urban Works of Tankiz al-Nasiri* Chicago, 2009), 81–153.

[60] Mahmoud Yazbak, "The Muslim Festival of Nabi Rubin in Palestine: From Religious Festival to Summer Resort," *Holy Land Studies* 10, no. 2 (2011): 169–98.

[61] Guy le Strange, *Palestine under the Muslims* (London, 1890), 412, 465, 482.

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tion of shrines in locations linked with the biblical prophets.[62] In the desert, not far from the Jordan River, the Dead Sea, and Jerusalem, this sultan built a large compound to commemorate Moses's grave.[63] Not all agreed with this imagination of the sacred topography of Bilād al-Shām, and such dissension is found in the heated debate regarding the identification of Moses's tomb.

The incompatible explanations of traditions narrating the miraculous night journey *(isrāʾ)* of the Prophet Muḥammad clearly reflect the conflicting interpretations of the geographical dimensions of Moses's story. Some medieval Muslim scholars argued that Muḥammad stopped at the tomb of Moses and visited his grave.[64] Moreover, despite the Mamluk authorities' initiative to enhance the importance of the holy shrine near Jericho, this claim was rejected by several contemporary, i.e., Mamluk, Muslim scholars,[65] who questioned the commonly perceived location of Moses's tomb and identified relics of Moses in other locations.

According to al-Harawī (d. 611/1215), for example, the eastern minaret of the Great Mosque of Damascus, which is said to be the White Minaret from which Jesus will descend, contains a piece of the rock that Moses struck and from which twelve springs gushed (Quran 7:160).[66] Abū Isḥāq Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ibn al-Firkāḥ al-Fazārī al-Shāfiʿī (660–729/1262–1329) portrays the clash of opinions concerning the site.[67] In a short epistle entitled "Tabyīn al-amr al-qadīm al-murwī fī taʿyīn qabr al-kalīm (Clarifying the old traditions that

[62] Y. Frenkel, "Baybars and the Sacred Geography of *Bilad al-Sham:* A Chapter in the Islamization of Syria's Landscape," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 25 (2001): 153–70.

[63] Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī Ibn Ṭūlūn al-Ṣāliḥī (1485–1536/880–953), "Tuḥfat al-ḥabīb fīmā warad bi-al-kathīf," Leiden University Library MS Arab 2512 (copied 936/1530), fol. 5a; Moshe Sharon, *Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum Palaestinae* (Leiden, 2004), 3:102–3 (Dayr al-Qalt); Reuven Amitai, "Some Remarks on the Inscription of Baybars at Maqam Nabi Musa," in *Mamlūks and Ottomans: Studies in Honour of Michael Winter,* ed. David J. Wasserstein and Ami Ayalon (London, 2006), 45–53; Hana Taragan, "Holy Place in the Making: Maqām al-Nabī Mūsa in the Early Mamlūk Period," *Aram* 19 (2007): 621–39; Aigle, "Legitimizing a Low-Born, Regicide Monarch," 6.

[64] Khalīl ibn Kaykaldī al-ʿAlāʾī (694–761/1294–1359), "Dhikr kalīm Allāh Mūsá," in his *Majmūʿ rasāʾil al-hāfiẓ al-ʿAlāʾī,* ed. Wāʾil M. B. Zahrān (Cairo, 2008), 47–49.

[65] Najm al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm Ibn Jamāʿah al-Maqdisī al-Shāfiʿī (833–901/1429–96), *Al-Durr al-naẓīm fī akhbār Mūsá al-kalīm,* ed. M. ʿA. M. al-ʿIlū (Beirut, 2007), 301–3.

[66] J. W. Meri, *A Lonely Wayfarer's Guide to Pilgrimage* [Arabic edition and English translation of al-Harawī's *Kitāb al-ishārāt*] (Princeton, 2004), 32.

[67] His booklet on Jerusalem was translated by Charles A. Matthews, *Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society* 14 (1934): 284–93, 15 (1935): 51–87; and idem, *Palestine—Mohammedan Holy Land* (New Haven, 1949).

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report on the exact location of Moses's tomb"),[68] the jurist analyzes a number of traditions regarding the death of Moses and the location of his grave, concluding that it must be located in the Qadam Mosque near Damascus:

> If the seeker of truth will read this tradition and all the documentation that I collected in this booklet, he will not hesitate to conclude that the tomb of Moses is the al-Qadam Mosque in Damascus. This is based upon the belief that what was well known in the remote past is closer to the truth than later sayings. If this is his deduction he should visit the al-Qadam Mosque, be involved with it, and contribute to its maintenance. By calling at the place he comes closer to God.[69]

By contrast, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī Ibn Ṭūlūn al-Ṣāliḥī (1485–1536/880–953), in "Tuḥfat al-ḥabīb fīmā warada bi-al-kathīf,"[70] who quotes Ibn al-Firkāḥ al-Fazārī and who visited *(ziyārah)* the al-Qadam mausoleum in the 920s/1514–23, places the tomb at the Red Hill *(al-kathīb al-aḥmar).*[71] Moreover, the question of the location of Moses's tomb was not settled even later during the Ottoman period.[72] Nevertheless, these conflicting opinions did not dissuade Muslim pilgrims from visiting the remarkable shrine near Jericho, especially during the spring.[73] Muḥammad ibn Khiḍr al-Rūmī (fl. 981/1574) noted that near there visitors would find the tombs of Joshua, who had been Moses's lieutenant, and Ibrāhīm al-Rāʿī, who had served as Moses's shepherd.[74]

Munājāt Mūsá

A significant segment of the cluster of traditions concerning Moses's mission and history focuses on the prophet's personal conversations with God *(munājāt).*[75]

[68] Jerusalem, National Library of Israel Yahuda collection MS Arab 809 (copied in AH 1044/1036–37).

[69] Ibid., fol. 5v.

[70] Leiden University Library MS Arab 2512 (copied 936/1530), fol. 5b; on it see Jan Just Witkam, *Inventory of the Oriental Manuscripts of the Library of the University of Leiden, Manuscripts Or. 2001–Or. 3000* (Leiden, 2008), 3:150.

[71] Ibn Ṭūlūn al-Ṣāliḥī, "Tuḥfat al-ḥabīb," fol. 6a.

[72] J. Sadan, "Le Tombeau de Moïse à Jéricho et à Damas," *Review des études islamiques* 49 (1981): 59–99; Meri, *A Lonely Wayfarer's Guide to Pilgrimage,* 26, 40.

[73] Sirāj al-Dīn Abū Ḥafs ʿUmar ibn ʿAlī Ibn al-Mulaqqin al-Shāfiʿī (723–804/1323–1401), *Al-Tawḍīḥ li-sharḥ al-jāmiʿ al-ṣaḥīḥ,* ed. Khālid al-Rabbāṭ and Jumʿah Fatḥī (Beirut, 2008), 10:47.

[74] *Al-Mustaqṣá fī faḍl ziyārāt al-Masjid al-Aqṣá,* ed. Mashhūr al-Ḥabbāzī (Jerusalem, 2011), 213–16.

[75] Abū Isḥāq Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Thaʿālabī al-Nisabūrī al-Shāfiʿī (d. 427/1035), *Arāʿis al-majālis fī qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ, or, Lives of the Prophets,* trans. William M. Brinner (Leiden, 2002),

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The *Munājāt Mūsá*—the legends about the communication, the murmured dialogue[76] between the prophet and God—is not a work's title but a literary subgenre (in Arabic, Persian, and other languages)[77] popular among Jewish, Christian, and Muslim audiences.[78]

In these legends, Moses is portrayed as a brave man who did not hesitate to bargain with the Almighty and with the Angel of Death (ʿIzrāʾīl).[79] During these deliberations he learned about the future of his people, the topography of the Holy Land, which he was barred from entering, and the date of his death. The stories about the moment of his demise clearly delineate the intimacy between God and Moses. God agreed to inform Moses as to his last moment, and is even said to modify the timeline of this event. The Angel of Death reluctantly allowed Moses to visit his family and postponed the seizure of his soul.[80] Furthermore,

410 (from Wahb ibn Munabbih); Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Nuwayrī (677–733/1278–1333), *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab* (Cairo, 1923), 1:326; "*Munājāt Mūsá* in al-Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Raḥīm Aḥmad *Kitāb Aḥwāl al-qiyāmah,*" in *Muhammedanische Eschatologie: nach der Leipziger und der Dresdner Handschrift zum ersten Male; Arabisch und Deutsch mit Anmerkungen,* ed. Moritz Wolff (Leipzig, 1872), 74 (Arabic)/132 (German).

[76] The concept of intimate dialogue with the Almighty was well-accepted among Sufi circles and became popular among the masses who believed in the power of saints' supplications to God. Omar Ali de Unzaga, "The Conversation between Moses and God in the Epistles of the Pure Brethren," in *Al-Kitab: La sacralité du texte dans le monde de l'Islam,* ed. D. de Smet, G. de Callatay, and J. M. F. van Reeth (Brussels, 2004), 371–87; Barbara Roggema, "The Intimate Conversations of God with Moses on Mount Sinai *(Munâjât Mûsâ):* An Apocryphon from Islam to Christianity to Judaism," in *Dialogues and Disputes in Biblical Disguise from Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages,* ed. Péter Tóth (New York, 2022), 190–213.

[77] Isaac H. Hall, "The Colloquy of Moses on Mount Sinai," *Hebraica* 7, no. 3 (1891): 161–77; Lazarus Goldschmidt, *Die abessinischen Handschriften der Stadtbiobliothek zu Frankfurt am Main* (Berlin, 1897), 21–22 (no. 7); Vera Basch Moreen, "A Supplementary List of Judaeo-Persian Manuscripts," *The British Library Electronic Journal* 21 (1995): 74; Steven Kaplan, *Les Falashas* (Brepols, 1990), 97–105; idem, *The Beta Israel (Falasha) in Ethiopia: From Earliest Times to the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1995), 104 *(nagara mushe);* Karla R. Suomala, "The Colloquy of Moses on Mount Sinai: Where Syriac Christianity meets Islamic Spain and Africa between the 16th and 19th centuries," *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* 8 (2005): 27–39.

[78] J. Sadan and N. Basel, "Some Fragments of Judaeo-Arabic Poetry (Munajat Musa?)," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 32 (2006): 213–46.

[79] Quran 32:11 *(malak al-mawt);* S. R. Burge, *Angels in Islam: Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī's al-Ḥabāʾik fī akhbār al-malāʾik* (New York, 2012), 36–37.

[80] Traditions on Moses's conversations before his death circulated in Mamluk Cairo and Damascus (Abū Zakarīyā Muḥyī al-Dīn Yaḥyá ibn Sharaf al-Dīn al-Nawawī al-Shāfiʿī (631–76/1233-–77), *Al-Minhāj fī sharḥ ṣaḥīḥ Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj* (Amman, 2000), 1450 (no. 2372); Sirāj al-Dīn Abū Ḥafs ʿUmar ibn ʿAlī Ibn al-Mulaqqin al-Shāfiʿī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ wa-manāqib al-qabāʾil min al-Tawḍīḥ li-sharḥ al-jāmiʿ al-ṣaḥīḥ,* ed. Aḥmad H. M. ʿUthmān (Mecca, 1998), 187–92 (quotes al-Thaʿālabī); Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Fatḥ al-bārī bi-sharḥ ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī,* ed. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Nāṣir al-

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Moses was not alone during this moment. Several traditions report that Gabriel and other angels dug his grave and accompanied him while he lay in it.[81]

This legendary account of Moses's death stresses his unique character and achievements: his soul left his body miraculously,[82] at the moment of his heroic death, he handled the fruit of Eden, and even the process of his burial is extraordinary—he was laid to rest by the angels. Despite these indications of his unique rank, the Muslim narrative emphasizes his position as a regular, mortal human being. According to this worldview, all the prophets, including Muḥammad, were mortal. This was primarily a dogma employed in religious polemics against the Christian belief in Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. Nevertheless, Muslim sources quite often quote the tradition that says that after forty days in the grave, prophets are resurrected.[83]

Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī's Soirées (*Majālis*)

The inhabitants of the citadel were not strangers to court assemblies *(majālis).* Chronicles and administrative manuals cast light on these events and on the duties of the sultan as "lord of the audiences." During these *majālis,* homiletic readings and storytelling were performed,[84] and reciting aloud constituted an integral part of events. The importance of these gatherings persuaded sultans, even as early as Baybars, to invest in the construction and maintenance of a royal reception hall in the citadel of Cairo.[85]

The sultan Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī followed this royal tradition and invested considerable effort and money in building his image accordingly. Essential components in his self-representation were his linguistic skills and his wide-ranging knowledge. Chronicles written close to his time relate stories about the gatherings at his court, where his wisdom was impressively displayed, and describe

Burak (Riyadh, 2005), 8:7; Berkey, *Popular Preaching,* 55. The authenticity of the tradition about Moses and the Angel of Death is debated among contemporary Muslim scholars: Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *Al-Sunnah al-nabawīyah bayna ahl al-fiqh wa-ahl al-ḥadīth* (Cairo, 1989), 34–36.

[81] Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Tuḥfat al-nubalāʾ min qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ,* ed. ʿAbbās Ghunaym (Cairo, 1998), 373–75 (a summary of Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ*).

[82] Rachel Havrelock, "The End of Moses," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 90 (2019): 257–70 (which includes references to the contemporary situation).

[83] Muqātil ibn Sulaymān al-Balkhī (80–150/700–67), *Tafsīr,* ed. A. M. Shaḥātah (Beirut, repr. 2003), 3:78 (Quran 21:33); al-ʿAlāʾī, "Dhikr kalīm Allāh Mūsá," 36; Abū al-Bakr Aḥmad ibn Ḥusayn Bayhaqī (384–458/994–1066), *Ḥayāt al-anbiyāʾ baʿda wafātihim,* ed. Aḥmad ibn Aṭīyah al-Ghāmidī (Medina, 1993), 70–77.

[84] These terms are used and debated by Linda G. Jones, *The Power of Oratory in the Medieval Muslim World* (Cambridge, 2012), 15–20.

[85] Rabbat, "Mamlūk Throne Halls," 201.

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him as an active participant in these assemblies, adding new information and novel interpretations, contributions that were highly admired.[86] Courtiers in his service compiled books for the sultan's "library" *(bi-rasm),* and they and others presented him with beautifully written and decorated books.

The stories of the prophets comprised an important element in the books that were presented to Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī or performed during the *majālis*. This should not surprise readers of Mamluk-period texts, which often refer to biblical episodes. This is visible in the insertion of a tale of "one of God's servants" into the account about Moses.[87] For example, Ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī transmits from *Al-ʿIqd al-farīd*[88] a story about a woman who accused the caliph:

> Thus, as far as you are concerned, we [the family of ʿAlī] are now in the same position as the Israelites *[manzilat banī isrāʾīl]* in relation to Pharaoh's family; ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, may God have mercy upon him, has occupied after the death of our Prophet the position of Aaron in relation to Moses. Our goal is Paradise and yours is hellfire.[89]

The performance of the legends of Moses in the sultanic court linked the urban common people with the royal entourage. At least two books that were donated to Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī or came to be preserved in his library contained stories about biblical prophets. The first work is kept today at the Israeli National Library in Jerusalem; the second in the Süleymaniye Library in Istanbul. The first work, "Majmūʿ ḥikāyāt wa-nawādir,"[90] is a beautifully decorated short book that contains, among other topics, the stories of the prophets Ezekiel and Moses. The second is "Al-ʿUqūd al-jawharīyah,"[91] which is a two-volume work that tells the history of the prophets, starting with Adam and ending with Muḥammad,

[86] Y. Frenkel, "The Mamlūks among the Nations: A Medieval Sultanate in its Global Context" in *Everything is on the Move: The Mamlūk Empire as a Node in (Trans-) Regional Networks,* Mamlūk Studies, vol.7, ed. Stephan Conermann (Bonn, 2014), 61–79.

[87] Quran 18:59–60, 64–65: "And when Moses said to his page, 'I will not give up until I reach the meeting of the two seas, though I go on for many years' . . . Then they found one of Our servants unto whom We had given mercy from Us, and We had taught him knowledge proceeding from Us."

[88] Abū ʿUmar Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih al-Andalusī (246–328/860–940), *Al-ʿIqd al-farīd,* ed. Mufīd M. Qamīḥah (Beirut, 1983), 1:257; idem, trans. Issa J. Boullata as *The Unique Necklace* (Reading, 2006), 1:296–97.

[89] Taqī al-Dīn Abū Bakr ʿAlī Ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī (767–837/1366–1434), *Thamrāt al-awrāq,* ed. Muḥammad A. Ibrāhīm (Cairo, 1971; Beirut, 2005), 108.

[90] Jerusalem, National Library of Israel Yahuda collection MS Arab 294.

[91] Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, MSS Aya Sofya 3312 and 3313 (microfilm Arşiv no. 3991).

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followed by the history of the caliphs, beginning with Abū Bakr and concluding with al-Malik al-Ashraf Abū al-Naṣr Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī.

In the texts that circulated among the Cairene elite, Moses is depicted as a devoted believer who confronted idolaters in the land of Egypt. He is said to have met an unnamed "servant of God," who is often identified with the mysterious al-Khiḍr.[92] The introduction of al-Khiḍr into the story is not surprising, since al-Khiḍr plays an important role in Mamluk-period Sufi discourses,[93] as can be deduced from al-Maqrīzī's *Al-Khabar ʿan al-bashar.*[94] One often encounters his name in biographies—more correctly, hagiographies—of Sufi shaykhs,[95] where he is said to provide them with information about future events or to affirm particular deeds and sayings.[96] Claiming that he was following the ideal model of Moses, the sultan, who presented himself as a *mujāhid,* could use the various stories of Moses as a way to reinforce his self-representation. It established a connection between the obedient and stubborn prophet who began his career in the land of the Egyptians and the wise and devoted sultan who now ruled Egypt.

The Texts

The range of topics in the "Majmūʿ ḥikāyāt wa-nawādir" illustrates the rich discourses that took place at the sultan's *majlis*. The compilation opens with Moses's dialog *(munājāt).* This is followed by an exegesis of a Quranic verse, the story of the prophet Ezekiel, supplications, the story of al-Bisṭāmī, and the story of Moses's death. It is noteworthy that the story of the death of Moses, though it is not narrated in the Quran, was not unfamiliar to Muslims, as we can find it in hadith collections, in Muslim chronicles, and in the *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ*. These Mus-

[92] See John Renard, "Khaḍir/Khiḍr," *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān,* 3:81b–83.

[93] Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Al-Zahr al-nadir.*

[94] Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī (766–845/1364–1441), *Al-Khabar ʿan al-bashar fī ansāb al-ʿArab wa-nasab sayyid al-bashar* (Beirut, 2013), 6:340–42. The chapter on al-Khiḍr was copied by Muḥammad ibn ʿUmar al-Aḥrab al-Ṣadīqī al-Bakrī (in Cairo 1043/1633) as an appendix to *ʿUqūd al-jumān,* entitled "Fāʾidah fī shaʾn al-Khiḍr" (Jerusalem, The National Library of Israel Yahuda collection MS Arab 313, fols. 21r–23v "copied from the author's autograph").

[95] Sirāj al-Dīn Abū Ḥafs ʿUmar ibn ʿAlī Ibn al-Mulaqqin al-Shāfiʿī, Ṭabaqāt al-awliyāʾ, ed. Nūr al-Dīn Shuraybah (Cairo, 1993), 364–65 (biography of Muḥammad ibn Ḥassān al-Busrī, d. 237/851–52), 560 (a biographical note by the author); Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyá al-Tādhifī al-Ḥanbalī, *Qalāʾid al-jawāhir fī manāqib al-Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir* (Cairo, n.d.), 19.

[96] Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥman al-Sakhāwī (831–902/1424–97), *Al-Manhal al-ʿadhb al-rāwī fī tarjamat quṭb al-awliyāʾ al-Nawawī,* ed. Aḥmad F. al-Mazīdī (Beirut, 2005), 40 [on this work see Samuela Pagani, "Muhyi l-Din al-Nawawi o degli eccessi della virtù," in *Scritti in onore di Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti,* ed. Daniela Bredi, Wasim Dahmash, Leonardo Capezzone, and Lucia Rostagno (Rome, 2008), 3:888–89].

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lim accounts provide a legendary biography of Moses and narrate a sequence of didactic episodes that make up the last chapter of his life.[97]

All versions of the Moses legends aimed to emphasize his qualities. Some of them address the mystery of the biblical verses that tell of his death. In line with the *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ,* the story of Moses's death highlights two cycles of negotiation.[98] The first tells of the communication between Moses and God;[99] the second tells of the disputation between Moses and the Angel of Death.[100] In both cases Moses does not hesitate to argue over the timing, location, and manner of his death.[101] In several of these traditions and legends he is portrayed as a strong adversary to the Angel of Death and as a prophet who was buried by angels,[102] as is the case with the text I examined, but the episodes narrated in this manuscript are unique. I was unable to find a similar story in Jewish or other Islamic sources. The only version that resembles this Mamluk text is a late Ethiopian one; presumably the similarity indicates a shared origin.[103]

The short chapter in "Al-ʿUqūd al-jawharīyah" opens with the story of Haman's arrival at Pharaoh's court in Egypt,[104] a timeline that Muslim exegetes strove to elucidate.[105] The next episode is an account of the meeting between Moses and the "Evergreen (al-Khiḍr)," who was mentioned in the preceding passage. This is followed by a tale on Moses's intimate murmured dialogue with God. During the conversation, Moses asks God, "Do you give sleep to your eyes?"

[97] Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ,* 532; Ibn al-Mulaqqin, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ,* 187–92.

[98] Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Kisāʾī (fl. tenth–early eleventh centuries?), *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ [Vita prophetarum],* ed. Isaac Eisenberg (Leiden, 1923), 239; on al-Kisāʾī see Jean-Claude Vadet, "La création et l'investiture de l'homme dans le sunnisme ou la légende d'Adam chez al-Kisāʾī," *Studia Islamica* 42 (1975): 6–10.

[99] Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Maḥmūd Aḥmad ibn Tamīm Ibn Hilāl al-Maqdisī (714–65/1314–64), *Muthīr al-gharām ilá ziyārat al-Quds wa-al-Shām,* ed. A. al-Khutaymī (Beirut, 1994), 374–75 *(ʿan Wahb ibn Munabbih);* Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Tuḥfat al-nubalāʾ,* 373–74.

[100] Ibn Jamāʿah, *Durr al-naẓīm,* 296 (quoting *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*); Ibn al-Mulaqqin, *Al-Tawḍīḥ li-sharḥ al-jāmiʿ al-ṣaḥīḥ,* 10:42–46.

[101] Najm al-Dīn al-Ṭūfī, *Al-Intiṣārāt al-islāmīyah,* 695–96.

[102] Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (224–310/838–923), *Tārīkh al-rusul wa-al-mulūk,* ed. M. A. Ibrāhīm (Cairo, 1967), 1:433–34; Ibn Jamāʿah, *Durr al-naẓīm,* 296–97.

[103] See n. 123.

[104] The name Haman appears six times in the Quran, always with the pharaoh. He is the chief minister of the king of Egypt who rejected Moses. Anthony H. Johns, in *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān,* 2:399.

[105] Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿUmar al-Rāzī (543–606/1149–1210), *Al-Tafsīr al-kabīr mafātīḥ al-ghayb* (Beirut, 1981), 27:67.

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and God demonstrates to him what would happen if he did slumber.[106] The next scene is a dialogue between the devil and Pharaoh.

Conclusion

Moses's story, from his birth on the banks of the Nile to his death in the desert or in Bilād al-Shām, was told and retold in Mamluk circles. In those legends Moses was depicted as a Muslim prophet and as a messenger who was informed about the future arrival of Muḥammad, and he expressed hope that he would be included among the audience that would follow the Prophet of Islam. Moses is portrayed as a mortal link between the Almighty and mankind, between Heaven and Earth. Hence, his story was useful politically. The transmission of Moses's legends in the court empower Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī's image as a Muslim sultan who exerts great efforts to strengthen his subjects' worldview (Islam). This sultan, whose courtiers depicted him as an ideal king, also played the role of intercultural mediator, a ruler who ensured his subjects' stability and prosperity. The stories about Moses's death also engaged with a theological question: how could the soul of the individual who talked directly with the Creator be seized by the Angel of Death, and how did this transpire? The story was used to establish the creed that all humans are doomed to die, including even God's messengers. (This argumentation clearly bears an anti-Christian message.)

Popular recensions of *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* are strongly attached to fundamental aspects of Islam: God, his revelation to the prophets, his omnipotence, and his angels, and are connected in Islamic eschatology. Stories about death and heaven are an indispensable part of the history of Islam and Arabic literary tradition.[107] They emphasize that the history of the universe is the history of God's will, which was transmitted to mankind via his messengers. The public performances of *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* created a continuous and unbroken temporal link connecting early, pre-Islamic prophets with the audience of the Mamluk court. This uninterrupted timeline asserted the dominance of Islam as the only true religion and reinforced the Mamluk sultan's image as the vigilant defender of this message. In addition, some historians, in order to dramatize their accounts, even evaluated contemporary events in relation to biblical stories.

The *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* from the Mamluk court illuminate the popular transmission of biblical stories in contemporary culture and testify to the widespread familiarity of audiences with such narratives. As emphasized, the transmission of legendary stories about the mission and lives of biblical prophets was not lim-

[106] Cf. above our discussion of Āyat al-Kursī (Quran 2:255).

[107] J. Knappert, "The Qiṣaṣu'l-Anbiyāʾ as Moralistic Stories," *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* 6 (1976): 103–16.

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ited to learned circles. The popularity of the tales is clearly visible in the favored reception of the "stories of the prophets" genre and the social position of the preachers who could employ the *isrāʾīlīyāt* as a platform to discuss complicated theological issues.[108] The culture of the *majālis* dissented from the view shared and advanced by several famous Muslim scholars that the *isrāʾīlīyāt* were falsified.[109] The legends were also well received by the Mamluk ruling elite.[110]

There is strong evidence that Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī envisioned himself as a divinely ordained ruler, as the renewer *(mujaddid)* of the tenth century. Members of his court endowed him with cosmic power. They circulated word that the source of his legitimacy was celestial.[111] In order to boost his image, al-Ghawrī from time to time even played the narrator's role in the *majālis*. The sultan, in whose court these stories were performed, and who was depicted as an active participant in the interpretation of the *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ,* was introduced as the guardian of the only true religion, which the Seal of the Prophets had established. The performance of Moses's legends in his court served as a tool to project this self-presentation.

[108] Roberto Tottoli, "Origin and Use of the Term Isrāʾīliyyāt in Muslim Literature," *Arabica* 46, no. 2 (1999): 193–210.

[109] Al-ʿIrāqī, *Al-Bāʿith ʿalá al-khalāṣ,* 30, emphasizes the close relations between the sultan and the *quṣṣāṣ,* and on 107–8 expresses his view about religious practices and the sultan's role in enforcing the "correct" praxis.

[110] ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAbd al-Salām al-Ṣaffūrī al-Shāfiʿī (d. 894/1489), *Kitāb Nuzhat al-majālis wa-muntakhab al-nafāʾis* (Cairo, 1990), 2:245.

[111] Mauder, *In the Sultan's Salon,* 757–68.

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Appendix: Translation of Jerusalem, National Library of Israel Yahuda collection MS Arab 294

The Death of Moses

[fol. 52r] It is narrated that Moses was on Mount Sinai *[jabal al-Ṭūr]* worshiping the Lord. On that night he raised his head, gazed at the sky, and pleaded: "O my God, my Almighty, my Creator, my Lord, fulfill my wish." At that very moment, a caller[112] on behalf of Allāh, praise be to him, called and asked him: "And what are your needs? The Almighty knows everything." Moses answered: "O my God, I want you to inform me when [52v] my death will be." The voice from Allāh said: "I will not supply a single creature with this information." Moses said: "O my God, my Almighty, my Creator, my Lord, I beg you illuminate me about that." Eventually the Almighty said: "O Moses, your death will be on Friday."

Consequently, Moses washed his clothes and every Friday night sat contemplating and waiting. One night while he was seated in his prayer niche and reading the Bible [53r] the Angel of Death advanced towards him. He said to him: "Peace be with you, O Moses," who responded: "Peace be with you, O servant of God." And Moses asked him: "Who are you? You have frightened me; I was shaken by you and the Bible has fallen from my hands." "Moses, don't you recognize me? I am the one who disperses the groups, who destroys the dwellings and the castles. I am the Angel of Death."

And Moses asked him: "Did you come to carry me off or [53v] are you only passing nearby?" The angel said: "I am here to take you away." Moses pleaded: "Give me an hour; I want to wash myself and to deal with my household and children." But the angel turned down this request saying: "God ordered me to take hold of your soul and not let you be alone." Yet, at that very moment God, in his generosity and grace, disclosed himself to the Angel of Death and ordered him: "Delay. Allow my slave to accomplish what he wishes." And the angel said to Moses: [54r] "Go to your home, arrange everything you need, and come back to meet me in this very place, so that I will be able to seize your soul."

Moses went to his mother's house. Standing in front of the gate he called to her: "Open the door." She asked: "Who is calling?" And Moses responded: "It is I, your son." But the mother said: "O servant of God, Moses is on the mountain worshiping his God. He usually comes to visit us every forty days; the last time he visited us was twenty-five days ago." [54v] Moses insisted and called again: "Open the door and I will inform you what has happened." Eventually she gave in and opened the door. As he entered the house she was shocked by his look

[112] Cf. Quran 50:41: "And listen thou for the day when the caller shall call from a near place" (trans. Arberry).

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and cried out: "What happened to you, why has the color of your face changed so drastically?" And Moses said: "Rise up, mother, so that we can separate and go our different ways to be united only in the Resurrection." He said his farewell and she wept as he left her.

Next he went to the house of Shuʿayb's [Jethro's][113] daughter. Standing in front of the gate he called: "Open the door." She asked: "Who is calling?" And Moses responded: "It is I, Moses." But she said: "O servant of God, Moses [55r] is on the mountain worshiping his God. He usually comes to visit us every forty days; the last time he visited me was twenty-five days ago." Moses insisted and called again: "Open the door and I will inform you what has happened." Eventually she gave in and opened the door. As he entered the house she was shocked by his look. "What happened to you," she asked him, "why has the color of your face changed so drastically?" And Moses said: "O Shuʿayb's daughter, I have came to take my leave." "What happened to you?" she asked him again, and Moses [55v] told her: "The Angel of Death has come to carry away my soul." Weeping, his wife said farewell to him. She brought their two children and he seated each of his sons on his lap.

Next he pleaded: "O God, my Lord, my Master, my Owner, my Possessor, if my soul is seized, who will care for these two boys?" Then a voice from heaven said: "O Moses, who delivered thee out of grief?[114] Who recovered [56r] Jacob's sight after sorrow had turned his eyes white?[115] Who rescued Ishmael from the sacrifice?[116] And who said: 'O fire, be coolness and safety for Abraham!'?[117] Who rescued Daniel from the lions' den? Who freed Jonah from the belly of the whale?[118] And who saved Joseph from detention and the dungeon?[119] O Moses: take your rod and go to the sea; you shall see there a miracle that demonstrates the immeasurable power of God."

So Moses took his rod and walked to the sea shore. As he reached it a voice from heaven ordered him: "Take the rod and strike the sea." Moses carried out the commandment and the sea parted. The voice from heaven asked him: "O Moses, what do you see?" And Moses responded: "O my God, my Almighty, my Creator, my Lord, in the sea I observe a black mountain." And God ordered him: "Strike this mountain." Moses did so and struck it. [56v] The mountain parted

[113] Brannon Wheeler, "Arab Prophets of the Qur'an and Bible," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 8, no. 2 (2006): 36–37.

[114] Quran 20:40 (trans. Arberry).

[115] Quran 12:84.

[116] Quran 37:102–7.

[117] Quran 21:69.

[118] Quran 37:139.

[119] Quran 12:42.

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and the Almighty asked him: "O Moses, what do you see?" And Moses responded: "O my God, my Almighty, my Creator, my Lord, in the black mountain I see a big rolling stone."

From heaven a voice told him: "O Moses, [57r] strike this big rolling stone." And Moses struck it and it parted. God asked him: "O Moses, what do you see?" And Moses responded: "O my God, my Almighty, my Creator, my Lord, in the rock I observe a red worm, holding in its mouth a green leaf, that in an eloquent voice is calling: 'Blessed is God who watches me, hears my words, and provides me with food. The Bountiful,[120] All-Clement[121] who is gentle with his servants.[122] Never will God forget me in this location, nor in other places.'"

[57v] God turned to Moses and said to him: "O Moses, if I don't forget this worm and this place, can you assume that I will overlook your sons? I love them and they are dearer to me, even more than the angels."[123]

Then Moses returned to his family and bade them farewell. Thereupon he came back to the Angel of Death, peace upon him, who was sitting and waiting for him. He asked Moses: "Have you completed all you wanted and accomplished your wishes?" [58r] And Moses said: "Yes." So the angel ordered him: "Proceed so that I will be able to seize your spirit. This is what Allāh has ordered me [to do]." Moses asked him: "How do you want to do it, from which organ of my body?" The angel said: "From your mouth." And Moses asked him: "How dare you take it from my mouth, the part of my body that spoke with Allāh!" So the angel said: "I will snatch it from your ears." And Moses responded: "How dare you take it from my ears, the organ that heard the words of Allāh!" So the angel said: "I will grab it from your hands." And Moses responded: "How dare you [58v] take it from my hands, which touched the Pentateuch!" So the angel said: "I will seize it from your feet." And Moses responded: "How dare you take it from my feet, which carried me to Mount Sinai!"

The Angel of Death turned to the Almighty and said: "You, my God, know better than me, your slave."[124] A voice from heaven called: "O Angel of Death,

[120] Quran 27:40.

[121] Quran 22:59.

[122] Quran 2:207.

[123] Cf. the Ethiopian "Death of Moses" story. See Wolf Leslau, *Falasha Anthology* (New Haven, 1951); 103–11; Edward Ullendorff, "The 'Death of Moses' in the Literature of the Falashas," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 24, no. 3 (1961): 419–43; Max Wurmbrand, "Remarks on the Text of the Falasha 'Death of Moses,'" *BSOAS* 25, no. 3 (1962): 431–37.

[124] For Moses's rejection of his call by the Angel of Death in Islamic tradition, see Muḥammad Muḥsin Khān, ed. and trans., *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Riyadh, 1997), 1:243 (no. 1339), 4:386 (no. 3407); Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥujjāj Yūsuf al-Mizzī (654–743/1256–1341), *Tuḥfat al-ashrāf bi-maʿrifat al-aṭrāf,* ed. Bashshār U. Maʿrūf (Beirut, 1999), 10:270 (no. 14728).

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let my slave proceed and climb the mountain." So Moses departed and climbed up the mountain. Allāh had dispatched two angels to the place. [59r] Michael and Gabriel, in the appearance of humans, descended from heaven, and started to dig a grave.[125] Engulfed in a cloud of fire, Moses then came down. He was accompanied by the Angel of Death, who was carrying in his hand an apple taken from Paradise.[126]

Moses advanced towards Michael and Gabriel, who were negotiating and disputing. While Gabriel maintained that the grave was too narrow, Michael claimed that it was too large. Moses approached them: [59v] "O men, are you not familiar with the size of a human being?" They responded: "Yes indeed, he is like you in size and height." So Moses said to them: "I will enter the grave." Moses entered the grave and lay down in it. The Angel of Death reached him and handed him the apple. Moses smelled the apple, and with that his soul immediately ascended to heaven.

At that very moment the angels in the seven heavens lamented and shed tears over him. Seventy thousand angels prayed at his grave.

[125] For a different version of these angels' roles see J. Rabbinowitz, trans., Deuteronomy 11:10, in *Midrash Rabbah,* trans. H. Freedman and Maurice Simon (London, 1939), 7:186.

[126] Compare with al-Thaʿālabī, *Arāʾis al-majālis,* 410.

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Leigh Chipman
Independent Scholar

Hair Removal and Hair Dyeing: Cosmetics in the Medieval Middle East, between Pharmacy and Hadith

> I want it long, straight, curly, fuzzy
> Snaggy, shaggy, ratty, matty
> Oily, greasy, fleecy
> Shining, gleaming, streaming
> Flaxen, waxen
> Knotted, polka-dotted
> Twisted, beaded, braided
> Powdered, flowered, and confettied
> Bangled, tangled, spangled, and spaghettied!
>
> (*Hair: The American Tribal Love-Rock Musical*, Gerome Ragni and James Rado, 1967)

Hair, both on the head or face and on the rest of the body, has social significance. As such, the attitude to hair is dependent on a particular cultural context and varies from culture to culture. There is one constant: one needs to tend to one's hair. Sometimes it needs to be grown or colored, sometimes it needs to be trimmed or removed. It is no coincidence that the musical that expressed the spirit of the 1960s counterculture was called *Hair*—and there is no doubt that the hair styles described in the theme song above would have shocked the average medieval Muslim. In the Bible, hair is an expression of power (Samson being the *locus classicus;* Judges 13–16), while shaving usually expressed purification and submission to God, an idea found again in Islam.[1] In ancient Greece, women were depicted in art without body hair or pubic hair, and women themselves apparently plucked their body hair or removed it by singeing, especially pubic

Of the many recipes that appear in *Minhāj al-dukkān,* the thirteenth-century manual for pharmacists by Abū al-Muná al-Kūhīn al-ʿAṭṭār al-Isrāʾīlī, those that deal with cosmetics have so far escaped study. I take this opportunity to honor my *Doktorvater,* Prof. Reuven Amitai, and return to the book that formed the foundation of my dissertation to examine recipes for hair dyes and depilatories. An earlier version of this article was presented at a day-conference on "Leisure in Islamic Societies" held at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 21–22 January 2009. I thank the participants for their comments. I am particularly grateful to Dr. Keren Abbou-Hershkovits and Dr. Or Amir, whose comments on later drafts helped me refine my ideas.

[1] Saul M. Olyan, "What Do Shaving Rites Accomplish and What Do They Signal in Biblical Ritual Contexts?" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 117 (1998): 619.

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hair.[2] In the Islamic world, both men and women are required to deal with their hair in specific ways. Of course, for women the most obvious issue is the requirement to cover their heads, thus also covering their hair (in contrast to the Jewish tradition, where what is important is the covering of the hair, not the head as such).[3]

This paper will not be dealing with the covering of the hair/head, nor with the appropriate way to cultivate facial hair,[4] but rather with two topics that appear not only in religious literature but also in pharmacological writings: the removal of body hair and the dyeing of the hair of one's head (including the beard). The sources I will use are hadith collections, principally compiled by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505), and pharmacopoeias, in particular *Minhāj al-dukkān* (composed ca. 658/1260 in Cairo). Previous studies of hair and hair care in Islamic societies have largely focused on legal texts; the purpose of this paper is to add the recipes for hair dyes and depilatory pastes to the conversation, asking: how did people actually color or remove hair? The pharmacological material at my disposal is limited; given the later texts' extensive quotation of earlier ones, I will be moving back and forth between Abbasid Baghdad and Mamluk Cairo in my citation of hadith and recipes alike.

Before diving into the texts, I should mention that the relatively few studies I have found so far that theorize depilation have dealt exclusively with the modern period (from the nineteenth century onward) and, in fact, mainly with the Anglophone world, which some would say is particularly extreme in its distaste for a hairy female body.[5] However, such studies do exist. In contrast, the topic of dyeing the hair of the head and beards seems to have not yet received an actual academic discussion, at least not a historicizing one.[6]

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[2] Martin Kilmer, "Genital Phobia and Depilation," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 102 (1982): 104–12; Elizabeth Bartmann, "Hair and the Artifice of Female Roman Adornment," *American Journal of Archeology* 105 (2001): 5; and see now the discussion in Noah Bickert, "He Found a Hair and It Bothered Him: Female Pubic Hair Removal in the Talmud," *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies and Gender Issues* 35 (2019): 139–41 and references there.

[3] See, e.g., Lynne Schreiber, ed., *Hide and Seek: Jewish Women and Hair Covering* (New York, 2003).

[4] Facial hair has been an important marker of modernity in the Middle East. See Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Women With Mustaches and Men Without Beards: Gender and Sexual Anxieties of Iranian Modernity* (Berkeley, 2005); Avner Wishnitzer, "Beneath the Mustache: A Well-Trimmed History of Facial Hair in the Late Ottoman Era," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 61 (2018): 289–326.

[5] See, e.g., Rebecca Herzig, *Plucked: A History of Hair Removal* (New York, 2015); Merran Toerien, Sue Wilkinsen, and Precilla Y. L. Choi, "Body Hair Removal: The 'Mundane' Production of Normative Femininity," *Sex Roles* 52, nos. 5–6 (2005): 399–406.

[6] See the recent issue of *Al-Masāq: Journal of the Medieval Mediterranean* devoted to the social meaning of hair in the Islamic Middle Ages, which discusses "the many different meanings



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Removing Hair

It is narrated by Abū Hurayrah in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* that the Prophet Muḥammad said: "Five are the acts of the *fitrah* (inborn human nature): circumcision, shaving the pubic hair, clipping the nails, cutting the mustaches short, and depilating the hair of the armpits."[7] Anas ibn Mālik adds that these acts should not be neglected for more than forty nights;[8] that is, they should be performed at least every forty days and preferably more often. From these hadith, the ulama concluded that these duties apply to women and men alike—perhaps even more so to men, since all Muslim men are circumcised.[9] The purpose of removing the hair, then, is not necessarily for external beauty but for beauty in the eyes of God: thus, a person becomes cleaner and purer spiritually and not only physically, similar to the attitude known from the Bible.

According to the above hadith, then, one may remove body hair either by means of shaving or by means of plucking. What of other means? It is said that the first to use *nūrah* (that is, depilatory paste containing unslaked lime) and enter the bathhouse was King Solomon, Sulaymān ibn Dāwūd. Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī ends his discussion of the permissibility of using depilatory paste with the following tale, according to which, when the Queen of Sheba, whose name was Balqīs, visited King Solomon and tested him with riddles, she was asked to enter the palace. The floor of the palace was covered with glass and when the queen saw this, she thought that the glass was a puddle of water and she raised the edge of her gown, so that it would not get wet. Thus, she exposed her legs and alas, her legs were hairy.

> Then Solomon asked: What will keep the hairs away? They told him: A razor will keep them away. He said: The razor leaves ugly marks. So then, the *shayāṭīn* prepared *nūrah* for him, and he was the first person for whom *nūrah* was made . . . the *nūrah* was made from seashells, smeared on the legs, and the hair went away.[10]

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inherent in the cutting and shaving, growing and braiding, displaying and concealing of hair in different socio-historical contexts" but does not mention dyeing. Petra Sijperstein, "Beards, Braids and Moustachios: Exploring the Social Meaning of Hair in the Mediaeval Muslim World," *Al-Masāq* 30, no. 1 (2018): 5.

[7] *Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī,* no. 5891 (book 77 [*kitāb al-libās*], hadith 108. Online at Sunnah.com, https://sunnah.com/bukhari:5891.

[8] *Saḥīḥ Muslim,* no. 258 (book 2 [*kitāb al-ṭahārah*], hadith 66. Online at Sunnah.com, https://sunnah.com/muslim:258.

[9] A. J. Wensinck, "Khiṭān," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed.; Jon Hoover, "Fitra," *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Three.*

[10] Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Al-Akhbār al-maʾthūrah fī al-iṭṭilāʿ bi-al-nūrah* ("Epistle on the usage of depilatories"), in his *Al-Ḥāwī fī al-fatāwī* (Beirut, 1982), 1:343.

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From this story, indeed from the fact that al-Suyūṭī bothered to devote a treatise (however short) to the subject, we may conclude that removing body hair was an important issue for Mamluk-era Muslims, and this is in fact the case up to the present day. As we saw, while shaving and plucking are the alternatives that the hadith suggests, there is another method: depilatory pastes. The medical-cosmetic literature, which can be considered reflective of actual reality, provides recipes for depilatory creams, a method of hair removal that is much less painful than plucking and at least as effective as shaving (and unlike shaving, does not leave scars from nicks). An example of such a recipe can be found in the abovementioned thirteenth-century Egyptian pharmacopoeia, *Minhāj al-dukkān*, which reads:

> An oil for preventing hair: Take one part of yellow arsenic and one part of unslaked lime. Soak in very strong vinegar for three days. Filter and add sesame oil and cook over low heat until all the water disappears, and the oil remains. I made it and its texture became coarse like soap . . . I distilled this in an alembic, and it [the texture] was improved.[11]

Modern preparations for the same purpose still contain more or less the same active ingredients, under new names—calcium hydroxide instead of unslaked lime, stearic acid instead of sesame oil. Immediately after this recipe for a depilatory oil (or rather, paste, judging from the described texture), a recipe appears to prevent regrowth of hair:[12] after plucking out *(natf)* the hairs, the area of plucking (later in the recipe specified to be the pubic region, *al-ʿānah*) must be lubricated with oily extract of henbane *(duhn al-banj*; *Hyoscyamus niger)* distilled without (olive?) oil *(bi-lā zayt)*. This will prevent hair growth, or at least suppress its regrowth. The author of the book adds that this is a tested recipe. Henbane is a poisonous plant that has a local analgesic effect when used externally[13] and therefore might give a pleasant sensation after plucking, which traumatizes the hair follicles, or even after using depilatory paste, which changes the relative pH of skin and hair, causing the hairs to dissolve.

It was probably not by chance that this depilatory recipe is for *nūrah* paste and not for sugar syrup, despite the long tradition of the latter being used for hair removal. First of all, it is possible that sugar syrup (usually a simple mixture of water, sugar, and lemon juice) was prepared by laypeople at home and there was no need to go to a pharmacist. There is no recipe for a syrup, as such,

[11] Al-Kūhīn al-ʿAṭṭār, *Minhāj al-dukkān,* ed. Ḥasan al-Āṣī (Beirut, 1998), 170.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Anahita Alizadeh et al., "Black Henbane and Its Toxicity—a Descriptive Review," *Avicenna Journal of Phytomedicine* 4, no. 5 (2014): 297–311.

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for this purpose in *Minhāj al-dukkān,* although there are recipes for many and very varied syrups. A recipe for viscous lemon syrup[14] seems like it could be used for hair removal, but it appears without any indication of its use. Another possibility is that people preferred to use *nūrah.*

The collected *fatāwá* of Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī includes a composition, mentioned above, called *Al-Akhbār al-maʾthūrah fī al-iṭṭilāʿ bi-al-nūrah* ("The collected reports on the smearing of *nūrah*"), where al-Suyūṭī answers two related questions: is the removal of hair with depilatory paste really according to the Sunnah? and are the hadiths on the subject reliable or not, meaning that there are contradictions between the hadiths on this matter? Al-Suyūṭī answers this question at length, indicating that the use of depilatory paste was common (otherwise, the question regarding the Islamic validity of its use would not have arisen). He begins by explaining that there are many hadiths, with varying degrees of reliability, according to which the Prophet and the Ṣaḥābah used *nūrah.* However, it is not clear whether the use of depilatory paste is required, like the shaving of the pubic hair *(ḥalq al-ʿānah)* and the plucking of the armpits *(natf al-ibṭ).* It can be said that this is a custom, and the Prophet's actions do not indicate *sunnah* in this case; it can be said that this is an act that is permitted, and Muḥammad performed it to clarify this; it can be said that the use of *nūrah* is *sunnah* because one should follow the custom of the Prophet. It seems that al-Suyūṭī favors the use of depilatory paste, because he later produces ten reliable hadiths, some with more than one chain of transmission, according to which Muḥammad used *nūrah*: "The Messenger of God, peace be upon him, used to enter the bathhouse and used to use depilatory paste *(kāna rasūl allāh, ṣ.l.ʿ.m., yadkhul al-ḥammām wa-kāna yatanawwir).*"[15] He cites additional hadiths according to which the Ṣaḥābah used *nūrah,* where the emphasis is on modesty laws: it is proper for a person to remove his pubic hair himself.[16] Al-Suyūṭī rejects as weak the only hadith he cites according to which the Prophet used to shave his pubic hair, but agrees that it is possible that Muḥammad sometimes shaved and sometimes used *nūrah,* thus settling the contradiction the questioner raised.[17]

Nūrah is further mentioned in Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿah's biography of the legendary Arab physician al-Ḥārith ibn Kalādah, as follows:

> Dāwūd ibn Rushayd tells us that according to ʿAmr ibn Maʿrūf, when al-Ḥārith ibn Kalādah lay dying, people came to his bedside and begged him to give them some words for their guidance

[14] Al-Kūhīn al-ʿAṭṭār, *Minhāj al-dukkān,* 19.

[15] Al-Suyūṭī, *Al-Akhbār al-maʾthūrah fī al-iṭṭilāʿ bi-al-nūrah,* 1:340–41.

[16] Ibid., 1:341.

[17] Ibid., 1:342.

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> when he would no longer be with them. . . . He said, "... use the depilatory paste called *nūrah* every month, as it gets rid of phlegm, eliminates bile and causes flesh to grow. . . ."[18]

In this case, *nūrah* does not merely remove superfluous hair, it also removes superfluous humors, specifically phlegm (cold and moist) and bile (hot and dry). Al-Ḥārith's recommendation of using *nūrah* monthly fits the recommendation of the jurisprudents mentioned above to do so at least every forty days. The story is reminiscent of the genre of prophetic medicine *(al-ṭibb al-nabawī),* which flourished during the Mamluk period.[19] While in prophetic medicine, Galenic ideas were "Islamicized" by being put in the mouth of the Prophet Muḥammad, here we have what seems to be the reverse: a religious duty is made even more worthwhile by having a positive medical effect on the believer's body.

Is it possible that there was a difference between the sexes: perhaps women removed their hair with sugar syrup, as is customary to this day, while men preferred to use *nūrah*? Men apparently removed mainly or only pubic and armpit hair—small and sensitive areas—while women also removed hair from more extensive areas of the body such as the arms and legs (like the Queen of Sheba). Like today, there may have been a demand among women for a method that would keep the body smooth for a long time, and hence there would be a preference for sugar syrup and plucking over the use of *nūrah* or shaving.

Dyeing the Hair

If hair removal is mandatory (for the pubic area and armpits) or permitted (for the legs and arms), what about dyeing the hair? Here the Muslim tradition is less decisive. Already some forty years ago, Juynboll analyzed hadiths dealing with the dyeing of one's hair—sometimes on the head and sometimes the beard.[20] Hair dye is called *khaḍāb.* According to what he found, there are several groups of hadiths that deal with this issue. First, there are hadiths from the Hijaz, in which there is opposition to dyeing hair with a plant called *wasmah* (probably indigo, *Indigofera tinctoria*), and support for dyeing it with *ḥinnāʾ* (henna, *Lawsonia inermis*) and *katam* (probably dyer's woad, *Isatis tinctoria*), two plants of which the former is common in the Arabian Peninsula and the latter must be imported,

[18] *A Literary History of Medicine: The* ʿUyūn al-anbāʾ fī ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbāʾ *of Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿah Online,* ed. Emilie Savage-Smith, Simon Swain, Geert Jan van Gelder (Leiden, 2020), §7.1, https://doi.org/10.1163/37704_0668IbnAbiUsaibia.Tabaqatalatibba.lhom-tr-eng1.

[19] See Irmeli Perho, *The Prophet's Medicine: A Creation of the Muslim Traditionalist Scholars* (Helsinki, 1995).

[20] G. H. A. Juynboll, "Dyeing the Hair and Beard in Early Islam: A Ḥadīth-analytical Study," *Arabica* 33 (1986): 49–75.

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probably from the Levant.[21] The combination of the two yields a dark red-orange color, but not black. Second, there are hadiths from Syria that support dyeing the hair black. These also contain polemics against the Christians and the Jews, who did not dye their beards. Third, there are hadiths from Basrah, according to which Muḥammad himself did not dye his hair, but it is still permissible to dye the hair black. Finally, there are hadiths from Kūfah, according to which Muḥammad did dye his hair and recommended the use of henna combined with *katam*. According to Juynboll, hair dyeing was common in all the societies conquered by the Arabs and was known in the Arabian Peninsula. He suggests that before Islam the use of *khaḍāb* was not common due to a lack of raw materials. After the conquests, on the other hand, the use of hair dye continued to grow and a group of traditionists arose who were associated with the trade in henna and were called *ḥinnāʾīyūn*. Juynboll claims that the connection is not accidental and that these were precisely the people who spread hadiths in favor of dyeing one's hair.

A recent article by El Shamsy,[22] however, has deconstructed Juynboll's claims, arguing that "the key feature of Juynboll's article is that it takes as its starting point the hypothesis that the hadith on hair dyeing are later fabrications to justify a cultural adoption by Muslims from their non-Muslim subject populations, and it then interprets the evidence in light of this assumption."[23] El Shamsy considers additional hadiths, as well as contemporary Muslim practice, to conclude that rather than competing traditions for and against dyeing hair at all, the debate was against dyeing the hair black and in favor of dyeing it a reddish-brown or orange color.[24]

I thought that the desire to dye the hair to a dark red-orange shade might indicate continuity with the Hellenistic tradition. The Greeks and Romans preferred to dye their hair these colors over darker ones. There are even reports of Roman women who wore wigs made from the hair of blonde or red-haired German slave girls, earning thus the ridicule of the satirists.[25] In Islamicate culture, matters are more complex. In addition to the testimony of the hadith, which is not unequivocal in this matter, we may consider the testimony of poetry. In

[21] Woad is native to the Mediterranean basin, extending into temperate Europe, thus would need to be imported into the hotter and drier Arabian Peninsula. See Daniel Zohary, Maria Hopf, and Ehud Weiss, *Domestication of Plants in the Old Word* (Oxford, 2012), 166–67.

[22] Ahmad El Shamsy, "The Curious Case of Early Muslim Hair Dyeing," in *Islam at 250: Studies in Memory of G. H. A. Juynboll,* ed. Petra Sijperstein and Camilla Adang (Leiden, 2020), 187–206.

[23] Ibid., 189.

[24] Ibid., 191.

[25] E.g., Juvenal, *The Satires,* trans. A. S. Kline, Satire 6, line 120: https://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/JuvenalSatires6.php.

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the descriptions of the beloved in Arabic and Persian poetry, the beloved is always described as having black hair, preferably black hair that flows over the shoulders. This is how ʿUmar ibn Abī Rabīʿah is quoted in the tenth-century anthology *Kitāb al-aghānī,* comparing the gazelle to a girl with the words "and that you [i.e., the gazelle] have no hair, whilst hers/is blackest flood upon her shoulders clothing her."[26] Sometimes the poet also dyes his hair, like Rudākī (d. circa 328/940), who says:

> I do not dye my hair black so as to be young again and sin again,
> but because people dye their clothes black in mourning,
> so I have dyed my hair black, mourning my old age.[27]

What do we find in pharmacological writings? Islamicate medicine is generally seen as continuing and developing Greek medicine. We would expect, therefore, to find in Arabic pharmacopoeias recipes for dyeing the hair that originate from the Hellenistic tradition, that is, for lightening the hair. However, this is not the case: recipes for hair dyes actually support the testimony of poetry according to which black hair is considered the most beautiful. So far, in this genre I have found only one recipe for lightening the hair, which does not necessarily mean dyeing it blond:[28] "for bleaching the hair: Grind mung beans in vinegar, smear that (on the hair), and (then) anoint it with jasmine oil."[29] This recipe appears in the pharmacopoeia of Sābūr ibn Sahl (d. 255/869), who, although he lived in Baghdad, represents a Syrian-Nestorian tradition. Compared to this single recipe, there are several recipes for dyeing the hair black, both in books from Baghdad and in books from Cairo. These recipes are usually also intended to strengthen the hair. The following recipe appears in *Minhāj al-dukkān:*

> Oil that blackens the hair and strengthens it, known as myrtle oil or emblic oil. Take three *ūqīyah*s [about 90 grams] of emblic

[26] Cited in Johann C. Bürgel, "The Lady Gazelle and Her Murderous Glances," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 20 (1989): 2.

[27] Translation from Bernard Lewis, *Music of a Distant Drum: Classical Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Hebrew Poems* (Princeton, 2001), 99.

[28] For recipes from a different genre, that of the tricks of various kinds of conmen, compare the chapter on dyeing humans in al-Jawbarī's thirteenth-century *Book of Charlatans,* which contains both a recipe for bleaching the beard and one for dyeing it blond. The latter is a very simple combination of henna and crushed madder, whose result, "a very intense reddish blond," fits well with the preferences of the hadith discussed above. See Jamāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥīm al-Jawbarī, *The Book of Charlatans,* trans. Humphrey Davis (New York 2020), 294–303. I thank the anonymous reviewer for this reference.

[29] Recipe 222 in *Sābūr ibn Sahl's Dispensatory in the Recension of the ʿAḍudī Hospital,* ed. and trans. Oliver Kahl (Leiden, 2009), 96 (Arabic), 203 (English).

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> myrobalan cleaned of seeds, cook in three *raṭl*s [about 900 ml] of water until half remains, and if it was [cooked in] wine, that would be better. Filter and add one *raṭl* of fresh myrtle-water and one *raṭl* of oil of violets. Cook until the watery part evaporates, and the oil remains. After removing from the fire, add five dirhams [about 16 grams] of frankincense, and use.[30]

Please note that there are no instructions whatsoever as to how this oil should be applied. Note, also, the comment of the Jewish author that it is better to use wine rather than water as a base in which the other ingredients are cooked. This is interesting, given that most schools of law permit the use in medicine of wine that has been reduced by two-thirds. Yet even though this is a preparation for external use, a Muslim consumer may prefer to avoid wine regardless; is it perhaps more acceptable here because this is not strictly a medicine?

An expanded version of this recipe appears in the *Aqrābādhīn* of Ibn al-Tilmīdh (d. 549/1154 or 560/1165), another Baghdadi Nestorian physician. His pharmacopoeia replaced that of Sābūr ibn Sahl in the hospitals of the Islamic East, and he was well-known also to al-Kūhīn al-ʿAṭṭār, who quotes him extensively (but not in this case). Ibn al-Tilmīdh adds that according to some versions, the myrtle water is cooked together with sesame oil.[31] This oil apparently gives the hair a black appearance, but the color does not remain over time and therefore it is not called *khaḍāb*. Recipes that receive this title contain the distinct coloring agents oak galls *(ʿafṣ)* and *nīl* (synonymous with *wasmah*), for example in the following recipe in Ibn al-Tilmīdh's compilation, which also describes the lengthy dyeing process:

> A dye *(khaḍāb)* which darkens the hair
>
> Take barley meal, let it properly ferment so that it becomes sour, add to one handful of it one *ūqīyah* (of) *rūsakhtaj* which is oxidized copper, pound (this), strain it through a cloth of silk, and liquefy it little by little with acid wine vinegar until that mixture of fermented dough and oxidized copper gains the consistency of pulped lote (fruits); then wrap it around the hair and stuff into it beet leaves or lettuce (leaves) or vine leaves or gourd leaves in order to prevent the dye from drying out (too soon); leave it (like this) for twelve hours, then take away (the leaves) and shake off (the dye) from the hair. Meanwhile you should have prepared twenty unpierced oak galls by burning them almost to the point

[30] Al-Kūhīn al-ʿAṭṭār, *Minhāj al-dukkān,* 162.

[31] Recipe 280 in *The Dispensatory of Ibn al-Tilmīd,* ed. and trans. Oliver Kahl (Leiden, 2007), 133 (Arabic), 266–67 (English).

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> of complete combustion, (then) by quenching them so that they can (easily) be crushed whilst some of their faculty is (still left), and (finally) by grinding them, straining them through a cloth of silk, and wetting them with water; (now) wrap (this dye) around the hair, put leaves into it, and let it alone for twelve hours as (you did) before; then take away (the leaves) and wash off (the dye). This will bring out a long-lasting beautiful black colour.[32]

This is an example of a two-step dyeing process, which probably begins with lightening the hair before dyeing it the desired color. Of course, similar processes also exist today, including the same technique of applying the dye to the hair, and covering it for a certain period of time—although today the hair is usually covered with a plastic bath cap for a period of up to half an hour. Moreover, this Baghdadi recipe is very different from the later Cairene one: where *Minhāj al-dukkān* makes use of myrobalans imported from India, myrtle-water, oil of violets, and finally frankincense, Ibn al-Tilmīdh's recipe begins with a mineral-based preparation, and then continues to using burnt oak galls. It is difficult to say how much each hair dye might have cost, and whether this affected who might have used it. At first glance, myrobalans and frankincense—imported to Egypt from India and Arabia, respectively—would appear to be more expensive ingredients, but oxidized copper and oak galls, too, may have been imported to Baghdad.

All the pharmacopoeias I have cited (which I believe to have been the most popular ones in use in the medieval Arabophone world, given their extensive use in hospitals or in the community)[33] were composed by Jews or Christians, not by Muslims. Might this have affected their contents? It is usually assumed that medicine in general was largely a tolerant interfaith matter for most of the pre-modern Islamic world, with a permanent decline in the status of *dhimmī* physicians and pharmacists occurring only in the Mamluk period.[34] To return to El Shamsy's paper, he makes use of Christian and Jewish sources to demonstrate that dyeing the beard unnatural colors was a custom used to differentiate Muslims from non-Muslims from early on. Indeed, he claims that it is possible

[32] Recipe 334 in ibid., 149 (Arabic), 282–83 (English).

[33] Ibid., 5, on Sābūr and Ibn al-Tilmīdh in hospitals; Leigh Chipman, *The World of Pharmacy and Pharmacists in Mamlūk Cairo* (Leiden, 2010), 1–3, on *Minhāj al-dukkān* in the community.

[34] There is an extensive bibliography on the place of *dhimmī*s in the medical profession and the changes therein over time. See, e.g., Paulina Lewicka, "Medicine for Muslims? Islamic Theologians, Non-Muslim Physicians and the Medical Culture of the Mamluk Near East," in *History and Society during the Mamluk Period (1250–1517),* ed. Stephan Conermann (Bonn, 2014), 83–106; and most recently, Efraim Lev, *Jewish Medical Practitioners in the Medieval Muslim World: A Collective Biography* (Edinburgh, 2021).

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that the hair-dyeing hadiths aimed to place the Muslims within the community of monotheists generally (the Torah and Talmud, like the hadith, object to the plucking of gray hairs and to dyeing the beard black) but at the same time clearly differentiating them from non-Muslims.[35] Over time, as Muslims became the majority rather than a ruling minority, the task of differentiation fell upon the *dhimmī*s, who were required to wear special markers of their status, and the objection to dyeing the hair black faded away.[36]

CONCLUSION

What conclusions can be drawn from everything I have said so far? Is all this nothing more than a curio? The anthropologist Christian Bromberger points out that "the strictly codified wearing of the beard and the mustache, as well as the practice of corporal hair removal, are among the strongest and most nuanced markers of adherence to the Islamic community."[37] It is interesting that there are significantly more recipes for hair dyes than for hair removal pastes in the pharmacological literature, a ratio of about three to one. In the context of the medieval Middle East, I suggest we should consider that these are treatments that were mostly done in the *ḥammām,* where other medical treatments were also performed (for skin diseases, for example).[38] The ḥammām is a kind of no man's land, both public and private, or neither public nor private. The discussions in the hadiths I cited on hair removal and dyeing concern the boundaries between the public and the private, the modest and the obscene. A possible direction for further research is the legal and medical-theoretical literature about the ḥammām and hair care. Within the scope of this article, I can only touch the tip of the iceberg that is the history and practice of cosmetics, but, apparently, there were no real differences between men and women in terms of hair care, and thus there is evidence of an ideal of beauty common to men and women: a

[35] El Shamsy, "Curious Case," 192–97.

[36] Ibid., 202–3.

[37] Christian Bromberger, "Hair: From the West to the Middle East through the Mediterranean (The 2007 AFS Mediterranean Studies Section Address)," *Journal of American Folklore* 121, no. 482 (2008): 385.

[38] See, e.g., Pauline Koetschet, "Quelques aspects du bain dans la médecine arabe médievale," in *25 siècles de bain collectif en Orient: Proche-Orient, Égypte et péninsule Arabique: balaneia = thermae = hammāmāt: Actes du 3e Colloque International Balnéorient, organisé par l'Institut Français du Proche-Orient et la Direction Générale des Antiquités et des Musées de Syrie (Damas-Syrie, 2–6 nov. 2009),* ed. Marie-Françoise Boussac et al. (Cairo, 2014), 1011–24.

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smooth and fair body, often placed in contrast to long black hair.[39] This ideal of beauty can be found, for example, in descriptions of the Prophet Muḥammad.[40] A common beauty ideal for men and women is an expression of the concept that men and women do not form a binary but are on a continuum. Most recently, Zayde Antrim has shown that in the *Thousand and One Nights,* an exemplar of Mamluk-era popular literature, the bodies of men and women are described in strikingly similar terms,[41] suggesting ungendered beauty standards rather than the woman being a defective version of the man (what Dror Ze'evi calls the woman-as-imperfect-man model)[42] that would appear to be a step on the way to a sex binary. If there is no essential difference between the sexes, there is no need to create the sharp distinctions between the hirsute man and the smooth woman that exist in modern society, which advocates a binary model. (Postmodern society has begun to challenge these sharp distinctions, and as evidence we find in recent decades the rise of a new male beauty model that advocates a smooth body for men as well.) On the other hand, even if traditional Muslim societies did not make distinctions between the sexes, they did make distinctions between genders, which manifested in all areas of life. In the context of hair removal, it can be seen that women remove hair from the entire body, while men remove it only from specific areas, and as such this is a gender distinction. If we return for a moment to the Queen of Sheba, her hairy legs are only one expression of her deviation from accepted norms. Is she hairy because she is descended from jinn? Or maybe she is hairy because she succeeded her father, killed her first husband, and continues to dominate men? In any case, she goes beyond the boundaries of her gender. Thus, it seems to me that the lens of gender and sex contributes to understanding the attitude toward hair but is not enough to explain it completely.

Another lens, which I alluded to above, is that of religion; more precisely, of distinction between male members of various religions. While removing body hair remained a private matter, since medieval adults would seldom have exposed their unclothed bodies, a man with a beard in his natural color—black, brown, gray, white—may belong to any religion. But a man whose beard is dyed reddish-

[39] This ideal seems to have lasted up to the nineteenth century in Iran. See Najmabadi, *Women With Mustaches,* 25: "Ideas of beauty were ungendered."

[40] Hadas Hirsch, "Personal Grooming and Outward Appearance in Early Muslim Societies," *Al-Masāq* 23, no. 2 (2011): 107.

[41] Zayde Antrim, "*Qamarayn:* The Erotics of Sameness in the 1001 Nights," *Al-ʿUṣūr al-Wusṭā* 28, no. 1 (2020): 1–44, esp. 5.

[42] Dror Ze'evi, *Producing Desire: Changing Sexual Discourse in the Middle East, 1500–1900* (Berkeley, 2006), 22–23.

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brown with henna is most certainly a Muslim, and likely one deeply invested in the Sunnah of the Prophet.

A final lens through which to understand hair dyeing and hair removal, one that I do not think has yet been considered in depth, is that of ethnic difference.[43] The Mamluk period is one in which there was a distinct ethnic difference between the ruling class ("Turks") and the ruled populace (Arabs).[44] Throughout the pre-modern and early modern periods, Arabs, Iranians, and Turks alike admitted to physical differences among the stereotypical members of each ethnic group.[45] At the same time, the Mamluks specifically regarded themselves as Muslim warriors—perhaps the greater number of recipes for hair dyeing in the pharmacopoeias of this period is a reflection of this?

[43] I thank Dr. Or Amir for this suggestion.

[44] Ulrich W. Haarmann, "Ideology and History, Identity and Alterity: The Arab Image of the Turk from the Abbasids to Modern Egypt," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 20, no. 2 (1988): 175–96.

[45] See, *inter alia,* John P. Turner, "Al-Jāḥiẓ and Identity," in *Islam on the Margins: Studies in Memory of Michael Bonner, ed. Robert Haug and Steven Judd (Leiden,* 2023), 201–19. For ethnic differences among the Mamluks themselves, see the works of Koby Yosef.

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Khiḍr and Rasputin: On the Potentials and Limits of Charismatic Advisors at Court

I vividly remember a conversation with Professor Reuven Amitai, back in 2010, when I had just begun considering a topic for my M.A. thesis. Seeking direction for the project, we discussed the role of Sufi shaykhs in the context of the Islamization of Palestine during the Mamluk period, and Reuven pointed me to a certain shaykh Khiḍr (d. 676/1277), who was sultan Baybars' spiritual advisor, a curious "Rasputin-like" character, and suggested that I start by reading about his deeds. Thus began my relationship with Khiḍr—and with the Sufis in general.

While the reference to Grigory Rasputin (1869–1916)—the notorious spiritual advisor to the last Czar of Russia, Nicholas II (1868–1918), and especially to the latter's spouse, Alexandra (1872–1918)—was obviously humorous, it soon became clear to me how much the stories of those two controversial (to put it mildly) spiritual figures had in common and how pairing them in a discussion about the possible influence of saintly characters at rulers' courts might be instructive. This short essay will thus examine the influence a charismatic advisor was able to wield at court but also consider how crossing certain boundaries might lead to a clash with other, more traditional or bureaucratic, authorities. Focusing on Khiḍr and the Mamluk context, Rasputin will serve as a point of comparison, which will help shed new light on Khiḍr and the phenomenon he represented at large. By doing so, the article will propose insights into the nature of relations between the Mamluk ruling elite and Sufi shaykhs, or other saintly figures, while situating them within a broader context.

Louis Pouzet pointed out the resemblance between Khiḍr and Rasputin in a brief footnote in his 1978 article.[1] While not the first scholar to emphasize Khiḍr's influence during Baybars' reign—Ashtor aptly called Khiḍr Baybars' "Hausprophet" in a brief 1937 article[2]—Pouzet's article paved the way for a number of subsequent short studies of the shaykh's mesmerizing story.[3] It seems

[1] Louis Pouzet, "Ḥaḍir Ibn Abî Bakr al-Mihrānî (m. 7 muḥ. 676/11 juin 1277), šayḫ du sultan mamelouk Al-Malik aẓ-Ẓâhir Baïbars," *Bulletin d'études orientales* 30 (1978): 182.

[2] Eliyahu Strauß (Ashtor), "Scheich Ḫiḍr, Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Juden in Damaskus," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 44 (1937): 227–30.

[3] Most studies dealt with Khiḍr's notorious assaults on the *dhimmī*s, or his influence over Baybars. Joseph Drory, "On Some Misdeeds of Sheikh Khiḍr, 'Chief of the Ishmaelites,'" in *Studies in Arabic and Islamic Culture,* ed. Binyamin Abrahamov (Ramat Gan, 2000), 37–49; Christian Müller and Johannes Pahlitzsch, "Sultan Baybars I and the Georgians—In the Light of New Documents

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that no other shaykh from the Mamluk period has received such scholarly attention, and rightly so.

In fact, writers contemporaneous to Khiḍr were no less intrigued than modern ones by his personality, his influence over such a potent ruler as Baybars, the edifying value of his story, and, as importantly, his alleged scandalous (and therefore entertaining) deeds. Khiḍr is mentioned in practically every chronology or biographical compendium of the Mamluk period. Most recensions of his story seem to be ultimately derived from two main "primary" sources. The first, attributed to the amir Qashtamur al-ʿAjamī (d. after 680/1281)—Baybars' comrade in the Baḥrīyah regiment and a fellow devotee of the shaykh—was originally narrated by Ibn Shaddād al-Ḥalabī (d. 684/1285), Baybars' court biographer.[4] The second version appears to have originated with the Damascene chronicler Ibn al-Jazarī (d. 739/1338), relying on an account narrated to him by his father, who personally met Khiḍr. Ibn al-Jazarī's version is later reproduced—and embellished—by the Cairene chroniclers Ibn al-Dawādārī (fl. 736/1335), al-Nuwayrī (d. 733/1333) and Ibn Abī al-Faḍāʾil (fl. 759/1358).[5] In other words, Khiḍr's story gained wide publicity very early on, was founded on well-known narrators who knew him first-hand, and received wide coverage from prominent chroniclers representing both Cairene and Syrian circles.

The Rise and Fall of Shaykh Khiḍr

Since Khiḍr's story is well known to modern scholarship, in what follows I will focus on the magnitude of his influence and the dynamics that made his downfall inevitable. Meanwhile, the parallels to Rasputin—whose story verges on a

Related to the Monastery of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem," *Arabica* 51, no. 3 (2004): 259–90; Peter Thorau, *The Lion of Egypt: Sultan Baybars I and the Near East in the 13th Century,* trans. Peter M. Holt (London, 1992), 225–29; Anne-Marie Eddé, "Baybars et son double: De l'ambiguïté du souverain ideal," in *Le Bilād al-Šām face aux mondes extérieurs: La perception de l'Autre et la représentation du souverain,* ed. Denise Aigle (Damascus and Beirut, 2012), 73–86; Peter M. Holt, "An Early Source on Shaykh Khaḍir al-Mihrānī," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 46 (1983): 33–39; Denise Aigle, "Legitimizing a Low-Born, Regicide Monarch: The Case of the Mamluk Sultan Baybars and the Ilkhans in the Thirteenth Century," in *Representing Power in Ancient Inner Asia: Legitimacy, Transmission and the Sacred,* ed. Isabelle Charleux et al. (Bellingham, WA, 2010), 61–94; Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The Early Mamluk Sultanate, 1250–1382* (London, 1986), 53–55 (Irwin also notes Khiḍr's resemblance to Rasputin).

[4] Ibn Shaddād, *Tārīkh al-Malik al-Ẓāhir,* ed. Aḥmad Ḥuṭayṭ (Wiesbaden, 1983), 58–60, 272–74.

[5] Holt, "Early Source"; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar wa-jāmiʿ al-ghurar,* ed. Ulrich Haarmaan et al. (Cairo, 1960–94), 8:220–24; Mufaḍḍal Ibn Abī al-Faḍāʾil, *Al-Nahj al-sadīd wa-al-durr al-farīd fīmā baʿda tārīkh Ibn al-ʿAmīd,* ed. Muḥammad Kamāl al-Dīn ʿIzz al-Dīn ʿAlī al-Sayyid (Damascus, 2017), 241–45; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab,* ed. Fahīm Muḥammad ʿAlawī Shaltūt (Cairo, 1975–98), 30:376–77.

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modern-day popular myth—will be discussed further below.[6] The sources outline several main features in Khiḍr's biography: his dubious origins and early life prior to his attachment to Baybars; his prophecies to the sultan predicting his ascent and key events during his reign; his unprecedented influence during the first decade of Baybars' reign; taking advantage of this influence, his scandalous deeds, related both to his private conduct and to his persecution of Jewish and Christian subjects; and, finally, his inevitable downfall—whether the outcome of his offensive behavior or of his clash with competing powerful members of court. I will concentrate on Khiḍr's influence over the sultan and his clash with other authoritative figures which, I maintain, was the most probable reason for his eventual fall from grace.

Not much is known regarding the shaykh Khiḍr ibn Abī Bakr al-Mihrānī al-ʿAdawī (d. 676/1277) prior to his joining Baybars' entourage. He grew up in Jazīrat Ibn ʿUmar (modern Cizre, Turkey) and was of Kurdish descent. According to Ibn al-Jazarī, Khiḍr started as a lowly servant in several notable households and constantly became entangled in controversies—all related to illicit affairs with women. Facing castration as punishment for impregnating a handmaiden, he fled southward, evidently reaching Damascus no later than 1250, about a decade before Baybars' ascent to the throne.[7]

In Damascus, Khiḍr began living as a recluse in a cave, which served him as a *zāwiyah,* on top of al-Mizzah, a Damascene suburb located on a hill outside of town, where he might have met Baybars for the first time and prophesied his future success. Al-Nuwayrī presents us with two versions—both quoted from Ibn al-Jazarī—which aim at explaining Khiḍr's widely known predictions regarding Baybars' career. According to one version, Khiḍr met some Sufis during his stay at al-Mizzah and they informed him of his future, including his relationship with Baybars.[8] In the second version, Ibn al-Jazarī quotes a conversation between his own father, Ibrāhīm, and the shaykh Khiḍr, which Ibrāhīm narrated to his son. Here, Khiḍr recounts that he received the prophecy about his illustrious future

[6]Rasputin became, beginning during his lifetime and even more so posthumously, one of the most omnipresent figures in Russian popular culture and beyond. An incredibly vast and diverse oeuvre has been composed about him, from biographies and novels to movies and pop songs, a fact which makes him an especially difficult figure to study—even more so considering the surprising dearth of reliable academic studies. Most of the writing on Rasputin is clearly biased, particularly against him. This is now slowly changing, as new archives from the early twentieth century are gradually opened to scholars since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991. See: Douglas Smith, *Rasputin* (London, 2017), 3–7.

[7]Pouzet, "Ḫaḍir," 174; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz,* 8:220; cf. Mufaḍḍal, *Al-Nahj,* 242; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat,* 30:376–77.

[8]Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat,* 30:377. This is Ibn al-Jazarī's version which is also quoted by Mufaḍḍal (*Al-Nahj*, 242) and Ibn al-Dawādārī (*Kanz,* 8:220–21).

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from a wandering naked *faqīr* on Mt. al-Jūdī, where he lived for a while after fleeing Jazīrat Ibn ʿUmar.[9] According to Khiḍr, the anonymous *faqīr* told him, "Go to Syria (al-Shām). A great matter with its king is destined for you." Having done so, while Khiḍr dwelled in his cave on al-Mizzah, he chanced to meet Baybars—by then an amir in the service of al-Malik al-Nāṣir, the Ayyubid ruler of Damascus (d. 658/1260)—and foretold his sultanate. Khiḍr continued, saying, "And that *faqīr* informed me of everything that will happen to me during my lifetime, and everything that will occur to the sultan, one incident after the other."[10]

The two conflicting versions suggest that rumors were widespread regarding the origins of the mysterious and unconventional shaykh, who seemed to have appeared from nowhere to become one of the most powerful men in the sultanate, possessing an instant, legendary influence over the sultan. This is apparent from the beginning of the conversation between Khiḍr and Ibrāhīm al-Jazarī, as narrated by his son:

> My father, Ibrāhīm, had once asked [Khiḍr]: "Brother, I yearn to know what the circumstances that led you to this state [in which you are now, i.e., as the sultan's close advisor] were." [Khiḍr] told him: "By God, I will not tell you before you tell me what you know about me [i.e., about my origins]." [Ibrāhīm al-Jazarī] said: "I know that you were an unfortunate shaykh *(shaykh naḥs),* that you were deported from al-Jazīrah, then from Aleppo, and then from Damascus, and I had not seen you before you reached this state." [Khiḍr] said: "By God Almighty, you have told the truth! And no one has ever spoken truthfully about me but you, my brother!"[11]

[9] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat,* 30:378. Mt. al-Jūdī is, according to Islamic tradition, the place where Noah's ark rested. See: M. Streck, "Djudi," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., 2:573–74.

[10] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat,* 30:379. The conversation between Khiḍr and Ibrāhīm al-Jazarī is quoted, from Ibn al-Jazarī's chronicle *Ḥawādith al-zamān,* only by al-Nuwayrī and does not appear in Ibn al-Dawādārī or Mufaḍḍal's accounts. This second version produced by Ibn al-Jazarī, via his father, was apparently unknown to Holt ("Early Source"), who assumed that Ibn al-Jazarī's first version of Khiḍr's early encounter with Baybars—available to him through the chronicles of Ibn al-Dawādārī and Mufaḍḍal—was the product of a later literary embellishment *(Literarisierung)* aimed at producing a "good story." As we see here, rather than relying on Ibn Shaddād as his source for Khiḍr's biography, as Holt suggested, Ibn al-Jazarī actually had his own sources, probably local Damascene ones, such as his own father. Holt was right, though, in his assumption—following Haarmann—that both Ibn al-Dawādārī and Mufaḍḍal drew on Ibn al-Jazarī. There are further sources Holt was apparently unaware of, a fact which compromises his conclusions even more, as will be discussed below.

[11] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat,* 30:378. Khiḍr then goes on to recount his story, including his meeting with the *faqīr* on Mt. al-Jūdī.

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The main issue behind this anecdote, and in fact behind both stories that aim at narrating Khiḍr's biography prior to his attachment to the sultan—regardless of their veracity and the effects of *Literarisierung* on them—is that contemporaries, who knew all too well of Khiḍr's influence and unruly conduct, had difficulty reconciling his eminence with his personality. It was widely known that Khiḍr prophesied Baybars' ascension to the throne, as well as other key events of the sultan's career, but Khiḍr did not fit the type of diviner people had in mind: he was no astrologer or expert in other divination techniques, nor was he a respected Sufi saint, who might also be considered capable of clairvoyance through divine grace *(karāmah).*[12] In fact, he was an outsider of dubious origins and, to add insult to injury, what was known about him was a far cry from what was expected of a typical saintly figure.

One approach to reconciling this anomaly was to portray Khiḍr as one who did not achieve his prophecies through divine favor but rather heard them from some mysterious, yet "proper," ascetic, or Sufi. It was the Sufis Khiḍr met at al-Mizzah, or the *faqīr* at Mt. al-Jūdī, who attained the prophecies and transmitted them to Khiḍr, who in turn presented them to Baybars as his own.[13] This narrative is echoed in an anecdote—of a more purely didactic nature—brought by the Upper Egyptian Sufi Ibn Nūḥ al-Qūṣī (d. 709/1309), in his treatise on the Friends of God *(awliyāʾ), Al-Waḥīd fī sulūk ahl al-tawḥīd.*[14] The purpose of the anecdote related to Khiḍr is to show that a true *walī*—as opposed to Khiḍr—has no need to associate with worldly rulers and receive their patronage. The anecdote presents a slightly different, though essentially similar, version of the origin of Khiḍr's prophecy. It is narrated by a certain righteous Sufi *(faqīr ṣāliḥ),* Ṭalḥah al-

[12] Like, for example, another contemporary shaykh who predicted Baybars' ascension. See: al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-abṣār fī mamālik al-amṣār,* ed. Kāmil Salmān al-Jabūrī and Mahdī al-Najm (Beirut, 2010), 8:173.

[13] Alternatively, as Ibn al-Dawādārī and Mufaḍḍal have it, those successful predictions might very well be by chance and not a sign of any clairvoyance or divine gift—God knows best. See: Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz,* 8:221; Mufaḍḍal, *Al-Nahj,* 243; Thorau, *Lion of Egypt,* 226. Here as well, both Egyptian chroniclers use identical phraseology, which leads us to assume they used the same common source—i.e., Ibn al-Jazarī; however, this statement is not found in al-Nuwayrī's account. The question of the nature of Khiḍr's prophecies is also raised by al-Yūnīnī, who characteristically takes a middle ground on the issue, and even by Ibn Taymīyah, who, also typically, did not think highly of Khiḍr. See: al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl mirʾāt al-zamān* (Hyderabad, 1954), 3:268; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām wa-wafayāt al-mashāhīr wa-al-aʿlām,* ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī (Beirut, 2003), 50:223. This is in fact part of a larger, ongoing discussion over questions of sanctity and authority in Islam, within which miracle and divination stories played a key role.

[14] Denis Gril, "Une source inédite pour l'histoire du *taṣawwuf* en Égypte au viie/xiiie siècle," in *Livre du centenaire, 1880–1980* (Cairo, 1980), 441–508.

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Damāmīnī,[15] who relates that he was with Khiḍr and another, anonymous, *faqīr* in Damascus *(al-Shām),* and Baybars—still prior to his ascent to the throne—associated with them in a mosque. When Baybars left, the anonymous *faqīr* predicted that "this man will be the ruler of Egypt and al-Shām." The *faqīr* then left on a journey; when Baybars returned, Khiḍr presented him with the prophecy as if it were his own. He made a pact with Baybars that when the prediction came true, Khiḍr would be his partner *(qasīm).* Years passed, Baybars became sultan, and Khiḍr achieved what he achieved. Meanwhile, one day Ṭalḥah—the eyewitness narrator of the story—saw the anonymous *faqīr,* the "original" prophesier, sleeping blissfully on a winter day in the courtyard of the mosque. The message is clear: "He never met with al-Malik al-Ẓāhir [Baybars] again, but his kingdom is superior to that of the earthly ruler and of any of those who exerted themselves in achieving ephemeral authority—both in life and in the Hereafter."[16] Khiḍr thus achieved worldly glory not for any sanctity or supernatural powers he possessed but simply because he stole the prediction emanating from a true saint.[17]

These anecdotes are also important in providing some insights into another issue pertaining to Khiḍr's character: While most scholars who have dealt with Khiḍr have taken it for granted that he was a Sufi shaykh,[18] it is far from clear whether it is accurate to label him as such, since we have practically no information on any shaykhs he might have associated with in contemporaneous sources.[19] The most substantial clues to Khiḍr being a Sufi, thus, are found in the

[15] I was unable to identify this person in the sources.

[16] Ibn Nūḥ, *Kitāb al-waḥīd fī sulūk ṭarīq al-tawḥīd* (publisher unknown), 2:216–17.

[17] As I argue elsewhere, the "stolen prediction" was a popular *topos* in medieval Islamic literature.

[18] This led some to make unsubstantiated claims. For example, Bloom suggests that, "It is indeed possible that the *zāwiya* of Šayḫ Ḫadir, Baybars' spiritual adviser, may have had Ḥanafī-Ṣūfī activities . . ."; and Berkey writes (without any apparent reference) that Baybars "performed with him [Khiḍr] the Sufi *dhikr.*" See: Jonathan M. Bloom, "The Mosque of Baybars al-Bunduqdārī in Cairo," *Annales Islamologiques* 38 (1982): 69; Jonathan P. Berkey, *The Formation of Islam: Religion and Society in the Near East, 600–1800* (New York, 2003), 243.

[19] It is true that later sources, such as the late fifteenth-century al-Sakhāwī, the sixteenth-century al-Shaʿrānī, or the even later al-Munāwī, refer to Khiḍr in more distinctly "Sufi" terms. In these works, Khiḍr is portrayed more as a righteous and venerated shaykh, who experienced mystical states *(aḥwāl)* and *karāmāt,* and whose tomb had become an object of pious visitation *(ziyārah),* while his controversial deeds are left aside. See: al-Munāwī, *Al-Kawākib al-durrīyah fī tarājim al-sādah al-ṣūfīyah,* ed. Muḥammad Adīb al-Jādir (Beirut, 1999), 3:27–28; al-Sakhāwī, *Tuḥfat al-aḥbāb wa-bughyat al-ṭullāb fī al-khiṭaṭ wa-al-mazārāt wa-al-tarājim wa-al-biqāʿ al-mubārakāt,* ed. Maḥmūd Rabīʿ and Ḥasan Qāsim (Cairo, 1937), 23; al-Shaʿrānī, *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrá,* ed. Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sāʾiḥ and Tawfīq ʿAlī Wahbah (Cairo, 2005), 229, 288.

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aforementioned anecdotes about his early association with certain anonymous *fuqarāʾ* prior to his meeting with Baybars.[20]

Be that as it may, it was during his sojourn at al-Mizzah that Khiḍr met the person who would become his second notable devotee, the amir Sayf al-Dīn Qashtamur al-ʿAjamī,[21] who is famous for bringing Baybars and Khiḍr together.[22] According to Ibn Shaddād, the fateful meeting between Baybars and Khiḍr took place in 661/1263, when Baybars was already sultan.[23] Since Khiḍr foretold Baybars' ascension to Qashtamur, it was now Qashtamur who told the sultan about the mysterious shaykh who had predicted his success and arranged the meeting between the two. Baybars was pleased with the shaykh, attached Khiḍr to his retinue, and the rest is history.

The next decade—from 661/1263 until his fall from grace in 671/1273—was Khiḍr's zenith. During that period, the shaykh attained a degree of power and authority as Baybars' spiritual advisor that perhaps no other Sufi shaykh—indeed no other religious figure throughout the long history of the Mamluk Sultanate— achieved.[24] The peak of the shaykh's influence seems to have been between 665/1267 and 669/1271.[25] How far his influence extended is difficult to say. The sources, for their part, indicate that it was significant. As Ibn Shaddād writes, after reporting the shaykh's trial and imprisonment:

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[20] In the account of Khiḍr's beginnings, it is stated that during his stay in Aleppo (that is, after being forced out of Jazīrat Ibn ʿUmar and before arriving at Damascus), he "served Ibn Qaraṭāy as a *bābā* for a period of time" *(wa-khadama ʿinda Ibn Qaraṭāy fī ṣūrat bābā muddatan).* According to Pouzet (following Blochet, the editor and translator of *Al-Nahj al-sadīd*), this should be read as "superintendent." However, Holt claims that the meaning must be understood as "dervish." If Holt is correct, then we have here an early indication of Khiḍr's Sufi-like tendencies. Holt, "Early Source," 33.

[21] Not much is said of him in the sources. Al-Birzālī mentions an amir by that name who died in Damascus in 710/1310 and was buried at al-Mizzah cemetery, not far from Khiḍr's sanctuary, where Qashtamur met the shaykh for the first time. The report seems questionable, though, and it appears that Qashtamur generally disappears from the scene after participating in the battle of Homs (680/1281). Al-Birzālī, *Al-Muqtafī ʿalá kitāb al-rawḍatayn,* ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī (Beirut, 2006), 3:463.

[22] Another amir of the Baḥrīyah who is mentioned as Khiḍr's devotee is Atāmish al-Saʿdī (d. 684/1285): Ibn Shaddād, *Tārīkh,* 282. On Atāmish (or Aytamish): al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-muqaffá al-kabīr,* ed. Muḥammad al-Baʿlāwī (Beirut, 1991), 2:335.

[23] The sources disagree as to whether this was their first meeting; some mention an earlier meeting, before Baybars' sultanate. According to Holt ("Early Source," 35–36), the stories about an earlier meeting were a product of *Literarisierung*. Perhaps there is no real contradiction between the two options: Mufaḍḍal, *Al-Nahj,* 242.

[24] Perhaps one possible exception would have been the shaykh Naṣr al-Manbijī, during the first decade of the eighth/fourteenth century: al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat,* 32:306.

[25] Eddé, "Baybars."

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> This man attained such a position with our lord the sultan [Baybars] as no other, so that [Baybars] would come visit him once or twice weekly, treat him kindly and joke with him, do for him what he wished, accept his petitions of intercession *(shafāʿāthu),* carry out his orders, and take him as his companion on all his journeys. Whenever [Baybars] would conquer a certain place, he would dedicate a portion of it to him from his own share of the booty. [Khiḍr's] authority (lit. his hand) stretched throughout the kingdom of our lord the sultan, [so that] he would do as he pleased and none of the governors *(nuwwāb)* would prevent him from it.[26]

Al-Yūnīnī, who reproduces Ibn Shaddād's account almost verbatim, adds that Baybars would "inform him [Khiḍr] of his deepest secrets *(ghawāmiḍ asrārihi),* advise him on his matters, and would never stray from his advice."[27] Of course, Khiḍr's predictions to the sultan were always fulfilled, thus reinforcing the latter's belief in the shaykh.[28]

Khiḍr's position at court also translated into substantial material benefits he received from the sultan. Besides the share he was awarded after each of Baybars' successful military campaigns, the sultan founded for Khiḍr a vast chain of *zāwiyah*s throughout the realm: we read of branches in Cairo, Damascus,[29] Aleppo, Alexandria, Gaza, Hebron, Baalbek, Homs, Ḥamāh, and Jerusalem, but there might have been more, since, according to Mufaḍḍal and Ibn al-Dawādārī, Khiḍr "had a *zāwiyah* in every town *(madīnah)*."[30] In each *zāwiyah* Khiḍr had a deputy in charge of its affairs *(nāʾib)* and *fuqarāʾ* who were allocated stipends for their live-

[26] Ibn Shaddād, *Tārīkh,* 59 (compare: al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl,* 3:5–6).

[27] Al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl,* 3:264–65.

[28] Ibid., 3:265. Between the crucial prediction regarding Baybars' ascent to the throne and Khiḍr's final prediction about their shared fate in death (on which below), all the predictions are related to Baybars' conquests, namely in Safed, Arsūf, Krak des Chevaliers (Ḥiṣn al-Akrād), and Caesarea. Another successful prophecy is Khiḍr's warning to the sultan to refrain from a planned trip to al-Karak and rather return to Cairo. Baybars ignored the warning; during that trip, he fell from his horse and was injured.

[29] Khiḍr's *zāwiyah* at al-Mizzah was constructed by Baybars in 664/1266. According to Ibn al-Ṣuqāʿī it was a domed structure *(qubbah)* which the shaykh referred to as *al-maʿbad* (the place of worship) and where he used to stay during his frequent visits to Damascus. Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Al-Rawḍ al-zāhir fī sīrat al-Malik al-Ẓāhir,* ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Khuwayṭir (Riyadh, 1976), 266; Ibn al-Ṣuqāʿī, *Tālī kitāb wafayāt al-aʿyān,* ed. Jaqueline Sublet (Damascus, 1974), 69; Ibn Shaddād, *Tārīkh,* 356; Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah* (Beirut, 1993), 13:309.

[30] Mufaḍḍal, *Al-Nahj,* 243. The most comprehensive list is provided by Ibn Shaddād, *Tārīkh,* 273, 350–52.

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lihood.[31] Those were corrupt men who robbed travelers, demanded protection payments from the population, gave shelter to criminals, and were given to all sorts of criminal behaviors, among them illicit sexual acts with married women and children.[32] While Khiḍr's "gangs" are described as *fuqarāʾ*—usually meaning Sufis—and even as his *murīdūn,*[33] i.e., disciples on the Sufi path, as with their shaykh, it is difficult to ascertain in what manner they were indeed invested in Sufism.

Khiḍr led these devoted (and well paid) followers in his notorious and well-documented purge of the religious minorities in the sultanate. During the years of his peak influence at court, Khiḍr and his rough followers led a series of attacks against Christian, Jewish, and Samaritan places of worship. Among their targets were the Georgian Monastery of the Cross, to the west of Jerusalem;[34] the Great Synagogue of Damascus;[35] the church that was the seat of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch in Alexandria;[36] a Samaritan synagogue in Nablus;[37] and perhaps more.[38]

At least some of Khiḍr's actions, though somewhat representative of the general anti-*dhimmī* ambiance prevalent in the region at the twilight of the Crusader period,[39] were met with disapproval by the mainstream of the ulama.[40] They

[31] Khiḍr apparently took good care of his followers, generously providing for them. In fact, his generosity seems to be his one positive trait mentioned in the sources. See, e.g., al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Muqaffá,* 3:753.

[32] Mufaḍḍal, *Al-Nahj,* 243; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat,* 30:379; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz,* 8:222.

[33] Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz,* 8:222.

[34] Müller and Pahlitzsch, "Sultan Baybars."

[35] Ibn Shaddād, *Tārīkh,* 59; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat,* 30:176; Strauß, "Scheich Ḫiḍr."

[36] Khiḍr "plundered it, converted it into a mosque, and named it *al-madrasah al-Khaḍrāʾ*." Ibn Shaddād, *Tārīkh,* 59. The name is obviously a pun on Khiḍr's, but the fact that he made it a mosque, which was called a madrasah, is somehow strange. It would be reasonable to assume that this also functioned as one of Khiḍr's *zāwiyah*s.

[37] Drory, "Some Misdeeds."

[38] Drory suggests that there were other sites as well, and perhaps Khiḍr's other *zāwiyah*s were also sites he confiscated from the religious minorities.

[39] Reuven Amitai, "Islamisation in the Southern Levant after the end of Frankish Rule: Some General Considerations and a Short Case Study," in *Islamisation: Comparative Perspectives from History,* ed. A. C. S. Peacock (Edinburgh, 2017), 160–61; Yehoshua Frenkel, "Baybars and the Sacred Geography of *Bilād al-Shām:* A Chapter in the Islamization of Syria's Landscape," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 25 (2001): 153–70; Tamer El-Leithy, "Sufis, Copts and the Politics of Piety: Moral Regulation in Fourteenth-Century Upper Egypt," in *La Développement du soufisme en Égypte à l`époque mamelouke,* ed. Richard J. A. McGregor and Adam Sabra (Cairo, 2006), 75–119.

[40] Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshá,* ed. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Shams al-Dīn (Beirut, 1987), 8:28; al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik,* 1:373. Indeed, both the synagogue in Damascus and the Monastery of the Cross were eventually returned to their owners. Another indication of the ulama's antagonism to

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also compromised Baybars' foreign policy by arousing discontent from both the Georgians and Byzantines.[41] And yet, as Ibn Shaddād, Baybars' biographer, states, Khiḍr did "all of these with the sultan's consent."[42] Furthermore, the reports on Khiḍr's seizure of the Damascene synagogue suggest that Baybars was complicit beyond just approving the shaykh's actions: Ibn Shaddād writes that Khiḍr (like Ibn Shaddād himself) had come to Damascus as part of the sultan's entourage when he sacked the synagogue, and al-Dhahabī adds that Khiḍr arrived at the place accompanied by "the amirs, notables, and the governor [of Damascus]."[43] Finally, Ibn al-Ṣuqāʿī, a Christian, writes that this was done to celebrate the occasion of Baybars' seizure of the Frankish stronghold of Krak des Chevaliers (Ḥiṣn al-Akrād), and adds that the synagogue and the adjunct Jewish properties were allocated to Khiḍr by the sultan, which strongly suggests that the two acted in partnership.[44] It should be noted that the conversion of the Greek Orthodox church in Alexandria into a "mosque" was also sponsored by the state treasury *(bayt al-māl).*[45]

Two incidents reported by al-Yūnīnī, allegedly as an eyewitness, bolster the claim that Khiḍr acted as the sultan's representative and, especially, that he was conceived as such by contemporaries. First, al-Yūnīnī reports Khiḍr's arrival at his native town Baalbek in 669/1271, probably as part of Baybars' entourage on the way to capture Krak des Chevaliers.[46] Al-Yūnīnī writes that the shaykh stayed at the *zāwiyah* constructed for him outside of town, where a delegation of the sultan's local representatives *(nuwwāb al-salṭanah)* and some of the inhabitants of the town came to pay homage to him *(ilá khidmatihi).* Al-Yūnīnī adds that he was part of that delegation and heard the local governor ask Khiḍr to predict when the fortress would be seized. Khiḍr said that it would fall within forty days—and so it was.[47] The second incident, also narrated by al-Yūnīnī as an

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Khiḍr's actions is the possible link some contemporaneous authors made between the raid on the synagogue and a subsequent flood which struck Damascus, supposedly divine retribution for this unsanctioned act. Strauß, "Scheich Ḫiḍr."

[41] Müller and Pahlitzsch, "Sultan Baybars."

[42] Ibn Shaddād, *Tārīkh,* 274.

[43] Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh,* 49:56–57.

[44] Ibn al-Ṣuqāʿī, *Tālī wafayāt,* 69–70.

[45] Ibn Shaddād, *Tārīkh,* 59. Khiḍr's raid on *dhimmī* taverns in Damascus in the year 668/1269–70—smashing wine vessels and forcing the owners to sign an oath *(qasāmah)* that they had no wine left in their possession—also seems to have been related to a sultanic decree on the matter. See: al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh,* 49:50–51.

[46] Thorau, *Lion of Egypt,* 204–5.

[47] Al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl,* 3:265–66. Al-ʿUmarī (*Masālik,* 8:175) is quoting al-Yūnīnī on this episode but adds that Khiḍr replied to the question by saying, "I told my son—and by that he meant al-

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eyewitness, relates a confrontation between Khiḍr and Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Nawawī (d. 676/1277), one of the most prominent and widely respected religious scholars of the age. Al-Nawawī, a Damascene Shafiʿite *faqīh,* did not shy away from publicly reproaching the sultan on various matters, most notably regarding the confiscation of the income from al-Ghūṭah, the agricultural oasis surrounding Damascus. In al-Yūnīnī's account, al-Nawawī ascended Khiḍr's *zāwiyah* on top of "the hill overlooking al-Mizzah," and discussed with the shaykh "a certain matter." When al-Nawawī's reproach of the shaykh reached high tones and harsh words were uttered, Khiḍr had his men forcefully evict al-Nawawī.[48] While we cannot tell what the issue at stake was, it seems reasonable, within the context of al-Nawawī's criticism of the sultan, that he approached Khiḍr as the ruler's representative. Whether Khiḍr indeed represented the sultan, then, would be less relevant than the fact that he was perceived as doing so.

All these examples show that, especially in the provinces, Khiḍr acted without restraint and was considered the sultan's right hand. Yet Khiḍr's vast network had its center in Cairo, next to the sultan's. Baybars founded for his shaykh a *zāwiyah* in the developing suburb of al-Ḥusaynīyah, which seems to have symbolized the latter's presence in the capital. For this *zāwiyah* Baybars allocated endowments which yielded 30,000 dirhams annually. Just in the vicinity of this impressive *zāwiyah,*[49] Baybars had constructed his Friday Mosque—his most conspicuous monumental building project in Cairo. Some sources are explicit that Baybars established this mosque for Khiḍr and chose a location near his

Malik al-Ẓāhir [Baybars]: You will seize it within forty days." That Khiḍr referred to Baybars as such in the presence of state notables is telling.

[48] Al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl,* 3:283. The issue of the confiscation of the Ghūṭah's revenues was extremely sensitive for the Damascenes, and this was remembered negatively for many years after Baybars's death: Jacqueline Sublet, "Le Séquestre sur les jardins de la Ghouta (Damas 666/1267)," *Studia Islamica* 43 (1976): 81–86; ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Bakr al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍarah fī tārīkh Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah,* ed. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo, 1967), 2:97–105.

[49] The *zāwiyah* included several residence buildings for Khiḍr's disciples, assembly halls, a pool, a bathhouse, a mill, and an oven. Ibn Shaddād, *Tārīkh,* 346; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Mawāʿiẓ wa-al-iʿtibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-al-āthār,* ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid (London, 2003), 4:808. Al-Nuwayrī (*Nihāyat*, 32:73) mentions, in passing, two bathhouses in Cairo named *"ḥammāmay al-shaykh Khiḍr."* If these were indeed related to this shaykh, they attest further to the magnitude of his properties.

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zāwiyah.[50] We should not over-emphasize Khiḍr's influence, however, and Baybars certainly had other considerations.[51]

This brings us to the key question of how far Khiḍr's influence over the sultan actually extended. Several modern scholars have suggested that Khiḍr was a key figure behind some of Baybars' policies, especially his aggressive attitude towards the Franks and his *dhimmī* subjects.[52] Eddé has made a compelling argument regarding Khiḍr's decisive influence over the sultan, based on Baybars' adoption of the title(s) *Iskandar al-zamān ṣāḥib qirān* ("Alexander of the age, lord of the auspicious conjuncture"). Implicit in this comparison was Alexander's "double"—al-Khaḍir, who appears as his spiritual guide in the Alexander romance—and, thus, Baybars' own double, shaykh Khiḍr.[53] This would suggest that Khiḍr actually stood behind Baybars' legitimization propaganda, as articulated in his public inscriptions. Denise Aigle went even further, writing that, "Like all the Mamluks . . . [Baybars] had little acquaintance with Islamic culture, and was advised on these matters by a shaykh who appears as his 'spiritual director,' one al-Khaḍir (the Green)."[54] I find this suggestion unfounded: Baybars had lived in an "Islamic culture" for many years prior to his acquaintance with Khiḍr, and more importantly, he had many other, far more suitable, advisors on these matters—qadis, ulama, and leading bureaucrats—chief among them, perhaps, Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir and the vizier Ibn Ḥinnā (d. 677/1278). In fact, it is the latter who

[50] Mufaḍḍal, *Al-Nahj,* 158; al-Sakhāwī, *Tuḥfah,* 23. Al-Maqrīzī writes that Baybars visited Khiḍr's *zāwiyah* twice during the construction of the mosque: once when he came to choose the location and again when he reviewed the final product (al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 4:188–94; cf. Bloom, "Mosque of Baybars," 53–55). Al-Maqrīzī is here quoting from *"jāmiʿ al-sīrah al-ẓāhirīyah,"* which surely relates, as Bloom rightfully speculated, to Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, Baybars' "official" biographer (a comparison between another passage al-Maqrīzī quotes from this *jāmiʿ al-sīrah al-ẓāhirīyah* and the parallel passage in *Al-Rawḍ* proves this point: compare *Khiṭaṭ,* 2:425–26, with *Al-Rawḍ,* 419). The section describing the construction of the mosque indeed appears in Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir's *Al-Rawḍ,* albeit in a much more concise form than in al-Maqrīzī. Bloom further speculated that al-Maqrīzī had access to an expanded version of *Al-Rawḍ* compared to the one we possess today. In light of Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir's disdain for Khiḍr, it is interesting that, if al-Maqrīzī indeed quotes him truthfully (which is far from taken for granted), here we have two mentions of Khiḍr with the adjective *al-shaykh al-ṣāliḥ* (the righteous shaykh), which Khiḍr does not receive in his other two mentions in *Al-Rawḍ*. This might imply that Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir wrote some earlier version of the work when his opinion of Khiḍr was somehow better, or prior to the latter's fall from grace.

[51] For example, the power struggle between the Hanafi and Shafiʿi *madhāhib* for dominance, or the accelerated urban development of al-Ḥusaynīyah: Bloom, "Mosque of Baybars."

[52] See especially Eddé, "Baybars." Pouzet already pondered these issues ("Ḥaḍir," 182–83).

[53] Eddé, "Baybars." On al-Khaḍir as Alexander's companion and guide, see: A. J. Wensinck, "al-Khaḍir," *EI2,* 4:902–5.

[54] Aigle, "Legitimizing," 65.

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stands at the center of the last part of our investigation of shaykh Khiḍr: his downfall.

In 669/1271, Khiḍr was arrested and sentenced to imprisonment by an ad hoc tribunal consisting of Baybars and several of his most senior amirs.[55] Suggestions as to the cause for this sudden turn of events range from Khiḍr's unruly behavior to his notorious persecution of the *dhimmī*s, which compromised Baybars' diplomatic interests.[56] However, as some sources make abundantly clear, it was the shaykh's direct clash with competing authorities at court that caused his demise. A plot in which two such authorities cooperated resulted in Khiḍr's trial.

According to the sources, even the most eminent persons in the Sultanate, like the amir Badr al-Dīn Bīlīk al-Khazindār (d. 676/1277), Baybars' trusted mamluk and viceroy, and the vizier Bahāʾ al-Dīn Ibn Ḥinnā, feared Khiḍr,[57] who openly disregarded, even humiliated, the vizier and the viceroy, among other notables.[58] While the conspiracy against Khiḍr is mentioned in several sources, the most interesting account is given by al-ʿUmarī (d. 749/1348). The latter, it should be noted, was a senior official in Cairo during al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's third reign (709–41/1309–41) and quotes his father—also a senior official—as his source.[59] His authority on the matter is further solidified since he ends his report by claiming that, "I saw, myself, in the papers of my uncle[60] . . . a copy of the

[55] This included, besides the sultan, the *atābak* Aqṭāy, Qalāʾūn, Baysarī, and Khiḍr's devotee, Qashtamur. Some sources (e.g., Mufaḍḍal, *Al-Nahj,* 244) also mention Bīlīk. The trial scene is surely one of the most dramatic—and famous—ones in Khiḍr's biography. The main anecdote related to it is Khiḍr's prophecy—as he faced the death sentence—that his fate and Baybars' are bound together: only days separate them. The prediction—which earned Khiḍr his life—indeed came true. Holt ("Early Source") argued that the trial scene was part of the later process of *Literarisierung, inter alia* since it was not part of Ibn Shaddād's recension of Khiḍr's biography. However, Ibn Shaddād seems at least to have known of this story, since he is quoted by al-Yūnīnī as narrating it. See: al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl,* 3:266.

[56] Drory, "Some Misdeeds," 45.

[57] Al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl,* 3:268. Cf. Ibn Shaddād (*Tārīkh,* 59), who writes of Khiḍr's *carte blanche* to act as he wished and his uncontested authority, but unlike the other sources, does not specify names. On Bīlīk: Reuven Amitai, "An Arabic Inscription at al-Subayba (Qalʿat Namrud) from the Reign of Sultan Baybars," *Israel Antiquities Authority Reports,* No. 11 (Jerusalem, 2001): 114–16; on Ibn Ḥinnā: al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl,* 3:384–85. Thorau (*Lion of Egypt,* 228) already noted the leading role the two played in Khiḍr's downfall.

[58] Mufaḍḍal, *Al-Nahj,* 244; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Muqaffá,* 3:752.

[59] His father, Yaḥyá ibn Faḍl Allāh (d. 738/1338), served *inter alia* as head of the chancery (*ṣāḥib dīwān al-inshāʾ):* Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar al-kāminah fī aʿyān al-miʾah al-thāminah,* ed. Muḥammad Sayyid Jād al-Ḥaqq (Cairo, 1965), 5:199–200.

[60] This is Shams al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb Ibn Faḍl Allāh (d. 717/1317), who also served as head of the chancery in Cairo: al-Ṣafadī, *Kitāb al-wāfī bi-al-wafayāt,* ed. Aḥmad al-Aranāʾūṭ and Turkī

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report *(nuskhat muṭālaʿah)* written on this affair."[61] The gist of the affair was that both Bīlīk and Ibn Ḥinnā were disgusted by Khiḍr's influence and his open disregard of their honor. It might be that the trigger was Khiḍr implicitly accusing Bīlīk, in front of Baybars, of conspiring to murder the sultan, which made Bīlīk fear for his own life. Be that as it may, the two, along with other senior amirs, investigated Khiḍr's unorthodox deeds and recruited witnesses from among his men—promising them substantial material rewards—to testify against him. The results of the investigation were apparently compiled in the report, which, according to al-ʿUmarī, "contained grave accusations."[62]

It seems that those accusations mainly related to acts of sodomy *(liwāṭ)* and fornication *(ziná).* Those were typical generic accusations in such cases and, given Khiḍr's history and the aforementioned description of the *fuqarāʾ* who lived in his *zāwiyah*s, it is not surprising that the trial focused on them. Even though sodomy and fornication were crimes normally brought in front of the qadi, it seems that the entire procedure was managed by leading Mamluk amirs.[63] Apart from three witnesses from among Khiḍr's men, the "key witness" was a Cairene woman with whom Khiḍr supposedly had adulterous relations, and who was shrewdly recruited by Ibn Ḥinnā in a plot meant to incriminate the shaykh. The investigation eventually resulted in the report being presented to the sultan, who ordered his shaykh arrested and brought to the famous trial at the citadel.[64] Baybars realized that to keep the fragile equilibrium within the Mamluk elite he had to sacrifice his shaykh. After all, as ferocious as Baybars may have been, in a way he was still first among equals with his senior amirs, whose interests he had pledged to protect when he was sworn in as sultan.[65]

Khiḍr and Rasputin: A Pattern?

A comparison between a thirteenth-century Sufi shaykh from the Levant and a modern Siberian *khlyst* is certainly problematic in many ways, but the stories

Muṣṭafá (Beirut, 2000), 19:211–16.

[61] Al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik,* 8:178.

[62] Ibid. As Drory ("Some Misdeeds," 39) pointed out, certainly some of the accusations against Khiḍr were generic ones meant to tarnish his reputation. However, as I discuss below, we should not dismiss those accusations out of hand, since they might have been based on widespread rumors.

[63] It is also possible that this was because convicting a person of such accusations in a sharʿī court was extremely difficult, and necessitated four witnesses: Thomas Bauer, *A Culture of Ambiguity: An Alternative History of Islam,* trans. Hinrich Biesterfeldt and Tricia Tunstall (New York, 2021), 191.

[64] Al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik,* 8:177–78.

[65] P. M. Holt, "The Position and Power of the Mamluk Sultan," *BSOAS* 38 (1975): 242.

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of Khiḍr and Rasputin have much in common. This is already evident in the preceding misleading sentence: labeling Khiḍr as a Sufi is somehow like labeling—or rather, accusing of being—Rasputin a *khlyst*.[66] Both figures were in fact difficult to classify, and the one thing which stands out in their personalities, the thing which won them their fame, was their charisma. This elusive quality was what drew elite persons to their orbit and allowed them eventually to exert influence at court. What the nature of either man's charisma was is difficult to say. Multiple accounts of Rasputin emphasize his "magnetic eyes" and the impression he made on St. Petersburg high society.[67] Regarding Khiḍr, we have no comparable descriptions. While Baybars might have been drawn to him because of his accurate prophecies, what was it that drew others, such as Qashtamur, to the shaykh? Charisma, as Weber famously showed, is a quality by virtue of which certain individuals are set apart from ordinary men and treated as though endowed with exceptional powers. Charisma must be recognized by others, and while both Rasputin's and Khiḍr's charisma was certainly recognized by some, others were far less impressed.[68]

The similarities between the two do not end there: both made their way to prominence as outsiders from extremely humble origins;[69] both owed their attachment to the ruler to middlemen or women;[70] both predicted their way to glory, resulting in a spiritual or magnetic hold over the ruler;[71] both were notorious for illicit and even utterly obnoxious conduct, transgressive of public norms, mostly related to their affairs with women;[72] both deployed their influence at court to act as social brokers who attained considerable material capital, which they distributed to their devotees, thus building reputations as generous patrons and solidifying their authority;[73] both were rumored to have (mostly negatively) influenced state policy;[74] both were drawn, by the combination of their alleged influence, otherness, and unorthodox conduct, to inevitable clashes with competing authorities from different elite circles and thus made victims

[66] Smith, *Rasputin,* 82–97, 279–88.

[67] Ibid., 50–59, 103–6.

[68] Xavier Marquez, "Charisma and Authority," in *Staging Authority: Presentation and Power in Nineteenth-Century Europe: A Handbook,* ed. Eva Giloi et al. (Berlin, 2022), 31–33; Smith, *Rasputin*, 110.

[69] Smith, *Rasputin,* 12–29.

[70] Ibid., 50–70, 98–102.

[71] Joseph T. Fuhrmann, *Rasputin: The Untold Story* (London, 2013), 19–20, 27.

[72] Ibid., 54–58.

[73] Smith, *Rasputin,* 155; Fuhrmann, *Rasputin,* 51, 111, 132–34, 185.

[74] Fuhrmann, *Rasputin,* 152–65; Smith, *Rasputin,* 359–488.

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of plots to dispense with them;[75] and, finally, both "predicted" that their end would be bound to that of the ruler, as indeed eventually happened.[76]

Each of these parallels is intriguing on its own, and inquiries into them would certainly be merited. However, I will settle here for just one: the inevitable clash between the charismatic adviser and competing forces at court. This has much to do with the juicier details in both men's biographies, since, while those are virtually impossible to ascertain, they were intricately bound with widespread rumors. As Rasputin's contemporary Lev Tikhomirov aptly noted in 1916, "What really matters is not what sort of influence Grishka [Rasputin] has on the Emperor, but what sort of influence the people think he has."[77] Following this, Douglas Smith states in his recent biography of Rasputin that "There is no Rasputin without the stories about Rasputin."[78] Likewise, the accounts of Khiḍr's life penned by his contemporaries reflect what people thought about him. More than a product of *Literarisierung* meant to embellish chronicles with popular anecdotes, what we see is an organic social process of rumors circulating and eventually being written down.

Did Khiḍr influence Baybars's policies? We cannot know, and I personally tend to doubt that he had any substantial influence. But that is not as important as the fact that people *thought* so. Was he drawn to wine drinking and adultery? Perhaps, but either way there were certainly rumors implying so. In a way, what we see here is a reverse of miracle stories. As Benedicta Ward observed, "[H]ere was an event that caused wonder . . . Certainly, something was thought to have happened; the rest is interpretation."[79] And what happened with Khiḍr was indeed in need of explanation. Nobody seemed to need to explain how another shaykh, ʿAlī al-Bakkāʾ of Hebron, predicted Baybars' ascension, since he was a well-respected, normative Sufi shaykh, and his story followed accepted models and *topoi.*[80] But Khiḍr did not conform to the stereotype of a respectable shaykh, and so his prophecy—widely known at the time—was explained in various ways.

Those who eventually brutally murdered Rasputin were members of the St. Petersburg elite, who might have acted from personal motivation or from a true call of duty to save Russia from his influence,[81] but they were certainly not his

[75] Fuhrmann, *Rasputin,* 185–205.

[76] Fuhrmann, *Rasputin,* 222; Smith, *Rasputin,* 584–85.

[77] Quoted in Smith, *Rasputin,* 7.

[78] Ibid.

[79] Benedicta Ward, "Miracles and History: A Reconsideration of the Miracle Stories used by Bede," in idem, *Signs and Wonders: Saints, Miracles and Prayer from the 4th Century to the 14th,* Variorum Collected Studies 361 (London, 1992), IX, 71.

[80] Al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik,* 8:173.

[81] Smith, *Rasputin,* 592–96.

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only enemies in the capital and not the first to plot his murder.[82] Likewise for Bīlīk and Ibn Ḥinnā: did they go after Khiḍr out of envy or resentment at his treatment of them, or did they feel Baybars had to be saved from himself, as he was blind to the detrimental effect of his shaykh? The point is that an outsider pushing his way to the top, basing his claims to authority solely on his charisma, is bound to draw fire. Rasputin is a good comparison for Khiḍr, but one need not go as far as early twentieth-century Russia to notice this dynamic. We may consider the Khalwatī shaykh Shujāʿ al-Dīn (d. 996/1588) and the Ottoman sultan Murād III (r. 982–1003/1574–95);[83] or Shaykh Ḥaydar al-Rammāl (fl. ca. 1530–50) and Sultan Sulaymān (r. 1520–66).[84] Even closer, the story of shaykh Quṭb al-Dīn al-Hirmās (d. 769/1367–68) and Sultan al-Nāṣir Ḥasan (r. 1354–62),[85] or that of Shaykh Ibrāhīm Ibn Zuqqāʿah (d. 816/1414) and the sultans Barqūq (r. 1382–99) and his son Faraj (r. 1399–1411), present the same phenomenon in many ways.[86]

There was an alternative way, though, for a charismatic person to make it at court without necessarily drawing opposition from competitive actors. An example is Aḥmad al-Zuhūrī (d. 801/1398), a holy fool *(majdhūb)*[87] who predicted Barqūq's ascent to the throne and who, when that indeed happened, was brought by the sultan to the Cairo citadel and allowed to act freely: "[Barqūq] was extremely close to him and had an excessive veneration of him, so that [al-Zuhūrī] used to spit at the sultan's face and swear at him in front of the amirs, and others, and this was tolerated. He [also] used to enter [the sultan's] harem and [the women there] would not hide from him."[88] This behavior was tolerated, I assume, because al-Zuhūrī was a *majdhūb,* a sort of holy fool.[89] As al-Maqrīzī writes, it was "as if he was Barqūq's lucky charm."[90] Whatever influence or intimate access to the sultan he might have had, he was considered harmless,

[82] Ibid., 330–50.

[83] John J. Curry, "The Meeting of the Two Sultans: Three Sufi Mystics Negotiate with the Court of Murad III," in *Sufism and Society: Arrangements of the Mystical in the Muslim World, 1200–1800,* ed. John J. Curry and Erik S. Ohlander (New York, 2012), 226–30.

[84] Cornell F. Fleischer, "Seer to the Sultan: Haydar-i Remmal and Sultan Süleyman," in *Cultural Horizons: A Festschrift in Honor of Talat S. Halman,* ed. Jayne L. Warner (Syracuse, 2001), 290–99.

[85] Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-ʿuqūd al-farīdah fī tarājim al-aʿyān al-mufīdah,* ed. Maḥmūd al-Jalīlī (Beirut, 2002), 3:386–87.

[86] Ibid., 1:63.

[87] The *majdhūb* was, literally, one whose soul was enraptured by God, and was thus allowed to act in a non-normative manner. On this Islamic "institution" see: Michael Dols, *Majnūn: The Madman in Medieval Islamic Society* (Oxford, 1992), 366–422.

[88] Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-ʿuqūd,* 1:179.

[89] I have the impression that Rasputin was also, in a way, considered as something of that sort early on, when he was taking his first steps in St. Petersburg.

[90] Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-ʿuqūd,* 1:179.

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and thus drew no opposition. A similar dynamic may be noticed with the later *majdhūb,* ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Dashṭūṭī (d. 924/1518), whose feet the sultan Qāytbāy (r. 1468–96) used to kiss and whom he saw as his spiritual guide.[91]

If the similarities between Khiḍr and Rasputin are apparent, this is not necessarily the case with their patrons, Sultan Baybars and the czar Nicholas. In fact, Baybars was in many ways a complete opposite of the Russian sovereign, who inherited the throne prematurely (and was perhaps never suited for the job to begin with). Baybars was a self-made man, who seized the throne violently and established a mighty sultanate. His relationship with Khiḍr should not obscure this. Baybars may have had a certain fascination with the occult, as some anecdotes about his interest in astrology may suggest,[92] but this was the *Zeitgeist,* and we would be hard pressed to find a medieval ruler who did not show an interest in astrological prognostications or an inclination to charismatic "spiritual advisors." Not only was this common, but, for Ibn Shaddād at least, Baybars' relations with Khiḍr were a clear indication of his piety, rather than a weakness.[93]

To better understand the apparent contradiction between Baybars' complete devotion—even submissiveness—to his shaykh on the one hand, and his ability to disregard his advice (which, remember, "he would always accept"), we can turn to Nicholas: while his court attracted a wide range of eccentric figures, Rasputin being just the last,[94] and despite his "naïve" personality and his deep spiritual conviction, his letters and actions show that he was more than capable of spurning Rasputin's advice when he saw fit. This applied all the more to Baybars. Thus, we must understand these figures not as naïve or gullible, but as complicated men: they believed in miracles, divination, astrology, and saints, but they also knew when to ask for a second opinion or, indeed, when to execute their spiritual advisors if realpolitik so demanded.

[91] Al-Ghazzī, *Al-Kawākib al-sāʾirah bi-aʿyān al-miʾah al-ʿāshirah,* ed. Khalīl al-Manṣūr (Beirut, 1997), 1:299. Geoffroy already noticed the parallels between the two pairs, Baybars/Khiḍr and Qāytbāy/al-Dashṭūṭī. See: Éric Geoffroy, *Le soufisme en Égypte et en Syrie: Sous les derniers mamelouks et les premiers Ottomans: Orientations spirituelles et enjeux culturels* (Damascus, 1995), 124.

[92] Eddé, "Baybars," 83.

[93] Ibn Shaddād, *Tārīkh,* 272.

[94] Robert D. Warth, "Before Rasputin: Piety and the Occult at the Court of Nicholas II," *The Historian* 47/3 (1985): 323–37.

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Āṣaf ibn Barakhyā in the Mongol and Mamluk Realms: Between Vizier and Magic

Āṣaf ibn Barakhyā (Hebrew: Asaph ben Berechiah) is an enigmatic figure. An obscure biblical character (also connected in the Jewish tradition to Asaph the Physician, author of an early Hebrew medical text), in Muslim lore Āṣaf appears mainly in connection to the king and prophet Sulaymān ibn Dāwūd, serving as his confidant, scribe, or vizier. While Āṣaf is not mentioned in the Quran, early commentaries *(tafsīr)* mention him on several occasions, and hence he was referred to in the various compilations of stories of the prophets *(qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ)* and in universal histories that included the era of the pre-Islamic prophets. In the Mamluk Sultanate, Āṣaf remained a marginal political figure mentioned mainly as a scribe in commentaries and *qiṣaṣ*. Though he was also recorded in other genres—such as popular epics and occult literature—due to his connection to magic, he hardly played any role in the political sphere. In contrast, in the Mongol realm, Āṣaf became synonymous with the emblematic vizier, sometimes together with the Iranian Buzurgmihr, and chroniclers and poets compared to him contemporaneous ministers such as Masʿūd Beg (d. 1289), the administrator of Central Asia under the Mongol Great Khans and later the Chaghadaid Khanate, as well as famous Ilkhanid viziers such as Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī (d. 1284), Rashīd al-Dīn (d. 1318), and the latter's son Ghiyāth al-Dīn (d. 1336). Āṣaf retained this position in the Timurid, Safavid, and Ottoman realms, so much so that he merited an entry in Persian dictionaries as a synonym for "a wise vizier."[1] Moreover, the *Stories of the Prophets* by al-Rabghūzī (fl. 1311), the first Turkish work of this genre that was compiled under Mongol rule, and has remained popular ever since, gives the vizier Āṣaf a bigger role than in previous works, stressing his military leadership and his abilities to control animals and devils.

This article is dedicated to my teacher, colleague, and friend Reuven Amitai, who once gave me a few references on Asaf and who discussed this article with me quite a few times without being aware of its destination. I'm grateful also to Stefan Kamola, who provided me with manuscripts of Rashīd al-Dīn's *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh;* to Jonathan Brack, who sent me a manuscript of Qāshānī's *Zubdat al-tawārīkh;* to Guy Ron-Gilboa, who allowed me to use his pre-publication article and referred me to important references; to Or Amir, who provided a few important Mamluk references and very useful comments; to Simone Ruffini for providing me with the manuscript of Pur-i Bahāʾ; and to Meir Bar-Asher and Eliyahu Stern for helping me decipher some challenging Arabic paragraphs.

[1] E.g., F. Steingass, *A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary* (repr. Delhi, 2011), 69.



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This study reviews Āṣaf's main images in the Jewish and Muslim realms and then focuses on his representation in Mamluk, Chaghadaid, and Ilkhanid sources. It argues that the Mongol period gave a major boost to Āṣaf's image as the embodiment of an ideal vizier in the Iranian-Turkish realm, and seeks to explain why he became such a prevalent political symbol in the Mongol and post-Mongol domains while never gaining similar function among the neighboring Mamluks. The discussion will hopefully bear some insights on the political culture of both realms.

Āṣaf in Jewish Lore

Asaph son of Berechiah is mentioned twice in the Bible as one of the important Levites at the time of King David, a singer and a musician who was one of the Levites responsible for bringing the Ark of Covenant to Jerusalem. Later, King David appointed him a singer in the House of the Lord that contained the Ark.[2] Asaph probably continued this role under King Solomon, during whose reign the Ark was placed in the Holy of Holies, the most sacred part of Solomon's temple.[3] His descendants continued to serve as temple singers under the Judean kings and even in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, namely after the return from Babylon and in the days of the second temple.[4] In David's time, Asaph was described as a seer *(ḥōzeh),* who "prophesied under the direction of the king [David]" *(nibā 'al yedei ha-melekh).*[5] He is also usually identified with King David's singer Asaph, mentioned several times in Psalms, who composed hymns for the Lord.[6]

In later Jewish tradition, Asaph son of Berechiah is identified with Asaph the Physician (Asaph ha-Rōphe), also referred to as Asaph the Astronomer (Yarḥōnī), author of *Sefer Asaph* (The Book of Asaph), *Midrash Refuʾot* [Midrash of remedies], or *Sefer Refuʾot* [The book of remedies], probably the oldest medical treatise in Hebrew. While the date and location of the book's compilation are still debated, both Zohar Amar and Ronit Yoeli-Tlalim recently suggested that the book was penned in the eighth–ninth centuries during the Abbasid translation movement, and was probably compiled in northern Mesopotamia. Deriving from a

[2] 1 Chron. 6:24, 15:17–19, 16:5; 25:1–6. See also *Samuel Ephraim Loewenstamm*, "Asaph" [in Hebrew], *Encyclopedia Biblica* (Jerusalem, 1972), 1:482–83.

[3] 2 Chron. 5:12.

[4] 2 Chron. 20:14 (under king Jehoshafat); 35:15 (under Josiah); Ezra 2:41, 3:10; Nehemiah 7:44, 11:22, 12:35, 46.

[5] 2 Chron. 29:30; 1 Chron. 25:2.

[6] Psalms 50, 73–83; Jacob Lassner, *Demonizing the Queen of Sheba: Boundaries of Gender and Culture in Postbiblical Judaism and Medieval Islam* (Chicago, 1993), 108; idem, "The 'One Who Had Knowledge of the Book' and the 'Mightiest Name of God': Qurʾānic Exegesis and Jewish Cultural Artifacts," in *Studies in Muslim-Jewish Relations I,* ed. Ronald Nettler (Oxford, 1993), 59–74.

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Persian cultural milieu, and transmitted to Hebrew via Syriac, it then disseminated mainly to Europe, playing an important role in the Eurasian exchange of medical knowledge.[7]

Later Jewish midrash compilations, however, mention Asaph as the vizier (Hebrew *sar*) of King Solomon, head of the humans under Solomon's service in parallel with the heads of the jinns, birds, and beasts, but this seems to be an image influenced by Muslim lore.[8] This is certainly true regarding his role as a demon summoner in a seventeenth-century Kabbalic text.[9] The main Solomonic anecdotes that include Āṣaf in Muslim lore, however, obviously have Jewish roots (see below), although Āṣaf is not mentioned in these Jewish versions.[10] The

[7] Zohar Amar, *Sefer ha-refuʾot shel Asaph ha-Rofe: ha-maʾamar ʿal tekhunot ha-mezonot = Asaph's Book of Medicines: Treatise on the Properties of Foodstuffs* (Ḳiryat Ono, 2022), 16–44, 61; Ronit Yoeli-Tlalim, "Exploring Persian Lore in the Hebrew Book of Āṣaf," *ALEPH: Historical Studies in Science and Judaism* 18, no. 1 (2018): 123–46; idem, *ReOrienting Histories of Medicine: Encounters along the Silk Roads* (London, 2021), 26–28.

[8] For the Hebrew tale see Adolf Jellinek, *Bet ha-Midrasch: Sammlung kleiner Midraschim und vermischter Abhandlungen aus der ältern jüdischen Literatur* (Leipzig, 1873), 5:22–26, who noted that it has an Arabic origin. In the Midrash's digital database, this midrash is dated to "pre-1050," namely after there was already a strong Muslim tradition connecting Āṣaf to king Solomon: https://maagarim.hebrew-academy.org.il/Pages/PMain.aspx?mishibbur=695000&mm15=000000000040%2000&mismilla=25 (based on Cambridge University Library MS ADD 854, fol. 22). Moreover, Guy Ron-Gilboa, who studied this midrash and its Arabic versions, claims that this story is of a much later date (sixteenth–seventeenth centuries), and based on the Muslim tale (personal communication); see his "Demonic Narrator, Angelic Interpreter: Embedding in Two Variants of a Solomonic Legend," *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 24, no. 1 (2024): 87–106. Note that the story of Āṣaf bringing the throne of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon, which is his main reference in the Muslim lore, was translated into Hebrew in the early fourteenth century as part of the translation of *Rasāʾil ikhwān al-ṣafāʾ* (see Kalonymus ben Kalonymus, *Iggeret Baʿale Ḥayyim* [Treatise on animals] [in Hebrew], ed. Y. Toporovski and A. M. Habermann (Jerusalem, 1948–49), 2:45; Yair Zoran, "'The Great Name' in Islam, Its Characteristics and Parallels in the Israelite Literature" [in Hebrew], *Ben Ever le-Arav* 9 (2016–17): 88, n. 117.

[9] Yuval Harari, "Demons and Dream: The Jewish Dream Magic [II] [Maaʾse Shedim ve-ḥalom: Magiyat ha-ḥalom ha-yehudit (Bet)]" [in Hebrew], *Teuda* 28 (2017), 208–10.

[10] Zoran suggested that the story about the Queen of Sheba's throne in which Āṣaf is mentioned (below) originated in Jewish sources, now lost: Zoran, "'The Great Name,'" 88, n. 117; see also Gordon D. Newby, *The Making of the Last Prophet: A Reconstruction of the Earliest Biography of Muhammad* (Columbia, SC, 1989), 162, where the mention of Āṣaf is presented as one sign for the Jewish origin of the Queen of Sheba's story. When the Rabbinic literature mentions Solomon's vizier it is the biblical figure of Benaiah son of Jehoiada, a famous general who served both David and Solomon and helped the latter in consolidating his rule. Lassner suggested that Benaiah is analogous to Āṣaf and was perhaps the origin of his figure in the Muslim tradition (Lassner, *Demonizing the Queen,* 107; see also ibid., 182, 184, where he presents a later Jewish folkloric source in which Benaiah plays Āṣaf's role in identifying that Solomon's throne was taken by a devil).

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connection between the Jewish and Muslim facets of Āṣaf/Asaph are, therefore, multifaceted and deserve further study.

Āṣaf ibn Barakhyā in Muslim Lore (Up to the Thirteenth Century)

In Muslim lore, Āṣaf ibn Barakhyā is connected to the king and prophet Sulaymān ibn Dāwūd, and appears as his confidant, scribe, or vizier. In many sources he is also described as Solomon's relative—son of his sister or a maternal (sometimes paternal) cousin.[11] Āṣaf's mother is said to have had an important position among the Children of Israel.[12] Āṣaf is described as a Levite, a descendant of the Prophet Samuel, although his genealogy includes only three generations—son of Barakhyā ibn Shmaʿya ibn Danīyāl (or Mikāʾīl /Malakiya).[13] Āṣaf does not appear in the Quran by name, but in the earliest commentaries and stories of the prophets he is mentioned in several episodes related to the Quranic mentions of King Solomon, notably in the following two pericopes:

The first is in the story of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, where Āṣaf is the one who brought the queen's throne from Yemen to Solomon's palace in Jerusalem in the twinkle of an eye. The story originated in the commentary on Quran 27:38–40 (*Sūrat al-naml,* the ant):

> [38]He [Solomon] said, "O Council, which one of you will bring me her [the Queen of Sheba's] throne, before they come to me in surrender?" [39] An efreet [Ifrīt] of the jinns said, "I will bring it to thee, before thou risest from thy place; I have strength for it [40] and I am trusty." ***Said he who possessed knowledge of the Book, "I will bring it to thee, before ever thy glance returns to thee."*** Then, when he [Solomon] saw it settled before him, he said, "This is of

[11] E.g., ʿUmārah ibn Wathīmah al-Fārisī (d. 902), *Les légendes prophétiques dans l'islam depuis le Ier jusqu'au IIIe siècle de l'Hégire = Kitāb badʾ al-ẖalq wa-qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ: d'après le manuscrit d'Abū Rifāʿa ʿUmāra b. Waṭīma b. Mūsā b. al-Furāt al-Fārisī al-Fasawī,* ed. Raif Georges Khoury (Wiesbaden, 1978), 144; al-Ṭabarsī (d. 1153), *Majmaʿ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān* (Beirut, 1961), 19:225 (nephew); Ibn al-Nadīm (fl. 987), *Kitāb al-fihrist* (Leipzig, 1872), 309 (maternal cousin); for paternal cousin: al-Masʿūdī (d. 956?), *Ithbāt al-waṣīyah lil-Imām ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib* (Beirut, 1988), 79.

[12] Abū ʿAlī Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Balʿamī (d. ca. 973), *Tārīkh-i Balʿamī,* ed. Parvīn Gunābādī and Muḥammad Taqī Bahār (Tehran, 1974), 1:574, 579–85.

[13] E.g., Muqātil ibn Sulaymān al-Balkhī (d. 767), *Kitāb tafsīr Muqātil b. Sulaymān* (Beirut, 2002), 3:307; Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-fihrist,* 309. The Mikāʾīl variant fits with Āṣaf's much longer biblical genealogy.

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> my Lord's bounty that He may try me, whether I am thankful or ungrateful."[14]

Āṣaf is usually identified as the one "who possessed knowledge of the Book." This is often interpreted as the one who knew the Mighty Name of God, the name that if one called him by it, God would immediately answer and fulfill the caller's request.[15] This reference, which accorded Āṣaf, a human, a knowledge or ability greater than that of the jinns, that even Solomon allegedly did not have, not only served as a trial for Solomon, but also brought Āṣaf to the realm of miracles, magic, and jinns,[16] and sometimes, notably in Shiʿite circles, even elevated him to the rank of a prophet.[17] More often, however, Āṣaf's miracle appears as an example of non-prophetic miracles *(karāmāt)* that God can make happen to honor a righteous person or a Sufi saint *(wālī).*[18] In some versions of the queen's visit, Āṣaf is also mentioned in other, more mundane, details, e.g., as writing

[14] Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted* (New York, 1955), 170; also available at https://archive.org/details/in.gov.ignca.4296/page/n7/mode/2up.

[15] E.g., ʿUmārah, *Les légendes prophétiques,* 144–45; Muqātil, *Tafsīr Muqātil,* 3:307; Balʿamī, *Tārīkh-i Balʿamī,* 1:574; Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Thaʿlabī (d. 1035), *ʿArāʾis al-majālis fī qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā, or Lives of the Prophets,* trans. William M. Brinner (Leiden, 2002), 532; Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Kisāʾī (eleventh century), *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* (Leiden, 1922), 290, 292; idem, *The Tales of the Prophets of Al-Kisaʾi,* trans. Wheeler M. Thackston (Boston, 1978), 316; al-Ṭabarsī, *Majmaʿ al-bayān,* 19:255; Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm ibn Manṣūr ibn Khalaf al-Nīshābūrī (eleventh century), *Qeṣaṣ ol-Anbiyā* [sic], ed. Habib Yaghmai (Tehran, 1961), 299; Maḥmūd ibn ʿUmar Zamakhsharī (d. 1044), *Al-Qurʾān: Maʿa tafsīrihi al-Kashshāf ʿan ḥaqāʾiq al-tanzīl lil-Imām Abī al-Qāsim Jār Allāh Maḥmūd ibn ʿUmar al-Zamakhsharī al-Khawārizmī* (Kolkata, 1856), 2:1028; Ibn al-Athīr (d. 1233), *Al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh* (Beirut, 1965), 1:236; Ibn al-ʿArabī, *Ibn al-ʿArabi's Fuṣuṣ al-Ḥikam: An Annotated Translation of "The Bezels of Wisdom,"* trans. Binyamin Abrahamov (London, 2015), 117–18. On the throne and its meaning as another manifestation of God's power (a theme that does not appear in the Jewish materials): Lassner, *Demonizing the Queen,* 91–93; and see there, 104–6, for alternative identifications of the throne's bringer (e.g., Jibrīl, al-Khiḍr, Solomon himself), which are presented by most authors.

[16] See also the exegesis to Quran 2:102, where the jinns write a book of their magical tricks, hide it behind Solomon's chair, and ascribe it to Āṣaf, who allegedly wrote the book for Solomon (e.g., Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān ʿan taʾwīl āy al-Qurʾān: Kitāb tafsīr al-Ṭabarī* [Mecca, n.d.], 2:107, 116).

[17] Notably al-Masʿūdī, *Ithbāt al-waṣīyah,* 76–82, where Āṣaf is described as Solomon's heir (as a prophet), his paternal cousin, and his son-in-law (77). Āṣaf passed on the prophethood to his descendants, and the last prophet among them was his eighth generation's heir, the biblical prophet Zakaria (80–82).

[18] E.g., ʿAlī ibn ʿUthmān al-Hujvīrī, *The Kashf al-Mahjúb: The Oldest Persian Treatise on Sufiism,* trans. Reynold A. Nicholson (Leiden, 1911), 230. And see Ibn al-ʿArabī, *Fuṣuṣ,* 117–18, where Āṣaf's action is presented as an extension of Solomon's abilities.

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Solomon's letter to Bilqīs, escorting her to meet Solomon, or being involved in building a glass palace for her use.[19]

The second Solomonic episode in which Āṣaf is often recorded is another—and much more major—trial of Solomon, in which he ends up temporarily losing his throne to a devil or a jinn due to the idol worshipping of his wife. The story is usually brought up as a commentary on *Sūrat Ṣad* 38:34: "Certainly We tried Solomon, and We cast upon his throne a mere body; then he repented."[20] This story, part of which is found as early as the Palestinian and Babylonian Talmuds, has several versions, with different names and identification of the princess and the jinn/devil, as well as various versions of Solomon's whereabouts during his trial and the Israelites' reaction to the pretender's rule.[21] Āṣaf is mentioned in various parts of this story, notably as the one who discovered the idolatry that was taking place in the palace and rebuked the king for it. He is often recorded also in the second part of the story, mainly as the one who suspected that the devil or jinn was not the king and confirmed this by questioning Solomon's mother or wives.[22] In rarer versions of this story, Āṣaf is even the one who replaced Solomon on the throne, either as an acting ruler who wore Solomon's seal ring and covered for the king until the latter had completed his repentance[23] or as "a devil *(shaytān)* called Āṣaf" who cunningly obtained Solomon's ring from him and ruled in his stead.[24]

Ibn ʿAsākir (d. 1176), in his *magnum opus Tārīkh Dimashq* [History of Damascus], combined these two episodes into one story *(riwāyah),* in which the Queen of Sheba is Solomon's wife from whom the devil is taking the seal. In this version, Āṣaf, defined as a youth from among the sons of the prophets *(ghulām min abnāʾ al-anbiyāʾ)* who grew up on Solomon's lap and was adopted by him, appears as Solomon's guard, standing next to his head with a sword. He not only brings the

[19] E.g., al-Kisāʾī, *Tales of the Prophets,* 314; al-Nīshābūrī, *Qeṣaṣ ol-anbiyā,* 293, 300.

[20] Arberry, *Koran,* 205. Note that the Quranic text refers to another trial, connected to horses, to be discussed below.

[21] On the Talmudical origin: e.g., Joseph M. Davis, "Solomon and Ashmedai (BGittin 68a–b), King Hiram, and Procopius: Exegesis and Folklore," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 106 (2016): 577–85; Guy Ron Gilboa, "Demonic Narrator, Angelic Interpreter," 97; on the various versions of this story in Muslim lore: M. O. Klar, "*And We cast upon his throne a mere body:* A Historiographical Reading of Q. 38:34," *Journal of Qurʾanic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2004): 103–26, which, however, hardly mentions Āṣaf; Helen Blatherwick, *Prophets, Gods and Kings in Sirat Sayf Ibn Dhi Yazan: An Intertextual Reading of an Egyptian Popular Epic*)Leiden, 2016(, 121.

[22] For various versions: Klar, *"And We cast upon his throne,"* and below.

[23] Al-Thaʿlabī, *ʿArāʾis al-majālis,* trans. Brinner, 542–43; al-Nīshābūrī, *Qeṣaṣ al-anbiyā,* 307.

[24] E.g., al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān,* 21:197; Roberto Tottoli, *The Stories of the Prophets by Ibn Muṭarrif al-Ṭarafī* [d. 1062] (Berlin, 2003), 212; this version is often ascribed to Mujāhid (642–718 or 722), and is more common in *tafsīr* than in *qiṣaṣ.*

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throne in a flash (by raising his hand from the sword's hilt), faster than the jinn, but also later attested that the impostor on the throne was not the king, informing the Israelites who had asked for his advice, thereby eventually leading to the impostor's escape.[25]

The two main episodes in which Āṣaf appears highlight his close and personal connection to Solomon and his unique knowledge or abilities. Both are connected to trials Solomon had to endure that were initiated by women and involved the realm of the supernatural.[26] Both are related to knowledge originating in God and transferred either through a magic seal or through acquaintance with the Mighty Name. The various versions of each episode suggest that oral traditions and folk stories were among the main sources of tales about Āṣaf. In addition to these two cases, Āṣaf is sometimes mentioned in other Solomonic anecdotes (e.g., Solomon's death, the book of magic that the jinns wrote and ascribed to Āṣaf, and the building of the temple), most of which had versions with or without Āṣaf.[27]

At a certain point, the character of Asaph the Physician *(Āṣaf al-ḥakīm)* also became known in the Muslim world and connected with Āṣaf son of Berachya, a connection probably facilitated by the relation between medicine and magic in the pre-modern world. A book called *Kitāb mujarrabāt al-buyūt fī al-ṭibb al-mathbūt* [The book of the tested remedies for home-use in the (field of) reliable medicine], ascribed to Āṣaf ibn Barakhyā al-ḥakīm, still exists today.[28] The healing

[25] ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥasan Ibn ʿAsākir, *Tārīkh madīnat Dimashq,* ed. ʿUmar ibn Gharāmah al-ʿAmrawī and ʿAlī Shirī (Beirut, 1995–2001), 69:73–75; hence Ibn Manẓūr, *Mukhtaṣar Tārīkh Dimashq* (Damascus, 1984–96), 5:288–90. In both cases the story appears in the biography of Bilqīs (the Queen of Sheba). In Solomon's biography, his meeting with the Queen of Sheba is not mentioned, but the loss of the seal episode appears in several more literary versions; in some of them Āṣaf "the trustworthy *(ṣiddīq)* or one of the Israelites' elite *(aḥbār)*" has a minor role (22:230–99). In most versions of the seal story, including Ibn ʿAsākir's second version, Āṣaf is described not as a youth, as in Bilqīs's story, but as an old man. There, his description probably was meant to explain how Āṣaf had access to Solomon's wives.

[26] For the gender issue and the women as representing chaos as opposed to Solomon's order: Helen Blatherwick, "Solomon Legends in Sīrat Sayf Ibn Dhī Yazan," *Mizan: Journal for the Study of Muslim Societies and Civilizations* 2, no. 1 (2017): 161–207 .

[27] This is also true for the two examples above, but to a much lesser extent. On the various Solomonic passages in the Quran and their appearances in the *tafsīr* and *qiṣaṣ* see Brannon M. Wheeler, *Prophets in the Quran: an Introduction to the Quran and Muslim Exegesis* (London, 2002), 266–79.

[28] On this book, whose dates of compilation and publication are unknown, see Amar, *Sefer harefuʾot,* 19, and Āṣaf ibn Barakhyā al-ḥakīm, *Kitāb mujarrabāt al-buyūt fī al-ṭibb al-mathbūt* (Cairo, n.d.). The book is not mentioned among those attributed to Āṣaf by Ḥājī Khalīfah that are mainly concerned with jinns. Ḥājī Khalīfah, *Kashf al-ẓunūn ʿan asāmī al-kutub wa-al-funūn* (London, 2021), 4:5, 593–594; 5:502.

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functions of the Mighty Name of God that Āṣaf allegedly knew,[29] or healing that involved jinn exorcism,[30] could have facilitated this shift. Yet I have not found any trace of Āṣaf as physician before the thirteenth century or among the Mamluk and Mongol references.

Until the thirteenth century, Āṣaf was primarily associated with the two aforementioned Solomonic episodes. He was characterized as a righteous individual, a relative of Solomon, and his scribe. Before the eleventh century, references to Āṣaf as a vizier are rare, and then and afterwards they are more common in Persian works than in Arabic ones.[31] The themes of magic and prophecy also continued to be associated with Āṣaf throughout the medieval period.

Āṣaf in the Mamluk Realm

In the Mamluk sphere, the figure of Āṣaf was rather marginal. In Mamluk stories of the prophets and universal histories he is mentioned almost exclusively in the context of the two Quranic episodes described above, and sometimes not even there.[32] Moreover, even Mamluk sources that dedicated plenty of space to the prophet Solomon usually only repeated earlier traditions and added nothing to the repertoire of Āṣaf's anecdotes. Thus, in his encyclopedic *Nihāyat al-*

[29] On the Name's healing abilities: Zoran, "'The Great Name,'" 83–85.

[30] Such as *Kitāb al-mandal al-sulaymānī* (The Book of Solomon's magic formulas for dealing with jinns), an anonymous Yemeni work of exorcism, compiled in the eleventh or thirteenth century, the framework story of which is Solomon's loss of the seal. After regaining his throne, Solomon received information about the various jinn tribes, and the book includes formulas of both magic and medicinal plants for curing the jinns' potential harms. Āṣaf is only mentioned in the first part of this story, rebuking the king and later making the jinn flee by reading al-Zabūr (Psalms, a reference to the Biblical Āṣaf?). While he is not related to the recipes, the shift from his role there to practicing medicine is not huge. Anne Regourd, "Images de djinns et exorcisme dans le *Mandal al-sulaymānī,*" in *Images et magie: Picatrix entre Orient et Occident,* ed. Jean-Patrice Boudet, Anna Caiozzo, and Nicolas Weill-Parot (Paris, 2011), 253–94, esp. 266, 267; for the date and medicinal plants: Anne Regourd, "Le *Kitāb al-Mandal al-sulaymānī,* un ouvrage d'exorcisme yéménite postérieur au ve/xie s., in *Démons et merveilles d'Orient,* special issue of *Res Orientales* 13 (2001): 123–38.

[31] For the Persian sources see below. For Arabic sources that define Āṣaf as Solomon's scribe, see for example ʿUmārah, *Les légendes prophétiques,* 144; al-Masʿūdī, *Ithbāt al-waṣīyah,* 77; al-Thaʿlabī, *Laṭāyif al-maʿārif* (Cairo, 1960), 55; al-Thaʿlabī, *ʿArāʾis al-majālis,* trans. Brinner, 532; Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-fihrist,* 309; Zamakhsharī, *Kashshāf,* 2:1028.

[32] For example, Ibn al-Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* (Cairo, n. d.), 439, who mentions Āṣaf only in connection to Bilqīs's story; cf. his *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah* (Beirut, 1993), 2:28 (where the identification of Āṣaf is only in the note, not in the text itself); Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-khabar ʿan al-bashar* (Beirut, 2013), 3:37 (Bilqīs), 7:221–22 (seal); Ibn al-Dawādarī, *Kanz al-durar* (Cairo, 1960–94), does not mention Āṣaf in his brief entry on Solomon (2:241–42), but mentions while discussing early scribes that Āṣaf wrote for Solomon (i.e., was Solomon's scribe) (1:391).

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arab, al-Nuwayrī (d. 1333) mainly cites tales from al-Thaʿlabī and al-Kisāʾī, while Ibn Manẓūr (d. 1311) only repeats Ibn ʿAsākir's stories.[33] In his famous dictionary *Lisān al-ʿArab,* Ibn Manẓūr identified Āṣaf as Solomon's scribe, who called God's Mighty Name and (as a result) Solomon saw (Bilqīs's) throne standing next to him.[34] Scribe is indeed a common denomination of Āṣaf in Mamluk historical sources, in continuation of earlier Arabic usages.[35]

Āṣaf's role in the main body of Mamluk Quranic exegesis is also small. Apart from briefly mentioning him in the two usual episodes (one of them—the loss of the seal—is condemned by Ibn Kathīr as based on *Isrāʾīlīyāt,* tales of Jewish origin),[36] he is referenced mainly in connection to *Sūrat al-baqarah* (the cow) 2:102, related to the magic promoted by the devils in Solomon's reign. The Quranic text stresses that it was not Solomon who disbelieved but the devils who taught the People of the Book an incorrect version of the Bible, thereby causing them not to acknowledge Muḥammad's prophecy. Several interpretations of these verses suggest that the wrong Bible was actually the book of Āṣaf *(Kitāb Āṣaf).* This was not a book written by Āṣaf, but one compiled by the jinns, who ascribed it to Āṣaf, thereby leading at least ignorant Jews (as opposed to their wise men) to believe it reflected Solomon's words. The jinns did this either after Solomon's death or when one of them took Solomon's throne. They either inserted their magic charm "in a line after every two lines" of a book Āṣaf had actually written to Solomon, or created their own book, sealed it with a seal similar to Solomon's, and marked Āṣaf as its author.[37] Although this notion is not novel,[38] the emphasis it receives in Mamluk works, as opposed to the minor mentions of the other anecdotes, as well as the citation of the version in which Āṣaf is depicted as the devil who usurped Solomon's throne in the seal story, associates Āṣaf more closely with the darker aspects of magic and diminishes the significance of the miracle he purportedly performed for Solomon.

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[33] Shihāb al-Dīn al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab,* vol. 14, ed. Saʿīd ʿĀshūr (Cairo, 1984), 82–141; Ibn Manẓūr, *Mukhtaṣar,* 5:288–89; 10:126–34.

[34] Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab (Cairo, 1981), 1:88.*

[35] **Notes 32, 33, 34** above and Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Qalqashandī, *Kitāb ṣubḥ al-aʿshá* (Beirut, 1987), 1:68.

[36] Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿaẓīm* (Beirut, 1998), 6:173 (Bilqīs), 7:59 (seal); Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Al-Durr al-manthūr fī al-tafsīr al-maʾthūr* (Beirut, 1983), 6:360 (Bilqīs), 7:181, 185 (seal); Niẓām al-Dīn al-Nīshābūrī, *Gharāʾib al-Qurʾān wa-raghāʾib al-furqān* (Beirut, 1996), 5:305–6 (Bilqīs; Āṣaf is described as the vizier or scribe of Sulaymān), 595–96 (seal).

[37] Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr,* 1:233, 236; al-Suyūṭī, *Durr,* 1:233; Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-ʿUjāb fī bayān al-asbāb* (Cairo, 1997), 1:303, 305–6, 308–9; al-Nīshābūrī, *Gharāʾib,* 1:345.

[38] See **note 16** above.

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Aside from these expected places, Āṣaf appears in several other genres of Mamluk literature, in all of which he is connected to magic or at least the supernatural.[39] Interestingly, in these other genres Āṣaf is described as Solomon's vizier, not his scribe.

One example is *Kitāb al-lumaʿ fī al-ḥawādith wa-al-bidaʿ* [The book of brightness in novelties and innovations], by Ibn Baydakīn (fl. ca. 1300–1), a student of Ibn Taymīyah (d. 1328) who lived in Mecca, Cairo, and Jerusalem, which describes and condemns innovations in Sunni religious practices.[40] The chapter devoted to repentance and lowering of the gaze *(al-ḥayāʾ and ghaṣṣ al-baṣar)* includes a passage about Āṣaf that is ascribed to the exegetists *(ʿulamāʾ al-tafsīr)* though I was unable to locate it in earlier compilations. The passage, an interpretation of *Sūrat al-kahf* (the cave) 18:17: "whomsoever God guides, he is rightly guided, and whomsoever He leads astray, thou wilt not find for him a protector to direct,"[41] actually explains how Āṣaf came to know the Mighty Name of God. According to Ibn Baydakīn, Āṣaf transgressed his due bounds by entering into the realm of prophecy[42] *(kāna musrifan ʿalá nafsihi fī ḥaḍrat al-nubūwah)* until he understood that nobody can save anyone (from God's punishment). God sent Gabriel to Solomon to rebuke Āṣaf for his pretentions. When Solomon passed on the reproach, Āṣaf was humbled and frightened. He went to the city's dunghill and repented. Dismounting, crying, and putting ashes on his head, he admitted his limits, crying to God, "You are you, and I am I." Being aware of his sin—trying to enter the realm of God without being prepared for it—he begged for God's guidance. Due to his sincere repentance, God forgave him, drew him close, and taught him the Mighty Name, which Āṣaf later used for summoning Bilqīs's throne.[43]

Another Mamluk genre, in which the Quranic references to Āṣaf are given a slightly different twist, is popular epic: Āṣaf has a guest appearance in the *Arabian Nights,* where he is the one who brings the rebellious *ʿifrīt* (the kind of jinn mentioned in *Sūrat al-naml*) to Solomon, who imprisoned the former in a long-necked copper bottle (*qumqum,* an equivalent of Aladdin's lamp).[44] Āṣaf's

[39] Given the huge amount of Mamluk writing, I probably missed quite a few other mentions of Āṣaf, and the selection below, based on references from secondary sources as well as *Al-Maktabah al-shāmilah* database, is somewhat arbitrary.

[40] Adam Sabra, "Ibn Baydakīn," *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 3rd ed., https://doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_36103.

[41] Arberry, *Koran,* 317.

[42] Or in the presence of [Solomon's] prophecy.

[43] Ibn Baydakīn, *Kitāb al-lumaʿ fī al-ḥawādith wa-al-bidaʿ,* ed. Ṣubḥī Labīb (Cairo, 1986), 1:199–200.

[44] *The Thousand and One Nights (Alf Laylaa wa-Layla) from the Earliest Known Sources,* ed. Muhsin Mahdi (Leiden, 1984), 1:90 (tenth night, the Fisherman's Story). According to *The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia,* certain editions include the tale of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, but I did not

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part is more central in *Sīrat Sayf ibn Dhī Yazan*. This legendary epic was probably composed in the late Mamluk period (fifteenth to early sixteenth centuries).[45] It tells the story of the Yemenite king Sayf, who, after fighting the king of Ḥabash (Ethiopia), led his people to (the then unpopulated) Egypt. There he diverted the river Nile to its current course and founded a proto-Islamic kingdom, from which he went to conquer the realms of humans and jinn in the name of Islam.[46] As shown by Hellen Blatherwick, *Sīrat Sayf* abounds in inter-textual references to the stories of the prophets, and notably to Solomonic legends, which inform its own plot and thematic subtext and anchor it in Islamic salvation history.[47] Among the Solomonic legends, there are a few allusions to the loss of the seal, but Solomon's relations with the Queen of Sheba receive a central place, probably due to the epic's south Arabian context. The story of Solomon and Bilqīs is used as a metaphor for the relations between order (man) and chaos (woman), and also plays a role in the plot: part of the *Sīrah* is the quest for Bilqīs's bridal clothes, worn at her wedding with Solomon and kept in his treasury, which Sayf's jinn milk-sister ʿĀqiṣah demands as her dowry.[48] The connection to the Queen of Sheba and the central part played by various jinns in the *Sīrah*'s plot, not only as Sayf's enemies but also as his relatives and helpers, partly explain Āṣaf's presence therein. Described as Solomon's vizier and son of his maternal (and once paternal) aunt, Āṣaf's main contribution to the plot is bequeathing his magic sword to Sayf. The sword, perhaps originating in Ibn ʿAsākir's story, was enchanted by Āṣaf to protect its bearer against all kinds of jinns, and can also test the sincerity of alleged converts. It is one of several magical items that help Sayf in fulfilling his major quest, diverting the Nile.[49]

Aside from this, Āṣaf—and even his father—appear in a complicated story told to Sayf about an enchanted fish pond that Solomon created for Bilqīs. The story,

find it in the regular editions (Ulrich Marzolph, Richard van Leeuwen, and Hassan Wassouf, *The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia* [Santa Barbara, 2004], 394–96).The story, combining the Queen's visit with Solomon's temporary loss of his crown (i.e., probably following Ibn al-ʿAsākir's version), was included only in Weil's translation of 1839–41 but omitted in later editions.

[45] J.-P. Guillaume, "Sayf Ibn D̲ h̲ ī Yazan," *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_6681.

[46] Blatherwick, *Prophets, Gods and Kings,* passim; idem, "Solomon Legends," 161–207; on popular epic in the Mamluk Sultanate: Konrad Hirschler, *The Written Word in the Medieval Arabic Lands* (Edinburgh, 2012), 164–96.

[47] Blatherwick, "Solomon Legends," 163–64.

[48] Ibid., 163, 167; anonymous, *Sīrat al-malik Sayf ibn Dhī Yazan fāris al-Yaman* (Beirut, 1986), 2:185ff.

[49] Ibid., 1:225–34, 2:256–69, and passim; Blatherwick, *Prophets, Gods and Kings,* 119–20 and passim; idem, "Solomon Legends," 164–65, 169–71.

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originating in an exegesis to Quran 27:44–45,[50] is an offshoot of the popular *qiṣaṣ* story about a palace with a glass- or crystal-covered pool that Solomon built to make Bilqīs expose her feet so that he could see whether they were hairy and hoofed as the jinns claimed (they were only hairy, apparently).[51] In the *Sīrah*'s version, however, Solomon, with the help of jinns and God, is making for Bilqīs a pond in which metal fish swim and breed like real ones. Here too, Āṣaf functions as Solomon's close counselor, who helps the king both in dealing with jinns and in satisfying Bilqīs's whims. He is described as possessing knowledge in sciences and the magical power of books, though he had to work hard to gain it (as opposed to Solomon, whose knowledge, embedded in his seal, was endowed by God). Āṣaf also protects Sayf's future interests, convincing Solomon to imprison rather than execute the mighty jinn who coveted Bilqīs by reminding the king that Sayf would eventually need this jinn's powers to divert the Nile.[52]

The *Sīrah*'s image of Āṣaf fits well with his representation in the *qiṣaṣ* literature but gives him a more central role in the plot. It combines his images as the king's trusted vizier and a powerful magician, portraying him as helping two sacred kings—Solomon and Sayf—in their personal and governmental missions and in bringing order to chaos.

While this image is still close to that of the *qiṣaṣ* literature, a somewhat different picture of Āṣaf appears in Mamluk occult literature. Āṣaf is mentioned six times in the famous manual of magic ascribed to al-Būnī, *Shams al-maʿārif wa-laṭāʾif al-ʿawārif* [The sun of esoteric knowledge and the subtleties of the experts], also known as *Shams al-maʿārif al-kubrá* [The greatest sun of knowledge]. While al-Būnī, a Sufi author of Algerian origin, allegedly died in Cairo in 1225 or 1233 and is therefore a pre-Mamluk author, recent research on the corpus of manuscripts of this work led both Gardiner and Coulon to argue that the book as it stands today is a compilation from the Mamluk period, greatly enlarging al-Būnī's original text. It was composed between 1272 and the end of the fourteenth century, with further additions inserted in the sixteenth century under the Ottomans.[53] Both Coulon and Gardiner ascribe the passages related to Āṣaf

[50] 27:44: "It was said to her, 'Enter the pavilion.' But when she saw it, she supposed it was a spreading water, and she bared her legs. He said, 'It is a pavilion smoothed of [27:45] crystal.'" (Arberry, *Koran,* 229).

[51] *Sīrat al-malik Sayf,* 2:405–8, 3:225–29; Blatherwick, "Solomon Legends," 168–75; for the story, see, e.g., Wheeler, *Prophets,* 280. Āṣaf is sometimes mentioned in this story either as the one suggesting the test, arranging the building, or leading the queen to her palace.

[52] For the full, beautiful story: *Sīrat al-malik Sayf,* 3:225–29; Blatherwick, "Solomon Legends," 170–75.

[53] Jean-Charles Coulon, "Salomon dans les traités de magie arabes médiévaux," in *Le roi Salomon au Moyen Âge: savoirs et representations,* ed. Jean-Patrice Boudet et al. (Turnhout, 2022), 67; Jean-Charles Coulon, "Magie et politique: événements historiques et pensée politique dans le

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to a post-Būnid attempt to make the book more palatable to Mamluk elite circles by ascribing some of its contents to courtly authorities like Āṣaf and (mostly) Solomon.[54] In its expanded version, the book is an encyclopedia of practical magic, specializing in letterism *(ʿilm al-ḥurūf)* and the science of Names *(ʿilm al-asmāʾ)* and abounding in magic squares and astrology. Āṣaf is mentioned in relation to the Mighty Name of God he used to summon Bilqīs's throne; as Solomon's vizier sitting on his magic carpet on which his seal was stamped together with the jinn ministers; as transmitting knowledge from Solomon about *khanfatrīyāt* (from the Greek *charaktêres,* letter-like magic signs), which Būnī defines as protected knowledge *(ʿilm muṣawwan)* that was used by al-Ḥallāj (d. 922) as well as by Āṣaf, Solomon, and others; and as an authority on *jafr,* letter divination, passing information via Solomon, Alexander the Great (Dhū al-Qarnayn), the Scriptures of the Ancients *(zubur al-awwalīyīn),* and the Book of Adam *(Sifr Ādam)* to the imam Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (d. 763). Āṣaf is also an author of a book *(sifr)* of his own apparently related to the Names of God and their magical uses, again transmitting information from Adam.[55] Āṣaf's figure combines the attributes of vizier, familiar from the Quran and *qiṣaṣ,* with that of an expert in the Names of God and letter divination. Coulon suggests that the aim of such an image, apart from anchoring magic in more "respectable" pseudo-epigraphic authorities, was to cement the functions of holy men, usually Sufi shaykhs in the Mamluk case, and scribes, as those serving the ruler by both writing for him and understanding the magic of written words.[56]

While al-Būnī's work is still related to the familiar Quranic references, a different, more practical facet of Āṣaf's "magic" in the Mamluk occult literature

Šams al-Maʿārif attribué à al-Būnī (mort en 622/1225)," *Arabica* 64, nos. 3–4 (2017): 442–86; Noah D. Gardiner, "Esotericist Reading Communities and the Early Circulation of the Sufi Occultist Aḥmad al-Būnī's Works," *Arabica,* 64, nos. 3–4 (2017): 405–41; idem, "Forbidden Knowledge? Notes on the Production, Transmission, and Reception of the Major Works of Aḥmad al-Būnī," *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 12 (2012): 81–143.

[54] See previous note; also Noah D. Gardiner, "Esotericism in a Manuscript Culture: Aḥmad al-Būnī and his Readers through the Mamlūk Period" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 2014), 30.

[55] Pseudo-Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Būnī, *Shams al-maʿārif al-kubrá,* 3rd ed. (Beirut, 2006), 537, 223, 415, 383, 393. Āṣaf's book is called (on 383, 393) *Kalām al-SRT,* but I was unable to decipher the meaning of this name. On *jafr,* a political-eschatological divinatory discourse originally associated with the Shiʿi imams, which, over time, became nearly synonymous with the science of letters: Noah D. Gardiner, "Jafr," *EI3,* https://doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_32687; on Adam's book *(Sifr Ādam),* which contains names of angels that are used for charms: Ibn al-Nadīm, *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm: A Tenth-Century Survey of Muslim Culture,* trans. Bayard Dodge (New York, 1970), 2:727; for a manuscript with a similar *isnād* attributed to Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq: Toufiq Fahd, *La divination arabe: études religieuses, sociologiques et folkloriques sur le milieu natif de l'Islam* (Leiden, 1966), 222.

[56] Coulon, "Magie et politique," 458–61.

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appears in the work of the alchemist, lettrist, and physician Sayyid Ḥusayn Akhlāṭī (d. 1397), an expert on the above-mentioned *jafr.* Akhlāṭī lived in the Mamluk realm, associated with scholars and occultists in Iran and Transoxiana, and was considered "an almost Solomonic figure," and "the true prophet of the age."[57] Akhlāṭī described the process of composing his book of *jafr* as using selections from the secret *jafr* attributed to Imam Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq, who had perused the original copy kept in the treasury of the prophet Solomon. The knowledge in the book was transmitted to Āṣaf through Alexander, the prophetic books *(ṣuḥuf al-anbiyāʾ),* the Book of Adam, and Gabriel, an *isnād* quite similar to the one appearing in al-Būnī's work.[58] In his *Risālah fī qawāʿid al-jafr* [A treatise on the principles of *jafr*], in a chapter dealing with the knowledge of the shining stars *(darārī),* he cites a book of Āṣaf described as "The Book of Āṣaf ibn Barakhyā ibn Samawʾal, the vizier of Sulaymān ibn Dāwūd, may peace be upon both of them, known as *The Comprehensive Book of the High and Low Spiritual Sciences* (*Kitāb al-ḥawī lil-ʿulūm al-rūḥānīyah al-ʿalawīyah wa-al-saflīyah*)." The book had two parts, external and internal. The internal part originally had six chapters, only two of which are cited. The first addresses the application *(iltimās)* of this science (of the stars) and features a table indicating the exact times that the moon rises after sunset for each day of the month. The second deals with the positions of the stars *(al-nujūm wa-manāziluhā)* in seven Gregorian (or Hebrew? or Ottoman?) months (*Tishrīn al-awwal, Tishrīn al-thānī,* etc.). The other chapters' titles deal with various astronomical issues as well as amulets and magic formulas against jinn *(mandal).*[59] This apparently practical material, devoid of the Quranic framework, brings to mind the Jewish designation of Āṣaf as an astronomer, but the connection, if any, is unclear to me at this stage.

In sum, while remaining quite peripheral to the Mamluk political scene, Āṣaf emerges as an authority of magic among Mamluk occultists. The blending of Āṣaf's magical and political traits in *Sīrat Sayf* is much more aligned with his depiction in the Mongol realm. While this alignment might have resulted from close interactions between Mamluk writers and their Mongol and post-Mongol counterparts from the fourteenth century onward, this hypothesis still requires further evidence.[60] It is to the Mongol realm that we now turn.

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[57] İlker Evrim Binbaş, *Intellectual Networks in Timurid Iran: Sharaf al-Dīn ʿAlī Yazdī and the Islamicate Republic of Letters* (Cambridge, 2016), 139, 154, and passim.

[58] Ibid., 153–54; cf. Būnī, *Shams,* 383.

[59] Ḥasan al-Akhlāṭī, *Risālah fī qawāʿid al-jafr wa-ʿilm al-falak wa-al-zayārij wa-ʿilm al-ḥurūf* (Beirut, 2002), 107.

[60] On such contacts see, e.g., Reuven Amitai, "The Mongols and the Arab Middle East," in *The Cambridge History of the Mongol Empire,* ed. Michal Biran and Hodong Kim (Cambridge, 2023), 818–19; Binbaş, *Intellectual Networks,* passim.

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Āṣaf in the Mongol Realm

In the Mongol domains, Āṣaf became the embodiment of a good vizier. This was partly due to an existing pre-Mongol Persian tradition that gave a bigger place to Āṣaf than its Arabic counterpart and, at least from the eleventh century, highlights his role as a vizier. As early as Balʿamī's (d. 956) translation of the history of al-Ṭabarī (d. 923) Āṣaf was given more space than he had received in the original Arabic chapter dedicated to Solomon, although it did not define him as vizier but only as Solomon's companion and cousin.[61] Āṣaf, however, is denoted vizier in the first Persian *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ,* compiled by al-Thaʿlabī in the eleventh century, where he appears not only in the two usual anecdotes but also as sitting on Solomon's throne and helping the king in judgement, as the one Solomon consults about building the temple, and as the one who knows that Solomon is dead before others became aware of this.[62] Āṣaf is mentioned in the Seljuq vizier Niẓām al-Mulk's (d. 1092) *Siyāsat-nāmah* as one of the prophets' viziers (like Aaron was to Moses, Simon [Petrus] was to Jesus, and Abū Bakr was to Muḥammad), in one of Āṣaf's surprisingly rare appearances in the Mirrors for Princes literature.[63] Moreover, Āṣaf is referred to quite often in pre-Mongol Persian poetry compiled in Iran and Central Asia from the eleventh century onward, mostly in panegyrics to various viziers. Thus, Āṣaf is mentioned, for example, in poems of Qaṭrān Tabrīzī (ca. 1009–88) and Sūzanī Samarqandī (d. 1166), where he is explicitly described as vizier.[64] Moreover, the Transoxiana-born Muḥammad ʿAwfī (ca. 1171–1242) in 1220 dedicated his *Lubāb al-albāb* [Quintessence of hearts], an anthology of poets both professional and amateur, to "the second Āṣaf," ʿAyn al-Mulk, the vizier of Malik Nāṣir al-Dīn Qabācha, ruler of Lahore, to whose court ʿAwfī had escaped to avoid the Mongol army.[65] The anthology included several poems by Seljuq and Ghaznavid poets, written about or by viziers, in which Āṣaf appears as a metaphor for the discussed vizier.[66] Āṣaf's growing popularity in the Iranian realm was probably related not only to the more central role of viziers in the eastern Islamic world, but mainly to the association of Solomon with Jamshid, the mythical Iranian king who was especially connected to Fars in the

[61] Balʿamī, *Tārīkh-i Balʿamī,* 1:574, 579–85; cf. al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-rusul wa-al-mulūk,* ed. M. J. De Goeje (repr. Leiden, 1964) 2:588–90; William M. Brinner, trans., *The History of al-Ṭabarī,* vol. 3, *The Children of Israel* (New York, 1991), 167–69.

[62] Al-Nīshābūrī, *Qeṣaṣ ol-Anbiyā,* 282, 283, 299, 304–5, 307–9.

[63] Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyar al-mulūk (Siyāsat-nāmah),* ed. H. Drake (Tehran, 1962), 218.

[64] Muḥammad Sūzanī Samarqandī, *Dīwān,* ed. Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh Ḥusaynī (Tehran, 1959), 64, 144; Qaṭrān Tabrīzī, *Dīwān,* ed. Muḥammad Nakhjawānī (Tehran, 1983), 167, 345; Russell Harris, "Āṣaf b. Barakhyā," *Encyclopaedia Islamica online,* 2008, http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1875-9831_isla_COM_0298.

[65] Muḥammad ʿAwfī, *Lubāb al-albāb,* ed. Saʿīd Nāfisī (Tehran, 1956), 4, 141–42.

[66] Ibid., 141–42, 429, 553, 558.

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Iranian collective memory. Both Jamshid and Solomon were perfect temporal rulers, sacred kings who commanded magical powers, controlled the wind, and were great builders. While the identities of the two were debated among Muslims, stories and courtiers were often interchanged between them, making *Āṣaf-i Jam* or *Āṣaf-i Jamshīd* (Āṣaf [the vizier of] Jamshid) a common poetic metaphor.[67] These features probably also contributed to Āṣaf's popularity in the Mongol realm.

Āṣaf's most detailed record in the Mongol era appears in the *Stories of the Prophets* compiled by al-Rabghūzī in 710/1310–11. This is the first Chaghadaid Turkic version of *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ,* penned by a certain Transoxianian judge, Naṣīr al-Dīn ibn Burhān al-Dīn al-Rabghūzī, a *nisbah* referring to (the unidentified) Ribāṭ al-Ughūz. The book was commissioned by a young Mongol commander called Toqbughā Bek, described as a devout Muslim well-versed in the Quran. DeWeese identified this figure with Amir Toqbughā, whom Ibn Baṭṭūṭah met in Nakhshab/Qarshī in 1332–33, when the former was the deputy or governor *(nāʾib)* in Ghaznah (Afghanistan) of the Chaghadaid khan, ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Tarmashirin (r. 1331–34), the khan who brought Islam to Transoxiana but was deposed by his kin soon after. According to Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, Amir Toqbughā, who had been a Muslim long before the khan and had built many colleges and Sufi lodges in Ghaznah, provided temporary shelter to Tarmashirin after his overthrow, before the latter continued to India.[68]

The book that al-Rabghūzī compiled for the Muslim-Mongol amir included not only the stories of the Israelite prophets and kings, Jesus, and St. George, but also Alexander the Great, as well as the life of the Prophet Muḥammad, the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, and ʿAlī's sons. In this he follows Thaʿlabī's Persian work but differs from most *qiṣaṣ* that do not include Muslim figures (or Alexander). This choice of content, however, encapsulated everything new converts like the

[67] Mahmoud Omidsalar, "Jamšid," *Encyclopedia Iranica Online,* https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/jamsid-ii; Dominic P. Brookshaw, *Hafiz and His Contemporaries: Poetry, Performance and Patronage in Fourteenth Century Iran* (London, 2019), 184–86; Anna Caiozzo, "Salomon magicien, roi et prophète dans la culture visuelle du monde musulman du XIIIe au XVIe siècle," in *Le roi Salomon au Moyen Âge: savoirs et representations,* ed. Jean-Patrice Boudet et al. (Turnhout, 2022), 236–238.

[68] Devin DeWeese, "Turkic Sources," in *Cambridge History of the Mongol Empire,* 2:281; cf. Nāṣir al-Dīn ibn Burhān al-Dīn al-Rabghūzī, *The Stories of the Prophets: Qiṣaṣ al-Anbiyāʾ: An Eastern Turkish Version,* 2nd ed., ed. and trans. Hendrik E. Boeschoten and John O'Kane (Leiden, 2015), XIII–XVI; Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, *Riḥla: Voyages d'Ibn Batoutah,* ed. and trans. C. Defrémery and B. R. Sanguinetti (Paris, 1874–79), 3:29; *Travels of Ibn Battuta,* trans. H. A. R. Gibb (Cambridge, 1958–2000), 3:555. On Tarmashirin: Michal Biran, "The Chaghadaids and Islam: The Conversion of Tarmashirin Khan (1331–34)," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 122, no. 4 (2002): 742–52.

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Mongols needed to know about Islamic salvation history.[69] Indeed, al-Rabghūzī stressed the popularity of the stories of the prophets, including their more popular versions, in his days, and such popularity is also attested by the significant place given to prophets in the work of Jamāl Qarshī (fl. 1303), the only indigenous quasi-historical work written in Mongol Central Asia, as well as by the few thirteenth-century fragments containing prophet-related Quranic commentaries, one of them dealing with Solomon, that were unearthed in Qarshī, the Chaghadaid western capital founded in Transoxiana by the khan Kebek (r. 1319–26).[70]

While al-Rabghūzī's work retained its connection to the Quranic commentaries, made use of hadith and former *qiṣaṣ* works in Arabic (notably al-Thaʿlabī) and Persian (al-Nīshābūrī), and even positioned itself as a pious alternative to the "faulty and unsound" versions of the *qiṣaṣ* it condemned, it also integrated popular stories, epic themes, and poetry. This mixture contributed to its unremitting popularity,[71] and also meant that some of its material was unattested elsewhere. This was true in Āṣaf's case as well.

Āṣaf is mentioned quite often in al-Rabghūzī's detailed chapter about David and Solomon. He is given a bigger role in his two usual anecdotes, which are narrated in a lively fashion with many "citations" of Āṣaf's words,[72] as well as being mentioned in other Solomonic episodes (e.g., Solomon's death).[73]

Yet it is in the prologue to the story of Solomon's loss of the seal, under the title "The Tale of Solomon and King ʿUkūz," that Āṣaf gets his most prominent role.[74] In the first part of this story, Āṣaf is placed in the famous episode of Solomon and the horses, derived from Quran 38:31–33.[75] According to al-Rabghūzī, Solomon desired a herd of flying horses from a distant island and had the demon Samdūn capture them. Āṣaf then presented 900 of the 1000 horses to Solomon, who became so engrossed that he missed the evening prayer. In horror, Solomon

[69] Al-Rabghūzī, *Stories,* iv–ix and passim.

[70] A. Borovkov, "Iz materialov dlja istorii uzbekskogo jazyka," *Tjurkologičeskij Sbornik* 1 (1951): 73–79; E. Fazylov, "Eine choresmtürkische Handschrift über gute und böse Taten," *Journal of Turkish Studies* (1990): 207–21; al-Rabghūzī, *Stories,* xviii; Jamāl Qarshī, *Al-Mulḥaqāt bi-al-ṣurāḥ*, in *Istorii͡a Kazakhstana v persidskikh istochnikakh,* vol. 1, ed. A. K. Muminov (Almaty, 2005), XC–XCIX.

[71] Al-Rabghūzī, *Stories,* xiii–xiv.

[72] Ibid., 2:350–74, notably 365–67 (Bilqīs); 367–69 (loss of the seal).

[73] Ibid., 2:369–70.

[74] Ibid., 2:342ff.

[75] "When in the evening were presented to him the standing steeds, he said, 'Lo, I have loved the love of good things better than the remembrance of my Lord, until the sun was hidden behind the veil. Return them to me!' And he began to stroke their shanks and necks." (Arberry, *Koran,* 273); for earlier stories derived from these verses that do not, however, mention Āṣaf, see, e.g., Wheeler, *Prophets,* 271.

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beheaded the 900 horses and prayed for redemption. God accepted his prayers, returned the sun to its earlier position, and allowed him to pray on time. Al-Rabghūzī notes that Āṣaf concealed the remaining 100 horses, which survived and became the ancestors of contemporary thoroughbreds.[76] Āṣaf is therefore given credit for preserving these choice horses, an honor unattested in previous versions of this story that probably endeared Āṣaf to a Mongol audience.

Following a digression about Solomon's throne, on which Āṣaf is also said to have sat, Solomon is informed by the demon Samdūn about the island kingdom of King ʿUkūz and decides to conquer it. With Āṣaf by his side, Solomon travels on a magic carpet. Āṣaf then assembles a three-winged army, led by humans in the center and 100,000 demons on each wing. Despite its strength, the army is initially defeated. Solomon sends reinforcements of beasts, flying birds, and, finally, the wind, which blinds the enemy soldiers, leading to victory. Solomon gives his whip to Āṣaf and the latter leaves alive no one who was as tall as the whip. After ʿUkūz was slain by a lion, Āṣaf purifies the city by destroying its towers, talismans, and sacred animals and brings the wealth to Solomon. Solomon marries ʿUkūz's beautiful daughter, Kūna, who later worships idols and causes Solomon to lose his throne.

This story, which I have not seen elsewhere, includes several elements that might appeal to a Mongol audience. First, it highlights Āṣaf's military role as a commander of a composite army of humans and demons, aided also by animals, birds, and fairies, albeit in a hard battle. Later, Āṣaf also purified the conquered city of remnants of idolatry and brought its wealth to his lord. Second, the whip's measure (i.e., killing everyone who was higher than the whip) is obviously reminiscent of Chinggis Khan's action after the defeat of the Tatars, when he measured them against the linchpin of the cart, killing everybody who was higher than it.[77] The mere conferring of the whip upon Āṣaf attests to Solomon's trust and appreciation of his companion.

Āṣaf's military leadership is also implied in the last part of the "loss of the seal" story, where after Āṣaf made sure the demon on the throne was not Solomon, he stated "Now it's up to you [the Children of Israel] to do something!" As a result of this call, men and fairies, wild animals, and birds all went together towards the palace, leading to the demon's escape.[78] Al-Rabghūzī thus portrayed Āṣaf not only as a close, wise, and loyal vizier with a special connection to God, who can even save his lord from the latter's own mistakes (e.g. ignoring the idolatry, killing the horses), but also as a military leader, who leads human and

[76] Al-Rabghūzī, *Stories,* 2:342–45, citation on 345.

[77] *The Secret History of the Mongols,* trans. Igor de Rachewiltz (Leiden, 2004), 1:77 (par. 154).

[78] Al-Rabghūzī, *Stories,* 2:354.

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non-human troops. These specific stories were probably chosen or reworked to please al-Rabghūzī's Mongol patron and audience, with Mongol tastes in mind.

The relatively bigger place given to Āṣaf in al-Rabghūzī's work can be partially explained by his being a sort of "local hero" in Central Asia: the mausoleum of Āṣaf ibn Barachyā still exists today on the foothill of Solomon mountain near Awsh (Osh) in Kyrgyzstan, and contemporary local traditions ascribe to Solomon and Āṣaf the digging of canals and building of irrigation projects in the Fergana valley. The aforementioned Jamāl Qarshī, writing in Kashghar in the early years of the fourteenth century, attested that it was known in his days, and located near the city of Awsh in Fergana.[79] The contemporary mausoleum, currently a part of the UNESCO site of Sulaiman-Too, is dated to the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries, but it is built on top of an older site, dated to the eleventh to twelfth centuries, which was probably the one mentioned by Qarshī.[80]

Qarshī also refers to Āṣaf in other parts of his work: he succinctly mentioned him as Sulaymān's vizier who knew God's Mighty Name in the section devoted to the prophets and as a metaphor (*Āṣaf al-ʿahd,* the Āṣaf of the era) for Maḥmūd Yalawach (d. 1254), described as the vizier of the Mongol khans, from Chinggis Khan to Möngke (r. 1251–59), and of his son Masʿūd Beg (d. 1289), called *Āṣaf-i Jam* (Āṣaf [the vizier] of Jamshid), who headed Mongol administration in Central Asia first under the Great Khans and later under the Chaghadaids and Qaidu (r. 1270–1303).[81]

Āṣaf is briefly mentioned in some of the Ilkhanid universal histories. He is not recorded in the more concise ones, *Niẓām al-tawārīkh* by Bayḍāwī (d. 1286) and *Tārīkh* of Banākatī (d. 1333), that do not mention Solomon,[82] but is succinctly

[79] Ashirbek Muminov, "Sacred Places in Central Asia: Attempts at Their Historical and Theological Interpretation," in *Muslim Saints and Mausoleums in Central Asia and Xinjiang,* ed. Shinmen Yasushi, Sawada Minoru, and Waite Edmund (Paris, 2013), 32; Qarshī, *Mulḥaqāt,* CCI. See also Juvaynī, *Genghis Khan: The History of the World Conqueror,* trans. J. A. Boyle (Manchester, 1997), 94, who describes Awsh as a place of pilgrimage.

[80] Sulaiman-Too Sacred Mountain was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2009: https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1230/.

[81] Qarshī, *Mulḥaqāt,* XCV, CLXXIII, CLXXVI. On Yalawach and his son: Thomas T. Allsen, "Mahmūd Yalavač (?–1254), Masʿūd Beg (?–1289), ʿAlî Beg (?–1280); Bujīr (fl. 1206–60)," in *In the Service of the Khan: Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yüan Period (1200–1300),* ed. Igor De Rachewiltz, Chan Hok-lam, Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing, and Peter W. Geier (Wiesbaden, 1993), 122–35.

[82] ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUmar Bayḍāwī, *Niẓām al-tavārīkh* (Tehran, 2003); in his *Tafsīr,* Āṣaf is succinctly mentioned in the usual places: in the commentary on Surah 27:40, as Solomon's vizier who brought Bilqīs's throne (Bayḍāwī, *Tafsīr al-Bayḍāwī* [Beirut, 1988], 2:177) and in Surah 38:33, in relation to the story of the loss of the seal as the one who informed Solomon of the idolatry at his house (2:312); Banākatī, *Tārīkh-i Banākatī: Rawẓ at ūlā al-albāb fī maʿrifat al-tavārīkh va al-ansāb* (Tehran, 1969).

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noted in Qāshānī's *Zubdat al-tawārīkh* (Choice of histories) and in the same words in Rashīd al-Dīn's *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh* (Compendium of chronicles), in the part titled *Īrān wa Islām* (Iran and Islam). In both sources he is mentioned in connection to Bilqīs's throne as the one who had knowledge, knew God's Mighty Name, and brought the throne to Solomon.[83] While Āṣaf is not mentioned in the part dedicated to Jewish history that has a chapter on David and Solomon, he is referred to in two of Rashīd al-Dīn's theological works. First, in *Laṭāʾif al-ḥaqāʾiq* (Subtle truths, compiled after 1308), Āṣaf's swift bringing of Bilqīs's throne to Solomon is given as an example of the ability of certain unique souls (including Rashīd al-Dīn himself) to accomplish things much faster than others, thereby suggesting a different passage of time.[84] In his *Asʾilah wa-ajwibah* (Questions and answers), the Ilkhanid vizier describes a dialogue with a Frankish physician and philosopher who, when addressing Rashīd al-Dīn, refers to him, among other praises, as "Āṣaf-i Sulaymān," meaning "[the one who has the attributes of] Āṣaf [the vizier] of Sulaymān."[85] I suspect that this does not necessarily (or not only) reflect Rashīd al-Dīn's self-image, as Yoeli-Tlalim suggested,[86] but denotes a common polite way of addressing a vizier in late Ilkhanid Iran, as other examples

[83] Abū al-Qāsim Qāshānī, "Zubdat al-tawārīkh," Berlin State Library MS Minutoli 237, fol. 37r; Rashīd al-Dīn, "Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh," British Museum MS ADD 2628, fol. 21a; India Office MS Islamic 3524, fol. 20a. Both texts fail to mention the "loss of the seal" story. For Qāshānī's work as the source of Rashīd al-Dīn's universal history: Osamu Otsuka, "Qāshānī, the First World Historian: Research on his Uninvestigated Persian General History, *Zubdat al-Tawārīkh,*" *Studia Iranica* 47, no. 1 (2018): 119–49. Note that the printed version of this part of Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh* (*Īrān wa-Islām,* vol. 1, ed. Muḥammad Rawshan [Tehran, 1994]), where Sulaymān and Āṣaf receive a much more elaborated entry (pp. 429–52 for Sulaymān), is actually based on Ḥāfiẓ-i Ābrū's reworking of the text (Otsuka, "Qāshānī," 121). Ābrū's text bears no resemblance to this version of Qāshānī/Rashīd al-Dīn. While it is mainly based on earlier compilations, notably al-Ṭabarī/Balʿamī, al-Thaʿlabī, and al-Nīshābūrī, it cites a few rare stories related to Āṣaf (e.g., a tradition ascribed to Wahb ibn Munabbih [d. ca. 725] gives the content of Solomon's letter to Bilqīs, as written by Āṣaf, that began with God's Mighty Name and called upon her to embrace Islam, as she eventually did [438–40]). Ābrū even adds several details about Āṣaf that I did not find in earlier works, e.g., the presence of a lion beneath Āṣaf's chair—which was located on Solomon's throne—that could feel when a witness was lying (447). On Ābrū's *Lives of the Prophets,* see Mohamad Reza Ghiasian, *Lives of the Prophets: The Illustrations to Hafiz-i Abru's "Assembly of Chronicles"* (Leiden, 2018).

[84] Rashīd al-Dīn, *Laṭāyif al-ḥaqāyiq* (Tehran, 2013), 13. On his concept of time: Judith Pfeiffer, "In the Folds of Time: Rashīd al-Dīn on the Theories of Historicity," *History and Theory* 57 (2019): 20–42.

[85] Rashīd al-Dīn, *Asʾilah va ajvibah-ʾi Rashīdī,* ed. R. Shaʿbānī (Islamabad, 1993), 2:52–53; cited in Yoeli-Tlalim, *Reorienting Histories,* 113.

[86] Ibid.

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described below show. In any case, it attests to the popularity of Āṣaf as a metaphor for a good vizier.

Returning to Ilkhanid universal histories, Āṣaf is also mentioned in Mustawfī Qazvīnī's *Tārīkh-i guzīdah* (Selected history, compiled ca. 1330), both in the prophet section, where he is defined as Solomon's vizier and briefly mentioned in his two usual anecdotes,[87] and in the Ilkhanid part as a metaphor for the good vizier, referring to Rashīd al-Dīn, whose vizierate is compared to that of Āṣaf and Buzurgmīr, and his son, Ghiyāth al-Dīn, the vizier of the last Ilkhan Abū Saʿīd, whom Mustawfī compares to Solomon.[88] Āṣaf is also mentioned in Qazvīnī's geographical work *Nuzhat al-qulūb* (Hearts' bliss) in relation to the Barmakids, the emblematic family of Abbasid viziers who converted to Islam in the Umayyad period. According to Qazvīnī, the Umayyad caliph Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 715–17) allegedly asked, "In the post-prophecy era, does my kingdom fall short from that of Sulaymān ibn Dāwūd?" The response he got was that "even if your kingdom is wider than Sulaymān's, you do not have a vizier like Āṣaf." Sulaymān then searched for a competent vizier and found Jaʿfar al-Barmakī.[89] Interestingly, the choice of Jaʿfar al-Barmakī by Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Malik also appears in *Akhbār al-Barāmikah* (The history of the Barmakids), ascribed to Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar ibn al-Azraq al-Kirmānī (fl. ca. 800), and hence in Niẓām al-Mulk's *Siyāsat nāmah,* in both cases with Solomonic references but without mentioning Āṣaf.[90] The record in Qazvīnī's book can therefore reflect Āṣaf's growing popularity as an emblematic vizier.

Āṣaf's use as a metaphor for a capable vizier is especially prevalent in the history of Vaṣṣāf (fl. 1328–29), where it refers to prominent Mongol and Ilkhanid viziers, notably Rashīd al-Dīn but also others such as Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī (d. 1283), Masʿūd Beg, and Saʿd al-Dīn Sawwājī (d. 1312).[91] This popularity may

[87] Ḥamd Allāh Mustawfī Qazvīnī, *The Taʾríkh-i-guzída; or "Select History" of Hamdulʾláh Mustawfí-i-Qazwíní, Compiled in A.H. 730 (A.D. 1330), and Now Reproduced in Fac-Simile from a Manuscript Dated A.H. 857 (A.D. 1453),* ed. Edward G. Browne and Reynold A. Nicholson (Leiden, 1910), 54.

[88] Ibid., 602, 603, 627.

[89] Mustawfī Qazvīnī, *Nuzhat al-qulūb: matn-i kāmil,* ed. Mīr Hāshim Muḥaddis (Tehran, 2017), 1:294.

[90] [Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar ibn al-Azraq al-Kirmānī?], *Akhbār al-Barāmikah,* ed. Jalīl al-ʿAṭīyah (Beirut, 2006), 34; in this edition the book is ascribed to "an author of the tenth century." For Abū Ḥafṣ as the author: Kevin van Bladel, "Barmakids," *EI3,* https://doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_24302; Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat nāmah/siyar al-mulūk,* 219, (trans.) 179.

[91] E.g., Vaṣṣāf, *Tārīkh-i Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥaẓ rat* (Tehran, 2009), 4:171, 175, 196, 228, 331, 333, 343, 349, 369. Of these, pages 196 and 331–69 all refer to Rashīd al-Dīn, 171 to viziers in general, and 175 to Saʿd al-Dīn (Sawwājī?). Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥaẓ rat (Waṣṣāf al-ḥaḍrah), *Geschichte Wassaf's,* ed. and trans. Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall (Vienna, 2010), 1:105, 132 (Persian), 109, 139 (German), referring to Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī and Masʿūd Beg.

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reflect not only Vaṣṣāf's conspicuous use of metaphors and poetry but also his Shirazi origin.[92] That I did not find any reference to Āṣaf in Juvaynī's work may suggest that Āṣaf's popularity increased in the early fourteenth century, when, after the Islamization of the Mongols, references to Abrahamic figures made more sense.

In Ilkhanid poetry, Āṣaf was a popular metaphor for viziers even before Mongol Islamization, in continuation of pre-Mongol trends. The references are usually rather obvious *(Āṣaf-i Sulaymān, Āṣaf-i Jamshīd, Āṣaf al-ʿahd),* and appear in poems dedicated to renowned and less renowned viziers,[93] but two earlier poems referring to Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī are a bit more interesting. In the Mongol ode of Pur-i Bahāʾ (d. 1284?), the poet says of Juvaynī: "Āṣaf, who was the vizier of the Solomon of (his) time, in the time of your fortune (would be only) someone good to serve as your *kötelchi* (the man in charge of a led horse)," implying that Juvaynī exceeds Āṣaf.[94] In another poem by Pur-i Bahāʾ, Juvaynī is again compared to Āṣaf (together with a list of other historical figures), yet Āṣaf is defined as "world conqueror and devil-binder" *(Āṣaf-i gītī gushā-yi dīv bandī),* a description that also refers to his military skills.[95] Another poet who uses Āṣaf as a popular metaphor is the notable Ḥāfiẓ (d. 1390), who dedicated many poems to various Muẓaffarid (i.e., post-Ilkhanid) viziers, and used the similarities between Solomon and Jamshid to combine Iranian and Muslim lore.[96] Thus, Ilkhanid and post-Ilkhanid poetry embraced the pre-Mongol Persian tradition of using Āṣaf as a common symbol for an exemplary vizier, particularly in praise of patron viziers.

By the late Ilkhanid and Jalayirid time this image of Āṣaf had become part and parcel of chancery formulas used while addressing viziers. Thus *Dastūr al-kātib* [The scribe's register], the administrative manual commissioned by Ghiyāth al-Dīn ibn Rashīd al-Dīn but completed only in 1360 and dedicated to the Jalayirid sultan Shaykh Uways (r. 1356–74), mentions Āṣaf as an example of the viziers of the prophets (as Niẓām al-Mulk did), but also includes *Āṣaf al-ʿahd* and *Āṣaf al-*

[92] Brookshaw, *Hafiz,* 184–87.

[93] See, e.g., the examples in Maḥmūd ibn Badr al-Dīn al-Jājarmī *(d. 1341), Muʾnis al-aḥrār fī daqāʾiq al-ashʿār* [The free men's companion to the subtleties of poems], *ed. Mīr Ṣāliḥ Ṭabībī* (Tehran, 1971), an anthology of Ilkhanid poetry, where poems of various poets of the thirteenth century are dedicated to various viziers, notably Bahāʾ al-Dīn Juvaynī (d. 1279), son of Shams al-Dīn, and Nāṣir al-Dīn Ṭūsī (d. 1274). Ibid., 1:105, 163) Bahāʾ al-Dīn), 327, 371; 2:427, 892 (Ṭūsī), 1215 (Bahāʾ al-Dīn). Many more examples can be added from various *dīwāns*.

[94] V. Minorsky, "Pur-i Baha's 'Mongol' Ode (Mongolica, 2)," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 18, no. 2 (1956): 266, 271.

[95] Pur-i Bahāʾ, British Museum MS OR 9213, fol. 18b.

[96] Brookshaw, *Hafiz,* 184–86, 264, for several examples.

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zamān—both meaning the Āṣaf of the era—as a polite address to viziers in letters written by amirs or by other viziers.[97]

Before concluding this section, we may note two other short Shiʿite references to the question of Āṣaf's prophecy. Ibn Ṭāwūs (d. 1266), the Baghdadi polymath, described Āṣaf in his book of supplication *Muhaj al-daʿawāt wa-manhaj al-ʿibādāt* as a prophet whose supplication to God enabled him to bring Bilqīs's throne to Solomon.[98] However, the senior Shiʿite authority of the late Ilkhanate, al-ʿAllāmah al-Ḥillī (d. 1325), accepted the Ashʿarite and Sufi position, according to which Āṣaf's miracle was the non-prophetic sort *(karāmah)* that can honor a righteous person and was facilitated by Solomon's prophetic miracles *(muʿjizah).*[99]

Prophetic considerations notwithstanding, Āṣaf's popularity as a synonym for a great vizier in the Iranian and Turkic worlds continued and even increased in the post-Ilkhanid period, notably among the Timurids, Safavids, and Ottomans, and was also expressed visually. Āṣaf not only merited an extended reference in the Timurid universal histories,[100] but the *Dastūr al-wuzarāʾ* [Register of ministers] by the late-Timurid and early-Safavid historian Khwāndamīr (d. 1534)—the only Muslim register of ministers that also includes pre-Islamic viziers—begins with a long chapter on Āṣaf (followed by Buzurgmihr), and uses Āṣaf as a metaphor for various illustrious viziers throughout the work.[101] In the Ottoman realm, Āṣaf was an especially popular as the epitome of the good vizier under Sulaymān the Magnificent (r. 1520–66), who compared himself to Solomon and his eminent vizier Ibrāhīm Pasha (d. 1536) to Āṣaf. The grand vizier and historian Luṭfī Pasha (d. 1564), who had briefly served under Sultan Sulaymān, even named his book on the qualities of a good vizier *Āṣaf nāmah.*[102]

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[97] Muḥammad Nakhjavānī, *Dastūr al-kātib fī taʿyīn al-marātib,* ed. ʿAlī Akbar Aḥmadī Dārānī (Tehran, 2017), 2:529, 1:444, 445, 447.

[98] Ibn Ṭāwūs, *Muhaj al-daʿawāt wa-manhaj al-ʿibādāt* (Beirut, 1987), 489. The same supplication allegedly enabled Jesus to revive the dead.

[99] Ibn al-Muṭahhar al-ʿAllāmah al-Ḥillī, *Kashf al-murād: sharḥ-i Tajrīd al-iʿtiqād* (Qum, 1993), 378; see also Sabine Schmidtke, *The Theology of Al-ʿAllāma Al-Hillī (d. 726/1325)* (Berlin, 1991), 159–63.

[100] E.g., Mīrkhwānd, *Rawḍat al-ṣafā* (Tehran, 1960), 1:375, 381 (with a different interpretation to the *jasad* verse); Ghiyāth al-Dīn Khwāndamīr, *Khulāṣat al-akhbār fī bayān aḥwāl al-akhyār* (Tehran, 2020), 100, 103–6; for Ābrū, **n. 83** above.

[101] Ghiyāth al-Dīn Khwāndamīr, *Dastūr al-wuzarāʾ* (Tehran, 1938), 5, 8, 9–15, 110, 138, 140, 156, 260, 267, 315, 338, 354, 356, 383, 387, 420, 434, 438, 464; Collin Mitchell, "Exploring Patronage, Genre and Scholar-Bureaucracy: The Trans-Imperial Career of Khwandamir (d. 1534)," *Entangled Religions* 13, no. 5 (2022).

[102] Serpil Baghci, "A New Theme of the Shirazi Frontispiece Miniatures: The Dīvān of Solomon," *Muqarnas* 12 (1995): 108–9. For Sulaymān the Magnificent's use of Solomon as a role model, see

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In the post-Mongol era, Āṣaf also gained popularity in the visual realm. Images of Solomon and hence Āṣaf are quite rare before the fifteenth century: I am aware of only one miniature ascribed to the mid-thirteenth century (i.e., late Abbasid or early Ilkhanid), depicting Solomon on his lion-based throne holding his seal and a globe, while Āṣaf (identified by an inscription over his head) is on his right and a jinn on his left.[103] An illustrated manuscript of a Seljuq cosmography completed in 1388 in Jalayirid Baghdad includes several pictures of Solomon, one of them depicting Āṣaf bringing Bilqīs's throne to his court.[104] Beginning in late-fifteenth-century Shiraz and throughout the sixteenth century, under the Aqquyunlu and the Safavids, Solomon became by far the most popular painted prophet. This was not only due to his representation of the new sacred king of the post-Mongol period, but also, and especially in Shiraz, capital of Fars, as an equivalent of Jamshid. Interestingly, illustrators in Shiraz used a frontispiece depicting Solomon's court or Bilqīs's visit to Solomon as a title page for various manuscripts, regardless of their context. In these illustrations, Āṣaf is almost always depicted next to Solomon, on the throne, together with various jinns and animals.[105] Baghchi suggested that the artisans saw Āṣaf as their patron, based on a similar argument of the Ottoman explorer Evliya Çelebi (1611–82), who claimed that the painters of Istanbul had regarded Āṣaf ibn Barakhyā as a prophet and painter who decorated the throne of Sulaymān and Bilqīs's palace, and hence as their patron.[106] In the Mamluk and Mongol anecdotes I found no such aspect of Āṣaf's figure, although he is sometimes (though not frequently) mentioned in the *qiṣaṣ* traditions as consulting Solomon in building the temple or Bilqīs's palace. This (rather vague) connection to Solomon's building enterprises might also have affected Ibn Baṭṭūṭah's unique record, according to which Āṣaf built the Aya Sophia church in Constantinople.[107] The early connection to the future Ottoman capital might have contributed to Āṣaf's popularity

Cornell H. Fleischer; "The Lawgiver as Messiah: The Making of the Imperial Image in the Reign of Süleyman," in *Soliman le Magnifique et son temps,* ed. Gilles Veinstein (Paris, 1992), 159–77.

[103] Rachel Milstein, *Le Bible dans l'art Islamique* (Paris, 2005), 102–3, and fig. 25 (Topkapı MS TMSK H 2152, fol. 97r). Milstein tentatively dates it to a pre-Mongol Arabic setting, but Caiozzo recently argued that based on its color, this is an early Ilkhanid work, perhaps even depicting Hülegü as Solomon: Caiozzo, "Salomon," 231–32.

[104] Caiozzo, "Salomon," 239 (Paris BnF MS sup. Person 332, fol. 136v); for the text: Muḥammad al-Ṭūsī, *ʿAjāyib al-makhlūqāt* (Tehran, 1966), 12–13, 339, 447, 485 for Āṣaf. Āṣaf is not mentioned in the more famous Ilkhanid Arabic cosmography of Zakāriyā Qazwīnī (d. 1283) with the same name.

[105] Baghci, "A New Theme,"101–11.

[106] Ibid., 108–9.

[107] Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, *Travels,* 2:509.

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in the Ottoman realm, even before his appropriation under Sulaymān the Magnificent.

While building on an existing Iranian and Central Asian tradition, the Mongol period significantly elevated Āṣaf as the quintessential symbol of a good vizier in Persian and Turkic literature. In the early fourteenth century, Āṣaf's image transcended from the realms of *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* and poetry to that of chronicles and chancery documents, solidifying his role as the ideal vizier. His popularity likely surged with the Mongols' conversion to Islam in Iran and the increasing number of Muslim Mongols in Central Asia, during which stories of the prophets, particularly those featuring local heroes, were instrumental in promoting conversion and enhancing converts' understanding of Islamic history and culture.

Conclusion

After examining the various representations of Āṣaf in Mongol and Mamluk literary works, it is pertinent to question what characteristics made Āṣaf an ideal vizier in the Muslim-Mongol context and why his image was marginal at best in the Mamluk sphere. After all, none of the references to Āṣaf mentioned above actually describe him dealing with mundane administrative work that was the lion's share of the vizier's job.[108] Instead, Āṣaf embodies the original Quranic concept of a vizier—a helper or counselor—serving as the deputy (or the alter-ego) of his ruler.[109] Āṣaf was celebrated for his wisdom, knowledge, and loyalty. As a close relative of the ruler, he employed his abilities to fulfill the ruler's desires while also serving as the latter's "safety rail,"[110] protecting the ruler from his own errors, providing necessary rebuke, and aiding in overcoming poor decisions and restoring authority. Additionally, Āṣaf possessed military prowess and was revered as a holy figure capable of performing miracles, defeating devils, mastering magic, and maintaining a close connection to the Divine—attributes highly valued by the Mongols.[111] Thus, Āṣaf's profile aligns with the ideal characteristics of a Mongol khan's companion.

[108] For the role of the vizier, see A. K. S. Lambton, *Continuity and Change in Medieval Persia* (Albany, 1986), 29–68.

[109] Muḥammad Qāsim Zamān, "Wazīr: in the Arab World," *EI2*, http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_1346.

[110] Coulon, "Salomon," 78.

[111] Peter Jackson, "The Mongols and the Faith of the Conquered," in *Mongols, Turks, and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World,* ed. Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran (Leiden, 2005), 275–77.

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Why, then, did such a set of qualities fail to endear Āṣaf to the Mamluks? The comparison may seem a bit skewed, since the genres examined in the two realms were not the same, but while I did not find Ilkhanid or Chaghadaid epics or occult books, I did check Mamluk chronicles and chancery guides (and to a lesser extent poetry) and did not find therein mentions of Āṣaf similar to those in the Mongol realm.[112] Indeed, most Mamluk works do not ascribe to Āṣaf the same attributes he enjoyed under Mongol rule: most Mamluk compilations treat Āṣaf not as vizier but as a scribe, a lesser post. Moreover, both scribes and viziers played a smaller role in Mamluk administration than in the Mongol one. As a result, while viziers in the Mongol sphere were not only esteemed courtiers but also great patrons of their co-religionist scholars and poets, in the Mamluk domains they were less important as patrons, a role played mainly by the Mamluk elite. Additionally, in the Mamluk realm, interactions between the sultan and his scribes or viziers were less patrimonial and more bureaucratic, contrasting with Āṣaf's familial relationship with his ruler.[113] Moreover, pre-Islamic traditions held less significance in Mamluk collective memory than Iranian traditions in the Ilkhanid realm, with the Mamluks favoring Muslim role models.[114] Thus, paradoxically, Āṣaf was a local hero in Mongol-ruled Fars and Fergana, where biblical figures were rare and Iranian celebrities appreciated, but not in the Mamluk realm, the locus of Solomon's kingdom, where there was a great variety of biblical and early-Islamic heroes to choose from. Moreover, the appropriation of Āṣaf by the occultists, his close connection to the *Isrāʾīlīyāt,* and perhaps also his nearly-prophetic status, all rendered him an unattractive political model for hardline Mamluk ulama like Ibn Kathīr or Ibn Khaldūn.[115]

Thus, while the Mongol period gave a boost to Āṣaf's position as the emblematic vizier of the Turco-Persian world, in the Mamluk domains he enjoyed political power mainly in a South Arabian epic. In compensation, he was referred to as a great magician in a few occult works, potentially influenced by Jewish materials. Āṣaf's multifaceted persona continued to evolve, gaining new dimensions in the post-Mongol and post-Mamluk periods, meriting broader investiga-

[112] The check was done mainly via *Al-Maktabah al-shāmilah* database.

[113] On Mamluk bureaucracy, see Carl F. Petry, *The Mamluk Sultanate: A History* (Cambridge, 2022), esp. 129–35.

[114] See, for example, the selection of professional figures (viziers. musicians, grammarians etc) in Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-abṣār fī mamālik al-amṣār* (Beirut, 2010), vols. 5–19, all of whom belong to the Muslim period (apart from some Jāhilī poets).

[115] Noah D. Gardiner, *Ibn Khaldūn Versus the Occultists at Barqūq's Court: The Critique of Lettrism in Al-Muqaddimah* (Berlin, 2020); Shari L. Lowin, "Isrāʾīliyyāt," *EI3,* https://doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_32621; Roberto Tottoli, *Biblical Prophets in the Qur'ān and Muslim Literature* (Richmond, 2002), 170–75.

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tion beyond this article. Yet, this divergent evolution in the neighboring and interconnected realms of the Mongols and Mamluks highlights distinct differences in political culture and the employment of collective memory.



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The Syrian *Fulūs* of the Mamluk Sultan al-Ẓāhir Barqūq

One of the bedeviling aspects of the monetary history of the Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt and Syria is the role of copper coinage, *fulūs,* from the beginning of the ninth/fifteenth century until the end of the sultanate. A debate has been simmering for decades about whether this last 117 years of Mamluk history should be described as an "age of copper (coinage)" or not. Due to space considerations a full discussion of the appropriateness of the label "age of copper" cannot be presented here.[1] What must be mentioned, however, is that while contemporary Mamluk chronicles frequently mention exchange rates for copper coins, they tend to be silent or at best inconsistent about mentioning changes made to copper coins and minting practices and why those changes took place. In this situation, the surviving numismatic evidence must be incorporated into debates on this topic. This is not as easy as it sounds, however, for the following reasons.

The first is that for the period of the ninth/fifteenth century and after, the numismatic data available for the study of Mamluk copper coinage is limited. The known specimens of all *fulūs* from all mints dating from the beginning of the ninth/fifteenth century onward are far fewer in number than those known for the gold and silver coinages over the same period. The *fulūs* from the Syrian mint-cities (Damascus, Ḥamāh, Tripoli, and Aleppo) in the period are even more scarce. The second reason, related to the first, is that scholarship to date about Mamluk copper coins has focused primarily on the coins from Cairo. For example, this bias for the Egyptian capital is seen in the seminal work of Mamluk numismatics, Paul Balog's *The Coinage of the Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt and Syria* (hereafter CMSES), where the coinage of Mamluk Syria is less well represented than that of Egypt.[2] Balog listed a total of 1219 types of Mamluk coins in CMSES

[1] Many aspects of this debate are outlined in these three articles: Jere L. Bacharach, "Circassian Monetary Policy: Copper," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 19 (1976): 32–47; Boaz Shoshan, "From Silver to Copper: Monetary Changes in Fifteenth Century Egypt," *Studia Islamica* 56 (1982): 97–116; and my "'It Has No Root Among Any Community that Believes in Revealed Religion, Nor Legal Foundations for its Implementation': Placing al-Maqrīzī's Comments on Money in a Wider Context," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 7, no. 2 (2003): 169–81.

[2] Paul Balog, *The Coinage of the Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt and Syria* (New York, 1964). Balog supplemented this work with "*The Coinage of the Mamluk Sultans:* Additions and Corrections," *American Numismatic Society Museum Notes* 16 (1970): 113–71. Balog's 1964 work was based in large part on his personal collection, which was heavily skewed toward the Egyptian mints.

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and its supplement. (A type is a unique combination of factors such as ruler, mint, date, metal, and design.) Out of these 1219 types, only 40 are definitively linked to a Syrian mint from the beginning of the ninth/fifteenth century until the end of the sultanate. Almost half of these 40 were minted during the reigns of Sultan al-Nāṣir Faraj (801–8/1399–1405 and 808–15/1406–12). While more types and specimens have come to light since, this data has only just begun to be incorporated into wider Mamluk numismatic scholarship.[3]

In light of these observations, I think additional discussions of the "age of copper" require a careful study of as many surviving copper coins as possible. In addition, since changes in coinage rarely line up neatly with the dates of reigns or of regime changes,[4] this approach should begin with an analysis of Mamluk copper coinage at the end of the eighth/fourteenth century. Thus, in this essay I am focusing on the *fulūs* of al-Ẓāhir Barqūq (784–91/1382–89 and 792–801/1390–99). In a previous study, I analyzed the production of large copper *fulūs* minted in Cairo (from 759/1357–58) and Alexandria (from 770/1368–69) through the end of Barqūq's rule.[5] The metrological data collected for that study supported the evidence from the chronicles that these copper coins were struck to a weight standard of one *mithqāl*.[6] That study did not discuss Barqūq's copper coinage struck in the Syrian mints, however.

Given the paucity of references from contemporary written sources about mint practices, the main approach of this study is via metrological analysis of the surviving coins themselves. This may seem counterintuitive, since copper coins are generally assumed to be petty coinage with little to no intrinsic value (i.e., the value of the metal bullion contained in each coin). This approach assumes their value was extrinsic to their metallic content, meaning the value was maintained by the issuing authority via guaranteed exchange rates with precious metal coinage or other means.[7] This is in contrast to coins of gold and

[3] Lorenz Korn, *Bilād aš-Šām III Ḥamāh,* vol. IVc, *Sylloge Numorum Arabicorum Tübingen* (Berlin, 1998) (hereafter SNAT Ḥamāh); Alaa Aldin Al Chomari, *Sylloge Numorum Arabicorum Tübingen,* vol. IVe2, *Bilād aš-Šām V. Die Münzstätte Aleppo in Mamlūkischer und Osmanischer Zeit (ca. 1260–1760)* (Berlin, 2021) (hereafter SNAT Aleppo).

[4] The second Simone Assemani Symposium on Islamic coins was devoted to this topic. See Bruno Callegher and Arianna D'Ottone, eds., *The 2nd Simone Assemani Symposium on Islamic Coins* (Trieste, 2010).

[5] Warren Schultz, "Mahmud ibn ʿAli and the "New Fulūs": Late Fourteenth Century Mamluk Egyptian Copper Coinage Reconsidered," *American Journal of Numismatics* 10 (1998): 127–48.

[6] Warren Schultz, "Mamluk Metrology and the Numismatic Evidence," *Al-Masaq* 15, no. 1 (2003): 59–75, which suggests that the Mamluk-era *mithqāl* was likely slightly heavier than the oft-cited value of 4.25 grams and was perhaps as heavy as 4.30 grams.

[7] Carlo Cipolla's "The Big Problem of the Petty Coins," in *Money, Prices, and Civilization in the Mediterranean World, Fifth to Seventeenth Century* (Princeton, 1956), 27–37, remains a valuable intro-

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silver, which always have the intrinsic value of their precious metal contained within. In other words, one repercussion of this assumption is that some publications do not record the weights of individual copper coins since it is commonly thought that the weight of individual copper coins was irrelevant to their value.[8] In the case of Mamluk Egyptian *fulūs,* however, previous research has shown that for some periods the weight of individual Egyptian *fulūs* determined their value. These periods date from the origins of the sultanate through the reigns of Barqūq.[9]

Whether the weight of individual copper coins was a factor in the valuation of Mamluk Syrian *fulūs,* however, has not been determined. The numismatic record for these coins is much more complicated than the *fulūs* from Egyptian mints. There are many more surviving types from the main Syrian mints of Damascus, Ḥamāh, Tripoli, and Aleppo up to the end of the eighth/fourteenth century than from Cairo and Alexandria. These types have a very wide range of designs, inscriptions, and figural images unlike any contemporary *fulūs* minted in Egypt. Some of these Syrian types survive in large numbers and some do not. Since no one has investigated these topics, it is not possible to determine whether any weight standard was in place for Mamluk *fulūs* from any Syrian mint at any time period, nor whether, if in place, such a weight standard was consistent across the four main mints.

At the core of this analysis is the data presented in the accompanying appendix, which provides an overview of the current state of numismatic knowledge for Barqūq's Syrian *fulūs*. It contains information derived from more than six hundred weighed individual coins across forty-two known types of copper coinage bearing Barqūq's name or royal title.[10] It is organized by mint series

duction to this topic.

[8] Contrast Stanley Lane-Poole's *Catalogue of Oriental Coins in the British Museum,* vol. 4, *The Coinage of Egypt* (London, 1879), and vol. 9, *Additions to the Oriental Collection, 1876–1888, Pt. I, Additions to Vols. I–IV* (London, 1889), which did not provide weights for Mamluk copper coins, with Henri Lavoix's *Catalogue des Monnaies Musulmanes de la Bibliothèque nationale: Égypte et Syrie* (Paris, 1896), which did.

[9] In addition to the 1998 study mentioned above, see Warren Schultz, "Mamluk Egyptian Copper Coinage before 759/1357–1358: A Preliminary Inquiry," *MSR* 5 (2001): 25–43; and idem, "How were Mamluk *Fulūs* Valued at the Beginning of the 9th/15th Century? Reflections on Two Passages from al-Maqrīzī and Some Archaeological Evidence," in *Second International Congress on the History of Money and Numismatics in the Mediterranean World, 5–8 January 2017, Antalya,* ed. Oğuz Tekin (Istanbul, 2018), 561–66.

[10] Note that some of the Syrian coin types attributed to Barqūq are anonymous and bear only the royal *laqab* al-Malik al-Ẓāhir. Nevertheless, these coins are attributed to Barqūq. Balog wrote the following referring to types 599–612 of this sultan: "A whole series of small copper coins, either with or without mint do not have the sultan's proper name, only his *laqab,* al-

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and the types within each series are listed in chronological order to the extent possible.[11] In three cases, I have charted this metrological data via the common numismatic tool known as the frequency table. These are histograms in which the vertical axis tracks the number of known coins being analyzed and the horizontal axis is divided into units of ascending weight. While I do not believe frequency tables allow us to calculate an exact value for a weight standard, the resulting shape of a frequency table may reveal that a weight standard existed.[12] This occurs when two shapes appear. The first is a bell-shaped graph, which suggests that the mint produced a specific number of flans from a pre-determined weight of alloy. The second is when the chart shows a steady rise in weight followed by a sharp, cliff-like drop after a certain weight amount. This indicates not only the existence of a weight standard but a situation in which coins circulated by count and coins heavier than the weight standard would be removed from circulation. (This is an example of Gresham's law—that coinage with a face value greater than the value of its metal [known as "bad money"] will remain in circulation, while people will keep rather than spend coinage with a face value close to the actual value of the metal ["good money"]—in action.) The usefulness of a frequency table is directly linked to the sample size of the coin type plotted. Unfortunately, in all but three cases the sample sizes of most of these forty-two types are too small to make a frequency table useful. In those cases, I have summarized the weight range established by the coins in that sample. This analysis is presented in the order of the mints of Damascus, Ḥamāh, Tripoli, and Aleppo, followed by those coin types which are not yet attributed to one of those mints.

Ẓāhir. None of them is dated. Nevertheless, we attribute them without hesitation to Barqūq, for the following reasons: as we have already pointed out for the Aleppo *fals* type D, with fesse and lion passant with cup above it, the style of the legends, the composite blazons and the general appearance of the coins suggest Barqūq's period. Since Baybars I, no other Baḥrī sultan had the same *laqab,* and after him al-Ẓāhir Ṭaṭar, who reigned a very short time, left no copper coins. The next al-Ẓāhir was Jaqmaq, and at his time the style and fabric of the copper coins had already changed to such an extent that mistaking the coins of the one for those of the other is quite unlikely. Finally, most of the coins in question are represented in the 'Antioch Hoard' of the American Numismatic Society. This hoard contains coins of a period not earlier than al-Ashraf Shaʿbān and not later than Barqūq. Therefore, coins with the *laqab* al-Ẓāhir, which are similar to those of the Antioch hoard, can be attributed to Barqūq without any doubt." Balog, CMSES, 274–75.

[11] Not all 650 coins are included in my analysis since not all of them have a weight provided. It is still valuable to know that these specimens exist and may at some future point be weighed.

[12] Note that all metrological studies have inherent challenges. In this case, these Mamluk *fulūs* were weighed at different times in different locations using different scales and different scale technologies (e.g., balances or electronic scales), all of which affect the precision of the weight value obtained.

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DAMASCUS

There are ten *fulūs* types from this mint. The sample sizes for these types range from one to forty-three. From Barqūq's first reign, Type 558 has fourteen weight values ranging from 1.26–2.713 grams. Type 559 has nine coins over the range of 1.77–3.31 grams. Type 560 has four coins from 1.36 to 2.58 grams. Type 560A is known by only one coin, which weighs 1.85 grams. Type 561 has eight coins ranging from 1.99 to 2.58 grams. These sample sizes are too small to provide any insight about possible weight standards or to justify the creation of frequency tables. The small data sets continue for three types from Barqūq's second reign. Type 562, which has been reattributed to the second reign, is represented by fifteen coins ranging from 2.33 to 3.166 grams.[13] Type 588 has eighteen coins ranging from 1.931 to 4.0 grams. Type 589 has six coins ranging from 2.20 to 3.73 grams. All three types include heavier coins than seen in the preceding types (558, 559, 560, and 561), but like those, the sample sizes are so small that it is unwise to draw any conclusions at this point.

It is only with Types 590 and 591 from the second reign that we have sample sizes that justify a frequency table. These two types are dated 798 and 799, respectively. Both feature a large device on one face, which Balog described as a "fleur-de-lis chalice."[14] Together, these types may be studied as one sample set, since other than the date there is no difference in their design. The sample size for Table 1 is drawn from ninety-nine weighed coins. This includes thirty-eight for 590, forty-three for 591, and an additional eighteen coins of this design with either partial or missing dates. These coins are plotted in Table 1.

It is immediately apparent that these coins are much heavier than all other *fulūs* of Barqūq from this mint. The rough bell-shape of the graph suggests that a standard falling somewhere between 4.20 and 4.50 grams may have been present. Perhaps a standard close to the *mithqāl* weight unit was used. Many more coins would be necessary, however, to determine both that a weight-standard was in place and to refine what that weight was.

Taken together, this survey of Damascene types leads to the following comments. First, there are so few coins known from the first reign that it is impossible to determine whether weight affected the value of any of the known types of these *fulūs*. That said, the coins of the first-reign types have weights from 1.26 to 3.31 grams, with the majority falling below 2.60 grams. These weights are well below what is observed from the contemporary Egyptian issues of Barqūq. Second, the weight ranges of some types from the second reign are higher than

[13] This reattribution appears in Lutz Ilisch, "Beiträge zur mamlukischen Numismatik," *Münstersche Numismatische Zeitung* 65–66 (1975): 5–10. See coin number 9.

[14] Balog, CMSES, 266–77.



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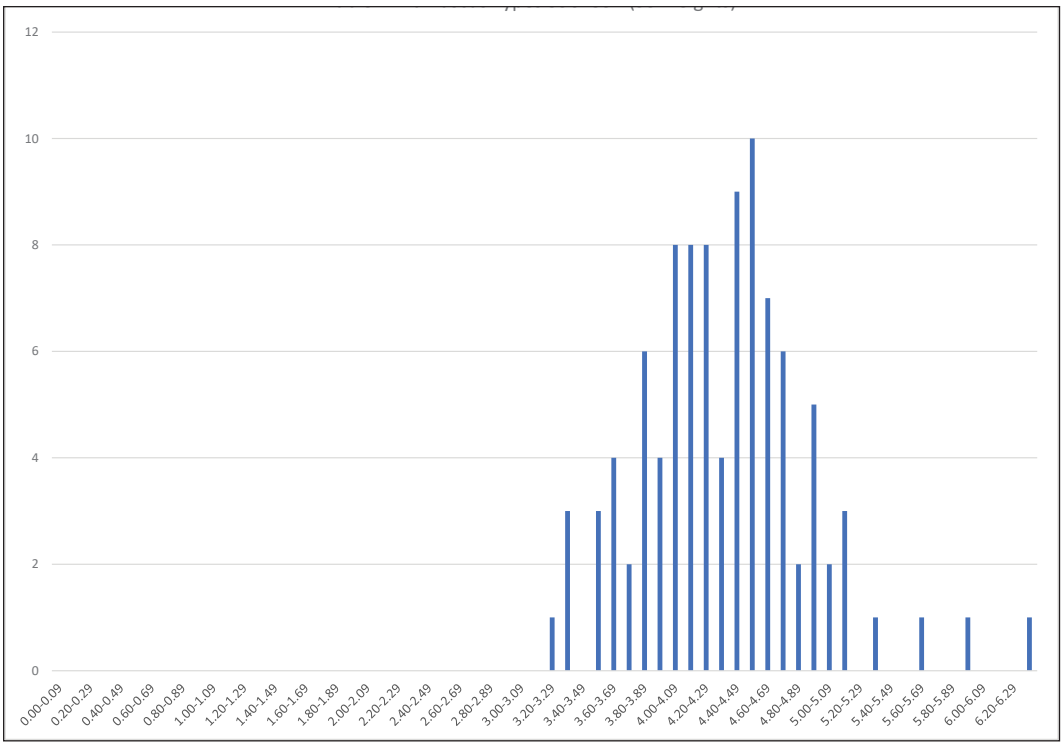


Table 1: Damascus Types 590–591 (99 Weights)

those seen in the first. This is seen for, for example, in Types 588–589, which, like Types 590 and 591, vary only in date and, while not plotted, have a range that has shifted about 1.00 gram to the heavier end of the spectrum. Finally, in the case of the "fleur-de-lis chalice" coins, Types 590–591, the evidence suggests that a weight standard may have been instituted toward the end of Barqūq's second reign, and that standard could be at or above the *mithqāl* unit that was seen in contemporary Egyptian *fulūs*.

Ḥamāh

There are nine types known from this mint, all with sample sizes too small to justify constructing a frequency table. From the first reign, Type 600 has twenty-four coin-weights, ranging from 1.19 to 2.89 grams. Thirteen weights of Type 601 coins are known, with a range of 1.44 to 2.60 grams. Type 607 has six coins ranging from 1.38 to 1.85 grams. In the second reign, Type 905 has seven coins ranging from 1.53 to 3.07 grams.[15] Type 597 coins are the heaviest of those

[15] Type 905 is anonymous and undated but has been attributed to the beginning of Barqūq's second reign. See Korn, SNAT Ḥamāh, 50.

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known from this mint, with 15 coins ranging from 3.22 to 5.58 grams. Type 598 is known by only one coin, weighing 3.40 grams. Type 599 has eight coins ranging from 0.90 to 2.09 grams. SNAT coins 676–678, of a type not seen in Balog's CMSES, weigh 3.32, 3.35, and 3.45 grams, respectively. Type 596 has twenty-four coins, ranging from 2.43 to 5.17 grams.

As was the case for Damascus, these data sets suggest that with the exception of Type 599, the *fulūs* of the second reign trended heavier than those in the first. Given the small sample sizes, however, it is impossible at this point to determine how much heavier and whether a standard existed. As for the lower-weight Type 599 coins, they lack dates and were attributed to Barqūq's second reign in the Ḥamāh sylloge volume published by the Forschungsstelle für Islamische Numismatik Tübingen.[16] The possibility that Type 599 might need to be attributed to the first reign due to metrological factors would require the addition of many more additional specimens of this and the other first-reign types.

Tripoli

Tripoli has the most meager numismatic evidence of all the Syrian mints for the *fulūs* of Barqūq. There are only six types known from this mint, all with small sample sizes ranging from a low of one to a high of seven weight values. Type 602, the only Tripoli coppers bearing a date (798), weigh 6.23 and 5.086 grams. This indicates a movement toward heavier *fulūs* at the end of Barqūq's second reign, as seen in Damascus and Ḥamāh. Given that for both of those mints, first-reign *fulūs* trended lighter than those from the second, it may be that the undated Tripoli Types 603 (seven weights from 1.79 to 2.76 grams), 604 (one weight of 2.16 grams), 605 (three weights from 1.42 to 1.83 grams), and 605A (three weights from 1.39 to 2.007 grams) may date from the first reign, but at this point that is speculation. That leaves Type 606 with only one weighed specimen (2.953 grams) about which no conclusions may be offered.

Aleppo

The metrology of Aleppan *fulūs,* however, does not reflect the possible trend toward heavier coins during Barquq's second reign suggested by the discussions above. There are eleven types known from this mint, with all but one having sample sizes too small to derive any generalizations other than the fact that almost all known coins weigh less than three grams. From the first reign, type 593 has seventeen weighed coins (ranging from 1.61 to 2.64 grams). Type 563 is represented by only one coin, weighing 3.52 grams. Type 564, dated 788 (twelve

[16] Ibid.



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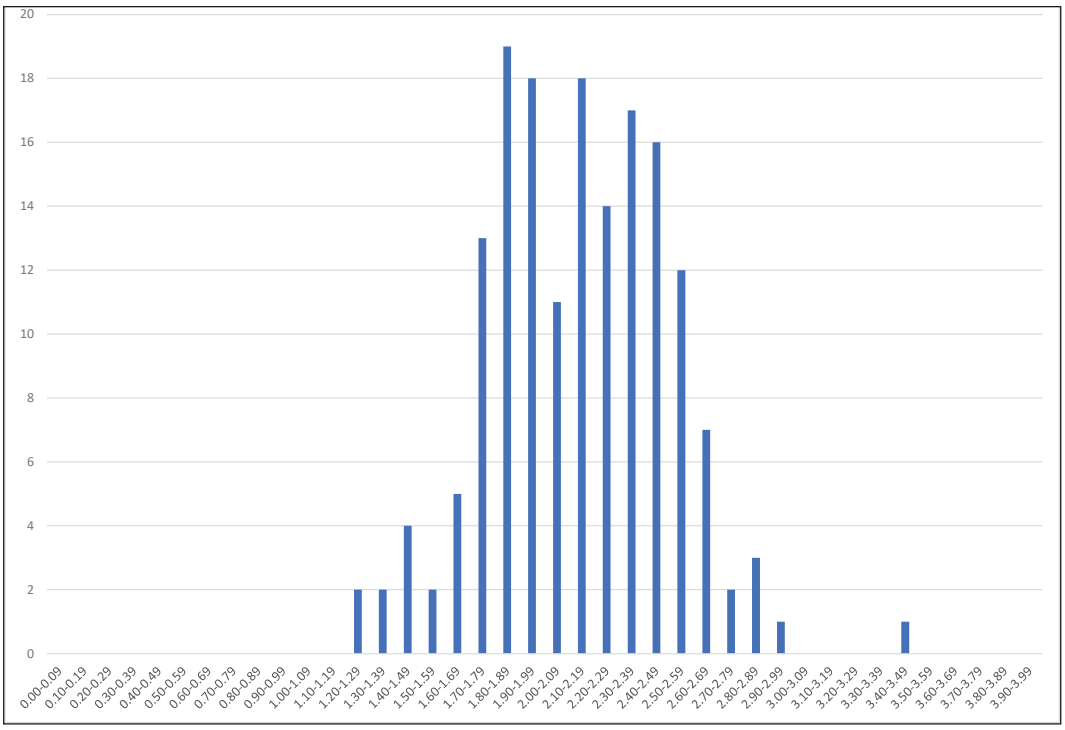


Table 2: Aleppo Types 564–565 (167 Weights)

weighed coins from 1.43 to 2.78 grams), and Type 565, dated 789 (two weights of 1.976 and 2.20), differ only in date. Since there are an additional 153 weighed coins (ranging from 1.241 to 3.410 grams, most of which come from the ANS Antioch hoard) of these two types with partial or missing dates, there is a data set large enough to be plotted on a frequency table. Table 2 charts those 167 weighed coins.

The weights all fall within a range of 1.20 to 3.40 grams, but the overwhelming majority fall between 1.70 and 2.70 grams. The graph has an emerging bell shape surrounding 2.0 grams, which raises the possibility that these coins were minted at a weight standard near that amount. A possible value for the hypothetical weight standard might be the half-*mithqāl,* but the sample size and curve shape only hint at that. At the very least, however, Table 2 indicates that these possibilities should be pursued.

Moving to the second reign, Type 592 has only three coins (2.18 to 4.68 grams) so it is unknown whether that heavier coin is representative of others of the type or merely an outlier. Type 592A has twelve weighed coins (1.259–2.367 grams). Type 594 has only one known example, and that coin was not weighed. SNAT number 443 has only one weighed specimen (2.70 grams), as does Type

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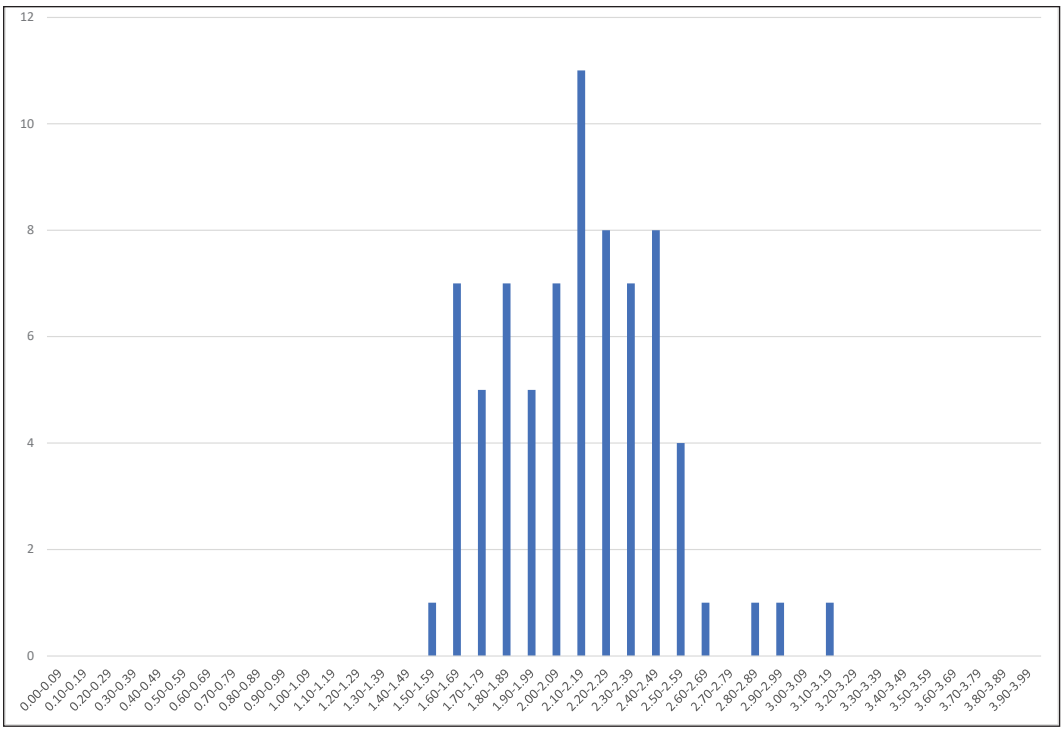


Table 3: Aleppo Type 595 (74 Weights)

595A (2.17 grams). Type 595B has two known weights (2.02 and 2.10 grams.) It is only with Type 595 that there is a sample size large enough to be plotted (seventy-four coins from 1.50 to 3.126 grams). This metrological evidence is presented in Table 3.

All weights fall between 1.50 and 3.20 grams. All but four of these coins, however, are lighter than 2.60 grams. That narrow range, plus the high peak occurring in the interval between 2.10 and 2.19 grams, may indicate that a possible weight standard of a half-*mithqāl* was in use. It is worth remembering that Type 595 is undated and that the SNAT Aleppo sylloge attributed it to the second reign. Given the overlapping weight ranges of Tables 2 (first reign) and 3 (attributed to the second reign), this may be a case where the metrological evidence of Type 595 suggests that a possible reattribution of this type to the first reign should at the very least be explored further. Whatever the case, other than the scanty evidence of Type 592, where one coin weighs 4.68 grams, the numismatic evidence from Aleppo indicates no movement toward heavier *fulūs* in either of Barqūq's reigns.

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No Mint or Mint Missing

There are seven types in this category. While these types lack mints—being either undated or having no known specimen on which a mint name is present or legible—there is general consensus that they come from the Syrian mints since they bear no resemblance at all to Barqūq's Egyptian *fulūs.* In the first reign, Type 562A is represented by one coin weighing 2.25 grams. For the second reign, Type 608 has 13 coins ranging from 1.301 to 2.92 grams. Type 609 has six coins ranging from 1.41 to 2.867 grams. Type 610 has three coins ranging from 1.337 to 2.63 grams. Type 611 has only one coin, weighing 1.6 grams. Type 612 has thirty-two coins, ranging from 0.908 to 2.981 grams. It is perhaps significant that these coins all weigh less than 3.00 grams. While these small data sets make wider generalization unfounded, I include this data on the chance that future specimens may make possible a more precise attribution of these types.

Conclusion

While the evidence gathered here does not allow for definitive conclusions about the metrology of Barqūq's Syrian *fulūs,* it nevertheless has value. This numismatic evidence suggests variance in metrological practice across the four mints, which may mean that there was no standard approach to the production of *fulūs* across Mamluk *Bilād al-Shām*. For example, Table 1 clearly shows that Damascus types 590 and 591, dated 798 and 799 respectively, were heavier than what is observed in the six types from the first reign. A majority of the specimens of Damascene Types 561 and 562 (also from the second reign) are also heavier than the first-reign types. A move to heavier copper coins suggests that a transition toward the Egyptian situation, where heavier copper coins were worth more than lighter ones, may have occurred.

This movement toward heavier *fulūs* is also suggested by the evidence from Ḥamāh, where the weight ranges for second-reign types—with the exception of Type 599—are heavier than those from the first. The scanty evidence from Tripoli , unfortunately, is an excellent example of how little we know about some aspects of Mamluk numismatics. The metrological data of the *fulūs* described as mint missing or no mint will only become useful if these coins are eventually attributed to known mints. The metrology of the surviving Aleppan *fulūs,* meanwhile, is inconclusive. Unlike the other Syrian mints, the overwhelming majority of specimens of all known types weigh below three grams regardless of where those types fall on the chronological spectrum. Thus far I have located only one known *fals* from Aleppo that weighs more than 3.00 grams.[17] In addition, most coins from frequency Tables 2 (first-reign Types 564–565) and 3 (second-reign

[17] This coin, an example of Type 592 (second reign), weighs 4.68 grams.

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Type 595) fall in ranges from less than 2.70 grams. If additional evidence were to reinforce these trends it might indicate that Barqūq's Aleppan *fulūs* remained lighter in weight as possibly based upon a standard near the half-*mithqāl* unit. At this point, however, this remains speculation.

This study also reinforces the great need for more numismatic evidence to be found and brought to bear on the study of Syrian *fulūs* of Sultan Barqūq as well on as the wider "age of copper" debate. The publication of coins from archaeological excavations will continue to bring more specimens to light, especially if hoards are found. In the meantime, a thorough harvesting of information scattered across already published archaeological field studies will certainly add to the corpus of evidence. In addition, there is other evidence in some institutions that would benefit from additional attention. Both of the two large copper hoards in the American Numismatic Society (the 1935 Antioch and the 1954 hoards mentioned by Balog) are good examples of this. While they have already provided valuable metrological data for this study, I know from my own experience working with them that additional information can be gleaned. A final example of known material in need of further study is the more than 200 kilograms of Mamluk *fulūs* from what is known as the Megadim hoard, recovered decades ago from a shipwreck south of Haifa, Israel. The majority of these coins survive in large, concreted blocks preserved by the Israel Antiquities Authority. While the hoard is unpublished, several years ago Mr. Ariel Berman informed me that he identified at least forty-three examples of Barqūq's *fulūs* amongst the loose material, specifically Types 558, 559, and 562 from Damascus; Types 564, 592, and 593 from Aleppo; Types 596, 600, and 905 from Ḥamāh; Type 603 from Tripoli; and Types 608 and 612 from the mint-missing or no mint category.[18] There is clearly more work to do.

Appendix: Syrian *Fulūs* of the Mamluk Sultan Barqūq

There are three components of this appendix which require further contextualization. The first is the basic organizational scheme. As mentioned, the building block of Balog's catalogue of Mamluk coinage was the type, a unique combination of mint, metal, sultan, date, and design. Balog arranged those types according to a schema based on the descriptive categories of epigraphic and heraldic. In current numismatic practice, it is much more common to list types in chronological mint series, regardless of appearance. Thus, this list of coin types has mint of origin as the first category, followed by the known or suspected chronological order of each type. Types identified by Balog have been supple-

[18] I am indebted to Mr. Berman for this information.

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mented and in some cases corrected based on subsequent studies.[19] The second component is that I have not included extensive descriptions of coins' appearances. These descriptions are readily available in the major catalogues and syllloges listed in the notes. Third, it needs be clarified that in some cases the lists of coins following each type may include duplications. This is most commonly encountered when Balog listed his own coins in his catalogue and then the same coins appear attributed to the Israel Museum, to which Balog donated his coins. In these cases, I favored the Israel Museum data. Similarly, some later sources provide updated weight information which I take to supersede the weights provided by Balog. To avoid the possibility of double-counting coins, I have excluded these CMSES coins from the weight total listed after the type number and indicated that by striking through this weight value. The weight that then replaces it in subsequent calculations is underlined. This practice is followed throughout the remainder of this appendix.

In addition, the abbreviations and *sigla* used to identify the publications or collections from which this data derived need additional explanation. This information is presented in three lists.

The first list provides relevant abbreviations used by Balog in his CMSES.

ANS	American Numismatic Society, general collection
Antioch hoard	A large copper hoard acquired by the ANS in 1935
Ashmol.	Ashmolean Museum, Oxford
Balog	Balog's hitherto unpublished coins from his collection, appearing for the first time in CMSES
Berman	By this I speculate Balog meant the personal collection of Ariel Berman, but Balog did not include his name in his list of those whose collections he studied.
Blau	O. Blau, *Die Orientalischen Münzen der K. Historisch-Archaeologischend Gesellschaft zu Odessa,* Odessa, 1876
BMC	Stanley Lane-Poole, *Catalogue of Oriental Coins in the British Museum,* v. IV, *The Coinage of Egypt,* London, 1879; and v. IX,

[19] Yet more comments are in order. I first started collecting this metrological data in the early 1990s and have continued to do so to the present. It is possible that additional coins have been added to some of these institutional collections since I last visited them and thus are not reflected here. At all the institutional collections visited I promised curators that I would use only the metrological data from their coins. I have held to that promise. Nor have I included data derived from some smaller institutional collections for which my access approval has expired. I have chosen not to include data from unpublished private collections, nor the Mamluk coins found at the Zeno.ru oriental numismatic database. Given the small sample size for the majority of the types found in this appendix, I may revisit both decisions in future studies.

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	Additions to the Oriental Collection, 1876–1888, Pt. I, Additions to vols. I-IV, London, 1889
BM	British Museum, unpublished coins
Fraehn	*Recensio numorum muhammedanorum Academiae Imp. Scienti. Petropolitanae,* Petropoli, 1855
Jungfleisch	Marcel Jungfleisch collection, Cairo, dispersed prior to the publication of Balog's catalogue
Khedivial	Stanley Lane-Poole, *Catalogue of the Collection of Arabic Coins Preserved in the Khedivial Library in Cairo,* 1897
L	Henri Lavoix, *Catalogue des Monnaies Musulmanes de la Bibliothèque nationale: Égypte et Syrie,* Paris, 1896
Mayer SH	Mayer, L. A. *Saracenic Heraldry,* Oxford, 1933
Miles *Antioch*	George C. Miles, "Islamic Coins," in Frederick O. Waagé, ed., *Antioch-on-the-Orontes IV, Part One: Ceramics and Islamic Coins,* Princeton, 1948
München	Staatliche Münzsammlung, München
Thorburn	Phillip Thorburn collection, some of which later ended up in the Ashmolean collection
Welzl v. Wellenheim	*Verzeichnis der Münz- und Medaillensammlung,* II, Pt. 2, Wien, 1845

This second list identifies the sources of coins that appeared after the publication of Balog's CMSES and supplement.

A&C	Coins from Balog's "*The Coinage of the Mamluk Sultans*: Additions and Corrections," *American Numismatic Society Museum Notes* 16 (1970): 113–71
ANS 1954:	Coins from this large hoard were not incorporated by Balog. The ANS accession numbers for these coins are 1954.176.1 to 1313. Only the digits after the second decimal point are listed below. Not all the coins attributed to this accession number had weights recorded in the ANS database at the time of my examination.
ANS Antioch	This replaces Balog's "Antioch hoard" in the list above. More weights are known from this hoard than those cited in CMSES. The ANS accession numbers for these coins are 1935.36.21 to 801. Only the digits after the second decimal point are listed below.
ARCE	Norman D. Nicol, Raafat el-Nabarawy, and Jere Bacharach, *Catalog of the Islamic Coins, Glass Weights, Dies and Medals in the*

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	Egyptian National Library, Cairo, Malibu, 1982. This publication supersedes the Khedivial catalogue listed above.
Awad	Coins from the Awad collection, Cairo, now dispersed. See Jere L. Bacharach, "Coins" in *Fustat Finds: Beads, Coins, Medical Instruments, Textiles, and Other Artifacts from the Awad Collection,* Cairo, 2002 (pp. 44–87)
IM	Israel Museum. These coins were donated by Balog to the museum after the publication of CMSES. There are more coins in the museum than were mentioned in CMSES. A sylloge of these and other Syrian coins is forthcoming.
FINT	Coins from the collection of the Forschungstelle für Islamische Numismatik, Tübingen which have not yet appeared in a sylloge volume
Fitzwilliam	Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge
IAA Nizanim	"Nizanim (Coin Hoard)," *Hadashot Archeologiyot* 50 (1974): 15
JNB	Collection of the Jordan National Bank Numismatic Museum, Amman, Jordan. These coins did not have accession numbers at the time of my examination.
Mayer 1976	Ariel Berman's catalog, *Islamic Coins: Exhibition Winter 1976,* Jerusalem, 1976
MB	Frédéric Bauden, *Catalogue des Monnaies Islamiques du Musée Bottacin,* [France], 2011
PAM	Coins from the Palestine Archaeological Museum in the Israel Antiquities Authority
PAM uncat.	Coins from PAM without registration numbers at the time of my research visit
PUL Antioch	Antioch excavation coins preserved in the Princeton University Library[20]
SICA 6	Norman D. Nicol, *The Egyptian Dynasties: Sylloge of Islamic Coins in the Ashmolean (SICA),* vol. 6, Oxford, 2007
SNAT Ḥamāh	Lorenz Korn, *Bilād aš-Šām III Ḥamāh,* vol. IVc, *Sylloge Numorum Arabicorum Tübingen,* Berlin, 1998
SNAT Aleppo	Alaa Aldin Al Chomari, *Sylloge Numorum Arabicorum Tübingen,* vol. IVe2: *Bilād aš-Šām V, Die Münzstätte Aleppo in Mamlūkischer und Osmanischer Zeit (ca. 1260–1760),* Berlin, 2021

Finally, the third list contains other abbreviations encountered in the appendix.

CMSES	Balog's 1964 corpus

[20] Searchable at Mamluk/Format: Coin—Princeton University Library Catalog Search Results https://catalog.princeton.edu/?f%5Bformat%5D%5B%5D=Coin&q=Mamluk&search_field=all_fields.

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DM	Date missing, meaning illegible or off flan[21]
MM	Mint missing, meaning illegible or off flan
ND	No date
NM	No mint
NWP	No weight provided. This is used when Balog or others did not provide a weight value for a coin.

DAMASCUS

Barqūq's First Reign:

Type 558. 784 H (14 weights of coins found)[22]

Balog listed nine coins: L 968 **1.79**; Balog **2.02**; ANS ~~**2.17**~~, **2.11**, **1.88**, **2.06**, **1.26**, **2.07**, **2.05**
ANS: 1002.1.1996, **2.68**; 1917.215.2509, **2.713**
ANS Antioch: 1935.36.403, **2.341**
FINT: CH7 A5, **2.43**
IM: 8485, **2.39**
PAM: 56765, **2.57**

Type 559. 786 H (9 weights)

Balog listed two coins: ANS **3.19**; Balog NWP
ANS Antioch: 1935.36.388, **2.467**; 419, **1.982**
FINT: CH7 A6, **3.31**
IM: 8486, **2.38**
JNB: **3.20**, **2.61**, **1.77**
SICA 6: 8486, **2.38**

Type 560. 787 H (4 weights)

Balog listed one coin: ANS ~~**2.58**~~
ANS: 0000.999.16278, **2.559**; 1919.256.5, **2.58**
BM: 1967-12-19-5, **1.36**
FINT: CH7 B1, **1.85**

[21] It is an unfortunate reality that Mamluk dies are always larger than the blank metal flans they strike. For many Mamluk coin types, mint and date information was often located in the marginal legends of the die, and these margins may transfer to the coin partially or not at all.

[22] This initial number is that assigned to this type by Balog in CMSES. Types which have a capital letter after the last digit are from Balog's 1970 supplement. Additional information includes date and mint when possible. The bolded numbers following the *sigla* for each source give the weight of each coin, while the numbers in regular font reflect the internal cataloguing information—if any—of the collection of origin.

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Type A&C 560A. 786–87 H (1 weight)
Balog listed one coin: Berman **1.85**

Type 561. 790 H (8 weights)
Balog listed five coins: L 963 **2.37**; Khedivial 1551 NWP; ANS **2.58**; two in Ashmolean NWP
ANS: 0000.999.16279, **2.464**; 0000.999.16280, **2.054**
ARCE: 2862, **2.08** (This is the same coin as Khedivial 1551 listed by Balog without a weight value.)
FINT: CH7 B2, **1.99**
Mayer 1976: 287, **2.38**
SICA 6: 1373, **2.35**

Type 562
This type has been moved to the second reign due to overstrike evidence.[23]

Barqūq's Second Reign:

Type 562. 79x H (15 weights)
Balog listed seven coins: L 964 **3.05**, L 965 **2.82**; Blau NWP; BM 8-5-1936 NWP; Thorburn NWP; Balog two coins NWP
ANS: 1938.11.28, **2.492**
ANS Antioch: 1935.36.502, **3.166**
Awad: **2.62**, **2.93**
BM: 76-2-3-20, **2.39**; 1936-8-5-28, **3.02**
FINT: CH7 B5, **3.08**; CH7 C1, **2.54**
Fitzwilliam: 1114, **2.64**
IM: 8487, **3.09**; 8503, **2.94**
MB: 295, **2.963**
SICA 6: 1374, **2.33**

Type 588. 796 H (19 weights)
Balog listed eleven coins: BMC 636 NWP; L 959 **4.0**, L 960 **2.96**, L 961 **2.64**, L 962 **3.54**; ANS two specimens, **2.68**, **2.71**; Balog ~~**2.50**~~, ~~**2.82**~~, two NWP
ANS: 1949.163.902, **1.931**; 1977.274.118, **2.868**
BMC 636, **3.03**
IM: 8485, **2.39**; 8446, **2.84**; 8447, **2.29**; 8524, **2.49**; 8525, **3.03**
FINT: CH7 E3, **3.76**
JNB: **2.37**, **3.00**, **2.37**

[23] As mentioned above, this reattribution is found in Ilisch, "Beiträge zur mamlukischen Numismatik," 5–10.

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SICA 6: 1383, **3.20**

Type 589. 797 H (6 weights)
Balog listed one coin: Balog ~~**3.15**~~
ARCE 2863: **2.20**
FINT: CH7 E5, **2.62**
IAA Nizanim: 10095, **3.54**
IM: 8448, **3.17**; 8526, **3.53**
JNB: **3.73**

Types 588–589. As above but partial or missing dates (2 weights)
ANS: 1949.163.902, **1.931**; 1977.274.118, **2.868**

Type 590. 798 H (38 weights)
Balog listed seven coins: Miles *Antioch* 192 NWP; ANS ~~**4.46**~~; München NWP; Thorburn NWP; Balog ~~**4.20**~~, **4.58**, NWP
ANS: 0000.999.16282, **4.097**; 0000.999.16283, **4.459**
ANS 1954: 1954.176.851–886, **4.70**, **4.69**, **3.87**, **4.45**, **4.27**, **4.36**, **4.40**, **3.83**, **3.71**, **3.60**, **4.47**, **4.18**, **4.75**, **5.69**[24]
Awad: **4.58**
BM: 1936-8-5-32, **4.48**
FINT: CH7 F1, **3.98**
IAA Nizanim: 10096, **5.12**; 10145, **3.78**
IM: 8527, **4.56**; 8528, **4.23**; 8529, **4.23**; 8530, **4.96**; 8531, **4.68**; 8532, **4.54**; 8533, **4.42**; 8534, **4.26**; 8535, **4.53**
JNB: **4.00**, **4.77**, **3.98**
PAM uncat.: **3.98**, **4.45**
PUL Antioch: 10313, **4.75**; 10318, **4.15**

Type 591. 799 H (43 weights)
Balog listed sixteen coins: BMC 633 NWP, 644 NWP; Welzl v. Wellenheim 12386 NWP; ANS **4.92**, **4.23**; Miles *Antioch* 193 NWP; Ashmolean NWP; Thorburn NWP; Balog eight coins, **3.37**, ~~**4.75**~~, ~~**4.13**~~, ~~**4.60**~~, ~~**4.35**~~, **5.07**, ~~**5.17**~~, ~~**4.67**~~
ANS: 1954.130.38, **4.23**; 1954.139.3, **4.92**
ANS 1954: 1954.176.848, **4.85**; 1954.176.849, **3.27**
Awad: **4.70**
BM: 79-7-9-61, **4.00**
BMC 634, **4.67**
FINT: CH7 F3, **6.38**

[24] Only fourteen of these thirty-five specimens had their weight provided in the ANS database. This is an example of the problem mentioned in note 11 above.

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IM: 8536-8547: **4.58**, **4.57**, **4.66**, **4.34**, **5.90**, **5.18**, **4.76**, **4.14**, **4.37**, **4.15**, **3.89**, **4.05**
JNB: **4.06**, **3.81**, **3.32**
PAM: 56849, **4.06**
PAM uncat.: **4.93**, **3.53**, **3.57**, **5.07**, **4.46**, **5.11**, **3.65**, **4.04**, **4.99**, **4.69**, **4.62**, **4.45**
PUL Antioch: 10309, **4.48**; 10311, **4.81**
SICA 6: 1384, **5.31**

Types 590–591. As above but partial or missing dates (18 weights)
ANS: 0000.999.16284, **4.10**
ANS 1954: 1954.176.864-873: **4.04**, **4.18**, **3.63**, **4.14**, **3.35**, **4.69**, **4.39**, **3.96**, **3.89**, **3.55**
BM: 1984-1-18-7, **4.16**; 1949-8-3-425, **4.23**
BMC: 633, **3.84**
IM: 8548, **3.66**; 8549, **4.47**; 8550, **4.57**
PAM uncat.: **4.21**

Ḥamāh

Barqūq's First Reign:

Balog did not list any types for Barqūq's first reign. Several types were subsequently attributed to the first reign after the publication of CMSES.

Type 600. ND (24 weights)
Balog listed this type in Barqūq's second reign. SNAT Ḥamāh attributed it to the first reign.
Balog listed four coins: Fraehn NWP; three Balog NWP
ANS Antioch: 1935.36.242-250: **1.951**, **1.412**, **2.468**, **1.976**, **1.800**, **2.537**, **1.875**, **1.601**, **1.781**
BM: 1967-12-19-8, **1.66**
Fitzwilliam: 1113, **1.17**
IM: 8572, **2.39**; 8573, **1.36**; 8574, **1.98**; 8575, **1.52**
JNB: **1.38**, **2.44**, **1.80**
SICA 6: 1382, **2.34**
SNAT Ḥamāh: 646, **1.98**; 647, **2.89**; 648, **1.65**; 649, **1.83**; 650, **2.20**

Type 601. ND (13 weights)
Balog listed this type in Barqūq's second reign. SNAT Ḥamāh attributed it to the first reign.
Balog listed seven coins: ANS **2.60**; six from 1935 ANS Antioch hoard NWP

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ANS Antioch: 1935.36.298-304: **2.369**, **2.376**, **1.949**, **1.730**, **1.907**, **1.988**, **1.444**
JNB: **2.09**
SNAT Ḥamāh: 651, **2.26**; 652, **2.09**; 653, **1.75**; 654, **1.91**

Type 607. ND (6 weights)
Balog listed this type in Barqūq's second reign. SNAT Ḥamāh attributed it to the first reign.
Balog listed one coin: München **1.85**
SNAT Ḥamāh: 655, **1.38**; 656, **1.77**; 657, **1.44**; 658, **1.55**; 659, **1.59**

Barqūq's Second Reign:

Type 905. ND (7 weights)
Balog did not link this anonymous type to any sultan. SNAT Ḥamāh attributed this type to Barqūq, probably 792 H.
Balog listed two coins: Mayer SH plate XX, no. 6 NWP; Balog NWP
IM: 9056, **1.53**
SNAT Ḥamāh: 661, **2.34**; 662, **2.01**; 663, **1.54**; 664, **0.99**; 665, **3.07**; 666, **1.91**

Type 597. ND (17 weights)
SNAT Ḥamāh attributed this type to the second reign.
Balog listed five coins: Balog ~~**4.52**~~, **4.02**, **4.36**, NWP; Miles *Antioch* 189
IM: 8565, **4.82**; 8566, **3.72**; 8567, **4.06**; 8568, **4.54**; 8569, **4.83**; 8570, **4.46**
PUL Antioch: 8751, **3.26**; 8753, **3.80**; 8753, **4.33**; 8754, **4.67**
SNAT Ḥamāh: 671, **4.68**; 672, **5.58**; 673, **3.22**; 674, **4.47**; 675, **3.50**

Type 598. ND (1 weight)
Balog listed one coin: Balog ~~**3.40**~~
IM: 8571, **3.43**

Type 599. ND (9 weights)
SNAT Ḥamāh attributed this type to the second reign.
Balog listed four coins: ANS **0.90**; three from 1935 ANS Antioch hoard NWP
ANS: 0000.999.34153, **1.255**
ANS Antioch: 1935.36.485-487: **1.944**, **1.619**, **1.997**
SNAT Ḥamāh: 667, **2.09**; 668, **1.73**; 669, **1.46**; 670, **1.62**

An undated type of a style not found in Balog (3 weights)
SNAT Ḥamāh attributed this type to the second reign.
SNAT Ḥamāh: 676, **3.32**; 677, **3.35**; 678, **3.45**

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Type 596. 799 H (24 weights)
Balog listed ten coins: BM 8-5-1936 NWP; Ashmolean NWP; Thorburn NWP; Balog seven specimens ~~**5.13**~~, ~~**4.58**~~, ~~**4.30**~~, ~~**4.51**~~, ~~**3.13**~~, ~~**5.08**~~, ~~**4.20**~~
ANS 1954: 1954.176.845, **4.17**; 1954.176.846, **4.50**; 1954.176.847, **5.02**;1954.176.892, **3.98**
BM: 1936-8-5-33, **4.74**; 1957-9-7-12, **3.35**; OR 2497, **3.69**; 1957-9-7-13, **4.23**; OR 2498, **2.43**
IM: 8558, **4.61**; 8559, **5.17**; 8560, **4.55**; 8561, **4.31**; 8562, **3.16**; 8563, **5.11**; 8564, **4.21**
JNB: **4.25**
MB: 290, **2.136**
PUL Antioch: 10308, **4.37**; 10319: **4.08**
SNAT Ḥamāh: 679, **3.78**; 680, **2.42**; 681, **5.11**; 682, **2.98**

Tripoli

Type 602 is the only one from this mint to be linked to a specific date. It falls in the second reign.

Type 602. 798 H (2 weights)
Balog listed this date as 789 but this was corrected to 798 in A&C
Balog listed one coin: Balog ~~**6.23**~~
FINT: CH8 C4, **5.086**
IM: 8576, **6.23**

Type 603. ND (7 weights)
Balog listed two coins: L 969 **1.79**; BMC 321 NWP
ANS: 0000.999.16295, **1.759**; 1917.216.2570, **2.249**
BM: 79-7-9-63, **2.64**
BMC: 321, **2.76**
FINT: CH8 C6, **2.182**
JNB: **2.14**

Type 604. DM or ND (1 weight)
Balog listed one coin: Ashmolean NWP
SICA 6: 1385, **2.16**

Type 605. ND (3 weights)
Balog listed two coins: two Balog NWP.
IM: 8577, **2.11**; 8578, **1.81**; 8579, **1.42**

Type A&C 605A (3 weights)
Balog listed one coin: Balog **1.39**

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ANS Antioch: 1935.36.421: **2.007**
FINT: CH6 D4, **1.948**

Type 606. ND (1 weight)
Balog listed one coin: ANS NWP
FINT: CH8 D6, **2.953**

Aleppo

Barqūq's First Reign:

Type 593. ND (17 weights)
SNAT Aleppo attributed this type to around 784 H.
Balog listed four coins: L 967 **1.78**; Jungfleisch **1.78**; Balog ~~**2.15**~~, **2.20**
ANS: 1977.274.117, **1.887**
ANS Antioch: 1935.36.377, **2.221**
Awad: **1.74**
BM: OR 2495, **1.78**
IM: 8522, **2.03**; 8553, **1.85**; 8554, **2.16**
JNB: **1.88**
SNAT Aleppo: 350, **2.32**; 351, **1.99**; 352, **2.64**; 353, **1.80**; 354, **1.61**
Additional specimen from excavation at Ramla: **1.86**[25]

Type 563. ⌈78⌉6[26] (1 weight)
Balog listed one coin: Balog **3.52**

Type 564. 788 H (12 weights)
Balog listed four coins: BMC 322 NWP "erroneously listed under al-Ẓāhir Ghāzī"; .958 **1.91**; Miles *Antioch* 191 NWP; Balog ~~**2.45**~~.
ANS: 0000.999.11446, **2.20**
BM: 65-1-5, **2.10**
BMC: 322, **2.17**
IM: 9489, **2.58**; 8490, **2.45**
PAM: 56766, **1.43**
SNAT Aleppo: 355, **2.78**; 356, **2.40**; 357, **2.41**; 358, **2.40**; 359, **1.85**

Type 565. 789 H (2 weights)
Balog listed one coin: ANS ~~**2.18**~~
ANS: 1962.58.4, **1.976**; 1917.215.1891, **2.18**

[25] This is coin number 24 in Robert Kool and Ariel Berman, "Coins from the Mamluk and Ottoman Period at Ramla," *Atiqot* 67 (2011): 55–60.

[26] The brackets indicate that the first two digits are not on this specimen but must be what they are due to other factors.

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Types 564–565. As above but partial or missing dates (153 weights)
ANS: 1002.1.1386, **2.476**; 1949.163.464, **2.689**
ANS Antioch: 1935.36.21–177: **2.220**, **1.422**, **1.929**, **1.911**, **1.851**, **2.060**, **2.217**, **2.332**, **1.892**, **1.710**, **2.234**, **1.948**, **2.105**, **2.679**, **1.908**, **2.306**, **1.818**, **2.259**, **1.878**, **2.083**, **2.120**, **2.060**, **2.611**, **1.930**, **2.024**, **2.161**, **2.406**, **1.241**, **1.878**, **2.278**, **1.919**, **2.190**, **1.894**, **2.801**, **2.344**, **1.884**, **2.613**, **1.905**, **2.380**, **2.383**, **1.803**, **1.960**, **1.757**, **2.388**, **1.898**, **1.793**, **2.064**, **2.167**, **2.434**, **1.982**, **2.158**, **1.572**, **1.344**, **2.461**, **1.820**, **1.508**, **2.090**, **2.542**, **1.794**, **2.417**, **2.476**, **1.924**, **2.524**, **2.787**, **1.688**, **2.323**, **2.113**, **1.967**, **2.462**, **1.617**, **2.127**, **2.120**, **1.382**, **2.562**, **1.702**, **2.408**, **2.375**, **2.870**, **2.008**, **2.273**, **1.630**, **2.695**, **2.515**, **2.838**, **1.843**, **2.399**, **2.578**, **1.921**, **2.505**, **2.349**, **2.440**, **2.789**, **2.144**, **2.247**, **2.560**, **1.773**, **1.870**, **3.410**, **2.539**, **1.833**, **1.858**, **2.343**, **1.855**, **1.813**, **2.090**, **1.491**, **1.627**, **2.425**, **2.131**, **1.739**, **2.613**, **1.756**, **1.959**, **2.319**, **2.389**, **2.247**, **2.215**, **2.143**, **1.813**, **2.588**, **2.200**, **2.264**, **1.651**, **2.303**, **2.531**, **1.765**, **2.343**, **1.909**, **2.374**, **2.641**, **2.115**, **2.093**, **2.375**, **1.889**, **2.577**, **2.913**, **2.200**, **1.457**, **1.764**, **1.949**, **2.121**, **2.086**, **1.776**, **2.265**, **1.744**, **1.747**, **2.098**, **2.451**, **2.199**, **2.478**, **1.976**, **1.280** (Five coins from this span are not included: four (numbers 25, 107, 108, and 135) due to their being cut in half and one (number 63) due to a possible data entry error. Thus, there are 152 weight measurements from this hoard.

Barqūq's Second Reign:

Type 592. DM (3 weights)
Balog listed one coin: Balog ~~**4.68**~~.
IM: 8523, **2.18**; 8551, **4.68**; 8552, **2.93**

Type A&C 592A. MM (12 weights)
Balog attributed this type to Aleppo.
Balog listed one coin: Balog **2.20**
ANS: 1959.115.2, **1.749**; 1973.277.3, **2.367**; 1973.227.4, **2.146**; 1973.227.5, **2.11**; 1917.215.1892, **2.053**; 1917.215.1893, **2.068**; 1917.215.1894, **1.879**; 1917.215.1895, **1.259**; 1917-2-5.896, **2.064**; 1949.163.465, **2.172**; 1959.165.317, **1.694**

Type 594. ND (1 weight)
Balog listed one coin: Miles *Antioch* 190 NWP.

Type 595. ND (72 weights)
The type attributed to the second reign by SNAT Aleppo.

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Balog listed fifty-nine coins: BM TR Stewart 1946 NWP, Sir R Burn 1949 8-3-421 NWP; ANS ~~**2.42**~~, ~~**2.13**~~; Antioch hoard 53 coins NWP; Balog two coins
ANS: 1976.109.139, **1.942**; 0000.999.11447, **2.13**; 1917.215.1897, **2.558**; 1940.152.3, **2.43**
ANS Antioch: 1935.36.178–231: **2.457**, **2.516**, **2.405**, **2.131**, **2.254**, **2.005**, **1.654**, **1.804**, **2.541**, **1.648**, **2.230**, **2.365**, **2.104**, **1.670**, **2.129**, **2.179**, **1.665**, **2.050**, **1.822**, **1.711**, **2.072**, **2.207**, **1.786**, **2.103**, **2.203**, **1.707**, **1.976**, **2.029**, **1.629**, **2.313**, **2.234**, **2.692**, **2.486**, **2.345**, **2.012**, **2.319**, **3.126**, **1.821**, **2.101**, **1.898**, **2.271**, **2.123**, **1.619**, **2.457**, **1.855**, **1.920**, **2.853**, **1.899**, **2.459**, **2.423**, **2.457**, **1.780**, **2.388** (One coin, number 200, is left out since it was cut in half. Thus, there are 53 weight measurements from this hoard.)
Awad: **1.89**
BM: OR 2496, **1.70**; 65-1-6, **2.13**; 1949-8-3-424, **2.34**; OR 2500, **2.94**
IM: 8555, **2.15**; 8556, **2.17**; 8557, **1.60**
JNB: **2.07**, **2.55**
Mayer 1976: 290, **1.50**
SNAT Aleppo: 436, **2.32**; 437, **2.28**; 438, **2.21**; 439, **2.03**; 440, **1.94**; 441, **1.92**

SNAT Aleppo lists one undated type not found in Balog (1 weight)
SNAT Aleppo: 443, **2.70**

Type A&C 595A. 79 (1 weight)[27]
Balog listed one coin: Balog **2.17**

Type A&C 595B. ND (2 weights)
Balog listed one coin: Berman **2.10**
MB: 294, **2.02**

No Mint or Mint Missing

Barqūq's First Reign:

Type A&C 562A. NM, ND (1 weight)
Balog listed one coin: Berman **2.25**

Type 607. MM, ND
Balog attributed this type to MM, but SNAT Ḥamāh moved it to Ḥamāh, first reign, where all specimens are now listed.

[27] The dash indicates that the year digit is not visible on the coin.

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Barqūq's Second Reign:

Type 608. NM, ND (13 weights)
Balog listed eleven coins: ten from ANS Antioch hoard NWP; one Balog NWP
ANS Antioch: 1935.36.232–241: **1.579**, **1.983**, **1.301**, **1.606**, **1.237**, **2.121**, **1.375**, **1.414**, **1.209**, **1.841**
FINT: CH8 E2, **1.337**
IM: 8580, **2.92**
SICA 6 1390, **1.89**

Type 609. NM, ND (6 weights)
Balog listed nine coins: ANS **1.89**; eight from the ANS Antioch hoard with only one weight given, **1.84**
Awad: **1.41**
FINT: CH8 E4, **1.670**
JNB: **1.95**
MB: 291, **2.867**

Type 610. NM, ND (3 weights)
Balog listed two coins: one from ANS Antioch hoard NWP; München **1.61**
FINT: CH8 E6, **1.337**
JNB: **2.63**

Type 611. NM, ND (1 weight)
Balog listed one coin: München **1.61**

Type 612. NM, ND (32 weights)
Balog listed seventeen coins: sixteen from ANS Antioch hoard NWP; Balog NWP.
ANS Antioch: 1935.36.259–290: **2.098**, **0.908**, **2.981**, **1.907**, **1.691**, **1.711**, **1.076**, **1.652**, **1.392**, **1.345**, **2.044**, **1.460**, **1.292**, **1.574**, **1.047**, **2.118**, **1.716**, **2.445**, **1.565**, **1.964**, **1.287**, **2.047**, **2.181**, **1.523**, **1.623**, **1.534**, **1.508**, **2.150**, **1.919** (This list does not include the weights of coins 275, 276, and 282, which were all altered after minting. Thus there are only 29 weights included and not 32.)
FINT: CH8 F1, **1.413**
IM: 8581, **2.72**
Mayer 1976: 291, **1.95**

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GISing Baybars: Unraveling the Odd Location of Maqām Nabī Mūsá

In a paper that critically analyzes Sultan Baybars's construction inscription at Maqām Nabī Mūsá, Reuven Amitai concludes his analysis with the following musing:

> I have often wondered what was the point of some Arabic inscriptions, which are located in positions that make reading them very difficult if not nearly impossible. At the same time, they are often written in such a stylized manner that even a trained epigrapher has trouble deciphering them. This is a point worthy of further enquiry and thought. In any event, the present inscription is different. It is placed relatively low, is accessible to the eye, and the style of the writing does not pose much of a problem. Here, at least, the inscription was intended to be read, and the visitor to the Maqam had the opportunity to peruse its contents and to meditate on its message of power and piety.[1]

Indeed, I have often pondered exactly the same riddle as I strolled the streets of the Old City of Jerusalem while surveying monumental and vernacular Mamluk architecture.[2] Amitai is correct in suggesting that in comparison with other Mamluk inscriptions, the inscription in Nabī Mūsá is more approachable and more legible. Yet, in my many visits to the site in question, and certainly in my visits to other Mamluk buildings (whether in Jerusalem, Safad, Gaza, or Cairo), never have I seen pilgrims or visitors taking the time or trouble to try and decipher those elaborate inauguration inscriptions. So, the puzzle remains. However, this is surely not the only question that hovers above this unique shrine. From early on—indeed prior to its construction by Sultan Baybars—and up to the present, this shrine has been shrouded in myths and conflicts and marred with contestation. Muslim scholars debated the "true" location of Moses's grave

[1] Reuven Amitai, "Some Remarks on the Inscription of Baybars at Maqam Nabi Musa," in *Mamluks and Ottomans. Studies in Honor of Michael Winter,* ed. David J. Wasserstein and Ami Ayalon (London, 2006), 51.

[2] The survey was part of a Ph.D. dissertation supervised by Reuven Amitai, which was ultimately published as Nimrod Luz, *The Mamluk City in the Middle East: History, Culture and Urban Landscape* (Cambridge, 2014). Objectively and unequivocally a super supervisor!

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for centuries before and after its concrete construction at its current location.[3] Another complicating issue is the way Muslim traditions disregarded the basic tenet suggested in the Bible regarding Moses's tomb being located east of the Jordan River. And most recently, we have also witnessed the efforts of the Palestinian Authority to use the site for its political advantage.[4]

Following its construction in the thirteenth century, the shrine quickly became one of the central Muslim pilgrimage sites in southern Bilād al-Shām. It became the primal location for a seasonal pilgrimage *(mawsim)* which was intentionally scheduled to compete with the annual tide of Christian pilgrims before and during the Greek Orthodox Easter.[5] In the twentieth century, the Nabī Mūsá compound (grave, mosque, *ribāṭ*) became pivotal in the emerging Palestinian national struggle. The annual festivities therein were instrumentally, and rather skillfully, used by the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Ḥajj Amīn al-Ḥusaynī, to bolster Palestinian nationalism and confront both the British and their Jewish adversaries during the Mandate period in the region (1920–48).[6] Maqām Nabī Mūsá's contested history, conflicting traditions as to its "true" location, and surely the role it played in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict all make for a fascinating case in point to explore the ample ways sacred places are constructed, produced, and perceived by different stakeholders and groups. In this paper, I aim to demystify some of the enigmas regarding this pilgrimage and sacred place, focusing mostly on offering an explanation of its rather humble and seemingly problematic and inaccessible location. To that end, the paper starts with a theoretical analysis regarding the inherently contested nature of sacred places. This is followed with an examination of the site's location and situation to demonstrate how problematic and, moreover, intriguing the location chosen for this compound is. Next, I focus on the crucial role of Sultan Baybars and his motivations in constructing the compound, as found in Mujīr al-Dīn's narration. The final part of the paper engages in a Geographic Information System (GIS) inquiry into the location of Nabī Mūsá. This, I argue, allows for a better under-

[3] Joseph Sadan, "The Holy Site (Maqām) of Nabī Mūsā, between Jericho and Damascus: A History of a Competition between Sacred Places [in Hebrew]," *Ha-Mizraḥ he-Ḥadash (The New East)* 28, nos. 1–2 (1979): 22–38; idem, "The Dispute Concerning the Maqām of Nabī Mūsā in the Muslim Sources [in Hebrew]," *Ha-Mizraḥ he-Ḥadash (The New East)* 28, nos. 3–4 (1980): 220–38; Amikam Elad, "Some Aspects of the Islamic Traditions Regarding the Site of the Grave of Moses," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 11 (1985): 1–15.

[4] Ifrach Zilberman, "The Renewal of the Pilgrimage to Nabi Musa," in *Sacred Space in Israel and Palestine,* ed. Berger Marshall, Yitzhak Reiter, and Leonard Hammer (New York, 2012), 103–15.

[5] Tawfik Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries in Palestine* (London, 1927), 195–96.

[6] Roger Friedland and Richard D. Hecht, "The Nebi Musa Pilgrimage and the Origins of Palestinian Nationalism," in *Pilgrims and Travelers to the Holy Land,* ed. Bryan F. LeBeau and Menahem Mor (Omaha, 1996), 89–118.

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standing of Baybars's motivations for locating the disputed tradition of Moses's burial ground in an unlikely, mostly unseen, and rather inaccessible location.

Places and the Contested Nature of Sacred Places

Geographical definitions of place since the 1970s have focused on the combination of location and meaning and the human subject's crucial importance in the construction of place.[7] Place is certainly a phenomenon, a location, but at the same time, it is a concept, a product, and a process in which humans are involved. The following is a rather useful definition for understanding place as a socially constructed entity: "place is space to which meaning has been ascribed."[8] As a product, place cannot be reduced to its mere physical qualities. It is the outcome and process of human endeavors. In his invariably persuasive manner, Foucault observed that place is fundamental in any exercise of power.[9] Put differently, places are, by their very natures, political entities, or at least are politicized through various human agencies. Place is replete with power and symbolism; at the same time, place is inexorably linked with controversies, conflicts, struggles over control, and debates (as well as actual physical conflict) over meaning and symbolism.

Sacred places make rather intriguing examples of the socio-political and constructed character of place. Geographers dealing with religion have pointed to the presence of conflict and contestation involved in the production of sacred sites.[10] "A sacred place is not merely discovered, or founded, or constructed; it is claimed, owned, and operated by people advancing specific interests."[11] Becoming a sacred place, therefore, involves a process of production, but it is also inescapably linked to cultural-political contests regarding the multiple meanings assigned to the place. The conflict is not just over the production, but also

[7] Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis, 1977); Tim Cresswell, *Place: An Introduction* (Malden, 2014).

[8] Erica Carter, James Donald, and Judith Squires, eds., *Space and Place: Theories of Identity and Location* (London, 1993), xii.

[9] Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977* (New York, 1980), 63.

[10] Christine Chivallon, "Religion as Space for the Expression of Caribbean Identity in the United Kingdom," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 19, no. 4 (2001): 461–83; Lily Kong, "Mapping 'New' Geographies of Religion: Politics and Poetics in Modernity," *Progress in Human Geography* 25 (2001): 211–33; Simon Naylor and James Ryan, "The Mosque in the Suburbs: Negotiating Religion and Ethnicity in South London," *Social and Cultural Geography* 3, no. 1 (2002): 39–59.

[11] David Chidester and Edward Linenthal, "Introduction," in *American Sacred Space,* ed. David Chidester and Edward Linenthal (Bloomington, 1995), 17.

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over the "symbolic surpluses that are abundantly available for appropriation."[12] Thus, sacred sites are intrinsically arenas where resources are transformed into surplus of meaning and often contested and fought over by various forces.

Against this theoretical backdrop, the construction of Maqām Nabī Mūsá in its specific location is to be understood as a highly political move on the part of Sultan Baybars. Further—and not surprisingly—it needs to be analyzed as part of an endeavor to claim and construct a place to serve specific interests of its builder. Indeed, in the remaining parts of this paper I will suggest such a political motivation. With this in mind, let us now explore the unique geography of this sacred place, which is essential to understanding Baybars's project in Nabī Mūsá.

Nabī Mūsá Near al-Kathīb al-Aḥmar: Site and Situation

Maqām Nabī Mūsá is located in a rather remote and inaccessible site in the northeastern part of the Judean Desert, about 15 km due east of Jerusalem and some 8 km southwest of Jericho (31°47′N 35°26′E). In the numerous Islamic traditions that mention the grave of Moses, it is often connected and associated with al-Kathīb al-Aḥmar, namely, the Red Hill. One such variant is narrated by Abū Hurayrah:

> The Angel of Death was sent to Moses. When he came to Moses, Moses slapped him on the eye. The angel returned to his Lord and said, "You have sent me to a slave who does not want to die." Allah said, "Return to him and tell him to put his hand on the back of an ox and for every hair that will come under it, he will be granted one year of life." Moses said, "O Lord! What will happen after that?" Allah replied, "Then death." Moses said, "Let it come now." Moses then requested Allah to let him die close to the Sacred Land, so much so that he would be at a distance of a stone's throw from it. Abu Huraira added, "Allah's Apostle said: If I were there, I would show you his grave below the red sand hill on the side of the road."[13]

In a different version of this tradition, we learn that during the Prophet's night journey *(al-isrā')*, he passed over the grave of Moses which is found near

[12] Ibid., 18.

[13] Al-Bukhārī, *Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* 4, 55, 619. Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī,* in Ṣāliḥ ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm Āl al-Shaykh, *Al-Kutub al-sittah* (Riyadh, 1419/1999), 1:104.

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"the Red Hill."[14] The association of the tomb with red sand puts us squarely in the Nabī Mūsá region, which is dominated by a unique and variegated rock formation called Hatrurim or Mottled Zone.[15] This is a geological formation that can be found all around the Dead Sea basin. The rocks of this formation have been subjected to (pyro)metamorphism resulting from combustion of hydrocarbon deposits, which resulted also in their very dominant red color.[16] This lent its name to several sites in the region with the suffix Edumin (Hebrew: red) or Aḥmar (Arabic: red), as the case may be.

The Nabī Mūsá compound was built in between two local catchment areas, Wādī Qalṭ to its north and Wādī Og (or Mukāliq) to its south.[17] Consequently, it is not part of the local road system that developed organically along the main ravines in the region. It is also not a station on the main historical road that connected Jerusalem to the Jericho region. This historical route was first paved during the British Mandate (1920–48), but even then, Nabī Mūsá was not part of it and the pilgrims were compelled to take a southern detour of a few kilometers to reach their destination from the main road. Another possible route that could have served pilgrims was along Wādī Og, which connected Jerusalem and the Christian monasteries of Khān al-Aḥmar (yet another reminder of the red rock formation in the area) and St. Euthymius, and from there eastward to the Dead Sea basin, but this route also fails to arrive at Nabī Mūsá. It traverses the valley of Nabī Mūsá a few kilometers south of the compound. Ultimately, there are several main routes in the compound's vicinity, but none of them serves it directly. Since its construction in the thirteenth century, pilgrims have been forced to use bifurcations from the main roads in the compound's vicinity. This was summed up rather harshly by the Jerusalemite qadi and chronicler Mujīr al-Dīn al-Ḥanbalī al-ʿUlaymī (hereafter, Mujīr al-Dīn), who described the site over two hundred years after it was inaugurated: "and the road to it is difficult and full of bumps and obstacles."[18] The inaccessibility of the place also troubled one of the most renowned travelers and scholars to have roamed the region in the nineteenth century, Victor Guérin. He visited the Holy Land no less than eight times between 1852 and 1888, during which he wrote an award-winning seven-volume series titled *A Geographical, Historical, and Archaeological Description*

[14] Elad, "Some Aspects of Islamic Traditions."

[15] Shulamit Gross, "Petrographic Atlas of the Hatrurim Formation," *Geological Survey of Israel,* https://www.gov.il/he/Departments/publications/reports/gross-et-al-report-2016.

[16] Avihu Burg, Yehoshua Kolodny, and Vladimir Lyakhovsky, "Hatrurim-2000: The 'Mottled Zone' Revisited, Forty Years Later," *Israel Journal of Earth Sciences* 48, nos. 3–4 (1999): 209–23.

[17] https://www.govmap.gov.il/?c=242479.53,631909.45&z=4&lay=BASIN.

[18] Mujīr al-Dīn al-Ḥanbalī al-ʿUlaymī, *Al-Uns al-jalīl bi-tārīkh al-Quds wa-al-Khalīl* (Baghdad, 1995), 1:102.

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of Palestine. Guérin and his company arrived at Nabī Mūsá from the Mar Saba monastery along the Wādī Og route. This is his description of the road he was forced to take in order to arrive at the maqām:

> On April 3rd, seven AM, under a clearing sky we mounted our horses again and rode on a very narrow path that was very slippery since it had rained during the last few days. The path wound through hills and valleys. And those valleys are mostly ferocious valleys of death. . . . our path twisted and turned.[19]

Guérin further narrates how he had to negotiate on that winding and dangerous path no less than six local streams, before he could finally arrive at the gates of Nabī Mūsá. And surely he was not the only seasoned traveler to experience difficulties while trying to arrive at the site from Jerusalem via the local desert paths. Dr. Natan Shalem (1899–59), a geologist and seasoned traveler, was one of the founders of the "Land of Israel Wandering Society," which promoted hiking as a way for Jews to become connected to the land during the British Mandate. On one such hike, he tried to follow the path from Jerusalem to Nabī Mūsá with a group of travelers:

> After a few moments we arrived at a dead end. . . . We stood there clueless, with no possible route out, left or right, the desert closed in on us. Some of us were climbing the surrounding hills to explore the area. Luckily for us, we encountered two Arab horsemen from the Desert Guards who were on their way to Nabi Musa and so we safely followed them.[20]

One may wonder: if such veteran hikers got lost while trying to find this pilgrimage site, what was the outcome for the innocent, inexperienced pilgrims over the years who tried to find the place and perform their pilgrimage? To make matters even more difficult, the location chosen for the construction of the site is in a local syncline. This essentially means that the site is not visible, even from a very short distance. It is also invisible from further away, and—due to its unique position in a valley—even from relatively high places in its vicinity. That said, as I approach the concluding parts of this paper, I will highlight one particular mountain in the region from which the Nabī Mūsá complex is highly visible.

The site and situation of this sacred compound seem at first glance to be rather problematic. When one considers its inaccessibility and low visibility to

[19] Victor Guérin, A *Geographical, Historical, and Archaeological Description of Palestine* [in Hebrew] (Paris, 1868; repr. Jerusalem, 1983), 4:12–13.

[20] Natan Shalem, *Collection of Essays* [in Hebrew] (Jerusalem, 1973), 404.

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both its immediate and more remote surroundings, one is bound to question Baybars's choice to construct the maqām in its current place. Put simply, this does not seem like a prime location, either for promoting the site as an Islamic pilgrimage center or for explaining the builder's motivation to construct the place in such an unlikely spot. To better understand Baybars's motivation to build this site, I will next discuss the architectural development of Nabī Mūsá through the narration provided to us by Mujīr al-Dīn, complemented with an analysis of Baybars's Islamization project in Bilād al-Shām. This, I argue, will set the background for understanding Baybars's motivation and preferences while concretizing an early tradition in this specific place.

Nabī Mūsá and Baybars's Islamization Project in Bilād al-Shām

The first line in the lengthy and rather detailed construction inscription of Nabī Mūsá assures us of the identity of the person responsible for the building project:

> In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate. "They only shall manage Allah's places of worship who have believed in Allah and the last day." Ordered the building of this noble sacred place over the Tomb of Moses, the speaker (with God)—prayer and peace upon him—our lord, the Sultan al-Malik al-Ẓāhir.[21]

While analyzing this inscription, Amitai sets the context of the construction project within the framework of one of Baybars's covert expeditions in Syria as he was on his way from Damascus to Jerusalem.[22] This probably took place in late 1269, following Baybars's visit to Mecca to perform the hajj. A slightly different chain of events, which certainly does not change the ultimate result, is suggested in the most detailed description of the building project, as narrated by Mujīr al-Dīn:

> The people argued about the place of the Prophet Moses' tomb, but what most of them agreed upon was that it is located east of Jerusalem within a day's walking distance. And the road to it is difficult and full of bumps and hurdles. On top of the tomb there is a mosque and to its right there is a dome made of stone and underneath it there lies the tomb. During the days of the pilgrimage, a black cloth is laid upon the tomb and on it a red embroidery cov-

[21] See Amitai, "Some Remarks on the Inscription," 47.

[22] Ibid., 48.

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> ered in gold on its sides. Most people believe this is the site of the grave. It is narrated in the *Saḥīḥ* that the Prophet met him [Moses] during the Night Journey and prayed on his tomb at the Red Hill.
>
> The one who built the said dome is al-Malik al-Ẓāhir Baybars, as he was returning from the hajj and after he visited Jerusalem in 668[/1269]. Only afterward were additional buildings constructed for the benefit of the pilgrims. In 875[/1470] the mosque was enlarged on its south side and the construction was only finished in 885[/1480]. After that year a minaret was built at the site. This place [i.e., the entire compound] is located south of Jericho and the people of Jerusalem perform pilgrimage to it for an entire week following the end of the rainy season.[23]

If we accept Mujīr al-Dīn's description, the compound underwent three major building phases within the Mamluk period. The initial phase was undertaken by Sultan Baybars in 1269.[24] This was also the most crucial one, as by ordering construction at this particular site, Baybars effectively ended a lengthy dispute regarding the exact place of Moses's burial ground.[25] The second phase, which probably took place shortly after, entailed service buildings at the flanks of the mosque to be used during the annual pilgrimage. The third phase took place during the reign al-Malik al-Ashraf Qāytbāy (r. 1468–96), and included the construction of a minaret and enlargement of the mosque area on its south side.

The construction of Maqām Nabī Mūsá was not a singular project executed under Baybars. On the contrary, Baybars was heavily engaged with building projects of a hagio-religious nature. As such, he ordered the renovation of mosques in Ramlah, initiated the construction of Mazār Abū ʿUbaydah in the eastern part of the northern Jordan Valley, and supported Sufi activities in Jerusalem by allowing them to reuse former Christian buildings.[26] This needs to be viewed also against the backdrop of an anti-Crusader, and surely anti-Christian, campaign that raged across al-Shām during the thirteenth century.[27] Following the conquest of Safad (1266), Baybars ordered the construction of several reli-

[23] Mujīr al-Dīn, *Uns al-jalīl,* 1:102.

[24] For a detailed architectonic survey and dating of specific parts within the compound, see Shmuel Tamari, "Maqam Nabi Musa near Jericho [in Hebrew]," *Cathedra* 11 (1979): 153–80.

[25] On this dispute, see Sadan, "The Holy Site."

[26] Yehoshua Frenkel, "Baybars and the Sacred Geography of Bilad al-Sham: A Chapter in the Islamization of Syria's Landscape," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 25 (2001): 153–70.

[27] Nimrod Luz, "Aspects of Islamization of Space and Society in Mamluk Jerusalem and its Hinterland," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 6 (2002): 133–54.

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gious buildings in the budding new city.[28] One of them was the Red Mosque and the construction inscription that still graces its gate clearly expresses both the piety and the anti-Christian sentiments the builder wishes to convey:

> In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate. This blessed mosque was built by the instructions of our lord and the Sultan al-Malik al-Ẓāhir, the most great and magnificent master, the wise, the just, the defender of the faith, warrior along the borders, the victorious, supporter of faith and the world, sultan of Islam and Muslims, slayer of the infidels and the heathens, capitulator of rebels and conspirators, Baybars al-Ṣāliḥī, partner of the commander of the faithful, and this in the year four and seventy and six hundred [1276].[29]

Surely, one may argue that these inscriptions follow a formula and need not be interpreted as overly representative or indicative of the policy or even ideology of the individual concerned. And yet, in the case of Baybars, this is only one of numerous projects, and it is moreover emblematic of his general militant anti-Christian policy. As previously observed by Amitai, the titles and various terms used in Baybars's numerous inscriptions convey a picture of:

> a tough fighter in the name of Islam, an impression certainly strengthened by Baybars's behavior on the battlefield and in day-to-day affairs. Perhaps no less important than his image as *mujahid,* "holy warrior," and a just Muslim sultan, is that of the *Heerkönig,* to use P. M. Holt's very apt term.[30]

It is exactly along these lines and against this background that I suggest in what follows that the construction of Nabī Mūsá in this particular humble and unlikely site was part of an anti-Christian strategy that is highly distinctive of this formidable sultan.

Nabī Mūsá and Baybars: Decoding the Move to the Locative Pole

The concretization of an oral and intangible tradition into a specific and tangible location, especially when this very location is in dispute, entails power and certainly follows a specific interest of the localizing person or group. This

[28] Luz, *The Mamluk City in the Middle East,* 33–36.

[29] Ibid., 160.

[30] Amitai, "Some Remarks on the Inscription," 51; P. M. Holt, "The Position and Power of the Mamluk Sultan," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 38 (1975): 237–49, esp. 246.

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is what I previously discussed under the heading of the "contested nature of sacred places." In the case at hand, I would argue that by constructing Nabī Mūsá in its specific location, Baybars was utilizing his power as sultan to create a certain sacred landscape that served his interests and ideology. As previously noted, Baybars conducted an unrelenting anti-Christian policy in Bilād al-Shām. In what follows, I focus on the specificities of his Nabī Mūsá project to decipher, indeed decode, Baybars's decision to construct the shrine in this exact location. To do so, I start with a description of Muslim pilgrims' activities at Nabī Mūsá as narrated by Felix Fabri, a Dominican monk who made at least two excursions to the region in the late fifteenth century. He left us a rather detailed account of his pilgrimage, which is commonly known as *The Book of the Wanderings of Brother Felix Fabri*.[31]

Fabri had a sharp and critical eye, and regularly broached topics that far exceed the ordinary purview of other Christian travelers. The following description is part of a very detailed section dedicated to the part of his journey, indeed pilgrimage, through the Judean Desert:

> After viewing the aforesaid places, we cast our eyes upon the place where we stood, where we saw many heaps of stones, piled up by the Saracens. . . . The Saracens pile up these stones in honour of Moses, because from this place one can distinctly see the mountains of Abarim and the peak of Pisgah, from whence Moses beheld the heritage of the Lord. . . . For this cause Saracens, when they come to this place, make piles of stones, and pray, looking towards the mount on their bended knees. . . . Not far from these heaps we saw a high and newly-built pyramid, beneath which the Saracens falsely say that Moses is buried—a thing contrary to the canon of the Bible, in the last chapter of Deuteronomy. Thus, they do in all other matters; they follow the Bible when they please, but when they do not, they obstinately contradict it, in spite of (its) truth.[32]

In this criticism of Islam and Muslims, Fabri refers of course to the Biblical account according to which Moses was buried east of the Jordan River, near Mount Nebo. What is particularly important in this description is that from Nabī Mūsá one can see the tops of the mountains in the ridge named Abarim, one of which is Mount Nebo. Further, there exists a well-established tradition among Muslims and Christians to pray from this area while facing east and commemorat-

[31] Felix Fabri, *The Book of Wanderings of Brother Felix Fabri,* trans. Aubrey Stewart, The Library of the Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society, vols. 7–10 (London, 1897).

[32] Ibid., 9:188.

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ing Moses.[33] This intriguing activity inspired me to inquire what exactly can be seen from Maqām Nabī Mūsá while looking east, and equally, from which mountains' tops can the maqām be observed. To that end, visibility lines between the Nabī Mūsá area and the mountain ridge east of it were examined by performing a Geographic Information System (commonly known as GIS) analysis.[34] Figure 2 below depicts visibility lines from Mount Nebo.

The area surrounding Nabī Mūsá is mostly unseen from the peak of the mountain and yet the immediate vicinity of the maqām is visible to anyone standing at the church that was constructed on top of Mount Nebo during late antiquity.[35] The church is dedicated to Moses, who according to the Christian understanding (that follows the Biblical description) was buried at that very spot after observing the land of Canaan, which God forbade him to enter. Figure 3 depicts the visible and blind spots when one looks from Nabī Mūsá east to Mount Nebo.

It is not surprising that Mount Nebo is observable from Nabī Mūsá. Yet, what is very intriguing is that this is true only for a very specific and small area in the vicinity of the maqām. This is also apparent when conflating the two locations. Figure 4 helps us better understand the uniqueness of Baybars's undertaking in that specific spot. As one moves away from Nabī Mūsá, the possibility to see, or be seen from, Mount Nebo diminishes rapidly.

Thus, GISing Baybars's project allows for a better understanding of his motivations to move the locative pole of the "Red Sand Hill" tradition to this very site. By constructing the Nabī Mūsá compound at this specific location, Baybars was not only providing local Muslim pilgrims with yet another sacred destination, but also supplying them with a bastion in the ongoing Muslim-Christian contestation over the Holy Land. In addition to setting the site in a place that visibly, and rather conspicuously, challenges the Judeo-Christian location of the same tradition, the annual *mawsim* of Nabī Mūsá did not adhere, as might be expected, to the hijri calendar but rather responded to and was in sync with the Christian liturgical one. The Nabī Mūsá pilgrimage was a response to the Greek Orthodox calendar and the festivities revolving around Easter, during which numerous seasonal Christian pilgrims would arrive in the region. The march to Nabī Mūsá started from Jerusalem on the Friday preceding the Christian celebration of Good Friday. The return to Jerusalem was a week later, on

[33] This idea was also suggested by Braslavsky, who pointed out that the Muslims pray from specific places as they challenge other contradicting traditions. For his assessment of the Nabī Mūsá location, see Joseph Braslavsky, *Studies in Our Country: Its Past and Remains* [in Hebrew] (Tel Aviv, 1954), 326. I would like to thank Mr. Zeev Erlich for supplying me with this reference.

[34] I am indebted to Dr. Mitia Frumin for conducting this analysis on my behalf.

[35] Michele Piccirillo, "New Discoveries on Mount Nebo," *Annual of the Department of Antiquities* 21 (1976): 55–59.

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Holy Thursday, which is also a festive Christian day that precedes Good Friday, the day commemorating Jesus's crucifixion.[36]

These anti-Christian sentiments that characterize Baybars's general attitude are also apparent in a tradition narrated by Mujīr al-Dīn. According to this tradition, Baybars visited Jerusalem in 668/1269 and during that time he ordered the construction of Maqām Nabī Mūsá. While there he also performed a pilgrimage (Arabic: *ziyārah*) to the site. On his way, he passed a monastery named Dayr Siqq. Upon learning that there were around three hundred monks in this monastery, he ordered the destruction of all the monks' cells to ensure "the safety of Jerusalem."[37]

When one considers the specific location of the maqām, the annual date of the pilgrimage and festivities therein, and surely Baybars's aggressive and relentless policy towards the Christians, one is bound to agree that this building project was part of an anti-Christian agenda and Baybars's general conduct of presenting himself as a devout Muslim and, moreover, a relentless *mujāhid*. The GIS analysis of the location chosen for the maqām supports this interpretation of Baybars's motivation and, furthermore, his overarching goal in constructing this sacred place.

Conclusions

This paper set out to explore the unique location of Maqām Nabī Mūsá and to explain it in relation to Sultan Baybars's general anti-Christian policy, entangled with his ambition to present himself as a just and devout Muslim ruler. To that end, I started with a discussion of the inherent contested nature of sacred places. This places the act of locating Nabī Mūsá in context and vividly explains why sacred places are by their very essence a contested category. They are replete with symbolism and meaning which are up for grabs by forces struggling over ownership, heritage, memory, and surely their right of access. This was followed by a geographic analysis of the site and the intriguing aspects of its location. After presenting the problematics involved in this location, mostly its inaccessibility and very limited visibility, a short assessment of Baybars's Islamization policy and prominent anti-Christian attitude followed. In the final part of the paper, the specific location of Nabī Mūsá was explored by utilizing GIS. This allows an understanding of Baybars's motivation to locate the (contested) tradition of Nabī Mūsá at this specific location. It is surely part of this energetic

[36] Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints,* 195–96. See also Adel Manna, "*The Development of the Cultural Identity of Arab Society in the Land of Israel," in The History of the Land of Israel: Late Ottoman Period [in Hebrew], ed.* Yehoshua Ben-Arieh *and* Israel Bartal *(Jerusalem, 1983), vol. 8:2, 178–80.*

[37] Mujīr al-Dīn, *Uns al-jalīl,* 2:87.

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sultan's project of Islamization of the Holy Land through numerous constructions of sacred places.

As is well known, the construction of sacred places was part and parcel of Baybars's general anti-Crusader policy. This was executed through a multifaceted struggle, involving military, economic, and indeed religio-symbolic, undertakings. That said, Maqām Nabī Mūsá is a fascinating case in point of a much larger and more fundamental discussion, which is the making of the sacred. The construction of sacred places involves a move from the intangible (oral or written tradition) to the tangible, that is, the emergence of a concrete place within a very specific geography. Put differently, the process of constructing sacred landscape is inexorably linked to the inquiry into how places become sacred. Like with other places, the casting in stone of abstract ideas, even if they are in dispute, is a crucial step toward the acceptance of a specific tradition. The construction of the Dome of the Rock ultimately ended the lengthy debate among scholars as to the exact destination of the Prophet's night journey. The same is true for the construction of the Holy Sepulcher, and indeed many other Christian sacred places that emerged in the Holy Land mostly during the fourth to sixth centuries. Any disputes, conflicts, and competitions regarding the exact location of a certain site cannot, in the long run, stand against the materialization of the mythology concerned. Once this new reality emerges, the rituals performed therein will ultimately cement and validate this specific interpretation. By constructing Maqām Nabī Mūsá, Baybars positioned himself in a clear and unequivocal fashion as a champion of Islam in the region. Building the maqām in this specific location conveys a very clear and challenging message to the Christians as to the validity of their tradition regarding Moses's grave. Moreover, it is also a strong statement of Islamic ownership and hegemonic position in the Holy Land, forged in a time of ongoing struggle with Christian forces there.



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Figure 1: The area between Nabī Mūsá and Mount Nebo. The red dot represents Nabī Mūsá, and the blue dot is Mount Nebo. In between the two, one observes the northern tip of the Dead Sea, and to its north, the Valley of Jericho.

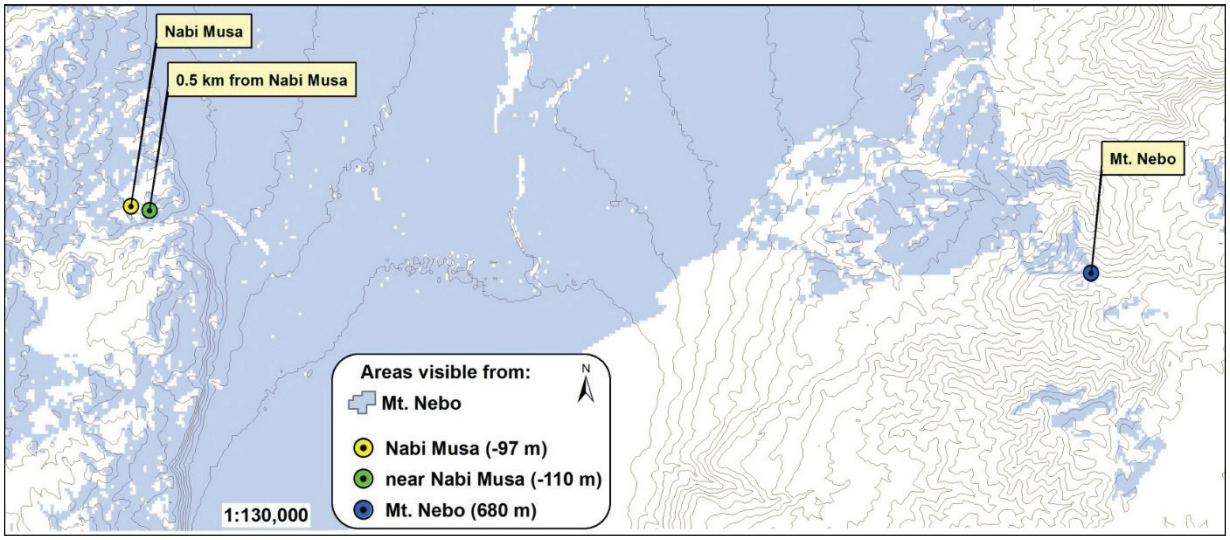


Figure 2: Areas visible from Mount Nebo.

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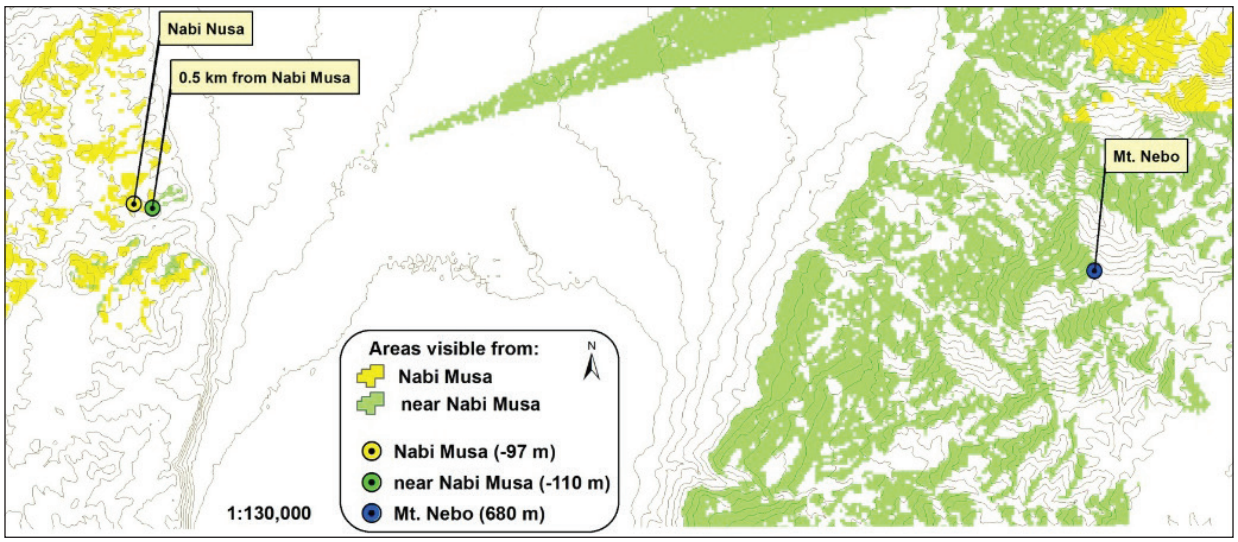


Figure 3: Areas visible from Nabī Mūsá

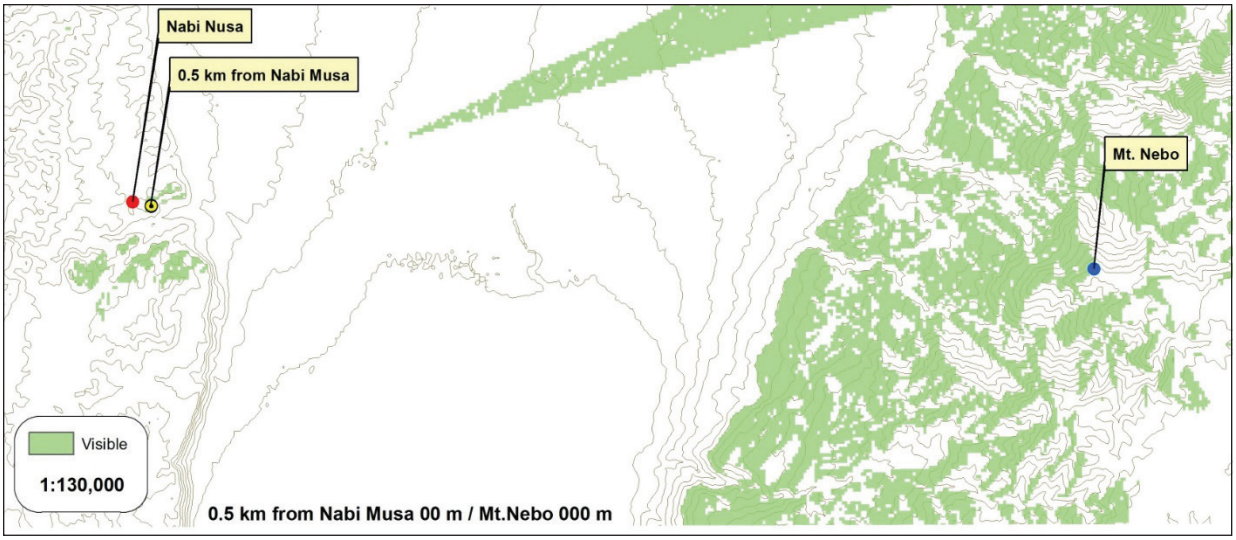


Figure 4: Visibility lines from Mount Nebo and Nabī Mūsá

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Kate Raphael, Mustafa Abbasi, and Eran Meir
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Between Safad and Damascus: Excavations at the Village of Naʿarān and Mamluk and Early Ottoman Rural Settlements in the Golan

Introduction

The preservation of both the landscape and archaeological sites make the Golan a unique case study for examining rural life in the Mamluk and early Ottoman periods.[1] A map of the Golan's spatial settlement in the Mamluk period was first made after a detailed archaeological survey was conducted by Moshe Hartal and Yigal Ben Ephraim, who identified 191 sites (Map 1).[2] Their work clearly shows that the Mamluk period was the third most densely settled period in the Golan Heights, after the Late Roman and Byzantine periods.[3]

Although the number of sites is of prime importance, it is not sufficient for determining the degree of prosperity, as some archaeologists have suggested, or a general decline, as some historians have described.[4] This paper presents our preliminary historical research regarding rural settlement in the Golan and the results of our archaeological excavation at Naʿarān, a village located in the central Golan (Map 1, no 47) on the road that connected Safad and Damascus, approximately 7 km from the Mamluk *khān* and bridge of Banāt Yaʿqūb.[5]

We would like to thank the anonymous reviewer for their advice. We are currently working on a detailed monograph that will bring together all the material from the excavation, and there we will incorporate and address the reviewer's helpful remarks. This research was funded by the Israel Science Foundation grant number 255/21.

[1] The Golan in this paper refers to the area that stretches from Mount Hermon in the north to the Yarmuk River in the south, bounded by the Rift Valley in the west and the Ruqad River and volcanic mounds in the east. When examining the early Ottoman *defters,* the region includes the eastern *nahiye* of Jadūr, which stretches about 25 km further east of the volcanic mounds.

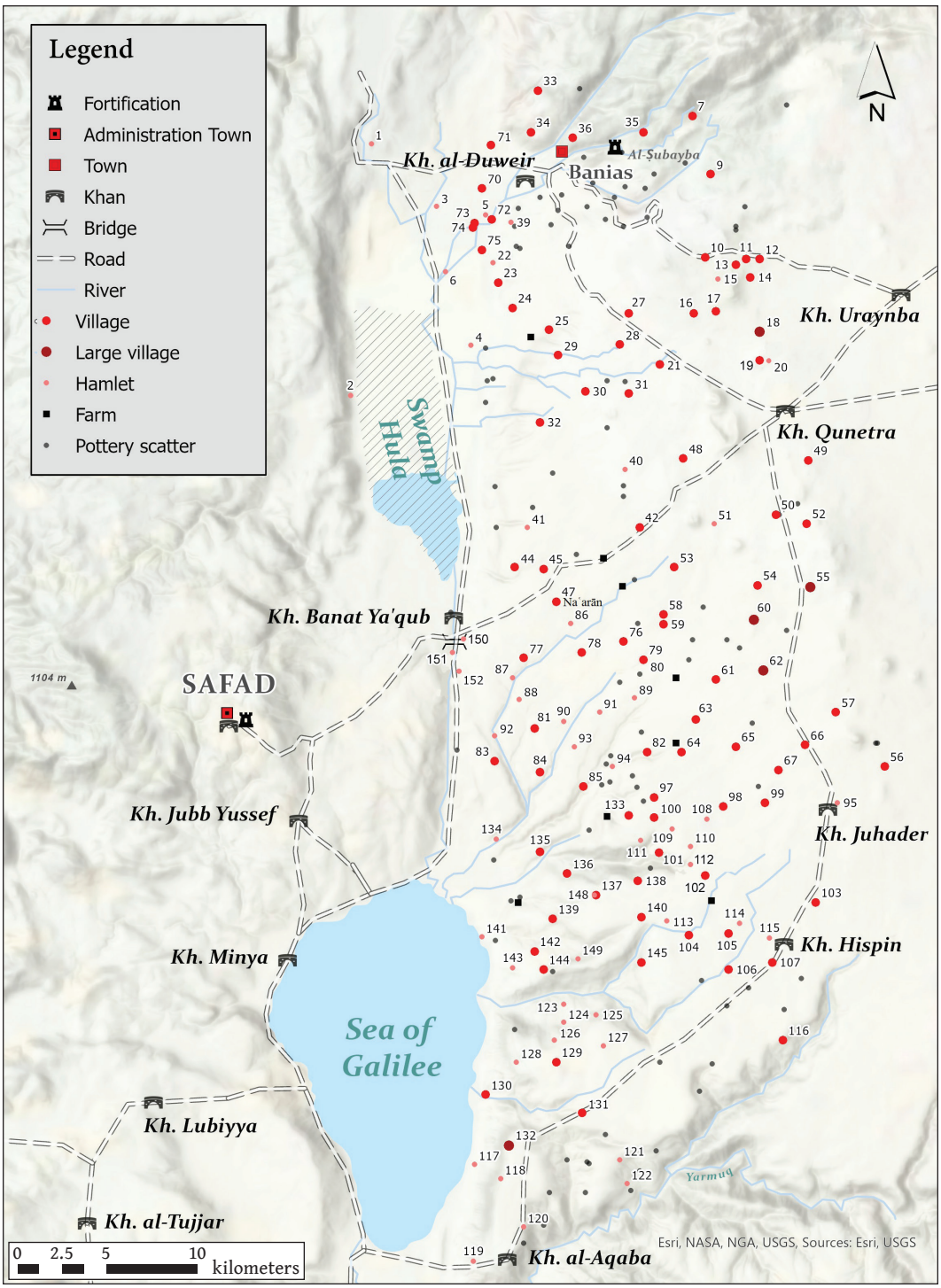
[2] Mamluk map of the Golan (map 18) produced by M. Hartal and Y. Ben Ephraim, published only at the Israel Antiquities Authority Survey website: https://survey.antiquities.org.il/#/Golan.

[3] Moshe Hartal, "Archaeological Survey as a Source for the History of the Golan," *Qadmoniot* 148 (2014): 80–89; Moshe Hartal and Yigal Ben Ephraim, The IAA Archaeological Survey of Israel Givat Orcha map 36/3 (http://survey.antiquities.org.il/#/MapSurvey/28), 2012.

[4] See section "Crisis in the Late Mamluk Period?" below.

[5] The project is funded by the Israel Science Foundation (Grant number 255/21) and is conducted by the authors, Tel Hai Academic College, Upper Galilee, Israel.

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Map 1. Mamluk sites according to the IAA Golan Survey. (Map by Yoav Yoskovich)

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The Geopolitical Background

The territorial continuity extending from Egypt to Syria that was established by the Mamluks was a new configuration that lasted throughout the entire Mamluk period.[6] The geopolitical changes brought about by the Mamluks changed the Golan from a frontier region to a centrally-located peaceful region, as the Mamluk Sultanate's frontier shifted approximately 700 km east to the Euphrates.[7] The Golan was thus no longer on the fringe of two rival entities;[8] raids previously carried out by Ayyubid and Frankish forces[9] throughout the twelfth century, which may have slowed growth and development, belonged to the past.

A significant turning point in our understanding of the Golan came with the correction of a longstanding error regarding the history of al-Ṣubaybah fortress (Qalʿat Namrūd), situated at the foot of Mt. Hermon. Amitai and Ellenblum showed that the fortress was founded by the Ayyubids. After it was besieged and destroyed by the Mongols (1260), it was rebuilt on a grand and lavish scale by the Mamluks.[10] Hartal's excavations and the discovery of the monumental inscription in al-Ṣubaybah demonstrated the fortress's impact on settlement patterns, security, and economic development in the Golan. In 1260 al-Ṣubaybah, Banias, and the region's villages were granted by Sultan Baybars (r. 1260–77) to Badr al-Dīn Bilik al-Khaznadār, the sultan's viceroy. The potential profits to be gained made the Golan a valuable and generous gift. The local population were the first to benefit.[11] The region's security encouraged trade and the population's

[6] Carl F. Petry, *Protectors or Praetorians? The Last Mamluk Sultans and Egypt's Waning as a Great Power* (New York, 1994), 35.

[7] Reuven Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-Ilkhanid War 1260–1281* (Cambridge, 2004), 202–7; Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages, The Early Mamluk Sultanate 1250–1382* (London, 1986).

[8] Meron Benvenisti, *The Crusaders in the Holy Land* (Jerusalem, 1976), 147–52; Ronnie Ellenblum, *Crusader Castles and Modern Histories* (Cambridge, 2007), 146–64.

[9] Malcolm Barber, "Frontier Warfare in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem: The Campaign of Jacob's Ford, 1178–79," in *The Crusades and their Sources: Essays Presented to Bernard Hamilton,* ed. J. France and W. G. Zajac (Singapore, 1989), 9–22; Nicholas Morton, *The Crusader States and their Neighbours* (Oxford, 2020), 20.

[10] Ronnie Ellenblum, "Who Built Qalʿat al-Ṣubayba?" *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 43 (1989): 103–12; Paul Deschamps, *Les Chateâux des Croisés en Terre Sainte II: La défense du royaume latin de Jérusalem,* vol. 2. (Paris, 1939); Moshe Hartal, *The al-Subayba (Nimrod) Fortress: Towers 11 and 9* (Jerusalem, 2001); Reuven Amitai, "An Arabic Inscription at al-Ṣubayba (Qalʿat Namrūd) from the Reign of Sultan Baybars," in ibid., 109–23; Kate Raphael, *Muslim Fortresses in the Levant, Between Crusaders and Mongols* (London, 2001).

[11] Hartal, *The al-Subayba;* Amitai, "An Arabic Inscription"; Barbé Hervé, "Le château de Safed et son territoire a l'époque des Croisades" (Ph.D. dissertation, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2010); Kate Raphael and Mustafa Abbasi, "The Galilee Villages during the Mamluk and

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lives and property were better protected due to the fortress's garrison and the government's interests in protecting traffic along the *barīd* road that crossed the Golan. The Turkmens, who had settled in the region in the twelfth century, might have further reinforced the Mamluk garrison.[12]

Although Baybars built Jisr Banāt Yaʿqūb,[13] and four caravansaries were gradually erected in the Golan by the governors of Damascus and private entrepreneurs,[14] current research has shown that the central regime did not invest in local dams, mills, markets, or village mosques.

The social and legal status of the *fallāḥīn* (farmers) under the Mamluks is still under debate. While some were not the owners of the land but could lawfully enjoy their harvest after paying taxes, others were probably serfs tied to the land. Nevertheless, villagers were also organized, sharing grazing land and distant fields[15] and combating government bureaucracy.[16] In contrast to the *fallāḥīn,* the livelihood of the *ʿurbān* (nomads) was based on private ownership of livestock and cooperative ownership of pasture. Most of the meat in the city markets was supplied by nomads. As long as the two populations were governed by an able ruler, the region could thrive.[17]

Early Ottoman Periods (1260–1746): A Smooth Transition or a Full-Scale Crisis?" *Cathedra* 174 (2022): 39–62.

[12] David Ayalon, "The Wafidiya in the Mamluk Kingdom," *Islamic Culture* 25 (1951): 89–104; Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks;* Nakamachi Nobutaka, "The Rank and Status of Military Refugees in the Mamluk Army: A Reconsideration of the *Wāfidiyah,*" *Mamlūk Studies Review* 10, no.1 (2006): 55–81.

[13] In a recent lecture given by Katia Cytryn-Silverman a question has been raised regarding the construction of the Banāt Yaʿqūb bridge by Baybars.

[14] Yigal Tepper and Yotam Tepper, "The 'Horses' Barid' Dated to the Era of the Mamluk Sultan Baybars," *Jerusalem and Eretz Israel* 1 (2003): 123–52; Katia Cytryn-Silverman, *The Road Inns (Khāns) in Bilād al-Shām* (Oxford, 2010); Andrew Petersen, "Medieval Bridges of Palestine," in *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras* VI, ed. Urbain Vermeulen and Kristof D'hulster (Leuven, 2010), 291–306; Andrew Petersen, *Gazetteer of Buildings in Muslim Palestine, Part 1* (Oxford, 2001), 182–89.

[15] Yehoshua Frenkel, "Preliminary Remarks on the Agrarian History of Syria during the Early Mamluk Period," *Horizons in Geography* 44–45 (1996): 97–113.

[16] Yehoshua Frenkel, "Rural Society in Mamluk Palestine," *Cathedra* 77 (1995): 17–38; idem, "Villages, the Religious Establishment and the Mamlūk Military Aristocracy: Notes on the History of Migration and Land Tenure in Mamlūk Bilād al-Shām," *Cathedra* 173 (2019): 37–59.

[17] Rudi Paul Linder, *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia* (Bloomington, 1983); Anatoly M. Khazanov, *Nomads and the Outside World,* tr. J. Crookenden (Cambridge, 1984); Emanuel Marx, "Political Economy of Middle Eastern and North African Pastoral Nomads," in *Nomadic Societies in the Middle East and North Africa, Entering the 21st Century,* ed. Dawn Chatty (Leiden, 2006), 78–97.

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Crisis in the Late Mamluk Period?

Some historians argue that the *iqṭāʿ* system, stagnation in farming technology, government monopoly over certain produce, heavy taxes, and the bubonic plague hindered development throughout the Mamluk Sultanate and led to a general decline in most agricultural areas during the mid-fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[18] Damascus and the Hauran were struck by the plague five times (1348, 1372–73, 1362–64, 1375–76, and 1411). According to Dols, one third to one half of the population in the Middle East perished from plague.[19] The gradual decline that archaeologists identified at Banias, the Golan's administrative center in the fifteenth century, might have been caused by the reoccurrence of plague.[20]

Carl Petry is among the few historians who have raised doubts about the theory of the Mamluk Sultanate's decline in the fifteenth century: "So far, none has presented a definitive explanation for the alleged decline that sapped the energies of cultivators, artisans and merchants who yielded up the monies bolstering their regime's finances."[21] Bethany Walker's work on the late Mamluk period in Jordan demonstrates that although villages decreased in size and agricultural output was reduced, there is no evidence of a full-scale crisis. Some areas even show demographic and economic growth. The lack of uniformity, according to Walker, testifies to the importance and strong influence of local factors in determining the local situation.[22]

Naʿarān According to the Primary Sources

The village of Naʿarān is located in the central Golan (Map 1: no. 47). The site was occupied for 1500 years, with several long gaps. The Mamluk phase is just one level in the site that needs to be carefully identified and excavated to provide a view of the community members' personal lives. Our second objective was to

[18] Frenkel, "Villages, the Religious Establishment"; Elyahu Ashtor, *A Social and Economic History of the Near East in the Middle Ages* (London, 1976), 331; Zohar Amar, *Foodstuffs and Industrial Products Grown in the Land of Israel during the Middle Ages* (Jerusalem, 1996), 10–11; idem, *Agricultural Production in the Land of Israel during the Middle Ages* (Jerusalem, 2000), 346–55; Joseph Drory, "Eretz Israel in the Mamluk State (1260–1516)," in *The History of Eretz Israel under the Mamluk and Ottoman Rule (1260–1804),* ed. Amnon Cohen (Jerusalem, 1990), 24, 44.

[19] Michael Dols, *The Black Death in the Middle East* (Princeton, 1977); Stewart Borsch, *The Black Death in Egypt and England* (Austin, 2005).

[20] Vasilius Tzaferis and Rina Avner, "Excavations at Banyas," *Qadmoniot* 23 (1990): 110–14.

[21] Petry, *Protectors or Praetorians,* 103.

[22] Bethany J. Walker, "The Northern Jordan Survey 2003—Agriculture in Late Islamic Malka and Hubras Villages: A Preliminary Report of the First Season," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 339 (2005): 67–111.

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try to situate the village within the larger historical picture of regional and international events that occurred in the sultanate. Unlike most villages, Naʿarān is mentioned in the literary sources several times due to its geographic location on the main road to Damascus. William of Tyre (d. 1186) mentions a place called Nuara, where the Damascenes and the Franks met (1140) to combat Zengi, who had threatened Damascus. Prawer identified Nuara with Naʿarān.[23] The establishment of the branch of the *barīd* between the *mamlakah* (province) of Safad and Damascus turned this route into a busy highway.

Al-ʿUmarī (1301–49) was the first Mamluk author to mention Naʿarān: "Regarding the [roads] that branched out from the center of Damascus, to Burayj al-Falūṣ, to Uraynbah, to Naʿarān, to Safad."[24]

Al-Qalaqshandī (1355–1418) repeats al-ʿUmarī but calls this branch the Safad Road *(ṭarīq Ṣafad).*[25]

Ibn Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī (1410–68), who was born and educated in Jerusalem, served al-Ashraf Barsbāy (r. 1422–38) in Egypt, but spent most of his career in Syria, where he held the position of deputy *(nāʾib)* in Karak, Malaṭya, and Jerusalem. For three consecutive years he served as leader of the pilgrim caravans. Although he retired from the Mamluk administration in 1453, he continued to consult with the sultan and participated in diplomatic missions.[26] Due to his active service in the provinces of Syria, he might have been better acquainted than others with the geography and the administrative layout of the region. Al-Ẓāhirī provides important additional details:

> As for the province of Naʿarān, it is exceptional, with many arduous roads. The region's largest town is Naʿarān. It is said that it has more than 160 villages. It is also a county of Damascus.[27]
>
> As for what lay between Damascus and Safad, from it to al-Burayj, then to al-Qalūs (al-fulūṣ?), then to al-Uraynbah, then to Naʿarān, then to Jubb Yusūf, then to Safad.[28]

[23] William of Tyre, *The Deeds Beyond the Sea,* tr. E. A. Babcock and A. C. Krey (New York, 1943), 2:106; Joshua Prawer, *A History of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Jerusalem, 1971), 1:243.

[24] Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyá ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, *Al-Taʿrīf fi al-muṣṭalaḥ al-sharīf,* ed. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Shams al-Dīn (Beirut, 1988), 250.

[25] Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshá fī ṣināʿat al-inshāʾ* (Cairo, 1915–22), 14:382.

[26] Julien Loiseau, "Ibn Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 3rd ed., http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_32237; Ghent University Mamluk Prosopography Project entry for Khalīl b. Shāhīn al-Shaykhī, https://ihodp.ugent.be/mpp/actor-khalīl-b.-shāhīn-al-shaykhī.

[27] Khalīl ibn Shāhīn al-Ẓahirī, *Kitāb Zubdat Kashf al-Mamālik* (Cairo, 1988), 41.

[28] Khalīl ibn Shāhīn al-Ẓahirī, *Kitāb Zubdat Kashf al-Mamālik* (Paris, 1894), 120.

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Ibn al-Jīʿān (d. 1480), whose book focuses on the voyage of the Mamluk sultan al-Ashraf Qāytbāy (r. 1468–96) to the fortresses on the Euphrates River, writes:

> And [the noble retinue] stopped at [Jisr Yaʿqūb], by the river bank which links to Birkat Qadas. The amir Bard Bek held a great banquet there. Between this station *(maḥaṭṭah)* and Damascus there are six relay stations *(burud):* al-Murayj, Saʿsaʿ, al-Uraynbah, al-Qunaytrah, Naʿarān, and Jisr Yaʿqūb.[29]

Ibn al-Jīʿān is the only source that states that Naʿarān had a relay station *(maḥaṭṭah).*[30] Finding this relay station became one of the excavation's primary goals; it turned out to be considerably more difficult than we expected.

Thus, according to the most detailed account, by the first half of the fifteenth century Naʿarān had developed into an administrative town with 160 villages under its jurisdiction; i.e., 45% of the total number of villages in the Golan. According to al-Ẓāhirī, the remaining 55% of the villages (200) were under the jurisdiction of the city of Banias.[31]

The Correlation between the Archaeological Evidence and the Written Sources

As mentioned earlier, Hartal and Ben Ephraim published a survey of 191 Mamluk sites. Mechael Osband and Haim Ben-David reexamined the pottery from the Golan survey and concluded that the number of Mamluk sites was 303.[32] While the archaeologists found it difficult to define the Mamluk sites (hamlets, farmsteads, or villages), al-Ẓāhirī clearly states there were 360 villages (قرية). This supports the survey results and confirms Hartal and Ben Ephraim's conclusion that the region was densely settled during the Mamluk period.

Since al-Ẓāhirī provides a picture that dates to the first half of the fifteenth century, it is possible that the waves of plague did not reduce the number of vil-

[29] Ibn al-Jīʿān, *Al-Qawl al-mustaẓraf fī safar mawlānā al-Malik al-Ashraf,* ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī (Tripoli, 1984), 91.

[30] For an analysis of this text, see Cytryn-Silverman, *Road Inns,* 106.

[31] Al-Ẓāhirī, *Zubdat Kashf al-Mamālik* (1894), 54.

[32] Hartal, "Archaeological Survey," 88. Following the excavation of the Mamluk level at Majdulīyah, Dr. Mechael Osband and Professor Chaim Ben-David from Kinneret Academic College reviewed data from the IAA Golan survey and the unpublished data (the material was provided by Hartal and Ben-Ephraim). A reexamination of the pottery from the survey showed Mamluk sites numbered 303. We would like to thank both for forwarding this information to us. Chaim Ben-David and Mechael Osband, "Mamluk-Period Settlement in the aʿamāl (Regions) of Bānyās, ěs-Saara and Nawā," *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 139 (2023): 113–38.

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lages but may have reduced the population in each village. This is, however, a crude supposition that has no further support.

In 1535, eighteen years after the Ottoman conquest, Naʿarān is registered in the *Mufassal Tahrīr Defteri* (detailed survey registers) carried out in the provinces of al-Shām al-Sharīf (Damascus) by Suleiman I (r. 1520–66). Under the Ottomans, the Golan was divided into three *nahiye*s: Shaʿarah, Hulah, and Jadūr. Naʿarān belonged to the first *nahiye*. The village was defined as a *timar* (small military fief) and belonged to ʿAlāʾ-Sayyid Şhihābü'd-dīn bin Sayyid Tācü'd-Dīn al-Ḥüsaynī er-Rufāʿī.[33] According to the document, it grew 5 *gharārah* of wheat (8,000 kg) and 5 *gharārah* of barley (8,000 kg). Its summer crops were valued at 300 *akçe* (the main silver coin in the Ottoman empire). Its income from goats and honey was 100 *akçe*. The *fallāḥīn* who cultivated the land paid 1300 akçe to the owner. In addition, they also paid the owner of the land a tithe of 500 *akçe*.[34] The village had 15 households and its own imam. For the sake of comparison, the two largest villages in the Golan had 64 and 54 families respectively. The total number of villages in the Golan had plummeted to 77.[35]

Previous Archaeological Research

Schumacher, who produced the first modern map of the Golan, visited the site of Naʿarān in 1897 and 1913, documenting Greek inscriptions, crosses carved in stone, and the Bedouin community who lived on the ruins.[36] Shmariya Gutman and Dan Urman surveyed the site in 1967–69. Urman suggested that the large complex next to the village was a medieval *khān*.[37] Dauphin, Gibson, and Schonfield, who studied Byzantine settlements in the Golan in the late 1970s, suggested that the complex was a Byzantine monastery that later served as a *khān*.[38] Hartal and Ben Ephraim surveyed the site in 1983 and 1995. Their methodical

[33] We have no further information about the owner of the village.

[34] Yayına Hazırlayanlar, Ahmet Özkılınç Ali Coşkun, and Abdullah Sivridağ, *401 numaralı Şam livâsı mufassal tahrîr defteri (942/1535),* Series T. C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı yayın nu. 118, 119, Defter-i Hâkânî dizisi 17 (Ankara, 2011), 1:26, 346.

[35] Ibid., 338–69.

[36] Gutlive Schumacher "Notes from Jadur," *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement* 29, no. 3 (1897): 195–96.

[37] Robert C. Gregg and Dan Urman, *Jews, Pagans and Christians in the Golan Heights: Greek and other Inscriptions of the Roman and Byzantine Eras* (Atlanta, 1996), 10–12.

[38] Simon Gibson and Claudine Dauphin, "Exploring Ancient Settlements and Landscapes in the Golan," *Cathedra* 73 (1984): 10–12; Claudine M. Dauphin and Jeremy J. Schonfield, "Settlements of the Roman and Byzantine Periods on the Golan Heights: Preliminary Report on Three Seasons of Survey (1979–1981)," *Israel Exploration Journal* 33 (1983): 197–205.

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collection and analysis of pottery showed that the site was settled during the Mamluk period.[39]

The 2022 Excavation at Naʿarān

The village covers circa 30 dunams. At the northwestern edge there is a cemetery with a few Byzantine and modern Muslim tombstones. A walk through the village alleys reveals a mix of ancient and modern building materials (iron and cement) with no apparent order. Column drums, capitals, and stone blocks decorated with crosses, rosettes, and other symbols are found in some of the courtyard houses, as well as animal pens, and the traditional Hauranian-style houses.[40] Some of the houses still stand to their full height. A spring shaded by large fig trees flows at the southeastern edge of the village. Remnants of steps lead to a building that may have served as a bathhouse in the Byzantine period. The Mamluk phase in the site is not easily recognizable, due to the recycling of building materials and the ongoing use of the same building methods in the subsequent period.

In the summer of 2021, a spark that accidently blew from a beekeeper's smoke gun set fire to the site. The fire, however, provided a unique opportunity to survey and photograph the village with a drone unhindered by the vegetation that is normally waist high.

Whereas Byzantine pottery was found almost throughout the entire site, Mamluk pottery could only be found on the crown of the hill and its eastern slopes (Fig. 1). Although the quantity of Mamluk pottery collected in this area was impressive, the only way of gauging the length of the Mamluk settlement and receiving answers as to who founded the houses and lived in them was to excavate a house all the way down to its foundations. We were also determined to try to answer a question regarding the large complex outside the village: was this a *khān* or just a station along the *barīd*?

The Hauran-Style House on the Hill (Area C)

During the survey, we identified at the top of the hill a Hauranian-style house with an entrance, three pillars, and a capital decorated with a crude tree of life

[39] Hartal and Ben Ephraim, Naaran site number 53 Ashmura Map (15) (2014), https://survey.antiquities.org.il/#/MapSurvey/1113.

[40] Moshe Hartal, "The Hauran Style Architecture," in *Rafid on the Golan: A Profile of a Late Roman and Byzantine Village,* ed. Shimon Dar, Moshe Hartal, and Eitan Ayalon (Oxford, 2006), 7–11; Howard C. Butler, *Ancient Architecture in Syria: The Southern Hauran,* Publications of the Princeton University Archaeological Expedition to Syria, part IIA2 (Leiden, 1909); idem, *Ancient Architecture in Syria: Umm idj-Djimal,* PPUAES IIA3 (Leiden, 1913).

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Fig. 1. Aerial view of Naʿarān (summer 2022). (Photo by Dan Malkinson)

and a cross. The entire structure was buried under a massive pile of long basalt beams. The scale of the collapse suggests that the building originally had two floors. Once the site was cleared, the plan could be seen. It consisted of a hall (12 m x 11 m) with a long narrow room (8 m x 12 m) at its side (Fig. 2). Similar designs can be found in other houses throughout the Golan.

After a week-long excavation of the site, we uncovered a dirt floor with a military blanket, two enameled bowls, and a mess tin that dated to the 1960s. The amount of modern glass, tin cans, and ammunition indicated the house was used by both Syrian and Israeli armies. Forty centimeters below this modern floor we abruptly shifted from the late twentieth century to the Mamluk period. At the base of the pillar lay a complete Mamluk oil lamp (Fig. 3). The Mamluk floor had burnt patches and fragments of plaster. A dark green sgrafitto glazed bowl (Fig. 4) and a Mamluk coin dated to 1300–99 were found on this floor. The floor foundation was made of field stones and a recycled Byzantine tombstone. The adjacent large hall had four arches built from well-dressed stones. The arches supported basalt roof beams. Stone and cement benches lined the walls,

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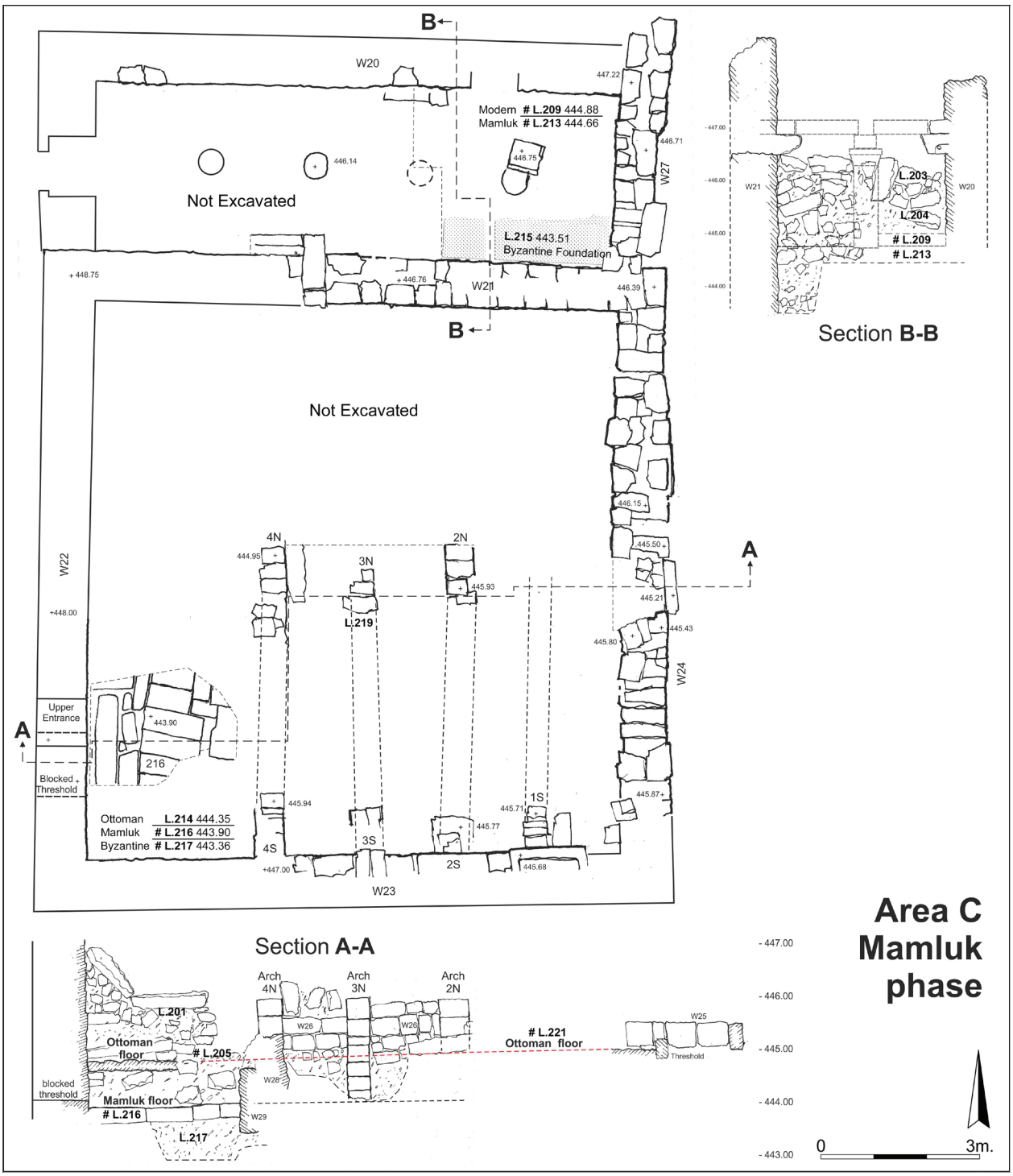


Fig. 2. Plan of the Hauranian house. (Jay Rosenberg)

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Fig. 3. Mamluk oil lamp. (Photo by Shai Scharfberg)

a common feature in rural architecture.[41] Fragments of clay tobacco pipes indicated that the hall, as we found it, dated to the late Ottoman period (eighteenth

[41] Bethany J. Walker, "Early Ottoman/Late Islamic/Post-Mamluk: What are the Archaeological Traces of the 16th Century in Syria?" in *The Mamlūk-Ottoman Transition: Continuity and Change in Egypt and Bilād al-Shām in the Sixteenth Century,* ed. Stephan Conermann and Gül Şen (Bonn, 2017), 355; idem, "The Phenomenon of the "Disappearing" Villages of Late Medieval Jordan, as Reflected in Archaeological and Economic Sources," *Bulletin d'études Orientales* (2012): 161–76; idem, "The Northern Jordan Project and the 'Liquid Landscapes' of Late Islamic Bilad al-Sham," in *Landscapes of the Islamic World: Archaeology, History, and Ethnography,* ed. Stephen McPhillips and Paul D. Wordsworth (Pennsylvania, 2016), 184–99; idem, *Jordan in the Late Middle Ages: Transformation of the Mamluk Frontier* (Chicago, 2011).

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Fig. 4. Mamluk glazed sgraffito bowl. (Photo by Shai Scharfberg)

to nineteenth centuries). Its arches, however, were constructed in the second half of the fourteenth century. Two coins—one roughly dated to 1400–1600, the other to the reign of Shaʿbān II (1363–77)—and fragments of glazed bowls provided a good date.[42]

[42] Copper alloy Mamluk coins do not always provide an exact date. Their inscriptions and the coin surface are often worn and almost impossible to read. Thus, the second coin was roughly dated to 1400–1600. The coins were cleaned by Orna Cohen and identified by Dr. Robert Kool, who heads the numismatic department at the Israeli Antiquity Authority.

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Was the house built during the late Mamluk period? To answer this, we proceeded with the excavation down to the foundations of the external walls. Fragments of Golan pitoi, cooking bowls, and storage jars, as well as two coins from the fourth and fifth centuries, dated the foundations to the Byzantine period. The house was abandoned in the seventh century and gradually collapsed over the next seven hundred years. It was rebuilt in the late Mamluk period in the traditional Hauranian style but was abandoned shortly after 1535 and occupied again only in the late Ottoman period. The village continued to thrive under the modern Syrian state until 1967.[43] The ruins were later used by the IDF for a short interval.

Was there a Khān at Naʿarān?

The *barīd* route and its stations were used first and foremost for military and government correspondence.[44] The *khān*s along the Safad-Damascus road that catered to merchants and travelers were built by private entrepreneurs about a century after the establishment of the *barīd*.[45]

Although the site is described as a stop along the *barīd,* Ibn al-Jīʿān is the only author who defines Naʿarān as a relay station *(burud).*[46] Schumacher writes that according to local traditions, Naʿarān served as an important way station.[47] Maʿoz concluded that the villagers built the large complex sometime after 1913 from stones collected in the ancient village and its surroundings.[48] Moshe Hartal and Yigal Ben Ephraim sided with Maʿoz.[49] Urman, who based his conclusions on pottery and an architectural analysis, remarks that "Near the hill, southwest of the village, stands a khan dating at least from the medieval period."[50]

[43] Yigal Kipnis, "The Profile of Settlement of the Syrian Golan Heights Prior to the Six Day War," *Cathedra* 116 (2005): map on page 136.

[44] Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks,* 74.

[45] For details on the *khān*s of Jubb Yūsuf, Jisr Banāt Yaʿqūb, Khisfīn, and Jūkhadār, see Cytryn-Silverman, *Road Inns,* 104, 106, 121, 123.

[46] Regarding the development of the *khān*s, roads, and infrastructure, as well as the architectural plan, see ibid.

[47] Gregg and Urman, *Jews, Pagans and Christians,* n. 11.

[48] Zvi Maʿoz, "Comments on Jewish and Christian Communities in Byzantine Palestine," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 117 (1985): 60–61.

[49] Moshe Hartal and Yigal Ben Ephraim, 'Naaran' Map 15 Ashmura, site 53. The Golan Archaeological Survey (2014). https://survey.antiquities.org.il/#/MapSurvey/1113/site/16453

[50] Gregg and Urman, *Jews, Pagans and Christians,* 109. The Naʿarān was surveyed also as part of Dan Urman's Ph.D. research, where it is mentioned in his catalogue of sites in the appendix: Dan Urman, "The Golan during the Roman and Byzantine Periods: Topography, Settlements, Economy" (Ph.D. thesis, New York University, 1979).

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Fig. 5. Aerial photograph of the *khān* (summer 2022). (Photo by Dan Malkinson)

Dauphin and Gibson concluded that the medieval *khān* was built on the remains of the Byzantine monastery.[51] In his book on roads and inns in Israel, Eliyahu Stern identifies this large complex as a Mamluk and Ottoman *khān*. According to Stern, the *khān* at Naʿarān was meant to replace an earlier *khān* at Qadariyah, approximately 4 km northeast of Naʿarān. Stern backed his conclusion with a description written in 1400 by the traveler Rabbi Yitzak Volfara.[52]

The large complex (46 m x 31.5 m) consists of an open rectangular courtyard surrounded by rooms on three sides and a long hall with stalls in the south (Fig. 5). The walls still stand to their full height. Its size and plan resemble a *khān*.[53]

[51] Gibson and Dauphin, "Exploring Ancient Settlements and Landscapes in the Golan," 7, 12; Dauphin and Schonfield, "Settlements of the Roman and Byzantine Periods," 204–5.

[52] Eliyahu Stern, *Caravansaries, Roads & Inns in Israel* ([Jerusalem], 1997), 136–37. Stern does not give the details of the source, and we never managed to locate it. Katia Cytrin-Silverman, who researched the Mamluk *khān*s in Israel, quotes and analyzes Ibn al-Jīʿān, but she does not include Naʿarān in her research: Cytryn-Silverman, *Road Inns,* 31; idem, "The Road Inns (Khans) in Eretz-Israel during the Mamluk Period," *Qadmoniot* 39 (2006): 66–77.

[53] Cytryn-Silverman, *Road Inns,* 184, plate 3.

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The foundations are built directly on the bedrock, that is ca. 50 cm from the surface. While it is close to the village, it is not a homogeneous part of it.

The northern half is a late nineteenth- to twentieth-century addition. The walls are built of roughly dressed basalt blocks, cement, Marseille tiles, plastered walls, iron bars, and rails. Soundings in the courtyard yielded pebbled and flagstone floors and a narrow water channel. The material from below the floors was predominantly modern with few Byzantine pieces and few glazed Mamluk sherds. The size of the modern compound and the octagonal cement fountain in the center suggest that it was the house of a prominent local figure. The earlier phases are difficult to distinguish.

The two rooms excavated on the southern side of the courtyard were built during the Byzantine period. Below their crude stone floors, we found a clean deposit of Byzantine pottery, four coins, and a seal dated to between the late third and seventh centuries. Modern pottery and glazed Mamluk and Ottoman bowls were found in the topsoil of both rooms.

The southern wing is an almost independent unit: a long hall (29 m x 6.2 m) supported by ten arches creating spacious individual stalls (6.2 m x 1.85 m). Narrow doorways (5.2 m x 1.62 m) are inserted in each arch. The roof is built with long basalt beams in the Hauranian style. The arches were packed with field stones in the twentieth century to strengthen the structure (Fig. 6). The excavation of two stalls yielded a mix of modern, Ottoman, and Mamluk unglazed coarse basins, glazed sgraffito, slip painted and monochrome bowls, a horizontal cooking pot handle, fragments of Rashayya ware, Marseille tiles, and porcelain bowls imported from Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The few indicative pieces from the foundations dated to the Mamluk and Byzantine periods. One Mamluk and one Late Roman coin were found, but neither was in clear archaeological context.

Using a great deal of caution, due to the fact that most loci were disturbed, we concluded that the southern wing divided into stalls and the rooms that open into the courtyard were founded in the Byzantine period and later resettled in the Mamluk period. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, an entirely new wing was added in the north. This conclusion follows those of Urman, Dauphin, and Gibson.

The Mamluk way station mentioned in the sources was probably a relatively modest building. It consisted of the long rectangular arched hall that may have served for stabling horses.

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Fig. 6. The stalls along the southern wing of the *khān*. (Photo by Shai Scharfberg)

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Summary

According to the coins and the pottery, Naʿarān was founded in the Byzantine period. The Mamluk period settlement was built towards the end of the fourteenth century on the Byzantine ruins. While the written sources state that it developed into a small town, the excavations display its last phase, when it was reduced to a small village. Not all the Byzantine houses at the site were rebuilt during the Mamluk period and there is no evidence of Mamluk settlement along the southeastern edge. The Mamluk period's domestic architecture at the site follows the Hauranian local tradition that had existed in the region since the first century CE. The houses are well built and constructed from recycled Byzantine stones. The community used common local pottery, well known from numerous sites across the country. It is an assemblage one expects to find in a village rather than a town. There were no imported vessels or luxury items. The number of coins is surprisingly low, indicating the community did not trade with the nearby markets or the merchants who traveled on the international road that passed through Naʿarān. This gap between the description provided in the sources and the archaeological finds is harder to explain. If Naʿarān was indeed a town in the late fourteenth century, its population must have shrunk rapidly during the late fifteenth century and the first decades of the sixteenth century. This conclusion is supported by the 1535 Ottoman tax book, eighteen years after the Ottoman conquest, which records only fifteen families living in the village.[54] Naʿarān does not appear in the tax books of the second half of the sixteenth century. Al-Khiyārī, who traveled through the region in 1672, describes a deserted village. Similar accounts are given by al-Nābulusī, who crossed the Golan in 1690, and Asʿad al-Luqaymī, who passed by Naʿarān in 1759. Though their accounts are very brief, al-Luqaymī does writes that the village was ruined by the plague.[55] The location of the village on a busy international road may have been a disadvantage in times of pestilence. The reoccurrence of the plague in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was apparently no less severe or frequent than when it first broke out.[56]

This argument is not convincing, however, since both the Galilee and Transjordan suffered similar disasters, but neither show dramatic changes. In both regions the number of villages remained fairly stable throughout the sixteenth

[54] Hazırlayanlar et al., *401 numaralı,* 1:346. Ibrāhīm ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Khiyārī, *Riḥlat al-Khiyārī, Tuḥfat al-Udabāʾ wa-Salwat al-Ghurabāʾ* (Baghdad, 1980), 387; ʿAbd al-Ghanī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Nābulusī, *Al-Ḥaḍrah al-unsīyah fī al-riḥlah al-Qudsīyah* (Beirut, 1991), 54.

[55] Muṣṭafá Asʿad al-Luqaymī, *Mawāniḥ al-uns bi-riḥlatī li-Wādī al-Quds* (Damascus, 2012), 265–66.

[56] In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Syria suffered eighteen outbreaks: Michael Dols, "The Second Plague Pandemic and its Recurrences in the Middle East 1347–1894," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 22 (1979), 169 n. 11, 176 n. 30.

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century.[57] Further analysis of the Ottoman tax books,[58] in fact, reveals the number of villages in the Golan remained low (between 66 and 78) and that the number of families in the villages had dropped by over 50% by 1565.[59] The reasons for this sharp decline are not at all clear. The excavations did not reveal signs of sudden human or natural destruction, and the sources do not point toward political turmoil or nomadic uprisings in the Golan or the larger region. At this point, we have no hard evidence or clue that explains this rather grim picture. Perhaps excavating one of the villages that existed throughout the sixteenth century and later and further examination of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century tax books will provide new data that will help in understanding these rapid changes.

[57] Walker, "Northern Jordan Survey," 67–111; idem, "Northern Jordan Project," 184–99; idem, *Jordan in the Late Middle Ages;* Raphael and Abbasi, "Galilee Villages," 39–62.

[58] Archives of the Ottoman Prime Ministry Office, Istanbul, *Tapu tahrir defterleri,* defter no. 263/1548; defter no. 257/1550; defter no. 430/1565.

[59] Ibid., defter no. 423/1565.

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Who Built Jisr (Banāt) Yaʿqūb over the Upper Jordan?

> *...And over this River there is a faire Bridge, the one end whereof is out of the Holy Land, the other in it.* (William Biddulph, 1600)[1]

Introduction

The crossing of the Upper Jordan River *(Nahr al-Sharīʿah)* to the north of the Sea of Galilee has always been of strategic importance for the inhabitants of the area. The well-known Acheulian site excavated since the 1930s has brought much attention to this location, which bridges the Dead Sea Rift.[2]

Later on, it was the excavation project at the Crusader fortress of Vadi Iacob (Chastelet according to William of Tyre, Meẓad ʿAteret in Hebrew, and Qaṣr ʿAtrah in Arabic)[3] that brought further attention to the historicity of the

Our heartfelt thanks extend to Prof. Amikam Elad of the Hebrew University for his invaluable assistance in researching relevant literary sources across various digital media platforms. We are also appreciative of Dr. Amir Mazor's efforts to enhance the literary evidence supporting the hypothesis presented in this article, despite encountering limited success in uncovering further mentions of the patronage of Banāt Yaʿqūb bridge. Our gratitude also goes to Idan Shaked, who actively participated in the fieldwork to inspect the remains and offered significant contributions based on his own research in this region and its northern vicinity. See I. Shaked, "The Settlements Pattern and the Road System in the Hula Valley During the 10th–13th Centuries" [in Hebrew] (unpublished M.A. thesis, Bar-Ilan University, 1998). Lastly, sincere thanks to Mr. Eli Satt, a member of Kibbutz Gadot, who provided valuable insights and data regarding the bridge under discussion. See his online publications: https://www.yoaview.com/Yoaview/SITE/?action=showobject&sn=2_873 and https://www.yoaview.com/Yoaview/SITE/?action=showobject&sn=2_864

[1] William Biddulph, "Part of another Letter of Master William Biddulph, from Jerusalem," in *Purchas his Pilgrimes in Five Bookes,* Part Two, Eighth Book, *Peregrinations and Travels by Land in Palestina, Natolia, Syria, Arabia, Persia, and Other Parts of Asia* (London, 1625), 1344–53.

[2] N. Goren-Inbar, "Gesher Benot Ya'aqov," in *Quaternary of the Levant: Environments, Climate Change, and Humans,* ed. Yehouda Enzel and Ofer Bar-Yosef (Cambridge, 2017).

[3] For the final report of this site's excavations, see K. Raphael, *The Excavations of the Templar Fortress at Jacob's Ford (1993–2009)* (Jerusalem, 2023). William of Tyre (d. 1186) was apparently the first to coin the name Chastelet: ibid., 2. On Qasr ʿAtrah, see also D. Pringle, *Secular Buildings in the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem: An Archaeological Gazetteer* (Cambridge, 1997), 85. See also R. Ellenblum, S. Marco, A. Agnon, T. Rockwell and A. Boas, "Crusader Castle Torn Apart by Earthquake at Dawn, 20 May 1202," *Geology* 26 (1998): 303–6.

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crossing of the Jordan in this area, which was witness in modern times—especially in the 1940s—to battles and settlement shifts.[4] This fortress was erected by the Knights Templar in 573/1178 in Muslim lands on the western side of the river to control Jacob's Ford (Vadum Iacob), and was destroyed by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn in 575/1179, eleven months after its construction had commenced, once negotiations to halt the works and maintain the status-quo *vis-à-vis* the passage to southern Greater Syria and the way to Egypt had failed.[5]

A now-destroyed stone bridge (figs. 1–5), located approximately one kilometer north of Meẓad ʿAteret (New Israel Grid 259099/768851, figs. 6–7),[6] has often been credited to the Mamluk sultan Baybars (r. 658–76/1260–77).[7] He is known to

[4]On the bombing and destruction of this bridge in 1946 by the Palmach, see U. Ofek, *Night of the Bridges* [in Hebrew] (Bene Brak, 1981) https://benyehuda.org/read/14096#%D7%92%D7%A9%D7%A8%D7%91%D7%A0%D7%95%D7%AA%D7%99%D7%A2%D7%A7%D7%91. On the shelling and eventual evacuation in 1948 of the moshava Mishmar haYarden on the western bank of the river, facing the bridge, see E. Lewin, "The Mental Cleavage of Israeli Politics," *Israel Affairs* 22, no. 2 (2016): 355–78 (especially 363–64).

[5]Raphael, *Excavations of the Templar Fortress,* 29–32.

[6]The few remains of the bridge are located 260 meters north of the modern steel bridge, erected just before the demolition of the former by the Syro-Ottoman Agricultural Company Ltd. in 1932. See fig. 8 for the exact location of the remains (labeled as number 1) as documented by M. Stekelis in 1937 (Israel Antiquities Authority/Mandatory Archive/SRF 76 (98/98) as part of his archaeological campaign in 1936–37 following the draining of the riverbed in 1933, towards the construction of the new bridge (M. Stekelis, "The Palaeolithic Deposits of Jisr Banāt Yaqūb," *Bulletin of the Research Council of Israel Section G* 9 [1960]: 61–90). The demolition of the ancient bridge has been attributed to "Jewish colonists," as claimed by A. Petersen in his "Medieval Bridges of Palestine" and repeated elsewhere, yet in fact it was recommended and coordinated by the British Government of Palestine. The full correspondence between 1932 and 1934 between the District Commissioner's Office (Northern District-Haifa), the Chief Secretary of the [Mandate] Government Offices in Jerusalem (C. J. Evans), and the Director of the Department of Antiquities (E. T. Richmond) is available in the archives of the Israel Antiquities Authority (also online). On 5 November 1932, H. H. Foot (then the acting district commissioner) wrote to the Director of Antiquities: "I confirm that the new bridge is being built at some little distance down stream [sic] from the present bridge by the Concessionaires of the Hulleh. The construction of this bridge has been ordained by Government under the terms of the Hulleh Concession. Full particulars may be obtained from the Director of Public Works." (IAA/Mandatory Archive/ATQ 428). On 5 February 1934, the Director of Public Works wrote an official letter to the Manager of the Syro-Ottoman Agricultural Company Ltd. (Ṣafad), which reads: "I am instructed to hand over the old bridge at Jisr Banat Yaʿqub to you for demolition, it being understood that you will: (a) Hand over all materials recovered from the demolition of the old bridge to the Engineer in Charge Nazareth district." Part of this correspondence has already been commented on and clarified by E. Satt in his online article "Benot Yaʿkov Bridge—Who Destroyed the Ancient Bridge?" http://www.yoaview.com/Yoaview/SITE/?action=showobject&sn=2_960.

[7]M. Saig, "The Organization of the Barid in the Latter Part of the Middle Ages" [in Hebrew] (unpublished M.A. thesis, Bar Ilan University, 1977), 94, does not refer specifically to Baybars but

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have built a series of bridges to enhance the road network within his territory. The available sources, however, do not mention his direct involvement in the construction of this particular bridge. On the other hand, we do learn that he crossed this bridge while on route to besiege Ṣafad.

This article brings to light a so-far overlooked piece of textual evidence dealing with the patronage of this bridge, placing its erection (or repair?) during the Ayyubid period. Despite being the sole source of information, it should not be overlooked but rather evaluated according to its face value and its historical-archaeological context.

Historical Background

Jacob's Ford/Vadum Iacob has, over the ages, been a crucial land bridge connecting the two sides of the Upper Jordan.[8] During the Crusader and post-Crusader periods, this was the main passage connecting Damascus and other important centers nearby with Ṣafad and Acre.[9]

Tradition has this location named after Jacob, as it was believed to be the "the Ford of Grief" *(makhāḍat al-aḥzān)* where he cried for his son Joseph,[10] even though many sources have acknowledged the impossibility of such an identification since Biblical Dothan—where the main events related to Joseph's destiny at the hands of his brothers took place—was in Samaria and not in the eastern Galilee.[11]

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generally to the Mamluk period, yet writes: "probably erected in the days of the Mamluks, as Jindās bridge [Ludd, erected by Baybars]."

[8] *Via Maris* is the ancient route that mostly followed the Mediterranean coastal plain until it turned east via the Jezreel Valley, and from the Sea of Galilee it continued north to cross the Upper Jordan, thus connecting Egypt to the northern regions of the ancient Middle East.

[9] For a concise background on this bridge, see R. Hartmann, "Ḏjisr Banāt Yaʿḳūb," *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 1st ed., http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2214-871X_ei1_SIM_2097; J. Sourdel-Thomine, "Djisr Banāt Yaʿḳūb," *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_2089.

[10] Yāqūt (Shihāb al-Dīn al-Ḥamawī al-Rūmī al-Baghdādī), *Kitāb muʿjam al-buldān,* ed. F. Wüstenfeld (Leipzig, 1866–73), 1:775.

[11] The denomination "Banāt Yaʿqūb," related to the bridge and to the fifteenth-century road-inn *(khān)* nearby, appears only from the seventeenth century or early eighteenth century. The Syrian mystic and traveler Muṣṭafá ibn Kamāl al-Dīn ibn ʿAlī al-Bakrī al-Ṣiddīqī (d. 1162/1749, on whom see C. Brockelmann, "al-Bakrī," *EI2,* https://doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_1114), traveling in 1710, writes in his *Al-Khumrah al-ḥasīyah fī al-riḥlah al-qudsīyah* (after G. Weigert, "Eigtheenth Century Travel Diary: From Damascus to Jerusalem" [in Hebrew], *Cathedra* 68 [1993]: 49–56): "...we came close to the bridge of Banāt Yaʿqūb...and we are next to a khān." "Banāt Yaʿqūb" also designates a few other sites in the vicinity, such as those referred to by V. Guérin in his *Description géographique, historique et archéologique de la Palestine* (*Galilée,* part 3/vol. 1) (Paris, 1880), 342–43, 350, 369) and repeated in the *Survey of Western Palestine:* "A little north of

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It is not clear if an actual bridge to allow wheeled vehicles and engines to cross the river was erected next to this ford; this is a matter yet to be explored. In any case, we do not hear about a bridge in this location in either early Islamic sources or in those relating to Crusader times.

On the other hand, the growing significance of the passage north of Vadum Iacob is underscored by its utilization by the Mamluk postal service *(barīd),* which linked Egypt and Syria and was established at the time of Baybars. While the primary route of this service predominantly traversed via Jisr al-Majāmiʿ, approximately 10 km south of the Sea of Galilee[12] and was known as the quickest means of connecting Egypt and Syria (typically a four-day journey on horse-

the bridge Guérin found a circular reservoir called Hummâm Benat Yakûb, the 'Bath of Jacob's daughters,' close to which are a few ruins on a hillock called Kh. el Hummâm. These names are not on the map [i.e., not in the PEF map Sheet IV from 1880; they do appear in Guérin's map from 1875]. Still farther north, Guérin came upon a tomb of circular form, built of basaltic stones, called the Kubûr Benât Yakûb, 'the Tombs of the Daughters of Jacob.' Here the Bedouins have hollowed out places where they store grain under the protection of the tomb. An adjacent hill is covered with tombs, and on another mound, in the midst of more tombs, the remains of some small houses. The legends of the bridge, the baths, and the tomb of Jacob's daughters seem to be entirely of Mussulman origin" (C. R. Conder and H. H. Kitchener, *Survey of Western Palestine* (London, 1881), 1:226. The same designation is attributed to a cave in Ṣafad: Mughārat Banāt Yaʿqūb (Conder and Kitchener, *Survey of Western Palestine,* 1:255). Charles Clermont-Ganneau, surveying Palestine in 1873–74, gives an explanation for the above designation, according to the legend of Nabī Ma'in (Benjamin, son of Jacob): "When Neby Ma'in died, his five sisters hastened to come from the Jisîr Benât Yaʿkûb, or 'Bridge of the Daughters of Jacob,' which is on the Jordan to the south of Lake Hûleh, in order to be present at his funeral. They all however died before reaching their destination, at different places in the neighbourhood, where their tombs are still the object of veneration." See Ch. Clermont-Ganneau, *Archaeological Researches in Palestine during the Years 1873–1874* (London, 1896), 2:78. For further insights and passages on the designation of the bridge but also on the identification of this region with the Biblical passages related to Jacob and Joseph, see R. Ellenblum, "Frontier Activities: the Transformation of a Muslim Sacred Site into the Frankish Castle of Vadum Iacob," *Crusades* 2, no. 1 (2003): 83–97. On the references of some of these locations to Jacob, see also Raphael, *Excavations of the Templar Fortress,* 1–2.

[12] A *markaz* (station) of the *barīd* was established at Jisr Majāmiʿ in the 1340s to ease the crossing over the River Jordan, located previously east of Baysān (Cytryn-Silverman, *Road Inns,* 59–61). On the postal system in the Islamic world in general, see A. J. Silverstein, *Postal Systems in the Pre-Modern Islamic World* (Cambridge, 2007); and more specifically on the Mamluk period, see J. Sauvaget, *La Poste aux Chevaux dans l'Empire des Mamelouks* (Paris, 1941), which includes a discussion on the various branches of the postal route, on which we will not dwell in this article. One will find a thorough description in al-ʿUmarī's *Al-Taʿrīf bi-al-muṣṭalaḥ al-sharīf,* ed. M. Ḥ. Shams al-Dīn (Beirut, 1988), 239–58 (including the description of the pigeon post and snow transportation), repeated by Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshá fī ṣināʿat al-inshāʾ,* ed. M. Ḥ. Shams al-Dīn (Beirut, 1987), 14:418ff. A French translation of the latter is in M. Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *La Syrie a l'époque des Mamelouks* (Paris, 1923), 239ff. See also K. Franz's recent article,

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back), the crossing at Jisr Yaʿqūb in the contemporary road network is also notable.[13]

By the mid-fourteenth century, Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī (d. 749/1349), in his administration manual *Al-Taʿrīf bi-al-muṣṭalaḥ al-sharīf,* refers to the route (and its stations, *marākiz*) for those coming from Damascus to Ṣafad as passing via Laghrān [*sic,* Naʿrān][14] and thus heading to the aforementioned bridge,[15] and in the 1480s Ibn al-Jīʿān, who wrote a travelogue of his journey with al-Ashraf Qāytbāy (r. 872–901/1468–96), mentions it as a relay-station *(markaz)* of the *barīd:*[16]

> And [the noble retinue] stopped at [Jisr Yaʿqūb], by the river bank which links to Birkat Qadas. And the amir Bardī Bek held a great banquet. And between this station *(maḥaṭṭah)* and Damascus are six relay stations *(burud):* al-Murayj [Burayj?], Saʿsaʿ, al-Uraynbah, al-Qunayṭrah, Naʿrān, and Jisr Yaʿqūb.

The above-mentioned relay station at Jisr Yaʿqūb most probably refers to the road-inn *(khān)* erected on the eastern bank of the river facing the bridge during the first half of the fifteenth century. The patron was a rich merchant named

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"Handlist of Stations of the Ayyubid and Mamluk Communication Systems," in *Egypt and Syria under Mamluk Rule,* ed. Amalia Levanoni (Leiden, 2022), 295–369.

[13] The fact that the bridge might have been repaired during the reign of Barqūq (r. 784–91/1382–89, 792–801/1390––99) emphasizes the importance of this crossing as an official route, but this repair has so far only been mentioned by Ch. Schefer, translator and editor of Bertrandon de la Broquière's *Le Voyage d'Outremer* (Paris, 1892), 52, n. 1 (his travels took place between 1432 and 1433), without any historical reference. There is a chance Schefer mixed up the repair of Majāmiʿ bridge with Jisr Yaʿqūb. In any event, this information was repeated (quoting la Broquière) by E. T. Richmond (IAA/Mandatory Archive/ATQ 428) in his letter of 1933 to the Chief Secretary of the Mandate Government Offices in Jerusalem, in his attempt to avoid the demolition of the bridge.

[14] This should be considered as al-ʿUmarī's misspelling (*Taʾrīf,* 250) (copied by al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ,* 428), as both in Khalīl al-Ẓāhirī (Ghars al-Dīn Khalīl ibn Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī, *Kitāb zubdat kashf al-mamālik wa-bayān al-ṭuruq wa-al-masālik,* ed. P. Ravaisse [Paris, 1894], 120) and in Ibn al-Jīʿān (see below, n. 16) it reads Naʿrān.

[15] Jisr Yaʿqūb is mentioned by the polymath Shams al-Dīn Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad Abī Ṭālib al-Anṣārī al-Ṣūfī al-Dimashqī (also known as Shaykh Ḥiṭṭīn, d. 1327 in Ṣafad), in his geographical treatise *Nukhbat al-dahr fī ʿajāʾib al-barr wa-al-baḥr* from 1300–23 when describing the course of the River Jordan. See *Nukhbat al-dahr,* ed. A. F. Mehren (Saint Petersburg, 1865), 107.

[16] Ibn al-Jīʿān, *Al-Qawl al-mustaẓraf fī safr mawlānā al-Malik al-Ashraf,* ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī (Tripoli, 1984), 91; translated into French by R. L. Devonshire, "Relation d'un Voyage du Sultan Qâitbây en Palestine et en Syrie," *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire* 20 (1922): 28.

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Ibn al-Muzalliq (d. 848/1444), who also built inns at Minyah on the northwestern bank of the Sea of Galilee and Qunayṭrah in the Golan Heights.[17]

The bridge was repaired in the eighteenth century by the governor of Acre, Aḥmad Jazzār Pasha. By the end of that century the bridge and *khān* next to it were the furthest point reached by Napoleon's troops during the siege of Acre. On 2 April 1799, the French attacked and drove away the Ottoman soldiers stationed at the *khān,* apparently also causing damage to the latter.[18]

Description of the Bridge and Modern Research

Jisr Yaʿqūb was originally constructed as a triple-arched structure in limestone, which has weathered over time and developed a gray hue due to natural decay.[19] The structure measures approximately 50 meters in length and 5.5 meters in width (fig. 9). Rectangular piers and abutments carried pointed arches and

[17] ʿAbd al-Qādir ibn Muḥammad al-Nuʿaymī al-Dimashqī, *Al-Dāris fī tārīkh al-madāris* (Beirut, 1990), 2:224; Cytryn-Silverman, *Road-Inns,* 31. Al-Nuʿaymī (d. 927/1520) writes: "...and he [Shams al-Dīn ibn al-Muzalliq] built lofty inns *(khānāt)* in Qunayṭrah, Jisr Yaʿqūb, al-Minyah, ʿUyūn al-Tujjār, on the route between Syria and Egypt. And he spent over a hundred thousand dinars on their erection. Inside each of these inns there is water. They are said to be of extreme beauty, in a way never surpassed by any king or caliph." In a personal communication (15 February 2024), Eli Satt from Kibbutz Gadot identified a spring located 200 meters southeast of the *khān* as the most probable water source.

[18] E. T. Richmond (IAA/Mandatory Archive/ATQ 428) (see n. 13), quoting U. J. Seetzen, *Reisen durch Syrien, Palaestina, Phoenicien, die Transjordan-Laender, Arabia Petraea und Unter-Aegypten* (Berlin, 1854), 1:341–42. The passage reads: "On the hilly bank on the west side of the bridge was a cluster of Arab tents where my Arab guide stood quietly. I walked across the bridge to the khān (Chân). The bridge is in very good condition, wide, has 3 arches, and I now found the width of the river to be 35 paces, although the bridge is almost half longer. At the west end of the bridge is a water mill. The khān on the other side lies on the high bank, about 100 paces from the bridge. It is built entirely of basalt stones, but inside almost completely ruined, which may have been partly due to the French under Bonaparte, one of whose corps attacked and drove away an Ottoman corps in the khān. There are a few soldiers here from the mutesellim of Ṣafad (Mützellim Szóffat), who leased the passage money to be collected here from the Pasha of Damascus. There is a miserable coffee shop and boutique with the most necessary foodstuffs. In the middle of the sizeable courtyard there is a destroyed water basin, which was built of beautiful basalt blocks and appears to be of old architecture. Since everything here is made of basalt, the bridge and the entire khān are also made of it. From the bridge to Lake Hule is about half an hour." Also quoted in A. Petersen, *A Gazetteer of Buildings in Muslim Palestine* (London, 2001), 182–83.

[19] Saig, in his abovementioned thesis on the *barīd* (n. 7), notes that originally the bridge crossing the Upper Jordan had only two arches, most probably a confusion on his part. Saig, "Barīd," 94. The gray hue of the building material led some of the nineteenth-century explorers such as Seetzen (see above) and Guérin (*Galilée,* 342) to describe the bridge as being built of basalt stones.

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their respective barrel vaults, which are set back some 35 cm from the edge of the piers. All arches consist of voussoirs joining at the mid-point and lack keystones. The central arch is wider than the side ones, which are slightly horseshoe-shaped. Cutwaters abut the piers on the upstream sides (figs. 10–11).

The modest width of the bridge allowed each of its piers and their respective vaults to be built as a single unit, with no need to move scaffolding (centering) or to reinforce inner seams with stone belts (unlike some more renowned bridges by Baybars; see below). Limestone blocks and ashlars covered the whole surface, concealing the *debesh* (soil mixed with undressed stones) used as infill. Many of the ashlars had drafted edges typical of Crusader monumental architecture (fig. 11), some still in situ these days (fig. 12).[20] The roadway (deck) rose towards the center (figs. 1–2), and was apparently topped by fieldstones packed in earth.

A fourth, round-shaped arch was added to the east in later times (figs. 2–4)[21] and also used local materials, including Crusader spolia.[22] A parapet made of small basalt blocks was added to the bridge sometime between 1912 and 1918

[20] It is worth mentioning that among the finds collected at the site of the bridge after its destruction in 1934 is a dressed basalt ashlar with a carved cross [fig. 13], though it may date from the Byzantine period. See IAA/Mandatory Archive/Jisr Banat Yaʿqub, SRF 76 (98/98).

[21] G. Dalman, *Palaestinajahrbuch (PJb) des Deutschen Evangelischen Instituts* 5 (1909): 19ff. (and E. T. Richmond in IAA/Mandatory Archive/ATQ 428, see n. 13, who quoted him) date the erection of the fourth arch to 1904. Following the testimony of the Swiss explorer J. L. Burckhardt from 1812 (J. L. Burckhardt, *Travels in Syria and the Holy Land,* ed. W. M. Leake [London, 1822], 315–16; repeated by La Broquière, *Le Voyage d'Outremer,* 52, n. 1; see also in Cytryn-Silverman, *Road-Inns,* 107), a fourth arch might have already existed in the early nineteenth century: "At thirteen hours is the bridge over the Jordan, called Djissr Beni Yakoub.... The bridge is of a solid construction, with four arches: on its E. side is a Khan, much frequented by travellers, in the middle of which are the ruins of an ancient square building constructed with basalt, and having columns in its four angles. The Khan contains also a spring." In a personal communication (13 February 2024) Eli Satt, a member of nearby Kibbutz Gadot and a researcher of the region, claimed that Burckhardt might have seen the bridge from afar and thought the shape of some overgrown vegetation to be an arch. Satt also appended a photograph by Dalman from 1905–8, where a bush between the second and third arch could have been misinterpreted as an extra arch. The present authors nevertheless still do not reject the possibility of an early date, especially as between Burkhardt's description and Dalman's photo there is a gap of ca. 15 years, during which that very bush might not be relevant. In addition, it is hard to believe that an explorer of Burckhardt's standards would be fooled by an illusion created by a bush. On the many readings on this meticulous explorer, see W. Y. Adams, "J. L. Burckhardt, Ethnographer," *Ethnohistory* 20, no. 3 (1973): 213–28, and C. Ansorge, "Study and Travel: John Lewis Burckhardt's Remarkable Journey Traced through Archives and Manuscripts in Cambridge University Library," *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 15, no. 3 (2018): 455–86.

[22] See Y. Stepansky's report on IAA Survey Map Rosh Pina (18), Benot Yaʿaqov Bridge, Jisr Banāt Yaʿqub (site 109), https://www.antiquities.org.il/survey/new/default_en.aspx?pid=447. See also A. Petersen, "Medieval Bridges of Palestine," in *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mam-*

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(fig. 10).[23] In 1918 the central (second) arch was blown-up by Ottoman forces attempting to slow down the British army on its way from Tiberias to Damascus (fig. 3). It was soon repaired by soldiers of the Australian expeditionary force.[24]

Little of the bridge remains: the landing of the modern eastern arch is still partly exposed, its arch possibly buried under the dirt; the springing of the second arch (originally the first) from the east is visible (figs. 4–5); on the western side it is possible to see some accumulation on the river bank, potentially hinting at remains of the western pillar.[25]

The bridge was documented by the Survey of Western Palestine in the late nineteenth century,[26] but it is not until 1919 that we get a detailed technical description (also relating to the abovementioned additions, as well as partial demolition from 1918), when the renowned historian of Islamic art K. A .C. Creswell visited the bridge after World War I:[27]

> A bridge of four arches, of which the first commencing from the W. end is of good masonry, the 2nd has been blown up, the 3rd resembles the first, and the fourth of wider span is braced from side to side by two tie bars with "S" ends and must be quite modern. The masonry of the 1st and 3rd arches is of fair sized blocks, many of which have rusticated centres and drafted edges. The stone has taken a pale golden-brown tint. The arches have a median joint. Between the first arch and the W. bank there are irregularities in the masonry, but elsewhere it appears to be uniform. The masonry, of fine large blocks, of the 1st arch is not carried right through, the lining of the tunnel being of smaller stones. There are two "V" shaped piers on the N. side, but where the third would be there is a long spit of land rendering a third less necessary. That part of the bridge above the 4th arch is narrower than the last. The parapet is modern, and is built of small blocks of basalt.

luk Eras VI, ed. U. Vermeulen and K. D'Hulster (Leuven, 2010), 295. The concrete landing of this fourth arch can still be seen today, hinting at the buried structure underneath.

[23] Satt suggests dating the east parapet to 1905–8, coinciding with the construction of the new arch, and the west parapet to a period before 1918, when the central arch was destroyed (personal communication, 15 February 2024). He draws upon the photograph by Dalman mentioned earlier, despite Dalman dating the addition of the arch to 1904. Based on this same photograph, however, the parapet over this addition appears to be of a different fabric from the arch, while the ancient bridge retains its original masonry without any additional basalt parapet.

[24] Satt, "Benot Ya'kov Bridge."

[25] Site last visited (Katia Cytryn) on 21 May 21 2023.

[26] Conder and Kitchener, *Survey of Western Palestine,* 1:206, 226.

[27] Quoted in Petersen, "Medieval Bridges," 295.

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As for the original structure, we must note the presence, as pointed out by Creswell, of "rusticated centres and drafted edges," and we agree with archaeologist Y. Stepansky, who surveyed the region, that this masonry most likely originates from the Crusader fortress downstream, as this is the typical masonry of the period (see below).

As pointed out above (n. 6) the ancient bridge was intentionally demolished in 1934, while a new steel bridge was erected to its south.

A Short Note on the Bridges by Baybars in Southern Bilād al-Shām[28]

Unlike the study of Roman roads, where the exposure of paved sections and milestones allows for fine-tuning the determination of the actual routes followed by travelers, the study of terrestrial networking under the Mamluks, which primarily relied on dirt paths and apparently lacked road markers, is a complex endeavor. In fact, it seems that routes changed organically, according to travelers' different necessities (e.g., an official messenger as opposed to a merchant carrying commodities), weather, and security conditions. Nonetheless, it remains feasible to delineate the broad contours of these routes by following the administrative manuals (for further details, see al-ʿUmarī and al-Qalqashandī, n. 12), by the identification of *khān*s sponsored through diverse forms of patronage, and by mapping bridges that facilitated the traversal of natural barriers.

In *Tārīkh al-Malik al-Ẓāhir,* also known as *Al-Rawḍ al-ẓāhir fī sīrat al-Malik al-Ẓāhir,* by Baybars's administrator and biographer ʿIzz al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Shaddād (613–84/1217–85), we read of seven bridges erected by this sultan in the southern districts of Bilād al-Shām:[29]

> ...he built a bridge near the village of Dāmiyah on the Jordan River ("the river in the Ghawr"), and he established a *waqf* for it intended for [the upkeep of] whatever gets damaged on it; and he

[28] Dror Czitron wrote his masters thesis, "Building Technology and the State of Conservation of the Baybars Bridges in Israel: Lod Bridge as a Case Study," in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Conservation at the Department of Archaeology, Haifa University (2019), under the supervision of Dr. Ravit Linn and Dr. Katia Cytryn. Special thanks to Prof. Reuven Amitai of the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, who was the external reader of this thesis and contributed with valuable input. For a recent, in-depth study on the roads and bridges under Baybars, see K. Raphael and R. Amitai, "Bridges and Roads to Mamluk Gaza and Beyond," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 54 (2023): 133–79.

[29] On Baybars's bridges in Cairo and its surroundings, see Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī, *Kitāb al-wāfī bi-al-wafayāt* (Beirut, 2004), 10:212.

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> erected three bridges over the Yarkon (ʿAwjāʾ) river and surroundings: he erected a bridge near Ludd, a bridge in Imdūd [*sic,* Isdūd] and a bridge near Yabnā [Yubnā]. And [he built] a bridge near Dayr Sunayd in the proximity of Gaza; and a bridge near Rubīl [probably Nabī Rubīn], and near Qāqūn. **And he endowed funds [as *waqf*] for each one of them [to cover] the expenses for repairs of what might get damaged or destroyed** [emphasis added].

Among these seven bridges, those which best survived are the one near Ludd (also known as Jisr Jindās following its proximity to the no longer extant village by that name), Yubnā (Hebrew: Yavne), Isdūd (Hebrew: Ashdod), and Dayr Sunayd. The remains of Jisr Dāmiyah are located in a military-controlled area on the Jordanian side of the Jordan River,[30] and apparently little has survived anyway. A site called "el-Jisr,"[31] located ca. 1.5 km southeast of Nabī Rubīn on the eastern bank of the Soreq River, should be the very bridge described by Ibn Shaddād.[32] As for a bridge near Qāqūn, research is yet to be done.[33]

The absence of Jisr Yaʿqūb in the above description is noteworthy, especially given its strategic location, but it does appear in a crucial event in the life of Baybars: his active role in transporting siege machines towards the conquest of Ṣafad in Shaʿbān 664/May 1266.

The Egyptian chronicler Ibn al-Furāt (735–807/1334–1405) writes:[34]

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[30] Unfortunately, the authors did not manage to analyze these remains.

[31] The site named "Dhahrat al-Jisr" according to the Mandatory Archive file should be read as Ẓahrat al-Jisr, i.e., "back of the bridge." See IAA/Mandatory Archive/ATQ 14a (el Jisr), where the description reads: "Ancient tombs (MBA) [necropolis of Tell es Sultan], rock-cut bombs. Rock-cut foundations of ancient bridge, rubble foundations, quarries [strokethrough], anc[ient] reservoir, medieval transitory settlement [the latter added in blue]."

[32] New Israeli Grid 1761/6479. M. Fischer and I. Taxel ("Yavne, Survey Map," *Hadashot Arkheologiyot* [Excavations and Surveys in Israel] 118 [2006], https://www.hadashot-esi.org.il/report_detail_eng.aspx?id=437&mag_id=111) describe El Jisr thus: "Located on a low kurkar hill along the eastern bank of Nahal Soreq, at the confluence with a small tributary, opposite Tel Mahoz. A concentration of dressed kurkar stones in the wadi channel probably belonged to a bridge that once spanned it."

[33] Israel Antiquities Authority archaeologist Dr. Eli Yannai (personal communication, 7 August 2023), who surveyed the maps concerning Qāqūn and its environs, suggested Jisr al-Maktabah as a possible identification. Jisr al-Maktabah, located west of Kibbutz HaOgen in the central Sharon Plain, is a Roman bridge that was reconstructed during the Ottoman period (https://www.antiquities.org.il/survey/new/default_en.aspx?surveynum=2173.

[34] Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥīm ibn al-Furāt, *Ayyubids, Mamlukes and Crusaders: Selections from the* Tārīkh al-Duwal wa'l-Mulūk *of Ibn al-Furāt,* trans. U. and M. C. Lyons (Cambridge, 1971), 1:113–16, 2:89–91. The present translation is my adaptation. A summarized version was also

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> The sultan stayed by Acre until the arrival of those troops whom we have already mentioned as raiding Tyre and other places. He had a number of mangonels [*manjāniq,* most probably trebuchets] constructed and these he distributed amongst the amirs to be transported. He then went off with his troops, wearing their armor, and, riding up close to the gate of Acre, he halted at Tall al-Fuḍūl (Toron Saladini), after which he left for ʿAyn Jālūt.
>
> The amir Sayf al-Dīn al-Zaynī had set off to bring up the mangonels from Damascus; he worked hard to get this done and the amir Jamāl al-Dīn al-Najībī (also) took a hand in the task. The mangonels were carried on the men's shoulders.
>
> The sultan marched off and came down against Ṣafad on Monday, the 8th of the great month of Ramaḍān in this same year (13 June 1266) that we have mentioned, after which he laid siege to it....
>
> On 21 Ramaḍān (26 June), the aforementioned month, the *manjāniq* arrived and the sultan, in his concern for them, sent out the amir ʿIzz al-Dīn, amir al-Jāndār, to meet them. Yet the camels were unable to carry the *manjāniq,* so the sultan commanded the amirs, the soldiers, and the rest of the people to carry them on their shoulders and necks from Jisr Yaʿqūb, which is one stage of marching from Safad *(marḥalah min Ṣafad).* The sultan himself, along with his elite, came out and dragged the wooden beams with the oxen.
>
> The qadi Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, author of the biography of al-Ẓāhir [Baybars], said: "[al-Malik] al-Mujāhid, ruler of al-Jazīrah, said, 'I hauled with the sultan until I got tired and left to rest, after which I came and hauled for a while, then I went several times, but the sultan stayed put, taking no rest, and continuing his work of transporting the wooden beams, together with his entourage and his servants of the houses and stables. The *manjāniq* began to shoot on 26 Ramaḍān (1 July).'"

This information was repeated (with some shortening and changes) by the fifteenth-century Cairene historian al-Maqrīzī in his *Al-Sulūk li-maʿrifat duwal al-mulūk.*[35]

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transmitted by Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Nuwayrī (d. 733/1333), *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab* (Cairo, 2002), 30:286.

[35] Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-sulūk li-maʿrifat duwal al-mulūk,* ed. M. M. Ziyādah (Cairo, 1942), 1:2:545–46; idem, *Histoire des Sultans Mamlouks de l'Égypte,* trans. M. Quatremère (Paris, 1845), 1:2:28. See

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Who Built Jisr Yaʿqūb? And Why?

After showing that not only does the bridge under discussion not appear in the very clear list of bridges erected by Baybars, but that in fact this sultan crossed it on his way to Ṣafad, where he established the capital of the province *(mamlakah),* we are left with the open question: who built it?

With the aid of online digital databases for Arabic sources, a singular piece of evidence has surfaced. Though it stands alone and its interpretation is somewhat puzzling, its significance cannot be overlooked, particularly when taking into account that it aligns remarkably well with the overall historical context.

In the biographical encyclopedia *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr wa-aʿwān al-naṣr,* al-Ṣafadī writes of the renowned Shaykh Ḥiṭṭīn, who died in 727/1327:[36]

> And he died—may God Almighty have mercy on him—as I think in Jumādá I in the year 727/1327 in Ṣafad. He was born in the year 654/1256. And the following is from the writings of Shaykh al-Birzalī: "...And when he came to Ṣafad and I saw him there, he was the shaykh of the village of ʿAlamīn al-Fuqarāʾ," a village near Maghrān [*sic,* read Naʿrān] at the Jordan River (al-Sharīʿah), near Jisr Yaʿqūb, *waqf* of Sultan Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Yūsuf, may God Almighty wrap him with His mercy.[37]

There are basically four ways to understand this passage: the first, that the village of ʿAlamīn was Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's *waqf;* the second, that Maghrān (i.e., Naʿrān)[38] was his *waqf;* the third as referring to the bridge itself; and the fourth,

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discussion on Baybars's conquest of Ṣafad (in Hebrew) in J. Drory, "Baybars and the Conquest of Safed," in *Studies in the History of Eretz Israel Presented to Yehuda Ben Porat,* ed. Y. Ben-Arieh and E. Reiner (Jerusalem, 2003), 410–22.

[36] (Also called al-Dimashqī; see note 15, above.) Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr wa-aʿwān al-naṣr,* ed. ʿAlī Abū Zayd et al. (Damascus, 1998), 4:475–76. On him see also O. Amir, "Muslim Religious Life in the Safed Area during the 13th and 14th Centuries according to a 'New-Old' Source" [in Hebrew], *Cathedra* 156 (2015): 53–54.

[37] Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr,* 4:475–76.

[38] Maghrān is possibly a misspelling of Naʿrān, already mentioned above. On this town, which was the center of the province of the same name, see the article in this volume by Kate Raphael, Mustafa Abbasi, and Eran Meir, "Between Safad and Damascus: Excavations at the Village of Naʿarān and Mamluk and Early Ottoman Rural Settlements in the Golan." It is true that al-Ṣafadī's passage on Shaykh Ḥiṭṭīn hints at a village next to the Jordan River and Naʿrān is ca. 6 km east (thanks to Dr. Or Amir and to Eli Satt for sharing their concerns on this matter), yet in a regional point of view, this is the closest administrative center to the river crossing. Satt has suggested identifying ʿAlamīn al-Fuqarāʾ with the site of ʿAlmin (Archaeological Survey of Israel, Map Katzrin 18/1, site no. 49) at HaKtzinim Pool/ʿAyn Almin (32°59'40"N 35°38'23"E), ca.

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that all three were part of his endowments.[39] As observed in Ibn Shaddād's passage above, bridges were endowed with properties[40] whose revenues would provide for their maintenance. We suppose the same system already existed under the Ayyubids.

In fact, associating the erection of Jacob's Bridge with Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn makes sense when analyzed in context. In 575/1179, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn ordered the destruction of the Crusader fortress of Chastelet, whose erection had only commenced in 573/1178, and that following Baldwin IV's (r. 1174–85) breaking off the *status quo* in that area—the very border between Muslim and Crusader territory.[41] This was an attempt by the Templars—after the victory at Montgisard in 1177—to control the best ford on the Upper Jordan (Vadum Iacob), believing that such a fortification would contain the Ayyubids from pressing towards Jerusalem, especially as this was the very place where Baldwin III was defeated by Nūr al-Dīn in 552/1157.[42]

Having destroyed Chastelet and the Crusaders' plans to control the ford, it seems only natural that Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn himself would see the necessity of guaranteeing a comfortable passage for his armies. A bridge just one kilometer north of the destroyed fortress (and apparently erected with *spolia* from that very place) would not only put the Crusader fortress of Ṣafad under pressure *vis-à-vis* possible faster advances of Muslim armies (as eventually happened under Baybars), but also better connect the Muslim villages on the eastern side of the Jordan with the sacred site of Nabī Shuʿayb. It seems Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn developed this site of pilgrimage,[43] in addition to the restoration of the pilgrimage to Bayt al-Aḥzān (Jacob's House of Grief; on Joseph, see above, n. 11), which seems to have stood at the very site of the Crusader fortification.[44]

One should see this "religious act" not unlike the later erection of pilgrimage sites by Baybars, which among other purposes aimed at effectively protecting and populating the roads in areas still abounding with Christian activity through a legitimate religious program.[45]

1.5 km from the ford on the Jordan River near Meẓad ʻAteret, and some 2.5 km from Jisr Banāt Yaʿqūb.

[39] Thanks to Prof. Amitai for giving his input on this passage.

[40] Raphael and Amitai, "Roads and Bridges," 147.

[41] Ellenblum, *Frontier Activities,* 90–91.

[42] Sourdel-Thomine, "D̲ j̲ isr Banāt Yaʿḳūb."

[43] See Amir, "Muslim Religious Life in the Safed Area," 60.

[44] Ellenblum, *Frontier Activities,* 86.

[45] Nimrod Luz dwells on such a background for the development of the site of Nabī Mūsá (on the way between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea/Jordan River) by Baybars in his article in this volume ("GISing Baybars: Unraveling the Odd Location of Maqām Nabī Mūsá"). See also H. Tara-

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It is worth noting that in the Mamluk period, this is the very route of the *barīd* reaching Ṣafad from the south,[46] while Jisr Yaʿqūb was on the messengers' route from Damascus to Ṣafad. It can thus be assumed with a high degree of certainty that this was the very road used for the *ziyārah* to Nabī Shuʿayb, even before the Mamluk period, and even before Ṣafad fell to Baybars.

The Earthquake of 1202

One difficulty when hypothesizing that the bridge was built sometime between 1179 and 1193 (i.e., the death of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn) is the severe earthquake of 1202 (with an estimated magnitude of 7.6), which, judging by its effect at Meẓad ʿAteret as analyzed by archaeo-seismologists,[47] should also have affected the alleged Ayyubid bridge.[48]

Such an earthquake would not leave the bridge without damage; it would certainly need repair. Rebuilding such a strategic bridge would be a logical undertaking, even if we do not find evidence for that either. A good example to which such a suggestion could be referred to is the case of Jisr al-Majāmiʿ, believed to have been erected in the early Islamic period, rebuilt during the Ayyubid period by Usāmah al-Ḥalabī, an amir of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, and apparently rebuilt once more by Sultan Barqūq, as mentioned in al-Maqrīzī's *Sulūk:*[49] "And [he] built [or rebuilt] a bridge over the Jordan River in the Ghawr, on the route to Damascus. Its length [is] 120 cubits [ca. 70 m], and [its] breadth 20 cubits [ca. 11.5 m]."

It is worth noting the discussion by M. Sharon in his *CIAP* concerning a certain inscription found in Bāniyās and dated 623/1226.[50] It deals with a block of

gan, "Politics and Aesthetics: Sultan Baybars and the Abu Hurayra/Rabbi Gamliel Building in Yavneh," in *Milestones in the Art and Culture of Egypt,* ed. Asher Ovadiah (Tel Aviv, 2000), 122, on the strategic interest of Baybars in developing the tomb of Abū Hurayrah in Yavne as a site of *ziyārah* (Islamic pilgrimage), thus also encouraging the population to transfer from the coast to the plain. "Presumably, Baybars also wished to retain and renew the road from Cairo to Damascus, which passed through Yavne, Ramla and Lydda, for the sake of comfort and delivery of mail—despite Yavne is not even mentioned in Muslim sources as a station on the *barid* road—as well as for strategic reasons, since he had two bridges built in the vicinity of Ramla: one, the Jindas Bridge, at Lydda (1273/671), the other at Yavne (672). The area was thus clearly a bustling thoroughfare."

[46] We read in al-ʿUmarī's passage on the *barīd* (*al-Taʿrīf,* 248): "...and whoever is on the road to Ṣafad arrives at Nayin, then to Ḥiṭṭīn—and there is found the tomb of Shuʿayb, may peace be upon him—then from there to Ṣafad."

[47] Ellenblum et al., "Crusader Castle Torn Apart," 303–6.

[48] We would like to thank Dr. Kate Raphael for bringing this fact to our attention.

[49] Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 3:2:946.

[50] M. Sharon, *Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum Palaestinae* (Leiden, 1999), 2:57–59.

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limestone which originally was about 3 meters wide, with a nine-petalled rosette engraved on each side of the inscription in *naskhī* script. While Sharon reads *thaghr* (a frontier) and believes this long inscription was set over a monumental gate, Clermont-Ganneau suggested in 1887 reading either *khān* or *jisr* (bridge), the latter being Clermont-Ganneau's preference by comparing it to Jisr Jindās at Ludd.[51] Sharon states that "if Clermont-Ganneau is right, then the inscription could have commemorated the building of one of the bridges on Wādī Zaʿārah (Ṣaʿār)" by al-Malik al-Azīz ʿUthmān ibn al-Malik al-ʿĀdil ibn Ayyūb (who received the dominion over Bāniyās from his brother al-Muʿaẓẓam ʿĪsá in 608/1211).

Either a *jisr* or a *thaghr,* this construction relates to the main northern thoroughfare connecting Damascus and Tyre, which crossed near Bāniyās and was used during the Crusader period, but for which archaeological evidence points to an apparent development already during the Fatimid period (tenth century) as part of the postal route.[52]

We are not suggesting here that the inscription at Bāniyās refers to the rebuilding of Jisr Yaʿqūb. It most probably refers to one of the buildings in the vicinity of Bāniyās. It may suggest, however, that the Ayyubids were busy not only with Bāniyās itself and its immediate surroundings (including the erection of al-Ṣubaybah by al-ʿAzīz ʿUthmān), but with the region's infrastructure in general, especially after the harsh earthquake of 1202, in their attempts to control the passes that connected the northern fortifications of the Latin Kingdom, and in this case also the razed fortress at Vadum Iacob.

Conclusion

For many generations the remains of the stone bridge connecting the Upper Galilee and the Golan Heights over the Upper Jordan River was considered to have a Mamluk origin, and, more specifically, to be one in the series of bridges erected by Baybars in southern Bilād al-Shām. The original bridge, before Ottoman additions, was erected over three arches, in an architectural scheme reminiscent of the well-known bridge at Ludd, which can be attributed to Baybars by its famous inscriptions and carved lions.

Perhaps now one should think the other way around: perhaps the builders working for Baybars were the ones who saw Jisr Yaʿqūb—the very bridge over which the sultan had helped roll the wood for the *manjāniq* toward his victory

[51] See Ch. Clermont-Ganneau, «Le Pont de Lydda Construit par le Sultan Beibars,» *Journal Asiatique,* 8th series, vol. 10 (1887): 512.

[52] I. Shaked, "The Tenth- and Eleventh-Century Mail Route from Banias to Tyre, and Identification of 'The Black Watch'" [in Hebrew], *Cathedra* 103 (2002): 21–32.

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over Ṣafad's Franks—as a source of inspiration both architectural and perhaps even symbolic.

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Figure 1. Banāt Yaʿqūb Bridge, 1912. Photo by Leo Cahen, Vienna. Caption reads: "Jacob's Bridge near Mishmar HaYarden." From Shulamit and Dov Goldshtein Collection, Shoshana and Asher Halevi photo archive, Yitzhak Ben Zvi (YBZ_0019_009).

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Figure 2. General view of the bridge, showing added arch on the eastern bank of the river. Note remains of *khān* on the far right. Caption reads: "Jordan near Mishmar haYarden." Yechiel Zehavi Collection, Shoshana and Asher Halevi photo archive, Yitzhak Ben Zvi (YBZ_0045_182).

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Figure 3. Banāt Yaʿqūb Bridge under repair, 1919, looking southeast. L. A. Mayer Collection, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Dept. of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies (Mayer_28A).

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Figure 4. Destroyed bridge, 1937. Photo by M. Stekelis. Photo courtesy Israel Antiquities Authority/Mandatory Archive/SRF 76(98/98).

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Figure 5. Mr. Idan Shaked, former IAA district archaeologist, standing on remains of bridge on east bank of the Jordan River, 21 May 2021. Photo by Katia Cytryn.

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Figure 6. Satellite image, Google Earth, 13 July 2024.

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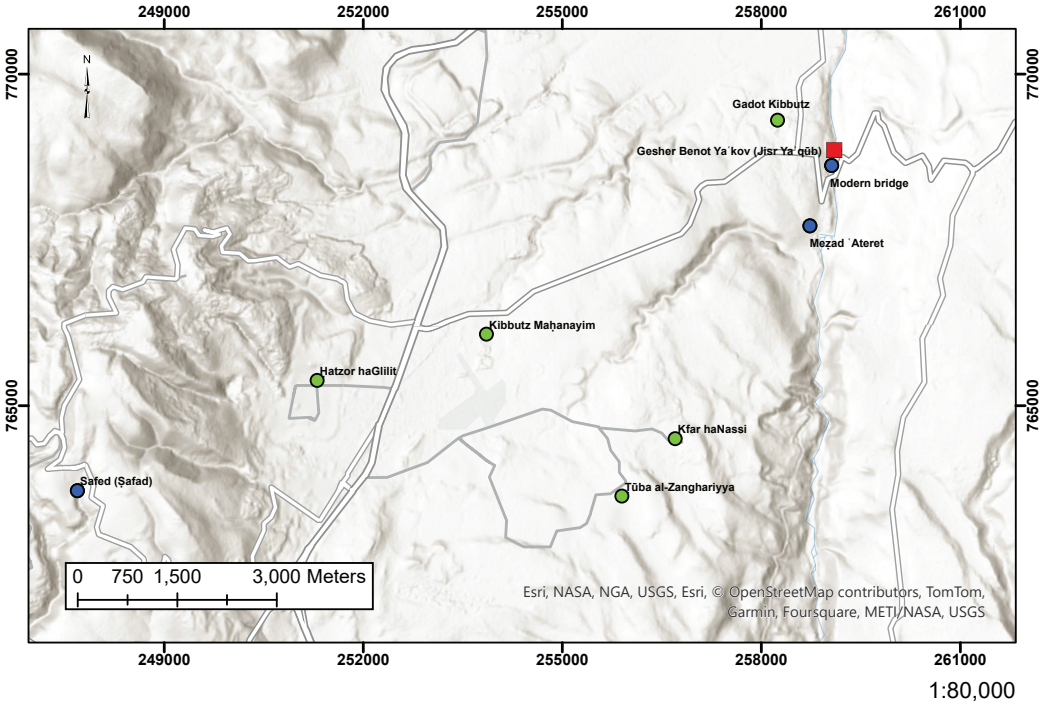


Figure 7. Location map of bridge. 1:80,000. By Dror Czitron, courtesy of Israel Antiquities Authority.

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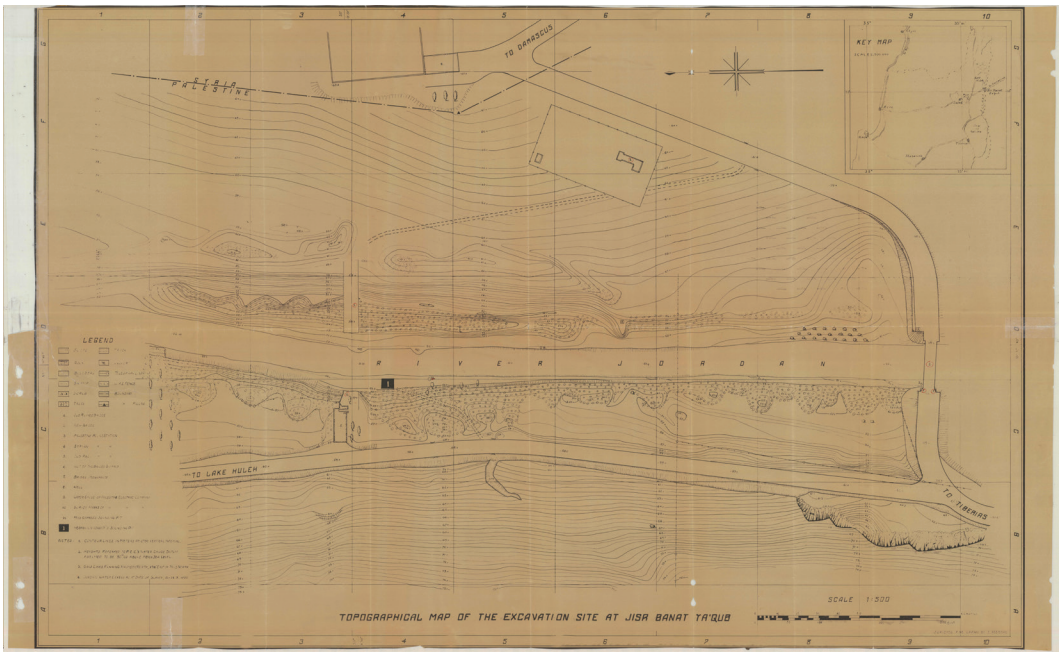


Figure 8. Topographical map of M. Stekelis excavations, 1936–37. Courtesy of Israel Antiquities Authority/Mandatory Archive/SRF 76(98/98).

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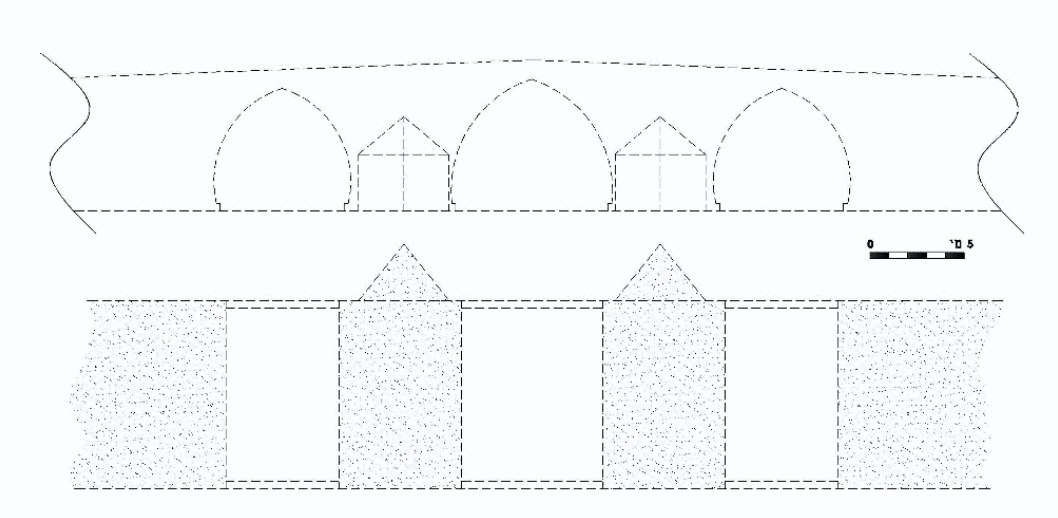


Figure 9. Schematic plan and section of Banāt Yaʿqūb Bridge by Dror Czitron and Erez Mizrachi.

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Figure 10. Bridge, with second arch from west (originally middle arch) repaired, January 1929. From Bohman Max Collection, Shoshana and Asher Halevi photo archive. Yitzhak Ben Zvi (YBZ_0358_336).

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Figure 11a. German-Israeli architect Eliezer Yellin and British-Israeli cellist Thelma Yellin-Bentwich with her father Herbert (Zvi) Bentwich (d. 25 June 1932), near the westernmost arch of the bridge, after repair of second arch. Shoshana Israeli house of Yellin Collection, Shoshana and Asher Halevi photo archive, Yitzhak Ben Zvi (YBZ_0388_0451).

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Figure 11b. Bridge, from southwest, with second arch under repair, 1919. Note Crusader masonry between arches. L. A. Mayer Collection, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Dept. of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies (Mayer_30A).

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Figure 12. Detail of drafted masonry, likely of Crusader origin, on the surviving section of the east bank bridge, looking north. Photograph by Katia Cytryn, May 21st, 2021.

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Figure 13. Cross carved on a basalt ashlar found at the site of Banāt Yaʿqūb Bridge after its destruction in 1934. See IAA/Mandatory Archive/Jisr Banat Yaʿqub, SRF 76(98/98).

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An Unpublished Decree of Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī Regarding Administrative Matters in the Port of al-Ṭūr

Introduction

As I emphasized in my "state of the art" article on Mamluk documentary studies twenty years ago, historians of the Mamluk period who express frustration about the dearth of available archives should prioritize studying the existing documents.[1] In my assessment of the collections that contain documents from the Mamluk period, I indicated that documents held by museum collections are seldom catalogued. I also briefly referenced the Oriental Institute in Chicago (now the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures) for two documents that had already been published.[2] During a research visit to Chicago in 2013, I was gratified to observe that the Museum's collections included four rolls identified as originating from the Mamluk period. Of these, two were unpublished. Of particular interest is document no. E13788, which merited further attention due to its contents.[3] The roll contains a decree that was issued by the sultan Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī on 28 Jumādá I 907/9 December 1501. The decree was addressed to the administrators of the port of al-Ṭūr in the Sinai Peninsula.

The earliest references to the port of al-Ṭūr in both narrative and administrative sources date back to the late seventh/thirteenth century. It appears that the location was utilized intermittently by merchants and pilgrims, with the ports of ʿAydhāb and al-Quṣayr handling the majority of the maritime traffic from and to Egypt. In the ninth/fifteenth century, the port in question experienced a period of significant growth and prominence, particularly in the latter half of the century, at the expense of the two aforementioned ports. This development is corroborated by the documents preserved in the archives of the St. Catherine Monastery. The preservation of these documents at the monastery

The author would like to thank the authorities of the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures (Chicago), particularly Helen McDonald, Registrar, and Susan Allison, Associate Registrar, for allowing him to publish this document, letting him consult it, and for providing him with a reproduction.

[1] Frédéric Bauden, "Mamluk Era Documentary Studies: The State of the Art," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 9, no. 1 (2005): 15–60.

[2] Ibid., 34.

[3] In June 2014, I attended the First Conference of the School of Mamlūk Studies, held in Venice, where I presented a research paper based on this document. It was entitled "Bandar al-Ṭūr, a Harbor on the Red Sea and its Significance for the Mamluks."



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not only demonstrates the significance of the connections between this institution and the port, but also illustrates the role of the monks in the management of the port through assets, including warehouses and storehouses, that they owned there.[4]

In what follows, the reader will find an edition with annotated translation of document no. E13788. This study is dedicated to Reuven Amitai, whose contribution to the field of Mamluk studies has been invaluable.

Description

The document (no. E13788) has been part of the holdings of the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures (West Asia & North Africa)—previously known as the Oriental Institute—in Chicago since 1929. Prior to that date, it was in the possession of Bernhard Moritz (1859–1939), a German Orientalist who pursued his studies in Berlin until he graduated in 1882. In the period between 1883 and 1885, he undertook a journey to the Middle East. Upon his return, he assumed the role of professor of Arabic at the Seminar for Oriental Languages in the German capital, a position he held until his appointment as director of the Khedival Library in Cairo in 1896. He led this institution until 1911. At this juncture in his career, he returned to Berlin, where he was appointed director of the library of the Seminar for Oriental Languages until his retirement in 1924.[5] During his tenures in Cairo and in Berlin, he continued to undertake research trips to Egypt and Syria, amassing material for his publications. During his travels in Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, he was able to collect a considerable quantity of artifacts spanning from antiquity to the Islamic period. In 1925, he offered his collection for sale to James Henry Breasted, the founder of the Oriental Institute in Chicago. The handlist comprised over 350 items and included manuscripts in a range of languages, including Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Syriac, Ethiopian, Coptic, and Samaritan. It also encompassed documents on papyrus, parchment, and paper in Arabic, Coptic, and Samaritan, as well as Islamic bookbindings, Mesopotamian and Palestinian seals, clay stamps and tesserae from Egypt and Palmyra, Babylonian clay tablets, gold, silver, and bronze coins, and Arabic stone inscriptions. The negotiation process spanned several years. In 1929, the collection was

[4] A forthcoming article by the present author will examine the development of the port of al-Ṭūr in the Mamluk period based on an analysis of documentary, administrative, and narrative sources.

[5] On Moritz, see Helmut Scheel, "Bernhard Moritz," *Forschungen und Fortschritte* 15 (1939): 391–92.



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finally procured for the sum of $12,500.[6] The collection was received by the museum in March of the same year.[7]

The significance of some of the Islamic artifacts drew the attention of scholars in Chicago, and some of them formed the basis of studies and doctoral dissertations. The three Arabic stone inscriptions were promptly studied and published following their arrival.[8] In 1938, Nabia Abbott published her study of the manuscripts of the Quran.[9] Approximately twenty years later, she followed suit with the Arabic papyri.[10] The Islamic bookbindings constituted the focus of Gulnar Kheirallah Bosch's doctoral dissertation, which she defended in 1952.[11] In 1961, Miroslav Krek prepared a comprehensive catalog of the Arabic manuscripts, primarily sourced from the Moritz collection.[12]

During his tenure in Egypt, Moritz procured four scrolls from the Mamluk period, all of which were part of the sale concluded with the Oriental Institute. One of the four scrolls was published by Moritz, who identified it as a decree is-

[6] See John Carswell, "Introduction: The Moritz Collection," in *Islamic Bindings & Bookmaking: A Catalogue of an Exhibition, The Oriental Institute, The University of Chicago, May 18–August 18, 1981,* ed. Gulnar Bosch, John Carswell, and Guy Petherbridge (Chicago, 1981), ix–x.

[7] The correspondence between Breasted and Moritz, along with the handlist and other material related to the purchase, can be consulted at the Museum Archives: Directors Correspondence: Moritz, B., Folders 10 and 12. It can be established that Moritz did not sell his entire collection to the Oriental Institute Museum. Some objects, including some Islamic bookbindings, were given or sold to the Islamische Museum in Berlin. Other bookbindings were sold to Chester Beatty Library in Dublin and to an Italian private collector from Milan. See Carswell, "Introduction," xi.

[8] William M. Randall, "Three Engraved Stones from the Moritz Collection at the University of Chicago," in *The Macdonald Presentation Volume: A Tribute to Duncan Black Macdonald, Consisting of Articles by Former Students, Presented to Him on His Seventieth Birthday, April 9, 1933* (Princeton, 1933; reprint New York, 1968), 327–30. Some of the readings were revised by Martin Sprengling, "The Arabian Nights Stone of the Oriental Institute," *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 51, no. 4 (1935): 217–32; idem, "Arabic Tombstones in the Oriental Institute: A New Reading," *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 52, no. 3 (1936): 192–95. The three inscriptions are also to be found in the *Thesaurus d'épigraphie islamique,* dir. Ludvik Kalus, co-dir. Frédéric Bauden, dev. Frédérique Soudan (Genève and Liège, 2024), records nos. 99, 40633, 40727 (https://www.epigraphie-islamique.uliege.be).

[9] Nabia Abbott, *The Rise of the North Arabic Script and Its Ḳur'ānic Development, with a Full Description of the Ḳur'ān Manuscripts in the Oriental Institute* (Chicago, 1939).

[10] Nabia Abbott, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri, I: Historical Texts* (Chicago, 1957); idem, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri, II: Qur'ānic Commentary and Tradition* (Chicago, 1967). Papyri from other collections were also included.

[11] Gulnar Kheirallah Bosch, "Islamic Bookbindings: Twelfth to Seventeenth Centuries" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Chicago, 1952).

[12] Miroslav Krek, *A Catalogue of Arabic Manuscripts in the Oriental Institute of Chicago* (New Haven, 1961). Fifty-nine manuscripts from the Moritz collection are listed.

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sued by the Ottoman sultan Selīm (r. 918–26/1512–20) in favor of the Venetian merchants, dated 923/1517.[13] The item is currently preserved under the catalog number E13789. As Gladys Frantz-Murphy has recently demonstrated, the document was in fact issued by the last Mamluk sultan, Ṭūmānbāy (r. 922–23/1516–17), during his continued resistance against the Ottoman army from a base situated within the Delta region. It may, therefore, be considered one of the final documents of the Mamluk sultanate.[14] A second scroll (no. E13787) comprises a decree issued by Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī in 919/1513 and directed towards various officials operating at Tripoli regarding commercial practices associated with Frankish merchants. The text was published by Donald S. Richards in 1999.[15] In addition to the third document at the core of the present study, there remains one unpublished Mamluk scroll dated to al-Ashraf Qāytbāy's reign (no. E13786).[16]

The provenance of these four documents is uncertain, and Moritz did not provide any clue as to where he had found them. Nevertheless, it is evident that they were obtained during his tenure as director of the Khedival Library. Document no. E13789 was already in his possession when he published it in 1915.[17] In 1918, Moritz published a study on the Monastery of St. Catherine, wherein he edited several documents to which he had access during his visit there.[18] It is not possible to ascertain whether the acquisition of these documents and his visit to the monastery were mere coincidence.[19] As Richards observed in his analysis

[13] Bernhard Moritz, "Ein Firman des Sultans Selim I für die Venezianer vom Jahre 1517," in *Festschrift Eduard Sachau zum siebzigsten Geburtstage gewidmet von Freunden und Schülern,* ed. Gotthold Weil (Berlin, 1915), 422–43. A German translation of the decree was prepared by Martin Hartmann, "Das Privileg Selims I für die Venezianer von 1517," in *Orientalistische Studien: Fritz Hommel zum sechzigsten Geburtstag* (Leipzig, 1918), 201–22.

[14] Gladys Frantz-Murphy, "Negotiating the Last Mamluk-Venetian Commercial Decree (922–3/1516–7): Commercial Liability from the Sixth/Twelfth to the Early Tenth/Sixteenth Century," in *Mamluk Cairo, a Crossroads for Embassies: Studies on Diplomacy and Diplomatics,* ed. Frédéric Bauden and Malika Dekkiche (Leiden, 2019), 741–81.

[15] Donald S. Richards, "A Late Mamluk Document Concerning Frankish Commercial Practice in Tripoli," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 62 (1999): 21–35.

[16] It is a letter addressed to the governor of Alexandria and dated 892/1487. It will be the subject of a forthcoming article by the present author.

[17] **See note 14. now note 13**

[18] Bernhard Moritz, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Sinaiklosters im Mittlealter nach Arabischen Quellen* (Berlin, 1918).

[19] It is not my intention to suggest that he obtained them through illicit means. Nevertheless, it is useful to mention the case of an Arabic manuscript currently held by the Chester Beatty Library (MS Arabic 4113). The text, "Nathr al-jumān fī tarājim al-aʿyān," is attributed to a certain Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Muqriʾ al-Fayyūmī (d. after 770/1368). The manuscript bears seal imprints of the Khedival Library in Cairo (see part 1, fols. 2a, 90b, 422b, and part 2, fols. 1a, 278a, 326b, particularly part 2, fol. 278a, where the inscription around the center is still

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of document no. E13787, the link to be established between it and the monastery is tenuous at best. Nevertheless, three documents pertinent to affairs in Tripoli are extant in the monastery archives, although only one pertains to a *waqf* property of the monastery in Tripoli.[20] This indicates that the monastery's archives may contain documents that initially appear to be unrelated to the monks. It can, however, be reasonably assumed that the monastery's authorities were likely involved in some capacity, as evidenced by the document published here.

Be that as it may, the document under consideration is currently located in Chicago, where it can readily be accessed. The scroll (Ar. *darj*) has a total length of 2,300 mm. As is customary for this format, it is composed of sheets *(waṣl)*—in this case ten—that are glued one below the other over a narrow surface area (a few millimeters). The width of the sheets exhibits a range of 160–164 mm, with the majority of them measuring 164 mm (see Table 1). The length of the sheets varies between 236 and 240 mm. The initial sheet exhibits slight damage, with the upper right corner torn apart, resulting in the loss of approximately one-third of the text located at the top. Two sheets, the third and the fourth, are notably smaller in size, measuring 234–230 and 224–216 mm respectively. The scroll terminates with a full sheet: the remainder of the scroll was excised just below the section where the subsequent sheet was affixed. This procedure was carried out at the chancery. The paper is a typical oriental paper (without watermark) with thick laid lines (20 laid lines occupy a space of 37 mm). The chain lines, which are barely visible, are parallel to the text and grouped in pairs. They are spaced 12 mm apart within the group and 47 mm apart between groups.

legible: "Bibliothèque khédiviale au Caire"), together with shelf numbers that are consistent with those typically used by this library: "nimrah khuṣūṣīyah 1745 tārīkh, nimrah ʿumūmīyah 32863" (see part 2, fols. 1a, 278a). At the end of part 2, a brief letter dated 4 June 1900 and signed by Bernhard Moritz can be found: "Dear Guest, I send you herewith in 2 parcels your Arabic manuscript, with which we have finished a month ago. I hope to see you here before starting. Yours truly, B. Moritz." A copy of the aforementioned manuscript is housed in the Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyah in Cairo, where it is catalogued under the shelf mark 1746 tārīkh, i.e., it was shelved immediately after the original manuscript. This copy was created by multiple copyists and is dated 1307/1889–90, which preceded the appointment of Moritz as director of the Khedival Library by six years. See *Fihris al-kutub al-ʿarabīyah al-mawjūdah bi-al-dār* (Cairo, 1924–63), 5:383. The addressee of Moritz's letter was Arthur Rhuvon Guest (1870–1946), a prominent British Arabist. Guest publicly disclosed his purchase in 1901, indicating that it occurred in Egypt between 1898 and 1900. See A. R. Guest, "Description of an Arabic Manuscript Bought in Egypt 1898–1900 A.D.," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 33 (1901): 91–95. In light of the numerous seal imprints and shelf numbers, Guest could not claim to be unaware of the manuscript's provenance. The manuscript was purchased by Chester Beatty after Guest's death.

[20] Richards, "A Late Mamluk Document," 21.

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Sheet no.	Width (mm)		Height (mm)	
1	Top	74	Left	237
	Bottom	162	Right	167
2	Top	163	Left	234
	Bottom	160	Right	230
3	Top	160	Left	224
	Bottom	162	Right	216
4	Top	164	Left	239
	Bottom	164	Right	239
5	Top	164	Left	240
	Bottom	164	Right	239
6	Top	164	Left	240
	Bottom	164	Right	240
7	Top	164	Left	240
	Bottom	164	Right	240
8	Top	164	Left	239
	Bottom	164	Right	239
9	Top	164	Left	238
	Bottom	164	Right	238
10	Top	164	Left	236
	Bottom	164	Right	237

Table 1. Measurements of the scroll. Measurements of the width were taken at the top and bottom of each sheet. Measurements of the height were taken at the left-hand and right-hand parts of each sheet.

The text is written in what appears to be the calligraphic style known as *riqāʿ*. For examples of comparison, one may refer to the third volume of al-Qalqashandī's *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshá*.[21] The layout of the invocation (*basmalah;* see fig. 2) can be compared with the model provided by al-Qalqashandī for this calligraphic style, which serves to corroborate the identification.[22] The *alif* can be linked to the following letter, but this remains exceptional. While diacritical points are rarely absent, the text is otherwise devoid of any other orthoepic signs (short vowels, absence of a vowel, doubling of a consonant). The fifth and seventh lines are the only exceptions.

The text is arranged in parallel lines with a slight curve towards the end, with the majority of the text separated from the right edge of the document by a space of 33–35 mm on average.[23] This is not the case for the initial four lines, where the text is written from one side to the other, and for lines 5–7 and 27–34, where the text is centered. The line spacing is 65–75 mm on average, with the ex-

[21] Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshá fī ṣināʿat al-inshāʾ* (Cairo, 1913–19; repr. 1963), 3:119–31.

[22] Ibid., 3:142 (closer to the first example on the page indicated).

[23] For letters, ibid., 6:195 and 314, recommends leaving a blank space in the right margin corresponding roughly to one fourth or one third of the width the scroll. This is not the case here, but our document is a decree.

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ception of the first four lines, which are narrower in width. In accordance with the prescribed regulations, the invocation is situated beneath the junction between the second and third sheets. The sheets that precede the one bearing the invocation were designated by the secretaries as the *ṭurrah*. Depending on the nature of the document, it could consist of several sheets that were left blank. In the case of our document, the *ṭurrah* is composed of two sheets.[24] At the top of the *ṭurrah,* the scribe inscribed a generic indication of the subsequent order's nature and intended recipients. A considerable amount of space was allocated between the second and third lines for the sultan's signature *(ʿalāmah),* which, in the case of decrees like this one, corresponded to his name. The document was signed by the sultan, thereby attesting to its legitimacy. Aside from a small section at the top of the scroll, on the right, which was torn apart, thereby destroying the beginning of the first three lines, the document is, generally speaking, in a satisfactory state of preservation. The missing section can be reconstructed on the basis of other examples of similar decrees.

Analysis

The decree *(marsūm)* bears the date 28 Jumādá I 907/9 December 1501. It was issued in response to a request from the personnel of the port of al-Ṭūr, whose wages were paid from the revenues of the aforementioned port. They appealed to the executive secretary *(dawādār kabīr)* Uzdamur (min ʿAlī Bāy al-Ashrafī), requesting that henceforth their primary representative on all matters pertaining to the revenues generated by the camel rental *(mutaḥaṣṣil al-tarkīb)* and other activities connected with the sultan's treasury *(al-dhakhīrah al-sharīfah)* be a certain Naṣr ibn Badr the Melkite Christian. The decree is addressed to the officials of the port, the inspector *(nāẓir),* the superintendent *(al-shādd),* and the administrators *(al-mutaḥaddithūn),* who are requested to comply with the instructions sent to them by the inspector of the Privy, who was also the agent of the State Treasury *(wakīl bayt al-māl).* It says that it is imperative that no impediment be placed in the path of Naṣr ibn Badr, acting in his capacity as the designated representative, in his efforts to collect the aforementioned revenues, and further states that, in accordance with the requirements of his function, he is obliged to maintain the accounts in a timely manner, ensuring the veracity of the amounts received and facilitating their disbursement to the appropriate recipients.

[24] On the *ṭurrah,* see Jørgen S. Nielsen, "A Note on the Origin of the *Ṭurra* in Early Mamlūk Chancery Practice," *Der Islam* 57 (1980): 288–92.

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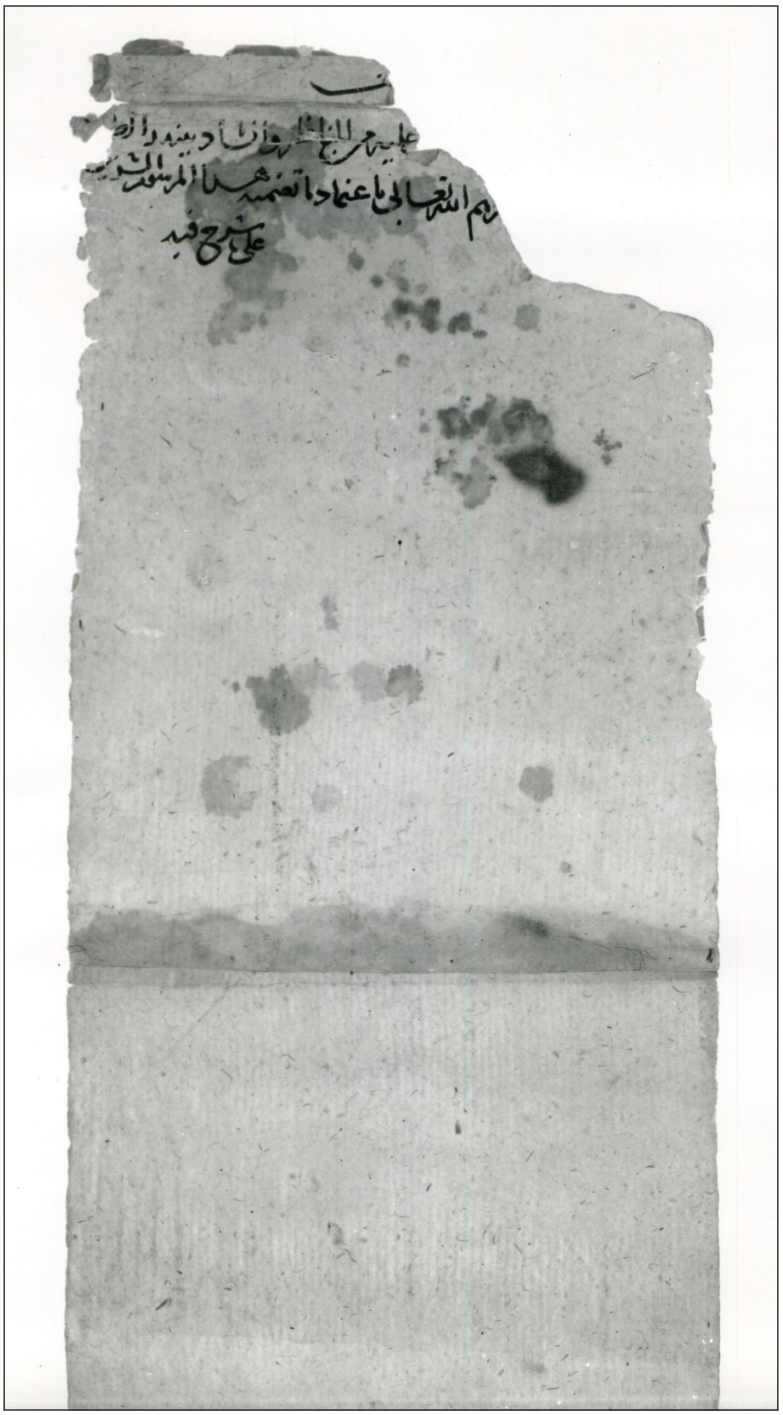


Figure 1: The decree (sheets 1–2) (ISAC, no. E13788). Courtesy of the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures, Chicago.

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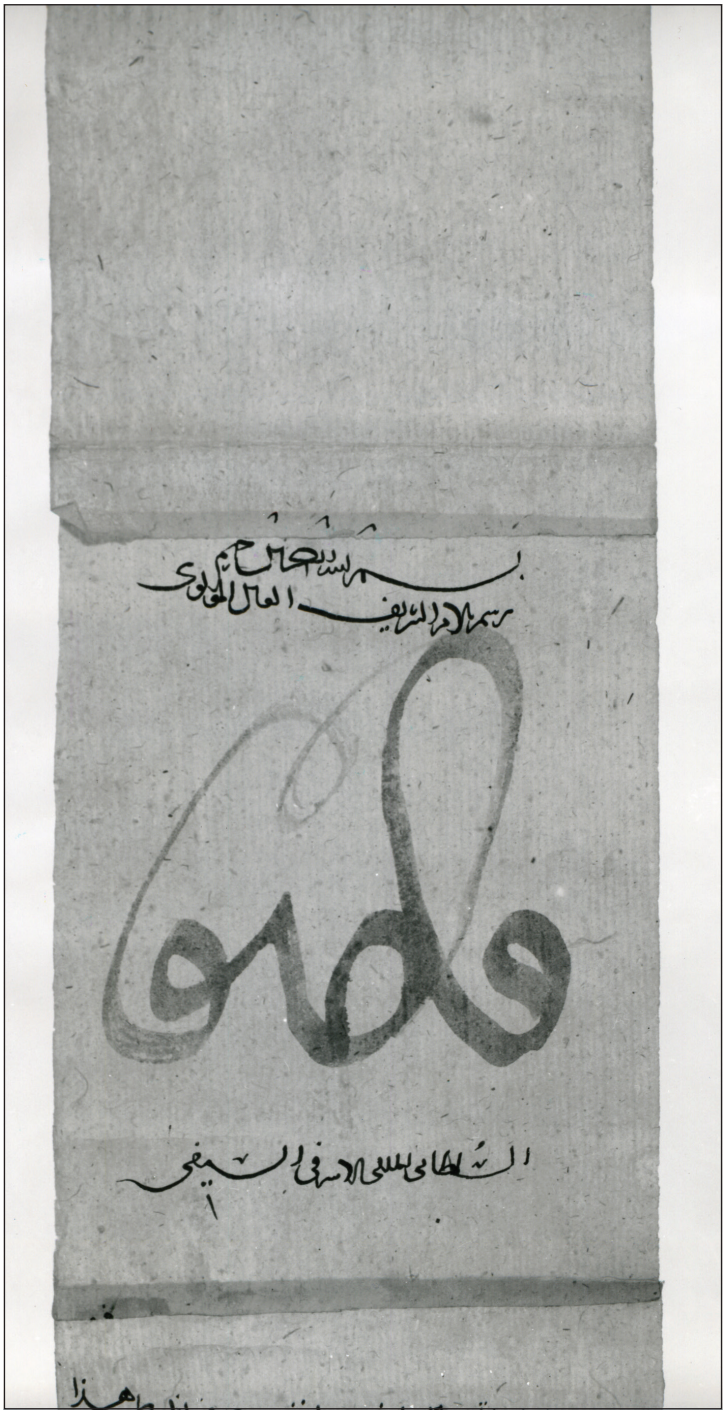


Figure 2: The decree (sheets 2–3) (ISAC, no. E13788). Courtesy of the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures, Chicago.

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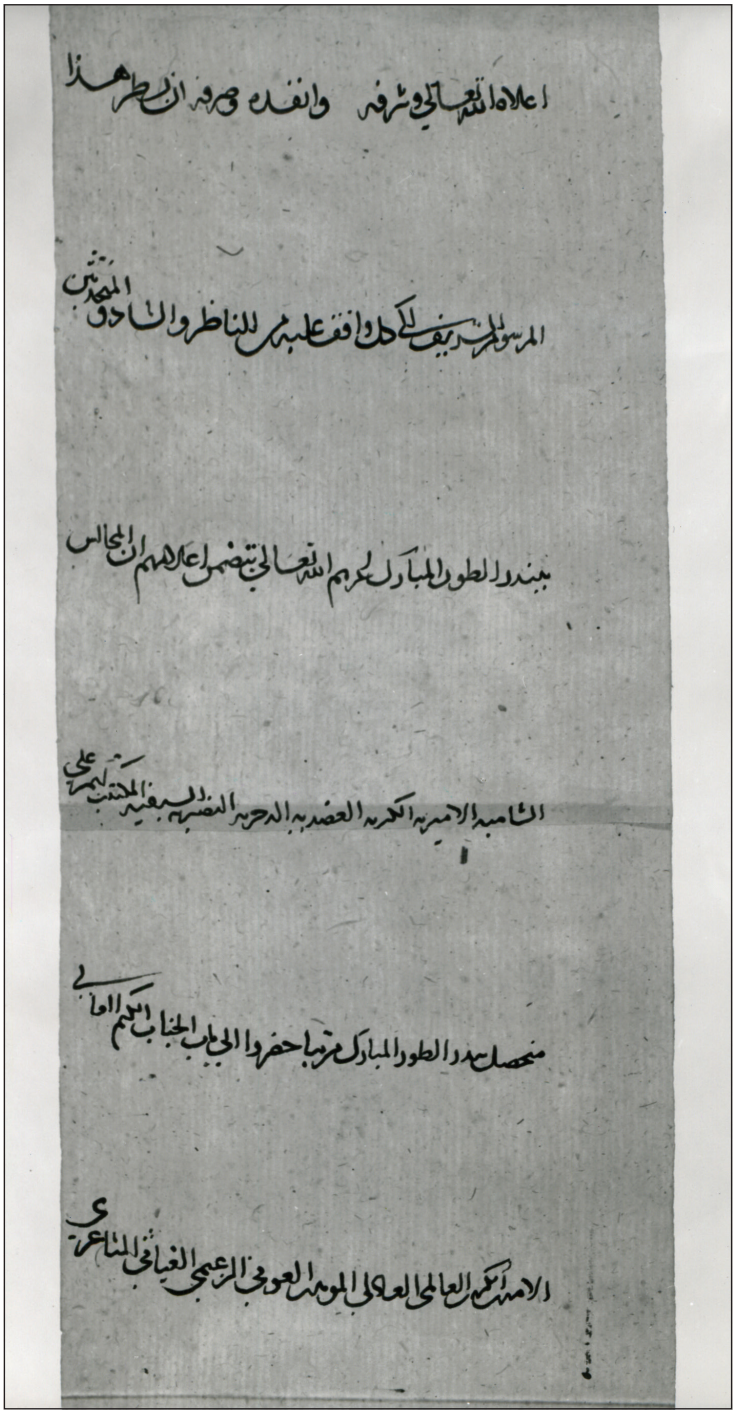


Figure 3: The decree (sheets 4–5) (ISAC, no. E13788). Courtesy of the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures, Chicago.

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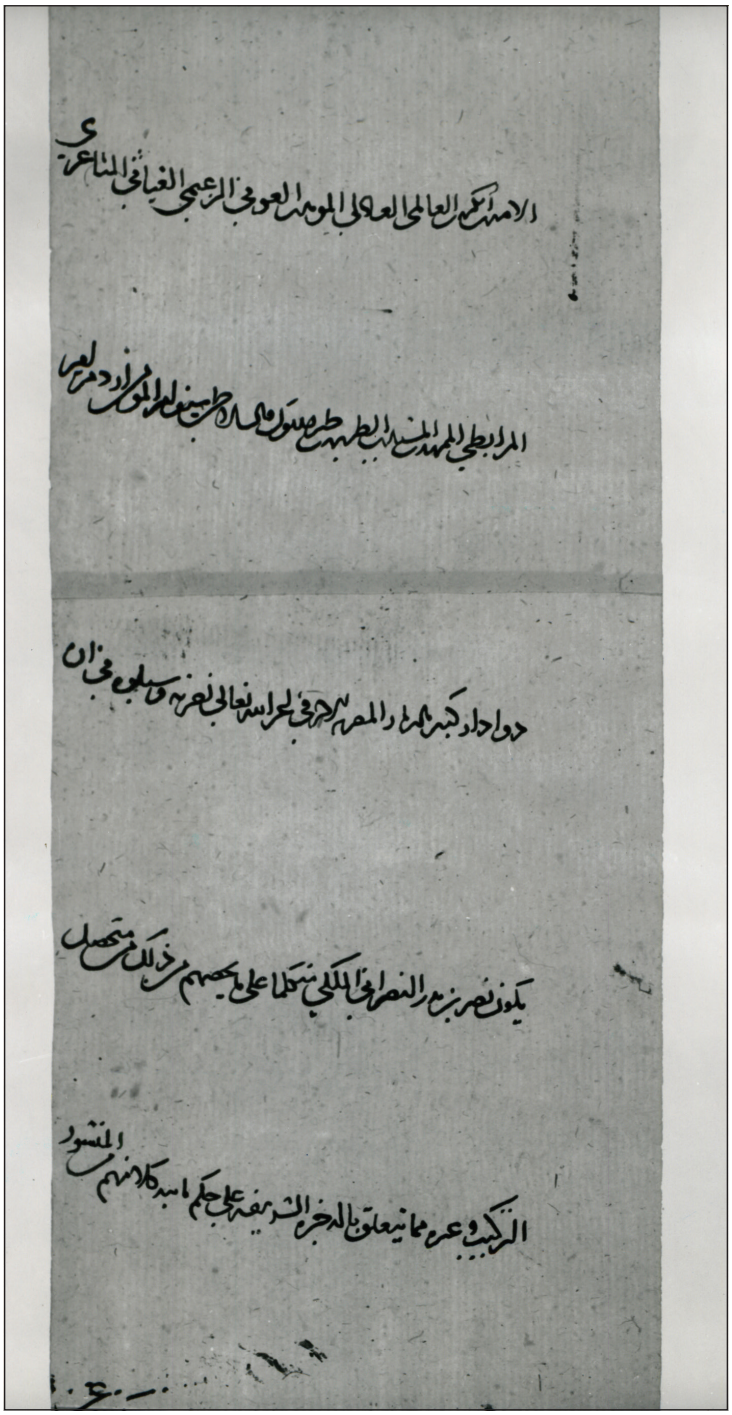


Figure 4: The decree (sheets 5–6) (ISAC, no. E13788). Courtesy of the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures, Chicago.

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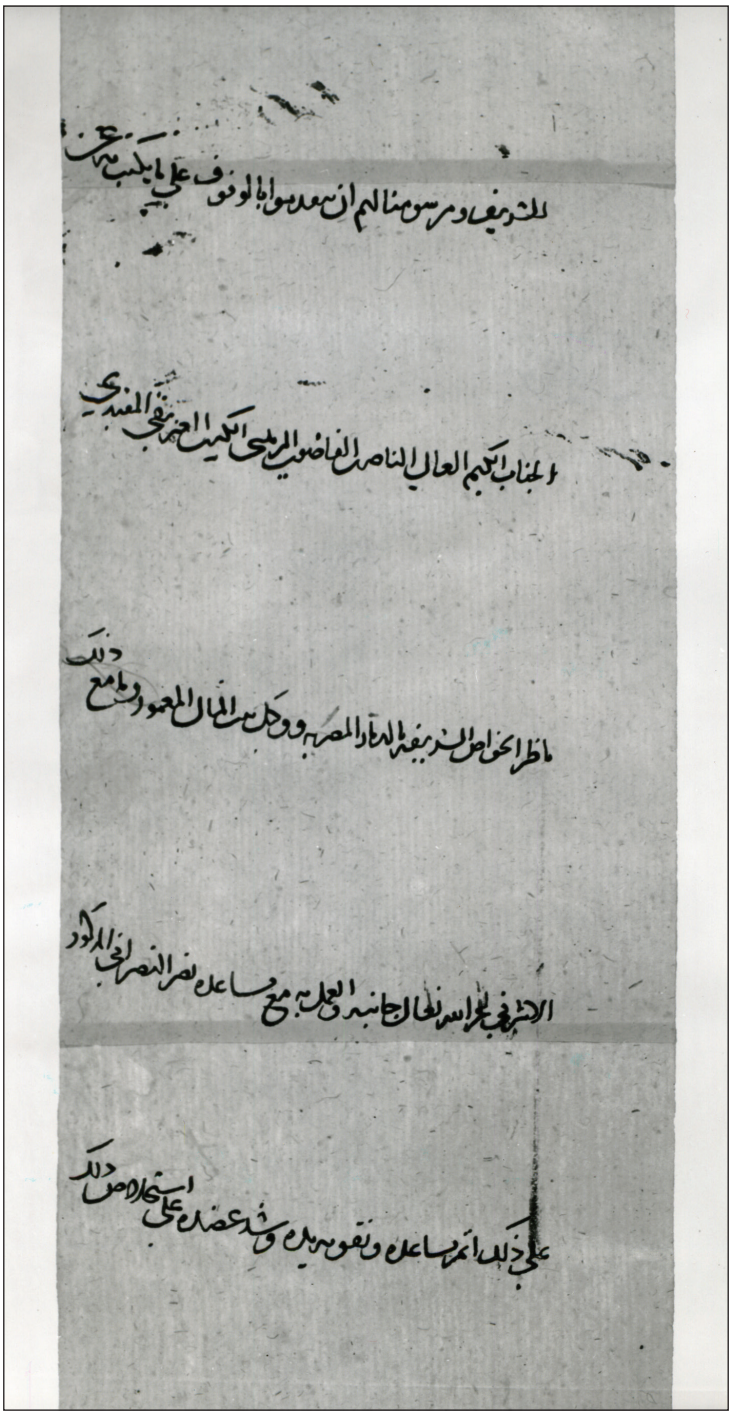


Figure 5: The decree (sheets 7–8) (ISAC, no. E13788). Courtesy of the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures, Chicago.

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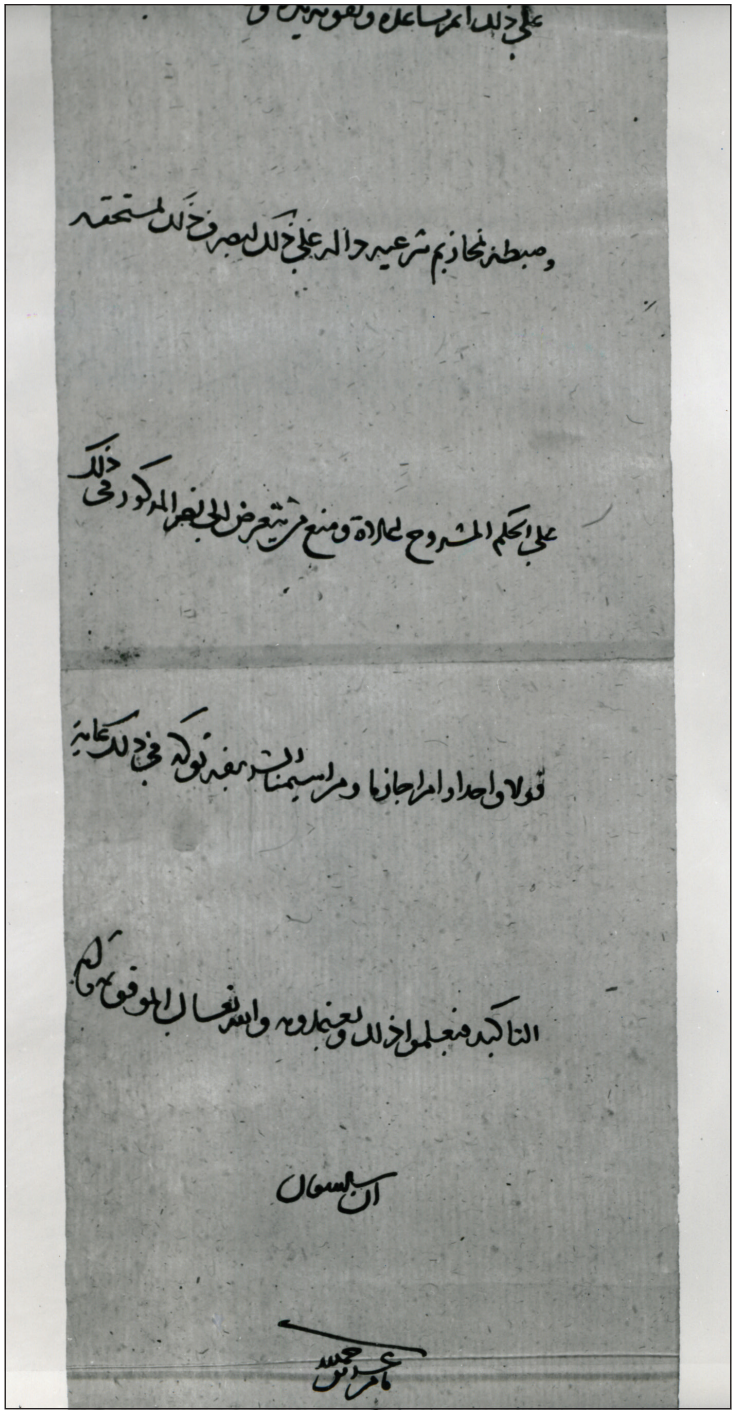


Figure 6: The decree (sheets 8–9) (ISAC, no. E13788). Courtesy of the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures, Chicago.

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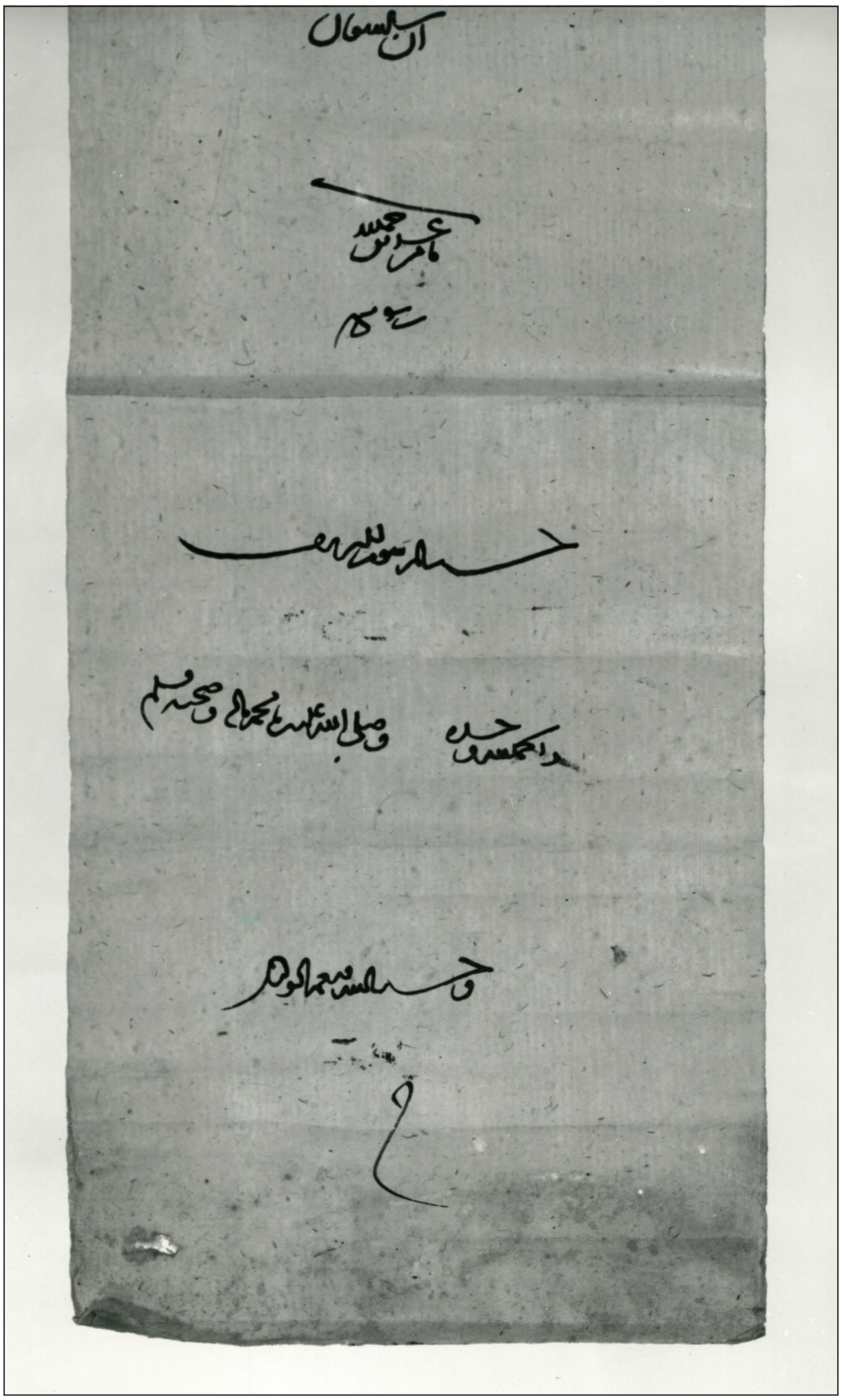


Figure 7: The decree (sheets 9–10) (ISAC, no. E13788). Courtesy of the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures, Chicago.

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Edition

Recto

١. [الاسم الشري]ف
٢. [مرسوم شريف بان يتقدم كل واقف] عليه من الناظر والشاد ببندر الط[ـور]
٣. [المبارك ... اع]زهم الله تعالى باعتماد ما تضمنه هذا المرسوم الشري[ـف]
٤. [والعمل به] على ما شرح فيه
٥. بسم الله الرَّحمن الرَّحيم
٦. رسم بالامر الشريف العالي المولوي

قانصوه

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١١. السامية الاميرية الكبيرية العضدية الذخرية النصيرية السيفية المكتتب لهم على
١٢. متحصل بندر الطور المبارك مرتبا حضروا الى باب الجناب الكريم العالي
١٣. الاميري الكبيري العالمي العادلي المويدي العوني الزعيمي الغياثي المثاغري
١٤. المرابطي الممهدي المشيدي الظهيري ظهر الملوك والسلاطين سيف امير المومنين ازدمر امير
١٥. دوادار كبير بالديار المصرية الاشرفي اعز الله تعالى نصرته وسيلوه في ان
١٦. يكون نصر بن بدر النصراني الملكي متكلما على ما يخصهم من ذلك من متحصل
١٧. التركيب وغيره مما يتعلق بالذخيرة الشريفة على حكم ما بيد كلا منهم من المنشور
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١٩. الجناب الكريم العالي الناصري القاضوي الرييسي الكبيري العريقي المفيدي
٢٠. ناظر الخواص الشريفة بالديار المصرية ووكيل بيت المال المعمور وما مع ذلك
٢١. الاشرفي اعز الله تعالى جانبه والعمل به مع مساعدة نصر النصراني المذكور
٢٢. على ذلك اتم مساعدة وتقوية يده وشد عضده على استخلاص ذلك
٢٣. وضبطه بمخازيم شرعية دالة على ذلك ليصرف ذلك لمستحقه
٢٤. على الحكم المشروح اعلاه ومنع من يتعرض الى نصر المذكور في ذلك
٢٥. قولا واحدا وامرا جازما ومراسيمنا الشريفة توكد في ذلك غاية
٢٦. التاكيد فيعلموا ذلك ويعتمدونه والله تعالى الموفق بمنه وكرمه

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٢٧. ان شا الله تعالى

٢٨. كتب في

٢٩. ثامن عشرين جمادى الاولى

٣٠. سنة سبع وتسعماية

٣١. حسب المرسوم الشريف

٣٢. والحمد لله وحده وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد واله وصحبه وسلم

٣٣. وحسبنا الله ونعم الوكيل

٣٤. حـ

Diacritical dots

Recto

١) [الشريـ]ـف؛ ٢) عليه، من، الناظر، والشاد، ببندر؛ ٣) تعالى، باعنماد، تضمه، الشريـ[ـف]؛ ٤) شرح، فيه؛ ٥) بسم، الرحيم؛ ٦) الشريف؛ ٧) السيفى؛ ٨) تعالى، وشرفه، وانفده، وصرفه، ان، يسطر، هذا؛ ٩) الشريف، واقف، عليه، الناظر، والشاد، والمتحدثين؛ ١٠) ببندر، المبارك، تعالي، يتضمن، ان؛ ١١) الساميه، الاميربه، العضديه، النصيربه، السيفيه، المكتسب، علي؛ ١٢) متحصل، المبارك، مرتبا، حضروا، الي، باب، الجناب، العالي؛ ١٣) العادلي، العوني، الزعمي، الغياثي، المثاعري؛ ١٤) المرابطي، المشدي، الطهيرى، سيف، ازدمر، امير؛ ١٥) كبير، الاسرفي، تعالي، نصرته، وسيلوه، في، ان؛ ١٦) يكون، نصر، بن، النصراني، الملكي، متكلما، يحصهم، من، ذلك، متحصل؛ ١٧) التركيب، يتعلق، بالدخيره، الشريفه، علي، بيد، منهم، المنشور؛ ١٨) الشريف، ومرسومنا، ان، بالوقوف، علي، يكتب، عن؛ ١٩) الجناب، الكريم، العالي، الناصرى، القاضوي، الكبيرى، العريقي، المفيدي؛ ٢٠) ناظر، الخواص، الشريفه، المصريه، ذلك؛ ٢١) الاشرفي، تعالى، جانبه، به، نصر، النصراني؛ ٢٢) علي، ذلك، اتم، وتقوبه، يده، وشد، عضده، علي، استحلاص؛ ٢٣) وصبطه، بمخازيم، شرعيه، علي، ذلك، ليصرف، ذلك، لمستحقه؛ ٢٤) علي، المشروح، ومنع، من، يتعرض، الي، نصر، ذلك؛ ٢٥) قولا، جازما، ومراسيمنا، الشريفه، توكد في، عاية؛ ٢٦) التاكيد، فيعلموا، ذلك، وبعتمدونه، تعالي، الموفق؛ ٢٧) ان؛ ٣٢) وصلي.

Translation

Recto

1. The noble name
2. Noble decree to the effect that all who may peruse it, the inspector and the superintendent in the blessed port of al-Ṭūr
3. ...—may God the Sublime fortify them—should command that reliance be placed on the contents of this noble decree
4. and that action should be taken accordingly, following the details given therein.
5. In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate.

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6. The noble order of the high lord,

Qānṣūh

7. the sultan al-Malik al-Ashraf Sayf al-Dīn
8. —may God the Sublime exalt and ennoble him, grant him the power to perform and confer on him unrestricted power—is decreed so that
9. this noble decree is drawn up to the effect that anyone from among the inspector, the superintendent, the administrators
10. in the blessed port of al-Ṭūr—may God the Sublime fortify them—be informed of its contents which are [as follows].
11. The exalted Presences, the great amirs, the strong arms, the treasures, the supporters, depending on Sayf al-Dīn [Qānṣūh], for whom wages are recorded as being taken from
12. the revenues of the blessed port of al-Ṭūr, presented themselves to the gate of the gracious and high Honor,
13. the great amir, the knowledgeable, the just, the supporter, the succor, the leader, the helper, the protector of the frontier regions,
14. the defender of the border fortifications, the facilitator, the builder, the backer, assistant of the rulers and the sultans, sword of the Commander of the Faithful, Uzdamur, chief
15. executive secretary in the Egyptian lands, al-Ashrafī—may God the Sublime strengthen his support. They conveyed him a request to the effect that
16. Naṣr ibn Badr the Melkite Christian will be their administrator for anything that regards them in terms of the revenues
17. generated by the lending [of camels] and other things that are connected with the noble [sultan's] Treasury in compliance with the noble diploma that is in the hand of each of them.
18. Our order to them [the authorities of the port] is that they command that what is written on behalf
19. of the gracious and high Presence, the helper, the judge, the great chief, of noble descent, the beneficial,
20. inspector of the noble Privy in the Egyptian lands, the agent of the thriving State Treasury, and the like,
21. al-Ashrafī—may God the Sublime strengthen his presence—be read and acted upon together with helping the aforementioned Naṣr the Christian
22. with this in the utmost manner, by emboldening him and bolstering him to claim the payment of this
23. and seize it with [the provision of] legal fiscal accounts proving this so that he can disburse it to the one who is entitled to it

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24. according to the rule detailed above and by restraining all who could trespass against the abovementioned Naṣr in this [regard]
25. unanimously and decisively. Our noble decrees lay on this the fullest
26. emphasis. Let them take cognizance of this and place reliance on it. God is the One who gives success by His grace and favor.
27. If God the Sublime wills.
28. Written on
29. the twenty-eighth of Jumādá I
30. in the year nine hundred and seven [9 December 1501].
31. According to [the terms of] the noble decree.
32. Praise be to God alone, and His blessing be upon our lord, Muḥammad, his family and his Companions, and His peace.
33. God is our sufficiency and an excellent Steward is He!
34. *ḥā'.*

Notes

L. 1. ***al-ism al-sharīf:*** this is a reference to the fact that the sultan's signature *(ʿalāmah)* is added by the sultan himself between lines 6 and 7.[25] Even if the majority of this part of the text is lost due to the tear, it can be restored thanks to similar documents from the Monastery of St. Catherine.[26]

L. 2. ***marsūm sharīf bi-an yataqaddam:*** this part of the text, which is missing due to the tear affecting the top right corner of the scroll, can be retrieved by comparison with other examples of decrees.[27]

L. 3. ***al-mubārak…:*** the proposed epithet for the port of al-Ṭūr is consistent with the one used for it in the text (see l. 10). It seems that there was still room for one additional word, for which no proposed hypothesis can be formulated.

L. 4. ***wa-al-ʿamal bi-hi:*** this is also a standard formula for decrees and it can be restored accordingly.[28]

L. 9. ***al-nāẓir:*** Ibn Iyās states that the office of inspector of the port of al-Ṭūr had been granted to ʿAlā' al-Dīn ʿAlī ibn Ḥasan al-Imām in Ramaḍān 906/March–April 1501, but it is impossible to ascertain whether or not he still

[25] See al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshá,* 13:161.

[26] See, for a document from 910/1504, Hans Ernst, *Die mamlukischen Sultansurkunden des Sinai-Klosters* (Wiesbaden, 1960), 210 (no. LVIII).

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

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held this position when this document was issued.[29] This same person was also appointed inspector of the Privy sometime later.[30]

al-mutaḥaddithīn: the verb *taḥaddatha* followed by the preposition *fī* or *ʿalá* takes the meaning "to have authority, inspection, jurisdiction over something."[31] Its use is largely attested in Mamluk sources, mainly from the ninth/fifteenth century, both in documentary and narrative sources. Among the documents held at the Monastery of St. Catherine, its first occurrence (the *maṣdar taḥadduth*) is attested in a decree dated 863/1459.[32] In another document from the same collection, dated 911/1506, the term *al-mutaḥaddithūn* is used to refer to office holders who were active in the port of al-Ṭūr.[33] In the narrative sources, the same word is combined with a wide variety of terms indicating things to be managed (endowed lands, revenues, offices, regions).[34] The exact function of this category of office holders is hard to define. In al-Ṭūr, they probably were at the lower level of the administrative ladder as they are mentioned after the inspector *(nāẓir)* and the superintendent *(shādd),* who supervised the activities of the port and were assisted in this by various administrators *(mutaḥaddithūn).* The same person could be appointed to the two functions of inspector *(naẓar)* and administrator *(taḥadduth).*[35]

L. 14. ***Uzdamur:*** the person who occupied the position of chief executive secretary *(dawādār kabīr)* was named Uzdamur min ʿAlī Bāy al-Ashrafī. He had been appointed to this position on Thursday 14 Muḥarram 907/30 July 1501, a few months before the document was issued, in replacement of Miṣr Bāy.[36] He seems to have remained in this position continuously until his death, which occurred on 15 Jumādá I 913/22 September 1507.[37] As indicated in another decree issued in 910/1505, the monks of St. Catherine

[29] Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr fī waqāʾiʿ al-duhūr,* ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá (Beirut, 1960–75), 3:474.

[30] Ibid., 4:22; Ibn al-Ḥimṣī, *Ḥawādith al-zamān wa-wafayāt al-shuyūkh wa-al-aqrān,* ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī (Sidon and Beirut, 1999), 2:140.

[31] Reinart P. A. Dozy, *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes* (Leiden, 1881), 1:257.

[32] Ernst, *Die mamlukischen Sultansurkunden,* 134 (no. XXVII, ll. 15 and 30).

[33] Ibid., 222 (no. LXIII, l. 11).

[34] See the detailed list in Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr, al-fahāris,* 2:349–53.

[35] Ernst, *Die mamlukischen Sultansurkunden,* 144 (no. XXX, l. 9): in this case, it is the patriarch who is designated as the inspector and administrator of some of the endowments held by the monks of St. Catherine.

[36] Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr,* 4:18 (ll. 1–2); Ibn al-Ḥimṣī, *Ḥawādith al-zamān,* 2:133.

[37] Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr,* 4:119 (l. 19)–420 (l. 5). However, the information provided by Ibn Iyās is contradicted by documentary evidence. Decrees related to the Monastery of St. Catherine show that, from the year 911/1506, the position of chief executive secretary was held by

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regarded themselves as being under his protection, which indicates that the monastery and its possessions, including those at the port of al-Ṭūr, were placed under his direct supervision.[38]

L. 16. ***al-malakī:*** the epithet, following *al-naṣrānī* (the Christian), should not be understood as the usual one linked to the sultan, but rather as meaning "the Melkite." It is used in some documents of the Monastery of St. Catherine together with *al-yaʿqūbī* (the Jacobite).[39] No information could be found in the documentary and narrative sources about Naṣr ibn Badr.

mutakalliman: the word is synonymous with *mutaḥaddith*.[40]

L. 17. ***al-tarkīb:*** all the diacritical dots are indicated in the document, which leaves little doubt about its correct reading. The second verbal form *rakkaba* can mean "to assemble different parts into one piece." It is known that boats could be transported and assembled for placement at sea, and the verb *rakkaba* was used to designate this operation.[41] Nevertheless, this is not the meaning that was chosen here as there is no evidence to suggest that boat assembly was a regular activity in al-Ṭūr, nor that it generated a revenue. Furthermore, it can by no means be interpreted as being a reference to the loading or unloading of the boats, an activity that was expressed through the verbs *shaḥana* and *wasaqa*. Preference has thus been given to another meaning of the verb: "to lend a horse/a camel to someone."[42] Goods unloaded in al-Ṭūr were then transported on the backs of pack animals.

Ṭūmān Bāy, the future sultan. See Ernst, *Die mamlukischen Sultansurkunden,* 224 (no. LXIII, year 911/1506), 228 (no. LXV, year 912/1506), 232 (no. LXVI, year 913/1507).

[38] Ernst, *Die mamlukischen Sultansurkunden,* 216 (no. LX, ll. 16–8: *wa-annahum jārīn fī ḥimāyat al-janāb...Uzdamur*). This is confirmed by a later decree dated one year later: ibid., 224 (l. 24: *kawn anna al-dayr al-madhkūr mashmūl bi-naẓarihi*).

[39] Ibid., 230 (no. LXV, l. 22: *al-ruhbān wa-al-ruhbānāt al-malakīyīn wa-al-yaʿāqibah*).

[40] Dozy, *Supplément,* 2:486.

[41] In 707/1307–8, it was decided to send unassembled parts of boats to al-Ṭūr and Suez, where they were to be assembled with the intent to attack Rasulid Yemen. See Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdat al-fikrah fī tārīkh al-hijrah,* ed. Donald S. Richards (Beirut, 1998), 396 *(wa-tasfīrihā ilá jihat al-Ṭūr wa-al-Suways ʿalá al-ẓahr li-turakkab hunāk wa-turmá al-baḥr wa-tusaffar).* It is only with the incursions of the Portuguese in the Red Sea from 1502 that we can discern a resurgence of the practice of sending boat parts to al-Ṭūr for assembly. This occurred in 1503 (see Marino Sanudo, *I diarii* [Venice, 1879–1903], 5:1000), in 1508 (ibid., 8:80) and 1509 (see Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr,* 4:151). All of the aforementioned cases pertain to a period subsequent to the date of the document published here.

[42] Edward William Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon* (London and Edinburgh, 1863–93), 1142; J. G. Hava, *Arabic-English Dictionary* (Beirut, 1899), 258.

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al-dhakhīrah: the term is here translated as "the [sultan's] treasury." In his study of the development and evolution of this term and the reality it covered over time in the Circassian period, Daisuke Igarashi stressed that it corresponded to the sultan's sources of income, particularly various forms of official financial resources directly controlled by the sultan. At the outset of the Circassian period, the bureau's remit initially encompassed the sultan's leasehold lands.[43] However, during the reign of Qāytbāy, its scope was expanded to incorporate additional revenue streams, including those derived from the sultan's transactions in spices, the proceeds of certain taxes, and other commercial activities.[44] As evidenced by the document, the sultan also had commercial interests in al-Ṭūr. This is corroborated by other documents housed in the archives of the St. Catherine Monastery. In a decree dated 891/1486, it is stated that a monk and his superior possessed storehouses *(ḥawāṣil)* that had been converted into endowments *(awqāf)* and where the spices belonging to the sultan's treasury *(al-dhakhīrah al-sharīfah)* were stored. Furthermore, it is noted that some local Bedouins unjustly requested money that they were not entitled to receive.[45] In 892/1487, the storehouses owned by the monks, as well as by other individuals, including Muslims and Christians, in the port were requisitioned for the purpose of storing spices intended for the sultan's treasury. This resulted in a loss of income from the rent, which was consequently suspended.[46] Such grievances were repeated almost annually. As early as 894/1489, another decree was issued in response to the monks' repeated complaints that their courtyards and storehouses, which were typically used to store the spices for the sultan's treasury, had been taken over by individuals who had stored wheat, beans, and flour in them without paying the rent.[47]

mā bi-yad kullan minhum: the expression is recurrent in decrees, usually under the form *ʿalá ḥukm mā bi-yadi(hi, him) min al-marsūm/al-marāsīm*.[48] It is therefore reasonable to conclude that a designation of a person or persons following the term *bi-yad* would be expected. The proposed reading is the most convincing, with *kullan* interpreted as a mistake for the correct

[43] Daisuke Igarashi, "The Evolution of the Sultanic Fisc and *al-Dhakhīrah* during the Circassian Mamluk Period," *MSR* 14 (2010): 89.

[44] Ibid., 99–102.

[45] Ernst, *Die mamlukischen Sultansurkunden,* 184 (no. XLVI).

[46] Ibid., 188 (no. XLVIII).

[47] Ibid., 196 (no. LI).

[48] For instance, ibid., 194 (l. 30).

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kullin made by the scribe who wrote the decree. The word cannot be read as *kilá,* as no dual subject precedes in the text. Furthermore, *kilá* would not be followed by *min* in such circumstances (the correct formulation would be *kilāhumā/kilayhimā,* "each of the both of them").[49]

L. 20. ***nāẓir al-khawāṣṣ...wa-wakīl bayt al-māl:*** the person who held both the positions of inspector of the Privy and agent of the State Treasury in 907/1501 was Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf al-Ṣafadī al-Ḥanbalī (d. 4 Dhū al-Ḥijjah 907/15 June 1502).[50] He was first appointed agent of the State Treasury in 903/1498, after the death of the previous holder.[51] He was dismissed sometime later until he was reinstated in the same position on 6 Shaʿbān 904/19 March 1499.[52] The function of inspector of the Privy was added to that of agent of the State Treasury on 14 Jumādá I 907/25 November 1501, after he had offered sixty thousand dinars to secure it. His predecessor, ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn ʿAlī ibn Ḥasan al-Imām, who seems to have also been inspector of the port of al-Ṭūr, was dismissed. His appointment took place two weeks before the document was issued.[53] He kept both positions until his death—apparently a suicide caused by the sultan's request for more money.[54]

L. 23. ***bi-makhāzīm:*** this is the plural of *makhzūmah,* a type of document of account attested in various sources from the late Fatimid period. The term appears for the first time, both in its singular and plural forms, in al-Makhzūmī's (d. 585/1189) *Al-Minhāj*. In a first occurrence, it refers to documents of account to be prepared by the secretary who manages the im-

[49] The word can certainly not be read *kilām* as a plural of *kalīm* (the one to whom one speaks), which plural in the dictionaries is given as *kulamāʾ.* See Hava, *Arabic-English Dictionary,* 656. The plural form *kilām* is only attested for the term *kalīm* (wound, injury) in Manfred Ullmann, *Wörterbuch der klassischen arabischen Sprache,* vol. 1: ك (Wiesbaden, 1970), 332. However, this form does not align with the passage in the document under examination. In the same work, the form *killām* is also found, which means "talking, speaking" (ibid., 336). It appears that this form is not applicable to the passage under discussion either.

[50] Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr,* 4:29; Ibn al-Ḥimṣī, *Ḥawādith al-zamān,* 2:152.

[51] Ibn al-Ḥimṣī, *Ḥawādith al-zamān,* 2:43; Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mutʿat al-adhhān min al-tamattuʿ bi-al-aqrān bayn tarājim al-shuyūkh wa-al-aqrān,* ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khālīl al-Shaybānī al-Mawṣilī (Beirut, 1999), 2:611.

[52] Ibn al-Ḥimṣī, *Ḥawādith al-zamān,* 2:70. According to the documentary evidence, he was dismissed once again before Jumādá II 905/January 1500 and reinstated in 906/1501. See ʿImād Badr al-Dīn Abū Ghāzī, "Mulāḥaẓāt ʿalá ikhtiṣāṣāt al-ʿāmilīn fī bayt al-māl wa-musammayātihim fī ʿaṣr al-mamālīk al-jarākisah," *Annales islamologiques* 33 (1999): 31 (nos. 29, 31, 33, 35).

[53] Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr,* 4:22; Ibn al-Ḥimṣī, *Ḥawādith al-zamān,* 2:140.

[54] He died after swallowing a diamond. Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr,* 4:29; Ibn al-Ḥimṣī, *Ḥawādith al-zamān,* 2:152.

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ported goods kept in the bonded warehouse of Alexandria.[55] In another passage, the term is mentioned in relation with daily lists detailing the names of the merchants, the staples they brought, and the taxes to be paid to the Treasury once they arrive in the port of Tinnīs.[56] From both passages, it is understood that this category of document is related to the day-to-day administration of commercial operations related to the activities carried out in Egyptian ports. The *makhāzīm* also features in Ibn Mammātī's (d. 606/1209) *Al-Qawānīn wa-al-dawāwīn* among the types of documents that the collector of state revenues *(jahbadh)* had to establish.[57] Al-Nuwayrī (d. 733/1333) also provides details for the *makhzūmah* in relation to the revenues generated by cultivated lands.[58] In his chancery manual, Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī (d. 749/1349) evokes the *makhāzīm* among recommendations addressed to a person appointed as inspector of the State Treasury: the recommendation is to extract from the *makhāzīm* on a daily basis the information he will need to provide if he is asked about the available revenues.[59] This type of document was also used by notaries. When addressing the issue of the sale of a deceased's estate in his manual, al-Asyūṭī (d. sometime after 903/1498) explains that a *makhzūmah* is to be drafted for each auction that takes place in a given market, one for each market depending on the nature of the goods sold. Once all the goods of the deceased have been sold, a summary statement of the proceeds of the sales *(jāmiʿah)* is drawn up.[60] *Makhāzīm* linked to the sale of estates have been preserved among the collection of the Ḥaram al-Sharīf documents.[61]

[55] Al-Makhzūmī, *Al-Minhāj fī ʿilm kharāj Miṣr,* ed. Claude Cahen (Cairo, 1986), 46–47; Claude Cahen, *Makhzūmiyyāt: Études sur l'histoire économique et financières de l'Égypte médiévale* (Leiden, 1977), 140–41.

[56] Al-Makhzūmī, *Al-Minhāj,* 58; Cahen, *Makhzūmiyyāt,* 152.

[57] Ibn Mammātī, *Al-Qawānīn wa-al-dawāwīn,* ed. ʿAzīz Sūryāl ʿAṭīyah (Cairo, 1943), 304 *(wa-ʿalayhi ʿamal al-makhāzīm wa-al-ruznamajāt wa-al-khatamāt wa-tawālīhā).* See also Cahen, *Makhzūmiyyāt,* 29, n. 1.

[58] Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab* (Cairo, 1923–97), 8:260, 274.

[59] Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, *Al-Taʿrīf bi-al-muṣṭalaḥ al-sharīf,* ed. Samīr al-Durūbī (al-Karak, 1992), 1:164. See also in al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr wa-aʿwān al-naṣr,* ed. ʿAlī Abū Zayd et al. (Beirut and Damascus, 1997–98), 1:654, the example of a governor of Damascus to whom the *makhāzīm* were read when he visited his bureau after his absence for a hunting game.

[60] Al-Asyūṭī, *Jawāhir al-ʿuqūd wa-muʿīn al-quḍāh wa-al-muwaqqiʿīn wa-al-shuhūd,* ed. Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Fiqī (Cairo, 1955), 1:466. At the time of al-Makhzūmī, the summary statement was made after a period of ten days (called *rūznāmaj*). Another summary statement was made at the end of the month (called *khatmah*) and of the year (called *ʿamal*). See Cahen, *Makhzūmiyyāt,* 20.

[61] Donald P. Little, *A Catalogue of the Islamic Documents from al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf in Jerusalem* (Beirut, 1984), 335–36. See also idem, "Documents Related to the Estates of a Merchant and His Wife in

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This review of a wide variety of sources demonstrates that the *makhzūmah* was a document of account used in specific circumstances that were quite broad and drafted by various categories of appointees. The main feature of this type of document consisted in listing the revenues for a single operation (a sale for one part of an estate in a given market) or on a daily basis. The document served to establish a summary document later on. The etymological meaning of the word *makhzūmah* is something that is pierced, perforated. As Little noticed, some of the documents containing the word *makhzūmah* have one or two holes, and he surmised that a string was passed through these holes to join several documents together in a bunch for filing purposes.[62] In his study on the documents of the Ḥaram al-Sharīf, Müller argued that not all the *makhāzīm* that are part of this collection have signs of perforation, and that the word *makhzūmah* is never written with the diacritical dots. In his view, the term should rather be read *maḥzūmah,* and the meaning would be a document where the transaction is "tied up."[63] As can be seen in our document, the word is clearly written with all the diacritical dots and must undoubtedly be read *makhāzīm*. Even in narrative sources, the word is written in an unquestionable manner: four examples are provided—three from al-Makhzūmī's *Al-Minhāj* and one from al-Maqrīzī's first version of the *Khiṭaṭ* in his own hand (see figs. 8–9). Even if the etymology of the word implies that this category of documents used to be perforated in order to be joined together, it does not mean that this was always the case or that, with the passing of time, other types of documents could not also be joined with these, as evidenced by the documents of the Ḥaram al-Sharīf.[64] The presence or the absence of perforation should thus not be considered as a definitive proof that documents belong to the *makhāzīm*. It is rather the presence of the word in the text of the document that should be the criteria for its identification.

Late Fourteenth Century Jerusalem," *MSR* 2 (1998): 118–21.

[62] Little, *A Catalogue,* 335.

[63] Christian Müller, *Der Kadi und Seine Zeugen: Studie der mamlukischen Ḥaram-Dokumente aus Jerusalem* (Wiesbaden, 2013), 112–13. MacGuckin de Slane had already reached this conclusion in his translation of Ibn Khaldūn's *Al-Muqaddimah*. Dozy, *Supplément,* 1:368, underlined that his correction of the manuscripts was wrong.

[64] See Little, *A Catalogue,* 335.

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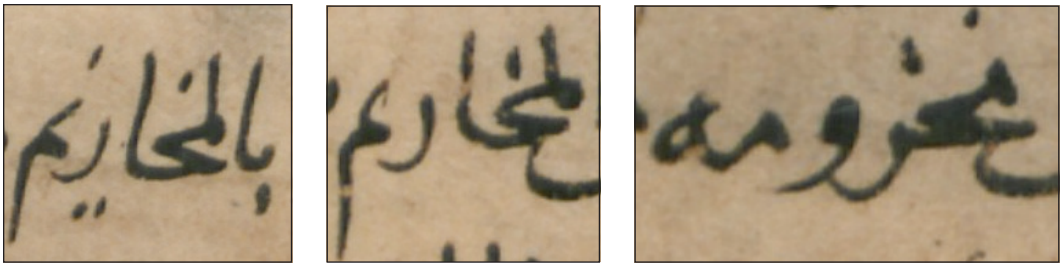


Figure 8: The word *makhzūmah, bi-makhāzīm,* and *bi-al-makhāzīm* in al-Makhzūmī's *Al-Minhāj* (British Library, MS Add. 23483, fols. 88a and 97a). Courtesy of the British Library.

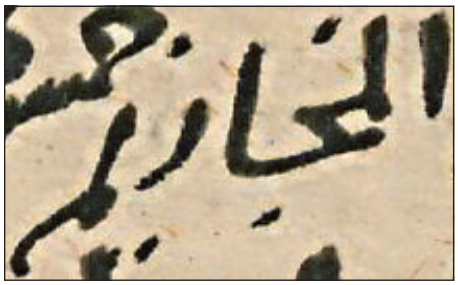


Figure 9: The word *al-makhāzīm* in al-Maqrīzī's first version of *Al-Mawāʿiẓ wa-al-iʿtibār* (Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi Müzesi, MS H1472, fol. 69a). Courtesy of Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi Müzesi

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Supplementary Note to the Article "Prolegomena on Ibn Ajā's Journey to Tabriz: Chronology and Itinerary according to the *Tārīkh al-Amīr Yashbak*," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 26 (2023): 117–53

Postscript: The Toponym of *MLShKRD*

On pages 138–39 of my contribution, I discuss the toponym spelled MLShKRD in Ibn Ajā's itinerary to and from Tabriz. Although I rejected the proposed identification of this toponym with Malazgirt/Muş or Walashjirt (contemporary Toprakkale/Eleşkirt/Ağrı), I was unable to offer a better identification of this stage of Ibn Ajā's journey.

Based on comparison with the early seventeenth-century Armenian travelogue of Simēon Lehacʿi,[1] the toponym can confidently be identified with the fortress and village of Manuškut,[2] which is, according to the *Index Anatolicus,* modern Yeşilova/Solhan/Bingöl. Within the itinerary of Simēon, this toponym constitutes one of the stations on the way from Čapałǰur (contemporary Bingöl) to the monastery of Surb Karapet at the modern village of Yukarıyongalı/Merkez/Muş.[3]

Due to this identification, the reconstruction of Ibn Ajā's itinerary between Bingöl and Aktuzla/Malazgirt/Muş proposed on page 140 of my article has to be amended, as he evidently did not follow the Göynük river in a northeasterly direction from Bingöl. Instead, he travelled east from Bingöl and likely continued beyond Yeşilova to the monastery of Surb Karapet, which continued to flourish in the fifteenth century. While he did reach Yeşilova from Muş during his return from Tabriz (see page 150 of my article), he does not mention Muş among the stations of his journey to Tabriz. Accordingly, he and his companions likely cut across the difficult terrain after departing from the area of Yeşilova and the monastery of Surb Karapet to the area of contemporary Varto/Muş, before continuing to al-Mallāḥah al-Bayḍāʾ (modern Aktuzla/Malazgirt/Muş), roughly along the itinerary suggested on p. 140 of my article.

[1] Simēon Lehacʿi, *Uł̣egrutʿyun,* ed. N. Akinean (Vienna, 1936).

[2] Ibid., 196.

[3] Ibid., 196–97. Simēon summarily condenses the first 50 km from Bingöl to Yeşilova, before describing in vivid detail the following 20 km from Yeşilova via a spring named Šakʿarlu (Turkic "sugar-sweet"), the village of Kuaṙs (according to the *Index Anatolicus,* this is contemporary Arakonak/Solhan/Bingöl), and a mountain named Tʿōzlu Tał (Turkic "dusty mountain") to the monastery of Surb Karapet. This narrative focalization should not be misunderstood to suggest that the later part of the journey was longer than the first.

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Identification of Ibn Ajā's MLShKRD with Yeşilova is particularly intriguing due to Ibn Ajā's description of his meeting with an individual called al-shaykh Muḥammad al-Kurdī, said to be a descendant of Muḥammad's uncle al-ʿAbbās, whom he met after climbing a high mountain after continuing his journey from Yeşilova. If this mountain could be identified with the *tʿōzlu tał* that constitutes the final stage before the monastery of Surb Karapet in Simēon's itinerary,[4] the meeting of Ibn Ajā and this shaykh would have taken place in the immediate vicinity of the monastery, if not at the monastery itself. A similar sojourn of Ibn Ajā at a Christian village *(qaryat naṣārá)* is mentioned during his return from Tabriz (see p. 148 of my article). While it is very plausible that Ibn Ajā's journey followed established routes including Armenian Christian monastic centers as far as possible, I am not aware of any further information that could enable the identification of the Kurdish shaykh he met at Yukarıyongalı.

[4] Ibid., 197.

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Romanized Arabic in *Mamlūk Studies Review* follows the Library of Congress conventions, briefly outlined below. A more thorough discussion may be found in *American Library Association–Library of Congress Romanization Tables* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1991): http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/romanization/arabic.pdf.

ء	ʾ	خ	kh	ش	sh	غ	gh	م	m
ب	b	د	d	ص	ṣ	ف	f	ن	n
ت	t	ذ	dh	ض	ḍ	ق	q	ه	h
ث	th	ر	r	ط	ṭ	ك	k	و	w
ج	j	ز	z	ظ	ẓ	ل	l	ي	y
ح	ḥ	س	s	ع	ʿ				
		ة	h, t (in construct)			ال	al-		

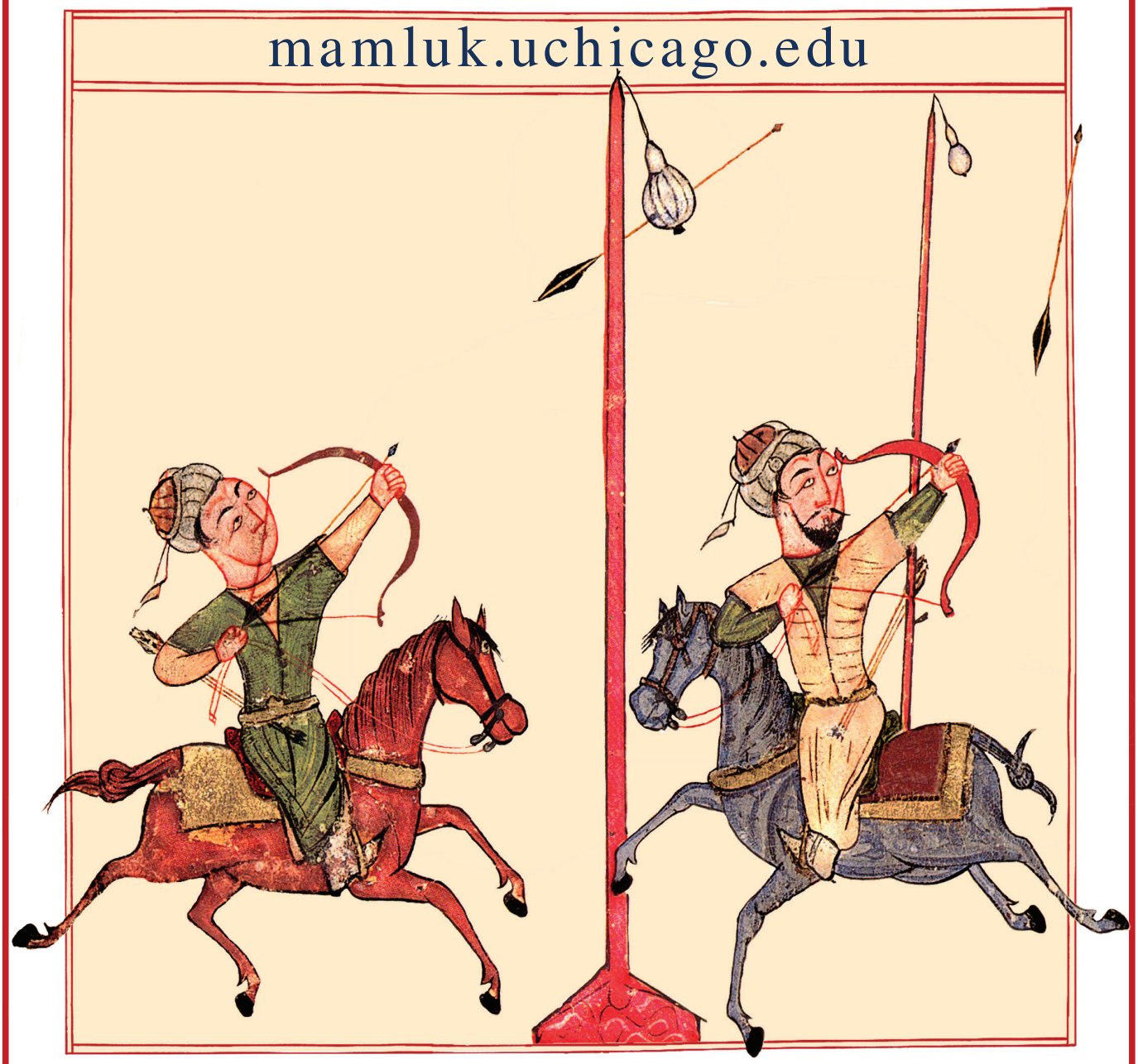
ـَ	a	ـُ	u	ـِ	i
ـً	an	ـٌ	un	ـٍ	in
آ	ā	ـُو	ū	ـِي	ī
ـَا	ā	ـُوّ	ūw	ـِيّ	īy (medial), ī (final)
ى	á	ـَو	aw	ـَي	ay
				ـَيّ	ayy

Avoid using apostrophes or single quotation marks for *ʿayn* and *hamzah*. Instead, use the Unicode characters ʿ (02BF) and ʾ (02BE).

Capitalization in romanized Arabic follows the conventions of American English; the definite article is always lower case, except when it is the first word in an English sentence or a title. The *hamzah* is not represented when beginning a word, following a prefixed preposition or conjunction, or following the definite article. Assimilation of the *lām* of the definite article before "sun" letters is disregarded. Final inflections of verbs are retained, except in pausal form; final inflections of nouns and adjectives are not represented, except preceding suffixes and except when verse is romanized. Vocalic endings of pronouns, demonstratives, prepositions, and conjunctions are represented. The hyphen is used with the definite article, conjunctions, inseparable prepositions, and other prefixes. Note the exceptional treatment of the preposition *li-* followed by the article, as in *lil-sultān*. Note also the following exceptional spellings: Allāh, billāh, lillāh, bismillāh, miʾah, and ibn (for both initial and medial forms). Words not requiring diacritical marks, though following the conventions outlined above, include all Islamic dynasties, as well as terms which are found in English dictionaries, such as Quran, sultan, amir, imam, shaykh, Sunni, Shiʿi, and Sufi. Common place-names should take the common spelling in American English. Names of archaeological sites should follow the convention of the excavator.

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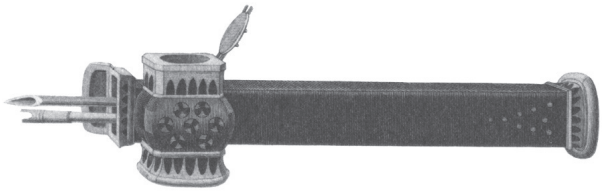
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