MAMLŪK STUDIES
REVIEW

IX
(2)

2005

MAMLŪK STUDIES REVIEW

PUBLISHED BY THE MIDDLE EAST DOCUMENTATION CENTER (MEDOC)
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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CONTACT

All communications should be sent to: The Editor, *Mamlūk Studies Review,* 5828 South University Avenue, 201 Pick Hall, Chicago, IL 60637, USA. The editor can be contacted by email at msaleh@uchicago.edu.

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MAMLŪK STUDIES
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Mamlūk Studies Review is a biannual refereed journal devoted to the study of the Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt and Syria (648–922/1250–1517). It appears in January and July. The goals of *Mamlūk Studies Review* are to take stock of scholarship devoted to the Mamluk era, nurture communication within the field, and promote further research by encouraging the critical discussion of all aspects of this important medieval Islamic polity. The journal includes both articles and reviews of recent books. Submissions of original work on any aspect of the field are welcome, although the editorial board will periodically issue volumes devoted to specific topics and themes. *Mamlūk Studies Review* also solicits edited texts and translations of shorter Arabic source materials (*waqf* deeds, letters, *fatāwá* and the like), and encourages discussions of Mamluk era artifacts (pottery, coins, etc.) that place these resources in wider contexts. Transliterated Middle Eastern languages should conform to the system utilized by the Library of Congress. All questions regarding style should be resolved through reference to *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 14th edition. All submissions should be typed double-spaced. Submissions must be made on labeled computer disk or online, together with a printed copy. The print copy should have full and proper diacritics, but the disk or online copy should have no diacritics of any kind.

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MAMLŪK STUDIES
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The Bruce D. Craig
Prize for Mamluk Studies

The Prize Committee is pleased to announce that Tamar el-Leithy (Ph.D., Princeton University) has been named the inaugural recipient of the Bruce D. Craig Prize for Mamluk Studies for his dissertation:

"Coptic Culture and Conversion in Medieval Cairo: 1293–1524"

The Committee based its decision on el-Leithy's insightful and original interpretations of the topic, based upon his close and careful use of previously neglected sources from the medieval Coptic community of Egypt. His critical approach to previous scholars' work on conversion results in important questions regarding their conclusions. The Committee commends el-Leithy for his valuable contribution to the field of Mamluk Studies. An abstract of the dissertation is appended to this announcement.

The Bruce D. Craig Prize, carrying a cash award of $1,000, is given annually by *Mamlūk Studies Review* for the best dissertation on a topic related to the Mamluk Sultanate submitted to an American or Canadian university during the preceding calendar year. In the event no dissertations are submitted, or none is deemed to merit the prize, no prize will be awarded. To be considered for the 2005 Prize, dissertations must be defended by December 31, 2005, and submitted to the Prize Committee by January 31, 2006. Submissions should be sent to:

Chair, Prize Committee
Mamlūk Studies Review
Pick Hall 201
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Chicago, IL 60637

The Prize Committee for 2005 consisted of Donald P. Little (McGill University); Marlis Saleh (University of Chicago); and Warren C. Schultz (DePaul University).

Abstract: "Coptic Culture and Conversion in Medieval Cairo, 1293–1524"

When Islam was half as old as it is today, Egypt was swept by mass conversions that irrevocably altered its religious history and demographic composition. In the early 8th/14th century, various pressures on the Coptic Christian community triggered a pivotal wave of conversion to Islam. While conversion protected lives and jobs, it did not guarantee immunity: converts often fell prey to the suspicions of their new co-religionists, provoking further regulation and Muslim anxieties of influence. Conversion rendered Copts socially marginal, but concomitantly culturally central.

Supplementing traditional Muslim accounts with unpublished legal documents and Coptic sources, this dissertation investigates how conversion was experienced, negotiated, and represented. The first section discusses hitherto unknown responses to the conversion wave, including the legal ruse of single-generation conversion, by which converts maintained their progeny as non-Muslims; a wave of Coptic martyrs in the late 8th/14th century; and a Coptic rite of quasi-rebaptism through which converts reverted to Christianity. The second part examines representations of converts in Muslim biographical dictionaries, including the epithets applied to converts and the tropes of religious suspicion. The third section investigates everyday social practices of converts like residence and patronage patterns and compares these to the suspicious charges of Muslim authors. The final section uses an unpublished collection of the correspondence of Patriarch Yuhanna XIII (1484–1524 A.D.) as a prism onto the long-term effects of the conversion wave on Coptic Christianity and culture.

CONTENTS

BOOK REVIEWS

Th. Emil Homerin
University of Rochester

The Study of Islam within Mamluk Domains

Religion was ubiquitous in the ancient and medieval worlds. It touched nearly everything; some things it saturated. Religion was powerful in China and India, Africa and South America, and certainly in Europe and the Middle East, where people consciously defined themselves in terms of the domains of faith: Christendom and the Abode of Islam. In such a context, nearly everything could have a religious dimension. As a result, scholarship on the Mamluk period (648–923/1250–1517) often touches on religion, and the University of Chicago′s *Chicago On-Line Bibliography of Mamluk Studies* lists nearly five hundred entries under religion alone. That number easily doubles when we add articles on just two important religious figures of the period, Ibn al-ʿArabī and Ibn Taymīyah; relevant articles on art and architecture, economics, literature, and scholarship could double the number of entries yet again. What is required at the outset, then, is a definition of religion to serve as a guiding and limiting principle for this review:

> Religion is ″an institution consisting of culturally patterned interaction with culturally postulated superhuman beings.″[1]

As with other human institutions, religion consists of systems of belief, action, and values, where beliefs are generally normative, rituals collective, and values prescriptive. However, religion differs from other cultural systems in that it makes direct reference to interactions with superhuman beings, or ″counter-intuitive agents.″[2] In the following review, then, I will focus primarily on recent studies of religion in the Mamluk age that I believe represent some of the prevalent trends, topics, and problems in this area. Further, it should be noted that in Mamluk domains, religion had three major instantiations: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Since I am not a specialist in either Judaism or Christianity, I have narrowed my scope to the study of Islam, though some references will be made to other faiths when occasions warrant.

Strangely, while the *Cambridge History of Egypt* contains separate chapters on Christian and Jewish communities in medieval Egypt, it does not include a

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[1]Melford E. Spiro, ″Religion: Problems of Definition and Explanation,″ in *Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion*, ed. Michael Banton (London, 1966), 85–126.

[2]Ibid., and see Ilkka Pyysiainen, *How Religion Works* (Leiden, 2001), 9–23.

chapter on Islam in the same period.³ Naturally, there are competent references to Islam throughout the *History′s* various articles on the Mamluk period,⁴ but there is no comparable study of Muslim communities in terms of their religious beliefs and practices. This is a telling statement about the field of Mamluk studies in general. For, as we shall see, there are a number of fine articles and books on particular facets of Islam in the Mamluk period, but I know of no book-length survey in any language on Islam there. Indeed, the source most often cited on this subject is an article written nearly forty years ago by Annemarie Schimmel.

The late Dr. Schimmel is justly renowned for her many erudite works on Islamic mysticism, but one of her early and enduring interests was the Mamluks. In 1943, Schimmel published ″Kalif und Ḳāḍī im spätmittelarterlichen Ägypten″⁵ and this would serve as an important source for her broad survey modestly entitled ″Some Glimpses of the Religious Life in Egypt during the Later Mamluk Period.″⁶ Schimmel began by describing the largely ceremonial position of the caliphs and their subordination to the Mamluk sultans, who, nevertheless, viewed themselves as protectors of the faith. She then reviewed important religious events, including the Friday prayers at the Citadel, the fast of Ramaḍān and the ‘Īd al-Fiṭr, the annual Hajj and the ‘Īd al-Aḍḥá, and the celebration of the Prophet′s birthday and lesser *mawlid*s of various saints. This leads to her account of Sufism in this period and to brief mention of several institutions, including the *khānqāh* and the *zāwiyah,* and the more prominent Sufi orders. Schimmel noted that Sufi doctrines and practices were at times controversial, as was the case in protracted disputes over the works of Ibn al-‘Arabī (d. 637/1240) and Ibn al-Fāriḍ (d. 632/1235). She then concluded with a few brief remarks on astrology, fortune-telling, unlawful taxes, and corrupt judges.

In many respects, Schimmel staked out the areas for later research, and several

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³Terry G. Wilfong, ″The Non-Muslim Communities: Christian Communities,″ in *Cambridge History of Egypt,* ed. Carl Petry (Cambridge, 1998), 175–97, and Norman A. Stillman, ″The Non-Muslim Communities: Jewish Communities,″ in *CHE,* 198–210.

⁴E.g., Michael Chamberlain, ″The Crusader Era and the Ayyūbid Dynasty,″ in *CHE,* esp. 231–34; Linda S. Northrup, ″The Baḥrī Mamlūk Sultanate, 1250–1390,″ in *CHE,* esp. 265–71; Jean-Claude Garcin, ″The Regime of the Circassian Mamlūks,″ in *CHE,* esp. 311–13; Jonathan Berkey, ″Culture and Society during the Middle Ages,″ in *CHE,* esp. 401–11.

⁵Annemarie Schimmel, ″Kalif und Ḳāḍī im spätmittelarterlichen Ägypten,″ *Die Welt des Islam* 24 (1942): 1–128.

⁶Annemarie Schimmel, ″Some Glimpses of the Religious Life in Egypt during the Later Mamluk Period,″ *Islamic Studies* 4 (1965): 353–92. For a later German version see her ″Sufismus und Heiligenverehrung im spätmittelalternlichen Ägypten,″ *Festscrift für W. Caskel,* ed. Erich Graf (Leiden, 1968), 274–89. In 1995, Dr. Schimmel mentioned to me that she still hoped to write more on the Mamluks.

of her opinions were standard in Mamluk studies until recent years. This is particularly the case for her characterization of the religious life of the Mamluk military elite:

> The impression that we get from the later sources is that neither the Mamluk Sultans themselves nor the *amirs* who rose from among them had any interest in spiritual things. Only a comparatively small number of them had sufficient knowledge of literary, or at least grammatically correct, Arabic.[7]

However, Schimmel tempered this sweeping judgment, as she went on to relate accounts of pious behavior by Mamluks, their sincere defense of Islam, and their financial support of religious officials and saintly individuals.[8]

That many Mamluks were, in fact, believing Muslims was conclusively shown about twenty years later by Donald P. Little in his influential article ″Religion Under the Mamluks.″[9] Little draws attention to Ibn Khaldūn′s view of the Mamluks as sent by God to save Islam from the infidel Mongols, for, as Ibn Khaldūn noted, the Mamluks ″embrace Islam with the determination of true believers, while retaining their nomadic virtues.″[10] Little argues persuasively that a strong Muslim faith and identity underlie many Mamluk military actions against the Mongols, Crusaders, and Shi'is, as well as the Mamluks′ lavish patronage of mosques, madrasahs, *khānqāh*s, and *zāwiyah*s, and the many religious personnel employed in them. Of special importance to the Mamluks were the holy cities of Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem, which they funded generously. Of course, economic and political motives were involved in Mamluk support of Islam and its institutions; *waqf*s supported Mamluks and their families as well as men of religion, and the sultans were not about to cede power to their puppet caliphs. In the vital area of religious law, too, the sultans sought to adjust the system in ways always favorable to their policies and desires.[11] Still, the Mamluks supported the religious establishment as well as wandering mendicants and Sufi shaykhs, but they took care to suppress individuals or groups who posed a threat to civil authority. Such was the case of the Aḥmadīyah-Rifā'īyah dervishes with their outlandish dress and strange behaviors, not to mention their close relationship with the Mongols, archenemies of the Mamluks. Similarly, the Mamluks sought to limit non-Muslim religious practices, especially Christian

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[7]Schimmel, ″Glimpses,″ 356.

[8]Ibid., 356–65, 376–79, 381.

[9]Donald P. Little, ″Religion Under the Mamluks,″ *Muslim World* 73 (1983): 165–81.

[10]Ibid., 165–66.

[11]Ibid., 168–75.

festivals and celebrations that were accompanied by wine, prostitutes, and brawling, while Christian officials in the civil administration were forced to convert to Islam on occasion, though this was by no means a Mamluk policy.[12] By contrast, respected Muslim scholars might also find themselves opposed by the Mamluk ruling elite if their beliefs and/or interests clashed, as happened with Ibn Taymīyah (d. 728/1328), whose vociferous condemnation of other scholars and popular Muslim practices landed him in jail several times.[13] In his assessment of religion under the Mamluks, Little concludes:

> Out of religious conviction and personal piety in some instances but also with an acute sense of their own welfare, the Mamluks strove to keep diverse religious forces in Egypt and Syria in a state of equilibrium. In such circumstances, Islam undeniably flourished.[14]

Whatever their personal proclivities toward Islam, it has long been asserted that politically the Mamluks relied on Islam for their legitimacy to rule. This crucial relationship has been most recently analyzed by Anne Broadbridge in her article ″Mamluk Legitimacy and the Mongols: The Reigns of Baybars and Qalāwūn.″[15] In relation to their subjects, the Mamluks swore to protect and promote Sunni Islam, particularly against their external political rivals, the Ilkhan Mongols. To counter the Chinggis Khanid dynasty and its prestige in terms of lineage and military success, the Mamluk slave dynasty laid claim to defending the faith, enforcing the shariʿah and, especially, to their priority and, hence, superiority in embracing Islam.[16] The issue of legitimacy, however, is but one, albeit major,

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[12]Ibid., 175–80. Also see idem, ″Coptic Conversion to Islam under the Baḥrī Mamlūks, 692–755/1293–1354,″ *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 39 (1976): 552–69; idem, ″Coptic Converts to Islam During the Baḥrī Mamlūk Period,″ in *Conversion and Continuity: Indigenous Christian Communities in Islamic Lands, Eighth to Eighteenth Centuries,* ed. Michael Gervers and Ramzi Bikhazi (Toronto, 1990), 263–88; and Linda S. Northrup, ″Muslim-Christian Relations During the Reign of the Mamluk Sultan al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn, A.D. 1278–1290,″ in ibid., 253–61.

[13]Little, ″Religion,″ 180–81. Also see idem, ″The Historical and Historiographical Significance of the Detention of Ibn Taymiyya,″ *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 4 (1973): 311–27, and idem, ″Did Ibn Taymiyya Have a Screw Loose?″ *Studia Islamica* 41 (1975): 93–111. For more on Ibn Taymīyah see below.

[14]Little, ″Religion,″ 181.

[15]Anne Broadbridge, ″Mamluk Legitimacy and the Mongols: The Reigns of Baybars and Qalāwūn,″ *Mamlūk Studies Review* 5 (2001): 91–118. Also see Northrup, ″Baḥrī Mamlūk Sultanate,″ 255–56, 269.

[16]Broadbridge, ″Legitimacy,″ 117–18.

strand in the web of relations binding the Mamluks within Islam. In a thoughtful essay, ″The Mamluks as Muslims,″ Jonathan Berkey suggests that we view the Mamluks ″as any social group . . . participating in the dynamic process of constructing and reconstructing Islam.″[17] Far from a static and monolithic tradition, Islam in the Mamluk domains was a complex and malleable faith, whose particular beliefs and rituals were often shaped by Mamluk influence. The Mamluks endowed religious institutions and patronized religious scholars, and they also participated in religious debates and in the transmission of religious knowledge. Though many Mamluks had little interest in religion, and often led lives criticized by the ulama, other Mamluks took an active interest in their adopted faith.

The range, diversity, and complexity of Islam in the early Mamluk period are admirably described and analyzed by Louis Pouzet in his study *Damas au VIIe/XIIIe siècle: vie et structures religieuses d'une métrople islamique.*[18] Pouzet begins his study of religious institutions by examining the four Sunni law schools and some of the scholars and scholarly families that controlled them in thirteenth-century Damascus. While the Shafiʿis were dominant under the Ayyubids, Hanafis gained influence under the early Mamluks, who began to appoint a chief judge for each of the four law schools. Despite their importance, the chief judges of Damascus were now subordinate to those of Cairo, and the Mamluk capital that would dominate their domains. Nevertheless, these and other judges were actively involved in both the religious and political life, and some of them served as official Friday preachers *(khaṭīb),* who swore allegiance first to Ayyubid, then to Mamluk sovereigns. In contrast to such religious officials were the more popular preachers *(wāʿiẓ)* who spread their religious teachings among the masses. Pouzet carefully surveys religious scholarship and teaching in Damascus, with a focus on the madrasah and *zāwiyah*. He describes various teachers and officials who worked in them, with some remarks on the *waqf*s, or religious endowments, that supported them, and he provides a detailed account of their curriculum, which included Quranic studies and recitation, the study of hadith, law, jurisprudence, and theology.[19]

Muslims in Damascus also cultivated the ascetic and mystical life, both individually and collectively. Pouzet refers to several families prominent in Sufism and its orders in the region, members of which held the prestigious office of *mashyakhat al-shuyūkh*. Despite occasional controversies, usually between supporters of Ibn al-ʿArabī and his detractors, such as Ibn Taymīyah, Sufism

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[17]Jonathan Berkey, ″The Mamluks as Muslims: the Military Elite and the Construction of Islam in Medieval Egypt,″ in *The Mamluks in Egyptian Politics and Society*, ed. Thomas Philipp and Ulrich Haarmann (Cambridge, 1998), 163–73, esp. 173.

[18]Louis Pouzet, *Damas au VIIe/XIIIe siècle* (Beirut, 1988).

[19]Ibid., 11–205.

remained an important element in spiritual lives of many Muslims of the period. Pouzet notes the presence of religious minorities in the area including various Shi'i groups, Christians, and Jews, and he then turns to issues of religion and political power. For both the Ayyubids and Mamluks, unity and the defense of Islam against the Mongols in the east and Christians in the west was paramount. Invasions and threats of invasion were eminent features of politics, religion, and life in general, and these hostilities sometimes made life hard for Christians and Jews living as protected people among the Muslims of Damascus.[20]

In his final chapter, Pouzet broadens his perspective of religious institutions to include religion's roles in the everyday life of Muslims. He reviews the importance of liturgy and prayer, the hajj pilgrimage to Mecca, and pilgrimage to shrines, celebrating the Prophet's birthday, and participating in war and jihad. Also essential to daily life were rules and laws regulating personal and public conduct, which were meant to keep Muslims on the straight and narrow and away from temptations to drink and carouse. The interpretations of premonitions and dreams were another essential feature of the faith, as were death and burial, and the collective religious rites and prayers to ameliorate or ward off disasters. In all, Muslim religious life in the thirteenth century continued largely unaffected by the political change that marked the end of the Ayyubids and the rise of the Mamluks. Islam continued to mark the times of day and the seasons, and set the moral and ethical standards of slave and sultan alike.[21]

Pouzet's *Damas au VIIe/XIIIe siècle* is ground-breaking in many respects, as other scholars over the last fifteen years have picked up and developed various subjects and concerns referred to in this insightful work. Among them is Islam's importance to the Mamluk sultans. In his book and elsewhere, Pouzet noted the dealings between Baybars I (d. 676/1277) and the controversial Sufi shaykh Khaḍir al-Mihrānī (d. 676/1277), and this relationship was studied further by P. M. Holt and Peter Thorau.[22] Several studies of other individual sultans and their reigns have also drawn attention to religion in their personal and public lives. Linda Northrup assessed Qalāwūn's (d. 689/1290) building projects, religious opposition to some of them, and the sultan's attempt to influence men of religion via appointments and patronage.[23] In addition, Carl Petry has contrasted Qāytbāy's (d.

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[20]Ibid., 207–338.

[21]Ibid., 339–408.

[22]Ibid., 272, and idem, ″Ḥaḍir Ibn Abī Bakr al-Mihrānī, šayḫ du sultan mamelouk al-Malik aẓ-Ẓāhir Baïbars,″ *Bulletin d'études orientales* 30 (1978): 173–83. Also see P. M. Holt, ″An Early Source on Shaykh Khadir al-Mihrani,″ *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 46 (1983): 33–49, and Peter Thorau, *The Lion of Egypt,* trans. P. M. Holt (London, 1992), 225–29.

[23]Linda Northrup, *From Slave to Sultan* (Stuttgart, 1998), 118–25, 230–39.

901/1496) concern for Sunni propriety with al-Ghawrī´s (d. 922/1516) less successful attempts to ″portray himself as the ´Guardian of Sunna.´″[24] One notable way that al-Ghawrī and other Mamluks could publicly proclaimed their piety was in their generous financial support of the annual hajj caravan, particularly those carrying royal wives, though this appears to have backfired for al-Ghawrī´s wife who was as cheap as her husband.[25]

Such royal patronage of religion exerted great influence on the shape and practice of Islam in the Mamluk period, especially in the form of *waqf,* an endowment for ostensibly pious goals. There are numerous studies of the *waqf* documents of this period and of their economic, social, and political importance, including Muḥammad Amīn´s groundbreaking book *Al-Awqāf wa-al-Ḥayāh al-Ijtimāʿīyah fī Miṣr: 648–923/1250–1517.*[26] Amīn dedicated an entire chapter to the religious dimensions of these endowments, especially in their capacity to support religious infrastructure. The *waqf* was essential for financing the construction and maintenance of mosques, madrasahs, *khānqāh*s, and other institutions, for promoting the hajj and jihad, and for supporting the various types of religious personnel necessary for the spread and practice of Sunni Islam.[27] More recently, Adam Sabra has considered the religious importance of *waqf* in the context of his study *Poverty and Charity in Medieval Islam.*[28]

Sabra begins with a discussion of the ideals and realities of poverty in Mamluk domains, an important issue to jurists particularly regarding who should give alms and who should receive them. In this light, he reviews various social classes among the elite and the common people, who were not always poor. Certain groups, including the chivalrous *futūwah* orders, pledged to aid the poor, while others, such as the morally suspect *ḥarāfīsh,* were actively involved in begging for such aid.[29] Sabra next outlines the religious ideals of asceticism and poverty with a few references to Sufis of the Mamluk period, but relying largely on the work of Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazzālī (d. 505/1111) and earlier authorities, who distinguish between material and spiritual poverty, and their effects. For most of these Sufi authors, wealth was a distraction, which could be dispelled by giving alms. By

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[24]Carl F. Petry, *Protectors or Praetorians?* (Albany, 1994), 154–58.

[25]Ibid., 158–62. Also see Kathryn Johnson, ″Royal Pilgrims: Mamluk Accounts of the Pilgrimages to Mecca of the Khawand al-Kubrā (Senior Wife of the Sultan),″ *Studia Islamica* 91 (2000): 107–29.

[26]Muḥammad M. Amīn, *Al-Awqāf wa-al-Ḥayāh al-Ijtimāʿīyah fī Miṣr: 648–923/1250–1517* (Cairo: 1980).

[27]Ibid., 178–231. Also see Gary Leiser, ″The *Madrasa* and the Islamization of the Middle East: The Case of Egypt,″ *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 22 (1985): 29–47.

[28]Adam Sabra, *Poverty and Charity in Medieval Islam* (Cambridge, 2000).

[29]Ibid., 1–17.

contrast, Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1200), Ibn Taymīyah, and other jurists would not equate poverty with piety, claiming that the accumulation of wealth for lawful and pious purposes was a legitimate undertaking. Similarly, the noted Sufi Abū Ḥafṣ al-Suhrawardī (d. 632/1234) held that while spiritual and, at times, material poverty were essential to the mystic path, a Sufi need not be a pauper, and a number of Sufis accepted the support of Mamluk amirs and sultans.[30]

Throughout his study, Sabra seeks to maintain ″the essential distinction between poverty as a form of piety and poverty as a social disability.″[31] It was persons in the latter category who were qualified to receive charity. As for those who gave alms and blessings to the poor, they legitimized their roles as benefactors, who were to receive, in turn, the blessings *(duʿāʾ)* of the recipient and, presumably, heavenly reward. Sabra reviews the opinions of the early Sufis, and al-Ghazzālī in particular, on the etiquette of giving and receiving *zakāh* which, like other forms of charity in the Mamluk period, remained a private affair with little state control.[32] While anyone could give alms, it was the Mamluks who were most often remembered for their substantial almsgiving. They fed the poor during Ramaḍān and on special holidays, and gave charity, freed prisoners, and relieved debtors in hopes of securing God′s favor against personal misfortunes, as well as against plague, war, famine, and other disasters.[33]

Of course, the Mamluks′ most extensive and enduring form of charity was the *waqf,* which the Shafiʿi scholar al-Nawawī (d. 676/1277) defined in economic and religious terms as ″the alienation of revenue-generating property with the principal remaining inalienable, while its revenues are disbursed for a pious purpose, in order to seek God′s favor.″[34] These endowments served the larger Muslim community by providing a range of essential services, including hospitals and medical care, education, some housing for students, employees, and destitute women, food and water for the poor, and the burial of their dead. Further, at funerals, the Mamluks and other Muslims distributed *kaffārah,* alms for the expiation of sins committed by the deceased.[35] This connection to the dead is essential for understanding the religious significance of the *waqf* and other forms of almsgiving in the Mamluk period. For, while most of these endowments provided revenues to their founders and their direct descendents, they were also believed to yield a spiritual profit. As Sabra notes, many endowment deeds refer to securing reward for the afterlife

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[30]Ibid., 18–31.

[31]Ibid., 35.

[32]Ibid., 35–50.

[33]Ibid., 50–68.

[34]Ibid., 70–71.

[35]Ibid., 73–95.

based on the exchange between the benefactor and the poor, of alms for prayers. Moreover, Mamluk building complexes supported by *waqf*s often contained the graves of the founder and some of his immediate relatives. There, they were to benefit from prayers said on their behalf at the site, which was frequently located near a saint's tomb or similarly sacred ground.[36]

This spiritual return on alms has been detailed further in my article "Saving Muslim Souls: the *Khānqāh* and the Sufi Duty in Mamluk Lands."[37] Based on a study of *waqf* deeds, religious tracts on death and afterlife, and other sources, I discovered that the Mamluk *khānqāh* served primarily as a chantry, where Sufis prayed for their founder's earthly and heavenly benefit. *Khānqāh* endowment deeds explicitly mandate that the Sufis employed there were to perform a daily communal ritual called *ḥuḍūr*. This ritual included reciting specific prayers and Quranic passages, considered by al-Qurṭubī (d. 681/1273), al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505), and other scholars of the period to be the most efficacious for attaining divine favor in this world and the next, and especially helpful for reducing the severity and length of the deceased's purgatorial punishment in the grave.[38]

This religious dimension of almsgiving underscores the centrality of death within medieval Islam, which has been described by Jane I. Smith and Yvonne Haddad in *The Islamic Understanding of Death and Resurrection*.[39] Their very useful study, however, is confined largely to matters of theology and doctrine, and so they did not consider the more personal matters of grief and mourning, and religious responses to them. The work of mourning is generally a difficult process through which the living confront the death of a loved one and gradually resolve their grief. The bereaved come to accept their loss as they find consoling substitutes in the memories and idealized images of the dead. Crucial to this process are funerary and mourning rituals, and religious beliefs that assert the continued life of the deceased, albeit in another form and/or realm.[40] The death of a child often

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[36]Ibid., 95–100. Also see Linda S. Northrup, "Qalāwūn's Patronage of the Medical Sciences in Thirteenth-Century Egypt," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 5 (2001): 119–40.

[37]Th. Emil Homerin, "Saving Muslim Souls: the *Khānqāh* and the Sufi Duty in Mamluk Lands," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 3 (1999): 59–83.

[38]Ibid., 74–83. Also see the study by Ragnar Eklund, *Life Between Death and Resurrection According to Islam* (Uppsala, 1941).

[39]Jane I. Smith and Yvonne Haddad, *The Islamic Understanding of Death and Resurrection* (Albany, 1981), esp. 1–98, 147–91.

[40]Robert Jay Lifton, *The Broken Connection* (New York, 1983), 3–112. For views of death in classical Islam see Thomas Bauer, "Todesdiskurse im Islam," *Asiatische Studien* 53 (1999): 5–16, and idem, "Islamische Totenbücher: Entwicklung einer Textgattung im Schatten al-Ġazālīs," in *Studies in Arabic and Islam: Proceedings of the 19th Congress: Halle 1998/Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants,* ed. S. Leder et al. (Sterling, VA, 2002).

evokes strong emotions, and this is the subject of ″Child Mortality and Adult Reactions,″ the final section of Avner Gil´adi´s book *Children of Islam*.[41] Based largely on sources from the Mamluk period, Gil´adi observes that Muslim parents regarded their children as a divine gift due, in part, to high rates of child mortality. Not surprisingly, there was a great need for consolation for the many children who died. Juridical and theological works provided hope to bereaved kin by affirming that these children died in innocence, and so dwell in Paradise where they will one day be reunited with their believing parents. Parental grief was also addressed by consolation treatises composed of Quranic citations, hadith, anecdotes, and stories designed to assure the bereaved that they were not alone in their sorrow. As important, the consolation treatises attempt to channel the tumultuous emotions provoked by the death of a loved one into theologically and socially appropriate modes of behavior. Hence, they counsel patience and trust in God, and discourage excessive outbursts of emotion, which might be construed as ingratitude, if not skepticism, regarding the divine promise of immortal life in heaven.[42]

Similarly, elegies from the Mamluk period reveal some of the Muslim doctrines and beliefs invoked to account for the death of loved ones, while affording us the opportunity to witness individual and communal responses to death. This has been my focus in ″A Bird Ascends the Night: Elegy and Immortality in Islam,″ and several other articles written on the elegies composed by the Cairene scholar Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī (d. 745/1344) for his daughter Nuḍār (d. 730/1329), who died at the age of twenty-seven.[43] Throughout his elegies, Abū Ḥayyān lauds his daughter´s erudition and scholarly accomplishments, her impeccable reputation and saintly life. Making allusions to the Quran and hadith, Abū Ḥayyān envisioned his lost Nuḍār as a martyr to illness who must surely have earned a place in Paradise. In this way Abū Ḥayyān sought consolation in a creative and religious response to his personal tragedy.[44] Such was also the case for the outstanding Mamluk poet Ibn Nubātah (d. 768/1366), who wrote a series of elegies after the death of his young son(s). Thomas Bauer has examined this verse in an insightful article, ″Communication and Emotion: The Case of Ibn Nubātah´s *Kindertotenlieder*,″ where he probes the complex interrelationship between poetic speech and

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[41]Avner Gil´adi, *Children of Islam* (Oxford, 1992), 67–119.

[42]Ibid., 69–100.

[43]Th. Emil Homerin, ″A Bird Ascends the Night: Elegy and Immortality in Islam,″ *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 59, no. 4 (1991): 247–79, esp. 255–74.

[44]Ibid., and also see Th. Emil Homerin, ″´I´ve Stayed by the Grave´: an Elegy/Nasīb for Nuḍār,″ in *Literary Heritage of Classical Islam,* ed. M. Mir (Princeton, 1993), 107–18, and idem, ″Reflections on Arabic Poetry in the Mamluk Age,″ *Mamlūk Studies Review* 1 (1997): 63–85, esp. 80–85.

overwhelming emotions.[45] Through a close reading of one of Ibn Nubātah′s elegies, Bauer reveals how such poems assist the work of mourning for both the poet and his audience. Specifically, while his son is in heaven above, the poet claims to be in hell below, where he must strive for a dignified patience until they are united again in Paradise. Building on a number of timeless metaphors, including ″life and death are a journey,″ and ″people are plants that must wither and die,″ Ibn Nubātah attempted to make sense of his personal sorrow by viewing death as part of a larger fated cycle. In this way, the poem may offer solace and produce a catharsis, which allow the bereaved to return to public life while reasserting social stability in the face of inevitable death.[46]

Though the problems raised by death are central to all religious traditions, they are by no means religions′ only focus. Regulating life, individually and socially, is also a major task, and within Islam, this was normally undertaken by the ulama. In his foundational study, *The Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Later Middle Ages,* Carl Petry concluded that status among the ulama was determined largely by an individual′s competence in Islamic law and literary skills. A qualified scholar might then serve in the Mamluk bureaucracy, the legal system, or in a number of other religious occupations. In terms of religion, the jurists and legal scholars claimed to be guardians of the shariʿah and *sunnah,* and so came to hold moral authority and influence.[47] Beyond the legal system, members of the ulama might work as readers of religious texts, prayer leaders, preachers, spiritual advisors, and professors and teachers of various religious subjects ranging from the Quran and hadith to law and ritual, theology and mysticism.[48] Generally viewed by medieval Muslim society as the custodians of religious knowledge, the exemplars of normative behavior, and, at times, repositories of spiritual power *(barakah),* the ulama were in a position both to guide the life of the community as well as legitimize the Mamluk dynasty.[49]

Though they were dependent on the Mamluk regime for financial aid and political support, the ulama nevertheless retained considerable independence through their religious and academic networks, and especially through their control of higher education, as noted in separate studies by Michael Chamberlain and

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[45]Thomas Bauer, ″Communication and Emotion: The Case of Ibn Nubātah′s *Kindertotenlieder,*″ *Mamlūk Studies Review* 7 (2003): 49–95.

[46]Ibid., esp. 66–73, 88–95. For some of the many metaphors for death, see George Lakoff and Mark Turner, *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago, 1989), 1–56.

[47]Carl F. Petry, *The Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1981), esp. 220–41, 312–25.

[48]Ibid., 246–72.

[49]Ibid., 312–25. Also see Ira M. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1967), esp. 107–15, 130–41.

Jonathan Berkey. In *Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus, 1190–1350,* Chamberlain examines the interactions of the learned elite with the Mamluks. He asserts that the transmission of religious knowledge followed distinctive lines of transmission between teachers and students bound by loyalty and service. Further, in Damascus, the madrasah*s*, *khānqāh*s, and similar foundations sponsored by the ruling class were not institutions of higher education so much as forms of patronage. ″They were useful to the ruling elite in providing a means of supporting the civilian elites upon whom they depended as a channel of influence into the city, as agents of social control and legitimation, and as religious specialists.″[50]

In *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education,* Jonathan Berkey provides a detailed description of religious education involving Islamic jurisprudence, normally the preserve of the scholarly elite and their students. Like Chamberlain, Berkey notes that a close personal relationship between master and student was at the heart of this system of normative education. Berkey claims that the flexibility within the education system ″resulted from the complete absence of any overarching state or ecclesiastical authority responsible for shaping Islamic education, or indeed any aspect of Islamic religious culture. Norms might be established, in practice as in belief, by consensus within the Muslim community.″[51] Berkey underscores this diversity by noting the difficulties in even defining the term madrasah, the most common historical marker for a school of Islamic jurisprudence. In fact, some madrasahs were not educational institutions at all, while mosques and *khānqāh*s could also sponsor educational endeavors, including the study of law. Moreover, the ulama were generally not bound exclusively to a single institution for their support; some scholars held multiple posts at once and moved from institution to institution. Likewise, scholars participated in teaching circles held outside of their respective institutions, and these gatherings served to extend religious education beyond the realm of jurisprudence and higher education, to a larger body of interested non-academics, including women and Mamluk amirs.[52] As important, most classes and nearly all education, for that matter, took place in a religious setting. Many of the most important educational institutions were part of a madrasah-mosque complex with

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[50]Michael Chamberlain, *Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus, 1190–1350* (Cambridge, 1994), 90; 69–90, 176–78.

[51]Jonathan Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education* (Princeton, 1992), 1–43, 60. Parts of this section are based on my earlier review of this book in *Mamlūk Studies Review* 1 (1997): 137–39.

[52]Berkey, *Transmission of Knowledge,* 44–94. Also see Donald P. Little, ″Notes on Mamluk Madrasahs,″ *Mamlūk Studies Review* 6 (2002): 9–20.

classes and study periods organized around the times for formal daily prayers, and surrounded by other pious and devotional activities such as the public recitation of the Quran or hadith. As Berkey insightfully observes, the transmission of religious texts ″took place alongside, and sometimes as part of Sufi activities, public sermonizing, and popular religious celebration, and those who devoted themselves to education did not necessarily see their efforts as something fundamentally distinct from public worship.″[53]

In his recent book, *Popular Preaching and Religious Authority in the Medieval Islamic Near East,* Berkey again addresses the transmission of religious knowledge, but by those who were generally outside the small circle of religious professionals. In particular, he studies the many popular preachers and storytellers, and how their activities raised issues of the interrelationship between high and popular cultures, on one hand, and questions of religious authority, on the other.[54] Berkey begins with a discussion of some of the key players involved: the *khaṭīb* was generally a state-appointed religious scholar who delivered the official Friday sermon, while the *wā'iẓ* (″preacher,″ ″admonisher″) and the *qāṣṣ* (″storyteller″) were often independent and less educated though they, too, called the common people to lead a pious life. As such, this latter group, like the ulama, actively transmitted religious knowledge, but this became a major source of tension. For as Berkey notes, ″the controversy that their activities engendered was in the final analysis about how the common people were to understand Islam.″[55] That much was at stake is clear from the many critiques of the popular preachers written throughout the medieval period by members of the religious establishment, including Ibn al-Jawzī, Ibn al-Ḥajj (d. 737/1336), Zayn al-Dīn al-'Irāqī (d. 806/1404), and 'Alī ibn Maymūn al-Idrīsī (d. 917/1511). Though these and other members of the ulama held a variety of theological and legal views, they were united in their stand against unlawful innovation in religion, which they sought to define and articulate in a system of proper Sunni belief and ritual.

Yet this was a daunting task, for the popular preachers and religious storytellers were pervasive in medieval Muslim society, and the common people often adored

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[53]Berkey, *Transmission of Knowledge,* 50, 128–81. For more on women and education in the Mamluk period, see Huda Lutfi, ″Al-Sakhāwī′s *Kitāb al-Nisā'* as a Source For the Social and Economic History of Muslim Women During the Fifteenth Century A.D.,″ *Muslim World* 71(1981): 104–24, esp. 121, and Jonathan P. Berkey, ″Women and Islamic Education in the Mamluk Period,″ in *Women in Middle Eastern History,* ed. Nikki R. Keddie and Beth Baron (New Haven, 1991), 143–57.

[54]Jonathan Berkey, *Popular Preaching and Religious Authority in the Medieval Islamic Near East* (Seattle, 2001). Portions of this section previously appeared in my review of this work in *Mamlūk Studies Review* 7 (2003): 246–49.

[55]Berkey, *Popular Preaching*, 21.

them as sources of religious edification and entertainment. Their critics, however, warned of charlatans and fools, who might cheat the people out of their money, while leading them astray. Such imposters and ignoramuses lacked proper education and certification, and so they spread lies, weak hadith, and heresies, while their preaching sessions were thought to encourage the mixing of the sexes and other illicit activities. This was a crucial issue, for popular preaching and storytelling were acceptable, even honorable, activities provided that their practitioners were trained and regulated by the ulama. Indeed, many critics of the popular preachers and storytellers were, themselves, preachers as well as religious scholars. Their sermons were punctuated by Quranic quotations and allusions, traditions of the prophet Muḥammad, and stories of the earlier prophets. Further, two themes central to all preaching were the renunciation of worldly goods and preparation for the Day of Judgment. Berkey reviews these and other themes found in the sermons of popular preachers, and their emotional impact on their audiences. He observes that underlying much of this preaching was Sufism, which was a prominent feature of Islam in the Mamluk period. Poverty and death were major topics of medieval mysticism, which sought to foster the love between God and His servants. But some critics feared that public expressions of pious love would be misconstrued by common folk as blatant eroticism, while the public presentation of mystical teachings could be even more dangerous. In response to such criticism, others defended popular preachers and storytellers as serving a religious service essential to the Muslim community.[56]

Berkey concludes that this debate over popular preachers and storytellers underscores the fact that while the ulama had emerged as the religious authorities of medieval Islam, precisely who qualified for membership in this elite group and on what basis remained somewhat ambiguous.[57] Here, Berkey touches on one of the most vexing problems in the study of Islam in the Mamluk period, namely what constitutes correct religious belief and practice. In a thoughtful article, ″'Orthodoxy′ and ′Heresy′ in Medieval Islam: An Essay in Reassessment,″ Alexander Knysh reviews the use and general misuse of these terms in scholarship on Islam. He pointedly concludes that:

> Eurocentric interpretive categories, when uncritically superimposed on Islamic realities, may produce serious distortions. Thus such distinctly Christian concepts as ″orthodoxy″ and ″heresy″ foster a tendency to disregard the intrinsic pluralism and complexity characteristic of the religious life of the Muslim community, leaving

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[56]Ibid., 36–52.
[57]Ibid., 88–96.

aside significant and sometimes critical ″nuances.″ In order to escape these shortcomings, one should try to let Islamic tradition speak on its own terms, to let it communicate its own concerns, its own ways of articulation and interpretation of religious phenomena.[58]

This observation is particularly relevant for the Mamluk period when, as Chamberlain notes, arguments over correct religious belief were ″one of the premier forms of social combat.″[59] Chamberlain′s evaluation of the situation in Mamluk Damascus is apt for the entire Mamluk period:

> In Damascus, as in many pre-Ottoman Islamic societies, heresy and orthodoxy were problematic categories: there were no state or corporate bodies that promulgated correct doctrine. In Damascus there were partisans of several systems of belief, including shī'īs, philosophers, ṣūfīs of various kinds, Ḥanbalīs, practitioners of kalām, and even at least one partisan of Ibn al-Rawandī.[60]

Members of the ulama, then, inevitably clashed on matters of doctrine and practice as they sought the right to assert and enforce their truth, with violence, if necessary.[61] Such was the unfortunate case of a Shi'i legal scholar in Damascus. As Stefan Winter explains in his article ″Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Makkī ′al-Shahīd al-Awwal′ (d. 1384) and the Shi'ah of Syria,″ Ibn Makkī was declared an extremist and executed in Damascus in 786/1384.[62] Based on this and other cases, Winter determines that while accused heretics could be brought before religious authorities, there were no formal inquisitions organized to root out heresy. In fact, the Mamluk regime did not have a universal policy on the Shi'ah or Muslim heterodoxy, in general. As Winter notes:

> The Mamluk Sultanate, the Damascene *qāḍī*s, or simply an agitated crowd, *al-'āmmah,* were liable to declare certain Shi'is to be intolerable heretics (*rāfiḍī*s). Yet none of them truly followed a consistent policy with regards to Shi'ism. The Sultanate′s campaigns

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[58]Alexander Knysh, ″′Orthodoxy′ and ′Heresy′ in Medieval Islam: An Essay in Reassessment,″ *Muslim World* 83 (1993): 48–67, esp. 62–63.

[59]Chamberlain, *Knowledge and Social Practice,* 167.

[60]Ibid., 167–68.

[61]Ibid., 162–75.

[62]Stefan H. Winter, ″Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Makkī ′al-Shahīd al-Awwal′ (d. 1384) and the Shi'ah of Syria,″ *Mamlūk Studies Review* 3 (1999): 149–82.

and edicts were directed against certain Shiʻi communities of the province of Tripoli only, not against the Shiʻi faith *per se*.[63]

In addition to the sectarian differences of Sunni and Shiʻi, the ulama were also divided on issues of theology and, especially, law, with the four Sunni *madhhab*s serving as key markers of scholarly identity and organization. Indeed, it was conflicts among these law schools that led the sultan Baybars (d. 676/1277) to establish a chief judgeship for each of them.[64] This range and diversity of Muslim religious belief in the Mamluk period is readily apparent in Alexander Knysh′s recent book *Ibn ʻArabi in the Later Islamic Tradition*.[65] Knysh maps controversies involving Ibn al-ʻArabī and his thought throughout the medieval Islamic world, and several chapters focus on events in Mamluk domains. He notes at the outset that while the ulama have been studied extensively in terms of their social power and status, there has been less attention to ″their intellectual concerns, doctrinal disagreements and factional differences.″[66] Following a survey of Ibn al-ʻArabī′s life and thought, and early biographical accounts of him, Knysh proceeds to analyze carefully the polemical tradition that formed against him.

Particularly authoritative for later generations have been numerous writings by the Hanbali jurist and theologian Ibn Taymīyah, who stressed the primacy of the shariʻah over any sort of metaphysical speculation. Ibn Taymīyah zealously opposed anything that he perceived as religious innovation, and he preached jihad against Christians, Shiʻis, and Mongols. But Ibn Taymīyah also felt that Muslim society was under attack from within, especially by beliefs in divine incarnation, mystical union with the divine, and monism. Ibn Taymīyah asserted that such beliefs and doctrines undermine the essential distinction between God and His creation upon which true monotheistic religion was based. Thus he stridently condemned any mystical writings and their authors, whom he believed to be infected by the unity of being, as their teachings blatantly encouraged deviation from God′s truth, which could only be found in the Quran, the *sunnah* of Muḥammad, and codified in the divine law.[67]

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[63]Ibid., 172. Also see Devin J. Stewart, ″Popular Shīʻism in Medieval Egypt: Vestiges of Islamic Sectarian Polemics in Egyptian Arabic,″ *Studia Islamica* 84 (1996): 35–66.

[64]See Joseph H. Escovitz, *The Office of Qâḍî al-Quḍât in Cairo Under the Baḥrî Mamlûks* (Berlin, 1984), 20–28, and Sherman A. Jackson, *Islamic Law and the State* (Leiden, 1996), esp. 49–112. Also see Michael Cook, *Commanding the Right and Forbidding the Wrong in Islamic Thought* (Cambridge, 2000), esp. 145–64, 348–56, 365–79.

[65]Alexander D. Knysh, *Ibn ʻArabi in the Later Islamic Tradition* (Albany, 1999).

[66]Ibid., 3.

[67]Ibid., 87–111.

In his attacks, Ibn Taymīyah often reduced abstract and sophisticated mystical doctrines to the grossest pantheism for polemical and rhetorical purposes, yet he made careful distinctions among the monists, revealing a good understanding of their ideas. For instance, Ibn Taymīyah ruled that Ibn al-'Arabī was not as insistent as some regarding absolute monism, perhaps out of respect for the law and careful attention to the Sufi path. Nevertheless, Ibn Taymīyah denounced Ibn al-'Arabī's teachings, especially those found in the latter's *Fuṣuṣ al-Ḥikam,* which appeared to pervert God's literal message. Such allegorical exegesis by Ibn al-'Arabī and others posed a grave danger to religion and society.[68] Further, their malignant doctrines had been spread in elegant forms such as Ibn al-Fāriḍ's verse, and so their debilitating effects upon the Muslim community were devastating.[69] Any claims to sainthood on behalf of such heretics, Ibn Taymīyah condemned as an absurd mockery of the religious law that was so necessary for proper communal life. As a result, compromise or accommodation was impossible, and Ibn Taymīyah declared that refutation of the monists was comparable to holy war against the Mongols.[70]

Ibn Taymīyah's refutations became the foundation for later polemics and public controversies that periodically arose in Mamluk domains. However, Ibn al-'Arabī had many supporters among the ulama and the ruling class. As Knysh observes, acceptance or rejection of Ibn al-'Arabī's ideas was often decided by temporal, not religious authorities. Moreover moderate scholars, including al-Suyūṭī, argued that statements made by Ibn al-'Arabī and other saints of God could be reconciled with the Quran and shari'ah via allegorical interpretations. Therefore, Muslims should venerate them, not declare them infidels, though their difficult and obscure writings should be restricted to qualified scholars of religion.[71] What emerges from a study of the Ibn al-'Arabī controversy is the fact that people on both sides of the dispute cut across the various classes and divisions of the ulama. Therefore, the debates and participants involved should not be reduced to static polarities like orthodoxy vs. heterodoxy or legists vs. mystics, which mask the ambiguity and ambivalence at the heart of the matter. Further, such controversies conclusively

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[68]Regarding Ibn Taymīyah's position on Quranic exegesis in general see Norman Calder, ″Tafsīr from Ṭabarī to Ibn Kathīr,″ in *Approaches to the Qur'ān*, ed. G. R. Hawting and Abdul-Kader A. Shareef (London, 1993), 101–40, esp. 125, 130–33.

[69]Also see Muhammad Umar Memon, *Ibn Taymīyah's Struggle Against Popular Religion* (The Hague, 1976), esp. 24–46, and Abdul Haq Ansari, ″Ibn Taymīyah's Criticism of Sufism,″ *Islam and the Modern Age* (August 1984): 147–56.

[70]Knysh, *Ibn 'Arabi,* 50, 62, 96–99. Also see Th. Emil Homerin, ″Sufis & Their Detractors in Mamluk Egypt: A Survey of Protagonists and Institutional Settings,″ in *Islamic Mysticism Contested,* ed. F. De Jong and B. Radtke (Leiden, 1999), 225–47, esp. 231–35.

[71]Knysh, *Ibn 'Arabi,* 113–40; 201–23.

show that for Islam in the Mamluk domains, beliefs and doctrine mattered. As Knysh concludes:

> Like other contested theological issues, Ibn al-'Arabī´s legacy served as a convenient rallying point for various religio-political factions vying for power and supremacy. While no universal *ijmā'* has ever been reached on the problem of Ibn al-'Arabī´s belief/unbelief, local campaigns to either vindicate or condemn him show that a relatively effective machinery was created by the *'ulamā'* for defining and formulating an authoritative position on a given doctrinal issue.[72]

Finally, it should be stressed that nearly all of the antagonists and protagonists in the Ibn al-'Arabī debate accepted and practiced Sufism in various degrees and forms. In ″Sufis & Their Detractors in Mamluk Egypt: A Survey of Protagonists and Institutional Settings,″ I attempt to gauge the place of mystical beliefs and practice in the Mamluk period. As was the case with Ibn al-'Arabī, particular Sufis and their beliefs might be the target of censure, but many other aspects of Sufism were acceptable to most Muslims. The ulama were not polarized between mystics and non-mystics so much as they exhibited a range of opinion regarding mystical experiences and practice, their content and value, relative to other types of authoritative sources. Even Ibn Taymīyah accepted Sufism provided it was grounded in the literal message of the Quran and the prophetic *sunnah.*[73] Perhaps more telling was the fact that the conservative Maliki scholar Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406) enumerated Sufism as one of ″the legitimate sciences that originated in Islam″ *(min al-'ulūm al-shar'īyah al-ḥadīthah fī al-millah)*. Elites and commoners alike sought the blessings of saintly shaykhs, and Sufi ceremonies were regularly attended by Muslims of all social classes. In fact, *ṣūfī* was a legitimate occupational category in *waqf* deeds. Not surprisingly, jurists and others criticized those who used the Sufi profession as a means to accrue large sums of money. Yet such behavior was inappropriate to any religious office, and this was not a critique of Sufis in particular, but of the ″ulama″ class, in general.[74]

Clearly, mysticism was a vital part of Islam in the Mamluk age, and this has been the focus of fruitful study for several decades. French scholars, including

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[72]Ibid., 273–74.

[73]Also see Th. Emil Homerin, ″Ibn Taymīyah´s *al-Ṣūfīyah w-al-fuqarā'*,″ *Arabica* 32 (1985): 219–44.

[74]Homerin, ″Sufis & Their Detractors,″ 225–47.

Paul Nwyia,[75] Jean-Claude Garcin,[76] and Denis Gril,[77] have been quite active in the field, producing a number of fine articles and monographs, while Victor Danner[78] and Elmer Douglas[79] have contributed translations and studies of important Sufi texts from the period. Many of these and other specialized studies inform the best current introduction to the topic, *Le Soufisme en Égypte et en Syrie* by Éric Geoffroy. Though Geoffroy′s ostensible focus is the later Mamluk and early Ottoman periods, this encyclopedic work covers much of the Mamluk centuries. He begins by situating Sufism within its larger social, political, and religious contexts, and he pays particular attention to the importance of the prophetic model and notions of saintliness in shaping Sufi traditions.[80] Geoffroy examines the important roles played by scholar-Sufis, charlatan Sufis, and the shaykhs and Sufis of the *zāwiyah*s and *khānqāh*s. He finds the *zāwiyah* to have been especially important for the teaching and training of Sufis, while he regards the *khānqāh* as a more impersonal semi-political institution.[81] I have touched on the *khānqāh*′s particular religious function above, and as Geoffroy notes, these institutions have received considerable scholarly attention. Leonor Fernandes and Doris Behrens-Abouseif have published a number of insightful studies on these institutions in terms of their architecture and social, economic, and religious roles, and to their work should be added more recent publications by Donald Little and ‘Āṣim Muḥammad Rizq.[82]

Geoffroy next reviews forms of affiliation among various Sufi paths and their major representatives in Syria and Egypt, with a comparison to those of other regions, and their mutual influences.[83] This is followed by an analysis of several prominent Sufi types including the ascetic, the practicing scholar, the inspired

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[75]E.g., Paul Nwyia, *Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh et la naissance de la confrérie sadilite* (Beirut, 1972).

[76]E.g., Jean-Claude Garcin, *Un centre musulman de Haute Égypte médiévale, Qūṣ* (Cairo, 1976), and a collection of his essays, *Espaces, pouvoirs, et idéologies de l′Égypte médiévale* (London, 1987).

[77]E.g., Denis Gril, ″Une source inedite pour l′histoire du *tasawwuf* en Égypte au VIIe/XIIe siècle,″ in *Livre du Centenaire de l′IFAO* (Cairo, 1980), 441–58, and idem, *La Risāla de Ṣafī al-Dīn Ibn Abī al-Manṣūr Ibn Ẓāfir* (Cairo, 1986).

[78]Victor Danner, tr., *Ibn ‘Ata′llah′s Spiritual Aphorisms* (Leiden, 1973); idem, *Ibn ‘Ata′llah: The Book of Wisdom* (New York, 1978).

[79]Elmer H. Douglas, tr., *The Mystical Teachings of al-Shadhili* (Albany, 1993).

[80]Éric Geoffroy, *Le Soufisme en Égypte et en Syrie* (Damascus, 1995), 1–144. A more recent introduction to the subject, *Al-Taṣawwuf wa-al-Ḥayāh al-Dīnīyah fī Miṣr al-Mamlūkīyah* (Cairo, 2002) by Aḥmad Manṣūr, is an anti-Sufi polemic of no scholarly value.

[81]Geoffroy, *Le Soufisme*, 145–87.

[82]See Homerin, ″Souls,″ for an extensive bibliography on this topic, and ‘Āṣim Muḥammad Rizq, *Khānqāwāt al-Ṣūfīyah fī Miṣr* (Cairo, 1997).

[83]Geoffroy, *Le Soufisme,* 189–281.

illiterate shaykh, the accomplished master, the mad mystic, and finally, the *malāmatī* or blame-seeker.[84] Unfortunately, on this latter topic, Geoffroy did not have access to the fine study by Ahmet T. Karamustafa, *God's Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in the Islamic Later Middle Period, 1200–1500.*[85] Karamustafa argues that the radical renunciation and social deviance that characterize these individuals resulted largely from their belief that Muslim society was an obstacle to salvation in the world to come. These antinomian mendicants similarly rebelled against the more established Sufi orders and institutions, which they regarded as unacceptable compromises with worldly life.[86]

Geoffroy goes on to survey some of the doctrinal debates of the period, including those on permissible forms of *dhikr* and *samā',* the belief/disbelief issues regarding Ibn al-Fāriḍ, Ibn al-'Arabī and monism, and the value of mystical inspiration.[87] As Geoffroy makes clear, in the face of such controversies, the various lines of Sufi initiation among the ulama were crucial to harmonizing mystical inspiration and practice with social propriety and law. Further, due to the support of Qāytbāy and, subsequently, the Ottoman sultan Selim I, Ibn al-'Arabī and his doctrine gained wider acceptance. Geoffroy argues convincingly that during the Mamluk period, Sufism's success stemmed, in part, from its flexibility in adapting to a plurality of conditions and needs, from those of the religious elite to those of illiterate peasants. As such, Sufism proved to be a fundamental and dynamic part of medieval Muslim life, socially, culturally, and, above all, religiously.[88]

In his concluding remarks, Geoffroy draws attention to the work of Boaz Shoshan regarding the place and popularity of Sufism in medieval Egypt. Shoshan takes up this and other themes in his book *Popular Culture in Medieval Cairo.*[89] He highlights the importance of the Sufi orders to congregational life and calls attention to the sermons of popular Sufi shaykhs. Shoshan examines in some detail the sermons of Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh (d. 709/1309), the celebrated Shādhilī Sufi master, who preached that faith and repentance were the foundation of religious life. Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh warned his audiences against Satan and sins, and urged them to perform regularly their prayers and other required religious duties, and to visit the tombs of the saints. Shoshan then draws attention to the close relationship

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[84]Ibid., 283–360.

[85]Ahmet T. Karamustafa, *God's Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in the Islamic Later Middle Period, 1200–1500* (Salt Lake City, 1994), esp. 25–56.

[86]Ibid., 17–23, 97–102.

[87]Geoffroy, *Le Soufisme,* 361–503.

[88]Ibid., 505–10.

[89]Boaz Shoshan, *Popular Culture in Medieval Cairo* (Cambridge, 1993).

between religion and magic, and he cites several cases of con-men and charlatans, followed by Ibn Taymīyah's condemnation of these frauds and their supporters.[90]

The popularity of magic at this time is further suggested by the work of Ibn Taymīyah's student, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah (d. 751/1349). Ibn Qayyim wrote an extensive refutation of beliefs in astrology, augury, and alchemy, which John W. Livingston has reviewed in his article "Science and the Occult in the Thinking of Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya." Livingston suggests that the occult was a refuge for many Muslims in the Mamluk period as they faced war, plague, famine, earthquakes, and other disasters that appeared to harbinger the Judgment Day. However, Ibn Qayyim and other members of the ulama denounced occult practices as sinful for they reduced God's undivided omnipotence to the flight of birds and moving stars. Significantly, Ibn Qayyim marshaled evidence that such practices were not only morally wrong, but scientifically implausible, and so they should be avoided. [91]

If the occult might relieve stress regarding the future, religious festivals could temporarily ease the burdens of the present, as Shoshan notes in his study of the Nawrūz celebration in Cairo. A popular spring festival, Nawrūz originated in pre-Islamic Iran, but it became associated with the prophet Abraham and spread to Egypt, where it was celebrated for centuries, including in the Mamluk period. Analyzing this holiday in terms of medieval European carnival, Shoshan notes that Nawrūz encouraged uninhibited, even wanton celebration, along with the reversal of social status. In this way Nawrūz may have eased social tensions among the populace, particularly among Cairo's lower classes.[92] More popular still than Nawrūz was the *Mawlid al-Nabī,* the birthday of the prophet Muḥammad, which has been studied by N. J. G. Kaptein in *Muḥammad's Birthday Festival*. While the main focus of this book is the *Mawlid al-Nabī* in North Africa, Kaptein provides a translation of a *fatwá* by al-Suyūṭī regarding the permissibility of celebrating the event. In his legal opinion, al-Suyūṭī examined the celebration in the context of religious innovation in general, and while conceding that the celebration was an innovation, he declared it to be a praiseworthy one, which brings heavenly reward to its participants. Significantly, Kaptein notes that al-Suyūṭī attributed the origins of the celebration to the thirteenth-century Ayyubid ruler Muẓaffar al-Dīn Kökbürü, thereby ignoring earlier Fatimid celebrations of the Prophet's birthday, perhaps in an attempt to provide Sunni respectability to the *Mawlid.* [93]

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[90]Ibid., 9–22.

[91]John W. Livingston, "Science and the Occult in the Thinking of Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 112 (1992): 598–610.

[92]Shoshan, *Popular Culture,* 40–51.

[93]N. J. G. Kaptein, *Muḥammad's Birthday Festival: Early History in the Central Muslim Lands*

Although al-Suyūṭī gave few details about actual celebrations, he did note that it was common for stories of the Prophet′s life and miracles to be recited on this occasion. This aspect of the Mamluk *Mawlid* has been discussed recently by Fāris Aḥmad al-ʿAlāwī in his book *ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah al-Dimashqīyah*. ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah (d. 922/1516) was a noted scholar and poet who composed a number of works praising Muḥammad, including her *Al-Mawrid al-Ahná fī al-Mawlid al-Asná*, and her *badīʿīyah* poem, popularly known as *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn fī Madḥ al-Amīn.* As an introduction to his new editions of both poems, al-ʿAlāwī provides a useful survey of the history of celebrating the Prophet′s birthday, and an overview of the *mawlid al-nabī* genre of prose and poetry.[94] Among this poetry, Muḥammad al-Būṣīrī′s (d. ca. 694/1294) *Burdah,* recently studied and translated by Stefan Sperl,[95] has a special place as the most celebrated poem ever composed in Arabic. Al-Būṣīrī′s *Burdah* and other poems praising the Prophet draw attention to the devotional spirit that was pronounced in the Mamluk period, and here, again, poetry helps to gauge Muslim religious concerns. Arabic religious poetry from the Mamluk period ranges from the refined verse of professional poets to the vernacular prayers of pilgrims. At times this verse reveals an ascetic spirit reflecting life′s vicissitudes and the human condition, as noted earlier in elegiac poetry. In such circumstances, some poems counsel pious circumspection and an acute awareness of one′s shortcomings, while others are urgent prayers seeking God′s intercession in troubled times, such as during an outbreak of plague, which evoked these verses from the Cairene judge Ibn al-Tansī (d. 853/1449):

> O God of creation, how great are my sins.
>   Have mercy, for You alone can forgive.
>   O my Lord, help a wretched servant
>   who kneels before the door of Your high home.[96]

Further, much of this religious verse has a homiletic character and often revolves around the mystical themes of love and union with God and, of course, devotion to the prophet Muḥammad.

As God′s final prophet, Muḥammad is universally regarded by Muslims as

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and Development in the Muslim West until the 10th/16th Century (Leiden, 1993), 44–75.

[94]Fāris Aḥmad al-ʿAlāwī, *ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah al-Dimashqīyah* (Damascus, 1994), 63–94. Also see Th. Emil Homerin, ″Living Love: The Mystical Writings of ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah,″ *Mamlūk Studies Review* 7 (2003): 211–34, and my review of al-ʿAlāwī in *MSR* 6 (2002): 191–93.

[95]Stefan Sperl, ″Qasida 50,″ in *Qasida Poetry in Islamic Asia and Africa,* ed. S. Sperl and C. Shackle (Leiden, 1996), 2:388–411, 470–76.

[96]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah* (Cairo, 1963), 15:539, quoted in Th. Emil Homerin, ″Arabic Religious Poetry: 1200–1800,″ in *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: The Post-*

˝the best of creation,˝ and his tomb in Medina attained a sanctity at times rivaling that of Mecca, as Shaun Marmon describes in her study *Eunuchs and Sacred Boundaries in Islamic Society.* Baybars, the first Mamluk sultan, rebuilt the sanctuary surrounding the tomb after it had been destroyed in a fire, and thereby set a precedent for later sultans, who would continue to support the holy site. Guarding this sacred space were ˝the eunuchs of the Prophet˝ praised for their piety and their ability to control the powerful forces present there. These liminal figures protected the sanctity of the shrine, guarding its boundaries from violations by visitors.[97] Akin to the holy Prophet were his spiritual heirs, the pious saints, and pilgrimage to their shrines was another marked feature of religion in the Mamluk period.

Over the last twenty years, the study of saints and sainthood in Islam has been an area of active interest, reflecting a prominent trend in the study of religion in general. Two works on Christian saints have been particularly influential in the field. In *Saints and Society,* Donald Weinstein and Rudolph Bell examined saints′ lives for what they may reveal about notions of individual growth and change, the importance of the family to the practice of religion, and the changing configurations of piety and sanctity in the late Middle Ages.[98] Peter Brown, in his *Cult of the Saints,* demonstrated that far from a ˝superstition,˝ Christian saint veneration was practiced by all social classes for it:

> . . . enabled the Christian communities, by projecting a structure of clearly defined relationships onto the unseen world, to ask questions about the quality of relationships in their own society . . . It was a form of piety exquisitely adapted to enable late-antique men to articulate and render manageable urgent, muffled debates on the nature and power of their own world, and to examine in the searching light of ideal relationships with ideal figures, the relation between power, mercy, and justice as practiced around them.[99]

In addition, several works in the 1980s undertook the comparative study of sainthood with contributions on Muslim saints, as scholars of Islam approached the subject with new interest.[100]

Classical Period, ed. R. Allen and D. Richards (Cambridge, forthcoming).

[97]Shaun Marmon, *Eunuchs and Sacred Boundaries in Islamic Society* (Cambridge, 1995), esp. 51–92.

[98]Donald Weinstein and Rudolph M. Bell, *Saints and Society* (Chicago, 1982).

[99]Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints* (Chicago, 1981), 63.

[100]William Brinner, ˝Prophet and Saint: The Two Exemplars,˝ in *Saints and Virtues,* ed. John

As for saints in the Mamluk period, groundbreaking work was done by Jean-Claude Garcin, who studied relations between popular saints and Mamluk amirs, as well as the various types of Sufi saints and their miracles, particularly in the context of the needs of the rural masses.[101] Also of importance has been the pioneering work on saints, shrines, and pilgrimage by Ernest Bannerth, Suʿād Māhir, and Yūsuf Rāghib.[102] Their efforts have served as foundations for more recent contributions to the study of saints and sainthood in Mamluk domains. For instance, *Saints orientaux,* edited by Denise Aigle, features articles by Éric Geoffroy on the hagiography *(adab al-manāqib)* and typology of saints from the Mamluk period, by Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen on a group of rural Sufi saints associated with al-Sayyid al-Badawī (d. 675/1276), and by Denis Gril on the importance of miracles *(karāmāt)* as evidence for Sufism´s prophetic heritage.[103] Miracles are the subject of a second volume edited by Aigle, *Miracle et karāma,* which contains further engaging articles, which occasionally touch on the Mamluk period. Geoffroy reviews the ambiguous position of some Sufis regarding evident and hidden miracles. While a saint might reveal a miracle to help others or defend against her/his detractors, s/he should take care to conceal them on other occasions so as not to become an object of excessive veneration by others.[104] Mayeur-Jaouen also provides a lively discussion of the relationships between animals, miracles, and Muslim

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Stratton Hawley (Berkeley, 1987), 36–51; Lamin Sanneh, ″Saints and Virtues in African Islam,″ in ibid., 144–67; Frederick M. Denny, ″God´s Friends: the Sanctity of Persons in Islam,″ in *Sainthood,* ed. Richard Kieckhefer and George D. Bond (Berkeley, 1988), 69–97; and more recently, Josef W. Meri, ″The Etiquette of Devotion in the Islamic Cult of the Saints,″ in *The Cult of the Saints in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages,* ed. J. Howard-Johnson and P. A. Howard (Oxford, 1999), 263–86. Also see Richard Gramlich, *Die Wunder der Freunde Gottes* (Wiesbaden, 1987); Michael Chodkiewicz, *Le Sceau des Saints* ([Paris], 1986); *Manifestations of Sainthood in Islam,* ed. Grace Martin Smith and Carl W. Ernst (Istanbul, 1993); and Vincent Cornell, *Realm of the Saint* (Austin, 1998).

[101]Jean-Claude Garcin, ″Deux Saints populaires du Caire au debut XVIe siècle,″ *Bulletin d´études orientales* 29 (1977): 131–43, and idem, ″Historie et hagiographie de l´Égypte musulmane à la fin de l´epoque mamelouke et au debut de l´epoque ottomane,″ *Hommages à la mémoire de Serge Sauneron* (Cairo, 1979), 287–316.

[102]Ernest Bannerth, *Islamische Wallfahrtsstätten Kairos* (Wiesbaden, 1973); Suʿād Māhir, *Masājid Miṣr wa-Awliyāʾuhā al-Ṣāliḥūn* (Cairo, 1976); Yūsuf Rāghib, ″Essai d´inventaire chronologiques des guides à l´usage des pèlerins du Caire,″ *Review des études islamiques* 41 (1973): 259–80; and idem, ″Al-Sayyida Nafīsa, sa légende, son culte et son cimetière,″ *Studia Islamica* 44 (1976): 61–86.

[103]Éric Geoffroy, ″Hagiograpie et typologie spirituelle,″ in *Saints orientaux,* ed. Denise Aigle (Paris, 1995), 83–98; Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen, ″Les Compagnons de la Terrasse, un groupe de soufis ruraux dans l´Égypte mamelouke,″ in ibid., 169–80; and Denis Gril, ″Le miracle en islam, critière de la sainteté?″ in ibid., 69–81.

[104]Éric Geoffroy, ″Les Mystiques musulmans face au miracle,″ in *Miracle et kařama,* ed. Denise

saints with several examples from the Mamluk period.[105]

Concern with hagiography, miracles, and intercession is also apparent in *Le Saint et son milieu,* edited by Rachida Chih and Denis Gril. This volume contains important articles by Éric Geoffroy and Richard McGregor on sainthood among the Shādhilī Sufis.[106] As McGregor notes, some Shādhilīs believed in multiple levels of sainthood *(walāyah),* ranging from that found in every believer to the higher levels of accomplished Sufi saints whose mystical inspiration continued Muḥammad′s prophetic legacy.[107] Denis Gril compares the lives of two saints, ʿAbd Allāh al-Minūfī (d. 749/1348), a scholar in Cairo, and Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Farghal (ninth/fifteenth c.), an illiterate peasant from a village in Upper Egypt. Gril notes that both are portrayed as possessing the same interior gnosis, proven by their ability to perform miracles, though al-Minūfī, unlike al-Farghal, attempted to hide his miracles. Again, like the prophet Muḥammad, both saints served their fellow human beings. Moreover, the two saints, and the different accounts written on them, present two prominent and contrasting models of sainthood in medieval Egypt: the saintly scholar and the illiterate saint. The latter was particularly important for those in the rural areas in need of a patron saint and a place for pilgrimage in order to share in the prophetic legacy embodied in all saints.[108] Finally, Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen examines saintly ideals in light of practical realities, in her study of shaykhs in the lineage of Ibrāhīm al-Matbūlī (d. 880/1475) at the end of the Mamluk and beginning of the Ottoman eras. She finds that there was always a need to strike a balance between the concrete realities involved with supporting a *zāwiyah,* and the requirements of maintaining religious comportment *(waraʿ).* This need was especially acute when shaykhs interacted with their Mamluk and Ottoman benefactors, whether at banquets and similar occasions, when receiving their gifts, or when seeking favors on behalf of the

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Aigle (Turnhout, 2000), 301–16.

[105]Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen, ″Miracles des saints musulmans et regne animal,″ in *Miracle et karāma,* 577–606.

[106]Éric Geoffroy, ″L′Élection divine de Muḥammad et ʿAlī Wafāʾ (VIIIe/XIVe s.) ou comment la branche wafāʾī s′est détachée de l′arbre *šāḏilī,″* in *Le Saint et son milieu,* ed. Rachida Chih and Denis Gril (Cairo, 2000), 51–60.

[107]Richard J. A. McGregor, ″The Concept of Sainthood According to Ibn Bāḫila: A Šāḏilī Shaykh of the 8th/14th Century,″ in *Le Saint et son milieu,* 33–50. Also see idem, ″New Sources for the Study of Sufism in Mamlūk Egypt,″ *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 65 (2002): 300–22, and his ″Being and Knowing According to an 8th/14th Century Cairene Mystic,″ *Annales islamologiques* 36 (2002): 177–96.

[108]Denis Gril, ″Saint des villes et saint des champs: étude comparée de deux vies de saints d′époque mamelouke,″ in *Le Saint et son milieu,* 61–82.

peasants, who depended on the shaykhs for intercession with both God and the ruling elite.[109]

Mayeur-Jaouen has also carried out extensive research on Egypt′s greatest saint, Aḥmad al-Badawī. In her book *Al-Sayyid al-Badawī, un grand saint de l′islam égyptien,* Mayeur-Jaouen describes the saint′s fortunes over the centuries until today. Of relevance to the Mamluk period is her study of al-Badawī′s life and miracles, and the evolving construction of his saintly reputation and shrine in Ṭanṭā. Significantly, she finds that much of the saint′s life and legend has been patterned on Muḥammad′s life story, demonstrating, once again, the centrality of the prophetic paradigm in Muslim thought and culture. Mayeur-Jaouen offers further proof that the miracles associated with al-Badawī, including defending the oppressed and helping the poor, reflect the concerns and tensions of Egyptian rural society in the Mamluk period. Similar miracles are attributed to al-Badawī′s successors whose village origins are underscored by the fact that many of them were not religious scholars or, in some cases, even literate. Mayeur-Jaouen also surveys some of the major doctrines and practices of the Aḥmadīyah order representing al-Badawī′s saintly lineage.[110]

Another famous rural saint of Egypt, Ibrāhīm al-Dasūqī (d. 696/1296), has been studied by Helena Hallenberg. She contrasts al-Dasūqī with his contemporary al-Badawī, suggesting that al-Dasūqī′s cult was less developed. She goes on to discuss possible economic motives for al-Dasūqī′s cult, and examines the early shrine and its endowment by the sultan Qāytbāy.[111] Hallenberg presents an extensive examination of the cult and mystical teachings ascribed to al-Dasūqī, and speculates on possible pre-Islamic elements within al-Dasūqī′s legend and cult. Hallenberg notes that the ancient Egyptian deity previously worshiped in the area was Horus, known as ″He of the two eyes,″ and there is an obvious resonance here with al-Dasūqī′s title ″He of the two eyes.″ She also notes that the light imagery and notions of the god-man as an axis mundi involved with al-Dasūqī also had earlier manifestations in ancient Egypt, as did al-Dasūqī′s miracle involving a crocodile, and too, the date for al-Dasūqī′s *mawlid.*[112]

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[109]Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen, ″Le Cheikh scrupuleux et l′émir généreux à travers les *Akhlāq matbūliyya* de Šaʿrānī,″ in *Le Saint et son milieu,* 83–115. For a discussion of various opinions on intercession *(al-shafāʿah)* in general, see Shaun E. Marmon, ″The Quality of Mercy: Intercession in Mamluk Society,″ *Studia Islamica* 87 (1998): 125–39.

[110]Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen, *Al-Sayyid al-Badawī, un grand saint de l′islam égyptien* (Cairo, 1994), esp. 161–506.

[111]Helena Hallenberg, ″The Sultan Who Loved Sufis: How Qāytbāy Endowed a Shrine Complex in Dasūq,″ *Mamlūk Studies Review* 4 (2000): 147–66.

[112]Helena Hallenberg, ″Ibrāhīm al-Dasūqī (1255–96): A Saint Invented,″ Ph.D. diss., University of Helsinki, 1997.

In contrast to these rural traditions is my study of an important saint of medieval Cairo. In *From Arab Poet to Muslim Saint: Ibn al-Fāriḍ, His Verse, and His Shrine,* I offer a case study of saint and shrine formation, most of which occurred in the Mamluk period. This renowned Arab poet was regarded as a saint soon after his death, due in large part to what many believed to be the inspired nature of his religious verse. A reverential grandson then composed a hagiography on the poet, which became the basis for much of Ibn al-Fāriḍ′s saintly reputation. However, as we have seen, Ibn al-Fāriḍ and his verse were part of the Ibn al-ʿArabī/monism controversies that divided the ulama on several occasions, underscoring the fact that Ibn al-Fāriḍ and his verse were enmeshed in a complex web of competing modes of authority and interpretation. Yet due in large part to the beauty of his verse, and to Mamluk patronage, Ibn al-Fāriḍ and his poetry remained an accepted part of Muslim religion and society in the Mamluk era.[113]

While such studies chart a single saint′s fortunes in the Mamluk period, several recent works take a broader view of the subject. Richard J. A. McGregor, in his *Sanctity and Mysticism in Medieval Egypt,* focuses on Sufi conceptions of sanctity within Islamic mystical theology, primarily through a careful study of the writings of Muḥammad Wafāʾ (d. 765/1363) and his son ʿAlī (d. 807/1405), founders of Cairo′s Wafāʾīyah Sufi order. In general, many Muslims of the Mamluk period believed that Muslim ascetics and mystics had attained sanctity. These saints had been annihilated mystically into God yet, due to His grace, they were allowed to abide in this world below as guides to others. These holy men and women, then, form a bridge *(barzakh)* between humanity and God. As spiritual heirs to the prophet Muḥammad, each saint shares in the Muḥammadan Reality, reflecting a portion of Muḥammad′s primordial light. Further, Muḥammad al-Wafāʾ and ʿAlī al-Wafāʾ, following al-Tirmidhī and Ibn al-ʿArabī, formulated a doctrine of a seal of the saints who would culminate the cycles of sainthood and presage the end of time and the coming of the Judgment Day.[114]

McGregor′s study gives us a fascinating view of some of the religious beliefs and doctrines circulating during the Mamluk period, particularly regarding the seal of the saints and the apocalypse. By contrast Christopher Taylor′s book *In the Vicinity of the Righteous* maps the sacred geography of Cairo, arguably the center of the Islamic world at that time. He demonstrates a firm grasp of the archeological and textual evidence, and pays particular attention to the often neglected pilgrimage

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[113]Th. Emil Homerin, *From Arab Poet to Muslim Saint* (Columbia, 1994, rev. 2nd ed., Cairo, 2001), esp. 1–75. Also see idem, *ʿUmar Ibn al-Fāriḍ: Sufi Verse, Saintly Life* (New York, 2001), esp. 295–335.

[114]Richard J. A. McGregor, *Sanctity and Mysticism in Medieval Egypt: The Wafāʾ Sufi Order and the Legacy of Ibn ʿArabī* (Albany, 2004). Also see my review of this book in this issue of *Mamlūk Studies Review.*

guides. Using these guides and their hagiographic content, Taylor discusses the sacred geography of Cairo, the divine blessings emanating from the tombs of holy persons, and the etiquette of pilgrimage *(ziyārah)* to their shrines.[115] Taylor then probes models of exemplary religious life, which include controlling one′s desire, poverty and the absence of material need, generosity, honesty, and similar exemplary traits that might help others lead better lives and attain heavenly reward.[116] He also reviews several types of miracles and other forms of saintly mediation, and their dynamic functions.[117] Taylor then examines the long-standing debate between Muslims, including Ibn Taymīyah and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah, who have held saint cults to be a pernicious form of idolatry, and the larger Muslim majority who have believed that the saints are God′s special friends whose prayers are answered on behalf of believers.[118] Taylor concludes that the saints and their cults played vital roles within medieval Islam in general, and in Mamluk Cairo in particular, as they combined ″unifying elements of universal significance with considerable diversity in local expression.″[119]

In many respects, Taylor′s study is complemented by Josef Meri′s recent book, *The Cult of the Saints Among Muslims and Jews in Medieval Syria*. Meri has drawn on many of the sources mentioned above for this fine book, which can serve as both an introduction to medieval Muslim (and Jewish) veneration of holy persons, appropriate to a general audience, and a scholarly study of the subject in Mamluk Syria. Meri begins by describing the spiritual topography of the region and the importance of scripture and religious writings for identifying sacred sites. Unlike Cairo, Syria was the burial place for a number of biblical prophets, as well as saints, while Damascus has often been associated with eschatological events. Meri stresses that devotees did not invent sacred space so much as they ″re-discovered″ it by association with these and other traditions.[120] He then proceeds to definitions of saints and their definitive traits, which include miracles, asceticism, and fasting. Meri, too, identifies various types of venerated people, from prophets, their families, and companions, to mystics, theologians, judges, and other men and women of exemplary learning and piety, to antinomian individuals and the

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[115]Christopher S. Taylor,*In the Vicinity of the Righteous* (Leiden, 1999), 1–79.

[116]Ibid., 80–126.

[117]Ibid., 127–67.

[118]Ibid., 168–218. Also see Niels Henrik Olesen, *Culte des saints et pèlerinages chez Ibn Taymiyya* (Paris, 1991).

[119]Ibid., 226.

[120]Josef Meri, *The Cult of the Saints Among Muslims and Jews in Medieval Syria* (Oxford, 2002), 1–58.

insane.[121] Of particular importance was *barakah,* the sacred blessing or charisma possessed by holy people, places, and relics, which Meri observes ″was spiritual, perceptual, and emotive, rather than conceptual.″[122]

Meri next turns to the practice of *ziyārah,* which he defines broadly as ″not only pilgrimage, but also the culture of devotion of which pilgrimage and saint veneration were an integral part.″[123] He reviews both Sunni and Shi‘i *ziyārah* practices and the debates on their legality. Like Taylor, Meri pays close attention to pilgrimage guides and related literature for probing pilgrimage rituals and etiquette, and as a source for a number of insightful sections on women devotees, individual saints, types of talismans, and such practices as seeking cures, rain, and repentance. He suggests that pilgrimage to local shrines had social and economic, as well as religious, motives, and that it may have offered the poor and elderly a way to participate vicariously in the more expensive and difficult hajj.[124] Following a chapter on Jewish pilgrimage, Meri considers various types of shrines and other sacred sites, and their proliferation in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Meri ascribes this growth, in part, to the decline of Abbasid central authority and the need by their various successors for religious legitimation as protectors and patrons of Islam and its holy places. The spread of Sufism and its orders also nurtured the growth of shrines and the cult of the saints, while sacred sites were steadily incorporated into larger mosque-madrasah complexes.[125] Meri concludes that the veneration of holy persons was a central part of popular religious life among Muslims, Christians, and Jews of the medieval Near East. But by popular he does not mean ″low″ or ″heterodox″ but normative as ″devotees from all walks of life… sought to reaffirm their faith, chart their sacred pasts, and derive relief from illness and adversity.″[126]

Meri′s recent study reaffirms a general conclusion reached by many of the scholars considered in this essay. Namely, a two-tier model of religion with a high faith of a literate elite above the vulgar superstitions of the masses is an inaccurate and misleading description of religion in the Mamluk period. We should recall that while the Quran and *sunnah* provide the foundation for Islamic belief and practice, they still allow for a wide array of regional and cultural interpretation and expression. Further, as Sunni Islam lacks an official earthly religious authority after the Prophet Muḥammad, local custom may not oppose normative Islam so

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[121]Ibid., 59–102.

[122]Ibid., 103, 104–19.

[123]Ibid., 10, 120–63.

[124]Ibid., 163–213.

[125]Ibid., 249–74.

[126]Ibid., 281–87.

much as determine it. The consensus of a community, its tradition, certifies correct belief and practice to a great extent, and this appears to have been the case in Mamluk domains. I would venture to say that this is the growing consensus of Mamluk scholars today.

Finally, I would like to offer a few concluding observations. First, recent study of religion in the Mamluk period has not been Egyptocentric. Works by scholars, including Little, Knysh, and Geoffroy, cover all Mamluk domains, including Palestine and the Hijaz, while important studies on the ulama, saints, and Sufis in Cairo have their able Damascene counterparts. A similar effect is found if we view this research, at least that on saints and Sufis, in terms of urban-rural relations, with studies of religion in Cairo, Damascus, and Jerusalem finding their village complements. Another positive trend in recent research is a familiarity among Mamluk scholars with related scholarship involving other regions and religions, especially Christianity and Judaism, which allows for a comparative perspective in terms of both subject matter and methodology. I am also encouraged by the fact that a number of scholars have used manuscripts for their research. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of unpublished manuscripts composed during the Mamluk period on religious topics, and careful study of them will, I believe, significantly enhance and, perhaps, dramatically change how we view medieval Islam. Concomitantly, there are still many published works from the period in need of further study involving theology, law, and mysticism, and covering a range of religious topics from death, purgatory, and the afterlife, to prayers and devotions, to the interpretation of the Quran, and dreams. Though we may lack a detailed and comprehensive introduction to religion in the Mamluk period, this should not be an obstacle to continued fruitful research in the future.

JOHANNES PAHLITZSCH
FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN

Mediators Between East and West:
Christians Under Mamluk Rule

In this article, I do not intend to provide a comprehensive overview of the situation of Latin and Greek Orthodox Christians in Mamluk Egypt and Syria, be they pilgrims, clerics, monks or traders, natives or immigrants. Rather, the focus will be on describing the position of these Christians between Orient and Occident, between Islam and Christianity, from concrete case studies. This intermediate position shows the wide variety of connections and dependencies that existed between the different peoples, religious communities, and state organizations, but at the same time provides a key to understanding the unity of the eastern Mediterranean region. In this sense this article may be seen as a contribution to the writing of ″a human history of the Mediterranean Sea expressed through the commercial, cultural and religious interaction that took place across its surface″ that David Abulafia has called for to supplement the *longue durée,* ecological approach of Fernand Braudel and more recently of Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell.[1]

CHRISTIANS IN PALESTINE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
Latin and Greek Orthodox Christians in the Mamluk Empire did not form a coherent group by any means. While Greek, Georgian, Russian, or Serbian monks and priests, Franciscans, Melkites (i.e., Arabic-speaking Orthodox), or Latin merchants on the one hand lived permanently or at least for long periods in the region, on the other hand many Latin and Orthodox pilgrims and travellers visited

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the Mamluk empire only temporarily. However, the relationships of the Christians in Syria and Egypt to the Mamluks cannot be seen in the isolation of a purely internal perspective. The Christian protecting powers such as Byzantium and the papacy, or various powers such as France, the kingdom of Aragon, the kingdom of Cyprus, or the Italian trading cities, looked after their own interests in the eastern Mediterranean.[2] Between all these different groups a complex network emerged, and these relationships have always to be kept in mind when one tries to determine the respective political environment and the motives of the protagonists involved.

Using the example of the Georgian community in Jerusalem it can be demonstrated how domestic and foreign policy are frequently interlinked so that it is sometimes hard to tell what formed the basis for Mamluk policy with respect to their Christian subjects. Did the Mamluks show consideration towards the Muslim religious establishment, which took generally a more anti-Christian position and from time to time stirred up the animosity of the Muslim population against the Christians,[3] or were foreign policy interests their primary concern? When and for what reason did the respective protecting powers intervene with the Mamluk court?

After Georgia had acknowledged the supreme rule of the Mongol Great Khan in 1243 it was directly involved in the continual conflicts of the Mamluks and the Ilkhanids, the Mongol rulers of Persia. In this conflict both parties were always on the lookout for allies and tried to create a second front in order to gain a tactical advantage over their opponent. Georgia also formed a part of this system of alliances.[4] In the beginning of 1268, after intensive diplomatic activities, the kings

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[2]The study of Reuven Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks: The Ilkhanid War, 1260–1281,* Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization (Cambridge, 1995) gives a good impression of the complex foreign relations of the Mamluks. Cf. also Werner Krebs, ″Innen- und Aussenpolitik Ägyptens im Spätmittelalter, 741–784/1341–1382″ (Ph.D. diss., University of Hamburg, 1980); and Albrecht Fuess, *Verbranntes Ufer: Auswirkungen mamlukischer Seepolitik auf Beirut und die syro-palästinensische Küste (1250–1517),* Islamic History and Civilization, Studies and Texts, vol. 39 (Leiden, Boston, and Cologne, 2001).

[3]Cf. the examples given by Donald P. Little, ″Communal Strife in Late Mamluk Jerusalem,″ *Islamic Law and Society* 6 (1999): 69–96.

[4]Christian Müller and Johannes Pahlitzsch, ″Sultan Baybars I and the Georgians—In the Light of New Documents Related to the Monastery of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem,″ *Arabica* 51 (2004): 276–80. For the early history of the Georgians in Jerusalem cf. Johannes Pahlitzsch, ″Die Bedeutung Jerusalems für Königtum und Kirche in Georgien zur Zeit der Kreuzzüge im Vergleich zu Armenien,″ in *L'idea di Gerusalemme nella spiritualità cristiana del medioevo: atti del Convegno internazionale in collaborazione con l'Istituto della Görres-Gesellschaft di Gerusalemme, Gerusalemme, Notre Dame of Jerusalem Center, 31 agosto–6 settembre 1999,* Pontificio Comitato di Scienze Storiche, Atti e Documenti, vol. 12 (Vatican City, 2003), 104–31.

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of the then-divided Georgia sent letters to the Mamluk sultan Baybars in which they declared that they had seceded from the Mongols because of the Mamluk sultan.[5] Subsequently, however, Mamluk-Georgian relations underwent a drastic change, since very shortly afterwards, probably in the summer of 1268 or 1269, Baybars gave in to the pleading of the Shaykh Khaḍir ibn Abī Bakr al-Mihrānī, his spiritual guide, and handed the Georgian Monastery of the Holy Cross near Jerusalem over to him—who turned it into a *zāwiyah,* a Sufi convent.[6]

The Monastery of the Holy Cross could be regarded as a royal foundation and was one of the most prominent Georgian monasteries outside of Georgia. Thus, the relationship of the Mamluks to Georgia had certainly reached its low point by this time. The reasons for the sudden and somewhat unexpected expropriation of the Monastery of the Holy Cross are quite obscure. Evidently, it was very difficult for Baybars to refuse to grant the wishes of his increasingly influential adviser and spiritual guide, Shaykh Khaḍir, who had built up a network of Sufi settlements under his control by confiscating churches and synagogues. When, for a period of time, the tension in foreign affairs eased during 1268, it seems that Baybars thought he was no longer in need of the alliance with the Georgians and eventually yielded to his adviser′s pressure and allowed the Monastery of the Holy Cross to be taken over. So both domestic and foreign policy as well as personal reasons obviously influenced Baybars′ decision.[7]

The significance of the Monastery of the Holy Cross for Mamluk-Georgian relations is particularly evident in the fact that the monastery was returned to the Georgians when relations between the two sides were resumed at the start of the fourteenth century.[8] However, the purpose this time was not to forge a military alliance, since the Ilkhans of Persia had dropped their aggressive policy of expansion directed at Syria, at least for the time being. Rather, the issue at hand was that the Mamluks had begun to import more and more Circassian military slaves, causing

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[5]Ibn ‘Abd al-Ẓāhir, *Al-Rawḍ al-Ẓāhir fī Sīrat al-Malik al-Ẓāhir,* ed. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Khuwayṭir (Riyadh, 1976), 299. It is not known if a true alliance came into being.

[6]Müller and Pahlitzsch, ″Sultan Baybars I and the Georgians,″ 271–75.

[7]However, Shaykh Khaḍir had some very powerful enemies among the Mamluk amirs, who regarded his influence on the sultan′s political affairs as being harmful. His anti-Christian attacks, with their damaging effect on foreign policy, most likely were a considerable factor in this. For this reason, it is perhaps no coincidence that the same amir who was later responsible for the overthrow and arrest of the shaykh had earlier supported the indigenous Christians; Müller and Pahlitzsch, ″Sultan Baybars I and the Georgians,″ 281.

[8]For a detailed analysis of the Mamluk chronicles that report these events cf. Johannes Pahlitzsch, ″Georgians and Greeks in Jerusalem (1099–1310),″ in *East and West in the Crusader States: Context, Contacts, Confrontations III*, ed. Krijnie N. Ciggaar and Herman Teule, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, vol. 125 (Leuven and Dudley, MA, 2003), 42–46.

increasing concern about the safety of the trading routes in the Caucasus.[9] The restitution of the Monastery of the Holy Cross was effected with the participation of the Byzantine Empire. Byzantium obviously wanted to use this opportunity to again assume the role of protector of the Orthodox Christians in Syria and Egypt which it had lost as a consequence of the Latin conquest of Constantinople in 1204.[10]

In the fifteenth century as well, the status of the Georgian community in Jerusalem played an important role in the relations between the Mamluks and Georgians, which still were influenced by trading interests. In 844/1440, the sultan Jaqmaq (842–54/1438–53) complained to the Georgian king that a levy of 1000 dinars had been imposed by the Georgian authorities on one of his traders charged with the purchase of military slaves. If the Georgian king would not reimburse the amount, the monks ″in charge of Georgian churches and the Golgotha in Jerusalem″ would have to raise the money and the sultan would ″issue instructions to use the sword of justice and equity to take vengeance upon the Christians and Georgians in the Muslim countries according to what they deserve.″[11] In his response, the Georgian king complained about the destruction of a church in Damascus and added that, in his country, the Muslims were treated well and could freely practice their religion.[12] Interpreting this as a hidden threat certainly does not seem farfetched. In the end, however, the two seem to have come to an amicable agreement. Because the Mamluks were aware that an undisrupted supply of military slaves from the Caucasus depended on their good behavior in their dealings with the Georgian residents of Palestine, the Georgians were even able to further expand their position in Jerusalem in the course of the fifteenth century.[13]

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[9]Andrew Ehrenkreutz, ″Strategic Implications of the Slave Trade between Genoa and Mamluk Egypt in the Second Half of the Thirteenth Century,″ in *The Islamic Middle East, 700–1900: Studies in Economic and Social History,* ed. Abraham L. Udovitch (Princeton, 1981), 335–45; Butrus Abu-Manneh, ″The Georgians in Jerusalem in the Mamluk Period,″ in *Egypt and Palestine: A Millennium of Association (868–1948),* ed. Amos Cohen and Gabriel Baer (Jerusalem, 1984), 108.

[10]Pahlitzsch, ″Georgians and Greeks in Jerusalem (1099–1310),″ 49. For another instance where Byzantium acted as advocate of the Oriental Christians in the fourteenth century cf. below, note 22; and Peter Schreiner, ″Byzanz und die Mamluken in der 2. Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts,″ *Der Islam* 56 (1979): 302.

[11]Abu-Manneh, ″The Georgians in Jerusalem in the Mamluk Period,″ 111, where a translation of Jaqmaq′s still unpublished letter can be found.

[12]Ibid., 108–9.

[13]For the further history of the Georgians in Jerusalem cf. Richard Janin, ″Les Géorgiens à Jérusalem,″ *Echos d′Orient* 16 (1913): 32–38, 211–19; Gregory Peradze, ″An Account of the Georgian Monks and Monasteries in Palestine as Revealed in the Writings of non-Georgian Pilgrims,″ *Georgica* 1, no. 4/5 (1937): 181–246; Elene Metreveli, *Masalebi Ierusalimis K‘art‘uli*

Looking at the development of Georgian-Mamluk relations from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century one comes to the conclusion that not only was the situation of the Georgians in Jerusalem influenced by mutual political and economic relations but that the way the Mamluks behaved vis-à-vis the Georgians in the Holy Land also had an influence on the relationship. Indeed, one could even say that the condition of the Georgian community was a kind of gauge for the state of these relations.

More or less the same holds true for the significance the Franciscan Custodia di Terra Santa had for the relationship of the Mamluks to the Latin West. Various diplomatic efforts of the kings of Aragon and Naples eventually led to the foundation of a Franciscan settlement in Jerusalem in 1335. Political and economic interests played a role here as well. Thus, one important aspect of the continuous rivalry between the kings of Aragon and Naples over domination in the Mediterranean region was the competition for the role of protector of the holy sites and of the Christians living in the Holy Land. Furthermore, the Angevins claimed the title of King of Jerusalem for themselves, while the Catalonians and the Mamluks pursued tangible trade interests.[14] The Venetians, who were conducting trade with Alexandria and the Levantine coast, were another party committed to championing the concerns of the Christians in the Orient. Providing the Western pilgrims with transportation was a very profitable business, thus they were natural partners for the Franciscans

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Koloniis Istoriisat'vis (Materials for the History of the Georgian Colony in Jerusalem) (Tbilisi, 1962); Donald S. Richards, ″Arabic Documents from the Monastery of St. James in Jerusalem Including a Mamluk Report on the Ownership of Calvary,″ *Revue des études arméniens* 21 (1988–89): 455–69.

[14]Girolamo Golubovich, *Biblioteca bio-bibliografica della Terra Santa e dell'Oriente Francescano* (Florence, 1923), 4:1–73; Leonhard Lemmens, *Die Franziskaner im Heiligen Land I: Die Franziskaner auf dem Sion (1335–1552)*, Franziskanische Studien, Beiheft 4 (Münster, 1925); Kaspar Elm, ″La Custodia di Terra Santa: Franziskanisches Ordensleben in der Tradition der lateinischen Kirche Palästinas,″ in *I Francescani nel trecento: Atti del XIV Convegno Internazionale della Società Internazionale di Studi Francescani, Assisi 16–17–18 ottobre 1986,* Società Internazionale di Studi Francescani, Convegni, vol. 14 (Assisi, 1988), 130–66; repr. in idem, *Vitasfratrum: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Eremiten- und Mendikantenorden des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts: Festgabe zum 65. Geburtstag,* ed. Dieter Berg, Saxonia Franciscana, vol. 5 (Werl, 1994), 241–62. For the unsuccessful efforts of James II of Aragon (1291–1327) to establish a Franciscan settlement in Jerusalem cf. Golubovich, *Biblioteca bio-bibliografica della Terra Santa e dell'Oriente Francescano* (Florence, 1919), 3:309–18; Aziz Suryal Atiya, *Egypt and Aragon: Embassies and Diplomatic Correspondence between 1300 and 1330 A.D.*, Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, vol. 23, no. 7 (Leipzig, 1938). For the relations of the Franciscans in Palestine with the Latin West cf. *La custodia di Terra Santa e l'Europa: I rapporti politici e l'attività culturale dei Francescani in Medio Oriente,* ed. Michele Piccirillo (Rome, 1983); David Abulafia, *The Western Mediterranean Kingdoms 1200–1500: The Struggle for Dominion* (London, 1997), 53–56, 118–19.

in the Holy Land, who were responsible for the Western pilgrims during their stay in Palestine.[15] So here as well the Christians in Jerusalem, in this case the Latins, served as a point of reference for international relations.[16]

Political Mediation by Regional Church Institutions and Laymen

The Greek Orthodox patriarchs of Alexandria, Jerusalem, and Antioch functioned as the primary links between the Mamluks and the Orthodox world. The career of the patriarch Lazaros of Jerusalem serves as an example for the intermediary position and the dependence of the patriarchs on the sultan and on the Byzantine emperor. Lazaros was elected to the office of patriarch sometime before 1341 in Palestine.[17] As had long been the custom, it was incumbent upon the sultan to express his approbation by issuing a document *(tawqīʿ)*. The fixed language of these documents of approbation obliged the new patriarch not only to conscientiously serve the believers entrusted to him, and to do so in accordance with their own laws, but also forbade him to establish contact with foreigners, and more specifically with foreign rulers, without the knowledge of the sultan. Every letter and all emissaries were to be promptly disclosed to the sultan.[18] Thus, in the eyes of the

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[15]Eliyahu Ashtor, ″Venezia e il pellegrinaggio in Terra Santa nel basso Medioevo,″ *Archivio storico italiano* 153 (1985): 197–223; David Jacoby, ″Pèlegrinage médiéval et sanctuaires de Terre Sainte: La perspective Vénitienne,″ *Ateneo veneto* 24 (1986): 27–58; repr. in idem, *Studies on the Crusader States and on Venetian Expansion,* Collected Studies Series, vol. 301 (Northampton, 1989); Marie-Luise Favreau-Lilie, ″The German Empire and Palestine: German Pilgrimages to Jerusalem between the 12th and 16th Century,″ *Journal of Medieval History* 21 (1995): 321–41, here 327–31.

[16]Donald P. Little, ″Christians in Mamluk Jerusalem,″ in *Christian-Muslim Encounters,* ed. Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Wadi Zaidan Haddad (Gainesville, 1995), 213, states that the Franciscans′ ″repeated petitions for concessions and favored treatment became factors in the Mamluks′ relations with foreign Christian powers.″ Nevertheless Little, ″Communal Strife in Late Mamluk Jerusalem,″ 87–94, does not refer to the state of Mamluk relations with the West in his dealing with the conflict of the local Muslim establishment with the Franciscans over the Tomb of David on Mt. Zion in 894–95/1489–90, during which both sides appealed to the sultan. Mamluk documents from the archive of the Custodia di Terra Santa are published in Norberto Risciani, *Documenti e firmani* (Jerusalem, 1930).

[17]Marius Canard, ″Une lettre du sultan Malik Nāṣir Ḥasan à Jean VI Cantacuzène (750/1349),″ *Annales de l′Institut d′Etudes Orientales* 3 (1947): 29; repr. in idem, *Byzance et les musulmans du Proche Orient,* Collected Studies Series, vol. 18 (London, 1973).

[18]Al-Qalqashandī (756–821/1355–1418), *Ṣubḥ al-Aʿshá fī Ṣināʿat al-Inshā'* (Cairo, 1917; repr. Cairo, ca. 1970), 11:392–95; Clifford Edmund Bosworth, ″Christian and Jewish Religious Dignitaries in Mamlûk Egypt and Syria: Qalqashandî′s Information on their Hierarchy, Titulature, and Appointment,″ *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 3 (1972): 199–203. Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-Aʿshá,* 4:194, mentions the Melkite patriarchs as office bearers of the *niyābah* of Damascus. This probably refers only to the patriarchs of Antioch, who had resided in Damascus since the

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Mamluks, the patriarch was fully dependent on the sultan, even in his contacts with the Church of Constantinople and the Byzantine emperor.

When a monk from Jerusalem by the name of Gerasimos objected to the election of Lazaros, it would thus have been the sultan´s obligation to resolve the dispute. But since Lazaros was at that moment in Constantinople—be it as a Mamluk emissary or in order to be confirmed as patriarch by the Byzantine emperor[19]—Emperor Andronikos III Palaiologos (1328–41) was involved in this conflict. Having sent an embassy to Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (d. 741/1341) to obtain additional information, he died before the issue could be resolved. In the following civil war between the supporters of the underage heir to the throne Joannes V Palaiologos, and Joannes VI Kantakouzenos, the patriarch Lazaros—still being in Constantinople—had pledged his support to the latter early on. Consequently, the supporters of Joannes V Palaiologos declared Lazaros discharged from his office. Gerasimos was elected patriarch of Jerusalem and approved by the sultan, probably in 1342.[20] Joannes VI Kantakouzenos for his part overturned

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election of Michael I Bishārah in about 1366: Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-Nihāyah fī al-Tārīkh* (Cairo, 1932), 14:319; cf. below, note 29. Thus the patriarch Mikhā'īl whose *tawqī'* is given in al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A'shá,* 12:424–26, confirming him as Melkite patriarch ″bi-al-Shām wa-a'mālihi″ is either Michael I or Michael II (1395–1404), in contrast to Bosworth, ″Christian and Jewish Religious Dignitaries,″ 203, n. 1, who identifies him with a Melkite archbishop of Damascus from the thirteenth century. Obviously, the *nā'ib al-salṭanah* of Syria was responsible for issuing the document of approbation for the leaders of the Syrian non-Muslim communities, although according to al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A'shá,* 4:194, the sultan sometimes confirmed the designations by the *nā'ib* and sometimes even issued a *tawqī'* before the *nā'ib*. Maurice Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *La Syrie à l´époque des Mamelouks d´après les auteurs arabes: Description géographique, économique et administration gouvernementale,* Bibliothèque archéologique et historique, vol. 3 (Paris, 1923), 168–69, sees in this the attempt of the sultan to exert direct control over the *dhimmī*s. For the role of the Greek Orthodox patriarchate of Alexandria in the relations between Constantinople and Cairo, especially with regard to the translation of their diplomatic correspondence, cf. Dimitri A. Korobeinikov, ″Diplomatic Correspondence between Byzantium and the Mamlūk Sultanate in the Fourteenth Century,″ *Al-Masāq* 16 (2004): 66–67; cf. also his work on the lists of the metropolitan sees, the *notitiae episcopatuum:* idem, ″Orthodox Communities in Eastern Anatolia in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries: Part 1: The Two Patriarchates: Constantinople and Antioch,″ *Al-Masāq* 15 (2003): 199–200.

[19]Against the statement of Joannes Kantakouzenos, *Eximperatoris Historiarum Libri IV,* ed. Ludwig Schopen, Corpus scriptorum historiae Byzantinae, vol. 13 (Bonn, 1832), 3:91, Canard, ″Une lettre du sultan Malik Nāṣir Ḥasan à Jean VI Cantacuzène (750/1349),″ 40–41, holds the opinion that it is unlikely that a patriarch would have gotten the sultan´s permission to travel to Constantinople only for his confirmation.

[20]In the letter of al-Nāṣir Ḥasan to Joannes VI from 750/1349 it is stated that a certain Malik Nāṣir (Μελὴκ Νάσαρ) has deposed Lazaros: Joannes Kantakouzenos, *Eximperatoris Historiarum Libri IV,* 3:97; French translation in Canard, ″Une lettre du sultan Malik Nāṣir Ḥasan à Jean VI Cantacuzène (750/1349),″ 50. This is obviously al-Nāṣir Aḥmad, who reigned for only about three

this decision and after having seized power in 1347 saw to it that Lazaros was confirmed by the patriarch of Constantinople.[21] It was, however, the sultan′s decision who was to officiate as patriarch in Jerusalem. It took two more years before Joannes VI sent Lazaros, together with an emissary, to Cairo to ask for his reinstatement. The answer of the new sultan al-Nāṣir Ḥasan to this plea has come down to us in the chronicle written by Joannes Kantakouzenos himself. After Kantakouzenos′ victory, the Mamluks showed little interest in supporting the candidate of the defeated party and the sultan consented to reinstate Lazaros in office. Al-Nāṣir Ḥasan also granted the request to rebuild a church in Cairo and promised that all pilgrims, priests, and monks at the holy sites in Jerusalem, as well as all Byzantine merchants in the Mamluk empire, would be under his protection.[22] The deposed Gerasimos decided to appeal to the sultan but died on his way to Cairo.[23] The course of events shows paradigmatically how, in the case of the Greek Orthodox churches in the Near East, Byzantine and Mamluk interests were intertwined. What was initially a regional and essentially internal Mamluk conflict over the patriarchate of Jerusalem became part of the Byzantine civil war.

Despite assurances of protection, Lazaros found himself exposed to Muslim assaults shortly afterwards in 1357. Assaults against Christians often occurred in the fourteenth century on the initiative of individual influential amirs or ulama, who were able incite the populace to violence. The rulers were thus forced to tolerate these assaults, against their will and in opposition to the interests of the state.[24] In this case, the anti-Christian excesses were immediately stopped after the

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months in 742–43/1342 (Canard, ibid., 50, n. 3). It might be no coincidence that al-Nāṣir Aḥmad tried to govern the Mamluk empire from Kerak and ordered the caliph to be sent from Cairo to Jerusalem; Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages* (London and Sidney, 1986), 129.

[21]For the date of this confirmation cf. Peter Wirth, ″Der Patriarchat des Gerasimos und der zweite Patriarchat des Lazaros von Jerusalem,″ *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 54 (1961): 319–20.

[22]Joannes Kantakouzenos, *Eximperatoris Historiarum Libri IV,* 3:95–98; Canard, ″Une lettre du sultan Malik Nāṣir Ḥasan à Jean VI Cantacuzène (750/1349),″ 49–51. The letter is dated Sha'bān 15, 750/October 30, 1349.

[23]The story of the conflict between Lazaros and Gerasimos is told by Joannes Kantakouzenos, *Eximperatoris Historiarum Libri IV,* 3:90–99. Canard, ″Une lettre du sultan Malik Nāṣir Ḥasan à Jean VI Cantacuzène (750/1349),″ 29–31, 39–42; Wirth, ″Der Patriarchat des Gerasimos und der zweite Patriarchat des Lazaros von Jerusalem,″ 320–23; Krebs, *Innen- und Aussenpolitik Ägyptens im Spätmittelalter,* 260–62; Klaus-Peter Todt, *Kaiser Johannes VI. Kantakuzenos und der Islam: Politische Realität und theologische Polemik im palaiologenzeitlichen Byzanz,* Würzburger Forschungen zur Missions- und Religionswissenschaft Abteilung 2, Religionswissenschaftliche Studien, vol. 16 (Würzburg and Altenberge, 1991), 69–70. For Joannes VI cf. in general Donald M. Nicol, *The Reluctant Emperor: A Biography of John Cantacuzene, Byzantine Emperor and Monk, c. 1295–1383* (Cambridge, 1996).

[24]Already Etienne Quatremère, ″Mémoire historique sur l′état du Christianisme sous les deux

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death of the amir responsible, and Lazaros was sent to Constantinople as an emissary of the sultan only a few months later.[25] This sudden transition, from a persecuted individual to an emissary traveling on official governmental matters, is surprising and poses the question whether Lazaros would have been able to refuse this assignment. What this event clearly illustrates, however, is how patriarchs had to fill a double function. They were not only the representatives of the emperor and the Orthodox Church in the Orient, but also served as intermediaries of the Mamluks vis-à-vis Byzantium, whether they wanted to or not.

The further fate of Lazaros illustrates once again the extent to which the Christians in the Levant were integrated into supra-regional relations and their development. When Peter I, the king of Cyprus, conquered and destroyed Alexandria in 1365, the resulting war with the Mamluks, lasting until 1370, had devastating consequences for the Christians in the Mamluk Empire. Copts, Syrian Orthodox Christians, Franciscans, Venetians, and Genoese, as well as Greek Orthodox clerics, were arrested and maltreated, and some of them were even executed.[26] This time,

dynasties des princes Mamlouks," in *Mémoires géographiques et historiques sur l'Egypte et sur quelque contrées voisines* (Paris, 1811), 2:220–66, gives a list of persecutions of Christians under the Mamluks according to al-Maqrīzī and the *Historia Patriarcharum Alexandrinorum*; Canard, "Une lettre du sultan Malik Nāṣir Ḥasan à Jean VI Cantacuzène (750/1349)," 34–38; Donald P. Little, "Coptic Conversion to Islam under the Baḥrī Mamluks, 692–755/1293–1354," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 39 (1976): 552–69; Urbain Vermeulen, "The Rescript of al-Malik aṣ-Ṣāliḥ Ṣāliḥ against the Dimmīs (755 A.H./1354 A.D.)," *Lovanensia Periodica* 9 (1978): 182-84; Clifford Edmund Bosworth, "The 'Protected Peoples' (Christians and Jews) in Medieval Egypt and Syria," *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 62 (1979–80): 11–36, especially 27–36; repr. in idem, *The Arabs, Byzantium and Islam: Studies in Early Islamic History and Culture,* Collected Studies Series, vol. 529 (London, 1996). Cf. also for the Ayyubid period Emmanuel Sivan, "Notes sur la situation des chrétiens à l'époque ayyubide," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 86 (1967): 117–30.

[25] Joannes Kantakouzenos, *Eximperatoris Historiarum Libri IV,* 3:99–104. Canard, "Une lettre du sultan Malik Nāṣir Ḥasan à Jean VI Cantacuzène (750/1349)," 31–32, 42–45; Timothy S. Miller, "A New Chronology of Patriarch Lazarus' Persecution by the Mamluks (1349–1367)," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 41 (1975): 474–78; Peter Schreiner, "Bemerkungen zu vier melkitischen Patriarchen des 14. Jahrhunderts," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 45 (1979): 392–95, who corrects Miller's chronology of Lazaros' persecution.

[26] Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-Nihāyah fī al-Tārīkh,* 14:320, speaks of "the disgrace, exemplary punishment and offense *(al-khazá wa-al-nakāl wa-al-jināyah)*" that befell the Melkites because of Peter's assault on Alexandria; for a Russian report of the persecution of the Christians cf. Schreiner, "Byzanz und die Mamluken in der 2. Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts," 296–304; for persecutions of Franciscans cf. Girolamo Golubovich, *Biblioteca bio-bibliografica della Terra Santa e dell'Oriente Francescano* (Florence, 1927), 5:113–16, 143–44; Lemmens, *Die Franziskaner im Heiligen Land I,* 61–63.

Lazaros was not prepared to tolerate the persecution and fled to Constantinople.[27]

This war disrupted the *modus vivendi* that Christians and Muslims, Orthodox and Latins, Arabs, Greeks, and western Europeans had found in the Levant, and various parties made attempts to end the war and thus put a stop to the persecution of the Christians. The Italian mercantile cities in particular, which saw their economic interests endangered, endeavored to pressure the Cypriot king, and the pope also called for an end to this war. The Mamluks, for their part, conducted direct negotiations with the Cypriot king, which, however, failed to yield results.[28] According to the historian Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373), the governor of Syria in 767/1366 appointed the Orthodox patriarch of Antioch, Michael I Bishārah, as mediator, he having been spared from persecution for this reason. In return he was obliged to write not only to Peter, but also to the Byzantine emperor *(malik Isṭanbūl),* in order to impress upon them the suffering that the attack on Alexandria had brought upon the Christians.[29]

Apparently the Mamluks hoped that the Byzantine emperor would be able to use his influence on the Greek population of Cyprus to influence its king to make peace, which is interesting because no political relationships are known to have

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[27]The Confession of Paulos Tagaris, ed. Herbert Hunger, ″Die Generalbeichte eines byzantinischen Mönches im 14. Jahrhundert,″ in *Studien zum Patriarchatsregister von Konstantinopel II,* ed. Herbert Hunger and Otto Kresten, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte, vol. 647 (Vienna, 1997), 195 (German translation, 200).

[28]Peter Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus and the Crusades, 1191–1374* (Cambridge, 1991), 166–71; Norman Housley, *The Later Crusades, 1274–1580: From Lyons to Alcazar* (Oxford, 1992), 39–42; Peter Edbury, ″The Lusignan Kingdom of Cyprus and its Muslim Neighbours,″ in *Kypros apo tin proistoria stous neoterous chronous* (Nikosia, 1995), 235–39; idem, ″Christians and Muslims in the Eastern Mediterranean,″ in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. 6, c. 1300–c. 1415, ed. Michael Jones (Cambridge, 2000), 880–81; Fuess, *Verbranntes Ufer,* 24–30, 384–86. For the good relations between Cyprus and the Mamluks before Peter's attack on Alexandria cf. Jean Richard, ″L'etat de guerre avec l'Égypte et le royaume de Chypre,″ in *Cyprus and the Crusades: Papers Given at the International Conference ´Cyprus and the Crusades,' Nicosia, 6–9 September, 1994*, ed. Nicholas Coureas and Jonathan Riley-Smith (Nicosia, 1995), 90–92; for the events after the capture of Alexandria and the diplomatic efforts to come to a peace agreement cf. Krebs, *Innen- und Aussenpolitik Ägyptens im Spätmittelalter,* 285–334.

[29]Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-Nihāyah fī al-Tārīkh,* 14:320; Schreiner, ″Bemerkungen zu vier melkitischen Patriarchen des 14. Jahrhunderts,″ 391–92. For the very confused chronology of the patriarchate of Antioch in the 1360s and ′70s cf. Otto Kresten, *Die Beziehungen zwischen den Patriarchaten von Konstantinopel und Antiocheia unter Kallistos I. und Philotheos Kokkinos im Spiegel des Patriarchatsregisters von Konstantinopel,* Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, Abhandlungen der Geistes- und sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse Jahrgang 2000, no. 6 (Mainz and Stuttgart, 2000), 51, n. 172, 59, n. 197, 66–67, 73, who corrects Joseph Nasrallah, ″Chronologie des patriaches melchites d´Antioche de 1250 à 1500,″ *Proche-Orient Chrétien* 17 (1967): 210–12. Cf. also above, n. 18.

existed at this time between Cyprus and the rest of the Byzantine empire. Indeed, it would be mistaken to view Cyprus only in terms of its orientation to the West since diverse cultural, social, and economic connections linked the Cyprus of the Lusignans to the Levant. It was certainly no coincidence that the Mamluks availed themselves of the Orthodox patriarch of Antioch; close relationships between Cyprus and the Syrian mainland still existed in the fourteenth century. The *Suriens*, the Arabic-speaking Christians of Cyprus who belonged partially to the Greek Orthodox faith and partially to the Syrian Orthodox faith, comprised a large group on the island. In Famagusta, they may have even constituted the majority. After Greek, Arabic was the language spoken most on the island.[30] There was even an exchange going back and forth between Cyprus and the mainland of disputations between Christian and Muslim scholars published as pamphlets.[31]

Beside high ranking clerics, laymen served as intermediaries as well. Emmanuel Piloti (ca. 1371–after 1441), a Venetian merchant of Cretan origin, had lived at the beginning of the fifteenth century for 22 years in Egypt, in addition to visiting Damascus and ports in Syria and Asia Minor.[32] On the basis of this long experience he wrote a treatise on how to reconquer the Holy Land. Piloti argued, not very originally, that the Crusaders—under the leadership of Venice—should first occupy Alexandria and Cairo. Having achieved this the conquest of the Holy Land would follow without difficulty. But Piloti′s treatise is confused, and includes besides his

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[30]Jean Richard, ″Le peuplement latin et syrien en Chypre au XIIIe siècle,″ *Byzantinische Forschungen* 7 (1979): 157–73; Laura Balletto, ″Ethnic Groups, Cross-Social and Cross-Cultural Contacts on Fifteenth-Century Cyprus," in *Intercultural Contacts in the Medieval Mediterranean: Studies in Honour of David Jacoby,* ed. Benjamin Arbel [= *Mediterranean Historical Review* 10 (1995)], 34-48. For the relations of the Greek Orthodox population of Cyprus and Palestine in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries cf. Johannes Pahlitzsch, *Graeci und Suriani im Palästina der Kreuzfahrerzeit: Beiträge und Quellen zur Geschichte des griechisch-orthodoxen Patriarchats von Jerusalem,* Berliner Historische Studien, vol. 33, Ordensstudien, vol. 15 (Berlin, 2001), 165, 229–30.

[31]Cf. Thomas F. Michel, *A Muslim Theologian′s Response to Christianity: Ibn Taimiyya′s Al-Jawāb al-Ṣaḥīḥ* (New York, 1984), and *Muslim-Christian Polemic during the Crusades: The Letter from the People of Cyprus and Ibn Abī Ṭālib al-Dimashqī′s Response,* ed. Rifaat Y. Ebied and David Thomas, The History of Christian-Muslim Relations, vol. 2 (Leiden and Boston, 2004). These two treatises are answers to an apology composed by the Melkite Paul of Antioch, bishop of Sidon, that was later circulated by Christians of Cyprus in an expanded version. For the possibility of dating Paul of Antioch to the early thirteenth century cf. Johannes Pahlitzsch and Dorothea Weltecke, ″Konflikte zwischen den nicht-lateinischen Kirchen im Königreich Jerusalem,″ in *Jerusalem im Hoch- und Spätmittelalter: Konflikte und Konfliktbewältigung—Vorstellungen und Vergegenwärtigungen,* ed. Dieter Bauer, Klaus Herbers, and Nikolas Jaspert, Campus Historische Studien, vol. 29 (Frankfurt and New York, 2001), 133–35.

[32]Emmanuel Piloti, *Traité d′Emmanuel Piloti sur le passage en Terre Sainte (1420),* ed. Pierre-Herman Dopp, Publications de l′Université Lovanium de Léopoldville, vol. 4 (Louvain, 1958), 63. For his life cf. the introduction of Pierre-Herman Dopp, ibid., XVIII–XXVI.

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ideas for a new crusade *inter alia* information on commerce in Alexandria, extremely interesting episodes of his life under Mamluk rule, and a comparison between the sultan′s court in Cairo and the papal curia—to the disadvantage of the latter.[33]

During his long stay in Egypt Piloti had established very good relations with his Muslim neighbors and colleagues.[34] Thus, it is no surprise to see him on several occasions acting as a mediator between Western Latin Christians and Muslims. In 1403, at the news that a Genoese fleet threatened to attack Alexandria, he withdrew like many of the Muslim inhabitants to Cairo while most of the Latin merchants preferred to leave Alexandria by sea. In response to this threat by the Genoese the Mamluk sultan Faraj decided to send a Muslim spice merchant who was experienced in doing business with Christian merchants to offer them the enormous amount of 500,000 ducats for their peaceful retreat. Since this merchant was very fond of Emmanuel Piloti (*″ledit marchant me portoit grant armour″*) he asked him if would accompany him in this task, to which Piloti agreed. However, as the two friends arrived in Alexandria the Genoese fleet had already left the Egyptian coast due to the outbreak of the plague.[35] The journey of these two merchants from the court of the sultan to the camp of the Genoese could well be viewed as a paradigm for the life of merchants in the eastern Mediterranean.[36]

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[33]Aziz Atiya, *The Crusade in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1938), 208–12; Antony Leopold, *How to Recover the Holy Land: The Crusade Proposals of the Late Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries* (Aldershot and Burlington, 2000), 198–200. For manuals of merchants that contributed to the knowledge of the Muslim world in Western Europe as well cf. John E. Dotson, ″Perceptions of the East in Fourteenth-Century Italian Merchants′ Manuals,″ in *Across the Mediterranean Frontiers: Trade, Politics and Religion, 650–1450: Selected Proceedings of the International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, 10–13 July 1995, 8–11 July 1996,* ed. Dionisius A. Agius and Ian Richard Netton, International Medieval Research, no. 1 (Turnhout, Belgium, 1997), 173–86.

[34]Emmanuel Piloti, *Traité,* 187, admonishes the Crusaders to treat the Muslims well during the projected conquest of Alexandria to win their minds and hearts (*″. . . ne soit fait alcune guaste ne desplaisir, mais honneur et courtoisie. Et cest la voye de consoler et confermer tous lez paysams et endoulchiera la leur mente et lez leurs cuers, et si prendront, amour et charité à l′estat de la crestienté.″*). He also stresses the fidelity of the Muslims to their belief (*″ilz observent la leur foy bestielle, que jamais ne la faillent″*) as well as their justice and philanthropy (*″ilz aront prestement justice et charité du proximo″*), ibid., 188. According to Atiya, *The Crusade in the Later Middle Ages,* 211, the Crusade was not regarded by him as a war of revenge but as a means towards the assimilation of the Muslims into the following of Christ. For the situation of Western merchants in Egypt cf. also in general Mohamed Tahar Mansouri, ″Les communautés marchandes occidentales dans l′espace mamlouk (XIIIe–XVe siècle),″ in *Coloniser au Moyen Âge: Méthodes d′expansion et techniques de domination en Méditerranée du XIe au XVIe siècle,* ed. Michel Balard and Alain Ducellier (Paris, 1995), 89–101, 107–11.

[35]Piloti, *Traité,* 196.

[36]John Pryor, ″At Sea on the Maritime Frontiers of the Mediterranean in the High Middle Ages: the Human Perspective,″ in *Oriente e Occidente tra Medioevo ed Età Moderna, studi in onore di*

In 1408, Piloti again was chosen to mediate between the Latins and the Mamluks. A pirate had seized a Muslim ship and sold the crew of 150 men to the duke of Naxos, Jacopo Crispo I (1397–1418). Since the sultan considered Naxos to be subordinate to Venice he confiscated the cargoes of four Venetian galleys, consisting of spices, and demanded that the Venetian merchants in Alexandria ask Jacopo Crispo to free these Muslim captives. Thereupon, the council of the Venetians chose Piloti to negotiate with the duke of Naxos and the sultan, since he was on good terms with the Muslims and especially with the Greeks, being himself of Greek origin. Although the Crispo family was of Venetian origin, the council obviously considered it useful to send somebody who had good relations with the Greeks to Naxos. And indeed Piloti succeeded in his mission and returned with the captives to Alexandria, where the Muslim population celebrated the liberation of their brothers in faith. As a reward the sultan allowed Piloti to import each month five barrels of Malvasia wine from his native island of Crete.[37]

By writing a treatise on the recovery of the Holy Land Emmanuel Piloti tried in another way to mediate between West and East. All his detailed descriptions of life in Alexandria and Cairo aimed at giving Western rulers, and especially the pope, an idea of the Mamluk state,[38] and indeed Ulrich Haarmann has demonstrated the value of Piloti´s texts as a source for the social structure and the ruling system of the Mamluk state.[39] However, in his attempt to influence the Latin rulers Piloti was unsuccessful. His work fell into oblivion and was rediscovered only in the nineteenth century.[40] But it belongs to a broad tradition of works written in the

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Geo Pistarino, ed. Laura Balletto, Collana di Fonti e Studi, vol. 2 (Geneva, 1997), 1033, has described the situation for merchants and travellers in the Levant adequately: ″The Mediterranean Sea was open to all with few restrictions. Beyond demands that taxes and customs duties be paid, states did not impose restrictions on the movement of their subjects. As a consequence, Byzantines, Muslims, and Latins moved freely upon the seas. This openness produced integrated relationships at both private and governmental levels. It is remarkable how frequently political or religious differences proved to be no obstacle at all to international or interfaith relationships.″ The major obstacles to movement were not political or religious but rather geographical and technical with the exception of times of war or political tensions.

[37]Piloti, *Traité,* 201–9. Piloti was not the only merchant with good relations with the Mamluks. For a Genoese slave-trader who even entered the service of the Mamluks cf. Benjamin Kedar, ″Segurano-Sakrān Salvaygo: un mercante genovese al servizio dei sultani mamalucchi, c. 1302–1322,″ in *Fatti e idee di storia economica nei secoli XII–XX: Studi dedicati a Franco Borlandi* (Bologna, 1976), 75–97.

[38]So explicitly in Piloti, *Traité,* 118.

[39]Ulrich Haarmann, ″The Mamluk System of Rule in the Eyes of Western Travelers,″ *Mamlūk Studies Review* 5 (2001): 11, states that Piloti ″as an expert in long-distance trade, . . . was better informed than any of the other European reporters of the late middle ages.″

[40]Dopp, Introduction to Piloti, *Traité,* V–XII, XLV–XLVIII.

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fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries which dealt with the Orient. Treatises on the recovery of the Holy Land and pilgrim´s reports were often copied together and circulated round the courts of western Europe.[41] These works testify to continued European interest in the East in the later fourteenth century and beyond, even if the recovery of Jerusalem was little more than a dream of enthusiastic nobles who tried to live up to their knightly ideals.[42]

INDIVIDUALS CROSSING BOUNDARIES

In this section how individuals moved between various political, social, and cultural groups will be illustrated. The previously mentioned patriarch Lazaros had always remained loyal to the emperor and his politics with respect to the Church—despite the Mamluks´ view that patriarchs were subject to the sultan´s authority. However, this was hardly a stance shared by all Orthodox dignitaries in the Orient. Because the Christians in the Levant were ruled by various authorities existing within a complex network of relationships, this also resulted in what could be called an ″open-space situation″ for them, in which several options for taking action existed. In the following, two examples of how the diversity of the eastern Mediterranean created niches, thus facilitating the pursuit of politically deviant or even entirely individual goals, will be presented.

The patriarchate of Antioch experienced a disagreement with the Church of Constantinople in the middle of the fourteenth century, on the subject of the

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[41]Without a doubt, the Latin pilgrims to Syria and Egypt on their return decisively influenced the Western image of the Orient. Especially the later, more detailed, pilgrim´s reports like the one of Bernhard of Breidenbach contributed to the creation of the image of an exotic Orient; Michael Herkenhoff, *Die Darstellung aussereuropäischer Welten in Drucken deutscher Offizinen des 15. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1996), 145–212. Since most of the pilgrims, in contrast to Emmanuel Piloti, stayed only for a short time in the Near East and did not speak Arabic their descriptions of the Muslims were quite often marked by old prejudices. At length, they dealt with the treachery of the Muslims and how they were maltreated by the Mamluk authorities. Thus they did not promote tolerance but kept the religious and cultural conflict alive. And they did so not only in their native countries but also in the Near East where they were viewed as representatives of Latin Christianity; Folker Reichert, ″Pilger und Muslime im Heiligen Land: Formen des Kulturkonflikts im späten Mittelalter,″ in *Kritik und Geschichte der Intoleranz,* ed. Rolf Kloepfer and Burckhard Dücker (Heidelberg, 2000), 3–21. Cf. also Andrew Jotischky, ″Mendicants as Missionaries and Travellers in the Near East in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries," in *Eastward Bound: Travel and Travellers in the Medieval Mediterranean, 1050–1500*, ed. Rosamund Allen (Manchester and New York, 2004), 88–106, who describes the view that Dominican and Fransciscan travellers to the East had of Oriental Christians. According to Jotischky (ibid., 100), it was a prominent feature of the travel reports of these friars to categorize peoples by their deviant religious practices.

[42]The manuscript of Piloti´s treatise was acquired by the Duke of Burgundy Philippe Le Bon (1419–67); Dopp, Introduction to Piloti, *Traité,* VIII–X; Leopold, *How to Recover the Holy Land,* 193–202.

mystical teachings of Gregorios Palamas. Despite the fact that these had been sanctioned officially at the synod of Blachernae in 1351 under the emperor Joannes VI Kantakouzenous, a good number of theologians continued to oppose them. One of the anti-Palamites was Arsenios, the metropolite of Tyre, which was the highest-ranking bishopric in the patriarchate of Antioch. After having agitated against the Palamites, he was forced to flee the city and came to Cyprus before Peter′s Crusade. At the time, the Latin-ruled island was a stronghold for anti-Palamism and a place of refuge for dissidents.[43] Several times, letters from Constantinople addressed to the autonomous Orthodox Church of Cyprus warned the clergy of the doings of Arsenios and others. Furthermore, Arsenios may have contacted the papal legate resident there at the time. It was not least thanks to these political controversies within the church that when an election for the office of patriarch was held in Antioch around 1364, Arsenios was one of three candidates simultaneously elected. Arsenios left Cyprus after the election to resurface, at the end of the Cypriot-Mamluk war, in Turkish-controlled Asia Minor, using the powers of the office to which he laid claim to consecrate bishops, ordain priests, and collect funds from the parishes.[44]

Arsenios was something of a wanderer between worlds. He had no reservations about associating with Latins and Muslims, taking advantage of the religious and political diversity in the Levant in order to pursue his own ends in church policy. The Byzantine emperor′s inability to maintain church discipline in the Mamluk Empire or the Turkish amirates gave him the opportunity to do so. Arsenios is not an isolated case. In fact, he himself consecrated one of the most colorful personalities of his time as bishop, a man who was to surpass him by far where flexibility and mobility were concerned. The bishop in question is the swindler and confidence man Paulos Tagaris, who presented his unusual path in life in a general confession to the patriarch and the synod of Constantinople in 1394.

After an unhappy marriage, Paulos had become a monk. As small-time swindles, in which he used an icon that supposedly worked wonders, were discovered, he had to leave Constantinople for Jerusalem, where he was safe from the grasp of the Byzantine authorities. There, the patriarch Lazaros took him under his wing and supported him until 1365, when persecution by the Mamluks forced Lazaros to flee to Constantinople. Without backing from Lazaros, Paulos could no longer

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[43]Jean Darrouzès, ″Lettre inédite de Jean Cantacuzène relative à la controverse palamite,″ *Revue des études byzantines* 17 (1959): 9; Kresten, *Die Beziehungen zwischen den Patriarchaten von Konstantinopel und Antiocheia,* 14, n. 30; cf. also Nicol, *The Reluctant Emperor,* 145, 154–55.

[44]Ioannis D. Polemis, ″Arsenius of Tyrus and his Tome against the Palamites,″ *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 43 (1993): 242–45; Hunger, ″Die Generalbeichte eines byzantinischen Mönches,″ 215–17; Kresten, *Die Beziehungen zwischen den Patriarchaten von Konstantinopel und Antiocheia,* 75–82.

remain in Jerusalem. However, he was able to befriend Michael I of Antioch, who brought him to Damascus. He was ordained a priest and took on a decisive role in the administration of the patriarchate. In this position, he was able to give free rein to his greed, ensuring that only those candidates who paid him sufficiently became bishops. When he came upon the vestments of a metropolite who had recently died, however, he donned them and declared himself patriarch of Jerusalem. From that point on, he traveled throughout Asia Minor, performing consecrations of metropolites and bishops in exchange for payment. Whenever a bishop refused payment, Paulos denounced him to the local amir and thus forced him to pay. In his efforts to set Paulos on the right track, the above-mentioned Arsenios of Tyre sought him out and consecrated him bishop in order to, at least retroactively, legalize the consecrations he had performed in clear breach of canonical rules. Paulos resolved to give up his godless conduct—but not for long. Upon learning that the Church in Constantinople was intent on arresting him and Arsenios, he made a daring decision. He traveled to Rome via Hungary and converted to Catholicism. Pope Urban VI was so taken with this move that he honored Paulos by appointing him as the Latin patriarch of Constantinople, whose seat was in Negroponte.[45] But there too he exploited his congregation to such an extent that he soon became unpopular and had to flee to Cyprus, where he received 30,000 ducats for his services in crowning the Cypriot King Jacob I. Finally, he returned to Rome. Since, however, it had in the meantime become common knowledge in the curia that Paulos was a swindler, he was forced to defect to the rival pope in Avignon, who gladly took in the victim of his political adversary, later referring him to the court of the French king Charles VI. The king rewarded him richly for his promise to send relics of Saint Dionysios Areopagites from Greece to France. Paulos promptly left—and was never heard from again at the French court.[46] At the end of his life, however, he was overcome by the desire for salvation and asked the synod in Constantinople for absolution, making a comprehensive confession of his misdeeds. The synod′s decision, however, has not been preserved.[47]

With Paulos, we have left the Mamluk Empire and the eastern Mediterranean far behind us. Self-assuredly he transcended all political and cultural boundaries while traversing the entire Christian world, from Georgia to Paris. What Paulos

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[45]Herewith ends the confession of Paulos Tagaris, who obviously told the synod only what concerned the Orthodox Church; Hunger, ″Die Generalbeichte eines byzantinischen Mönches,″ 193–99 (German translation, 199–204).

[46]Ibid., 211–14.

[47]Ibid., 197–99 (203–4). For the life of Paulos cf. also Donald M. Nicol, ″The Confessions of a Bogus Patriarch: Paul Tagaris Palaiologos, Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem and Catholic Patriarch of Constantinople in the Fourteenth Century,″ *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 21 (1970): 289–99.

and Arsenios share is that they both demonstrate the possibilities for individual agency in the world of the eastern Mediterranean. They were moving between the cultures as though this were a matter of course and they could do so because of the multi-ethnic and multi-confessional character of the individual states in the eastern Mediterranean. The close interconnection between these numerous ethnic and confessional groups created a certain unity of space regardless of political boundaries.[48]

The case studies presented in this article demonstrate the complex network of relationships in which Christians operated in the Levant, showing how supra-regional external factors and developments determined their actions, while also demonstrating how their actions could in turn influence those supra-regional developments. In doing so, the focus has not been only on political relationships. It was rather the closer examination of the conditions within the Orthodox Church in Syria and Palestine in the middle of the fourteenth century that provided an opportunity to illustrate the complexity of the social reality in the Levant and the opportunities resulting for the individual. The model of reciprocal compartmentalization, of antagonism between cultures, be they Islam, Latin Christianity, or the Eastern Church, does not stand up to closer examination. Only a micro-historical, interdisciplinary approach makes it possible to show differences as well as connections.[49] The example of the Christians in the Levant is especially suited to show this kind of unity in diversity. Thus, a historical, and above all cultural and social historical, treatment of the *Oriens Christianus* should be an essential part of any research done on the eastern Mediterranean region in the Middle Ages.

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[48]Norman Housley, ″Frontier Societies and Crusading in the Late Middle Ages,″ in *Intercultural Contacts,* ed. Arbel, 107–8, points out that because of these intensive cross-cultural contacts the Latin states of the eastern Mediterranean could not be called frontier societies in the strict sense of the term. Charles J. Halperin, ″The Ideology of Silence: Prejudice and Pragmatism on the Medieval Religious Frontier,″ *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 26 (1984): 465, however, demonstrates that in medieval frontier zones between Christianity and Islam a pragmatic attitude prevailed only as long ″neither side in the struggle had the ability to eliminate the other. The transience of the frontier derived from its intrinsic instability.″

[49]Cf. the similar results of Molly Greene, *A Shared World: Christians and Muslims in the Early Modern Mediterranean,* Modern Greek studies series (Princeton, 2000), 6, who states that ″a focus on Crete in the seventeenth century renders visible the common world that Latins, Eastern Christians, and Muslims shared for many centuries, despite wars and considerable cultural hostility.″

Bernadette Martel-Thoumian
Université Grenoble 2

The Sale of Office and Its Economic Consequences during the Rule of the Last Circassians (872–922/1468–1516)

The story told by various chronicles of the last fifty years of the Mamluk state (872–922/1468–1516) confirms how the long-established sale of office served as a source of license for holders of military, religious, and administrative office.[1] The period under discussion was of course a difficult one for the Mamluk state, the last actually in which issues of foreign aggression and attendant, recurring economic crises were to be addressed.[2] Did the sale of office, always a valuable source of revenue for the state, expand during this period? If so, into what areas? Also, depending upon whether the required sums were indexed to the office, to the location, or to the date of appointment, they could have had an impact on economic life.

This article considers the following chronicles: *Inbā' al-Ḥaṣr fī Abnā' al-ʿAṣr* of al-Ṣayrafī, *Wajīz al-Kalām fī Dhayl ʿalá Duwal al-Islām* of al-Sakhāwī, *Tārīkh* of al-Buṣrawī, *Taʿlīq* of Ibn Ṭawq, *Dhayl Nayl al-Amal fī Dhayl al-Duwal* of ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ ibn Khalīl, *Badā'iʿ al-Zuhūr fī Waqā'iʿ al-Duhūr* of Ibn Iyās, *Ḥawādith al-Zamān wa-Wafayāt al-Shuyūkh wa-al-Aqrān* of Ibn al-Ḥimṣī, and *Mufākahat al-Khillān fī Ḥawādith al-Zamān* of Ibn Ṭūlūn.[3] We have often noted that these works, which cover the period at some length, contain gaps—months, if not

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This article has been translated from the French by W. W. Clifford and Vanessa De Gifis.

[1]Cf. Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Rāziq, *Al-Badhl wa-al-Barṭalah* (Cairo, 1979), and in particular the first chapter which treats problems of venality before the accession of the Mamluks to power, 25–39.

[2]Cf. Gaston Wiet, *L'Egypte arabe,* vol. 4 of *Histoire de la nation égyptienne,* ed. G. Hanotaux (Paris, 1937), 589–636; Jean-Claude Garcin, *Etats, sociétés et cultures du monde musulman médiéval, Xe–XVe siècle* (Paris, 1992), 1:343–69; Carl Petry, *Twilight of Majesty: The Reigns of the Mamlūk Sultans al-Ashraf Qāytbāy and Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī in Egypt* (Seattle, 1993); and idem, *Protectors or Praetorians? The Last Mamlūk Sultans and Egypt's Waning as a Great Power* (Albany, 1994).

[3]ʿAlī ibn Dāwūd al-Jawharī al-Ṣayrafī, *Inbā' al-Ḥaṣr fī Abnā' al-ʿAṣr* (Cairo, 1980); Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sakhāwī, *Wajīz al-Kalām fī Dhayl ʿalá Duwal al-Islām* (Beirut, 1995); ʿAlī ibn Yūsuf al-Buṣrawī, *Tārīkh* (Beirut, 1988); Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Ibn Ṭawq, *Taʿlīq* (Damascus, 2000); ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ ibn Khalīl, ″Dhayl Nayl al-Amal fī Dhayl al-Duwal,″ Bodleian MS Huntington 610; Ibn Iyās, *Badā'iʿ al-Zuhūr fī Waqā'iʿ al-Duhūr* (Cairo-Wiesbaden, 1960–63); Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn al-Ḥimṣī, *Ḥawādith al-Zamān wa-Wafayāt al-Shuyūkh wa-al-Aqrān* (Beirut-Sidon, 1999); Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat al-Khillān fī Ḥawādith al-Zamān* (Cairo, 1964).

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years—though of course the most extensive writings are not always the most instructive on a given issue.[4] A perusal of the table below will confirm this. Take the example of the first two chronicles, the *Inbā'* and the *Wajīz*. Al-Ṣayrafī and al-Sakhāwī each record nine cases of venality but in the *Inbā'* the period under consideration is only four years while that in the *Wajīz* is twenty-six, a ratio six times greater. This leads us once more to question not only the sources of information of these authors but their perspective with regard to the given results. How objective or subjective could they be?

CHRONICLES STUDIED AND CASES OF VENALITY REPORTED

Author	Chronicle (years covered)	Cases of Venality
al-Ṣayrafī (d. 900/1495)	*Inbā'* (872–76/1468–72)	9
al-Sakhāwī (d. 902/1497)	*Wajīz* (872–98/1468–93)	9 (of which 1 is reported in *Dhayl*, 2 in *Badā'i'*, 1 in *Ḥawādith*, and 1 in *Mufākahah*)
al-Buṣrawī (d. 905/1499–1500)	*Tārīkh* (871–904/1467–99)	11 (of which 3 are reported in *Mufākahah*)
Ibn Ṭawq (d. 915/1509)	*Ta'līq* (885–90/1480–85)	14 (of which 7 are reported in *Mufākahah*)
'Abd al-Bāsiṭ ibn Khalīl (d. 920/1514)	*Dhayl* (872–96/1468–91)	12 (of which 1 is reported in *Wajīz* and 7 in *Badā'i'*)
Ibn Iyās (d. 930/1524)	*Badā'i'* (872–922/1468–1516)	37 (of which 2 are reported in *Wajīz*, 7 in *Dhayl*, 2 in *Ḥawādith*, and 1 in *Mufākahah*)
Ibn al-Ḥimṣī (d. 934/1528)	*Ḥawādith* (872–922/1468–1516)	6 (of which 1 is reported in *Wajīz*, 1 in *Tārīkh*, 11 in *Badā'i'*, and 12 in *Mufākahah*)
Ibn Ṭūlūn (d. 953/1546)	*Mufākahah* (884–922/1479–1516)	26 (of which 1 is reported in *Wajīz*, 3 in *Tārīkh*, 9 in *Ta'līq*, 1 in *Badā'i'*, and 2 in *Ḥawādith*)

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[4]Bernadette Martel-Thoumian, ″Muḥibb ad-Dīn Salāma b. Yūsuf al-Aslamī, un secrétaire à Damas sous les derniers sultans Mamlouks,″ in *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras,* ed. U. Vermeulen and D. de Smet, vol. 3 (Leuven, 2001), 219–69.

This chart reveals yet another issue of no less importance. Many cases are mentioned by two or more authors. This is no accident but reflects for the most part the geographical origins of these historians. It is hardly surprising, then, that Ibn Iyās records a great number of things borrowed from his master, ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ ibn Khalīl, who like him resided in Cairo. One can perceive an identical phenomenon among Damascene authors such as al-Buṣrawī, Ibn Ṭawq, and Ibn Ṭūlūn. Only Ibn al-Ḥimṣī seems to have broken this pattern since his informants are also represented by the works of Ibn Iyās and Ibn Ṭūlūn. This bipolarization around the two great cities of the Mamluk state forms another impediment to our understanding of the profusion of venality. But the scholar who ventures beyond the confines of these two great metropolises will gain access to equally useful though little-cited regional sources of information—from cities like Aleppo and Jerusalem, for example—untapped by the chroniclers for whom the reproduction, either in part or in whole, of the writings of their predecessors seems to have been the norm.

As mentioned earlier, all offices that were by their nature military, religious, or administrative could be made the object of gift *(badhl)* or bribe *(barṭalah/birṭīl)*,[5] something to which we will return later. Study of the table below will elucidate this.

DISTRIBUTION OF CASES OF VENALITY BY AUTHOR AND BY TYPE OF OFFICE[6]

Author	Source	Military Offices	Religious Offices	Administrative Offices
al-Ṣayrafī	*Inbāʾ*	2	3	4
al-Sakhāwī	*Wajīz*	3	7	2
al-Buṣrawī	*Tārīkh*	2	6	3
Ibn Ṭawq	*Taʿlīq*	1	13	1
ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ ibn Khalīl	*Dhayl*	2	7	4
Ibn Iyās	*Badāʾiʿ*	7	23	8
Ibn al-Ḥimṣī	*Ḥawādith*	1	4	1
Ibn Ṭūlūn	*Mufākahah*	4	20	5

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[5]According to Kazimirski, the term *barṭala/birṭīl* signifies a ″gift for bribing a judge.″ *Dictionnaire Arabe-Français* (repr. Beirut, n.d.), 1:112.

[6]These figures take into account the plurality of offices held by an individual.

Religious posts were the object of great monetary activity. Three authors stand out clearly in this regard. The Damascenes Ibn Ṭawq and Ibn Ṭūlūn mention, respectively, thirteen cases in the *Taʿlīq* and twenty in the *Mufākahah*. The Cairene Ibn Iyās records twenty-three in his *Badāʾiʿ*. However, these three figures require some comment. Actually, the duration taken into account in the *Taʿlīq* and in the *Mufākahah* is less than that in the *Badāʾiʿ*, by several years for the *Mufākahah* and thirty for the *Taʿlīq*. If one were to create a prospective for the same number of years, one would be right in thinking that the number of cases of sale of office recounted in the *Badāʾiʿ* would be surpassed.

It is equally interesting to note that the figures mentioned by Ibn Iyās for military and administrative office holders, seven and eight respectively, are half as many. This information is repeated more or less equally among the different authors, except al-Ṣayrafī. The supremacy of religious office is problematic. One must understand that when the sultan granted military and administrative posts in exchange for hard cash of full weight or accepted money offered by job hunters it was hardly surprising. Actually, title holders had to be of exemplary morality and probity; this at any rate is how they are extolled by the jurists in their works.[7]

To clarify and advance our thesis we append two lists. The first enumerates cases of venality chronologically; the second, which is subdivided into three small lists (I, II, III), follows a thematic classification with regard to which we have followed the order in the chancellery manuals (military, religious, and administrative office). We have, moreover, to bear in mind the plurality of offices held by a single person, which explains how the same individual could figure on both lists II and III. The chronological list allows us to establish that seventy-eight people paid to obtain the post or posts they desired to occupy during the period covered. Certain people paid for two renewals, some three or more. One must differentiate at this point between candidates and positions occupied, by virtue of the common practice in the Mamluk age of plurality of offices. If one were to make a general calculation of the number of positions, one would arrive at the number one hundred twenty-six. Again, this is not an accurate reflection since in two cases the offices obtained are followed by the vague expression ″and other offices″ (II/7, 16). If one divides by categories, one sees that nineteen military offices, seventy-five religious posts and thirty-two administrative positions were acquired in exchange for financial contributions.

These facts are of course not only relative with respect to the elements specified before but also because certain years appear altogether devoid of venality, or at least the authors are mute on the subject. But is this to say that no post was farmed

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[7]Cf. Emile Tyan, *Histoire de l'Organisation Judiciaire en Pays d'Islam* (Paris, 1938), 1:425–31; Franz Rosenthal, ″Rashwa,″ *The Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., 8:466–67.

out in 877–78, 880, 882, 884, 899, 901, 903, 907, 909–10, or 913–14? It is difficult to establish this when one knows that for a given year, the authors do not record the same facts. One might equally suppose that they could not know about every transaction, or that the popularization of this phenomenon led them only to consider the cases which appear interesting to them, such as that of Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-Naqīb, *qāḍī al-quḍāh* of Cairo, who had six renewals (II/41, 43, 45, 47, 52, 56). He paid once to obtain this office, then renewed it five times.[8] One must not forget that in the great majority of cases it is the main posts that are mentioned, particularly in this sphere. This last point allows one to think that every gift or bribe connected to a minor post often avoided the scrutiny of the authors. It is also possible that they were not judged sufficiently useful to be recorded.

Consequently, the different parameters used do not allow us to establish an effective picture of those posts that were sold. We have mentioned above that the body of information which serves as the basis of this study does not reflect the whole of the reality, only part. The two following examples provide a good demonstration of this. In *Al-Ḍaw' al-Lāmi'*, al-Sakhāwī mentions in the notice he dedicated to Raḍī al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Manṣūr that he obtained in 890/1485 the posts of *nāẓir al-jaysh* and *kātib al-sirr* in Aleppo in exchange for 2,000 dinars.[9] In the *Wajīz* the same author noted in the obituary of Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn 'Awwāḍ, who died in Jumādá II 892/May 1487, that he paid 3,000 dinars for the post of qadi of Alexandria.[10] Yet we have found no mention of these nominations. How many people escaped the attention of the chroniclers? Be that as it may, during a fifty-year period we have counted 126 cases, which is on average 2.5 cases a year. If we exclude those years for which no case of venality is seen, we obtain the figure of 3.4 cases per year. In the face of such results one many ask oneself if it is expedient to launch into a study of venality and its economic consequences if the numbers neither constitute nor reveal convincing indicators.

Clearly, to understand and judge venality in its entirety still seems an impossibility. Of course, the study of the thematic tables allows us to establish for the first time the phenomenon in its temporal and geographic dimensions. From these figures we will try to extrapolate the ultimate economic implications.

The table below allows us to maintain that venality was not just an economic phenomenon, but a political one as well. All sovereigns farmed out offices, even

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[8]This concerns the conferment of the post of the grand Maliki qadi but also the granting of certain teaching positions; read the pages Ibn Khaldūn dedicated to this subject in *Le voyage d'Occident et d'Orient*, ed. and trans. Abdesselam Cheddadi (Paris, 1980), 148–204, 212–15, and 248–49. See also Morimoto Kosei, ˝What Ibn Khaldūn Saw: The Judiciary of Mamluk Egypt,˝ *Mamlūk Studies Review* 7 (2002): 109–31.

[9]Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍaw' al-Lāmī' fī Ahl al-Qarn al-Tāsi'* (Cairo, 1934), 9:164–65, no. 413.

[10]Al-Sakhāwī, *Wajīz,* 3:1022–23, no. 2213.

those who enjoyed only brief reigns. In the latter case the record is laughable since altogether there were but six posts for four rulers. This is certainly far from the totals racked up by Qāytbāy and Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī, who elevated, respectively, sixty-eight and twenty-nine offices, little enough when one recalls how many years both exercised power. Be that as it may, Mamluk sultans employed this practice until the end, the last instance occurring in Rabīʿ II 922/May 1516 (II/63).

DISTRIBUTION OF CASES OF VENALITY BY SULTAN AND BY TYPE OF OFFICE

Sultan	Military Offices	Religious Offices	Administrative Offices
Qāytbāy (872–901/1468–95)	13	39	16
Muḥammad ibn Qāytbāy (901–4/1495–98)	—	—	1
Qānṣūh (904–5/1498–1500)	—	1	1
Jānbalāṭ (905–6/1500–1)	—	1	—
Tūmānbāy (906/1501)	—	2	—
Qānṣūh al–Ghawrī (906–22/1501–16)	6	20	3

If one were to consider things from a geographic perspective, one would observe the clear predominance of Damascus with respect to offices of the pen. Actually, thirty-nine religious posts were farmed out there as against thirty-three for Cairo, two for Aleppo and two for Jerusalem. We find the same situation for administrative posts: eighteen for Damascus, ten for Cairo, three for Aleppo, and one for Jidda. Military offices constituted a case apart with regard to the fixed number of amirs eligible to be governors of provinces. We will return a little later to the significance that one may attribute to these different figures.

It would hardly be surprising to learn that the most elevated posts were frequently the object of financial transaction. But these were not the only ones, for the range of posts proves to be quite large. In the case of the military, gubernatorial posts—always a question of the locale of the city and its importance—were studied in eight cases. While the post of *nāʾib* of Damascus was leased only once (I/6), and again the information appears only in the obituary notice of its holder, the amir Qijmās, one will note that the governor of Ṣafad renewed three times (II/10, 15, and 17). Coming thereafter are various offices, among which we find those of

ḥājib al-ḥujjāb (I/18) and *dawādār* (I/5), which would not be but for their position in the palatine hierarchy.

Concerning religious offices, we will see that judicial posts occupied the first place and that among them were thirty renewals for the post of *qāḍī al-quḍāh*. Yet one big difference appears among the four judicial schools: the Shafiʻi *madhhab* comes first with eighteen leased offices (seven in Damascus and eleven in Cairo); this is followed by the Hanafi *madhhab* with ten posts (six in Damascus, one in Aleppo, and three in Cairo). The Hanbali and Maliki schools seem to have been little affected by venality since there exists but one case per school in Cairo.

When one reads Ibn Iyās´s reflections on venality it would seem that the practice was anchored in current morality. Ironically, the author expresses his own astonishment in Dhū al-Qaʻdah 919/December 1513 when Sultan Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī invested four grand qadis on the same day without any of the grantees having had to make the slightest payment.[11] This observation leads one to think that venality of office became so commonplace, indeed, insignificant a practice that it attracted only occasional attention from historians. There is a possible explanation for this small number of cases. One can of course measure the importance of venality in the testimony of the *Tārīkh* of al-Buṣrawī, who was opposed to this practice. In Muḥarram 902/September 1496 he produced a list of Shafiʻis paired with their privileges and showed that the majority took gifts overtly *(baʻḍuhum yaʾkhudhu al-rashwah jahran)*—in short, a bribe.[12] Damascus was not the only city affected by this scourge. The same author on 7 Jumādá II 902/February 1497 recalled this problem at the same time as a reunion with Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn, brother of the *shaykh al-islām* Kamāl al-Dīn ibn Sharīf. The discussion turned on the issue of the corruption which reigned in Jerusalem and which was the work of the Shafiʻi qadi. This person ˝plunged into debt and bribes *(al-rashwah)* in an indescribable manner.˝ [13] In such a context one understands better that the chroniclers had at heart to bring to the attention of their readers honest men such as the Shafiʻi qadi ʻAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Akhmīmī, who never accepted a single bribe *(ʻafīfan ʻan al-rashwah)* during his tenure.[14] If the post of Shafiʻi grand qadi was the object of financial transaction, the same applied to his deputy *(nāʾib qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʻī)* of which we have uncovered nine cases for Damascus.

Venality did not strike the judiciary alone; teaching posts were affected identically: five *mudarrisūn* (three in Damascus and two in Cairo) obtained their

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[11]Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʻ,* 4:350–52.

[12]Al-Buṣrawī, *Tārīkh,* 190.

[13]Ibid., 203.

[14]Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʻ,* 4:352–53.

offices through purchase.[15] We should note at this point that instructors were not obliged to disburse money to obtain a lecture post. According to ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ this was a recent phenomenon. Shihāb al-Dīn ibn al-Ṣayrafī, who obtained the post of *mudarris* at the Shaykhūnīyah (Cairo) in Dhū al-Qaʿdah 895/September 1490, had been the first to be hired in a cashless deal (II/36). It is nevertheless difficult to say if the remark is applicable to all institutions or just the Shaykhūnīyah. In any case, in Damascus in Muḥarram 883/April 1478 ʿImād al-Dīn al-Nāṣirī obtained a teaching post, though the establishment concerned is not mentioned (II/7). Other religious posts underwent the same process: those of *muḥtasib* (two cases in Cairo),[16] *shaykh* (five cases, of which four were in Cairo and one in Jerusalem), and *wakīl al-sulṭān* (four cases, three of which were in Damascus and one in Cairo), as well as the different offices of controller *(nāẓir al-bīmāristān, nāẓir al-ashrāf* and *nāẓir al-asrāʾ)* (of eleven cases, six were in Damascus, two in Aleppo, and three in Cairo).

With regard to administrative office, the two most important posts in the civil administration of the ninth/fifteenth century to be farmed out were those of *kātib al-sirr* (seven cases) and *nāẓir al-jaysh* (six cases). Again, Damascus accounts for five cases for the post of *kātib al-sirr* and six for that of *nāẓir al-jaysh*. We must remember that these two posts were often conjoined but also that the post of *kātib al-sirr* was sometimes bundled with that of *qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī* (III/2, 9). That the vizier figures only in two renewals in our list is undoubtedly a reflection of the decline of the post in Cairo, which no longer existed in Damascus after 839/1435.[17] One notes also the frequency of the post of controller of the citadel *(nāẓir al-qalʿah)* (three cases in Damascus and one in Aleppo) but also the mention of the office of secretary of the mamluks *(kātib al-mamālīk),* a less elevated post in the hierarchy, that had two renewals much later (in 912/1506).

Before going into greater detail on the question of disbursement, some remarks are in order. From the outset amounts were not mentioned systematically by the authors, who were no doubt informed about them, even though for the military and administrative offices we possess figures for more than three-quarters of them. Thus, for nineteen military posts the sum total was noted in twelve cases; for sixty-three religious posts there were thirty-nine cases, and for twenty-one administrative posts there were fourteen cases. In addition, if the Mamluks paid a sum of money to obtain or be reconfirmed in an office (I/2 and 5) they could only

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[15]Cf. Jonathan P. Berkey, ″Tadrīs,″ *EI²*, 10:83–84. This term usually designates the teaching of religious law, that is to say *fiqh*.

[16]Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Rāziq, ″La Ḥisba et le muḥtasib en Egypte,″ *AnIsl* 13 (1977): 115–78.

[17]Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Rāziq, ″Le vizirat et les vizirs dʾEgypte au temps des mamluks,″ *Annales islamologiques* 16 (1980): 183–239.

retain one office. In religious and civil cases, the business was much more complex since one is faced with the plurality of offices (II/2 and III/4; II/4 and III/5; II/12 and III/6; II/3 and III/7; II/14 and III/8; II/30 and III/11; II/34 and III/16) or several posts of the same category (II/6, 7, 16, 39, 40, 46, 48, 49; III/15, 17, 20, 21). No information is ever given that reveals whether the sum demanded or paid was a lump sum; perhaps it was a forfeiture. We have only one detailed example. According to Ibn Ṭūlūn, in Shaʿbān 916/November 1510, the *qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī* Walī al-Dīn ibn al-Farfūr granted to ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Ramlī the *niyābah shāfiʿīyah* for one hundred *ashrafī*s and, according to rumor, on the same day also accorded to him the post of *mutakallim* for the affairs of the Ḥaramayn for 150 *ashrafī*s (II/49).

The offices that we have cited were conferred in exchange for financial contributions, although in certain cases the authors were reticent about them. Indeed, one encounters in their writing the expression ″*wa-qīl*″ signifying that they were only reporting rumor, perhaps without any foundation (I/16; II/11, 41, 62; III/21, 50, 60). It is in this vein that Ibn Ṭawq recorded in Shaʿbān 886/September 1481 the nomination of ʿImād al-Dīn Ismāʿīl al-Nāṣirī to the post of *qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī:* ″I have heard it said that he had obtained this post through an exchange of a sizeable cash gift, all to retain the offices that he already possessed″ (II/16). The same author, speaking somewhat fatalistically of a similar case, that of Ibn al-Ghazzī, adds: ″God alone knows the truth of it″ (II/11). Paying to obtain a post had become an official act, at any rate a well-known practice, as when in Dhū al-Qaʿdah 897/August 1492 ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq al-Sunbāṭī spent 1,000 dinars to land a teaching post in al-Manṣūrīyah; we have this from al-Sakhāwī (II/38). In the case of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-ʿAdawī, one of his relatives, named ʿAbd al-Qādir, told al-Buṣrawī that new amounts were required for the renewal of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn in the office of *wakīl al-sulṭān* and for obtaining the office of *nāẓir al-dhakhīrah*. We are ignorant of the details of this operation, but the trip to Cairo, for the individual lived and worked in Damascus, cost him 28,000 dinars, which he had to borrow.

The language employed to invoke these monetary transactions is ambiguous to say the least. The question is one of *badhl* (gift) (I/7,8, 11; II/15, 17, 26).[18] The candidate proposed a sum to the ruler who had the right to accept it but also to refuse it in order to obtain more. It is perhaps better to speak not of a gift but a bribe. If sometimes the amount of this gift is noted, as in the case of Shāhīn al-Jamālī, who offered 20,000 dinars for the post of *shādd* in Jidda to Sultan Qāytbāy in Rajab 876/December 1471 (I/2), this information is not systematic. In the case of Shams al-Dīn ibn al-Muzalliq one learns only that he gave an important

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[18]Franz Rosenthal, ″Gifts and Bribes: The Muslim View,″ *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 108 (1964): 135–44.

gift (to the same ruler) to obtain the office of *qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī* in Damascus in Shaʿbān 889/August 1484 (II/24). It is in no way easier to figure values described simply as ˝much˝ *(kathīr)*. One might suppose that he paid the sum habitually demanded of the candidate for the highest judicial office, whatever his affiliation, namely 3,000 dinars (II/10, 35, 44, 45, 46, 52, 57, 59). That was at any rate the amount ordinarily required in Cairo, according to the authors. The situation seems slightly different for the provinces since Ibn al-Muzalliq paid in the previous month the tidy sum of 10,000 dinars for the same post (II/22). How much did he spend the second time? The sultan undoubtedly exploited his desire to be reinstated in the post of grand qadi. Our confusion is increased when Ibn al-Ḥimṣī says that Sharaf al-Dīn ibn ʿĪd confided to him that he was relieved of his obligation to satisfy Sultan Qāytbāy, who conferred the post of *qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī* upon him (II/8).

One sees then the total ambiguity of the gift, indeed, its total ambivalence. Trapped between the voluntary and forced gift, candidates who ardently desired to obtain a post, which make up the majority of cases in this study, or extend their occupation (I/3), were ready to pay any amount to insure access.[19] The result was a veritable rush for office by whomever, whatever his abilities, was able to fulfill the object of his dreams, if only he could entice the ruler financially. Shocked, Ibn Iyās tells how in Ṣafar 887/March 1482 Sultan Qāytbāy conferred on Muḥammad ibn al-ʿAẓamah the office of controller of *waqf*s under the pretext that he had promised him an important monthly deduction on the revenues derived from properties in mortmain. While this individual, intent on lining his own pocket, did not possess the capacity required to administer this office properly, the ruler took it (II/19). We have already had occasion to refer to the fickleness of rulers who had little scruples in distributing religious and administrative offices to incompetents for money.[20] Military offices do not seem to have entirely escaped this fate. Ibn Iyās, for one, was shocked to discover that one of the *julbān* obtained the lucrative post of *nāʾib* of Ḥiṣn al-Akrād for the modest sum of 1,000 dinars (I/13). For the author, who cannot explain Qāytbāyʿs action, this was very unusual *(wa-hādhā min al-nawādir)*.

If the authors use the word *badhl,* whatever its meaning, they never use the word *barṭalah/birṭīl* and seem to prefer to it *rashwah* (gift), what one bestows on

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[19]The following anecdote is evocative of the spirit that prevailed then. In Ṣafar 908/August 1502, when the pilgrimage amir Asṭamur arrived in Baṭn al-Marr, before the Mecca station, he was received by al-Jāzānī, who came to meet him. Asṭamur offered him a robe of honor saying: ˝If you desire to be invested with the lordship of Mecca, you must pay the sultan 50,000 dinars.˝ This was understood by al-Jāzānī: ˝I will pay this sum.˝ Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ,* 4:36–37.

[20]Bernadette Martel-Thoumian, *Les civils et lʿadministration dans lʿetat militaire mamlouk: (IXe/XVe siècle)* (Damascus, 1992), 78–121.

a judge or an officer for gain. Is this a question of bashfulness or was the word simply not in current usage? Thus, we have already mentioned that the authors are not always in a position to furnish us with the sum total paid out by the candidates. Monetary transactions are referred to as *bi-mablagh* (for an amount) (II/40, 63, 60, 61; III/9) and *bi-māl* (for cash) (II/6, 56; III/16, 46); some could be accorded the epithet *kathīr* (much) (*bi-māl kathīr,* II/31) or *kabīr* (large, considerable) (*bi-mablagh kabīr,* III/51). One observes a linguistic variant that signifies when the candidate is successful—*wa-qad sa'á fī dhālika bi-mablagh lahu ṣūrah*—meaning that the person has been able to pay because of great wealth (I/14, 15, 17; II/31, 32, 42; III/13, 18).[21] These different expressions underscore that the sums paid were sizeable, but of what magnitude? It is difficult to give an estimate or determine the range of unspecified gifts. We are unable to say if these sums were really large or just perceived as such by the authors. Moreover, amounts were assessed every fifty years, which complicates our effective understanding of them because during the same period economic progress undoubtedly occurred. To conduct a precise study, it would be necessary to take into account the various price indices, such as monetary variations.

Fortunately, we possess figures for fifty-six posts, that is, slightly less than half. The totals are always quoted in dinars ranging from 100 (*nā'ib qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfi'ī,* II/49) to 100,000 (*nā'ib* of Damascus, I/6). We have noted above that the price takes into account the office and unquestionably the plurality. The sums paid by the amirs are always greater or at least equivalent to those paid by individuals who accumulated religious and administrative offices. This demonstrates conclusively that the military disposed of greater resources or were otherwise able to make stronger bids. Certain details here are worthy of attention. Certain authors such al-Ṣayrafī (I/1; III/1, 2, 3) but occasionally also Ibn Ṭawq and Ibn Ṭūlūn (I/5) and even Ibn al-Ḥimṣī (I/4) mention that the dinars furnished were weighed coins composed of good alloy.[22] In taking this precaution, Sultan Qāytbāy, to whom the sums ultimately reverted, was assured that the volume of money corresponded to the sums demanded. However, it is difficult to confirm that this practice was in fashion during the entire length of Qāytbāy´s reign or during the reigns of his successors; the last mention is in 886/1481. One can hope that Qāytbāy had confidence in the coins he ordered into circulation, as at the same time the chroniclers claimed a halt to counterfeiters. Ibn Ṭūlūn mentions two payments in *ashrafī* dinars (II/49, 51) and like Ibn Ṭawq uses the term *dhahab* (III/10, 11). Indeed, Ibn Iyās proved that in great detail in the case of Fakhr al-Dīn

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[21]According to Kazimirski, the expression *māl lahu ṣūrah* signifies that an individual had considerable wealth (*Dictionnaire Arabe-Français,* 1:1384).

[22]The term *wazana* means to give money to someone after it has been weighed (ibid., 2:1530).

ibn al-ʿAfīf when he noted that he paid for the post of *kātib al-mamālīk* with 2,000 dinars and change (*wa-kusūr,* III/19).[23]

Of course certain candidates made payments both in specie and in kind, things such as grain and livestock. Thus, Sharaf al-Dīn al-Ṣughayr paid 8,000 dinars and 5,000 *ardabb*s of barley, about 45,000 liters (III/21).[24] Shihāb al-Dīn al-Ḥimṣī disbursed an unknown sum of cash to which he added livestock (II/27). Similarly, Badr al-Dīn ibn al-Muʿtamid paid in kind, offering forty sacks of barley (II/50) for the post of *qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī* in Damascus. According to Muḥibb al-Dīn ibn Yūsuf, he gave a thousand horses (III/17). Ibn Iyās noted that Badr al-Dīn ibn Muzhir paid a cash sum but also a portion of his inheritance to obtain the post of *kātib al-sirr* held previously by his father (III/14). Unfortunately, we do not possess any details about this transaction. How much was the sum paid and what was the nature of the portion of the inheritance (house, property, livestock) demanded from the applicant by Qāytbāy? In the ledger of this arrangement it is difficult to calculate the proportion of each kind of payment but it is interesting to note that the sultan accepted all forms.

Of course, not everyone could furnish the required sum all at once. The government, if it did not have a candidate likely to pay an equivalent sum, would accept graduated payments. The amir Aydakī and the cleric Raḍī al-Dīn al-Ghazzī, who undoubtedly lacked ready funds to take their offices, were permitted to pay half on the day of their installation and the balance on a date fixed by the authorities (I/12; II/11). Though the amir Ulmās had agreed to pay 41,000 dinars for the post of *walī al-shurṭah,* he offered 20,000 down and the rest in installments (I/19). Yet it happened that a candidate could not finally pay what he had offered to the sultan, or what the latter had charged. The sultan, pressed no doubt by necessity, took a sum less than that fixed at the outset. ʿImād al-Dīn Ismāʿīl al-Nāṣirī, who promised 8,000 dinars to Qāytbāy, could only pay 7,000 dinars in the end (II/7).

Nevertheless, the sultan was not always so accommodating. In Rabīʿ II 879/August 1474, on Wednesday the 15th, the new *nāẓir al-ashrāf* of Damascus, al-Sayyid al-Sharīf, did not receive his robe of investiture because he did not fulfill his promise to pay. According to al-Ṣayrafī, he was finally installed in his new office on Friday the 23rd after having paid 1,000 dinars (II/3). These compromises do not seem to have been systematically applied and the affair could always take another turn when the sultan´s need for money proved urgent. The Shafiʿi grand qadi Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-Naqīb underwent such an experience in

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[23]*Kusūr* signifies change, making up of a sum with fractional coinage; cf. R. Dozy, *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes* (repr., Beirut, 1981), 2:474.

[24]According to Sato Tsugitaka, *State and Rural Society in Medieval Islam: Sultans, Muqta´s and Fallahun* (Leiden, 1997), 241.

Jumādá I 916/August 1510 when Sultan Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī revoked his office after he had been in it for only two months and sixteen days. The qadi had not finished paying the agreed amount at the time of his nomination, on which he still owed 1,000 dinars. Though destitute he had to pay, and the sultan, to ensure payment, ordered him locked up in the home of the *nāẓir al-khāṣṣ*.

We have, to this point, noted transactions made face-to-face between the sultan and anyone seeking a post. But venality was not uniquely the purview of the sultan, for other high-ranking persons also took advantage of their positions for profit. This situation seems to have been so common in Damascus for religious offices that one cannot detect any exception. The following three cases refer to the same person, the Shafiʿi grand qadi Shihāb al-Dīn ibn al-Farfūr. In Jumādá II 886/July 1481 he conferred the *niyābah shāfiʿīyah* on Muḥyī al-Dīn Yaḥyá ibn Ghāzī for a cash amount that was less than what was rumored (II/15). In Rajab 889/August 1481 it was Shihāb al-Dīn al-ʿAzāzī to whom he gave the same post for eighty *ashrafī* dinars, according to Ibn Ṭūlūn, and for 400, according to Ibn Ṭawq (II/23). In Jumādá II 889/June 1484 Taqī al-Dīn ibn Qāḍī Zuraʿ became *nāʾib al-ḥukm* after he paid a considerable amount of cash (II/21). A member of the Farfūr clan again figures years later. In Shaʿbān 921/September 1515 *qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī* Walī al-Dīn ibn al-Farfūr requested of Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Ramlī 1,000 dinars. The latter was then imam of the Umayyad mosque but was unable to pay more than half the balance. The post then went to Taqī al-Dīn al-Qarā for an enormous sum (II/58)! We have related four scenarios involving high Damascene religious dignitaries, though this practice was not limited to them. In Muḥarram 892/December 1486 the governor of Damascus named as *nāʾib* of Ṣafad the *ḥājib al-ḥujjāb* Īlbāy for 20,000 dinars (I/10). Then in Shawwāl 895/August 1490 Sultan Qāytbāy enjoined the *ḥājib kabīr* Yūnis al-Sharīfī to choose the Hanafi grand qadi; his choice was Muḥibb al-Dīn ibn al-Qusayf, who agreed to pay 3,000 dinars (II/35).

Often when money proved scarce it became necessary to solicit the support of influential people. It is unclear if such services were systematically compensated since we possess examples in which cash is not mentioned, only the names of intermediaries. A case in Ramaḍān 887/October 1482 is notable since Shihāb al-Dīn al-ʿAzāzī obtained the *niyābah shāfiʿīyah* thanks to the intervention of Shaykh Sirāj al-Dīn ibn al-Ṣayrafī and for 200 dinars (II/20). In Ṣafar 898/November 1492 the amir Qānībāy Qarā al-Rammāḥ obtained the post of *nāʾib* of Ṣahyūn in exchange for a bribe and the intervention of the amir Azbak al-Khāzindār (I/14).

It would seem, moreover, that candidates were obligated financially to their intercessors. In Dhū al-Qaʿdah 897/August 1492 ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq al-Sunbāṭī spent 1,000 dinars to obtain a teaching post in al-Manṣūrīyah. This amount consisted of a bribe but also gifts made to people who had supported him, including an anonymous

amir, who received one hundred dinars (II/38). The case of Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Qādir ibn al-Naqīb is particularly interesting. As we have already noted, this person occupied the post of Shafiʿi grand qadi in Cairo six times, paying each time with bribes. He also had recourse to the offices of certain individuals. Ibn Iyās mentioned that in Dhū al-Qaʿdah 911/March 1506 he obtained on three occasions the post of grand qadi for 5,000 dinars but also that he had distributed 2,000 more to those amirs who had supported his candidacy, to principal members of the sultan´s retinue *(khawāṣṣ),* notably the *dawādār* Azdamur. On the occasion of his sixth and last nomination, in Jumādá II 921/July 1515, he paid out the usual 3,000 dinars to which he added the amounts distributed to the *dawādār,* to his adjutant *(dawādār thānī)* and to the *kātib al-sirr*. One can easily imagine all the resources expended by this individual to obtain the office of his dreams and then to maintain himself in it. According to rumor, he spent a total of some 36,000 dinars. One can easily believe, too, Ibn Iyās´ claim that in acting in such a fashion, he ruined his fortune (II/41, 43, 45, 47, 52, 56).

Venality caused money to change hands at such a rate that if they were not systematically important at the start, these sums could become so if the candidate solicited the same office frequently enough and put himself in debt to his intermediaries. One must not forget that the case of Ibn al-Naqīb noted before, as it constitutes a case of affiliation, is not really an exception. Thus in Dhū al-Qaʿdah 918/January 1513 Kamāl al-Dīn al-Ṭawīl occupied for the third time the office of Shafiʿi grand qadi, achieving his ends by spending in excess of 10,000 dinars (II/48, 53, 57). Other individuals occupied the same posts two or three times by utilizing bribes rather than their abilities, which created discontent with their nominations. Such is the reminder of Ibn Iyās concerning the affection that Ḥusām al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn al-Shiḥnah possessed for the post of Hanafi grand qadi in Ramaḍān 921/October 1515 (II/59): ″Sultan Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī interested himself in all things having to do with the procuring of money.″[25] The author deplored his youth, and consequently his lack of experience as judge, which paralleled his lack of learning, perhaps because he had not completed his education. The judgment of Ibn Iyās is severe: ″He was undoubtedly the most incompetent of the Hanafi qadis,″[26] while other candidates who had been omitted possessed the requisite qualifications to administer the office.

Even so, it would not be right to place all responsibility for the sale of office and its convolutions solely on the rulers. It was after all the candidates themselves who sought backers to support their applications by means of gifts of varying value. It was in essence a contractual relationship: both parties were free to accept

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[25]Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ,* 4:477.

[26]Ibid.

or reject the proposed deal. Clearly, the sultans exploited the system to their advantage, but the candidates were certainly not inclined to invest, and invest substantially, to no purpose. They of course hoped their new position would allow them not only to recoup their investment but also exploit the system in turn.

Ibn Ṭūlūn relates that the *nāẓir al-jaysh* Shihāb al-Dīn ibn al-Farfūr and the *qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī* Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-ʿAdawī ″disgraced themselves″ in Damascus. In Ṣafar 886/April 1481 al-ʿAdawī lost the post of *qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī* while retaining those of *nāẓir al-qalʿah* and *wakīl al-sulṭān*. Desirous of managing them, Ibn al-Farfūr agreed to pay 32,000 dinars and had his prayers answered. Al-ʿAdawī, who had bid only 10,000 dinars to the *dawādār,* was dismissed, but only for a brief time because in the same month he regained two of his former offices *(nāẓir al-qalʿah* and *wakīl al-sulṭān)* in exchange for 26,000 dinars. He did not succeed in retaining them, though, as Ibn al-Farfūr offered in Rabīʿ I/May the sum of 30,000 dinars and obtained as well the post of *wakīl bayt al-māl* (II/12, 13, 14).[27] One wonders if any part of the money found its way into the sultan′s coffers. Regardless, the attitude of those two office holders gives us an idea of the amount of competition induced by the system. We note that the sum ″pocketed″ by the *dawādār* in the space of a month was close to 88,000 dinars! It is interesting to note, however, that the Ibn al-Farfūr reported here is the same Shihāb al-Dīn ibn al-Farfūr we have mentioned above in the three affairs of attribution of posts between 886 and 889. Shihāb al-Dīn did not wait long to swap the status of solicitor for that of purveyor of offices, this providing the means of reimbursing himself quickly. This attitude was by no means exceptional. Ibn Iyās, in the notice he dedicated to the amir Qānībāy Qarā al-Rammāḥ in Rabīʿ I 921/April 1513, recalled that he had obtained the post of *nāʾib* of Ṣahyūn through a bribe and the intervention of the amir Azbak al-Khāzindār, but also that his attitude towards his administrators leads one to believe that he was recouping his outlay by pressuring them (I/14). Undoubtedly, it was for the same purpose that the qadi Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-ʿAdawī came to Cairo in Dhū al-Qaʿdah 891/October 1496. He knew in advance that, good year or bad, he would recoup the 28,000 dinars that he had borrowed for the trip (II/30).

Even so, it is not necessary to see in these practices the emergence of an entirely new phenomenon. When ʿAbd al-Karīm ibn Kātib al-Manākh was nominated vizier in Shawwāl 826/September 1423 in exchange for 20,000 dinars, his father said to him: ″I have occupied the office of vizier and I have left there the 60,000 dinars that I would possess without ever being able to repair the breach in my fortune. How shall you manage it?″ ʿAbd al-Karīm made this Sibylline comment:″I would fill this void by taking from the Muslims′ portion.″ With these

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[27]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahah,* 1:36, 37 et 39

profound observations the new vizier revealed to his father a pyramid scheme. One would be right in thinking that the top was not systematically composed of these ″Muslims″ but that, according to circumstance, other intermediaries would give money thinking that they would recoup in requisite time. Only the poor devil at the bottom of the pyramid would legitimately feel himself injured. In the chronicles it is only the apex of the edifice that is uncovered, while the rest remains hidden, appearing only rarely.

Though significant amounts were either paid or recouped by candidates, they pale in comparison with those disbursed during the first half of the ninth/fifteenth century. The three examples adduced here are, in this regard, significant. Of course, the question is the conferment of the post of *kātib al-sirr,* the most elevated position in the administrative hierarchy and the most coveted. As one can see from the figures that follow, one is far from the kind of sums paid during the period which presently interests us. Thus, in Rabī' I 808/August 1405, Sa'd al-Dīn Ibrāhīm ibn Ghurāb paid 60,000 dinars; in Shawwāl 826/October 1421 Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn al-Bārizī gave 40,000 dinars; in Rajab 832/April 1429, Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muzhir paid 100,000 dinars.[28] The rapacity and cupidity of the sultans in place—Faraj, al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh, and Barsbāy—had nothing on Qāytbāy and Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī. What is more, sums were paid entirely at the time of the purchase of office. If it is true that these three rulers exercised power during periods which were filled with political and economic crises, contrary to their successors, they were capable of sizing up issues, even bringing solutions to bear, though they proved to be temporary.

Be that as it may, these findings lead us to question the wealth of different office holders since even amirs seem to have had difficulty in paying. Are we faced with the onset of a general impoverishment, at least concerning certain notables? Is the situation the same in Cairo as in the provincial capitals? How does one explain this phenomenon? For the last fifty years of the Mamluk Sultanate′s existence, rulers confronting foreign dangers and diverse economic crises were focused less and less on devising a new fiscal regime to keep state coffers filled. Arbitrary exactions from notables, merchants, or non-Muslim communities, as well as new levies on various branches of commerce and the property of mortmain, allowed Qāytbāy to replenish his often empty treasury. His successor Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī used similar methods; he had recourse to simple extraordinary levies, to confiscation of the goods of office holders fallen into disgrace, and to seizing the inheritances of the wealthy deceased.

In these circumstances, one sees how the government agreed on a price for certain offices, as in the case of the grand qadi: all candidates hoping to occupy

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[28]Cf. the lists in the appendices of 'Abd al-Rāziq, *Al-Badhl wa-al-Barṭalah*.

the position had to furnish 3,000 dinars to the sultan. The practice became virtual law. The procedure, without any legal sanction, became so implicit, on the one hand, by princely fiat and, on the other, by the voluntary acquiescence of the candidates. The relatively low asking price is easily explained: administrators, already subject to so many different financial drains, were no doubt unable to extend themselves any further. Of course, there were always exceptions, but the sultan could leave these offices without title holders. Thus, to confer such an office for such a relatively small sum was insurance for always having on hand a potential applicant. Thus, in Rabī' I 919/May 1513 Sultan Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī spoke to 'Izz al-Dīn al-Shīshīnī of his desire to award the post of *qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanbalī:* ″Give me 1,000 dinars and I will confer on you the offices of your father″ (II/54). If the ruler wanted to obtain more, since all appointments and removals depended on his good will, he had only to dismiss summarily the office holder and replace him. This was his most used gambit! The case of Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-Naqīb is instructive: in Dhū al-Qaʿdah 918/January 1513 he had already been Shafiʿi grand qadi five times though the total length of his mandate had been less than a year, in fact, only nine months and eight days.

Did venality exacerbate the major political crises that crisscrossed the sultanate, particularly when it was time to mobilize against external enemies? During these critical periods demands for money but especially its collection proved vital for the raising and equipping of troops. In fact, only five years stand out distinctly: 886/1481 and 922/1516, with nine cases of venality each; 889/1484 and 921/1515, seven cases; and finally, 893/1488, six cases. The last two years of the Mamluk sultanate were marked by greater activity: sixteen offices were farmed out, bringing in some 60,000 dinars, although for three posts the amount is not precise. This sum seems modest ultimately and we may be right in thinking that it was only a balance, though not a negligible one, and nothing more. Moreover, the story in the chronicles is that when the sultan mobilized his forces he raised a new tax, justifying it by invoking the necessity of defending his territory.

Sultans preferred to bleed the population as a whole, with the help of the procedures enumerated above, rather than demand what appeared to be prohibitive fees from various grantees. They were being pragmatic since the sums collected in this way could not be compared with revenues induced through venality. If so, it is a question of yielding to a bad habit embedded in current mores, of assimilation into a quasi-levy, a tax on office. While we have been unable to illuminate fully this phenomenon in our study, it seems to us that during the last fifty years of the sultanate venality of office lost its financial importance. Revenues generated through venality are not attested in reports about other taxes. But did they contribute to the enrichment of all those who practiced it? It is difficult to answer affirmatively because a certain number of individuals undoubtedly had time to recoup their

losses. Still, we cannot be absolutely sure. For those who had the opportunity, the government soon confiscated money won from the ″Muslims′ portion.″ May morality be saved!

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

Date	Name	Office/Location	Amounts/Methods of Payment	Source
Jumādá I 874/ Nov. 1469	Tāj al-Dīn ibn al-Hayṣam	*mustawfī al-khāṣṣ,* Cairo	1,000 weighed dinars	*Inbā',* 152
Jumādá I 875/ Oct. 1470	Qāsim ibn al-Qarāfī	vizier, Cairo	20,000 weighed dinars	Ibid., 226
Jumādá II 876/ Nov. 1471	Taghrībirdī	*kāshif al-jusūr wa-al-damm,* al-Sharqīyah	1,000 weighed dinars	Ibid., 365
Rajab 876/ Dec. 1471	Shāhīn al-Jamālī	*shādd,* Jidda	20,000 dinars	Ibid., 383
Rajab 876/ Dec. 1471	Muḥammad ibn ʻAbd al-Raḥmān	*ṣayrafī,* Jidda	10,000 weighed dinars	Ibid., 383
Rajab 876/ Dec. 1471	Ibn al-ʻAjlūnī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī,* Damascus	10,000 dinars	Ibid., 390
Ramaḍān 876/ Feb. 1472	Quṭb al-Dīn al-Khayḍarī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʻī, kātib al-sirr,* Damascus	about 30,000 dinars	Ibid., 406, 423
Rabīʻ II 879/ Aug. 1474	al-Sayyid al-Sharīf[29]	*nāẓir al-ashrāf,* Damascus	1,000 dinars	Ibid., 498, 504
Ṣafar 881/ May 1476	Quṭb al-Dīn al-Khayḍarī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʻī, kātib al-sirr,* Damascus	not specified	*Dhayl,* fol. 271v; *Badā'iʻ,* 3:119
Rabīʻ I 881/ June 1476	Taqī al-Dīn ibn al-Naḥḥās	*muḥtasib,* Cairo	800 dinars	*Tārīkh,* 76
Rajab 881/ Oct. 1476	Taqī al-Dīn ibn Qāḍī ʻAjlūn	*nāẓir al-asrā', nāẓir waqf* al-Ruknīyah, Damascus	not specified	Ibid., 78
Rajab 881/ Oct. 1476	Jānibak	*ḥājib thānī,* Damascus	4,000 dinars	Ibid.
Muḥarram 883/ Apr. 1478	ʻImād al-Dīn Ismāʻīl al-Nāṣirī	*nāẓir, mudarris,* and other Hanafi functions, Damascus	asking price: 8,000; payment: 7,000 dinars	*Ḥawādith,* 1:221
Shawwāl 883/ Dec. 1478	Ibrāhīm ibn Shādī Bak al-Julubbānī	*kāshif,* al-Ḥawrān	10,000 weighed dinars	Ibid., 226

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[29]This person is likewise designated by the expression Ibn al-Khawājā bi-khān al-nashshārīn.

Date	Name	Office/Location	Amounts/Methods of Payment	Source
Shawwāl 885/ Dec. 1480	Sharaf al-Dīn ibn ʿĪd	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī*, Cairo	not specified	*Wajīz*, 3:907; *Badāʾiʿ*, 3:170; *Ḥawādith*, 2:252–53; *Mufākahah*, 1:28
Dhū al-Qaʿdah 885/ Jan. 1481	Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-ʿAdawī	*mudarris* al-Shāmīyah al-Barrānīyah, Damascus	350 dinars	*Mufākahah*, 1:30
Dhū al-Qaʿdah 885/ Jan. 1481	Muḥibb al-Dīn ibn al-Qusayf	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī*, Damascus	3,000 dinars	*Taʿlīq*, 1:28; *Mufākahah*, 1:30
Dhū al-Ḥijjah 885/ Feb. 1481	Raḍī al-Dīn al-Ghazzī	*nāʾib qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī*, Damascus	900 dinars, payment in two parts	*Taʿlīq*, 1:33; *Mufākahah*, 1:31
Ṣafar 886/ Mar. 1481	Shihāb al-Dīn ibn al-Farfūr	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī, nāẓir al-jaysh, wakīl al-sulṭān, nāẓir al-qalʿah*, Damascus	32,000 dinars	*Taʿlīq*, 1:49; *Mufākahah*, 1:36-37
Ṣafar 886/ Mar. 1481	Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-ʿAdawī	*nāẓir al-qalʿah, wakīl al-sulṭān*, Damascus	26,000 dinars	*Taʿlīq*, 1:51; *Mufākahah*, 1:37
Rabīʿ I 886/ Apr. 1481	Shihāb al-Dīn ibn al-Farfūr	*qāḍī al-quḍāh al-shāfiʿī, nāẓir al-jaysh, nāẓir al-qalʿah, wakīl al-sulṭān*, Damascus	30,000 dinars	*Mufākahah*, 1:39
Jumādá I 886/ June 1481	Īlbāy	*dawādār*, Damascus	10,000 weighed dinars	*Taʿlīq*, 1:64; *Mufākahah*, 1:42
Jumādá I 886/ July 1481	Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn Ghāzī	*nāʾib qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī*, Damascus	not specified	*Mufākahah*, 1:46
Shaʿbān 886/ Sept. 1481	ʿImād al-Dīn Ismāʿīl al-Nāṣirī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī* and other offices, Damascus	not specified	*Taʿlīq*, 1:82

Date	Name	Office/Location	Amounts/Methods of Payment	Source
Sha'bān 886/ Sept. 1481	Fakhr al-Dīn al-Ḥamawī	*nā'ib qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfi'ī,* Damascus	not specified	*Ta'līq,* 1:83; *Mufākahah,* 1:50
Dhū al-Qa'dah 886/Dec. 1481	Shihāb al-Dīn al-Ramlī	*nā'ib qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfi'ī,* Damascus	not specified	*Ta'līq,* 1:110
Dhū al-Ḥijjah 886/Jan. 1482	Qijmās	*nā'ib,* Damascus	100,000 dinars	*Wajīz,* 3:1014–15
Ṣafar 887/ Mar. 1482	Muḥammad al-'Aẓamah	*nāẓir al-awqāf,* Cairo	not specified	*Dhayl,* fol. 319; *Badā'i',* 3:192
Ramaḍān 887/ Oct. 1482	Shihāb al-Dīn al-'Azāzī (al-'Adhāwī?)[30]	*nā'ib qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfi'ī,* Damascus	200 dinars	*Ta'līq,* 1:195
Jumādá II 889/ June 1484	Qāsim Shughaytah	vizier, Cairo	not specified	*Dhayl,* fol. 336v
Jumādá II 889/ June 1484	Taqī al-Dīn ibn Qāḍī Zura'	*nā'ib al-ḥukm,* Damascus	not specified	*Ta'līq,* 1:370; *Mufākahah,* 1:63
Rajab 889/ July 1484	Shihāb al-Dīn al-'Azāzī	*nā'ib qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfi'ī,* Damascus	80 or 400 dinars	*Ta'līq,* 1:380; *Mufākahah,* 1:63
Rajab 889/ July 1484	Shams al-Dīn ibn al-Muzalliq	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfi'ī,* Damascus	10,000 dinars	*Ta'līq,* 1:380; *Mufākahah,* 1:64
Sha'bān 889/ Aug. 1484	Shams al-Dīn ibn al-Muzalliq	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfi'ī,* Damascus	not specified	*Wajīz,* 3:950
Sha'bān 889/ Aug. 1484	Sharaf al-Dīn ibn al-Baqarī	*nāẓir al-awqāf,* Cairo	not specified	*Dhayl,* fol. 337
Dhū al-Qa'dah 889/Nov. 1484	Mūsá ibn Shāhīn ibn al-Turjumān	*naqīb al-jaysh,* Cairo	not specified	*Wajīz,* 3:951
Sha'bān 890/ Aug. 1485	Shihāb al-Dīn al-'Azāzī	*nā'ib qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfi'ī,* Damascus	not specified	*Ta'līq,* 1:508
Sha'bān 890/ Aug. 1485	Shihāb al-Dīn al-Ḥimṣī	*nā'ib al-ḥukm,* Damascus	cash + livestock	Ibid., 511
Sha'bān 890/ Aug. 1485	Badr al-Dīn ibn Ajā	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī,* Aleppo	not specified	*Dhayl,* fols. 346v–347

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[30]Appears as al-'Azāzī in the *Ta'līq* and as al-'Adhāwī in the *Mufākahah.*

Date	Name	Office/Location	Amounts/Methods of Payment	Source
Dhū al-Ḥijjah 890/Dec. 1485	Amīr al-Ḥājj ibn Abī al-Faraj	*naqīb al-jaysh,* Cairo	not specified	*Wajīz,* 3:960
Rabīʿ I 891/ Mar. 1486	Muḥammad ibn Shāhīn	*nāʾib al-qalʿah,* Damascus	10,000 dinars	*Mufākahah,* 1:72
Dhū al-Qaʿdah 891/Nov. 1486	Amīn al-Dīn al-Ḥasbānī	*kātib al-sirr,* Damascus	4,000 dinars	*Tārīkh,* 115–16
Dhū al-Qaʿdah 891/Nov. 1486	Zayn al-Dīn al-Ḥasbānī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī,* Damascus	14,000 dinars	Ibid., 116
Dhū al-Qaʿdah 891/ Nov. 1486	Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-ʿAdawī	*wakīl al-sulṭān, nāẓir al-dhakhīrah,* Damascus	not specified	Ibid.
Muḥarram 892/ Dec. 1486	Īlbāy	*nāʾib,* Ṣafad	20,000 dinars	*Mufākahah,* 1:73
Ramaḍān 892/ Aug. 1487	Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-Dahānah	*shaykh al-jāmiʿ,* al-Muʾayyadī, Cairo	not specified	*Dhayl,* fol. 366v; *Badāʾiʿ,* 3:243
Ramaḍān 892/ Aug. 1487	Badr al-Dīn al-Makīnī	*shaykh,* al-Khashshābīyah, Cairo	about 2,000 dinars	*Wajīz,* 3:1009; *Dhayl,* fols. 366v–367; *Badāʾiʿ,* 3:243
Ṣafar 893/ Jan. 1488	Duqmāq al-Sayfī Īnāl al-Ashqar	*nāʾib,* Jerusalem	not specified	*Dhayl,* fol. 372; *Badāʾiʿ,* 3:247
Rabīʿ I 893/ Feb. 1488	Muwaffaq al-Dīn al-Ḥamawī	*nāẓir al-jaysh,* Damascus	not specified	*Dhayl,* fols. 372v–373; *Badāʾiʿ,* 3:248
Rabīʿ I 893/ Feb. 1488	ʿAbd al-Raḥīm al-Ḥamawī	*kātib al-sirr,* Damascus	not specified	*Dhayl,* fols. 372v–373; *Badāʾiʿ,* 3:248
Rabīʿ II 893/ Mar. 1488	Aydakī	*nāʾib al-qalʿah,* Damascus	10,000 dinars, payment in two parts	*Tārīkh,* 126; *Mufākahah,* 1:87
Ramaḍān 893/ Aug. 1488	Badr al-Dīn ibn Muzhir	*kātib al-sirr,* Cairo	cash + part of inheritance	*Badāʾiʿ,* 3:255

Date	Name	Office/Location	Amounts/Methods of Payment	Source
Shawwāl 893/ Sept. 1488	Muḥibb al-Dīn ibn Yūsuf	*nāẓir al-jaysh, nāẓir al-jawālī,* Damascus	10,000 or 20,000 dinars	*Tārīkh,* 130; *Ḥawādith,* 1:321–22; *Mufākahah,* 1:99
Ṣafar 895/ Dec. 1489	Sirāj al-Dīn al-Ṣayrafī	*mudarris,* al-Shāmīyah al-Barrānīyah, Damascus	600 dinars	*Tārīkh,* 140; *Ḥawādith,* 1:321–22; *Mufākahah,* 1:115
Rajab 895/ May 1490	Yūsuf ibn al-Minqār	*kātib al-sirr, nāẓir al-jaysh, nāẓir al-qalʿah, nāẓir al-bīmāristān,* Aleppo	not specified	*Wajīz,* 3:1139
Shawwāl 895/ Aug. 1490	Muḥibb al-Dīn ibn al-Qusayf	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī,* Damascus	3,000 dinars	*Mufākahah,* 1:130
Dhū al-Qaʿdah 895/ Sept. 1490	Shihāb al-Dīn ibn al-Ṣayrafī	*mudarris shāfiʿī,* al-Shaykhūnīyah, Cairo	not specified	*Dhayl,* fol. 398
Rajab 896/ May 1491	Burhān al-Dīn ibn al-Quṭb	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī,* Damascus	2,000 dinars	*Tārīkh,* 147; *Mufākahah,* 1:140
Shaʿbān 896/ June 1491	a *julbān*	*nāʾib,* Ḥiṣn al-Akrād	1,000 dinars	*Dhayl,* fol. 403
Dhū al-Qaʿdah 897/Aug. 1492	ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq al-Sunbāṭī	*mudarris,* al-Manṣūrīyah, Cairo	1,000 dinars	*Wajīz,* 3:1261
Dhū al-Qaʿdah 897/ Aug. 1492	Zayn al-Dīn ibn al-Jamāʿah	*khaṭīb, shaykh al-shuyūkh khānqāh,* Jerusalem	not specified	Ibid., 1262
Ṣafar 898/ Nov. 1492	Qānībāy Qarā al-Rammāḥ	*nāʾib,* Ṣahyūn	not specified	*Badāʾiʿ,* 3:294
Jumādá II 902/ Feb. 1497	Muḥibb al-Dīn ibn Yūsuf	*kātib al-sirr, nāẓir al-jaysh, nāẓir al-jawālī, nāẓir al-qalʿah,* Damascus	1,000 horses	*Tārīkh,* 202
Rabīʿ I 904/ Nov. 1498	Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Ṣafadī	*nāẓir al-bīmāristān,* al-Manṣūrī, *wakīl al-sulṭān,* Cairo	not specified	*Ḥawādith,* 2:61
Jumādá I 905/ Dec. 1499	Zayn al-Dīn ibn al-Nayrabī	*nāẓir al-jaysh,* Damascus	not specified	*Badāʾiʿ,* 3:428

Date	Name	Office/Location	Amounts/Methods of Payment	Source
Ṣafar 906/ Aug. 1500	Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-Naqīb	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī*, Cairo	7,000 dinars	Ibid., 448
Rajab 906/ Jan. 1501	Burhān al-Dīn ibn al-Karakī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī*, Cairo	not specified	Ibid., 471
Dhū al-Ḥijjah 906/ June 1501	Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-Naqīb	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī*, Cairo	not specified	*Badāʾiʿ*, 4:12; *Ḥawādith*, 2:127
Jumādá I 911/ Sept. 1505	Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qalqashandī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī*, Cairo	3,000 dinars	*Badāʾiʿ*, 4:91
Dhū al-Qaʿdah 911/Mar. 1506	Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-Naqīb	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī*, Cairo	5,000 dinars	Ibid.
Jumādá I 912/ Sept. 1506	Fakhr al-Dīn ibn al-ʿAfīf	*kātib al-mamālīk*, Cairo	2,000 dinars	Ibid., 99
Dhū al-Ḥijjah 915/ Mar. 1510	Badr al-Dīn al-Makīnī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī, shaykh* al-Khashshābīyah and al-Sharīfīyah, Cairo	3,000 dinars	Ibid., 171
Rabīʿ I 916/ June 1510	Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-Naqīb	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī*, Cairo	not specified	Ibid., 183
Jumādá I 916/ Aug. 1510	Kamāl al-Dīn al-Ṭawīl	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī, shaykh* al-Khashshābīyah, al-Sharīfīyah and al-Baybarsīyah, Cairo	5,000 dinars	Ibid., 189
Shaʿbān 916/ Nov. 1510	ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Ramlī	*nāʾib qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī*, Damascus; *mutakallim*, al-Ḥaramayn	100 *ashrafī*s; 150 *ashrafī*s	*Mufākahah*, 1:347
Ṣafar 917/ Apr. 1511	Badr al-Dīn ibn al-Muʿtamid	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī*, Damascus	40 sacks of barley	Ibid., 354
Ṣafar 917/ Apr. 1511	Jamāl al-Dīn al-Dūbānī al-Ruḥaybī	*nāʾib qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī*, Damascus	200 *ashrafī*s	Ibid.
Muḥarram 918/ Mar. 1512	Sharaf al-Dīn ibn Rawq	*nāẓir al-khazāʾin al-sharīfah, mustawfī*, Cairo	5,000 dinars	*Badāʾiʿ*, 4:257
Rabīʿ II 918/ June 1512	Ṭarābāy	*nāʾib,* Ṣafad	not specified	Ibid., 267

Date	Name	Office/Location	Amounts/Methods of Payment	Source
Rajab 918/ Sept. 1512	Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-Naqīb	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī*, Cairo	3,000 dinars	Ibid., 280–81
Dhū al-Qaʿdah 918/Jan. 1513	Kamāl al-Dīn al-Ṭawīl	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī*, Cairo	not specified	Ibid., 290
Rabīʿ I 919/ May 1513	Shihāb al-Dīn al-Shīshīnī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanbalī*, Cairo	1,000 dinars	Ibid., 305
Rajab 919/ Sept. 1513	Jānim min Walī al-Dīn	*nāʾib*, Tripoli	60,000 dinars	Ibid., 330
Dhū al-Qaʿdah 919/Dec. 1513	Muḥibb al-Dīn ibn Yūsuf	*nāẓir al-awqāf al-ḥanafīyah*, Damascus	3,000 dinars	*Mufākahah*, 1:378
Rabīʿ I 920/ Apr. 1514	Sharaf al-Dīn al-Ṣughayr	*nāẓir al-dawlah*, *kātib al-mamālīk*, *mutakallim fī thulth al-wizārah*, Cairo	8,000 dinars + 5,000 *ardabb*s of barley	*Badāʾiʿ*, 4:370–71
Jumādá II 921/ July 1515	Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-Naqīb	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī*, Cairo	3,000 dinars	Ibid., 460–61
Jumādá II 921/ July 1515	Yūsuf min Sībāy	*nāʾib*, Ṣafad	not specified	Ibid., 461–62
Jumādá II 921/ July 1515	Ṭarābāy min Yashbak	*ḥājib al-ḥujjāb*, Damascus	not specified	Ibid., 463
Rajab 921/ Aug. 1515	Kamāl al-Dīn al-Ṭawīl	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī*, Cairo	3,000 dinars	Ibid., 469
Shaʿbān 921/ Sept. 1515	Taqī al-Dīn al-Qarā	*imām*, al-Umawī, Damascus	not specified	*Mufākahah*, 1:386
Ramaḍān 921/ Oct. 1515	Ḥusām al-Dīn ibn al-Shiḥnah	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī*, Cairo	3,000 dinars	*Badāʾiʿ*, 4:477
Ramaḍān 921/ Oct. 1515	Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Damīrī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh mālikī*, Cairo	2,000 dinars	Ibid.
Muḥarram 922/Feb. 1516	Shams al-Dīn al-Sikandarī	*imām*, Cairo	1,200 dinars	Ibid., 5:13
Ṣafar 922/ Mar. 1516	Shihāb al-Dīn ibn al-Rūmī	*imām al-sulṭān*, Cairo	1,000 dinars	Ibid., 15
Rabīʿ I 922/ Apr. 1516	Ulmās	*walī al-shurṭah*, Cairo	41,000 dinars, 20,000 dinars and the balance in staggered payments	Ibid., 26–27
Rabīʿ II 922/ May 1516	Māmāy al-Ṣughayr	*muḥtasib*, Cairo	15,000 dinars	Ibid., 27

DISTRIBUTION OF CASES OF VENALITY BY TYPE OF OFFICE[31]
I. MILITARY FUNCTIONS

No.	Date	Name	Office/Location	Amounts/Methods of Payment	Source
1	Jumādá II 876/ Nov. 1471	Taghrībirdī	*kāshif al-jusūr wa-al-damm*, al-Sharqīyah	1,000 weighed dinars	*Inbāʾ*, 365
2	Rajab 876/ Dec. 1471	Shāhīn al-Jamālī	*shādd*, Jidda	20,000 dinars	Ibid., 383
3	Rajab 881/ Oct. 1476	Jānibak	*ḥājib thānī*, Damascus	4,000 dinars	*Tārīkh*, 78
4	Shawwāl 883/ Dec. 1478	Ibrāhīm ibn Shādī Bak al-Julubbānī	*kāshif*, al-Ḥawrān	10,000 weighed dinars	*Ḥawādith*, 1:226
5	Jumādá I 886/ June 1481	Īlbāy	*dawādār*, Damascus	10,000 weighed dinars	*Taʿlīq*, 1:64; *Mufākahah*, 1:42
6	Dhū al-Ḥijjah 886/ Jan. 1482	Qijmās	*nāʾib*, Damascus	100,000 dinars	*Wajīz*, 3:1014–15
7	Dhū al-Qaʿdah 889/ Nov. 1484	Mūsá ibn Shāhīn ibn al-Turjumān	*naqīb al-jaysh*, Cairo	not specified	Ibid., 951
8	Dhū al-Ḥijjah 890/ Dec. 1485	Amīr al-Ḥājj ibn Abī al-Faraj	*naqīb al-jaysh*, Cairo	not specified	Ibid., 960
9	Rabīʿ I 891/ Mar. 1486	Muḥammad ibn Shāhīn	*nāʾib al-qalʿah*, Damascus	10,000 dinars	*Mufākahah*, 1:72
10	Muḥarram 892/ Dec. 1486	Īlbāy	*nāʾib*, Ṣafad	20,000 dinars	Ibid., 73
11	Ṣafar 893/ Jan. 1488	Duqmāq al-Sayfī Īnāl al-Ashqar	*nāʾib*, Jerusalem	not specified	*Dhayl*, fol. 372; *Badāʾiʿ*, 3:247
12	Rabīʿ II 893/ Mar. 1488	Aydakī	*nāʾib al-qalʿah*, Damascus	10,000 dinars, payment in two parts	*Tārīkh*, 126; *Mufākahah*, 1:87

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[31]For all these offices, see Maurice Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *La Syrie à l'époque des Mamelouks* (Paris, 1923), and William Popper, *Egypt and Syria under the Circassian Sultans, 1382-1468* (New York, 1977), 1:90–110.

13	Shaʿbān 896/ June 1491	a *julbān*	*nāʾib,* Ḥiṣn al-Akrād	1,000 dinars	*Dhayl,* fol. 403
14	Ṣafar 898/ Nov. 1492	Qānībāy Qarā al-Rammāḥ	*nāʾib,* Ṣahyūn	not specified	*Badāʾiʿ,* 3:294
15	Rabīʿ II 918/ June 1512	Ṭarābāy	*nāʾib,* Ṣafad	not specified	Ibid., 4:267
16	Rajab 919/ Sept. 1513	Jānim min Walī al-Dīn	*nāʾib,* Tripoli	60,000 dinars	Ibid., 330
17	Jumādá II 921/ July 1515	Yūsuf min Sībāy	*nāʾib,* Ṣafad	not specified	Ibid., 461–62
18	Jumādá II 921/ July 1515	Ṭarābāy min Yashbak	*ḥājib al-ḥujjāb,* Damascus	not specified	Ibid., 463
19	Rabīʿ I 922/ Feb. 1516	Ulmās	*walī al-shurṭah,* Cairo	41,000 dinars, 20,000 dinars and the balance in staggered payments	Ibid., 5:26–27

II. Religious Functions

No.	Date	Name	Office/Location	Amounts/Methods of Payment	Source
1	Rajab 876/ Dec. 1471	Ibn al-ʿAjlūnī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī,* Damascus	10,000 dinars	*Inbāʾ,* 390
2	Ramaḍān 876/ Feb. 1472	Quṭb al-Dīn al-Khayḍarī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī, kātib al-sirr,* Damascus	about 30,000 dinars	Ibid., 406, 423
3	Rabīʿ II 879/ Aug. 1474	al-Sayyid al-Sharīf	*nāẓir al-ashrāf,* Damascus	1,000 dinars	Ibid., 498, 504
4	Ṣafar 881/ May 1476	Quṭb al-Dīn al-Khayḍarī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī, kātib al-sirr,* Damascus	not specified	*Dhayl,* fol. 271v; *Badāʾiʿ,* 3:119
5	Rabīʿ I 881/ June 1476	Taqī al-Dīn ibn al-Naḥḥās	*muḥtasib,* Cairo	800 dinars	*Tārīkh,* 76
6	Rajab 881/ Oct. 1476	Taqī al-Dīn ibn Qāḍī ʿAjlūn	*nāẓir al-asrāʾ, nāẓir waqf* al-Ruknīyah	not specified	Ibid., 78
7	Muḥarram 883/ Apr. 1478	ʿImād al-Dīn Ismāʿīl al-Nāṣirī	*nāẓir, mudarris,* and other Hanafi offices, Damascus	asking price: 8,000 payment: 7,000 dinars	*Ḥawādith,* 1:221
8	Shawwāl 885/ Dec. 1480	Sharaf al-Dīn ibn ʿĪd	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī,* Cairo	not specified	*Wajīz,* 3:907; *Badāʾiʿ,* 3:170; *Ḥawādith,* 1:252–53; *Mufākahah,* 1:28
9	Dhū al-Qaʿdah 885/ Jan. 1481	Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-ʿAdawī	*mudarris* al-Shāmīyah al-Barrānīyah, Damascus	350 dinars	*Mufākahah,* 1:30

No.	Date	Name	Office/Location	Amounts/Methods of Payment	Source
10	Dhū al-Qaʿdah 885/ Jan. 1481	Muḥibb al-Dīn ibn al-Qusayf	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī*, Damascus	3,000 dinars	*Taʿlīq*, 1:28; *Mufākahah*, 1:30
11	Dhū al-Ḥijjah 885/ Feb. 1481	Raḍī al-Dīn al-Ghazzī	*nāʾib qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī*, Damascus	900 dinars, payment in two parts	*Taʿlīq*, 1:33; *Mufākahah*, 1:31
12	Ṣafar 886/ Mar. 1481	Shihāb al-Dīn ibn al-Farfūr	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī, nāẓir al-jaysh, wakīl al-sulṭān, nāẓir al-qalʿah*, Damascus	32,000 dinars	*Taʿlīq*, 1:49; *Mufākahah*, 1:36–37
13	Ṣafar 886/ Mar. 1481	Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-ʿAdawī	*nāẓir al-qalʿah, wakīl al-sulṭān*, Damascus	26,000 dinars	*Taʿlīq*, 1:51; *Mufākahah*, 1:37
14	Rabīʿ I 886/ Apr. 1481	Shihāb al-Dīn ibn al-Farfūr	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī, nāẓir al-jaysh, nāẓir al-qalʿah, wakīl al-sulṭān*, Damascus	30,000 dinars	*Mufākahah*, 1:39
15	Jumādá II 886/ July 1481	Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn Ghāzī	*nāʾib qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī*, Damascus	not specified	Ibid., 46
16	Shaʿbān 886/ Sept. 1481	ʿImād al-Dīn Ismāʿīl al-Nāṣirī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī* and other offices, Damascus	not specified	*Taʿlīq*, 1:82
17	Shaʿbān 886/ Sept. 1481	Fakhr al-Dīn al-Ḥamawī	*nāʾib qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī*, Damascus	not specified	*Taʿlīq*, 1:83; *Mufākahah*, 1:50

No.	Date	Name	Office/Location	Amounts/Methods of Payment	Source
18	Dhū al-Qaʻdah 886/ Dec. 1481	Shihāb al-Dīn al-Ramlī	*nāʾib qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʻī*, Damascus	not specified	*Taʻlīq*, 1:110
19	Ṣafar 887/ Mar. 1482	Muḥammad al-ʻAẓamah	*nāẓir al-awqāf*, Cairo	not specified	*Dhayl*, fol. 319; *Badāʾiʻ*, 3:192
20	Ramaḍān 887/ Oct. 1482	Shihāb al-Dīn al-ʻAzāzī (al-ʻAdhāwī?)	*nāʾib qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʻī*, Damascus	200 dinars	*Taʻlīq*, 1:195
21	Jumādá II 889/ June 1484	Taqī al-Dīn ibn Qāḍī Zuraʻ	*nāʾib al-ḥukm*, Damascus	not specified	*Taʻlīq*, 1:370; *Mufākahah*, 1:63
22	Rajab 889/ July 1484	Shihāb al-Dīn al-ʻAzāzī	*nāʾib qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʻī*, Damascus	80 or 400 dinars	*Taʻlīq*, 1:380; *Mufākahah*, 1:63
23	Rajab 889/ July 1484	Shams al-Dīn al-Muzalliq	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʻī*, Damascus	10,000 dinars	*Taʻlīq*, 1:380; *Mufākahah*, 1:64
24	Shaʻbān 889/ Aug. 1484	Shams al-Dīn al-Muzalliq	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʻī*, Damascus	not specified	*Wajīz*, 3:950
25	Shaʻbān 889/ Aug. 1484	Sharaf al-Dīn ibn al-Baqarī	*nāẓir al-awqāf*, Cairo	not specified	*Dhayl*, fol. 337
26	Shaʻbān 890/ Aug. 1485	Shihāb al-Dīn al-ʻAzāzī	*nāʾib qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʻī*, Damascus	not specified	*Taʻlīq*, 1:508
27	Shaʻbān 890/ Aug. 1485	Shihāb al-Dīn al-Ḥimṣī	*nāʾib al-ḥukm*, Damascus	cash + livestock	Ibid., 511
28	Shaʻbān 890/ Aug. 1485	Badr al-Dīn ibn Ajā	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī*, Aleppo	not specified	*Dhayl*, fols. 346v–347

No.	Date	Name	Office/Location	Amounts/Methods of Payment	Source
29	Dhū al-Qaʿdah 891/ Nov. 1486	Zayn al-Dīn al-Ḥasbānī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī*, Damascus	14,000 dinars	*Tārīkh*, 116
30	Dhū al-Qaʿdah 891/ Nov. 1486	Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-ʿAdawī	*wakīl al-sulṭān, nāẓir al-dhakhīrah*, Damascus	not specified	Ibid.
31	Ramaḍān 892/ Aug. 1487	Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-Dahānah	*shaykh al-jāmiʿ* al-Muʾayyadī, Cairo	not specified	*Dhayl*, fol. 366v; *Badāʾiʿ*, 3:243
32	Ramaḍān 892/ Aug. 1487	Badr al-Dīn al-Makīnī	*shaykh* al-Khashshābīyah, Cairo	about 2,000 dinars	*Wajīz*, 3:1009; *Dhayl*, fols. 366v–367; *Badāʾiʿ*, 3:243
33	Ṣafar 895/ Dec. 1489	Sirāj al-Dīn al-Ṣayrafī	*mudarris* al-Shāmīyah al-Barrānīyah, Damascus	600 dinars	*Tārīkh*, 140; *Ḥawādith*, 1:321–22; *Mufākahah*, 1:115
34	Rajab 895/ May 1490	Yūsuf ibn al-Minqār	*kātib al-sirr, nāẓir al-jaysh, nāẓir al-qalʿah, nāẓir al-bīmāristān*, Aleppo	not specified	*Wajīz*, 3:1139
35	Shawwāl 895/ Aug. 1490	Muḥibb al-Dīn ibn al-Qusayf	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī*, Damascus	3,000 dinars	*Mufākahah*, 1:130
36	Dhū al-Qaʿdah 895/ Sept. 1490	Shihāb al-Dīn ibn al-Ṣayrafī	*mudarris shāfiʿī* al-Shaykhūnīyah, Cairo	not specified	*Dhayl*, fol. 398

No.	Date	Name	Office/Location	Amounts/Methods of Payment	Source
37	Rajab 896/ May 1491	Burhān al-Dīn ibn al-Quṭb	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī,* Damascus	2,000 dinars	*Tārīkh,* 147; *Mufākahah,* 1:140
38	Dhū al-Qaʿdah 897/ Aug. 1492	ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq al-Sunbāṭī	*mudarris* al-Manṣūrīyah, Cairo	1,000 dinars	*Wajīz,* 3:1261
39	Dhū al Qaʿdah 897/ Aug. 1492	Zayn al-Dīn ibn al-Jamāʿah	*khaṭīb, shaykh al-shuyūkh khānqāh,* Jerusalem	not specified	Ibid., 1262
40	Rabīʿ I 904/ Nov. 1498	Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Ṣafadī	*nāẓir al-bīmāristān* al-Manṣūrī, *wakīl al-sulṭān,* Cairo	not specified	*Ḥawādith,* 2:61
41	Ṣafar 906/ Aug. 1500	Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-Naqīb	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī,* Cairo	7,000 dinars	*Badāʾiʿ,* 3:448
42	Rajab 906/ Jan. 1501	Burhān al-Dīn ibn al-Karakī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī,* Cairo	not specified	Ibid., 471
43	Dhū al-Ḥijjah 906/ June 1501	Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-Naqīb	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī,* Cairo	not specified	*Badāʾiʿ,* 4:12; *Ḥawādith,* 2:127
44	Jumādá I 911/ Sept. 1505	Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qalqashandī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī,* Cairo	3,000 dinars	*Badāʾiʿ,* 4:91
45	Dhū al-Qaʿdah 911/Mar. 1506	Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-Naqīb	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī,* Cairo	5,000 dinars	Ibid.

No.	Date	Name	Office/Location	Amounts/Methods of Payment	Source
46	Dhū al-Ḥijjah 915/ Mar. 1510	Badr al-Dīn al-Makīnī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfi'ī, shaykh al-Khashshābīyah and al-Sharīfīyah,* Cairo	3,000 dinars	Ibid., 171
47	Rabī' I 916/ June 1510	Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-Naqīb	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfi'ī,* Cairo	not specified	Ibid., 183
48	Jumādá I 916/ Aug. 1510	Kamāl al-Dīn al-Ṭawīl	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfi'ī, shaykh al-Khashshābīyah, al-Sharīfīyah, and al-Baybarsīyah,* Cairo	5,000 dinars	Ibid., 189
49	Sha'bān 916/ Nov. 1510	'Alā' al-Dīn al-Ramlī	*nā'ib qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfi'ī,* Damascus; *mutakallim,* al-Ḥaramayn	100 *ashrafī*s 150 *ashrafī*s	*Mufākahah,* 1:347
50	Ṣafar 917/ Apr. 1511	Badr al-Dīn ibn al-Mu'tamid	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfi'ī,* Damascus	40 sacks of barley	Ibid., 354
51	Ṣafar 917/ Apr. 1511	Jamāl al-Dīn al-Dūbānī al-Ruḥaybī	*nā'ib qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfi'ī,* Damascus	200 *ashrafī*s	Ibid.
52	Rajab 918/ Sept. 1512	Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-Naqīb	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfi'ī,* Cairo	3,000 dinars	*Badā'i',* 4:280–81
53	Dhū al-Qa'dah 918/ Jan. 1513	Kamāl al-Dīn al-Ṭawīl	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfi'ī,* Cairo	not specified	Ibid., 290

No.	Date	Name	Office/Location	Amounts/Methods of Payment	Source
54	Rabīʿ I 919/ May 1513	Shihāb al-Dīn al-Shīshīnī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanbalī,* Cairo	1,000 dinars	Ibid., 305
55	Dhū al-Qaʿdah 919/ Dec. 1513	Muḥibb al-Dīn ibn Yūsuf	*nāẓir al-awqāf al-ḥanafīyah,* Damascus	3,000 dinars	*Mufākahah,* 1:378
56	Jumādá II 921/ July 1515	Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-Naqīb	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī,* Cairo	3,000 dinars	*Badāʾiʿ,* 4:460–61
57	Rajab 921/ Aug. 1515	Kamāl al-Dīn al-Ṭawīl	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī,* Cairo	3,000 dinars	Ibid., 469
58	Shaʿbān 921/ Sept. 1515	Taqī al-Dīn al-Qarā	*imām* al-Umawī, Damascus	not specified	*Mufākahah,* 1:386
59	Ramaḍān 921/ Oct. 1515	Ḥusām al-Dīn ibn al-Shiḥnah	*qāḍī al-quḍāh ḥanafī,* Cairo	3,000 dinars	*Badāʾiʿ,* 4:477
60	Ramaḍān 921/ Oct. 1515	Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Damīrī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh mālikī,* Cairo	2,000 dinars	Ibid.
61	Muḥarram 922/ Feb. 1516	Shams al-Dīn al-Sikandarī	*imām,* Cairo	1,200 dinars	Ibid., 5:13
62	Ṣafar 922/ Mar. 1516	Shihāb al-Dīn ibn al-Rūmī	*imām al-sulṭān,* Cairo	1,000 dinars	Ibid., 15
63	Rabīʿ II 922/ May 1516	Māmāy al-Ṣughayr	*muḥtasib,* Cairo	15,000 dinars	Ibid., 27

III. Administrative Functions

No.	Date	Name	Office/Location	Amounts/Methods of Payment	Source
1	Jumādá I 874/ Nov. 1469	Tāj al-Dīn ibn al-Hayṣam	*mustawfī al-khāṣṣ,* Cairo	1,000 weighed dinars	*Inbā',* 152
2	Jumādá I 875/ Oct. 1470	Qāsim ibn al-Qarāfī	vizier, Cairo	20,000 weighed dinars	Ibid., 226
3	Rajab 876/ Dec. 1471	Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān	*ṣayrafī,* Jidda	10,000 weighed dinars	Ibid., 383
4	Ramaḍān 876/ Feb. 1472	Quṭb al-Dīn al-Khayḍarī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī, kātib al-sirr,* Damascus	about 30,000 dinars	Ibid., 406, 423
5	Ṣafar 881/ May 1476	Quṭb al-Dīn al-Khayḍarī	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī, kātib al-sirr,* Damascus	not specified	*Dhayl,* fol. 271v; *Badāʾiʿ,* 3:119
6	Ṣafar 886/ Mar. 1481	Shihāb al-Dīn ibn al-Farfūr	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī, nāẓir al-jaysh, wakīl al-sulṭān, nāẓir al-qalʿah,* Damascus	32,000 dinars	*Taʿlīq,* 1:49; *Mufākahah,* 1:36–37
7	Ṣafar 886/ Mar. 1481	Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-ʿAdawī	*nāẓir al-qalʿah, wakīl al-sulṭān,* Damascus	26,000 dinars	*Taʿlīq,* 1:51; *Mufākahah,* 1:37
8	Rabīʿ I 886/ Apr. 1481	Shihāb al-Dīn ibn al-Farfūr	*qāḍī al-quḍāh shāfiʿī, nāẓir al-jaysh, nāẓir al-qalʿah, wakīl al-sulṭān,* Damascus	30,000 dinars	*Mufākahah,* 1:39
9	Jumādá II 889/ June 1484	Qāsim Shughaytah	vizier, Cairo	not specified	*Dhayl,* fol. 336v
10	Dhū al-Qaʿdah 891/ Nov. 1486	Zayn al-Dīn al-Ḥasbānī	*kātib al-sirr,* Damascus	4,000 dinars	*Tārīkh,* 115–16
11	Dhū al-Qaʿdah 891/ Nov. 1486	Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-ʿAdawī	*wakīl al-sulṭān, nāẓir al-dhakhīrah,* Damascus	not specified	Ibid., 116
12	Rabīʿ I 893/ Feb. 1488	Muwaffaq al-Dīn al-Ḥamawī	*nāẓir al-jaysh,* Damascus	not specified	*Dhayl,* fols. 372v–373; *Badāʾiʿ,* 3:248

No.	Date	Name	Office/Location	Amounts/Methods of Payment	Source
13	Rabīʿ I 893/ Feb. 1488	ʿAbd al-Raḥīm al-Ḥamawī	*kātib al-sirr*, Damascus	not specified	*Dhayl*, fols. 372v–373; *Badāʾiʿ*, 3:248
14	Ramaḍān 893/ Aug. 1488	Badr al-Dīn ibn Muzhir	*kātib al-sirr*, Cairo	cash + part of inheritance	*Badāʾiʿ*, 3:255
15	Shawwāl 893/ Sept. 1488	Muḥibb al-Dīn ibn Yūsuf	*nāẓir al-jaysh*, *nāẓir al-jawālī*, Damascus	10,000 or 20,000 dinars	*Tārīkh*, 140; *Ḥawādith*, 1:321–22; *Mufākahah*, 1:99
16	Rajab 895/ May 1490	Yūsuf ibn al-Minqār	*kātib al-sirr*, *nāẓir al-jaysh*, *nāẓir al-qalʿah*, *nāẓir al-bīmāristān*, Aleppo	not specified	*Wajīz*, 3:1139
17	Jumādá II 902/ Feb. 1497	Muḥibb al-Dīn ibn Yūsuf	*kātib al-sirr*, *nāẓir al-jaysh*, *nāẓir al-jawālī*, *nāẓir al-qalʿah*, Damascus	1,000 horses	*Tārīkh*, 202
18	Jumādá I 905/ Dec. 1499	Zayn al-Dīn ibn al-Nayrabī	*nāẓir al-jaysh*, Damascus	not specified	*Badāʾiʿ*, 3:428
19	Jumādá I 912/ Sept. 1506	Fakhr al-Dīn ibn al-ʿAfīf	*kātib al-mamālīk*, Cairo	2,000 dinars	Ibid., 4:99
20	Muḥarram 918/ Mar. 1512	Sharaf al-Dīn ibn Rawq	*nāẓir al-khazāʾin al-sharīfah*, *mustawfī*, Cairo	5,000 dinars	Ibid., 257
21	Rabīʿ I 920/ Apr. 1514	Sharaf al-Dīn al-Ṣughayr	*nāẓir al-dawlah*, *kātib al-mamālīk*, *mutakallim fī thulth al-wizārah*, Cairo	8,000 dinars + 5,000 *ardabb*s of barley	Ibid., 370–71

John L. Meloy
American University of Beirut

Economic Intervention and the Political Economy of the Mamluk State under al-Ashraf Barsbāy

The economic interventions of the sultan al-Ashraf Barsbāy (r. 825–41/1422–38) have become emblematic of his reign, whether used as evidence for the impact of his character on his administration or as a means to contend with the deterioration of the Egyptian economy.[1] Barsbāy′s involvement in the spice trade is often cited as the most destructive of his policies, instigating ″the ruin of the upper stratum of the Levantine bourgeoisie.″[2] Taking a different approach to this issue, Jean-Claude Garcin has argued that the sultan′s spice trade policy enabled him to consolidate his political position.[3] This policy involved a two-pronged strategy of securing the Hijaz to control the passage of the trade through Jedda and of invading Cyprus to control European interference in eastern Mediterranean shipping.

Barsbāy′s political consolidation, however, had a paradoxical quality. In the Mediterranean, within one year of its conquest by the Mamluks in 829/1426, Barsbāy came to rely on indirect rule in Cyprus through his reinstatement of the King of Cyprus.[4] In the Red Sea, less than two years after the installation of a Mamluk officer as co-ruler of Mecca in 827/1424, the sultan reinstated the deposed sharif as ruler of the Holy City.[5] In the latter case, the financial gains from restrictions imposed on spice merchants were offset by fiscal concessions—although

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[1]Ahmed Darrag, *L′Égypte sous le règne de Barsbay, 825–841/1422–1438* (Damascus, 1961); Harry Miskimin, Robert Lopez, and Abraham Udovitch, ″England to Egypt, 1350–1500: Long-Term Trends and Long-Distance Trade,″ in *Studies in the Economic and Social History of the Middle East,* ed. Michael A. Cook (London, 1972), 93–128.

[2]Eliyahu Ashtor, *Levant Trade in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1983), 280.

[3]Jean-Claude Garcin, ″The Regime of the Circassian Mamluks,″ in *The Cambridge History of Egypt,* vol. 1, *Islamic Egypt, 640–1517,* ed. Carl F. Petry (Cambridge, 1998), 290–317, esp. 293–94.

[4]In Jumādá II 830 (March–April 1427); Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Ma'rifat Duwal al-Mulūk,* ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá Ziyādah and Sa'īd 'Abd al-Fattāḥ 'Āshūr (Cairo, 1956–73), 4:741, 743, 878.

[5]In Dhū al-Ḥijjah 828 (October–November 1425), Sharif Ḥasan ibn 'Ajlān resumed his position in Mecca; Taqī al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Fāsī, *Al-'Iqd al-Thamīn fī Tārīkh al-Balad al-Amīn,* ed. Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Fiqī (Cairo, 1959–69), 4:151; al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:700.

the precise figures are not known—to the Meccan sharifs, who had successfully resisted Mamluk domination. The Mamluks´ failure to overcome this opposition led to Barsbāy´s reliance on the sharif of Mecca as his political broker in the region, to whom he was eventually compelled to relinquish part of the fiscal benefits of the trade as it passed through Jedda.[6] The sultan´s relations with Cyprus and the Hijaz are paralleled by the situation in Upper Egypt, where the amirs of the Hawwārah Bedouin won considerable autonomy from Cairo.[7] So while Barsbāy attempted to consolidate his political position by dominating the commercial resources of the Mamluk economy, an action no doubt induced by the constrained economic circumstances described by Udovitch, the sultan ultimately had to lighten his grip on local powers. The inability of the Sultanate to impose direct control on these outlying areas and the means by which it incorporated the Meccan sharif, the Cypriot king, and the Hawwārah amir into the state apparatus are remarkable indications of both the weakness and the resilience of the Mamluk state.

In light of this paradoxical aspect of the Mamluk state´s ″foreign″ relations, it is also worth considering Barsbāy´s interventions in the domestic economy of Egypt. Just as the spice trade policy had a political dimension, in which the Sultanate´s spice monopoly had to comply with the exigencies of Hijazi politics, the regime´s attempts to control the domestic economy had an impact on the internal politics of the Mamluks. The contemporary chronicle sources for the reign of Barsbāy indicate that the state both imposed and attempted to impose a number of measures to control the sale and production of a variety of products. Although historians of this reign have obliquely acknowledged the tensions between Barsbāy and the political elite, the economic interventions of the sultan have generally been portrayed within a political vacuum. In general this view may be a consequence of the apparent robustness of Barsbāy´s rule: he pushed the boundaries of state power during a period of protracted economic decline. More often than not, however, accounts of Barsbāy´s actions fail to mention the resistance he encountered or their failure altogether. A particularly vivid example may be cited from an otherwise very illuminating article by Eliyahu Ashtor. In the case of the sugar interventions, while noting the opposition of the amirs, Ashtor concludes that Barsbāy ″had recourse to other methods of extortion,″ and the reader infers that the sultan was driven by his ″cruelty″ and ″greed,″ to use Ashtor´s words, to

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[6]John L. Meloy, ″Imperial Strategy and Political Exigency: The Red Sea Spice Trade and the Mamluk Sultanate in the Fifteenth Century,″ *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 123, no. 1 (2003): 1–19.

[7]Jean-Claude Garcin, *Un centre musulman de la Haute-Égypte médiévale, Qūṣ* (Cairo, 1976), 477.

dominate the sugar market.[8] To be fair, Ashtor was first of all interested in economic issues and thus did not pursue the political implications of resistance to the sultan. In addition, he quite naturally was building on the conclusions of other scholars. However, even if Barsbāy was indeed an extraordinarily unsavory character, such cursory assessments have perhaps inhibited the investigation of the political dimensions of his reign.

The most comprehensive treatment of Barsbāy's reign is, of course, that of Ahmad Darrag, although in the wealth of detail he betrays some uncertainty in determining the basis of the sultan's policy. Was it built on responses to prevailing economic problems or was it determined by his character? Both readings have been taken from Darrag's work.[9] But when we consider these two factors, one may yet wonder where politics were in the determination of policy. Darrag's and other historians' treatment of the sultan's character cannot be examined fully here; such a study would be lengthy since this characterization is rooted in those of earlier modern historians and of the Mamluk biographers. But regarding Darrag's use of the internal monopolies in support of his view of Barsbāy's character, it is important to note that a comparison of his discussion of these interventions with the entire set of information provided by the chronicles concerning the commodities of wheat and sugar, for which we have a relatively substantial amount of data, reveals the sultan to have been less of a threat to the domestic economy than members of the military and civilian elite were. From the perspective of these chronicle reports rather than biographical assessments, we can examine the Sultanate's economic interventions in the context of competition in the political economy of Egypt.[10] Examination of the entire set of evidence clarifies the nature and extent of these interventions; moreover, the evidence shows that in 832/1429 there was a shift in the regime's policy concerning these commodities, allowing an interpretation that places these actions within the broader context of the sultan's political consolidation. The resulting view casts the relations between Barsbāy and the economic elite who had vested interests in these commodities in a more nuanced light, so that his interventions are a useful opportunity to examine the disposition of state power and wealth in fifteenth-century Egypt.

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[8]Eliyahu Ashtor, ″Levantine Sugar Industry in the Later Middle Ages,″ *Israel Oriental Studies* 7 (1977): 242, 243. Ashtor also speculated on the extent of corruption in the Mamluk sugar industry, citing examples from the thirteenth and fourteenth centures (p. 244); he did not mention Barsbāy in this context. He later noted the ″opposition″ to interventions in sugar: *Levant Trade in the Later Middle Ages,* 278.

[9]R. Stephen Humphreys, *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry* (Princeton, 1991), 184–85; Garcin, ″The Regime of the Circassian Mamluks,″ 293.

[10]An approach adopted by Garcin, for example, in his ″Jean-Léon l'Africain et 'Aydhab,″ *Annales islamologiques* 11 (1972): 189–209.

Before proceeding, however, there are two weaknesses of the sources that must be acknowledged. One is that most information on this topic comes from Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Maqrīzī′s chronicle *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Maʿrifat Duwal al-Mulūk.* Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad al-ʿAynī, in his chronicle *ʿIqd al-Jumān fī Tārīkh Ahl al-Zamān,* has little or nothing to say about economic matters.[11] The reliability of al-Maqrīzī′s information is to some extent affirmed by another important chronicle of these years, Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn Ḥajar′s *Inbāʾ al-Ghumr bi-Abnāʾ al-ʿUmr,* which provides corroborating evidence for some of al-Maqrīzī′s reports.[12] The chronicle of ʿAlī ibn Dāwūd al-Ṣayrafī, *Nuzhat al-Nufūs wa-al-Abdān fī Tawārīkh al-Zamān,* and those of Ibn Taghrībirdī, particularly *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah,* have little in the way of details to add to al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Ḥajar for the years in question; neither do later historians like al-Sakhāwī and Ibn Iyās.[13] While we should, of course, judge al-Maqrīzī′s conclusions and assessments with circumspection, particularly his pointed views on the sultan′s comportment and personality, his economic data may be considered as a useful starting point for a general understanding of particular aspects of the Mamluk political economy.

The second weakness concerns the range of commodities that we can examine. Along with spices, commodities as diverse as firewood, textiles, and foodstuffs, as well as ″strategic″ resources such as natron and alum, were all subject to the control of the sultan′s commercial bureau *(al-matjar al-sulṭānī).*[14] The state monopolies on the production of natron and alum are well established in administrative sources and go back to the Fatimid period. The extraction of these two minerals in particular was perhaps confined largely to certain localities such as the Wadi Natrun so that a state monopoly would have been sustained rather easily. As for restrictions on other, more widely available commodities during the Mamluk period, our information is unfortunately rather fleeting, so it is difficult to understand the nature of these interventions in a detailed way. However, we can reach some conclusions about a number of products that were significant enough to be mentioned fairly frequently. Of course, spices are mentioned often in the sources because of their value and, as has long been recognized, because

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[11]Al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd al-Jumān,* ed. ʿAbd al-Rāziq al-Ṭanṭāwī Qarmūṭ (Cairo, 1985, 1989), covering the years 815–50/1412–47.

[12]Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʾ al-Ghumr,* ed. Ḥasan Ḥabashī (Cairo, 1969–72).

[13]Al-Ṣayrafī, *Nuzhat al-Nufūs,* ed. Ḥasan Ḥabashī (Cairo, 1970–73); Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah* (Cairo, 1963–72).

[14]On the *matjar,* see: Subhi Y. Labib, *Handelsgeschichte Ägyptens im Spätmittelalter, 1171–1517* (Wiesbaden, 1965), 164–65; Ira M. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1967), 127; and Subhi Labib, ″Al-Iskandariyyah,″ *The Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., 4:132. On special resources, see: Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-Aʿshá fī Ṣināʿat al-Inshāʾ* (Cairo, 1913–20), 3:459–61.

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they constituted an important resource available to the Mamluk authorities. As for domestic commodities, the commodities of sugar and wheat, which have also received some attention by historians investigating other aspects of the Mamluk economy,[15] are sufficient to offer some idea of the nature of the regime′s interventions, the relationship between the sultan and Egypt′s military and civilian elite, many of whom were large stakeholders in the economy, and the consequences of these restrictions on Egypt′s political economy.[16]

WHEAT

Wheat was a major crop in the Nile Valley. The elite of Mamluk society, amirs and high-ranking officials in the administration, accumulated and stored their wealth in the form of grain.[17] Egypt ordinarily exported wheat to surrounding regions—the Hijaz is often cited as a destination since it imported a considerable quantity of its food, but also places more fertile and further afield in the eastern Mediterranean received Egyptian grain. In times of dearth, which could occur for a variety of reasons, such as an inadequate Nile inundation, Egypt imported grain. While Popper′s study shows that the failure of the Nile to reach plenitude was relatively rare during the Circassian period, that possibility nevertheless generated considerable anxiety every year.[18] Even in the short term, the price of wheat was very volatile, as one can see from Popper′s compilations of prices for the years

[15]On wheat: Ashtor, ″The Wheat Supply of the Mamluk Kingdom,″ *Asian and African Studies* 18 (1984): 283–95; Ira M. Lapidus, ″The Grain Economy of Mamluk Egypt,″ *The Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 12 (1969): 1–15; Boaz Shoshan, ″Grain Riots and the ′Moral Economy′: Cairo, 1350–1517,″ *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 10/3 (1980): 459–78; idem, ″Money Supply and Grain Prices in Fifteenth-Century Egypt,″ *The Economic History Review* (new ser.) 36/1 (1983): 47–67.

On sugar: Ashtor, ″Levantine Sugar Industry″; Sato Tsugitaka, ″Sugar in the Economic Life of Mamluk Egypt,″ *Mamlūk Studies Review* 8, no. 2 (2004): 87–108; Mauritz Sobernheim, ″Das Zuckermonopol unter Sultan Barsbai,″ *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und verwandte Gebiete* 27 (1912): 75–84.

On agriculture in general: Sato Tsugitaka, *State and Rural Society in Medieval Islam* (Leiden, 1997); Heinz Halm, *Ägypten nach den mamlukischen Lehensregistern* (Wiesbaden, 1979–92); Hassanein Rabie, *The Financial System of Egypt, A.H. 564–741/A.D. 1169–1341* (London, 1972); and Gladys Frantz-Murphy, *The Agrarian Administration of Egypt from the Arabs to the Ottomans* (Cairo, 1986).

[16]Lapidus, ″Grain Economy,″ 9–10; Gaston Wiet, *L′Égypte arabe*, vol. 4 of *Histoire de la Nation égyptienne*, ed. Gabriel Hanotaux (Paris, 1931–40), 451.

[17]Ashtor, ″Wheat Supply,″ 293; Lapidus, ″Grain Supply,″ 10; idem, *Muslim Cities,* 51–52; A. N. Poliak, ″Les révoltes populaires en Égypte à l′époque des Mamelouks et leurs causes économiques,″ *Revue des études islamiques* (1934): 261.

[18]William Popper, *The Cairo Nilometer: Studies in Ibn Taghrî Birdî′s Chronicles of Egypt: I* (Berkeley, 1951), 209–10; Adel Allouche, *Mamluk Economics* (Salt Lake City, 1994), 11–12.

1394–96 and 1448–57.[19] Under these general circumstances, with the political elite holding large grain stocks, it comes as no surprise to find in the chronicles reports of speculation in the grain market.

Al-Maqrīzī made relatively numerous and substantive comments on the wheat market, reflecting his long-standing interest in economic issues and his *muḥtasib*-like preoccupation with the well being of the *ummah*. Of course, grain speculation could pose a serious problem that caused the populace extreme hardship at times, virtually eliminating wheat from the marketplace and interrupting the production of bread. To some extent, one might have been able to anticipate the occurrence of speculation since it often took place at particular times in the agricultural calendar, which of course hinged on the flooding of the Nile. The river usually started to rise from its annual low in June and peaked at Cairo in late August. In accordance with the natural cycle, wheat was sown from October to December and harvested from April to May, just before the onset of the inundation. In Upper Egypt the planting and harvesting seasons were a few weeks earlier.[20] To return to al-Maqrīzī, in Dhū al-Qaʿdah 836 (19 June–18 July 1433), just before the rise in the Nileʹs level, wheat prices climbed 30 percent (from 100 to 130 *dirham fulūs* per *irdabb*). Al-Maqrīzī observed that the reason for this rise in price was that a group of people of means *(al-nās)* had made it a practice to try to set off a rise in prices by spreading rumors during the season of the increase of the Nile that it would not reach plenitude. The disinformation would then prompt the grain producers to withhold sales and the merchants to buy up what they could in order to store it, waiting for the opportunity to make a substantial profit. The ensuing rise in prices would allow dealers to sell at an artificially high price to nervous buyers.[21] In this particular incident, other commodity prices rose as well.

A similar incident occurred in the summer of 831/1428. At the beginning of Dhū al-Qaʿdah (12 August–10 September 1428), prices, having been ʺlow,ʺ started to rise to the extent that wheat surpassed the price of 300 *dirham fulūs* per *irdabb*. Prices of other commodities rose as well. Fodder became so scarce that the amirs sent their men to the villages surrounding the city to gather it, often by force. The situation caused the sultan to take the measure of controlling the supply of fodder, monopolizing its sale at a fixed price in the square below the Citadel. It is noteworthy that al-Maqrīzī does not remark that this was unjust in any way. The following month there was still a dearth of wheat on the market even though, according to

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[19]William Popper, *Egypt and Syria under the Circassian Sultans, 1382–1468 A.D.: Systematic Notes to Ibn Taghrî Birdîʹs Chronicles of Egypt (Continued)* (Berkeley, 1957), 95–100.

[20]Sato, *State and Rural Society,* 198, 254; W. Willcocks and J. I. Craig, *Egyptian Irrigation* (London, 1913), 163, Table 263.

[21]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:893–94; al-Ṣayrafī, *Nuzhat al-Nufūs,* 3:261–62.

al-Maqrīzī, it was plentiful in traders´ silos and storehouses since they were interested in gaining maximum profit from their transactions. Consequently, the price rose above 400 *dirham fulūs,* when finally ˝God looked gladly upon his faithful,˝ and the price fell. Ibn Ḥajar´s take on this incident was that the price had reached 400 before it fell, after which the silos of the sultan and others were opened so that the market´s supply became sufficient.[22] The rise in prices may have stopped when the Nile reached plenitude so that the speculators would have been unable to continue playing on people´s fears about the viability of the crop of the following year.[23]

Ordinarily, during the growing season prices would remain relatively stable. However, a rise in prices could be triggered by shortages induced by hoarding, which is what happened in Rabīʿ I 832 (9 December 1428–7 January 1429). From the condition of low prices at the end of 831, noted above, the price of wheat rose to 450 *dirham fulūs* per *irdabb,* and then to 500, along with an equally alarming rise in prices of other commodities. Al-Maqrīzī and al-Ṣayrafī noted that speculation caused the price of wheat to rise to 280 *dirham fulūs* per *irdabb* in Jumādá II (8 March–5 April 1429),[24] until it began to decline to 220 in Rajab (6 April–5 May 1429).[25] The sources do not implicate the sultan in this episode of speculation. At this point, however, the sultan forced the sale of his stocks of grain on people of means *(al-nās),* raising the price from 220 to 300 *dirham fulūs* per *irdabb*.[26]

Not all incidents of speculation occurred in association with the flooding of the Nile. Prices took a sharp turn upwards in early 829 (started 13 November 1425). In the middle of Ṣafar (13 December 1425–10 January 1426) of that year, the price of wheat rose again until it eventually surpassed 300 dirhams per *irdabb*. Wheat flour and bread were scarce in the markets, and by the last day of the month the crisis had reached the point where people were fighting for wheat. Al-Maqrīzī attributed this rise in price to a number of factors. First, the supply of foodstuffs to Cairo was blocked by strong winds that prevented boats from sailing on the Nile so that the quays became empty of goods. News of severe inflation came from Bilād al-Shām, where the price of an *irdabb* of wheat had reached 1000 *dirham fulūs,* and in Upper Egypt also wheat was scarce, setting off a rise in prices in Cairo. To make matters worse, an outbreak of disease among livestock caused losses to farmers to the extent that a man who owned 150 water buffaloes

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[22]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:782–83; Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʾ al-Ghumr,* 3:405.

[23]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:784; on determining plenitude, see Popper, *Cairo Nilometer,* 69–70.

[24]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:794; al-Ṣayrafī, *Nuzhat al-Nufūs,* 3:148, who dates this to the following month, Rabīʿ II 832.

[25]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:796, 799, 800.

[26]Ibid., 801.

lost all but four of them.[27] The situation may have been exacerbated by poor administration: al-Maqrīzī stated that the *muḥtasib* of Cairo, Amir Īnāl al-Shishmānī, was especially severe in dealing with the grain traders so that many were inclined to abandon their occupations.[28]

Whatever the real causes, under these extreme circumstances of dearth, al-Maqrīzī commented that the notables became ″avaricious.″ When the price of wheat in Egypt reached 250 *dirham fulūs* per *irdabb,* a number of amirs of a thousand refused to sell their stocks of wheat, reputedly saying that they would only sell when the price reached 300 dirhams. The sultan himself made no attempt to sell from his stocks, fearing that his small supply would be unable to ameliorate the problem, which of course led people of means *(al-nās)* to suspect his complicity in the matter. The result was that it came to be said of the market inspector *(mutawallī al-ḥisbah),* even though all of this was beyond his capacity to rectify, that ″the calamities were heaped on one individual.″[29] A day later, the first day of Rabī' I (11 January–9 February), it would seem that the hoarders could hold out no longer since speculation stopped and bread was again available in the bakeries. In addition, the sultan began to distribute it to the poor on a daily basis, perhaps an indication of a stable market.[30]

Barsbāy′s administration undertook some effort to stop speculation in the wheat market. In Dhū al-Qa'dah 830 (24 August–22 September 1427), the price of wheat rose to more than 200 *dirham fulūs* per *irdabb,* after it had reached a low of 80 dirhams in Rajab (28 April–27 May),[31] which accompanied an increase in the price of other commodities. Anticipating an opportunity to make a killing, traders began to buy quantities of the grain. In order to prevent speculation, the sultan forbade purchases of more than ten *irdabb*s of wheat at a price of 150 *dirham fulūs* per *irdabb*.[32] Al-Maqrīzī does not mention how the incident ended, but the Nile reached plenitude just weeks later and the market probably stabilized.[33]

The regime also tried to interdict hoarding in Dhū al-Ḥijjah 829 (4 October–1 November 1426) and again the following month in Muḥarram 830.[34] In these

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[27]This outbreak is not documented by Michael Dols, *The Black Death in the Middle East* (Princeton, 1977), 310, Appendix 1; on plague epizootics, see 156–60.

[28]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:710–11; on Īnāl al-Shishmānī, see Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal al-Ṣāfī wa-al-Mustawfá ba'da al-Wāfī,* ed. Nabīl Muḥammad 'Abd al-'Azīz (Cairo, 1985), 3:207–8.

[29]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:711.

[30]Ibid., 712.

[31]Ibid., 744.

[32]Ibid., 750-51.

[33]Ibid., 752.

[34]Ibid., 729, 735.

decrees the sultan ordered the amirs and the notables to suspend the practice of protection *(al-ḥimāyah)* by removing their personal insignias *(runūk)* from their mills, shops, and presses. This order was probably designed to prevent hoarding and speculation through the practice of privatized protection, in which powerful members of the military and civilian elite *(al-ḥumāt)* would protect individuals from taxation and forced sales, for which the protectors would receive a payment.[35] This practice, which Ibn Taghrībirdī described as being ″the greatest of the causes of the ruin of Egypt and its villages,″[36] in effect reduced not only the state′s access to economic resources but also the state′s ability to control the marketplace. The effect of these measures may have had an immediate effect, but it is unlikely that it had any long-term preventative value since speculation continued to occur unabated, as mentioned above, in the following years.

While the sultan′s efforts to stop hoarding and speculation may have been for naught, starting in mid-832 (mid-1429) his interventions became very aggressive. He used his power to halt the conduct of commerce while forcing wholesalers to buy from his stocks—in effect cornering the market for a short period of time—and at the same time he tried to prohibit the use of privatized protection, which would otherwise diminish the resources available in the economy. In Rajab of that year (6 April–5 May 1429), in an incident cited above, the sultan′s commercial bureau forced the sale of a number of commodities so that the price of grain rose from 220 *dirham fulūs* per *irdabb* to 300.[37] Since the preceding month, the price had fallen from a high of 500 *dirham fulūs,*[38] an unusually high price that al-Maqrīzī attributed to speculators.[39]

In Rabīʿ I 833 (28 November–27 December 1429), the sultan was able to force the sale of wheat at a price of 360 *dirham fulūs* because the *muḥtasib* of Cairo (Īnāl al-Shishmānī, mentioned above) prevented the grain ships from docking at the quays of Miṣr and Būlāq, in order that the bureau could empty its stocks at the expense of the millers. It is not known what the price was prior to this intervention, but in Shawwāl of the previous year (4 July–1 August 1429), the price had risen to 250 *dirham fulūs*.[40] Shoshan interprets this episode as a failed

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[35]Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Khalīl al-Asadī, *Al-Taysīr wa-al-Iʿtibār wa-al-Taḥrīr wa-al-Ikhtibār fīmā Yajibu min Ḥusn al-Tadbīr wa-al-Taṣarruf wa-al-Ikhtiyār,* ed. ʿAbd al-Qādir Aḥmad Ṭulaymāt ([Cairo], 1968), 134-46, esp. 144; on the practice of *ḥimāyah,* see John L. Meloy, ″The Privatization of Protection: Extortion and the State in the Circassian Mamluk Period,″ *The Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 47, no. 2 (2004): 195-212.

[36]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah,* 16:160.

[37]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:801; cf. Darrag, *Barsbay,* 152.

[38]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:796, 799.

[39]Ibid., 783.

[40]Ibid., 804.

attempt at monopolization. However, the evidence does not indicate the imposition of permanent restrictions on sales but rather that it was a successful attempt to corner the market.[41] While the sultan, of course, gained in the short term, it is noteworthy that Ibn Ḥajar and al-Maqrīzī did not express their disapproval of this action, noting instead the benefits that ensued since it ultimately resulted in the lowering of the price of grain; al-Maqrīzī commented: ″Praise to God, perhaps the body will recuperate after the malady.″[42]

In Shawwāl 835 (1–29 June 1432), the sultan′s bureau bought rather than sold grain. Wheat was cheap and the sultan ordered his agents to purchase while imposing a moratorium on all other transactions until the bureau′s stocks were full. No doubt this meant a loss for the grain dealers, but al-Maqrīzī noted that the effect was salutary since the market had been stagnant and this generated sales.[43] Another report indicates that the sultan′s participation could have unintended consequences. In Jumādá II 840 (11 December 1436–8 January 1437), the sultan ordered his *matjar* to purchase 30,000 *irdabb*s to store in the royal granaries. People feared a rise in prices and began to buy up wheat, barley, and broad beans.[44]

While the sultan′s *matjar* no doubt intended to make a profit, and from 832 clearly used the sultan′s coercive power to dominate the market, the prevailing impression one gets from these reports is that a major threat to the economy was the predatory behavior of the economic elite. The sultan was successful in cornering the market in wheat at particular moments but he was much less successful in curtailing the manipulation of the market by the amirs and notables who traded in wheat. In an incident involving broad beans rather than wheat, in Ṣafar 838 (6 September–4 October 1434), the sultan forced the sale of 10,000 *irdabb*s of it at the unit price of 175 *dirham fulūs*. Al-Maqrīzī observed that the sultan ordered that anyone who enjoyed high rank *(jāh)* would not be protected from this decree. He also remarked that this order was not realized since those who held high rank or benefited from the protection of those with high rank were nevertheless able to escape the decree while those who did not were subject to it. Consequently, he stated, people of means *(al-nās)* had to bear losses, not from the rise in price, but

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[41]Shoshan, ″Grain Riots,″ 468.

[42]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:820; Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā' al-Ghumr,* 3:436; al-Ṣayrafī, *Nuzhat al-Nufūs,* 3:180–81.

[43]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:872; al-Ṣayrafī, *Nuzhat al-Nufūs,* 3:239; cf. Darrag, *Barsbay,* 152.

[44]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:1004; al-Ṣayrafī, *Nuzhat al-Nufūs,* 3:378. Darrag (*Barsbay,* 152–53) also notes that the price rose from 100 to 140 *dirham fulūs* per *irdabb,* and that the sultan made the purchase with the intention to profit; when people panicked, the price rose. He cites here al-Maqrīzī, whose information is very brief, and Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā' al-Ghumr,* whose report I have not been able to check.

rather from the fees *(kulaf),* referring to the protection fees that they had to pay to avoid the sultan′s interventions.[45]

The reports of these aggressive interventions are, however, relatively few, although Darrag cited them without fail in his discussion of the interior monopolies. In fact, Darrag′s concluding remarks are a bit ambiguous on the issue of a monopoly, but it is clear that he regarded the sultan′s actions as consistently predatory. The sum of the evidence on wheat, however, indicates that the interventions of the Mamluk elite in general were a serious or perhaps even greater problem for the populace than those of the sultan; certainly the elite were the greatest impediment to the state′s ability to regulate, much less monopolize, the market. Speculators were, as one would expect, individuals of means who were members of the upper echelons of the military, amirs of a thousand for example, or members of the civilian elite, denoted only as ″notables″ *(a‘yān).* The sultan, for his part, could ultimately do little to establish the administration′s fiscal control of the wheat market, except use his political power to enforce his priority in the trade, which he started to do after 832. Even in this regard, Barsbāy had to exert special efforts to prevent grain dealers from taking refuge within their own status or in the protection of their patrons. However, these efforts were apparently not successful. The evidence also suggests that his participation in the market was little more than occasional. After all, the profits from the wheat marker were not as lucrative as those from other commodities, like sugar.

Sugar

Barsbāy′s administration undertook a series of interventions in the sugar market. The nature and extent of these interventions has remained ambiguous. These took the form of decrees prohibiting the sale and the cultivation of sugar and then immediately the abolition of those orders leaving, as both Darrag and Ashtor have noted, an uncertainty about the situation.[46] Nevertheless, Darrag concluded that Barsbāy continued the sugar monopoly throughout his reign. Ashtor maintained that the last attempt at monopolization occurred in 836/1433, and that forced purchases were conducted as late as 839/1435.[47] Lapidus also argued for 836/1433 as the last monopolization. Lapidus called Barsbāy′s interventions ″a system of forced purchases in the form of a *gabelle,*″ referring to a practice used in eighteenth-

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[45]Note the typographical error in Darrag′s rendition of this incident—he states that it was 100,000 *irdabb*s (*Barsbay,* 152); al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:933; Asadī used the expression *kulfah* (pl. *kulaf*) to refer to protection payments (*Al-Taysīr wa-al-I‘tibār*, 136).

[46]Darrag, *Barsbay,* 150–51; Ashtor, ″Levantine Sugar Industry,″ 242–43; idem, *Levant Trade,* 278.

[47]Ashtor, ″Levantine Sugar Industry,″ 243.

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century France where the General Farm would force a community to purchase its salt at a higher than market price.[48] While this assessment goes some way in helping us understand the sultan´s actions, it is important to acknowledge that the nobility, clergy, and other privileged members of *ancien régime* society were exempt from the *gabelle*. In the case of Barsbāy´s interventions, communities of commoners were not the only targets of his interventions. He eventually had to abandon intervention in the sugar market since it struck too close to the interests of the military and civilian elite who were his competitors in the market.

It is helpful to understand this series of decrees in the context of the agricultural calendar. Since sugar cane cultivation exhausted the soil, in Mamluk Egypt it was planted for two consecutive years before the land was left fallow.[49] There were minor differences in the growing seasons of the two crops (respectively, *al-ra's* and *al-khilfah*) but in general, the cane was planted in February and March and was harvested in November and December, possibly continuing into the first months of the following year.[50] Sato Tsugitaka has observed that the cultivation of cane required not only relatively new farming technology, such as a heavy plow, but also the equipment and labor used in turning sugar cane into sugar—processing plants, where the cane is prepared, pressing factories to produce the juice, and refineries where the juice is repeatedly boiled and filtered, finally producing different grades of sugar and molasses.[51] All of this involved capital investment that only the political and economic elite could provide.

The first decree, dating to Dhū al-Qaʿdah 826 (6 October–4 November 1423), ordered the closure of all sugar refineries *(maṭābikh),* just before the harvest would take place. In addition, the decree forbade the sale of all sugar and sugar products except from the sultan´s stocks, managed by an office *(dīwān),* presumably within the sultan´s commercial bureau.[52] According to Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, the sultan imposed this restriction on the advice of an influential merchant named Nūr al-Dīn al-Ṭanbadī, and they made a great deal of money. The embargo was lifted three months later, in Ṣafar 827 (4 January–1 February 1424), when the inspector of the army *(nāẓir al-jaysh),* who one would surmise had his own interests to

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[48]Lapidus, *Muslim Cities,* 56–57.

[49]Sato, *State and Rural Society,* 216–20, 254.

[50]Ibid., 190, 199; Marius Canard, ″Ḳaṣab al-Sukkar,″ *EI²,* 4:683; Willcocks and Craig, *Egyptian Irrigation,* 375.

[51]Sato, *State and Rural Society,* 215 ff.; idem., ″Sugar in the Economic Life of Mamluk Egypt,″ 91ff.

[52]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:647, 654; Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʾ al-Ghumr,* 3:309; cf. Sobernheim, ″Das Zuckermonopol,″ 81.

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protect in the sugar refining industry, returned from the pilgrimage and thwarted al-Ṭanbadī´s plans.[53]

During almost every year from 828 though 832, decrees similar to that of 826 were issued and revoked. The only one not issued during the cane harvesting season was that of Shaʻbān 828 (18 June–16 July 1425), when the sultan prohibited all but his own agents´ transactions on sugar.[54] There is no mention of this embargo being lifted but it is likely that it was not effective since in Dhū al-Ḥijjah 829 (4 October–1 November 1426) and again in Ṣafar 830 (2–30 December 1426), in reports cited in the previous section, the sultan subsequently ordered members of the elite to remove their personal insignias from their sugar presses, among other facilities—again just prior to or at the start of the harvest.[55] This decree was probably not intended to appropriate sugar stocks, as I have interpreted it before, but rather intended to stop hoarding and speculation through the practice of ḥimāyah.[56]

Barsbāy took more drastic measures in Ṣafar 831 (21 November–19 December 1427), at about the time of the harvest and also just before the planting season. Not only did he prohibit the production of molasses and sugar, but he also prohibited the cultivation of sugar cane. Again, the same report states it was immediately abolished.[57] The following year, in Rabīʻ II 832 (8 January–5 February 1429), both al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Ḥajar reported another decree announcing an embargo on sugar transactions, but not stating anything about cultivation. Again, this decree was abolished.[58]

Concerning this report, Ibn Ḥajar supplies additional information, stating that Nūr al-Dīn al-Ṭanbadī took 60,000 dinars from the sultan to engage in commerce. Al-Ṭanbadī invested it in sugar and the sultan prohibited all others from trading in

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[53]Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā' al-Ghumr,* 3:309; note that Ibn Ḥajar mentions this in his account of Dhū al-Qaʻdah 827, when the plan was implemented. Al-Maqrīzī, and not Ibn Ḥajar, mentioned the annulment of the decree the following Ṣafar, just after the pilgrims usually returned from the pilgrimage (*Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:657; cf. Sobernheim, ″Das Zuckermonopol,″ 82); cf. Darrag, *Barsbay,* 147.

[54]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:691; cf. Sobernheim, ″Das Zuckermonopol,″ 82.

[55]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:729.

[56]Asadī, *Al-Taysīr wa-al-Iʻtibār,* 144; Meloy, ″On Sugar and Spice: Mamluk Intervention in the Economy″ (paper presented at the 36th Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association, Washington, D.C., November 2000).

[57]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:766; Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā' al-Ghumr,* 3:398; cf. Sobernheim, ″Das Zuckermonopol,″ 82–83.

[58]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:795; Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā' al-Ghumr,* 3:423; al-Ṣayrafī, *Nuzhat al-Nufūs,* 3:149; cf. Sobernheim, ″Das Zuckermonopol,″ 83; cf. Ashtor, ″Levantine Sugar Industry,″ 243, who neglects to mention that this decree was abolished.

it without his permission. Ibn Ḥajar further remarked that ″he engaged in disgraceful affairs so that the imprecations against him increased. Many officials *(ahl al-dawlah)* remonstrated against him about this state of affairs, which continued to the end of the year.″ Thus the restriction evidently continued through until the end of September. However, it is noteworthy that Ḥasan Ḥabashī, the editor of *Inbā᾽ al-Ghumr,* states that his manuscript *hā᾽* negates the last verb: ″which did not continue.″[59] This alternative reading may support the brief statements of al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Ḥajar, the latter of whom makes a statement at the end of his account of the year′s events that a decree was issued and then rescinded. While the sultan may have been able to monopolize sugar through the remaining eight months of the year, the sultan′s restriction on the sugar market was not sustained the following year. It would seem that the opposition of the amirs and the *aʿyān* was not negligible.

While there is no detailed evidence for speculation in the sugar market on the part of the economic elite as there was with wheat, there is evidence for their intervention. A case occurred in Jumādá I 833 (26 January–24 February 1430), when the majordomo Āqbughā al-Jamālī attempted to force the purchase of sugar on merchants. This was well timed since a severe outbreak of the plague had occurred the previous month—what Ibn Taghrībirdī later called ″The Great Extinction.″[60] Since sugar was used for medicinal purposes, the price had just risen; indeed, the majordomo had only been appointed to the office a month before as well, and probably thought he could use the weight of his new position to take advantage of the market.[61] However, his attempt failed when merchants refused to open their shops.[62] By the end of the year, he was removed from his post and imprisoned for a few days until he handed over the funds he owed to the sultan *(al-kulaf al-sulṭānīyah),* after which he was released and appointed inspector of bridges.[63]

A decree in the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus dated Dhū al-Ḥijjah 836 (19 July–17 August 1433) announced the abolition of interventions in sugar.[64] Lapidus

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[59]Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā᾽ al-Ghumr,* 3:419, n. 1.

[60]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah,* 14:338.

[61]Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā᾽ al-Ghumr,* 3:436; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah,* 14:337, 346.

[62]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:824; al-Ṣayrafī, *Nuzhat al-Nufūs,* 3:185; cf. Sobernheim, ″Das Zuckermonopol,″ 83; cf. Ashtor, ″Levantine Sugar Industry,″ 243, who states that action was carried out for the government and neglects to mention that it was opposed.

[63]Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā᾽ al-Ghumr,* 3:436.

[64]Sobernheim, ″Inschriftliche Wirtschafts- und Verwaltungs-Verordnungen der Mamluken-Sultane aus der Omajjaden-Moschee von Damaskus,″ in *Aus fünf Jahrtausenden morgenländischer Kultur: Festschrift fur Max Freiherrn von Oppenheim,* Archiv für Orientforschung, Beiheft 1 (Osnabruck, 1967 [reprint]), note inscription no. 9, 122; idem, ″Das Zuckermonopol,″ 78–79, 80–81; Gaston Wiet, ″Notes d′épigraphie syro-musulmane,″ *Syrie* (1925): 165, 171; (1926): 154.

interprets this decree as the end of the sultan′s monopoly on sugar cultivation, refining, and sales.[65] It is more likely, I would suggest, that this was an ordinance directed against amirs and notables who tried to take advantage of their own power for temporary advantage in the market—similar to the decrees mentioned above requiring the effacement of insignia and names from storehouses (in Dhū al-Ḥijjah 829 and Muḥarram 830). The Damascus inscription was probably an attempt by the sultan to try to prohibit strong-arm tactics carried out by Mamluk officials like Āqbughā.

After Jumādá I 833/1430, there are no other reports of interventions in the sugar industry. However, Sobernheim cited an intervention that was supposed to have occurred later that year in Shaʿbān (25 April–23 May 1430), and which Ashtor observed is in fact not included in the account of that month in the manuscript Sobernheim used for his article on the sugar monopoly.[66] Ashtor noted that the information, while missing in al-Maqrīzī′s chronicle, was contained in that of Ibn Ḥajar. However, it is still not certain that a decree occurred at this time. Ashtor seems to be referring to information given by Ibn Ḥajar that is presented in the context of a statement made by the Shafiʿi chief judge that the embargo on sugar cultivation, except on the lands of the sultan, was one of three injustices committed by the sultan that year. Although there are a couple of differences in details, this report in fact parallels one given by al-Maqrīzī at the beginning of his account of the year 832 and the prohibition of cultivation fits the decree of 831.[67]

In spite of his expressions of uncertainty, Aḥmad Darrag concluded in his study of Barsbāy′s reign that the Mamluk state was able to sustain a monopoly on sugar. After a review of the more aggressive of the reports noted above, Darrag concluded that ″It is probable that Barsbāy did not modify his plan [to restrict the industry], not easing his severe hold, since al-Maqrīzī relates that in Rabīʿ I 837/October–November 1433, the press of a mamluk was set on fire by royal order.″[68] Darrag′s interpretation of the episode seems unwarranted. There is no mention that this Mamluk had contravened a commercial restriction of the sultan. But more to the point, the conclusion that a monopoly was sustained seems improbable, given the string of rescinded decrees and the opposition of state officials and merchants to these interventions. In arguing his case, Darrag also cites the report that in Muḥarram 839 (27 July–25 August 1435) the sugar sellers in Damascus were moved into one area ″to facilitate control.″[69] Ashtor agrees with

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[65]Lapidus, *Muslim Cities,* 127.

[66]Ashtor, ″Levantine Sugar Industry,″ 243, n. 91; Sobernheim, ″Das Zuckermonopol,″ 75–84.

[67]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk,* 4:791; Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʾ al-Ghumr,* 3:439.

[68]Darrag, *Barsbay,* 149.

[69]Ibid., 150.

this assessment and quotes the anonymous author of *Ḥawlīyat Dimashqīyah* about this report, explaining that it was carried out ″to make the ṭarḥ of sugar easier, as all of them would be in one place.″[70] The facilitation of forced purchases, however, need not be the only reason markets were consolidated. Lapidus offers a different explanation of this type of physical control: ″true markets were created in which a fair and competitive price could be determined.″[71] During the later years of Barsbāy′s reign, there is no evidence for his attempts to monopolize the sugar industry as he had tried to do earlier on. However, the sultan still resorted to forced sales. The re-organization of the Damascus sugar market indicates the state′s attempt at fiscal control, but not monopolistic control.

The consistent timing of Barsbāy′s interventions between 828 and 832, and possibly as late as 833, suggests that his intention was to establish his priority in sugar transactions; in other words, he repeatedly attempted to corner the sugar market. The wording of these reports is not clear enough, however, to indicate how soon after the decree was issued it was revoked, and thus whether or not he was successful. However, given the interests of individuals like Āqbughā and the anonymous *ahl al-dawlah* mentioned above, it is certain that Mamluk amirs and notables played a role in blocking the sultan′s interference, as the *nāẓir al-jaysh* did in 827/1424. It may well be that the sultan successfully decreed his priority in trade when cane was harvested, his bureau completed the necessary transactions, and then the market was opened up again. Whichever was the case, the role of the amirs and *a'yān* in the market is clear and it was their collective power that renders untenable the assumption that the sultan himself had no reason to change his approach to the sugar industry. The evidence of sugar interventions indicates that a change was affected when this information is placed in the context of the regime′s other interventions in wheat and spices. Eliyahu Ashtor insightfully noted that the ″resistance the spice traders could offer was much weaker,″ implying that the state then shifted its attention from this sector of the economy to the spice trade.[72] Indeed the state did abandon sugar for spice, but Barsbāy′s regime had directed itself toward spices from the beginning of his reign only to find that there were others besides spice merchants who had a stake in the trade.

Conclusions

Historians have often depicted Barsbāy as if he had an entirely free hand in intervening in the economy of Egypt. Notwithstanding the occasional nod to the

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[70]Ashtor, ″Levantine Sugar Industry,″ 243, citing p. 142 of the chronicle; I have not been able to consult this source.

[71]Lapidus, *Muslim Cities,* 100.

[72]Ashtor, *Levant Trade,* 278.

opposition of the amirs, historians have portrayed Barsbāy′s interventions as monopolies established in spite of this opposition. Of course, it is impossible to discount the financial benefit of these actions to the sultan, whether or not they constituted true monopolies. But examination of these actions should be placed in the context of the predatory economic behavior of the elite, who were just as willing as the sultan to manipulate the market.

Boaz Shoshan argues that the economy of Egypt was fundamentally paternalistic—that is, based on a system in which one of the responsibilities of the ruler was ″to protect consumers and prevent hoarding and speculation.″[73] He also claims that there were occasional breakdowns in paternalism, one of which he argues occurred under Barsbāy.[74] Shoshan′s verdict on Barsbāy, however, is stretched. He cites the incident of 833/1429 and claims that Barsbāy did so ″*probably* not because of his concern about a just distribution but rather in an attempt to increase his profits.″ He asserts that ″Barsbāy *had to discard* his plan shortly afterwards,″ which assumes that we know his plan was a permanent monopoly. He disregards Ibn Ḥajar′s and al-Maqrīzī′s approving comments on this event as well as on an incident that occurred in 835/1432, strong support of the sultan′s paternalism.[75] The sultan′s purchase of 30,000 *irdabb*s of grain in 840/1427 provoked the populace to fear inflation, but we simply do not know if his intention was to replenish the royal granaries for paternalistic purposes or for pure profit.

Shoshan's argument for the breakdown of paternalism is stronger when he refers, however only briefly, to the role of other ″interest groups.″[76] As E. P. Thompson noted, paternalism, as an ideal, was quite separate from its ″fragmentary real existence,″ when the regime employed it for ″symbolic effect.″[77] Thus a more effective test for the occurrence of paternalism is in the expectations of the masses and the compliance of other economic actors in society. This is not the place to examine the motivations of the Cairene crowd; however, concerning the latter, the evidence on wheat and sugar presented above shows that dealers in these commodities successfully competed against Barsbāy. In particular, the incident of 838/1434 mentioned earlier, in which the sultan forced the sale of beans and attempted to impose this measure on all ranks of society, indicates the ease with

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[73]Shoshan, ″Grain Riots,″ 459. Shoshan relies here on E. P. Thompson, ″Moral Economy of the English Crowd,″ *Past and Present* 50 (1971): 73-136; and Louise Tilly, ″The Food Riot as a Form of Political Conflict,″ *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 2 (1971): 23-57.

[74]Shoshan, ″Grain Riots,″ 467–68.

[75]Ibid., 468, my emphasis. A minor point: one of these two incidents, citing al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk* , 4:801, occurred in 832.

[76]Shoshan, ″Grain Riots,″ 468.

[77]Thompson, ″Moral Economy,″ 88.

which influential individuals could escape the control of the state, defying the paternalistic order. Any breakdown in paternalism was thus more likely due to the sultan's failure to suppress competing patrons, rather than the sultan's own transgressions. When viewed in terms of this more complex political dynamic, the interventions of Barsbāy take on a political rather than simply material significance. Actions interpreted as the sultan's attempts to fill his treasury are more likely efforts taken to establish the fiscal control of the economy that any state would want to achieve.

When Barsbāy determined that he could not achieve control of the domestic economy, he concentrated on other assets that fell within the state's territory. By 832, sanctions against speculation in the wheat market were abandoned and the state adopted a more aggressive role in controlling the wheat market. The evidence, however, indicates that the sultan intended not to monopolize it but rather to ensure that the amirs and notables did not control it. In contrast to the situation with wheat, the regime did want to monopolize the production of sugar to varying degrees and attempted to do so up until 832. After this time, the state gave up. Why? The evidence points most clearly to the successful opposition of influential officers and notables.

Since these sectors of the domestic economy were in effect out of the sultan's reach, Barsbāy was compelled to concentrate on the commodity that the amirs and notables of Egypt did not have a secure grip on—the spice trade. Barsbāy's intervention in the spice trade was based on two modes of control in the Red Sea.[78] The first mode of control was on merchants in the spice trade with the east. The regime imposed measures in a series of four phases, which became progressively more severe and more focused on the merchants of Yemen. First, in Dhū al-Ḥijjah 828 (14 October–12 November 1425), protectionist actions were implemented that favored merchants from Cairo over those of other lands in that all merchants passing northward along the Red Sea route had to first go to Cairo where their goods would be taxed. Second, in Muḥarram 830 (2 November–1 December 1426), the sultan decreed his priority in conducting spice transactions, an order that was issued again in Muḥarram 832 (11 October–9 November 1428). The effectiveness of the sultan's engagement in the spice commerce was enhanced when, in Jumādá I 833 (26 January–24 February 1430), the sultan established a group to deal in spices on behalf of the *matjar*. This was the administration's attempt to compete more effectively against independent spice merchants.[79] Third, in Rajab 835 (4 March–2 April 1432), the sultan prohibited all transactions in spices except those undertaken on his behalf; this measure was not clearly

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[78]The following is discussed in detail in Meloy, ″Imperial Strategy.″

[79]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk*, 4:823–24.

sustainable, another instance of the sultan′s inability to maintain control of the economy.[80] Finally, in Ṣafar 838 (September–October 1434), the sultan implemented a direct economic assault on Yemen, declaring that the goods of Yemeni merchants coming from Yemen would be seized.

These measures were imposed in concert with the second means of control: the extension the state′s direct control in the Hijaz. However, this attempt by the state to control the political affairs of Mecca ended in failure and, in 832, after three years of political turmoil in the Hijaz, the Mamluk sultan conceded one-third of the revenues collected on the transit trade to the Meccan sharif. Almost immediately, the turmoil subsided. In short, the sultan recognized that he had to concede power to local authorities in Mecca in order to achieve stability in the region. Further concessions were made to the Sharifate in 840 (at the end of 1436).[81] Mamluk actions in the Hijaz should be seen in the context of the regime′s attempt to control its economy.

In the first half of Barsbāy′s administration the state attempted to extend control through direct measures—domestically as well as abroad—by displacing amirs and notables who were local producers of sugar or Meccan authorities who controlled the flow of the eastern trade. These measures were political as much as they were economic. While the Mamluk state′s freedom of action was more generally hampered by a stagnant economy that prevailed across the broader region, competing political forces blocked Barsbāy′s attempts to exploit economic resources. The state abandoned its strategy of direct control in about 832. In both commodities of sugar and spice, the state had to compromise with ″local″ authorities, conceding to them the wealth that they previously had access to. Consequently, to some extent, the merchants became the sole victims of the state. After all, the traders did not hold power critical to the support of the state—the amirs could threaten coups and the sharifs were instrumental in the state′s secure hold on Mecca and the pilgrimage. The regime under Barsbāy transformed its state-building strategy from one of direct control of these valuable resources, whether in the Egyptian countryside or the Hijaz, to one founded on an empire of exotic commodities.

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[80]Meloy, ″Imperial Strategy,″ 8.

[81]Ibid., 17.

THOMAS BAUER
UNIVERSITÄT MÜNSTER

Mamluk Literature: Misunderstandings and New Approaches

We live in hard times for pioneers and discoverers. There are no more blank spots on the map of our globe, there are no undiscovered continents, no unexplored jungles, and no unknown tribes to be found. But still there is Mamluk literature. Despite several remarkable efforts in recent years—especially volume 7 [no. 1] of *Mamlūk Studies Review,* which was devoted entirely to Mamluk literature—the state of the art of Mamluk literature is, in a word, deplorable. There is no comprehensive and reliable overview of the literature as a whole, many crucial texts still remain unedited, and monographs on Mamluk poets or the most important genres of Mamluk literature are lacking almost altogether, and so it is not easy even today to determine who were the most important literati or even which books were the most characteristic, influential, and important. What we see is an enormous contrast between a flourishing literary culture on the one hand and a remarkable dearth of scholarly enterprises dealing with that culture on the other. In fact, it seems as if no other field in the realm of Arabic studies has been neglected as much as that of Arabic literature of the Mamluk and Ottoman periods. Not even the increasing interest in the Mamluk period witnessed in the last decades has been enough to ensure a lasting effect on the study of Mamluk literature so far. This state of affairs requires an explanation, since thinking today about the reasons for the actual plight of the study of Mamluk literature will be helpful, I hope, in determining what has to be done in the future. I want to start with a couple of rather general and theoretical considerations before I then examine recent achievements in the various fields of literature.

Searching for the reasons for this sorry state of affairs, we inevitably end up in the second half of the nineteenth century, a period in which perceptions of Arabic culture and literature were shaped that to a certain degree prevail up to the present day. Many of the prejudices and misconceptions that for a long time prevented scholars in the Arab and Western world alike from appropriately assessing Mamluk and Ottoman literature can easily be discerned as originating in Western ideologies of this era. Therefore, I dare to say that the study of Mamluk literature should start with an enquiry into Western prejudices that originated in the colonial climate of the nineteenth century.[1]

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[1]Elsewhere I have examined contemporary and earlier Western attitudes towards the work of Nāṣīf al-Yāzijī, one of the most prominent representatives of late Ottoman Arabic literature, and

In several European countries, the middle of the nineteenth century signalled a turning point in the perception of non-Western literatures. In previous decades, the attitudes mainly displayed towards ″oriental″ poetry were those of curiosity and fascination. Several decades later, a colonial point of view began to dominate. Western intellectuals and scholars began to look at what they called ″the Orient″ with the conviction of unquestionable superiority, which included the notion of the superiority of Western culture and literature. From that point on, differences between Arabic literature and contemporary Western literature were no longer seen primarily as interesting, stimulating, and inspiring, but rather as a deficiency on the side of Arabic literature. These negative perceptions of the differences between Arabic and Western literature, and the subsequent disdain for post-Saljuq Arabic literature, were crucial for the colonial enterprise, given that this enterprise was justified by the mission to bring civilization to the rest of the globe. However, nobody could deny that the Islamic world had once been one of the most impressive civilizations of the world. The trick now was to impute a notion of decadence and stagnation to the history of the Islamic world, which allowed at one and the same time acknowledgment of its former greatness, as well as the need to restore its former glory through colonialism and Westernization. This perception was fostered by contemporary philosophic ideas about history, such as those of Hegel and of Darwinism. According to these ideas, each culture was destined to fulfill a certain historical mission to contribute to the overall progress of the human race. Having fulfilled its mission, a culture becomes obsolete and a new form of culture emerges which in turn serves as a basis for further progress. In our case, this new culture was, of course, contemporary Western culture. From this perspective, it was deemed that the mission of Islamic culture was to bridge the ″dark ages″ of the European Middle Ages and to stimulate Western development by conveying the knowledge and philosophy of antiquity to the West.[2] After having accomplished this mission, there seemed to be no further justification for continuing with a distinct Arabo-Islamic culture, because now an allegedly superior culture had come into existence. Therefore, any pure continuation of Islamic culture was seen as an embarrassment, and any differences in relation to Western culture were a deficit that needed to be nullified, even for the Arabs′ own sake.

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one of the first Arabic poets who was directly confronted with Western writers and intellectuals (Lamartine, Elie Smith); see Thomas Bauer, ″Die *badīʿiyya* Nāṣīf al-Yāziǧīs und das Problem der spätosmanischen arabischen Literatur″ (to appear in *Festschrift Renate Jacobi* [forthcoming]). Despite a rapidly growing literature on ″orientalism,″ the phenomenon of the colonialization of Arabic literature (still mainly described in outright positive terms such as ″liberation″ or ″modernization″) remains largely unstudied.

[2]This is one of several reasons why I oppose the application of the notion of ″Middle Ages″ to the Islamic world; see also my note in *MSR* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 74–75.

This colonial perception is mirrored, both then and now, by the state of research on Arabic literature.[3] The whole of the post-Saljuq period was neglected and stigmatized as being imitative, worthless, and irrelevant. But whereas Western and Arab scholars alike merely neglected Mamluk literature, the period of late Ottoman Arabic literature often aroused contempt and even deep repugnance. On closer examination we find, however, that there is no case in which these attitudes were engendered by any single specific text. Whenever texts from this period were analyzed (rarely enough), scholars found them interesting, to say the least. Rather, it was the singular existence instead of any form of traditional non-Western literature which displayed aesthetic norms and ideological content different from modern Western literature that provoked the discomfiture of adherents to ″modernization,″ which inevitably means Westernization.[4] We must therefore conclude that the perception of post-Saljuq literature has been shaped thus far by ideology rather than by accepted scholarly standards of cultural, aesthetic, and literary history.

In our own day, only a few still subscribe to these ideas, but prejudices often prove to be lasting. To recognize this history and to question well-established perceptions is therefore the first and foremost task in approaching Mamluk literature. A better understanding of post-Saljuq Arabic literature is best achieved via a dialectic process. One part of this process is to appreciate the relativity of our own values, standards, and prejudices, and to locate them in their respective historical and social contexts. The other part is to examine the social, aesthetic, and ideological circumstances of any period of Arabic literature and thus to establish the values and standards that the members of the specific literary communities themselves applied to their own literature. This can only be done through a close reading of literary, theoretical, biographical, and historical texts, against which we constantly have to check and correct our assumptions about the literary system of any given period. Therefore, dealing with pre-modern Arabic literature must mean primarily the execution of an ongoing process of learning, in which the object of study is not only an object, but also an agent that helps to establish and formulate the objects and methods of study themselves.

This cultural studies background now brings me to the first of five issues which I consider to be the five major obstacles in the way of a proper understanding of Mamluk literature and society.

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[3]This is also true for many other fields of Islamic culture. So, e.g., scholars only very recently started to take into account the development of Islamic law after al-Shāfiʿī.

[4]Bauer, ″Die *badīʿiyya* Nāṣīf al-Yāziǧīs;″ idem, ″Vom Sinn der Zeit: Aus der Geschichte des arabischen Chronogramms,″ *Arabica* 50 (2003): 501–31.

(1) Importance

We should always be aware of the fact that in modern Western societies, literature is by and large a marginalized field, and that poetry above all has comparatively little social relevance today beyond advertising jingoism. This attitude towards the relative unimportance of poetry is tacitly transferred to other societies and thus may account for the backward state of the art in the field of Arabic literature in general. Many periods of Arabic literature—not only the Mamluk period—are still by and large unstudied; students avoid courses dealing with poetry (which is considered both extremely difficult and unimportant), and the number of Western scholars dealing with classical Arabic literature is steadily decreasing; projects involving literature have worse chances for support than those dealing with other fields; and, of course, scholars dealing with historical and religious texts may feel free to skip poetry that occurs in these texts on the grounds that nothing important will be missed. Instead, and by contrast to our own attitudes, poetry especially was a foremost means of communication in Arabic societies throughout the ages, used on both trivial occasions as well as in those of major social and political importance. The role literature played in these societies was in general more important than in modern Western societies, but it also differed in various periods and regions in Arabic history. Therefore, my next point addresses:

(2) The Social Role of Literature and of the Poet

During the Abbasid era, literary culture was mainly shaped by the values and attitudes of the *kuttāb* whereas religious scholars took part in belles-lettres only marginally. During the Saljuq period, however, we can see the gradual merger between the *adab*-oriented culture of the *kuttāb* and the *sunnah*-oriented culture of the ulama. From then on, the *kuttāb* gradually ceased to form a distinct social group with its own cultural values. Instead, the duties of the *kātib* came to be fulfilled by people who had received the training of a religious scholar. The result was a rather homogeneous group of ulama who became the bearers of Islamic religious as well as of secular culture. Remarkably, this development did not prove detrimental to literary culture. Instead, the process of ″ulamaization of *adab*″ was counterbalanced by a process of ″*adab*ization of the ulama,″ who in the meantime had made the *adab* discourse of the *kuttāb* their own.[5] Poetry became a pre-eminent medium of communication between ulama, and this medium also included panegyric poetry, which now was addressed by one alim to another,

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[5]Examples of ulama composing poetry in the beginning of this period are given in Th. Emil Homerin, ″Preaching Poetry,″ *Arabica* 38 (1991): 87–101; Thomas Bauer, ″Raffinement und Frömmigkeit: Säkulare Poesie islamischer Religionsgelehrter der späten Abbasidenzeit,″ *Asiatische Studien* 5 (1996): 275–95.

rather than to rulers and military leaders. For the ulama, it would become more and more important to be able to take part in this form of poetic communication. Some of the main consequences of this development are the following:

(a) A general *increase in the number of ulama taking part in literary communication*. In al-Ṣafadī´s *A'yān al-'Aṣr,* which is not a work of literature but a collection of the biographies of two thousand of al-Ṣafadī´s most eminent contemporaries, about a quarter of the entries contain or mention poetry composed by the person portrayed. If we consider the high number of Mamluks who hardly ever composed poetry in Arabic and the fact that al-Ṣafadī quoted only poetry of quality, it would not be an exaggeration to say that virtually every member of the ulama took part in poetic communication in one form or another.

(b) The *rise of genres serving the immediate communication among ulama*. Mamluk ulama communicated in the form of poetry. They addressed panegyric poetry to each other, congratulated each other for the *a'yād,* the safe return from the hajj, or the birth of a child, or offered their condolences on the death of a teacher or relative in the form of often-lengthy poems. They accompanied presents with epigrams and sent each other poetic enigmas for entertainment, and they always expected an answer, of course also in the form of poetry. *Dīwān*s, anthologies, and biographical works are full of this sort of poetry, but none of these genres has been studied so far. This leads us to the next point:

(c) The *blurring of the boundaries between everyday and literary communication*. The post-enlightenment Western conception of the poet as a genius who reveals eternal truths has led to a general disapproval of all forms of occasional poetry which came to be considered as trivial and of no literary value. This conception does not do justice to Mamluk literature. Here we find poems of purely literary value side by side with poems or documents that primarily fulfill practical purposes but were nevertheless considered of literary value. Consequently, modern concepts about what is literature and what is not have to be adapted to this situation.

(d) An *increase in poetic production of any quality*. All this led to an enormous increase in poetic and other forms of literary production which inevitably results in countless poems that are well-made but at best of only minor literary interest. This observation ought not to be used to depreciate Mamluk literature. Instead, it should help to heighten the admiration of a culture that achieved a great deal of poetization of everyday life and made the reaffirmation of cultural values and the training of linguistic consciousness a permanent trait of daily routine.

(e) A *growing interest in matters of private life*. Most Abbasid poetry mirrored asymmetrical social relations (poet/patron; poet/beloved) and poets were not supposed to talk about their private lives. The ulama-poets of the Mamluk period instead communicated on more or less equal terms, had a similar personal history

and a similar life style. Now they could talk about their personal circumstances and take it for granted that their fellow ulama would be interested in this on the basis of shared experiences.[6] Consequently, we find love poems addressed to one′s own wife (Ibn Ḥajar), and a more intimate tone in poems on the death of one′s own son, daughter, or mother (Ibn Nubātah; Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī; Ibn Sūdūn).

(f) Poetry as a means of distinction. Despite a common outlook on life and similar habits and experiences, the group of the ulama was far from uniform and their members had a strong appreciation and feeling for prestige and hierarchy. The large number of madrasahs and the high prestige attributed to learning contributed to the rise of a broadened layer of people with a more or less superficial scholarly training.[7] These people may have memorized a textbook on grammar and another one on law and may have heard a reasonable amount of hadith, but they could not be accepted by the professional ulama as equals. But since there were no guild rules, no entrance examinations, and no membership cards for the group of the ulama, there had to be other means of delimitation. Instead of such formal criteria for membership, the group of the ulama defined itself as consisting of those who participated in their leading discourses in a qualified way. Poetry was one of these discourses, and linguistic proficiency, especially a flawless mastering of Arabic grammar, became one of the main criteria that the high-brow ulama used to distinguish themselves from lesser-educated aspirants. This is the reason why scholars like al-Ṣafadī and Ibn Ḥajar used to express their reserve whenever they quoted texts displaying interference of the spoken language. They never denied that they enjoyed these texts, but were simply afraid of violating professional ulama standards by quoting (or even composing) them, without making clear that they knew better. Just the opposite. As far as popular literature is concerned, we can even speak of

(g) The *blurring of the boundaries between popular and educated literature,* a fact that has already been noted repeatedly.[8] This is again a consequence of the

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[6]Thomas Bauer, ″Communication and Emotion: The Case of Ibn Nubātah′s *Kindertotenlieder*,″ *MSR* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 49–95, here 63–64.

[7]See 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), 375–411, here 403–4, 409; Stefan Leder, ″Postklassisch und vormodern: Beobachtungen zum Kulturwandel in der Mamlūkenzeit,″ in *Die Mamluken: Studien zu ihrer Geschichte und Kultur: Zum Gedenken an Ulrich Haarmann (1942–1999)*, ed. Stephan Conermann and Anja Pistor-Hatam (Hamburg, 2003), 289–312.

[8]Leder, ″Postklassisch und vormodern,″ 290–304; Robert Irwin, ″Mamluk Literature,″ *MSR* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 1–29, here 18. For the shadow-play see Amila Buturovic, ″The Shadow Play in Mamluk Egypt: The Genre and Its Cultural Implications,″ *MSR* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 149–76, here

″bourgeois″ tendency of Mamluk literature and society. The ulama were as much at home in the *sūq*s as the craftsmen were in a madrasah. And as long as no concerns about scholarly prestige were involved, little prevented the ulama from displaying their interest in everyday affairs and in popular literature. Though the popular epics seem to have remained rather outside their horizon, popular poetry in dialect as well as in standard language (sometimes deficient) by poets like Ibrāhīm al-Mi‘mār and Ibn Sūdūn were held in great esteem by the leading ulama as well as by the ″people of the street.″ ‘Izz al-Dīn al-Mawṣilī [27][9] even bothered to adorn the *dīwān* of al-Mi‘mār with a colorful example of his *inshā’*.[10] The poems and *maqāmah*s of these popular poets, as well as other texts like the shadow plays of Ibn Dānyāl, provide insight into the life of the crafts and the lower classes incomparable to what we know from earlier periods. Even in the *dīwān*s of ulama-poets, scenes of everyday life turn up from time to time.

(3) The Role of Rhetorical Devices

In considering the social functions of poetry mentioned above, we must not forget the immediate function of poetry for the individual, that is, to provide for her/his emotional needs, to bring about entertainment and fun, and to provoke amazement and surprise. The use of rhetorical devices should be seen in this context. The Mamluk poet was not supposed to express his very individual feelings, but to help his audience to cope with their own. Linguistic foregrounding, such as the use of figures of speech and rhetorical devices, arouses emotions in the recipient and thereby stimulates a process of recontextualization of his/her own previous emotions. In this respect, the usage of rhetorical devices cannot be considered a sign of lack of veracity, but as a means to initiate a process of catharsis in the hearer/reader of the text.[11] In addition to this emotional aspect, there is an intellectual side of rhetoric. Similar to the conceit in European literature, rhetorical devices may serve ″to surprise and delight by wit and ingenuity. The pleasure we get from many conceits is intellectual rather than sensuous.″[12] This is certainly also true for many of the *tawriyah*-pointed epigrams that were so popular in all levels of Mamluk society. And this is small wonder, since there has hardly been a culture with a comparable linguistic consciousness as the culture of Islam, a religion that

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158–60.

[9]Numbers in square brackets refer to the list of some major poets and *udabā’* of the Mamluk empire at the end of this article.

[10]″Dīwān Ibrāhīm al-Mi‘mār,″ Dār al-Kutub MS 673 Shi‘r Taymūr, fols. 2–3.

[11]Bauer, ″Communication and Emotion,″ 86–88; idem, review of *Ibn Nubātah: Shā‘ir al-‘Aṣr al-Mamlūkī,* by Maḥmūd Sālim Muḥammad, *MSR* 6 (2002): 219–24.

[12]J. A. Cuddon, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms* (London, 1979), 144.

is entirely based on texts and their interpretation and linguistic exegesis.

(4) Originality

One of the main points of criticism directed against Mamluk literature is its alleged conservatism, or, as it is often put in a more deprecatory way, its lack of originality, its stagnation. Some of these statements even give the impression that the poets were positively prohibited from treating new themes in their poetry.[13] This, of course, is nonsense, since no person or institution ever existed that could force poets to adhere to established conventions. Therefore, the reason for the perception of Mamluk literature as stagnant and unoriginal must lie somewhere else, and since I do not believe that it lies in the literature itself, we have to examine again the background of our own expectations. This expectation is doubtlessly shaped by European literary history, with its rapid succession of consecutive literary epochs, each of which seems to have lasted but a single century. And since Western literary historians are accustomed to think in clearly separated epochs, they are trained to figure out discontinuities rather than stressing the phenomena of continuity.

This is not the place to try to explain the rapid pace of modern European literature, but it should be observed here that, taken in a global context, it is a singular case. Other great literary traditions—especially China and other East Asian literature, but also classical literatures of antiquity—display a pattern of development very similar to that of Arabic literature (and other Islamic literatures). Consequently, this form of change can be called ″organic″ in contrast to the ″catastrophic″ form found in several post-medieval European literatures. In any case, neither type of development necessarily implies superiority to the other. The notion of backwardness and lack of innovative power can only be applied to single poets in relation to their contemporary literary system, but not to literatures as a whole.

In any case, no literary period springs up from out of nowhere, but inevitably has points of reference in the past. Therefore, a much more promising approach is to look for the points of reference for Mamluk authors and the specific relationship between poets and culture, instead of complaining about the supposed conservatism of this era. But what were these points of reference for Mamluk authors, what constituted their literary horizon? The few studies that pay attention to this question

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[13]See, for example, Shmuel Moreh, ″Traditionelle und neue Formen der Dichtung in der Gegenwart,″ in *Grundriß der arabischen Philologie,* vol. 2, *Literaturwissenschaft,* ed. Helmut Gätje (Wiesbaden, 1987): 89–95, here 89: ″Diese Arten von Poesie waren in ihre eigenen strengen Konventionen von Motiv und Stil gebunden und ließen somit dem Dichter keinen Spielraum, seine Gefühle oder Lebensumstände auszudrücken.″

suggest that the situation was complex and further studies are needed to develop a clearer picture. Inevitably, then, the following remarks must be seen as quite preliminary.

My first observation is that Mamluk readers were unusually keen on reading contemporary literature. As is evidenced by many anthologies (most explicitly by Ibn Nubātah´s *Maṭla' al-Fawā'id*),[14] pre-Abbasid poetry was considered primarily a part of the cultural heritage of mainly philological interest. For the Mamluk public, the first to compose palatable poetry were the *muḥdath* poets from Abbasid times, especially their late representative Ibn al-Mu'tazz (d. 296/908), the only pre-Mutanabbian poet whose verses are encountered often and regularly in Mamluk anthologies. But still these forms of Abbasid literature must have had a strongly antiquarian flavor for the Mamluk public. Nevertheless, there are several cases of referring back to Abbasid literature, but their relevance has been perhaps somewhat overestimated by Robert Irwin.[15] And, after all, it was not lack of originality that led Mamluk authors to refer back to such early traditions. Rather, the authors had something new to say about the matters treated by their predecessors. To mention some of the most prominent cases: in his preface to his anthology entitled *Al-Ghayth al-Musajjam fī Sharḥ Lāmīyat al-'Ajam,* al-Ṣafadī refers to al-Jāḥiẓ´s ideal of *adab* in deliberately mixing different topics in order to prevent boredom. This Jāḥiẓian ideal, however, is not revived in any antiquarian or restorative way, but put in the form of a definitively Mamluk invention, i.e., the anthology in form of a commentary. Al-Ṣafadī´s book has the outward form of a commentary on a famous poem by the Saljuq poet al-Ṭughrā'ī (d. 514/1120-1) known as *Lāmīyat al-'Ajam.* But the form of commentary is mainly a pretext for compiling an anthology of texts of both old and recent origin, both earnest and humorous, in order to give a colorful picture of subjects relevant to any educated person of ″modern″ (i.e., Mamluk) times. Therefore, this book is an experiment in how to embody the Jāḥiẓian ideal of *adab,* and it is definitely not a case of falling back on tradition out of cultural impotence. The same holds true for al-Ṣafadī´s and Ibn Nubātah´s commentaries (or rather: anthologies in the form of commentaries) on two *risālah*s by Ibn Zaydūn,[16] and for Ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī´s early-Abbasid-style anthology *Thamarāt al-Awrāq.*[17] Obviously it is the purpose of these texts to reinterpret and

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[14]Thomas Bauer, ″Literarische Anthologien der Mamlukenzeit,″ in *Die Mamluken,* ed. Conermann and Pistor-Hatam, 71–122.

[15]″Mamluk Literature,″ 9 (″antiquarian feel″), 29.

[16]See Everett Rowson, ″An Alexandrian Age in Fourteenth-Century Damascus: Twin Commentaries on Two Celebrated Arabic Epistles,″ *MSR* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 97–110; for al-Ṣafadī´s *Ghayth* see also Nabīl Muḥammad Rashād, *Al-Ṣafadī wa-Sharḥuhu 'alá Lāmīyat al-'Ajam* (Cairo, 1423/2002) and its review by Everett Rowson in *MSR* 8, no. 1 (2004): 315–23.

[17]It is one of the few anthologies that deliberately imitates the pattern of the unstructured *adab*

remodel Abbasid ideals and to put them into a contemporary context. By remodelling works of the past, Mamluk authors did not try to create pieces of literature that resembled their models as closely as possible or that could be taken for Abbasid creations, nor did they aspire to revive a ″golden age.″ Classical attitudes seem to have played no noteworthy role. Instead, these and other forms of intertextual references, such as allusion, *mu'āraḍah*, *takhmīs*, *tashṭīr,* etc., may fulfill a range of different purposes. They may serve as a means to determine one′s relation with the past, to enter into a dialogue with its central texts, to introduce their message into contemporary discourse and to adapt it to the then-prevailing tastes. In other cases, it may be mainly a demonstration of virtuosity in reshaping an older text, but this procedure also inevitably contributes to the forming of the cultural memory of the times. It may well be the case that different sorts of texts were approached by different forms of intertextuality. So it may turn out that texts from the more ancient periods were rather made the object of a creative play such as the *takhmīs* and *tashṭīr,*[18] whereas texts reflecting a more recent aesthetic, such as those from the late Buyid, Saljuq, and Ayyubid periods, may have been reshaped in more individual ways, such as a *mu'āraḍah,* but this is only one of several possibilities considering the present state of knowledge. Further studies of Mamluk manifestations of intertextuality and a comparison with forms of intertextuality in other periods of Arabic literature will certainly yield interesting results. After all, it should not be forgotten that a heightened degree of synchronic as well as diachronic intertextuality is characteristic for all periods of Arabic poetry, from the *jāhilīyah* right up to the present day.[19] The Mamluk period is in no way out of the ordinary in this respect.

What is true for single texts, is also true for whole genres. Even the most conservative genres did not owe their conservatism to a lack of creativity or to nostalgic yearning. Instead, they retained many inherited features because it turned out that in this way they could most effectively serve the emotional and communicative requirements of society. A good example is furnished by the genre of *ghazal,* which was perhaps the most widespread genre in the Mamluk period and which more than others is characterized by a thematic and formal

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anthology of the Abbasid period, and indeed it also consists largely of Abbasid material, mixed up, however, with specimens of Mamluk *inshā'*. I suspect that the proper *raison d'être* of this book has not yet been established.

[18]See P. F. Kennedy, ″Takhmīs,″ *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 10:123–25.

[19]For the *jāhilīyah* see Thomas Bauer, ″Formel und Zitat: Zwei Spielarten von Intertextualität in der altarabischen Dichtung,″ *Journal of Arabic Literature* 24 (1993): 117–38; for the modern period see Birgit Embaló, ″Intertextuelle Bezüge zeitgenössischer arabischer Poesie zur arabischen Dichtungstradition,″ in *Understanding Near Eastern Literatures,* ed. Verena Klemm and Beatrice Gruendler (Wiesbaden, 2000), 37–57.

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continuity (which lasted well into the nineteenth century). But this continuity can easily be explained by the fact that *ghazal* poetry was the primary medium by which a collective knowledge about love was preserved and thereby through which the feelings and experiences of the people were influenced, whereas these feelings and experiences in turn influenced the shape of the *ghazal*. Therefore we come to understand that on one hand the Mamluk *ghazal* follows models that were created by and large during the early and middle Abbasid period. On the other hand, many Mamluk *ghazal* poems display a distinct Mamluk flavor and are clearly recognizable as pertaining to the Mamluk, and not to the Abbasid, period—for example Ibn Ḥajar's ″Red Sea *ghazal*,″ in which the author interweaves a number of different strains of Arabic love poetry in order to transform them into a definitely contemporary expression of his experiences.[20] Therefore, elements that at first sight appear as purely conventional and traditional may well also have had the function of adding an additional dimension of complexity to the poem by virtue of introducing a reference to the collective experience preserved in literary tradition. This function of poetry as contributing to the preservation of the collective memory of society and of adapting it to contemporary needs has been given little attention in Arabic studies so far, probably because poetry does not play such a great role in these same contexts today in modern societies. For the Arabo-Islamic world, however, I can hardly see how studies in the history of social knowledge, culture, attitudes, and mentalities can be carried out without resorting to the study of literature and especially poetry.

These remarks on phenomena of intertextuality should not detract from the fact that the Mamluk period was indeed a particularly innovative and creative period. Whenever Mamluk works of literature have been studied without prejudice and in greater detail, they have been found to be interesting and original (as in the contributions to *MSR* 7 [no. 1]), and there is no lack of genre origination during the Mamluk period or of definitive stages of development during that time. As examples I could mention the *badī'īyah,* the shadow-plays of Ibn Dānyāl, the nonsense-poetry by Ibn Sūdūn, popular poetry dealing with the crafts, the popular festivals, and with hashish. I could also mention the erotic *maqāmah,*[21] travelogues in the form of *inshā',* or, in the fields of stylistics, the practical and theoretical

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[20]Thomas Bauer, ″Ibn Ḥajar and the Arabic Ghazal of the Mamluk Age,″ in *Ghazal as World Literature: Transformations of a Literary Genre,* ed. Thomas Bauer and Angelika Neuwirth (Beirut, 2004): 35–55.

[21]Everett K. Rowson, ″Two Homoerotic Narratives from Mamlūk Literature: al-Ṣafadī's *Law'at al-shākī* and Ibn Dānyāl's *al-Mutayyam*,″ in *Homoeroticism in Classical Arabic Literature,* ed. J. W. Wright, Jr., and Everett K. Rowson (New York, 1997): 158–91. A collection of heteroerotic *maqāmāt* based on the stylistic device of the *tawjīh* is Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Rashf al-Zulāl min al-Siḥr al-Ḥalāl* (Beirut, 1997).

preoccupation with the *tawriyah*. Whether these genres are appreciated or not, we can hardly deny that they were innovative.

Therefore, we may conclude, that Mamluk Arabic literature is not characterized by stagnation and a lack of innovation, but rather by a steady and gradual development, which, however, did not evolve towards the same endpoint as Western literature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. According to a colonial point of view, the modern West is the only legitimately-existing culture, and every other development that went in a different direction must be seen as an historical error. What is described as ″stagnation″ is therefore not the lack of development per se, but the lack of developments that mimicked and confirmed Western models. Such divergences should, of course, serve as a paradigm for a critical scholarly analysis—but only for recognizing and appreciating differences and not for a rejection of those differences.

(5) MORALITY

Still today, we repeatedly come across complaints about the moral decadence of the Mamluk period. Since the notion of ″decadence″ is linked so inseparably to that of the erotic, it seems not out of place to make some remarks on this subject here. Two genres in particular touch on the subject of morality, namely *ghazal* (love poetry), and *mujūn* (satire). The *ghazal* was one of the most popular genres of Mamluk poetry, and it was widely cultivated because of its overall emotive potential.[22] The majority of *ghazal* poetry is homoerotic, i.e., the beloved is of male gender. The first Arabic poet to popularize the homoerotic *ghazal* was Abū Nuwās (d. ca. 198/813), and for the next thousand years to come Arabic love poetry remained primarily homoerotic (yet not to the same degree as the Persian and Turkish *ghazal*). The situation changed only in the middle of the nineteenth century, when the massive and deep-reaching influence of colonialism brought about the enforcement of Western conceptions of gender and sexuality. Western influence deeply modified, at least officially, previous indigenous concepts. From then on, Arab poets stopped composing homoerotic poems and began to deal with their own poetic traditions in imitation of Western scholars, i.e., by suppressing parts of it and by denying the homoerotic character of the rest. Victorian moral standards inherited in colonial times are still deeply rooted in the Islamic world today and have started to enter into an alliance with modern Islamist ideologies. Meanwhile Western attitudes about homosexuality have changed, and there is an equally great danger now of Western scholars falling into another trap, which is to

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[22]A convincing study of the Mamluk *ghazal* is still lacking; the book by Majd al-Afandī, *Al-Ghazal fī al-'Aṣr al-Mamlūkī al-Awwal* (Damascus, 1994), displays all the prejudices and misconceptions discussed above; see the review in *MSR* 3 (1999): 214–19.

presume the existence of a coherent and identifiable ″gay community″ in the pre-modern Arab world as well. This would be a grave anachronism. In reality, neither approach to the phenomenon does justice to the real background of homoerotic Arabic poetry. As a matter of fact, not only are nineteenth-century moral standards inapplicable to the pre-modern Islamic world, but the whole concept of love and sexuality turns out to have been so different that even our notions of hetero- and homosexuality prove not to be universal. But if it is now difficult to free oneself from deeply-rooted conceptions of aesthetics, how difficult it must be to realize the relativity of one′s feelings in so personal a realm as love and sexuality!

Despite this difficulty, a couple of recent studies have been able to show with sufficient evidence that love and sexuality in the pre-modern Arabic world were not regulated according to parameters of sex, but according to parameters of gender. All forms of love in which persons of a male gender fell in love with persons of non-male gender identity were socially acceptable. Here, persons of male gender means those of the male sex who have reached adulthood. And persons of non-male gender identity can be females; or males who have not yet grown a dense beard; eunuchs; or ″effeminates″—*mukhannathūn*. Religious norms prohibited certain sexual practices and encouraged marriage,[23] but in general religious institutions were indifferent towards men falling in love with beautiful youths.[24] Therefore it is not too surprising to find homoerotic poems composed by pious religious scholars such as Ibn Ḥajar (who at the same time erected a memorial to marital love in two of his *ghazal* poems).

The genre of *mujūn* was less important and less respected than the *ghazal*. It was cultivated widely but not very intensively. Nevertheless, not only popular poets like al-Miʿmār, Ibn Dānyāl, and Ibn Sūdūn were given to composing *mujūn,* but also representatives of the established ulama culture, such as Ibn Nubātah, participated in this genre as well.[25] Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī [18] dedicated a whole

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[23]A number of publications have appeared on this subject during the last decade. Here it may suffice to mention *Homoeroticism in Classical Arabic Literature*, ed. J. W. Wright, Jr., and Everett K. Rowson (New York, 1997); Thomas Bauer, *Liebe und Liebesdichtung in der arabischen Welt des 9. und 10. Jahrhunderts: Eine literatur- und mentalitätsgeschichtliche Studie des arabischen Ġazal* (Wiesbaden, 1998), 150–84; idem and Angelika Neuwirth, ″Introduction,″ in *Ghazal as World Literature,* 9–31; Arno Schmitt, ″*Liwāṭ* im *Fiqh*: Männliche Homosexualität?″ *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 4 (2001–2): 49–110.

[24]Discussions about the permissibility of getting religiously stimulated by gazing at beardless youths are centered either around theological conceptions of the nature of man′s relation to the divine or the fear that this practice might instigate unlawful acts (a problem also discussed in the context of love poetry).

[25]Ibn Nubātah also brought together a selection of the *Dīwān* of Ibn al-Ḥajjāj (d. 391/1000), the

chapter of his *Dīwān* to the subject of *mujūn,* which was included in the Damascus edition of the years 1297–1300 (1879–83). This edition appeared at a time in which Victorian morals obviously had not yet been as strongly internalized in the Arab world as today. In the recent edition of al-Ḥillī′s *Dīwān* the *mujūn* chapter is purposely omitted.[26] Similarly, the *mujūn* chapter has also been removed from the edition of al-Ḥillī′s anthology of his own two-line epigrams.[27] Equally unfortunate is the fact that the only existing edition of the poetry of Ibn Dānyāl [9] is heavily bowdlerized.[28] The *Dīwān* of Ibrāhīm al-Miʿmār [19] was so popular in the Mamluk period that Ibn Taghrībirdī did not dare to quote very much of it, since it was known to everybody anyway.[29] This *Dīwān* is preserved in a number of manuscripts but remains unedited, even though it is one of the most original *dīwān*s of that period. The reason for this neglect is, I am convinced, the fact that many of al-Miʿmār′s poems are frivolous, and some of them might even be considered obscene. This shows very clearly the damage that is done to a proper appreciation of Mamluk literature and cultural history by the adoption of false Western conceptions which, in this case, proved to be quite short-lived. While modern Western technology nowadays floods the whole world with pornography, in the Arab world Western moral standards of yesterday still fight a monstrous battle against six-hundred-year-old penis-epigrams. Those who fight staunchly against ″pornography″ do not realize that there is good reason to be proud of a culture that managed to integrate a conversation about ″the sexual″ into an established, sophisticated literary discourse, thus showing that there is a way to cultivate the obscene without having to take recourse either to psychopathic suppression nor to pornographic consumption. Again it seems to me that none of the solutions offered by modern culture (both Western and Islamic) are conspicuously superior to those of pre-modern Islamic culture and that modern solutions can in no way provide the yardstick by which other cultures can or should be measured.

These five points certainly do not exhaust the list of possible misunderstandings about Mamluk literature or their origins, but it may suffice to show the principal

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most famous *mujūn* poet of the Abbasid period. The collection has been edited now in Tunisia: *Talṭīf al-Mizāj min Shiʿr Ibn al-Ḥajjāj: Ikhtiyār Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn Nubātah,* ed. Najm ʿAbd Allāh Muṣṭafá (Sūsah, 2001): see the review by S. Moreh in *Journal of Semitic Studies* 48 (2003): 212–14.

[26]See the discussion of the issue in *Dīwān Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī,* ed. Muḥammad Ḥawwar (Beirut, 2000), 1:14–15.

[27]Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī, *Dīwān al-Mathālith wa-al-Mathānī fī al-Maʿālī wa-al-Maʿānī,* ed. Muḥammad Ṭāhir al-Ḥimṣī (Damascus, 1419/1998).

[28]*Al-Mukhtār min Shiʿr Ibn Dānyāl,* ed. Muḥammad Nāʾif al-Dulaymī (Mosul, 1399/1979).

[29]Abū al-Maḥāsin Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal al-Ṣāfī wa-al-Mustawfá baʿd al-Wāfī,* ed. Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn (Cairo, 1984), 1:192.

direction of reorientation that is necessary in the study of the literature and culture of the Mamluk era.

I would now like to present a short overview of the most important achievements and the most pressing desiderata in the field of Mamluk literature.[30] Looking for a Mamluk text that would help us to follow indigenous concepts of literature, one may resort to Ibn Nubātah´s anthology *Maṭla' al-Fawā'id,* a prescriptive text in which the author tries to define the social role of the *adīb*.[31] According to him, the task of the *adīb* is threefold. First, he has to be a linguistic exegete of the principal texts of Islamo-Arabic culture (such as the Quran, hadith, and pre- and early Islamic poetry). Second, he must be a poet as well as an expert and connoisseur in the field of poetry, and third, he has to fulfill the same role in the field of *inshā',* thus inheriting the tasks of the *kātib* of the Abbasid era. Ibn Nubātah does not explicitly mention the *maqāmah,* but it goes without saying that the composition of *maqāmāt* was a major activity of Mamluk literati. As far as poetry is concerned, we have to take into account *dīwān*s as well as anthologies, as is already shown in Ibn Nubātah´s own production (not least in his *Maṭla',* which is an anthology itself). In sum, it becomes quite clear that the major fields of activity of the Mamluk *adīb* must be seen in the following five realms: (1) poetry, (2) anthologies, (3) *maqāmah*s, (4) *inshā',* and (5) theory (literary theory and rhetoric).

(1) To start with *Poetry*: Recent years have granted us editions of the *dīwān*s of al-Talla'farī, Ibn Ghānim al-Maqdisī, al-Jazzār, Ibn Tamīm, al-Maḥḥār, al-Ḥillī, and Ibn Ḥajar. The early Mamluk poet and compulsive gambler al-Talla'farī [2] is known to all readers of Rosenthal's *Gambling in Islam*. Unfortunately, Rosenthal did not live to see the long-awaited appearance of an edition of al-Talla'farī´s complete *Dīwān*.[32] Ibn Ghānim al-Maqdisī [3] is a major Sufi author of the period

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[30]This overview is to be understood as a continuation of the ″state of the art″ articles that appeared previously in this journal: Th. Emil Homerin, ″Reflections on Poetry in the Mamluk Age,″ *MSR* 1 (1997): 63–85, and Robert Irwin, ″Mamluk Literature,″ *MSR* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 1–29. In general, I will concentrate on texts and studies not yet treated in these contributions. I will not consider the popular epics, the Arabian Nights, nor Mamluk literature in Turkish. These groups of texts have been dealt with amply by Irwin, to whose knowledgeable explanations I have little to add. Recent contributions are Stefan Leder, ″Postklassisch und vormodern,″ 290–93, and Thomas Herzog, ″Legitimität durch Erzählung: Ayyūbidische und kalifale Legitimation mamlūkischer Herrschaft in der populären *Sīrat Baybars*″ in *Die Mamluken,* ed. Conermann and Pistor-Hatam, 251–68. Ten contributions on *Sīrat Baybars* are assembled in *Arabica* 51 (2004): 1–221. Recent contributions on Mamluk literature in Turkish are reviewed by Robert Dankoff in *MSR* 8, no. 1 (2004): 303-7.

[31]See Bauer, ″Literarische Anthologien,″ 85–94.

[32]*Dīwān al-Talla'farī,* ed. Riḍā Rajab (Damascus, 2004); and see Franz Rosenthal, *Gambling in Islam* (Leiden, 1975).

whose *Dīwān* is an important supplement to his more famous *maqāmah*-style *Kashf al-Asrār fī / ʿan Ḥikam al-Ṭuyūr wa-al-Azhār,* one of most interesting Sufi texts of the period, edited and translated several times.[33] Yaḥyá al-Jazzār [4] is one of the first of the many craftsmen poets of the period. Growing up in his parentsʹ butcher shop in al-Fusṭāṭ, he discovered his literary talent and joined the companionship of the leading poets of his time who held him in great esteem. This encouraged him to try to earn his livelihood by composing panegyric poetry, only to realize the difficulty of making a living as a professional poet in this time. Thus he returned to his original job, saying that as a butcher, the dogs would run after him, whereas as a poet, he had to run after the dogs. A selection of his poetry has been preserved and edited in an unsatisfying way.[34] Ibn Tamīmʹs [5] small *Dīwān*[35] furnishes us with formidable specimens of the Ayyubid and Mamluk art of the epigram, a form that was extremely popular in the Mamluk period. The Syrian poet al-Maḥḥār [10] is important for the history of *muwashshaḥ* and *zajal* in the East.[36] In the field of the *zajal,* al-Maḥḥār styled himself as a new Ibn Quzmān and purposely imitated the Andalusian style and dialect. But the Syrian and Egyptian public came to prefer *azjāl* in their local dialects. This may have been a reason why his *zajal* seems to have been less popular than the *zajal* of other authors.[37] In any case, a study of the Eastern *zajal,* its language, style, and content, is a major desideratum. An important event was the publication of Muḥammad Ḥawwarʹs critical edition of the *Dīwān* of Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī [18], which is clearly superior to several older uncritical editions, but which does not contain the chapter on *mujūn*. For that, the Damascus edition still remains the only source.[38] Finally, Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī [35] met with interest because he was the most ingenious hadith scholar of his time. In a way not atypical for the Mamluk period, he started as a poet by eulogizing princes from the Rasulid dynasty, before he turned to hadith studies. The published recension of his *Dīwān*—one of three recensions compiled by the author himself—is in fact an

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[33]*Dīwān al-ʿIzz ʿAbd al-Salām ibn Ghānim al-Maqdisī,* ed. Māhir Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Qādir (Damascus, 2001); ʿAbd al-Salām ibn Ghānim al-Maqdisī, *Kashf al-Asrār ʿan Ḥikam al-Ṭuyūr wa-al-Azhār*, ed. idem (Jiddah, 1416/1996).

[34]*Dīwān al-Jazzār,* ed. Muḥammad Zaghlūl Sallām (Alexandria, 2001); see my review in this issue of *MSR*.

[35]*Dīwān Mujīr al-Dīn Ibn Tamīm,* ed. Hilāl Nājī and Nāẓim Rashīd (Beirut, 1420/1999).

[36]Sīrāj al-Dīn al-Maḥḥār, *Dīwān,* ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad ʿAṭā (Cairo, 1422/2001).

[37]In his collection of *muwashshaḥāt* and *azjāl* entitled *ʿUqūd al-Laʾāl fī al-Muwashshaḥāt wa-al-Azjāl* by al-Nawājī, ed. ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Shihābī (Baghdad, 1982), the author included two *muwashshaḥs* by al-Maḥḥār, but none of his *zajal*s.

[38]*Dīwān Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī,* ed. Muḥammad Ḥawwar (Beirut, 2000). For earlier editions see Wolfhart Heinrichs, ʺṢafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī,ʺ *EI*[2]*,* 8:801b–805b.

anthology comprising those poems that were considered best by Ibn Ḥajar himself.[39]

The number of major poets whose *dīwān*s are still unedited is, however, larger. I will mention here only eight examples: (1) Ibn Qurnāṣ [1], whose epigrams of nature poetry are often quoted; (2) Ibn Dānyāl [9], whose poetry is preserved in a selection by al-Ṣafadī edited only in bowdlerized form; Li Guo′s studies on two of his poems have demonstrated sufficiently that not only his shadow plays but also his *Dīwān* contains precious gems;[40] (3) Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī [16], the famous grammarian, was also a prolific poet and attracted the attention of Th. Emil Homerin, who dedicated several studies to him;[41] (4) Ibrāhīm al-Miʿmār [19], a popular poet who was in several ways a forerunner of Ibn Sūdūn and whose satirical portrayal of middle-class life in Cairo is of enormous importance for literary and cultural history alike;[42] (5) and (6) al-Qīrāṭī [26] and Ibn Makānis [28] belong to the most often-quoted poets of their time: their *dīwān*s have been preserved in several manuscripts and their edition will be a considerable help to gain a more precise idea about Mamluk poetry in the second half of the eighth century.[43] The same holds true for (7) al-Shihāb al-Manṣūrī [39], one of the ″seven shooting stars″ of the ninth century. And finally (8) the poetess ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah [43] must not be forgotten, author of exquisite Sufi poetry and of a remarkable *badīʿīyah,* the last protagonist of Mamluk poetry, who died even as the Ottoman army was approaching Cairo. She has become the object of several studies, but promises to edit her *Dīwān* have not yet been fulfilled, as far as I know.[44]

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[39]See my review in *MSR* 4 (2000): 267–69.

[40]Li Guo, ″Paradise Lost: Ibn Dānyāl′s Response to Baybars′ Campaign against Vice in Cairo,″ *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 121 (2001): 219–35; idem, ″The Devil′s Advocate: Ibn Dānyāl′s Art of Parody in His *Qaṣīdah* No. 71,″ *MSR* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 177–209.

[41]Th. Emil Homerin, ″A Bird Ascends the Night. Elegy and Immortality in Islam,″ revised ed., *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 59 (1991): 247–79, and idem, ″′I′ve stayed by the Grave′: An elegy/*nasīb* for Nuḍār,″ in *Literary Heritage of Classical Islam: Arabic and Islamic Studies in Honour of James A. Bellamy,* ed. Mustansir Mir (Princeton, 1993): 107–18.

[42]Cf. Thomas Bauer, ″Ibrāhīm al-Miʿmār: Ein dichtender Handwerker aus Ägyptens Mamlukenzeit,″ *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 152 (2002): 63–93; idem, ″Die Leiden eines ägyptischen Müllers: Die Mühlen-Maqāme des Ibrāhīm al-Miʿmār (st. 749/1348),″ in *Ägypten–Münster: Kulturwissenschaftliche Studien zu Ägypten, dem Vorderen Orient und verwandten Gebieten (Festschrift Erhart Graefe),* ed. Anke Ilona Blöbaum et al. (Wiesbaden, 2003), 1–16; and idem, ″Das Nilzağal des Ibrāhīm al-Miʿmār: Ein Lied zur Feier des Nilschwellenfestes,″ in *Alltagsleben und materielle Kultur in der arabischen Sprache und Literatur (Festschrift Heinz Grotzfeld),* ed. U. Stehli-Werbeck and Th. Bauer (Wiesbaden, 2004): 69–88.

[43]Some verses of Ibn Makānis′ *urjūzah* on good behavior, satirizing the manners of the parvenus of his times, are translated in Geert Jan van Gelder, ″Arabic Didactic Verse,″ in *Centres of Learning,* ed. J. W. Drijvers and A. A. MacDonald (Leiden, 1995): 103–17.

[44]Th. Emil Homerin, ″Living Love: The Mystical Writings of ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah (d. 922/1516),″

(2) *Anthologies:* With the *Dīwān*s of al-Jazzār and Ibn Ḥajar we have already entered the domain of anthologies, a vast and largely unexplored field which, however, is of crucial importance to the understanding of the whole of Mamluk culture.[45] Undoubtedly the Mamluk period was the golden age of the anthology. In no other period did the literati compose as many anthologies and so wide a range of different types of anthologies. This again is no sign of lack of originality,[46] but the result of the dynamic literary culture of the period. Anthologies functioned more and more as the visiting cards of the *adīb*. By composing an anthology, an *adīb* could prove his literary taste, as well as his knowledge and mastery of texts and traditions, and could prove himself worthy of joining the ranks of its masters. Thus anthologies functioned somewhat like offprints today in modern academic life. This is corroborated by the significant amount of intertextuality between anthologies in this period. Furthermore, in a society in which everybody tried to take part in poetic communication, anthologies provided their readers with material to learn from or to be quoted in conversations. Popular anthologies such as the *Kanz al-Madfūn* by Yūnus al-Mālikī served to entertain and instruct less-educated layers of society. In anthologies, the material could be trimmed to match special occasions, purposes, and circumstances, and this flexibility was certainly among the reasons that this form of text was able to flourish in the Mamluk period. It is also one of the reasons why most anthologies focus on ″new″ (i.e., Ayyubid and Mamluk) material, because the readers wanted to be ″up to date.″ More often than not, even poets themselves did not strive to leave a sum of their work in the form of a *dīwān* but rather published their creations in the form of anthologies. The most important Mamluk poet besides al-Ḥillī, Ibn Nubātah [22], did not compile a definitive version of his *Dīwān*. The collection known today as *Dīwān Ibn Nubātah* is a compilation of his pupil al-Bashtakī, who drew on several anthologies compiled by Ibn Nubātah himself (a collection of his poems on Abū al-Fidāʾ, a collection of *ghazal* epigrams, a book containing seven liners, etc.).[47] Unfortunately, none of these anthologies has been published (though several of them are preserved in manuscript form) so that we cannot identify the sources of many poems of the *Dīwān*. A critical edition of the *dīwān* of as important a poet as Ibn Nubātah

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MSR 7, [no. 1] (2003): 211–34; idem, review of *ʿĀʾishah al-Bāʿūnīyah*, by Ḥasan Rabābiʿah, ibid., 237–39.

[45]A comprehensive but necessarily preliminary survey is given in my article ″Literarische Anthologien.″

[46]Brockelmann saw the only value of these books in their preservation of older texts that have been lost (*Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur* [Leiden, 1949], 2:7–8).

[47]A survey of Ibn Nubātah′s works is given in ʿUmar Mūsá Bāshā, *Ibn Nubātah al-Miṣrī: Amīr Shuʿarāʾ al-Mashriq* (Cairo, 1963).

would be a desideratum anyway, and I would strongly favor a critical edition of Ibn Nubātah′s poetic anthologies first.

Perhaps the most important edition of a literary anthology compiled by the poet himself is the edition of the *Nuzhat al-Nufūs* of Ibn Sūdūn [37][48] which opened a window into a hitherto little-known area of ″popular″ poetry of the Mamluk period. Ibn Ḥajar′s and Ibn Sūdūn′s contemporary, al-Nawājī [36], has found a competent and engaged advocate in Ḥasan ʿAbd al-Hādī. So far, ʿAbd al-Hādī has edited two of al-Nawājī′s anthologies and a bio-bibliographical text.[49] Al-Nawājī, an outstanding *homme de lettre* of the first half of the ninth century, is known primarily for his anthology of wine poetry (and related subjects) entitled *Ḥalbat al-Kumayt*,[50] which, due to its importance, deserves at least a reprint or better yet a critical edition. But I would encourage even more an edition of al-Nawājī′s comprehensive *ghazal* anthology *Marāti ʿ al-Ghizlān* (a model for two anthologies by al-Shihāb al-Ḥijāzī [38] already published)[51] and his anthology of beard-epigrams (*Khalʿ al-ʿIdhār fī Waṣf al-ʿIdhār*) preserved in many manuscripts and widely know in his own time. I am afraid that again pseudo-moral scruples will get in the way in the case of these titles. Therefore it was a wise decision by ʿAbd al-Hādī to start his Nawājī project with the poet′s collection of his poems in praise of the Prophet. Though this genre is doubtlessly morally unquestionable, it remains virtually unstudied.[52] The Mamluk period witnessed a great blossoming of this genre, but Western scholars were reluctant to book this fact on the positive side of the balance of Mamluk literature because this form of religious poetry led the Arabs even further away from the direction of secular modernity. It is high time now for an unprejudiced pioneering study on the genre of *madḥ al-nabī*, which is not even treated in the standard dictionaries. In this context, it should be noted that we still lack an edition of Ibn Sayyid al-Nās′ [15] collection of his own

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[48]Arnoud Vrolijk, *Bringing a Laugh to a Scowling Face: A Study and Critical Edition of the ″Nuzhat al-Nufūs wa-Muḍḥik al-ʿAbūs″ by ʿAlī Ibn Sūdūn al-Bašbuġāwī* (Leiden, 1998). See my review of this and another edition in *MSR* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 267–72.

[49]*Al-Maṭāliʿ al-Shamsīyah fī al-Madāʾiḥ al-Nabawīyah* (Amman, 1999); *Ṣaḥāʾif al-Ḥasanāt fī Waṣf al-Khāl* (Amman, 2000); *Muʾallafāt Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan al-Nawājī al-Shāfiʿī* (Amman, 2001).

[50]See G. J. van Gelder, ″A Muslim Encomium on Wine: *The Racecourse of the Bay (Ḥalbat al-Kumayt)* by al-Nawāǧī (d. 859/1455) as a Post-Classical Arabic Work,″ *Arabica* 42 (1995): 222–34.

[51]Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Ḥijāzī, *Al-Kunnas al-Jawārī fī al-Ḥisān min al-Jawārī* and *Jannat al-Wildān min al-Ghilmān,* ed. Raḥāb ʿAkkāwī (Beirut, 1418/1998).

[52]Of some relevance is Nāẓim Rashīd, *Al-Madāʾiḥ al-Nabawīyah fī Adab al-Qarnayn al-Sādis wa-al-Sābiʿ lil-Hijrah* (Baghdad, 2002).

poems in praise of the Prophet.[53]

As far as anthologies comprising material from different authors are concerned, we can record a few very welcome editions of texts hitherto accessible only in poor prints, such as al-Ibshīhī´s [34] *Mustaṭraf*.[54] The *tadhkirah*-style anthology *Al-Muḥāḍarāt wa-al-Muḥāwarāt* by al-Suyūṭī has been edited in an exemplary way.[55] Its diligent philological method of editing, its detailed indices, clear print, and solid binding stand in marked contrast to the faulty and negligent way Mamluk literary texts are usually presented, which only reflects the general disdain in which these texts are held. But the great majority of existing texts still remain in manuscript form. In a survey of Mamluk anthologies, I mentioned ninety anthologies by fifty different authors.[56] This list can easily be augmented, but it may provide a first orientation for future efforts. What we need most urgently given the present state of our knowledge are preliminary studies of as many of these anthologies as possible. They should determine the contents of the book, the plan of the author, its main sources, and give a first judgement of the supposed target group of the author. To exploit the enormous wealth of Mamluk anthologies, dozens of studies are needed to determine the character of all of these books, in order to give a comprehensive idea of the literary market in Mamluk times, to establish the literary canon of the Mamluk period, and to find out which of these books deserve to be edited.

In this context, I would like especially to point to anthologies by unknown authors or to altogether anonymous works designed for those with less education and which may yield valuable insights into the values and the world view of the lower middle class. They are perhaps an abundant, still untapped source for the study of the culture and the mentalities of the people below the class of the highbrow ulama.[57]

(3) *Maqāmāt*: One of the most famous legends so typical of the ˝orientalist˝ approach to post-Saljuq literature is the often-told story that Nāṣīf al-Yāzijī (1214–87/1800–71) was drawn to the genre of *maqāmah* by de Sacy´s edition of

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[53]*Bushrá al-Labīb bi-Dhikrá al-Ḥabīb;* his anthology of early Islamic poems of this genre entitled *Minaḥ al-Midaḥ* has been edited by ‘Iffat Wiṣāl Ḥamzah (Damascus, 1407/1987).

[54]*Al-Mustaṭraf fī Kull Fann Mustaẓraf*, ed. Ibrāhīm Ṣāliḥ (Beirut, 1999).

[55]Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Kitāb al-Muḥāḍarāt wa-al-Muḥāwarāt,* ed. Yaḥyá al-Jubūrī (Beirut, 1424/2003).

[56]Bauer, ˝Literarische Anthologien,˝ 41–52 (no. 30k should be deleted from the list).

[57]See, with special reference to Yūsuf al-Mālikī´s *Kanz al-Madfūn,* ibid., 28–36, and see also G. Canova, ˝Una pagina di *al-Kanz al-Madfūn* sugli uomini più illustri,˝ in *Ultra mare: mélanges de langue arabe et d´islamologie offerts à Aubert Martin,* ed. Frédéric Bauden (Louvain, 2004), 93–107.

the *maqāmah*s of al-Ḥarīrī.[58] According to this legend, al-Yāzijī ˝revived˝ a classical Arabic genre, thus becoming a protagonist of the *nahḍah,* the ˝revival˝ of Arabic literature. In reality, however, there was nothing to revive, because there had been no death. Instead, al-Yāzijī must have been familiar with the *maqāmah* genre, because quite simply, there was a living and uninterrupted tradition of *maqāmah* literature from al-Hamadhānī right down to al-Yāzijī. In the colonialist view, however, the *maqāmah* tradition had to be hushed up (with the exceptions of al-Hamadhānī and al-Ḥarīrī) in order to present a picture of death and decadence. Ultimately, however, this view is no longer tenable, because in the interim the first (!) comprehensive presentation of *maqāmah* literature has appeared.[59] Its author Hämeen-Anttila has recorded 175 authors of *maqāmāt* between al-Ḥarīrī and al-Yāzijī.[60] Sixty of them belong to the Mamluk period,[61] but only a small portion of these *maqāmāt* is accessible in print,[62] and studies are lacking almost altogether. But we see that it is sometimes enough just to compile a simple list in order to refute prejudiced claims about Mamluk literature. This list also provides the necessary data for future research, which hopefully will not fail to materialize before too long. I am confident in this respect, since the *maqāmah* genre seems to be more attractive for modern scholars than poetry. At the present stage of research, an overview of the different types of the Mamluk *maqāmah* and their respective literary and social functions would be especially welcome. Still, a great number of relevant texts have not yet been edited, and so editions remain a major agenda in this field also.[63]

(4) *Inshā':* The next point on the list is *inshā',* the drawing up of official and private correspondence, official documents, notes, and related texts (such as prefaces to books) in elaborated and rhymed prose. And here again we have to cope with established Western assumptions. According to these standards, texts of an outright pragmatic nature, such as letters of appointment, are not considered to be proper literature. But Mamluk texts speak a different language. Texts in rhymed prose

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[58]Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila, ˝1000 Years of Maqāmas: A List of Maqāma Authors,˝ *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der arabisch-islamischen Wissenschaften* 13 (1999–2000): 244–315, here 244.

[59]Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila, *Maqāma: A History of a Genre* (Wiesbaden, 2002).

[60]Ibid., 372–405; the number will increase if additional sources are considered (e.g., al-Muḥibbī, *Nafḥat al-Rayḥānah*).

[61]Ibid., nos. 66–123 (some of them do not belong to Mamluk literature in the sense of being the literature that was created within the borders of the Mamluk empire).

[62]Ibid., nos. 69, 75, 85, 89, 94, 97, 97bis, 98, 103, 112, 115, 116, 119.

[63]A recent edition is Ibrahim Kh. Geries, *A Literary and Gastronomical Conceit: Mufākharat al-Ruzz wa �ʾl-Ḥabb Rummān: The Boasting Debate Between Rice And Pomegranate Seeds Or al-Makāma al-Simāṭiyya (The Tablecloth Makāma)* (Wiesbaden, 2002).

are included in literary anthologies. Ibn Nubātah devotes a whole section of his *Maṭlaʿ al-Fawāʾid* to *inshāʾ*. His and Ibn Ḥijjah´s travelogues are presented in the previously mentioned *Thamarāt al-Awrāq*. Furthermore, al-Ṣafadī´s congratulatory note on the occasion of the Nile flood is even included in the popular anthology *Kanz al-Madfūn*. In several Mamluk *dīwān*s, such as the *Dīwān* of al-Qīrāṭī [26], poetry and *inshāʾ* are presented side by side without any real difference in status. Therefore, to understand Mamluk and Ottoman perceptions of *inshāʾ*, new approaches to the aesthetics of literature must inevitably be developed, ones that will surmount the still current ″Diskreditierung der Okkasionalität durch die Erlebnisästhetik.″[64] But before this can be accomplished, philologists will have to do their job and provide us with an edition of the most important *inshāʾ* collections above and beyond al-Qalqashandī´s *Ṣubḥ*, especially *Alḥān al-Sawājiʿ bayn al-Bādiʿ wa-al-Marājiʿ* by al-Ṣafadī [21], *Al-Sajʿ al-Muṭawwaq, Zahr al-Manthūr,* and *Taʿlīq al-Dīwān* by Ibn Nubātah [22], and *Qahwat al-Inshāʾ* by Ibn Ḥijjah [33].[65]

(5) *Theory:* When we talk about *adab* of the Mamluk period, it is not out of place to discuss several texts that themselves claim to be about history or have to do with religion, whether in the form of, as Irwin aptly puts it, ″literature of piety and rigorism,″ or in the form of Sufi literature.[66] There should be no objection to that because the boundaries of *adab* are fluid, anyway. But there is another vast field which indeed is part of *adab,* although it is usually omitted when talking about Mamluk literature. This is the field of *ʿUlūm al-adab*. In the Mamluk period, the term *adab* was no longer primarily associated with the entertainment and education of *belles lettres,* but rather more closely with those scholarly disciplines that deal with the Arabic language. Many professional *udabāʾ* must have recognized that their most powerful justification for taking their rank among the ulama and their presence in the madrasahs lay in their theoretical preoccupation with philology and linguistics.

At a time in which everyone composed poetry, it is difficult to distinguish oneself by poetry alone. Of course, poets could distinguish themselves by composing better poetry than their contemporaries, but poets may have sought a more scholarly field to become on a par with the hadith and *fiqh* specialists. We should probably

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[64]H.-G. Gadamer; see W. Segebrecht, *Das Gelegenheitsgedicht: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte und Poetik der deutschen Lyrik* (Stuttgart, 1977), 56.

[65]A profound study on *inshāʾ* with special reference to *tashrīf* is Werner Diem, *Ehrendes Kleid und ehrendes Wort: Studien zu* Tašrīf *in mamlūkischer und vormamlūkischer Zeit* (Würzburg, 2002); an edition of the *Qahwat al-Inshāʾ* is in preparation by Rudulf Veselý: see Veselý, ″Das *Taqrīẓ* in der arabischen Literatur,″ in *Die Mamluken,* ed. Conermann and Pistor-Hatam, 379–85.

[66]See, e.g., Irwin, ″Mamluk Literature,″ 16–77 (history); 18 (magic); 23–25 (″literature of piety and rigorism″); 25–26 (Sufi literature).

locate the many complaints of Ibn Nubātah about his poverty and the low esteem in which poetry is held within this context. Of course, such complaints are a topos and are plainly contradicted by the overall presence and overwhelming social importance of poetry, and also by the fame and respect that Ibn Nubātah acquired during his lifetime. But it seems as if Ibn Nubātah had a different sort of appreciation in mind when he composed his aforementioned anthology *Maṭlaʿ al-Fawāʾid,* which, on a closer look, turns out to be a manifesto for the importance of the professional *adīb.* It shows that the *adīb* had his place in the madrasah as a scholar in the field of the propaedeutic linguistic disciplines; in the chancellery as specialist in *inshāʾ,* and in a way also in everybody′s home as an advisor in literary matters and as a supplier of poetic stuff. Therefore, the picture of *adab* is not complete if we do not regard the achievements of Mamluk *udabāʾ* in the fields of philology, linguistics, and rhetoric. Again, this is a vast field, and again, the Mamluk contribution to it is only superficially known. Thus all I can do here is to limit myself to a kind of name dropping. In the discipline of grammar, besides the great and well-known names such as Ibn Mālik, Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī [16], Ibn Hishām, and al-Suyūṭī [42], lesser-known figures ought not to be overlooked, such as Ibn Kaykaldī, the author of a recently-printed work on linguistic generalization and specification *(ṣiyagh al-ʿumūm),* which is equally relevant for linguistics and *uṣūl al-fiqh.*[67] In the field of lexicography, we have the famous dictionaries by Ibn Manẓūr, al-Fayyūmī, and al-Fīrūzābādī with their respective merits, and we should not forget al-Suyūṭī′s *Al-Muzhir fī ʿUlūm al-Lughah wa-Anwāʿihā* with its unconventional theoretical approach towards lexicography.

Much to our chagrin, the Arabs still displayed only minor interest in the Arabic lexicon of later periods and of substandard Arabic.[68] Therefore, the reader often encounters more lexical difficulties with Mamluk *zajal*s than with pre-Islamic odes. Those texts in which different registers of speech are mixed, such as the shadow-play and the *zajal,* especially still give Arabists a lot to do. Besides Dozy′s indispensable *Supplément,* several studies on special terminological subjects (to mention only Ayalon′s studies on administrative and military terminology) have been carried out, and many studies in cultural history treat lexicographical problems. However, a comprehensive dictionary that would give convenient access to our present knowledge is still lacking. I would like to call attention to the genres of dialect poetry such as the *zajal.* There are more of them than is commonly

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[67]Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl ibn Kaykaldī, *Talqīḥ al-Fuhūm fī Tanqīḥ Ṣiyagh al-ʿUmūm,* and Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī, *Aḥkām ″Kull″ wa-Mā ʿalayhi Tadull,* ed. ʿAlī Muʿawwaḍ and ʿĀdil ʿAbd al-Mawjūd (Beirut, 1418/1997).

[68]I could find no further details about al-Bishbīshī′s (d. 820/1417) *Al-Tadhyīl wa-al-Takmīl li-Mā Ustuʿmila min al-Lafẓ al-Dakhīl,* mentioned in *GAL,* 2:26, and possibly a forerunner of al-Khafājī′s (d. 1069/1659) famous *Shifaʾ al-Ghalīl fīmā fī Kalām al-ʿArab min al-Dakhīl.*

assumed, and most of them are not written in imitation of Andalusian Arabic, but rather neatly reflect the dialects of Cairo and Damascus. A critical edition of these texts will also contribute to our knowledge of the Arabic language of the Mamluk period.

But let me return to Arab linguistics. The Mamluk era is a post-Sakkākian era. In the beginning of the seventh/thirteenth century, al-Sakkākī systematized the ingenious ideas of ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī and thus revolutionized the Arab perception of language. His achievements have been superficially studied, and there is a German translation of the *‘Ilm al-Ma‘ānī* section of al-Sakkākī´s *Miftāḥ*[69] that also contains a useful terminological glossary. Still, however, the real importance of al-Sakkākī´s and his successors´ teachings has not yet been realized. Even a superficial glance in Ḥājjī Khalīfah´s *Kashf al-Ẓunūn* demonstrates that al-Sakkākī´s *Miftāḥ,* together with its revision and abbreviation by al-Qazwīnī, is one of the most influential and most studied books of the post-Saljuq Arabic world.[70] The three fields of *‘ilm al-bayān*, *‘ilm al-ma‘ānī,* and *‘ilm al-badī‘* comprise subjects that are studied today under headings such as stylistics, rhetoric, semantics, and pragmatics. As far as the Mamluk production in these three fields is concerned, besides al-Khaṭīb al-Qazwīnī (d. 739/1338), the names of Ibn al-Zamlakānī (651/1253), Ibn Abī al-Iṣba‘ (654/1256), and Badr al-Dīn ibn Mālik (686/1287) come to mind, none of them yet the subject of thorough study. In this regard, Sharaf al-Dīn al-Ṭībī (743/1343) should also be mentioned. He wrote an important book on *al-ma‘ānī wa-al-bayān,* but also tried to apply his results in the study of rhetoric to his commentary on hadith.[71]

One of the most comprehensive commentaries on al-Qazwīnī´s *Talkhīṣ* is the ″Bride of Happiness″ by Bahā’ al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 773/1372).[72] In a book of this scale, the text of al-Qazwīnī´s précis provides for little more than the structure and the chapter headings. As a matter of fact, a book like that of Bahā’ al-Dīn is an independent and critical work of rhetoric that contains many insights which can still enrich contemporary linguistics and communication theory.

Works dedicated in a more practical way to literary theory and criticism, as well as of rhetoric, often take the form of anthologies, to mention only the treatises

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[69]Udo G. Simon, *Mittelalterliche arabische Sprachbetrachtung zwischen Grammatik und Rhetorik: ‘ilm al-ma‘ānī bei as-Sakkākī* (Heidelberg, 1993).

[70]See the statistics in my review of Simon, in *Zeitschrift für Arabische Linguistik* 35 (1998): 86–90.

[71]*Sharḥ al-Ṭībī ‘alá Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ al-Musammá bi-al-Kāshif ‘an Ḥaqā’iq al-Sunan,* ed. ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Hindāwī (Beirut, 1417/1997).

[72]Bahā’ al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī al-Subkī, *‘Arūs al-Afrāḥ fī Sharḥ Talkhīṣ al-Miftāḥ,* ed. Khalīl Ibrāhīm Khalīl (Beirut, 1422/2001).

on the stylistic devices of *jinās, tashbīh,* and *tawriyah* composed by al-Ṣafadī, Ibn Ḥijjah, and al-Suyūṭī. Several of them have been edited recently, among them al-Ṣafadī's book on comparison, containing interesting remarks on the neuropsychological background of literature.[73]

In addition to this monographic treatment of rhetoric, a new form of dealing with rhetoric appeared, the *badī'īyah*, a poem, composed as a *mu'āraḍah* to al-Būṣīrī's *Burdah* in praise of the Prophet, in which each line exemplifies one or more stylistic devices. This curious mixture between poetry, theory, and piety (invented by Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī [18]) has been utterly misunderstood by its modern critics, who complain that *badī'īyāt* are neither profound theoretical texts nor emotionally overwhelming literary works of art, nor even deeply felt expressions of religious feelings. But they fail to understand that the fascination of the *badī'īyah* is exactly the fact that it represents so much all at once! Thus far, twenty-five authors of *badī'īyāt* from the Mamluk period are known, with each of their texts displaying its own characteristics. Studies are almost totally lacking.[74] From a literary point of view, the most beautiful *badī'īyah* is probably the poem composed by 'Ā'ishah al-Bā'ūnīyah [43]. More interesting from a theoretical point of view are those *badī'īyāt* that were accompanied by a commentary plus an anthology. The only Mamluk representative of this sort of text is Ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī's [33] *Khizānat al-Adab,* which is one of our most important sources for thinking about literature and rhetoric from the Mamluk period.[75] There are two mediocre editions of this book, but a critical and indexed edition of this key text is a strong desideratum. Equally important would be studies on the actual usage of rhetorical devices in the texts of Mamluk authors in order to establish the relation between theory and practice in this vast field.[76]

To sum up, the Mamluk period is one of the apogees of Arabic literature, displaying an extremely broad, lively, and vital literary culture—as every unprejudiced observer

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[73]See the review by Everett Rowson in *MSR* 8, no. 1 (2004): 315–23.

[74]'Alī Abū Zayd, *Al-Badī'īyāt fī al-Adab al-'Arabī: Nash'atuhā, Taṭawwuruhā, Atharuhā* (Beirut, 1403/1983); Pierre Cachia, ″From Sound to Echo in Late *badī'* Literature,″ *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 108 (1988): 219–25; idem, *The Arch Rhetorician or The Schemer's Skimmer: A Handbook of Late Arabic* badī' *drawn from 'Abd al-Ghanī an-Nābulusī's* Nafaḥāt al-Azhār 'alā Nasamāt al-Asḥār (Wiesbaden, 1998); Bauer, ″Die *badī'iyya* Nāṣīf al-Yāziğīs.″

[75]The book was so popular that even an edition based exclusively on manuscripts preserved in Syria can be considered a major step towards making accessible one of the most important sources for Mamluk literary culture: Ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī, *Khizānat al-Adab wa-Ghāyat al-Arab* (Beirut, 1421/2001; 2nd ed. 1425/2005).

[76]Geert Jan van Gelder, ″Poetry for Easy Listening: *Insijām* and Related Concepts in Ibn Ḥijjah's *Khizānat al-Adab,*″ *MSR* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 31–48.

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surely will concede. During the two and a half centuries of the Mamluk period, its literati composed some veritable masterpieces of Arabic literature, many interesting and original works of literature, literary theory, and rhetoric, as well as countless less remarkable works of everyday poetry, which, despite its lack of originality, reflects an interest in literature and a linguistic consciousness. And Mamluk literature is fascinating because it transcends boundaries: the boundaries between everyday and literary communication; between popular and high literature; between poetry and prose; between the private and the public; between theory and praxis. Colonial delusions have thus far prevented a proper appreciation of this culture. It is high time now to critically investigate and question these prejudices and erroneous assumptions and to open up new ways to a better understanding of the fascinating world of Mamluk literature.

Some Major Poets and *Udabā'* of the Mamluk Empire

#	Name	Date	poetry	anthol.	maqāmah	inshā'	theory
1	Ibn Qurnāṣ	671/1272	▓		■		
2	al-Tallaʿfarī	675/1277	▓		■		
3	Ibn Ghānim al-Maqdisī	678/1279	▓		■		
4	al-Jazzār	679/1281	▓				
5	Mujīr al-Dīn Ibn Tamīm	684/1285	▓				
6	al-Shābb al-Ẓarīf	688/1289	▓		■		
7	Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir	692/1292	▓			≡	
8	al-Būṣīrī	c. 694/1294	▓				
9	Ibn Dānyāl	710/1310	▓		■		
10	al-Maḥḥār	711/1311	▓				
11	al-Wadāʿī	716/1316	▓	▨		≡	▒
12	Shams al-Dīn Ibn al-Ṣāʾigh	725/1325	▓		■		▒
13	al-Shihāb Maḥmūd (Ibn Fahd)	725/1325	▓	▨	■	≡	
14	al-Nuwayrī	733/1332		▨		≡	▒
15	Ibn Sayyid al-Nās	734/1334	▓		■		
16	Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī	745/1344	▓	▨			▒
17	Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī	749/1349	▓	▨		≡	
18	Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī	749/1348	▓		■		▒
19	Ibrāhīm al-Miʿmār	749/1348	▓		■		
20	Ibn al-Wardī	749/1349	▓		■		
21	al-Ṣafadī	764/1363	▓	▨	■	≡	▒
22	Ibn Nubātah	768/1366	▓	▨	■		
23	Ibn Abī Ḥajalah	776/1375	▓	▨	■		
24	Ibn Ḥabīb	779/1377	▓		■		
25	Ibn Jābir al-Andalusī al-Aʿmá	780/1378	▓				▒
26	al-Qīrāṭī	781/1379	▓	▨		≡	
27	ʿIzz al-Dīn al-Mawṣilī	789/1387	▓				▒
28	Ibn Makānis	794/1392	▓				
29	al-Ghuzūlī	815/1412	▓	▨			
30	al-Qalqashandī	821/1418	▓	▨	■	≡	▒
31	(Ibn) al-Damāmīnī	827/1424	▓	▨	■	≡	▒

Some Major Poets and *Udabā'* of the Mamluk Empire		poetry	anthol.	maqāmah	inshā'	theory
32	al-Āthārī	828/1425	▨	▨			▨
33	Ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī	837/1434	▨	▨		▤	
34	al-Ibshīhī	c. 850/1446		▨			
35	Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī	852/1449	▨	▨			▨
36	al-Nawājī	859/1455	▨	▨		▤	
37	Ibn Sūdūn al-Bashbughāwī	868/1464	▨		█		
38	Shihāb al-Dīn al-Ḥijāzī	875/1470	▨	▨			
39	Ibn al-Hā'im al-Shihāb al-Manṣūrī	887/1482	▨				
40	al-Badrī	894/1489	▨	▨			
41	Tāj al-Dīn Ibn 'Arabshāh	901/1495	▨				▨
42	al-Suyūṭī	911/1505	▨	▨	█		▨
43	'Ā'ishah al-Bā'ū'nīyah	922/1516	▨				

JONATHAN P. BERKEY
DAVIDSON COLLEGE

Popular Culture under the Mamluks: A Historiographical Survey

There is something apparently appealing about the topic of popular culture. Perhaps the appeal lies in the riotous nature of the festivals in which popular culture was frequently expressed. The medieval ulama critics who chose to address popular religious and cultic practices of which they disapproved described them in almost rapturous detail, dwelling at sometimes astounding length on transvestitism, games of sexual inversion, bacchanalia—of all of which, of course, they disapproved. Their disapproval may or may not be shared by contemporary historians, but we do seem to love to dwell on it. This is not, perhaps, surprising. What early twenty-first-century historian, having just plowed his or her way through one of those endless passages in the chronicles about the price of bread, or about the relative value of one copper coin or another, or about which deputy qadi resigned his office and was replaced by another—what twenty-first century-historian could fail to be intrigued by the violent expostulation of Ibn al-Ḥājj against the muleteers who helped guide female visitors to the Qarāfah around the tombs, furtively leading them to abandoned cells and dark corners on moonlit nights, chatting them up in a place which should inspire feelings of religious awe and thoughts of eternal damnation, and sliding their mischievous hands over the thighs of the unsuspecting—or perhaps the all-too-suspecting—women?[1]

Whatever the reason, popular culture has, directly or indirectly, been the subject of much research in recent years.[2] It should be acknowledged at the outset that cultural historians of the Mamluk period owe a great deal to those social historians who have described the social structures of medieval Egypt and Syria over the last four decades. The publication of Ira Lapidus´ study of *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* was a turning point for everyone working in the field of medieval Islamic social and cultural history, but it has been supplemented by important works such as Louis Pouzet´s book on religious life in Damascus, Jean-Claude Garcin´s important study of a provincial Egyptian town, and Carl Petry´s analysis of the *Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Later Middle Ages*.[3] These works provide the

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[1] Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Madkhal al-Sharʿ al-Sharīf* (Cairo, 1929), 1:267–68.

[2] One of the first significant works was that of Barbara Langner, *Untersuchungen zur historischen Volkskunde Ägyptens nach mamlukischen Quellen* (Berlin, 1983).

[3] Ira Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, MA, 1967); Louis Pouzet, *Damas au VIIe/XIIIe siècle: vie et structures religieuses d´une métropole islamique* (Beirut, 1988);

necessary foundation for any analytical investigation of popular culture in the period. In particular, they have provided us with a clear understanding of the character of the ulama and their authority. This is especially important, both because the ulama will figure prominently as arbiters of cultural practices, and also because their peculiar function in Islamic societies is one of the most important features distinguishing those societies from, say, those of medieval Europe. Special mention should also be made of what appears to be a distinctive sub-topic of the field of Mamluk social history: namely, the character and function of crowds in Mamluk society. Again, Ira Lapidus initiated this line of research, but it has been continued in more focused studies by others.[4] What emerges from these studies is a view of crowds consisting of ad hoc assemblages of common people articulating specific grievances against ruling authorities, very often the market inspector. Significantly, however, these crowds seem to have lacked any propensity to embrace a political vision completely dismissive of the existing order—on the contrary, they occasionally expressed a rather conservative support for the legitimacy of the status quo. That nuanced relationship between the common people and the Mamluk authorities, with crowds willing to express frustration on particular issues but reluctant to pose a structural challenge to existing patterns of authority, may foreshadow a similar complexity in the character of popular culture.

Despite the attention the topic has received in recent years, the historian must first consider the question: ″Does popular culture exist?″ The question is not an idle one, particularly if the historian of the Near East hopes to participate in the broader historiographical discourse that until now has taken place largely among European historians. The issue, of course, is not whether the ″people,″ that is, social groups beyond a social or cultural elite, had ″culture.″ Rather, the central issue might be phrased this way: is there a stratum of cultural activity and production that is self-consciously distinct from that of the elite, and which is produced independently from, or even in opposition to, elite culture?[5]

For all that historians of the Near East, to overcome our deeply-rooted sense of methodological inferiority, might wish to meet the challenge of European historians on their own rarefied turf, it is important to recognize the distinctiveness

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Jean-Claude Garcin, *Un centre musulman de la Haute-Égypte médiévale, Qūṣ* (Cairo, 1976); Carl Petry, *The Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1981).

[4]Boaz Shoshan, ″Grain Riots and the ′Moral Economy′: Cairo, 1350–1517,″ *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 10 (1979–80): 459–78; James Grehan, ″Street Violence and Social Imagination in Late-Mamluk and Ottoman Damascus (ca. 1500–1800),″ *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 35 (2003): 215–36.

[5]For a review of the literature in European history, see Natalie Zemon Davis, ″From ′Popular Religion′ to Religious Culture,″ in *Reformation Europe: A Guide to Research,* ed. Steven Ozment (St. Louis, 1982), 321–41.

of Islamic societies. They are structured differently than, say, European societies, and consequently questions about cultural transmission and the social frameworks that make that transmission possible will necessarily be different, as will the character of the sources available to the historian. A festival such as that of Nawrūz, celebrated by medieval Egyptians apparently with some abandon despite the disapproval of various religious and secular authorities, displays plenty of parallels to the saturnalia and carnivals of misrule that colored the late medieval and early modern European scene; but noting the parallels takes us only part of the way down the road of understanding the specific historical significance of the festival.[6] This is a point which, in a slightly different context, Michael Chamberlain made convincingly in his excellent book on *Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus* in the late Ayyubid and early Mamluk period.[7] It would be delightful to find an Islamic Montaillou, a French village whose inhabitants´ controversial religious beliefs and practices Emmanuel Leroy Ladurie famously brought to light, or a medieval Muslim artisan whose unconventional cosmological convictions could be elucidated like those of the Italian miller studied by Carlo Ginzburg.[8] It would be silly, however, to wait for studies which, given the nature of the source material, probably will never emerge. Better, as Chamberlain demonstrated, simply to work with the sources we are given. From them, in fact, much can be said, if we pose questions that are appropriate and relevant to a medieval Islamic society.

So: Was there such a thing as ″popular culture″ in Egypt and Syria during the Mamluk period? There have been at least two distinct answers to this question in recent literature on the subject. One is that of Boaz Shoshan, who tackled the issue directly in his study of *Popular Culture in Medieval Cairo.* Shoshan was sympathetic to the arguments of European historians that it is misleading to think of ″popular culture″ as something distinct from the culture of elites. In the Islamic Middle East, of course, that distinction may be even harder to draw, since the lines separating one social group from another were, in general, more porous than they were in medieval Europe. Nonetheless, Shoshan considered the concept of ″popular culture″ analytically useful, in so far as it pointed to ″genres of ′texts′, both written and non-written . . . , which, despite their unavoidably uncertain

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[6]See Boaz Shoshan, *Popular Culture in Medieval Cairo* (Cambridge, 1993), 40–51, and my review in *American Historical Review* 100 (1995): 1637.

[7]Cambridge, 1994.

[8]*Montaillou: Cathars and Catholics in a French Village, 1294–1324*, trans. Barbara Bray (London, 1978); *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, trans. John and Anne Tedeschi (Baltimore, 1980). Boaz Shoshan actually found such an Islamic miller, but the sources were far too limited in nature to allow a study similar to Ginzburg´s; ″On Popular Literature in Medieval Cairo,″ *Poetics Today* 14 (1993): 349–65.

boundaries, provide safe bases for analysis as primarily popular″—that is, which are in some way the preserve of social groups ″inferior to the bourgeoisie.″ (Shoshan actually went further and suggested that these social groups were ″supposedly also illiterate, at least by and large.″ That is probably a slightly more problematic assertion, since illiteracy can take different forms and can be found in different degrees, particularly in an Islamic society where some familiarity with the Quran and other religious texts was so highly valued, and since the task of measuring illiteracy in a pre-modern Islamic society is daunting.)[9]

A second answer to the underlying question is considerably more skeptical that the designation ″popular culture″ has any serviceable meaning. Some scholars, following perhaps the dominant trend in European historiography, have been deeply suspicious of conventional ″two-tiered″ models of culture, setting, for example, ″high″ or ″elite″ culture against ″low″ or ″popular″ culture. If E. H. Carr was right, that all history is in the final analysis contemporary history, then it is likely that this line of analysis stems at least in part from the suspicion of hierarchies which is endemic in our contemporary *zeitgeist,* or at least in the *zeitgeist* dominant within academic circles. It also perhaps reflects the extraordinary influence of the work of Peter Brown, the pre-eminent historian of religious culture in late antiquity, an influence that derives both from its sheer intellectual force and also from the particular academic ″genealogies″ of many historians in our field. Whatever its origins, this suspicion of a ″high-low″ model of medieval Islamic culture has been enthusiastically embraced by several historians in important recent works. Ahmet Karamustafa, for example, argued strongly against seeing the practices of the Qalandarīyah and other odd or antinomian Sufi groups as in any sense a manifestation of a ″popular religion,″ and insisted instead that they should be viewed as normal and natural outgrowths of mainstream Sufi values and principles.[10] Christopher Taylor′s study of the *ziyārat al-qubūr* in medieval Cairo makes similar points. He argues in the first place that the visitation of tombs was a ″liminal″ practice and the cemeteries a liminal space, in which conventional social distinctions and hierarchies broke down. Secondly, he points out that those religious scholars who opposed the practice did not by any stretch of the imagination represent a consistent ulama voice, and so it is difficult if not impossible to identify what would constitute the ″high″ end of a two-tiered cultural model. Ibn Taymīyah, for instance, famously opposed the cult of saints and visitation of tombs, or at least certain aspects of them; but his arguments grew more out of specific theological concerns than any

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[9]Shoshan, *Popular Culture,* 7.

[10]Ahmet Karamustafa, *God′s Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in the Islamic Later Middle Period, 1200–1550* (Salt Lake City, 1994).

generalized suspicion of ″popular culture.″[11] (And to complete the confusion, of course, Ibn Taymīyah′s tomb became an object of pilgrimage after his death.)

These two historiographical positions are not perhaps mutually exclusive. It may be possible to accept that there is a cultural stratum which can meaningfully be called ″popular,″ while at the same time agreeing with Karamustafa, Taylor, and others that the two-tiered model is inadequate and misleading, especially in a medieval Islamic context.[12] Without trying to resolve the question in any definitive way, I will attempt in this article to outline the parameters of the issue and how the topic of ″popular culture″ has been and could yet be productively approached. Much of the following discussion will necessarily focus specifically on religious culture.

Some evidence for a distinctive ″popular culture″ can be found in the character of the surviving historical sources themselves. While the historian of Mamluk society mostly lacks certain types of sources that have been the bread and butter of European medievalists—archives, for example, or documentary sources—in broader terms the period is extremely rich in terms of the material available for its reconstruction. Some of these materials—chronicles, biographical dictionaries—are of course widely familiar. For all of their familiarity, they still can, when approached creatively, yield new insights, as demonstrated so clearly by Chamberlain′s book. But the literary foundation on which Mamluk history has largely been constructed has been described as ″deceptively firm.″[13] That is, there exist in the libraries of the Near East, Europe, and North America vast quantities of texts still in manuscript form, many of them of apparently quite a different character than the more polished and familiar works of al-Maqrīzī, Ibn Taghrībirdī, and others. These sources need to be surveyed more thoroughly—especially in terms of their authorship, and in terms of their role in the cultural life of medieval Egyptians and Syrians—before any adequate reckoning can be made of the character and scope of ″popular culture.″

These new or underutilized historical sources vary widely in character. Among them, of course, are the by now famous *waqfīyah*s of Cairo. Their value to the cultural historian is, strictly speaking, somewhat indirect, but nonetheless important. They have proven valuable for reconstructing the history of certain areas of economic

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[11]Christopher S. Taylor, *In the Vicinity of the Righteous: Ziyāra and the Veneration of Muslim Saints in Late Medieval Egypt* (Leiden, 1999). Cf. Muhammad Umar Memon, *Ibn Taimīya′s Struggle Against Popular Religion* (The Hague, 1976), 46–57. See also Boaz Shoshan′s critique of this viewpoint in his review of Taylor′s book, *IJMES* 32 (2000): 543–46.

[12]Certainly that is what I tried to suggest in my own recent study of ″popular″ preachers and storytellers. Jonathan P. Berkey, *Popular Preaching and the Religious Authority in the Medieval Islamic Near East* (Seattle, 2001).

[13]Ibid., 10.

life, as in the works of Carl Petry and Adam Sabra. In his recent book on poverty and charity in Mamluk Cairo, for example, Sabra used the *waqfīyah*s to begin to elucidate certain aspects of the economic and social life of those who—if popular culture exists—produced and consumed it.[14] But in the end the *waqfīyah*s are a limited source. A richer vein for the historian of popular culture lies in the vast array of unpublished, even uncataloged manuscripts of a religious nature in the major libraries in Egypt and Europe. On this score it is worth drawing special attention to the most recent, and mostly still unpublished work of Christopher Taylor, who has begun a more systematic survey of prayer manuals, *fatwá* collections, and various other religious texts, all of them outside the well-traveled mainstream of Mamluk-era literature, from the collection in Dār al-Kutub in Cairo.

It was not perhaps exactly the literature that he had in mind, but some evidence for Shoshan′s position can perhaps be gleaned from the literature of popular entertainment. The Mamluk period was an exceptionally fruitful period for the production of literary works such as the *Thousand and One Nights*, the *Sīrat ʿAntar,* and the *Sīrat al-Ẓāhir Baybars*. These texts pose very difficult questions of origin—the question of ″authorship″ is really not even relevant—but there are plenty of indications that the Islamic Middle Period was a critical one for the crystallization of identifiable (if not definitive) versions of them. The *Sīrat ʿAntar,* for instance, concerns the exploits of a pre-Islamic hero, and there are references to ʿAntar in very early Islamic sources. But the versions in which the romance is now known contain numerous references to much later events and persons, including European Crusaders. Moreover, the earliest known more-or-less complete narrative of ʿAntar′s life is found in a manuscript dating from 1466.[15] If dating these entertainments is difficult, so is assigning them to a particular literary genre, since they must at all times have circulated (especially in oral form) in widely different circumstances. Since E. W. Lane′s popular nineteenth-century *Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians,* however, it has been common to see them as the preserve of popular storytellers, reading or reciting the romances to largely illiterate audiences in coffeehouses and on street corners.[16] By itself, that view may perhaps place unfair or unnecessary limits on our understanding of these complex texts, but it certainly reflects one aspect of their manifestation in

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[14]Adam Sabra, *Poverty and Charity in Medieval Islam: Mamluk Cairo, 1250–1517* (Cambridge, 2000).

[15]B. Heller, ″ʿAntar, Sīrat,″ *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 1:518–21; Peter Heath, *The Thirsty Sword: Sīrat ʿAntar and the Arabic Popular Epic* (Salt Lake City, 1996), esp. 27–30.

[16]See E. W. Lane, *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, 5th ed. (London, 1860), 414–15.

medieval society. Complaints by figures representing the cultural elite about how these texts circulated among the ʿāmmah, about how popular storytellers fabricated false and distracting tales to the delight of their ignorant audiences, provide a sort of backhanded confirmation of the independence of this popular voice.[17] Students of storytellers and reciters of epics in contemporary Egypt have also stressed the agency of the storytellers themselves: that is, that they are not simply transmitters to common people of texts originally produced for or among elite groups, but actively shape the stories they tell in response to their own experiences and those of their audience. Of course we cannot assume that contemporary practice necessarily reflects that of the Mamluk period, but it does at least support the case for a distinctive cultural stratum which, as Shoshan put it, ″provide[s] safe bases for analysis as primarily popular.″[18]

If there is such a thing as popular culture, then it must be predicated upon some sort of hierarchy: that which is popular is that which is common, and its opposite is the preserve of some elite or elites. At least in general terms, the underlying social distinction is perhaps that which medieval Muslim writers themselves made in separating the ʿāmmah from the khāṣṣah. Those terms are not terribly precise—it may, for example, be slightly more difficult to identify who was an ʿāmmī than who was, say, a serf in a medieval European village. And more generally, the hierarchies that characterized medieval Islamic societies—at least those distinguishing indigenous social groups, as opposed to that separating the Mamluks from the locals—were more flexible and porous than those of medieval Europe. But the fact that the hierarchies were more flexible, or the underlying social categories more porous, does not mean that they were less important. On the contrary, their very flexibility may have made the matter of preserving them more important to those who benefited from them.

This was certainly the case with the religious elite, the ulama. Lacking precise institutional mechanisms for consolidating their authority, they relied instead upon a variety of social and ideological tools. Among the latter was the important distinction between that which was sunnah, accepted normative tradition, and that which was bidʿah, unacceptable innovation. Of course, the Islamic discourse over innovations was very old and very complex, and not all jurists felt that all innovations were to be eschewed. But hostility to bidʿah was a common discursive theme amongst Mamluk-period scholars. Of them, Ibn al-Ḥājj is the most colorful, and consequently he is perhaps the most cited Mamluk-period author on the subject of popular culture—indeed, so pervasive is his presence in the historiography of the field that the study of popular culture in the Mamluk period might more accurately

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[17]Shoshan, ″On Popular Literature,″ esp. 353.

[18]See Bridget Connelly, Arab Folk Epic and Identity (Berkeley, 1986).

be called the study of Ibn al-Ḥājj. But in fact he was hardly alone or unusual in warning his readers against the perils of unlawful innovations; his concerns were shared by many writers from amongst the ulama. Their discursive attack on innovations served as one means of affirming their authority in the face of practices, many of them associated with suspect festivals such as the Prophet´s birthday and the new year celebrations of Nawrūz, which were popular among those the ulama writers dismissed as the *‘āmmah*.[19]

The attack on innovations was part of a broader effort on the part of the ulama elite to defend their authority in the face of challenges to it which, from the viewpoint of the leading scholars themselves, might be said to have ″bubbled up from below.″ These challenges took different forms. On one end of the spectrum was the group known as the *muwallahūn,* who might be described generously as marginal holy men, who lampooned the rituals and pretensions of the ulama, by living in rubbish heaps, or wearing dirty clothes, or urinating in their robes, and generally indulging in behavior which was, at least superficially, both anti-social and contemptuous of *shar‘ī* norms. Such individuals, however, were so far beyond the pale that, as has been argued, their transgression of the ″normal order″ served paradoxically to reaffirm it, and to affirm the dominant role of the leading ulama in the production of knowledge and in putting it to social use.[20] A less dramatic but more serious threat was posed by those preachers and storytellers who, operating independently, sometimes in mosques and sometimes on street corners, and catering to a primarily non-elite audience, transmitted to their listeners a body of religious knowledge that, from the standpoint of the ulama, was of dubious legitimacy: unsubstantiated hadith, for example, or popular but suspect stories of the pre-Islamic prophets. Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, in his attack on these miscreant storytellers, understood their authority to derive directly from their relationship with the common people. He was moved to write his treatise, he says, after being humiliated by a storyteller whose authority and learning he had challenged. When Suyūṭī had suggested to the man that he should check the authenticity of the hadith he recited with recognized scholars in the field, the storyteller had reacted with rage. ″You expect me to verify my hadith with the scholars? Rather,″ he said, ″I will verify them with the people [*al-nās*].″[21] What these storytellers represented was a challenge to the authority of the ulama, not simply or even primarily because of the *content*

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[19]For a survey of this literature, see Jonathan Berkey, ″Tradition, Innovation and the Social Construction of Knowledge in the Medieval Islamic Near East,″ *Past and Present* 146 (1995): 38–65, and Maribel Fierro, ″The Treatises Against Innovations (*kutub al-bid‘a*),″ *Der Islam* 69 (1992): 204–46.

[20]Chamberlain, *Knowledge and Social Practice,* 130f.

[21]Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Taḥdhīr al-Khawāṣṣ min Akādhīb al-Quṣṣāṣ* (Beirut, 1972), 4.

of what they transmitted to the common people, but because the texts and stories they transmitted they had acquired outside the channels—such as personal training with a reputable teacher, attested by an *ijāzah*—which defined the ulama′s authority.[22]

In the challenge posed to the ulama by purveyors of knowledge and culture such as the storytellers and popular preachers, we can locate a cultural stratum which is in some meaningful sense ″popular.″ While they did not use the term popular culture, many medieval ulama at least *thought* that they were conducting a rear-guard action against threats to the integrity of Islam posed by cultural attitudes and practices associated with the common people, the ʿ*āmmah*—that is, *they* perceived a distinct popular culture and the threat it posed. At the same time, it is important to remember that, when we survey the cultural scene through a lens broader than the narrow ideological one of scholars such as Ibn al-Ḥājj, what we perceive is less a bipolar cultural world than a rich and complex one, in which various cultural attitudes and practices cannot be assigned unambiguously to one end of the spectrum or another. This has been the dominant theme embraced by cultural historians of the Mamluk period over the last decade or two. At one end of the spectrum, we encounter men and women from diverse social backgrounds—not just scholars or scholars in training, but common folk, men and women, and Mamluks— participating actively and meaningfully in the transmission of Islamic religious knowledge, of the texts in which that knowledge is embedded.[23] At the other, we meet perfectly reputable and elite jurists such as Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī who, as Christopher Taylor has amply demonstrated, mounted a vigorous defense of popular practices such as the visitation of tombs from *within* the mainstream Islamic tradition. Even Ibn al-Ḥājj morosely admitted that ulama could be found indulging in various popular religious practices of which he disapproved, such as participating in festivals associated with non-Muslims.[24]

One forum in which the various strands of culture, elite and popular, came together and mingled fruitfully was, of course, Sufism, a topic in Mamluk cultural history which has probably been addressed more thoroughly than any other. In addition to an enormous and comprehensive survey of late Mamluk Sufism in all of its organizational, institutional, and theological forms,[25] we have now a plethora of more focused studies on particular saints, orders, and institutions. It sometimes

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[22]Berkey, *Popular Preaching,* passim.

[23]Jonathan Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education* (Princeton, 1992).

[24]See, for example, Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Madkhal,* 2:4–7 and 141–43.

[25]Éric Geoffroy, *Le soufisme en Égypte et en Syrie sous les derniers Mamelouks et les premiers Ottomans: Orientations spirituelles et enjeux culturels* (Damascus, 1995).

seems as though the category of ideas and practices labeled ″Sufi″ has become so broad as to be almost meaningless; but until a more precise vocabulary of scholarship is formed, we must continue to use it.

Sufism was an unmistakably ″popular″ cultural phenomenon. Developments within Sufism during and around the Mamluk period contributed to the increase in the number of those Muslims who would identify themselves in some way as ″Sufis″: the proliferation of *khānqāh*s and other Sufi institutions, for example, and the crystallization of the ″orders″ *(ṭuruq,* sing. *ṭarīqah)* as objects of Sufi affiliation. Michael Winter has suggested that, in a way, by the later Middle Period Sufism had for many supplanted the study of hadith as a cherished pious activity open to virtually any Muslim. Not, of course, that the transmission of hadith had died out—on the contrary, large public recitations of some of the principal collections of prophetic traditions remained a prominent feature in the religious landscape. But as Winter put it, the recitation of hadith ″lost its place to Sufism as the sphere in Islam where a ruler, an *'ālim,* or a commoner could request a personal, or least a partially creative and active participation in religion.″[26]

But here again, we perceive an ambiguity in what, culturally speaking, popular Sufism involved and implied. Part of the appeal of Sufism lay in the fact that, as Winter suggested, it provided a forum in which non-elite voices could be heard addressing and contributing to religious life. Hence, for example, those occasional women identified as *shaykhah*s, serving in leadership roles within various Sufi groups, and about whom we would like to know much more. Hence, too, the figure of the *shaykh ummī,* the ″illiterate″ or more precisely (since not all of them were really *illiterate*) the ″unlettered″ Sufi master, who typically came from a humble background, who lacked much if anything in the way of a systematic education, but who nonetheless claimed an authority based on his access to religious knowledge via dreams or visions, or more vaguely through his ″heart.″[27] More generally, religious practices which may or may not have been technically ″Sufi″ but which nonetheless shared Sufism′s emphasis upon a cult of personality focusing on holy men and women, such as the practice of visiting the tombs of the dead, provided scope for the articulation of the religious concerns of the common people. One cannot, for example, read the stories told about the miraculous intercession of ″saints″ buried in the cemeteries of Cairo to relieve the hunger, or illness, or fear of those who visited them in their tombs, without recognizing in them an expression of the religious concerns, priorities, and world-view of the ″common people.″[28]

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[26]Michael Winter, *Society and Religion in Early Ottoman Egypt: Studies in the Writings of 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Sha'rānī* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1982).

[27]See Winter, *Society and Religion,* 192–95, and Geoffroy, *Le soufisme,* 299–307.

[28]Taylor, *In the Vicinity of the Righteous,* 130–54.

More pointedly, there is evidence that Sufism became a channel for embracing magic and the occult, and for a recasting of popular thaumaturgical expectations in Muslim garb, aspects of the mystical life which certainly made Sufism, or at least some Sufis, the target of the ulama´s wrath.[29]

But Sufism did not speak with a single voice, and if it allowed the common people to articulate their religious vision and concerns, it could also serve to reinforce the authority among them of the ulama. In the first place, of course, Sufism was not simply popular with the common people. Sufi affiliations became common among the leading ulama, even among those most inclined to criticize certain aspects of Sufi ritual and behavior, such as Ibn Taymīyah and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah. Even more telling are those rural Sufis studied by Jean-Claude Garcin, who constitute a reminder that ″popular culture″ need not always oppose itself to elite culture. These figures were held in considerable esteem by their neighbors, very often, however, not because they represented in the eyes of their beholders any sort of popular resistance to dominant Islamic authorities, but precisely because they were taken as models of the pious Muslim living in accordance with *shar‘ī* norms. *Popular* Sufis may thus have been quite ″normal″—that is, Muslim in a very conventional, shari‘ah-oriented way, providing a level of basic education to the common folk who followed them, even undertaking the Quranic injunction to ″command the good and forbid the evil.″[30] By contrast, the outlandish, antinomian behavior of groups like the Qalandarīyah was not limited in either origin or appeal to lower social strata, despite efforts by some medieval writers to make precisely that connection as a way of discrediting them; on the contrary, there is evidence that many of those most drawn to such movements were young dissenters from within the various social elites.[31]

There are several other important themes connected with the study of popular culture in the Mamluk period which are worth mentioning, in part because they may yet contain considerable scope for further investigation. The first is that of intercession. Intercession, of course, is at first glance more a topic of social or

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[29]See, for example, J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford, 1971), 27–28 and 199–200; Winter, *Society and Religion,* 172–76; Shoshan, *Popular Culture,* 18–22. Michael Winter in particular has insisted on a persistent tension between Sufis and juristically-oriented scholars, the *fuqahā'*. See *Society and Religion,* esp. 230–36.

[30]Jean-Claude Garcin, ″Histoire et hagiographie de l´Égypte musulmane à la fin de l´époque mamelouke et au début de l´époque ottomane,″ in *Hommages à la mémoire de Serge Sauneron*, vol. 2, *Égypte post-pharaonique* (Cairo, 1979), 287–316, esp. 293–96 [reprinted in *Espaces, pouvoirs, et idéologies de l´Egypte médiévale* (Variorum, 1987)]; Leonor Fernandes, ″Some Aspects of the *Zāwiya* in Egypt at the Eve of the Ottoman Conquest,″ *Annales islamologiques* 19 (1983): 9–17.

[31]Karamustafa, *God´s Unruly Friends,* 5–10 and 93.

even political history, but it may offer some chance at investigating the complex place of popular culture in Mamluk society. The importance of intercession in this society is of course well known. The intercession to be sought from the Prophet or respected holy men and women was the foundation of the cult of the saints and the visitation of the tombs, and provided a cultural forum in which Muslims of very different social strata might meet and participate in a common activity. More practically, Sufis became prominent over the course of the Mamluk period as intercessors, both with God and with secular powers. Theirs was not so much a comprehensive political threat, since there is little evidence they held any grand political ambitions; but they did seek in various ways to ameliorate the lives of the common people. Their power was very real, if Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī is to be believed—he ascribed the defeat of Sultan al-Ghūrī to the ruler′s quarrel with a popular shaykh—and judging by the Mamluks′ own frequenting of these shaykhs, the perception of their power was widely shared. Al-Ghūrī himself is a case in point, since his respect for Sufi shaykhs led him (to no avail, apparently) to take the shaykh of the Badawīyah order with him to Syria on his last campaign. (By contrast, he had earlier offered his police a reward for every drunken *faqīh* they could find.)[32] What intercession offers is a way of measuring the precise social and political consequences of cultural ideas, practices, and the individuals engaged in them *in the specific context of Mamluk society*—that is, a way of studying popular culture in a framework that makes specific sense for the medieval Islamic world, and that does not rely on categories or insights drawn from European history.

A second promising theme is that of religious syncretism—the degree, that is, to which Jewish, Christian, and Muslim ideas, texts, attitudes and practices may have influenced one another. This constituted a consuming worry of people such as Ibn al-Ḥājj and Ibn Taymīyah—the concern, that is, that Islam might be corrupted by its adherents adopting and participating in practices associated with the infidels in their midst. The need to draw sharp boundaries between the faith communities was an old concern in Muslim discourse. Given the conditions of medieval life, with reduced but still significant populations of Jews and especially Christians living alongside Muslims, the opportunities for the sharing of religious ideas and practices were legion. This made it all the more necessary to draw firm cultural and psychological lines between them, especially with regard to the seductive appeal of religious festivals. ″Participation with [the *dhimmī*s] in their festivals

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[32]Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr fī Waqā'i' al-Duhūr,* 3rd ed. (Cairo, 1984), 5:85–86; Winter, *Society and Religion,* 19, 100. On Sufi shaykh*s* and the ruling elites more generally, see Fernandes, ″Some Aspects of the *Zāwiya*;″ Jean-Claude Garcin, ″Deux saints populaires du Caire au début du xvie siècle,″ *Bulletin d' études orientales* 29 (1977): 131–43; Geoffroy, *Le soufisme*, 120–28.

wholly or partly is synonymous with participation with them in unbelief wholly or partly,″ Ibn Taymīyah said. Indeed, ″festivals are that which most particularly serves to differentiate one religious law from another and constitute their most prominent symbols.″[33] One can understand, perhaps, Ibn al-Ḥājj′s horror at the behavior of Muslims who participated in the sort-of Coptic, but decidedly non-Muslim festival of Nawrūz, when they would (among other things) drink wine, or indulge in a sort of wet tee-shirt contest. If a professor in a school had the temerity to try to hold a lesson on that day, his students might pounce upon him, and throw him into the institution′s fountain.[34] Less dramatic, perhaps, but more remarkable are the details given by Ibn al-Ḥājj and others of Muslim participation in specifically Christian festivals, including Christmas and Easter. Given the shrill character of the ulama′s expressed fears, it is surprising that the question of syncretism, which would seem to be so potentially rich a topical area, has not received more explicit attention from contemporary historians. Taylor′s study of the *ziyārat al-qubūr* took note of the importance of the question, especially with regard to the cult of the saints, but left it for later and fuller investigation.[35] Joseph Meri′s recent book on the cult of the saints in medieval Syria does include a study of the Jewish as well the Muslim cult, and takes note of a number of pilgrimage sites which were common to adherents of the two faiths, such as the shrine of Ezekiel in Iraq. Jews and Muslims, he observes, shared a ″common language of ritual communication,″ and, more grandly, ″shared sacred places and undertook sacred journeys together,″ but the book leaves for the future a systematic confrontation with the specific question of syncretism.[36]

Finally, there is the question of gender. Popular culture, and popular religion in particular, provided unusually fertile territory for the active participation and creative contribution of women. There are, in the first place, those women identified in the sources as Sufi *shaykhah*s; the ranks of the storytellers and popular preachers, too, included a number of women. More generally, Ibn al-Ḥājj′s account leaves the reader with the impression that it was *women* who were in many cases the driving force behind the popular religious practices of which he disapproved—the unregulated visiting of tombs, the active and gleeful participation in *dhimmī* festivals, etc. Ibn al-Ḥājj′s concerns may well have been exaggerated, but at the very least they seem to provide an opportunity for an analysis—perhaps even a Freudian one—of the *gendered* character of the ulama′s authority. Natalie Zemon Davis

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[33]Memon, *Ibn Taimīya′s Struggle,* 206, 213 et passim.

[34]Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Madkhal,* 2:49–52 et passim.

[35]Taylor, *In the Vicinity of the Righteous,* 4.

[36]Joseph Meri, *The Cult of Saints Among Muslims and Jews in Medieval Syria* (New York, 2002), 286–87; on the shrine of Ezekiel, ibid., 229–38.

gave her famous study of popular festivals in early modern Europe the provocative title of ″Women on Top.″ Something similar might one day emerge from the pen of a historian in our field.[37]

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[37]Natalie Zemon Davis, ″Women on Top,″ in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford, CA, 1975), 124–51.

DORIS BEHRENS-ABOUSEIF
SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Veneto-Saracenic Metalware, a Mamluk Art[*]

The provenance of the so-called Veneto-Saracenic metalware has been a subject of controversy ever since it attracted scholarly attention in the last century.[1] The bronze vessels known by this label include several stylistic sub-groups, which have in common the frequent use of European shapes combined with a new style of linear silver inlay displaying an unconventional style of arabesque. Their workmanship is characterized by extreme fineness. An important number of Veneto-Saracenic vessels bear craftsmen's signatures, most of which include the title *mu'allim* or master. The most frequently signed names are Zayn al-Dīn, Muḥammad, and Maḥmūd al-Kurdī, who signed his name with or without the *nisbah* al-Kurdī. The appellation Veneto-Saracenic has been coined to categorize this particular group of vessels because they were first thought to be the product of a Muslim workshop in Venice during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. On the basis of socio-historical grounds, however, Hans Huth in an article published in 1972 discarded the possibility of a Muslim workshop operating in Venice at that time.[2] This argument has not been challenged ever since.

A number of authors, among them A. S. Melikian-Chirvani and James Allan, have related the Veneto-Saracenic vessels to late Mamluk metalwork, which is also the common attribution adopted in most art catalogues. Although there are

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[1]James W. Allan, ″Venetian-Saracenic Metalwork: The Problem of Provenance,″ in *Venezia e l'oriente vicino: atti del Primo simposio internazionale sull'arte veneziana e l'arte islamica* (Venice, 1986), 167–83; idem, *Metalwork of the Islamic World in the Aron Collection* (London, 1986), Ch. 5; A. S. Melikian-Chirvani, ″Venise, entre l'Orient et l'Occident,″ *Bulletin d'études orientales* 27 (1974): 1–18; L. A. Mayer, *Islamic Metalworkers and their Works* (Geneva, 1959), 56–58. For the history and bibliography of the debate see Melikian-Chirvani, ″Venise,″ 1–2; Allan, ″Venetian,″ 67–68.

[2]Hans Huth, ″'Sarazenen' in Venedig?″ in *Festschrift für Heinz Landendorf* (Cologne/Vienna, 1972), 58–68.

still some diverging opinions on that matter, it is widely agreed that one of the sub-groups of the Veneto-Saracenic family can definitely be attributed to a late Mamluk production. Syria is believed to be the provenance of the objects characterized by a dense knot-work that is also found on vessels of uncontested Mamluk origin (fig. 1).

The Mamluk provenance of the mainstream of the Veneto-Saracenic metalware, however, which includes objects signed by Maḥmūd, Zayn al-Dīn, and Muḥammad, has been contested. Rachel Ward attributed the Maḥmūd al-Kurdī vessels to Western Iran and in a more recent monograph Sylvia Auld argued in favor of an attribution of the Maḥmūd al-Kurdī group to Aq Qoyunlu lands in southeast Anatolia or western Iran. She moreover places Zayn al-Dīn′s work in an Ottoman context.[3] Neither author, however, has provided any visual evidence for a connection between the Veneto-Saracenic and Iranian or Aq Qoyunlu homologues. This article presents new evidence to confirm the Mamluk attribution, and more particularly James Allan′s arguments, which established a stylistic connection between the Maḥmūd al-Kurdī group and the decorative arts of the reign of the Mamluk Sultan al-Ashraf Qāytbāy (872–901/1468–96).

Among the multiple features which connect the Veneto-Saracenic style with late Mamluk metalware are some shapes. A variety of shapes have been decorated in this style, many of which are European while others are Mamluk. The rounded, lidded bowl, which is not of European origin, has been used across all stylistic sub-groups, with some variations, and can be considered as the most characteristic form of Veneto-Saracenic vessels. The profile of these bowls is common in late Mamluk vessels, which are not associated with a lid, however (figs. 2, 3). Likewise, the spherical hand-warmer or incense-burner (see fig. 1), another characteristic utensil produced in the Veneto-Saracenic style, is common in the mainstream style of metalware of the entire Mamluk period. Also the shallow basin, of which there is a remarkable Veneto-Saracenic specimen in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Inv. 741-1898), is a shape adopted in a number of luxury vessels, sometimes in a faceted version, attributed to the reign of Sultan Qāytbāy. Among these is the basin in the Türk ve Islam Eserleri Müzesi (TIEM) in Istanbul bearing the sultan′s name.

There are, moreover, a number of objects of evidently late Mamluk provenance on grounds of their shape, inscriptions, and blazons which are decorated in a style

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[3]Rachel Ward, *Islamic Metalwork* (London, 1993), 102; idem et al., ″Veneto-Saracenic Metalworks: An Analysis of the Bowls and Incense Burners in the British Museum,″ in *Trade and Discovery: The Scientific Study of Artefacts from Post-Medieval Europe and Beyond* (London, 1995), 235–57; Sheila Canby, *The Golden Age of Persian Art (1501–1722)* (London, 1999), 21; Sylvia Auld, *Renaissance Venice, Islam and Mahmud the Kurd: A Metalworking Enigma* (London, 2004), 11–35.

akin to the decoration of conventional Veneto-Saracenic vessels, including those with European shape. Two basins with Mamluk inscriptions, one in the Poldi Pezzoli Museum in Milan (1657) (fig. 4)[4] and the other in the Musée des Beaux Arts in Lyon (E 538), could have been manufactured by the same hand that produced the uninscribed Veneto-Saracenic jug with a European body in the Poldi Pezzoli collection (1656) (fig. 5).[5] They share the same engraved patterns displaying a sequence of curved cartouches of alternating format with flowers in the background.

Two late Mamluk caskets, one in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York[6] and the other in the Victoria and Albert Museum, both inscribed with their patron′s name, are decorated with curved interlocking cartouches of linear inlaid silver on a background of scrolls, which recall the work of Maḥmūd al-Kurdī on the lid of his bowl in the Victoria and Albert Museum (2290-1855) (figs. 6, 7). Although these caskets have not been considered Veneto-Saracenic because of their inscriptions and shape, the design of their decoration is hybrid, combining conventional late Mamluk with Veneto-Saracenic features.

Although inscriptions are rare on published Veneto-Saracenic vessels, the few inscribed pieces we know bear texts which belong to the late Mamluk epigraphic repertoire. Melikian-Chirvani has identified one benedictory poem, which starts with the words ″balaghta min al-ʿulyā″ on a Veneto-Saracenic footed bowl and a salver in the Victoria and Albert Museum.[7] Another poem, inscribed on the cartouches of a Veneto-Saracenic bucket in the Islamic Museum in Berlin (Inv. B72), which Auld wrongly interprets as a pseudo-inscription,[8] can be read on many mainstream late Mamluk vessels (fig. 8). This poem starts with the phrase ″man tamaʿnā fī jamālī″ meaning ″who examines my beauty.″[9] It is inscribed on a

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[4]Assadullah Souren Melikian-Chirvani, ″Cuivres inédits de l′époque de Qāytbāy,″ *Kunst des Orients* 6, no. 2 (1969): 99–133; J. M. Rogers, catalogue entry no. 95, in *Circa 1492,* ed. Jay A. Levenson (London, 1991), 203; Esin Atıl, *Renaissance of Islam: Art of the Mamluks* (Washington, DC, 1981), 102, cat. no. 35; Allan, ″Venetian,″ fig. 1.

[5]Melikian-Chirvani, ″Cuivres inédits,″ fig. 8; Paola Torre, ″Metalli Islamici,″ in *Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Tessuti-Sculture, Metalli Islamici* (Milan, 1987), cat. nos. 5 and 9; Melikian-Chirvani, ″Cuivres inédits,″ fig. 1.

[6]Atıl, *Renaissance of Islam,* 105, cat. no. 36.

[7]Melikian-Chirvani, ″Venise,″ 112; see also J. W. Allan, ″Later Mamluk Metalwork″ (I and II), *Oriental Art* 15, no. 1 (1969): 38–43, and 17, no. 2 (1971): 156–64, showing the use of this text on late Mamluk vessels.

[8]Auld, *Renaissance Venice,* 284, cat. no. 7.22; *Islamische Kunst, verborgene Schätze* (exhibition catalogue) (Berlin, 1986), 114, cat. no. 195.

[9]The word ″tamaʿnā,″ from *maʿnā,* has an unusual form, comparable to *tafalsafa.* I am copying and transliterating the inscribed texts according to their spelling as it is, not as it should be.

lunch box in the British Museum[10] and a covered tray in the Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde in Munich in the name of Taghrībirmish, the great *dawādār* and vizier of Sultan Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī (see Appendix).

Both poems, the one starting with ″*balaghta min al-'ulyā*″ and the other starting with ″*man tama'nā*,″ appear among the multiple texts inscribed on a lidded box in the Khalili collection and on a spouted bowl in the Benaki Museum in Athens, both of which are common late Mamluk ware (figs. 9, 10). These two vessels are interesting reference pieces because they display a whole set of inscriptions, which appear individually on various other late Mamluk objects.

In addition to shape, decoration, and inscriptions, which associate them with late Mamluk metalwork, a decisive argument, so far disregarded, for attributing the Veneto-Saracenic vessels to late Mamluk craftsmanship is the use of the title *mu'allim* in the majority of their signatures. The title *mu'allim* is a characteristic feature of Mamluk craftsmen′s signatures. It is also regularly used in literary sources from Egypt and Syria from the Mamluk and Ottoman periods in association with craftsmen and in fact down to the present. It was not used in the Iranian world and it was not common on craftsmen′s signatures elsewhere. Considering its close association with Mamluk culture it is unlikely that contemporary craftsmen from other lands would have used this title unless they would have liked to be mistaken for Mamluk.

Some signatures by Maḥmūd and Zayn al-Dīn include the phrase *yarjū al-maghfirah* following the name. This phrase appears on other late Mamluk metal vessels following either the name of a craftsman or the patron. All vessels mentioned in Gaston Wiet′s catalogue in connection with this particular phrase are late Mamluk.[11]

Moreover, the tripartite disc used by Maḥmūd al-Kurdī as a frame for his signature on a tray in the British Museum (1895 5-21) is clearly reminiscent of Mamluk royal blazons, thus signaling a Mamluk context at the same time as it is a demonstration of the craftsman′s pride.[12] The title *ra'īs* is used on another Veneto-Saracenic lidded bowl in the Victoria and Albert Museum before the name of the craftsman Muḥammad Ibn al-Ḥājj 'Alī Ibn *al-mu'allim* Khaḍr *al-naqqāsh*.[13] The title *ra'īs* was commonly used in Mamluk chronicles to qualify the head of a guild. It is not exclusively Mamluk, however.[14] This *ra'īs* Muḥammad could be

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[10]Ward, *Islamic Metalwork,* 119.

[11]Gaston Wiet, *Catalogue Général du Musée Arabe du Caire: Objets en Cuivre* (Cairo, 1932; repr. 1984), 128, 145, 146, appendix nos. 416, 430, 480.

[12]Auld, *Renaissance Venice,* 13, pl. 5 a–d.

[13]Auld misread the signature; ibid., 156, cat. no. 2.12.

[14]Mayer, *Islamic Metalworkers,* 14.

the same who signed as *muʿallim* Muḥammad on a ewer published by Christieˊs.[15]

Another most interesting signature occurs on an unpublished Veneto-Saracenic bowl in the Khalili collection. It has in its interior two unframed signature cartouches, inscribed in Mamluk *naskhī* script. The first includes the words ˝ʿamal Zayn al-Dīn.˝ This name appears elsewhere sometimes in conjunction with ˝ibn ʿUmar˝ or ˝ibn al-muʿallim ʿUmar al-naḥḥās.˝[16] The second inscription, separated from the first, includes only the patronym ˝Ibn Zanbūʿah,˝ (fig. 11), which sounds rather like a nickname. I assume that Ibn Zanbūʿah refers to Zayn al-Dīn and not to a second craftsman. The style of the bowl suggests that he is most likely the same Zayn al-Dīn known from other signed vessels. In any event,the name *zanbūʿah* with the letter *ʿayn* can obviously not be Persian or Turkish. In the Mamluk dictionary of Fīrūzābādī the word *zunbāʿah* means the tip of a shoe.[17] *Zanbūʿah* might be a colloquial transformation of *zunbāʿah,* but this is speculation. This signature, however, suggests that the cultural environment of Ibn Zanbūʿah is a traditionally Arabic-speaking one**.** This type of four-radical word sounds rather colloquial Egyptian.

James Allan has rightly compared the style of the Maḥmūd al-Kurdī objects with the architectural decoration of the Qāytbāy period in Cairo; in his arguments he includes the remarkable marble inlaid spandrels of the mosque of Qijmas al-Isḥāqī built in 1479. The spandrels of the windows and, notably, the mihrab are decorated in the same novel style and they are signed by the craftsman ʿAbd al-Qādir *al-naqqāsh,* who also signed similar work in the mosque of Abū Bakr ibn Muzhir built in 1489–90.[18] The mihrab of Qijmasˊ mosque is of particular interest here because it displays in the space beneath the conch a central rosette radiating in a complex deployment of arabesque towards the edges (fig. 12). The central rosette bears a striking resemblance to the patterns used on the lids and bottoms of Veneto-Saracenic bowls (fig. 13). This type of marble inlay was a novelty, which might explain the craftsmanˊs multiple signatures in the mosque. Most interestingly, the signature of the mihrab is placed in the very center of the rosette and consequently of the mihrab itself, which is an unprecedented, almost blasphemous place for a craftsmanˊs signature. Maḥmūd al-Kurdī is known to have placed his signature in such a central position on several pieces, including the lid of his bowl in the Victoria and Albert Museum, another one published in Sothebyˊs catalogue, a tray

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[15]Christieˊs catalogue *Islamic Art and Manuscripts* October 2001, 173, cat. no. 320.

[16]Auld,*Renaissance Venice,* 32.

[17]Al-Fīrūzābādī, *Al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ* (Beirut, 1952), 3:34.

[18]Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Islamic Architecture in Cairo, an Introduction* (New York and Leiden, 1982), 148.

in the Louvre, and another tray in the Hermitage Museum.[19] One of Auld′s arguments against a Mamluk origin of Maḥmūd al-Kurdī is this very central position of this signature. She argues that ″It would be tantamount to an insult to the Mamluk hierarchy,″ and that there is no other instance where a craftsman puts his name so prominently in the place normally reserved for the name of the sultan.[20] The signature of ʿAbd al-Qādir *al-naqqāsh* in the center of a mihrab contradicts this view and reveals at the same time the pronounced craftsman′s pride during the reign of Sultan Qāytbāy.

A key-piece for my attribution of the Veneto-Saracenic metalware to the late Mamluk period is an unpublished bowl in the Khalili collection (MTW 1542), signed by *al-muʿallim* Maḥmūd (fig. 14). It has a Mamluk shape and is entirely silvered. An inscription on the rim, which compares the whiteness of the bowl to that of the full moon, confirms that although the present silver is of a later date, its white appearance is original. Many Veneto-Saracenic vessels have a gilded or silvered interior, which might well be original.

The decoration of this bowl is of remarkable delicacy, hardly visible to the naked eye, displaying a variety of juxtaposed patterns that surpasses the common practice on Veneto-Saracenic objects, where the interlace network is often set against a rather uniform background of scrolls. This juxtaposition of several alternating patterns is one of the characteristic features of luxury vessels of the reign of Sultan Qāytbāy.[21] In spite of its monochrome appearance, which distinguishes it from the characteristic inlaid work of this group, the design of this bowl is in the Veneto-Saracenic style. Its background scrolls are similar to those of the lidded bowl at the Courtauld Institute Art Gallery signed by Maḥmūd with the *nisbah* al-Kurdī.[22] The general layout of the design with interlacing curved lines, which divide the surface in cartouches, is basically a derivation of the traditional interlocking bands with cartouches and medallions, which are common on some late Mamluk basins and bowls (fig. 17).

Most interestingly, the bowl bears two epigraphic cartouches on the body and four on the rim, all of which contain poetry (see Appendix). One of the cartouches of the rim bears the *muʿallim*′s signature at the end of the poem. The first cartouche starts with the words *anā ṭāsah* meaning ″I am a bowl,″ a common phrase in the epigraphy of late Mamluk metalwork (figs. 15 a, b, c, d). Inscriptions on the rim are one of the characteristic features of late Mamluk tinned copper bowls. The

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[19]Allan, ″Venetian,″ fig. 3; Sotheby′s catalogue 30.4.1992, no. 49; Auld, *Renaissance Venice,* 18, pl. 9.

[20]Auld, *Renaissance Venice,* 26.

[21]Melikian-Chirvani, ″Cuivres inédits,″ figs 16, 17, 23, 24.

[22]Auld, *Renaissance Venice,* 146f., cat. no. 2.1.

two inscriptions on the body of the Maḥmūd bowl are repeated on another late Mamluk bowl of a more ordinary type in the Khalili collection (see fig. 3).

As on many vessels of the later Mamluk period, the inscriptions on both bowls do not follow the calligraphic esthetics nor the epigraphic conventions established in the Bahri period. Rather the text meanders up and down, which makes it difficult to read. Each of the two bowls has spelling mistakes, as often happens on late Mamluk vessels. Fortunately, the mistakes on the two bowls are not identical so that I was able to read most of the text (see Appendix). The text, which belongs to what can be called vernacular craftsman's poetry of poor quality, praises the beauty and the craftsmanship of the bowl and includes good wishes to the owner. It also indicates that the bowl was made for drinking.

The design of the decoration conforms with that of other vessels signed by Maḥmūd, who is likely to have himself composed the poem on the rim, which ends with his name. The shape of the bowl is typically and exclusively Mamluk. Both the shape of the bowl and the inscriptions identify Maḥmūd's work with Mamluk art.

Maḥmūd's Mamluk provenance does not define his ethnic origin, however. The *nisbah* al-Kurdī, which he included in his signature elsewhere, can be misleading and does not justify an association of Maḥmūd's work with the Aq Qoyunlu kingdom. There is a Mamluk madrasah in Cairo known by the name of an amir called Maḥmūd al-Kurdī, who cannot be our craftsman and who was not even a Kurd.[23] A *nisbah* might refer to the place where someone originated, or migrated to or spent a period of time, as it could also refer to an affiliation with a patron or even with a Sufi order. Mamluk biographical literature mentions scholars with multiple *nisbah*s because they studied in several cities. Maḥmūd might have been a Kurd from Mamluk territory, which, it should be recalled, included southeast Anatolia and Cilicia. The Mamluk army included Kurds, who, together with the Turcomans, dominated the region of Aleppo in the fifteenth century.[24] On a salver in the British Museum (1878 12-30 711) Maḥmūd signed his name as ″Maḥmūd ibn al-Kurdī ibn al-muʿallim li-amr mawlāh,″ the last two words meaning ″on the order of his lord.″ This signature suggests that his father might have been the one who migrated and was therefore known as al-Kurdī.

The Mamluk attribution of the work of Maḥmūd or other craftsmen working in the Veneto-Saracenic style is not challenged by the presence of Iranian elements

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[23]Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Mawāʿiẓ wa-al-Iʿtibār bi-Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Āthār* (Bulaq, 1270/1853–54), 2:395 f.; K. A. C. Creswell, ″A Brief Chronology of the Muḥammadan Monuments of Egypt to A.D. 1517,″ *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* 16 (1919): 39–164, here 117.

[24]David Ayalon, ″The Auxiliary Forces in the Mamluk Sultanate,″ *Der Islam* 65, no. 1 (1988): 13–37.

in this style noted by several authors including Melikian-Chirvani and Allan. It is well known that the Mamluk decorative arts of the fourteenth as well as the fifteenth centuries show many features in common with their Iranian homologues; this is true also for other stylistic groups of late Mamluk metalwork. The number of Iranian refugees escaping the Timurids was so high in fifteenth-century Cairo that orders were repeatedly issued to evict them (without success, however).[25]

Another sub-group of Veneto-Saracenic vessels shows parallels with our Maḥmūd bowl as well as with some mainstream late Mamluk copper vessels. A copper bowl in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford (1982.6), inscribed and adorned with a Mamluk blazon (figs. 16, 17), has the same shape as the Maḥmūd bowl of the Khalili collection. Its engraved decoration, however, is of a different style, and very similar to that of a bowl in the Bargello Museum in Florence (Bg. B 839), which has been identified by G. Curatola as of Veneto-Saracenic style, but of Italian craftsmanship.[26] The decorative composition of this bowl is simpler than that of the Ashmolean piece, without inscriptions or blazon, consisting of continuous patterns filling three horizontal registers. Like the bowl of the Ashmolean Museum, the engraved decoration of fine scroll patterns is raised against a cross-hatched ground. This engraving style characterizes a group of late Mamluk vessels, most of which, however, are of rather coarse work. An exceptionally fine specimen in the Benaki Museum (13068) shows parallels with these two bowls (figs. 18, 19).[27] Its cartouches are inscribed with the Mamluk votive inscription mentioned earlier, which starts with ″*balaghta min al-ʿulyā*″ alternating with a pattern of knot-work, which can also be seen on the bowl of the Ashmolean Museum.

The body of this bowl, which bears traces of gilding, has two main inscribed cartouches in the middle and four smaller ones in the upper and lower registers that divide its external surface. The rim is entirely inscribed with a benedictory inscription common on late Mamluk bowls, referring to drinking. The cartouches of the body also include multiple references to drinking. One of the phrases can also be found among the set of texts inscribed on the spouted bowl in the Benaki Museum mentioned earlier. This includes the words ″*asāka tustaqā bi-kās mizājuhā kaf* . . .″ referring to the Quran verse 76:5.

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[25]Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Maʿrifat Duwal al-Mulūk,* ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá Ziyādah and Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ ʿĀshūr (Cairo, 1970–73), 3:962, 1058, 4:436, 1206.

[26]*From the Medicis to the Savoias, Ottoman Splendour in Florentine Collections* (exhibition catalogue) (Istanbul, 2004), 177; *Islam Specchio d'Oriente* (Florence, 2002), 133, cat. no. 109; M. Spallanzani, ″Metalli Islamici nelle raccolte medicee da Cosimo 1 a Fernando 1,″ in *Le Arte del Principato Mediceo* (Florence, 1980), 95–115.

[27]Atıl, *Renaissance of Islam,* 107, cat. no. 38; Allan in ″Later Mamluk Metalwork″ publishes lunch boxes and trays of similar style and inscriptions; Wiet, *Objets en Cuivre,* Pls. LXVI, LXVIII, LXIX. See fig. 12 here.

The poetical inscriptions on the main cartouches start with the phrase ˝anā ṭāsah˝ like the inscription on the rim of our Maḥmūd bowl; however, this one is followed by a different text. The composite blazon with a cup and powder horns has an unconventional quatrefoil profile and the minuteness of the engraving is of Veneto-Saracenic quality. Whereas traditional Mamluk blazons are circular, the blazon with a lobed profile has also been used on the basin in the Musée des Beaux Arts in Lyon discussed by Melikian-Chirvani and on the basin of the Poldi Pezzoli Museum of Figure 4. In spite of its inscriptions and the patterns of its engraving connecting it with Mamluk art, this bowl is unusual and represents another variation in the spectrum of late Mamluk metalwork.

Another point connecting the Maḥmūd bowl in the Khalili collection with the Ashmolean bowl as well as with late Mamluk metalware is an engraved medallion in the center of their respective inner bottoms. It consists of concentric circles around the spin mark including a circle of smaller circles (figs. 20, 21). The circles in the Ashmolean and the Khalili bowls are similar with the difference that the first is centered by a whirling rosette. Many late Mamluk bowls of the more crude type have such circles, which replace the circle of fishes common in Bahri vessels. The late Mamluk bowl of Figure 3, which shares the same inscription as our Maḥmūd bowl, has also an inner circle with a whirling rosette (fig. 22). These similar circles attribute the vessels in question to a common late Mamluk workshop. Considering its strong similarity with the bowl of the Ashmolean Museum, the Bargello bowl should also be attributed to Mamluk craftsmanship. It is possible, however, that the bowls were produced in one workshop and decorated in another.

The genre of inscriptions engraved on the Maḥmūd bowl of the Khalili collection and the bowl of the Ashmolean Museum is a characteristic feature of late Mamluk tinned copper bowls. These inscriptions display a variety of texts, which begin with ˝anā ṭāsah˝ and continue with words spoken in the first person praising the beauty and the craftsmanship of the vessel.[28] The term ṭāsah is the Arabic colloquial form of ṭās, which is used in classical Arabic and is a word of Persian origin. Mamluk anthologies refer to a poetical genre which praises the ṭāsah in connection with wine drinking. The Mamluk poets Burhān al-Dīn al-Qīraṭī, Ṭaqī al-Dīn ibn Ḥujjah al-Ḥamawī, and al-'Afīf al-Tilimsānī are reported to have composed verses in praise of the ṭāsah alongside other drinking vessels, such as the ewer and the cup or kās.[29] Their poetry must have inspired the vernacular and often awkward poems inscribed on late Mamluk vessels, including the two bowls discussed here.

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[28]I am currently working on a study of these inscriptions.

[29]Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Nawājī, Ḥulbat al-Kumayt fī al-Adab wa-al-Nawādir al-Muta'alliqah bi-al-Khamrīyāt (Cairo, 1299/1981–82), 171ff.; Ibn Taghrībirdī, Al-Manhal al-Ṣāfī, ed. Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn (Cairo, 2003), 10:73.

These poems, which do not belong to classical literature, are unlikely to have circulated outside the cultural environment where they were composed, or to have been inscribed on Iranian or Anatolian objects, unless as part of a premeditated scheme to imitate Mamluk work.

It is interesting to note that, according to their inscriptions, these metal bowls were dedicated to drinking. Some of them refer to water and others to water and flowers, whereas others mention wine and love. The use of these bowls for drinking seems to be confirmed by two eyewitnesses in Cairo. Leo Africanus, who visited Egypt during the Ottoman campaign in 1517, writes about shops in Cairo selling drinks made of water flavored with various flower essences in artfully made metal bowls.[30] Also Evliya Çelebi in the seventeenth century mentions shops serving clear water to prominent clients in beautifully decorated bowls and cups *(kâseler ve taslar)* which looked like pure gold. He also mentions various fruit drinks sold by peddlers in tinned bowls.[31]

The fact that most recorded Veneto-Saracenic vessels, unlike the mainstream of Mamluk ware, are not inscribed and that they were found in European collections suggests that they were produced for a European clientele. However, the bowls of the Khalili and the Ashmolean collections, with their traditional Mamluk shapes and inscriptions referring to their use for drinking, are likely to have been made for a local market.

On the basis of chemical analysis of the metal, which shows that the Maḥmūd al-Kurdī group includes less nickel than the rest of the Veneto-Saracenic and the common Mamluk metalware, Ward has argued that this production should be attributed to west Iran. The analysis she refers to is based on a comparison with three western Iranian specimens.[32] Considering the recycling possibilities of metalware in the past as in the present, as can still be seen in the practices of metalworkers in the bazaars of the Middle East today, the variation of the metal composition is not a compelling argument. The metal composition which, according to Ward, differs even between a bowl and its lid, is one of many divergences between the sub-groups of the Veneto-Saracenic family. Late Mamluk metalwork altogether displays quite disparate features that might well have included the use of different materials or even imported vessels to be locally decorated. Differences in style appear not only between Veneto-Saracenic sub-groups signed by different craftsmen, but also within a group signed by the same craftsman. This is apparent even in the craftsmen′s signatures themselves, in their wording as well as in the style of their engraving. Maḥmūd′s signature is occasionally but not always set

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[30]*Waṣf Ifrīqiyā*, trans. Muḥammad Ḥājjī and Muḥammad al-Akhḍar (Beirut, 1983), 2:204.

[31]Evliya Çelebi, *Siyahatnamesi X, Misir, Sudan Habeş* (Istanbul, 1938), 360.

[32]Ward et al., ″Veneto-Saracenic Metalworks.″

against a cross-hatched ground, sometimes including the word *‘amal* and sometimes *naqsh,* and even his name was presented in different manners. With his inscribed silvered bowl Maḥmūd demonstrates yet another variation within his own production. These inconsistencies suggest that the names might not refer to the artisan who engraved the bowl, but perhaps to workshops, which produced various styles, or to designers responsible only for the patterns. The *ra’īs* Muḥammad, who signed a lidded bowl in the Victoria and Albert Museum, was the grandson of a *naqqāsh,* who is not to be understood necessarily as metalworker since the decorator of the mihrab of Qijmas al-Isḥāqī was also a *naqqāsh.* He could be merely a designer. Al-Maqrīzī mentions in the early fifteenth century two markets for designers *(rassāmīn),* who produced patterns, in the central bazaar of Cairo.[33]

In spite of their variety of styles the Veneto-Saracenic vessels have a common origin, i.e., they were produced in the same artistic environment, which as a matter of fact earned them their label.[34] They all share a significant feature, which is a conceptual one: They represent a new esthetical approach to forms and to arabesque decoration without entirely departing from tradition and they display a taste for extremely minute engraved design, which is among the finest Islamic metalwork ever produced. Whether the European style bodies were imported or produced locally is a question that still needs to be answered. As I demonstrated elsewhere, there is some evidence that European expertise permeated Mamluk craftsmanship during the reign of Qāytbāy.[35] The new esthetics displayed in the Veneto-Saracenic metalwork conforms to the renaissance of the decorative arts during this period, which produced a remarkable and fascinating variety of styles and techniques in Mamluk metalwork with some surprising specimens, such as the gold inlaid basin in the Türk ve Islam Eserleri Müzesi with the sultan´s name or the ewer in the Victoria and Albert in his wife´s name.[36] Other crafts, like ceramics and glass also attest to innovative initiatives. An underglaze-painted blazon with Qāytbāy´s name shows a high quality unprecedented in Mamluk ceramics.[37] A singular lamp in the Islamic Museum in Cairo also inscribed with this sultan´s name reveals the attempt during this period to revive the lost art of enameled glass, perhaps with the help of European craftsmen working in Cairo.

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[33]Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 2:101,105.

[34]Some vessels, however, have been identified as Venetian imitations of the Veneto-Saracenic. Most of these attributions seem justified.

[35]Doris Behrens-Abouseif, ″European Arts and Crafts at the Mamluk Court,″ *Muqarnas* 21 (2004): 45–54; Gaston Wiet, *Catalogue Général du Musée Arabe du Caire: Lampes et bouteilles en verre émaillé* (Cairo, 1929: repr. 1982), 100, cat. no. 333.

[36]Wiet, *Objets en Cuivre,* 116; Ward, *Islamic Metalwork,* 118; Tim Stanley, *Palace and Mosque: Islamic Art from the Middle East* (London, 2004), 90.

[37]Marilyn Jenkins, *Islamic Art in the Kuwait National Museum* (London, 1983), 85.

The Mamluk carpets known from European collections are also likely to have been produced on Qāytbāy´s initiative.[38] Likewise, architectural decoration during the reign of Qāytbāy produced new combinations of designs and techniques in marble, stone, and stucco. The creation of the so-called Veneto-Saracenic metalware in this innovative environment could well have continued in the following decades and perhaps further after the Ottoman conquest of Egypt and Syria.

While multiple and compelling arguments associate Veneto-Saracenic metalwork with Mamluk art, so far no comparable metalwork from the Islamic world has provided parallels to contend the Mamluk attribution. As to the question of a more exact provenance of the Veneto-Saracenic metalwork, i.e., Egypt or Syria, this still needs further investigation.

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[38]A large Mamluk carpet found in the Alhambra and recently exhibited in the Alhambra Museum is attributed to the reign of Qāytbāy. This has been communicated to me by Dr. Purificación Marinetto Sanchez, who is currently preparing a publication on this subject.

APPENDIX

I.   INSCRIPTION ON THE BERLIN VENETO-SARACENIC BUCKET[39]
Four cartouches on this bucket include a poem common on late Mamluk vessels, written in *naskhī* script and alternating with cartouches of good wishes written in Kufic. I am including here the text of this poem. A fifth cartouche in *naskhī* includes the sentence ˝al-ṣabr ʿibādah.˝ The text is not distributed in the cartouches according to the sentences, but haphazardly.

<div dir="rtl">

من تمعنا في جمالي نزهة العين يراني

لي طرز من الخير قد حوى كل المعاني

كيف لا يسمو جمالي و النفوس تهوى وصالي

</div>

> Who contemplates my beauty will find me a delight to the eye
> I have a form which includes all the essence of good
> How would my beauty not be outstanding when the souls long for
> my love?

II.   INSCRIPTIONS OF THE BOWL SIGNED BY MAḤMŪD IN THE KHALILI COLLECTION
Because of the vernacular character of the text and the unconventional writing, the reading of these inscriptions remains problematic and to some extent conjectural. The text on the rim is clear; the inscriptions of the body, however, which occupy four lines, pose a problem as to the sequence of their words. The same inscription on the late Mamluk bowl in the Khalili collection (MTW 1349) ends with an additional phrase: ˝al-ṣabr ʿibādah,˝ probably to fill a space at the edge of the cartouche that would have been otherwise empty. The inscriptions of the rim of the Maḥmūd bowl, however, are according to my knowledge so far unparalleled.

A. The Rim (Numbered by Cartouche):

<div dir="rtl">

١. انا طاسه كماله البدر شكلي وبياضي يحكى القمر في السمو و كزهى (كزهر؟)

٢. الرياض صنعة نقشي و على الكف اتجلى كالعروس الفناعه

٣. تواضع تكبرا كالنجم لاح لباصر (؟) على سفحات الما و هو رفيع ولا

٤. تكو كالدخان يعلو بنفسه الى طبقات الجو و هو ضيع عمل المعلم محمود

</div>

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[39]See note 7.

1. I am a bowl which looks like the full moon, my whiteness resembles the moon in the sky like the flourishing (like the flowers?)
2. In gardens is the art of my decoration, I appear in the palm like a perfumed bride
3. Be humble to be great pride like a star shining to the viewer on the surface of the water while it is high and
4. Do not be like smoke which raises itself in the air and then is lost. Work of master Maḥmūd.

B. Cartouche 1 on the Body:

فكر اللبيب تحير في اوصافي و بديع نقشي مدعش [كذا][40] للنواظر منهل عذب و ورد صافي و باخر

ضبط في (؟)[41] لعينك خافي

    The mind of the thoughtful wonders about my looks, my decoration
    is magnificent and stunning to the viewer, (like) a sweet stream
    and clear water, in finest (?) work hidden to your eye.

C. Cartouche 2 on the Body:

يكاد ظاهري ينظر من باطني لصفائه والحسن ليس بخافي فانظر الى حسني ومحكم صنعتي و اشرب

هنيا صحه وعوافي

    My exterior almost looks through my interior for its clearness,
    beauty is not hidden, look at my beauty and the excellence of my
    craftsmanship and drink in happiness, health, and strength.

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[40]The correct form ″*mudhish*″ is used on the Khalili bowl with the same inscription.

[41]The placement of ″*fī*″ (″in″ or ″in me″) is not clear.

Fig. 1. Spherical hand-warmer or incense burner, Khalili Collection (MTW 1520)

Fig. 2. Lidded box, Veneto-Saracenic style, signed by Zayn al-Dīn Ibn Zanbūʿah, Khalili Collection (MTW 527)

Fig. 3. Late Mamluk bowl in the Khalili Collection (MTW 1349)

Fig. 4. Basin in Veneto-Saracenic style with Mamluk inscriptions and blazon, Poldi Pezzoli Museum, Milan (Inv. 1657)

Fig. 5. Jug of Veneto-Saracenic style, Poldi Pezzoli in Milan (Inv. 1656)

Fig. 6. Detail of a late Mamluk casket, Victoria and Albert Museum (Inv. 377-1897)

Fig. 7. Detail of the lid signed by *al-muʿallim* Maḥmūd in the Victoria and Albert Museum (2290-1855)

Fig. 8. Inscribed cartouche of the Veneto-Saracenic bucket in the Islamic Museum in Berlin (B72)

Fig. 9. Late Mamluk lidded box, Khalili Collection (MTW 527)

Fig. 10. Late Mamluk spouted bowl, Benaki Museum in Athens (33701).

Fig. 11. Signature of Ibn Zanbūʿah on the lidded bowl (fig. 2), Khalili Collection (MTW 527)
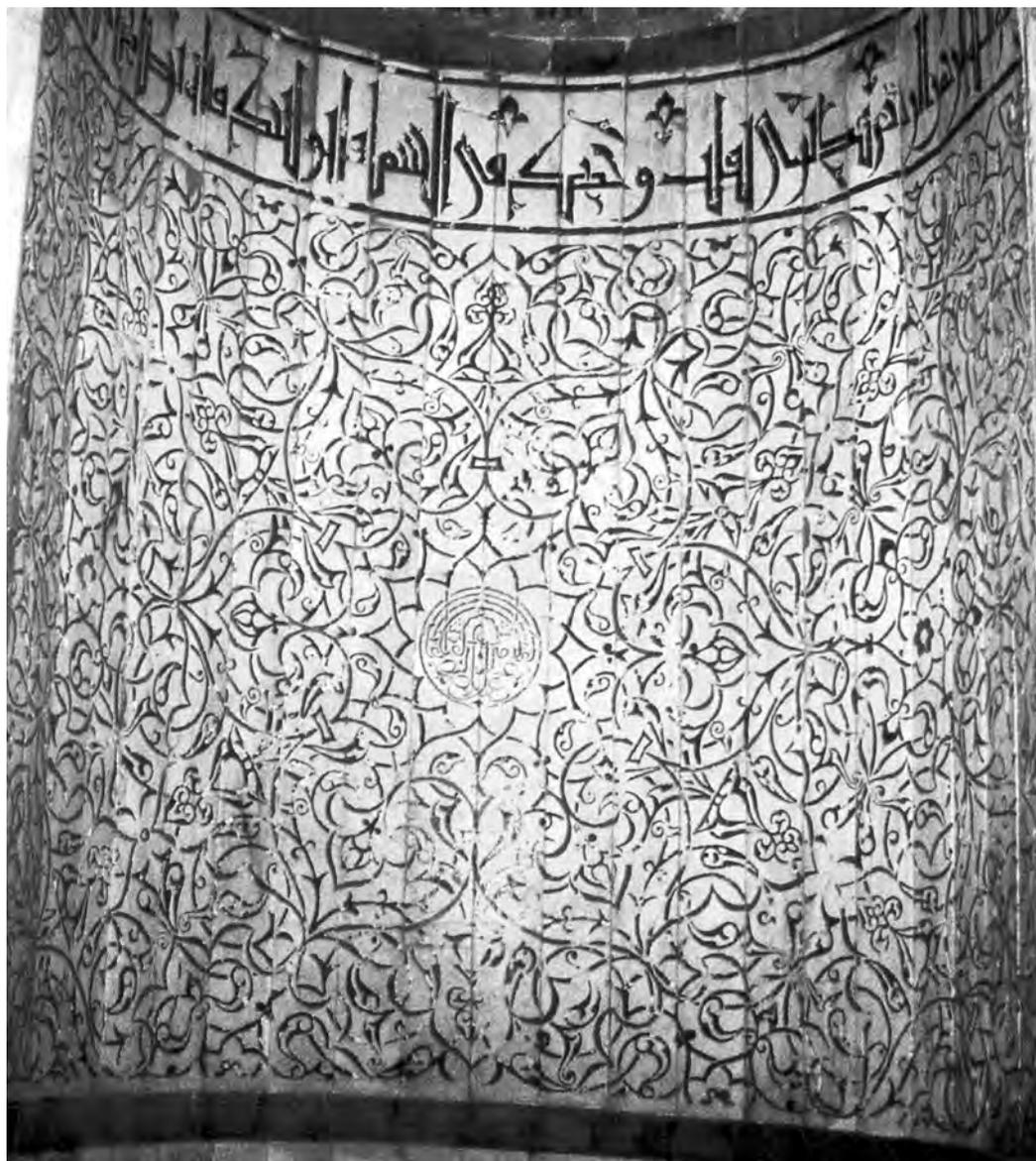
Fig.12. Inlaid marble decoration with the signature of ʿAbd al-Qādir *al-naqqāsh* in the mihrab of the mosque of Qijmas al-Isḥāqī in Cairo

Fig. 13. Bottom of the bowl of Zayn al-Dīn Ibn Zanbūʿah, Khalili Collection (MTW 527)

Fig. 14. Bowl signed by *al-muʿallim* Maḥmūd, Khalili Collection (MTW 1542)

Fig. 15. Inscriptions on the rim of the bowl signed by *al-muʿallim* Maḥmūd in the Khalili collection (MTW 1542)

Fig. 16. Copper bowl in the Ashmolean Museum (1982.6)

Fig. 17. Detail of copper bowl in the Ashmolean Musem

Fig. 18. Late Mamluk basin in the Benaki Museum (13068)

Fig. 19. Detail of the late Mamluk basin in the Benaki Museum

Fig. 20. Engraved circle in the bottom of the Maḥmūd bowl in the Khalili Collection.

Fig. 21. Engraved circle in the bottom of the bowl in the Ashmolean Museum

Fig. 22. Engraved circle in the bottom of the late Mamluk bowl of fig. 3.

Jo Van Steenbergen
University of St. Andrews

Mamluk Elite on the Eve of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad´s Death (1341): A Look behind the Scenes of Mamluk Politics

When God made the morning rise and the muezzin announced the hour of prayer, the amir Sayf al-Dīn Qawṣūn left his house with a large retinue of his followers and sat down at his gate, thinking about the loss of his king and *ustādh* which had befallen him. After an hour, the amir Sayf al-Dīn Bashtak left [his house] with some of his companions. The amir Qawṣūn stood up, quickly walked over to him, and met him on the road. He embraced him, wept, and consoled him over his sultan, the like of which time will never ever allow again. After an hour, the sultan´s mamluks came out [of their barracks] and the amir Sayf al-Dīn Qawṣūn consoled them over their master, whereupon they sat down for a moment. Then, the gate of the Citadel was opened and out came the *khāṣṣakīyah* amirs, like Yalbughā, al-Ḥijāzī, al-Māridānī, Aqsunqur, and another, while they were weeping and mourning, and the amirs Qawṣūn and Bashtak consoled them. Then they [all] asked for the veteran amirs, so these entered [the Citadel, came] to them and were informed of the death of the sultan. Then, they [all] wept and they asked [the veterans´] advice on whom to appoint over them. But al-Aḥmadī said: ˝You, you haven´t buried the sultan yet and you are already arguing. Have you forgotten what has been decreed to you and [have you forgotten] the oaths you have sworn? By God, you are not to appoint anyone but his son Abū Bakr; if not, [I swear that I will fight until] my white hair will be colored by my blood and my head will fly from my body.˝ But the amir Sayf al-Dīn Qawṣūn told him: ˝O lord Rukn al-Dīn, don´t be angry; [I swear] we will decapitate anyone who disagrees.˝ And Bashtak said to them: ˝Whoever disagrees with me will have to make the effort to join us in our agreement to the rule of the son of our *ustādh* [or he will be eliminated].˝ So the *khāṣṣakīyah,* the mamluks of the sultan, and the *muqaddam*s *alf* all left to fetch the amir Abū Bakr. They brought him, made him sit on the royal throne in the *īwān* and the army

came by, kissing the ground before him. Then he was given the royal epithet "al-Malik al-Manṣūr." Everyone's mind was set at rest and, thank God, contrary to what the people had been thinking, nothing [bad] happened and the issue ended well.[1]

This very visual and dramatic picture of the first reactions to the demise of al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn (r. 1293–94; 1299–1309; 1310–41) reveals the names of some members of his socio-political elite of the highest-ranking amirs of one hundred at the end of his reign. As highly unlikely as the actual scene may be, it hints not just at the identity of these individuals, but also at the nature of their relationship with the sultan and with each other (some are inside the Citadel, others not; some take counsel on the succession, others give counsel; some take the lead through these events, others follow, etc.). As such, this story, to a certain degree, reflects the approach that will be taken in this article to establish the nature and identity of this Mamluk elite in its most consolidated form, i.e., at the very end of one of the Mamluk empire's longest, most prosperous, and most successful sultanic reigns.

Indeed, this article's central purpose is to identify and define this elite of highest-ranking amirs at al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's court. And as it happens, we are very fortunate to have a list of all the amirs that held the highest military rank—that of amir of one hundred—at the time of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's death in June, 1341, left to us by the obscure historian Shams al-Dīn al-Shujāʿī (d. ca. 1354):

> There were twenty-five *muqaddam*s *alf* in Egypt on the day of his death: Badr al-Dīn Jankalī ibn al-Bābā, *al-ḥājj* Almalik, Baybars al-Aḥmadī, ʿAlam al-Dīn Sanjar al-Jāwulī, Sayf al-Dīn Kūkāy, Najm al-Dīn Maḥmūd Wazīr Baghdād—these are the senior outsiders *(barrānīyah kibār);* the rest are his mamluks and intimates: his son Abū Bakr, Qawṣūn, Bashtak, Ṭuquzdamur, Aqbughā ʿAbd al-Wāḥid, Aydughmish, the *amīr ākhūr,* Quṭlūbughā al-Fakhrī, Yalbughā al-Yaḥyāwī, Maliktamur al-Ḥijāzī, Alṭūnbughā al-Māridānī, Bahādur al-Nāṣirī, Aqsunqur al-Nāṣirī, Qumārī al-Kabīr, Qumārī, the *amīr shikār,* Ṭurghāy, Aranbughā, the *amīr jāndār,* Barsbughā, the *ḥājib,* Bulrughā ibn al-ʿAjūz, the *amīr silāḥ,* and Baygharā."[2]

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[1]Shams al-Dīn al-Shujāʿī, *Tārīkh al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn al-Ṣāliḥī wa-Awlādihi,* ed. B. Schäfer as *Die Chronik Aš-Šuǧaʿīs,* Quellen zur Geschichte des Islamischen Ägyptens, vol. 2a (Wiesbaden, 1977), 1:107.

[2]Ibid., 111–12. For the individual identification of each of these amirs, see the appendix to this

His son and successor Abū Bakr excepted, these twenty-four individuals were indeed the political and military elite at the end of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad´s regime, many of whom were to play significant roles in socio-political life in years to come. Rather than dealing with each one of them individually, the approach chosen to engage the issue of their identity and socio-political role (Who were they? What did they do?) in this article is their interaction with their ″king,″ ″ustādh,″ ″master,″ or ″sultan.″ This study will also attempt to establish whether such an analysis of this elite might allow for a behind-the-scenes look at Mamluk political culture at al-Nāṣir´s court [3] and hence, narrow the wide spectrum of characterizations so far given to al-Nāṣir´s rule, from ruthlessly enforced

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article. For references to this list, see also Winslow W. Clifford, ″State Formation and the Structure of Politics in Mamluk Syro-Egypt, 648–741 A.H./1250–1340 C.E.,″ Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1995, 262; Mounira Chapoutot-Remadi, ″Liens et Relations au sein de l´Élite Mamluke sous les Premiers Sultans Bahrides, 648/1250–741/1341,″ Ph.D. diss., Aix-en-Provence, 1993, 604–5.

[3]On the correlation between such interaction, politics, and authority in the Mamluk state, also defined as patronage, household politics, or even factionalism, see also Reuven Amitai-Preiss, ″The Mamluk Officer Class during the Reign of Sultan Baybars,″ in *War and Society in the Eastern Mediterranean, 7th–15th Centuries,* ed. Yaacov Lev, The Medieval Mediterranean: Peoples, Economies and Cultures, vol. 9 (Leiden, 1997), 275; Chapoutot-Remadi, ″Liens et Relations,″ 65; idem, ″Liens propres et identités séparées chez les Mamelouks Bahrides,″ in *Valeur et distance: Identités et sociétés en Egypte,* ed. Chr. Décobert, Collection de l´atelier méditerranéen (Paris, 2000), 179–180; Clifford, ″State Formation,″ 5–6, 47, 65, 244–45, 272; Robert Irwin, ″Factions in Medieval Islam,″ *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1986): 228; Amalia Levanoni, ″The Consolidation of Aybak´s Rule: An Example of Factionalism in the Mamluk State,″ *Der Islam* 71 (1994): 252; idem, ″The Mamluk Conception of the Sultanate,″ *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 26 (1994): 374–75. A number of studies have already noted the existence of one or more such relationships, never however exhaustively with respect to this specific episode and the elite of amirs involved (see Amalia Levanoni, *A Turning Point in Mamluk History: The Third Reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn, 1310–1341*, Islamic History and Civilization, Studies and Texts, vol. 10 [Leiden-New York-Cologne, 1995], esp. 28–60; Chapoutot-Remadi, ″Liens et Relations,″ esp. 67, 604–6; idem, ″Liens propres et identités séparées,″ 175–88; Peter M. Holt, ″Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn [684–741/1285–1341]: His Ancestry, Kindred and Affinity,″ in *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras*, ed. U. Vermeulen and D. De Smet, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, vol. 73 [Leuven, 1995], esp. 319–23; D. S. Richards, ″Mamluk Amirs and Their Families and Households,″ in *The Mamluks in Egyptian Politics and Society*, ed. Th. Philipp and U. Haarmann [Cambridge, 1988], 32–40).

authoritarianism[4] to spendthrift monarchism[5] to well-balanced oligarchism.[6]

It will be argued that it actually was a combination of this elite's ″mamluk,″ family, and exchange relationships with al-Nāṣir Muḥammad that largely defined its composition, identity, and socio-political function at the end of his reign; furthermore, it will be suggested that these precise relationships not only characterize this elite, but also shed some light on the actual nature of al-Nāṣir's authority.

″Mamluk″ Relationships

A first aspect of this elite's identity and composition concerns their origin and subsequent status as mamluks or manumitted slaves. For when analyzing this elite's composition in terms of the allegedly basic feature of Mamluk political culture—the relationship between a mamluk, his manumitting *ustādh,* and his peers[7]—a remarkably varied patchwork of mamluk origins and status is revealed. Though an *ustādh*'s basis of power was supposed to be the loyalty and cohesion of his corps of personal mamluks, all acquired, trained, and manumitted in his service and all identifiable by a *nisbah* that was derived from his name,[8] this group of senior amirs encompassed such a variety of mamluk ″categories″ in and outside his Nāṣirīyah corps of personal mamluks, that there remain surprisingly few grounds for assuming that such a bond supporting his authority really existed.

Barrānīyah, Nāṣirīyah, Khāṣṣakīyah

A first clear mamluk ″category″ of amirs of one hundred were those six that did not have the *nisbah* al-Nāṣirī at all.[9] Actually, in his list al-Shujāʿī already identified these six as a separate group, labeling them ″senior outsiders″ *(barrānīyah kibār).* And this clearly reflects the fact that, as suggested by their *nisbah*s, they had

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[4]Most importantly in H. N. al-Ḥajjī, *The Internal Affairs in Egypt during the Third Reign of Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad* (Kuwait, 1978, 2000), 96–163, esp. 159–63; Peter M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusades: The Near East from the Eleventh Century to 1517,* History of the Near East (London, 1986), 114; Reuven Amitai-Preiss, ″The Remaking of the Military Elite of Mamluk Egypt,″ *Studia Islamica* 72 (1990): 145–60.

[5]See Levanoni, *Turning Point,* esp. 28–80.

[6]Clifford, ″State Formation,″ esp. 235–40.

[7]On the ″mamluk″ concept, see the classic study by David Ayalon, *L'Esclavage du Mamlouk,* Oriental Notes and Studies, vol. 1 (Jerusalem, 1951).

[8]Ibid.

[9]They are the amirs Jankalī, Almalik, Baybars, Sanjar, Kūkāy, and Maḥmūd.

never been members of al-Nāṣir′s corps of personal mamluks.[10] In fact, what most of these outsiders in the Nāṣirīyah-dominated ranks of senior amirs actually had in common was that they had entered the Mamluk empire as young mamluks long before al-Nāṣir′s third ascendancy to power in 1310, i.e., they definitely were senior amirs ″who had priority in immigration″[11] and they were therefore also occasionally referred to in the sources as ″the veterans″ *(al-mashāyikh)*.[12] Almalik, Baybars al-Aḥmadī, Sanjar al-Jāwulī, and allegedly also Kūkāy were all members of the Manṣūrīyah, the corps of mamluks trained and manumitted by al-Nāṣir′s father al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn (d. 1290) more than fifty years earlier.[13] And the remaining two, Jankalī ibn al-Bābā and Najm al-Dīn Maḥmūd, actually were not even mamluks and therefore complete outsiders, yet with a remarkable record of service: both of them had been high ranking officials in the Ilkhanid empire before they had fled

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[10]According to al-Qalqashandī, the term *barrānīyah* was used for mamluks and amirs who did not belong to the *khāṣṣakīyah;* they were also called *al-kharajīyah* (al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A‘shá fī Ṣinā‘at al-Inshā'* [Cairo, n.d.], 3:386; 4:56). According to Rabbat, the term should also be taken literally, as the amirs who lived outside the sultan′s quarters in the Citadel′s southern enclosure (Nasser O. Rabbat, *The Citadel of Cairo: A New Interpretation of Royal Mamluk Architecture,* Islamic History and Civilisation, Studies and Texts, vol. 14 [Leiden, 1995], 289); this may also be derived from the following quote from al-Maqrīzī: ″In it, the sultan reviewed the mamluks of the barracks and the outsiders *(al-barrānīyah)*″ (al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Ma‘rifat Duwal al-Mulūk,* ed. Muḥammad M. Ziyādah [Cairo, 1956–58], 2:313). Combined with the information in this article′s opening story from al-Shujā‘ī, these outsiders indeed seem to have lived outside the sultan′s quarters, unlike their colleagues.

[11]On the specific terminology of a ″senior amir″ *(amīr kabīr),* probably also referred to when al-Shujā‘ī called them ″kibār,″ see Peter M. Holt, ″The Structure of Government in the Mamluk Sultanate,″ in *Eastern Mediterranean Lands in the Period of the Crusades,* ed. Peter M. Holt (Warminster, 1977), 55; Abū al-Maḥāsin Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Kitāb al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah* (Cairo, 1963–72), 10:303.

[12]Cf. al-Shujā‘ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:107; Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī, *A‘yān al-‘Aṣr wa-A‘wān al-Naṣr,* ed. ‘Alī Abū Zayd et al. (Beirut-Damascus, 1998), 1:618, 4:162; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal al-Ṣāfī wa-al-Mustawfá ba‘da al-Wāfī,* ed. Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn (Cairo, 1984–2003), 3:85; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* ed. ‘Adnān Darwīsh as *Tārīkh Ibn Qāḍī Šhuhba par Abū Bakr ibn Qāḍī Šhuhba al-Asadī al-Dimashqī (779/1377–851/1448), Tome Second, Premier Partie du Manuscrit, 741/1340–750/1350,* Publications de l′Institut Français de Damas, vol. 145 (Damascus, 1994), 487.

[13]Al-Ṣafadī, *A‘yān,* 2:81–83, 467–70, 618–20, 4:162–63; al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Mawā'iẓ wa-al-I‘tibār bi-Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Āthār* (Cairo, 1996), 3:83, 4:108, 247–48; Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar al-Kāminah fī A‘yān al-Mi'ah al-Thāminah,* ed. H. al-Nadawī (Beirut, 1993), 1:411, 502, 2:170–72, 3:270; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:768; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 3:85–88, 479–81, 6:74–76. See also Clifford, ″State Formation,″ 262. Kūkāy′s claims are rather more dubious, as there exists only one reference linking him to the Manṣūrīyah (al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:768). On the Manṣūrīyah corps, see Linda S. Northrup, *From Slave to Sultan: The Career of al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn and the Consolidation of Mamluk Rule in Egypt and Syria (678–689 AH/1279–1290 AD),* Freiburger Islamstudien, vol. 18

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to Mamluk Syro-Egypt, in 1304 and in 1337 respectively.[14]

Mamluk society generally seems to have shown these amirs respect for their long experience, veteran status, and continued loyalty to the sultan. Hence when Damurdāsh, the former ruler of Anatolian Bilād al-Rūm, fled to Cairo in 1329 and was given an official position inferior to one of those veterans, al-Maqrīzī recorded the following telling story:

> [Damurdāsh] was so upset about it that the sultan had to send the amir Badr al-Dīn Jankalī to him to apologize and [explain] that he did not want to disrespect his [royal] status, but that . . . the sultan′s father had senior mamluks who had brought up the sultan, so that he wanted to honor their status. ″Therefore I make you sit next to them.″[15]

The other eighteen amirs of one hundred are all mentioned in the sources with the *nisbah* al-Nāṣirī, i.e., they actually were members of al-Nāṣir′s personal corps of mamluks; yet two different ″categories″ in terms of mamluk status may be discerned within this group of Nāṣirīyah amirs of one hundred.

There were seven Nāṣirīyah amirs whose relationship with the sultan actually went far beyond the mere formalities of *ustādh*-mamluk loyalty. For all seven—Qawṣūn, Bashtak, Aqsunqur, Maliktamur, Qumārī, Alṭunbughā, and Yalbughā—are specifically identified in one or more of the era′s sources as members of the sultan′s special private retinue of forty favorite mamluks and amirs, the *khāṣṣakīyah*.[16] These were the real ″insiders″ among the amirs of one hundred. Very often, they had been picked for their good looks and, as such, they were all attached to the sultan by a more personal bond of sultanic favor and affection—often

(Stuttgart, 1998), 189–96.

[14]Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān*, 2:163–66, 5:399; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:539–4,; 4:331–32; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 5:22–25; Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The Early Mamluk Sultanate 1250–1382* (London, 1986), 108; Levanoni, *Turning Point,* 41; Holt, ″An-Nāṣir Muḥammad,″ 321. Maḥmūd′s ″priority in immigration″ indeed is nonexistent—in his case, *kabīr* probably refers to his long-standing previous career with his Ilkhanid overlords.

[15]Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:295.

[16]Al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhat al-Nāẓir fī Sīrat al-Malik al-Nāṣir,* ed. Aḥmad Ḥuṭayṭ (Beirut, 1986), 130; al-Shujāʿī, *Tārīkh,* 1:107; al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān*, 1:605, 4:131, 132, 5:585; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:475; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:515, 537, 538. For this definition of the *khāṣṣakīyah*, see M. Q. al-Baqlī, *Al-Taʿrīf bi-Muṣṭalaḥāt Ṣubḥ al-Aʿshá* (Cairo, 1983), 114; Khalīl ibn Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī, *Zubdat Kashf al-Mamālik wa-Bayān al-Ṭuruq wa-al-Masālik,* ed. P. Ravaisse as *Zoubdat Kachf el-Mamalik* (Paris, 1894), 115–16. Al-Maqrīzī gives even more specific information, as he states that the number of *khāṣṣakīyah* amirs of one hundred at the time of the Nāṣirī *rawk* (1315) was eight (al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 3:353). For a very explicit reference to this group of amirs, as the ″khāṣṣakīyah

even referred to as sultanic ″infatuation.″[17] Thus, al-Malik al-Nāṣir was said to have been ″extremely infatuated and in love with″ Qawṣūn,[18] with Bashtak,[19] with Alṭunbughā,[20] with Maliktamur,[21] and with Yalbughā,[22] apparently to the extent that when the latter became ill, al-Ṣafadī says the sultan himself looked after his protegee, meanwhile not administering justice for twenty days and even neglecting his own dying son Ibrāhīm.[23] And al-Ṣafadī has the following telling story about the amir Maliktamur:

> I′ve seen him when he was in Cairo. . . . Because of the sultan′s love for him he would not let him go to the square to play polo on Saturday, rather he allowed him to go down on Tuesday [only] . . . and he used to say to him: ″O Maliktamur, cover your head when you play so that the sun cannot harm your face.″ And he would only allow him to attend the public service very occasionally, so that no one [ever] saw him.[24]

Finally, as regards the remaining eleven Nāṣirīyah amirs of one hundred, the sources do not identify them as having a specific in- or outsider status at the time of the sultan′s demise and we may assume they were merely Nāṣirīyah, linked to the sultan by the usual *ustādh*-mamluk relationship.[25]

In terms of their mamluk origins and status, clearly this elite was made up of three groups: the latter majority of common sultanic mamluks and two smaller groups of out- and insiders with a more defined status and more personal bonds with the sultan. Yet, as is often the case with such categories, they do not necessarily reflect historical realities. On the one hand, none of these groups are ever mentioned

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of the mamluks of the sultan [that are] *muqaddam*s *alf,*″ see al-Shujā‘ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:107.

[17]See al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:477; al-Shujā‘ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:60, 222, 266; al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhah,* 149, 153, 205; al-Ṣafadī, *A‘yān,* 1:691, 4:131, 137, 445, 5:591–92; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 4:104; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:409, 477, 4:358, 437; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:184; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:378, 538; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 3:68.

[18]Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 4:104.

[19]Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:477; al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhah,* 154

[20]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 3:68; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:385; al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhah,* 265

[21]Al-Ṣafadī, *A‘yān*, 5:446; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 4:358

[22]Al-Shujā‘ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:60; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:477.

[23]On Ibrāhīm, see al-Ṣafadī, *A‘yān*, 5:591–92; also Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 4:437. On justice, see al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:492.

[24]Al-Ṣafadī, *A‘yān*, 5:446; see also Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 4:358.

[25]These eleven remaining amirs were: Aqbughā ‘Abd al-Wāḥid, Aydughmish, Bahādur, Qumārī al-Kabīr, Quṭlūbughā, Ṭuquzdamur, Ṭurghāy, Urumbughā, Barsbughā, Burunlī, and Baygharā.

as having acted as a self-consciously solidary group during the entire length of al-Nāṣir′s third reign; on the other, lines between the *khāṣṣakīyah* and non-*khāṣṣakīyah* are sometimes not as clear-cut as might be expected. Both of the so-called common Nāṣirīyah amirs Aydughmish and Quṭlūbughā can be identified fairly early in al-Nāṣir′s reign as members of the *khāṣṣakīyah*; it is, however, uncertain whether they retained that status in al-Nāṣir′s final years, since there is no explicit reference to it.[26] Bahādur′s status remains quite undefined as well, because though he was not explicitly identified as a *khāṣṣakī* in any of the sources, he is said to have enjoyed some of the *khāṣṣakīyah* privileges that come with sultanic favor. Thus, all relevant sources agree with Ibn Ḥajar that

> [The sultan] favored him so [much] that he came to stay with him
> to spend the night, as the fourth out of four: Qawṣūn, Bashtak,
> Ṭughāy Tamur, and Bahādur.[27]

″Veterans″ and ″Strangers″

Moreover, aside from these three very ″mamluk″ categories, there clearly were some additional distinctive features of mamluk origin and status, which were also known, or at least to some degree noticed, as they did find their way explicitly into the era′s sources. They mainly seem to have resulted from the success and length of al-Nāṣir′s rule and to some extent from his afore-mentioned personal predilection for certain types of mamluks.

Firstly, since al-Nāṣir reigned for so long, the continuous influx of new sultanic mamluks for thirty odd years resulted in serious generational differences in his final years between freshly appointed amirs and those who had managed to stay at the top for one or more decades. And though there is no clear reference to any sort of tension between those generations during al-Nāṣir′s reign,[28] the existence of different generations *(ṭabaqāt)* in the ranks of amirs did not go unnoticed. Quṭlūbughā was said to be ″from the generation of Arghūn al-Dawādār,″[29] and al-Ṣafadī made the following statement, revealing to some extent the contemporary awareness of this aspect of court life:

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[26]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 3:165; al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān*, 4:113; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 3:205.

[27]Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:498; also al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān*, 2:62; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 3:431; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:322.

[28]There is a reference to generational tension between Bahādur and the younger Alṭunbughā as the former is said to have born the latter a grudge for his quick promotion; in 1342 this tension is said to have caused Alṭunbughā′s removal from Cairo (al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 4:105; also to some extent confirmed in Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:323).

[29]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 10:82; instead of using the noun *ṭabaqah,* al-Ṣafadī talks about ″the high rank *(raf'ah)* of the amir Sayf al-Dīn Arghūn al-Dawādār″ (al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān*, 4:113).

> [Ṭuquzdamur] continued to be [the most] senior and revered, from the generation of Arghūn and from those after him, until the very end; he saw three or four generations come and go, while he remained as he had been and the sultan never turned against him.[30]

Thus, looking at these amirs of one hundred in generational terms, a clear distinction may be found between seniors or even ″veterans″ and rather freshly promoted juniors. Apart from the afore-mentioned revered ″veterans″ of the *barrānīyah,* the ranks of the common Nāṣirīyah count some amirs who, like Ṭuquzdamur and to some extent Quṭlūbughā, had considerable years of service as amirs of one hundred. Aydughmish had been promoted about thirty years earlier, shortly after the very start of al-Nāṣir′s third reign;[31] and both Aqbughā and Bahādur are said to have been amirs of one hundred since the late 1320s.[32] And though both Quṭlūbughā and Ṭurghāy were only promoted shortly before al-Nāṣir′s demise, neither of them should be considered a newcomer in these ranks either: Quṭlūbughā had been a privileged member of al-Nāṣir′s elite until he had been sent off to Damascus in 1327 and Turghāy had been a long-standing amir of one hundred when he was appointed governor of Aleppo in 1338.[33] On the other hand, the amirs Barsbughā, Burunlī, and Baygharā had only been appointed in 1338 or even later[34] and this certainly did not go unnoticed by contemporaries like al-Shujā′ī, for he referred to Baygharā as ″the last of the later [amirs of one hundred and] commanders of one thousand.″[35]

Parallel to these common Nāṣirīyah ranks of amirs of one hundred, there clearly are two generations present among their *khāṣṣakīyah* peers. There is explicit reference to the promotions, often at a very young age, of five of these *khāṣṣakīyah* amirs to the rank of amir of one hundred fairly late in al-Nāṣir′s reign,[36] while the

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[30]Al-Ṣafadī, *A‘yān*, 2:611.

[31]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 3:165; al-Shujā‘ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:251.

[32]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 2:480, 3:431; al-Ṣafadī, *A‘yān*, 2:62; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:498, 3:250; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:322–23; al-Shujā‘ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:86, 94 (quote), 249–50, 253; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:508, 514; K. V. Zettersteen, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Mamlūkensultane in den Jahren 690–741 der Higra nach arabischen Handschriften* (Leiden, 1919), 213.

[33]Al-Ṣafadī, *A‘yān*, 2:578; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 2:216; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 6:380; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah,*Tārīkh,* 2:383.

[34]Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:262, 264; al-Shujā‘ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:43, 94, 221, 223.

[35]Al-Shujā‘ī,*Tārīkh,* 1:94.

[36]Alṭunbughā and Yalbughā apparently were born only in the early 1320s (Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:379; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 4:436–37); Aqsunqur was said to have been given a rank of amir of one hundred in 1336 (Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:515); Qumārī was promoted amir of one

promotion of the amirs Bashtak and Qawṣūn conspicuously predated them by as much as ten years.[37]

A final distinctive feature related to the mamluk relationship between this elite and their sultan specifically has to do with the mamluk status of a number of the Nāṣirīyah amirs of one hundred. For like the *barrānīyah* that were explicitly referred to as ″outsiders,″ there were also some ″strangers″ among the Nāṣirīyah due to certain doubts about the soundness of their claims to Nāṣirīyah status. Thus, for instance, according to al-Ṣafadī the amir Ṭuquzdamur

> only considered himself to be a stranger within the sultan′s household, because he had no peer to affiliate with.[38]

This was due to the fact that this Ṭuquzdamur, and also Aydughmish, Ṭurghāy, and Bahādur, had actually entered the ranks of the Nāṣirīyah not directly from the slave markets, but rather from other *ustādh*s′ corps: Sultan al-Mu'ayyad Abū al-Fidā' of Ḥamāh, an amir called al-Ṭabbākhī, and the afore-mentioned king Damurdāsh respectively.[39] Furthermore, Qumārī al-Kabīr allegedly had been an adult shepherd of small cattle in ″the land of the Turks″ before being brought to Egypt by his brother, the amir Baktamur al-Sāqī (d. 1332), which again is hardly the customary way to enter the sultanic mamluks′ ranks.[40] In the case of two of the *khāṣṣakīyah*, this ″stranger″ status definitely had everything to do with the reason for their being brought into the *khāṣṣakīyah*, i.e., the appeal of their good looks to the sultan. Thus, there is the well-known story about Qawṣūn, who had been a young merchant from the Black Sea region, ″a beautiful and tall boy, about eighteen years old,″ whose appearance impressed the sultan so much that he made a considerable effort to acquire him as one of his personal mamluks;[41] and secondly, there was Maliktamur, originally a companion of the Baghdadi scholar al-Suhrawardī, but apparently so famous throughout the region for his beauty that

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hundred on 10 December 1337 (al-Shujā'ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:29); and Maliktamur ″was promoted at the end of al-Malik al-Nāṣir′s reign″ (Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 4:358).

[37]Qawṣūn was promoted in 1326 (al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:272), Bashtak apparently in 1327 (ibid., 291).

[38]Al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān*, 2:611; also in Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 6:420–21.

[39]Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-Durar wa-Jāmi' al-Ghurar,* vol. 9, *Al-Durr al-Fākhir fī Sīrat al-Malik al-Nāṣir,* ed. Hans R. Roemer (Cairo, 1960), 365; al-Shujā'ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:252; al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 1:653, 2:62, 578, 611; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:426, 498, 2:216, 225; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 3:165, 431, 6:380, 420; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:322, 383, 465.

[40]Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:497; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:723.

[41]Al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān*, 4:138; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 3:257; al-Shujā'ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:222; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 4:104 (quote).

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al-Nāṣir again was determined to acquire him as a mamluk.[42] There are also the cases of the *khāṣṣakī* amirs Alṭunbughā al-Māridānī, who allegedly had first been a mamluk of the Artuqid ruler of Mārdīn, sent to al-Nāṣir as a gift,[43] and Yalbughā, about whom Ibn Ḥajar says that he had been born in Egypt ″while his father was in the service of al-Nāṣir, and he grew up with such an extremely beautiful face and fine figure that he got promoted.″[44] While the latter two especially are more contested stories,[45] in the case of Qawṣūn the actual fact of a perception of his being a ″stranger″ among the Nāṣirīyah may be seen from the reports on the political conflicts following al-Nāṣir′s death, where that specific feature was said to have been used to discredit his political appeal and to destabilize his alliances.[46]

This analysis of mamluk relationships, in terms of these amirs′ mamluk origins and status, provides a revealing look at the nature and identity of these elite amirs of one hundred at the end of al-Nāṣir′s reign. At the very least it gives us some insight, both into the background of the individuals, and into the nature of some of the ties that bound them to the sultan. What is striking is the small role traditional mamluk-*ustādh* bonds played in these relationships. Indeed, the general picture that emerges is of a varied elite composed of both intimates and outsiders, veterans and juniors, mamluks and non-mamluks, and real and outsider Nāṣirīyah, every one of them having a different relationship with the sultan due to their different personal histories.

EXCHANGE RELATIONSHIPS

A second relationship which was inherent in this elite of amirs of one hundred at the end of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad′s reign was of a far more material character, and consisted of the exchange of benefits between the sultan and his amirs.[47] As the

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[42]Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 4:358; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:184.

[43]Al-Shujāʿī, *Tārīkh,* 1:266; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:378.

[44]Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 4:36–437.

[45]According to Ibn Ḥajar, al-Nāṣir ″had bought [Alṭunbughā] as a child″ (Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:409); the story about Yalbughā especially seems very doubtful, since it is related regarding Yalbughā′s father Ṭābuṭā—even by Ibn Ḥajar, who claimed the opposite—that ″he had come [to Egypt] when he heard about his son′s favored position with al-Nāṣir″ (Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 2:213; also al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 2:563; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 6:358).

[46]See al-Shujāʿī, *Tārīkh,* 1:164.

[47]On the concept of exchange as a major lever of socio-political interaction in the Mamluk state, cf. Clifford, ″State Formation,″ esp. 6, 46–47, 58; Ira M. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), 48–50, 187–88; Michael Chamberlain, *Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus, 1190–1350,* Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization (Cambridge, 1995), 38–40; W. W. Clifford, ″*Ubi Sumus?* Mamluk History and Social Theory,″ *Mamlūk Studies Review* 1 (1997): 60, 62.

head of a highly-centralized state bureaucracy, the sultan was the sole authority that controlled access to the military hierarchy (and its financial resources) and to the military administration, while at the same time the wealth of his treasury allowed him to bestow generous rewards on those he favored. Hence exchange relations not only defined the military, socio-political, and economic status of this Mamluk elite, but were also imperative in the absolute subordination of this elite to the sultan.

PROMOTION

The number of positions for the highest military rank in Egypt was fixed at twenty-four by al-Nāṣir Muḥammad in the course of his 1315 cadastral reform, the *rawk al-Nāṣirī,* when financial resources were allocated for precisely that number of amirs of one hundred.[48] At the end of 1326, al-Maqrīzī mentions an increase of one extra position and *iqṭāʿ,* to twenty-five, as a result of the split of the *iqṭāʿ* of the arrested amir Arghūn al-Nāʾib.[49] As can be seen from al-Shujāʿī′s list, there remained twenty-five amirs up till the very end of al-Nāṣir′s reign, though by then this number included one of his own sons, Abū Bakr.

One conspicuous previously-mentioned feature of this elite of amirs of one hundred is that no less than eight amirs, or one third of this elite, had been promoted to this rank within the four final years of al-Nāṣir′s reign. Only six amirs of the Nāṣirīyah—Aydughmish, Ṭuquzdamur, Qawṣūn, Bashtak, Bahādur and Aqbughā—had managed to maintain stability in their careers and retain their rank for more than ten years. Actually, when compared with parallel but less complete lists that are known for the years 1312 and 1332, only three (actually even just two) and twelve names respectively still remained in 1341.[50]

The only political authority that was responsible for these bestowments and deprivations of military rank was al-Nāṣir Muḥammad himself. In his position as the sultan, he was the sole official who was empowered to elevate one into the

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[48]Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ,* 4:14; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:221, 3:353; al-Ẓāhirī, *Zubdah,* 113.

[49]Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:280.

[50]From the 1312 list in a work by al-Ḥasan ibn Faḍl Allāh al-Ṣafadī, studied in detail by Reuven Amitai, only the names of the amirs Almalik and Baybars remained, while Amitai himself added another one that returned in 1341, Jankalī (Amitai, ″Remaking,″ 161–62; also Chapoutot-Remadi, ″Liens et Relations,″ 605); from the 1332 list of amirs that accompanied al-Nāṣir on his third hajj, the names of the amirs Jankalī ibn al-Bābā, Almalik, Baybars, Sanjar al-Jāwulī, Ṭuquzdamur, Aydughmish, Qawṣūn, Bashtak, Bahādur al-Nāṣirī, Urumbughā, Aqbughā ʿAbd al-Wāḥid, and Ṭurghāy remained (Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz,* 9:366, al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:351–52). On al-Nāṣir Muḥammad′s active involvement in the composition of his elite, see also Amitai, ″Remaking,″ 145–46, 151–55; Levanoni, *Turning Point,* 28–30; and Chapoutot-Remadi, ″Liens propres et identitées séparées,″ 180.

ranks of amirs of one hundred and whose signature was required to legitimize the *manshūr,* the document conferring an *iqṭāʿ* upon a new appointee.[51] Therefore promotion to the highest rank was not only a matter of timing and circumstance, it was a result of, first and foremost, this elite′s relationship with the sultan, inevitably one of gratitude, loyalty, and subordination.

When circumstances and timing are subjected to closer scrutiny, another feature becomes apparent: the absence of any reference to strong competition for this limited number of highly desirable positions. For in those nine cases for which such information exists, three times an amir was promoted to a position left by the demise of his predecessor,[52] while six times promotion took place after the sultan had sent the previous amir to occupy an office in Syria.[53] Only once did this provoke any minor protest, which was resolved peacefully but firmly by al-Nāṣir:

> When the sultan sent [the amir of one hundred Tashtamur al-Nāṣirī] to Ṣafad in the year 738, he requested exemption, implored him and demanded to be excused. . . . On Thursday, [the sultan] made him sit before him after the public service, and said to him: ″I′m only sending you to Syria to perform a job for me.″ He made him bow his head, kissed it, and bid him goodbye.[54]

Generally, in the few cases where an actual reason for such promotion is referred to by the sources, it either concerns exchange of promotion for loyalty and services offered to the sultan,[55] or the sultan′s afore-mentioned infatuation with and favoritism towards some of his *khāṣṣakīyah.*[56] Though the sample is admittedly limited and absence of further data renders the conclusion rather conjectural, overall these elements do seem to confirm the picture of a sultan who was all-powerful and

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[51]Holt, ″Structure,″ 47–48; idem, ″The Position and Power of the Mamluk Sultan,″ *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 38, no. 2 (1975): 246–47.

[52]Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:177, 437; al-Shujāʿī, *Tārīkh,* 1:28, 29.

[53]Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:272; al-Shujāʿī, *Tārīkh,* 1:43, 94, 253; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:383, 538.

[54]Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 2:588.

[55]See al-Shujāʿī, *Tārīkh,* 1:93 (Quṭlūbughā is re-promoted in 1340 after his active involvement in the arrest of the Syrian governor Tankiz); al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 1:619; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:411; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 3:85 (Almalik is taken up in al-Nāṣir′s entourage in 710 after his services rendered as a trustworthy and efficient messenger between the deposed al-Nāṣir in al-Karak and the new sultan Baybars al-Jāshinkīr in Cairo).

[56]See al-Shujāʿī, *Tārīkh,* 1:253; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:391, 409, 477–78; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 2:497; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:385.

individual amirs who, though high-ranking, had few options but to obey his orders.[57]

The same picture emerges from another example, in which case al-Nāṣir allowed himself to bend the rules of the mamluk military curriculum on a whim, promoting the highly-favored rank-and-file mamluk Bahādur directly from rank-and-file status to the rank of amir of one hundred.[58] Again, this act is said to have provoked unsuccessful protest, in particular from the senior *khāṣṣakī* amir of one hundred, Baktamur al-Sāqī (d. 1332).[59] When the latter was murdered by the order of al-Nāṣir, he is said to have felt himself obliged to promote Baktamur′s little brother Qumārī to the highest rank.[60] Even a sultan′s whims had their limits.

Appointment

Appointment to high offices in the administration was also the sultan′s prerogative. This administration was designed to assist the sultan in governing his empire, and its military branch was mainly comprised of positions representing the sultan in the execution of his prerogatives.[61]

Again, it is actually very revealing that among those military offices that had executive power in the government, that of viceroy *(nā'ib),* financial minister *(wazīr),* and chamberlain *(ḥājib)* are explicitly stated to have been abolished or stripped of their authority by the sultan by the end of his reign:

> When [al-Nāṣir] died, he did not have a *nā'ib,* a *wazīr,* or a *ḥājib* with executive authority, except for Barsbughā al-Ḥājib, who rendered justice without having been given the [ceremonial] staff of the office of *ḥājib.*[62]

The sultan had simply refused to appoint a new amir in these offices when they had become vacant earlier in his reign. Actually, apart from the office occupied by this Barsbughā, the only offices awarded to high-ranking amirs toward the end of his reign were ceremonial offices of the court that managed certain aspects of

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[57]This is absolutely contrary to how Clifford depicted al-Nāṣir, i.e., as a sultan who continuously had to work to balance the wishes and aspirations of the different mamluk units that served him, and whose success stemmed from his great ability to achieve this (Clifford, ″State Formation,″ 235–74, esp. 272–74).

[58]Al-Shujāʿī, *Tārīkh,* 1:253.

[59]Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 2:62.

[60]Al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhah,* 157; al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 4:132–33; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:497.

[61]See, e.g., al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ,* 4:16–28; Walther Bjorkman, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Staatskanzlei im islamischen Ägypten* (Hamburg, 1928), 151–53; David Ayalon, ″Studies on the Structure of the Mamluk Army,″ *BSOAS* 16 (1954): 57–64.

[62]Al-Shujāʿī, *Tārīkh,* 1:111; also ibid., 94.

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life in the Citadel, like oversight of the stables and the aviary, access to the public sessions, and management of the barracks and kitchens.[63] According to al-Maqrīzī, there was a very specific reason not to invest his most senior amirs with any executive power:

> He wanted to be independent in the affairs of his realm and to apply the rules single-handedly; therefore, he even abolished the office of *nā'ib al-salṭanah* so that he alone would carry the burdens of the state.[64]

Though this view is al-Maqrīzī´s interpretation rather than an objective observation, in this specific case it supports the information so far adduced: though they were amirs of the highest rank and status, they were explicitly excluded from the formal channels of government, and this again confirmed their absolute subordination to a sultan who was the realm´s sole executive authority.

Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad seems to have been wise enough, though, not to isolate himself entirely from his elite in the government of his realm. On more than one occasion, advice was sought from the *mashūrah,* the quite informal court council that was to advise the sultan in state affairs.[65] Its membership seems to have been limited, though, to those who indeed had enough experience to offer useful advice. A valuable observation in this respect was made by al-Maqrīzī:

> In [1318] the sultan made a group of the veteran commanders of the *ḥalqah* sit [with him] during the times of the council with the amirs, and he listened to what they had to say.[66]

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[63]Cf. al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 1:548, 554, 686, 2:81; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:391, 394, 502; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 2:480, 497, 3:282, 479; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:202, 341, 342, 377, 508, 754; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:101, 178; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz,* 9:298, 374, 380; al-Shujāʿī, *Tārīkh,* 1:111, 223, 251; Zettersteen, *Beiträge,* 127, 128, 158, 184, 189, 195; al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhah,* 230; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:262, 319.

[64]Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:534.

[65]E.g., in 1311, two ˝masters of the council˝ were among the amirs who attended a military review (Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz,* 9:238–39); in 1312 there is reference to a council when Mongols threatened to attack Syria (ibid., 246); in 1336, rumors of war at the northeast border necessitated the organization of a council (al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhah,* 365–66); in 1339 the amirs of the council persuaded the sultan to arrest his financial supervisor, al-Nashw (al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:485); in the same year, there was a council on actions to be taken after the arrest of the Syrian governor Tankiz (Zettersteen, *Beiträge,* 210).

[66]Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:182.

This quote implies that there was some connection between seniority of service, including experience in state and military affairs, and membership in the *mashūrah.* Indeed, at the end of his reign four of the *barrānīyah* veterans—Almalik, Baybars, Sanjar and Jankalī—were said to have been members of this *mashūrah;* and in fact, they may well have been the only members.[67]

Secondly, the evidence from al-Maqrīzī also implies that there was some vague regularity in these council meetings, probably linked to the timing of the weekly public sessions in the *īwān* of the Citadel. For when al-Maqrīzī, in his *Khiṭaṭ,* depicts this regular public session in the Citadel (*khidmat al-īwān*) he makes a very specific reference, both to this council and its veteran members:

> . . . and at a distance of about fifteen cubits there sat right and left of him [=the sultan] the men of age and standing, belonging to the most senior amirs of one hundred—they are called the amirs of the council. . . .[68]

GRANTS, GIFTS, AND BENEFITS

Apart from promotions in the military hierarchy and appointments in the military administration, there was yet another level of exchange between the sultan and his senior amirs. This indeed was an exchange of a more material, direct, and tangible character, consisting of all sorts of benefits that the sultan dispensed from his apparently abundant wealth to his most senior amirs. And again, this mainly seems to have been one-way traffic. From the abundant income he had allocated to himself after the 1315 *rawk,* exceeding by far any individual amir′s share in the empire′s resources and collected by very efficient financial supervisors, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad spent enormous amounts on many different things, including some of his amirs.[69] In terms of defining the elite amirs at the end of al-Nāṣir′s reign and their relationship with the sultan, there are a number of remarkable features that appear when one scrutinizes this kind of exchange.

First of all, there was one type of payment every sultan had to make to his amirs because it was part of state ceremonial. Among several other payments in kind, it consisted of the payment of certain sums of money *(nafaqah)* and the

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[67]Al-Shujā‘ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:104; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:485, 523; al-Ṣafadī, *A‘yān,* 1:618, 2:467, 469; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 3:85, 6:74; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:411, 2:171. Moreover, if Ibn Taghrībirdī is to be believed, other senior amirs were explicitly excluded from this council (″He [=al-Nāṣir] did not incorporate them [=the amirs] in the advisory council, not even Baktamur al-Sāqī, Qawṣūn, Bashtak, nor anyone else; rather, he would only be guided by the elderly among the amirs″ [Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 9:174]).

[68]Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 3:339.

[69]See, e.g., Levanoni, *Turning Point,* 53–60.

bestowal of robes of honor and the like, the value and elaborate decoration of which were related to the rank of each amir.[70] They were bestowed by the sultan on his amirs on specific occasions or in return for specific services, like the finishing of a polo ground in 1330, when ″robes of honor and golden sashes were granted to the amirs and the commanders, and a robe of honor was bestowed upon the amir Sayf al-Dīn Aqbughā ʿAbd al-Wāḥid . . . and the amir Sayf al-Dīn Almalik al-Jūkandār . . .″;[71] the promotion of his son Aḥmad to the rank of amir in the same year;[72] the marriage of another son in 1331, when ″a robe of honor was bestowed upon . . . the amir Baybars al-Aḥmadī, upon Aydughmish, Amir Ākhūr, and also upon the remaining state officials . . .″;[73] or in 1339, when he had the oath of allegiance to his rule renewed by the amirs, and ″handed to every *muqaddam alf* the amount of 1,000 dinars.″[74] These grants clearly were a ceremonial expression and confirmation of an amir′s rank, status, and office, as well as a consideration for his loyalty and service to the throne, and their value was therefore quite formally weighed and determined.

There was another area of sultanic largess, however, of a completely informal and personal character and quite unrelated to any specific occasion or service. It was clearly directed to one specific group of amirs within the elite, those who, as mentioned earlier, for very personal reasons, had managed to attract the sultan′s attention and had come to enjoy the sultan′s favor: the *khāṣṣakīyah* amirs of one hundred. This personal expenditure by the sultan upon his *khāṣṣakīyah* amirs was already quite notorious in its time; in his own engaging style, al-Maqrīzī vividly describes it as ″exceeding all bounds.″[75] Those *khāṣṣakīyah* amirs that are explicitly mentioned in the sources are Qawṣūn, Bashtak, Maliktamur, Alṭunbughā, and Yalbughā, and they were involved in four different sorts of material exchange with their sultan, all of which made them extremely wealthy.

A *khāṣṣakī* amir might be granted an enlargement of his amiral *iqṭāʿ* by the income from additional villages. Thus, for example, in 1332 Bashtak was given the *iqṭāʿ* (and personal properties) of the murdered senior amir Baktamur al-Sāqī;[76]

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[70]Cf. David Ayalon, ″The System of Payment in Mamluk Military Society,″ *JESHO* 1 (1958): 37–65, 257–96.

[71]Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz,* 9:357.

[72]Ibid.

[73]Ibid., 360; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:343.

[74]Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:499; for other examples of this kind of official expenditure, on the occasion of the marriages of his sons, his return from the Hijaz in 1332, the completion of large construction works, and a state visit by the ″daughter of the sultan of Fez,″ see al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:345–46, 357, 432, 435, 447–48, 453.

[75]Ibid., 535.

[76]Al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhah,* 157; al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 1:690. On the evolution of his colleague Qawṣūn′s

when Maliktamur was promoted in 1338, to the *iqṭāʿ* he inherited from his predecessor was added the village of ″al-Naḥrāwīyah, with an estimated monthly tax revenue of 70,000 dirhams″;[77] and to the amir Yalbughā′s *iqṭāʿ* were added the village of al-Manzilah in 1338, and ″the village of Sūhāy, in the Ṣaʿīd, with an estimated tax revenue of 15,000 dinars″ the next year.[78] Eventually, the *iqṭāʿ*s of the most senior *khāṣṣakīyah* colleagues, Qawṣūn and Bashtak, were said to have exceeded 200,000 dinars in value.[79]

Some *khāṣṣakīyah* amirs are also reported to have been fortunate recipients of al-Nāṣir′s extravagance, much to the despair of his financial managers. Thus al-Maqrīzī relates how Bashtak one day got 1,000,000 dirhams in return for a lost tax district[80] and how in the year 1337 he, Qawṣūn, Alṭunbughā, and Maliktamur were given 200,000 dinars each on the same day.[81] Another well-known story of al-Nāṣir′s generosity is the following:

> The *ḥājj* Ḥusayn, his *ustādār,* said: ″One day, [an amount] of 20,000 dinars was mentioned before the sultan, and Yalbughā said: ′By God, O lord, [I swear that] I have never seen 20,000 dinars.′ So when he left from [the sultan], he [the sultan] summoned . . . the financial inspector and said: ′Bring me at once 25,000 dinars and five honorary presents.′ . . . When he brought that, [the sultan] said: ′Carry the honorary presents to Yalbughā and tell him to bestow them upon the *jamdārīyah* when they come with the gold.′ He summoned five from the *jamdārīyah* and made each one of them carry 5,000 dinars, saying: ′Take this gold to Yalbughā.′ So they took it, and he bestowed those robes of honor upon them.″[82]

Even in the financial disputes between the sultan and his financial inspector al-Nashw on the one hand and these amirs on the other, from time to time sultanic

iqṭāʿ, see Shihāb al-Dīn al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab* (Cairo, 1931–98), 33:202, 292; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:314.

[77]Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:467; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 4:358.

[78]Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:463, 493.

[79]Ibid., 525; also al-Kutubī, ″ʿUyūn al-Tawārīkh,″ Cambridge University Library MS Add. 2923, fol. 59. Amirs of one hundred were said to have been granted *iqṭāʿ*s with annual incomes that ranged from 80,000 to 200,000 dinars (Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-Abṣār fī Mamālik al-Amṣār,* ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, Textes arabes et études islamiques, vol. 23 [Cairo, 1985], 29; al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ,* 3:453–54; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 3:350–51).

[80]Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:535.

[81]Ibid., 432.

[82]Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 5:585–86; also in Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 4:437; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:535.

decisions tended to favor the latter. For instance, in the year 1336 a private sugar factory that was connected to Qawṣūn was targeted by al-Nashw′s new fiscal policies to enhance the sultan′s ever-insufficient income. In the end, however, after the confiscation of its proceeds, these were immediately forwarded by al-Nāṣir to Qawṣūn, leaving the latter perhaps even better off than he otherwise might have been.[83] In all, the high *iqṭāʿ* incomes these amirs already had been awarded occasionally seem to have been augmented by such huge sultanic cash gifts and benefits.

Even more than cash benefits, all sorts of valuable presents like horses, mamluks, robes of honor (and in the case of Bashtak even the wife of a murdered colleague) were quite regularly directed by the sultan to amirs like Qawṣūn, Bashtak, Maliktamur, and Yalbughā.[84] In the case of the latter, al-Ṣafadī said that:

> No one was delighted like him by the bestowals that came to him. Horses were offered to him with saddles, equipment, and accoutrements: fifteen saddles decorated with brocade and gold and inlaid with precious jewels for fifteen horses, and two hundred [trappings] for two hundred cart horses; and there were sent to him honorary presents: satin, golden sashes, brocaded embroidery, etc., which he had to give to those who brought those [presents] to him. . . . In all, [the sultan′s] grants and bestowals upon him were beyond [normal] bounds.[85]

And finally, an extravagant example of his unbounded generosity is the huge buildings he had constructed for some of these amirs. Though these were very limited in number, the amount of money spent, the efforts made, and the ground-breaking splendor that resulted again highlight the often outlandish behavior the sultan displayed towards the handful of amirs with whom he was really infatuated. There is passing reference to some sultanic involvement in the construction of Qawṣūn′s mosque and of Bashtak′s palace,[86] but actually, it was the amirs Alṭunbughā al-Māridānī and Yalbughā al-Yaḥyāwī who were the focus of this sultanic extravagance.[87] He had a mosque built for Alṭunbughā in 1334 (even before he

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[83]Al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhah,* 369–70.

[84]Cf., e.g., al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 1:690, 4:138, 5:445; al-Shujāʿī, *Tārīkh,* 1:222; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:451–52, 471–72, 491, 535; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 4:358, 478; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 3:367.

[85]Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 5:585, 586; also Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:438; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 4:437.

[86]Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:320, 501.

[87]On the sultan′s architectural patronage, see Howayda al-Harithy, ″The Patronage of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn, 1310–1341,″ *MSR* 4 (2000): 219–44.

became an amir), as well as a luxurious palace for each of Alṭunbughā and Yalbughā in 1337.[88] And according to al-Shujāʿī, for the palace of Yalbughā alone an incredibly huge sum of money—he mentions the highly unlikely amount of 40 million dirhams—was set aside.[89]

To sum up, five of the seven *khāṣṣakīyah* amirs of one hundred identified before are mentioned by the sources as recipients of occasional additional benefits in cash and kind from the sultan, who awarded them unprecedented wealth. Nowhere is it recorded that they had to return anything to their generous patron, and no mention is made of any specific reason why such lavish patronage was bestowed upon these amirs, apart from the fact that in the case of the construction of buildings, there are some faint hints of a link between sultanic infatuation and these building projects. However faint these references, it does seem very plausible to assume that in this extravagant patronage and favoritism of his *khāṣṣakīyah* amirs of one hundred, al-Nāṣir′s infatuation with them again had an important role to play.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Apart from ″mamluk″ and exchange relationships, there remains one small but fundamental issue that also conspicuously characterized a great number of the amirs of one hundred at the end of al-Nāṣir′s reign—their familial relationship with the dying sultan. By an active marriage policy al-Nāṣir had managed to establish links between himself and a great number of his amirs that incorporated an important part of the empire′s socio-political elite into his own family.[90]

Eight of the amirs of one hundred at the end of al-Nāṣir′s reign are mentioned at least once in the sources as married to one of al-Nāṣir′s daughters. Six of these sultanic sons-in-law were again his favorites from the *khāṣṣakīyah:* Qawṣūn, Bashtak, Maliktamur, Aqsunqur, Qumārī, and Alṭunbughā,[91] and number seven

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[88]Al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhah,* 265–68; al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 5:586; al-Shujāʿī, *Tārīkh,* 1:25; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:385, 438–39, 453; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 4:437; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:538; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:185; idem, *Al-Manhal,* 3:68–69.

[89]Al-Shujāʿī, *Tārīkh,* 1:25.

[90]The issue of al-Nāṣir′s family and marriage policy has been noted and dealt with in great detail by Peter Holt (Holt, ″An-Nasir Muhammad,″ 313–24, esp. 319–23).

[91]Qawṣūn was married in 1326 (al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhah,* 436; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:272, 283; al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 4:137; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 3:257; al-Shujāʿī, *Tārīkh,* 1:222; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 4:104); on Maliktamur, see al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 5:444; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 4:358; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:184; on Aqsunqur, see al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 1:554; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:394; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 2:497; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:754; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:178; on Qumārī, see al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 4:131; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 3:256; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:431; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:101; on Alṭunbughā, see al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 1:604; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:409; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,*

was the afore-mentioned probable *khāṣṣakīyah*-nominee Bahādur.[92] Number eight, Urumbughā, actually is a rather more doubtful case, as it was only the later historian Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah who stated that he had been married to one of his *ustādh*ʹs daughters.[93] Apart from these eight, there also was the amir Aqbughā ʻAbd al-Wāḥid, whose sister Ṭughāy was married to the sultan,[94] and there are two more senior or even veteran amirs, in terms of years of service—Jankalī ibn al-Bābā and Ṭuquzdamur—that came to be father-in-law of one or more of al-Nāṣirʹs sons.[95] So in all, ten or even eleven members of this elite were related to the sultan by ties that went beyond ʺmamlukʺ or exchange relations and actually linked them to his family, hence—as the history of the years between 1341 and 1382 shows—firmly connecting his familyʹs future to his military and socio-political eliteʹs fate.

Direct reasons, however, for this marriage policy again remain largely unmentioned (or unnoticed). Only in the case of his brother-in-law Aqbughā ʻAbd al-Wāḥid is there unambiguous information that al-Nāṣirʹs marriage to Ṭughāy actually predated Aqbughāʹs military career and was ʺthe cause of his promotion by al-Nāṣir. . . .ʺ[96] Gaining political experience and guidance may well have been a key element in linking some of his sons to the dyed-in-the-wool amirs Jankalī and Ṭuquzdamur, though there exists no evidence for such an assumption, and more personal or even other as yet unknown reasons may equally have been involved. The same goes for his *khāṣṣakīyah* sons-in-law, for it remains unclear whether he tried to enhance the loyalty to his reign and family of those men he himself had chosen to be at the very top of Mamluk society, or whether his grounds were less intentionally political, perhaps even more personal or emotional. In any event, at this point information remains too indefinite to allow any conclusive statement on al-Nāṣirʹs marriage policy, except that there is a conspicuous uniformity

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3:68; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 4:105; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:378; in general, also al-Shujāʻī, *Tārīkh,* 111; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:536. So from the seven *khāṣṣakīyah* amirs of one hundred, only Yalbughā was not a son-in-law of al-Nāṣir (there was a—rather distant—link though, as he was married to a sister of one of the sultanʹs wives [al-Ṣafadī, *Aʻyān,* 5:591; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:473]).

[92]See al-Shujāʻī, *Tārīkh,* 111, 253; al-Ṣafadī, *Aʻyān,* 2:62; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:498; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 3:431; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:323.

[93]Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:319.

[94]Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʻyān,* 1:548; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:391; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 2:480.

[95]Zettersteen, *Beiträge,* 195, 199, 210, 218; al-Shujāʻī, *Tārīkh,* 1:3, 18, 29; al-Ṣafadī, *Aʻyān,* 2:165, 611; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:540, 2:225; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 5:24, 6:422; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:407, 417, 432, 436. Jankalīʹs daughter actually already died in 1339 and the sultan had her son—his grandson—sent to Jankalī to be brought up in his household.

[96]Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:391; also in al-Ṣafadī, *Aʻyān,* 1:548; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 2:480.

between the list of *khāṣṣakīyah* amirs of one hundred and that of the sultan´s sons-in-law.[97]

CONCLUSION

If we look back on this reconstruction of the Mamluk elite on the eve of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad´s death, it becomes clear that variety rather than any sort of uniformity is the keyword: there is an enormous variety in this elite´s histories, in their mamluk status, and in their years of service. Though all were promoted to the highest rank, reasons for this were dissimilar, and their involvement in state administration—if any—was not uniform; even in terms of financial benefit from al-Nāṣir´s renowned expenditures, it was only the *khāṣṣakīyah* who benefited so handsomely, while at the same time, their ranks alone were additionally characterized by close and inclusive family connections with their benefactor, the sultan.

We have been able to show that just as this variety characterized the nature and composition of this Mamluk elite on the eve of al-Nāṣir´s death, it equally defined their relationships with the sultan. He showed some of them respect and others personal affection; he employed some to render him specific services and asked others for their advice; he bestowed regular formal benefits upon most of them, and elected others on whom to lavish occasional grants and gifts; and finally, two were chosen to be his sons´ fathers-in-law, while others were chosen to consider the sultan himself as their father-in-law.

Clearly, in dealing both with the nature of this elite and with the nature of al-Nāṣir´s socio-political relationships, these features warn us not to generalize and consider groups of people where we actually should be considering individuals. Even with a small group like the *khāṣṣakīyah,* differences are noted when we take into account concepts like generations and ˝strangers.˝ The individual amir and his personal history define the socio-political context far better than any other conceptual device.

Is it then at all possible to derive from this very specific cross section of the Mamluk elite a better understanding of al-Nāṣir´s successful rule? Apart from the retrospective observation of their success, there seems to be no conclusive evidence at all on the largely invisible policies and political behavior that contributed to al-Nāṣir´s long, stable, and prosperous reign. This article rather suggests circumstantial evidence. First of all, it is clear from the varied nature of this elite that the basis of al-Nāṣir´s authority over them could not have been any cohesion resulting from his mamluks´ loyalty to their *ustādh.* For membership in his Nāṣirīyah was hardly a compelling argument for promotion, and certainly not for sultanic

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[97]There is only one son-in-law of the sultan mentioned who was not an amir of one hundred at all: Abū Bakr ibn Arghūn al-Nāʾib (al-Shujāʿī, *Tārīkh,* 1:111; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:536).

favor. Moreover it was not exchange of financial benefit for loyalty either that bound this elite to their sultan, as this exchange has been shown to affect the *khāṣṣakīyah* only. Rather, as already suggested, many of this elite′s features imply that it was his solid, engaged, and independent position at the very top of the military hierarchy and of the government′s administration that account for the continuous subordination of this elite, which was left with no real alternative but to accept and gratefully return his patronage. There exist occasional references to plans to create an alternative order, but in an almost paranoid way the sultan always managed to have them firmly nipped in the bud.[98] Clearly it was this ″pro-active″ policy of al-Nāṣir that was referred to when al-Ṣafadī stated that—as mentioned earlier—the amir Ṭuquzdamur ″saw three or four generations come and go, while he remained as he had been and the sultan never turned against him.″[99] Moreover, observations regarding the sultan′s often harsh treatment of his amirs are recorded by al-Yūsufī and al-Shujā‘ī,[100] and according to the latter, seconded by al-Maqrīzī, on many an occasion awe or even fear determined the amirs′ attitudes towards their sultan.[101] All in all, these elements taken together make a very strong case—at least as far as his elite is concerned—for considering al-Nāṣir Muḥammad a sultan whose firm hold on his office, combined with his political experience (and even paranoia), allowed him to dominate Mamluk society′s elite. For this elite of individual amirs, with their various backgrounds, lacked any strong sense of solidarity and could pursue their self-preservation only within the parameters their sovereign set for them.

One final question needs to be asked: what was the nature of al-Nāṣir′s involvement in creating this quite successful varied composition of his elite? In a previous study on the amir Qawṣūn,[102] I agreed with Reuven Amitai that indeed al-Nāṣir Muḥammad seemed to have ″created a system of balances and counter

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[98]Among many such references, there is the sudden eviction of the *khāṣṣakī* amir Quṭlūbughā in 1327 (esp. Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 3:250) and of the *nā’ib* Arghūn in 1326 (e.g., al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:279), the murder of the *khāṣṣakī* amir Baktamur al-Sāqī in 1332 (e.g., al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhah,* 135) and of the long-standing governor of Syria Tankiz in 1339 (e.g., Zettersteen, *Beiträge,* 210), and there are a number of allegedly false rumors that, regardless of their high positions, time and again endangered the amirs Bashtak, Aqbughā, and Qawṣūn in the period 1339–40 (al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:483–84).

[99]Al-Ṣafadī, *A‘yān*, 2:611. For a similar, though more general, remark, see al-Shujā‘ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:113.

[100]See al-Yūsufī, *Nuzhah,* 153; al-Shujā‘ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:113.

[101]Al-Shujā‘ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:61, 112; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:447, 449, 478, 483, 532.

[102]J. Van Steenbergen, ″The Amir Qawṣūn, Statesman or Courtier? (720–741 AH/1320–1341 AD),″ in *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras III,* ed. U. Vermeulen and J. Van Steenbergen, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 103 (Leuven, 2001), 451–68.

balances that prevented and disabled the rise of any powerful faction against his rule."[103] On the basis of many features mentioned above, such a foregone conclusion may be perhaps a bit audacious. Clearly, the process of selecting his ″lieutenants″ and favoring some of his mamluks had as much to do with al-Nāṣir′s personal and emotional predilections as with his political insights. Actually, a combination of both may well have been responsible for the (accidental?) origin of this elite′s divergent composition and interaction with him, though again, due to its private nature this is an argument that remains conjectural.

Even though the origin of such policies remains obscure, their result is undeniable: al-Nāṣir′s success for more than thirty years is aptly epitomized in the subordination of his elite at the very end of his reign and confirmed by the succession of his son Abū Bakr. And this situation was actually very convincingly depicted at the beginning of this article in al-Shujā'ī′s highly dramatical story: one by one the elite′s many different categories of mourners enter the scene; tension rises between the lead characters; the late sultan′s will is executed; and in an overwhelming final chord of unanimity the new sultan is enthroned as al-Manṣūr Abū Bakr. Al-Nāṣir had been ″victorious″ one last time.

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[103]Ibid., 466, referring to Amitai, ″Remaking,″ 162.

APPENDIX: LIST OF AMIRS OF ONE HUNDRED AT THE END OF AL-NĀṢIR MUḤAMMAD´S REIGN

Abū Bakr ibn Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn (1322–41)
> al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 1:720–23; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:462–64; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:254–55; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:17–18

Almalik al-Jūkandār, al-Ḥājj, Sayf al-Dīn (ca. 1277–1346)
> al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 1:618–20; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:411; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 3:85–88; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 4:108; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:175–76; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:487–89

Alṭunbughā al-Māridānī al-Sāqī al-Nāṣirī, 'Alā' al-Dīn (ca. 1320–43)
> al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 1:604–7; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:409; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 3:67–70; al-Shujā'ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:266; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 4:104; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:105; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:378

Aqbughā 'Abd al-Wāḥid al-Nāṣirī, Sayf al-Dīn (d. 1344)
> al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 1:548–49; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:391; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 2:480–82; al-Shujā'ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:267; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 4:225; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:107; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:377–78

Aqsunqur al-Nāṣirī, Shams al-Dīn (d. 1347)
> al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 1:554–56; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:394; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 2:496–99; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:178–80; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:515

Aydughmish al-Nāṣirī al-Ṭabbākhī, 'Alā' al-Dīn (d. 1342)
> al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 1:652–53; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:426–28; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 3:165–68; al-Shujā'ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:251; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:99–100; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:320–22

Bahādur al-Damurdāshī al-Nāṣirī, Sayf al-Dīn (d. 1343)
> al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 2:62–63; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:498; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 3:431–32; al-Shujā'ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:252; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:104; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:322–23

Barsbughā al-Nāṣirī, al-Ḥājib, Sayf al-Dīn (d. 1342)
> al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 1:686–88; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:474; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 3:282–83; al-Shujā'ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:223; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:316; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:262

Bashtak al-Nāṣirī, Sayf al-Dīn (d. 1341)
> al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 1:690–94; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:477–79; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 3:367–72; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 3:54–56; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:18–20; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:264–65

Baybars al-Aḥmadī al-Jarkasī, Amīr Jāndār, Rukn al-Dīn (ca. 1262–1345)
> al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 2:81–83; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:502; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,*

3:479–81; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 3:83; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:143; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:459–60

Baygharā al-Nāṣirī al-Manṣūrī, Sayf al-Dīn (d. 1353)

al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 2:100; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:514–15; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:294

Burunlī (Bulurghā) al-Nāṣirī, Ibn al-'Ajūz, Sayf al-Dīn (d. 1342)

al-Shujā'ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:175, 221; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:263–64

Jankalī ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Bābā ibn Jankalī ibn Khalīl ibn 'Abd Allāh al-'Ijlī, Badr al-Dīn (1276–1346)

al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 2:163–66; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 1:539–40; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 5:22–25; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 3:218–19; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:143–44; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 3:460–61

Kūkāy al-Silāḥdār al-Manṣūrī, Sayf al-Dīn (d. 1348)

al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 4:162–63; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 3:270; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:241; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:625

Maḥmūd ibn 'Alī ibn Sharwīn al-Baghdādī, Wazīr Baghdād, Najm al-Dīn (d. 1347)

al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 5:399; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 4:331–32; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 3:80; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:183; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:536–37

Maliktamur al-Ḥijāzī al-Nāṣirī, Sayf al-Dīn (ca. 1310–47)

al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 5:444–46; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 4:358–59; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:184; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:537–38

Qawṣūn al-Nāṣirī, al-Sāqī, Sayf al-Dīn (ca. 1300–42)

al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 4:136–41; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 3:257–58; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 4:104; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:278–81

Qumārī al-Ṭatarī al-Nāṣirī al-Ḥasanī, Amīr Shikār, Sayf al-Dīn (d. 1342)

al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 4:131–32; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 3:256; al-Shujā'ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:250; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:101; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:341

Qumārī al-Nāṣirī al-Kabīr, Sayf al-Dīn (d. 1346)

al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 4:132–33; al-Shujā'ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:238; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:177; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:497

Quṭlūbughā al-Fakhrī al-Ashrafī al-Nāṣirī, al-Silāḥdār al-Sāqī al-Ṭawīl, Sayf al-Dīn (d. 1342)

al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 4:112–20; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 3:250–52; al-Shujā'ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:249–50; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 3:77; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:103; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:275–78

Sanjar al-Jāwulī, 'Alam al-Dīn Abū Sa'īd (1255–1345)

al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān,* 2:467–70; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 2:170–72; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 6:74–76; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 4:247–48; al-Shujā'ī, *Tārīkh,* 1:276; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:109; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:426–29

Ṭuquzdamur al-Ḥamawī al-Nāṣirī, Sayf al-Dīn (d. 1345)
    al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 2:610–13; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 2:225; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 6:420–22; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:142; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:463–65

Ṭurghāy al-Nāṣirī al-Ṭabbākhī, al-Jāshinkīr, Sayf al-Dīn (d. 1344)
    al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 2:578–79; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 2:216; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 6:379–80; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz,* 9:366; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:107; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:383

Urumbughā al-Nāṣirī, Amir Jāndār, Sayf al-Dīn (d. 1342)
    al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 1:480–81; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal,* 2:335; al-Shujāʿī, *Tārīkh,* 1:251; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:99; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:319–20

Yalbughā al-Yaḥyāwī al-Sāqī al-Nāṣirī, Sayf al-Dīn (1319–47)
    al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān,* 5:584–92; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar,* 4:436–37; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 10:185; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 2:538–40

AMALIA LEVANONI
UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA

Food and Cooking during the Mamluk Era: Social and Political Implications[*]

Food has been a long-standing object of attention in ethnographic and sociological research. Anthropologists of the nineteenth century focused on the ritual supernatural aspects of food consumption. Their twentieth-century successors, especially field anthropologists, studied rituals surrounding food and then food in the wider context of social systems. Among historians, too, leading historians of the *Annales* School[1] pioneered attempts to develop a ″total history″ emphasizing the macro-historical analysis of societies over long periods and the study of all aspects of human experience, especially material culture. A salient example is Fernand Braudel′s major works, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* and *Capitalism and Material Life 1400–1800,*[2] in which the author underscored the influence of long-term changes in material culture, including food, on the social systems in Europe. Braudel′s monumental works provided an incentive for the study of social history. Norbert Elias′ *The Civilizing Process,*[3] one of the most important studies written in the last decades in this field, traces the origins of the norms of conduct in today′s western Europe in late medieval royal courts. The western European way of conduct, including table manners, was modeled by cultural factors in royal courts in a long-term political process related to the formation of states and power monopolization in them.

In the last decades, scholars studying the history of Islam have also begun to focus on the study of material culture, including food. The collection *Culinary Cultures of the Middle East,* edited by Sami Zubaida and Richard Tapper,[4] examines

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Middle Eastern cuisine mainly in the modern era, while studies by David Waines[5] and Manuela Marín[6] focus on the medieval period. In David Waines´ *In a Caliph´s Kitchen* and A. J. Arberry´s ″A Baghdad Cookery-Book″ an attempt was made to learn about the culinary culture of medieval Baghdad from recipe books.[7] Eliyahu Ashtor´s ″Essai sur l´alimentation des diverses classes social dans l´Orient médiéval″[8] looks at social stratification in medieval Near Eastern populations by way of their patterns of food consumption. In his *Al-Maṭbakh al-Sulṭānī,* Nabīl Muḥammad ‘Abd al-‘Azīz examines the royal kitchen during the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods.[9] Geert Jan Van Gelder explored food manifestations in Arabic literature[10] and G. S. Reynolds studied the Sufi approach to food in *adab* literature.[11] Late medieval humoristic and allegorical ″debates″ between foods were studied and edited by Manuela Marín and Ibrahim Kh. Geries.[12] Two articles are especially interesting for the research of food and cooking in medieval Islam: Maxime Rodinson´s ″Recherches sur documents arabes relatifs a la cuisine″[13] is a valuable bibliography of the Arabic sources on cuisine, and David Waines´ ″Prolegomena to the Study of Cooking in Abbasid Times: A Circuitous Bibliographical Essay″[14] is an excellent

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[5]See for example: David Waines, ″The Culinary Culture of al-Andalus,″ in *The Legacy of Muslim Spain*, ed. Salma Khadra Jayyusi (Leiden, 1992), 725–38; idem, ″Food and Drink,″ in *The Encyclopaedia of the Qur’ān,* ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Leiden and Boston, 2002), 2:216–23; idem, ″Maṭbakh,″ *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 6:807–9; David Waines and Manuela Marín,″Muzawwar: Counterfeit Fare for Fasts and Fevers,″ *Der Islam* 59 (1992): 289–301.

[6]Manuela Marín, ″Beyond Taste: The Complements of Colour and Smell in the Medieval Arab Culinary Tradition,″ in *Culinary Cultures of the Middle East.*

[7]David Waines, *In a Caliph´s Kitchen* (London, 1989); A. J. Arberry, ″A Baghdad Cookery Book,″ *Islamic Culture* 13 (1939): 21–47, 189–214.

[8]Eliyahu Ashtor, ″Essai sur l´alimentation des diverses classes social dans l´Orient médiéval,″ *Annales* 23 (1968): 1017–53.

[9]Nabīl Muḥammad ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, *Al-Maṭbakh al-Sulṭānī Zamān al-Ayyūbīyīn wa-al-Mamālīk* (Cairo, 1989).

[10]Geert Jan Van Gelder, *God´s Banquet: Food in Classical Arabic Literature* (New York, 2000); idem, *Of Dishes and Discourse: Classical Arabic Literary Representations of Food* (Richmond and Surrey, 2000).

[11]G. S. Reynolds, ″The Sufi Approach to Food: A Case Study of Adab,″ *The Muslim World* 90 (2000): 198–217.

[12]Manuela Marín, ″Sobre alimentación y sociedad (el texto árabe de la ʾ La guerra deleitosa),̆″ *Al-Qanṭara* 13 (1992): 83–121; Ibrahim Kh. Geries, *A Literary and Gastronomical Conceit* (Wiesbaden, 2002).

[13]Maxime Rodinson, ″Recherches sur documents arabes relatifs a la cuisine,″ *Revue des études islamiques* 17 (1949): 95–158.

[14]David Waines, ″Prolegomena to the Study of Cooking in Abbasid Times: A Circuitous Bibliographical Essay,″ *Occasional Papers of the School of Abbasid Studies/University of St.*

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survey of the modern study of cooking and methodological issues connected with this field of research.

Similar to their western European counterparts, royal courts in medieval Islam were centers of cultural repertoire formation. Courtly models had special prestige value that contributed to their dissemination among the population at large.[15] However, the success of courtly models dissemination in the lower classes was not a forgone conclusion. It depended, to a great extent, on the court′s position within a given society as a whole and the dynamics of the interaction among its functional groups. Generally it was the courtiers who represented important functional groups in the community and were influential in the formation of cultural standards because they had access to cultural capital and held positions in the royal court that enabled them to impose their models of conduct and shunt those of their opponents.[16]

The position of high ecclesiastics in the European courts of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, especially those of the House of Otto, had an impact on European courtly culture. Other agents of culture in the royal courts were intellectuals, such as poets.[17] Similarly, with the rise to power of the Abbasids (133/750), the position of religious scholars, ulama, increasingly grew in the Muslim royal courts too. With the decline of the Abbasid Caliphate in the middle of the ninth century, which entailed a gradual erosion of the caliph′s authority, military elites dominated the royal court with the assistance of orthodox religious circles. Religious scholars brought their cultural repertoire with them; hence, the courtly code of conduct was based on Muslim tradition. Muslim religious law portrays a common way of life, material as well as intellectual. A special section clarifying the Prophet′s attitude to food and eating is included in the hadith, the Muslim tradition. As one of many aspects that constitute the Muslim model of ideal leadership, and as an indispensable factor in everyday life, food was quite naturally converted into a code of social and cultural symbols in the Muslim court. By the middle of the thirteenth century, when the Mamluks rose to power in Egypt, courtly models of conduct had already been a standard of Muslim culture for some time. Therefore, the Mamluk ruling elite were not free to act as they wished; Muslim standards of conduct and models of leadership dictated their behavior.

Mary Douglas, one of the leading scholars of the structural-cultural approach in sociology, has defined food as a code of symbols of social relationship by

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Andrews 1 (1986): 30–39.

[15]Elias, *The Civilizing Process,* 390–401.

[16]Gadi Algazi, ″Bodily Rites and Social Organization: Norbert Elias′ ′Process of Civilization′″ (in Hebrew), *Zmanīm* 18, no. 70 (2000): 77–78.

[17]Ibid., 77.

which the social structure of society might be deciphered.[18] Messages delivered through the symbolic language of food and cuisine, as much as other fields of material culture, encode social hierarchy, class boundaries, and transactions across these boundaries. Her observations are based on the notion that there is a correspondence between a given social structure and the structure of symbols by which it is expressed.

The present article will endeavor to show that aspects of food preparation and consumption identified especially with the Mamluk ruling elite were used in their dialogue with the general population to cultivate their image as agents of Muslim tradition and reinforce the social structure that defined and buttressed their position as rulers. It is important to mention that ideas and practices related to food constituted a significant part of Islamic tradition and public knowledge. Therefore, beside foods and culinary traditions that were specific to particular locales, there were common features to food in medieval Muslim communities.

THE KITCHEN

In medieval western Europe ″only the great lords and the rich bourgeois had proper kitchens and the necessary personnel.″[19] The preparation of food during the Mamluk era was similarly affected by social stratification, within both the ruling Mamluk elite and the general population. Only people of means could maintain kitchens in their homes, not only because of the great expense involved but also because of the danger entailed in keeping fire indoors since no effective means were available to extinguish it. In 751/1350 the Cairene quarter Khaṭṭ al-Bunduqīyīn, the quarter in which the market of cross-bows *(bunduq)* previously existed, was burnt to ashes by a fire that burned uncontrolled for two days and nights. The prefect *(wālī)* of Cairo together with the high-ranking amirs and their mamluks struggled for another three days to extinguish it. In the wake of this fire, ″some people abandoned cooking at home″ *(wa-taraka jamā'ah min al-nās al-ṭabkh fī al-dūr).*[20] The owning classes had the resources to invest in the necessary precautions against fire risks. Thus, for example, Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (709–41/1310–41) ordered that the vaults *('uqūd)* of the new kitchen in the Citadel of Cairo—the seat of the Mamluk Sultanate—be built of stone ″for fear of conflagration″ *(khawfan*

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[18]Mary Douglas, ″Deciphering a Meal,″ in *Implicit Meanings* (London and New York, 1999), 231.

[19]Alfred Gottschalk, quoted in Stephen Mennell, *All Manners of Food* (Oxford and New York, 1985), 47.

[20]Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Mawā'iẓ wa-al-I'tibār fī Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Āthār* (Cairo, 1987), 2:31–32. For another example see: Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf Abū al-Maḥāsin Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Mawrid al-Laṭāfah fī Man Waliya al-Salṭanah wa-al-Khilāfah,* ed. Nabīl Muḥammad 'Abd al-'Azīz Aḥmad (Cairo, 1997), 201.

min al-ḥarīq).[21] The government palaces in the Citadel of Cairo, the adjacent palaces and homes of the Mamluk amirs, and those of the civilian elite all had running water, which allowed them to supply the needs of a kitchen and also served for purposes of hygiene and extinguishing fires.[22] Khalīl ibn Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī, the fifteenth-century historian, attests that ″the fire never goes out″ in the sultan′s kitchen.[23] The *khānqāh* (a hospice for Muslim ascetics) Sultan al-Muẓaffar Baybars al-Jāshinkīr established in 706/1306 functioned continuously for fifty years. It was closed down in 776/1374 due to lack of water caused by the Nile receding.[24]

Another difficulty in maintaining a kitchen was the high cost of cooking utensils. The ownership of pots and their quality were symbols of social status. While the elite had kitchens equipped with ″astounding utensils″ *(al-alāt al-ʿajībah),* the lower classes sometimes had to rent utensils in the market.[25] Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1362), who compiled the biographical dictionary *Al-Wāfī bi-al-Wafayāt* during the reign of Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, highlighted the miserliness of one of the prominent amirs, Baktamur al-Ḥājib (d. 738/1337), by noting that despite the latter′s great wealth, he used to rent pots in the market.[26] During al-Nāṣir Muḥammad′s long stays at the home of Baktamur al-Sāqī (d. 732/1332), another of his prominent amirs, ″he used to eat nothing but what the mother of Aḥmad ibn Baktamur cooked for him in silver pots″ *(wa-lā yaʾkul . . . illā mimmā taṭbukhuhu lahu Umm Aḥmad ibn Baktamur fī qudūr fiḍḍah).*[27] When al-Nāṣir Muḥammad himself prepared for the hajj in 721/1321, the utensils taken along in his provisional kitchen included copper, silver, and gold pots.[28] Sultan al-Ashraf

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[21]Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 2:230.

[22]Ibid., 210; *waqf* documents contain details about water supply to Mamluk palaces and their kitchens and baths. See for example the *waqfīyāt* of the edifices of Amirs Qurqmās, al-Razzāz, Alnāq, and Manjak in Muḥammad Ḥusām al-Dīn Ismāʿīl ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ, ″Arbaʿ Buyūt Mamlūkīyah min al-Wathāʾiq al-ʿUthmānīyah,″ *Annales islamologiques* 24 (1988): 54, 55, 56, 58, 61, 65, 72, 76, 78, 83, 86, 92, 93, 96, 98.

[23]Ghars al-Dīn Khalīl ibn Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī, *Zubdat Kashf al-Mamālik wa-Bayān al-Ṭuruq wa-al-Masālik,* ed. Paul Ravaisse (Paris, 1894), 125.

[24]Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 2:416–17.

[25]Al-Ẓāhirī, *Zubdat Kashf al-Mamālik,* 125; Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Maʿrifat Duwal al-Mulūk,* ed. Muṣṭafá Ziyādah and Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ ʿĀshūr (Cairo, 1930–73), 2:125, 98; see also ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ, ″Arbaʿ Buyūt Mamlūkīyah min al-Wathāʾiq al-ʿUthmānīyah,″ 56.

[26]Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfī bi-al-Wafayāt,* ed. ʿAlī ʿAmārah and Jacqueline Sublet (Wiesbaden, 1980), 10:192.

[27]Ibid., 193. See, for another example, the dowry of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad′s daughter: al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:249.

[28]Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf Abū al-Maḥāsin Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah* (Cairo, 1963–72), 9:58; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:196.

Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī (907–22/1501–16) used to drink water from golden cups.[29] Sultans´ meals were routinely served on Chinese porcelain and so were meals in the amirs´ households.[30]

The proportion of copper and silver utensils in the dowries of brides from the civilian and Mamluk elites indicates that running a kitchen was integral to their lifestyle. Describing the market for utensils inlaid with silver in Cairo, Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1441) relates: ″The brides who were daughters of amirs, viziers, high clerks, and leading merchants used to include in their dowry . . . seven *dikak:* one of silver, one of silver-inlaid copper, one of white copper, one of painted wood, one of Chinese porcelain, one of crystal, and one of Chinese painted paper.″[31] A *dikkah* was a sort of painted wooden bedstead, often inset with ivory or ebony, on which the bride´s dowry was exhibited *(shuwrat al-ʿarūs).* The trousseaus of upper class brides included several *dikak,* with each *dikkah* loaded with different kind of utensils, while that of middle class brides included only one *dikkah* of brass utensils inlaid with silver. The dowry of Baktamur al-Sāqī´s daughter was transferred by porters from her father´s to her husband´s residence. It included, among many other prestigious items, twenty-nine porter´s loads of silver utensils and at least sixty-five loads of copper.[32] The old silver utensils of Bint al-ʿAmāʾim, daughter of a Cairo merchant, were inlaid with gold at a cost of 100,000 pure silver dirhams.[33]

In contrast with the elite, most of the lower social strata did not have their food prepared at home. At least in the first decades of the Mamluk Sultanate, rank-and-file mamluks in the service of the sultan were provided with daily meals in the Citadel, while those in the service of the amirs took their meals at their masters´ tables. Sultan al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn (678–90/1279–90) made frequent inspections of the food distributed to his mamluks in order to ensure its excellence and nutritional quality.[34] With the general weakness which beset the Mamluk Sultanate in the fifteenth century, when the mamluks only received money for their lodging and for the rest had to look for themselves—their food was mainly based on cooked broad beans.[35]

Members of the civilian middle class, those who earned a respectable living

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[29]Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-Zuhūr fī Waqāʾiʿ al-Duhūr* (Cairo, 1982–84), 5:88; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:508, 591; idem, *Khiṭaṭ,* 2:105.

[30]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 14:230; Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ,* 4:151; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:591.

[31]Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 2:105.

[32]Al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfī,* 10:197.

[33]Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 2:105.

[34]Ibid., 213, 214.

[35]Ibid., 214.

but were not well off, prepared their food at home in ″kitchenettes.″ These were most likely without fire and running water, as borne out by evidence that the water was supplied by water vendors and the food sent to the market to be cooked, at the shop of the butcher *(sharā'iḥī),* the cook *(ṭabbākh),* or the baker *(khabbāz),* who also baked bread that had been prepared at home. Muslim scholars gave special attention to the issue of who was to bring the flour back from the miller or the bread and food to and from the market, indicating that in middle-class families it was the women who prepared the food at home. *Ḥisbah* manuals explicitly instruct millers, bakers, cooks, and water carriers to employ professional women for this purpose or, when this was impossible, pious and trustworthy boys or chaste men *(mastūr al-ḥāl).*[36]

*Muḥtasib*s also instructed that when only women were at home, the food or water carrier should lower his eyes when dealing with them. Moreover, it was totally forbidden *(muḥarram)* for him to enter the house when a woman was alone at home. In such a case, he should put the food near the door, conceal himself from her sight and make a sign to her to come and take it. He should leave only when he had made sure that the food had been collected.[37] At least in Ibn al-Ḥājj′s (d. 737/1336) lifetime, people ignored these recommendations, and ″unchaste,″ ″impious″ lads or even Jews and Christians were employed to take food from Muslim homes to the market and back. Ibn al-Ḥājj complains that this situation ″generally led to seduction or its anticipation.″[38]

Sources indicate that those who belonged to the lower socioeconomic strata could not prepare food at home or found much difficulty when they tried to do so. Therefore they bought food prepared by cooks and butchers at the market: ″and generally the butcher cooks for those whose earnings are not sufficient″ *(wa-al-ghālib anna al-sharā'iḥī yaṭbukhu li-man lā yurḍá hāluhu fī kasbihi).*[39] This ″take-away″ food was sold in clay containers, while in the cooks′ shops food was served in inexpensive clay utensils which often were not washed after use.[40] The pots used for cooking in the market were not always cleaned after use. Stone pots were often repaired, when cracked *(mash'ūbah),* with congealed blood, although Muslim

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[36]Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Al-Madkhal* (Beirut, 1981), 4:164–65, 179–80; Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Qurashī Ibn al-Ukhūwah, *Ma'ālim al-Qurbah fī Aḥkām al-Ḥisbah,* ed. Reuben Levy (Cambridge, 1938), 90; Ibn Bassām al-Muḥtasib, *Nihāyat al-Rutbah fī Ṭalab al-Ḥisbah,* ed. Ḥusām al-Dīn al-Sāmarrā'ī (Baghdad, 1968), 62.

[37] Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Madkhal,* 4:170–71, 180.

[38]Ibid., 165, 179.

[39]Ibid., 187, 190.

[40]Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 2:95, 105; Ibn al-Ukhūwah, *Ma'ālim al-Qurbah,* 109; Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Madkhal,* 2:76–77; 4:193–94, 205; Ibn Bassām, *Nihāyat al-Rutbah,* 26.

tradition considered it unclean and therefore forbidden.[41] On the bottom rung of the social ladder were the urban indigents, who depended on the mercy and charity of the property-owning classes.[42]

Kitchens, then, were a symbol of social status and a testament to resources. As such, they were often attached to religious institutions which were created by the ruling groups and run by charitable endowments, *awqāf* (sing. *waqf*) as a part of their policy of state support of religion.[43] Typical of Mamluk patronage policy was the construction of monumental projects that included the founder′s mausoleum side by side with a mosque, *khānqāh,* or madrasah. Such monumental buildings clearly propagated the link between the benefactors and the Islamic institution. Naming these religious institutions after their founders perpetuated their memory. The architectural and religious symbols of these monumental projects are beyond the scope of this study. Of interest to our purpose here is that the Mamluk ruling groups provided considerable material support within the precincts of these complexes, such as providing food and other commodities to both Muslim scholars and ascetics and the needy urban populace.

The monumental complex Sultan al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn built in 682–83/1283–84 in the center of Fatimid Cairo[44] included his mausoleum *(qubbah),* a madrasah, and a hospital *(bīmāristān)*—furnished with a kitchen—that was the centerpiece of the complex.[45] The hospital′s maintenance was financed by a generous *waqf.* The stipulations laid down in the *waqf* deed show that this kitchen was provided with running water, on-going fire, and the necessary utensils. The hospital′s patients came from all social strata of Cairo and its environs.[46] Until the end of the Mamluk Sultanate, Mamluk sultans supported this prestigious project of charity.

The inclusion of a kitchen was obviously necessary for the running of the hospital. Furnishing a madrasah or a *khānqāh* with a kitchen, however, was not obvious. Therefore a special social meaning was attached to this kind of charity. The *waqf* Sultan al-Muẓaffar Baybars al-Jāshinkīr allocated in 709/1309 for the operation of the aforementioned *khānqāh* within the monumental complex of his mausoleum includes stipulations concerning the food supplied to the ascetics

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[41]Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Madkhal,* 4:191.

[42]Ibid., 190.

[43]Ira M. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1967), 356–58.

[44]For details see: Nasser Rabbat, *The Citadel of Cairo: A New Interpretation of Royal Mamluk Architecture* (Leiden, 1995), 136–36.

[45]Linda S. Northrup, *From Slave to Sultan: The Career of al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn and the Consolidation of Mamluk Rule in Egypt and Syria (678–689 A.H./1279–1290 A.D.)* (Stuttgart, 1998), 120–21.

[46]Al-Ḥasan ibn 'Umar Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirat al-Nabīh fī Ayyām al-Manṣūr wa-Banīh* (Cairo, 1976), 1:360–61; Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i',* 1:1:353. See also Northrup, *From Slave to Sultan,* 120.

residing there. Each Sufi was provided daily with food prepared and cooked in the *khānqāh*ʹs kitchen.[47] It included three *raṭl*s[48] of bread, three *raṭl*s of mutton and sweets, while the *khānqāh*ʹs head received a double share.[49] Al-Maqrīzī relates that when the kitchen stopped functioning in 776/1374, the Sufis were only provided with commercially-made bread and seven dirhams[50] per person to finance the rest of their needs.[51] Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, the founder of Khānqāh Siryāqūs, stipulated in his *waqf* deed that each Sufi would get daily one *raṭl* of mutton ″cooked in an appetizing manner″ *(qad ṭubikha fī taʿm shahī)* and four *raṭl*s of ″pure″ bread (white bread) and other commodities.[52] It is worthy of note that meat, sweets, rice, and white bread were considered symbols of social status and were valued as elite food items.

The college-mosque al-Nāṣir Ḥasan, built 758–61/1356–59, had a kitchen attached to it which, according to the donorʹs deed, was to supply daily meals to the collegeʹs staff and the children residing in its orphanage. Every Thursday evening, the poor living in the vicinity were served a meal that included small, round loaves of bread, mutton, rice, and honey.[53] Amir Yashbak min Mahdī (d. 885/1480) established a *waqf* to support the operation of a kitchen for needy people living near the al-Azhar mosque, providing each diner with bread and a bowl of *qamḥīyah,* a porridge made of milk, wheat, and meat.[54] These cases of feeding the needy people living in areas surrounding mosques might indicate the ways in which the Mamluk rulers or prominent amirs constructed the body of their clientele, *atbāʿ,* from among the lower classes of the civilian population.

Since a great number of the masses could not afford to buy food and others could not prepare it properly at home, it was used by the Mamluk elite as an instrument to enhance their image as devoted Muslim rulers. Providing the destitute with food, often identified with quality food of the elite and cooked in kitchens maintained by the elite, fostered the Mamluksʹ image as public-spirited and devout Muslims, and their prestige as holders of power and resources.

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[47]Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 2:417.

[48]*Raṭl* or *riṭl* was a weight equivalent to five lbs. in Syria and 15.75 oz. in Egypt.

[49]Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn, *Al-Awqāf wa-al-Ḥayāh al-Ijtimāʿīyah fī Miṣr, 648–923/1250–1517* (Cairo, 1980), 218–19.

[50]Dirham (pl. *darāhim*): a silver coin weighing an eighth of an ounce.

[51]Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 2:417.

[52]Ibid., 420. For other examples see: Ibn Iyās, *Badāʹiʿ,* 1:2:533; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 2:382, 423, 425.

[53]Amīn, *Awqāf,* 137.

[54]Ibid., 136.

The Preparation of Food

The preparation of food was of interest mainly to the top echelon of the Mamluk ruling elite, to members of the civilian upper class who were able to cook food at home, and to the professional cooks who kept shops catering to the vast urban lower classes. The latter′s attitude toward food preparation was simple, pragmatic, and aimed at the maximization of profit. The cooks used countless tricks to adulterate the food, while *muḥtasib*s used counter-methods to expose their deceit. As a result, the quality of food prepared in the market, though it varied, was generally poor.[55] *Muḍīrah,* a sour milk soup sold by weight, was deviously made heavier by the addition of ground rice flour.[56] Ways of adulterating meat dishes included the incorporation of much fat and little meat; the replacement of mutton with goat meat or with the meat of impure animals like dogs, and the use of spoiled, cooked meat or carrion masked by the liberal use of spices.[57] Ibn Bassām al-Muḥtasib relates that cooks used to improve the taste of meat dishes with *al-laymūn al-maliḥ,* most probably citric acid.[58] Another common agent in flavoring food was salt *(maliḥ).*[59]

Bread was often made of spoiled flour or adulterated by replacing the grain flour with ground peas, broad beans, or chick peas. Moreover, despite the strictures of the *muḥtasib*s, bakery workers often kneaded the dough with dirty hands and feet or failed to wear garments with narrow sleeves and don head-bands and mufflers to stop their spittle from falling into the dough when they spoke or sneezed. Nor were instructions to prevent insects from creeping onto the bread always carried out.[60] Ibn al-Ḥājj testifies that it was largely because of the bakers′ lack of compliance with *ḥisbah* instructions that filth such as flies, straw, or hair was often found in commercially-made bread.[61] Therefore people preferred, if they could afford it, homemade bread *(al-khubz al-baytūtī)* which was prepared at

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[55]Ibn Bassām, *Nihāyat al-Rutbah,* 21.

[56]Ibn al-Ukhūwah, *Ma‘ālim al-Qurbah,* 89, 107; Ibn Bassām, *Nihāyat al-Rutbah,* 45.

[57]Ibn al-Ukhūwah, *Ma‘ālim al-Qurbah,* 107, 109; Ibn Bassām, *Nihāyat al-Rutbah,* 36, 37, 38, 40, 44–45, 47–48; Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Madkhal,* 4:102–202. For further examples of adulterating foods see: Ibn Bassām, *Nihāyat al-Rutbah,* 29–33, 39–40, 41, 43, 44, 47, 48, 50, 51–52, 55, 57, 58; Ibn al-Ukhūwah, *Ma‘ālim al-Qurbah,* 106, 107–10; Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Madkhal,* 4:185, 187,190–91.

[58]Ibn Bassām, *Nihāyat al-Rutbah,* 37; Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i‘,* 5:122.

[59]Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah, *Medicine of the Prophet,* trans. Penelope Johnstone (Cambridge, 1998), 277. See also: Ibn Bassām, *Nihāyat al-Rutbah,* 31; Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Madkhal,* 4:173. On the issue of the ″spice spectrum″ in low and high cuisine see: Waines, ″Study of Cooking,″ 38.

[60]Ibn Bassām, *Nihāyat al-Rutbah,* 21; Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Madkhal,* 4:172–74; Ibn al-Ukhūwah, *Ma‘ālim al-Qurbah,* 91.

[61]Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Madkhal,* 4:173.

home and then baked at the commercial bakery.[62]

Beyond the concern shown by the *muḥtasib*s, especially the moralists among them such as Ibn al-Ḥājj, regarding the quality and purity of the food prepared in the market, a particular fear is clearly evident in their complaints about the fitness of the food in relation to the requirements of Muslim religious law. Muslim food taboos prohibit carrion *(maytah),* blood *(damm),* flesh of swine *(laḥm khanzīr)* and dog *(kalb),* and wine *(khamr),* as they cause a state of major impurity *(najāsah).*[63] Excretions from the body such as sweat, urine, sperm, etc., when they soil the person or his clothes cause a state of minor impurity *(ḥadath)* that can be dispelled by ablution *(wuḍū').*[64] Obviously, when workers in the shops of bakers, cooks, and butchers in the market worked with dirty hands and legs and failed to wear the appropriate garments, they defiled the food they prepared. Knowing that cooks and bakers in the market were not observing Muslim requirements for food preparation only heightened the aspiration to have food prepared at home.[65] As we have seen, the ruling and civilian elites possessed kitchens in their palaces where dietary rules could be meticulously observed. A large number of ulama and Sufis resided in religious institutions built for them by the ruling elite, and received their food from kitchens built specially within those institutions. The bourgeoisie, which included numerous religious scholars and officials, took a great deal of trouble over the preparation of food in their homes and incurred the cost of sending it for cooking and baking in the market. In contrast, the masses depended on the grace and favor of those who provided food in the market for its quantity, quality, and ritual fitness. Therefore, the ability to maintain a diet in accordance with Muslim dietary rules was a privilege reserved for the elite groups who held a monopoly on knowledge and wealth.

For members of the Mamluk and the learned elites, food and its consumption were features of social and cultural expression. The banquet was a social event emphasizing the shared status and cultural background of the participants. This was especially true when intellectuals were invited to keep company with the ruling elite. They were expected to display their adroitness at light, enjoyable conversation on various subjects, a practice defined in medieval Arabic literature as *adab.* Food was a theme in Mamluk *adab* literature too. Famous poets of the period dedicated some of their verses to favorite dishes and the pleasures of consuming them. Thus, for example, the famous fourteenth-century poet Jamāl al-Dīn Ibn Nubātah (d. 768/1367) composed verses in praise of *qaṭā'if,* a popular

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[62]Ibn al-Ukhūwah, *Ma'ālim al-Qurbah,* 92.

[63]Waines, ″Food and Drink,″ 220.

[64]G. H. Bousquet, ″Ḥadath,″ *EI²,* 3:19.

[65]Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Madkhal,* 4:167–68, 174, 185, 187, 191, 193–94.

pastry.[66] Well-known ulama did not refrain from writing on the mundane subject of dining, as illustrated by the anthology *Manhal al-Laṭā'if fī al-Kināfah wa-al-Qaṭā'if* (The spring of witticism concerning the *kināfah* and *qaṭā'if*),[67] composed by the famous scholar and historian 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505). Since the ulama frequently took part in shared repasts within and outside their social circles, literature dealing with food purity and table manners was of special interest to them. For example, the historian Muḥammad Ibn Ṭūlūn (d. 953/1546) wrote a treatise entitled *Dalālat al-Shakl 'alá Kammīyat al-Akl* (A guide on how to determine food quantity for consumption).[68]

Appreciation of fine food was a trait associated with the owning class, and therefore they dabbled in culinary adventures. To some of the elite, cooking was a hobby. The vizier Majīd Ibn Khaṣīb owned seven hundred slave girls, two of whom were experts at preparing fried dishes. To illustrate the vast wealth he accumulated during his period of service, al-Maqrīzī relates that large quantities of food were cooked ″in his kitchen at home.″[69] Sultan al-Ṣāliḥ Ṣāliḥ (752–55/1351–54) was an amateur cook. He himself laid the table at a banquet he held in honor of his mother, Qutlūbak, and he served her and other close associates dishes he had cooked ″with his own hands″ *(wa-ṭabakha al-ṭa'ām bi-yadihi)*.[70] Khalīl ibn Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī enumerates at least forty-four dishes on the menu of the sultan′s kitchen, some of which came in varying flavors.[71] It is worthy of mention that dishes included in the royal menu such as colocasia, *sambūsak* (a small meat pie), and *harīsah* (cooked meat and wheat pounded together) were also consumed in the market in cooks′ shops.[72] This might well indicate that cooking traditions, mainly Arab and Persian, were standard in the urban centers of the Middle East.[73] The elite′s quality dishes that could not be had in the market, however, had their particular prestige value. The masses were aware of these differences because, on occasion, with the elite′s permission, they were exposed to this refined food. Thus, for example, at the end of the banquet Sultan al-Ẓāhir

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[66]Jalāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī, *Manhal al-Laṭā'if fī al-Kināfah wa-al-Qaṭā'if,* ed. Maḥmūd Naṣṣār (Cairo, 1994), 15–17, 18, 21, 23.

[67]*Kināfah* is a pastry made of sweet vermicelli. *Qaṭā'if* (s. *qaṭīfah*) is sweetmeats.

[68]Muḥammad ibn 'Alī Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Dalālat al-Shakl 'alá Kammīyat al-Akl,* ed. Muḥammad Khayr Ramaḍān Yūsuf (Beirut, 1998).

[69]Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* , 3:59.

[70]Ibid., 2:929; For further examples see: al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfī,* 10:193; 'Abd al-'Azīz, *Al-Maṭbakh al-Sulṭānī,* 41, 43.

[71]Al-Ẓāhirī, *Zubdat Kashf al-Mamālik,* 125; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* , 2:535; al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfī,* 4:37; Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i',* 5:88.

[72]Ibn Bassām, *Nihāyat al-Rutbah,* 44, 45; Ibn al-Ukhūwah, *Ma'ālim al-Qurbah,* 10.

[73]Waines, ″Study of Cooking,″ 37.

Barqūq (784–801/1382–99) held for his amirs and mamluks to mark a victory of his, probably in a polo game, huge quantities of food, especially meat and drinks were left to the common people.[74] Considering medieval social immobility, gestures of this kind provided the elite with the opportunity not only to exhibit their social rank and power but also to nurture in the masses´ minds the social structure that secured their position at the top of the social ladder. Status symbols clearly defined the social boundaries between the masses and the elite. All those who were invited to the banquet enjoyed the same status and only when they left the scene were the masses permitted to cross the boundaries and devour the remaining food. Terms of social inclusion and exclusion denoted the holders of power and authority.

DIET

Sociologists who have studied the diet of medieval western Europeans have shown that the higher their rank, the larger was the quantity of food they consumed and the greater the proportion of meat in their diet. Members of the lower strata, though they performed hard manual labor, consumed smaller quantities of food and much less meat.[75] Sources from the Mamluk period reveal a similar picture. The nutrition of the Egyptian rural masses in the Mamluk period was based mainly on locally-available crops. Upper Egypt was abundant in sugar cane and dates, so its inhabitants lived mainly on sweet foodstuffs *(ḥalawah)*.[76] In Lower Egypt, taro (colocasia, *qulqās*) and peas *(jūlabān)* were staples of nutrition. The diet of the peasantry was based mainly on bread: ˝And their *fallāḥīn* have a kind of bread called *kaʿk* made of wheat flour, and it is dried and constitutes the main part of their diet all year round.˝[77] Fish was also readily available, especially in the autumn, when the Nile tide brought this form of sustenance in large quantities. Fishing in this season was so easy that children could help provide food.[78] Al-Maqrīzī testifies that milk and milk products were also important ingredients in the diet of the masses *(wa-kathīr yukthirūna akl al-albān wa-mā yuʿmal minhā)*.[79] In western Europe in the same period dairy products were always considered a typical peasant food.[80]

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[74]Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 3:902; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 12:80–81. For another example see: al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 3:403.

[75]Mennell, *All Manners of Food,* 44, 304.

[76]Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad Ibn Duqmāq, *Kitāb al-Intiṣār li-Wasiṭat ʿAqd al-Amṣār* (Beirut, 1983), 41–46.

[77]Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 1:45.

[78]Ibid., 46, 64, 108. See also: Ashtor, ˝Essai sur l´alimentation,˝ 1029–30.

[79]Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 1:45.

[80]Mennell, *All Manners of Food*, 28.

Scarcity meant that the lower classes consumed small quantities of meat. In medieval Europe cattle rearing for meat was done for the privileged.[81] Even today in France and the United States a symbolic connotation of wealth is attached to steak.[82] Offal was the principal meat generally associated with the food of the poor, probably because it could not be kept for long.[83] Furthermore, for dietary reasons, the Muslim tradition has restrictions about offal. Slaughtering instructions demand the setting aside of the animal´s blood because it is considered unclean.[84] While it is much easier to separate the blood from the animal´s flesh, offal, on the other hand, has to go through a special process in order to clean from it the blood it contains. There was always a doubt about the cleanness of offal, especially that which was prepared in the market, and therefore it was considered an inferior food.[85] Offal and the heads of large and small cattle were disdained by the upper classes in Mamluk Egypt and treated as waste. The cook of Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, al-Ḥājj ʿAlī amassed great wealth from selling such waste products accumulated in the sultan´s kitchen and catering at the homes of great amirs and officials during festive events. Al-Maqrīzī reports that al-Ḥājj ʿAlī frowned in response to the sultan´s request that he cook an additional mutton dish at the end of the feast held when Amir Baktamur al-Sāqī´s son married the daughter of Amir Tankiz. When the sultan asked him why, al-Ḥājj ʿAlī told him that his request would deprive him of the 20,000 dirhams he could have made from selling the unused cattle, chicken, and goose parts that he had accumulated during the celebration, which had to be sold immediately, before they spoiled. The sultan insisted he prepare the dish, promising to reward him with an equal sum of money. On the sultan´s order, butchers and cooks from Cairo were brought to the Citadel, where they bought the waste products for 23,000 dirhams.[86]

In contrast to the common people´s diet, meat and sweets, which were prestigious items in the Middle East throughout the Middle Ages, were the mainstay of the upper classes. There were other prestigious comestibles but we will confine our discussion to these two. The annals of the Mamluk period are replete with information about the quantities of food consumed by the military elite. In the first decades of the Mamluk sultanate, it was considered necessary to provide rank-and-file mamluks with a daily portion of meat: ″and they had plenty of meat dishes, sweets, and

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[81]Elias, *The Civilizing Process,* 96; Mennell, *All Manners of Food*, 45.

[82]Ronald Barthes, *Mythologies* (Paris, 195)7, 62–64; Marshall Sahlins, *Culture and Practical Reason* (Chicago, 1976), 172; Mennell, *All Manners of Food*, 311.

[83]Mennell, *All Manners of Food,*, 312–13.

[84]Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Madkhal,* 4:183–84

[85]Ibid., 185.

[86]Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 2:231 and 315; idem, *Sulūk,* 2:686.

fruits . . ." *(wa-kānat lahum al-idārāt al-kathīrah min al-luḥūm wa-al-aṭ'imah wa-al-ḥalawāt wa-al-fawākih).*[87] During the reign of Sultan al-ʿĀdil Kitbughā (694–96/1294–96) the quantity of meat consumed daily in the sultan's household alone reached 25,000 *raṭl*s, while that served at the *simāṭ*s, the daily banquets al-Nāṣir Muḥammad held for his amir*s*, reached 35,000 *raṭl*s, apart from poultry, lamb, kid, venison, and so on. At al-Ẓāhir Barqūq's *simāṭ,* 5,000 *raṭl*s of beef were served, in addition to poultry.[88] Considering the decrease in the royal expenditure during the Circassian Sultanate (784–923/1382–1517), relatively large quantities of meat were served also in the *simāṭ*s of Sultans al-Muʾayyad Shaykh (815–24/1412–21) and al-Ashraf Barsbāy (825–41/1422–38).[89] It was told of the above-mentioned vizier Majīd Ibn Khaṣīb that "he used to cook daily in his kitchen, at home, one thousand *raṭl*s of meat, apart from geese and other poultry." The quantity of sweets consumed in his household was so large that he had to invent containers for sweetmeats that were later called after him *al-khaṣbīyah.*[90]

The prestige of meat and sweets was so enhanced by their association with the upper classes that they were identified with the food of kings. According to al-Maqrīzī, the provisions packed for the hajj of Sultan al-Ashraf Shaʿbān (778/1376) included "varieties of royal foods" *(anwāʿ al-maʾākil al-mulūkīyah),* such as the 30,000 boxes containing five *raṭl*s each of sweets made from refined sugar for the sultan's personal consumption. The endless quantities of sweets taken by the amirs and mamluks on the hajj elicited the following comment from al-Maqrīzī: "Consider the greatness of a country in which three hundred and sixty thousand *raṭl*s of sugar can be produced in one month for the sultan and his amirs, apart from [that produced] for others, which probably was of a similar volume." [91]

The special attention paid by the chroniclers of the Mamluk period to the varieties and quantities of meat and sweets consumed at the ruling elite's social events also attests to the role of these foodstuffs as signifiers of class status. Such occasions provided the upper classes with the opportunity to enhance their social position. It is no coincidence that they made extensive use of status symbols in these contested arenas to convey their control of resources and power not only to the public, but also to fellow members of their class. In 692/1293, Sultan al-Ashraf Khalīl held a banquet to celebrate the dedication of the Ashrafīyah palace, the circumcision of his brother Muḥammad (the future sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad), and that of his nephew, Mūsá ibn al-Ṣāliḥ. For this banquet 3,000 sheep, 600 head

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[87]Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 2:213.

[88]Ibid., 2:210 and 213.

[89]Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 2:210–11.

[90]Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 3:59.

[91]Ibid., 273.

of cattle, and 500 horses were slaughtered to prepare the meat dishes, while 1,800 *qinṭār*s of sugar were used for the beverages and another 160 for the sweets.[92] At the banquet held on the occasion of the marriage of Amir Qawṣūn to one of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad′s daughters, the refreshments included the meat of 5,000 sheep, 1,000 head of cattle, 50 horses, and great numbers of fowl and geese, together with sweets and beverages made from 11,000 *ablījah,* cones, of sugar.[93] In the inauguration of the great palace al-Nāṣir Muḥammad built for Yalbughā al-Yaḥyāwī, one of his favorite amirs, 300 *qinṭār*s of sugar were used for preparing only the drinks.[94] The inclusion of horseflesh in the food served in these banquets is of interest to our discussion for it signified the Mamluk menu. The Mamluks retained the practice of consuming horseflesh prevalent in the Eurasian steppes,[95] although Muslim tradition rejected it. The Prophet avoided horseflesh and Abū Ḥanīfah (d. 150/767), the founder of the Hanafi school of law, declared horseflesh unlawful.[96] The Mamluks belonged to a minority school of Hanafis that regarded the eating of horses as acceptable.[97] Furthermore, the number of horses is much smaller than that of other animals slaughtered for the Mamluk banquets. This indicates their high value and scarcity. Therefore it was identified as a distinctive Mamluk taste and symbol of their wealth and status.

The dedication of monumental religious edifices,under the patronage of Mamluk sultans and grand amirs, and the ceremonies held in those edifices to celebrate the Prophet′s and saints′ birthdays *(mawlid,* pl. *mawālid)* or religious festivals, were also occasions for dialogue between members of the ruling elite and their subjects that consolidated and sanctioned the existing social order. It was customary on the festivals of ‘Īd al-Fiṭr and ‘Īd al-Aḍḥá and the Prophet′s birthday to serve sweet dishes and beverages. Thus, for example, the inauguration ceremony of the madrasah founded by Amir Sirghitmish in Cairo (757/1356) included a magnificent meal *(simāṭ jalīl)* in which the mosque basin was filled with sugar-sweetened water.[98]

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[92]Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 2:112, 211. A *qinṭār* equaled 100 *raṭls,* that is, about 100 lbs (378.5 kg) in Cairo.

[93]Ibid.; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:288. For further examples see: ibid., 346, 685–86; 4:1221; Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i‘,* 4:151; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 9:102; 10:155; 14:38–39; 15:345.

[94]Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Al-Durar al-Kāminah fī a‘yān al-Mi’ah al-Thāminah,* ed. Muḥammad Sayyid Jādd al-Ḥaqq (Cairo, n.d.), 5:212.

[95]Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A‘shá fī Sinā‘at al-Inshā’* (Beirut, 1987), 4:455; Ibn Baṭūṭah, *Riḥlat Ibn Baṭūṭah: Tuḥfat al-Nuẓẓār fī Gharā’ib al-Amṣār,* ed. Ṭalāl Ḥarb (Beirut, 1987), 339.

[96]Frederick J. Simoons, *Eat Not This Flesh*: *Food Avoidances from Prehistory to the Present* (Madison, 1994), 179. See Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Madkhal,* 4:167.

[97]My thanks are due to Robert Irwin for this information.

[98]Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 3:28.

The sumptuous meal served at the inauguration of Sultan al-Ẓāhir Barqūq´s madrasah (788/1386) included ˝. . . varieties of the best foods and roast meat of horses, mutton, geese, poultry and gazelles˝ (anwā‘ al-aṭ‘imah al-fākhirah, wa-al-mashwīyah min al-khayl wa-al-khirāf wa-al-iwazz wa-al-dajāj wa-al-ghizlān).[99] A sweet beverage that filled the madrasah basin, sweetmeats, and fruits concluded the meal. The sweet refreshments served on such occasions had a double meaning: they combined a traditional religious symbol with the Mamluk elite´s status symbol. According to the hadith, the Prophet liked sweetmeats (ḥalawah) and honey. He especially blessed the palm tree and was of the opinion that whoever starts the day with seven dates would not be harmed that day by poison or witchcraft.[100] He himself used to drink a cup of water mixed with honey every day, and used to break the fast during Ramaḍān with a date or raisins.[101]

There is a debate among the religious scholars, the commentators on Muslim tradition through the ages, on the issue of what kind and quantity of sweetmeats the believer is permitted to consume. Ascetics during the Mamluk period interpreted ḥalawah as comestibles that were naturally sweet, such as dates, honey, and fruits, on the grounds that it was truer to the way of the Prophet and the period in which he lived, because the early Muslims were only exposed to processed sweetmeats after the great conquests. As processed sweetmeats were considered luxury foods throughout the Middle Ages, ascetics designated them solely for the next world.[102] In contrast, the more permissive of the commentators on sweetmeats, like Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī (d. 852/1449) and Badr al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-‘Aynī (d. 855/1451), were of the opinion that ḥalawah was a comestible that had undergone processing which turned it into a sweetmeat (mā dakhalathu al-ṣan‘ah). As this liberal interpretation appeared to cast aspersions on the image of the Prophet, depicting him as a person who used to consume luxury foods every day, these commentators added a restriction on the quantity that could be consumed and this became the religious precept according to which sweetmeats could be eaten. This broad interpretation of the tradition enabled the Mamluks to introduce, with the consent of the clerics who played an active role in the religious ceremonies, their own interpretation as an accepted way of implementing the traditional Islamic models, particularly that of the Prophet. Thus the Mamluks replaced the Prophet´s dates or raisins with refined sweetmeats or beverages. The inclusion of the status

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[99]Al-Maqrīzī, Sulūk, 4:547.

[100]Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Faḍl Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, Fatḥ al-Bārī bi-Sharḥ al-Bukhārī (Cairo, 1959), 11:489; Maḥmūd ibn Aḥmad al-‘Aynī, ‘Umdat al-Qāri’ Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (Beirut, 2001), 21:91.

[101]Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah, Medicine of the Prophet, 211; Ibn Ḥajar, Fatḥ al-Bārī, 11:502; al-‘Aynī, ‘Umdat al-Qāri’, 21:105.

[102]Ibn Ḥajar, Fatḥ al-Bārī, 11:489; al-‘Aynī, ‘Umdat al-Qāri’, 21:91–92.

symbols characteristic of the Mamluk lifestyle, of a quality and measure that only they as rulers could permit themselves, for ceremonies of a religious character and particularly of the Islamic festivals, lent credence to their status within the Muslim establishment. This was one of many other public activities by which the Mamluks wished to cultivate their image as part of the glorious pantheon of earlier rulers, who were perceived in Muslim tradition as the Prophet´s successors and faithful followers of Islam.[103]

It was at these festive ceremonies, which were conducted according to a strict order, that the hierarchy within the functional groups of the society of the Mamluk Sultanate was clearly manifested. Thus, for example, the Prophet´s birthday festivities during the rule of al-Ẓāhir Barqūq were regularly attended by the elite of the religious establishment that included senior orthodox scholars and Sufis, and the Mamluk elite that included amirs and soldiers.[104] The order of entrance to the ceremony and the seating arrangements had a set pattern that indicated the hierarchy between the two elite groups and within each of them. Thus, the jurists entered first and sat on the sultan´s right by their rank *(‘alá marātibihim),* followed by the Sufis whose place was on the sultan´s left, i.e., they were formally of lower status. Then came the amirs and sat at some distance from the sultan. The soldiers, who were last to enter, were seated at both sides of the amirs, to their right and left. Only those who were members of these two important groups in society, the clerics and the Mamluks, were invited to these ceremonies. The order of seating determined, theoretically at least, the superiority of the religious over the military elite and symbolized the superiority of its cultural repertoire, i.e., the Muslim tradition, over the military-Turkish repertoire of the Mamluks. The common people were not invited to take part in these ceremonies. In the event that they were allowed entry, it was only after the dignitaries had departed after the festive repast and their participation was relegated to the role of cleaning up the leftovers.

A similar role was allotted to the common people at the ceremonies held for ‘Īd al-Fiṭr by al-Ẓāhir Barqūq. He used to hold a special *simāṭ* every day of this holiday. When the ceremonies were over and the dignitaries had left, the servants and common people were allowed in to devour the remaining food.[105] The masses could cross social boundaries and fleetingly observe the lifestyle of the upper class only after the latter had left the scene, and only with their permission, thus

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[103]On the issue of inventing tradition for political purposes see: David Cannadine, ″The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: the British Monarchy and the ´Invention of Tradition,´ *c.* 1820–1977,″ in *Invention Of Tradition,* ed. Erica Hobsbaum and Terence Ranger (Cambridge, 1984), 101–64.

[104]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 12:73–74.

[105]Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 2:210. For further examples see: al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:807; 3:403, 547; idem, *Khiṭaṭ,* 2:330; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 11:243; 14:38–39.

reasserting their status as those wielding power and authority. This pattern, repeatedly manifested in the religious ceremonies and sanctioned by them, enhanced the hierarchical social structure that guaranteed the religious authority of the ulama, and the ruling elite′s political and social preeminence.

TABLE MANNERS

Traditional Muslim table manners involved partaking food in common meals from one central dish, as was the standard among the upper class of western Europe at the time.[106] As there was no recommendation in Muslim tradition to use personal utensils like plates or spoons, the diner was required to take a small morsel with three fingers and deposit it in his mouth without making contact with his saliva. This also held true for drinking: the drinker was required to drink without touching the vessel with his lips. Licking one′s fingers and then putting them into the common dish was considered abhorrent. Licking the fingers at the end of the meal, on the other hand, was allowed as this was equal to wiping one′s hand with a napkin.[107]

Norbert Elias has shown that the etiquette of the medieval western European aristocracy at the table was not designed to maintain personal or common hygiene, otherwise more utensils that the aristocracy could easily afford would have been introduced. What is more, luxury utensils were already abundant at the tables of the upper class, but for different reasons.[108] Therefore, Elias concludes, refined manners were adopted not only for aesthetic reasons, but were also part of conditioned behavior, the self-checking standards, of the upper class molded into a particular form of conduct that constituted one of many other symbols of their social distinction.[109] Islamic sources, too, do not mention hygiene or disgust as an explanation for the rules and regulations that made up proper conduct at the common meal. They do mention, on the other hand, prescriptions and recommendations from the *sunnah,* the authoritative model of the Prophet.[110] Courtly experience in Islam, especially of famous rulers of earlier periods, was also considered worthy of being included in normative Muslim conduct.[111] As manners of partaking food together were part of traditional etiquette, the learned from

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[106]Elias, *The Civilizing Process,* 96; Mennell, *All Manners of Food*, 45.

[107]Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazzī al-ʻĀmirī al-Dimashqī, *Ādāb al-Muʼākalah,* ed. Mūsá Bāshā (Damascus and Beirut, 1987), 23, 27–28.

[108]Elias, *The Civilizing Process,* 103–4.

[109]Ibid.; Mennell, *All Manners of Food*, 44.

[110]Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Madkhal,* 1:216, 217, 222.

[111]See for example: al-Ghazzī, *Ādāb al-Muʼākalah,* 17, 18–19, 20, 37; Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Madkhal,* 1:209, 211, 215–20; 4:23, 209, 216.

religious circles were deeply committed to follow them. A strict adherence to the *sunnah* was doubtless a prominent distinction of their religio-social status. The restrictions that the religious circles imposed on themselves were used against both the lower classes and the Mamluk ruling elite, especially when the latter deviated from normative Muslim conduct.

In public, members of the Mamluk ruling elite could not avoid table manners and food taboos that were *sunnah* as they felt responsible for maintaining normative Muslim order as much as the ulama. In private, however, the Mamluks often indulged in a different cultural repertoire. The sources reveal that prominent amirs not only consumed wine, but also manufactured it in large quantities.[112] Sultan al-Manṣūr Abū Bakr (d. 742/1341) used to associate with his father′s amirs, such as Maliktamur al-Ḥijāzī and Ṭajār and *khāssakīyah* Mamluks, enjoying wine, women, and singers′ performances. These drunken parties were the main cause of Abū Bakr′s downfall.[113] Maliktamur al-Ḥijāzī, who escaped Abū Bakr′s downfall without a scratch, had no reason to suppress his strong passion for wine *(mūla‘an bi-al-khamr)* and wine was carried on camels to his house in the Citadel.[114] During his governorship in Damascus, Amir Sudūn min ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 841/1437) made a fortune from his ownership of taverns.[115]

As mentioned earlier, dishes of horseflesh were included in meals served at their banquets. After the Oirat, the Mongol warriors who had fled the Mongol Ilkhanate of Persia (695/1295), found refuge in the Mamluk Sultanate, they were allowed into the Mamluk army and their children into the majority of the amirs′ households. Since they kept their homeland tradition without intervention, they consumed horseflesh as was the custom in the Eurasian steppes. This was abhorrent to the Muslims because they used to tether the beast and beat it to death.[116] The Muslim tradition, however, forbids the flesh of animals beaten to death *(mawqūdhah).*[117] Furthermore, it provides detailed prescriptions of how to slaughter the animal with minimum suffering and purify it for consumption by setting aside its blood.[118] Such blatant deviations from Muslim codes of behavior by the ruling elite made it easier for the ulama to level sharp criticism against the Mamluks′ cultural repertoire and bar its dissemination to the general population.

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[112]Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 2:400–2.

[113]Ibid., 567–68. For more examples see: ibid., 646–47; 710.

[114]Ibid., 667.

[115]Ibid., 1067.

[116]Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Ibn al-Furāt, *Tārīkh al-Duwal wa-al-Mulūk,* ed. Qusṭanṭīn Zurayq (Beirut, 1942), 8:204; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 1:812; idem, *Khiṭaṭ,* 2:22–23.

[117]Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Madkhal,* 4:183–84.

[118]Waines, ″Food and Drink,″ 220

Conclusion

The social relationship between the Mamluk ruling class, the civilian elite, and their subordinates was conducted through an intricate network of communication. The most influential sphere whereby the ruling elite could buttress its legitimacy for rule was the patronage of Islam. The Mamluks invested special efforts and attention to tie their status symbols with Muslim rituals and festivals in order to foster the right social structure and sanction their position in it. The impact of the implicit language of communication, the messages encoded in symbols, had a strong effect in forming the social structure that enabled the long rule of the Mamluks despite its shortcomings. The messages delivered from the Mamluk elite to the civilians through the semiotic language of food, together with other fields of material culture, established a common structured conception of the normative social order which accorded them social and political authority—the status of rulers over the masses.

The present article discussed the Islamic cultural repertoire in the Mamluk court whose agents were the religious scholars. The Mamluk rulers conducted themselves in the public sphere in accordance with Muslim models of behavior. In another study, which is nearing completion, the author of this article addresses the relationship between the ulama and the Mamluks in the context of an alternative cultural repertoire whose roots were not grounded in Islam. In their everyday lives, the Mamluks clung to another cultural repertoire in addition to the Islamic one, which included the Turkish heritage they brought with them from their homeland in the Eurasian steppes. In accordance with Norbert Elias´ socio-cultural theory, the cultural characteristics of the Mamluk court could have been expected to ″leak″ from the court to the general population. This process did not occur, however, and despite the 270 years of Mamluk rule in Egypt and Syria, their cultural repertoire included the general populace only occasionally and superficially. It may be assumed that the reason for this stems from socio-historic processes that typify the side-by-side existence of two cultures that are unequal in development, in which case the simple culture seeks to adopt the more sophisticated one. Hence, it is only natural that the Mamluk elite with its nomadic culture would adopt, both intellectually and materially, the urban culture of Islam. Not only did the Mamluks preserve their cultural heritage throughout the entire period of their rule alongside that of Islam, but they also used it as a marker to distinguish their status as rulers over the remaining groups within the population. It would appear that preservation of their culture stems from the unique social structure of the Mamluk elite. The reign of the Mamluks was founded on continual recruitment of fresh human resources from the Eurasian steppes and therefore the Mamluk elite, despite long years of rule, was permanently composed of first-generation immigrants within a society with a deep-rooted Arab-Muslim culture. Moreover, the Mamluks, both

during the Turkish and the Circassian periods, did not cut off their connection with their homeland. They brought their relatives from the old country and at times Mamluks′ offspring born in Egypt were sent to the homeland to be raised traditionally.[119] The ulama, in contrast, had been the normative representatives of Muslim culture for generations and their interest, whether stemming from genuine ideological motives or concern for preserving their status, lay in fostering Muslim culture as the sole superculture in Muslim society. This concept led them to consider any alternative cultural repertoire to be inferior. It would appear that the social weakness of the Mamluks as new immigrants, despite their belonging to the ruling elite, was effectively exploited by the religious scholars to direct criticism against the everyday lifestyle of the Mamluks, at times implicitly and at times explicitly, with the aim of heightening awareness that their cultural repertoire, despite being the repertoire of a royal court, was unfit to serve as an alternative to the traditional Islamic repertoire which they represented.

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[119] Amjad Jaimoukha, *The Circassians: A Handbook* (Richmond, England, 2001), 175–77.

Book Reviews

Die Mamlūken: Studien zu ihrer Geschichte und Kultur: Zum Gedenken an Ulrich Haarmann, 1942–1999. Edited by Stephan Conermann and Anja Pistor-Hatam. Asien und Afrika: Beiträge des Zentrums für Asiatische und Afrikanische Studien (ZAAS) der Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, vol. 7 (Hamburg: EB-Verlag, 2003). Pp. 416.

REVIEWED BY DONALD P. LITTLE, McGill University

The extraordinary collegial respect and friendship felt for Ulrich Haarmann are evident from no less than three volumes of articles that have so far been dedicated to his memory: *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt (c. 950–1800),* ed. Hugh Kennedy (Leiden: Brill, 2001); vol. 6 (2002) of *Mamlūk Studies Review;* and the present work. Of these, *Die Mamlūken* is distinctive as a tribute from German (with one exception) Mamlukists. Appropriately, twelve of the fourteen articles are written in German; two, in English. Some of them were originally presented in remembrance of Haarmann at a special session of the 28th Deutschen Orientalistentag held in Bamberg in March 2001. While the predominant use of German in this festschrift will certainly restrict the number of its readers (a fact which Haarmann himself would readily acknowledge since he studied at Princeton and published extensively in English), cultural considerations evidently held sway—another fact which he would have appreciated. Be that as it may, this volume contains many substantial contributions to our field and, accordingly, should serve as a salient reminder of the need to read German in practically all fields of Islamic studies. Here I shall only allude briefly to the contents of each article, hoping that my linguistic inadequacies have not led me astray.

The articles can be roughly grouped in several categories: bibliographical, historiographical, diplomatic, political/military, and general. Coeditor Conermann gives a rousing introduction to the volume in the form of a survey of the recent state of the art: ″Es boomt! Die Mamlūkenforschung (1992–2002),″ as a sequel to similar efforts by Peter Thoreau, ″Zur Geschichte der Mamluken und ihrer Erforschung,″ *Die Welt des Orients* 20–21 (1989–1990): 227–40; Ulrich Haarmann, ″Mamluk Studies: A Western Perspective,″ *Arab Journal for the Humanities* 51 (1995): 329–47; and Robert Irwin′s ″etwas uninspirierten Überblick″ (p. 1) ″Under Western Eyes: A History of Mamluk Studies,″ *MSR* 4 (2000): 27–51. Commendably, Conermann lists twenty-two books on the Mamluks published in Arabic since 1992, with the caveat, however, that ″the modest quality of Arabic secondary

literature is a noteworthy problem of Mamlūk research . . .″ (p. 2). In this survey Conermann introduces his colleagues′ articles by inserting resume-excerpts abstracting their contents. Here, it seems to me, would have been the perfect opportunity to broaden the usefulness of the volume by casting the abstracts in a language other than German. Conversely, the English abstracts of the two English articles could well have been written in German. Also in the bibliographical category is Thomas Bauer′s ″Literarische Anthologien der Mamlūkenzeit.″ In an appendix Bauer gives an annotated list of some ninety anthologies of various types of Arabic literature compiled during the Mamluk period. In the body of his article Bauer argues, contrary to the received wisdom, that this era ″must be considered as one of the most interesting periods of Arabic literary history″ (p. 71), though it has received very little scholarly attention. Characteristically, Rudolf Veselý tackles a technical question in his ″Das *Taqrīẓ* in der arabischen Literatur,″ showing that previously unnoticed ″blurbs″ dating from the fifteenth century ″give a glimpse of a little slice of the sociocultural life of Egypt in the last century of the Mamluk epoch″ (p. 385).

Closely related to the bibliographical studies are two of a historiographical orientation, both focusing on the nature of biography in Mamluk literature. As indicated by the title, in ″Ibn Ağās (st. 881/1476) ′Taʾrīḫ al-Amīr Yašbak aẓ-Ẓāhirī′ —Biographie, Autobiographie, Tagebuch oder Chronik?″ Conermann attempts to define by genre Ibn Aghā′s history *(tārīkh)* of the amir Yashbak, who flourished under Qāytbāy. Predictably, perhaps, Conermann concludes that the work combines autobiographical, biographical, annalistic, and, even, journalistic elements. This article also contains a German translation of Ibn Aghā′s long report on his mission for Qāytbāy to Uzun Ḥasan, of Aq Qoyunlu fame. In one of the two contributions written in English Otfried Weintritt goes beyond the Mamluks to discuss a work by a chief of the Qādirīyah order in Damascus under the Ottomans during the seventeenth century: ″Taʾrīḫ ʿAbd al-Qādir: Autobiography as Historiography in an Early 17th Century Chronicle from Syria.″ Justification for including this article in a volume devoted to the Mamluks is not provided. In any case, Weintritt provides a useful introduction to an eclectic work still in manuscript that he characterizes as a ″″Personal Historiography,′ which is notably lacking in a certain kind of historiographical professionalism,″ whatever that may mean (p. 387). The nature/theory of historiography is addressed in Anja Pistor-Hatam′s ″Ursachenforschung und Sinngebung: Die mongolische Eroberung Bagdads in Ibn Ḫaldūns zyklischem Geschichtsmodell.″ Here she, the coeditor, examines Ibn Khaldūn′s account of the 1258 Mongol conquest of Baghdad in terms of his cyclic model of history. In addition she situates the model in the context of traditional Muslim universal histories and compares their interpretations of the catastrophe with those of Ibn Khaldūn. Not surprisingly, Ibn Khaldūn′s philosophy of history

accommodates it as a part of his cyclical historical process in contrast to the conventional apocalyptic version of other historians. Also in a historiographical vein is a contribution to Mamluk diplomatic by Conermann and Lucian Reinfandt: ″Anmerkungen zu einer mamlūkischen *waqf*-Urkunde aus dem 9./15. Jahrhundert.″ This is a translation of, and diplomatic commentary on, a family *waqfīyah* for the benefit of one of the *awlād al-nās,* a document which was first studied by Haarmann in ″Joseph′s Law: The Careers and Activities of Mamluk Descendants before the Ottoman Conquest of Egypt,″ in *The Mamluks in Egyptian Politics and Society,* edited by Thomas Phillip and Ulrich Haarmann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 174–87, and subsequently edited and published by Conermann and Suad Saghbini, ″*Awlād al-Nās* as Founders of Pious Endowments: The *Waqfīyah* of Yaḥyá ibn Tūghān al-Ḥasanī of the Year 870/1465,″ *MSR* 6 (2002): 21–52. While the German translation and commentary are expert and certainly helpful, it is awkward to separate them from the textual edition both by venue and language. Surely at this juncture we need not erect such obstacles for ourselves and our students.

Seven articles focus on substantive, as opposed to formal, topics. Two of these treat aspects of Mamluk military activity, or the lack of it. In ″Dreikampf um die Macht zwischen Osmanen, Mamlūken und Safawiden (1500–1517): Warum blieben die Mamlūken auf der Strecke?″ Albrecht Feuss works from the observation that the Mamluks abandoned a policy of military expansion after defeating the Mongols and Crusaders and correlates this lassitude with the decline of the Mamluks′ military power on both land and sea as an explanation of their inability to compete successfully with the Ottomans and Safavids as masters of the Middle East. Internal combat is the subject of Henning Sievert′s ″Der Kampf um die Macht in Mamlūkenreich des 15. Jahrhunderts,″ a struggle which resulted from ″practically no hereditary succession to the throne and no method of selection fixed in writing″ during the Circassian period (p. 335). From his review of the standard sources Sievert recommends using the tool of ″network analysis″ to illuminate sociological factors, especially the role of faction in Mamluk government and society. Loosely related to Sievert′s article is Thomas Herzog′s ″Legitimität durch Erzählung: Ayyūbidische und kalifale Legitimation mamlūkischer Herrschaft in der populären *Sīrat Baibars*.″ Both discuss the issue of succession to the sultanate, the main differences being Herzog′s reliance on a fictional source rather the conventional histories and his highlighting of pre-Mamluk—Ayyubid—practice and caliphal sanction in legitimizing the Mamluk sultanate in the eyes (ears) of the popular audience for the *Sīrah*. Gerhard Hoffmann goes back to the roots of the use of mamluks in Muslim armies in ″Die Einnahme von Amorium/‘Ammūrīya im Jahre 838—ein Katalysator frühmamlūkischer Tendenzen im ‘abbāsidischen Militär?″ He judiciously concludes that ″It remains therefore problematic to seek the

underlying structure of the later, developed, Mamluk system in early Abbasid times, especially in the caliphate of al-Mu'taṣim″ (p. 40). Judicial history is also represented in ″Some Remarks on Mālikī Judges in Mamlūk Egypt and Syria,″ wherein Lutz Wiederhold uses specific cases involving Maliki judges to shed light on the specific role of Malikis in a profession dominated by Shafi'is and Hanafis under the Mamluks. Finally, there are two think-pieces which examine certain general aspects of Mamluk culture and society. In ″Post-klassisch und prä-modern: Beobachtungen zur Kulturwandel in der Mamlūkenzeit,″ Stefan Leder discusses the cultural and social changes effected and reflected during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries by the spread of madrasahs and the popularization of literature, using the writings and careers of scholars such as Abū Ḥayyān, Ibn al-Ḥajj, Tāj al-Dīn, and Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī, among others, as examples. In ″Einige kritische Bemerkungen zum sogenannten ´mamlūk phenomenon,´″ Peter Thoreau takes up one of the themes touched upon by Leder, namely decline, but political (as opposed to cultural) decline, which set in during the Circassian period. Re-examining the reigns of Baybars and Qalāwūn in this paradigm, Thoreau concludes that the years 1260–93 should not be regarded as the classic years of Mamluk rule but as a deviation from the norms of two hundred years of Mamluk history.

Taken as a whole, the book clearly offers much food for thought, not least as a compendium of the extensive work on the Mamluks being conducted by German scholars, inspired by Haarmann. As might be expected, the scientific rigor and command of the sources associated with German scholarship are much in evidence and, to labor the point, demonstrate the necessity for those of us born without a German tongue to cultivate one.

ẒAMYĀʾ MUḤAMMAD ʿABBĀS AL-SĀMARRĀʾĪ, *Al-Manhaj al-Tārīkhī ʿinda al-Qalqashandī: Dirāsah Taḥlīlīyah* (Riyadh: Markaz al-Malik Fayṣal lil-Buḥūth wa-al-Dirāsāt al-Islāmīyah, 2001). Pp. 254.

REVIEWED BY LI GUO, University of Notre Dame

This book sets out to ″investigate the methodology of al-Qalqashandī´s historical writings through analytical studies aimed at identifying the patterns *(al-masūghāt)* and factors *(ṭabīʿat dawāfiʿihi)* determining his choice of topics—civilization *(al-ḥaḍārah),* genealogy and Arab tribes, the succession of dynasties *(al-khilāfah)*—that go beyond the [usual] subjects his contemporaries were preoccupied with, namely

political history and biography of learned men″ (p. 10). The project therefore is ″to focus on the methodological principles upon which al-Qalqashandī based [his] historical research; among these are historical criticism *(al-naqd al-tārīkhī)* and extensive use of documents″ (p. 11), for which al-Qalqashandī is well known to the readers of this journal and, for that matter, to all students of medieval Islamic history. It is noteworthy here that the scope of inquiry is beyond the *Ṣubḥ al-Aʿshá,* arguably the best known and the most important work of al-Qalqashandī, and extends to other lesser known and rarely studied titles, such as the *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Maʿrifat Ansāb al-ʿArab,* the *Qalāʾid al-Jumān fī al-Taʿrīf bi-Qabāʾil ʿArab al-Zamān,* and the *Maʾāthir al-Anāfah fī Maʿālim al-Khilāfah,* which, unlike the encyclopedic manual-like *Ṣubḥ al-Aʿshá,* deal with the history of Arab tribes and dynasties.

The book consists of four chapters, with Preface, Introduction, and Conclusion. The introduction provides a sketch of al-Qalqashandī′s life and work. Chapter One, ″The Form and Content of al-Qalqashandī′s Historical Writings,″ begins with an outline of the organizational principles that guided al-Qalqashandī′s presentation and choice of materials. The author suggests that al-Qalqashandī′s method in treating his primary sources is one of cautious liberty, in that he might have edited, or ″polished″ *(taṣarrafa fī),* these sources for the sake of consistency in style; but the author assures us that this was usually carefully executed without bowdlerizing the essential information contained in these sources.

For me, more interesting is Chapter Two, which is on al-Qalqashandī′s sources. This is a particularly thorny issue insofar as several hundred works, many of which are lost today, were used by al-Qalqashandī, who in turn had a tendency to shorthand, and at times to shortchange them in his citations. The authors are, more often than not, mentioned by nicknames and pen names, whereas the titles are not always given in full. Therefore, the painstaking effort to delineate and sort out the details of these sources in this chapter is to be commended. Particularly helpful is the chart of the hitherto unpublished and lost sources cited by al-Qalqashandī (pp. 122–23).

Titled ″The Foundations *(usus)* of al-Qalqashandī′s Historical Research,″ Chapter Three situates al-Qalqashandī′s writings within the context of medieval Muslim historiography. The author is of the opinion that while al-Qalqashandī distinguished himself by his ″characteristic method″ *(manhajuhu al-khāṣṣ)* and ″unique perspectives″ *(ruʾyatuhu al-khāṣṣah),* he is essentially a product of the historical thought and historical philosophy in Egypt during the ninth/fifteenth century. His intensive use of the documents *(al-wathāʾiq)* is a hallmark of his tremendous success and significant legacy. A lengthy discussion of al-Qalqashandī′s use of documents (pp. 136–47) concludes with yet another useful chart of the documentary sources utilized in al-Qalqashandī′s major writings (704 for the

Ṣubḥ al-Aʿshá, ten for the *Qalāʾid,* four for the *Nihāyah* and the *Maʾāthir,* respectively). Al-Qalqashandī´s achievement is also seen in his role in systematically preserving and standardizing technical terms *(al-muṣṭalaḥ)* for Arabic historical writing and documentation as a whole in the later Middle Ages. A third chart, of the terms used and standardized by al-Qalqashandī (pp. 154–55), constitutes a handy tool for students, although the list itself is far from being exhaustive. The chapter concludes with a layout of al-Qalqashandī´s system of abbreviations and cross-referencing (pp. 156–69), which is also very helpful, especially for those navigating al-Qalqashandī´s monumental *Ṣubḥ al-Aʿshá.*

The last chapter deals with ″Al-Qalqashandī´s Historical Criticism″ *(al-naqd al-tārīkhī).* It discusses his critique of primary sources *(al-maṣādir), khabar*-material and historical narratives, and documents. The author points out that al-Qalqashandī´s critical use of documents extends from simply quoting the contents of a given document to commenting on the form and formulaic features of the text, an aspect usually ignored by many of al-Qalqashandī´s fellow historians (pp. 202–7). By and large, al-Qalqashandī´s historical criticism, according to the author, stemmed from his deep belief in employing the principle of *ijtihād,* or ″individual reasoning,″ in the study of Islamic jurisprudence, for historical research. In historiographic terms, this method of *ijtihād* has to do with tracing, and describing, new patterns and trends in history, based on independently verified proofs. In this connection, al-Qalqashandī´s understanding of ″history″ was essentially an exercise of *taḥqīq al-khabar,* that is, critically investigating and vigorously verifying the raw data. This getting-to-the-bottom-of-the-truth approach to history is, according to the author, a further step on the part of al-Qalqashandī that goes beyond the historians prior to him. Furthermore, al-Qalqashandī´s critical method also has to do with his ″flexibility″ *(murūnah)* in accepting, and respecting, various explanations and narratives of a given historical event; and this, according to the author, is in accordance with the general cultural atmosphere in al-Qalqashandī´s time when the four Sunni legal schools came to share the landscape of intellectual discourse and the ulama and *muʾarrikhūn,* many of whom wore both hats, worked together in fostering a milieu of competition and free exchange of data, and ideas, among themselves. In the final analysis, al-Qalqashandī´s era saw the maturity of medieval Muslim historiography, thanks to him, and to the collective efforts of his fellow historians.

The book is descriptive in nature and at times lacks rigorous in-depth analysis. For example, in describing the devices used by al-Qalqashandī in citing his sources, the author singles out, among others, the use of *qāla* and *qultu* to mark the end of a quote and the beginning of al-Qalqashandī´s own comment (pp. 51–52). This technique, however, is by no means al-Qalqashandī´s innovation at all, but rather a device frequently seen in Ayyubid and early Mamluk sources. And with regard

to al-Qalqashandī´s treatment of sources, he is, according to the author, characterized for his ″careful collection and verification of raw data,″ ″his reliance on more than one source for the same story, and his educated guessing *(al-iḥtimāl wa-al-tarjīḥ)*″ (pp. 122–35); but weren´t such things done by any respected historian? What is so special about al-Qalqashandī? This remains unclear.

That said, the book is overall a work of diligent research. It is encouraging to see a young Iraqi woman historian joining the small, but ever-growing, club of scholars working on Mamluk historiography today. She is well versed in primary sources and current scholarship in the Arab world, and is reasonably familiar with Western literature, albeit mostly through Arabic translations. With valuable observations regarding al-Qalqashandī´s source criticism and methodology, and, more importantly, with detailed analysis of his lesser-known works, the book under review is a welcome contribution to our understanding and assessment of this great Mamluk historian.

MAḤMŪD SĀLIM MUḤAMMAD, *Ibn al-Wardī: Adīb Bilād al-Shām* (Damascus: Dār Saʿd al-Dīn, 2002). Pp. 289.

REVIEWED BY KONRAD HIRSCHLER, University of Kiel

The fact that a monograph on the Syrian man of letters Zayn al-Dīn ʿUmar Ibn al-Wardī (d. 749/1349) has now been published is to be welcomed, especially as he is usually assigned a minor role in the surveys of Mamluk literature, such as Mūsá Bāshā´s *Tārīkh al-Adab al-ʿArabī, al-ʿAṣr al-Mamlūkī* (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1989). The author, professor of Mamluk literature at the University of Damascus, has previously published on the subject of Mamluk poetry, for example his strongly-criticized monograph on Ibn Nubātah (see review by Thomas Bauer, in *MSR* 6 [2002]: 219–26). The present work is structured in the same way as that previous work: the standard summary of medieval dictionaries relevant to his biography (pp. 7–20) is followed by sections on the ″Content of the Poetry″ (pp. 21–149), ″The Poetical Style″ (pp. 151–202), and ″Prose″ (pp. 207–76).

This monograph certainly reflects the author´s work on Ibn al-Wardī´s *Dīwān,* an anthology of poems, discourses, treatises, epistles, and *maqāmāt*. However, the implication of the title, which suggests a study of the scholar´s contributions in general, is misleading, as the author rarely discusses Ibn al-Wardī´s other writings.

Jamāl Fawzī Muḥammad 'Ammār, *Al-Tārīkh wa-al-Mu'arrikhūn fī Bilād al-Shām fī 'Aṣr al-Ḥurūb al-Ṣalībīyah (521–660 A.H.)* (Cairo: Dār al-Qāhirah, 2001). Pp. 340, tables, (missing) maps.

Reviewed by Niall Christie, University of British Columbia

This book presents an examination of historical writing in the Bilād al-Shām region during part of the Crusading period, from 521/1127 to 660/1261–62. Through the consideration of a number of historical sources for the period, the author explores the relationship between historians and their texts and the historiographical movements of which these writers were members.

'Ammār opens his study with a brief survey of previous literature in Arabic on these topics. He then lays out the historical and cultural background to his study, discussing the various dynasties that dominated the area, the external enemies that attacked it, the various ethnic and religious groups that occupied it, and the mercantile and cultural activity that took place in it. He also carefully defines the limitations of his study; he is examining historical writing from the Shām region, from the period beginning with 'Imād al-Dīn Zangī's takeover of Mosul in 521/1127 and ending with the establishment of Mamluk supremacy in Shām in about 660/1261–62, and is examining a limited number of sources, none of which are in any language other than Arabic. In defining his limits in this way, 'Ammār wisely acknowledges that his study is intended to be selective rather than comprehensive; a full study of historical writing in this region in the Crusading period would certainly require considerably more space than the author has at his disposal! Unfortunately, the temporal limits do mean that 'Ammār's book will be of limited use for the majority of the readership of this journal, but this should not be regarded as a criticism of the inherent value of the work itself.

Having established his limits, 'Ammār then proceeds to the meat of his work: the examination of the texts themselves. He divides his sources into three major genres and devotes a section of his study to each genre. He opens the first section, on universal histories, with a definition of what is meant by ″universal history,″ along with a history of the genre and a discussion of its positive and negative features. He then proceeds to the texts themselves, the first of which is the *Miḍmār al-Ḥaqā'iq wa-Sirr al-Khalā'iq* of the Ayyubid amir of Ḥamāh, Muḥammad ibn 'Umar (d. 617/1221). He presents a short biography of the author, followed by a consideration of the work's content, the types of sources the author uses, the way in which the work is written, the author's style, and how the work compares with those of contemporaries. These are, broadly speaking, the same topics he addresses with regard to the other works considered in his study, although when discussing longer or more significant works he examines other topics as well; thus, when

considering his next text, the *Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh* of Ibn al-Athīr (d. 630/1233), ‘Ammār also addresses Ibn al-Athīr′s treatment of his sources, significant features of his text, his critical and philosophical approaches to history, flaws in his chronicle, and its importance and impact. The remaining texts discussed in this section are the *Tārīkh al-Manṣūrī* of Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Ḥamawī (d. after 633/1235), the *Tārīkh al-Islāmī* (or *Tārīkh al-Muẓaffarī*) of Ibn Abī al-Dam (d. 642/1244), and the *Mir’āt al-Zamān fī Tārīkh al-A‘yān* of Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī (d. 654/1256).

In the second section, ‘Ammār turns to histories of regions, states, families, and cities, again defining the genre and discussing its origins and history before proceeding to the texts themselves. In this section he examines the *Tārīkh Dawlat Āl Saljūq* of ‘Imād al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī (d. 597/1201), the *Tārīkh al-Bāhir fī al-Dawlah al-Atābikīyah* of Ibn al-Athīr, the *Dhayl Tārīkh Dimashq* of Ibn al-Qalānisī (d. 555/1160), and the *Zubdat al-Ṭalab fī Tārīkh Ḥalab* of Ibn al-‘Adīm (d. 660/1262).

The third section of ‘Ammār′s work addresses biographies and memoirs, again discussing the origins and development of the genre before proceeding to discuss two texts, the *Kitāb al-I‘tibār* of Usāmah ibn Munqidh (d. 584/1188) and the *Nawādir al-Sulṭānīyah wa-al-Maḥāsin al-Yūsufīyah* of Bahā’ al-Dīn ibn Shaddād (d. 632/1234).

‘Ammār finishes his work with a fourth section, in which he makes a number of general comments on historians and the production of histories in the region during the period. This section is followed by three pages with space and headings for maps (the maps themselves appear to have been accidentally omitted). A bibliography and list of contents follow.

In addition to the omitted maps, there are other problems with ‘Ammār′s work. His use of *hijrī* and *mīlādī* dating is inconsistent; at times he will use one, or the other, or both, but is not systematic in this regard. More serious, however, is the fact that he makes use of only seven works of Western scholarship, none of which were published after 1981. This is unfortunate, as more recent work has been carried out on a number of the texts he discusses; for example, Robert Irwin′s article on Usāmah ibn Munqidh[1] would have been helpful when discussing the *Kitāb al-I‘tibār*. That said, ‘Ammār′s study still provides a useful survey of a number of sources from the Crusading period and will be of interest to scholars working with the texts discussed in its pages.

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[1]″Usāmah ibn Munqidh: An Arab-Syrian Gentleman at the Time of the Crusades Reconsidered,″ in *The Crusades and Their Sources: Essays Presented to Bernard Hamilton,* ed. John France and W. G. Zajac (Aldershot, 1998), 71–87.

ṬĀHĀ THALJĪ ṬARĀWINAH, *The Province of Damascus during the Second Mamlūk Period (784/1382–922/1516)* (Kerak: Mu'tah University, 1994). Pp. 200.

REVIEWED BY BETHANY J. WALKER, Grand Valley State University

Specialists of the Middle Islamic period will benefit from recent publications by Jordanian historians, who are increasingly turning to provincial and local studies. One of the first Jordanian monographs in English on a specifically Mamluk topic is Ṭāhā Ṭarāwinah´s *The Province of Damascus during the Second Mamlūk Period (784/1382–922/1516),* published by Mu'tah University in southern Jordan. The author chose Damascus province as a model for all of Greater Syria (p. 13) and intends the work to be an introduction to provincial history. As such, the monograph appears to have been influenced by Muḥammad 'Adnān Bakhīt´s *The Ottoman Province of Damascus in the Sixteenth Century,* a work that has guided Jordanian scholarship on the Ottoman period since its publication in 1982. Ṭarāwinah´s book is based on his largely unedited doctoral dissertation, written in 1987. It follows the organization and scope of inquiry of most graduate theses written in Jordan today and reflects the state of Mamluk studies in that country in the 1980s.

The monograph opens with a layman´s introduction to the Mamluk dynasty and an explanation for the provincial focus of the book. It is divided into six chapters, each of which highlights a theme that is found in most modern Jordanian scholarship on the Middle (Ayyubid-Mamluk) and Late (Ottoman) Islamic periods: administrative and military structures, the educated and tribal elite, social classes and their economic power, Mamluk decline, and education. Very few manuscripts were consulted for this study. The majority of Ṭarāwinah´s sources consist of contemporary Syrian chronicles, biographical dictionaries, administrative manuals, local histories, and a few travelogues, all published and edited, and an assortment of related secondary sources in Arabic and English. He makes little use of early Ottoman sources, which is unfortunate given the fact that the Ottoman administration of Syria was largely modeled on late Mamluk practices.

Chapter I (″The Mamluk Administration of the Province″) is a summary of earlier scholarship on the structure of Mamluk government. For the physical structure and administrative divisions of the Syrian provinces, the author relies primarily on al-'Umarī, al-Dimashqī, al-Qalqashandī, and al-Ẓāhirī, in the end restating many of the arguments made in Nicola Ziadeh´s 1953 study on the same topic: *Urban Life in Syria under the Early Mamluks.* In his description of military and civilian offices, Ṭarāwinah relies on both Egyptian (al-Maqrīzī, Ibn Taghrībirdī) and Syrian (Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, Ibn Ṭūlūn) sources. The only new contribution in this chapter is Ṭarāwinah´s concern for the instability and unevenness of provincial administration, particularly in terms of regularly shifting borders, short terms of

office, and shortsighted financial practices. While he explores financial concerns in Chapter V, the author merely mentions, and does not account for, the possible factors behind such fluid administrative structures.

The second chapter, ″The Military Force and its Role,″ acknowledges the seminal work of David Ayalon on the structure of the Mamluk army, while highlighting those amiral rebellions against the sultan that punctuated the Burji Mamluk period in Syria. The role of Jordanian tribesmen in the rebellions against (and in support of) Sultans Barqūq and Faraj, in particular, have captured the attention of this author, as well of many other Jordanian historians of his generation.

Civilian society is the focus of the following chapter, entitled ″The Population and Local Power Groups.″ Here Ṭarāwinah is concerned primarily with the political role of the Shi'i and Druze minorities in today′s Lebanon and various clans and tribal confederations in the Golan, Ḥawrān, and Balqāʾ. Once again, the focus on Jordanian tribal history is apparent in this chapter and should be of interest to anthropologists. However, the author′s almost complete reliance on biographical dictionaries and chronicles, to the exclusion of travelers′ accounts and modern ethnographic and archaeological reports, strips the narrative of methodological depth and vigor.

In perhaps the most interesting and thought-provoking chapter of the book (Chapter IV: ″The Socio-Economic Structure″) Ṭarāwinah documents the class conflicts of urban Damascene society and explains, in very modern and politically relevant terms, the organization, leadership, platform, and methods of what might today be called terrorist groups. These ″criminal gangs″ include the *zu'r* (″scoundrels″), *ḥarāfīsh* (″hoboes″), *ballāṣīyah* (″confidence men″), and *ḥarāmīyah* (″robber bands″) (p. 13). Ṭarāwinah extends his analysis to the state′s inconsistent policies towards these gangs, which varied from suppression to co-option. That the modernist political critique subtly used in this chapter was intentional may be indicated in the book′s introduction. Here the author rightly describes the late Mamluk period as a transitional one that ″contained the legacy of the past and the root causes of a number of modern Syrian problems″ (p. 13).

Many readers will be disappointed with Chapter V, ″The Mamluk Financial Policy and its Effects on the Province.″ The main arguments of this chapter concerning the *dirham-fulūs,* provincial mints, arbitrary taxes and monopolies, and the general process of Mamluk decline during the fifteenth century are today out-of-date and contribute nothing new to our understanding of the roots of this process in Syria. The author, however, does document in detail how state officials, merchants, and a pre-modern urban ″mafia″ colluded in confiscation of property, embezzling, and the sale of offices and how these practices directly impacted the Syrian economy. The effect of Mamluk financial policies on Syrian industries could be a promising new focus of research for provincial specialists.

In his final chapter, ″The State of Learning and the Intellectual Life,″ Ṭarāwinah predictably scours biographical dictionaries and specialized sources on education (namely Nuʿaymī´s *Al-Dāris fī Tārīkh al-Madāris*) to trace the careers of Damascus´ academic elite. His descriptions of the top hadith scholars, Quranic reciters, and legal minds of the day are arguably the most useful and colorful social commentaries in his study. The book then concludes with a sobering assessment of the government corruption and educational stagnation of late Mamluk Syria, a point of view primarily informed by his interest in financial policy and structure of education in the province.

The present work presents some significant shortcomings. This first edition, which came out in 1994, was not edited and updated to reflect important scholarship by Jordanian historians in the 1980s and 1990s. Numerous books and articles published by Yūsuf Ghawānimah, Jordan´s leading Mamlukist, and four volumes of early Ottoman tax registers translated into Arabic by Muḥammad Bakhīt, the country´s most prolific Ottomanist, are not consulted in this study. Furthermore, Ṭarāwinah does not make use of the extensive microfilm archives of Mamluk and early Ottoman manuscripts housed at the University of Jordan (available since the 1980s) and Ahl al-Bayt University (since the 1990s), sources rich in data on provincial administration. Similarly, the author makes no reference to the extensive scholarship on Syrian Mamluk art and architecture, archaeological reports for Greater Syria, extensive secondary literature on Syria´s sugar industry in this period, and many late medieval travelers´ accounts that would have given depth to his description of Syrian trade, industry, and culture. As a result, the monograph, while strong in elements of political and social history, is weak on general culture and does not touch those topics of growing interest today to students of Mamluk provincial history, such as environmental and agricultural history, demographic transformations, and local exchange networks.

The editing and publication quality of the copy available to this reader was unfortunately poor, with numerous misspellings in English and faulty pagination. Several pages in Chapter III were missing (pp. 81, 84, 85, 88, 89, 92, 93, and 96) and replaced with duplicate pages from Chapter I. These are the responsibility of the publisher/printer, however, and not the author. Future printing of the text will need to address this and should, in addition, include an index.

Nonetheless, Ṭarāwinah´s monograph is a very readable and most welcome contribution to Mamluk provincial studies, an area of inquiry that has received little attention to date. While it is far from a comprehensive work on the subject, readers will find its broad coverage of political and social history a good general introduction to the Mamluk´s Damascus province, highlighting Syrian-based sources that are often neglected in Cairo-based studies. Its focus on the ″Burji″ Mamluk period, furthermore, fills in a chronological void in Mamluk historiography and in

this sense could supplement Carl Petry′s *Twilight of Majesty: The Reigns of the Mamlūk Sultans al-Ashraf Qāytbāy and Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī in Egypt* as a textbook or seminar reader.

OLIVIA REMIE CONSTABLE, *Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean World: Lodging, Trade, and Travel in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Pp. 427.

REVIEWED BY STUART BORSCH, Assumption College

This book strikes one, from the very start, as an astounding endeavor in the scope and scale of the topic. In this age of globalization, when huge food and hotel conglomerates dominate the marketplace, Remie Constable has taken up the task of exploring their predecessors in the medieval world. Drawing on a wide variety of sources, philological, archaeological, and documentary, she explores the various manifestations of the *funduq,* that space for storage, commerce, lodging and boarding that dominated most areas in the Mediterranean at one time or another. For any scholar interested in travel, trade, or the socioeconomic structure of Mediterranean life, this book is a must read.

The parable of the Good Samaritan is a brilliant starting point; the *pandocheion* mentioned is the etymological root for *funduq,* as she establishes in an exploration of sources from late antiquity. The *pandocheion* serves as a Christian metaphor for the life of a pilgrim and the transit of body and soul through this world to the next. Tracing the evolution of the *pandocheion,* she goes on to analyze the purpose and function of *funduq*s as they matured in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. She describes the economic and social functions of *funduq*s and their relationship to other institutions, particularly *sūq*s.

She illustrates how *funduq*s served as loci for government taxation of imports and exports. The nature of taxation served in many cases to raise the price of goods sold in *funduq*s, an item of complaint for some contemporary observers. Constable details the interconnection of high-quality long-distance trade items, such as silk, and the role that *funduq*s played in providing merchants with an opportunity to fetch premium prices for the sale of these goods to wealthy households and local merchants who purchased them for resale. Concerning the sale of staple goods, such as grain, fruit, salt, and other bulk items, she describes how governments in the Mediterranean often sought to regulate prices and used *funduq*s as a means to do so. Interestingly, the market inspector, the *muḥtasib,* seems to have had little

to do with *funduq*s, a fact that further distinguishes *funduq*s from *sūq*s. It seems that the owners, or renters, of the *funduq*s were responsible for many of the functions that would be carried out by the *muḥtasib* in a *sūq*.

Of particular interest to scholars of the medieval Islamic world is the way in which *funduq*s were commonly used to generate incomes for pious endowments. Some *funduq*s served directly as charitable institutions, providing lodging, food, and medicine for poor travelers, in addition to money that would allow them to return home. Others generated funds that were then used to support other charitable institutions. In any case, it would seem that the *funduq*s were often not unlike *waqf*s in the role they played in Muslim societies.

Not surprisingly, *funduq*s were focal points for government taxation and regulation of trade. The government use of *funduq*s for this purpose seems to have grown over time, in Egypt from the Fatimid through Ayyubid to Mamluk eras. However, it seems that the taxes and tariffs were not so onerous as to disrupt trade, and merchants were willing to put up with the taxes in exchange for an orderly institution that they could rely upon for a reliable center of their activities.

Constable describes the architecture of the *funduq*s in detail, using both illustrations and descriptions provided by travelers and endowment deeds. The security provided by *funduq*s was clearly paramount in their economic function, and the practice of using a single gate which was locked at night is noted, along with the surprising role that *funduq*s sometimes played in sequestering suspected criminals for a short period. The basic layout of *funduq*s is well known to most scholars of the medieval Islamic world, but Constable′s section on architecture provides a vivid exploration of the various structural elements of the *funduq* and *khān*s that offers a stunningly clear illustration of the ways in which the *funduq* served the medieval traveler.

The overall architectural description provided by Constable goes a long way to reveal the impressive scale and scope of the *funduq,* where there were sometimes as many as ninety-nine rooms provided for travelers′ quarters in the upper story of the structure. She goes into great detail in describing the functions of the lower story of the *funduq,* which was used to store goods, sell wares, and stable pack animals. She provides accounts of travelers′ sleeping arrangements on the upper stories, including unroofed rooms that allowed for relief from the summer heat at night, as well as areas on the flat roof to which travelers could retire in the heat of the summer night, and describes the use of latrines and the provision of fresh water by underground conduits serving the *funduq*s.

Provision for access to, or the inclusion of, mosques at the *funduq* is also explored. Facilities for prayer were not confined to Muslim travelers solely, but were also provided for Christian and Jewish *funduq*s, in which a chapel or synagogue was often located within the *funduq*. One of the interesting features of this book is

that it illustrates the divergence between accommodations provided by the Dār al-Islām for foreigners and the utter lack thereof for any Muslim who wanted to live as a merchant in the Latin West. Facilities such as churches and communal living were provided for by Muslim rulers in the Dār al-Islām while there was almost no parallel to be found for such accommodations in the European world.

She describes the way in which *funduq*s acquired their own judicial status, independent of laws for Muslims and local religious minorities. They were allowed to settle legal disputes within their own *funduq,* with the exception of capital crimes. She also traces the process by which *funduq*s (Italian = ″*fondacos*″) were designated by ″nationalities″ as Italian city-states began to assert their own independence and identity. At the same time, she demonstrates how states in the Muslim world limited the scope in which *fondacos* could operate, restricting their activities to focal points of international trade (e.g., Alexandria) while prohibiting them from operating in key domestic markets (e.g., Cairo).

She also outlines how the growth of Italian city-states paralleled the development of commercial concessions in Muslim cities, where, by the thirteenth century, consuls were chosen to represent the interests of and administer justice in the *fondaco.* Churches were another concession to the merchants in the *fondacos.* The pattern of consul representation and church activities became standard features of the *fondacos* over time. She details the advance of concessions by which *fondacos* were owned by Italian city-states, adumbrating the later development of *fondacos* in the early modern period.

She also explores the development of *fondacos* in Christian Spain and Sicily, demonstrating the similarities and differences with *fondacos* and *funduq*s in the Islamic world. The adaptation of a Muslim institution can be seen in this period in Mediterranean history. She explains how the *fondacos* came to concentrate more on the shipment and taxation of goods, rather than on housing merchants, as they did in the Islamic world.

She explains how the *fondacos* and *funduq*s changed over time, as Christian states became the dominant power in the Mediterranean. Christian *fondacos* dominated the loci of maritime international trade while Muslim *funduq*s continued to dominate overland trade. She details the rise and fall of the institution known as the *khān,* an institution which served rural areas rather than urban ones.

More strikingly, she describes the replacement of the *funduq* and the *khān* by the *wakālah*s, which served the commercial needs of traveling merchants, but did not serve as housing facilities for merchants. The emergence of the *wakālah* was also associated with the rise of more centralized government intent on profiting from regional and international trade. This was particularly true in Mamluk Egypt.

She goes on to explore the different characteristics of *fondacos* in countries north of the Mediterranean. She observes that *fondacos* there, although derived

from the Arabic *funduq,* did not usually house traveling merchants, only their cargo. The impulse for segregating the merchant population was not very strong within a society in which both merchants and their hosts were Christian. In exploring the difference between *fondacos* on the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean, she focuses on one particular example, the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, in which the *fondaco* of the southern Islamic sphere of influence was replicated by a *fondaco* of the north. She shows how the particular socioeconomic structure of Venice put it in a position to mimic the centralized trading foci of the Islamic south. However, most of the Christian *fondacos* went their own way, drawing away from the function of *fondacos* on the other side of the Mediterranean.

This is a fantastic survey of the cultural and economic terrain of travelers in the middle Ages. Every detail of this institution is explored. This text will serve as a valuable resource for scholars, as well as a text for graduate and undergraduate surveys of the medieval economic world.

Richard J. A. McGregor, *Sanctity and Mysticism in Medieval Egypt: The Wafā' Sufi Order and the Legacy of Ibn 'Arabī* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004). Pp. 246.

Reviewed by Th. Emil Homerin, University of Rochester

Richard J. A. McGregor significantly advances his earlier studies of the Wafā'īyah Sufi order with extensive new research on the order′s two most important figures, its founder Muḥammad Wafā' (d. 765/1363), and his son 'Alī (d. 807/1405). Together they authored nearly thirty works, most of them still only in manuscript, and McGregor is to be commended for the diligence required for his pioneering study. He focuses, in particular, on notions of sanctity that were central to the thought of Muḥammad Wafā' and 'Alī, and on the possible influences on them of Ibn al-'Arabī and his school. As such, McGregor′s study is concerned primarily with mystical philosophy in the Mamluk period.

McGregor reviews Muslim conceptions of sanctity *(walāyah)* from al-Ḥākim al-Tirmidhī (d. ca. 300/910) to Ibn al-'Arabī (d. 638/1240). He notes that al-Tirmidhī distinguished between prophetic revelation *(waḥy)* and saintly inspiration *(ilhām),* both clearly in contact with the divine. The superior revelation of the prophet brings God′s message and law to humanity, while mystical inspiration may reveal spiritual realities, and insights into the law. Al-Tirmidhī and later Sufis constructed various hierarchies of saints, whose assemblies insured the proper functioning of

the cosmos and life on earth. Just as Muḥammad culminated the era of prophecy, so too the seal of the saints will come at the end of saintly rule, along with the Judgment Day. A similar doctrine circulated in Shiʿi circles, though the saints and their seal were replaced by the imams. Al-Tirmidhī´s ideas were also taken up and elaborated by Ibn al-ʿArabī, who detailed numerous classes and classifications of saints according to their prophetic inheritance and spiritual function. In Ibn al-ʿArabī´s complex system, *walāyah* ″is the hyle in which all else operates″ (p. 24). Ultimately, all prophets, messengers, and saints are manifestations of the Muḥammadan Reality whose prophetic seal was the historical Muḥammad. As to the saints, the Seal of Universal Sainthood is Jesus, while the Muḥammadan Seal of Sainthood was, hardly a surprise, Ibn al-ʿArabī himself.

Not all Muslims embraced Ibn al-ʿArabī´s doctrines and elaborate saintly hierarchy, as McGregor notes in a chapter on the Shādhilīyah order, where Muḥammad al-Wafāʾ began his religious career. McGregor sketches the origins and development of this order in North Africa and Egypt, especially Alexandria. The Shādhilīyah order was widespread and quite influential in Mamluk domains, producing important mystics, scholars, and preachers such as Ibn ʿAṭá Allāh al-Iskandarī (d. 709/1309) and Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 756/1355). Lesser known was Dāʾūd Ibn Bākhilá (d. eighth/fourteenth c.), Muḥammad al-Wafāʾ´s spiritual master and teacher. For Ibn Bākhilá and other early Shādhilī Sufis, sanctity results from proximity *(qurbah)* to the divine. Muslims who undertake spiritual disciplines may acquire a share of sanctity, though only a rare few attain spiritual vision. These saints have been annihilated mystically into God yet abide in creation to guide others, thus serving as a bridge *(barzakh)* between humanity and God. Sainthood, then, is the remnant of prophecy, which was sealed by Muḥammad. The saints are his spiritual heirs, each with a share of the Muḥammadan Reality, like moons reflecting the light of the sun.

Notably absent from this early Shādhilī system is a doctrine of a seal of the saints as found in al-Tirmidhī and Ibn al-ʿArabī, though this would be addressed by Muḥammad Wafāʾ and ʿAlī. McGregor discusses the hagiographic traditions surrounding Muḥammad Wafāʾ, which declare him to be the seal of the saints and superior to al-Shādhilī and other great Sufis and saints. Recorded here are accounts of Muḥammad Wafāʾ´s visions of the prophet Muḥammad, who commanded him to recite the Quran much as Gabriel had commanded him. These and similar accounts establish Muḥammad Wafāʾ´s privileged place and that of ʿAlī. However, a different view of ʿAlī is given by his younger contemporary Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 852/1449). He remarked that ʿAlī was quite intelligent, cultured, and a talented preacher, though Ibn Ḥajar disapproved of the excessive veneration shown to ʿAlī by his followers. Further, according to Ibn Ḥajar, ʿAlī spent most of his time with his followers at the Wafāʾ family home in Roda, where he had a minbar constructed

for the Friday prayers to be said there. Sometime after ʿAlī´s death, the Wafāʾīyah order left Roda for a large *zāwiyah* containing the graves of Muḥammad and ʿAlī in the al-Qarāfah cemetery. Still, despite ʿAlī´s great popularity, and that of his father, their Wafāʾī order does not seemed to have spread beyond Cairo. There, however, direct descendents of Muḥammad and ʿAlī maintained the family´s saintly prestige well into the nineteenth century. McGregor also mentions in passing that ʿAlī´s grandson was a teacher and companion of the Sultan Jaqmaq (d. 857/1453). Though outside the scope of this book, I would encourage McGregor to pursue further research on Wafāʾī relations with other members of the ulama as well as their social and economic relations with Mamluk sultans and amirs.

Next, McGregor surveys many writings by Muḥammad Wafāʾ and ʿAlī. Both were said to have composed poetry ″in the style of Ibn al-Fāriḍ,″ which generally means poetry on mystical union and oneness. McGregor cites a few verses of Muḥammad´s poetry, which resemble the enigmatic verse of al-Niffarī (d. 354/965) and Ibn al-ʿArabī as well as sections of Ibn al-Fāriḍ´s *Naẓm al-Sulūk*. Muḥammad also composed prayers and a work on jurisprudence, while ʿAlī wrote a treatise in defense of popular preachers, recently discussed by Jonathan Berkey in his *Popular Preaching and Religious Authority in the Medieval Islamic Near East* (Seattle, 2001). Their most important works, however, are a series of mystical treatises on a number of topics including the underlying oneness of being, the perfect human *(al-insān al-kāmil),* God´s self-disclosure *(tajallī)* to creation, and, of course, *walāyah* or sanctification. McGregor carefully details the nuanced positions of both mystics on this topic. In short, Muḥammad Wafāʾ developed the Shādhilī doctrine of sainthood as an extension of prophecy by adding to it notions of cyclical renewal. He declares that there will be seven one-hundred-year cycles, each with a saint who will renew the religion of Islam. These seven cycles will be completed by the eighth, whose renewer will be the final seal of sainthood who is, no surprise, Muḥammad al-Wafāʾ himself. ʿAlī builds upon his father´s teachings, maintaining that the shaykh, or spiritual guide, reflects God´s self-disclosure and so serves as the student´s door into mystical experience and divine life. Further, in discussing the relationship of sanctity to prophecy, ʿAlī posits a ″spirit of saintly inspiration.″ Whereas Gabriel comes to each prophet in some form, a spirit of saintly inspiration likewise comes to them, and to the saints. This spirit is a manifestation of God´s self-disclosure, and ʿAlī cites as examples the figure Khaḍir (Khiḍr), who spoke with Moses, and the handsome man who breathed God´s spirit into Mary, the mother of Jesus. Finally, ʿAlī picks up the idea of cyclical renewal, to which he adds a final ninth cycle signaling the apocalypse. By his calculations, this final seal is, to no surprise, ʿAlī himself.

McGregor´s study gives us a fascinating view of some of the religious beliefs and doctrines circulating during the Mamluk period, and he has presented the

teachings of Muḥammad Wafā’ and ‘Alī in some detail. Less convincing, however, is his claim that Muḥammad and ‘Alī ″relied heavily on [Ibn al-‘Arabī′s] philosophy″ (p. 75). As McGregor himself notes, neither Muḥammad nor ‘Alī ever mention Ibn al-‘Arabī or his works, and many of their ideas and terms involving sanctity differ substantially from Ibn al-‘Arabī′s on the subject. Given Ibn al-‘Arabī′s importance and influence on Islamic mysticism at the time, it is difficult to believe that Muḥammad and ‘Alī knew nothing of his ideas. Further, as McGregor points out, passages from the works of Muḥammad Wafā’ and, especially, ‘Alī resonate at times with Ibn al-‘Arabī′s writings or those of his students, including al-Qūnawī (d. 672/1273), al-Qāshānī (d. 735/1334), and, I would add, al-Qayṣrī (d. ca. 748/1347). However, a number of Muḥammad′s and ‘Alī′s ideas can also be found in the verse of Ibn al-Fāriḍ, and the writings of al-Tirmidhī and other earlier mystics. Therefore, McGregor must undertake a more extensive and exacting comparison if he wants to assess the scope and strength of Ibn al-‘Arabī′s influence on Muḥammad and ‘Alī.

Finally, readers owe Richard McGregor thanks for providing in his notes Arabic passages to his translations. Unfortunately, there are many typos in these passages, though the Arabic reader will have little problem correcting them.

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Arabic Transliteration System

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).

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-		

◌َ	a	◌ُ	u	◌ِ	i
◌ً	an	◌ٌ	un	◌ٍ	in
آ	ā	ُو	ū	ِي	ī
ا	ā	ُوّ	ūw	ِيّ	īy (medial), ī (final)
ى	á	َو	aw	َي	ay
				َيّ	ayy

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. 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-sulṭān*. Note also the following exceptional spellings: Allāh, billāh, lillāh, bismillāh, miʾah, 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 the following terms: Quran, sultan, amir, imam, shaykh, Sunni, Shiʿi, Sufi. Common place-names should take the common spelling in American English. Names of archaeological sites should follow the convention of the excavator.