# MAMLŪK STUDIES
## REVIEW

# I

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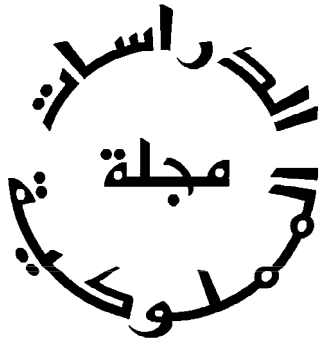


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# MAMLŪK STUDIES REVIEW

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*Mamlūk Studies Review* is an annual, Open Access, refereed journal devoted to the study of the Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt and Syria (648–922/1250–1517). 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, *fatawa* and the like), and encourages discussions of Mamluk era artifacts (pottery, coins, etc.) that place these resources in wider contexts. An article or book review in *Mamlūk Studies Review* makes its author a contributor to the scholarly literature and should add to a constructive dialogue.

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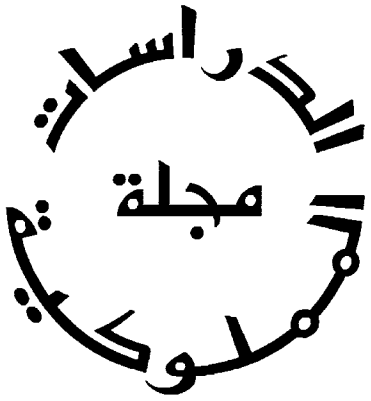

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## ARTICLES



## BOOK REVIEWS

**Donald P. Little**
McGill University

# The Use of Documents for the Study of Mamluk History*

I would like to thank Bruce Craig and the staff of the *Mamluk Studies Review*, the Mamluk Studies Workshop, and the Center for Middle Eastern Studies of the University of Chicago for inviting me to give the First Annual *Mamluk Studies Review* Lecture. Being first is always, of course, an honor which I embrace with gratitude but not without wondering, I must confess, why it has been conferred on me, and this puzzlement has led me to a bit of autobiographical retrospection and speculation which I am afraid will mark much of this lecture. In justification I can only say that when Bruce Craig first invited me he stressed the informality of the occasion; in a later conversation, however, he mentioned in passing that the talk would be published in the *Mamluk Studies Review*, and still later he asked, quite casually, whether I could deliver a final draft upon arrival in Chicago. This query led me to believe that the occasion would not be so informal after all. In any case, my remarks are going to be what might be characterized as semi-formal, partly autobiographical and, I hope, mildly amusing (as an anonymous student once damned me with faint praise in a course evaluation), and partly scientific. In this respect I should warn you that an English reviewer of my catalogue of the Ḥaram documents has characterized some of my work as ″nonsensical,″ while another, more charitable, has stated that my articles on the Ḥaram papers ″demonstrate, rather convincingly, that documentary studies need not necessarily be dull.″[1] These two criticisms need not necessarily be regarded as incompatible, of course, but while I shall certainly strive to be not necessarily dull, I shall also try to avoid the nonsensical. And if the editors of the *Review* insist on publishing my talk, I will trust fully their discretion to delete any comments they deem to be insufficiently serious for publication in a maiden scholarly journal.

Let me spend a few minutes, then, in discussing why and how I became first what might be called, to coin a term, a Mamlukist or a Mamlukologist, if you prefer, and later a Mamluk papyrologist. Not because this story is of any great significance, not enough at any rate to be included in either of the two recent books devoted to the careers of leading contemporary historians of the Middle East,[2] but because it may interest an audience largely composed of graduate students in Middle Eastern and Islamic history, who, if they are typical of my own generation of what used to be called Orientalists before that term was

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*Delivered as the First Annual *Mamluk Studies Review* Lecture at the University of Chicago, January 19, 1996.

[1]D. S. Richards, review of *A Catalogue of the Islamic Documents from al-Ḥaram aš-Šarīf in Jerusalem*, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 50 (1987): 362-364; D. O. Morgan, review of *History and Historiography of the Mamluks*, *BSOAS* 51 (1988): 403.

[2]Thomas Naff, ed., *Paths to the Middle East: Ten Scholars Look Back* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993); Nancy Elizabeth Gallagher, ed., *Approaches to the History of the Middle East: Interviews with Leading Middle East Historians* (Reading: Ithaca Press, 1994).


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degraded and fell out of fashion, are both curious about the strange and wonderful professional and personal lives of their professors but also at times discouraged, disgruntled, and disillusioned by the occasionally dreary and relentless grind of the academic mills which produce Ph.D.´s in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies. To you I bring from my own experience a message of hope.

Reminiscing about my own career has jolted me with the electrifying realization that I am probably the oldest surviving continuing practitioner of Mamluk studies in North America today. Older, certainly, than Stephen Humphreys, who will be next year´s lecturer, and his peers, Carl Petry and Jere Bacharach. Although I am younger than William Brinner, one of my early teachers, Brinner, after an auspicious start as editor and translator of a Mamluk historical manuscript,[3] apparently decided, as he announced in an unpublished paper given at the 1977 conference of the American Oriental Society in Toronto, that the Mamluks were gangsters, a veritable medieval Muslim Mafia, and presumably unworthy, therefore, of further attention. Ira Lapidus, somewhat younger than I, after a spectacular debut as a Mamlukist, also abandoned the field some years ago.[4] In any event, I suspect that my longevity as a North American Mamlukist accounts to a great extent for my being invited as inaugural lecturer today. But there is another reason to invoke Professor Brinner´s name in the context of my own career. After I left Berkeley, at Brinner´s suggestion, after a single year of study there, and moved to UCLA because it had a much larger staff in Middle Eastern Studies than Berkeley did, and a much broader range of seminars and courses, I had the good fortune of studying Arabic for a year with the late Professor Wilhelm Hoenerbach, to whom I once confided, on a social occasion, that I had not the remotest idea about a feasible topic for a doctoral dissertation. Given my academic background in English literature, with an M.A. thesis on Colley Cibber(!), it is not surprising that two years at Berkeley and UCLA were not sufficient to immerse me in the arcane field of Islamic Studies as presided over by the late Professor G. E. von Grunebaum in the early sixties. In fact, the only solid preparation I had had for this discipline was an intensive course in Arabic at the Army Language School in Monterey, California, where for a year, five days a week, six hours a day, I made endless small talk in Iraqi Arabic with six other GIs, one of whom was a WAC, which made it possible for us to practice using the second-person feminine verb forms. The only reason I studied Arabic rather than Chinese or Korean, two other options offered to me, was that in the aftermath of the Korean War I had no desire to make myself eligible for military service in the Far Eastern sector. Believe it or not, Iraq seemed to be a haven of peace and calm in those days, relatively speaking. Two more years in the military which I spent in the Washington area reading Arabic backwards in transliteration gave me a reasonable facility for coping with what is today called Modern Standard Arabic. All this, typically, was irrelevant to the advice that Hoenerbach gave me about selecting a dissertation topic. Since I was a Californian, he mused (actually I was a Tennessean, but never mind), why not join what he characterized as a California tradition in scholarship on Middle Eastern history, namely Mamluk studies? At this point he mentioned the names and work of William Popper, editor and translator of the chronicles of the famous fifteenth century Mamluk historian Ibn

[3]*A Chronicle of Damascus, 1389-1397, by Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ṣaṣrā*, 2 vols. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1963).

[4]Author of *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967; student edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).


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Taghrībirdī;[5] Walter J. Fischel, also at Berkeley, author of several works on Ibn Khaldūn;[6] and Brinner, editor and translator of a fragmentary history of Mamluk Damascus.[7] Being ignorant, as I said, and desperate, I adopted Hoenerbach´s suggestion with alacrity, though it is clear in retrospect that neither he nor I really knew what this decision would entail. But before we leave him, it should be mentioned that although his primary field of interest, besides a secret passion for Arabic erotica, was the Arabic literature of al-Andalus, he was also an expert on Spanish-Islamic documents, and his *Spanisch-Islamische Urkunden aus der Zeit der Naṣriden und Moriscos*[8] (contemporaries of the Mamluks) is one of the great books on medieval Islamic documents. Unfortunately, Hoenerbach was not interested in imparting his knowledge of this exotic subject to his students, so that I had no instruction in Arabic diplomatic from him or from anyone else for that matter. Having chosen the Mamluks as my field of specialization, I was now forced to learn something about them through reading secondary scholarship in order to define a dissertation topic that would satisfy the exacting, but also tolerant, expectations of von Grunebaum and also the criteria for fellowships awarded by the American Research Center in Egypt, for I was determined to study and live in Cairo, the heart of both the Mamluk Sultanate and the contemporary Arab world. For reasons which I cannot recall, after falling under the spell of David Ayalon´s exquisite studies on Mamluk history and institutions,[9] I drafted a proposal on Mamluk relations with the Mongols which satisfied both von Grunebaum and ARCE, so that in October, 1962, I found myself in Cairo with a topic about which I had done very little preliminary research and with a command of Iraqi Arabic that Egyptians found hilarious but which unfortunately did not enable me to understand much of what they were saying to and about me. At this juncture I was helped by still another scholar, an old Cairo hand (in the sense that he had spent a few years in Cairo)—Professor George Scanlon. Scanlon helped me by lending me his copy of Hans Robert Roemer´s edition of volume 9 of Ibn al-Dawādārī´s universal chronicle, recently published by the German Archaeological Institute in Cairo, which was devoted to the reign of the great Mamluk sultan, al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad,[10] in whose reign Mamluk confrontations with the Mongols loomed large. But soon I realized that what really engaged my attention was not so much the topic itself (fascinating though it was and is—in fact, Reuven Amitai-Preiss recently published his dissertation on aspects of this topic)[11] as the historical sources in light of Roemer´s brief allusions to the relationship of Ibn al-Dawādārī´s work to other histories of al-Nāṣir´s reign. Here began a three-year comparative study of these sources, many of which existed only in manuscripts found in Cairo and European libraries. This fact, along with the

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[5]*Al-Nujūm al-Zāhira by Ibn Taghrī Birdī,* 5 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1909-36); *History of Egypt, 1382-1469, Translated from the Arabic Annals of Ibn Taghrī Birdī*, 5 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1954-60).

[6]E.g., *Ibn Khaldūn and Tamerlane: Their Historic Meeting in Damascus, 1401 A.D. (803 A.H.): A Study Based on Arabic Manuscripts of Ibn Khaldūn´s "Autobiography"* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1952).

[7]See note 3 above.

[8](Bonn: Selbtsverlag des Orientalischen Seminars der Universität Bonn, 1965).

[9]*L´esclavage du Mamelouk* (Jerusalem: The Israel Oriental Society, 1951*); Studies on the Mamluks of Egypt (1250-1517)* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1977).

[10]*Die Chronik des Ibn ad-Dawādārī*, vol. 9 (Cairo: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, 1960).

[11]*Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-Īlkhānid War, 1260-1281* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).


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benevolence of the Center, enabled me to spend not just one year but three years in Cairo, broken only by a honeymoon in London, Paris, Berlin, and Istanbul, cities chosen not only for their romantic associations but as the repositories of Mamluk manuscripts.

To make this long story somewhat shorter, the result of my research was not a history of Mamluk-Mongol relations but a dissertation entitled ″An Analysis of Arabic Annalistic and Biographical Sources for the Reign of al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalā'ūn,″[12] in which I tried to straighten out the relationships among two dozen Mamluk histories one to the other and to determine the originality, if any, of each. Much to my surprise and delight, my nominal but benign supervisor von Grunebaum offered to recommend it for publication by the University of California Press. The Press, of course, submitted it to an external anonymous reader; this person, after a year of not reading it, finally did and delivered himself of the devastating verdict that my dissertation was utterly and completely worthless and that I should never have been encouraged or allowed to embark upon it. Needless to say, as a recent recipient of a Ph.D., I found this contemptuous judgment somewhat daunting, even though von Grunebaum hinted that it had been given by a political scientist at the University of Chicago who neither knew nor cared anything about the Mamluks. But the story grows curiouser and curiouser. By chance our Islamics librarian at McGill, Professor Michel Mazzaoui, happened soon thereafter to visit Professor Roemer at his Orientalisches Seminar in Freiburg, Germany, and told him about my work. As the editor of Ibn al-Dawādārī, Roemer was interested, especially, he declared, since he just happened to have a graduate student of his own, Ulrich Haarmann by name, who was writing a dissertation on virtually the same topic—the sources for the reign of al-Nāṣir—that I had recently completed. As all graduate students know, one of their worst nightmares besides comprehensive exams is that their supervisor will move or pass away before they complete their dissertations; another is that another graduate student, somewhere out there, is working on the same topic and will finish it first. I must confess that this latter *cauchemar* never haunted me, because I was serenely confident that no one else would ever embark on such an obscure scholarly quest. Whether Ulrich Haarmann lost any sleep I don't know, but I do know that he, and Roemer, acted with utmost courtesy and generosity, for not only did Haarmann revise and adapt his research and dissertation in light of mine, but Roemer accepted it for publication in his ″Freiburger Islamstudien″ series. In this format, along with Haarmann's published dissertation,[13] it was used extensively in several dissertations by students in Freiburg.[14] I am also proud, perversely, perhaps, that my book, or the first part of it, was translated and published, errors and all, into Arabic, without any acknowledgment to me, by an Egyptian scholar. This was not the only time this happened to me. But as the oldest surviving

[12]Submitted to the University of California at Los Angeles, 1966.

[13]Mine was published as *An Introduction to Mamluk Historiography* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag; Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1970); Haarmann's as *Quellenstudien zur frühen Mamlukenzeit* (Freiburg: D. Robischon, 1969).

[14]E.g., Samira Kortantamer, *Ägypten und Syrien zwischen 1317 und 1341 in der Chronik des Mufaḍḍal b. Abī l-Faḍā'il* (Freiburg: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1973); Antranig Melkonian, *Die Jahre 1287-1291 in der Chronik al-Yūnīnīs* (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag Becksmann, 1975); Shah Morad Elham, *Kitbugā und Lāǧīn* (Freiburg: Klaus Schwarz Verlag 1977). For more recent work along the same lines, see Li Guo, ″The Middle Baḥrī Mamluks in Medieval Syrian Historiography: The Years 1297-1302 in the *Dhayl Mir'āt al-Zamān* Attributed to Quṭb al-Dīn Mūsā al-Yūnīnī: A Critical Edition with Introduction, Annotated Translation, and Source Criticism″ (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1994).


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continuing practitioner of Mamluk studies in North America today, I can afford to be forbearing and admit that I am somewhat flattered by the close attention that two Arab scholars have given to my work.

In this autobiographical section of my lecture, it remains for me to explain how I was converted from a specialist in Mamluk chronicles and biographical dictionaries into a papyrologist, a term I use in the sense defined by Gladys Frantz-Murphy, known to some of you, I am sure, as a former associate at the University of Chicago. ″In its larger sense,″ she has written, ″papyrology is the use of documentary sources for the study of civilization. To limit the definition of Arabic papyrology by the medium on which documents are written would be to ignore the possibility of millennia-long historical investigation.″[15] In our context a papyrologist, then, is a student of documentary sources, or, more simply, documents, for the study of Mamluk history. As I have already intimated, Islamic documents were not expected to be in the province of graduate students´ knowledge at the universities of California in the early sixties. The one professor that knew anything about documents, Hoenerbach, kept his knowledge to himself while he was in California. Although S. D. Goitein´s monumental work based on the documents of the Cairo Geniza was published by the University of California Press, it did not begin to appear until 1967,[16] long after I had taken my Ph.D. comprehensive examinations. If I read the first volume of the venerable Nabia Abbott´s *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri*,[17] I do not recall it. But I am sure that I considered Adolf Grohmann´s work on the Egyptian papyri as too abstruse and technical for my comprehensives reading list.[18] While it is true that the seminal articles of Bernard Lewis and Stanford Shaw on the Ottoman archives had begun to appear in the fifties, Ottoman studies were not within my purview.[19] The point is that as far as the training of Middle East historians is concerned in the sixties, and still to a great extent today, unless a student is an aspiring Ottomanist with a special interest in archival research, not much training is offered in how to use documents as historical sources.

So I became a papyrologist through happenstance. In 1976 a Ph.D. student of mine at McGill traveled from Cairo to Jerusalem in search of materials for a dissertation on the Mamluk sultan Qalāwūn. In Jerusalem she, Linda Northrup, became a friend of a young Palestinian woman who had been appointed director of the Islamic Museum within the walls of al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf, the sacred enclosure of al-Aqṣá Mosque and the Dome of the Rock; the director, Amal Abul-Hajj, had recently discovered hundreds of obviously old documents stuffed into a locked cabinet in the museum. By a cursory examination of the dates and names it was realized that these were documents from the period of Mamluk rule in Jerusalem, mainly from the late fourteenth century. Overwhelmed by the magnitude of the discovery, her lack of professional training in the preservation and restoration of

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[15]″Arabic Papyrology and Middle Eastern Studies,″ *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin* 19 (July 1985): 34.

[16]*A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*, vol. 1: *Economic Foundations* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967).

[17]Vol. 1: *Historical Texts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957).

[18]E.g., *Einführung und Chrestomathie zur arabischen Papyruskunde*, vol. 1 (Prague: Czechoslovak Oriental Institute, 1955).

[19]E.g., Lewis, ″The Ottoman Archives as a Source for the History of the Arab Lands,″ *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1951): 139-155; Shaw, ″Cairo's Archives and the History of Ottoman Egypt,″ *Report on Current Research, Spring 1956* (Washington, D.C.: Middle East Institute, 1956), 59-72.


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documents, and the need to classify and catalog them without recourse to Israeli scholars, Abul-Hajj was led to ask for assistance from various Western scholars. With pronounced reluctance I allowed myself to be convinced that it was my duty to lend a hand. With generous financial assistance from McGill University I headed a group of three from McGill to sort out, temporarily restore, and photograph some nine hundred documents. In highly unusual, even risky, perhaps foolhardy, circumstances, photographs were taken and sent to Montreal via New Hampshire. At this point the question arose as to what to do with them, since I was completely unable to decipher the cursive scripts and technical language in which they were written. Here I can offer some advice to those of you who aspire to teaching careers. When in doubt about your qualifications to teach a subject which may be assigned to you, teach it, preferably in the form of a seminar or a workshop with students who by sharing the labor can help to train you and each other. In my case this method worked very well, for at the end of four months, working with a group of four students, I had managed not only to survey the scholarly literature on Islamic diplomatic but to gain some facility in reading the scripts, classifying the documents, and assessing their significance as sources for the history of the Mamluks and their institutions.[20] This was seventeen years ago. I still regard myself to be in training as a papyrologist.

Now I would like to move, as promised, from the personal and anecdotal, to the objective and scientific part of my remarks. Here I would like, one, to bring to your attention the documentary resources which are so far available to students of the Mamluks; I emphasize *so far* because I am confident that more documents will be discovered and that those that have already been discovered and await a buyer will be bought and made available to scholars. Two, I will allude to some of the challenges and opportunities that using these sources poses to scholars. And, three, I shall briefly review the work of a few representative scholars who have used Mamluk documents to illuminate Mamluk history. Since my purpose is to encourage students to use documents in their own research, I shall try to avoid letting these observations degenerate into a list of the names of scholars, libraries, and archives.

First, the places in which documents can be found. These can be divided into two types, namely copies contained in literary sources, and originals that have been preserved and have turned up in various places. As far as literary sources are concerned, again there are two types: histories, be they chronicles or biographical dictionaries, and manuals, prepared either for chancery scribes or notaries. Several Mamluk historians liked to transcribe documents that were at their disposal into their histories. This should come as no surprise in the case of at least two of the biographers of the first great Mamluk sultans, Baybars and Qalāwūn, for Ibn ʻAbd al-Ẓāhir was both confidential secretary (*kātib al-sirr*) and chief of chancery (*ṣāḥib dīwān al-inshā'*) under these sultans, and his nephew, Shāfiʻ ibn ʻAlī, was his assistant in the chancery. Both, then, were professional drafters of documents, with ready access to them, especially those they had drafted themselves, and did not hesitate to lend authenticity and color to their biographies by including copies in their texts.[21] Several of these are diplomatic documents, treaties, for example, concluded

[20]This seminar was the basis of my article, ″The Significance of the Ḥaram Documents for the Study of Medieval Islamic History,″ *Der Islam* 57 (1980): 165-181; reprinted in my *History and Historiography of the Mamluks* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1986).

[21]See Little, ″The Fall of ʻAkkā in 690/1291: The Muslim Version,″ in *Studies in Islamic Civilization in Honour of Professor David Ayalon*, ed. M. Sharon (Jerusalem: Cana; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1986), 162, 165-


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with Crusaders; but there are also internal documents, such as *khuṭbah*s recited by the caliph on the occasion of Baybars´s investiture, or, more interesting from a historian´s point of view, memos drawn up by Qalāwūn advising his son, al-Ṣāliḥ, on how to conduct the affairs of state during his, the sultan´s, absence.[22] Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī, the author of two voluminous biographical dictionaries, was also employed in Mamluk chanceries, both in Egypt and in Syria, where he drafted or copied many documents that he inserted into biographies. Many of these are diplomas of appointment to offices in the Mamluk state, both administrative and military.[23] Baybars al-Manṣūrī, though not a bureaucrat but a high-ranking military officer, saw fit to enliven his chronicle, *Zubdat al-Fikrah*, with documents, mostly of a diplomatic nature.[24] The already-mentioned Ibn al-Dawādārī was the son of a minor Mamluk and probably did not have easy access to official documents, but this did not deter him from copying the copies contained in the works of his contemporaries, both Egyptians and Syrians, so that his *Kanz al-Durar* contains documents issued during the Mongols´ occupation of Damascus in 699/1299-1300 and a decree condemning those Muslims who espoused the beliefs of the famous Ḥanbalī jurisprudent, Ibn Taymīyah.[25] Later chroniclers, such as Ibn al-Furāt and al-'Aynī, obviously deemed these documents to be sufficiently important to copy and incorporate into their texts adapted from earlier historians.[26]

Chancery manuals, most notably al-Qalqashandī´s fourteen-volume encyclopedia of essential and trivial knowledge for clerks employed by the vast Mamluk bureaucracy, contain dozens of copies of original documents to serve as models for employees of the chancery and other government offices. These samples of thirty different categories range from royal decrees and diplomas of appointment to peace treaties and safe conducts, official letters, and reports.[27] Although the exemplary documents that al-Qalqashandī transcribes are by no means limited to the Mamluk period, many, if not most, are derived from that era. But the very fact that al-Qalqashandī compares Mamluk chancery practice with that of the Fatimid and Ayyubid periods makes it possible to undertake comparative studies. Notarial manuals—*kutub al-shurūṭ*—constitute a related genre. Designed for the use of clerks associated with Islamic courts, these manuals are similar to the chancery handbooks in that they provide exemplars of many types of documents, legal and judicial in this case. But whereas al-Qalqashandī reproduces transcriptions, sometimes edited, of actual documents, the notarial manuals tend to shun real documents in favor of ideal models, forms, if you

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[22]E.g., Shāfi' ibn 'Alī, *Ḥusn al-Manāqib al-Sirrīyah al-Muntaza'ah min al-Sīrah al-Ẓāhirīyah*, ed. 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Khuwayṭir (Riyadh: Maṭābi' al-Quwwāt al-Musallaḥah al-Sa'ūdīyah, 1976), 51-55; idem, *al-Faḍl al-Ma'thūr min Sīrat al-Sulṭān al-Malik al-Manṣūr*, Oxford Bodleian MS Marsh 424, fols. 82v.-89r.; Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, *al-Rawḍ al-Ẓāhir fī Sīrat al-Malik al-Ẓāhir*, ed. 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Khuwayṭir (Riyadh: n.p., 1976), 143-148.

[23]E.g., *al-Wāfī bi-al-Wafayāt*, ed. Dorothea Krawulsky (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1982), 17:91-98.

[24]E.g., *Zubdat al-Fikrah fī Ta'rīkh al-Hijrah*, vol. 9, British Museum MS Add. 23325, as transcribed by Muḥammad Muṣṭafá Ziyādah in his edition of al-Maqrīzī's *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Ma'rifat Duwal al-Mulūk* (Cairo: Maṭba'at Lajnat al-Ta'līf wa-al-Nashr, 1939), 1:974-977.

[25]*Chronik*, 9:20-29, 139-142.

[26]E.g., Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rīkh Ibn al-Furāt*, ed. Q. Zurayq and N. 'Izz al-Dīn (Beirut: American University Press, 1939), 8:194-195; al-'Aynī, *'Iqd al-Jumān fī Ta'rīkh Ahl al-Zamān*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Miṣrīyah al-'Āmmah lil-Kitāb, 1992), 4:39-43.

[27]*Ṣubḥ al-A'shá fī Ṣinā'at al-Inshā'*, 14 vols. (Cairo: al-Maṭba'ah al-Amīrīyah, 1913-1919).


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like, of an astonishing variety, with names and dates omitted. These models are similar to the standard printed forms of leases and wills that one can buy in Quebec; they are couched in foolproof legal jargon, and one need only fill in the names, dates, and special conditions that apply. By far the most valuable Mamluk manual of this type is the work entitled *Jawāhir al-'Uqūd wa-Mu'īn al-Quḍāh wa-al-Muwaqqi'īn wa-al-Shuhūd* (Essential Contracts and Helper to Judges, Notaries, and Legal Witnesses) by Shams al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, a notary who practiced in Egypt and Syria toward the end of the Mamluk period.[28] This work contains hundreds of models, ranging from marriage contracts, bills of divorce and sale to court records, proxies, and oaths.

Finally, just for fun, I should mention that documents show up in unlikely literary sources. In a hagiographical work devoted to the career of Ibn Taymīyah, the author, Ibn 'Abd al-Hādī, has transcribed a poignant letter written by Ibn Taymīyah from Cairo to his mother in Damascus.[29] As trivial as this may sound—and the letter is mundane, of the ″Dear mom, I miss you and wish I could be at home with you, but important business keeps me here″ type, it is of considerable interest both to students of this intellectual giant of the Mamluk era and to students of medieval Islamic epistolary, few though we may be.

What are some of the challenges posed by these documents found in literary sources? Obviously, because of their random selection by historians and compilers they are no substitute for archives, by which I mean systematic collections of records kept more or less intact, which can be exploited for a consecutive span of time. Instead, the discontinuity and isolation of literary documents restrict the historian either to discrete events or to comparative studies. For example, if one happens to be interested in Mamluk-Mongol relations during the reign of Qalāwūn, one can find the texts of his diplomatic exchange with the Īlkhān Aḥmad Tegüder preserved in the manuscript of Baybars al-Manṣūrī's *Zubdat al-Fikrah*, as yet unpublished but also in the published work of a later historian, Ibn Abī al-Faḍā'il, who obviously copied it from the former or an intermediary.[30] It has also been reprinted as an appendix to Ziyādah's edition of al-Maqrīzī and was translated by Quatremère.[31] Moreover, since there are other specimens of Mamluk-Mongol correspondence preserved, one could make a comparative study of their diplomatic contacts over a given period of time. This would be tricky, of course, because historians would like to have a complete, or nearly complete, set of such documents, but complete records are exceptional for medieval Islamic history. Nevertheless, on a positive note, one of the main virtues of Mamluk literary documents is their accessibility. Many are available in published form and have accordingly been transcribed and sometimes translated, so that scholars need not take the trouble or waste time in obtaining microfilm copies, or traveling to distant libraries to study the original, or in struggling with difficult hand-written scripts. On the other hand, one must stress that in addition to being transcriptions of original documents, these are by definition editions of originals, in the sense that the historians have often

[28]Ed. Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Fiqī, 2 vols. (Cairo: Maṭba'at al-Sunnah al-Muḥammadīyah, 1955).
[29]Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Hādī, *al-'Uqūd al-Durrīyah min Manāqib Shaykh al-Islām Aḥmad ibn Taymīyah*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Fiqī (Cairo: Maṭba'at Ḥijāzī, 1938).
[30]*Zubdah*, 9:131 ff.; Mufaḍḍal ibn Abī al-Faḍā'il, *Histoire des sultans mamlouks*, ed. E. Blochet (Paris: Fermin-Didot et Cie, 1919-1928), 335ff.
[31]*Kitāb al-Sulūk*, 2:977-984; E. Quatremère, *Histoire des sultans mamlouks de l'Égypte* (Paris: Oriental Translation Fund, 1845), 2:158-166.


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deliberately or inadvertently changed the texts. This we know from documents preserved in more than one literary source.

Be that as it may, the potential for the study of Mamluk foreign relations through documents is great, as reference to the section on ″Foreign Relations″ in your own *Mamluk Studies: A Bibliography* will show you.[32] As examples, I would mention only the recent works of two scholars, one senior and one junior. In his *Early Mamluk Diplomacy (1260-1290): Treaties of Baybars and Qalāwūn with Christian Rulers*,[33] Peter Holt has translated, annotated, and analyzed the texts of eleven Mamluk-Crusader treaties drawn from the literary sources discussed above, both histories and manuals. As Holt declares in the ″Preface,″ these deserve study because

> [t]hey reveal some of the realities of the contacts between the medieval Muslim and Christian communities, particularly on that Syro-Palestinian border where the powerful realm of the early Mamluk sultans confronted the diminished Crusader states in the last decades of their existence. They show in detail how, even in this prolonged crisis, life went on with provision for merchants to go about their business by land and sea, and for local authorities to collaborate in the policing of the frontier. The treaties exemplify the sophisticated efficiency of the sultan´s chancery—that was to be expected—but they also indicate a diplomatic procedure with respect for legality and precedent, sometimes, admittedly, practised with a degree of finesse.[34]

The junior, but very accomplished, scholar is Reuven Amitai-Preiss. He, like Holt, has also produced a detailed study of specific documents, in the form of an article entitled ″An Exchange of Letters in Arabic between Abaγa Īlkhān and Sultan Baybars″ in which he analyzes correspondence already transcribed and translated by the Saudi scholar ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Khuwayṭir.[35] But this article was probably a by-product of the research for his dissertation and book, *Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-Īlkhānid War, 1260-1281*,[36] where this exchange and others are not studied independently but woven into the fabric of historical narrative based on the literary sources. In contrast to diplomatic documents related to foreign affairs that have received considerable, but by no means exhaustive, study, documents related to the internal workings of the Mamluk state have received little attention. Although certificates of appointment to various offices in the bureaucracies are not as exciting as correspondence between the superpowers of the medieval Muslim world, the former do afford opportunities for richer understanding of the workings of the Mamluk bureaucracy and state.

Original documents or remnants of archives are exceedingly important. These can be divided into two groups: documents preserved by non-Muslim institutions and those found in Muslim venues. Of the former the best known are those found in St. Catherine´s

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[32]Ed. John L. Meloy (Chicago: The Middle East Documentation Center, 1995), 75-94.
[33](Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995).
[34]Ibid., vii-viii.
[35]*Central Asiatic Journal* 38 (1994): 11-33.
[36](Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).


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Monastery in Sinai, one of the earliest monasteries in the world. In 1950 much of the priceless manuscript collection of the monastery was photographed by an American-Egyptian team, including approximately 1100 scrolls written in Arabic.[37] Most of these date from the Ottoman period, but about two hundred can be attributed to the Mamluk era. They consist of royal decrees issued by Mamluk sultans to the monks of the monastery but also deeds of conveyance for properties belonging to it at one time or another. A similar collection is held by the Franciscan Monastery of Mt. Zion in Jerusalem. Here I must confess to my ignorance; I hope that one of you may rectify it by further study. There is a catalogue of 2644 Arabic and Turkish decrees and legal documents concerning the sanctuaries, properties, and rights of the *Custodia di Terra Franca* in Jerusalem, but I have not seen it.[38] In extenuation, however, I have seen and own a publication which is one of my favorite books because it has no title page, meaning that the author, title, date, and place of publication are not identified. It contains photographs, transcriptions, Italian translations of and commentaries on twenty-eight Mamluk decrees and court records from the Burjī period. This book is so obscure that it has not even found its way into the Mamluk Studies bibliography, so that if this lecture serves no other purpose it will add another entry to that estimable work. It is usually referred to as *Documenti e Firmani* by Noberto Risciani and Eutimio Castellani and was published in 1936 by the Press of the Franciscan Fathers in Jerusalem.[39] I am well aware that there are other scattered Mamluk documents from other non-Muslim institutions, including the Cairo Geniza, but I will mention only those of various Italian archives. Some of these, a handful, have been made available by none other than John Wansbrough. Now famous for his studies of the sources for early Islamic history, Wansbrough wrote his dissertation on ″Documents for the History of Commercial Relations between Egypt and Venice, 1442-1512.″[40] Obviously the main value of documents dealing with non-Muslims, as studied most notably by Hans Ernst in his 1960 published dissertation *Die mamlukischen Sultansurkunden des Sinaiklosters*,[41] Samuel Stern, and others,[42] is the information they provide on Mamluk policies toward Christian institutions such as the two monasteries in question and the Italian city-states studied by Wansbrough. Many of these documents are accessible either in published form, or, in the case of the St. Catherine´s papers, in microfilms available from the Library of Congress and other institutions. Most of these, it should be emphasized, have not yet been studied.

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[37]See A. S. Atiya, *The Arabic Manuscripts of Mount Sinai* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1955); Kenneth W. Clark, *Checklist of Manuscripts in St. Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1952).

[38]Eutimio Castellani, *Catalogo dei Firmani ed altri Documenti Legali . . . conservati nell' Archivio della stessa Custodia in Gerusalemme* (Jerusalem: Tipografia dei pp. Francescani, 1922).

[39]See Martiniano Pellegrino Roncaglia, *Essai bibliographique de diplomatique islamique (Arabe-Persane-Ottomane)* (Beirut: Université Arabe de Beyrouth, 1979), 1:250.

[40]University of London, 1961. See also his articles, e.g., ″Venice and Florence in the Mamluk Commercial Privileges,″ *BSOAS* 28 (1965): 483-523; ″The Safe Conduct in Muslim Chancery Practice,″ *BSOAS* 34 (1971): 20-35.

[41](Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1960).

[42]Stern, ″Petitions from the Mamluk Period (Notes on the Mamluk Documents from Sinai),″ *BSOAS* 29 (1966): 233-276; reprinted in his *Coins and Documents from the Medieval Middle East* (London: Variorum, 1986); and, e.g., D. S. Richards, ″Documents from Sinai Concerning Mainly Cairene Property,″ *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 28 (1985): 225-293.


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Documents emanating from Muslim institutions dealing with Muslim transactions and affairs are of great significance. These are the least accessible because most of them must be consulted either *in situ*, in Cairo or Jerusalem, or on microfilm if these can be obtained. In the case of the Ḥaram documents, copies are now available in Jerusalem at the Ḥaram Library, in Jordan at the University of Amman and the National Archives, in Canada at McGill and Toronto Universities, in Paris at the Bibliothèque Nationale, and, finally, I hope, now at the University of Chicago. I do not know whether complete microfilm copies of the Cairo Mamluk documents kept at the National Archives (Dār al-Wathā'iq al-Qawmīyah) and the Ministry of Pious Endowments (Wizārat al-Awqāf) are available or not. In any case, they consist of 888 documents, including many endowment deeds (*waqfīyāt*), bills of conveyance, and other legal deeds; these have been catalogued, and a few samples published by Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn.[43] This collection has been studied and used by several scholars, both Arabs and Americans. Since many of the endowment deeds were drawn up for public buildings endowed by sultans and amirs, they have naturally been exploited by students of Islamic architecture. Two examples are Leonor Fernandes, whose published dissertation, *The Evolution of a Sufi Institution in Mamluk Egypt: The Khanqah*,[44] and several articles rely heavily on *waqfīyah*s, and the Lebanese scholar Saleh Lamei Mostafa, assisted by Felicitas Jaritz, has also used *waqfīyah*s for studies of the buildings of Sultan Barqūq and his son.[45] Carl Petry, in his recent work focusing on the reigns of Sultans Ghawrī and Qāytbāy, has used the same type of documents to supplement material in the narrative histories to reconstruct the fiscal policies of these two sultans and their appropriation of state properties into their personal trust reserves.[46] Jonathan Berkey's book, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education*,[47] also draws on the Cairo papers as primary sources for the development of educational institutions in Mamluk Cairo. But the fullest and most detailed exploitation by a historian of the Cairo records is Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn's *al-Awqāf wa-al-Ḥayāh al-Ijtimā'īyah fī Miṣr*.[48] Because it is written in Arabic it has been used by only a few Western scholars, but it deserves the attention of every Islamic medievalist as a comprehensive, richly documented study of Mamluk cultural, religious, social, political, and economic life under the Mamluks, based on documents containing endowments established by Mamluk statesmen.

Finally, the Ḥaram documents. About the same in number as the Cairo documents, the Jerusalem papers are very different in character, being, I believe, remnants from the

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[43] *Fihrist Wathā'iq al-Qāhirah ḥattá Nihāyat 'Aṣr al-Mamālīk (239-922 H./853-1516 M.)* (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire, 1981). The bibliography in this book contains references to other documents published by Amīn elsewhere.

[44] (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 1988). See also her articles, such as "Three Ṣūfī Foundations in a 15th Century Waqfiyya," *Annales islamologiques* 17 (1981): 141-156; "Notes on a New Source for the Study of Religious Architecture during the Mamluk Period: The Waqfīya," *al-Abḥāth* 33 (1985): 3-12.

[45] E.g., *Madrasa, Ḫānqāh und Mausoleum des Barqūq in Kairo*, mit einem Beitrag von Felicitas Jaritz (Glückstadt: Verlag J. J. Augustin, 1982).

[46] *Twilight of Majesty: The Reigns of the Mamluk Sultans al-Ashraf Qāytbāy and Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī in Egypt* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1993); *Protectors or Praetorians? The Last Mamluk Sultans and Egypt's Waning as a Great Power* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994).

[47] (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992). Cf. Ulrich Haarmann, "Mamluk Endowment Deeds as a Source for the History of Education in Late Medieval Egypt," *al-Abḥāth* 28 (1980): 31-47.

[48] (Cairo: Dār al-Nahḍah al-'Arabīyah, 1980).


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archives of a late fourteenth century Shāfi'ī judge. As such, they constitute a variegated sampling of judicial and notarial documents, including court records, marriage contracts, wills, and financial records of various kinds. By far the most numerous type is estate, or probate, inventories. There are lists of the possessions of persons already dead or on the verge of dying in Jerusalem, compiled by representatives of the Shāfi'ī court in order to insure that those entitled to a share of an estate, including the government, would indeed get it. These four hundred-plus inventories have been studied extensively by my student, Huda Lutfi, for her dissertation and book*: al-Quds al-Mamlukiyya: A History of Mamluk Jerusalem Based on the Ḥaram Documents*.[49] In this book, using these very limited sources, Lutfi was able to synthesize a wealth of data relating to the administration and organization of Jerusalem under the Mamluks not available in narrative sources, as well as plentiful detail about the economy of the city and the material and social life of its inhabitants. In my own publications I have treated specific problems that can be illuminated by the documents, specifically domestic slavery, intercommunal relations between Muslims, Christians, and Jews, relations between Jerusalem and Cairo, and, most recently, the highly organized but extremely complex manner in which the courts intervened in the settlement of estates in a provincial town in the Mamluk Empire.[50] But the main focus of my inquiries has been the relationship of these documents to the manuals of Islamic law, the *shurūṭ* models formulated by jurisprudents. Whether *fiqh* is a strictly isolated, theoretical enterprise, divorced from the practice of Islamic law, has been a question which has long exercised Orientalists, and the comparison of real documents with the models, I believe, affords us the opportunity to compare theory and practice on an empirical basis.

But here I will stop, almost, for I do want to conclude by mentioning some of the challenges and opportunities raised by Mamluk documents of both literary and archival provenance. As far as challenges are concerned, one must cultivate something which Professor Roemer told me was indispensable for papyrologists. One need not be very intelligent, he said, as long as one has *Sitzleder*, a term you might not find in dictionaries, because it´s slightly rude, meaning a rear end calloused into leather by years of sitting in an attempt to decipher the scrawls in Arabic penned by notaries, to translate the legal jargon imposed by the jurisprudents or chancery officials, and to interpret it in accordance with the historical context in which the documents were written and the legal procedures that prevailed. In other words, documents are extremely difficult to use, especially those that have not yet been edited, and this includes most. The first opportunity that they afford to young scholars is to edit and publish some of them and to analyze them as documents, in order to make the task of interpreting them easier for other scholars. A related task is to compare those of the Mamluk era with those of preceding and succeeding periods. Despite recent advances, the study of Muslim diplomatic is still in a rudimentary stage and needs many scholars in search not so much of material rewards as of an intellectual adventure of finding, understanding, and publishing documents. But if this demanding task lacks appeal for you, the Mamluk documents also constitute a rich and indispensable ancillary source for historians who rely on narrative and biographical materials. Here I will leave the last word

[49](Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 1985).

[50]"Documents Related to the Estates of a Merchant and His Wife in Late Fourteenth Century Jerusalem," forthcoming in *Manuscripts of the Middle East*.


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to next year's lecturer, Steve Humphreys, in his exemplary book, *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry*:

> In medieval Islamic history we are poor in archives but rich in documents. For the most part we have only begun to identify and study these, let alone integrate them into the main stream of historical research, which still depends overwhelmingly on narrative and literary sources. But documentary materials are quickly moving from the periphery to the center of historical thinking in the Islamic field, and a serious historian can no longer avoid the hard job of learning how to use them effectively.[51]

[51](Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 40.


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# Mamluk Historiographic Studies: The State of the Art

The past decade has seen an uneven development in Mamluk historiographic studies. On the one hand, a considerable number of important Mamluk sources—chronicles, biographical dictionaries, geographical and administrative encyclopedias as well as treatises on historical theory—have been edited and thus added to our growing Mamluk library. On the other, we continue to witness a dearth of articles, and even fewer monographs, devoted to Mamluk historians and their writings;[1] not since the pioneering works of Jean Sauvaget, Claude Cahen, Donald Little, and Ulrich Haarmann have we seen any ground-breaking study of the historical thought and writing of this extraordinary era, which is commonly believed to have been one of the most prolific in Islamic history for its output of historical and archival documentation. This review thus offers a welcome opportunity not only for stock-taking, but also for sharing thoughts with interested colleagues. My comments are informed by my research on al-Yūnīnī (d. 1326) and a concomitant process of contemplating what has been achieved and what has not, in my own work and in the field at large. Among the various issues, I find three especially important: the editing of Mamluk sources, the study of the biographies of Mamluk historians, and the study of the development of genres and forms in Mamluk historical texts.

## I

In his introduction to *The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The Early Mamluk Sultanate, 1250-1382*, Robert Irwin warned us that ″until the publication of all the best sources (among them, al-'Ayni, the remaining volumes of al-Safadi, al-Dhahabi′s history, al-Nuwayri′s encyclopedia, the rest of al-Yunini, etc.) any history of the period will be premature.″[2] Less than a decade later, remarkable progress has been made in editing and publishing all the above-mentioned primary sources, thanks to the efforts of Mamluk scholars, Western and Middle Eastern alike.

The relevant part of al-'Aynī′s (d. 1451) massive *'Iqd al-Jumān fī Ta'rīkh Ahl al-Zamān*, which ranges over the years 648/1250-707/1307 was edited by Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn and published in four volumes (Cairo, 1987-89). This portion of the

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[1]Of course, this is not to ignore the fact that discussions of the sources and related historiographic issues are to be found in introductory essays, or appendices, of some monographs that deal with the Mamluk period; e.g., Carl Petry, *Twilight of Majesty: The Reigns of the Mamlūk Sultans al-Ashraf Qāytbāy and Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī in Egypt* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1993), 3-14; Nasser Rabbat, *The Citadel of Cairo: A New Interpretation of Royal Mamluk Architecture* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 305-309.

[2](Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1986), no page number.


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text, which contains much original material for the Baḥrī period, is commonly regarded as the most significant segment of the entire work.[3] The facsimile version of al-Ṣafadī's (d. 1363) *A'yān al-'Aṣr wa-A'wān al-Naṣr*, edited by Fuat Sezgin (Frankfurt am Main, 1990), has so far reached its third volume, which touches upon persons who lived in the early Mamluk period. The remainder, hopefully with an index, is eagerly awaited. Also awaited is the rest of al-Ṣafadī's other biographical dictionary *al-Wāfī bi-al-Wafayāt*, volumes 23 and 24 of which have been published during the past decade (Leipzig, 1931-<1993>). Although we do not expect the parts that deal with the Mamluk period from al-Dhahabī's (d. 1348) *Ta'rīkh al-Islām* to come out soon, many of his biographical works on learned persons who flourished during the seventh/thirteenth and eighth/fourteenth centuries have been published. Many of these are short works abridged from the relevant parts of the larger *Ta'rīkh al-Islām*.[4] The project of editing al-Nuwayrī's (d. 1333) *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab*, long in progress, has finally reached the Mamluk era with the publication of volumes 29-31, edited by Muḥammad Ḍiyā' al-Dīn al-Rīs, Muḥammad 'Abd al-Hādī Shu'ayrah, and al-Bāz al-'Arīnī, respectively (Cairo, 1990-92); these constitute the last part of the fifth *fann*, namely, the "craft" of historiography, of this monumental encyclopedia,[5] covering events of the years from the later Ayyubids through 700/1300, i.e., the middle Baḥrī period. And after a long pause following the publication of the first four volumes of the Hyderabad edition, the later part of al-Yūnīnī's *Dhayl Mir'āt al-Zamān*, which contains a wealth of information on Mamluk Syria not found in any other source, has been analyzed and edited in two Ph.D. dissertations, by Antranig Melkonian (Freiburg, 1975), covering the years 687/1287-690/1291, and Li Guo (Yale, 1994), covering the years 697/1297-701/1302. The completion of the remaining ten-year portion (702-711) is being planned by the latter as well.

Of the major sources that deal with the Baḥrī period, Baybars al-Manṣūrī's (d. 1325) *Mukhtār al-Akhbār: Tārīkh al-Dawlah al-Ayyūbīyah wa-Dawlat al-Mamālīk al-Baḥrīyah ḥattá Sanat 702 al-Hijrīyah* (Cairo, 1993)[6] and his *Kitāb al-Tuḥfah al-Mulūkīyah*

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[3]See Donald Little, *An Introduction to Mamluk Historiography* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1970), 80-87. There is also a second "edition" of al-'Aynī's *'Iqd al-Jumān* by 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṭanṭāwī al-Qarmūṭ, professor in the Asyut branch of al-Azhar. The two volumes cover the years 815-850/1412-1447 (Cairo: Maṭba'at 'Alā', 1985; al-Zahrā' lil-I'lām al-'Arabī, 1989). This edition is not on the same level of scholarship as Amīn's work.

[4]For example: *al-I'lām bi-Wafayāt al-A'lām*, ed. Riyāḍ Murād et al. (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-Mu'āṣir, 1991); *Tahdhīb Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, ed. Shu'ayb al-'Arna'ūṭ (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 1991); *al-Kāshif fī Ma'rifat man lahu Riwāyah*, ed. Muḥammad 'Awwāmah et al. (Jiddah: Dār al-Qiblah lil-Thaqāfah al-Islāmīyah, 1992); *Mu'jam Muḥaddithī al-Dhahabī*, ed. Rawḥīyah al-Suyūfī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmīyah, 1993); *Mu'jam Shuyūkh al-Dhahabī*, ed. Rawḥīyah al-Suyūfī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmīyah, 1990); *Mu'jam al-Mukhtaṣṣ bi-al-Muḥaddithīn* (al-Ṭā'if, 1988); *Taqrīb Tarājim Tārīkh Baghdād ma'a Dhaylayhi wa-Istifādāt al-Dimyāṭī*, ed. Sāmī Dallāl (Cairo: Dār al-I'lām al-Duwalī, 1992); *Nuzhat al-Fuḍalā': Tahdhīb Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, ed. Muḥammad Mūsá (Jiddah: Dār al-Andalus al-Khaḍrā', 1995); *al-Mu'īn fī Ṭabaqāt al-Muḥaddithīn*, ed. Muḥammad 'Azab (Cairo: Dār al-Ṣaḥwah, 1987); *al-Dīnār min Ḥadīth al-Mashāyikh al-Kibār*, ed. Majdī Ibrāhīm (Cairo: Maktabat al-Qur'ān, 1988); *Dhāt al-Niqāb fī al-Alqāb*, ed. Muḥammad al-Māliḥ (Damascus: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 1993).

[5]For an analysis of al-Nuwayrī's five *fann*s and the structure of the work, see 'Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Nadawī, *Manhaj al-Nuwayrī fī Kitābihi Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab* (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1987), esp. 92-97; also Mounira Chapoutot-Remadi, "al-Nuwayrī," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 8:156-160.

[6]For the manuscript survey, see the editor's "Un nouveau manuscrit attribué à Baybars al-Manṣūrī: Mukhtār al-Akhbār," *Studia Islamica* 67 (1988): 151-153. For a review of the edition by P. M. Holt, see *Bulletin*


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*fī al-Dawlah al-Turkīyah: Tārīkh Dawlat al-Mamālīk al-Baḥrīyah fī al-Fatrah min 648-711 Hijrīyah* (Cairo, 1987), both edited by ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd Ṣāliḥ Ḥamdān, are now available. In his introduction to the latter, the editor, echoing Little´s and Eliyahu Ashtor´s opinions, challenges Cahen´s speculation that the *Tuḥfah* is an abridged version of the same author´s *Zubdat al-Fikrah fī Ta'rīkh al-Hijrah* by stating that it is in fact another original work on the reign of the Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn, for it contains many details that are not found in the *Zubdah* and also extends three years beyond the *Zubdah*, reaching 711.[7] Another interesting Mamluk text now being published is al-Dhahabī´s epitome of al-Jazarī´s (d. 1338) acclaimed chronicle, edited by Khaḍir al-Munshadāwī.[8] Of al-Jazarī´s original chronicle, the parts that cover the Baḥrī period after 698 are lost today and have only survived in detail in al-Yūnīnī´s *Dhayl Mir'āt al-Zamān* and in al-Dhahabī´s extremely short epitome. The publication of both versions provides a basis for further inquiry into the textual relationship between al-Jazarī, al-Yūnīnī, al-Dhahabī, and other contemporary Syrian historians. In addition, a partial edition and translation of the years 694-696 from al-Jazarī´s chronicle is found in Numan Jubran´s 1987 Freiburg dissertation.[9] A less well-known Syrian chronicle, *Tadhkirat al-Nabīh fī Ayyām al-Manṣūr wa-Banīh*, by Ibn Ḥabīb al-Ḥalabī (d. 1377), which, as the title suggests, deals exclusively with the dynasty founded by al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn, has also been brought to scholarly attention: volume 1 was published in 1976, followed by volume 2, which covers the years 709/1309-741/1340, namely the reign of the Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn (Cairo, 1976-in progress). The thinness of the original text, which has already been noticed by modern scholars,[10] is compensated for to a certain extent by appendices containing the *waqfīyah* documents and other related material on which the editor of the volume, Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn, has done substantial research.[11]

A major event in editing early Mamluk sources during the past decade or so is the publication, in several editions, of Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʻUmarī´s (d. 1349) historical, geographical, and administrative encyclopedia *Masālik al-Abṣār fī Mamālik al-Amṣār*.[12] Among them the facsimile edition, in twenty-seven volumes, under the general editorship of Fuat Sezgin, is by far the most complete (Frankfurt am Main, 1988). Based on the major manuscripts preserved in libraries all over the world, the edition makes this fascinating, lengthy work handily available. However, since the parts that deal with biographies are now of secondary importance because most of the original sources from which al-ʻUmarī drew his material have been published in recent years,[13] one might

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*of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 58, no. 1 (1995): 131-132.

[7]See the editor´s introduction to the edition, 13-14.

[8]*al-Mukhtār min Ta'rīkh ibn al-Jazarī al-Musammá Ḥawādith al-Zamān* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʻArabī, 1988).

[9]*Studien zur Geschichte und Sozialgeographie von Damaskus im Ausgehenden 13. Jahrhundert mit einer Teiledition der Chronik Šams ad-Dīn Muḥamad* [sic] *al-Ğazarīs* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Albert-Ludwigs-Universität, 1988). I thank Dr. Jubran for sending me a copy of his dissertation.

[10]See Little, *Introduction*, 94.

[11]See his *al-Awqāf wa-al-Ḥayāh al-Ijtimāʻīyah fī Miṣr* (Cairo: Dār al-Nahḍah al-ʻArabīyah, 1980) and *Catalogue des documents d'archives du Caire de 239/853 à 922/1516* (Cairo: Institut français d´archéologie orientale, 1981).

[12]The most recent study of the work is Shemuel Tamari´s *Topological Studies in the Masālik al-Abṣār fī Mamālik al-Amṣār of Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʻUmarī* (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1989).

[13]For the sources of the *Masālik*, see Dorothea Krawulsky´s discussion of the manuscripts of the *Masālik*


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question the wisdom of publishing the whole work instead of concentrating on the most valuable portions of it, namely, the volumes that deal with geographical and administrative issues. In addition, given the enormous size and complex structure of the work, I find this edition extremely difficult to use inasmuch as it, like the other facsimile editions in the same Frankfurt series, lacks any kind of textual criticism or indices, except for a brief introduction. One can only hope that an accompanying volume of indices will come along. In this regard, Mamluk scholars might find Dorothea Krawulsky´s partial critical edition of the work a very relevant and useful reference (Beirut, 1986). As the subtitle *Dawlat al-Mamālīk al-Ūlá* (by the editor?) indicates, Krawulsky´s edition contains the sixth *bāb* of the work, that is, the portion that deals with geographical and administrative matters in Egypt, Syria, and the Hijaz during the early Mamluk period. This edition has many merits: a detailed introduction, translated from the German into elegant Arabic by Riḍwān al-Sayyid, is followed by a critically edited text, in the real sense of the term, with a meticulously supplied philological apparatus as well as parallel references. There are not only indices of manuscripts, sources, proper names, places, Mamluk administrative and military terms, and other technical terms, but also a much-needed index of Arabic terms for plants, animals, minerals, etc., occurring in the text. Partial editions of special interest are also found in M. Aḥmad´s edition of the eighth through fourteenth *bāb*s, the parts that touch upon North Africa and the Sahara, with annotations and maps (Casablanca, 1988). Worth mentioning also is the much earlier historical-topographical encyclopedia *al-A'lāq al-Khaṭīrah fī Dhikr Umarā' al-Shām wa-al-Jazīrah*, by Ibn Shaddād (d. 1285). The publication of the first part, edited by Yaḥyá 'Abbārah (Damascus, 1991), in two volumes[14] has not only brought this long overdue project to its completion, but also has finally fulfilled Sauvaget and Zayyāt´s aborted editing plan, adding a fuller version to Dominique Sourdel´s previous partial edition (Damascus, 1953).

The later Mamluk sources, namely those major chronicles and biographical works produced during the Burjī period, the latter being the hallmark of the achievements attained by Mamluk historians,[15] have long been available to modern students. The last decade, however, has seen the continuation of major projects, such as the editing of the rest of Ibn Taghrībirdī´s *al-Manhal al-Ṣāfī wa-al-Mustawfá ba'da al-Wāfī*, by Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn (Cairo, 1984-<1993>), which has so far reached the letter *'ayn* (volume 7, 1993). Some less-known works have been edited as well. Among these, al-Maqrīzī´s *Kitāb al-Muqaffá al-Kabīr*, edited by Muḥammad al-Ya'lāwī in eight volumes (Beirut, 1987-91), might warrant special attention inasmuch as it contains entries for religious, political, and military figures in Ifrīqiyā and the Maghrib as well as the Islamic East, ranging from the establishment of the Fatimid dynasty in Ifrīqiyā in the fourth/tenth century to the end of the eighth/fourteenth century; a host of Egyptian Mamluk amirs´ biographies, which are not found in other works of its kind, are particularly valuable. Ibn Taghrībirdī´s

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in *Dirāsāt* (Series A: The Humanities, University of Jordan) 17, no. 2 (1990): 169-185.

[14]Part 1 of the work focuses on Aleppo. Part 2 (two volumes, ed. Sāmī al-Dahhān) on Damascus (vol. 1) and Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine (vol. 2), and part 3 (two volumes) on the al-Jazīrah and Mosul, were published in 1956 and 1978 respectively.

[15]For the most recent treatment of the Mamluk biographical dictionaries, see Tarif Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 17, 204-210; Wadād al-Qāḍī, "Biographical Dictionaries: Inner Structure and Cultural Significance," in *The Book in the Islamic World*, ed. George N. Atiyeh (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 93-122.


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*Ḥawādith al-Duhūr fī Maḍá al-Ayyām wa-al-Shuhūr* has also been edited in two ongoing projects, both covering the years 845-860, one by Muḥammad Kamāl al-Dīn ʻIzz al-Dīn (Beirut, 1990-in progress) and another by Fahīm Muḥammad Shaltūt (Cairo, 1990-in progress). Ibn Ḥajar al-ʻAsqalānī's *Dhayl al-Durar al-Kāminah*, edited by ʻAdnān Darwīsh (Cairo, 1992), is a continuation of the same author's biographical dictionary *al-Durar al-Kāminah fī Aʻyān al-Miʼah al-Thāminah*. The significance of this continuation lies in its coverage of the persons who lived in the first three decades of the ninth/fifteenth century (801-832), a time during which the author himself was at the peak of his intellectual maturity and judgment. The edition is based on a manuscript originally from the Taymūrīyah collection, on the margins of which Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah's (d. 1448) autograph notes are found. A prominent historian in his own right, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah is known for his chronicle in which he continued the works of his Syrian predecessors, al-Birzālī (d. 1339), al-Dhahabī, Ibn Kathīr (d. 1373), and others, reaching the early ninth/fifteenth century.[16] After a long delay since the publication of the first volume (covering 781/1379-800/1397), ably edited by ʻAdnān Darwīsh (Damascus, 1977), volumes 2 and 3 (covering 741/1340-780/1378) of *Taʼrīkh Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah* were finally published in 1994 in Damascus. The edition is lavishly produced: the introductions, in both Arabic and French, give a detailed description of the manuscripts as well as insightful analysis of the content and form of the work; moreover, each volume is supplied with an analytical summary. The Arabic text is generously vocalized and followed by various helpful indexes.

Apart from the mainstream Mamluk chronicles and biographical works, some minor biographical works, local histories, and works on numismatics have been made available to scholars. Of the former, one is Ibn al-ʻIrāqī's (d. 1423) *al-Dhayl ʻalá al-ʻIbar fī Khabar man Ghabara*, edited by Ṣāliḥ Mahdī ʻAbbās (Beirut, 1989). A supplement to al-Dhahabī's biographical dictionary *al-ʻIbar*, it contains entries for those who lived and died during 762-786, the late Baḥrī era. For those interested in the history of the Druze community under the Ayyubids and Mamluks and its interaction with the rest of Muslim society at large, the two publications of Ibn Asbāṭ's (d. 1520) *Ṣidq al-Akhbār* form a welcome contribution to a field for which there are limited written sources. A partial edition focusing on the later Mamluk era was edited by Nāʼilah Qāʼidbayh under the title *Taʼrīkh al-Durūz fī Ākhir ʻAhd al-Mamālīk* (Beirut, 1989). The complete text of the *Ṣidq al-Akhbār* was recently published in two volumes, covering the events of 526-700 and 701-926, by ʻUmar Tadmurī (Tripoli, Lebanon, 1993). Al-Maqrīzī's famous *Shudhūr al-ʻUqūd fī Dhikr al-Nuqūd* has been revisited in a new edition by Muḥammad ʻUthmān (Cairo, 1990). It is based on two manuscripts, one having been recently discovered in King Saud University and the other an autograph from Leiden.[17] This new edition was aimed, as the editor states, at correcting some errors made by previous studies, from partial editions and translations by Tychsen (1797), de Sacy (1905), Mayer (1933), and Father al-Karmili (1939), to Raʼfat al-Nabarāwī's 1988 edition.[18] The part that concerns us here is chapter 3 of the treatise, which is devoted to Mamluk Egyptian numismatics.[19]

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[16]David Reisman has recently discovered a holograph manuscript of the work; see "A Holograph MS of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah's *Dhayl*," paper presented at the Middle East Studies Association annual meeting, 1996.
[17]For a description of the manuscripts see the editor's introduction, 10-17.
[18]"Kitāb al-Nuqūd al-Qadīmah wa-al-Islāmīyah," *Majallat al-ʻUṣūr* [London] 3, no. 1 (1988): 117-147.
[19]See pp. 132-154 of the edition.


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The Mamluk era is also distinguished by having produced a core of literature, so to speak, on historical thought and theory, a genre that set the stage for the later development of Muslim historiography in general.[20] The major representative treatises of this genre have been analyzed in Franz Rosenthal's *A History of Muslim Historiography*, and it is therefore very intriguing to see a new edition of al-Kāfiyajī's (d. 1474) *al-Mukhtaṣar fī 'Ilm al-Ta'rīkh*, published recently by Muḥammad Kamāl al-Dīn 'Izz al-Dīn (Beirut, 1990).[21] To justify the necessity of this new edition, the editor claims that Rosenthal's edition contains "numerous errors and omissions (*kathīrat al-taḥrīf wa-al-ḥadhf*)" (p. 32). Nevertheless, after a careful collation of Rosenthal's edition with 'Izz al-Dīn's corrections, I find *all* the alleged "omissions" are in fact right there in Rosenthal's edition.[22] The bizarre fact is that 'Izz al-Dīn himself has evidently not even seen Rosenthal's original work, but only an *Arabic translation* of it.[23] Whether the so-called "omissions" are from this translation or simply 'Izz al-Dīn's ineptness is beyond me. In any case, my collation reveals that it is this new edition that contains numerous errors, some of which are critical.[24] Although 'Izz al-Dīn has also argued that there are three cases in which the prose in Rosenthal's edition might be verse,[25] this assertion is itself questionable for, to my knowledge, it is not an infrequent practice in Mamluk historical writing for rhymed prose to be used in a narrative context.[26] And after all, this alone does not justify the need for a new edition, one that is, oddly enough, based on the same manuscript, namely MS Dār al-Kutub 528 *ta'rīkh*. In addition, the arbitrary and inconsistent punctuation and paragraphing applied in this "new" edition has contributed to numerous misreadings.[27] This edition itself might not merit much attention; however, it does raise some questions regarding the general methodologies and

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[20]The most exhaustive treatment of the role that Mamluk historians played in shaping the landscape of medieval Arabic-Islamic historiography is still Franz Rosenthal's *A History of Muslim Historiography*, 2nd ed. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968); for a recent discussion, see Khalidi, *Historical Thought*, chapter 5, "History and *siyasa*."

[21]*Historiography*, 245-262 (translation) and 547-580 (edition).

[22]E.g., the cases cited by 'Izz al-Dīn in his introduction to the edition, pp. 32, 33 vs. Rosenthal's edition, pp. 552, 555, 557, 568, respectively.

[23]Quoted in the introduction as a Baghdad, 1963 edition, but in the bibliography as a Beirut, 1983 second edition.

[24]E.g., the reading of *sittah* (i.e., *six* eras; Rosenthal edition, 553) as *sanah* ('Izz al-Dīn edition, 65); *al-tazawwuj* (i.e., Iblīs's offspring were conceived through his *intercourse* with his own eggs; Rosenthal, 565) as *al-burūj* ('Izz al-Dīn, 90); the phrase *mā alladhī* (Rosenthal, 565) as *maladhī* ('Izz al-Dīn, 90), just to name a few.

[25]The introduction, pp. 33-34.

[26]For example, al-Yūnīnī wrote the entire preface of his *Dhayl Mir'āt al-Zamān* in rhymed couplets, but this does not mean that they ought to be read as verses; see *Dhayl Mir'āt al-Zamān*, vol. 1 (Hyderabad, 1954), 2.

[27]For instance, in the above-mentioned example (Rosenthal, 553, line 4 vs. 'Izz al-Dīn, 65, line 2), the original text of: *i'lam anna al-tawārīkh al-mashhūrah fī zamāninā sittah ta'rīkh al-Hijrah wa-al-Rūm wa-al-Furs wa-al-Mālikī wa-al-Yahūd wa-al-Turk* (there are six eras which are widely used in our time and they are. . . .) is clearly understood from Rosenthal's edition without the need of any punctuation. However, it appears in 'Izz al-Dīn's version as: *i'lam anna al-tawārīkh al-mashhūrah fī zamāninā: sanat ta'rīkh al-Hijrah, wa-al-Rūm, wa-al-Furs, wa-al-Mālikī, wa-al-Yahūd, wa-al-Turk*. . . ; that is, all mixed up. One will also find such punctuation absurd: *ka-Ādam—'alayhi al-salām mathalan—yaḥṣulu lahu—ḥīna' idhin—'indahu* . . . (75), *Ādam—'alayhi al-ṣalāh* . . . *—khalaqahu Allāh—ta'ālá—min turāb* . . . (82), *'asharat qurūn—'alá mā qālū—wa-Allāh—ta'ālá—arsalahu* . . . (99). In addition, the paragraphing is often questionable.


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approaches in our study and editing of Mamluk manuscripts. Two age-old questions are in order here: *what* to publish and *how*?

In concluding this survey of recently-published Mamluk sources, one quickly realizes that despite some exemplary work, the issues raised by Cahen some thirty years ago[28] are still with us. The ″historical method and spirit″ advocated by Cahen in dealing with Arabic manuscripts has still, in Cahen′s words, ″very seldom been followed.″ The Mamluk sources under review are no exception. A case in point is the two editions of Ibn Taghrībirdī′s *Ḥawādith al-Duhūr* mentioned above. Published at approximately the same time, both editions took MS Aya Sofya 3185 as their basis and consulted other available manuscripts, such as MS Taymūrīyah 2404, which is a copy of a Vatican manuscript. However, the most important manuscript of the work, Berlin 9462, copied by al-Sakhāwī (d. 1497), was not used in the preparation of the two separately executed editions. The loss is obvious. The situation is no better in the 1987 Cairo edition of al-'Aynī′s *'Iqd al-Jumān*. Of the major extant manuscript sets, only one, MS Cairo Dār al-Kutub 1584 *ta'rīkh*, was consulted. The Cairo manuscript is, as a matter of fact, a copy of an Istanbul manuscript set, although this information is not provided by the editor.[29] Instead of original manuscript research, a common and, of course, much handier practice seems to be to publish any manuscript (or other forms of the text, such as microfilms or photocopies) available in a major library, say, Cairo′s Dār al-Kutub or Ma'had al-Makhṭūṭāt, without appropriate textual collation and source criticism. For instance, Ibn Iyās′s (d. 1524) geographical and administrative dictionary *Nuzhat al-Umam fī al-'Ajā'ib wa-al-Ḥikam*, edited by Muḥammad 'Azab (Cairo, 1995), is, as the editor tells us, based on a single copy of an ″Aya Sofya manuscript″ (namely Aya Sofya 3500;[30] and, again, no other information is given) that happened to come to his attention.[31] The entire edition is virtually devoid of any textual criticism; there are no indexes or aids of any kind, except for a general chronology of Islamic dynasties. And after all, since the work itself does not furnish much original material other than quotations from some well-known sources of the *khiṭaṭ* (historical topography) genre, one might question the desirability of publishing a work of such minor importance, even if it is of some interest,[32] before a thorough source-critical study. The same could be said about Muḥammad Kamāl al-Dīn 'Izz al-Dīn′s edition of 'Abd al-Bāsiṭ ibn Khalīl al-Malaṭī′s (d. 1514) *Nuzhat al-Asāṭīn fī-man Waliya Miṣr min al-Salāṭīn* (Cairo, 1987), a short biographical dictionary of the Ayyubid and Mamluk sultans who ruled Egypt. Although the edition is nicely produced, the original work itself is of virtually no importance, consisting of entries that comprise nothing more than the birth and death dates and ruling years of the sultans. One cannot help but wonder why a work of such little importance was published in the first place, while the same author′s very important chronicle, *al-Rawḍ al-Bāsim fī Ḥawādith al-'Umr wa-al-Tarājim*, is still unedited.[33]

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[28]″Editing Arabic Chronicles: A Few Suggestions,″ *Islamic Studies* [Karachi] (Sept., 1962): 1-25.

[29]We are only told that these are from the Velieddin collection, Istanbul (the numbers are not provided); see Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1936-42), S1:51 (Welieddin 2390, 2392).

[30]Brockelmann, *GAL*, S2:405.

[31]See the editor′s introduction, 5-6.

[32]A short note about this particular work is found in Petry, *Twilight*, 50 n. 69.

[33]For the importance of this work, see the discussion of the sources in Petry, *Twilight*, 8-9.


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This kind of rush to publish is also seen in some work done in the West. One instance is Melkonian's edition of al-Yūnīnī's *Dhayl Mir'āt al-Zamān*,[34] which not only lacks a basic survey of the manuscript traditions, but also ignores secondary literature. As a result, it is based on a single manuscript (MS Istanbul Ahmet III, 2907/e), without consulting other extant manuscripts (e.g., MS Yale Landberg 139, which is quite different from the Istanbul version). Given the fact that the first four volumes of the *Dhayl Mir'āt al-Zamān*, published in Hyderabad (1954-1962), already constitute a "bad" edition, in Cahen's assessment,[35] it is rather sad to admit that we may, realistically speaking, never have the opportunity to re-do it properly. Once a work has been published, it is, in most cases in the Islamic field, considered as "done," whether it is a good edition or not. Economic constraints and academic trends have already made publishers shy away from publishing works of a "philological" nature. We cannot afford to waste very limited resources, as Cahen lamented thirty years ago, "preparing unsatisfactory editions"[36] before all the best manuscripts have been consulted and thoroughly analyzed!

In addition to the question of analyzing manuscripts, the technical aspects of presentation should also be taken into consideration. Of course, editing practices vary from one scholar to another, and there is no such thing as a standard formula when it comes to editing medieval texts.[37] What concerns us most here is to take a close look at the problems existing in our common practice: the way to present variant readings, the making of a critical apparatus, indices, punctuation, paragraphing, orthography, and so forth. In practice, I find two extremes which compel discussion. One of these might be characterized as "free editing," which is represented by 'Izz al-Dīn's new edition of al-Kāfiyajī's *al-Mukhtaṣar* discussed above, and the other is the traditional Orientalist method applied in Gunhild Graf's edition of Ibn al-Dawādārī's minor chronicle *Durar al-Tījān*.[38] Since the contents as well as the historical and historiographic aspects of Graf's work have been discussed at length by others,[39] I shall limit myself here to the technical aspects of manuscript editing.

One of the features of Graf's edition is her policy of "faithfully" transcribing the Arabic text as it appears in the original manuscript(s): a painstaking attempt was made to maintain in the printed text all the paleographic peculiarities and orthographic irregularities,

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[34]For the originality of this work and its unique position in early Mamluk historiography, see Cahen, "Editing Arabic Chronicles," 3-4, 17.

[35]Cahen, "Editing Arabic Chronicles," 3, 17; Sauvaget, *Introduction to the History of the Muslim East*, recast by Claude Cahen (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982), 177. Further discussion is also found in Li Guo, "The Middle Baḥrī Mamlūks in Medieval Syrian Historiography—The Years 1297-1302 in the Dhayl Mir'āt al-Zamān Attributed to Quṭb al-Dīn Mūsā al-Yūnīnī: A Critical Edition with Introduction, Annotated Translation, and Source Criticism" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1994), 4-7.

[36]"Editing Arabic Chronicles," 1.

[37]For the most recent general discussion of the methodology of Arabic manuscript editing, see M. G. Carter, "Arabic Literature," in *Scholarly Editing: A Guide to Research*, ed. D. C. Greetham (New York: Modern Language Association, 1995), 546-574.

[38]*Die Epitome der Universalchronik Ibn ad-Dawādārīs im Verhältnis zur Langfassung: Eine quellenkritische Studie zur Geschichte der ägyptischen Mamluken* (Berlin: Schwarz, 1990).

[39]See book reviews in: *BSOAS* 4 (1991): 366-367, by P. M. Holt; *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin* 26 (1992): 109-111, by Reuven Amitai-Preiss; *Bulletin critique des Annales islamologiques* 8 (1992): 95-96, by Jean-Claude Garcin; *Die Welt des Islams* 33 (1993): 158-159, by Donald Little; and *Der Islam* 71 (1994): 388-390, by Bernd Radtke.


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including the obvious errors (corrections are given in the apparatus), occurring in the manuscript(s). It is too hazardous here, on a theoretical level, to get into the age-old debate of the merits and shortcomings of this approach, which has been followed in the editorial work done by many European Arabists, among which are the editions of various volumes of Ibn al-Dawādārī′s major chronicle *Kanz al-Durar* by a group of German scholars.[40] On a practical level, however, I find Graf′s approach and its result questionable. For one thing, Graf′s transcription is far from being ″faithful″: errors and inconsistencies are found on nearly every page. And the apparatus is accordingly very confusing.[41] The idea of providing the reader with the philological as well as paleographic features of the original manuscripts might not sound bad, but it is without merit if typographical errors are frequent. To prove its ″originality,″ Graf′s edition contains many of the features of ″Middle Arabic.″[42] It is, of course, a matter of choice if the editor insists on providing the reader with a text full of Middle Arabic orthographic features instead of the modern standard norm. My view on this issue is as follows: (1) This traditional Orientalist approach was justified in a time when the lack of an easy means of reproduction (photocopying, microfilming, etc.) and the difficulties of international travel made most of the manuscripts inaccessible. It was also justified when our knowledge of classical Arabic orthography was so limited that all the editions of manuscripts were supposed to provide, besides their contents, textual samples for paleographic investigation. But are these practices justified today when these conditions no longer exist? In other words, if the purpose of today′s edited text is to study orthography, why bother to transcribe the manuscript? Why not simply use a ″faithful″ photocopy? (2) Many of the characteristics of Middle Arabic, foremost among them the undotted *tā' marbūṭah* and omitted *hamzah*, are well-known today and therefore do not need to be called to one's attention; on the other hand, the undotted letters themselves are very dubious. It is extremely difficult to know whether the dots were omitted on purpose in the original manuscripts, or were effaced by time and circulation. To transcribe undotted letters in the printed text is, therefore, pointless, if I may be permitted a pun; and the impression it gives is sometimes undoubtedly false. (3) Even if the editor feels strongly about preserving the original orthographic features in his edition, the reader deserves, at least in the apparatus, explanations that are in accordance with modern standard spelling conventions. In Graf′s case, it does not seem to make much sense that on, for example, p. 102, lines 10 and 14, the orthography of the Middle Arabic, that is, the undotted *tā' marbūṭah*, would be used in the editor′s apparatus for the words *al-malā'ikah* and *al-yaqaẓah*.

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[40]E.g., *Kanz al-Durar wa-Jāmi' al-Ghurar*, vol. 8, ed. Ulrich Haarmann (Cairo: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, 1971) and vol. 9, ed. Hans Robert Roemer (Cairo: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, 1960). Interestingly enough, Haarmann himself seems to have altered this editing policy, in that all the rules of Modern Standard Arabic orthography have been strictly observed in his recently published edition of Abū Ja'far al-Idrīsī′s *Anwār 'Ulwī al-Ajrām fī al-Kashf 'an Asrār al-Ahrām* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1991).

[41]E.g., 87, line 10, *ya'dū* (with *alif al-wiqāyah*), cited in the apparatus as ″ba'dū: ya'dū″ (this time without *alif al-wiqāyah*). We do not know whether it was *ya'dū* or *ba'dū* that appeared in the manuscript in the first place; 93, line 11, *bn al-'Assāl*, in apparatus as ″bn 'Assāl;″ 103, line 7, *al-amal*, in apparatus as ″al-amāl: al-āmāl,″ etc.

[42]On the question of the classical Arabic norm and the so-called ″Middle Arabic,″ see Wolfdietrich Fischer, ″Das Mittelarabische,″ *Grundriß der Arabischen Philologie*, 3 vols. (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1982), 1:89-95; Joshua Blau, ″Das frühe Neuarabisch in mittelarabischen Texten,″ *Grundriß*, 1:96-109 (with bibliography).


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With regard to philological details, another long disputed but never fully resolved issue, transliteration, also deserves discussion. A case in point is Michael Chamberlain's *Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus, 1190-1350* (Cambridge, 1994). It is true that the work itself, as a social history, does not naturally fall within the scope of this review; however, one of the many merits of Chamberlain's excellent study lies in the fact that the author often quotes the sources (many of which still remain in manuscript) in the original Arabic. He thus renders the reader a valuable service in presenting not only the author's interpretation but also a partially "edited" text; it thus becomes relevant to our concern here. Chamberlain's work is without doubt one of the finest treatments of Mamluk social history in years; it is therefore a pity that the author's sensitivity and meticulousness in analyzing and conceptualizing his sources is not equally visible in his presentation of textual materials. As a result, the book's numerous misspellings of Arabic terms and phrases have called into question the reliability of the quotations. Again, we are not arguing here over the merits and shortcomings of various transliteration systems. The point is that any system should conform to the standard grammatical rules and intrinsic structure of the Arabic language, and be applied consistently. Unfortunately, on neither count can Chamberlain's work be viewed as acceptable. The most remarkable problems are the handling of the *tā' marbūṭah* and, more important, the verbs. It is indisputable that the spelling of the *tā' marbūṭah* is mandatory (in any transliteration system) when it occurs in the first term of an *iḍāfah* construction. Thus, Chamberlain's transliteration of nearly all the *iḍāfah*s in the book is flawed.[43] It is also very frustrating to see that in many cases the basic forms of Arabic verbs are violated.[44] One is equally troubled with a number of misspellings, or questionable spellings, of certain technical terms, such as the pervasive *tā'rīkh* (for *ta'rīkh*, or *tārīkh*),[45] among others.[46] If Chamberlain's discourses on the

[43]E.g., *Tadhkira*[*t*] *al-sāmi'* (5 n. 5; 105 n. 78, and the bibliography), *khazāna*[*t*] *'ilmihi* (5 n. 5), *Riḥla*[*t*] *Ibn Baṭṭūṭa* (48 n. 63), *tuḥfa*[*t*] *al-nuẓẓār* (48 n. 63), *Zubda*[*t*] *al-ḥalab* (65 n. 147), *ṭabaqa*[*t*] *al-'alyā'* (79 n. 47), *ḥalqa*[*t*] *al-ḥanābila* (81 n. 59), *sanna*[sic][*t*] *qisma*[*t*] *al-waẓā'if* (96), *maḥabba*[*t*] *aẓ-ẓuhūr* (105; also note the inconsistency in spelling the "sun letter" with the definite article), *ma'rifa*[*t*] *al-qawā'id* (117 n. 66), *'ibāda*[*t*] *al-jawāriḥ* (126), *ṭahāra*[*t*] *anfāsihi* (126), *Rawḍa*[*t*] *al-Muḥibbīn* (128 n. 135), *ṣalā*[*t*] *as-sirr*, *'ibāda*[*t*] *al-qalb*, *qurba*[*t*] *al-bāṭin* (129), *baraka*[*t*] *al-ḥadīth* (129 n. 137), *turba*[*t*] *al-muwallahīn* (132), *sūra*[*t*] *al-Nūḥ* (137 n. 174), *ziyāra*[*t*] *qabrihi* (142), *ṣu'ūba*[*t*] *mā . . .* (146 n. 226), *jumla*[*t*] *durūsihi* (147 n. 233), *murāja'a*[*t*] *kitāb* (148 n. 237), *ma'rifa*[*t*] *al-insān* (150 n. 246), *riyāsa*[*t*] *al-'ulamā'* (154; but on the next page: *imāmatu'd-dunyā* and *riyāsatu'd-dīn*!), *baraka*[*t*] *al-waqt* and *baraka*[*t*] *al-'ilm* (157), *ḥawma*[*t*] *al-baḥth* (165), etc.

[44]The examples include verbs and participles in various forms: *yatajazā'* (for *yatajazza'u*, 43 n. 43), *yā'kul* (for *ya'kulu*, 48 n. 65), *mustaḥiq* (for *mustaḥiqq*, 65, 95 n. 22), *iltajā'a* (for *iltaja'a*, 66 n. 150), *li-yaḥṣul . . . wa-yartafiq* (for *li-yaḥṣula . . . wa-yartafiqa*, 76), *yastiḥiq* (for *yastaḥiqqu*, 79 n. 47), *yatalamadhu* (for *yatatalmadhu*, 79 n. 49), *jayyadan* (for *jayyidan*, 86 n. 88), *yataradid* (for *yataraddadu*, 113 n. 32), *yuḥibūnahu* (for *yuḥibbūnahu*, 115 n. 46), *muṭahhur* (for *muṭahhar*, 126), *yatawakkul* (for *yatawakkalu*, 128), *ḥadartu . . . ḥadathanā* (for *ḥaḍartu . . . ḥaddathanā*, 139 n. 183), *tā'khudhu . . . yaqrā'u . . . qarā'a* (for *ta'khudhu . . . yaqra'u . . . qara'a*, 145 n. 224), *yarwaya* (for *yarwiya,* 146 n. 226), *yaqrā'* (for *yaqra'u*, 147 n. 236), *jā* (for *jā'a*, 157 n. 36), *mutaṣaḥib* (for *mutaṣāḥib*[?], 160 n. 53), *lā taḥsan* (for *lā taḥsunu*, 174 n. 139), etc.

[45]This is also seen in highly respected publications; e.g., *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 114 (1994): 254-255. The misspelling seems to have stemmed from a misconception that there is a *long* vowel, instead of a *short* one, that precedes the unvoweled *hamzah*. Such a misconception and its ramifications seem to be quite common; for instance, Rabbat, *Citadel of Cairo*, a book whose transliteration is otherwise accurate and consistent, persistently spells terms such as *al-mū'tamar* (for *al-mu'tamar*, 17 n. 33; 217 n. 85), *Mā'mūn* (for *Ma'mūn*, 52), *Mū'arikh* (for *mu'arrikh*, also missing the


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meanings of these terms[47] are well received by Mamluk scholars, it is unlikely their spellings will be. By and large, the book, which is part of the *Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization* series, seems to lack careful editing and proofreading. As far as the transliteration of Arabic terms is concerned, the errors cited above aside, other inconsistencies[48] as well as misprints[49] are too numerous to count.

These general technical issues aside, we are also faced with some particular challenges in dealing with Mamluk texts. One such challenge, as some Mamluk scholars have already shown, is how to handle the striking textual similarities among some sources. This is partially due to the nature of Mamluk historical writing as a whole in that certain bits of information from one source have been copied nearly verbatim in other sources with or without acknowledgment.[50] This common practice among certain Mamluk historians sometimes leads to a very complex and puzzling circumstance wherein works ascribed to different authors turn out to share one identical textual tradition. Let me cite the case of al-Jazarī and al-Yūnīnī again: a close collation of the parts covering the early and middle Baḥrī period, that is, 690-698 (where al-Jazarī's version ends), from al-Yūnīnī's *Dhayl Mir'āt al-Zamān* and al-Jazarī's *Ḥawādith al-Zamān* reveals that the two works actually are one text, and it is likely that this portion of the text was originally penned by al-Jazarī and quoted and edited by al-Yūnīnī later. The problem here is that, of al-Jazarī's original version, only a fragment is extant in a unique manuscript (MS Paris, BN arabe 6973) and the bulk of the material has survived only in al-Yūnīnī's *Dhayl Mir'āt al-Zamān*, in two very well-preserved manuscripts, and in al-Dhahabī's abridged version. Al-Dhahabī's version has now been published, while al-Jazarī's version, except for a selective French translation by Sauvaget, has never been edited. Should we now publish two separate

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*shaddah* on *rā'*, 52 n. 6), *al-mū'minīn* (for *al-mu'minīn*, 69, 71, 72 n. 51), *Lū'lū'* (for *Lu'lu'*, 95, 174), *anshā'* (for *ansha'a*, 144 n. 36), *al-Mū'ayyad* (for *al-Mu'ayyad*, 305); the excessive long vowels are also found in spellings such as *Nūwayrī* (for *Nuwayrī*; *passim*), *qadīmān* (for *qadīman*, 218), etc. There are also some errors concerning case endings, verbs, and participles in Rabbat's work; e.g., *wassa'a* sāḥatuhu *wa nawwara* bāḥatuhu (for *sāḥatahu* and *bāḥatahu*, 191), *taṭṭilu* (for *tuṭillu*, 221), *muta'amimīn* (for *muta'ammimīn*, 269, 301), *yata'ayanūn* (for *yata'ayyanūn*, 290 n. 17).

[46]E.g., the term *manṣab* (stipendiary post), one of the "buzzwords" of the book (no explanation is given as to why the commonly used *manṣib* is overlooked and its rare form *manṣab* is chosen; all the dictionaries, except Golius, Freytag, Dozy, and Kazirmirski, give the form *manṣib*), *al-muqallad* (for *al-muqallid*[?], "follower of a legal scholar," 152), *dār al-su'ādah* (for *dār al-sa'ādah*, xv, map 2 and 91 n. 1), etc.

[47]For the *manṣab*, see index, "manṣab"; esp. chapter 3, "Manṣabs and the logic of fitna," 91-107.

[48]The spelling of case endings, for example, is totally random: one wonders why *khidmatan 'aẓīma* (for *'aẓīmatan*, if the ending is to be given, 117 n. 59), and *lah* (116 n. 52) but *lahu* (118), *qabrihi* (142) but *wajhih* (143), *min ẓahri* but *'alā ẓahr* (147 n. 237), and even when the case ending is given, it is not always correct (e.g., 148 n. 237, *ḥālatu* [for *ḥālata*]). Another major inconsistency is the treatment of the "sun-letters"; it is rather odd to see *'adīm al-nāẓir* while right in the next line *aḥdhaq an-nās* (157); such instances are legion. In addition, we never know why some Arabic terms are in italics while others (even occurring in the same line of the text) are not.

[49]For instance, the *hamzah*s are frequently mixed with the *'ayn*s; the *shaddah*s as well as other diacritical points are often either missing or added in wrong places.

[50]The subject has been treated extensively in Little, *Introduction*; the recent discussion by Chamberlain has touched upon the mechanics of book production and reproduction as well as the notion of mutual "benefiting" by quoting from each other held by historians and *ḥadīth* transmitters in Damascus; see Chamberlain, *Medieval Damascus*, 141ff.


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versions ascribed to al-Yūnīnī and al-Jazarī respectively; or are we better served by producing a critical edition of *both* versions in one volume?[51]

The next challenge is the frequency of grammatical irregularities in Mamluk historical writing, combined with a tendency, as will be discussed below, to use colloquial language on various occasions. The foremost of these irregularities is the use of the accusative form of the dual and plural even in the nominative case, and the indiscriminate use of the subjunctive mood in plural verbs, among others. The question is: should we publish ″ungrammatical″ texts or, rather, their ″normalized″ versions?[52]

Another technical challenge in editing Mamluk sources is the making of indexes, especially indexes of proper names. Mamluk historical and biographical works are full of names of Turkish, Persian, and Mongolian origin; the matter is complicated by the pervasive use of *al-Dīn* compound titles. A person is likely to be mentioned as Muḥammad, or by a well-known nickname such as Ibn al-Bayyā‘ah, or as al-Shaykh Shams al-Dīn, or al-Amīr Sayf al-Dīn, for example. Hans Robert Roemer′s and Ulrich Haarmann′s editions of the *Kanz al-Durar* have set forth a system in which a person′s given name is usually listed as the main entry while cross-references are made by listing his commonly known name and the *al-Dīn* title, or even the variant forms of his given name as well. This method of proper name indexing has been applied in several publications under review, but has largely been ignored in others. One hopes that future publications provide the necessary indexes, thus making the study of Mamluk sources less difficult than it now is.

Thirty years ago, Cahen made no apology for the fact that one of his most significant articles ″was devoted to such elementary matters,″ namely, the very basic methodological issues concerning the editing of medieval Arabic chronicles. Some thirty years later, his call is by no means out of date; and as yet the high standard he urged to provide the reader, not only with ″the textual, linguistic and historical explanations which help him in understanding the narrative, but also give him the references to all other sources,″[53] has yet to be met. It is my belief that despite technical advances in reproduction, which has greatly facilitated access to manuscripts, one of the main tasks for modern Mamluk historians is still to edit critically and publish the sources. In addition to ″literary works,″ i.e., chronicles, biographical dictionaries, and geographical and administrative works that await editing, Mamluk archival documents (official and non-official correspondence, *waqfīyah* archives, legal documents, business transactions, etc.) constitute a field that so far has hardly been explored.[54] The editing and publishing of such materials

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[51]In my edition of al-Yūnīnī′s *Dhayl*, his version is presented as the main text while variant readings from al-Jazarī′s version are supplied in the upper apparatus. The purpose here is, first, to present the two nearly identical versions in one volume; and, second, to demonstrate the visible textual similarities between the two and thus help the reader gain a more intimate and sustained look at the actual working relationship between the two authors. However, I am waiting for reactions to this experiment.

[52]Some scholars opt to put the grammatically correct sentences in the narrative, while indicating the original irregular ones in the apparatus. However, the other way around, i.e., to maintain the irregular ones in the main text and supply corrections in the apparatus, also has its merits, in that it will give the reader a sense, or taste, of the language used at the time in scholarly writings. Again, this is a matter of choice.

[53]″Editing Arabic Chronicles,″ 5.

[54]That modern students′ interest in original Mamluk documents has grown rapidly can be seen from S. D. Goitein′s study of the Cairo Geniza documents (1967-1984), Little′s work on the materials from al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf (1984), and Amīn′s study of the *waqfīyah* documents (1980-1981). The most recent discussions


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holds great promise for future studies. And besides, Cahen´s suggestion to publish lists, with full references, of all the persons listed in those bulky Mamluk biographical dictionaries and chronicles, some of which might never be published,[55] still remains very inviting. Shall we give CD-ROM a try?

## II

Paradoxically, despite the Mamluk period´s richness in sources, especially biographical literature, we have yet to produce a book-length biography of any of the great Mamluk historians, a study that would, as R. Stephen Humphreys expresses the ideal, analyze ″the interplay between the life and career of a historian, the cultural currents in which he was immersed, and the development of his thought and writing;″[56] a study that would frame Mamluk history in not only political, social, military, and institutional but also personal and intellectual terms. It is true that our knowledge of the lives and labors of great Mamluk historians has been expanded enormously during the past decade or so. However, we still lack, except for a few figures of Ibn Khaldūn´s (d. 1406) magnitude, biographical and intellectual studies on Mamluk historians[57] that can match, in scale and depth, the work done in our sister fields, e.g., in Ayyubid historiography, David Morray´s seminal study of Ibn al-'Adīm (d. 1262);[58] and in Ottoman historiography, Cornell Fleischer´s biography of Mustafa Ali.[59] With regard to the *'ulamā'* of the Mamluk era as a whole, attention has long been given to the jurists and theologians such as Ibn Taymīyah (d. 1328), Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 1355), and al-Suyūṭī (d. 1505).[60] The only historians that have received book-length treatments, i.e., Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī and al-Suyūṭī, are, however, presented mainly as *'ālim*s, not just as historians.[61] Nevertheless, full-length biographical studies of

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of the study of Mamluk documents are to be found in Daniel Crecelius´s introduction (dealing mainly with general *waqf* documents) to a special issue on *waqf*s and other institutions of religious/philanthropic endowment in comparative perspective, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 38, no. 3 (1995): 247-261, and Chamberlain, *Medieval Damascus*, 2-3, 12-21, although Chamberlain´s own work is based largely on conventional ″literary″ sources. Recent publications on the subject include P. M. Holt, *Early Mamluk Diplomacy (1260-1290): Treaties of Baybars and Qalāwūn with Christian Rulers* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), and Werner Diem, ″Vier arabische Rechtsurkunden aus dem Ägypten des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts,″ *Der Islam* 72, no. 2 (1995): 193-257.

[55]″Editing Arabic Chronicles,″ 18-19.

[56]*Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 135.

[57]A number of bio-bibliographical studies of Mamluk historians, written in Arabic, has been published over the past years. Nearly all these publications, however, are of a popular nature: e.g., Muḥammad Kamāl al-Dīn 'Izz al-Dīn´s *Silsilat al-Mu'arrikhīn*, published in Beirut by 'Ālam al-Kutub, including *al-Maqrīzī Mu'arrikhan* (1990), *Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī Mu'arrikhan* (1987), *Abū al-'Abbās al-Qalqashandī Mu'arrikhan* (1990), *'Abd al-Bāsiṭ al-Ḥanafī Mu'arrikhan* (1990), *al-Badr al-Zarkashī Mu'arrikhan* (1989); and Ḥusayn 'Āṣī´s *al-Maqrīzī Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn 'Alī ibn 'Abd al-Qādir al-'Ubaydī 766-845 H./1366-1441 M. Mu'arrikh al-Duwal al-Islamīyah fī Miṣr* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmīyah, 1992), and his *Ibn Iyās Mu'arrikh al-Fatḥ al-'Uthmānī li-Miṣr* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmīyah, 1993).

[58]*An Ayyubid Notable and His World: Ibn al-'Adīm and Aleppo as Portrayed in his Biographical Dictionary of People Associated with the City* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994).

[59]*Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: A Biographical Study of the Historian Mustafa Ali, 1541-1600* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

[60]E.g., Elizabeth Sartain, *Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī: Biography and Background* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975).

[61]Sabri Kawash, *Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (1376-1449 A.D.): A Study of the Background, Education, and*


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the great, and less-than-great, Mamluk historians would shed much light not only on their lives and works but also on the social and cultural implications behind the flourishing of historical writing during the Mamluk era. For instance, in an attempt to answer the question posed by Little, ″why so many historians of high caliber flourished at a time when all other arts and sciences save those connected with architecture were in decline[?],″ [62] previous research has largely focused on the ″big picture″ issues, i.e., the political, cultural, and psychological factors during a time of crisis (e.g., the Frankish and Mongol invasions), when the concern for Muslim communal identity and the protection of Arabic-Islamic culture was high.[63] This is, in my opinion, just one part of the story. By examining some representative individuals′ lives and careers we may have more success in understanding why this period not only saw an overall flowering of historical writing as compared to other traditional Muslim scholarly pursuits, but also why certain genres such as royal biographies, chancery manuals, geographical treatises (*masālik*), and topographical tracts (*khiṭaṭ*) flourished. This all came about under the pressure of a very practical demand for perfecting the ″craft of the chancery clerk″ (*adab al-kātib*) under the Mamluk *dīwān* system, a constant source of fierce competition and animosity among the intelligentsia striving for status, recognition, and a better standard of living. In addition, this kind of biographical study would also significantly enrich our understanding of the overall intellectual environment of that time and eventually lead to a larger framework for Mamluk intellectual history. A short list of such biographical studies would naturally include such names as al-Dhahabī, al-Maqrīzī,[64] Ibn Taghrībirdī, and al-Sakhāwī. On the other hand, selected case studies of the lives and careers of some lesser-known authors, i.e., those from non-traditional backgrounds such as the ″middle class″ that emerged for the first time in Islamic history during the early Mamluk period,[65] Mamluk soldiers of lower status, petty chancery clerks, etc., surely holds the promise of fresh and interesting observations.

It is understandable that the traditional bio-bibliographic treatment of a given author may not stir the enthusiasm of today′s researcher. In this respect, Morray′s study of the Ayyubid historian Ibn al-ʻAdīm and his principal work *Bughyat al-Ṭalab fī Taʾrīkh Ḥalab* may offer some new insights and directions for research. In Morray′s study, three themes, Ibn al-ʻAdīm himself, his world, and the compilation and writing of the *Bughyah*,[66] are treated together organically. In the chapter on Ibn al-ʻAdīm′s ″network,″ so to speak, which constitutes the bulk of the study (pp. 20-121), the delineation of Ibn al-ʻAdīm′s Aleppine contemporaries, based on information drawn largely from the *Bughyah*, is amazingly reminiscent of the medieval Islamic *mashyakhah* genre,[67] but with a modern

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*Career of a ʻĀlim in Egypt* (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1969).

[62]*Introduction*, 1.

[63]For a discussion of the political and psychological factors that are considered to have contributed to the flourishing of historical writing in general and biographical literature in particular during the Mamluk period, see Dorothea Krawulsky′s introduction to her edition of *Masālik al-Abṣār* (Beirut: al-Markaz al-Islāmī lil-Buḥūth, 1987), 29-37.

[64]Al-Maqrīzī is also listed by Humphreys as one of ″the most obvious subjects″ of such pursuits; see *Islamic History,* 135.

[65]See Ulrich Haarmann, *Quellenstudien zur frühen Mamlukenzeit* (Freiburg im Breisgau: D. Robischon, 1969) 129ff.

[66]Morray, *An Ayyubid Notable*, 20.

[67]The *mashyakhah* genre has commonly been defined as lists of one particular learned person′s teachers; it is significant to note here that some *mashyakhah* works also contain lists of the teachers′ students, that is,




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twist: never before, to my knowledge, has a medieval Islamic historian's life and milieu been examined in such a way wherein all the people he was associated with, and influenced by, are presented side by side with abundant parallel references for cross-checking.[68] This is followed by detailed discussions of Ibn al-'Adīm's collection of his material, his composition of the *Bughyah*, and his personal reflections on his work (pp. 151-95). We not only learn a great deal about a remarkable historian and his milieu, but also a lot about the workings of his, and to a certain extent his colleagues', minds, their view of the world, their mentality, ideas, assumptions, and "tastes" concerning historical writing, as well as the textual devices employed in conveying such information.

In this connection, it appears that, in addition to the study of individual historians, another area worth investigating would be the study of Mamluk historians as groups—that is, those who were associated with particular settings (e.g., Cairo, Damascus, Aleppo, etc.), or who shared ideological and professional bonds (e.g., the Ḥanbalīs in Syria, the *kātibs* in Cairo, etc.), or the same mentalities, values, and assumptions, and thus demonstrated similar approaches to their writing. This naturally raises another question that has intrigued modern scholars for a long time, namely, the question of whether there was a so-called "Egyptian school" and a "Syrian school" of historical writing in the Mamluk era. Although more will be said when we discuss the development of genres and forms in Mamluk historical writing, it should be emphasized here that the study of the lives and intellectual environments of these "groups" may well shed light on the formation of the conceptions and assumptions shared by these historians and the approaches favored by them.

To ask whether there was an Egyptian school or Syrian school is to ask to what extent they are really *different*. The detectable differences in form and content (which will be a topic of discussion below) aside, other areas such as the differences in background and life experience also merit investigation. To clarify this point, I will survey two groups of chroniclers, Egyptian and Syrian respectively, who lived and wrote around the same time, shortly before al-Dhahabī,[69] that is, during the late seventh/thirteenth and early eighth/fourteenth centuries, and look at the areas of *difference* that might suggest additional topics for investigation.

First is the difference in *career paths*. Previous scholarship has confirmed that since the late Ayyubid period, there were three types of historians: statesmen, court historians, and the *'ulamā'*.[70] Nevertheless, nearly all the Syrian chroniclers, except for Abū al-Fidā', an Ayyubid prince of Ḥamāh, belong to this last category, i.e., they were

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the fellow students of the person in question.

[68]Previous studies of Mamluk *'ulamā'* and intellectual life such as those by Carl Petry, *The Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981) and Louis Pouzet, *Damas au VIIe/XIIIe siècle: Vie et structures religieuses d'une métropole islamique* (Beirut: Dar el-Machreq, 1988) were aimed at drawing a larger and more comprehensive landscape, rather than focusing on a particular person and his surrounding.

[69]This is taking into consideration that al-Dhahabī, a Damascene, is believed to have been the one who finally set the stage for the later development of Islamic historiography, not only in Syria, but also in Egypt and elsewhere; and as such, the differences, if there were any, would be much more clearly seen in the pre-Dhahabī chroniclers and their writings.

[70]See Haarmann, *Quellenstudien*, 131-132. Haarmann's point here is not contradicted by Humphreys's assertion that prior to this time there were isolated individuals representative of some of these groups; *Islamic History*, 131.


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local religious scholars:[71] Al-Birzālī spent most of his life as a *ḥadīth* professor;[72] al-Jazarī was a renowned *ḥadīth* scholar;[73] al-Yūnīnī had taught *ḥadīth* and was, at some point in his life, the Ḥanbalī grand master in Ba'labakk;[74] and al-Dhahabī was well-known as "the *ḥadīth* transmitter of the time" (*muḥaddith al-'aṣr*) atop all his other titles. The career background of their Egyptian counterparts is much more complex. On the one hand, all the Egyptian chroniclers in question were members of the Mamluk military elite: Baybars al-Manṣūrī, once the governor of the fortress of al-Karak, held the highest feudal rank: amir of a hundred and commander of a thousand.[75] Ibn al-Dawādārī, though himself a low-ranking officer, had the opportunity to accompany his father, a grand amir who was in the service of al-Malik al-Nāṣir, on numerous occasions and thus witnessed many events.[76] The anonymous author (fl. 14th century) of the chronicle edited by Zetterstéen[77] was himself a soldier who fought in various Mamluk campaigns during al-Malik al-Nāṣir's reign. A lesser-known figure, Ibn 'Abd al-Raḥīm (fl. 1295), who wrote a continuation of Ibn Wāṣil's (d. 1298) *Mufarrij al-Kurūb fī Akhbār Banī Ayyūb* up to the year 695/1295 or 96, was a Mamluk official who accompanied Sultan Baybars's expedition to al-Rūm in 675/1277.[78] It is thus noteworthy that none of the major Egyptian chronicles of the Baḥrī period were, according to the current state of our knowledge, written by the Cairene *'ulamā'*, or so-called "men of the pen" (*rijāl al-qalam*), whose interests seemed to be elsewhere, such as the pursuit of a career in the Mamluk bureaucratic establishment. Examples include al-Nuwayrī, the author of *Nihāyat al-Arab*, whose civil service record includes various posts such as *nāẓir al-juyūsh*, *ṣāḥib al-dīwān*, and *nāẓir al-dīwān*, and al-'Umarī, the author of *Masālik al-Abṣār*, who occupied high posts in the Mamluk chancellery, as did his father and brother. It is by no means an accident that the three major Mamluk geographical and administrative encyclopedias (the third being al-Qalqashandī's *Ṣubḥ al-A'shá*) were all compiled by this group of Cairene *kātibs*, i.e., civil bureaucrats. As for the "court historians," their primary concern was definitely writing royal biographies and treatises devoted to praise of the sultan.[79]

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[71]See also Little, *Introduction*, 46.

[72]Franz Rosenthal, "al-Birzālī," *EI*$^2$, 1:1238-1239.

[73]Haarmann, *Quellenstudien*, 13-22.

[74]Guo, "al-Yūnīnī," 11-27.

[75]The recent studies of Baybars al-Manṣūrī's career, especially his participation in Mamluk campaigns, include: Haarmann, "Arabic in Speech, Turkish in Lineage: Mamluks and Their Sons in the Intellectual Life of Fourteenth-Century Egypt and Syria," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 33 (1988): 95, 101f; Amalia Levanoni, *A Turning Point in Mamluk History: The Third Reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn (1310-1341)* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 15ff; and Reuven Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-Īlkhānid War, 1260-1281* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 13, 45, 63-64, 84-85, 188-191, 197-199.

[76]Haarmann, *Quellenstudien*, 61-84; Little, *Introduction*, 10-18.

[77]Karl Wilhelm Zetterstéen, ed., *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Mamlukensultane in den Jahren 690-741 der Higra nach arabischen Handschriften* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1919); Little, *Introduction*, 18-24.

[78]This information about this person is only found in Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks*, 4, 136, 169f, 219; he is also briefly mentioned in Haarmann, *Quellenstudien*, 102 n. 4.

[79]The most recent discussions on the subject are Wilferd Madelung, "A Treatise on the Imamate Dedicated to Sultan Baybars I," *Proceedings of the 14th Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants*, Part 1, ed. A. Fodor, *The Arabist: Budapest Studies in Arabic* 13-14 (1988): 91-102, and Remke Kruk, "History and Apocalypse: Ibn al-Nafīs' Justification of Mamluk Rule," *Der Islam* 72, no. 2 (1995): 324-337.


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Second is the difference in *ethnic*, *ideological*, *and intellectual background*. Although known to have been ″fond of theological studies,″[80] Baybars al-Manṣūrī had no formal training in the traditional Arabic-Islamic curriculum, and it has been suggested that he wrote his chronicle with the help of a Christian secretary.[81] There is no evidence to suggest that Ibn al-Dawādārī or Ibn ʻAbd al-Raḥīm received any formal education either.[82] Nor did Zetterstéen´s anonymous chronicler, clearly a Mamluk soldier, have much formal education in these subjects. There is, therefore, very little possibility for us to speculate on the intellectual pursuits and ideological affiliations of these Mamluks of Turkish or Mongolian stock.[83] Writing chronicles seems to have been a means by which they fulfilled either a personal interest or a sense of duty in recording the *events* they either experienced, witnessed, or learned about from others. The concentration on political and military affairs and the tendency to use colloquial vernacular, instead of classical Arabic, in their writings seems to suggest this. On the contrary, all the Syrian historians in question had not only gone through the full traditional Islamic curriculum, but nearly all of them were, as mentioned above, professors.[84] Among various scholarly pursuits, the transmission of *ḥadīth* was for them the highest calling, while writing chronicles was considered an ancillary discipline, a way to preserve information about the lives and achievements of the *ḥadīth* transmitters of each period within the framework of an annalistic chronicle. It is no wonder that in these authors´ works, a great deal of attention is given to the *rijāl* material, i.e., the lives and works of *ḥadīth* transmitters. The incorporation of the *rijāl* genre into an annalistic form, which is conventionally attributed to the Baghdad Ḥanbalī Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 1198),[85] was brought to completion by this group of Syrian authors, and the presentation of obituaries-biographies (*wafayāt*) next to each year´s events (*ḥawādith*), the chronicle proper, became the norm for medieval Islamic historiography. It should also be noted that the tools of *ḥadīth* criticism evidently had a certain influence on these Syrian *ḥadīth* scholar-historians´ methodology.[86] One notes also that their sensitivity about the competition among the local *ʻulamāʼ*, both in Cairo and Damascus,[87] is clearly reflected in their tireless effort to record promotions and dismissals within the learned circles of the two cities as well as numerous juicy anecdotes about such events, the kind of materials rarely seen in the Egyptian chronicles. On the other hand, the Egyptian learned persons, i.e., al-

[80]Eliyahu Ashtor, ″Baybars al-Manṣūrī,″ *EI*$^2$, 1:1127-1128; Little, *Introduction*, 4.

[81]Eliyahu Ashtor, ″Baybars al-Manṣūrī,″ *EI*$^2$, 1:1127-1128; for Baybars al-Manṣūrī´s religious learning, see Levanoni, *Turning Point,* 14-19, 23ff.

[82]See Bernard Lewis, ″Ibn al-Dawādārī,″ *EI*$^2$, 3:744; also see Haarmann, *Quellenstudien*, 70-79.

[83]The intellectual pursuits of the Mamluks have been discussed in recent scholarship; see: Haarmann, ″Arabic in Speech, Turkish in Lineage,″ 81-114; and most recently, Jonathan Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 143ff., especially 146-160.

[84]For the indigenous scholarly tradition in Syria in Mamluk times, which is believed to have been ″more vigorous than in Egypt (in Haarmann´s words),″ see Henri Laoust, ″Le hanbalisme sous les Mamlouks Bahrides (658-784/1260-1382),″ *Revue des études islamiques* 28 (1960): 1-71; Haarmann, ″Arabic in Speech, Turkish in Lineage,″ 85f.

[85]Humphreys, *Islamic History*, 240.

[86]The most current discussion of the significance of *ḥadīth* transmission in Damascus at the time and the methodology involved is seen in Chamberlain, *Medieval Damascus*, 138f. Berkey is also of the opinion that the focus in many Cairene *madrasah*s was on *fiqh*, while *ḥadīth* took priority in *madrasah*s in Damascus, see *Transmission of Knowledge*, 82f.

[87]A fascinating examination of the subject is Chamberlain, *Medieval Damascus,* esp. 91-107.


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Nuwayrī and al-'Umarī, though themselves of the *'ulamā'* class, were from quite a different educational and intellectual background as compared to their Syrian counterparts: well-versed in the so-called *adab al-kātib*, ″the craft of the clerk,″ al-Nuwayrī and al-'Umarī were mainly concerned with the functional aspects of history, and their writings are, not surprisingly, manuals of the bureaucratic system and the formulae to be utilized in its daily executive exercises, occasionally with an idealistic and perhaps ahistorical tone.

Third is the difference of *working relationship*. The Egyptian authors were basically independent individuals.[88] There is little evidence to suggest that they held shared values, or that they regarded their writing as a common enterprise. Conversely, the Syrian authors seemed to enjoy a kind of network: al-Jazarī and al-Yūnīnī′s affiliation with Ibn Taymīyah and the Ḥanbalī institutions in Ba'labakk and Damascus is well documented. Al-Birzālī had been al-Yūnīnī′s student and later became his and al-Jazarī′s editor (the first volume of al-Yūnīnī′s *Dhayl Mir'āt al-Zamān*, we are told, was dictated by the author to al-Birzālī in person). He not only had close contacts with Ibn Taymīyah but also passed on a great deal of information acquired from him to al-Yūnīnī and al-Jazarī. Both al-Birzālī and al-Yūnīnī had taught *ḥadīth* in Damascus and Ba'labakk, and among their students was al-Dhahabī, who also had studied *ḥadīth* with al-Yūnīnī′s brother 'Alī.[89] This extended network no doubt had a direct impact on the assumptions, thinking, and writing of these Syrian historians: Abū Shāmah (d. 1268), for instance, followed Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī closely and the latter′s *Mir'āt al-Zamān* was also the model for al-Yūnīnī′s continuation, which in its turn influenced al-Dhahabī′s writing greatly; al-Yūnīnī, al-Birzālī, and al-Jazarī′s writings were, as Humphreys puts it, ″closely linked to one another in ways that are still not wholly clear″;[90] al-Kutubī (d. 1362) and Ibn Kathīr, a disciple of Ibn Taymīyah, both relied on al-Yūnīnī, al-Birzālī, and al-Jazarī for information on the early Mamluk period in their universal histories. It goes without saying that the study of, in Chamberlain′s words, ″the bonds created by interactions with their *shaykhs* and others in the ritualized environment of the production of knowledge″ in Damascus[91] will shed significant light on our understanding of the textual milieu of their writings.

To sum up, it may be misleading at this stage to talk about a ″court culture″ in early Mamluk Cairo as opposed to an indigenous intellectual milieu in Damascus,[92] and thus the notion of the Egyptian ″court chroniclers″ vs. Damascene *'ulamā'* historians is perhaps an oversimplification. However, it is reasonable that the differences discussed above would have had an influence on these historians′ writings. For instance, the examination of their different career paths would illuminate what kinds of events they had experienced and what kinds of sources they had been exposed to. A probe into their diverse intellectual backgrounds would help us gain insight into their different views of the world and their diverse approaches to recording history, as well as their distinct styles and formats.

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[88]See Little, *Introduction*, 19f.

[89]For a discussion of the relationship between al-Yūnīnī, al-Jazarī, al-Birzālī, and al-Dhahabī, see Guo, ″al-Yūnīnī,″ 106-113, 120f.

[90]*Islamic History*, 240-241.

[91]*Medieval Damascus*, 139; on the notion of mutual ″benefit″ among the Damascene *'ulamā'*, see 112ff., 118f.; on the copying of books and sharing information among the Damascene *'ulamā'*, see 141f.

[92]Haarmann has suggested that a Mamluk ″court culture″ did not exist until the late fourteenth century, that is, the end of the Baḥrī period, and that it blossomed during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; see ″Arabic in Speech, Turkish in Lineage,″ 82, 86ff.


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Moreover, the investigation of their varied ″networks″ would shed much light on the textual relationship between them, a subject that has long puzzled students of Mamluk source-critical studies.

The recent studies of the *'ulamā'* elite in Mamluk times by Louis Pouzet, Michael Chamberlain, and Jonathan Berkey hold great promise for this field by setting the stage for such inquiries on a *macro*-historical landscape. Another area into which we should seek to advance, in my opinion, is case studies on a *micro*-historical level, studies that would present and analyze the lives and careers of an individual, or a group of historians, within the context of their social, intellectual, and cultural milieus. Some recently-published sources, among them the *ṭabaqāt* and *mashyakhah* works,[93] and new methodological avenues and research tools such as the macroscopical analytical approach, the use of *waqfīyah* documents (Berkey), and new ways of reading conventional biographical dictionaries (Morray, Chamberlain), will surely provide the impetus for more valuable research to come.

## III

As already noted above, biographical studies would help us to appreciate the assumptions and methodology of the historians of the Mamluk era. This would also benefit our study of the development of genres and forms in Mamluk historiography, a subject that has received much less attention than it deserves. It is really a pity that, since the works of Rosenthal,[94] Little,[95] and Haarmann[96] in the sixties and seventies, we have seen very few studies devoted to this very important subject. Although no one would disagree that the amount of Arabic historical writing reached an unprecedented level during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, that many fundamental changes and developments in pre-modern Arabic-Islamic historiography occurred during this era, or that many of the genres of medieval Arabic-Islamic historical writing were begun, reformulated, or perfected during Mamluk times, we must admit that the state of our current knowledge of these developments, particularly the textual ones, is far from being exhaustive.

Among the various issues concerning the forms and genres of Mamluk historical writing, some stand out as having long captured the attention of scholars but never having been thoroughly investigated. In what follows I hope to illuminate some of these issues by reviewing current work on them and posing questions that might invite further exploration.

*Question One*: Was there a ″breakdown″ (*Auflösung*) (in Haarmann's words) or a trend deviating from the classic medieval Islamic standard in Mamluk historical writing? Previous attempts to answer the question, first posed by Haarmann in his *Quellenstudien*

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[93]For example, al-Birzālī's version of Ibn Jamā'ah's *Mashyakhah*, ed. Muwaffaq ibn 'Abd Allāh (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1988), 2 vols., and Ibn Kathīr's Shāfi'ī *ṭabaqāt* and its *dhayl* by al-'Ibādī, ed. Aḥmad 'Umar Hāshim et al., 3 vols. (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqāfah al-Dīnīyah, 1993), are among the newly edited and published biographic sources.

[94]*Historiography*, esp. 71-86 (on annalistic form), 100-105 (on biography), 146-50 (on world history), 179-86 (on the use of verse in historical writing).

[95]*Introduction*, passim.

[96]*Quellenstudien*, esp. 119-198; idem, ″Auflösung und Bewahrung der klassischen Formen arabischer Geschichtsschreibung in der Zeit der Mamlūken,″ *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft* 121 (1971): 46-60.


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(1970) and elaborated by him in several subsequent articles, might be summarized as follows: (1) With regard to content, although Mamluk chronicles still followed the traditional ″Ṭabarī″ mode, i.e., they were arranged within an annalistic framework, the content of the entries in Mamluk texts is often of a personal nature rather than the tales of kings and saints that were the core of the classic *ta'rīkh* genre. (2) With regard to form, the late Ayyubid and early Mamluk periods witnessed the emergence of such new genres as the *dhayl* (supplement),[97] as well as new formats such as biographies, as an integral part of the annals.[98] (3) With regard to style, ″*some* . . . Mamluk chroniclers . . . cultivated a new, ′literarized′ mode of historical writing by granting disproportionately high importance to elements of the wondrous and exotic, to popular motifs, to the vernacular language, etc.″[99] A number of factors, Haarmann argues, triggered such developments, or ″breaking down″ of the old norm: the diversity of authorship stimulated the introduction of new elements ranging from high *adab* culture (poetry in classic form, rhymed prose [*al-saj'*], witty sayings [*al-ajwibah al-muskitah*], etc.) to mass entertainment (folk romances, anecdotes, marvels and miracles [*'ajā'ib wa-gharā'ib*], the use of colloquial vernacular, etc.). Also, the changing mechanics in the process of composing and circulating historical writings, which is characterized by Haarmann as a kind of ″public participation,″[100] made it easy for later editors, scribes, or even owners, to add to the texts some personal, local, or partisan flavor.

These ″deviations″ have also been observed by Bernd Radtke, a veteran student of medieval Muslim historiography, but he has come to quite different conclusions. Radtke′s *Weltgeschichte und Weltbeschreibung im mittelalterlichen Islam* (1992) is a collection of his studies on the subject of world history and cosmography in Islam. The bulk (pp. 206-447) of this dense, but unevenly presented, collection focuses on two particular historians: the Ayyubid Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī and the Mamluk Ibn al-Dawādārī as a case study for the author′s theory of ″Islamic cosmology.″ For Radtke, many of the elements in Mamluk historical writing regarded by modern scholars as ″innovations″ can be, by and large, found also in early Islamic historiography and thus must not in themselves be construed as ″deviations″ from the traditional norm, but rather, reflect the continuation of an Islamic ″salvation history.″

Radtke′s studies are based on a wide theoretical framework aimed at establishing and comparing ″parallel developments concerning the *forms* of historical writings in both Islamic and Christian world-chronicles,″ because ″in both, the history of the world is written within the framework of an *imago mundi*, a conceptual picture of the world.″ According to Radtke, within Islam there were two world views:

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[97]″Auflösung,″ 51-52; for more on the subject, see also Caesar Farah, *The Dhayl in Medieval Arabic Historiography* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1967).

[98]″Auflösung,″ 52f.

[99]Haarmann′s emphasis; idem, review of *Weltgeschichte und Weltbeschreibung im Mittelalterlichen Islam,* by Bernd Radtke, *JAOS* 115, no. 1 (1995): 134; also see idem, ″Auflösung,″ 49 (″Literarisierung der inneren Form″).

[100]According to Haarmann, first drafts and ″work-in progress″ notes were no longer the authors′ private property, but rather, a great number of them were put at the public′s mercy immediately after their having been written down, only to be revised and verified in the course of public circulation. Many works were therefore handed down in their abridged (*mukhtaṣar*), or draft (*muswaddah*), form, not their final version; see *Quellenstudien*, 126ff.


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> Both have their own way of presenting time, subjects and of using various literary devices. Salvationist world-history admonishes and educates the soul by teaching the truth. It makes use of the annalistic form, and its cosmological model is the so-called ´Islamic cosmology´. . . . The other kind of world-chronicle may be called cultural history. . . . Its intention is not only to admonish the soul, but also to entertain and to convey practical knowledge. The literary devices have their parallels in Classical rhetoric. The cosmological model and the geographical schemes come from Antiquity. As well as the annalistic form, it uses history of dynasties and caliphates.

As different as these models may be, Radtke admits that ″[f]rom the thirteenth century onwards a mixture of salvationist, cultural, and world history as entertainment became the norm.″[101] In other words, all the Mamluk historical writings, including Ibn al-Dawādārī´s much discussed world history, *Kanz al-Durar*, examined in detail, sometimes tediously, by Radtke, fall into the category of this ″mixture.″ Radtke´s discussion of the *taṣdīq* vs. *ta'ajjub*/*ta'jīb* in Islamic historiography, namely, the double character of history as both revealed and true (*taṣdīq*) as well as astounding and amazing (*ta'jīb*), a distinction largely ignored by previous students in the field, is thought-provoking. This vigorous discourse not only expounds the old Aristotelian skepticism against history as a mere craft (*technē)* but gives this notion an Islamic interpretation, which will help us to reach a better understanding of the dynamic nature of medieval Islamic historiography in general, and to justify the changes and alterations, or even deviations from the classical norm by historians of the Mamluk era. Ironically, however, many of Radtke´s own conclusions seem to suggest contradictions. For instance, Ibn al-Dawādārī was, as Radtke tries to demonstrate, merely a disciple of Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, who followed the latter´s cosmography so faithfully that his own universal history *Kanz al-Durar,* or at least the first volume, is nothing more than a revised, shortened version of its model. No significant distinction can thus be made between the two under the rubric of Islamic ″salvation history.″[102]

Radtke´s overall framework is challenged by Haarmann who, with full acknowledgment of its ″rich scholarly yield,″ criticizes it as largely derived from a ″strangely static world view, as far as the potential of medieval Islamic culture for change is concerned.″[103] Opposed to Radtke´s ″Islamic salvation history,″ Haarmann warns modern students to be more careful and sensitive in tracing down the ″tiniest developments and processes, even abortive ones, as necessarily more significant than the centuries-long apparent immutability of pre-modern mentalities, societies and institutions.″ Here Haarmann advocates that we lift the study of Mamluk historiography to a whole new level, that is, as part of the inquiry into the ″static vs. dynamic″ nature of pre-modern Islamic intellectual life. Thus the ideological controversy, outlined by Haarmann as taking place ″between the historian looking for development and alteration and the sociologist of culture captivated by the phenomena of continuity,″ may be illustrated in the cultivation of a new, ″literarized″ mode of historical writing that has been singled out by Haarmann as the most

[101]*Weltgeschichte*, 543-544.
[102]Ibid., 102-103, 206-208.
[103]*JAOS* 115, no. 1 (1995): 134.


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remarkable measure in evaluating such changes and developments. The key issue here, Haarmann argues, is not whether some of the ″novel″ elements, e.g., the notion of *ta'ajjub*, already existed in early Islamic historiography, but rather ″the *quantitative* change, the sharp increase of literary insertions in the writing of those few historians who, as a corollary, met the criticism of their more traditionally minded peers.″ However, more questions may be posed: Is the ″literarized″ mode in historical writing the only demonstrable feature of the ″dynamic nature″ of Islamic culture during Mamluk times? To what extent is the quantity of *adab* insertions ″decisive″ enough in measuring such changes? As for the ″few historians″ listed by Haarmann as representing this ″trend,″ i.e., Ibn al-Dawādārī, al-Jazarī, al-Nuwayrī, and Ibn Iyās (who lived much later), what are the similarities and dissimilarities among their writings; and were they the only ones who headed in this direction?

This particular area has been further explored by Otfried Weintritt in his *Formen spätmittelalterlicher islamischer Geschichtsdarstellung* (1992). A revised version of the author's 1988 Freiburg dissertation, this handsomely produced monograph, volume 45 of the *Beiruter Texte und Studien* series, presents a literary analysis of al-Nuwayrī al-Iskandarānī's (d. after 1374) *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, a chronicle describing the attack on, and brief occupation of, Alexandria by the Christian king of Cyprus Peter I in 767/1365. It also examines and compares the work in question with two other related sources: Badr al-Dīn al-'Aynī's (d. 1451) royal biography of al-Mu'ayyad[104] Shaykh (r. 1412-21) and Ṭaṭar (r. 1421), and Ibn Abī Ḥajalah's (d. 1375) *Kitāb Sukkardān al-Sulṭān*, a biography of Sultan Ḥasan (r. 1347-51; 1354-60). Weintritt's work is of special interest for several reasons. First, it introduces a number of Mamluk historical sources that have hitherto never been studied by modern scholarship. Second, it stands out as perhaps the only monograph in years that tackles problems of topoi, motifs, textual devices, and literary styles of medieval Arabic historiography in general, and Mamluk historiography in particular.

After two introductory essays (chapters A and B) on methodological issues and a presentation of the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* and its author, chapter C, which constitutes the core of Weintritt's work (pp. 37-179), is a detailed literary analysis of a wide range of issues concerning the perception, reflection and presentation of history by the author from a Muslim viewpoint. Under the rubric of the ″medieval Islamic concept of salvation history,″ that is, as defined by Weintritt, he examines the experience of the defeat of Islam that led to a reinterpretation of the historical event by these Muslim historians resulting in the conclusion by them that Christian superiority was not real, and that Muslims were ″intrinsically superior to the unbelievers.″[105] Here Weintritt has meticulously examined a host of literary techniques utilized by al-Nuwayrī al-Iskandarānī to convey such a message. Among these are *istiṭrād* (conceptualized digression, which, as Weintritt explains, ″employs individual historical information as a thematic basis for the systematic insertion of material derived from historiographical and non-historiographical literature,″ pp. 87-100, 223), fictionalization (e.g., the failure of Peter I, pp. 101-117), the *ajwibah muskitah* topos (″witty reply that would silence [the opponent],″ pp. 118-121), and various compositional techniques such as fabricative syntax (pp. 122-125), typology and magic of figures (*jafr*), proverbial prophesying (pp. 126-134), etc. As a whole, Weintritt argues, the work under

[104]Wrongly spelled as ″al-Mu'aiyad,″ 222.
[105]*Formen*, 222.


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study deliberately contains very little factual historical information, while including other genres such as *ḥikāyāt* (tales, anecdotes, pp. 142-168, with selective German translation), elegies (pp. 169-182, with German translation and Arabic transliteration of the verses), among others. Echoing Haarmann and Radtke, Weintritt names this trend ″a new kind of comprehensive representation of history,″ that not only employs non-historiographic *adab* genres, but also ″involves a literary organization″ within the *istiṭrād* framework. These characteristics, suggests Weintritt, are also shared by the two royal biographies examined (pp. 183-200) that were contemporary with the *Kitāb al-Ilmām*. In these three texts, Weintritt emphasizes, we witness an array of deliberately produced literary systems of historical writing, be it chronicle or royal biography, that have generated their own text-forms in representing the ideal concept of the so-called ″Islamic salvation history.″

Weintritt′s work, which has unfortunately not yet received much attention, has brought new authors and titles to the discussion that has long focused on a handful of names such as Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, al-Jazarī (mainly by Haarmann), and Ibn al-Dawādārī (whose researchers are legion: Köprülü, Roemer, al-Munajjid, Boratav, Little, Langner, Graf, Krawulsky, Badeen, among others). Indeed, Ibn al-Dawādārī must be considered to be one of the major ″innovators″ of this trend of *Auflösung*, or ″deviation.″[106] However, there is a wide range of opinion regarding the relationship between these historians. For Radtke, as discussed above, Ibn al-Dawādārī was merely a faithful disciple of Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, a Ḥanbalī who emigrated from Baghdad to Damascus, and his work was thus no more than a link in the long chain of continuity in the ″salvation history″ tradition. And in the meantime, Haarmann sees another Syrian *ḥadīth* scholar and historian, al-Jazarī, as *the model* for Ibn al-Dawādārī. Even though the interpretations differ, no one argues that there was indeed a Syrian root to Ibn al-Dawādārī′s ″innovations.″ This naturally leads us to another long-debated but never fully resolved question:

*Question Two*: Was there a ″Syrian school″ of historical writing as well as an Egyptian counterpart? Previous scholarship has been ambiguous on the issue. Notes about a ″long-lived ′school′ of Damascus historians″ were brought together by R. Stephen Humphreys as follows: (1) the starting point of this ″school″ was Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī and his *Mir'āt al-Zamān*, a universal chronicle; (2) the core of this Damascene group include: Abū Shāmah, al-Jazarī, al-Birzālī, al-Yūnīnī, al-Dhahabī, al-Kutubī, and Ibn Kathīr; and, (3) the ninth/fifteenth century saw some attenuation of historical writing in Damascus, but was still able to produce major chronicles by Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah and Shams al-Dīn Ibn Ṭūlūn.[107] As for the textual aspects of this ″school,″ Humphreys, basing his remarks on previous studies by M. H. M. Ahmad, Sāmī al-Dahhān, and Haarmann, emphasizes the continuity of the tradition established by Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, that is, ″for each year the most notable events were recorded, and then concise obituaries were given for the important persons who had died during that year.″ Humphreys, as well as previous scholars, seems to suggest that this structural technique in combining *ḥawādith* (events) and *wafayāt* (obituaries) within an annalistic framework is the trade mark of this Syrian ″school.″ However, he has been careful to keep the term within quotation marks. Meanwhile,

[106]For an overview of the Ibn al-Dawādārī scholarship, see Haarmann, *JAOS* 115, no. 1 (1995): 134.
[107]*Islamic History*, 240-241.


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Reuven Amitai-Preiss appears more at ease calling it ″the Syrian school of fourteenth-century historians″ which began with al-Yūnīnī, among others.[108]

Some recent studies have kept this discourse alive. My 1994 dissertation on al-Yūnīnī and his chronicle *Dhayl Mir'āt al-Zamān* not only confirms what previous scholars have already suggested about the inter-relatedness of these three Damascene historians, but takes a step forward, through a word-by-word collation of al-Jazarī′s *Ḥawādith al-Zamān* and al-Yūnīnī′s *Dhayl* (the part that covers the years from 691 to 699) and an edition (697-701) that presents both authors′ versions (al-Jazarī′s ends at 699). In the dissertation I develop two key points: (1) the later part of al-Yūnīnī′s famous *Dhayl*, the only surviving contemporary Syrian source for the years in question (i.e., 699 onward), was in fact al-Jazarī′s work either slightly edited by, or wrongly attributed to, al-Yūnīnī; and (2) al-Birzālī was perhaps actively involved in this enterprise, as an editor, a primary source, and the dictator of at least one of its early redactions. Al-Jazarī, al-Yūnīnī, and al-Birzālī′s contribution to medieval Islamic historiography was that they perfected and reformulated the *mode* started by Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, a mode wherein the two basic sections of each year′s record, namely the *ḥawādith* (events) and *wafayāt* (obituaries), were evenly presented, and in which the latter was also effectively enhanced by adding to it the *ḥadīth*s transmitted on the authority of, and *adab* output by, the *a'yān* of the era, namely the *'ulamā'*, and, less frequently, some Mamluk statesmen. History as recorded by these Syrian historians is not only a record of events, but a register of Muslim religious learning, as well as a selective anthology of the cultural and literary heritage of the time.

With regard to this Syrian ″school,″ many issues still await further investigation. For instance, Humphreys seems more explicit in listing the features of this Syrian mode from Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī to the Damascene trio than in outlining the later phase of development of this Syrian ″school,″ i.e., from al-Dhahabī onward, which is even more significant in influencing the later development of medieval Islamic historiography. Given the paucity of scholarship on this subject, this silence is quite understandable. It is rather a surprise that we still have not seen any substantial studies of al-Dhahabī, unarguably one of the most important figures not only in this ″school″ but in medieval Islamic historiography as a whole. Other significant figures of this Syria connection, such as Ibn Kathīr and al-Kutubī are also far from having been thoroughly studied, except for the editions of their indispensable works. Of course, given the scope and intellectual vitality of al-Dhahabī′s and Ibn Kathīr′s writings, which touch upon such a wide range of Islamic learning, the task is formidable. And in regard to the puzzle of the relatedness of certain authors, it appears that there may be more facets besides the emergence of a common mode of presentation and the public nature of manuscript circulation at the time that may have led to later confusion and corruption of texts. We may need to tackle the problem from a wider perspective, say, social and cultural history, or even Western textual criticism which has been employed recently by Islamicists in source-critical studies of the Quran and *ḥadīth* literature. For instance, in terms of social and cultural history, modern scholars, such as Laoust, Haarmann, Pouzet, Berkey, and Chamberlain, have all noted the fact that in Mamluk times the indigenous Syrian scholarly tradition remained more vigorous than in Egypt,[109] that the Egyptian Mamluks and their sons (*awlād al-nās*) retained closer ties to

[108] *Mongols and Mamluks*, 4-5.
[109] ″Arabic in Speech, Turkish in Lineage,″ 85.


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the Mamluk sphere than those who went through their formative period in Syria, the domain of traditional scholarly excellence and *'ulamā'* power,[110] that the science of *fiqh* (jurisprudence) remained ″the jewel in the crown″ of the *madrasah*s in Cairo[111] while *ḥadīth* transmission and study, a discipline very close to historical writing, enjoyed higher esteem in Damascus and other Syrian centers of learning such as Ba'labakk.

A more limited question thus is susceptible to analysis, namely, what impact these differences might have had on Egyptian and Syrian historians′ assumptions and objectives in writing history. And in terms of textual aspects, while the quantitative change, that is, the amount of *adab* material inserted into historical works, has been singled out by Haarmann as the decisive criterion in determining the fundamental breakthrough made by some Mamluk historians, he is not specific about ″how much is too much?″ Nor has a distinction been made between Syrian authors and Egyptians authors with regard to this quantitative measure. A statistical survey of the textual witnesses of the ″Yūnīnī-Jazarī tradition″ has not only confirmed Haarmann′s hypothesis, but has also revealed that it was quite the opposite, namely, it was al-Jazarī, viewed by Haarmann as ″less″ extreme in this ″deviation,″ and al-Yūnīnī, who showed more distinguishable features of this particular deviation than Ibn al-Dawādārī.[112] For instance, both al-Jazarī′s *Ḥawādith al-Zamān* and al-Yūnīnī′s *Dhayl* are replete with quotations from every level of traditional classical Arabic *adab*, including a total of more than 2,200 poems found in al-Yūnīnī′s version alone, an anthology the scope of which finds no match in any of the contemporary Egyptian chronicles, which are characterized by much shorter biographical-obituary sections and contain much less classical *adab* material. But Ibn al-Dawādārī′s role as an important ″innovator″ is justified by his introduction of popular motifs and themes, anecdotes, folklore, etc., another kind of *adab*, maybe in its ″lower″ form,[113] as opposed to the Syrian penchant for classical flavor and more mainstream ″high″ culture. The same can be said about other contemporary Egyptian chroniclers, such as Baybars al-Manṣūrī and al-Nuwayrī in whose work *adab* and *ta'rīkh* are categorized as belonging to different ″arts.″ The anonymous chronicle edited by Zetterstéen is nearly devoid of biographies, to say nothing of a separate *wafayāt* section.

In this connection, the question of an ″Egyptian school″ of historical writing is even more problematic. To begin with, it is too broad a focus. Unlike the relative homogeneity of the Syrian *ḥadīth*-trained *'ulamā'* historians who seem to have worked around a clearly traceable ″mode″ of historical writing, Egyptian historians came from all parts of society: statesmen, semi-official court historians, *'ulamā'*, ″middle class″ clerks, Mamluk soldiers, etc. Moreover, they seem to have written various genres of history, most of which either started or flourished during the period: royal biographies, chronicles, topographies, geographical and administrative encyclopedias, biographic dictionaries, and so forth. Fatḥīyah al-Nabarāwī, an Azhari historian, has devoted a whole chapter to what she terms the ″Egyptian school of historical writing (*al-madrasah al-ta'rīkhīyah al-miṣrīyah*)″ in her

[110]Ibid., 110.
[111]Berkey, *Transmission of Knowledge*, 82ff.
[112]This statistical survey is part of a revised version of my dissertation, yet to be published.
[113]Much previous scholarly emphasis has been placed on the folkloric materials found in Ibn al-Dawādārī′s chronicles; e.g., Haarmann, *Quellenstudien*, 162-175; Barbara Langner, *Untersuchungen zur historischen Volkskunde Ägyptens nach mamlukischen Quellen* (Berlin: Schwarz, 1983), passim.


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newly published book on medieval Islamic historiography.[114] Her ambitious description of this ″Egyptian school″ begins with the third/ninth century when ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Abd Allāh Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam (d. 871) wrote the *Kitāb Futūḥ Miṣr*, the earliest history of Islamic Egypt, and ends with Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī. According to al-Nabarāwī, this Egyptian school has gone through three major phases in its evolution.

First was the early period in which the emergence and growth of historical writing developed side by side with other Islamic ″sciences,″ especially *ḥadīth* transmission and *fiqh* discourse. Starting from Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam, this period features authors like Abū ‘Umar al-Tujībī al-Kindī (b. 897), and al-Ḥasan ibn Zūlāq, among others.

The second phase spans the period from the fourth/tenth to the eighth/fourteenth century, which featured Muḥammad ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh al-Musabbiḥī (d. 1029) and his acclaimed history of Fatimid Egypt,[115] and Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Salāmah ibn Ja‘fār al-Quḍā‘ī (d. 1065). Al-Nabarāwī gives credit to the two Fatimid historians for establishing a ″historiographic method″ or ″mode,″ (*al-manhaj al-tārīkhī*) that was to be followed by all later Egyptian historians; nevertheless, she never speaks, in concrete terms, of what the fundamental features of this ″method″ were, much less of its historiographic significance. The only early Mamluk historian singled out in this period is al-Nuwayrī, who is presented here as the representative of new genres such as the encyclopedia and biographical dictionary. Al-Nabarāwī simply attributes the efflorescence of these new genres to the influence of ″other schools of historical writing, especially the Iraqi school,″ namely al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Ibn Khallikān, Ibn al-Jawzī, and finally, Ibn al-Athīr (pp. 217ff.). The third phase was the so-called time of ″brilliance″ (*ta’alluq*) of the Egyptian school in the ninth/fifteenth century. The representatives of this ″school″ include al-Qalqashandī, Ibn Khaldūn, al-Maqrīzī, al-Sakhāwī, and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī.

It is clear that al-Nabarāwī is unfamiliar with the current scholarly debate on the subject, and her discussion therefore sheds no light on the ongoing discussions concerning Mamluk historical writing in particular and the recent debate over the theory of ″schools″ in Arabic-Islamic historical writing in general. Furthermore, her analytical framework is based on geographical, rather than historical and intellectual, backgrounds. Accordingly, all those who lived and wrote in Iraq, from al-Ṭabarī to Ibn al-Athīr, belong to an ″Iraqi school″ of historical writing (pp. 143-78), and those of a Syrian background, Ibn ‘Asākir, al-Iṣfahānī, Ibn al-‘Adīm, up to Abū Shāmah, belong to a ″Syrian school″ (pp. 123-142), and so forth. This kind of grouping neither helps us gain insight into the characteristics of the so-called ″school,″ nor is it in accordance with historical facts. One might easily ask: What about a historian who lived and wrote in different cities? For instance, Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī is listed by al-Nabarāwī as falling into the category of the ″Iraqi school,″ because of his association with the Ḥanbalī establishment in Baghdad. By emphasizing his Baghdad background, however, she ignores the fact that his career flourished in Damascus, where he not only lived and wrote, but where his method of writing essentially established the basis for the long-lived *Syrian* tradition, as discussed above. Again, if we do not have a clear definition of what a ″school″ really means, if we do not have substantial historical and,

[114] *‘Ilm al-Ta’rīkh: Dirāsah fī Manāhij al-Baḥth* (Alexandria: al-Maktab al-Jāmi‘ī al-Ḥadīth, 1993), 179-239.

[115] *Akhbār Miṣr*, ed. Ayman Fu’ād Sayyid et al. (Cairo: Institut français d′archéologie orientale, 1978-1984).


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more importantly, textual evidence to describe and conceptualize the features that distinguish one ″school″ from another, the mere labeling of ″schools″ is pointless.

The ongoing debate on the subject has proven that applying ambiguous labels to a given group of historians or works can be dangerous and misleading.[116] The purpose in defining and studying a ″school,″ in my opinion, has to do with common forms, genres, methods and traits shared by a group of authors from the same intellectual and ideological, and perhaps also geographical, background. This inquiry into the differences and similarities among the ″schools″ would tell us more about the mechanism of change and development in the world views of pre-modern Muslim historians and their different approaches to recording history. Based on what we know, it is hard to see an ″Egyptian school″ at work, at least in the early Mamluk period, as opposed to a more clearly defined Syrian one.

However, it is undeniable that there are certain traits that ought to be seen as characterizing Mamluk Egyptian authors. For instance, modern scholars have long posited a so-called ″Cairo narrative style,″ which may be characterized, in Carl Petry′s words, as ″a blending of colloquial and formal language unique to the second half of the ninth/fifteenth century,″ and represented by Ibn Iyās.[117] Ibn al-Dawādārī′s unique style, which has attracted the attention of western scholars, is just another example of this phenomenon. Yet another question may be raised. If it is too risky at this stage of our knowledge to talk about an ″Egyptian school″ of historical writing during the Mamluk period, Is it safe to talk about a ″Cairo style″? So we are faced with:

*Question Three*: What can we say concerning language and style in Mamluk historical writing? In contrast to the relative silence in the West on this subject, Middle Eastern researchers have long shown an interest in examining the art, including language and style, of historical writing by their predecessors, among them the Mamluk authors. Recent publications of this kind include ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Nadawī′s study of the methodology utilized by al-Nuwayrī in the composition of his *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab*,[118] and Aḥmad Māhir al-Baqarī′s linguistic study of Ibn Iyās′s *Badā'i‘ al-Zuhūr*, a universal history distinguished mainly for its coverage of the later Middle Ages in Egypt.[119] Since al-Baqarī′s work picks up the theme of the ″Cairo narrative style″ mentioned above, some comments here seem not to be redundant.

Al-Baqarī′s study opens with an introductory essay on Ibn Iyās′s intellectual background, especially his literary talent (*al-mawhibah al-adabīyah*) that would later have a profound impact on his style of historical writing. We learn from this detailed analysis that Ibn Iyās, a prominent historian and prolific poet, was an erudite stylist who not only mastered the intricacies of classical Arabic syntax, prosody, and rhetoric, but also often used plain language that did not hesitate to employ the earthy epithet or the slang of Egyptian vernacular, in an effort to make his writings accessible to a large audience. Western students may find al-Baqarī′s discussion of the samples extracted from Ibn Iyās′s

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[116]One such instance is the debate over the ″Syrian school″ in early Islamic historiography; for details see Albrecht Noth, *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition: A Source-Critical Study*, 2nd ed. in collaboration with Lawrence Conrad, trans. Michael Bonner (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1994), 4-5, especially note 10.

[117]Cited from Ḥasan Ḥabashī′s introduction to his edition of al-Jawharī al-Ṣayrafī′s *Inbā*'; see *Twilight*, 7.

[118]See note 5 above.

[119]*Ibn Iyās wa-al-Lughah: Min Kitābihi Badā'i‘ al-Zuhūr fī Waqā'i‘ al-Duhūr* (Alexandria: al-Maktab al-Jāmi‘ī al-Ḥadīth, 1989).


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work informative and interesting (pp. 17-42, on his poetry; pp. 43-55, on his employment of classical Arabic rhetorical devices as well as his use of rare words and colloquial expressions; pp. 56-61, on his citation of classical Arabic poetry and proverbs with which his history is replete). This is followed by chapters 2 and 3, which constitute the core of the study. Chapter 2 (pp. 63-113) deals with grammatical issues related to Ibn Iyās′s work. The detailed and meticulous analysis asks a wide range of questions about both morphology (*al-ṣarf*) and syntax (*al-naḥw*). A very interesting segment of the chapter (pp. 106-113) touches upon Ibn Iyās′s creative, sometimes deviate, use of classical standard verb forms for the purpose of conveying new meanings with these verbs, or delivering a certain special effect. Chapter 3 is a lexicographic analysis of the ″official language,″ namely, Mamluk technical terms and the classical written Arabic norm, as seen in Ibn Iyās′s work. These include ranks and professions (pp. 119-129), monetary transactions (pp. 130-135), and so forth. Of special interest is a discussion of the terms of crime and its punishment (*lughat al-jarā'im wa-al-'uqūbāt*, pp. 135-142), Mamluk disciplinary procedure (pp. 143-144), and Cairene police jargon (*lughat al-shurṭah*, pp. 145-147). The chapter concludes with a segment on various special usages (inflection, verbal nouns, propositions, etc.) in Ibn Iyās′s work.

Despite the wealth of textual evidence, one may note, minor shortcomings aside,[120] that there is a major methodological flaw reflected in the work′s static treatment of the materials without placing them in historical perspective. No attempt was made to trace the historical development of the language in Mamluk historical writing; besides listing quotations in each of the ″categories,″ the author does not say much about whether the examples examined were Ibn Iyās′s own, or simply his quotations from other sources. For instance, the use of the rare word *″taqanṭara″* (p. 47) was in fact not Ibn Iyās′s at all; it is found in a number of previous chronicles that describe the event that took place in 697 in which Sultan Lājīn′s horse *bucked* [*and threw him down*].[121] All of these chronicles derived the story from a common source, i.e., Muḥammad Ibn al-Bayyā'ah′s chronicle (*ta'rīkh*) which is lost today. That is to say, the word that occurs in Ibn Iyās′s *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr* is no more than a quotation, not his own usage. Another example is the colloquial expression *″īsh″* (″what′s this?,″ p. 50) which was already pervasive in early Mamluk sources.

Given the fact that the historians often quoted from one another without acknowledgment and this is one of the characteristics of historical writing produced in the period, this static approach will not yield much insight into the subject, and may be totally misleading. Moreover, the author is aware of the complex and nuanced situation regarding the ″duality″ of the Arabic language at a time when foreign elements e.g., Persian, Mongolian, and Turkish, were so widely used, and therefore is careful to assure us that even though two ″languages″ co-existed in Cairo, he concludes that ″the gap was not such that it would totally separate the public′s vernacular (*lughat al-jamharah*) from the official language (*lughat al-ḥukūmah*).″ The extent of the interplay between this blending of

[120]E.g., the loose organization (e.g., morphological issues scattered in chapters two and three), the careless editing (e.g., p. 3, the author claims that chapter 2 is on ″official language″ and chapter 3 on grammar, while the opposite seems to be the case), the lack of a bibliography, not to mention necessary indexes and glossary, etc.

[121]E.g., Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-Durar*, 8:371; Zetterstéen, *Beiträge*, 44; al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl* and al-Jazarī, *Ḥawādith al-Zamān* (both in Guo, ″al-Yūnīnī,″ edition, p. 3, and translation, p. 224).


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classical, ″official,″ and vernacular language is left unexplained. This ″Mamluk split identity,″ as Haarmann called it, namely to be a Turk and an Egyptian Muslim at the same time,[122] and the mentality resulting from such linguistic and ethnic differences between the Mamluks and the locals must have had some influence on the language and style of Egyptian historians, particularly those from non-Arab Mamluk stock. Given the fact that this trend of ″linguistic duality″ had already begun, as previous studies have shown, as early as the writings of Ibn al-Dawādārī, a second generation Mamluk (*awlād al-nās*), the enterprise of Ibn Iyās, himself a member of this ″sons of Mamluks″ elite, may better be placed within this long list of non-Arab Mamluk intelligentsia whose cultural and intellectual achievements are too important to ignore now. It follows that further investigation of the issue of continuity and change in historical writing, including questions of language and style, is needed as an integral part of this comprehensive inquiry.

Among many issues relating to language and style, another rarely touched upon is the use of rhymed prose, the so-called *al-saj'*, in Mamluk historical writing. William Brinner noted that rhymed prose was taken very seriously in the drafting of Mamluk documents in that a bad piece of writing by bureaucrats would be criticized as ″consisting of weak expression, mostly unrhymed.″[123] Aside from some isolated observations,[124] we are not sure to what extent this classical rhetorical device had found its way into historical writing in the Mamluk period. Clearly, more needs to be done on this subject as well.

In conclusion, let me briefly recapitulate the main points I have tried to make in this rather long article. First of all, I have examined a substantial number of Mamluk historical texts edited and published since the late 1980s, evaluated them as to their historiographic significance as well as the quality of the editions themselves, and expressed concern that the old problem of unscientifically prepared editions is still a problem in our field. I have called attention to the lack of adequate biographical studies of the major Mamluk historians and suggested that such studies of select Mamluk historians, as individuals and groups, would help frame Mamluk history not only in political, social, military, and institutional, but also personal and intellectual terms. It would also shed some light on the formation of the conceptions and assumptions shared by Mamluk historians and the approaches favored by them. I have addressed the related question of whether there were ″schools″ of historical writing in the Mamluk period. I have suggested three areas of difference between two groups of early Mamluk Egyptian and Syrian historians for further study: career paths, ethnic, ideological, and intellectual backgrounds, and working relationships among these practitioners of the historian's craft. Finally, I have dealt with the development of genres and forms in Mamluk historiography focusing on three questions: (1) the so-called ″breakdown″ of the classical medieval Islamic standard in Mamluk historiography; (2) the question of a ″Syrian school″ vs. an ″Egyptian school″ in terms of their textual features and composition strategy; and (3) language and style in Mamluk historical writing.

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[122]″Arabic in Speech, Turkish in Lineage,″ 111.

[123]″Some Ayyūbid and Mamlūk Documents from Non-Archival Sources,″ *Israel Oriental Studies* 2 (1972): 122-123.

[124]E.g., al-Yūnīnī's preface to his *Dhayl* was actually written in rhymed prose; see *Dhayl*, 1:2. Ibn Iyās's occasional inclination toward the *saj'* style has also been observed by al-Baqarī, *Ibn Iyās wa-al-Lughah*, 49.


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# *Ubi Sumus?* Mamluk History and Social Theory

## I

The critical mass of scholarly attention now gravitating around late medieval Syro-Egypt has begun to necessitate for the first time an evaluation of the current state of knowledge within the field of Mamluk history, that is, the interpretive significance of the questions historians have so far posed of their documentary and artifactual evidence. There is bound to be dissatisfaction with the way in which many scholars have so far used their empirical research to address fundamental questions of structure and change in Mamluk society. Yet, this problem is perhaps only typical of the general shortfall in critical thinking within Middle East history as a whole. Even in such a relatively modern field as Ottoman history, for instance, scholars have only recently begun to call for a ″critical revaluation″ of historical methodology, especially with regard to modeling rather than merely assuming the structures of early modern social formation.[1] As the Ottomanist Suraiya Faroqhi has observed candidly: ″The intellectual framework within which Ottoman history is practised is as yet poorly developed and this state of affairs has made us susceptible to the ′occupational disease′ of being overwhelmed by our documents.″[2] Indeed, Faroqhi′s colleague, Halil Berktay, has reified this problem in Ottoman history as ″document-fetishism.″ Obsession with the practices of traditional historical methodology, Berktay charges, has diverted scholars from the ″intellectual sources which could inform them about the proper questions to ask of their documents.″[3]

This emerging reorientation in Ottoman history has stimulated some scholars to conceive of social formation as a dialectic between the state and peasant. The historian John Haldon, for instance, has theorized about a tributary mode of surplus appropriation from peasants as the principal dynamic in the rise of ″feudalist″ states like the Ottoman Empire. Rejecting the class reductionism and economism of traditional Marxism, Haldon has tried to draw attention to the anthropological content of Marx′s early writings and the extent to which macroeconomic production may have been affected by microsocial processes of abstraction, self-reflection and intentionality. Haldon′s view is, of course, speculative since Marx never produced a social psychology able to demonstrate how individual consciousness might have achieved such autonomy from collective order.

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[1]Rifa‘at ‘Ali Abou-El-Haj, *Formation of the Modern State: The Ottoman Empire Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), ix, 2.

[2]Suraiya Faroqhi, ″In Search of Ottoman History,″ in *New Approaches to State and Peasant in Ottoman History*, ed. Halil Berktay and Suraiya Faroqhi (London: Frank Cass, 1992), 235.

[3]Halil Berktay, ″The Search for the Peasant in Western and Turkish History/Historiography,″ in *New Approaches to State and Peasant in Ottoman History*, ed. Halil Berktay and Suraiya Faroqhi (London: Frank Cass, 1992), 109, 157.


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Nevertheless, Haldon has sought, as he himself has said, to advance a macrotheory with ″the possibility of nesting a multiplicity of meso- and micro-structural analytical approaches within the overall [neo-Marxist] paradigm.″[4] Clearly, Ottoman history, at least, has become fertile ground for an appreciation of how ″change is structured, and structures change″ over time.[5]

By comparison, medieval Islamicists have seemed less conscious of the need for developing intellectual frameworks within which their empirical research might be embedded in larger issues of social process. Indeed, more than a quarter of a century ago the Mamlukist Ira Lapidus warned that ″studies of Muslim social structure are few and incomplete.″[6] He extolled the need to ″expose social relationships,″ to examine their ″total configuration″ and ″the forces which shaped their interaction.″ Lapidus later reiterated and expanded his position, urging scholars to begin ″to explore not only social action but the concepts and values that bear on the ordering of social relationships, the . . . symbols of social order, and the mentality of peoples.″[7] Yet, as R. Stephen Humphreys, another Mamlukist, has been obliged to remind us recently, little interim progress has been made in demonstrating how action may have been linked to order in medieval Middle East society. Indeed, in his omniscient critique of medieval Islamic history, Humphreys has specifically criticized this analytical shortfall in the secondary literature and has gone so far as to call for new ″lines of inquiry″ and even entire ″research strategies″ to trim this interpretive deficit. Humphreys has focused particularly on the failure of Islamicists, including Mamlukists, to explicate the ″patterns of behavior through which people structure their relations with one another, define common goals, and allocate resources.″[8]

What Humphreys has described in so many words is the need for middle range theories of social interaction, culture, ideology, and economic relations for medieval Islamic civilization, in which the Classical Mamluk state was perhaps the premier social formation. However, the gravitational pull of traditional research methods based on philology, chronology, and historiography has tended to inhibit scholars from making the necessary intellectual transition from description to analysis. Only in rare instances has Mamluk scholarship managed to model the ″patterns″ and ″structure″ of society to which Humphreys has alluded—most notably in the work of Lapidus himself, as well as his student, Michael Chamberlain. Indeed, the work of these two scholars, separated by nearly three decades, reflects to an interesting degree the development of social theory itself from a synchronic, normative, systems perspective to one with a more diachronic, materialist, and post-structural outlook.

Yet, if most Mamlukists have not been able to interpret social process, that is, demonstrate ways in which social action and order were linked, they have at least shown an

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[4]John Haldon, *The State and the Tributary Mode of Production* (London: Verso, 1993), 3.
[5]Peter Burke, *History and Social Theory* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 2; see also, Gordon Leff, *History and Social Theory* (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1969); William A. Green, *History, Historians, and the Dynamics of Change* (Westport: Praeger, 1993).
[6]Ira M. Lapidus, ″Muslim Cities and Islamic Societies,″ in *Middle Eastern Cities*, ed. Ira M. Lapidus (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969), 49.
[7]Ira M. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1967; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), xiv-xv, 3.
[8]R. Stephen Humphreys, *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), ix.


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interest in social actors. Scholars, indeed, have taken an essentially positivist view of Mamluk history in their Weberian focus on political and cultural elites as sources of social formation and reproduction. In this they have no doubt been influenced by Lapidus's own social anthropology of late medieval Syro-Egypt. Yet, if scholars have sometimes acknowledged Lapidus's ideas they have generally been unable either to develop or engage them dialectically. This may be due in part to the failure of Lapidus himself to explicate the *isnād* of his own social thought. Lapidus has acknowledged the influence of at least two luminaries—Max Weber and Talcott Parsons—but only in passing.[9] And even this admission has not been entirely helpful given the problematic relation between the works of Weber and Parsons, particularly Parsons's evolutionary and deterministic reading of Weber's more developmental and contingent concept of social action. Ultimately, though, Lapidus has been indebted to Parsons's adaptation of Weberian social action. For Parsons's functional analysis of the evolution of Western society from traditionalism to modernism has provided Lapidus with an important framework for understanding the process through which late medieval Syro-Egyptian society achieved integration.[10]

Certainly, Lapidus's interpretation of the nature of action and order in Mamluk society bears many of the hallmarks of the kind of systems analysis typical of the normative functionalism practiced especially by Parsons. He has incorporated into his own analysis many of the same functional concepts employed by Parsons—"system," "function," "values," "equilibrium," "adaptation," "atomization," "differentiation," etc. Indeed, Lapidus has identified the "substance" of his work as a description of the process by which a "system" of social relations was structured to achieve social "equilibrium"—an essentially Parsonian perspective. For Lapidus, like Parsons, was trying to address ultimately the long-standing Hobbesian problem of social order by advancing a model of society based on consensual rather than coercive social practices. Both sought to describe a social system which legitimated the hierarchical stratification of status groups on the basis of value consensus. Parsons's focus on values was embedded ultimately in Weber's emphasis on the cultural context of social action. Weber maintained that social action had to be explained in terms of its cultural meaning for social actors. Action and structure were mediated, Weber believed, through the individual's subjective interpretation of his own social environment. Social actors were therefore inspired by cultural values to engage in contingent practices which reproduced but sometimes transformed society. Indeed, Weber's legendary study of the rise of capitalism was essentially an inquiry into why rational social practices emerged in tenth/sixteenth century Europe from irrational religious

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[9]Lapidus, *Muslim Cities*, viii.

[10]Functional thought was foundational even in the conventional Orientalist scholarship upon which Lapidus drew; see especially, G. E. von Grunebaum, "The Structure of the Muslim Town," *Islam: Essays in the Nature and Growth of a Cultural Tradition*, Memoir no. 81 (n.p.: American Anthropological Association, 1955), 141-158, who observed, among other things, that ". . . the unity of the [Muslim] town is functional, not civic." Grunebaum in turn seems to have been influenced by the writings of French urbanists attempting to evaluate the social solidarity of the Muslim town in terms of Durkheim's distinction between the "mechanical" solidarity of the traditional/archaic city and the more "organic" solidarity of the modern/classical type. That is, they sought to distinguish between an holistic society based on a religious and socially ritualized collective consciousness with undifferentiated forms of social solidarity and a rational society in which social interaction was sufficiently differentiated and diverse to individuate a self-conscious political discourse.


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beliefs, that is, how the traditional world developed into the modern through the transformation of social meaning.

To demonstrate this ″contingent acceptance″ of such ″societal values″ Parsons suggested a mechanism—″internalization.″ Drawing on development psychology, Parsons argued that individuals were socialized from an early age through natural interactions with family and peers to assimilate (internalize) symbolic codes of social morality, to accept normative constraints on social action in ways conducive to the reproduction of social order. The concept of internalization allowed Parsons to link social action to the structure of social order in a way that seemed more autonomous and purposeful than, for instance, Durkheim´s concept of mechanical solidarity. Individuals reproduced society because they were socialized to do so. Yet, internalization also allowed Parsons to reinterpret Weber´s concept of social action in a way more conducive to his own belief about the integrative nature of social evolution. For Weber believed that contingent action was historical not teleological; it was meant to analyze changes from patriarchal and patrimonial forms of social organization, not to reify the process of modernization itself. Indeed, Weber felt that modern social action did not lead ultimately to greater social integration, as Parsons believed, but, as Marx believed, to the increased isolation and alienation of the individual from society. In the end structural controls imposed especially by modern bureaucratic structures vitiated individual autonomy and intentionality. Social order depended in the end, Weber believed, on hierarchical coercion not socialization after all.

Parsons attempted to counter Weber´s pessimism by narrowing, though not entirely closing, the gap between social process and social actors themselves. Action was determined ultimately by larger structural issues which tended toward equilibrium in modern society. Indeed, Parsons suggested that there was an evolutionary trajectory from traditionalism to modernism—a ″convergence″ of modern industrial societies toward a common form of internal organization. The functional requirements for that convergence determined historical process. Parsons suggested, in fact, a predictable sequence of social systems each more complex and functional than the last, a process which could not in the end be affected by human agency. This sequencing of social systems was an ″adaptive upgrading″ of society from traditional to modern organization. In this ″directional″ development social relations were determined functionally by the adaptive needs of the social system. Values provided the legitimating control which facilitated the ″adaptive upgrading″ of societies toward modernism. Parsons´s search, therefore, was for the ″core″ of a society, that is, its integrated social subsystems where those values were formed and practiced. Although these subsystems were drawn together through the sharing of common values, a ″consensus of values″ needed to be reflected only among social elites, who then used their power to ″persuade″ other social groups to conform to those values. The power to persuade was based on what Parsons euphemistically called ″confidence″ in the social system, that is, the expectation that force could be used to impose conformity should value orientation prove insufficient.

Clearly Parsons´s inquiry into the boundary between social action and order provided Lapidus with a comprehensive if deterministic model of social process. Lapidus suggested a Weberian condominium between socialized political and cultural elites, following Parsons, as a rationalizing factor in the integration of late medieval Syro-Egyptian society. Lapidus accepted Weber´s focus on cultural values as the source of social action but in his own functional analysis subsumed Weber´s emphasis on autonomy and


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contingency just as Parsons had. The teleology of ″convergence″ made value orientation and adaptation functional requirements in the integrative evolution of late medieval Islamic society. Indeed, Lapidus proclaimed that his study of the ″system of [social] relations″ would demonstrate exactly how Muslim urban society adapted itself to ″Mamluk domination″ in order to create ″one political and social whole.″[11] Lapidus thought this sort of collective order was possible precisely because Muslim society ″tended to be relatively undifferentiated,″ and so various social strata ″rarely reflected the autonomous interests of their members.″[12] Clearly Lapidus shared with functionalist anthropology the belief that, the further down the social hierarchy, the more readily individuals were prepared to adopt the values of social elites.

By calling attention in this way to the lack of autonomy enjoyed by urban social groups, Lapidus was challenging traditional beliefs about the autonomy and dynamism of the medieval Islamic city itself. From Marx, who saw history as the ″urbanization of the countryside,″ to Anthony Giddens, who views cities as ″power containers″ engaged in the ″elimination of the countryside,″ social theorists have long attempted to privilege the city as an autonomous engine of social transformation.[13] Indeed, Weber had argued that the origins of Western capitalist society lay precisely in the struggle waged by urban communes to ″usurp″ political and juridical autonomy from patrimonial elites. Naturally enough, Weber saw the failure of capitalism in Oriental societies as the failure of local urban autonomy in the face of patrimonial control, much as Marx had explained the failure of the Asian countryside to resist its ″princely camp″—the Asian city. Yet, Lapidus did not want to privilege the issue of urban autonomy, arguing: ″We must look more deeply into the urban constitution, behind . . . the struggle for local autonomy. . . .″[14] In fact, Lapidus wanted to use his analysis of urban social groups to break down the entire conceptual urban/rural dichotomy upon which traditional Orientalist social history had been based: ″. . . we should eschew the urban-rural dichotomy and avoid using ″city″ and ″village″ as absolute categories . . . we should think in terms of *pays*, districts, and regions, including both urban and rural units, as a natural form of settlement organization in the medieval Muslim world.″[15]

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[11]Ibid., viii, 191.

[12]Ibid., 185.

[13]Karl Marx, *Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations* (New York: International Publishers, 1965), 78; Anthony Giddens, *The Nation-State and Violence: Volume Two of a Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987), 22.

[14]Lapidus, *Muslim Cities*, 3.

[15]Lapidus, ″Muslim Cities,″ 67, 68. Lapidus was, of course, rejecting the use made by Orientalists of the Western urban communal model in interpreting medieval Islamic cities as ″chaotic, formless, collections of villages,″ a series of self-regulating cells based on corporate institutions unique to urban life (quarters, guilds, militias, etc.), p. viii. See, for instance, Louis Massignon, ″Les corps de métiers et la cité islamique,″ *Revue internationale de sociologie* (1920): 473-489; idem, ″La ′futuwwa′, ou ′pacte d′honneur artisanal′ entre les travailleurs musulmans au Moyen Âge,″ *La nouvelle Clio* 4 (1952): 171-198; Jean Sauvaget, ″Esquisse d′une histoire de la ville de Damas,″ *Revue des études islamiques* 8 (1934): 421-480; idem, *Alep* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1941); Bernard Lewis, ″The Islamic Guilds,″ *Economic History Review* 8, no. 1 (1937): 20-37; Georges Marçais, ″La conception des villes dans l′Islam,″ *Revue de la Méditerranée* [Algiers] 2 (1945): 517-533; Robert Brunschvig, ″Urbanisme médiéval et droit musulman,″ *REI* (1947): 127-155; Nicola A. Ziadeh, *Urban Life in Syria under the Mamlūks* (Beirut: American University in Beirut, 1953; Westport: Greenwood Press, 1970); Franz Taeschner, ″Futuwwa, eine Gemeinschaftsbildende Idee im Mittelalterlicher Orient und ihre Verschiedene Erscheinungsforme,″ *Schweizerisches Archiv für*


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American social theory by Lapidus´s day had of course been subjected already to many conceptual antinomies: status/contract, mechanical/organic, *Gemeinschaft/ Gesellschaft*, industrial/folk. The foundation of American urban sociology at the University of Chicago helped to establish one more—urban/rural. To Chicago sociologists, the modern city was an unparalleled source of both liberation and challenge to the individual. On the one hand, the spatial segregation created by urbanization emancipated the individual from the social control of traditional intimate groups. However, this weakening of bonds of kinship and folk tradition left the individual isolated, living in a Durkheimian social void. As Louis Wirth observed in his legendary comments about urbanization: ″Nowhere has mankind been further removed from organic nature than under the conditions of life characteristic of great cities.″ The city both initiated and controlled the economic, political and cultural life ″of the most remote parts of the world″ weaving ″diverse areas, peoples, and activities into a cosmos.″ The fact of urban concentration, Wirth believed, naturally invited ″the study of the differences between the rural and the urban mode of living.″ City and country were ″two poles″ around which ″all human settlements tend to arrange themselves.″ For these reasons Wirth saw the ″urban-industrial and rural-folk society as ideal-types of communities . . . for the analysis of the basic models of human association. . . .″[16]

Lapidus, like many sociologists and social anthropologists of his generation, questioned whether Wirthian ″ideal-type constructs″ of the urban and the rural corresponded to actual differences in socioeconomic structures, functions or values.[17] Urban organization seemed too diverse to be typed meaningfully. Possibly there was a condominium, even a continuum between urban and rural forms of social organization; even Wirth finally qualified his own idealized urban/rural dichotomy, admitting before his death that ″cities represent a vast continuum shading into non-urban settlements.″[18] In any case Lapidus did not view urban society as integrated only through what Wirth had called the ″pecuniary nexus . . . [leading] to predatory relationships.″ Man was not freed from moral order by the biotic competition of urban human ecology. Urban life provided the same sort of ″primary″ contacts which traditional socialization had, not just the ″secondary″ kind Wirth had described as ″impersonal, superficial, transitory, and segmental.″ Lapidus believed that informal social networks like families, fraternities, factions, neighborhoods,

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*Volkskunde* [Basel] 52 (1956): 122-158; Eliyahu Ashtor, ″L´administration urbaine en Syrie médiévale,″ *Rivista degli studi orientali* 31 (1956): 73-128; idem, ″L´urbanisme syrien à la basse-époque,″ *RSO* 33 (1958): 181-209.

[16]Louis Wirth, ″Urbanism as a Way of Life,″ *American Journal of Sociology* 44, no. 1 (1938): 1-24.

[17]See for instance, Oscar Lewis, ″Urbanization without Breakdown: A Case Study,″ *Scientific Monthly* 75, no. 1 (1952): 31-41; Gideon Sjoberg, ″Folk and ´Feudal´ Societies,″ *AJS* 58 (1952): 231-239; William L. Kolb, ″The Social Structure and Function of Cities,″ *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 3, no. 1 (1954): 30-46; O. D. Duncan and Albert J. Reiss, Jr., *Social Characteristics of Urban and Rural Communities, 1950* (New York: Wiley, 1956); Charles T. Stewart, Jr., ″The Urban-Rural Dichotomy: Concepts and Uses,″ *AJS* 64 (1958): 152-158; Joseph A. Kahl, ″Some Social Concomitants of Industrialization and Urbanization: A Research Review,″ *Human Organization* 18, no. 3 (1959): 53-74; Philip M. Hauser, ″Observations on the Urban-Folk and Urban-Rural Dichotomies as Forms of Western Ethnocentrism,″ in *The Study of Urbanization*, ed. P. M. Hauser and L. F. Schnore (New York: Wiley, 1965): 503-517.

[18]Louis Wirth, ″Rural-Urban Differences,″ in *Community Life and Social Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956): 172-176.


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tribes, schools of law, and religious communities transcended both the segmentation and spatiality of the classic urban/rural dichotomy; they provided regional ″social solidarities″ which urban communal institutions like guilds could not. Indeed, Lapidus believed ″religious-communal bonds″ rather than ″urban-rural divisions″ were the ″rule″ throughout all Islamic social organization.[19]

Rather than the autonomous city with its formal coordinating agencies Lapidus, like Parsons, saw the real source of social formation residing in the family-based household. Parsons had associated the rise of industrialism with the emergence of a dynamic ″family firm,″ a result of the separation of property rights from feudal control and their association with intimate or ″sib″ groups. The family firm, not the city, was the early engine of industrial capitalism. The family ″emancipated″ itself from the political structure, it did not try to take it over from patrimonial elites as Weber′s urban agents were expected to do. Lapidus saw the Mamluk ″military household″ similarly as the dynamic center of social power in Syro-Egyptian society, primarily because of its informal domination of the regional economy.[20] Private households rather than statist bureaucracies controlled the economic ″surplus″ of Mamluk society. This control over the economic base of society gave the Mamluk *umarā*' control over the superstructure of ″communal and religious life of the towns″ as well. Yet, because the Mamluk household was not an ″alien military establishment,″ that is, it was a functional subsystem of ″regional″ integration, there was no overt struggle over surplus. ″Regime and society did not confront each other . . . ,″ therefore, social equilibrium was maintained.[21]

The informal network of patronal relationships which the Mamluks established with other social groups did not create the sort of anomic predatory relationships suggested in Wirth′s ideal-typification. Through such patronage networks the Mamluk political elite functionally exchanged economic benefits for social validation from the cultural elite. Lapidus interpreted this Mamluk ″self-interest″ as functional, not, in contradistinction to Parsons, as a source of ″atomism,″ which concerned Parsons about all utilitarian behavior. Indeed, Lapidus saw such self-interest as a form of social control by which the Mamluks actually ″atomized the common people.″[22] Mamluk military households were functionally inhibited from using their power in ways which threatened social reproduction; even their paramilitary squabbles did not, until the final decades, vitiate their ″vital″ function in the socioeconomic integration of ″regional″ Syro-Egyptian society.[23] Other social groups undifferentiated by horizontal class interests, indeed unified through vertical clientelistic structures, merely internalized the reality of Mamluk domination, ″. . . bending, accommodating, assimilating . . . Mamluk powers and actions in ways which created an over-all political and social pattern [of equilibrium].″[24] Only when Mamluk extraction of economic surplus exceeded social norms did ″confidence″ in Mamluk authority fail. The

[19]Lapidus, ″Muslim Cities,″ 57.
[20]Household is different from family, though the two are often used interchangeably. Lapidus′s use of the term ″military household″ seems meant to convey the fact that the Mamluk family was surrounded by a constellation of ″personal dependents and clients of the emirs,″ not to imply that the military household was only a unit of co-residence without the capacity to generate normative relationships.
[21]Lapidus, *Muslim Cities*, 48-78.
[22]Ibid., 190.
[23]Ibid., 35-43, 51.
[24]Ibid., 78.


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Ottoman conquest of Syro-Egypt in the early tenth/sixteenth century was merely the pushing over of a social system in classic disequilibrium.

## II

Lapidus did not see the Syro-Egyptian city as an autonomous force in late medieval society, separated from and transforming the countryside. Certainly there were no emergent Weberian middle class agents attempting to ″usurp″ power from the traditional Mamluk elite; in fact, ″the development of a unified and independent middle class was impossible.″[25] Yet, neither did Lapidus view the city as a social void. Indeed, it seems to have been his principal goal in *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* to demonstrate that social integration depended on the reduction of isolation and tensions among social groups, not only between urban and rural groups, but also among different social subsystems within cities themselves. Mamluk cities, therefore, were complex units held together more by the functional socioeconomic interdependence of status groups than traditional coercive controls. And a society moving away from traditional beliefs and customs was, definitionally in the early 1960s, a society moving toward modernity. Certainly from a functionalist perspective the likelihood of an ″adaptive upgrading″ of Egyptian society from traditionalism to modernism would be easier to envision if late medieval society was already, as Lapidus seemed to suggest, a coherently organized social system whose subsystems were closely interdependent and relatively stable.

Lapidus´s reconstruction of the social system of late medieval Syro-Egypt clearly ought to have been groundbreaking. Yet, this expectation has gone almost entirely unfulfilled. For one thing, the slow collapse of expectations about modernization over the course of the 1960s made Lapidus´s functionalist macrosociological approach seem problematic. Lapidus´s work had been essentially synchronic, a study of the structure of the functional linkages of Mamluk urban society rather than the mechanisms which affected various social subsystems. Yet, in the developing world of thirty years ago these subsystems did not seem especially stable or interdependent, and there seemed to be little real socio-economic integration in light of the failures of industrial capitalism and pluralistic democracy. In the aftermath of modernization theory, American social scientists began to turn away from the study of functionalism to embrace that of dysfunctionalism. They began to study in earnest the microsociology of conflict, inequality and oppression—a trend which has been accelerated by postmodernist obsession with social pessimism and cultural implosion.

In this degraded theoretical environment, Lapidus gradually changed his own functionalist approach to late medieval Syro-Egyptian society. He recognized that his focus on collective order, regulation, and stability left little room finally for microprocesses of individual socialization and even autonomy. In *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* social action had been dictated by a socialized environment rather than individual intentionality. Autonomy from collective control suggested the sort of fundamental social change which classic functionalism feared as destabilizing to the entire social system. Lapidus may have been reluctant to model microprocesses of social change because they suggested the sort of internal conflict upon which Marxist social theory thrived and for

[25]Ibid., 190.


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which functionalism had long been a preferred alternative among mainstream American social scientists. For such theorists, the pathway to modernity was better through internal value-orientation than internal conflict, through developmental prosperity rather than class struggle.

Although Lapidus continued to identify Muslim urban society as the set of ″informal relations among individuals, classes and groups,″ he no longer felt that those relations ought to be functionally assumed by scholars. He has called instead for works which can actually model ″social action,″ that is, ″the social processes underlying the functioning of urban societies″ as well as the ″concepts and values that bear on the ordering of social relationships. . . .″ Accordingly, Lapidus has suggested microsociologies of ″loyalty, discipleship, patronage, friendship, clientage, politics, and religious education to reveal the patterns of human behavior that make . . . societies.″ Lapidus′s appeal has been essentially for middle range theories which, one suspects, can be retrofitted to support his original functionalist insights. The results have been mixed. In the first place, though Lapidus′s appeal has struck a chord among various Mamluk scholars, their work has reflected generally only low-level theorization, that is, empirical research with generalizations based on repeated observation. On the whole, these social historians have tended to avoid unifying their results into middle range theories where such empirical generalizations could be used to differentiate between material and cultural explanations of human behavior.

Lapidus′s early focus on informal social networks rather than communal institutions as the source of social formation has remained, however, the basic thrust line of Mamluk history. Most of that attention, though, has been focused on isolated descriptions of the social origin, organization, and function of social elites. Thus, we possess a variety of informational studies about religious dignitaries, chancery scribes, judges, *wazīr*s, market inspectors, civil administrators, and law court and police officials.[26] A few scholars have

[26]See, for instance, Kamāl Sulaymān al-Ṣalībī, ″The Banu Jamā‘a: A Dynasty of Shāfi‘ite Jurists in the Mamluk Period,″ *Studia Islamica* 9 (1958): 97-109; Clifford E. Bosworth, ″Christian and Jewish Religious Dignitaries in Mamluk Egypt and Syria: Information on Their Hierarchy, Titulature and Appointment,″ *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 3 (1962): 59-74; Jon Elliott Mandaville, ″The Muslim Judiciary of Damascus in the Late Mamluk Period″ (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1969); Donald S. Richards, ″The Coptic Bureaucracy under the Mamluks,″ *Colloque international sur l′histoire du Caire* (1969) (Cairo: Ministry of Culture, n.d.), 373-381; Joseph H. Escovitz, ″Vocational Patterns of the Scribes of the Mamluk Chancery,″ *Arabica* 23 (1976): 42-62; idem, ″Patterns of Appointment to the Chief Judgeship of Cairo during the Bahri Mamluk Period,″ *Arabica* 30 (1983): 147-168; idem, *The Office of* Qâḍî al-Quḍât *in Cairo under the Baḥrî Mamlûks* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1984); Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Rāziq, ″Le *ḥisba* et le *muḥtasib* en Égypte au temps des Mamlūks,″ *Annales islamologiques* 13 (1977): 115-178; idem, ″Les muḥtasibs de Fosṭāṭ au temps des Mamlūks,″ *AI* 14 (1978): 127-146; idem, ″Le vizirat et les vizirs d′Égypte au temps des Mamlūks,″ *AI* 16 (1980): 183-239; Joan E. Gilbert, ″Institutionalization of Muslim Scholarship and Professionalization of the ′Ulamā′ in Medieval Damascus,″ *Studia Islamica* 52 (1980): 105-135; Jørgen S. Nielsen, *Secular Justice in an Islamic State: Maẓālim under the Baḥrī Mamlūks, 662/1264-789/1387* (Leiden: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul, 1985); Peter M. Holt, ″A Chancery Clerk in Medieval Egypt,″ *English Historical Review* 101 (1986): 671-679; ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Amīn Ṣādiq Abū Rās, *Shaykh al-Shuyūkh bi-al-Diyār al-Miṣrīyah fī al-Dawlatayn al-Ayyūbīyah wa-al-Mamlūkīyah* (Cairo: Maktabat ‘Ālam al-Fikr, 1987); Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Salām Nāṣif, *al-Shurṭah fī Miṣr al-Islāmīyah* (Cairo: al-Zuhrā’ lil-I‘lām al-‘Arabī, 1987); Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Ṭāsān, ″al-Qaḍā’ fī Makkah fī al-‘Ahd al-Mamlūkī,″ *al-‘Uṣūr* 6, no. 2 (1991): 299-318; Bernadette Martel-Thoumian, *Les civils et l′administration dans l′État militaire Mamlūk (IXe/XVe siècle)* (Damascus: Institut


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attempted to introduce some interpretive content, focusing especially on the mediatory role of these elites in urban social structure. Carl F. Petry, for instance, has observed that while civil elites generally failed to mediate proactively on behalf of other social groups, they at least helped to symbolize ″communal cohesion″ in the non-institutionalized social environment of late Circassian Mamluk society.[27] Jonathan Berkey has drawn attention to the role of educators, working through an ″informal system of instruction and . . . personal relationships,″ in helping to level social divisions within Mamluk society.[28] Ulrich Haarmann, for his part, has argued that Mamluk offspring (*awlād al-nās*) were a critical social, political, and even cultural link between the Mamluk ruling elite and other social subsystems.[29]

Unfortunately neither these subsystems nor, indeed, the ruling elite itself have received meaningful analysis. Though urban gangs, rural notables, merchants, peasants, tribal peoples, and even amirs have all been described in some way, they remain little understood as components of social formation.[30] Some scholars, again, have attempted to

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français de Damas, 1992). See more generally on social life, Sa'īd 'Abd al-Fattāḥ 'Āshūr, *al-Mujtama' al-Miṣrī fī 'Aṣr Salāṭīn al-Mamālīk* (Cairo: Dār al-Nahḍah al-'Arabīyah, 1962; revised edition, 1993); Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn, *al-Awqāf wa-al-Ḥayāh al-Ijtimā'īyah fī Miṣr, 648-923 H./1250-1517 M.* (Cairo: Dār al-Nahḍah al-'Arabīyah, 1980); Ḥayāt Nāṣir al-Ḥajjī, *Aḥwāl al-'Āmmah fī Ḥukm al-Mamālīk, 678-784 H./1279-1382 M.* (Kuwait: Sharikat Kāẓimah lil-Nashr wa-al-Tarjamah wa-al-Tawzī', 1984).

[27]Carl F. Petry, *The Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 325.

[28]Jonathan Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 20, 217.

[29]Ulrich W. Haarmann, ″Arabic in Speech, Turkish in Lineage: Mamluks and Their Sons in the Intellectual Life of Fourteenth-Century Egypt and Syria,″ *Journal of Semitic Studies* 33, no. 1 (1988): 81-114; idem, ″The Sons of Mamluks as Fief-holders in Late Medieval Egypt,″ in *Land Tenure and Social Transformation in the Middle East*, ed. Tarif Khalidi (Beirut: American University in Beirut, 1984), 141-168.

[30]See, for instance, Eliyahu Ashtor, ″The Karimi Merchants,″ *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1956): 45-56; S. D. Goitein, ″New Light on the Beginnings of the Kārim Merchants,″ *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 1 (1958): 175-184; Walter J. Fischel, ″The Spice Trade in Mamluk Egypt: A Contribution to the Economic History of Medieval Islam,″ *JESHO* 1 (1958):157-174; Jacqueline Sublet, ″'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Takrītī et la famille des Banū Kuwayk, marchands Kārimī,″ Arabica 9 (1962): 193-196; William M. Brinner, ″The Significance of the *Ḥarāfīsh* and their ′Sultan′,″ *JESHO* 6 (1963): 190-215; David Ayalon, ″The Muslim City and the Mamluk Military Aristocracy,″ *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities* 2 (1968): 311-329; idem, ″Mamlūk Military Aristocracy during the First Years of the Ottoman Occupation of Egypt,″ in *The Islamic World: From Classical to Modern Times*, ed. C. E. Bosworth et al. (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1989): 413-431; idem, ″The Auxiliary Forces of the Mamluk Sultanate,″ *Der Islam* 65 (1988): 13-37; Ibrāhīm Aḥmad Rizqānah, ″al-Qabā'il al-'Arabīyah fī Miṣr 'inda al-Maqrīzī,″ in *Dirāsāt 'an al-Maqrīzī: Majmū'at Abḥāth*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá Ziyādah et al. (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Miṣrīyah al-'Āmmah lil-Ta'līf wa-al-Nashr, 1971), 81-94; M. A. Hiyari, ″The Origins and Development of the Amīrate of the Arabs during the Seventh/Thirteenth and Eighth/Fourteenth Centuries, ″ *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 38 (1975): 509-524; Abdel Hamid Saleh, ″Les relations entre les Mamluks et les bédouins d′Égypte,″ *Annali instituto orientale di Napoli* 30 (1980): 365-393; Amīn al-Nafūrī, ″Ajnād al-Qabā'il al-'Arabīyah fī Bilād al-Shām fī 'Ahd al-Mamlūkī,″ *Dirāsāt Tārīkhīyah* 5 (1981): 99-116; Charles Verlinden, ″Marchands chrétiens et juifs dans l′État mamelouke au début du XVe siècle d′après un notaire vénetien,″ *Bulletin de l′Institut historique belge de Rome* 51 (1981): 19-86; Muḥammad 'Adnān al-Bakhīt, ″The Role of the Ḥanash Family and the Tasks Assigned to It in the Countryside of Dimashq al-Shām,″ in *Land Tenure and Social Transformation in the Middle East*, ed. Tarif Khalidi (Beirut: American University in Beirut, 1984), 257-289; Barbara


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be more interpretive. Petry and Robert Irwin, for instance, have called attention to the social dynamic of clientelistic structures in the shaping of Mamluk political action;[31] focus on such dyadic non-corporate and goal-oriented relationships may serve as a corrective to the more rigid and institutionalized politics of *khushdāshīyah* currently favored by traditional scholarship.[32] Toru Miura has argued that the numerous sub-quarters (*ḥārāt*) of the larger Ṣāliḥīyah quarter in Damascus were integrated into a larger ″political unit″ through the social networks of urban gangs;[33] this suggests that the function of social mediation between rulers and ruled may not have been a monopoly of the *'ulamā'*. In a more rural vein, William Tucker has noted that natural disasters may have had a significant social psychological effect on religious practices among late medieval Egyptian peasants.[34] Jean-Claude Garcin, following Lapidus′s thematic rejection of an urban/rural dichotomy in late medieval Egypt, has interpreted the rise of the urban center of Qūṣ in terms of the larger regional dynamic of Upper Egypt itself. Garcin′s observation that ″the city can not be separated from the countryside around it″ clearly recalls Lapidus′s injunction to ″think in terms of *pays* . . . as a natural form of settlement organization.″ As a crucial part of that regional dynamic, Garcin has emphasized especially the social role of the bedouin in influencing ″the structure of the establishment of human groups in a region.″[35]

On the whole, scholars have conformed to Lapidus′s functionalist identification of social integration with stasis.[36] Yet, what about change in Mamluk society? Jonathan

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Kellner-Heinkele, ″The Turkomans and *Bilād aš-Šām* in the Mamluk Period,″ in ibid., 169-180; Dorothea Krawulsky, ″al-Badw fī Miṣr wa-al-Shām fī al-Qarnayn al-Sābi' wa-al-Thāmin al-Hijrīayn 'inda al-'Umarī fī Masālik al-Abṣār,″ *al-Ijtihād* 4, no. 17 (1992): 35-72; Richard T. Mortel, ″The Ḥusaynid Amirate of Madīna during the Mamlūk Period,″ *Studia Islamica* 80 (1994): 97-119; idem, ″The Mercantile Community of Mecca during the Late Mamluk Period,″ *JRAS* (1994): 15-35.

[31]Robert Irwin, ″Factions in Medieval Egypt,″ *JRAS* (1986): 228-246; Carl F. Petry, *Protectors or Praetorians? The Last Mamlūk Sultans and Egypt′s Waning as a Great Power* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 131-151.

[32]See also Amalia Levanoni, *A Turning Point in Mamluk History: The Third Reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn (1310-1341)* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), who has remarked on the collapse of corporate solidarity in the Mamluk system during the first decades of the eighth/fourteenth century.

[33]Toru Miura, ″The Structure of the Quarter and the Role of the Outlaws—the Ṣāliḥīya Quarter and the Zu′r in the Mamlūk Period,″ in *Urbanism in Islam: Proceedings of the International Conference on Urbanism in Islam* (Tokyo: Middle Eastern Culture Center, 1989), 3:402-437. See also, Nawāl al-Messiri Nadim, ″The Concept of the *Ḥāra*: A Historical and Sociological Study of al-Sukkariya,″ *AI* 15 (1979): 313-348; Michael Meinecke, ″The Old Quarter of as-Salihiya/Damascus: Development and Recent Changes,″ *al-Ḥawlīyāt al-Atharīyah al-'Arabīyah al-Sūrīyah* 35 (1985): 31-47.

[34]William F. Tucker, ″Natural Disasters and the Peasantry in Mamlūk Egypt,″ *JESHO* 24, no. 2 (1981): 215-224. See also, Sa'īd 'Abd al-Fattāḥ 'Āshūr, ″al-Fallāḥ wa-al-Iqṭā' fī Aṣr al-Ayyūbiyīn wa-al-Mamālīk,″ in *Buḥūth wa-Dirāsāt fī Tārīkh al-'Uṣūr al-Wusṭá* (Beirut: Jāmi'at Bayrūt al-'Arabīyah, 1977), 141-152; Yūsuf Darwīsh Ghawānmah, ″al-Ṭā'ūn wa-al-Jafāf wa-Atharuhumā 'alá al-Bī'ah fī Junūb al-Shām (al-Urdunn wa-al-Filasṭīn) fī al-'Aṣr al-Mamlūkī,″ in *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan*, ed. 'Adnān Ḥadīdī (Amman: Department of Antiquities, 1985), 2:315-322.

[35]Jean-Claude Garcin, *Un centre musulman de la haute-Égypte médiévale: Qūṣ* (Cairo: Institut français d′archéologie orientale, 1976), xvi, 574; idem, ″Note sur les rapports entre bédouins et fellahs à l′époque mamluke,″ *AI* 14 (1978): 147-163; idem, ″Le système militaire mamluk et le blocage de la société musulmane médiéval,″ *AI* 24 (1988): 93-110; Lapidus, ″Muslim Cities,″ 68.

[36]Petry has recently characterized Mamluk society even down to its last days as a ″quagmire of stasis,″ *Protectors*, 225. Problems of social inversion as well have received little attention; see, however, David Ayalon, ″The Eunuchs in the Mamlūk Sultanate,″ in *Studies in Memory of Gaston Wiet*, ed. Myriam


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Berkey, who is perhaps better known for arguing that social integration was advanced through the transmission of social knowledge, has suggested recently that social change did emerge from the fundamental tension between tradition and innovation in Mamluk socio-culture. The late medieval period was, according to Berkey, a period of ″vulnerability and decay″ as well as the introduction of ″new peoples, ideas and models of behavior to the Muslim Near East.″[37] Berkey´s historical dialectic suggests that Mamluk society, like all social organizations, possessed both progressive and conservative tendencies whose contradictions inevitably generated energy for social change. Boaz Shoshan, too, has maintained that confrontation between traditional high culture and innovative popular culture affected the structure of social life in medieval Cairo. The cultic veneration of *shuyūkh* particularly created over time ″a common cultural domain consisting of shared practices and meanings.″[38] Concerning the Mamluk army, Levanoni has argued that it experienced in the early eighth/fourteenth century a radical transformation from disciplined fighting force to military proletariat.[39] Moreover, several architectural studies have also intimated social change through physical changes in both sacred and profane urban spaces.[40] This combination of architectural and documentary evidence serves as a kind of settlement archaeology, not in the sense of theorizing the relationship between social groups and their ecology but rather changes in social and cultural behavior over time as reflected in changing patterns of spatial organization. This includes especially the process of

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Rosen-Ayalon (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1977), 267-295; Fedwa Malti-Douglas, ″*Mentalités* and Marginality: Blindness and Mamlūk Civilization,″ in *The Islamic World from Classical to Modern Times: Essays in Honor of Bernard Lewis*, ed. C. E. Bosworth et al. (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1989), 211-238; Huda Lutfi, ″Manners and Customs of Fourteenth-Century Cairene Women: Female Anarchy versus Male Shar'i Order in Muslim Prescriptive Treatises,″ in *Women in Middle Eastern History*, ed. Nikki R. Keddie and Beth Baron (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 99-121; Shaun Marmon, *Eunuchs and Sacred Boundaries in Islamic Society* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

[37]Jonathan P. Berkey, ″Tradition, Innovation and the Social Construction of Knowledge in the Medieval Islamic Near East,″ *Past and Present* 146 (1995): 46.

[38]Boaz Shoshan, *Popular Culture in Medieval Cairo* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 78.

[39]Levanoni, *Turning Point*.

[40]See, for instance, André Raymond, ″Essai de géographie des quartiers de résidence aristocratique au Caire au XVIIIe siècle,″ *JESHO* 6 (1963): 58-103; idem, ″La localisation des bains publics au Caire au quinzième siècles d´après les Ḫiṭaṭ de Maqrīzī,″ *Bulletin d´études orientales* 30 (1978): 347-60; Layla 'Alī Ibrāhīm, ″Middle-Class Living Units in Mamluk Cairo: Architecture and Terminology,″ *Art and Archaeology Research Papers* 14 (1978): 24-30; idem, ″Up-to-date Concepts of the Traditional Cairene Living Units,″ *Ekistics* 48, no. 287 (1981): 96-100; idem, ″Residential Architecture in Mamluk Cairo,″ *Muqarnas* 2 (1984): 49-57; Jean-Claude Garcin, ″Habitat médiéval et histoire urbaine à Fusṭāṭ et au Caire, ″ *Palais et maisons du Caire, I: Époque mamelouke (XIIIe-XVIe siècles),* ed. Jean-Claude Garcin et al. (Paris: Editions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1982), 145-216; Jacques Revault, ″L´architecture domestique du Caire à l´époque mamelouke (XIIIe-XVIe siècles),″ *Palais et maisons du Caire, I: Époque mamelouke (XIIIe-XVIe siècles),* ed. Jean-Claude Garcin et al. (Paris: CNRS, 1982), 19-142; Leonor Fernandes, ″Two Variations on the Same Theme: The *Zāwiya* of Ḥasan al-Rūmī, the *Takiyya* of Ibrāhīm al-Ǧulšānī, *AI* 21 (1985): 95-111; idem, ″Three Ṣūfī Foundations in a 15th Century *Waqfiyya*,″ *AI* 17 (1981): 141-156; idem, ″Mamluk Politics and Education: The Evidence from Two Fourteenth Century Waqfiyya,″ *AI* 23 (1987): 87-98; idem, *The Evolution of a Sufi Institution in Mamluk Egypt: The Khanqah* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1988); Doris Behrens-Abouseif, ″Locations of Non-Muslim Quarters in Medieval Cairo,″ *AI* 22 (1986): 117-132; idem, ″The Citadel of Cairo: Stage for Mamluk Ceremonial,″ *AI* 24 (1988): 75-79; idem, ″Change in Function and Form of Mamluk Religious Institutions,″ *AI* 21 (1985): 73-93; idem, ″Gardens in Islamic Egypt,″ *Der Islam* 69 (1992): 302-312.


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privatization of public space, a key development which many historical anthropologists have recognized about social transition from the traditional to the modern.

## III

Nevertheless, Lapidus´s view of late medieval Syro-Egypt as a society in equilibrium, functionally integrated through normative behavior, has not been fundamentally challenged. That is, until recently by Lapidus´s own student, Michael Chamberlain. Like many before, Chamberlain has adopted Lapidus´s position on ″institutional″ history, that an undifferentiated social formation can be better explained in terms of informal social networks than formal communal institutions. Like Lapidus, too, Chamberlain has located that social dynamic among political/cultural elites. Chamberlain´s elites, however, are engaged in a social process which completely transforms Lapidus´s integrated social subsystems into autonomous social units operating in ″arenas of a never-ending struggle for social power and status.″[41] Social action is no longer based on internalized values but on the materialist logic of utilitarian strategy and practices. Power now defines culture; value consensus gives way to value manipulation. The perceptions people have of social life are no longer necessarily stable or shared in such a way that social action can be coordinated. Social knowledge, in short, is no longer functionally supportive of social order. Indeed, the reproduction of social order is no longer based on accepting constraints on social action but in exceeding them. Chamberlain´s methodological rejection of Lapidus´s normative functional analysis—″metaphors derived from functioning bodies″—appears to be derived largely from his readings in the social psychology of the late German sociologist, Norbert Elias, as well as the cultural anthropology of the French post-structuralist, Pierre Bourdieu.[42]

Like Parsons, Elias had studied at Heidelberg University not long after the death there of Weber. Like Parsons, too, Elias was fascinated by psychoanalysis and admired Parsons´s ability to psychologize the macrosocial process. However, Elias disagreed with Parsons´s Weberian focus on action, particularly his view that social systems could only be comprehended as abstractions in which there existed a logical necessity that action always be integrated. Elias charged that this made society seem too much like a ″medley of disembodied actions″ rather than ″networks of human beings in the round.″ Elias and, after him, Bourdieu sought to close the interpretive gap between the individual and society, suggesting that social action possessed its own dynamic, one unpredictable even to social actors themselves. In place of Parsons´s immutable, functionally integrated society, Elias and Bourdieu suggested a collation of interdependent human networks forming autonomous spheres of action structured by their own immediate histories and internal logic. Importantly, these spheres were subject to processes not only of integration but disintegration as well. For Elias these spheres or ″figurations″ were the result of the ″interweaving of countless individual interests and intentions″ into autonomous outcomes. These ″relational dynamics″ were created by constantly changing power balances among these human networks, although there was ultimately an historical trajectory from violent

[41]Michael Chamberlain, *Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus, 1190-1350* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 175.
[42]Ibid., 21-22.


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figurations to more pacific ones. For Bourdieu such spheres or ″fields″ are spaces for competition and conflict rather than socialization and cooperation. The structure of the field in turn is determined by the state of the relations of force between various social actors or ″players.″

Elias′s figuration theory and Bourdieu′s field theory share with Parsons′s functionalist systems theory, however, a common focus on differentiation and autonomy in social organization, though as a source of change rather than equilibrium, as process rather than stasis. There are no deterministic relationships among the subsystems, no organic cohesion or self-regulation as in a functionally interdependent social system; coherence is achieved only accidentally and temporarily. Even the imagery is quite different. Whereas Parsons sought a ″boundary″ between action and order in the social system, Bourdieu has conceived of the social field as a ″fluid″ process.

These theories, moreover, are all tied to linear models of social evolution which depend heavily on distinguishing dialectically between pre-industrial and industrial types of social organization. Parsons had described the process of modernization as a series of structural differentiations facilitating the ″directional″ development of early modern rational socioeconomic organization into modern bureaucratic industrialism. Elias attempted similarly to tie his process of *Zivilisation* to the evolutionary expansion and internalization of social control as a form of rational behavior. As webs of interdependent social networks expanded and became more dense, social action became correspondingly more controlled and society more differentiated. The constant division and subdivision of social functions transformed social control from external compulsion to internal self-discipline, part of the emergence of rational behavior.

Bourdieu, unlike Parsons and Elias, has been interested not in Weberian rational action but practical logic—what it makes sense to do—which may in fact be irrational; he has tried, however, to draw the same distinction between ″material″ and ″symbolic″ power in society that Weber once drew between ″economic order″ (wealth) and ″social order″ (honors). In his search for what is essentially the cultural process underlying (intra)class conflict Bourdieu has distinguished pre-industrial (pre-capitalist/doxic) from industrial (capitalist/discursive) social formations in terms of their autonomization of symbolic power. Pre-capitalist societies, being insufficiently developed economically to differentiate the material from the symbolic, were unable to produce an explicit symbolic system capable of generating the sort of competitive discourse leading necessarily to class struggle. The rise of capitalist societies, however, autonomized a discursive symbolic sphere capable of providing the dominated with ″symbolic means of rejecting the definition of the real″ hitherto imposed by the dominant material class. The producers of symbols (artists, writers and other intellectuals) are seen to struggle on a ″field of opinion″ with the dominant material class ″for the power to impose the legitimate mode of thought and expression″ in modern class societies; the dominant class eventually turns to symbolic power as well in order to continue its dominance. In this intellectual field of struggle for position, capital is no longer just accumulated but differentiated into economic and cultural types, each mutually convertible. The dominant class in capitalist society must, for a variety of reasons, convert some of its economic capital into cultural capital. The center of this conversion is the educational system, which is tied to the need to provide a market for cultural capital. Here class struggle is replicated and legitimated through the conversion of social position


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into educational merit; the cultural capital produced was then later reconverted into economic power by the dominant class to preserve its position.[43]

Bourdieu figures significantly in Chamberlain´s explanation of the effect of such unconstrained competition on social order in a medieval Muslim city. Part of Bourdieu´s appeal may be that his theory of social strategies is extrapolated from his own anthropological observations about modern Muslim village life among the Algerian Kabyle. For Bourdieu, the Kabyle village was a center of eternal competition for status fought out by kinship groups using symbolic taxonomies. In such pre-capitalist societies, where a ″system of mechanisms . . . ensuring the reproduction of the established order by its own motion″ has not yet emerged, these strategies of ″symbolic violence″ were often more important and ″economical″ than ″overt (physical or economic) violence″ as *″elementary forms of domination.″*[44]

To some degree, then, Chamberlain´s Damascus is Bourdieu´s Kabyle village writ large. Damascene social life was similarly consumed by the constant and largely symbolic struggle for control of knowledge (*ʻilm*) as a way of achieving power and status, ultimately of ensuring ″social survival.″ Sixth/twelfth through eighth/fourteenth century Damascus was a suitably ″precarious″ and ″turbulent period″ in which elite social competition (*fitnah*) ″imposed its own logic″ on the strategies and practices by which medieval Damascenes acquired economic and cultural capital.[45] Chamberlain´s vision of a turbulent *high* medieval period is of course consistent with the belief common to both Elias and Bourdieu that the medieval period antedated the civilizing/modernizing process. Whereas Weber had envisaged the movement toward rational action beginning in the tenth/sixteenth century, Elias had seen already in the ninth/fifteenth century standards of control being imposed on society by political elites who were themselves making the transition from warrior violence to courtly manners. The high medieval period by contrast was a sinkhole of personality development. In language reminiscent of Johan Huizinga´s ″violent tenor of life,″ Elias suggested that social relations in the medieval period were violent, impulsive, aggressive, cruel, and without conscience.

The ninth/fifteenth century was also an important benchmark in Bourdieu´s analysis of the cultural process of modern class struggle. It was the beginning of the historical autonomization of a symbolic system in which the intellectual/artist freed himself culturally from the political and religious agencies of pre-capitalist legitimation in order to produce a competitive ethical/aesthetic discourse. In arguing that this process of autonomization was already underway in Damascus well before the ninth/fifteenth century, however, Chamberlain has modified Bourdieu´s model of historical development. Chamberlain´s focus on the social competition to control knowledge (*ʻilm*) presupposes already in the high medieval period a social elite (*aʻyān*) as a specialized group of symbolic producers, attempting to monopolize the objectified instruments of symbolic struggle (i.e., reading, writing, certification). This further supposes, following Bourdieu, that that struggle was part of a larger social competition with the dominant economic class (*umarāʾ*) for control of the ″hierarchization of the principles of hierarchization.″ Chamberlain argues, in effect, that medieval Damascus was already sufficiently developed in terms of exchange relations to

[43]Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 159-197.
[44]Ibid., 190-197.
[45]Chamberlain, *Knowledge*, 4-9.


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generate an explicit symbolic system autonomous enough to engender class struggle. Yet, it is difficult to see how that struggle might have occurred since Chamberlain does not believe that there was a ″division of social and political labor″ between the *a'yān* and *umarā'* of Damascus.[46] Moreover, while Chamberlain speaks of the medieval Middle East generally as possessing a ″relatively high monetization of its economies,″ it is unclear if this could have constituted the sort of capitalistic development that Bourdieu has in mind.[47] Finally, according to Chamberlain, medieval Damascus had ″no educational system to reproduce existing social divisions,″ another limitation on Bourdieu′s thinking.[48]

Despite these qualifications, Chamberlain remains fundamentally indebted to Bourdieu′s basic understanding of social structure as a product of radically contingent action by self-reflective individuals rather than an ″institutionalized call to order,″ though even Bourdieu has admitted that rules can facilitate the generation of such action.[49] This has allowed Chamberlain to interpret the ″continuous reshuffling of power and resources″ by practical, self-indicating elite households (*buyūt*; sg., *bayt*) as the ″fundamental dynamic of political and social life″ in medieval Damascus.[50] Damascus, in effect, is no longer a society—the locus of social cooperation—merely a social space dedicated to unlimited ″struggle for social power and status.″ [51] And yet, Chamberlain′s observation that elite social competition (*fitnah*) was responsive to mediation seems to recognize ultimately a limitation to the radical contingency of social practice and strategy. Members of the Damascene elite negotiated among themselves for complementary shares of social and economic capital. Rulers (*salāṭīn*, *nuwwāb*) especially, able only ″to frustrate other social bodies′ independent possession of power or wealth,″ were obliged to negotiate both with the *a'yān* for ″use of the sacred″ and with the *umarā'* for political power.[52] One might infer that the aggregation of such bargaining created in effect a ″negotiated order″ in which differences could be neutralized, if not resolved, in such a way that necessary connective social operations might occur. Individuals could bond at least temporarily, adopting complementary or even similar values, which could become the basis of an occasionally unified social system.

Indeed, rhetoric about practice and strategy aside, the *a'yān* and *umarā'* still appear as functionally interdependent in Chamberlain′s analysis as in that of Lapidus. In what Chamberlain describes as an ″exchange among surplus-consuming groups″ of status for benefit, amirs engaged in a deterministic exchange of their economic capital for the cultural capital of urban notables. Chamberlain′s conclusion that ″the *a'yān* of the city accommodated themselves to the military patronage state″ seems little different ultimately from Lapidus′s earlier observations about the functional ″adapting [of] urban Muslim society to Mamluk domination,″ or its ″. . . accommodating . . . Mamluk power and

[46]Ibid., 8.
[47]Ibid., 1, 40.
[48]Ibid., 154.
[49]Bourdieu, *Outline*, 17.
[50]Chamberlain, *Knowledge*, 8, 46.
[51]Ibid., 9, 175; Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc J. D. Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1992), 16: ″. . . Bourdieu explodes the vacuous notion of ′society′ and replaces its with those of field and social space.″
[52]Chamberlain, *Knowledge*, 41, 49.


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actions."[53] In both cases the *a'yān* appear to have successfully internalized Mamluk domination. Moreover, it was not just the *a'yān* and *umarā'* that were functionally related. According to Chamberlain the *salāṭīn* and *nuwwāb* also had a "functional dependence on their subjects." Rulers, unable to "penetrate the cities they dominated through intrusive state agencies," fit themselves "into existing social and cultural practices . . . turning them to political use."[54]

Precisely because such "social and cultural practices" were products of urbanization in Damascus, Chamberlain's analysis, unlike that of Lapidus, reflects ultimately an urban rather than a regional perspective on social formation in medieval Syro-Egypt.[55] Urbanization, moreover, had a more anomic consequence on Chamberlain's Damascenes than on those of Lapidus. Chamberlain's Damascus was, in effect, a social void of secondary contacts possessed of the same "segmented character and utilitarian accent" that Wirth originally described. Bourdieu, though, is the real source of Chamberlain's view of urbanization. Like Durkheim before him, Bourdieu believes that urbanization was crucial to the erosion of traditional social solidarity. For Durkheim urbanization led eventually to increased crime and suicide; for Bourdieu it leads to the emergence of a zone of struggle over the symbolic manipulation of the conduct of social reality—the field. It was only in the city that people with sufficiently diverse cultural traditions were sufficiently concentrated to be able to recognize their own formerly misrecognized social domination; it was in the city that their own cultural traditions were exposed, revealing "their arbitrariness *practically*, through first-hand experience."[56] Damascus, according to Chamberlain, experienced a similar process of urbanization at the end of the fifth/eleventh century, when "pastoralists, professional and slave troops, and urban elites" found themselves thrown together into an "empire-building process" stimulated by external threats to Syro-Egypt.[57] In that dynamic historic moment, however, socialization gave way to survival. Damascus became a social space without a Parsonsian "core."

## IV

The integration of social theory and Mamluk history over the last thirty years has achieved only limited results. Much of that achievement, moreover, resides in the work of just two scholars, Lapidus and Chamberlain. Only in their writings do we possess meaningful interpretation of social formation and reproduction in Mamluk Syro-Egypt. Social life is generally understood to be composed of such things as beliefs, norms, laws, knowledge, and ideas. Lapidus's interpretation has been, correspondingly, that of a functional, norm-based, regional society; Chamberlain's view has reflected a utilitarian, knowledge-based, urban space. Yet, both have underscored recent thinking about the necessity of studying informal urban/regional social groups in terms of attitudes based on

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[53]Ibid., 17, 61; Lapidus, *Muslim Cities*, 78, 191.
[54]Chamberlain, *Knowledge*, 17.
[55]Lapidus, "Muslim Cities," 56: "However superior the functions of the towns may have been, Muslim communities were often regional rather than urban bodies."
[56]Bourdieu, *Outline*, 233.
[57]Chamberlain, *Knowledge*, 37-38; this dating is probably derived from Lapidus, see, for instance, Lapidus, *Muslim Cities*, xiii-xiv; idem, "Muslim Cities," 52-53, 72; idem, "The Evolution of Muslim Urban Society," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 15 (1973), 38-50.


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locality, ethnicity, religion, kinship, etc., rather than categorized class-based attributes.[58] In Mamluk Syro-Egypt household, not class, was the basis of social formation—though not apparently of social change. For Lapidus's elite households were socialized, their action functionally integrated; even when their behavior became dysfunctional owing to environmental pressures, Mamluk society did not experience structural change or innovation in the relations of power, only collapse. Even Chamberlain's elite agents of social conflict (*fitnah*) could only manipulate and exploit structure, never consciously question or alter it. Ultimately, Damascus was not a center of macrosocial change, only constant microsocial transformations.

Yet, change is difficult to detect in social processes which appear deterministic or subconscious rather than cognitive. The human capacity for change resides after all in consciousness—the ability to perceive and synthesize many perspectives into one unitary apprehension of reality. Consciousness is formed within the structures of linguistically or symbolically mediated interaction. Society, in effect, is constituted intersubjectively through gestural communication, including language. Gestures are transformed into symbols with meaning understood by both parties. George Herbert Mead's theory of gestures shows how contingent action by individuals is actually enmeshed within symbolic structures. These gestures are in effect a social institution, what Mead called "an organization of attitudes," which condition social interaction. Individuals behave in terms of potential response by partners in these interactions, internalizing the expectations they have of each other. In this way social norms—by extension social order—become susceptible to change through modifications in communication. Cognition, in short, can have an adaptive affect on action and order through linguistic and symbolic expression.

Social order is, of course, hierarchical, and hierarchy has figured importantly in the discussions of both Lapidus and Chamberlain. The structure of such hierarchization can be seen to depend on superiors, equals, and inferiors developing an intersubjective understanding of one another at the cognitive level—"taking the role of the other" as Mead once observed. Individual behavior is integrated collectively by means of reciprocal expectations about behavior. Effective communication about these expectations can be seen, therefore, as supportive of social order; understanding a symbolic action after all means understanding about rules. It seems unlikely that social process can ever be demonstrated as either strictly normative or utilitarian, functional or self-indicating as Lapidus and Chamberlain have suggested. It may be possible, however, to fulfill Lapidus's original mandate about exploring concepts, values, and symbols of social order by demonstrating how action and structure were mediated through the establishment of a communicative order within Mamluk society, and how social order depended ultimately on keeping those lines of communication open.

[58]See, for instance, R. E. Pahl, "Is the Emperor Naked? Some Questions on the Adequacy of Sociological Theory in Urban and Regional Research," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 13, no. 4 (1989): 709-720.


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# Reflections on Arabic Poetry in the Mamluk Age

## I

Arabic poetry composed during the Mamluk Empire (1250-1517) is a vast and rich resource for the study of Arabic and Islamic cultures. Yet it is a resource that is seldom tapped due largely, I suspect, to its raw state, for the majority of this verse is to be found only in manuscript form. Brockelmann, for example, lists approximately twenty *dīwān*s from this period, most of which are still in manuscript today, and this number grows substantially when one includes additional holdings at Cairo's Dār al-Kutub and the Arab League Manuscript Institute; other collections, such as those in Damascus and Istanbul, will undoubtedly add to the total.[1]

From among these many manuscripts, about a dozen have been edited and published over the last century. In addition, a substantial number of edited Arabic poems from the Mamluk period may be found in a wide variety of published sources including chronicles, such as Ibn Taghrībirdī's *al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, biographical works, such as al-Ṣafadī's *al-Wāfī bi-al-Wafayāt*, and several poetic works and anthologies, including Ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī's *Khizānat al-Adab wa-Ghāyat al-Arab*. Some poems from these and other published works have been collected by 'Umar Fārūq in volume three of his *Ta'rīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī*. Fārūq's encyclopedic work is arranged chronologically and includes brief biographies, bibliographical information, and samples of verse by over seventy-five poets of the Mamluk era.[2]

Yet even these many published poems have received scant attention from Western scholars. This continued neglect may reflect the lingering influence of older surveys of Arabic literature which, if they discuss Mamluk Arabic poetry at all, usually dismiss it in a few pages.[3] For instance, at the turn of the century R. A. Nicholson noted that while Mamluk Arabic poetry had yet to receive extensive study, its best poets were "merely elegant and accomplished artists, playing brilliantly with words and phrases, but doing little else."[4]

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[1]Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*, 2nd ed. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1943), 2:3-24; S2:1-13.

[2]'Umar Fārūq, *Ta'rīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī* (Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm lil-Malāyīn, 1975), 3:602-977.

[3]See Clément Huart, *A History of Arabic Literature* (New York: Appleton and Co., 1903), 323-333; Ignaz Goldziher, *History of Classical Arabic Literature* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1966), 153-154. A. J. Arberry ignores the Mamluks in his *Arabic Poetry: A Primer for Students* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965).

[4]R. A. Nicholson, *A Literary History of the Arabs* (1907; reprint, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 448-450.


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Fifty years after Nicholson, the situation remained much the same in terms of both the lack of Western research on Mamluk Arabic poetry, and the entrenched scholarly views of Arabic literary history. In the second edition of his survey *Arabic Literature*, H. A. R. Gibb divides this heritage into periods mirroring their respective political developments: the ″Heroic Age″ of pre-Islamic Arabia led to the Umayyad ″Age of Expansion,″ while the early Abbasid ″Golden Age″ inevitably declined in the ″Silver Age″ of the Saljuqs until the Fall of Baghdad. What then follows until 1800, Gibb simply labels the ″Age of the Mamluks″ whose literary output, he says, ″was enormous throughout, but the qualities of originality, virility, and imagination, weak from the first, die away completely by the sixteenth century.″[5]

It should come as no surprise, then, that the last thirty years have seen only a handful of articles in Western languages involving Mamluk Arabic poetry.[6] This lack of Western scholarly concern may also account for an anomaly in the *Cambridge History of Arabic Literature*; having surveyed Arabic prose and poetry from their pre-Islamic roots through their flowering in the Abbasid Age, this series has recently passed over the Mamluk and Ottoman periods to publish a volume on contemporary Arabic Literature.[7]

## II

Fortunately, modern studies of Mamluk poetry in Arabic have been more extensive and promising. As early as the 1940s several studies appeared touching upon Arabic literature in the Mamluk era,[8] but it was in the late sixties and early seventies, that the subject drew the attention of a considerable number of Arab scholars. This has resulted in the editing and publication of some additional *dīwān*s, a few new surveys, and a small

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[5]H. A. R. Gibb, *Arabic Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 142. Gibb does not cite any Arabic poetry from the Mamluk period, and he mentions only one Mamluk poet by name, al-Būṣīrī.

[6]Ahmad al-Ghawaby, ″Al-Maqrizi as a Poet,″ *Minbar al-Islam* 2, no. 4 (1962): 28-30; Barbara Flemming, ″Literary Activities in Mamluk Halls and Barracks,″ in *Studies in Memory of Gaston Wiet*, ed. M. Rosen-Ayalon (Jerusalem: Institute of Asian and African Studies, 1977), 249-260; Victor Danner, ″Al-Būṣīrī: His Times and His Prophetology,″ in *Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies: A Festschrift in Honor of Professor Wadie Jwaideh*, ed. Robert Olsen (Brattleboro, Vermont: Amana Books, 1987), 41-61; Th. Emil Homerin, ″A Bird Ascends the Night: Elegy and Immortality in Islam,″ *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 59, no. 2 (1991): 247-279; idem, ″′I′ve Stayed by the Grave′: A *Nasīb*/Elegy for Nuḍār,″ in *Literary Heritage of Classical Islam: Arabic and Islamic Studies in Honor of James A. Bellamy*, ed. Mustansir Mir (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1993), 107-118. Also see the earlier article by Mohammad Awad, ″Sultan al-Ghawri: His Place in Literature and Learning (Three Books Written under His Patronage),″ in *Actes du XX. congrès international des orientalistes*, Brussels, 5-10 September 1938 (Louvain, 1940), 321-322.

[7]The Cambridge series is planning a volume to cover Arabic literature during the period 1150-1850; tentatively entitled *The Post-Classical Period*, this volume is to be edited by D. S. Richards and Roger Allen. As for *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, the second edition contains brief entries on a number of Arabic poets of the Mamluk period, including al-Būṣīrī, Ibn Abī Ḥajalah, Ibn ʻAfīf al-Tilimsānī, Ibn Ḥijjah, Ibn Isrā'īl, and Ibn Nubātah.

[8]See ʻAbd al-Laṭīf Ḥamzah′s brief remarks in his *al-Ḥarakah al-Fikrīyah fī Miṣr fī al-ʻAṣrayn al-Ayyūbī wa-al-Mamlūkī al-Awwal* (Cairo: Dār al-Fikr al-ʻArabī, [1945]), 262-287; al-Ṣibāʻī al-Bayyūmī, *Ta'rīkh al-Adab al-ʻArabī bi-Miṣr wa-al-Shām ʻalá ʻAhday al-Mamālīk wa-al-ʻUthmānīyīn* (Cairo: Maṭbaʻat al-ʻUlūm, 1947-48), 78-156. Al-Bayyūmī′s treatment of poetry is very general and lacking analysis and source citations.


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number of monographs that target specific poets. As to be expected, several of the surveys are very basic introductions to Mamluk Arabic prose and poetry, based largely on a very limited number of published sources. For example, Muḥammad Kāmil al-Fiqī's *al-Adab fī al-'Aṣr al-Mamlūkī* briefly reviews Mamluk poetry together with prose works in context of the politics and culture of the period. Al-Fiqī notes the "conservative character" of this poetry in both form and content, decries the prominence of ornamentation and literary devices in both prose and poetry, and mentions the spread of new popular poetic forms and folk verse.[9]

A more recent and expanded introduction is that of Shawqī Ḍayf, forming volume six of his *Ta'rīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī*. Ḍayf divides this work into two major sections, one on the literature of Egypt, the other on that of Syria. In his chapters on poetry, Ḍayf draws attention to the long history of Arabic poetry in the region pre-dating the Mamluks, and then briefly discusses popular poetic forms, including *rubā'ī* and *muwashshaḥ*, which became popular in the late Abbasid and early Mamluk periods. He then turns to more traditional genres, including *madīḥ*, *rithā'*, *fakhr*, *hijā'*, and *ghazal*, citing examples of each from poets spanning the entire Ayyubid and Mamluk periods. Ḍayf also treats this poetry thematically, including sections on Shī'ī, Sufi, and philosophical verse, and poems in praise of the Prophet Muḥammad, as well as providing sections on humorous verse and folk poetry. Again, Ḍayf cites numerous verses to illustrate his themes and briefly examines the work of representative poets. Often he provides useful paraphrases of their verse, but offers little other interpretation or analysis; this survey also lacks a bibliography.[10]

Several earlier works may be used to substantially supplement Ḍayf's introduction, and they may have inspired his division of poetry between that of Egypt and Syria. 'Umar Mūsá Bāshā in *Adab al-Duwal al-Mutatābi'ah* concentrates on the prose and poetry of Syria from the Zangids through the Ayyubids and to the Mamluks, ending with the reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn. Bāshā gives an overview of major political events, as well as of the social, religious, and moral life of this period with its use of wine and hashish, both of which were accompanied by other illicit activities. Bāshā notes that in spite of such wayward tendencies, this age, particularly under the Ayyubids, witnessed an intellectual and cultural florescence, which was carried on by the early Mamluks who likewise patronized the various arts and sciences.[11]

Bāshā organizes his long subsequent section on poetry around eleven Syrian poets representing many of the genres and poetic trends of the times; he gives a biography of each poet, noting their literary work, and citing examples of their favored genres, themes, and styles. Included from the Mamluk period are al-Ashraf al-Anṣārī (d. 662/1264) with his elegant poetic style, al-Shāb al-Ẓarīf (d. 688/1289) with his enchanting verse on wine and love, and al-Talla'farī (d. 675/1277) with his simple poetry on life and experience.[12]

Drawing on his substantial studies of these eleven poets, Bāshā next appraises the overall state of poetry during this period, largely in terms of styles and themes. He finds

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[9]Muḥammad Kāmil al-Fiqī, *al-Adab fī al-'Aṣr al-Mamlūkī* (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Miṣrīyah al-'Āmmah lil-Kitāb, 1976), 126-182. For a similar introduction, see Muḥammad Khafājī, *al-Ḥayāh al-Adabīyah fī Miṣr: al-'Aṣr al-Mamlūkī wa-al-'Uthmānī* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Kullīyah al-Azharīyah, 1984).

[10]Shawqī Ḍayf, *Ta'rīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1984), 6:161-399, 604-778.

[11]'Umar Mūsá Bāshā, *Adab al-Duwal al-Mutatābi'ah* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-Ḥadīth, 1967), 3-173.

[12]Ibid., 177-445.


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several major literary trends in this verse: (1) *al-madrasah al-taqlīdīyah*, the traditional or imitative school, composing poetry for the most part in accord with the classical canon; (2) *madhhab al-tawriyah wa-al-insijām*, also called the school of ″licit magic,″ an innovative movement using allusion and symbols with an elegant style to express abstract thoughts and feelings, often of a religious nature. This movement produced a third one tending toward ornamentation, (3) a *badī‘* or highly rhetorical style characterized by *jinās* (paronomasia) and *ṭibāq* (antithesis), and finally there is (4) *madhhab al-funūn al-shi‘rīyah al-mustaḥdathah* representing recent folk and colloquial poetic concerns and forms.[13]

Turning to major themes and genres, Bāshā suggests that poems in praise of Muḥammad—one of the featured genres of the time—arose out of the chaos of the Crusades and the Mongol threat. Following Ayyubid practice, the Mamluks fostered a conscious sense of Muslim identity by encouraging devotion to Muḥammad, clearly manifest in panegyrics of him. Poetry was also used to incite the troops to battle against the Crusaders who were usually portrayed by poets as the evil other. Bāshā also notes Mamluk influence on the archetypal beloved who increasingly appears as a Turkish maiden or young boy. Still, some poets, such as al-Shāb al-Ẓarīf, resisted this innovation, and Bāshā suggests that the continued use of an Arab beloved and the nostalgia for the days of the Arab Prophet may underscore a deep dissatisfaction on the part of many Arab subjects with their Turkish masters and their military rule.[14]

Bāshā further observes that there was a proliferation of poetry among all social classes accompanied by new poetry (*al-funūn al-shi‘rīyah al-mustaḥdathah*) with its folk and musical elements. Bāshā describes and gives examples of many of these newer forms including *muwashshaḥ*, *zajal*, *rubā‘ī*, *mawwāl*, and *musammaṭ*. Though popular with the masses for expressing their work-a-day life and humor, these folk genres, Bāshā claims, also afforded accomplished poets an occasional opportunity to escape the burden of the classical Arabic tradition.[15]

In contrast to this often simple, colloquial verse were the traditional or imitative genres (*al-aghrād al-taqlīdīyah*) of intellectuals and more serious poets. But here, too, Bāshā finds an uneasiness with tradition as many poets opened their *nasīb*s with the Nuwāsian rejection of the ruins and beloveds of Arab legend. Further, under the inspiration of Abū Tammām (d. ca. 232/846) and al-Buḥtarī (d. ca. 284/897), poets increasingly used ornamentation and rhetorical devices to embellish their verse, going to great lengths to distinguish themselves from their poetic forefathers.[16] Bāshā surveys, with illustrations, various figures of speech and rhetorical devices including personification (*tashkhīṣ*), simile and metaphor (*tashbīh*, *isti‘ārah*), antithesis (*ṭibāq*), and paronomasia (*jinās*), and cites as a typical example of excess Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī′s (d. 749/1349) *al-Badī‘īyah al-Nabawīyah*; this panegyric on Muḥammad is composed of approximately 140 verses, each featuring a different rhetorical device. Bāshā is disturbed by such *badī‘* poets, whom he criticizes as mind-slaves to style, wasting their time on verse games, and he quotes several denunciations of their poetry by critics of the period. Nevertheless, Bāshā

[13]Ibid., 446-456.
[14]Ibid., 456-530, esp. 416, 462.
[15]Ibid., 581-635.
[16]Ibid., 531-580.


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notes that *badī‘* verse was only one of multiple poetic tendencies of this eclectic period, which also produced less affected, more elegant and sincere verse.[17]

For this study of Syrian poets, Bāshā draws many of his examples from both published works and manuscripts, which he lists separately in a very useful bibliography. However, Bāshā is far more dependent on published and secondary sources for his subsequent study *Ta’rīkh al-Adab al-‘Arabī: al-‘Aṣr al-Mamlūkī*. Again, Bāshā organizes his study chronologically around individual authors whom he finds representative of important literary trends. In matters of verse, he devotes separate chapters to the lives and works of eight poets, including al-Anṣārī, al-Talla‘farī, and al-Shāb al-Ẓarīf, whose chapters are taken verbatim from Bāshā′s earlier work, with several useful additions such as a section on al-Anṣārī′s ascetic verse, and one on al-Shāb al-Ẓarīf′s *Maqāmāt al-‘Ushshāq*.[18]

Bāshā′s new studies focus on al-Būṣīrī (d. 694/1295) and his panegyrics to the Prophet Muḥammad; the Sufi verse of al-Shāb al-Ẓarīf′s father, ‘Afīf al-Dīn al-Tilimsānī (d. 690/1291); Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī′s playful and licentious verse in various poetic forms; Ibn Nubātah al-Miṣrī (d. 768/1366) and his elegant poetry replete with symbolism and double entendre; the traditional panegyrist Ibn Mālik al-Ḥamawī (d. 917/1516), and finally, a short chapter on ‘Ā’ishah al-Bā‘ūnīyah (d. 922/1516), her Sufi verse, panegyrics for the Prophet, and poetic exchanges with her literary contemporaries.[19] Unfortunately, Bāshā does not focus on a practitioner of the very popular *badī‘* verse, which he personally dislikes, nor does he examine the new poetic forms in any detail, as he did in his earlier study of the Syrian poets. Further, his studies of individual poets of the Mamluk period are largely descriptive with little analysis or commentary. Nevertheless, Bāshā′s history is a very readable introduction, providing a number of poems for further study.[20]

Undoubtedly another fruitful source for Ḍayf and more recent scholars of literature in Mamluk Egypt has been the concise study of life and literature in Mamluk times, *al-Adab fī al-‘Aṣr al-Mamlūkī*, by Muḥammad Zaghlūl Sallām.[21] In volume one of this two-volume work, Sallām draws on a number of primary sources to present a plausible and detailed account of Mamluk politics, cultural and intellectual life, and religion. He pays particular attention to the military nature of the foreign Mamluk regime, which was supported at times by the largely Arab populace due to their fear of invasion by infidels, whether Christian Crusaders or pagan Mongols. But the Mamluk protectors were also predators as they vied with one another for wealth and power, and the endemic Mamluk disputes led to political and economic instability and social unrest. Further, Sallām suggests that the rigid stratification among the Mamluk ranks reinforced efforts to clearly distinguish and rank individuals and groups among the larger populace, whether in terms of occupation or religious affiliation.

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[17]Ibid., 636-706.

[18]‘Umar Mūsá Bāshā, *Ta’rīkh al-Adab al-‘Arabī: al-‘Aṣr al-Mamlūkī* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr al-Mu‘āṣir, 1989), esp. 126-131, 249-253.

[19]Ibid., 97-451.

[20]Bāshā also adds an appendix on reading and analyzing texts, using as examples al-Būṣīrī′s *Burdah* and an elegy by Ibn Nubātah. In both cases, Bāshā makes several relevant observations regarding matters of form and influence, but his primary aim is the daunting task of evaluating the ″sincerity″ of the poets′ intentions and emotions; *Ta’rīkh*, 623-702.

[21]Muḥammad Zaghlūl Sallām, *al-Adab fī al-‘Aṣr al-Mamlūkī*, 2 vols. (Cairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, 1971).


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Sallām briefly touches upon aspects of the lower classes and popular culture with several critical observations on the place of women within Mamluk society. He notes that while a few women became scholars many more staffed the marginal professions as singers, dancers, and prostitutes. He also cites several edicts that aimed to keep women segregated and subordinate in a man´s world by proclaiming guidelines for their behavior and dress, which included prohibitions against their wearing turbans and men´s clothes.[22] Turning to cultural and intellectual life, Sallām, too, points to its conservative, preservative character as a response to the destruction of Baghdad in the East, and the Christian *reconquista* in the West. Cairo and, to a lesser extent, Damascus became bastions of Arab Muslim culture which, for a variety of political and economic factors, was generously supported by the Mamluk elite. Study of the various religious sciences flourished, and a strong Sunnī interpretation of Islam became ascendant.

Sallām reviews Mamluk achievements in the study of history, language, and the natural sciences, and then turns to religious life. He points out differences and tensions among the Sunnī *'ulamā'*, a distinct if diminishing Shī'ī presence in the empire, especially in the Hijaz, and the varying fortunes of non-Muslims. Sallām claims that the Mamluks consciously played on religious difference to divide and control their subjects.[23] Sallām then focuses on Sufism in the Mamluk era, its doctrines, orders, and major institutions, such as the *khānqāh*. He discusses poetry in praise of the Prophet Muḥammad, and reviews Sufi poetry´s major themes and practitioners, but categorizes them generally in terms of the Sufi doctrines of monism (*waḥdat al-wujūd*), incarnationism (*al-ḥulūlīyah*), and love of absolute beauty, rather than in terms of poetic form and style.[24]

Sallām briefly surveys some of the arts and crafts patronized by the Mamluks, including architecture, textiles, and music, and the possible influence of the latter on the poetry of the period, particularly the newer poetic forms such as the *rubā'ī*, *mawwāl*, *muwashshaḥ*, *zajal*, and *balīq*. Sallām cites examples of these ″folk″ forms which, he maintains, largely reflect the colloquial speech and everyday experiences of the masses. But Sallām asserts, as did Bāshā, that these popular forms also stimulated poets among the literary elite to experiment in matters of rhyme, meter, style, and modes of expression.[25]

Having set this background, Sallām turns in his second volume first to prose and then to poetry proper. He claims that the non-Arab Mamluks were often ignorant of proper Arabic which, Sallām asserts, led to a slippage in poetic standards, as serious poets lacked an educated and appreciative audience. As a result patronage of verse was sporadic, and only rarely could an individual support himself solely by poetry. Nevertheless, the penchant for composing poetry spread throughout Mamluk society, especially among the scribal class and the *'ulamā'*, as well as among the poorer masses, and by the fourteenth century, colloquial Arabic and folk forms were widespread in Arabic poetry. Sallām suggests that such developments may have alienated many serious poets from the elite and commoners alike, and that this alienation may have inspired poems in praise of Muḥammad and Sufi verse, as did the threats of infidel invasion. Still, while most Mamluks had little taste for classical Arabic poems, Sallām notes that they certainly savored sad lamentations

[22]Ibid., 1:13-104.
[23]Ibid., 1:105-192.
[24]Ibid., 1:193-274.
[25]Ibid., 1:275-336.


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for captured cities urging them on to action, and the subsequent rousing poetic accounts of their valiant military exploits, and stunning victories over Godless foes.

Turning from *madīḥ* and *ḥamāsah* verse to the *ghazal*, Sallām also draws attention to the Turkish Mamluks and the changing standards of beauty reflected in many *ghazal*s of the period, as the beloved's form shifts from a dark, wide-eyed Arab, to a Turk, soft and white with slanting eyes. As for *hijā'*, or invective verse, Sallām notes its function as a vital form of social satire and criticism, often aimed at judges and other religious officials.[26] Then, leaving traditional poetry (*taqlīdī*), Sallām once again takes up folk forms and themes (*sha'bī*), the influence on them of music and Andalusian elements, and then briefly examines his third class of Mamluk poetry, *badī'*. Sallām catalogs various literary devices that came to dominate much of Mamluk poetry, particularly among the scribal class, once again with ample examples.[27]

Following this overview of Mamluk Arabic poetry, Sallām gives entries for twenty-one poets spanning the Mamluk period. He arranges these entries chronologically according to death dates, determining, where possible, a poet's residence in either Egypt or Syria. Sallām draws his materials from previously published Mamluk sources, carefully cited for each entry, which vary in length from a paragraph to fifteen pages. Further, these entries follow the traditional Arab biographical form, recording, where possible, the poet's full name, place of birth and death, profession, teachers, students, patrons, and opinions on the poet and his verse by his contemporaries. Sallām also notes the types and genres preferred by each poet, often citing examples. Likewise, he pays careful attention to possible literary influences on individual poets, and to a poet's literary companions, including samples of poetic exchanges among them. While Sallām offers little literary analysis of particular poems or of Mamluk Arabic verse in general, his patient descriptive work is among the best introductions to literary life in the Mamluk era, and his bibliography cites many of the published primary sources available for further research on Mamluk Arabic poetry and poets.[28]

A final survey worth noting is Bakrī Shaykh Amīn's *Muṭāla'āt fī al-Shi'r al-Mamlūkī wa-al-'Uthmānī*. Amīn aims to address Arabic verse more in aesthetic than historical terms, and his introduction immediately sets the tone of the work; he deplores the fact that many modern scholars have categorically dismissed the Arabic literature of the Mamluk and Ottoman periods as decadent, particularly due to the prominence of ornamentation and rhetorical devices in much of its poetry and prose. He castigates Arab scholars for turning away from this portion of their heritage due largely to its emphasis on formal qualities while, at the same time, embracing modern artists, like Picasso, who have similar formal concerns. Amīn feels that underlying this reorientation is a rejection of what is Arabic and Islamic in favor of what is Western and, hence, of Judaeo-Christian taste. He therefore proposes to give this Arabic literature its due.[29]

Amīn begins his work with two chapters of general introduction to Arab history and culture from the late Saljuq through the Ottoman periods. Then he divides his study of Mamluk and Ottoman Arabic poetry based on the standard groupings of verse as either

[26]Ibid., 2:105-120.
[27]Ibid., 2:121-132.
[28]Ibid., 2:133-250.
[29]Bakrī Shaykh Amīn, *Muṭāla'āt fī al-Shi'r al-Mamlūkī wa-al-'Uthmānī,* 4th ed. (Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm lil-Malāyīn, 1986; 1st ed. 1972), 5-10.


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traditional/imitative (*taqlīdī*) or new/innovative (*mustaḥdath*). He notes at the outset the sheer number of poets composing in Arabic from the Saljuq through the Ottoman periods, despite declining patronage under non-Arab rule; most of these individuals supported themselves by occupations other than their poetry which, nevertheless, served as a badge of cultural distinction. He further acknowledges the fact that much of their verse has been either lost or remains in manuscript.

But undeterred by this fact when addressing the major genres of classical Arabic poetry, including *madīḥ*, *rithā'*, *ghazal*, *fakhr*, *ḥamāsah*, *hijā'*, and *waṣf*, Amīn concludes that Mamluk and Ottoman poets were bound by tradition, aiming to conserve it rather than to interact creatively with it. To support his case, Amīn compares panegyric verses by al-Nābighah (d. 604) with those of Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī; whereas the former pre-Islamic poet makes a concise comparison between his courageous patrons and a flock of predatory birds sweeping down on their prey, the Mamluk poet cobbles together a disparate host of traditional adjectives and images to praise his patron's courage.[30]

Amīn acknowledges that some Mamluk poets occasionally broke with tradition, as when a few of them make a woman speak to express her feelings in love poetry, or when a poet describes markets, business transactions, or the effects of natural disasters.[31] But in general, due to lack of patronage and a cynicism about the times, many poets turned away from expressing their true feelings only to submerge themselves in intricate word-play. Amīn claims that this tendency is quite evident in invective poetry which, he asserts, no longer critiqued a tribe or society, but rather attacked an individual, personal enemy. Amīn believes that this reflects the dissolution of tribal bonds as a result of urbanization and economic independence, and a refusal to criticize the ruling Mamluks for fear of reprisal. He ignores, however, Sallām's examples of verse critical of both the ruling elite and the religious establishment, perhaps regarding them as exceptions.[32]

However, if poets were hesitant to compose invectives against their Mamluk masters, they were quick to praise them and their efforts on behalf of Islam. Amīn notes that images of the Mamluks as defenders of the faith and counter-Crusaders were essential to their legitimation, as were references to their ascetic almost saintly qualities. Further, these religious and doctrinal elements so central to the legitimacy of the Ayyubid and Mamluk regimes were extended in *ḥamāsah* poetry from praise for an individual amir to lauds for entire armies.[33]

In spite of a few pertinent observations, Amīn's discussion of more traditional Arabic verse in the Mamluk and Ottoman periods adds little that is new. However, his second section on innovative verse is much more detailed, as he contrasts the conservatism in the classical genres to the free and playful spirit he finds in the new and innovative poetic forms and themes. Amīn devotes separate sections to a startling variety of Arabic verse including verses revealing important dates, verse riddles and puzzles, poetic "trees" where individual verses branch off from a central verse to create a poem, poems forming geometrical shapes, verses reading forward and backward, and poems, that if the end word is omitted from each verse, yield new poems with different rhymes and meters. Next, Amīn gives brief examples of various rhetorical devices to be found in this poetry and then,

[30]Ibid., 81-98.
[31]Ibid., 99-125.
[32]Ibid., 137-148.
[33]Ibid., 126-136.


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after his detailed account of the many complex and fantastic poetic forms, Amīn pronounces them all to be the trivialities and waste products of the ″killing emptiness″ of the age.[34]

Amīn, however, finds some redeeming qualities in several of the thematic innovations of the period, particularly in the flourishing of Sufi themes and panegyrics of the Prophet. He ascribes the prominence of this religious verse to the tumultuous effects of the Crusades and the Mongol threat, and to a general dissatisfaction with Turkish rule, Mamluk or Ottoman. Amīn gives a sampling of Sufi verse by Ibn al-Fāriḍ (d. 632/1235), Ibn al-ʻArabī (d. 637/1240), and ʻAfīf al-Dīn al-Tilimsānī and a glance at their poetic sources in early poetry praising Muḥammad, and love and wine poetry, which they adapted as a mode of expression appropriate to their efforts and experiences in the mystic way. Amīn then reviews panegyrics of Muḥammad in the context of Sufism and the dominant influence of al-Būṣīrī′s *Burdah* on this religious genre, which often prays for the Prophet′s intercession on behalf of the poet and his sad state.[35] Amīn rounds out this section on thematic innovation with a few brief references to poems on hashish and their possible connection to homosexuality, sarcastic and humorous verse serving as an outlet for personal and social frustrations, poems about one′s own wretchedness, and *ikhwānīyāt*, poems exchanged among friends and colleagues as expressions of admiration and affection.[36]

In his final observations, Amīn stresses the fact that literary history is not identical to political dynasties and geographical borders. Nevertheless, he sees a decline in poetic quality resulting from a loss of state patronage now in the hands of a foreign, largely Turkish elite. This was accompanied by a changing Arabic language with more colloquial elements and less nuance, and a widening gap between popular parlance and a literary language losing vitality and emotive power as it severed its links to life. Fleeing the brutality of their world, poets retreated to their literary ivory towers; they became learned to the point of being esoteric, but while they could be clever, they were not committed to a larger life and its poetic expression.[37]

## III

Despite his initial defense of Arabic poetry from the Mamluk and Ottoman periods, Bakrī Amīn, in the end, sides with a majority of Arab literary scholars in holding a dim view of this poetry, which they have labeled variously as decadent, pallid, worn out, and lacking authenticity. While similar Western appraisals seem to stem, in part, from idealized views of Arab culture and Islamic history, most Arab negative opinions appear to be the product of a pervasive reading of this poetry in terms of romantic notions of creativity that embrace the simple and emotional as indicative of personal experience, sincerity, and truth.

Therefore, condemnation of Mamluk Arabic verse as decadent and superficial says more about modern tastes than it does about this poetry and its roles within Mamluk society. A useful corrective to this state of affairs is *al-Naqd al-Adabī fī-al-ʻAṣr al-Mamlūkī* by ʻAbduh ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz Qulqaylah. Inspired by the work of earlier scholars,

[34]Ibid., 161-229.
[35]Ibid., 233-275.
[36]Ibid., 276-294.
[37]Ibid., 298-320.


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among them Maḥmūd Rizq Salīm and Muḥammad Zaghlūl Sallām, Qulqaylah presents an extensive survey of twenty-six litterateurs and scholars of the Mamluk period and their views on Arabic literature.[38] He compiles their opinions on a number of specific critical issues, including what factors make a good writer, effects of the environment on a writer, and the appropriateness of artistic elements in writing, and then turns to matters of form, content, and literary borrowing or theft (*sariqāt*).[39]

Specifically in matters of poetry, Qulqaylah shows that Mamluk critics followed earlier tradition in their preference for a largely paratactic poetic structure, and in their appraisals of classical genres: invective poetry may be seen as a negative panegyric; the function of the *nasīb* is to attract the listener's attention by mentioning the beloved, while a proper *ghazal* relates the words and acts occurring between lovers; elegy should never contain erotic or pleasurable themes but should, instead, focus on the deceased's good qualities and lasting legacy.[40] As for *badī'*, it is quite clear that many of the critics surveyed by Qulqaylah appreciated its creative potential and the erudition that it displayed, particularly in high quality verse involving allusion or double entendre (*tawriyah*). Yet a number of critics denounced the burgeoning of rhetorical devices, which threatened to choke poetic spontaneity, and they sought to stem its excesses, though not its creative uses per se.[41]

In addition to Qulqaylah's study, recent Western research on pre-Islamic and classical Arabic poetry has also challenged persistent romantic misreading of pre-modern Arabic verse.[42] Among this work is Stefan Sperl's insightful book on mannerism in Arabic poetry of the fifth/eleventh century. Sperl argues that mannerism is defined by the way in which a particular poem relates to previous literary convention and subjects. Specifically, mannerism's primary subject is the poetic tradition itself, as the poet aims to invoke wonder in his audience through various rhetorical strategies. The poet's playful and intricate weave of antitheses and metaphorical inversions creates discord between signifier and signified, calling into question normal perception while, at the same time, suggesting a seamless reality where the ordinary may suddenly be transformed into the miraculous.[43]

Such work by Sperl and others holds promise for a better grasp and understanding of Mamluk poetry, particularly in its *badī'* and mystical varieties.[44] Yet considerable

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[38]'Abduh 'Abd al-'Azīz Qulqaylah, *al-Naqd al-Adabī fī al-'Aṣr al-Mamlūkī* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Anjlū-Miṣrīyah, 1972), 49-207.

[39]Ibid., 211-278, 281-389.

[40]Ibid., 365-369, 393-417.

[41]Ibid., 419-432.

[42]In particular see the work of Jaroslav Stetkevych, ″Some Observations on Arabic Poetry,″ *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 26 (1967): 1-12; idem, ″Arabism and Arabic Literature: Self-view of a Profession,″ *JNES* 28 (1969): 145-156; idem, ″The Arabic Lyrical Phenomena in Context,″ *Journal of Arabic Literature* 6 (1975): 55-77; idem, ″The Arabic *Qasīdah*: From Form and Content to Mood and Meaning,″ *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 3-4 (1979-80): 774-785; idem, ″Arabic Poetry and Assorted Poetics,″ in *Islamic Studies: A Tradition and Its Problems*, ed. Malcolm H. Kerr (Malibu, California: Undena Publications, 1980), 103-123. Also see Michael Sells, ″The *Qasîda* and the West: Self-Reflective Stereotype and Critical Encounter,″ *Al-'Arabiyya* 20 (1987): 307-357; Suzanne P. Stetkevych, *The Mute Immortals Speak* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1993).

[43]Stefan Sperl, *Mannerism in Arabic Poetry: A Structural Analysis of Selected Texts (3rd Century AH/9th Century AD—5th Century AH/11th Century AD)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), esp. 1-7, 155-180.

[44]Also see Suzanne P. Stetkevych, *Abū Tammām and the Poetics of the 'Abbāsid Age* (Leiden: E. J. Brill,


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groundwork remains to be done in the forms of additional edited *dīwān*s and other primary sources, and more focused research on themes, genres, and poets. Presently, there are very few studies on individual poets. Jawād Aḥmad ʻAllūsh, Maḥmūd Rizq Salīm, and Yāsīn Ayyūbī have surveyed the writings of the poet and critic Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī;[45] ʻUmar Mūsá Bāshā has examined the work Ibn Nubātah, Maḥmūd Rabdāwī has studied the work of Ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī, while Ibrāhīm Jād al-Rabb recently completed a study of the writings of Ibn Makānis (d. 794/1392).[46]

Among the many poets requiring further focused attention are al-Shāb al-Ẓarīf, al-Būṣīrī, Ibn Abī Ḥajalah (d. 776/1375), and ʻĀ'ishah al-Bāʻūnīyah, a celebrated woman scholar and litterateur. Her work raises an issue seldom addressed in the study of the Mamluk period, namely verse by women poets. Careful study of their verse and a comparison of it to that of their male contemporaries might reveal differing concerns and experiences based in part on gender. Although extant Arabic poetry by women of the pre-modern eras is scarce, I have found some verse by women in Mamluk biographical dictionaries, and recently I managed to obtain copies of several manuscripts of ʻĀ'ishah´s *Dīwān*.

In addition to these poets, many other individuals composed Arabic poetry during the Mamluk period, and we should attempt to distinguish serious poets from interested amateurs. By studying the number and transmission of manuscripts of specific poets we may better appreciate the literary tastes and preferences of the time and so discover which poets were read most often and served as the focus for study and commentary;[47] this was clearly the case with al-Būṣīrī, for instance, whose *Burdah* became a part of the Arabic poetic canon. Also worthy of study are the possible effects of ethnicity, class, education, and occupation on the Arabic verse of individual poets. As discussed by Li Guo elsewhere in this volume, education and occupation were important factors in the approach and style of Mamluk histories distinguishing, to a degree, historians from Damascus from those in Cairo; we should be alert to a similar situation among poets.

A related issue demanding further attention is that of the colloquial and folk-inspired poetic forms, which were also utilized by many accomplished poets. As we have seen, this verse has been described and discussed in a number of surveys, and to these discussions should be added Paul Kahle´s recently published edition of three shadow plays by Ibn Dāniyāl,[48] as well as Aḥmad Ṣādiq al-Jammāl´s pioneering study *al-Adab al-ʻĀmmī fī Miṣr fī al-ʻAṣr al-Mamlūkī*. Al-Jammāl draws distinctions between official literary Arabic (*fuṣḥá*), ungrammatical variations on this literary language deriving in part from the common parlance of the masses (*ʻāmmīyah*), and the related, though largely oral folk traditions with their anonymous cycles of myth and legend (*shaʻbī*). Al-Jammāl

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1991); Jaroslav Stetkevych, *The Zephyrs of Najd* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

[45]Jawād Aḥmad ʻAllūsh, *Shiʻr Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī* (Baghdad: Maṭbaʻat Maʻārif, ca. 1959); Maḥmūd Rizq Salīm, *Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī* (reprint, Cairo: Dār al-Maʻārif, 1980); Yāsīn Ayyūbī, *Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-Lubnānī, 1971).

[46]ʻUmar Mūsá Bāshā, *Ibn Nubātah al-Miṣrī* (Cairo: Dār al-Maʻārif, 1963); Maḥmūd Rabdāwī, *Ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī, Shāʻir wa-Nāqid* (Damascus: Dār Qutaybah, 1982); Ibrāhīm Jād al-Rabb, *Ibn Makānis wa-al-Shiʻr fī ʻAṣr al-Mamālīk* (Cairo: Markaz al-Nashr li-Jāmiʻat al-Qāhirah, 1990).

[47]Suggested by Dr. Frank Lewis in response to my presentation of this paper at the Mamluk Studies Workshop, University of Chicago, April 26, 1996.

[48]Paul Kahle, ed., *Three Shadow Plays by Muḥammad Ibn Dāniyāl*, E. J. W. Gibb Memorial, n.s. no. 32 (Cambridge: Trustees of the E. J. W. Gibb Memorial, 1992).


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concentrates on the colloquial literature in terms of the political, social, and intellectual life of Mamluk Egypt.[49] He then discusses major colloquial forms, including the *muwashshaḥ*, *zajal*, and *balīq*, their meters, diction, and themes, and major practitioners of several of these popular verse forms.[50]

Al-Jammāl stresses that while colloquial verse is light and musical in style, it may still bear substantive meaning, often of a socio-political nature. Less restricted in both form and theme than the classical tradition, colloquial Arabic became a pliant language for expressing both public and private sentiments, either directly or by insinuation through various forms of word-play. Thus, this delightful verse could momentarily relieve the stress of life´s vicissitudes, while giving vent to the frustrations of the poet and larger populace.[51] Al-Jammāl, too, seems to hold romantic assumptions regarding poetry when he accepts colloquial verse as a sincere and accurate reflection of the poet´s life and personal experience. Nevertheless, he is quite sensitive to this poetry´s functions and value, especially when compared to the majority of scholars who have dismissed this and other playful verse as a waste of time and of little aesthetic worth.

Dealing with a similar situation involving fifteenth century Timurid Persian riddles, Paul Losensky has called attention to the overly serious approach taken by modern scholars to such verse. Drawing on the work of Johan Huizinga and Jan Mukarovsky,[52] Losensky points out that in many periods types of poetry and versification have served as a social ritual or game where play, not profundity, was the aim. In the Timurid case, riddles often play on personal names, promoting an accepted mode of social exchange—a kind of greeting card—created for immediate consumption by a host and his guest.[53]

Losensky´s insightful observations should be extended to riddles, colloquial verse, and other occasional Mamluk Arabic poems, which were probably never intended to meet the highest aesthetic standards, nor to stand the test of time as literary masterpieces. Following Losensky´s lead, we may make a useful distinction between poetry of conscious aesthetic aspirations and sensibilities, and more disposable verse intended for a limited audience and immediate use. Thus poems like those reviewed by Bakrī Amīn—reading forward and backward, or in botanical and geometric shapes, or poems in which the omission of the end words produces new poems—should be seen as a kind of ″verse-search,″ indicative more of playful erudition and cultural sophistication than of artistic decline and decadence.

Similarly serving everyday social needs are the hundreds of occasional poems, including verses exchanged between friends (*ikhwānīyāt*) to express affection and get-well wishes, poems celebrating special occasions, and elegies offering condolences. Again, a modern analogy is our own Hallmark cards containing verses to commemorate particular types of occasions. Few scholars of English would consider this verse to be original

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[49]Aḥmad Ṣādiq al-Jammāl, *al-Adab al-ʻĀmmī fī Miṣr fī al-ʻAṣr al-Mamlūkī* (Cairo: Dār al-Qawmīyah, 1966), 3-65.

[50]Ibid., 69-216.

[51]Ibid., 217-219.

[52]See Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), 119-135; Jan Mukarovsky, *Aesthetic Function, Norm, and Value as Social Facts*, trans. M. E. Suino, Michigan Slavic Contributions, no. 3 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1979), esp. 60-64.

[53]Paul Losensky, ″Welcoming Fighânî´: Imitation, Influence, and Literary Change in the Persian *Ghazal*, 1480-1680.″ 2 vols. (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1993), 1:160-72.


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poetry of high caliber, yet it is precisely its standardized form and restricted number of easily recognizable cultural ideals and traditional motifs that render such verse so very useful.

Careful study of Arabic occasional poetry from the Mamluk period could thus sharpen our perceptions of social etiquette and proper conduct, as well as of the cultural ideals and sentiments encoded in this poetry. While it is true that identifiable authors composed this Arabic verse—in contrast to the largely anonymous verse of our own occasion cards—we should not be obsessed with questions regarding the ″sincerity″ of a poet′s sentiments. Rather, we should probe the criteria that culturally identify these sentiments and their appropriateness on a given occasion. In other words, the emphasis here should not be on the truth or actual existence of these feelings in a poet, but of their proper identification, as such; it is not a question of these sentiments *being* so, but of their being *so*.[54]

Clearly, poetry has been fundamental over the centuries to Islamic culture for expressing feelings and beliefs, and for articulating views on life, society, and politics. Though poetry′s importance to Muslim societies has long been noted, there are few studies of this poetry′s place and function within broader historical and religious contexts. Yet poetry and the other arts can be invaluable instruments for sensing the undercurrents of submerged history, what Fernand Braudel has also called the ″unconscious history″ holding the basic values and foundational structures of a civilization.[55] Just as Medieval European painting before and after the Black Death vividly portrays changing notions of life, death, and dying,[56] so too may Arabic poetry reflect and reveal shifting views and patterns of belief fundamental to Mamluk society and its larger Islamic civilization.

In fact, this poetry, too, registered changes wrought by the plague,[57] and some of the many other topics and areas for further research have been touched upon in surveys, especially those by Maḥmūd Rizq Salīm and Fawzī Amīn. Maḥmūd Rizq Salīm filled a large volume of his *ʻAṣr al-Salāṭīn al-Mamālīk* with verse regarding Egyptian life during the Mamluk era. Drawing material from published sources and some manuscripts, Salīm cites verse toward the end of volume seven to illustrate various features of Egypt, including the Nile and the Nilometer, the island of Rawḍah, various lakes, and other natural phenomena.[58] Then in volume eight, Salīm cites poetry first to enliven his account of political events, and then to illustrate aspects of the cultural and social life of the period.[59]

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[54]David Schalkwyk, ″Fiction as ′Grammatical′ Investigation: A Wittgensteinian Account,″ *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 53, no. 3 (Summer, 1995): 290 and citing Stanley Cavall, *The Claim of Reason* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 45.

[55]Fernand Braudel, *On History*, trans. Sarah Matthews (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 38-40; idem, *A History of Civilizations*, trans. Richard Mayne (New York: The Penguin Press, 1994), 27-33.

[56]For a concise overview of these changes see William Fleming, *Arts and Ideas*, 8th ed. (Fort Worth: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1992), 219-226; for a more detailed analysis involving the Black Death and sacred art in Italy, see Samuel K. Cohn, Jr., *The Cult of Remembrance and the Black Death* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1992), 244-261. I wish to thank Michael Holly, Professor of Art History, University of Rochester for initially drawing my attention to this effect of the Black Death in Europe.

[57]Michael W. Dols, *The Black Death in the Middle East*, second printing with corrections (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 236-237, 325-326.

[58]Maḥmūd Rizq Salīm, *ʻAṣr al-Salāṭīn al-Mamālīk*, 8 vols. ([Cairo]: Maktabat al-Adab, 1965), 7:342-424.

[59]Ibid., 8:3-130, 131-279.


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Working from the assumption that ″poetry is the interpreter of the milieu,″[60] Salīm has amassed literally hundreds of verses to describe and, occasionally, probe a wide range of subjects, from relations between specific poets and Mamluk sultans, to examples of social criticism and religious movements. He claims that although the foreign-born Mamluk elite were not as inclined as their Arab predecessors to patronize professional poets, poetry continued to flourish, particularly among the *'ulamā'* and scribal classes, where composing verse was a sign of accomplishment.

In the final two hundred and fifty pages of volume eight, Salīm groups the poets of Egypt into seven generations and devotes sections to major poetic genres of the time, including panegyrics for the Prophet Muḥammad, love poetry, descriptive poetry, wine poetry, and Sufi and ascetic verse. In each case, after a few brief general remarks, Salīm cites major representatives and verses of each poetic type. He then concludes his volume with examples of various rhetorical devices found in Mamluk Arabic verse, and a few of the developing popular forms including the *zajal*.[61] Though Salīm′s anthology-like sections offer useful examples, poetic analysis and literary history and criticism are not among this work′s strong points, and his bibliography is too brief and lacking essential information. Yet Salīm was a pioneer in understanding the larger ramifications of the study of Mamluk Arabic poetry, as he clearly grasped the importance of Arabic verse as an essential element for distilling a more precise image of the society and culture of the Mamluk Age.

Salīm′s historical and sociological reading of Mamluk Arabic literature is also apparent in *al-Mujtama' al-Miṣrī fī Adab al-'Aṣr al-Mamlūkī al-Awwal, 648-784*, by Fawzī Muḥammad Amīn, a former student of Muḥammad Zaghlūl Sallām. Fawzī Amīn believes that poetry from the Mamluk period can lend a sense of living reality to the historical accounts of events and society, while contributing a more personal, human element as well. In addition, he hopes that the study of this poetry in its social context will also yield important clues regarding the era′s tastes and standards of beauty.[62]

With these goals in mind Fawzī Amīn organizes his study around eight major topics: (1) government and administration, (2) *jihād*, (3) wealth and corruption, (4) religious currents, Sufi and Shī'ī, (5) sectarian trends, particularly those involving conflicts between Muslims and the Christians and Jews under their protection, (6) characteristics of the Egyptian personality and general life, including the subject of women; (7) amusements, including hunting, chess, riddles, singing and dancing, and legally deviant behavior including the consumption of wine and hashish, as well as homosexual tendencies, and finally, (8) literary tastes among the elite, and among the masses.

Citing numerous verses and poems, Fawzī Amīn renders, at times, a lively account of Mamluk society in Egypt. Nevertheless, this work, like Salīm′s, is largely a survey of the period, with most of Fawzī Amīn′s observations and conclusions echoing those of his teacher Sallām, and other earlier scholars regarding the political, religious, and cultural life of the period. As for his final chapter, promisingly entitled ″Literary Taste,″ it is a general summary of poetic trends. Fawzī Amīn characterizes elite taste by what is referred to usually as traditional or imitative (*taqlīdī*), as well as by the dominance of *badī'*.

[60]Ibid., 8:215.
[61]Ibid., 8:269-525.
[62]Fawzī Muḥammad Amīn, *al-Mujtama' al-Miṣrī fī Adab al-'Aṣr al-Mamlūkī al-Awwal: 648-784* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1982), 1-6.


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Interestingly, Fawzī Amīn ascribes the popularity of *badī‘* to a tendency in Islamic art toward two-dimensional abstraction, with space filled to capacity; as in the arabesque, various elements move together in harmony, creating a symmetry amid repetition and variation, and leaving no place for Satan to rest his evil eye.[63] Not surprisingly, Fawzī Amīn finds popular literary taste embodied in the newer poetic forms which, he too, views as a revolt against literary tradition. The lighter style and colloquial diction of this verse readily expressed the everyday realities of common folk and the poet´s more personal feelings, especially of a humorous or sarcastic nature.[64] Fawzī Amīn completes his study with an extensive bibliography of over 150 relevant primary and secondary sources, both published and in manuscript.

Fawzī Amīn, Salīm, and several others noted above have drawn attention to an area of particular prominence and research potential, namely, religious life, since it was during the Mamluk period that what is often regarded today as Sunnī Islam was extensively codified and spread, linking Abbasid universal religious aspirations to their later Ottoman formulations. While some valuable scholarship has focused on general religious trends, and the theological ideas of a few outstanding thinkers,[65] the broader concerns of Mamluk religious life could be delineated in greater detail through the study of this period´s poetry, which voiced not only theological and political issues, but also more personal spiritual feelings and aspirations.

Islamic mysticism was a distinctive characteristic of Mamluk religion,[66] and several books by ‘Alī Ṣafā Ḥusayn feature Sufi verse from Fatimid and Ayyubid Egypt. Ḥusayn gives special attention to the mystical verse of the Fatimid Sunnī poet Ibn al-Kīzānī (d. 560/1166), as well as to the Sufi writings of Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh (d. 612/1214) during the Ayyubid period. Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh´s work and other Sufi literature from the seventh/thirteenth century are also the main focus of Ḥusayn´s more general survey and anthology *al-Adab al-Ṣūfī fī Miṣr fī al-Qarn al-Sābi‘ al-Hijrī*.[67]

What is clear from these and other works is the singular importance of ‘Umar Ibn al-Fāriḍ to the Arabic religious poetry of the Mamluk era.[68] The most celebrated Arab poet

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[63]Ibid., 406-407.

[64]Ibid., 377-477.

[65]E.g., the studies on Ibn Taymīyah beginning with Henri Laoust, *Essai sur les doctrines sociales et politiques de Taqî-l-Dîn Aḥmad b. Taimiya* (Cairo: Imprimerie de l´Institut français d´archéologie, 1939); and, more recently, Muhammad Umar Memon, *Ibn Taymîyah´s Struggle against Popular Religion* (The Hague: Mouton, 1976). Also see Annemarie Schimmel, ″Some Glimpses of Religious Life during the Later Mamluk Period,″ *Islamic Studies* 4 (1965): 353-392; idem, ″Sufismus und Heiligenverehrung im spätmittelalterlichen Ägypten,″ in *Festschrift für W. Caskel*, ed. Erich Gräf (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968), 274-289; Donald P. Little, ″Religion under the Mamluks,″ *Muslim World* 73 (1983): 165-181; Alexander Knysh, ″´Orthodoxy´ and ´Heresy´ in Medieval Islam: An Essay in Reassessment,″ *Muslim World* 83 (1993): 48-67.

[66]See Th. Emil Homerin, ″Thieves and Asses: Sufism and Its Detractors in Mamluk Egypt,″ forthcoming in *Sufism and Its Opponents*, ed. Frederick De Jong and Bernd Radtke.

[67]‘Alī Ṣafā Ḥusayn, *al-Adab al-Ṣūfī fī Miṣr fī al-Qarn al-Sābi‘ al-Hijrī* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, 1964); idem, *Ibn al-Kīzānī al-Shā‘ir al-Ṣūfī* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, 1966); idem, *al-Adab al-Ṣūfī fī Miṣr: Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh al-Qūṣī* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, 1971).

[68]Th. Emil Homerin, *From Arab Poet to Muslim Saint: Ibn al-Fāriḍ, His Verse, and His Shrine* (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1994). Also see Annemarie Schimmel, *As Through a Veil: Mystical Poetry in Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), esp. 41-45; R. A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism* (1921; reprint, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,


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in Islamic mysticism, Ibn al-Fāriḍ was regarded as a fine poet during his lifetime, and his poetry continued to be read, studied, and imitated by Muslims for generations. His strong influence is evident in the verse of a number of noted poets throughout the entire Mamluk period, including his student Ibn al-Khiyāmī (d. 685/1286), Ibn Isrā'īl (d. 677/1278), Muḥammad ibn Wafā' (d. 765/1363), his son 'Alī (d. 807/1405), Aḥmad al-Manṣūrī (d. 887/1482), and 'Ā'ishah al-Bā'ūnīyah. These and other poets imitated Ibn al-Fāriḍ's *badī'* poetic style with its potential for intimating a largely Neo-Platonic mystical view of life. This, in turn, suggests an "Ibn al-Fāriḍ school" of poets who attempted to reveal the spiritual significance permeating all life, while urging their audience to undertake the quest for self-illumination.

The mystical beliefs and world views voiced by these poets received theological interpretation and elaboration from Sufi theorists, including al-Tilimsānī and al-Dasūqī (d. 677/1278), who used poetry and its commentary to spread their own religious doctrines, particularly the controversial monistic one of *waḥdat al-wujūd*, or "the unity of being." In stark contrast, other Mamluk poets composed verse critical of such doctrines as they sought to promote less speculative interpretations of Islam. Frequently judges and legal scholars, individuals including al-Quṭb al-Qastallānī (d. 686/1287), Ibn al-Wardī (d. 749/1349), and Ibn Abī Ḥajalah, replaced mystical themes with those offering more traditional moral advice and religious instruction, though their poems, too, often formally imitated those by Ibn al-Fāriḍ.[69]

Thus, Mamluk Arabic poetry presents often conflicting perspectives on religious life, exposing some of the complexity and centrality of competing religious views and their underlying roots in Mamluk society. But despite their different emphases, many mystical and non-mystical religious poems from this period reveal a devotional quality, which is particularly pronounced in poems praising the Prophet Muḥammad and his family. Though some such panegyrics were composed prior to the thirteenth century, it was under the Mamluks that a distinct poetic genre to praise the Prophet—*al-madīḥ al-nabawī*—was extensively developed and codified by al-Būṣīrī and his many imitators.[70] Yet, here, too, we find Ibn al-Fāriḍ's lasting influence, since al-Būṣīrī consciously modeled his *Burdah* on an ode by this master-poet.[71]

Similar to Sufi poetry, which came to express a collective view of reality, these panegyrics present an evolving mystical and devotional image of the Prophet Muḥammad. While we must evaluate this poetry in literary terms, we should also focus on this poetry's place in Mamluk religion and society, and the extent to which these panegyrics, as well as mystical verse, assumed liturgical roles at mosques, shrines, and elsewhere particularly

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1978), 162-266; A. J. Arberry, *The Mystical Poems of Ibn al-Fāriḍ*, 2 vols. (London: Emery Walker, 1952-56).

[69]Homerin, *Arab Poet*, 22-31, 57-60.

[70] See Zakī Mubārak, *al-Madā'iḥ al-Nabawīyah fī al-Adab al-'Arabī* (1935; reprint, Cairo: Dār al-Sha'b, n.d.); Ḥusayn, *al-Adab al-Ṣūfī,* esp. 216-220, 230-233; Schimmel, *As Through a Veil*, esp. 171-211; idem, *And Muḥammad is His Messenger* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), esp. 176-194; Victor Danner, "Al-Buṣīrī: His Times and His Prophetology," in *Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies: A Festschrift in Honor of Professor Wadie Jwaideh*, ed. Robert Olsen (Brattleboro, Vermont: Amana Books, 1987), 41-61.

[71]Mubārak, *al-Madā'iḥ*, 201-203.


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during threatening times, and on social and religious gatherings, including holidays and state occasions.

Further, as Bāshā and Sallām have suggested, panegyrics for the Prophet may express a discontent with non-Arab rule and, in light of the Crusades and the Mongol invasion, a deep nostalgia for an idyllic time of peace, religious purity, and moral order. Still, poets also consciously forged positive links between the Prophet Muḥammad and the counter-crusading Mamluk sultans, and this raises important related issues regarding the types and extent of patronage, and the use of religion and poetry by the ruling elite. Previous studies of political panegyric poetry have examined this relationship in the verse of earlier classical Arab poets, concluding that religious elements were crucial for a regime's self-definition and for projecting an evolving image of the just Muslim ruler requisite for ideological legitimation.[72]

That this was a primary task of many poems from the Mamluk period, including religious ones, seems evident from verse by al-Būṣīrī, al-Ḥillī, Qānṣūh min Ṣādiq (fl. early tenth/sixteenth century), and many others.[73] Similar to Mamluk architecture and painting, panegyrics of sultans and amirs served to proclaim the Mamluks' dedication to Islam, and their patronage and defense of Muslim society, while at the same time asserting and justifying their God-given right to imperial rule.[74] Further study of Arab panegyrics should continue to probe models of rule and legitimation, alert to possible Iranian and Turkish elements, especially in light of the destruction of Baghdad and the political domination by the foreign Mamluk sultans.

That the Mamluks were in need of legitimation and public support seems clear, for many of the same poets who composed panegyrics, likewise circulated verse critical of government officials, the religious establishment, and society in general. These poets thus became social critics, frequently using invective poetry (*hijā'*) to drive home their points. Many invective verses were cited by Mamluk historians and chroniclers and, far from being anecdotal, these quotations often appear to hint at the writers' own sympathies, offering a kind of cipher for reading between the lines of seemingly neutral accounts.[75] In addition to targeting individuals, Mamluk poets often assail entire groups, such as Coptic Christians, and so thoughtful study of invective poetry building on the groundwork laid by Salīm, Fawzī Amīn, Ayyūbī, and Van Gelder[76] could also yield valuable insights into some of the tensions and fault lines lying within various communities of Mamluk society.

These, then, are a few suggestions for further research involving Arabic poetry composed during the Mamluk Age. As is the case with many arts of this era, we know too little at present to meaningfully generalize, let alone precisely formulate standards regarding

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[72]See Stefan Sperl, "Islamic Kingship and Arabic Panegyric Poetry in the Early 9th Century," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 8 (1977): 20-35; idem, *Mannerism*, 9-70; Suzanne P. Stetkevych, "The Abbasid Poet Interprets History: Three *Qasīdahs* by Abū Tammām," *JAL* 10 (1979): 49-64.

[73]Yāsīn Ayyūbī, "al-Shi'r wa-al-Sulṭān fī al-'Aṣr al-Mamlūkī," *al-Turāth al-'Arabī* 6, no. 22 (1979): 211-331; reprinted as "Jadalīyat al-'Alāqah bayna al-Shi'r wa-al-Sulṭah fī al-'Aṣr al-Mamlūkī," *al-Fikr al-'Arabī* 53 (1988): 190-206.

[74]R. Stephen Humphreys, "The Expressive Intent of Mamluk Architecture in Cairo," *Studia Islamica* 35 (1972): 69-119; Oleg Grabar, "Reflections on Mamluk Art," *Muqarnas* 2 (1984): 1-12; Esin Atil, "Mamluk Painting in the Late Fifteenth Century," *Muqarnas* 2 (1984): 159-171.

[75]E.g., Homerin, *Arab Poet*, 66-71.

[76]Jan Van Gelder, *The Bad and the Ugly: Attitudes Toward Invective Poetry (Hijâ') in Classical Arabic Literature* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1988).


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the quality of this Arabic verse or the range of its artistic and social meanings. Though reference to poetry was conspicuously absent from the *Muqarnas* volume dedicated to the Art of the Mamluks, Ira Lapidus's concluding remarks ring true for Mamluk verse as well: "In the artistic legacy of Mamluk Egypt we have clues to the political culture, the religious goals, and even the mentality or sensibility of the civilization."[77]

## IV

We should continue, then, to probe poetry's place and functions within Mamluk society through the contextual study of poets and their verse. This research promises to break new and fertile ground in the fields of Mamluk, Arabic, and Islamic studies, and so lead to significant discoveries involving the complex relationships between society, religion, and political authority, and their multiple forms of expression. But we must proceed carefully and with humility, for the sheer quantity of the poetry is daunting, and our findings may lead us in unexpected and exciting directions, as I found during my study of poems by the noted Mamluk scholar Abū Ḥayyān.

Athīr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf, known as Abū Ḥayyān, typifies the non-Egyptian origin of many scholars of the Mamluk period. Born in Granada in 654/1256, he studied in Andalusia, North Africa, and finally settled in Cairo where he died in 745/1344. He was a noted Quran scholar, a distinguished grammarian, and litterateur composing more than fifty works, including a considerable amount of verse. His *Dīwān* covers nearly 200 pages arranged according to end rhyme and containing an assortment of poems including a panegyric for a teacher, an elegy for a friend, some religious poems, occasional verses on an elephant, the gift of a horse, a wedding, as well as a number of poems exchanged with his contemporaries.[78]

Yet what led me to Abū Ḥayyān's *Dīwān* was not his poetry, but that of his daughter Nuḍār. By any standards of the time, she had received an exceptional education in the Islamic religious sciences, and while still a young woman, Nuḍār was regarded as an accomplished scholar by her male peers. The noted Mamluk scholar al-Suyūṭī listed Nuḍār among the women poets of Mamluk Egypt, though he did not cite any of her poetry. Not finding any works by her, I turned to her father's *Dīwān*, hoping to find samples of her verse that she had exchanged with him.[79]

I found none, but what I found instead were nine elegies on her by a grieving father. I discovered that at about the age of twenty-eight, Nuḍār had fallen gravely ill and died after considerable suffering. According to the Mamluk biographer al-Ṣafadī, a family friend, Abū Ḥayyān took his daughter's death very hard and went into a year of mourning, composing a consolation manual and his elegies for her. These elegies are extraordinary

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[77]Ira Lapidus, "Mamluk Patronage and the Arts in Egypt: Concluding Remarks," *Muqarnas* 2 (1984): 181.

[78]Concerning Abū Ḥayyān and his work, see Th. Emil Homerin, "A Bird Ascends the Night: Elegy and Immortality in Islam," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 59, no. 2 (1991): 247-279; idem, "I've Stayed by the Grave': A *Nasīb*/Elegy for Nuḍār," in *Literary Heritage of Classical Islam: Arabic and Islamic Studies in Honor of James A. Bellamy*, ed. Mustansir Mir (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1993), 107-118.

[79]Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Nuzhat al-Julasā' fī Ash'ār al-Nisā'*, ed. 'Abd al-Laṭīf 'Āshūr (Cairo: Maktabat al-Qur'ān, n.d.), 83. For more on Nuḍār, see Homerin, "Bird," 255-256; idem, "Atāki Himāmuki: Marāthī Abī Ḥayyān al-Tisa' li-Nuḍār," forthcoming in *Fulbright Occasional Papers* (Cairo), vol. 4.


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since even a single elegy for a daughter is rare in Arabic poetry.[80] But in addition to their value to Arabic literary history, these multiple elegies permit us to observe Abū Ḥayyān´s grief and his process of mourning as he confronted his daughter´s death:[81]

1. Now that Nuḍār
has settled in the grave,
my life would be sweet again
could my soul only taste it.

2. A brave young woman
seized for six months
by a strange sickness
of varied nature:

3. Swelling stomach and fever,
then consumption, coughing, and heaving—
who could withstand
five assaults?

4. She would see
visions sometimes,
or leave this world
for the Realm Divine,

5. And inwardly,
she was calm, content
with what she saw of paradise,
but of life, despairing.

6. Yet she was never angry for a day,
never complaining of her grief,
never mentioning the misery
she suffered.

7. She left her life on Monday
after the sun´s disk
appeared to us
as a deep yellow flower.

8. The people prayed
and praised her,
and placed her in the tomb—

[80]Homerin, ″Bird,″ 248-255; idem, ″I´ve Stayed by the Grave´,″ 107-108. The Ayyubid literary critic Ibn Athīr once noted that the most difficult elegy for a poet to compose is one on women or children due to the paucity of poetic motifs for either group; Qulqaylah, 369.
[81]See Homerin, ″Bird,″ 269-271. The Arabic text of these verses is forthcoming in Homerin, ″Atāki.″


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dark, desolate, oppressive.

These opening verses directly challenge the pervasive view of Mamluk Arabic poetry as slavish imitation, pallid, artificial, and unauthentic. In a restrained and sober language free of hyperbole, Abū Ḥayyān graphically recounts his daughter´s debilitating illness, her eventual death, and funeral. Abū Ḥayyān calls upon the elegiac qualities of the classical *nasīb* to articulate and express his grief and loss; his world is slowly effaced as he stands overwhelmed by his daughter´s final departure.[82]

At this point, however, Nuḍār is not some rarefied classical beloved, but a very real and all too mortal woman. Further, in this and other poems, Abū Ḥayyān declares his daughter a martyr due to her deadly disease. This judgment may, in fact, represent a view of illness and death widespread in Mamluk Muslim society, and similar scholarly opinion would soon prevail regarding Muslim victims of the plague, who were believed to have been struck down and so martyred by the jinn.[83]

Though Nuḍār has been carried to her grave and lost to him, Abū Ḥayyān does not seek consolation in some heroic act, but in signs that her new abode is heaven. In vv. 4-8 Abū Ḥayyān alludes to four separate prophetic traditions intimating immortality: a Muslim, beholding paradise while dying (v. 4), patient as death ensues (v. 5), dying, like the Prophet, on a Monday (v. 7), and praised after death by the community (v. 8), will dwell in paradise.[84] That this is Nuḍār´s God-given blessing becomes clear as later in this and the following poem, Abū Ḥayyān praises his daughter´s scholarly and religious achievements and her bravery in the face of death. Clearly, the beloved of these elegies is not the enticing beauty of the classical Arabic tradition, but a virtuous Muslim lady and martyr. Though Abū Ḥayyān may gain some solace from his daughter´s heroic life, he can not let go, and in his elegies, he strives to hold fast to Nuḍār, if no longer physically here below, then at least in memory and spirit:[85]

1. My body is bound
to the grave;
my heart
stands on affliction.

2. When I remember Nuḍār,
my eye
swells with blood
from a wounded heart.

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[82]For more on Abū Ḥayyān´s use of *qasīdah* elements in his elegies, see Homerin, ″Bird,″ 268-273; idem, ″I´ve Stayed by the Grave´,″ 107-113.

[83]See Michael W. Dols, ″Al-Manbijī´s ´Report of the Plague´: A Treatise on the Plague of 764-65/1362-64 in the Middle East,″ in *The Black Death: Impact of the Fourteenth Century Plague*, ed. Daniel Williman (Binghamton, New York: Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1982), 65-75; idem, *Black Death*, 116-118.

[84]Homerin, ″Bird,″ 270-272.

[85]Ibid., 273-274; Homerin ″I´ve Stayed by the Grave´;″ Arabic text forthcoming in ″Atāki.″


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3. The festival passed,
then the greater one,
while Nuḍār was under
earth and stone;

4. I couldn´t see
Nuḍār´s fine face,
Oh, how I crave
that sweet face!

5. Nuḍār was my intimate,
my love;
Nuḍār was my life,
my spirit.

6. Nuḍār left behind
in my heart sorrow;
it will go
when I reach my grave.

7. Never did Nuḍār
have an equal
to her brilliance
and weighty reason,

8. To her poise
and good company,
her priceless hand
and eloquence.

9. She reflected on her studies:
grammar and jurisprudence,
and the apostle´s
sound traditions,

10. And she revealed to you
the people´s histories
and won
the sage´s wisdom.

11. Nuḍār passed her life
then left,
her reputation
undefiled.


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12. She was recorded
among the transmitters
from mankind´s master;
how fair her reports and praise!

13. She´s gone on ahead now,
while we stay
for a moment
in our passing time.

14. Then we´ll follow behind
hoping for
a kind Lord´s forgiveness
for our sins.

The beloved´s ruined campsite featured at the beginning of innumerable Arabic odes has been transformed in this elegy to a grave. There, Abū Ḥayyān stands tied like the *balīyah*, the riding-camel left to die at the grave of a great warrior so as to serve as his ghost mare in the netherworld (v. 1).[86] With broken heart and no reason to live, Abū Ḥayyān is oblivious to even the high religious holidays suggesting, perhaps, a skepticism regarding a divine plan which would demand his daughter´s suffering and premature death. Whatever the case, Nuḍār has gone taking with her the very essence of her father´s love and life (vv. 2-5).

In six consecutive verses, Abū Ḥayyān invokes Nuḍār´s name, if not to call her from the dead, then at least to conjure her image, as he moves from lamentation for his loss toward a consoling vision of his pure and pious daughter (vv. 1-6). Among Nuḍār´s fine qualities was her study and transmission of Muḥammad´s words and deeds, and perhaps her father finds solace in the Prophet´s promised intercession on behalf of believing Muslims (vv. 6-11). But for the present, like the *balīyah* camel, Abū Ḥayyān lingers at the grave slowly wasting away. He can only pray that death will end his suffering, and that God will forgive his sins and so grant him a final reunion with his beloved Nuḍār (vv. 12-13).

This elegy and others by Abū Ḥayyān make complex emotions and experiences palpable by intensifying and channeling their emotive energy through time-tested cultural forms. Such elegies have been central to the work of mourning, which has played a vital part in the lives of Muslim men and women, yet rarely have their loss and sorrow been mentioned by scholars of Islam. Generally, the subjects of death and dying are glossed with abstract and doctrinal presentations of Islamic notions of resurrection, punishment, and paradise.[87] But the study of elegies, like those of Abū Ḥayyān, can help us follow changing Islamic beliefs and doctrines on death and the afterlife while, at the same time, informing us of personal grief and individual and communal responses to the death of loved ones.

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[86]For more on the *balīyah* camel, see Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Alūsī, *Bulūgh al-Arab fī Ma'rifat Aḥwāl al-'Arab* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmīyah, n.d.), 2:307-308.

[87] See, for example, Jane I. Smith and Yvonne Y. Haddad, *The Islamic Understanding of Death and Resurrection* (Albany: State University of New York, 1981).


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Abū Ḥayyān´s elegies attest to Arabic poetry´s potential to reveal crucial aspects of Muslim life and practice during the Mamluk period, substantially enhancing the chronicles, histories, and other relevant sources. Yet, we must remember, too, that much of this poetry aims to evoke feelings and the intensity of experience, and so in contrast to historical documents and more traditional religious texts, this poetry not only tells us about life and existence, but it moves us to participate imaginatively in the experience of them both. These two poetic examples tap a vast and deep source for the study and teaching of the Mamluk period and of Islam, in general. For reading poetry by Muslims in the Mamluk Age can heighten our perceptions of their lives by helping us to feel more sharply and with more understanding some of what they may have felt and believed in their own day, which for a moment, then, may not seem so far away.


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# The *Maḥmal* Legend and the Pilgrimage of the Ladies of the Mamluk Court

During the Ottoman period in Egypt a legend was created which attributed the origin of the *maḥmal* tradition to Shajarat al-Durr. As women´s topics are receiving increasing attention in scholarly research these days, the persona of Shajarat al-Durr ought to be revisited. More particularly, the circumstances that led to the association of the Egyptian pilgrimage with a female royal person deserve our interest. For this purpose, references to the earlier pilgrimage of the Abbasid queen Zubaydah and to the pilgrimage performed by the elite women of the Mamluk court will be examined and compared in the following pages in order to decode the legend about Shajarat al-Durr.

Mamluk history begins with an extraordinary episode—the rule of a female sultan, Shajarat al-Durr, a Turk, who began her career as a slave. She carried the title of *sulṭānah* and was elected by men to fulfill this function. In her name the *khuṭbah* was delivered and coins were minted.[1] One tends sometimes to disregard this fact because of its exceptional character. In her status as *sulṭānah* in the medieval Muslim world, Shajarat al-Durr was of course an almost unique case.[2] Her accession to the throne of Egypt was largely related to the complex and unstable political situation of that time, the end of the Ayyubid dynasty during Louis IX´s Crusade against Damietta and the absence of an adequate successor to Sultan al-Ṣāliḥ Najm al-Dīn Ayyūb.[3] Although her reign as *sulṭānah* lasted only three months, or more precisely eighty days, Shajarat al-Durr´s involvement in politics covered a much longer period, namely, the seventeen years during which, as the favorite concubine, then as the wife of two consecutive sultans, she was far from being a passive spectator of political events, using all available means to play an active role in decision-making at the sultan´s court. This role began during al-Ṣāliḥ´s fight for the throne of Egypt, when she accompanied him to prison along with his closest followers. It ended with her decision to murder her second husband Aybak.

Al-Maqrīzī, who seems to have been familiar with Shajarat al-Durr´s *waqf* documents, attributes to her important buildings in Cairo. These included her husband´s mausoleum as well as a garden, a *ḥammām*, and a palace near the cemetery of Sayyidah Nafīsah where she also founded a *madrasah* with her own mausoleum.[4] Shajarat al-



[1]The main source on Shajarat al-Durr is still Götz Schregle´s monograph, *Die Sultanin von Ägypten. Šajarat ad-Durr in der arabischen Geschichtsschreibung und Literatur* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1961).

[2]Only another Turk of the slave dynasty of Delhi, Raḍīyah Begum, at almost the same time (1236-1240), achieved such a career, but she was a sultan´s daughter.

[3]Peter Thorau, *The Lion of Egypt: Sultan Baybars I and the Near East in the Thirteenth Century*, trans. P. M. Holt (London: Longman, 1992), chapters 4 and 5.

[4]al-Maqrīzī, *al-Mawā'iẓ wa-al-I'tibār fī Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Āthār*, 2 vols. (Būlāq: Dār al-Ṭibā'ah al-Miṣrīyah, 1270/1853-54), 2:20, 134, 374; Nūr al-Dīn al-Sakhāwī, *Tuḥfat al-Aḥbāb wa-Bughyat al-Ṭullāb*


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Durr´s buildings and pious foundations were substantial; a look at their architecture reveals, moreover, a political mind and a great sense of innovation behind their design.[5] The *miḥrāb* of her mausoleum, for example, includes a kind of rebus; its conch is adorned with glass mosaics representing a tree whose branches carry mother-of-pearl, instead of flowers or fruits. This motif refers to her name, ″Tree of Pearls.″ The mausoleum she erected for al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb adjoins the *madrasah* he had founded in the city center for the four schools of Sunnī Islamic law.[6] It was the first royal mausoleum in Cairo, and as Christel Kessler observed, the first funerary building meant to assume a role in the life of the city.[7] Placed in the central part of the main avenue, it projects boldly on three sides with large windows on each facade. No doubt, Shajarat al-Durr attached great importance to the commemoration of her husband through whom she derived the legitimacy of her status and authority. She gave him a solemn funerary ceremony, attended by his *mamlūk*s, including her husband and successor al-Mu'izz Aybak; at that time she had already abdicated in his favor. Quran reciters were hired for the service of the tomb, as stipulated in Shajarat al-Durr´s *waqf* deed. Shajarat al-Durr erected, moreover, a *madrasah* with her own mausoleum in the cemetery. This was a further innovation, as it was the first time in Cairo that a ruler built a personal mausoleum as part of his own religious foundation. This became a tradition throughout the entire Mamluk period. Whereas al-Ṣāliḥ´s *madrasah* was in the heart of al-Qāhirah, her own complex, which included a *ḥammām* and a palace, was in the cemetery of Sayyidah Nafīsah. The choice of the cemetery of Sayyidah Nafīsah as the place for her burial was also an innovation of Shajarat al-Durr; earlier members of the Ayyubid dynasty had been buried at the mausoleum of Imam al-Shāfi'ī. While she sought likewise the neighborhood of a holy person, she preferred a cemetery connected to a female saint, that of Sayyidah Nafīsah where a number of other holy women and relatives of the Prophet such as Ruqayyah, 'Ātikah, and Sukaynah were also buried or commemorated in funerary monuments.[8] This choice proved to be shrewd, for despite the scandalous end she suffered—being thrown half-naked from the Citadel—Shajarat al-Durr´s image in historiography as well as in popular tradition became increasingly exalted, as Schregle demonstrates, so that she acquired an almost holy character. The presence of her mausoleum amidst a number of mausoleums of holy women contributed to her sanctification.

Shajarat al-Durr´s buildings are, therefore, among the most political monuments of medieval Cairo. Her religious funerary complex had an impact on the female funerary architecture of the Baḥrī Mamluks. The *madrasah*-mausoleum, built two decades later for Fāṭimah Khātūn, a wife of Sultan Qalāwūn, is similarly located in the neighborhood of Sayyidah Nafīsah.[9] Moreover, several women of the Qalāwūn family built mausoleums

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*fī al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Mazārāt wa-al-Tarājim wa-al-Biqā' al-Mubārakāt* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Azhar, 1356/1937), 118.

[5]K. A. C. Creswell, *Muslim Architecture of Egypt* [hereafter *MAE*], 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952-59; reprint, New York, 1978), 2:135f.; Doris Behrens-Abouseif, ″The Lost Minaret of Shajarat ad-Durr at Her Complex in the Cemetery of Sayyidah Nafīsah,″ *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Abteilung Kairo* 39 (1983): 1-16.

[6]Creswell, *MAE*, 2:94ff.

[7]Christel Kessler, ″Funerary Architecture within the City,″ *Colloque international sur l'histoire du Caire* (1969) (Cairo: Ministry of Culture, n.d.), 257-268.

[8]Nūr al-Dīn al-Sakhāwī, *Tuḥfat al-Aḥbāb*, 114f.; Behrens-Abouseif, ″Minaret″, 6.

[9]Aḥmad 'Abd al-Rāziq, *La femme au temps des Mamlouks en Égypte* (Cairo: Institut français d´archéologie


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for themselves attached to religious foundations, such as the *khānqāh*-mausoleum of Ṭughāy, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad´s wife (ca. 749/1348, *Index*, no. 247),[10] the *madrasah* of Tatar al-Ḥijāzīyah, al-Nāṣir´s daughter, (761/1360, *Index*, no. 36), the *madrasah* of Sultan Sha'bān´s mother, (770/1368-69, *Index*, no. 125), and the mausoleum of Ṭulbāy, Sultan Ḥasan´s wife (ca. 765/1364, *Index*, no. 80).

THE *MAḤMAL*

In his monograph on Shajarat al-Durr, Schregle refers to the epic known as *Sīrat Baybars*, which is a popular romance based on historical facts, and investigates the *sulṭānah´*s image in it. In this epic, which acquired its final shape in the Ottoman period, the origin of the *maḥmal* is attributed to Shajarat al-Durr.[11] The *maḥmal* was the ceremonial palanquin that accompanied the pilgrim caravan from the reign of al-Ẓāhir Baybars until the reign of King Fu'ād in the 1920s. The earliest association of the *maḥmal* with the Egyptian pilgrimage caravan occurs in connection with Sultan al-Ẓāhir Baybars al-Bunduqdārī in 659/1266.[12] Al-Qalqashandī describes the *maḥmal* as a tent made of embroidered yellow silk and topped by a spherical finial made of gilded silver; it was paraded twice a year in the streets of Cairo.[13] The use of yellow, the official color of the Mamluks, for the *maḥmal* during the Mamluk period indicates its emblematic and political character. The *maḥmal* tradition is distinct from that of the *kiswah*, or veil of the Ka'bah, which was also carried by the pilgrim caravan. The yearly dispatch of the *kiswah* was a prerogative of the caliphate since the early history of Islam, although some Saljuq sultans donated their own. Since the establishment of the Fatimid caliphate of Egypt, a *kiswah* was sent also from Cairo, this one being white, instead of the Abbasid black.[14] The *kiswah* was not carried within the *maḥmal*, which remained an empty and symbolic palanquin. Al-Qalqashandī, in his history and description of the *kiswah*, writes that both were simultaneously prepared and dispatched in Cairo.[15] A well-known miniature of the Baghdad school dated 1237 documents the existence of an Abbasid *maḥmal* at the time of the caliphate.[16] Its shape corresponds very much to the description given by al-Qalqashandī of the Egyptian *maḥmal* and to the much later Egyptian *maḥmal*s, including the one of King Fu'ād, now on display in the Ethnographic Museum in Cairo. In the seventeenth century it was covered with black silk embroidered with inscriptions in gold threads on the four sides.[17] In the Baghdad miniature it has a gold color. The Egyptian

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orientale, 1973), 20.

[10]The numbers of the monuments are those listed in *The Index of the Islamic Monuments of Cairo*, Department of Egyptian Antiquities.

[11]Schregle, 104f.

[12]al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Ma'rifat Duwal al-Mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá Ziyādah and Sa'īd 'Abd al-Fattāḥ 'Āshūr (Cairo: Lajnat al-Ta'līf wa-al-Tarjamah wa-al-Nashr, 1970-73), 1:544.

[13]al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A'shá fī Ṣinā'at al-Inshā'*, 14 vols. (Cairo: al-Mu'assasah al-Miṣrīyah al-'Āmmah lil-Ta'līf wa-al-Tarjamah wa-al-Ṭibā'ah wa-al-Nashr, 1964), 4:57; Jacques Jomier, *Le Maḥmal et la caravane égyptienne des pèlerins de la Mecque* (Cairo: Institut français d´archéologie orientale, 1953), 39f.

[14]Yūsuf Aḥmad, *al-Maḥmal wa-al-Ḥajj* (Cairo: Maṭba'at Ḥijāzī, 1937), 241f.

[15]al-Qalqashandī, 4:276-284.

[16]Richard Ettinghausen, *al-Taṣwīr 'inda al-'Arab* (*Arab Painting*), trans. Salman and Takrītī (Baghdad, 1973), 119.

[17]Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatnamesi*, vol. 10 (Istanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1938), 432.


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*maḥmal* was not the only one, however, to appear in Mecca; there were also *maḥmal*s from Yemen and Iraq, the Egyptian one having the most prominent position.[18]

After the fall of the Abbasid caliphate of Baghdad in 1258 and the establishment in 659/1261 of a symbolic caliphate by Sultan Baybars in Cairo, an event celebrated with great ceremony,[19] it was natural that Baybars would also take over the Abbasid privilege of dispatching the *maḥmal* and the *kiswah* from his capital, Cairo. But to achieve this, he had first to eliminate the Rasulid presence from the Hijaz and bring it under Mamluk control. The Rasulid ruler of Yemen, al-Malik al-Muẓaffar Yūsuf ibn al-Manṣūr, had taken advantage of the fall of Baghdad to bring the Hijaz, with the Holy Cities, under his control and have the *khuṭbah* spoken in his name. After having performed the pilgrimage in 659/1261, he provided the *kiswah* for several years, as successor of the Abbasid caliphs.[20] A competition resulted between Yūsuf and Baybars for the privilege of providing the *kiswah*,[21] until 667/1269 when Baybars made his pilgrimage and established the dispatch of the *kiswah* as the acknowledged prerogative of the Mamluks of Egypt in whose name the *khuṭbah* of the Hijaz was now performed.[22] As a palanquin, the *maḥmal* has obvious female connotations, although men sometimes also traveled in a *miḥaffah*, which is the term used in Mamluk sources for the common palanquin. In his study of the Muslim pilgrimage, Gaudefroy-Demombynes has presented three possible interpretations for the *maḥmal*. The first is that it followed the ancient Arab tradition of having a litter with a high-ranking lady accompany military campaigns to incite the soldiers to fight. ʻĀʼishah, the Prophetʹs wife, played such a role in the Battle of the Camel.[23] The second interpretation views the litter as a royal symbol, whereas the third identifies it with a parasol. The third interpretation can be discarded; the two others should be considered and even combined.

Although Shajarat al-Durr herself is not mentioned in any source as having ever been to Mecca, and although Mamluk chronicles agree that it was al-Ẓāhir Baybars who introduced the *maḥmal* tradition to Egypt and who also performed the pilgrimage, it was Shajarat al-Durr with whom popular culture preferred to associate the pilgrimage and the palanquin, giving her a kind of patron role. This legend has been repeated by Lane and ʻAlī Mubārak;[24] the Turkish historian and traveler Evliya Çelebi similarly connects Shajarat

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[18]Jomier, 48f.

[19]Annemarie Schimmel, ″Kalif und Kadi im spätmittelalterlichen Ägypten,″ *Die Welt des Islams*, 24 (1942): 5-127.

[20]al-Rashīdī, *Ḥusn al-Ṣafā wa-al-Ibtihāj bi-Dhikr man Walá Imārat al-Ḥājj*, ed. ʻAbd al-Laṭīf Aḥmad (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khanjī, 1980), 122f.

[21]Jomier, 30f.

[22]Ibn ʻAbd al-Ẓāhir, *al-Rawḍ al-Zāhir fī Sīrat al-Malik al-Ẓāhir*, ed. al-Khuwayṭir (Riyadh: n.p., 1976), 354ff.

[23]Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *Le pèlerinage à la Mekke* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1923), 161. Cf. Heinz Halm who alludes to the possibility that the origin of the *maḥmal* might be related to the *shamsah*, a kind of suspended oversize crown which Abbasid and Fatimid caliphs sent with the pilgrimage caravan to adorn the Kaʻbah; ″Al-Shamsa. Hängekronen als Herrschaftszeichen der Abbasiden und Fatimiden,″ *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras*, ed. U. Vermeulen and D. De Smet (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1995), 126-138.

[24]Schregle, 104ff.; Rudi Paret, ″Sīrat Baybars,″ *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 1:1126-1127; Edward Lane, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (London: Dent, n.d.; reprint, New York: E. P. Dutton, 1954), 444f.; ʻAlī Mubārak, *al-Khiṭaṭ al-Tawfīqīyah al-Jadīdah*, 20 vols. (Būlāq, 1306/1888-89), 9:22.


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al-Durr with the pilgrimage, however not with the *maḥmal*, but with the *kiswah*. Evliya Çelebi, who worked for the Ottoman government for several years in Egypt (1672-1680), reports that at that time the *waqf* of Shajarat al-Durr was quite substantial and included a number of villages which were endowed to provide the *kiswah* for the Ka'bah.[25] The information he gives on *waqf* is usually trustworthy, as he was himself involved in the supervision of *awqāf* in Egypt. His association of the *kiswah* with Shajarat al-Durr, which is the earliest reference on this subject I could find, should not be entirely discarded, at least as long as the *waqf*s of the Ḥaramayn have not been consulted on this subject. What the exact origins of these *waqf*s are, or if they belonged to a namesake of the *sulṭānah*, is not possible to tell at the moment, as the Ḥaramayn archives are presently inaccessible. While he attributes the *kiswah* endowment to Shajarat al-Durr, Evliya Çelebi, who was quite familiar with Mamluk chronicles, confirms the fact that the *maḥmal* tradition went back to Baybars.

It is interesting to note that the *wakālah* of Dhū al-Faqār in the quarter of Jamālīyah in Cairo is known popularly as Wakālat Shajarat al-Durr; it was there that in the late Ottoman period final work on the *kiswah* was performed before its departure.[26] Yūsuf Aḥmad, however, in his detailed documentation of the *kiswah* and its endowment, does not seem to have come across any reference to Shajarat al-Durr.

## ZUBAYDAH

Shajarat al-Durr was not the first queen to be associated with the pilgrimage. There are multiple references in early and later medieval sources associating Zubaydah, Hārūn al-Rashīd's wife, with the pilgrimage in most exuberant terms.[27] Zubaydah not only performed the pilgrimage, but she is moreover credited with spending an enormous fortune on infrastructural works to conduct water to Mecca after years of drought. According to Ibn Khallikān she spent as much as 50 million *dirham*s, and according to al-Mas'ūdī 1,700,000 *dīnār*s for infrastructural works on the pilgrimage road.[28] She built hospices and cisterns, and dug wells and canals to conduct water from a distance of twelve miles to Mecca across mountains and valleys in the desert. When her intendant tried to warn her about the expenses, she answered "we shall do it, even if every stroke would cost a *dīnār*." Today the "Darb Zubaydah" in the Hijaz still shows vestiges of the medieval infrastructure.[29] Zubaydah, whose wealth was fabulous, was also famous for her elegance and her creative fashion and life-style, which everybody imitated.[30] Among her innovations, she is reported to have been the first to use a palanquin of silver, ebony, and sandalwood adorned with clasps of gold and silver and draped with sable and silk of blue, green, yellow, and red colors. It is very likely that she used such a palanquin for her pilgrimage, which could be related to the origin of the *maḥmal* of Baghdad.

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[25]Evliya Çelebi, 10:155, 420, 422, 566.
[26]'Alī Mubārak, 9:22.
[27]Nabia Abbott, *Two Queens of Baghdad* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946).
[28]Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, 2 vols. (Cairo: n.p., 1310/1892-3), 1:189; al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfī bi-al-Wafayāt* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1962), 14:176f., no. 242; al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-Dhahab*, ed. C. Barbier de Meynard and Pavet de Courteille (Paris: Imprimerie impériale, 1861-1871), 8:289ff.
[29]Sa'd ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Rashīd, *Darb Zubaydah: The Pilgrim Road from Kufa to Mecca* (Riyadh: Riyadh University Libraries, 1980).
[30]al-Mas'ūdī, 8:304f.


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Coming back to *Sīrat Baybars*, Shajarat al-Durr is identified there as an Abbasid princess, daughter of the caliph al-Muqtadir,[31] who came to Egypt on her way to Mecca. There she met Sultan al-Ṣāliḥ Najm al-Dīn Ayyūb who married her. In the epic, furthermore, Shajarat al-Durr adopts Baybars to replace her dead son Khalīl, who died as a child. She is thus represented as the daughter of a caliph and the adoptive mother of a sultan. This establishes another parallel between Shajarat al-Durr and Zubaydah, who was the only Abbasid queen to have been both a daughter and a mother of caliphs. The superposition of Shajarat al-Durr and the Abbasid queen Zubaydah could have been supported furthermore by another factor, which is the location of the complex of Shajarat al-Durr in the cemetery of Sayyidah Nafīsah. The palace she had built there was later used as the residence of the Abbasid caliphs of Cairo.[32] In the same neighborhood, moreover, close to the Sayyidah Nafīsah shrine, is the undated mausoleum where most of the Abbasid caliphs of Cairo were buried and which was erected in the mid-thirteenth century.[33] In Shajarat al-Durr's own mausoleum one of the Abbasid caliphs was also buried, probably the last one.[34] The neighborhood connection with the Abbasid caliphs may have contributed to the association of Shajarat al-Durr with Abbasid tradition and Zubaydah.

## MAMLUK LADIES

The legend attributing the *maḥmal* to Shajarat al-Durr took shape in the Ottoman period, i.e., three or four centuries after the *sulṭānah*'s death. There must have been in the meantime an additional factor which contributed to keeping her image alive in such a way as to justify the creation of a legend which presented her as patron of the pilgrimage caravan, who visited the Holy Cities a dozen times and, moreover, provided the *kiswah* to the Ka'bah. This additional factor is to be sought in Mamluk historical accounts about the pilgrimages of women of the aristocracy. Mamluk historians show great interest, even enthusiasm, when referring to the pilgrimages of sultan's wives or concubines. They describe the pilgrimage of a *khawand*, or princess, as a spectacular event. It was the only occasion during which the Cairene population had an opportunity for contact with ladies of the Mamluk court. Otherwise, the sultans' wives made no public appearances; the celebrations they attended, such as marriages or circumcisions, took place within the Citadel. There were, of course, exceptions to this rule, which the historians found worth mentioning, like the occasion when Ṭughāy, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's favorite wife, joined her husband on an excursion to Giza. But even then, the princess was not supposed to be seen, and an order was given that on her way across Cairo, all shops should be closed and people kept off the streets.[35] When Sultan Khushqadam's eldest daughter died, her mother, Surbāy, was so grieved that she came down from the Citadel to visit her grave. This visit seems to have been such an exceptional event that it was mentioned in the short biography which al-Sakhāwī dedicated to Surbāy.[36] When Khushqadam's next wife, Shakarbāy,

[31]Schregle, 100f.
[32]Nūr al-Dīn al-Sakhāwī, *Tuḥfat al-Aḥbāb*, 118; Ibn Duqmāq, *Kitāb al-Intiṣār li-Wāsiṭat 'Iqd al-Amṣār* (Būlāq, 1314/1896-97), 4:125.
[33]Creswell, *MAE*, 2:93.
[34]Max van Berchem, *Matériaux pour un Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum: Égypte* (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1894-1903), 1:110f.
[35]al-Maqrīzī, *al-Sulūk*, 2:240.
[36]Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Sakhāwī, *al-Ḍaw' al-Lāmi' li-Ahl al-Qarn al-Tāsi'*, 12 vols. (Cairo, 1896),


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traveled to Ṭanṭā to visit the shrine of Aḥmad al-Badawī, this excursion too was mentioned as something unusual. Ibn Taghrībirdī writes explicitly that it was uncommon for Mamluk ladies, *khawandāt*, to go out without their husbands, except for pilgrimage.[37] The departure on pilgrimage was the exceptional event which gave the population the opportunity of seeing the palanquin of a *khawand*; it added an exciting touch to a major religious celebration. Mamluk biographies of the elite ladies refer consistently to their pilgrimages, which some of them performed more than once. Just as the biographies or obituaries of amirs and sultans have to include a mention of their buildings and foundations, for the Mamluk ladies it was the pilgrimage that was recorded as a token of their piety. The reference to the pilgrimage was part of the aristocratic lady´s image.

Historical accounts concerning the pilgrimages of the Mamluk ladies form a kind of topos. They never fail to include statements about the luxury and beauty of the female convoy. The earliest of these accounts is that referring to Ṭughāy who traveled for the first time in 721/1321 with unparalleled comfort and luxury; her pilgrimage is the feature which characterizes her in all biographical references. She traveled in state, accompanied by a ceremonial orchestra and sultanic banners, with an escort of high dignitaries and eminent amirs. Her caravan included cows to provide her with fresh milk all along the journey, so that she could have her customary hot toasted cheese twice a day, and also camels carrying pots planted with vegetables so that she could maintain a healthy diet. Ṭughāy was praised for her charitable deeds and donations during the journey. The sultan spent more than 80,000 *dīnār*s on her pilgrimage and, moreover, exempted the city of Mecca from taxes that year.[38] When referring to Ṭughāy, Ibn al-Dawādārī recalls another lady who had traveled centuries earlier, in a similarly lavish style; this was Jamīlah, the daughter of the Buyid prince Nāṣir al-Dawlah, who was the first princess to make her pilgrimage with camels carrying pots planted with vegetables. She made generous donations and bestowed many robes of honor.[39]

Ever since Princess Ṭughāy went to Mecca, Mamluk historians have emphasized the elegance and luxury of the Mamluk ladies´ outfits and entourage in their pilgrimage, the number of dignitaries who accompanied them, and most of all the charity and benevolence they demonstrated. Sultan al-Ghawrī´s wife was exceptional in that she was criticized for her stinginess, especially when compared with her predecessor, Qāytbāy´s wife.[40] If the display of elegance and pomp were exaggerated, however, it could be severely criticized, as in the case of some amirs´ wives who went on pilgrimage in 746/1346 with extravagant accoutrement, competing with each other in lavishness, and bestowing robes of honor on their servants and bodyguards. This provoked the *qāḍī al-quḍāh*, in his sermon of the *ʻīd*, to denounce the ladies´ extravagant behavior as a bad example for others.[41] The episode

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12:66.

[37]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Ḥawādith al-Duhūr fī Madá al-Ayyām wa-al-Shuhūr*, ed. William Popper (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1930-1942), 8:593.

[38]al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfī,* 16:447f., no. 481; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-Durar wa-Jāmiʻ al-Ghurar*, ed. Hans Robert Roemer (Cairo: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, 1960), 9:305; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʻAsqalānī, *al-Durar al-Kāminah fī Aʻyān al-Miʾah al-Thāminah* (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Ḥadīthah, 1966), 2:322, no. 2025; ʻAbd al-Rāziq, 298.

[39]Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-Durar*, 9:305f.

[40]Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʻ al-Zuhūr fī Waqāʾiʻ al-Duhūr*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá (Cairo: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, 1961-75), 4:441.

[41]al-Maqrīzī, *al-Sulūk*, 2:693.


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demonstrates the public significance of the pilgrimage of Mamluk ladies. Barakah, Sultan Sha'bān's mother, traveled in state with ceremonial orchestra and sultanic banners escorted by high dignitaries. She also had camels carrying pots planted with vegetables.[42] Her liberality and benevolence along the way were so great that the year of her pilgrimage came to be named "the year of the Sultan's mother."[43]

When a sultan's wife made the pilgrimage in the company of her children, her notoriety was increased, as in the case of Sultan Īnāl's wife, who traveled in 861/1457,[44] with two sons, one of whom was the *amīr al-ḥājj*, and two daughters, one married to the Grand Dawādār and the other to the second Dawādār. They traveled with three palanquins followed by a large convoy of dignitaries and courtiers. Khushqadam's wife was accompanied in 868/1464 by her grandson who was the *amīr al-ḥājj* of that year. Ibn Taghrībirdī testifies that this caravan was even more impressive than that of Īnāl's wife.[45] The fact that the *amīr al-ḥājj* belonged to the royal family was, of course, convenient. Qāytbāy's wife, Fāṭimah (d. 879/1475), had an impressive caravan and sat in a palanquin which Ibn Iyās describes at length, as made of silk embroidered with ruby, turquoise, and pearl.[46] Her escort included an orchestra for religious music. When al-Ghawrī's wife went on pilgrimage with her ten-year old son, the sultan himself went to the departure station to ensure the tents were placed in accordance with the proper protocol.[47] It was observed that the sultan's wife traveled in the palanquin once used by Qāytbāy's wife. Among the signs of luxury was a portable bath, made of copper, as well as utensils for heating water.[48]

An unusual episode this year was that the camel with the *khawand*'s palanquin, on its way out, crossed the city in a procession. Usually the sultanic ladies would leave the Citadel on the desert road across the cemetery, without passing through the city, which was a prerogative of the Mamluk dignitaries. But that palanquin was empty and just for display. The *khawand* herself waited at the Citadel for its return so that she could ride, as was the tradition, through the cemetery. In Mecca the *sharīf* gave her a special reception having his courtiers carry her in her palanquin in a procession across the city. As for the *maḥmal* litter, it preceded the convoy of al-Ghawrī's son. Although al-Ghawrī's son was not *amīr al-ḥājj*, as in the cases of Īnāl's and Khushqadam's sons, he crossed the city in a particularly grand procession on his way to Birkat al-Ḥājj, the first caravan station on the pilgrimage road. The special pomp displayed on this occasion was probably due to the presence of an Ottoman ambassador in Cairo at that time, whom the Sultan wanted to impress, as he was inclined to do in such circumstances.

Unlike women of the Cairene bourgeoisie, the ladies of the Mamluk aristocracy are not described as scholars or poets; neither is their contribution in religious patronage of particular significance. 'Abd al-Rāziq lists eleven buildings attributed to female patrons in Mamluk Cairo, and although this number is not high, a closer look reveals that not all of

[42]Ibid., 2:177.
[43]Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāminah*, 2:7.
[44]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Ḥawādith*, 2:303f.
[45]Ibid., 2:476; idem, *al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah*, 16 vols. (Cairo: n.p., 1963-72), 16:111, 115.
[46]Ibn Iyās, 3:104.
[47]Ibid., 4:409f.
[48]Ibid., 4:433, 441.


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them can even be definitely attributed to the ladies to whom they are ascribed.[49] The number of monuments which can safely be assigned to women of the aristocracy remains low, particularly if one considers their financial potential. Carl Petry estimates that the women´s share in the benefits of *waqf*s of Mamluk sultans and amirs was substantial, amounting to about 28 percent, which makes them appear as active partners in the economy of the Mamluk elite.[50] The estates of females, moreover, were less likely to revert to the state or to be confiscated, as happened with the estates of sultans and amirs. Seen in comparison with the magnitude of religious and philanthropic institutions sponsored by the Mamluk sultans and amirs, the contribution of their female partners is not considerable. The fact that they did not act as founders of institutions does not exclude the possibility, however, that women could have sponsored existing foundations or made donations wherever they were needed. Historians often refer to such philanthropic deeds without specifying what they consisted of.

When a princess built a religious foundation, she did not supervise the construction herself, as the Mamluk amirs and sultans did, but assigned someone else to do it. As previously mentioned, Sha'bān built the *madrasah* for his mother. Whereas the inscriptions name Asalbāy, al-Nāṣir´s mother, as the founder of the mosque of al-Fayyūm, Ibn Iyās writes that Sultan al-Nāṣir, the son of Qāytbāy, ordered its construction and that Shaykh al-Dashṭūṭī supervised it.[51] In the Mamluk period women did not perform their prayers in mosques, although they did visit shrines and saints´ tombs, especially those in the cemetery. Mamluk mosques, unlike the Ottoman, have no accommodation for female worshipers. It is not even mentioned if the women of the sultan´s harem ever visited the mosque in the Citadel which was located in the non-public section.

The pilgrimage remains therefore the foremost expression of piety for a female member of the Mamluk court. If we recall that more sultans´ wives performed this religious duty than sultans themselves, of whom only four are recorded to have been to Mecca during their reign,[52] the ladies´ pilgrimage added to the sultanate´s religious aura. The opulence displayed by a lady´s caravan reflected the sultan´s own magnificent image. It was part of the court ceremonial, which most Mamluk sultans eagerly cultivated. The pilgrimage of the aristocratic Mamluk ladies was thus a matter of great interest, its notoriety increasing over time. The procession of the empty palanquin of al-Ghawrī´s wife at the end of the Mamluk period reflects the fascination associated with the image of a royal lady as pilgrim, which was not only a product of Ibn Iyās´s fantasy. This episode may have been an intermediary stage in the formation of the *maḥmal* legend around Shajarat al-Durr, the empty palanquin becoming the symbol of an absent queen. How far Zubaydah´s image contributed to the topos of the female aristocratic pilgrim is difficult to ascertain; she was the first Muslim queen to act as patron and sponsor of the pilgrimage and thus could have set an example and an ideal for later Muslim princesses.

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[49]The inscription on the mausoleum of Fāṭimah Khātūn is in the name of Qalāwūn. The mausoleum known popularly by the name of Umm al-Ashraf is not definitely identified and could have been erected by Sultan Barsbāy himself. In the case of the *madrasah* of Umm al-Sulṭān Sha'bān, the sources attribute the foundation to the sultan´s mother, the inscription states that it was built by the sultan for his mother, perhaps with her funds. 'Abd al-Rāziq, 20-24.

[50]Carl Petry, "A Paradox of Patronage in the Later Mamluk Period," *Muslim World* 73 (1983): 199.

[51]van Berchem, 4:556f.; Ibn Iyās, 3:392.

[52]al-Ẓāhir Baybars, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, al-Ashraf Sha'bān, al-Ashraf Qāytbāy.


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Shajarat al-Durr´s image in later Mamluk historiography, especially in Ibn Iyās´s chronicle, became increasingly colorful and impressive.[53] Ibn Iyās is also the author who describes in the most detail the departure of the *khawand*s on pilgrimage which suggests a certain acceptance for a female role in religious life. This acceptance is evidenced by al-Sakhāwī´s last volume in his biographical encyclopedia which is dedicated to fifteenth century women, mainly from the scholarly milieu, the only one of its kind in the Mamluk period. It should be recalled here that there is no restriction in Islam on women´s contribution to religious patronage, just as there were no restrictions for admitting women among the saints. In the Ottoman period several mausoleums of sultans and amirs were visited as saints´ tombs, including that of Shajarat al-Durr; during this period also the cult of Sayyidah Zaynab acquired its prominence in Egypt´s popular religious life. Her religious-funerary complex, the importance of her pious endowments and the use of her palace as caliphal residence in the Mamluk period contributed to enhance Shajarat al-Durr´s memory and bestow it with religious radiance. Popular imagination, which needed a female symbol to associate with the empty *maḥmal*, found no better candidate than Shajarat al-Durr.

[53] Schregle, 25f., 46.


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# Mamluk Archaeological Studies: A Review

This review seeks to address the relationship between archaeology and the field of Mamluk studies. To paraphrase a recent discussion by Marcus L. Rautman, Mamluk artifacts are more than mere historical illustration; their evidence may be considered necessary to overcome the intrinsic limitations of the written evidence.[1] Yet, historians of the Mamluk period do not seem to be aware of this potential or able to assess the relevance of fieldwork to their research. Much of the fault for this separation in disciplinary comprehension lies with the archaeologist, and with what is currently practiced as archaeology.[2]

The role of archaeological evidence in historical research is often misunderstood due to the nature of its evidential base. While study of material culture deals, at least in part, with physical objects, their contribution to historical studies is no more ″real″ or direct than the historian´s more traditional documents; archaeological evidence is cumulative and not specific. In other words, one should not expect new information about specific individuals or historic events. Though new documents may be discovered, archaeological research is more concerned with patterns, repeating contexts, and associations. Thus, one may seek patterns of land use (historical geography) and social organization (settlement systems), that is, broad questions of social and economic history. The following is a general exploration of some examples of excavations, artifacts, and the complexities of historical interpretation.[3]

## QŪṢ, A FORGOTTEN CAPITAL

The archaeology of Qūṣ might qualify under the rubric of the re-discovery of a lost (or at least forgotten) provincial capital of Egypt. A history of life in this (provincial) city during Fatimid through Mamluk times was undertaken by Jean-Claude Garcin.[4] This city may be taken as a symbol of the fate of Islamic sites which disappear (from the historic record) when their economic functions change. To paraphrase Garcin: Qūṣ might have



[1]Marcus L. Rautman, ″Archaeology and Byzantine Studies,″ *Byzantinische Forschungen* 15 (1990): 137-165. Throughout this article ″Islamic″ may be substituted for ″Byzantine″ to produce an insightful picture of the history and state of this parallel discipline.

[2]This has been the subject of a dialogue in Donald S. Whitcomb, ″Toward a ´Common Denominator´: An Archaeological Response to M. Morony on Pottery and Urban Identities″ (Los Angeles: Von Grunebaum Center for Near Eastern Studies, 1995).

[3]This paper makes no claim to a comprehensive listing of sites, excavations, and surveys. The casual mentions of Ayyubid-Mamluk evidence on archaeological sites in Palestine would be difficult to enumerate, let alone evaluate.

[4]Jean-Claude Garcin, *Un centre musulman de la haute-Égypte médiévale: Qūṣ* (Cairo: Institut français d´archéologie orientale, 1976). It is instructive to compare J. H. Kramer´s article published in 1927, ″Ḳūṣ,″ *The Encyclopaedia of Islām*, 1st ed., 2:1156-1157, with that of Garcin published in 1982, ″Ḳūṣ,″ *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 5:514-515.


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returned to the desert had it not been situated in a rich agricultural region. This is a new research problem for the historian; one is confronted not only by problems of archaeological remains resisting the erosion of water and sand but also by the continuing rural milieu surviving the urban organization imposed upon it.[5]

Garcin began his history by assembling the historical sources, including local accounts and biographies, travelers′ descriptions of the city and its regional context, and documentation such as the Geniza records. He considered the inscriptions and architecture within the town, especially the mosque. He initiated a detailed topographic plan, rather in the manner of Sauvaget, mapping the ″traces of the medieval past still extant beneath the surface of the soil.″[6] Reading the early reports of Aly Bahgat and others, he observed that, ″One after another the extant koms have been attacked; and each time that a kom disappeared, without doubt some new objects went to enrich private collections, saved perhaps but also losing much of their significance, being separated from their context.″[7] He concluded that ″archaeological investigation would furnish us with the most useful assistance.″ Then in 1966, ″during the destruction of some new buildings at the kom″ (next to the tomb of Sheikh Yousef), a hoard of *dīnār*s and a metal basin filled with twenty-six objects, mainly highly decorated metalwork, were discovered.[8] Garcin attempted to begin excavations in 1967 and again in 1973, both years being unfortunate timing for fieldwork.

Subsequent excavations were conducted by the Egyptian Department of Antiquities in the 1980s. In anticipation of a published report, one may generally observe architectural remains of two periods: Fatimid residences exactly like those of al-Fusṭāṭ; and, above that, Mamluk buildings like those found at Quseir al-Qadim. The excavations at Qūṣ hold a potential key to the Islamic archaeology of Egypt, tracing the development of one of many Coptic towns through the Fatimid period and its distinctive Islamic history with the prosperity of the Mamluk period.

## QUSEIR, THE PORT OF QŪṢ

The more recent architectural remains uncovered at Qūṣ were strongly reminiscent of the excavations at Quseir al-Qadim. This site is complementary to the research situation of Qūṣ; the port has minimal historical documentation but has remained completely abandoned since the fifteenth century and has thus provided a detailed view of life in a Red Sea port and the commerce which sustained it.[9] The resettlement of this port is indicated by numismatic and other artifactual evidence to have occurred in the beginning of the twelfth century (Fatimid occupation is unlikely). The period of great prosperity was the Baḥrī

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[5] Garcin, *Qūṣ*, viii-ix.

[6] This methodology is seen to its best effect in Jean Sauvaget, *Alep: Essai sur le développement d′une grande ville syrienne, des origines au milieu du XIXe siècle* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1941). The method may be easier when there is a Seleucid/Roman base plan, see his ″Le plan de Laodicée-sur-Mer,″ *Bulletin d′études orientales* 4 (1934): 81-114; idem, ″Note complémentaire,″ *BEO* 6 (1936): 51-52.

[7] Garcin, *Qūṣ*, xii-xiv. Investigated by Aly Bahgat in 1918 and reported in the *Bulletin du Comité du conservation des monuments de l′art arabe* 32 (1922): 271-274, 610-611; see Garcin, *Qūṣ*, xiii.

[8] This hoard of objets d′art would seem to date from the late thirteenth century; it is described in detail by A. A. el-Emary, ″Studies in Some Islamic Objects Newly Discovered at Qūṣ,″ *Annales islamologiques* 7 (1967): 121-138. He cites a preliminary report on *Excavations at Ḳūṣ* by A. M. Abdel Tawab.

[9] See Donald S. Whitcomb, ″Quseir al-Qadim: Text and Context in the Indian Ocean Spice Trade,″ *al-′Usur al-Wusta* 7 (1995): 25-27. This article is critical of Garcin′s presentation of the history of Quseir in *EI*$^2$, 5:519.


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Mamluk period, with traded artifacts from India, China, Syria, and even Takrūr (West Africa).

The thirteenth century occupation formed a crescent of residences around the silted-up Roman harbor. While totally lacking architectural embellishments, these well-constructed residences obviously refer to urban architecture of the Nile Valley. In the center was a natural prominence called ″the Sheikh´s house″ during the excavations. The Eastern Area revealed a very different settlement, a complex of foundations (possibly multiple reconstructions) not unlike village constructions along the Red Sea littoral in recent times. Faunal analysis indicates a strong reliance on marine resources (fish, turtle, conch) and a marked preference for goat over sheep. There was a greater reliance on imported foodstuffs (e.g., sheep) in the thirteenth century occupation around the Sheikh´s house.

The settlements of both periods present a paradox of ″rich″ artifactual contents in a ″poor″ architectural setting. The material culture inventory reveals Mamluk ceramics and glass from the Nile Valley, perhaps even from the capital. More importantly, there is a surprising range of imported luxury items; these include celadons and porcelains (blue and white wares) from the Far East, resist-dyed cloth associated with the India trade, majolica from North Africa, pilgrim flasks and enameled glass from Syria, and iron money from West Africa. These artifacts indicate that this small port functioned as a conduit for contacts over most of the known world of the fourteenth century.

The marvelous preservation of artifacts in Quseir al-Qadim includes potential for detailed internal documentation. The excavations have produced a corpus of documents written on paper similar to the Cairo Geniza. Like the Geniza, this is a random preservation rather than an archive; the Quseir letters were not gathered together for storage but found as a part of normal trash accumulation. These letters, about 200 of which are fairly complete, detail the daily life of the community, ranging from discussion of crops and trade to love letters. While several prominent specialists have taken these documents to hand, very little analysis has resulted.[10] One expectable result of such analysis will be more detailed information on the commercial relations of the thirteenth and fourteenth century, and Quseir´s participation in the spice trade.

While on the shores of the Red Sea, one may move north to the port of al-Ṭūr, near the southern tip of the Sinai peninsula. The historical note that the customs station for the northern Red Sea was changed from Quseir to al-Ṭūr in 1380 is fully borne out by the archaeological evidence. Almost no evidence exists in Quseir of the fifteenth century and, conversely, the Japanese excavations have virtually no artifacts from the thirteenth and early fourteenth century.[11] At the old harbor, which had once supported two villages according to Niebuhr´s account, late Mamluk and Ottoman artifacts including numerous Ming porcelains were found. The Mamluk occupation has extensive public structures possibly illustrating the change from *sāḥil* to *bandar* in the late fourteenth century, mentioned in historical documentation.

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[10]The author is happy to report that Dr. Li Guo has undertaken the study of the letters from the Sheikh´s house and has discovered many interesting details, including the owner´s name, al-Shaykh Ibrāhīm Abū Mufriḥ.

[11]See Mutsuo Kawatoko, *A Port City Site on the Sinai Peninsula, al-Ṭūr* (Tokyo: The Middle Eastern Culture Center in Japan, 1995).


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AL-FUSṬĀṬ, IN THE SHADOW OF AL-QĀHIRAH

The lower architectural phase at Qūṣ is strikingly similar to the houses at al-Fusṭāṭ, best exemplified in the early excavations of Bahgat and Gabriel in the 1920s. Al-Fusṭāṭ has received much more intensive and recent archaeological research at the hands of George Scanlon. It is not the intention here to critique these excavations but briefly to describe the nature of the Mamluk occupation and its relevance to Cairo in the Mamluk period. Al-Fusṭāṭ continued from the early Islamic period into the Ayyubid period, when it had become the habitat of ″an easygoing middle class.″[12]

One reason for discussion of al-Fusṭāṭ is the important corpus of documentation generically known as the Cairo Geniza documents. While most of the dated documents belong to the Fatimid and Ayyubid periods, some indications of the social history in the Mamluk period should be reflected and relations to archaeological evidence should be invaluable. Goitein states a desire to coordinate these sources of information, yet his first consideration, that of topographic elements, explicitly leaves aside archaeological evidence. A separate study of Cairo by Staffa comes to the same conclusion, that social history does not need careful consideration of archaeological evidence. Both Goitein and Staffa were particularly impressed with the discovery and description of the sophisticated water supply and sewage networks revealed by the excavations.[13]

On the other hand, domestic architecture should have been a natural subject of archaeological research, yet Goitein states that ″the results of the Fustat excavations are not as helpful for the interpretation and testing of the Geniza documents as one might expect.″[14] He goes on to explicate contributory factors of archaeological deposition which account for this situation. This does not dissuade him from observing the ″blatant discrepancy between the findings of excavators and competent [medieval] observers″ concerning multi-story dwellings. These are related to pre-Islamic Arabian tower structures as evidenced in Yemen and brought to al-Fusṭāṭ by Arab settlers; he later suggests these might have functioned as apartment buildings analogous to Classical *insulae*.[15]

Goitein′s volume on daily life contains extensive, detailed consideration of virtually every artifact used by these people. This wide-ranging scholarship contains virtually no reference to actual objects unearthed in the great piles of well-preserved trash in al-Fusṭāṭ. This is not to criticize Goitein, the excavators have a responsibility to take the lead in interpreting the artifacts recovered. Yet the fragments of textiles, which would be of great value in explicating household furnishings and clothing, were not systematically collected until 1982 and the archaeological report appears innocent of acquaintance with the Geniza descriptions.[16] The accomplishment of Goitein was to construct a picture of medieval social

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[12]See S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, vol. 4: *Daily Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 11.

[13]Ibid., 4:36; the reference is to George T. Scanlon, ″Housing and Sanitation, Some Aspects of Medieval Islamic Public Service,″ *The Islamic City: A Colloquium*, ed. Albert H. Hourani and S. M. Stern (Oxford: Cassirer, 1970), 179-194. S. J. Staffa, *Conquest and Fusion: The Social Evolution of Cairo, A.D. 642-1850* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977).

[14]Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, 4:53.

[15]Ibid., 4:53-59. One might also suggest a relationship to the *uṭum* (pl. *āṭām*) of Yathrib/Medina. One may note that only a small portion of the early Islamic city has in fact been excavated and that portion excavated is mostly suburbs developed in the late eighth and ninth centuries.

[16]Louise W. Mackie, ″Textiles,″ in *Fusṭāṭ Expedition Final Report,* vol. 2: *Fusṭāṭ-C*, by Władysław Kubiak and George T. Scanlon, ARCE Reports 11 (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns for the American


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history from difficult fragments of written evidence; the archaeologist also has his multitude of fragments (sherds of many different materials) available for analysis and interpretation.

## BILĀD AL-SHĀM, THE MIDDLE ISLAMIC LEVANT

Turning to Syro-Palestine, one may begin to understand the problems confronting Mamluk archaeology by noting the origins of archaeology in Biblical (and Classical) studies. Thus, Kenyon's popular account of excavating Jerusalem has about 200 pages, of which three deal with the Crusaders, and half a page with the Mamluks. Such Eurocentrism has lessened; still, a recent issue of *'Atiqot*, devoted to Islamic archaeology, contains nine articles on early Islamic (read Umayyad), one on Fatimid, and two on Crusader subjects.[17]

Study of the Middle Islamic period in the Levant thus turns around appreciation of the Crusader occupation. In her summary of the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods in Palestine, Rosen-Ayalon could make no more reliable reference than the excavations at Abu Ġôsh.[18] This site centers on the Crusader church of St. Jeremias, which incorporated part of an Abbasid caravanserai. The archaeologists found the structures reverted to a *khān* in the Mamluk period, dated 1250-1500. The nearby site of al-Qubeibah produced the same two Islamic periods of occupation, this time framing Crusader occupation of a castle.[19] The same pattern is found in Pringle's more recent excavations at al-Burj al-Aḥmar (the Red Tower).[20] Beginning with a survey of the Sharon Plain (between Caesarea and Apollonia), the discussion turns around its structure (settlements and roads) in the Crusader period. The contribution of archaeological evidence is seen to be a refinement of dating and thus any assessment of the settlement system for this and later medieval periods.

Description of the excavations naturally focuses on principal occupation of the castle (al-Burj al-Aḥmar, phases B, C). Subsequent phases are labeled Destruction (D, D1) and Later and post-Medieval (E, E1). Pringle cautions that "strata were too confused . . . to allow any more precise definition of the exact phases of occupation."[21] When he turns to the ceramic evidence, these phases become more interesting. The evidence describes the characteristics of "an agricultural village settlement, to which for a period of 150 years . . . were added Frankish residents of the castle."[22]

The Crusader castle was in fact one of many rural *burgi*, part of a process called "incastellamento" in the contemporary Mediterranean world. Such *maisons fortes* were analogous to manor houses as the core of agricultural reorganization. Ronnie Ellenblum has analyzed the locations of such "castles" and suggests extensive integration in settlement

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Research Center in Egypt, 1989), 81-97.

[17]Kathleen Kenyon, *Jerusalem: Excavating 3000 Years of History* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1967); *'Atiqot* 26 (1995).

[18]Myriam Rosen-Ayalon, "Between Cairo and Damascus: Rural Life and Urban Economics in the Holy Land during the Ayyubid, Mamluk and Ottoman Periods," *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land*, ed. Thomas E. Levy (London: Leicester University; New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1995), 512-523.

[19]R. de Vaux and A.-M. Steve, *Fouilles à Qaryet el-'Enab, Abu Ġôsh, Palestine* (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1950); and Bellarmino Bagatti, *I monumenti di Emmaus al-Qubeibeh e dei dinatorni*, Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, 4 (Jerusalem: Franciscan Press, 1947).

[20]Denys Pringle, *The Red Tower (al-Burj al-Aḥmar): Settlement in the Plain of Sharon at the Time of the Crusaders and Mamluks, A.D. 1099-1516* (London: British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem, 1986).

[21]Ibid., 129-130.

[22]Ibid., 136.


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during the latter century of Crusader occupation (1187-1291).[23] This would indicate both change within the Crusader period and continuity into the succeeding Ayyubid and Mamluk periods, at least as far as archaeological indicators are concerned (one of the reasons the periodization of Middle Islamic 1 begins ca. 1200; see chart following text).

Other excavations in Islamic sites have focused on standing architectural monuments of the Umayyad period. In the process most of these sites have revealed Ayyubid/Mamluk occupation. One of the most prominent was the palatial complex outside of Jericho, Khirbat al-Mafjar, in which the latest phase (Phase 4) is Mamluk.[24] The extensive burnt material suggests that the building was still carrying a wooden roof at the end of occupation. The ceramics have the very distinctive geometric painted juglets and slip painted glazed wares, that is, a balance between hand-made and glazed wares, culminating in a limited number of finely decorated frit wares, typical of Mamluk occupation. A rather similar early Islamic complex with an Ayyubid/Mamluk reoccupation was Qasr al-Hayr East (Period II). Around the standing monuments, the large and small enclosures, was the mounding of an extensive mud-brick settlement; walls within and between the earlier structures also belong to this resettlement. Grabar described the site as a small bidonville-like settlement, the ″rather primitive small town″ of ʻUrd, beginning with Nūr al-Dīn′s redevelopment of Raqqa.[25] In a shift from this focus on standing monuments, the excavations at Khirbat al-Fāris in southern Jordan have mapped and excavated a medieval and Ottoman village. Likewise, the excavations at Tell Tiʻinnik have advocated a ″reverse chronology,″ working back from the Ottoman to Mamluk and earlier (see below).[26]

## ARTIFACTS AND SOCIAL HISTORY

The phenomenon of the twelfth through fourteenth centuries in northern Bilād al-Shām continues to be treated by archaeologists as a monolithic entity with fuzzy edges, usually labeled Ayyubid/Mamluk. The pattern was set with the publication of the Hama excavations by the Danish team in the 1930s. While the actual stratigraphic data has never appeared, the pottery was presented in great and influential detail.[27] Among the many types

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[23]Ronnie Ellenblum, ″Settlement and Society Formation in Crusader Palestine,″ in *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land*, ed. Thomas E. Levy (London: Leicester University; New York: Facts on File, 1995), 502-511.

[24]See Donald S. Whitcomb, ″Khirbat al-Mafjar Reconsidered: The Ceramic Evidence,″ *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* no. 271 (1988): 51-67. The dichotomy of identifications into Umayyad/Abbasid and Ayyubid/Mamluk is a problem in classification yet to be systematically addressed by Islamic archaeologists.

[25]See Oleg Grabar et al., *City in the Desert: Qasr al-Hayr East*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), 160-161. Grabar states that this upper phase was excavated in ″arbitrary levels of 50 to 100 cm.″ One section claimed more careful attention by Robert Adams, see p. 81. The evidence of Ayyubid/Mamluk occupations in the Euphrates region deserves separate consideration. One may note the potential of the Bālis excavations, for which the historical setting has recently appeared: A. Raymond and J.-L. Paillet, *Bālis II: Histoire de Bālis et des îlots I et II* (Damascus: Institut français de Damas, 1995).

[26]Jeremy Johns and Alison McQuitty, ″The Fāris Project: Preliminary Report upon the 1986 and 1988 Seasons,″ *Levant* 21 (1989): 63-95; idem, ″The Fāris Project: Preliminary Report on the 1989, 1990, and 1991 Seasons,″ *Levant* 25 (1993): 37-61. Ghada Ziadeh, ″Ottoman Ceramics from Tiʻinnik, Palestine,″ *Levant* 27 (1995): 209-245.

[27]The main information on these excavations is in Harald Ingholt, *Rapport préliminaire sur sept campagnes des fouilles à Hama en Syrie (1932-1938)* (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1940). See also Poul Jørgen Riis and Vagn Poulsen, *Hama, fouilles et recherches 1931-1938*, vol. 4, pt. 2: *Les verreries et*


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of ceramics in this site, one may examine two types as holding possible relevance as reflections of social organization: geometric painted pottery and slip-painted glazed ware.

Geometric painted pottery is also known as pseudo-prehistoric ware and, more formally and recently, as hand-made geometric painted ware (HMGPW). This ceramic features an often elaborate decorative scheme, sometimes with multiple colors, on a crude, ill-fired ceramic. The ware has often been associated with domestic production by women (as opposed to industrial wheel-made wares by men in urban settings). Following these assumptions, the ware is usually considered a devolution of an important Islamic craft, indicative of decline in the late Mamluk and Ottoman periods.[28]

In Syria, the existence and dating was signaled at Hama, where the collection includes extremely rare vessels with animal and human figures.[29] An intensity and variety of production is revealed in its occurrence in surveys and rural sites suggesting a popular craft with an important meaning and/or function. When one plots temporal and regional distribution, one sees a surprising fit with the Crusader occupation in Bilād al-Shām. This is not Crusader ware but possibly a reaction to this occupation, a reaction which continued as a popular symbol through the Mamluk period.

The Hama excavation report also describes slip-painted glazed ware as a Syrian product.[30] Rogers, in a brief discussion of its occurrence at Apamea, calls it ″gamma″ ware and suggests a distribution in Syria.[31] This ceramic is usually a red ware upon which a design in white slip is painted; the designs and distribution are strongly reminiscent of the geometric wares, a sort of up-scale domestic ware. The vessel is then covered with a yellowish clear lead glaze turning the decoration yellow and the remainder a glossy red-brown. The technique and elements of its style continue into the Ottoman period and extend into Spain and the New World, where descendants of slip-painted glazed ware were most popular in the Spanish and English colonies. Slip-painted glazed ware is a prominent product of Mamluk Egypt where it occurs as a specialized goblet form.[32] The village of al-

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*poteries médiévales* (Copenhagen: Nationalmuseet, 1957). A final presentation of the archaeology of the Islamic levels has been announced by P. Pentz.

[28]There is a roughly contemporary phenomenon in North Africa, Nubia, and Iran/Persian Gulf; such a wide-spread style would be labeled an archaeological ″horizon,″ had it occurred in a prehistoric or early historic period. A similar type of ceramic has been linked with medieval transhumance in southern Iran; see Donald Whitcomb, ″Pseudo-Prehistoric Ceramics from Southern Iran,″ *Golf-Archäologie: Mesopotamien, Iran, Bahrain, Vereinigte Arabische Emirate und Oman*, ed. K. Schippmann et al. (Buch am Erbach: Marie L. Leidorf, 1991), 95-112.

[29]The type was labeled simply Geometric ceramic, type D XX, figs. 1000-1046, in Riis and Poulsen, *Hama*, vol. 4, pt. 2.

[30]Ibid., type C XVI, figs. 821-832.

[31]The origin of this name remains a mystery; the presentation of the Apamaea ceramics remains an unstratified puzzle; see J. M. Rogers, ″Apamaea, the Mediaeval Pottery: Preliminary Report,″ *Apamée de Syrie: Bilan des recherches archéologiques, 1969-1971*, ed. Janine and Jean C. Balty (Brussels: Centre belge de recherches archéologiques à Apamée de Syrie, 1972), 253-270; and idem, ″Mediaeval Pottery at Apamaea in the 1976 and 1977 Seasons,″ *Apamée de Syrie, Bilan des recherches archéologiques, 1973-1979*, ed. Janine Balty (Brussels: Centre belge de recherches archéologiques à Apamée de Syrie, 1984), 261-285.

[32]See George T. Scanlon, ″Some Mamluk Ceramic Shapes from Fustat: ′Sgraff′ and ′Slip′,″ *Islamic Archaeological Studies* [Cairo] 2 (1980): 59-145; idem, ″Mamluk Pottery: More Evidence from Fustat,″ *Muqarnas* 2 (1984): 115-126. Also, Donald S. Whitcomb, ″Islamic Ceramics,″ *Quseir al-Qadim 1980*, ed. Donald S. Whitcomb and Janet H. Johnson (Malibu: American Research Center in Egypt 1982), 132-


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Burj al-Aḥmar used quantities of both hand-made painted pottery and glazed slip-painted ware during the first century of Mamluk rule (1265-1390). Both the household ceramic and the finer glazed ware are described as local Palestinian products.[33]

## SPECIALIZED CERAMIC ARTIFACTS: GRENADES AND PIPES

There are two classes of ceramic artifacts which bear special consideration for Mamluk studies. The first are grenades, a specialized vessel firmly established in Mamluk and contemporary assemblages for which no persuasive utilization is known. The other is the ceramic pipe bowl, for which use is apparently agreed but association with Mamluk archaeology sadly misplaced.

The so-called grenade, or better, sphero-conical vessel, is a hard well-made ceramic (usually approaching a stoneware) with a very small opening at the rounded end. The surface usually has a glaze (often a firing by-product) and impressed or stamped decorative elements.[34] Traditional identifications of these sphero-conical vessels has been as fire-throwers, based on the superficial similarity to modern grenades. Other popular identifications are perfume or mercury containers, to which may be added postulated uses as hanging lamps, water pipes, or aeliopiles. Most recently, some currency has been granted the idea of beer or alcohol bottles; this last identification relies on unique and undocumented examples from Iran and the evidence solely poetic in form.[35] What is certain is a wide distribution from Khorasan to Egypt during the Mamluk period; one may suggest that a search of Turkic or even Mongol paraphernalia might yield a cultural usage.

By way of contrast, there is little doubt of the use of clay pipe bowls, moulded, decorated, and burnished. This is a common element of paraphernalia in depictions of the Ottoman period and indeed maintains a formal similarity with original (stone) pipe bowls of native American usage. Excavated examples from Tell Ti'innik in Palestine have been used to shift the hand-made geometric painted ware to the Ottoman period, a radical revision in dating.[36] When Pringle found pipes at al-Burj al-Aḥmar, he considered the testimony of Hama and Tell Qaimun (Tel Yoqne'am)[37] where pipes were dated to the Mamluk period; in the end he followed his own stratification to post-Mamluk occupation (phase E, 17-19th

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192, pl. 36; and Kawatoko, *al-Ṭūr*, pl. 21.7.

[33]Pringle, *The Red Tower*, 135-36, 149-150.

[34]There is an extensive literature treating grenades, beginning with Hama; Riis and Poulsen, *Hama*, vol. 4, pt. 2, type DXXI, figs. 1047-1058. Recently Peter Pentz has offered new archaeological evidence from Hama, claiming to strengthen the traditional identification as ″grenades,″ in ″A Medieval Workshop for Producing ′Greek Fire′ Grenades,″ *Antiquity* 62 (1988): 89-93.

[35]A. Ghouchani and C. Adle, ″A Sphero-Conical Vessel as *fuqqā'ah*, or a Gourd for ′Beer′,″ *Muqarnas* 9 (1992): 72-92.

[36]Ziadeh, ″Ottoman Ceramics.″

[37]Pringle, *The Red Tower*, 142. The Tell Qaimun evidence is often cited but the extant reports do not offer details necessary for independent stratigraphic contribution. See Amnon Ben-Tor and Renate Rosenthal, ″The First Season of Excavations at Tel Yoqne'am, 1977: Preliminary Report,″ *Israel Exploration Journal* 28 (1978): 57-82; and Amnon Ben-Tor, Yuval Portugali, and Miriam Avissar, ″The Second Season of Excavations at Tel Yoqne'am, 1978: Preliminary Report,″ *IEJ* 29 (1979): 67-83. Another nearby site, this time with a Crusader castle, is 'Afula, with no better contexts or reportage; see M. Dothan, ″The Excavations at 'Afula,″ *'Atiqot* 1 (1955): 19-74; and more recently, Benjamin Z. Kedar and Denys Pringle, ″La Fève: A Crusader Castle in the Jezreel Valley,″ *IEJ* 35 (1985): 164-179. Yet another site with published potential is Buṣrá (Bostra), see Sophie Berthier, ″Sondage dans le secteur des thermes sud à Buṣrā (Syrie) 1985,″ *Berytus* 33 (1985): 5-45.


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centuries).[38] Ever since Hama, pipes have been suggested to have fourteenth century associations, but St. John Simpson has carefully refuted this association as, in a large number of cases, the result of faulty stratigraphy.[39] This should raise a red flag for readers of archaeological reports: isolated artifacts (or special types) should fit with the remainder of the assemblage or, put another way, archaeological evidence comes in repeating patterns.[40]

## CONCLUSIONS

The preceding discussion of Mamluk archaeology has not touched on many places and monuments which are usually considered important for an understanding of Mamluk history; the architecture of Cairo or Jerusalem are two obvious beginning points.[41] Study of such monuments falls into the realm of art history, which runs on parallel tracks but employs a very different methodology from archaeology. Archaeology is suited for inquiry into long-term change. One may seek in archaeological research patterns of land use (historical geography) and social organization (settlement systems), or rather ecology and economy in human development. Archaeology also provides information about the characteristics/functioning of particular places and periods, e.g., the dramatic change observed in the beginning of the Middle Islamic period induced by a new mix in the Middle East, the long-term affects of Crusaders and Mongols on early Islamic civilization.

Since an understanding of Mamluk culture must take into account the changed nature of social organization in its rural and urban settings, the primary evidence from the archaeological record must be integrated with that from the documents. One might well return to a description of the Egyptian scene:

> Besides being a highly centralized country with an administration organized to maximize royal revenues, Egypt was and remained a traditional peasant society in which primary social relations, those of family and friend, of patron and client, remained of supreme importance. The focus of loyalty was the village. . . .[42]

This description, actually applied to Ptolemaic, not Mamluk, Egypt, is advanced here not for some vague romantic sense of continuities, but to draw a parallel between two societies in multi-cultural transitions, in which ethnic origin became less important than

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[38]*The Red Tower,* 142.

[39]The Hama references are: Riis and Poulsen, *Hama*, vol. 4, pt. 2, type D XXII, figs. 1069-1082. The refutation is found in St. John Simpson, ″Ottoman Clay Pipes from Jerusalem and the Levant: A Critical Review of the Published Evidence,″ *Society for Clay Pipe Research, Newsletter* 27 (October, 1990): 6-16. An example of such stratigraphy with pipes is in G. J. Wightman, *The Damascus Gate, Jerusalem*, BAR 519 (Oxford: British Archaeological Reports International, 1989), pl. 63.

[40]Likewise, the evidence of coin finds must be treated as only one element of a large pattern; like C14 samples, there is an unavoidable sampling error which requires rejection *unless* the interpretation fits all other lines of evidence.

[41]See Michael Meinecke, *Die Mamlukische Architektur in Ägypten und Syrien*, 2 vols. (Glückstadt: J. J. Augustin, 1992), and Michael H. Burgoyne and D. S. Richards, *Mamluk Jerusalem, an Architectural Study, with Additional Historical Research* (Jerusalem: British School of Archaeology, 1987).

[42]Dorothy J. Crawford, ″The Good Official of Ptolemaic Egypt,″ *Das Ptolemäische Ägypten*, ed. Herwig Maehler and Volker Michael Strocka (Mainz am Rhein: von Zabern, 1978), 199-201.


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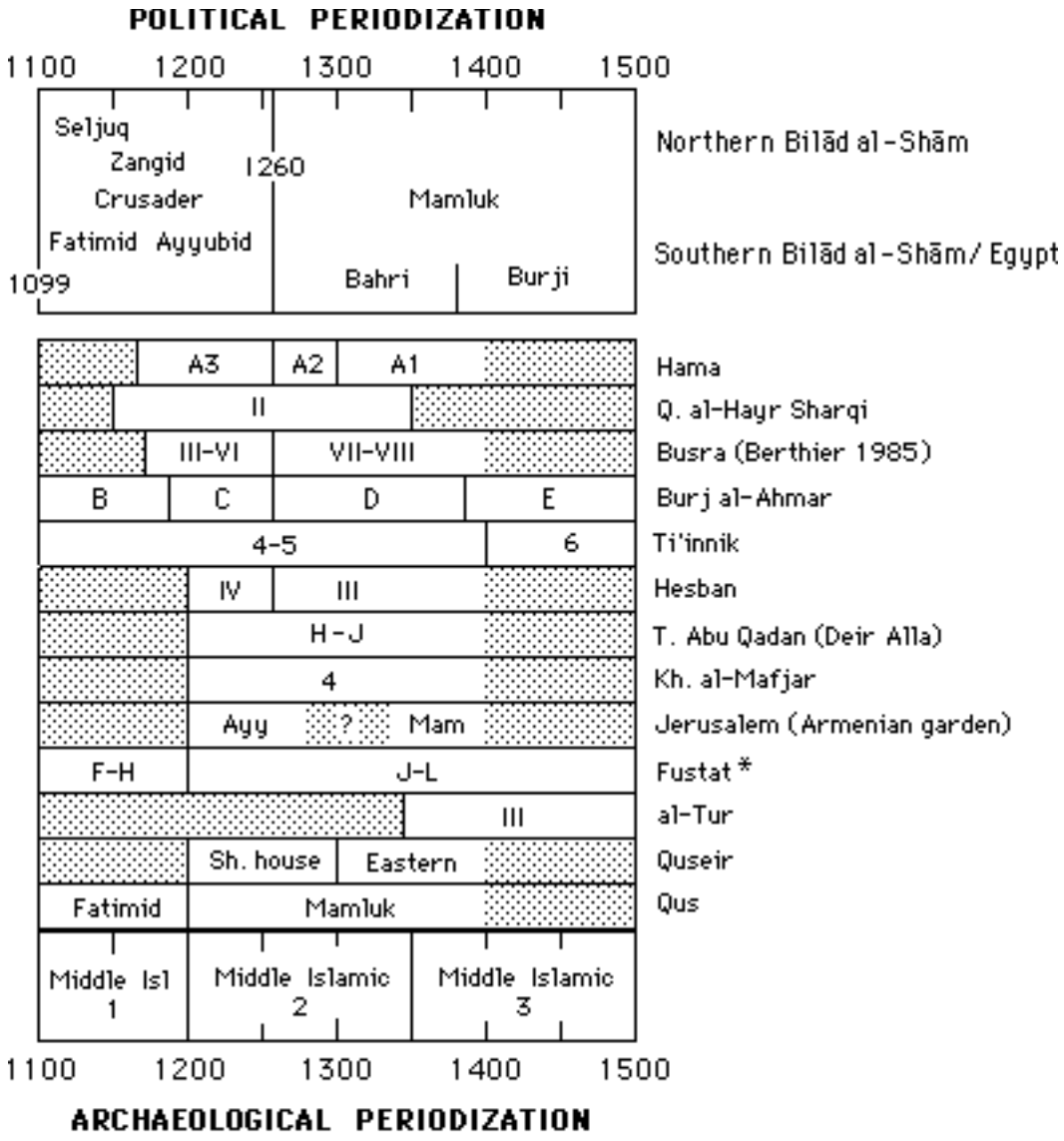
contemporary cultural sphere. Definition of such cultural spheres is more diffuse in the archaeological record than in some documentary evidence, but it is more readily discernible in the material record of daily lives as they gradually unfolded over time.





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# Mamluk Architecture and the Question of Patronage

The study of patronage of the arts and architecture during the Mamluk period helps us sharpen the picture that we have of this alien ruling class. At the same time, it illuminates the relationships which existed between the Mamluks, the religious elite, and the rest of the population. In examining the patronage of architecture in the Mamluk period, historians and art historians face a number of complex problems. Some derive from the nature of the buildings themselves or their inscriptions, while others result from the conflicting accounts provided by the various literary sources and, sometimes, by the *waqf* documents. Scholars also have to be aware of external factors—economic, social, political—which had an impact on the decisions of patrons to construct one type of building rather than another.

The present article is an attempt to reflect on the patronage practices and to raise some questions about the architectural achievements of the Mamluk period. It also tries to sort out the patterns followed by both the military and civilian elite when commissioning their buildings. A survey of the extant monuments from the period between 1250-1517, as well as those no longer extant but recorded in the literary sources, allows us to identify four broad categories of buildings of either a religious or a secular nature. The classification of the buildings under a given category is based on the function of the buildings as defined in their inscriptions, literary sources, or *waqf* documents.[1] Accordingly, buildings may be grouped under four categories: (1) religious, which includes the *jāmi'*, *masjid*, *madrasah*, *khānqāh*;[2] (2) social, which includes the *zāwiyah*,[3] *ribāṭ*, *bīmāristān*, *sabīl*, *sabīl-kuttāb*, *ḥammām*; (3) domestic, which consists of the palace, *dār*, and house (*qā'ah*, *riwāq*, *ṭabaqah*, *rab'*); (4) commercial/industrial, which includes the *qaysārīyah*, *wakālah*, *khān*, *funduq*, *sūq*, *mi'ṣarah*, *ṭāḥūn*, *furn*, *maṭbakh sukkar*, *sirjah*.

The ratio of religious to secular buildings constructed at a certain time is difficult to assess. At the present time our understanding of the economic, political, and social factors which had an impact on the choice of buildings constructed by patrons allows us to draw only broad conclusions as to how this choice was made. We can sometimes speculate that

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[1]The reader is asked to keep in mind the fact that, in some cases, buildings—especially large complexes—had multiple functions. In such cases the predominant function of the building will determine the category into which it falls. Civil and military architecture have been deliberately left out of this discussion since both categories included buildings which were generally part of large projects placed under the aegis of the state.

[2]Although *madrasah*s and *khānqāh*s had functions which were not directly related to religious rituals, their primary concern was the teaching of the religious sciences and/or Sufism; therefore, their inclusion under this category is justifiable.

[3]*Zāwiyah*s have been deliberately excluded from the category of religious buildings since their function—at least as far as Mamluk Egypt is concerned—was not directly associated with ″orthodox″ religious practice. See Fernandes, ″The *Zāwiya* in Cairo,″ *Annales islamologiques* 18 (1982): 116-121.


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the need to control or create ties with religious scholars often motivated patrons to establish foundations providing positions for the civilian elite.[4] We can further point out the relationship which existed between the growing interest of patrons in constructing commercial buildings such as *wakālah*s or *qaysārīyah*s and *funduq*s around the end of the fourteenth century and onwards, and the growth of Mediterranean trade. One can also speculate on the lack of interest shown by the Mamluks in the construction of mosques per se on the basis of the religious developments of the period.

However, before turning our attention to the pattern of patronage arising from the varying motives of patrons, let us pause for a moment to ask the question, Who were the patrons? We could use—although with reservation—the answer provided by L. A. Mayer, who writes:

> . . . although the bulk of public buildings in Islam were either devoted to religious use (like mosques, madrasas, kuttâbs, zâwiyas, cemeteries) or founded out of a religious impulse (like hospitals or sabîls), with very few exceptions they were constructed by order of laymen. Economically they were entirely the work of the governing classes, military or civilian, and independent of any ecclesiastical authority. . . . And just as there is no ecclesiastical architecture of any consequence except that ordered by laymen, so there is no bourgeois architecture worthy of the name.[5]

The preceding statement calls for two comments. Firstly, it uses a terminology which totally ignores the nature of Islam when it refers to an ″ecclesiastical authority″ and ″ecclesiastical architecture.″ Secondly, the statement mentions the absence of ″bourgeois architecture″ without taking into consideration the structure of the Muslim society under study. Despite its defects, we have to agree with Mayer′s statement that the patrons were those who could afford to pay for the construction of a building, whether from the military or civilian elite. It would also be appropriate to include explicitly two groups who were actively involved in the establishment of both religious and secular foundations: women and merchants.

The best documented of the various groups of patrons are the rulers and their military elite. The sources provide us with enough information to allow us to reconstruct the pattern of patronage of this group during the Mamluk period. It is evident that religious foundations, which helped the ruler legitimate his rule, were the primary focus of patronage by the sultan and his amirs. For the Mamluks, perhaps even more than for any other group, political power was acquired and maintained by force and legitimized by an ideology at the center of which was Islam. According to the medieval scholars, a good ruler was the one striving to impose and uphold the *sharī'ah* and thus hold high the banner of Islam.

With this ideal of rulership in mind, the Mamluk rulers arranged and rearranged their public buildings so as to project and maintain an image of themselves in harmony with the expectations of their subjects, both the religious elite and the masses. The patronage of religious buildings such as the *jāmi'*, for instance, was regarded as part of the ruler′s

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[4]See Fernandes, ″Mamluk Politics and Education: The Evidence from Two Fourteenth Century *Waqfiyya*,″ *AI* 23 (1987): 87-98.

[5]L. A. Mayer, *Islamic Architects and Their Works* (Geneva: Albert Kundig, 1956), 22-23.


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duties.[6] Thus, it is not surprising to note that every effort was made by the Mamluks to associate their names with the greatest possible number of religious buildings, whether newly constructed or rebuilt. Among the most important foundations were *jum'ah* mosques, which provided a place for the community to perform their daily rituals, attend the Friday prayer, and listen to the *khuṭbah*. Sultan Baybars encouraged the introduction of the *khuṭbah* in a number of mosques in the same urban agglomeration.[7] He also ordered the building of his *jāmi'*, which was constructed between 665-67/1266-69. Many important mosques date from the time of Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad who, along with his amirs, embarked on a large program of building and rebuilding mosques as mentioned by al-Maqrīzī.[8] However, after a period of about twenty-five years of intense activity involving the construction of mosques, one notes that fewer mosques were built after the death of this sultan.

Talking about a fifteenth century *madrasah*, van Berchem pointed to the fact that the Friday rituals were now celebrated in such foundations: ″À cette époque, on ne bâtissait presque plus de Mosquées, et l'office du vendredi ce célébrait dans la plupart des madrasahs.″[9] By the mid-fourteenth century, a number of *madrasah*s also had the function of *jāmi'*s. Despite the strong opposition of the Shāfi'ī school of law to the deliverance of more than one *khuṭbah* in an urban center, this practice was introduced in a number of foundations.[10] However, we should point out that permission to build a *jāmi'* or to introduce a *khuṭbah* in a *madrasah* had to be obtained from the sultan and approved by the religious scholars. It is clear that this privilege was enjoyed primarily by members of the military elite. With time, however, the same privilege came to be shared by members of the civilian elite, women related to the sultans, and rich merchants. Al-Sakhāwī mentions a number of cases in which construction of, or introduction of the *khuṭbah* in, a foundation were authorized. Thus, we read that the *khuṭbah* was delivered in the *madrasah* built by al-Zaynī ibn al-Jī'ān next to his house, with the permission of the sultan and sanction of the religious scholars.[11] Elsewhere, we read that the *khuṭbah* was delivered in the mosque built by al-Zaynī al-Ustādār in Būlāq with the permission of the sultan (*bi-idhn al-sulṭān*) and the agreement of the jurists.[12]

Because the *khuṭbah* was delivered in so many *madrasah* foundations, some jurists felt the need to point out that a *madrasah* was not a mosque. Indeed, we read: ″*madrasah*s are not to be considered mosques but only the *miḥrāb* itself or some say the *īwān al-miḥrāb* exclusively [is to be considered as a *jāmi'*]; the rest of it is not to be treated as a *jāmi'* since it is permissible [for people] to gather in it, to eat and to work in it, and so

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[6]Ibn Taymīyah, in a number of his *fatwá*s, goes so far as to consider a ruler's neglect in building or restoring mosques as deviant behavior; *Majmū' Fatāwī Shaykh al-Islām Aḥmad Ibn Taymīyah* (Riyadh: Maṭābi' al-Riyāḍ, 1381).

[7]al-Maqrīzī, *al-Mawā'iẓ wa-al-I'tibār fī Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Āthār* (Būlāq; reprint, 1977), 2:297-298.

[8]Ibid., 304-325.

[9]Max van Berchem, *Matériaux pour un Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum: Égypte* (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1894-1903), 3:344.

[10]al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:331.

[11]al-Sakhāwī, *al-Tibr al-Masbūk fī Dhayl al-Sulūk* (Būlāq: n.p., 1897; reprint, Cairo: Maktabat al-Kullīyah al-Azharīyah, 1972), 176.

[12]Ibid., 217, see also, 185; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Inbā' al-Ghumr bi-Abnā' al-'Umr* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmīyah, 1968), 9:156-157; Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr fī Waqā'i' al-Duhūr*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá, 5 vols. (Cairo: In Kommission bei Franz Steiner Verlag, Wiesbaden, 1960-84), 3:117.


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on."[13] The practice of delivering the *khuṭbah* in *madrasah*s was still frowned upon by the Shāfi'ī jurists as late as the middle of the fifteenth century. Al-Sakhāwī mentions an incident which took place between Shāfi'ī and Ḥanafī jurists regarding the introduction of the *khuṭbah* in the *madrasah* of Qāḍī Badr al-Dīn Ḥasan ibn Suwayd, built in Miṣr in 845/1441-1442.[14] The author clearly states that Ḥanafī jurists allowed more than one *khuṭbah* in one *miṣr* while the Shāfi'īs opposed it. He then provides his own opinion on the matter saying: "non-authorization of multiplicity [of *khuṭbah*s] is more appropriate and God provides guidance" (*'adam al-ta'addud awlá wallāh al-hādī*). The opposition of the Shāfi'ī jurists was so strong that when the introduction of the *khuṭbah* in the *madrasah* of Qalāwūn was proposed in 774/1372-73, a great debate took place between the Ḥanafīs and the Shāfi'īs. *Fatwá*s were issued on the subject, explaining their respective positions. Al-Suyūṭī[15] adds that al-Bulqīnī wrote to support the practice while al-'Irāqī opposed it. Could this strong opposition to the deliverance of more than one *khuṭbah* in an urban center have influenced the decision of patrons regarding the type of building to be commissioned, especially in centers like Bayn al-Qaṣrayn? Baybars, Qalāwūn, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, Barqūq, and Barsbāy, each of whom erected one of their foundations in this location, declined to build a *jāmi'*. They all chose to build religious foundations, the functions of which were associated with teaching and Sufism. Furthermore, the *khuṭbah* was not given originally at some of the early foundations.[16]

The former site of the Fatimid palaces, which had been transformed by the Ayyubids into a center of religious and commercial activities, Bayn al-Qaṣrayn became a prime locus for the construction of large foundations during the Mamluk period. Indeed, early patrons, in imitation of their former master al-Ṣāliḥ Najm al-Dīn Ayyūb, elected to build at least one of their foundations here whenever possible. The fact that Bayn al-Qaṣrayn was deemed an important site highly appreciated by religious scholars is reflected in a comment that al-'Aynī made when talking of Sultan al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh. According to this author, when the sultan discussed his intention to build a *madrasah/jāmi'* in al-Qāhirah with his advisors, they all recommended the location opposite the *madrasah* of Sultan Barqūq in Bayn al-Qaṣrayn so that al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh, too, would have a foundation standing among those of other sultans.[17]

It is also worth mentioning that by the Mamluk period Bayn al-Qaṣrayn had become, as al-Maqrīzī says, the site of an important *sūq*.[18] This probably would also have influenced the type of foundation erected there, and would perhaps have caused reluctance to build a *jāmi'* in this location. Indeed, the objection to the building of a *jāmi'* in a *sūq* is well documented. Al-Sakhāwī and Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī both mention a heated debate which took place apropos the *jāmi'* of al-Ghamrī (d. 849). Many religious scholars, we are told, admonished him and some tried to dissuade him from building the *jāmi'*. Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī mentions that he was among the people who advised the shaykh to forego

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[13]al-Shaykh al-Tūnisī, *al-Masā'il al-Malqūṭah*, MS Dār al-Kutub, Fiqh Mālikī, no. 61.
[14]al-Sakhāwī, *al-Tibr al-Masbūk*, 9-11.
[15]al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-Muḥāḍarah fī Akhbār Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah*, (Cairo: 'Īsá al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1968), 2:304.
[16]See al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:379-380.
[17]al-'Aynī, *'Iqd al-Jumān fī Ta'rīkh Ahl al-Zamān*, ed. 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṭanṭāwī al-Qarmūṭ (Cairo: n.p., 1985), 1:224-226.
[18]al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:27-29.


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introducing a *khuṭbah* in the foundation (i.e., keep it a *masjid*) but that he was faced with the patron's total refusal of his advice.[19] Al-Sakhāwī, who reports the same event, writes: "The scholars censured him for that" (*fa-'āba 'alayhi ahl al-'ilm dhālika*).[20]

Both the opposition of the Shāfi'īs to more than one *khuṭbah* in a *miṣr* as well as the jurists' stand regarding the construction of a *jum'ah* mosque in a *sūq* must have inevitably influenced the choice of the foundations to be built on the site of Bayn al-Qaṣrayn. It is therefore not surprising that a sultan like Baybars al-Bunduqdārī, who commissioned a very large mosque in 665-67/1266-69, chose for its location a *maydān* outside al-Qāhirah proper. The same sultan had already built a *madrasah* in Bayn al-Qaṣrayn a few years earlier and had requested explicitly that no changes be made to this building. We read in al-Maqrīzī[21] that Baybars went to his *madrasah* in al-Qāhirah and, "He entered it and so did the *fuqahā'* and the *qurrā'* . . . and he said, 'this is a place I have dedicated to God. . . . When I die do not bury me here and do not alter the plan of this place'."[22] There was always an attempt to keep burial grounds away from urban centers. Al-Suyūṭī confirms that Baybars was firmly opposed to any urban development around burial grounds.[23] Interestingly, when the custom of adding a *qubbah* to religious foundations in urban centers was adopted by the early Mamluk sultans, their legal function as specified by the *waqf* documents was that of a *masjid* and/or teaching place. Only the *fisqīyah* (burial chamber) underneath them was to be considered a burial ground.[24]

Talking about the complex of Qalāwūn, al-Nuwayrī writes that when the sultan saw al-Turbah al-Ṣāliḥīyah, he ordered the construction of a *turbah* for himself, containing a *madrasah*, a *bīmāristān*, and a *maktab sabīl*. He established as *waqf* a number of his properties including *qaysārīyah*s and *ribā'*, and most of the income from these was endowed on the *bīmāristān* and then on the *turbah bi-al-qubbah*. The use of the two terms juxtaposed clearly indicates that the two words were not synonymous. Often the functions of the *qubbah* went beyond what was specified in the *waqfīyah*. Indeed, many sultans made it a place for holding important *majālis* and paid regular visits to their mausoleums. For instance, Mamluk chronicles report a number of *majālis* taking place in the *qubbah* of Qalāwūn and attended by his sons and grandsons.[25] Furthermore, this *qubbah* became the locus of an important ceremonial: the swearing of the oath, which took place at the manumission of a *mamlūk* and his promotion.[26] In an article entitled "Reflections on Mamluk Art" Oleg Grabar writes:

> The problem with all these Mamluk foundations is that there are so many of them, located so close to each other—as in the Shari' Bayn al-Qaṣrayn in

[19]Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Inbā' al-Ghumr*, 9:244-245.
[20]al-Sakhāwī, *al-Tibr al-Masbūk*, 137.
[21]al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:300.
[22]The reference here probably points to what had happened to the *madrasah* of his previous master al-Ṣāliḥ Najm al-Dīn Ayyūb when his wife, Shajar al-Durr, added a *qubbah* to it.
[23]al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-Muḥāḍarah* 2:139-141.
[24]Ḥujjat Waqf al-Sulṭān Qalāwūn, Dār al-Wathā'iq 15; Ḥujjat Waqf al-Sulṭān al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, Dār al-Wathā'iq 25; Ḥujjat Waqf al-Sulṭān Ḥasan, Dār al-Wathā'iq 40.
[25]Baybars al-Manṣūri, *al-Tuḥfah al-Mulūkīyah fī al-Dawlah al-Turkīyah* (Cairo: al-Dār al-Miṣrīyah al-Lubnānīyah, 1987), 170; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:381; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab*, ed. al-Bāz al-'Arīnī (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Miṣrīyah al-'Āmmah lil-Kitāb, 1964), 31:197, 220-222, 225.
[26]al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:380-381.


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> Cairo . . . and in Cairo′s eastern cemeteries—that one begins to doubt their actual social, religious, or intellectual uses and usefulness.[27]

One has to wonder why it is that we are still left in doubt as to the ″usefulness″ of a number of monuments whose function is clearly indicated in their inscriptions and explicitly described in great detail in their *waqfīyah*s and by the chroniclers. Referring back to the descriptions of buildings provided by the literary sources and the *waqfīyah*s of the buildings erected along Bayn al-Qaṣrayn, one can not help but notice their importance in the eyes of the people who witnessed their construction. There can be no doubt whatsoever as to the purpose and usefulness of a complex such as the one erected by Qalāwūn in which a *bīmāristān* was joined to a *madrasah* and a *qubbah*. Al-Maqrīzī describes the building, explaining the patron′s choice of foundations and deals briefly with some of the services provided by the *bīmāristān*.[28] Details of the services provided by this hospital are found in its endowment deed.[29]

It is equally interesting to read the texts of two chancery documents issued in the name of Qalāwūn, both dated 684/1285, appointing the *ra'īs al-aṭibbā'*. In the first document we read:

> Since *'ilm* (science), as we are told, consists of two types, *'ilm al-adyān* (religious sciences) and *'ilm al-abdān* (sciences of the body, anatomy), it was incumbent upon us to focus on both and create for them, during our days, whatever will ensure their existence in perpetuity. . . . Thus we have constructed for the two a monument rooted in piety.[30]

In another document of appointment issued by the same ruler to designate Qāḍī Muhadhdhab al-Dīn as teacher in the *bīmāristān* one reads:

> We have seen former rulers adopt sound policies towards their subjects. They showed great care for the sciences of religion but neglected the sciences of the body. Each constructed a *madrasah* and yet neglected to build a *bīmāristān* ignoring thus [the Prophet′s] saying: Science is of two types (*al-'ilm 'ilmān*). . . . We have built a *bīmāristān* that fills the eyes with admiration and which surpasses other buildings and preserves the health and well being of people.[31]

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[27]Oleg Grabar, "Reflections on Mamluk Art," *Muqarnas* 2 (1984): 8.

[28]al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:406-408.

[29]Ḥujjat Waqf al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn, al-Awqāf 1010; also see Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirat al-Nabīh fī Ayyām al-Manṣūr wa-Banīh*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Miṣrīyah al-'Āmmah lil-Kitāb, 1976-86), 1:359.

[30]The text of the document is preserved in Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rīkh*, 8:22-25, as indicated in Muḥammad Māhir Ḥamādah, ed., *al-Wathā'iq al-Siyāsīyah wa-al-Idārīyah lil-'Aṣr al-Mamlūkī* (Cairo: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 1980), 324-327.

[31]al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A'shá fī Ṣinā'at al-Inshā'* (Cairo: al-Mu'assasah al-Miṣrīyah al-'Āmmah lil-Ta'līf wa-al-Tarjamah wa-al-Ṭibā'ah wa-al-Nashr, 1964), 11:253-256.


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Baybars al-Manṣūri writes about the complex of Qalāwūn which poets described in a number of *qaṣīdah*s, from which he quotes a few verses:

> A minaret shining like a star in the darkness providing guidance to the world / A *madrasah* standing as testimony to its high civilization, a lofty achievement / The light of which eclipses the Ẓāhirīyah. . . . / Knowledge by it remains soundly rooted and disseminated thus suppressing atheism and debauchery.[32]

*Waqf* documents and other sources also mention some of the reasons motivating patrons to endow pious foundations. Among the principal reasons for constructing *jāmi'*s or *masjid*s is the desire to follow the sayings of the Prophet, who is reported to have encouraged their building in a number of *ḥadīth*s. In the statement of purpose contained in the *waqfīyah*s one reads that the Prophet said, ″After the death of an individual three of his deeds will survive. Among the three, the most important is the construction of a house for God.″ One also reads that the Prophet said, ″He who builds a house for God, no matter how small its size, God will build a place for him in heaven.″ In addition to the sayings of the Prophet, the idea of reward in the afterlife is always stressed in the statement of purpose found at the beginning of the *waqfīyah*s.[33] It is also interesting to note that the buildings themselves often carry at the beginning of the foundation inscription the Sūrat al-Tawbah (S. 18).

The decision of a patron to build a religious building was not, however, always dictated by personal considerations such as self-aggrandizement or reward in the afterlife. Indeed, sometimes the decision to build a *jāmi'* was a direct response to the needs expressed by the people or by religious scholars. Discussing the Jāmi' al-Jadīd al-Nāṣirī, Baybars al-Manṣūri writes that al-Nāṣir Muḥammad gave the order to construct this *jāmi'* on the Nile opposite the Isle of Rawḍah because the inhabitants of this *maḥallah* (urban center) had no *jāmi'*. They kept expressing the wish to have a *jāmi'*, which would save them the trouble of walking to other mosques on Fridays. Baybars al-Manṣūri writes that al-Nāṣir, ″being aware of their needs, ordered the construction of this mosque and took a personal interest in its planning.″ We are told that it was constructed in the best way ″displaying beauty, perfection and grandeur. . . . Trees lined its sides surrounding it with the perfume of their flowers and the shade of their branches.″[34]

Discussing the same mosque, al-Maqrīzī writes that Qāḍī Fakhr al-Dīn ibn Faḍl Allāh, the *wazīr al-jaysh*, built this mosque ″in the name of″ (*bi-ism*) the sultan.[35] Although the statement of al-Maqrīzī leaves no doubt as to who the real patron was, or that the Qāḍī must have been the supervisor of the construction, there are other cases where the question of patronage poses a problem. Indeed, how should we define patronage? On what basis do we attribute a building to a patron, especially when we are dealing with royal constructions? Is the person giving the order to construct a monument and whose name figures in the inscription on the building preceded by ″has ordered construction″ (*amara bi-*

[32]Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *al-Tuḥfah al-Mulūkīyah*, 111-112.
[33]Ḥujjat Waqf al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn, al-Awqāf 1010; Ḥujjat Waqf al-Sulṭān Ḥasan, al-Awqāf 881, fols. 4-9; Ḥujjat Waqf al-Sulṭān Abū al-Naṣr Qāytbāy, al-Awqāf 886, fols. 4-6, to name but a few.
[34]Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *al-Tuḥfah al-Mulūkīyah*, 226.
[35]al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:304.


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*inshā'*) to be considered the patron or is the one who undertakes the construction at his own expense the real one? Furthermore, in cases of the reconstruction of a building in ruins, are we entitled to credit the new monument to the patron whose name is on the new inscription or the previous patron?

The presence of phrases like ″from his personal funds″ (*min mālihi al-khāṣṣ*) or ″has constructed [it] for″ (*ansha'a li*) found in some inscriptions on buildings, as well as a number of other oddities which exist in the inscriptions of some monuments, and discrepancies between the reports of chroniclers and *waqf* documents dictate great caution when deciding the question of patronage. For example, in the case of the *madrasah* of Khawand Barakah (Umm al-Sulṭān Sha'bān) constructed in 770/1368-69, the inscriptions clearly state that Sultan Sha'bān ″has ordered the construction of this blessed *madrasah* for his mother″ (*Amara bi-inshā' hādhihi al-madrasah al-mubārakah li-wālidatihi Mawlānā al-Sulṭān al-Malik al-Ashraf Sha'bān*).[36] Yet the *waqfīyah* and the sources explicitly state that she is the one who commissioned (*ansha'at*, *banat*) it and paid for its construction.[37]

Another interesting case is presented by the complex of Faraj ibn Barqūq (803-813/1400-1411) in the desert, where all the inscriptions, except for one, mention that this sultan ordered its construction.[38] The only inscription which does not associate the construction of the *turbah* with the name of Faraj is that found in the interior of the northern mausoleum at the base of the dome. It reads: Sultan Barqūq ″has ordered the construction of this blessed *turbah* . . . in the reign of his son Mawlānā al-Sulṭān al-Malik al-Nāṣir Abū al-Sa'ādāt Faraj. . . .″ (*Amara bi-inshā' hādhi*[*hi*] *al-turbah al-mubārakah Mawlānā al-Sulṭān al-Shahīd al-Malik al-Ẓāhir Abū Sa'īd Barqūq . . . fī ayyām walidihi Mawlānā al-Sulṭān al-Malik al-Nāṣir Abū al-Sa'ādāt Faraj. . . .*).[39] The information provided by the sources indicates that Barqūq was the one who had selected the location for the construction of a *turbah* and had left a large sum for its erection. Al-Maqrīzī mentions that in his will (*waṣīyah*) Barqūq set aside 80,000 *dīnār*s for the construction of the *turbah* outside Bāb al-Naṣr and that he indicated that the surplus money was to be used for the acquisition of properties to be made *waqf* on the foundation.[40] There seemed to be no doubt in people's minds at the time as to who was the real patron since Ibn Taghrībirdī thought it important to correct their beliefs when he wrote:

> People think that this *turbah* was built (*ansha'ahā*) by al-Ẓāhir Barqūq before his death and they call it Ẓāhirīyah but this is not so, for none other than al-Malik al-Nāṣir Faraj built it after his father's death.[41]

It is clear that Barqūq did not witness the construction of the *turbah* and that Faraj probably was the one who gave the order to build it. However, since Barqūq expressed the wish to

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[36]van Berchem, *CIA, Égypte*, 1:279.
[37]Ḥujjat Waqf Umm al-Sulṭān Sha'ban, Dār al-Wathā'iq 47; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:399; 'Alī Mubārak, *al-Khiṭaṭ al-Tawfīqīyah al-Jadīdah* (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Miṣrīyah al-'Āmmah lil-Kitāb, 1980), 4:126.
[38]van Berchem, *CIA, Égypte*, 3:316, nos. 205, 206, 207.
[39]van Berchem, *CIA, Égypte*, 3:320, no. 212.
[40]al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Ma'rifat Duwal al-Mulūk*, 3/2:936-937.
[41]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah* (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Miṣrīyah al-'Āmmah lil-Ta'līf wa-al-Nashr, 1963), 13:102.


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build it, selected the location, and left the money to erect it, should we not consider him, as his contemporaries did, the real patron?

Another odd case is reported by Ibn Iyās who discusses a *madrasah* built in 859/1455 by the *nāẓir al-khāṣṣ* al-Jamālī Yūsuf. He writes that ″al-Jamālī began to construct a *madrasah* in the *ṣaḥrā'* for the sultan . . . and the expenditures for the work were paid out of his own money, not that of the sultan (*wa-kāna maṣrūf dhālika min māl nāẓir al-khāṣṣ Yūsuf dūna māl al-sulṭān*). . . . He built a *zāwiyah* opposite this *madrasah* and a *ḥawsh* for the burial of the family of the sultan.″[42]. Elsewhere, we read that the same amir restored (*jaddada*) a *madrasah*—the Madrasah Fakhrīyah—and placed on it an inscription in the name of the sultan.[43] Ibn Iyās´s reports lead us to assume that we are faced here with a gift offered to Sultan Īnāl and his family.

Occasionally we find references to sultans´ names in inscriptions on buildings built by amirs. For instance, we find an inscription on a wooden door in the mosque of Azbak al-Yūsufī (900/1494-95) which mentions the name of Sultan al-Malik al-Ashraf Abū al-Naṣr Qāytbāy and praises him.[44] Could the references to the name of a ruling sultan possibly indicate that the latter contributed to the construction of the building, donating money or building materials, and that as a gesture of gratitude his name would be mentioned in one of the inscriptions? The most interesting example is the one offered by the inscription on the mosque of Qānībāy built in 845/1441-42, which mentions the name of Sultan Jaqmaq.[45] Indeed, in that particular instance we know that when the sultan died in 857/1453 he was buried in the *qubbah* attached to the mosque. We also know that when the sultan´s son died he too was buried in this mausoleum.[46] The questions raised here are, Why was the sultan buried in this mausoleum and why does his name appear in the inscription? Did Jaqmaq build this mosque and donate it as a gift or did Qānībāy build it?

The largest group of patrons was undoubtedly the military elite who would have had no trouble securing for themselves a permit to build a public building. However, one should not ignore the contributions of other groups such as members of the civilian elite, women, and rich merchants. Some women of the households of Mamluk sultans became actively involved in the construction of religious buildings, especially from the time of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad´s rule. Some of them, such as Sitt Hadaq (740/1339-40), built mosques; others built *madrasah*s like the *madrasah* of Umm al-Sulṭān Sha'bān (770/1368-69). A number of them patronized Sufi foundations or other charitable ones. Hence, Umm Anūk[47] built the *khānqāh* known under her name, the *khānqāh* of Ṭughāy in 749/1348; Khawand Ṭulbāy built hers in 765/1363-64. The daughter of Baybars al-Jāshankīr built the Ribāṭ al-Baghdādīyah in 684/1285-86.

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[42]Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr*, 2:330-331, 367. The amount spent on the construction as reported by the author was 12,000 *dīnār*s.

[43]Ibid., 291; see also al-Sakhāwī, *al-Tibr al-Masbūk*, 346.

[44]van Berchem, *CIA, Égypte* 3:531, no. 356; 'Alī Mubārak, *al-Khiṭaṭ al-Tawfīqīyah*, 4:115.

[45]van Berchem, *CIA, Égypte,* 3:381, no. 260.

[46]Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr*, 2:300-303, 306; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Inbā' al-Ghumr*, 9:216-217.

[47]Khawand Ṭughāy, also known as al-Khawand al-Kubrá, was a concubine of Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad who later became his favorite wife. Ṭughāy, who was known for her beauty, had acquired great power and influence and, according to al-Maqrīzī, some *qāḍī*s and amirs would go so far as to kiss the floor in front of her as they would do for the sultan. Ṭughāy gave birth to a son Anūk, hence the title of Umm Anūk that al-Maqrīzī uses to refer to her foundation. Ṭughāy died in 749 leaving behind a great fortune. See al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:425-426.


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A number of important religious foundations were built by civilians, patrons whose influential position and/or wealth earned them the privilege of erecting public buildings. Some were built by viziers, for instance, the *jāmi'* at Dayr al-Ṭīn rebuilt by Tāj al-Dīn ibn Ḥannā in 672/1273. Ibn Ḥannā, we are told, had moved to a new residence in the Bustān al-Ma'shūq. Realizing that the old *jāmi'* was too small for the inhabitants of the quarter, and for his own convenience (so as not to have to walk too far for the Friday prayer) he decided to tear down and rebuild the mosque in 672/1273.[48] Likewise, the vizier Sa'd al-Dīn Ibrāhīm al-Bashīrī rebuilt the Jāmi' Birkat al-Raṭlī when he decided to move to a new house nearby.[49]

Members of the religious elite, especially *qāḍī*s, also rebuilt, restored, or built religious foundations. Qāḍī Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn 'Umar al-Suyūṭī, *nāẓir bayt al-māl*, built the Jāmi' al-Suyūṭī in 671/1272. This mosque was restored and enlarged by Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad, known as Ibn al-Bārizī, the *kātib al-sirr*, in 822/1419.[50] Qāḍī 'Abd al-Bāsiṭ, one of the most famous patrons, is said to have commissioned a number of public buildings, among which was a *madrasah* dated 823/1420 at which he had the *khuṭbah* read, and behind which he added a *ribāṭ* for women, and a mosque in Būlāq built in 817/1414.[51] Al-'Aynī and al-Bulqīnī both built *madrasah*s, while the Jāmi' al-Ḥanafī was built by Shaykh Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Ḥanafī in 817/1414.[52]

It is interesting to note that a number of mosques and *madrasah*s were built by influential officials who were converted Copts or of Coptic descent and/or rich merchants. Al-Maqrīzī mentions the Madrasat al-Baqrī built by Ra'īs Shams al-Dīn Shākir, one of the converted Copts who held the position of *nāẓir al-dhakhīrah* during al-Nāṣir Ḥasan's rule.[53] Al-Ṣāḥib 'Abd al-Karīm ibn Shākir ibn al-Ghannām al-Qibṭī, who was a vizier, built and rebuilt the *madrasah* near al-Azhar.[54] Qāḍī Badr al-Dīn ibn Suwayd al-Miṣrī al-Mālikī (d. 829) built al-Madrasah al-Suwaydīyah. This individual was originally a Coptic merchant whose father was a poultry seller in Sūq Shanūdah.[55] Vizier Fakhr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ghanī ibn Niqūlā al-Armanī (of Armenian descent) built a *jāmi'* and a mausoleum in Bayn al-Sūrayn,[56] and 'Abd al-Bāqī ibn Ya'qūb, a *kātib* known as Abū Ghālib, built a *madrasah* near Qanṭarat al-Mūskī.[57]

By the end of the fourteenth century, many of the religious officials who supervised *waqf*s were increasingly involved in the restoration of religious foundations. The work was often undertaken with the revenues derived from the *waqf*s but sometimes with the restorer's own money. We also note the growing interest of other civilians such as merchants or physicians in the construction or restoration of educational foundations. Thus

[48]al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:298-299; Ibn Duqmāq, *Kitāb al-Intiṣār li-Wāsiṭat 'Iqd al-Amṣār* (Cairo: n.p., 1893), 78.
[49]al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:326-327.
[50]Ibid., 315-316.
[51]Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr*, 2:59; see also al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:327.
[52]al-Sakhāwī, *al-Tibr al-Masbūk*, 378, 389; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:327; for other examples, see ibid., 2:327-329.
[53]Ibid., 391.
[54]Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr*, 2:57.
[55]Ibid., 104; see also Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Inbā' al-Ghumr*, 8:111.
[56]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, 14:152.
[57]al-Sakhāwī, *al-Tibr al-Masbūk*, 153.


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we learn that the Ra'īs al-Aṭibbā' Ibn al-Maghribī built a *jāmi'* and next to it a *qubbah*.[58] Al-Maḥallī, a well-known merchant, built a *madrasah* on the Nile and restored the Jāmi' 'Amr.[59] Al-Maqrīzī mentions the Madrasah Musallamīyah built in the *khuṭṭ* of Bayn al-Sūrayn by Kabīr al-Tujjār Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Musallam (d. 776).[60]

The close ties which existed between the merchant class and the religious class as well as the support of the former for the latter is well documented in the chronicles and biographical dictionaries. From these sources we learn that many rich merchants encouraged their children to get an education and often boasted of having sons who were members of the *'ulamā'*. Furthermore, many religious scholars seem to have been involved in some type of trade at an early stage of their lives and sometimes even after they had been appointed to prominent positions.[61] Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī himself worked as a merchant before he dedicated his life to scholarship.[62]

The case of Qāḍī Badr al-Dīn Ḥasan ibn Suwayd al-Miṣrī, mentioned above, is relevant here since he had accumulated great wealth by investing in the Kārim trade in Yemen.[63] Qāḍī Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr al-Makhzūmī, known as Badr al-Dīn al-Damāmīnī, who held the position of *nā'ib al-ḥukm*, was also involved in trade. In fact this *qāḍī* died in 828/1424 while he was in India on business.[64] The direct involvement of the *'ulamā'* in trade during the rule of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad may be inferred from Ibn Khaldūn's statement mentioning the emigration of the dealers from among the *'ulamā'* and the merchants to Miṣr during the sultan's rule (*wa-raḥala arbāb al-baḍā'i' min al-'ulamā' wa-al-tujjār*.[65]

Whatever the intent of the patrons when ordering the construction of a religious foundation, in order for it to provide its intended services, it needed fixed revenues. Such revenues were produced by *waqf*s which consisted mostly of buildings falling under categories three (domestic) and four (commercial/industrial) mentioned above. Although land represented an important part of the endowments, it seems that greater attention was given to investments in commercial properties such as the *wakālah*, *qaysārīyah*, *funduq*, *maṭbakh sukkar*, and *mi'ṣarah*, together with the construction/restoration of rental properties such as the *rab'*, *qā'ah*, *riwāq*, *ṭabaqah*, or *ḥawsh*. These foundations provide us with insights into investment practices as well as the transformation of the urban environment during Mamluk rule.

While the religious buildings remained as fixed landmarks, it was the secular buildings falling under categories three and four which defined the urban transformation of the quarters. The acquisition of large plots within the urban centers allowed patrons to restructure them in ways which suited their interests. The texts of *waqfīyah*s often allow us to follow what happened to a certain quarter when its land was acquired by the founder.[66]

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[58]al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:328.
[59]Ibid., 368.
[60]Ibid., 401.
[61]Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Inbā' al-Ghumr*, 8:321; Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr*, 2:356; al-Sakhāwī, *al-Tibr al-Masbūk*, 191.
[62]Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Inbā' al-Ghumr*, 2:196; Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr*, 2:90, 269.
[63]Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Inbā' al-Ghumr*, 8:111; Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr*, 2:104.
[64]Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Inbā' al-Ghumr*, 8:92; Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr*, 2:98.
[65]Ibn Khaldūn, *Ta'rīf* (Beirut: Dār al-Kātib al-Lubnānī, 1979), 351.
[66]Ḥujjat Waqf al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn, al-Awqāf 1010; Ḥujjat Waqf al-Sulṭān Ḥasan, al-Awqāf 881; Ḥujjat Waqf al-Ashraf Barsbāy, Dār al-Wathā'iq 173; Ḥujjat Waqf al-Sulṭān al-Ghawrī, al-Awqāf 882.


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The sources also note the transformation of quarters due to the acquisition of their properties by rich owners. For instance, when al-Nāṣir Muḥammad decided to rebuild the Jāmi‘ al-Jadīd, he acquired a number of houses and appropriated part of the road. When the *jāmi‘* was constructed the area around it became a prime location.[67]

The pattern followed by patrons when planning their investments was to try to integrate the life of their quarters by building or reconstructing commercial and rental properties around their religious foundations. The advantages of having buildings clustered in one quarter were twofold. First, it allowed the *nāẓir* of the *waqf* to keep an eye on the foundations and control them. Second, from the economic point of view, it made sense especially if one takes into consideration the fact that water could be shared by more than one foundation (one *sāqiyah* or *bi’r* could serve two or three buildings). Transportation of drinking water would also cost less and the collection of rents would be faster. In addition to these advantages, by constructing his secular buildings next to each other, a patron could avoid some of the building restrictions which the *sharī‘ah* imposed on the proximity of buildings to each other, their architecture, their heights, and so on.[68] Rich and powerful patrons would invest in the construction of a number of such clusters throughout the city and thus be able to control the development of those quarters. Although such quarters usually developed around religious foundations,[69] sometimes patrons planned their religious foundations as part of a much larger project, as was the case with the foundation of Azbakīyah where the presence of the *birkah* (pond), rather than the mosque, was responsible for its development.[70]

The booming trade of the fifteenth century gave impetus to the construction of a number of new commercial foundations such as *wakālah*s, and resulted in the growth of a new quarter, Būlāq, west of al-Qāhirah.[71] According to the information provided by our sources, there was an increasing interest on the part of merchants and religious officials in the construction of either *wakālah*s or *qaysārīyah*s. Hence, Qāḍī Tāj al-Dīn al-Manawī built a *qaysārīyah* in 750/1349 and Qāḍī Jalāl al-Dīn al-Bulqīnī built another one in the same quarter (*khuṭṭ*) in 811/1408.[72] Small industries based on imported agricultural produce, such as olives, were also increasing. Indeed, the *waqfīyah*s of sultans Barsbāy, Qāytbāy, and al-Ghawrī bear witness to the increase in the number of *maṭābikh sukkar* or *ma‘āṣir*.[73] One notes that regardless of the class to which the patrons belonged, there was

[67]al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:304-305; for other examples, see Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Inbā’ al-Ghumr*, 208; al-‘Aynī, *al-Sayf al-Muhannad fī Sīrat al-Malik al-Mu’ayyad*, ed. Fahīm Muḥammad Shaltūt (Cairo: Dār al-Kātib al-‘Arabī lil-Ṭibā‘ah wa-al-Nashr, 1967), 272. See also Doris Behrens-Abouseif, ″The North-Eastern Extension of Cairo under the Mamluks,″ *AI* 17 (1981): 157-189.

[68]For more information on this, see Fernandes, ″Habitat et prescriptions légales″ in *Habitat traditionnel dans les pays musulmans autour de la Mediterranée,* vol. 2: *L´histoire et le milieu*, Rencontre d´Aix-en-Provence, 6-8 juin 1984 (Cairo: Institut français d´archéologie orientale, 1990), 419-426.

[69]For example, the case of al-Ẓāhir, which developed around the Sultan´s mosque, or the case of al-Mu’ayyad Shaykh or Sultan al-Ghawrī. See also *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:298-299.

[70]For an interesting study on the development of Azbakīyah, see Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Azbakiyya and Its Environs, from Azbak to Isma‘il, 1476-1879* (Cairo: Institut français d´archéologie orientale, 1985).

[71]For further information on the growth of Būlāq, see Nelly Hanna, *An Urban History of Būlāq in the Mamluk and Ottoman Periods* (Cairo: Institut français d´archéologie orientale, 1983).

[72]al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:91.

[73]Ḥujjat Waqf al-Sulṭān Barsbāy, al-Awqāf 880; Ḥujjat Waqf al-Sulṭān Qāytbāy, al-Awqāf 888; Ḥujjat Waqf al-Sulṭān al-Ghawrī, al-Awqāf 882.


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a growing tendency for them to invest in the construction of buildings which would produce greater revenues: *sūq*s, *qaysārīyah*s, and *ma'ṣarah*s. These investments served no other purpose than to increase the patron's wealth.[74]

As for real estate investment, patrons showed great interest in diversification. In areas around their foundations they built or rebuilt *rab'*s, *ribāṭ*s, *qā'ah*s, *riwāq*s, *ṭibāq* and *ḥawānīt* and endowed them as *waqf*s. Rich *wāqif*s would sometimes invest in the acquisition of whole quarters, as in the case of amir Mughultāy al-Jamālī, who acquired a large *ḥikr* land on which twenty-four properties were constructed.[75] Since the *ḥikr* was made *waqf*, the money collected from the lease of the land to the property owners was left under the control of the amir who was the *nāẓir al-waqf*.[76]

The restoration and rebuilding of urban properties as well as the creation of new urban centers never ceased to attract the interest of the Mamluks and other elite elements of society, who through their *waqf*s were transforming and restructuring the city of Cairo.[77] This paper has attempted to focus on some of the problems of the patronage of architecture in the Mamluk period. The discrepancies between some sources—chronicles and *waqf*s—and the inscriptions of the buildings themselves indicate that it is still difficult to know who the real patron of a building was. Identifying the patron or group of patrons still leaves us with the task of determining what factors influenced the choice of monuments to be built and the selection of their location. In this endeavor we benefit greatly by looking at

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[74]Even though revenue-producing foundations were placed under the umbrella of *waqf*s, the money collected exceeded, by far, the needs of the religious foundation on which they were made *waqf*.

[75]*Ḥikr* (pl. *aḥkār*); a simplified definition of the term would be "long-term lease." In his discussion of the term, Claude Cahen wrote: "il s'agit d'une forme de louage à long terme et trés souple, qui à la fois sauvegarde l'éminente propriété du propriétaire—ici l'État—, de l'autre donne au locataire une liberté d'usage plus grande que dans une ordinaire location. Les *aḥkār* dont il est question ici sont connus d'Ibn Mammāṭī, qui les dit tantôt bâtis, tantôt exploités en jardins"; "Contribution à l'étude des impôts dans l'Égypte médiévale," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 5 (1962): 270. The *ḥikr* as a long-term lease of land—built upon or used as orchards—was regulated by the *sharī'ah*. A freehold property could equally be held as *ḥikr* which the lessee could enjoy for a certain period of time. The lease of a *ḥikr* covered a period of time agreed upon between the two parties. The period could be ten to thirty years, but occasionally up to ninety years. A *ḥikr* was not always the property of the "state" since it could be bought from the *bayt al-māl* (public treasury), in which case it became private property of the individual. Usually, the lessee of the *ḥikr* agreed to pay the owner a lump sum, in addition to the monthly or yearly amount fixed by the lease. The money paid in advance granted the lessee the privilege of disposing of the land or the freehold property the way he wanted with the proviso that at the end of the lease, the land or property be returned to its owner in its original condition. During the Mamluk period the lease of *ḥikr* had become widespread, even though the practice was frowned upon by conservative jurists. Many of them opposed it since it often resulted in disputes between parties and/or claims of ownership by the lessees or their descendants. For information on the *ḥikr* during the medieval period, see Ibn Mammātī, *Kitāb Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn*, (Cairo: Maṭba'at Miṣr, 1943), 342. For interesting information on the practice and its developments during the Ottoman period, see Nelly Hanna, *Habiter au Caire: La maison moyenne et ses habitants aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1991), 168.

[76]Ḥujjat Waqf Mughultāy al-Jamālī, al-Awqāf 1666; the passage dealing with the *ḥikr* is soon to be published by the present writer.

[77]Ḥujjat Waqf al-Sulṭān Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī, Awqāf 883, fols. 33-37, 128-157, provides a good example of how the urban center around the mosque of al-Azhar was restructured by al-Ghawrī who left his permanent imprint on the quarter. See also Ḥujjat Waqf Tatarkhān, daughter of Ṭashtumur, Awqāf 913, fols. 27-29, 34; Ḥujjat Waqf al-Sulṭān al-Ashraf Barsbāy, Awqāf 880, fols. 246-249, 249-261, to name but a few.


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the information provided by sources such as legal opinions or epistles in addition to the accounts of the chroniclers. Indeed, these sources provide us with insight into the discourse taking place between scholars of the different schools of thought. Since many of the debates often dealt with issues concerned with the application of the law to daily life, for instance, the legality of some practices or innovations touching on religious matters, they may have had an impact on the planning of some types of religious buildings and their locations. The buildings in Bayn al-Qaṣrayn may represent a case in point as the patrons´ choice of building type and architecture may have been influenced by the debates between Ḥanafīs and Shāfi'īs over the validity of the multiplicity of *khuṭbah*s in one urban center. Finally, thanks to the details they provide on the patterns of investment and the descriptions of the income-generating properties, *waqf* documents allow us to form a better picture of the relationship between power, wealth, and urban policies in the Mamluk period.


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# Book Reviews

SYLVIE DENOIX, *Décrire le Caire: Fusṭāṭ-Miṣr d'après Ibn Duqmāq et Maqrīzī: L'histoire d'une partie de la ville du Caire d'après deux historiens égyptiens des XIVe-XVe siècles*. (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1995). Pp. 159.

REVIEWED BY AMY W. NEWHALL, University of Arizona

In many parts of the city, the study of the urban history of Cairo is very rewarding. A profusion of standing monuments and rich remains complements textual evidence in the form of legal documents and, most importantly, late medieval descriptions. In contrast, the area of al-Fusṭāṭ, the site first occupied by the Muslim conquerors, is available to us almost only through the historical descriptions of two historians, Ibn Duqmāq (d. 809/1406) and al-Maqrīzī, who, although close contemporaries, wrote entirely independently of each other. The purpose of Sylvie Denoix's book is to reexamine their descriptions of al-Fusṭāṭ in order to reconstruct its form in the Mamluk period, an era which scholars have until recently largely ignored. Her particular method of textual analysis also throws light on events that are the great clichés in accounts of al-Fusṭāṭ's history: the chaotic reign of the late Fatimid ruler al-Mustanṣir billāh in 446/1060, the burning of al-Fusṭāṭ in 1168, and the great time of troubles that occurred in the reign of Faraj ibn Barqūq in 1403. She attempts to determine the true effects of these events: How far east did the early city extend? What was the true nature of the contraction after these events? Where did revival or new development occur? The crisis of 1403 is of special interest to Denoix because, chronologically, her two accounts bracket it. It provides a kind of high-tide mark by which she can measure the flow and ebb of Mamluk urban prosperity.

The chronicles of Ibn Duqmāq (*Kitāb al-Intiṣār li-Wāṣitat 'Iqd al-Amṣār*) and al-Maqrīzī (*al-Mawā'iẓ wa-al-I'tibār fī Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Āthār*) are well-known: they combine the authors' observations with information they have gathered from earlier sources now lost to us. Ibn Duqmāq's chronicle is of critical importance for al-Fusṭāṭ, and Denoix concentrates on it. Because Ibn Duqmāq frequently does not distinguish between historical and observed reality, the picture of the city he presents is timeless and highly subjective. Denoix, by making a very close reading of the text and examining its choice of language and phrasing, attempts to unfreeze and reorder the sequence of his "stills" and reanimate our picture of the evolution of al-Fusṭāṭ. In the course of this examination she comes to some conclusions about the attitudes of her chroniclers and how they reflect the times in which they wrote.

From the results of this analysis, Denoix develops a schematic map of Mamluk al-Fusṭāṭ. Both in order to test her textual reading and to see if Ibn Duqmāq has neglected to tell us of certain areas, she then superimposes her diagram on the street network generated by two archaeologists at the beginning of the century, Ali Bahgat and Albert Gabriel (and


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redated by George Scanlon). While the two do not overlap, they do meet, thus suggesting the limits of the Mamluk revival of the city.

Denoix proceeds to fill in her diagrammatic schema with the street and building information of Ibn Duqmāq and al-Maqrīzī. She is frustrated by their failure to give any sense of quarters, so she works at identifying various agglomerations. Appropriately enough for an important agricultural and commercial entrepôt, warehouses figure largely in the urban inventories, as do such water-reliant enterprises as mills, sugar refineries, paper mills, and potteries. She notes that the concept of nuisance industries did not exist at this time for they were fully integrated in the normal urban fabric. (Under the Ottomans they were regulated and moved.) As in the northern districts of Cairo, buildings frequently had multiple purposes; commercial and residential functions were combined. As for the differing religious groups, there seems to have been no strict partitioning in practice. There were natural concentrations, but no exclusive areas. Nor does there seem to be much clustering by class, although the presence of twenty-four *madrasah*s founded in the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods suggests a vogue for living in the area among the military elite.

Denoix´s study is one more piece in a long term effort (mostly French) to study and reconstruct medieval Cairo. This effort started in the nineteenth century with Paul Casanova, Paul Ravaisse, and G. T. Salmon and, as she points out, was begun in an arbitrary (and typically colonial) manner by dividing up the areas to be studied before knowing anything about the sources available for them. Nevertheless, these early works remain of fundamental importance; they have paved the way for a crop of scholarship in the last twenty-five years by André Raymond, Władysław Kubiak, Nelly Hanna, Doris Behrens-Abouseif, and Nasser Rabbat, among others. Denoix´s study follows upon the pioneering work of Paul Casanova, *Essai de reconstitution topographique de la ville d'al-Fusṭāṭ ou Miṣr* (1919), but, whereas Casanova´s work was primarily concerned with topography, Denoix´s is concerned with historical context and the evolution of the region of al-Fusṭāṭ-Miṣr. Her multifarious analytical methods (close textual reading, schematic mapping, archaeological findings, and comparison of her two main sources) succeed in developing new understanding from familiar texts and lead us to a better sense of the fortunes and misfortunes of the oldest section of Cairo, al-Fusṭāṭ-Miṣr. She also makes an interesting but speculative attempt to characterize the mentality of the two historians.

The text contains numerous maps illustrating the results of the textual analysis, and the appendices provide a useful selection of translations from Ibn Duqmāq, a list of the region´s *madrasah*s, a glossary, and an index of toponyms for both Ibn Duqmāq and al-Maqrīzī.

MICHAEL MEINECKE, *Die Mamlukische Architektur in Ägypten und Syrien*. (Glückstadt: J. J. Augustin GmbH, 1992). Vol. I: Pp. 243, Vol. II: Pp. 576.

REVIEWED BY DORIS BEHRENS-ABOUSEIF, University of Munich

Michael Meinecke´s study of Mamluk architecture in Egypt and Syria consists of two volumes. The first includes the analysis, plates, and bibliography. The second is a


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detailed catalogue of references in Mamluk literary sources concerning buildings erected in this period; it is followed by a detailed, one hundred page long index (pp. 496-596).

The first volume has eight chapters which follow a chronological sequence. Chapter 1 describes the Cairene school of architecture in the mid-thirteenth century. The second deals with the revival of early Islamic architecture under al-Ẓāhir Baybars. Chapter 3 deals with the early Qalāwūnid dynasty, chapter 4 with al-Nāṣir Muḥammad´s reign, and chapter 5 with the internationalization of Mamluk architecture in the later phase of the Qalāwūnid dynasty. Chapter 6 presents the period of Barqūq. Seven deals with Syria in the aftermath of Tīmūr´s invasion. The last chapter discusses the continuity of Mamluk architectural traditions under Ottoman rule.

This is the first work to survey Mamluk architecture as a whole, dealing with Egypt and Syria together. Meinecke´s study is concerned with the whole of Syria (Jerusalem, Hebron, Damascus, Hama, Aleppo, and Tripoli) and Cairo, but not with all of Egypt, as it does not tackle the subject of provincial architecture within Egypt. This is partly justified by the scarcity of extant medieval buildings in the Egyptian provinces. There are, however, extant medieval monuments in the Delta (Damietta, al-Maḥallah al-Kubrá, and Fuwā) and Upper Egypt dating from the Mamluk period or built under the Ottomans in the Mamluk tradition, which one would have expected to see in this survey. Since this study discusses Mamluk influence on Anatolia and Turkestan, it should not have omitted entirely the question of how far the style of the capital was adopted in Egypt itself. The relationship between the imperial style of the capital and the provincial style is an interesting question, as has been shown in connection with Ilkhanid and Ottoman architecture by Renata Holod and Aptullah Kuran.[1]

Meinecke´s analysis of Mamluk architecture is marked by the great emphasis it puts on foreign influences and transfers of patterns between the Mamluk and other Muslim schools of architecture, as well as between the various regional schools within the Mamluk empire. This idea, which he explains with a busy migration of ″workshops″ or ″lodges,″ is a kind of *leitmotif* in the book. The following comments will focus, therefore, on this aspect of the study.

In his discussion of the mosque of Sultan Ḥasan the author attributes the stucco inscription frieze in the prayer hall to Iranian craftsmen (pp. 121f.). One of the author´s arguments is based on the fact that at that time some Iranian dignitaries built mausoleums in Jerusalem (p. 120). These mausoleums, however, were erected in the local Mamluk style, without apparent Iranian influence. J. M. Rogers has given a much more plausible interpretation of this frieze when he compared it with Mamluk Quran illuminations of the same period, with which it has a striking similarity, much more than with the remote eastern Iranian examples that Meinecke presents.[2] As for the chinoiseries on the portal of Sultan Ḥasan´s mosque, they have been common on Mamluk portable objects of metal, pottery, and textile and in Quran illuminations since the reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad. As again convincingly demonstrated by J. M. Rogers,[3] they were transferred by the trade with China

[1]Renata Holod, ″Text, Plan, and Building: On the Transmission of Architectural Knowledge,″ in *Theories and Principles of Design in the Architecture of Islamic Societies* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, 1988), 1-12; Aptullah Kuran, ″Ottoman Classical Mosques in Istanbul and in the Provinces,″ in ibid., 13-22.

[2]Janine Sourdel-Thomine and Bertold Spuler, *Die Kunst des Islam* (Berlin: Propyläen-Verlag, 1973), 326.

[3]J. M. Rogers, ″Evidence for Mamluk-Mongol Relations 1260-1360,″ in *Colloque international sur*


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following the Mamluk-Mongol entente during al-Nāṣir Muḥammad′s reign, through portable objects, such as porcelain or textiles, rather than through migration of ″Iranian specialists,″ who would have come from eastern Iran just to carve this one frieze and leave the country again.

Coming to Mamluk influence on Anatolia, the author ascribes it to craftsmen who participated in the building of Sultan Ḥasan′s mosque, and migrated in large numbers afterwards, exercising a tremendous influence on the architectural development of the Muslim world (p. 131). Meinecke attributes to these craftsmen the plan of the Ulu Cami (1366-67) in Manisa (p. 136), whose prayer hall consists of four naves cut by a large central dome over the *miḥrāb*. He argues that this plan, having no precedent in Asia Minor, must have been built under Mamluk influence, as it recalls some mosques of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad′s reign which have a large dome over the *miḥrāb*. Would craftsmen of Sultan Ḥasan have migrated in the 1360s to Manisa to build there a mosque that recalls the buildings of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad? Why so complicated? There are two mosques in Mosul erected in the late twelfth century, the Jāmi‘ Nūrī and the mosque of Mujāhid al-Dīn, which show far more similarity with the Manisa plan than the mosques of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, and which probably belong to the architectural tradition which produced the Manisa mosque plan. This type of prayer hall was also used in Mardin in eastern Anatolia (1172-76), in Dunaysir in Upper Mesopotamia (1201) and, with some variation, in Aleppo (1223), and is more likely to have pertained to Saljuq Upper Mesopotamian or eastern Anatolian architecture. From there it went under Ayyubid influence to Yemen where we find it at the Ashrafīyah mosque in Ta‘izz, whose prayer hall was built in the years 694-97/1294-97. Lewcock has rightly connected the Ashrafīyah plan with that of Dunaysir and, further back, to the plan of the Great Mosque of Lashkari Bazar (ca. 1020).[4] The mosques of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, which Meinecke declares to be the prototype for Manisa follow the model of Baybars′s mosque in Cairo, which Creswell rightly ascribed to the influence of Mardin! An attribution of the Manisa mosque plan to the craftsmen of Sultan Ḥasan, who were building four-*īwān* mosques in Cairo, seems therefore far-fetched indeed.

When discussing the dome built by Amir Yashbak al-Dawādār in 1481 and known as Qubbat al-Fadāwīyah (p. 168), Meinecke attributes its architecture to Ottoman influence, basing his argument on the fact that it is a single-dome prayer hall, and comparing its ground plan with that of the mosque of Dāwūd Pasha in Istanbul. A ground plan is not sufficient for such an attribution; the Mamluks were familiar with domed chambers which they used as mausoleums. Neither the elevation, nor the dome profile, nor the transitional zone, nor any other feature in Cairene architecture at that time, or in this monument in particular, betrays any Ottoman influence. Meinecke′s analyses are based on ground plans alone, disregarding elevations. The author overlooked, moreover, that this dome had predecessors in Cairo, the earliest being the dome of the Rifā‘ī *zāwiyah* built in the 1430s by Sultan Barsbāy near his mausoleum in the cemetery, which is mentioned in his *waqf* deed and is still extant. Another one was erected by Jānībak, *nā’ib* of Jiddah, in 1463, also as a *zāwiyah*, which later was used by the Baktāshī order in Cairo and of which a nineteenth-century photograph has been published in *Annales islamologiques*, vol. 19,

*l′histoire du Caire* (1969) (Cairo: Ministry of Culture, n.d.), 385-403.

[4]Ronald B. Lewcock and G. R. Smith, ″Three Medieval Mosques in the Yemen: A Preliminary Report,″ parts 1 and 2, *Oriental Art* 20, no. 1 (Spring 1974): 75-86; no. 2 (Summer 1974): 192-203.


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1983. There is thus a whole group of domed buildings, all of which were *zāwiyah*s, whose tradition seems to be rooted in Baḥrī Mamluk architecture. Qubbat al-Naṣr is mentioned by al-Maqrīzī as a *zāwiyah* built during the reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad. Although it did not survive, we know at least that it was a domed *zāwiyah*, which leads the tradition back to a period prior to the articulation of Ottoman architecture.

By focusing on the ″migration of workshops,″ the author neglected other possibilities for the transmission of architectural knowledge. The question of how far drawings, elevations, models, or even oral communications might have been used to transfer architectural ideas from one place to another is not considered. The use of the octagonal shaft in Syrian minarets might well have occurred under Cairene influence (p. 189, pl. 133) without necessarily implying that craftsmen from Cairo moved to Damascus to erect such shafts. This kind of influence, which did not involve much more than just an idea and did not include equivalence of proportions and elevations, could have been transmitted by simple drawings or by oral communication. Most of the examples of foreign influences, whether Iranian patterns in Cairo or Mamluk patterns in Turkestan refer to details, often minor details, rather than to entire projects, thus contradicting the idea of migrating lodges. This does not exclude, however, the mobility of individual craftsmen, just as that of scholars or physicians.

The rich material of the survey itself demonstrates, more implicitly than explicitly, that Mamluk architecture on the whole was regionally oriented, and furthermore that Cairo, as imperial capital, enjoyed the lion′s share both in quantity and refinement of the work produced. Notwithstanding similarities here and there, it should be recognized that the Cairene style of Mamluk architecture is not much represented outside the capital. Except for Qāytbāy′s *sabīl* in Jerusalem, there is not one single dome or minaret profile in Syria that could be attributed to the Cairene style. Qāytbāy′s buildings in Jerusalem are an exception because the sultan was unsatisfied with the first building after he visited it. He eventually ordered it rebuilt by craftsmen he sent from Cairo; the minaret, however, was built in the local style. Also, when the same sultan sent craftsmen to rebuild the Prophet′s mosque in Medina, the minaret was erected in a style that had ceased to exist in Cairo more than a century earlier, the latest similar shaft being that of Qūṣūn (736/1335-36). Interestingly, however, this style continued to be used in the Egyptian provinces, namely in the city of al-Maḥallah al-Kubrá.

Meinecke seems to have been under the influence of European art history, especially when he uses the terms ″Bauhütte″ and ″Architektengilde,″ or guilds of architects (pp. 193f.), basing himself on the term *mi′mārīyah* mentioned in the late Mamluk chronicle of Damascus by Ibn Ṭūlūn.[5] A careful reading of Ibn Ṭūlūn, however, shows that the term *mi′mārīyah* here refers to masons and other building craftsmen rather than designer-architects as understood by Meinecke, who uses the terms ″Architekt″ and ″Künstler″ (p. 194) in this context. In Mamluk *waqf* documents of Egypt and Syria, the *mi′mār* is a craftsman, hired on a monthly basis with a relatively low income to take care of a building′s maintenance, along with the plumber.

[5]Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat al-Khillān fī Ḥawādith al-Zamān*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá ([Cairo]: al-Mu'assasah al-Miṣrīyah al-'Āmmah lil-Ta'līf wa-al-Tarjamah wa-al-Ṭibā'ah wa-al-Nashr, 1962), 1:143, 148, 197.


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As for Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn al-ʻAṭṭār, mentioned here as artist and head of a guild, he was the sultan′s contractor in Damascus. He is designated as the sultan′s *muʻallim* or *miʻmār*, and the context identifies him as contractor: he had to evaluate costs and was in charge of demolition and excavation works. When, following the Ottoman conquest, he was involved in the building of the shrine of Ibn al-ʻArabī in Damascus, he was part of a team of clerks and bureaucrats, as the text explicitly states, all of whom designed the building together.[6] In the Mamluk period the buildings were designed by a consortium of founder, contractor, clerks, land-surveyors, and master-masons.

Neither the lists of urban trades included in the Mamluk *ḥisbah* literature nor the lists of guilds during the Ottoman period ever refer to ″guilds of architects″; only craftsmen such as masons, decorators, carpenters, etc., are considered practitioners of trades. The building activity of the Mamluk sultans and amirs was organized by a *dīwān*, or office, at the court under the control of an amir of ten, who was called *shādd al-ʻamā'ir al-sulṭānīyah*, and later *muʻallim*, who was also the supervisor of the building craftsmen (al-Qalqashandī, vol. 4, p. 22). In the Ottoman period these crafts were under the supervision of the *miʻmār bāshī*. In the later Mamluk period the *muʻallim* of the sultan could also be a bureaucrat. In any case, he was a member of the Mamluk establishment, equivalent to the modern minister of public works. Moreover, each royal building had its own *shādd*, who often recruited the craftsmen on an ad hoc basis. Aḥmad al-Ṭūlūnī, the *muʻallim* of Barqūq, who was a contractor of non-Mamluk origin, was made amir of ten and his descendants belonged socially to the *awlād al-nās*, i.e., the sons of mamluks; he was, moreover, the sultan′s father-in-law.[7] The *muʻallim al-ʻamā'ir*, Ḥasan al-Tanamī, who was appointed in 869/1465, had been governor of Jerusalem and Hebron.[8] The *muʻallim*s, as supervisors of the building craft and members of the Mamluk administration, did not migrate, as free-lance professionals, from one region to another in search of jobs, as they could be transferred from one to another. The idea of lodges (*Bauhütten*), which implies an inner organization or even autonomy, migrating from one region to another according to the market′s requirements thus does not conform with our knowledge of Islamic social history. The building craft was largely in the rulers′ hands rather than a free trade.[9]

Meinecke should have been more careful while using the term ″Gilde,″ or guild, in connection with the Mamluk period. While according to Subhi Labib there were no guilds under the Mamluks in the medieval European sense of autonomous corporations, Ira Lapidus even states they were ″nonexistent″ in Mamluk cities.[10]

As for the identification of Mamluk monuments, the author calls a four-*īwān* building a *madrasah*, and identifies a hypostyle building as a mosque; the building of Barsbāy in the Coppersmiths′ quarter is designated a *madrasah* whereas that of al-

[6]Ibn Ṭūlūn, *al-Qalā'id al-Jawharīyah fī Ta'rīkh al-Ṣāliḥīyah*, ed. Muḥammad Aḥmad Duhmān ([Damascus]: Maktab al-Dirāsāt al-Islāmīyah, 1949-56), 1:64; idem, *Mufākahat al-Khillān*, 1:150; 2:37, 68, 124.

[7]See my article, ″Muhandis, Shād, Mu'allim—Note on the Building Craft in the Mamlūk Period,″ *Der Islam* 72, no. 2 (1995): 293-309.

[8]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Ḥawādith al-Duhūr fī Madá al-Ayyām wa-al-Shuhūr*, ed. William Popper, University of California Publications in Semitic Philology, vol. 8 (Berkeley: University of California, 1930-42), 490.

[9]Ira M. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 65.

[10]Subhi Labib, *Handelsgeschichte Ägyptens im Spätmittelalter (1171-1517)* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1965), 222f.; Lapidus, *Muslim Cities*, 96.


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Mu'ayyad Shaykh is called a mosque (pp. 154f.). This distinction between *madrasah* and mosque, which is based on the building's plan, is not exact. According to recent works based on Mamluk *waqf* documents, both foundations had the same functions as a combined *madrasah-khānqāh*-Friday mosque. It has already been demonstrated that a hypostyle mosque could be as much a *madrasah* as a cruciform one; in the late Mamluk period various plans were used to fulfill the same functions. In this matter, epigraphy, which is often arbitrary, can be misleading; *waqf* data are more reliable.

The analysis of the first volume concentrates on religious architecture. The discussion of plans deals exclusively with prayer halls and their adjoined mausoleums, without referring much to the presence, or absence, of living quarters in the complexes of *madrasah*s and *khānqāh*s. An important share of Mamluk monuments included *madrasah*s or *khānqāh*s or both, i.e., they were also boarding institutions. The originality of Sultan Ḥasan's mosque is not only its monumentality, as stated by the author; it is the first *madrasah* to have the living units away from the courtyard and fully integrated along the facade. Since it is also the first *madrasah* with the status of a Friday mosque, this change is not accidental, but related to the new, more public, functions of the institution. The location of the living quarters in relationship to the prayer hall is therefore significant. The evolution of the multiple complex *madrasah-khānqāh-jāmi'* in the late Mamluk period had a decisive impact on the organization of space in religious architecture, leading ultimately to the living units being detached from the main building and taking the form of an independent *rab'*.

In the bibliography the author confuses Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Sakhāwī, the author of *al-Ḍaw' al-Lāmi'*, with his namesake, Abū al-Ḥasan Nūr al-Dīn 'Alī al-Sakhāwī, who wrote *Tuḥfat al-Aḥbāb*, identifying them as the same author.

The reader will be grateful for the unique collection of ground plans included in the first volume; some elevations would have been useful to facilitate comparisons.

The second volume is divided into forty-nine entries, chronologically ordered and named by the sultans who ruled in the Mamluk period. The buildings are recorded under the name of the city or location. They are documented with the founders' names and dates and a bibliography of primary and secondary literature. The primary sources used are published historiographical literature. This volume, which according to the introduction was done by Viktoria Meinecke-Berg, comprises very important documentation, no less valuable than the first volume; it is of great use to all scholars of Mamluk architecture and history as well. The detailed three-register index gives easy access to the survey.

The reader should not expect to find in Michael Meinecke's survey of Mamluk architecture a discussion of social, urban, or iconographic aspects of architecture. The study does not refer to *waqf* documents nor does it deal with epigraphy, except to date the building and identify the founder. Unlike Golombek and Wilber's study of Timurid architecture and Goodwin's books on Ottoman architecture, which are agreeable and appealing as readings, this is essentially a reliable survey and reference book. The taxonomic aspect of this gigantic work places it in the Creswell tradition, as an important document for historians of Mamluk architecture.


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ʻALĪ AL-SAYYID ʻALĪ MAḤMŪD, *al-Ḥayāh al-Iqtiṣādīyah fī Jiddah fī ʻAṣr Salāṭīn al-Mamālīk, 648-925 H./1250-1517 M*. (Cairo: al-Maṭbaʻah al-Tijārīyah al-Ḥadīthah, 1991). Pp. 147.

REVIEWED BY CARL F. PETRY, Northwestern University

The appearance of a monograph addressing the economy of an important commercial entrepôt within the Mamluk state, other than the capital Cairo itself, is a welcome event. And since so much contemporary scholarship in Arabic is neglected by Western readers for obvious linguistic reasons, the inclusion of recent works in this language by the editorial staff of *Mamluk Studies Review* for assessment is to be commended. The author has produced a straightforward, if somewhat verbose, description of economic activity in Jiddah as mentioned by Arabic narrative sources that were compiled from the thirteenth through the fifteenth centuries. Without exception, these texts are available in print; most belong to the roster of well-known chronicles consulted by virtually everyone who has delved into the Mamluk era (There are exceptions, for example: p. 100, note 394; p. 140, entry 7: the Maghribī traveler al-Tujībī's *Mustafād al-Riḥlah wa-al-Ightirāb*, although published in Tunis, is not a frequently cited work. It nonetheless contains noteworthy details on shipbuilding in Jiddah).

This monograph's value derives exclusively from its factual information. It contributes no fresh methodological insights, nor does it significantly alter existing perceptions of the commercial economy of prominent Red Sea ports throughout the Middle Ages. Indeed, the author himself frequently asserts that details on commercial or manufacturing activity in the port of Jiddah occur rarely in the chronicle literature, thereby enabling only glimpses into the town's economic history rather than a thorough reconstruction of its foundations. The author seems also minimally acquainted with the profound conceptual transformation in approaches to the economic history of the eastern Mediterranean and Southwest Asia that has occurred over the past three decades. While numerous monographs published in Arabic are listed in the bibliography, these fall into the same particularistic category as the book under review. Few works of broader scope, either in Arabic or other languages, are noted. The absence of any reference to such a comprehensive survey as Subhi Labib's *Handelsgeschichte Ägyptens im Spätmittelalter* (Wiesbaden, 1965), which frequently alludes to the prominence of Jiddah in the commerce of the Red Sea throughout the Mamluk era, is disconcerting.

The author's depiction of Jiddah's economy proceeds as follows: the port's florescence as a trading center in the Mamluk period, its gradual supplanting of Aden as the primary docking facility for ships arriving from south and east Asia, its markets and their influence on daily life, economic crises and their consequences for market activities, measures and weights (with interesting facts on the reckoning of quantities), monetary transactions (also providing significant data on currencies used in transactions), Jiddah's relations with international centers of trade, land and maritime trade routes, customs and collection enforcement, agrarian and pastoral activities (the latter section mentioning tribal groups rather than analyzing economies of husbandry), and craft industries: shipbuilding (the most intriguing commodity discussion in the monograph, with interesting details on timber scarcity and hulls designed for navigation through coral reefs), tanning of hides,


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preparation of confections, braiding of mats, manufacture of rosaries (*masābiḥ*), minerals and metallurgy, pottery and ceramics, marble and plaster work.

Readers seeking to place the commercial history of Jiddah within the wider context of the Hijaz economy as a whole under the Mamluks are advised to consult the recent articles by Richard Mortel, with special emphasis on his ″Prices in Mecca during the Mamlūk Period,″ *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 32, no. 3 (October, 1989), pp. 279-334; and ″The Mercantile Community of Mecca during the Late Mamlūk Period,″ *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (third series) 4 (1994), pp. 15-35.

WAEL B. HALLAQ, *Ibn Taymiyya against the Greek Logicians*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993). Pp. 204.

REVIEWED BY DAVID C. REISMAN, Yale University

This work, Professor Hallaq′s most recent, is almost unique to modern studies of Ibn Taymīyah and for this reason deserves our attention. Hallaq has proved an enormously capable writer in his field, the study of logic, specifically of that variety of logic employed in medieval Muslim legal theory. He has written a number of articles on the historical development of legal logic as well as on some of the technical terms peculiar to that field. *Ibn Taymiyya against the Greek Logicians* is his first major work; it is something of a mixed blessing. His profound grasp of the discussions in medieval Arabic works on logic is evident here and in that regard it is an important book. As a work on Ibn Taymīyah′s thought in general, however, it is frustratingly incomplete.

The work is made up of three parts. The most substantive of these parts is the translation of an abridgment of Ibn Taymīyah′s *Naṣīḥat Ahl al-Imām fī al-Radd ʻalá Maṇṭiq al-Yunān* (otherwise known as *al-Radd ʻalá al-Manṭiqīyīn*) by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505) entitled *Jahd al-Qarīḥah fī Tajrīd al-Naṣīḥah*. Why Hallaq chose to translate al-Suyūṭī′s and not Ibn Taymīyah′s work will be discussed shortly. The translation is prefaced by an introduction, the strongest aspect of which is the discussion in part 1 of the terms of the argument against logic as Ibn Taymīyah saw them (one of the clearest explanations to date of Ibn Sīnā′s theory of essence and existence is that provided in pp. xiv-xvii), and the weakest aspect of which, in light of its stated aim, is the discussion in part 2, ″Sources of the Critique.″ The reader perhaps would have benefited more from solid research into lines of transmission of anti-logic writings than the speculation he is given; the notes on later medieval Latin and early modern European anti-logic writings and the striking similarity between Ibn Taymīyah′s conclusions and those of these writings are no more than a curiosity.[1] The section does have a certain value, however, in that it places Ibn Taymīyah′s thought within a broader context while stressing the distinctive and original nature of Ibn Taymīyah′s contribution. The annotated commentary to the translation is extensive and superb. It evinces Hallaq′s wide and discriminating reading of Arabic works

[1]The similarity between Ibn Taymīyah′s views and those of the British empiricists was noted by S. S. Nadvi as early as 1927; an extract of his article, originally appearing in *Islamic Culture*, was quoted in the introduction (p. 14) to al-Kutubī′s 1949 edition of *al-Radd ʻalá al-Manṭiqīyīn*.


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on logic and Greek and Arabic philosophy in general. He has taken great pains to trace Ibn Taymīyah's uncited references to opinions of other thinkers; where this has proved difficult, he has delineated the general field of enquiry. Specific issues, the articulation of which in the text might initially strike the reader as abstruse, are precisely explained, often with original examples from Hallaq who, it would seem, is as much a logician as he is an historian of logic—a fortunate state of affairs.

Before turning to the translation, a major criticism regarding Hallaq's choice of work to translate must be raised. Much of the secondary literature on Ibn Taymīyah is either out of date or labors under the misapprehension that the defining characteristic of Ibn Taymīyah's thought is reactionary diatribe. This may or may not be the result of an overemphasis on his role as a social reformer, or even of current social and political climates. The topic is certainly too large to be tackled here. Hallaq's study is the first (recently) to present us with Ibn Taymīyah as a thinker, one who, in the case of logic, has a profound grasp of his topic, is capable of formulating precise and well-founded responses to his opponents, one who has the "extraordinary ability to define and isolate the crucial and fundamental principles upon which the most complex systems of thought are erected" (p. xiv). Why, then, has Hallaq chosen to translate al-Suyūṭī's abridgment and not the *Radd 'alá al-Manṭiqīyīn* itself? Ibn Taymīyah's express purpose in refuting Greek logic and its proponents among Arab philosophers, theologians, and Sufis was the discrediting of the systems of metaphysics in vogue among those groups, systems which were based on that logic. Hallaq is aware of Ibn Taymīyah's larger goal (pp. xi-xii) but argues that al-Suyūṭī's abridgment, stripped of the corollary arguments against the metaphysics of these groups (and against its implications for the doctrinal theology of Islam as Ibn Taymīyah conceived of it), "is a more effective critique of logic than that originally formulated by Ibn Taymiyya" (p. liv).[2] Certainly what was advantageous to al-Suyūṭī's goal (on which, see p. liii) does little service to a proper understanding of the larger context of Ibn Taymīyah's program of thought. In part 3 of his introduction, Hallaq further argues that Ibn Taymīyah's work is characterized by digression, repetition, and a certain imbalance between criticism advanced and solutions proposed, this because the aim of Ibn Taymīyah's mission was "persuasion, if not outright dissuasion" (p. l). With particular regard to the issue of digression, Hallaq notes that this mode of discourse "leaves the modern reader with a sense of frustration" (p. li). Two immediate responses come to mind. First, since when is the modern reader's ease of understanding a criterion for the assessment of the intellectual worth of a medieval treatise? Second, a much more profound examination of Ibn Taymīyah's style and methodology needs to be undertaken before we can place a negative value on a given characteristic of that style. From one perspective, Hallaq has produced an important work on the development of opinions about logic among medieval Arabic thinkers, from another, he has largely dismissed the historical and intellectual context of that development.

Translation is a notoriously difficult business. A judicious balance between, on the one hand, an unreadable literal translation and, on the other, a readable but overly paraphrastic translation is the desired end. It is worth arguing that Hallaq's translation of technical terms should become standard for future studies of logic in Arabic. However, the

[2]Hallaq also says that scholars like Brunschvig and van Ess expressed similar opinions (p. liv, n. 185). Brunschvig characterized the abridgement as "assez fourni" and van Ess noted that al-Suyūṭī had "carefully abridged" Ibn Taymīyah's work; these statements in no way buttress Hallaq's opinion.




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reader who is interested in Hallaq´s topic and who can read Arabic would be advised to make a careful comparison of the Arabic text with Hallaq´s translation as a whole. There are numerous errors, the result of excessive paraphrase, inconsistency in the translation of basic terms, lack of attention to tense, and an outright disregard for certain Arabic particles. Thus, the particle *innamā* would seem anathema to Hallaq as he only rarely translates it. A few examples only: for ″the concept of a quiddity is obtained by real definition″, p. 8 (85, l. 16),[3] read ″the concept of a quiddity is obtained only by real definition″; for ″he cannot be said to have formed a concept of the meaning upon hearing that definition″, p. 10 (86, ll. 14-15), read ″he cannot be said to have formed a concept of the meaning only by hearing that definition″; for ″The claim that definitions lead to forming a concept of things is that of the Greek logicians . . .″, p. 12 (88, l. 4), read ″Only the Greek logicians . . . claim [that definitions lead to forming a concept of things]″, etc. The particle *qad* with the imperfect is often left unnoticed; thus, for ″. . . because the one who forms a concept does so without words. The hearer [of this definition] can also form a concept without being told anything at all″, p. 10 (87, ll. 1-3), read ″. . . for the speaker might (*or*: will sometimes) form a concept of the meaning of what he says without articulating [it] and that is [equally] possible for the hearer, without being told anything at all.″

Disregard for tense is often evident, particularly in conditional sentences. Hallaq translates, p. 10 (85, ll. 12-15): ″If the concepts of things were dependent upon definitions, and if until this day people have not yet formed [*sic*] a concept for any of these matters, and if a judgment is contingent upon conception, so that when a concept is not formed, a judgment is not formed either, then men would have no knowledge of the great majority of their sciences.″ Read: ″If the concept of things had been dependent upon definition and if to this day people had not formed a concept for any of these matters, and if a judgment had been contingent upon a concept—so whenever a concept is not formed, a judgment is not formed—man would have no knowledge of the great majority of his sciences.″ Further, Hallaq translates, pp. 8-9 (85, l. 16 to 86, l. 2), ″Such a definition is either impossible or difficult to come by, as they themselves admit. Hence, it is not always or often possible to form a concept of a particular reality. But since concepts of realities are actually formed, it is known that concepts are not in need of definition.″ Read: ″This definition being either impossible or difficult [to come by], as they themselves have admitted, it would not have been always or often possible to form a concept of a particular reality, but concepts of particular realities have been formed, so it is known that concepts do not stand in need of definitions.″

One example of inconsistency in the translation of basic terms will suffice here. Hallaq translates both *dhihn*, p. 6, and *ʻaql*, p. 9, as ″intellect.″ *Dhihn*, of course, is better rendered ″mind,″ reserving the philosophical term ″intellect″ for *ʻaql*. The temptation to paraphrase is often considerable, but equally often it does damage to a precise point an author wants to convey. Hallaq translates, p. 5 (83, ll. 6-7), ″. . . although refuting them would require (*yaḥtamil*) much more than what I have said″. Ibn Taymīyah is *not* confessing an insufficiency in his treatise; in fact, he is noting the opposite. ″Would require″ should read ″admits of″ or ″allows for,″ the implication being that his treatise comprises the bulk of a compelling refutation. Hallaq, p. 6 (84, ll. 6-8), translates: ″Since this statement is not based on knowledge, and [*sic*] it is the first that they have established,

[3]The reference in parentheses is to the Arabic text.


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how can it be the basis of the criterion of knowledge and of their claim that logic [*sic*] is a canonical instrument the correct use of which safeguards the intellect from error.″ Read: ″Since this is a statement not based on knowledge, being the first that they have established, how can it be the basis of the criterion of knowledge and of what they claim is a canonical instrument regard for which safeguards the mind against stumbling in (lit.: slipping from) its examination.″[4] Hallaq′s translation, as it stands, serves as a good but rough guide to reading Ibn Taymīyah′s treatise; it could have stood a few more revisions.

Finally, Ibn Taymīyah wrote another treatise against logic (unnoticed by Hallaq), with specific reference to its use in dialectic argumentation (*jadal*). The work is entitled *Tanbīh al-Rajul al-Ghāfil ʻalá Tamwīh al-Jadal al-Bāṭil* and would seem to be a comprehensive refutation of the *Muqaddimah fī al-Jadal* by Burhān al-Dīn al-Nasafī (d. 684/1285). Future research into some of the problems involved in Ibn Taymīyah′s views on logic (e.g., that discussed by Hallaq, pp. xxviii-xxxii) might benefit from an edition and translation of this work.[5]

Despite some significant problems, Hallaq′s work should be viewed as an important contribution to Ibn Taymīyah studies, one that *largely* appreciates and critically evaluates the thought of this important intellectual of the Mamluk period.

REUVEN AMITAI-PREISS, *Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-Īlkhānid War, 1260-1281*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). Pp. 272.

REVIEWED BY JOHN E. WOODS, University of Chicago

Until relatively recently, those interested in tracing the broad outlines of the history of the Mamluk state of Egypt and Syria (1250-1517), one of the longest-lived political entities in Islamic annals, were confronted with an astounding dearth of scholarly articles and monographs. This is certainly true of the study of Mamluk foreign relations, especially those with powers in the East—the Mongols and their successors down to the rise of the Safavid dynasty in Iran. Nevertheless, aspects of the Mamluk ″Eastern Question″ have been delineated in several pioneering works such as Ahmad Darrag′s survey of the Mamluk state under one of the most important sultans of the first half of the fifteenth century, *L′Égypte sous le règne de Barsbay, 825-841/1422-1438* (Damascus, 1961); S. Zakirov′s study of the ″alliance″ between the Mamluks and the Mongols of Russia, *Diplomaticheskie otnosheniya Zolotoi Ordy s Egiptom, XIII-XIV vv*. (Moscow, 1966), and Fāyid Ḥammād ʻĀshūr′s monograph on relations between the Baḥrī Mamluks and the

[4]What Hallaq translates ″logic″ is, in the text, an attached pronoun the immediate antecedent of which is *mā*; *innahā* (p. 84, l. 7) is incorrect and should be read *innahu*. I would argue that the conjunctive *mā* does not replace ″logic″ (*manṭiq*), as Hallaq has it, but rather ″definition″ (*ḥadd*).

[5]George Makdisi discussed the MS in ″The Tanbīh of Ibn Taimīya on Dialectic: The Pseudo-ʻAqīlian Kitāb al-Farq,″ in *Medieval and Middle Eastern Studies in Honor of Aziz Suryal Atiya* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972), 285-294. At least some of the introduction to this work, missing in the MS, can be found in ʻAbd al-Hādī′s *al-ʻUqūd al-Durrīyah min Manāqib Shaykh al-Islām Aḥmad ibn Taymīyah*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Fiqī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʻIlmīyah, 1938), 29-35.


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Mongols of Iran, *al-'Alāqāt al-Siyāsīyah bayna al-Mamālīk wa-al-Mughūl fī al-Dawlah al-Mamlūkīyah al-Ūlá* (Cairo, 1976).

A consideration of these and other works reveals a number of persistent geo-political, economic, demographic, ideological, and cultural themes in the dealings of the Mamluks with their eastern neighbors extending throughout the two and a half centuries of Mamluk independence. The principal areas of direct conflict—the cities of inland Syria and southeastern Anatolia—were frequently the local counterparts of larger patterns of competition for the control of land and sea commercial routes. Among the most important demographic aspects of the period was the influx into the Mamluk state and along its frontiers of large numbers of refugees, renegades, and political enemies from states in the East in the second half of the thirteenth century. After the collapse of the Chingizids in Iran following the death of Abū Sa'īd Bahādur Khān in 1335, moreover, there was a reflux of Mongol and Turkish tribes from Anatolia and Syria westward onto the Iranian plateau. In the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, Tīmūr's policy of peopling Transoxiana by the forced migrations of artisans, craftsmen, and nomads from the territories he conquered also contributed to the dynamic nature of the population history of the period. Finally, the establishment of Shī'ism as the state religion in Safavid Iran in 1501 caused many individuals and groups to seek asylum in India, the Ottoman Empire, and the Arab world. In terms of political and religious ideology, from the Mongol conquests to the rise of the Ottomans, the Mamluks were preoccupied with the threat to Syria and Egypt posed by an infidel, apostate, or heterodox potentate in the East, be it "the king of the Tatars," Tīmūr the Lame, or the Sufi Shah Ismā'īl Ṣafavī.

Most of the literature on Mamluk-Eastern relations focuses on legal and military issues. (A notable exception is the provocative essay by Michael Rogers, "Evidence for Mamluk-Mongol Relations," in *Colloque internationale sur l'histoire du Caire*, Cairo, 1974, pp. 385-403.) Much ink continues to be spilled, for example, on the subject of the alleged "law code" (*yasa*) of Chingiz Khan and its influence or lack of influence on the Mamluks. The second topic that unfailingly occupies the interest of researchers and amateurs alike is the Battle of 'Ayn Jālūt, the defeat inflicted by the Mamluk army in 1260 upon the forces of Hulagu, Chingiz Khan's grandson and the conqueror of Baghdad. The present study falls into this category.

Beginning in 1260 and ending with the peace treaty of 1323, hostilities between the Mamluks and the Mongols went on for more than sixty years. During this period, the Ilkhanid Mongols launched six offensives against their Mamluk enemies, invading Syria in 1260, 1281, 1299, 1300, 1303, and 1312. They also carried out a defensive campaign against them in Anatolia in 1277. Amitai-Preiss has provided us a detailed account of the first two invasions of Syria as well as Baybars's "intervention" in Anatolia, or one-third of the period of the Mamluk-Ilkhanid wars.

His scheme of presentation is informed by two major factors. The first is heuristic and lies in the relative abundance of Mamluk historical materials and the consequent paucity of Mongol sources. He acknowledges this state of affairs somewhat tautologically: ". . . most of the information at our disposal on the Mamluk-Ilkhanid conflict is derived from the pro-Mamluk Arabic sources. It is true that the corpus of Mamluk historical works is much larger than its pro-Mongol counterpart, and this might be one reason for this phenomenon . . ." (p. 7). This results in far more space and detail accorded the Mamluk component of the narrative, although Persian, Syriac, and Armenian sources are listed in the bibliography.


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The second factor determining the shape of his presentation is the centrality given the personality of the second Mamluk sultan Baybars, who ruled for almost seventeen years from 1260 to 1277. Amitai-Priess even designates the second battle of Homs in 1281 ″Baybars′s posthumous victory.″ A more appropriate title for the book thus might be *Baybars Fights the Ilkhanids*.

His method of presentation, moreover, is essentially chronological, focusing on political history. The three battles—‘Ayn Jālūt (1260), Elbistan (1277), and Homs (1281)—are the pegs on which the narrative is suspended and, when the Mamluks and Mongols are not fighting each other, they are engaged in waging a ″Cold War,″ maneuvering diplomatically, and conducting espionage. Economy, demography, and ideology receive only passing mention. The last two chapters of the work, however, do deal in some detail with several thematic aspects—mainly military and strategic—of the conflict.

The text is illustrated by three plates—photographs of the Jezreel Valley, Birecik, and the plain of Elbistan—which are unfortunately not very well reproduced in the book. Eight maps, four dynastic and genealogical tables, and a glossary are appended to the text. Especially useful are the maps of the areas of the major battle sites and those of the Fertile Crescent and northern Syria-southeastern Anatolia. In connection with the latter, Amitai-Preiss gives the Arabic forms of locales in modern Turkey (e.g., Abulustayn for Elbistan) and these maps facilitate their location. There is a problem, however, with the toponym Dokat, identified as ″the family castle″ of the Anatolian Saljuq sultan (pp. 166, 174, index). This is certainly the town and fortress of Tokat, usually spelled Tūqāt in Arabic.

The philology of the work is fundamentally sound, but the following points should be noted. The term *bahādur* is identified as a Mongol word (p. 108) although it may in fact be earlier, traced by Sir Gerard Clauson in his *Dictionary of Pre-Thirteenth Century Turkish* to a Hunnish (Hsiung-nu) proper name. The expression *yāsāh* on page 121 is probably a transliteration mistake for *yasākh* ← *yasāq*. Finally, on the meaning of *parvāna*, an element in the name of Anatolian Saljuq strongman Mu‘īn al-Dīn Sulaymān, Amitai-Preiss quotes the derivation of Claude Cahen in *Pre-Ottoman Turkey* and cites the Persian-English dictionary of Steingass as an authority. Here, he should have consulted works such as Muḥammad Mu‘īn′s edition of *Burhān-i Qāṭi‘* or the *Lughat-nāma* of Dikhudā—he would hardly have used Hans Wehr for the meaning of a Mamluk technical term.

There are some technical problems in the dating of several sections. Between pages 169 and 176, for example, the chronology of Baybars′s campaign to Anatolia in 1277 is increasingly bungled.

| Page | Amitai-Preiss Date | Correct Date |
|---|---|---|
| 169 | Monday, 6 Dhū al-Qa‘dah/12 April | Sunday, 6 Dhū al-Qa‘dah/11 April |
| 172 | Friday, 10 Dhū al-Qa‘dah/15 April | Thursday, 10 Dhū al-Qa‘dah/14 April |
| 175 | Tuesday, 20 Dhū al-Qa‘dah/25 April | Sunday, 20 Dhū al-Qa‘dah/25 April |
| 176 | 6 Dhū al-Ḥijjah/16 May | 6 Dhū al-Ḥijjah/11 May |
| 176 | 10 Dhū al-Ḥijjah/20 May | 10 Dhū al-Ḥijjah/15 May |


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There is another error on page 185 where 29 Jumādá II 679 is identified with 2 November 1280 whereas the correct conversion is 26 October. Here, Amitai-Preiss has given the Gregorian rather than the Julian date.

In conclusion, these are minor flaws in an otherwise competent and workman-like piece of research. We need more detailed monographs of the sort Amitai-Preiss has produced in order to undertake the broader issues discussed at the beginning of this review.

ʻALĪ AL-SAYYID ʻALĪ, *al-Ḥayāh al-Thaqāfīyah fī al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah: ʻAsr al-Salāṭīn al-Mamālīk 642-923 H*. (Cairo: ʻAyn lil-Dirāsāt wa-al-Buḥūth al-Insānīyah wa-al-Ijtimāʻīyah, 1414/1994). Pp. 304.

REVIEWED BY RICHARD T. MORTEL, King Saud University

One of the major difficulties facing the historian of the Arabian Peninsula in pre-modern times—with the possible exception of the Yemen—is the paucity of primary source material. This is particularly true of Medina, for which we have no contemporary annals comparable to those produced by several generations of native historians of Mecca beginning in the ninth/fifteenth century with al-Fāsī.

Having myself experienced the problems involved in seeking to reconstruct the political history of Medina during the medieval period, I welcomed the invitation to review a work which promised to discuss cultural life in the second holiest city of Islam during the Mamluk era, in anticipation that the author had discovered hitherto unknown contemporary source materials—a rather unlikely prospect, I am forced to concede—or else had dealt with his chosen subject using a methodology based on a thorough review of all relevant Mamluk-era historical and biographical literature, in order to extract the data pertinent to a study of cultural life in Medina, which would then be subjected to rigorous analysis.

After a careful reading of the work I must, however, confess to a serious disappointment. ʻAlī al-Sayyid´s book, instead of describing Medinese cultural life during Mamluk times, appears to this reviewer as a verbose and quite undisguised apology for the Mamluks, lacking in sophistication or the application of any identifiable modern historical methodology, written with the aim of fostering an exaggerated and oftentimes simplistic perception of the extent of Mamluk political, economic, and cultural penetration in the Hijaz, without any awareness of historical progression. The underlying assumption of the work, repeated *ad nauseam*, is that the Mamluks of Egypt had vanquished both the Crusaders and the Mongols, and had thereby assumed primacy in the Islamic world, and must—of necessity—have controlled the Hijaz in general, and Medina in particular, from the middle of the seventh/thirteenth century (see pp. 5ff., 59, 79, 235-236). The author´s thesis is that the existence of ″cultural life″ in Medina was due—almost *in toto*—to Mamluk political suzerainty, economic superiority, and, naturally, largesse. Whatever cultural life existed in Medina, he seems to be telling the reader, must be the product of Mamluk influence.

Without, however, denying the significance of Mamluk influence in the Hijaz, I do call ʻAlī al-Sayyid´s point of view into question. Although the Mamluks repeatedly attempted to extend their sovereignty over the Hijaz from the reign of Sultan Baybars, the


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Hijaz in general cannot be said to have fallen completely into the Mamluk orbit until the early ninth/fifteenth century. What we do certainly observe, during the seventh/thirteenth and eighth/fourteenth centuries, is a pattern of gradually increasing Mamluk involvement in the political life of both Mecca and Medina. Moreover, I have been unable to discern in ʻAlī al-Sayyid´s book any awareness or understanding of the modalities of the evolution of Mamluk control over Medina, and its ramifications on Medinese cultural life. Specifically, to what extent is the author justified in referring to Medina as a ″Mamluk city″? (p. 162)

Earlier, I have alluded to the scarcity of data for the history of Medina during the Mamluk period, whether political, economic or cultural history is intended. ʻAlī al-Sayyid is himself also acutely aware of the parameters of this dilemma, and frequently complains of the scarcity of information specific to Medina (pp. 90, 102, 249, 279), a situation which unfortunately leads him to vapid generalizing from non-Hijazi sources, including *ḥisbah* manuals, Egyptian *waqf* documents, Mamluk histories, etc., under the assumption that the same or similar circumstances must have prevailed in Medina (e.g., pp. 81ff.). Thus, when he discusses the *madrasah* (in Medina), he finds himself forced to describe that institution as it developed in Mamluk Cairo (pp. 99-109). There is no doubt in the mind of this reviewer that, if the author had restricted himself to a consideration of the data pertaining exclusively to Medina, the size of the resultant work would have been greatly diminished, but its potential importance would have been similarly increased.

A number of serious flaws mar the book. The author—although he makes frequent mention of Ibn Farḥūn as a historian of Medina—is unaware of the existence of at least one manuscript copy of his *Naṣīḥat al-Mushāwir wa-Tasliyat al-Mujāwir*, an indispensable mine of information on political and cultural affairs in Medina during the seventh/thirteenth and eighth/fourteenth centuries.

Equally serious is the absence of any background concerning the precise religious affiliation of the sharifs of Medina or political developments in the amirate. Although ʻAlī al-Sayyid is aware of the Shīʻism of the Husaynid sharifs of Medina, he makes no mention of their specific sectarian allegiance within Shīʻism as a whole, i.e. Imāmī, or Twelver, Shīʻism, as opposed to the Zaydism of their Ḥasanid cousins in Mecca. Indeed, ʻAlī al-Sayyid appears to be completely unaware of political developments in the two amirates of Mecca and Medina, as opposed to external influences, to the extent that he claims that Jammāz ibn Shīḥah (d. 704/1304) was the last of the line of Husaynid amirs of Medina! The reality of the matter is that the Husaynids retained control of the amirate for several centuries thereafter. Elsewhere (p. 35), he asserts that the history of the Husaynid sharifs of Medina was distinguished—compared with the history of their cousins the Ḥasanid sharifs of Mecca—by the notable absence of factional strife and struggle for control of the reins of power; once again, the facts simply do not support this statement.

Finally, the author´s discussion of the factors which he believes promoted the development of cultural life in Medina lacks credibility, in that he gives primacy of place to economic factors, particularly the India trade. A careful examination of both the primary and secondary literature on economic life in the medieval Hijaz will, I believe, clearly demonstrate that Mecca—with its Red Sea port of Jiddah—and not Medina, was the principal beneficiary of the dramatic increase in the volume of this trade which begins to be observed in the eighth/fourteenth century. In comparison, Medina and its port of al-Jār, are relegated to a position of total insignificance. Furthermore, ʻAlī al-Sayyid´s contention that the expansion of the India trade in the Red Sea-Hijaz region was a result of Mamluk policy


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(pp. 13 ff.) is simply not substantiated by the facts. On the contrary, it was the disastrous economic policies of the Mamluk administration in Cairo, beginning with the reign of Sultan Barsbāy when *de facto* Mamluk suzerainty came to be imposed on the Hijaz, that led to the decline and eventual disappearance of the India trade in the Red Sea-Hijaz region.

In summation, ʻAlī al-Sayyid´s work should be seen, not as a consideration of indigenous manifestations of cultural life in Medina during Mamluk times, but rather a discussion of cultural contacts between Mamluk Egypt and Medina, or, perhaps, Mamluk contributions to cultural life in Medina. Even with this caveat in mind, a potential reader must also be prepared for sweeping generalizations, and a historical methodology based upon an uncritical repetition of material found in the primary sources, with little or no attempt at comparison and analysis.

JONATHAN BERKEY, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992). Pp. 238.

REVIEWED BY TH. EMIL HOMERIN, University of Rochester
AND DEBORAH DERYLAK, University of Chicago

In this work based on dissertation research, Jonathan Berkey provides a detailed description of religious education in Mamluk Cairo (1250-1517). Berkey´s main focus is on higher education, primarily Islamic jurisprudence—the study of one or more of the four major schools of Sunnī law—which, not surprisingly, was the preserve of the scholarly elite (*ʻulamāʼ*) and their students. Berkey, however, moves beyond this select group to discuss other aspects of the education system including the place in it of women and the ruling Mamluk military elite, as well as the educational institutions themselves and their place in the urban setting of medieval Cairo. Throughout, the author contends that the transmission of religious knowledge in Mamluk Egypt was vital to easing certain social boundaries as it brought together individuals from groups that otherwise might not have mingled so easily.

When first examining the *ʻulamāʼ*, Berkey focuses on the personal. He draws much of his data from medieval biographical dictionaries, which encourage such an approach because their biographies tell us more about their subjects´ teachers than about the places where any given individual studied. Concomitantly, while texts were obviously central to instruction, these texts were not only read, but were, ideally, orally passed from teachers to students. As Berkey notes, ″the belief that only oral transmission is truly legitimate, lies deeply embedded in the Islamic educational system″ (p. 24). Thus it was largely the *ijāzah*—the ″license″ to teach a given work with its chain of transmission from shaykh to student—which afforded one scholarly authority. A close personal relationship between master and student, then, was at the heart of this system of normative education with its rather elastic institutional structure.


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Personal contact was likewise essential to patronage, for as Berkey observes:

> Urban society in the Mamluk period was characterized by a web of patronage that bound the ulama as a group to the military elite. In exchange for protection from external enemies and income from bureaucratic and legal appointments, the educated elite legitimized the Mamluk regime by enjoining obedience on the local population, mediating the government's needs for tax revenues, and performing a host of tangible and intangible services to the state (p. 101).

In several instances, Berkey reveals some of the ties between specific individual benefactors of schools and certain instructors there, and here, too, we see the informality of the system and the fluid way in which schools were administered. Wealthy endowers of institutions often appointed instructors, while ruling sultans who might not be directly affiliated with a school could make appointments. Scholars, too, took similar liberties by reserving and endowing posts for their sons and favored students.

Berkey provides his strongest evidence for the flexibility of the system of religious education in his discussion of the institutions themselves. This chapter is based primarily on a careful study of *waqf* documents, deeds of charitable endowment which, in this case, provided for the erection and maintenance of schools, specific classes to be taught, the staff and, usually the faculty. Berkey makes several cogent observations, noting in particular that the diverse structure of higher education "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" (p. 60).

Berkey underscores this diversity by noting the difficulties historians have had in even defining the term *madrasah*, the most common historical marker for a school of Islamic jurisprudence. He states that, "[n]ot all madrasas were exclusively or even principally educational institutions, and, as in earlier periods, much serious legal and religious instruction took place outside of madrasas" (p. 47). Mosques and Sufi convents, for example, also frequently supported and maintained similar educational endeavors.

Just as higher education was not solely the property of any single type of institution, the '*ulamā*' themselves were rarely bound exclusively to a single institution for their support. Some scholars often held several posts at once and even moved from institution to institution in what might be regarded as a medieval version of "double-dipping." Further, scholars also 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.

Clearly the schools were by no means limited to instruction in jurisprudence. Other subjects taught included Quranic exegesis, *ḥadīth*, the linguistic sciences, and occasionally, medicine, and many classes were open to a larger public. In particular, women and Mamluk amirs—although rarely numbered among the scholarly elite—often excelled in the popular study of *ḥadīth*, even to the point of receiving *ijāzah*s from their instructors which they in turn passed on to their students.

Just 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


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*madrasah*-mosque complex with 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 *ḥadīth*. 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″ (p. 50).

Throughout his study, Berkey explicitly moves from the personal to the societal, highlighting the major roles that Islamic education and its institutions played in Mamluk Cairo. Thus, Berkey reserves most of his conclusions regarding education′s important social dimension for his final chapter. Perhaps this discussion would have been more nuanced had it woven together and extended certain strands mentioned in earlier chapters. For instance, Berkey might have addressed the question of why certain schools attracted a large number of foreign students. Given that students were drawn more to individual teachers than to institutions, how did the presence of a large foreign contingent affect an institution′s place within Cairene society? Again, given the prominent functions of educational institutions as centers for worship and education for the public as well as for the scholarly elite, Berkey might have offered further analysis of the factors involved in an individual′s decision to endow an institution besides political interests and the accrual of social and symbolic capital.

Finally, Berkey′s passing comparisons to western medieval education might have been expanded somewhat to enhance his arguments. He pointedly concludes:

> For centuries in the medieval West, higher education, often literacy itself, was the almost exclusive prerogative of a clerical elite consecrated to the service of an established Church. Islam, of course, has neither a church nor a clergy, and therefore lacks two fundamental impediments to broad social interest and participation in education. . . . In particular, the emphasis on the personal as opposed to institutional contacts and relationships, and the unquestioned superiority of the spoken as opposed to the written word guaranteed the persistent openness and informality of the system of education (p. 216).

Nevertheless, while the earliest medieval ″universities″ in Europe were mobile guilds or corporations of students and scholars sanctioned by papal or imperial authority, they were not bound to any particular location. By contrast, higher education in Mamluk Cairo was in some sense often linked to, though not defined by, its endowed institutions. Further, though these early European guilds were degree-awarding institutions, the license to teach conferred by them might have been usefully compared to the Muslim *ijāzah* and the authoritative masters who controlled its granting.

These few observations aside, Jonathan Berkey′s *The Transmission of Knowledge* is a patiently researched and well-written study of a fundamental aspect of medieval Muslim religion and society. Berkey′s work is insightful and stimulating, and it lays fertile ground for further research.


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ḌAYF ALLĀH IBN YAḤYÁ AL-ZAHRĀNĪ, *Zayf al-Nuqūd al-Islāmīyah: Min Ṣadr al-Islām ḥattá Nihāyat al-ʻAṣr al-Mamlūkī*. (Mecca: [s.n.], 1413/1993). Pp. 149.

RA'FAT MUḤAMMAD AL-NABARĀWĪ, *al-Sikkah al-Islāmīyah fī Miṣr: ʻAṣr Dawlat al-Mamālīk al-Jarākisah*. (Cairo: Markaz al-Ḥaḍārah al-ʻArabīyah lil-Iʻlām wa-al-Nashr, 1993). Pp. 371.

ADEL ALLOUCHE, *Mamluk Economics: A Study and Translation of al-Maqrīzī's* Ighāthah. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994). Pp. 162.

REVIEWED BY WARREN C. SCHULTZ, DePaul University

Scholarship on Mamluk economic and monetary history has come a long way over the past fifty years. The numerous studies by Ashtor, Bacharach, Balog, Ehrenkreutz, the Fahmīs (father and son), Labib, Popper, Rabie, Shoshan, and Udovitch are well known and have provided a strong foundation for the field. Still, as seen by the three works reviewed here, there is work to be done and scholarship continues, albeit with varying levels of usefulness. And, as is often the case, that level of usefulness is often related to the facility with which the author handles both the literary and numismatic sources.

The subject matter of *Zayf al-Nuqūd al-Islāmīyah* is both more and less than that which its title claims. More in that this short book goes beyond an English definition of the word counterfeiting to include such matters as governmental issues of lightweight or debased coinages, and less in that it provides an overview only of the Arabic-speaking lands (from North Africa to Iraq), ignoring the Islamic lands to the East. The author makes no claim to thoroughness for such a wide ranging topic over such a long time frame, promising only to give an overview of the problem and terminology of counterfeiting and to provide well known examples of it from Islamic history. The work is organized around lists (thus we have the eighteen ways of counterfeiting, the eight reasons for counterfeiting, and the four ways to detect it, etc.) followed by notable examples drawn from the Arabic chronicles. By far the largest number of these anecdotes are drawn from the Mamluk period (pp. 33-37).

Despite the convenience of having so many Mamluk era citations gathered between two soft covers, Mamlukists will find little of benefit in this work. The reasons are numerous. First of all, there is nothing new. All of the events cited are known and have been discussed in previous work on Mamluk money. Secondly, there is little analysis or interpretation of the anecdotes cited, and what little there is often cannot be trusted. Examples of this last problem are best illustrated by the following three categories: an uncritical and sometimes careless use of the sources, a concern only with the normative, and a lack of awareness of the numismatic record.

Al-Zahrānī's careless use of sources is illustrated by the following examples. In the discussion of the events of the end of the eighth/fourteenth century (p. 51), we read that the Ustādār Maḥmūd ibn ʻAlī "opened" a mint in Alexandria during the second reign of al-Ẓāhir Barqūq. A careful reading of what al-Maqrīzī and other Mamluk authors had to say about this event reveals that Maḥmūd ibn ʻAlī only reopened a previously closed mint. This


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is an apparent minor point when taken out of context, but it is important when considering the total picture of the actions of Barqūq and his *ustādār*. Similarly, al-Zahrānī claims (p. 36) that the many different types of coins mentioned by the sources as circulating in the early to mid-ninth/fifteenth century are proof of the monetary chaos of the period, yet he ignores that those same sources often include exchange rate information revealing how merchants and money changers did business in such a marketplace. Al-Zahrānī's uncritical approach to the literary sources is seen most vividly in his dubious assertion (p. 33) that the Mamluk period saw more counterfeiting than any other period in Islamic history. While it is likely that we have more accounts of counterfeiting from the Mamluk era than any previous period of Islamic history, it must be asked whether this is only a reflection of the fact that we have more sources about the Mamluks to draw upon. This is especially crucial to consider given the numerous counterfeit coins from many Islamic dynasties that can be examined in major collections around the world.

It must also be stressed that this is a normative work based on normative attitudes. Despite the number of stories drawn from the chronicles, the book is concerned with how money ought to be, and not how it actually was. Al-Zahrānī begins his overview of Islamic money and counterfeiting with a brief survey of relevant Quranic, *ḥadīth*, and legal material as well as a brief discussion of the first truly Islamic coinage, that of the Umayyad Caliph ʻAbd al-Malik. His subsequent discussion of numerous citations from the next eight centuries is then based on the unstated assumption that the money of ʻAbd al-Malik is the only true Islamic coinage, and any deviation from its standards must represent a form of counterfeiting. Given the tremendous diversity of coinages issued by the many subsequent Islamic dynasties—similar in some ways but varying widely in others—this is essentialism in the worst way. It even ignores that Islamic jurists reconciled themselves to the existence of different coinages, and concentrated their legal rulings on the basic requirements needed for the money used by Muslims. This essentialism leads to several anachronistic assumptions. Al-Zahrānī cites authors as far apart temporally as al-Jāḥiẓ and al-Qalqashandī in his description of the characteristics of ″Islamic coinage″ ignoring the reality that over the seven plus centuries between these two men not only did the money change but even the definitions of basic terms had varied. Thus al-Qalqashandī is quoted in the discussion of early Islamic silver *dirham*s, resulting in the assertion that early Islamic *dirham*s were only two-thirds silver, when it is known that they are over 90 percent pure. Furthermore, this example hinges on al-Qalqashandī's use of the term *nuqrah* to indicate an alloy of two-thirds silver and one-third copper, yet Ayyubid and some Mamluk sources assert that *nuqrah* indicated fine silver. Let the reader beware.

Finally, nowhere is this normative concern more evident than in al-Zahrānī's lack of awareness of the numismatic evidence. While coins that were clipped, broken, of varying weights and alloys, and of foreign origin do not fit in his definition of a proper Islamic coinage, it is known that coins such as these circulated in Mamluk markets. This shortcoming extends beyond the borders of Egypt, as when the author asserts (wrongly) that the Ashrafī *dīnār* of al-Ashraf Barsbāy was the first Muslim gold coin to be issued to a non-*mithqāl* weight standard. There are numerous lighter-weight gold coins from earlier Muslim states as any perusal of coin dealers' lists would reveal. There is also no acknowledgment that numismatic evidence indicates that even the weight value of the *mithqāl* unit changed over time and place. In conclusion, Mamlukists interested in the matter of counterfeiting in the sultanate would be best served by skimming this work and


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devoting their time and their attention to studies such as Bacharach's "Foreign Coins, Forgers, and Forgeries in 15th Century Egypt" in *Actes du 8ème Congrès international de numismatique* (Paris, 1976), pp. 501-511.

Unlike the first book reviewed, Ra'fat al-Nabarāwī's *al-Sikkah al-Islāmīyah fī Miṣr: 'Aṣr Dawlat al-Mamālīk al-Jarākisah* is based on a thorough familiarity with both the literary and numismatic sources. As Ḥasan al-Bāshā notes in his forward, this book addresses an important period in the monetary history of Egypt, that of the reign of the Circassian Mamluk sultans, 784-922/1382-1517. Al-Nabarāwī examines this topic first by analyzing the surviving numismatic evidence, classified by stylistic analysis (section one), and then surveying the exchange rate information found in the contemporary literary sources (section two). These extensive discussions are sandwiched between a brief introduction and a short conclusion.

As anyone who has worked on Mamluk money can testify, the chief obstacle to its study is access to the coins. Collections are scarce, sometimes limited in scope, or even closed to examination. Thus, the chief value of this work lies not in any new interpretation of the Mamluk monetary system, but in the wealth of data packed into it. This is especially true of the numismatic section, in which the author states that he has published 636 new coin types (p. 348). There the reader will find not only information about previously published Mamluk coins but also the results of the author's personal and in-depth examination of four major collections: those of the American Numismatic Society, the Egyptian Library, the Islamic Art Museum in Cairo, and the personal holdings of the noted collector Dr. Henry Awad. The last two are unpublished and especially welcome additions. Thus the book is a very useful and much more detailed supplement to the relevant sections of the long out of print *The Coinage of the Mamlūk Sultans of Egypt and Syria* by Paul Balog (New York: American Numismatic Society, 1964). Indeed, for those who cannot locate a copy of Balog's corpus, al-Nabarāwī's book along with Sāmiḥ 'Abd al-Raḥmān Fahmī's *al-Waḥdāt al-Naqdīyah al-Mamlūkīyah: 'Aṣr al-Mamālīk al-Baḥrīyah* (Jiddah, 1403/1983) will make an adequate substitute.

Some minor comments are in order. First, it is worth asking why the rather artificial distinction of Circassian period (vis-à-vis the Baḥrī or Turkish period) has been followed. The many shortcomings of following this division have been pointed out by scholars interested in other aspects of the Mamluk Sultanate, and similar shortcomings are found in the field of monetary history. A wider perspective reveals that the money issued by al-Ẓāhir Barqūq and subsequent Circassian sultans can only be understood in the context of the money issued by the earlier sultans. If any major break in monetary practice is to be emphasized, it is better to look at events in the reigns of al-Nāṣir Faraj, al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh, and/or al-Ashraf Barsbāy and not the reign of al-Ẓāhir Barqūq.

Second, while the claim of 636 new coin types is technically true, it must be noted that quantity does not always equal importance. In classical numismatic terminology, any variation in coin legend, design, style or other factors can constitute a new type. While changes of these types may be extremely significant and of major importance to the economic historian, it may also happen that such differences are insignificant and of interest only to the collector. Many of the changes noted here fall into the latter category. For example, a large number of the new types cited occur in the copper coinage from the reigns of Barqūq. Almost all are the result of minor changes in legend placement, and, in the


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opinion of this reviewer, have about as much economic significance as changes in date on the American quarter dollar.

Third, the book's stylistic analysis of Circassian Mamluk coins would have benefited from a change in format. Long term trends in coinages are illustrated much better when the coins are arranged in mint series rather than by reign of individual sultan. Fourth, it should be noted that al-Nabarāwī's exchange rate data—while useful—has been superseded by that found in Ḥamūd al-Najīdī's *al-Niẓām al-Naqdī al-Mamlūkī*, (Alexandria, n.d.). On the other hand, the book also contains a helpful glossary of Mamluk monetary terminology (pp. 339-345). While this is a welcome aid in keeping track of all those adjectival labels the Mamluks applied to their money, it also contains an oft-repeated error: al-Nabarāwī repeats Balog's assertion that the *dirham* (*min al-*) *fulūs* was a copper coin weighing one *dirham* (2.97 grams), a conclusion not borne out by the numismatic or chronicle evidence.

Finally, there are sixteen plates featuring 134 coins. These photographic reproductions are of much better quality than is normally encountered in Middle Eastern publications (cf. the poor illustrations found in *Zayf al-Nuqūd al-Islāmīyah*). Unfortunately, however, the coins are reproduced at larger than actual size and not according to any consistent scale. Ashrafī *dīnār*s, for example, are nowhere near an inch in diameter. Anyone unfamiliar with the coinage should use the plates with caution.

Last to be reviewed is *Mamluk Economics: A Study and Translation of al-Maqrīzī's* Ighāthah, Adel Allouche's masterful translation of a Mamluk historian and civil servant's strident criticism of the ruling Mamluk elite and their monetary policies. Many reviewers have already commented upon why this book is a welcome replacement for Gaston Wiet's 1962 French translation, and those reasons need only be endorsed and not repeated here. This reviewer has also written a long discussion of Allouche's book for the *American Journal of Numismatics*, and what follows is a synopsis of the comments found there. Briefly stated, they are as follows: if this translation does nothing more than eliminate the common misunderstanding that *Ighāthat al-Ummah bi-Kashf al-Ghummah* is about famines, then Allouche will have achieved a great deal. Allouche's study goes beyond that, however, by providing an elegant and highly readable translation of this important economic treatise. That said, Allouche's only passing familiarity with the numismatic evidence necessitates treating with caution the monetary analysis found in the translation's introduction and supporting material.

Allouche's translation is based upon the Cairo 1940 Arabic edition. The *Ighāthah* itself is a short work; in this volume the translation fills but sixty-three pages. Following the lead of the text itself, Allouche has divided the *Ighāthah* into nine sections. The translation is supplemented by a twenty-page introduction and nine useful appendices. The first of these appendices is in effect a glossary, while the remaining eight are tabular presentations of exchange rates and commodities prices. These appendices and the accompanying notes to the text bear witness to Allouche's thorough familiarity with the relevant contemporary literary sources.

Allouche argues persuasively that it is in the context of al-Maqrīzī as critic that the *Ighāthah* should be understood, calling it a polemical treatise (p. 13). In it al-Maqrīzī blames the Mamluks for Egypt's economic problems. Unlike earlier crises, which he states were caused by natural phenomena, al-Maqrīzī believes the difficulties of the first decade


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of the ninth/fifteenth century were caused by the ″malfeasance and negligence of the public good″ exhibited by Egypt′s rulers (p. 24). While also condemning Mamluk practices such as the selling of offices and high taxation, al-Maqrīzī devotes the bulk of his critique to the Mamluks′ monetary policies, specifically their excessive issuance of copper coinage. If the government were to abandon copper coins and return to silver and gold, argues al-Maqrīzī, the troubles would cease (pp. 80-81). Regardless of whether al-Maqrīzī′s antidote was correct or not, Allouche rightly emphasizes that al-Maqrīzī′s concern about economic and monetary matters was rare for the time, and it is those issues and not famines which are the true subject of the work (pp. 5, 13).

In Allouche′s introduction to the translation he promises both a ″presentation and [an] explanation of a number of relevant issues″ (p. x). After a short historical overview, the introduction is broken up into five sections addressing five issues: Contemporary Views of the Early Circassians; The Date of al-Maqrīzī′s *Ighāthah*; The Notion of *Ghalā*'; The Scope of the *Ighāthah*; and A Discussion of al-Maqrīzī′s Views. Woven throughout the introduction are several conclusions drawn about Mamluk money. It is clear that Allouche has based his conclusions primarily upon the evidence found in the chronicles. While the author does make frequent reference to Balog′s corpus of Mamluk coins (mentioned above), it is evident from his discussion that he is not intimately familiar with the coins themselves. As a result, his brief analysis of Mamluk money, while better than many which have preceded it, should still be treated with caution.

I will limit my discussion to two examples. First of all, it is no longer universally accepted that the Mamluk monetary system was ever ″based″ on any particular metal as al-Maqrīzī claims and Allouche (and others) have repeated. The numismatic record is quite clear that coins in all three metals—gold, silver, and copper—were in existence throughout the entire Mamluk period, albeit subject to temporary shortages and frequent changes in supply and demand. Thus when al-Maqrīzī alleges that (a) silver coins were not minted in the reign of al-Ẓāhir Barqūq, and (b) silver was no longer minted by ″about″ 1403 (p. 15), the numismatic evidence indicates that these scenarios were (a) not true, and (b) only a temporary interruption in minting. Furthermore, because one particular coin was more commonly cited in price quotations or exchange rates does not mean that it was the ″basis″ of the system, merely that it was a common currency at that time. Exchange rates, by definition, require the presence of two types of money. Thus, Allouche′s frequent assertions that the Mamluk monetary system was based first on gold, then silver, and later on a ″copper dirham of account″ (pp. 15-20) should be discounted.

My second comment concerns this ″copper *dirham* of account.″ In his preface, Allouche rightly acknowledges the tremendous difficulties encountered in understanding Mamluk monetary terms (p. x). These terms are used inconsistently in the sources and frequently have multiple meanings. Nowhere are these problems more evident than in the phrase *dirham/darāhim min al-fulūs* found in the Mamluk era texts. Separately, the term *dirham* may refer to either a silver coin or a weight unit, while *fulūs* (sg., *fals*) always refers to copper coins. But as Allouche points out, when these words are linked together, the resulting phrase has caused much confusion among modern scholars. It has been interpreted (and translated) many ways, ranging from the assumption that it was still a silver coin to the definition that it was a copper coin weighing a *dirham* (as seen above in al-Nabarāwī′s book). Neither of these is correct. The phrase refers to a unit of account, and it means the amount of copper coins (*fulūs*) necessary to achieve the value of one silver


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coin (*dirham*). Allouche rightly recognizes this term as a unit of account, and his translation is the better for it.

Throughout the book, however, Allouche renders *darāhim min al-fulūs* as ″dirham of account.″ While this usage is better than William Popper´s ″trade-dirham,″ it is still problematic. Contrary to Allouche´s belief, this ″dirham of account″ was not the only unit of account in use in the Mamluk domains (pp. 9, 17). Given the extremely irregular weights of Mamluk gold and silver coins struck before the reform issues of the 1420s, it is probable that these coins were weighed for all transactions. The value of the weighed amount of coins was then determined by comparison to their respective unit of account. Thus Mamluk money was no different from other contemporary monies in that it consisted of two parts: the coin itself and the unit of account by which its value was determined. The inherent problem of Allouche´s use of ″dirham of account″ for *darāhim min al-fulūs* is that his phrase could easily be confused with the unit of account specific to the silver *dirham*. A more accurate and less misleading (albeit inelegant) rendering of the Arabic phrase would be ″a silver *dirham*´s worth of copper coins.″ Better yet, why not use the transliterated Arabic phrase itself?

A final word on the *Ighāthah* itself is needed. The powerful indictment by al-Maqrīzī notwithstanding, it should not be forgotten that many modern scholars have reached a different conclusion regarding the economic troubles that beset the Mamluk sultanate, arguing that the monetary policies followed were a reaction to economic difficulty, not a cause of it. That should be kept in mind lest the reader be swept aside by Allouche´s flowing translation of al-Maqrīzī´s polemic.

MUḤAMMAD ḤAMZAH ISMĀ'ĪL AL-ḤADDĀD, *al-Sulṭān al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn: Tārīkh Aḥwāl Miṣr fī 'Ahdihi, Munsha'atuhu al-Mi'mārīyah* (Cairo: Maktabat Madbūlī, 1993). Pp. 245.

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Al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn, whose reign (1279-1290) was of considerable importance, both with respect to the establishment of the Mamluk sultanate in Egypt and Syria and within the broader context of world history, has recently been the subject not only of a monograph but also of numerous articles treating various aspects of his rule. His reign is also covered in some recent general histories of the Mamluk period. Yet, despite the relatively intense scrutiny to which this sultan and his reign have been subjected, Qalāwūn remains a rather enigmatic, even somewhat colorless, personality.

Until recent studies brought attention to the political and military importance of his reign, Qalāwūn was perhaps best known for his monumental complex in Cairo, comprising a *bīmāristān* (hospital), *qubbah* (dome), and *madrasah* (school), whose remains, with the exception of the hospital, still stand today. The hospital in particular, as one of the most advanced medical institutions of its day and well-documented, has attracted scholars interested in social, cultural, and medical history.[1] The complex as a whole—the first multi-

[1]For example, Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn, *al-Awqāf wa-al-Ḥayāh al-Ijtimā'īyah fī Miṣr 648-*


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purpose institution of its kind in Egypt—has been a focus for architectural historians with respect to both plan and decoration.[2]

Notwithstanding the apparent scope of the monograph as indicated by the title, one would expect that, as an archaeologist by training and a lecturer (*mudarris musā'id*) in the College of Archaeology (Kullīyat al-Āthār) of Cairo University, al-Ḥaddād's real focus would be this complex. Integrating the findings of his archaeological survey within the wider historical and socio-cultural framework of the period might enable him to cast new light on this sultan and his reign. Expectations are raised by the fact that this book was submitted to, and won first prize in, a competition sponsored by the Historical and Archaeological Committee of the High Council for Culture in Egypt. It is also recommended by two of Egypt's most eminent medieval historians, Sa'īd 'Abd al-Fattāḥ 'Āshūr and Su'ād Māhir Muḥammad (inside back cover).

Al-Ḥaddād divides his monograph into two parts: historical narrative and description of the monuments. Part 1, entitled "Sultan Qalāwūn and the Condition of Egypt during His Reign," is subdivided into three chapters: (1) "Qalāwūn and the Sultanate"; (2) "The Internal Condition of Egypt during the Reign of Qalāwūn"; and (3) "External Relations." Part 2, "The Extant Monuments of Sultan Qalāwūn in the City of Cairo: The Architectural Complex in Mu'izz al-Dīn lillāh Street," comprises an introduction and four chapters. Each of the first three chapters is devoted to one component of Qalāwūn's complex (*bīmāristān*, *qubbah*, *madrasah*), while the fourth is intended as an analytical study of the entire complex. The text is embellished with notes, as well as with plans and photographs (unfortunately not well reproduced). The work includes a bibliography of primary and secondary sources used, but lacks an index.

There are, in my opinion, two problems with this study, the first of which is methodological. There is no apparent thesis. Further, the author fails to define the relation between the historical and descriptive sections of the work. The length of the two parts suggests that they have equal importance; the historical narrative occupies ninety-two pages, while the study of the monuments consumes eighty-six pages. The function of part 1, the historical narrative, however, is puzzling. The basic outline of Qalāwūn's reign has been traced elsewhere by Surūr, 'Āshūr, Ḥasan, Rabie, and myself,[3] and the most insightful accounts of Qalāwūn's sultanate published to date are found in Robert Irwin's *The Middle East in the Middle Ages* and Ulrich Haarmann's contribution in *The*

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*923/1250-1517* (Cairo: Dār al-Nahḍah al-'Arabīyah, 1980), especially 156-172; also Ahmad Issa Bey, *Histoire des bimaristans (hôpitaux) à l'époque islamique* (Cairo: Imprimerie Paul Barbey, 1928), passim; published in Arabic as *Ta'rīkh al-Bīmāristānāt fī al-Islām* (Damascus: Maṭbū'āt Jam'īyat al-Tamaddun al-Islāmī, 1939).

[2]For example, Max Herz, *Die Baugruppe des Sultans Qalāūn in Kairo*, Abhandlungen des Hamburgischen Kolonialinstituts, 42 (Hamburg: L. Friederichsen, 1919); K. A. C. Creswell, "The Māristān, Mausoleum, and Madrasa of Sultan Qalā'ūn," *Muslim Architecture of Egypt*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), 190-212.

[3]Muḥammad Jamāl al-Dīn Surūr, *Dawlat Banī Qalāwūn fī Miṣr* (Cairo: Dār al-Fikr al-'Arabī, 1948); Sa'īd 'Abd al-Fattāḥ 'Āshūr, *Miṣr fī Aṣr Dawlat al-Mamālīk al-Baḥrīyah* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Nahḍah al-Miṣrīyah, 1959), among other works; 'Alī Ibrāhīm Ḥasan, *Ta'rīkh al-Mamālīk al-Baḥrīyah* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Nahḍah al-Miṣrīyah, 1967); Hassanein Rabie, "Ḳalāwūn," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 4:484-486. 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.)*, under review for publication.


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*Encyclopaedia of Islam* article ″Miṣr.″[4] Al-Ḥaddād brings neither new information nor a new perspective to his narrative. Nor does he use his synthesis as a framework within which to interpret the findings of his survey of the monuments.

The archaeological (i.e., descriptive) survey of Qalāwūn′s complex which constitutes part 2 is, perhaps, somewhat more useful. In addition to providing a physical history of the complex and the various modifications to it as well as detailed descriptions of its plan, architectural components and decoration, the author on occasion usefully compares and contrasts textual descriptions with the actual remains of the structure (e.g., p. 123). But when he delves, for example, into social history, repeating what the endowment deeds and historical accounts say about health care, the clientele of the hospital and its employees, al-Ḥaddād contributes little that has not been said elsewhere.[5] His most interesting, and perhaps most important, observation, based on a comment of Ibn ‘Abd al-Ẓāhir, is that the sultan does not seem to have intended the *qubbah* as his burial place, for the tomb itself was not part of the original structure; it was built only after Qalāwūn′s death (pp. 140-141). Rather, the *qubbah* served an architectural function, to draw attention to the complex; it was also the site of religious activities: Quran recitation, discussions of *ḥadīth*, teaching of Quran commentary and *fiqh* (p. 141). Rather than serving as a conclusion in which the results of the archaeological survey are analyzed within the historical and historiographical context, the final chapter provides a discussion of the scholarly literature regarding the main features of the three principal components of the complex. Several questions remain unanswered. What does this descriptive archaeological survey add to what we learn from documents and texts? Are there considerations other than those mentioned in the sources which might have stimulated Qalāwūn to build such a complex, incorporating a hospital? If inspired by Nūr al-Dīn′s hospital, as some sources relate, is it possible to detect the influence of Nūr al-Dīn′s hospital on Qalāwūn′s, either physically or in terms of functions? To what degree was the sultan himself involved in the plan? Do the archaeological remains shed any further light on his reign, character or personality?

A second criticism concerns the historiographical basis of al-Ḥaddād′s monograph. Although Ibn ‘Abd al-Ẓāhir and Baybars al-Manṣūrī (*Zubdat al-Fikrah fī Ta’rīkh al-Hijrah*) have been used, several other important contemporary sources (e.g., Baybars al-Manṣūrī′s *al-Tuḥfah al-Mulūkīyah fī al-Dawlah al-Turkīyah* and Shāfi‘ ibn ‘Ali′s *al-Faḍl al-Ma’thūr min Sīrat al-Malik al-Manṣūr*, among others) in which the complex has been discussed have not been consulted. Noticeably, the sources most frequently cited date to the later Mamluk period: al-Maqrīzī, al-‘Aynī, Ibn Taghrībirdī, and Ibn Iyās. Although these sources often contribute new information, in at least one instance their uncritical use results in an anachronistic use of terminology.[6] An account of Qalāwūn′s reign, based on a much wider range of contemporary and later Mamluk literary sources, first analyzed historiographically, will be found in my own study on Qalāwūn.[7]

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[4](Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1986); and Section 5: ″The Mamluk Period 1250-1517,″ 2nd ed., 7:165-177, respectively. See also Northrup, *Slave to Sultan*.

[5]E.g., al-Ḥaddād, 55-57, 128-139. Cf. Amīn, *al-Awqāf wa-al-Ḥayāh al-Ijtimā‘īyah*, 156-172; idem, in the appendix to his edition of Ibn Ḥabīb′s *Tadhkirat al-Nabīh fī Ayyām al-Manṣūr wa-Banīh* (Cairo: al-Hay’ah al-Miṣrīyah al-‘Āmmah lil-Kitāb, 1976), 295-396.

[6]The terms *mushtarawāt*, *ajlāb* and *julbān* (al-Ḥaddād, 42) to describe categories of *mamlūk*s are not, to my knowledge, found in the sources for Qalāwūn′s reign.

[7]*From Slave to Sultan*.


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Similarly, on several occasions al-Ḥaddād cites the endowment deed for Qalāwūn′s complex, drawn up by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Katkhudā, leader of the Qāzdughlīyah janissary unit in Egypt during the second half of the eighteenth century and *nāẓir* at that time of Qalāwūn′s hospital, rather than Qalāwūn′s original deeds, without telling us why. Though the existence of Katkhudā′s deed has been known for some time, this document has not been widely available to scholars until recently,[8] and it would have been appropriate to note the importance of this source, which, (though not having seen it myself) I suspect, includes the endowment deed for the *madrasah,* which is not found among the extant documents dating to the thirteenth century.

Although al-Ḥaddād has used current secondary literature in Arabic, his failure to supplement older, and still valuable, foreign scholarship with more recent research—whether with regard to the historical narrative or description of the complex—is unfortunate. Important recent foreign studies treating aspects of Qalāwūn′s reign are not cited in the historical narrative.[9] Of more importance, no study of Qalāwūn′s monuments in a Western language later than Creswell′s foundational study, *The Muslim Architecture of Egypt*, vol. 2 (1959) is cited. He accuses ″Orientalists″ of neglecting the role of local tradition as an influence on the elements of the *madrasah*, but makes no reference to Michael Meinecke′s important, detailed analysis of the decorative system employed in the complex in which local influences *are* traced.[10] He might also have mentioned the plans of the World of Islam Festival Trust to restore this monument.[11] For whom is this work intended? If meant for a lay public, with a general interest in Egypt′s history and monuments, al-Ḥaddād′s work presents a clearly written and generally accurate synthesis of Egyptian and, albeit, older foreign scholarship. The specialist, however, will likely be disappointed. Having failed to interpret the findings of the archaeological survey in the light of the historical conditions of Qalāwūn′s reign or to make use of important documentation and research, whether original sources or the most recent foreign scholarship, an opportunity has been lost to illumine further Qalāwūn′s life and reign.

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[8]For excerpts from this document (Ministry of Awqāf, Cairo, no. 1012) regarding the hospital, see Issa Bey, *Histoire des bimaristans*, 69-72. Al-Ḥaddād also cites Muḥammad Sayf al-Naṣr Abū al-Futūḥ′s ″Madrasat Sulṭān al-Malik al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn bi-al-Naḥḥāsīn bi-al-Qāhirah: Dirāsat Atharīyah fī Ḍaw’ Wathīqah Jadīdah,″ *Majallat Kullīyat al-Ādāb,* Jāmi‘at Ṣan‘ā’ (1984), which I have not yet seen.

[9]For example, Adel Allouche and P. M. Holt, among others, on diplomacy; Robert Irwin and Donald P. Little on the conquest of Tripoli and Acre, respectively.

[10]″Das Mausoleum des Qalā’ūn in Kairo: Untersuchungen zu Genese mamlukischen Architekturdekoration,″ *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Abteilung Kairo* 27, no. 1 (1971): 47-80.

[11]Alistair Duncan, ″Proposed Restoration and Rehabilitation of the Madrasa, Mausoleum, and Maristan of Sultan Qala’un,″ in *Islamic Cairo: Architectural Conservation and Urban Development of the Historic Centre*, ed. Michael Meinecke, Art and Archaeology Research Papers (London: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Abteilung Kairo, 1980), 74-76.


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ḤAYĀT NĀṢIR AL-ḤAJJĪ, *Ṣuwar min al-Ḥaḍārah al-'Arabīyah al-Islāmīyah fī Salṭanat al-Mamālīk* (Kuwait: Dār al-Qalam lil-Nashr wa-al-Tawzī', 1992/1412). Pp. 249.

REVIEWED BY JOHN L. MELOY, University of Chicago

This book consists of four studies in the administrative and social history of the Mamluk period, with an emphasis on the Baḥrī period and the reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn in particular. The author's preface is unnecessarily apologetic for the book's limited purview in light of the fact that a complete study of the period's civilization would be a vast undertaking. In fact, the range of topics, like those covered in the author's many other published works, is quite broad: the papers collected here deal with the fields of administration, law, education, and medicine. The preface also unnecessarily justifies the exploration of the articles' topics on the basis of the unique achievements of Islamic civilization during this period. This claim comes across as more than a bit overstated and is based in part on a number of unsubstantiated assertions, for example, that the Mamluks' unbounded enthusiasm for Islam was the foundation of the civilization and that half of Upper Egypt's population converted to Islam during the reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad.

The first article, entitled "al-Taqsīm al-Idārī fī Miṣr Zaman al-Mamālīk al-Baḥrīyah" (The Administrative Division of Egypt at the Time of the Baḥrī Mamluks), discusses the *iqṭā'* system in Egypt by way of a description of the cadastral surveys and land distributions ordered by Sultan Ḥusām al-Dīn Lājīn and Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn (*al-rawk al-ḥusāmī* and *al-rawk al-nāṣirī*, respectively). The author presents information on both surveys as well as the economic importance of the latter; unfortunately, the conclusion offers little synthetic analysis beyond the assertion that *al-rawk al-nāṣiri* was long-lived because it was an administrative organization that conformed to Egypt's political, economic, and social conditions. The third paper, "Min Mazāhir Niẓām al-Ta'līm fī Miṣr Zaman al-Mamālīk" (On Features of the Educational System in Egypt at the Time of the Mamluks) consists of a series of discussions on the various institutions—mosques, *madrasah*s, *khānqāh*s, *ribāṭ*s, and *zāwiyah*s—that offered instruction, as well as sections on faculty, students, certification, libraries, and *maktab-sabīl*s. This article, too, is descriptive, and offers no argument about the nature of education in Mamluk Egypt. Both papers appear to have been published previously; I have partial references to articles of the same titles by the author in *Majallat Dirāsāt al-Sharq al-Awsaṭ* and *Majallat al-Jāmi'ah al-Mustanṣirīyah*, although I have not been able to identify the issues.

The second and fourth articles are slightly revised versions of articles that appeared earlier, although there is no reference to this fact. The first of these, "al-Qaḍā' wa-al-Quḍāh fī Miṣr fī 'Ahd al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn (709-741 H./1309-1341 M.)" (The Judiciary and Judges of Egypt in the Reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn) appeared in *Dirāsāt: al-'Ulūm al-Insānīyah*, vol. 13, no. 12 (1986): 65-95. The version in this book includes a number of new paragraphs and a conclusion. The article begins with a very brief discussion of the institution of chief judgeships for each of the four Sunnī legal *madhhab*s during the reign of Baybars and developments during the reign of Qalāwūn. The body of the article covers various aspects of the judiciary during the reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad. The conclusion, like the introduction, poses broader questions about aspects of the judiciary. The uniqueness of the Mamluk judiciary with respect to the chief judgeships is


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substantially diminished when one considers that the Fatimids sponsored chief judges in both Shī'ī and Sunnī *madhhab*s, and that Nūr al-Dīn Zangī appointed chief judges in a number of *madhhab*s as well. The article entitled "al-Bīmāristān al-Manṣūrī mundhu Ta'sīsihi wa-ḥattá Nihāyat al-Qarn al-Thāmin" (The Manṣūrī Hospital from Its Foundation to the End of the Eighth Century) consists of discussions on the *waqfīyah* of the hospital, apparently (there is no explicit reference) as published by Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn in his edition of Ḥasan ibn Ḥabīb's *Tadhkirat al-Nabīh fī Ayyām al-Manṣūr wa-Banīh*. It also contains discussions of the hospital's equipment, its medical, financial, and administrative organization, and the study of medicine in the hospital, and it concludes with a discussion of the hospital in the following century. This article, the book's fourth and last piece, first appeared in *al-Majallah al-'Arabīyah lil-'Ulūm al-Insānīyah*, vol. 8, no. 29 (1988): 6-35. The version under review includes only a few changes.

These four articles use a wide range of chronicle and encyclopedic sources, both published and unpublished. In each of the papers, the author presents a great deal of information; the papers, however, are informed by only the briefest references to secondary literature in any language, and the conclusions offer little in the way of synthetic analysis. Since the book does not approach the sources with any particular methodological strategy, these articles serve only as introductory surveys and do not offer substantial insights into their respective topics.

P. M. HOLT, *Early Mamluk Diplomacy (1260-1290): Treaties of Baybars and Qalāwūn with Christian Rulers*. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995). Pp. 161.

REVIEWED BY ANNE F. BROADBRIDGE, University of Chicago

P. M. Holt's latest work, *Early Mamluk Diplomacy*, combines two of his main research interests: the political and military history of the Levant during the epoch of the Crusades and the critical translation of Arabic sources into English. These interests have already emerged in such works as his *The Eastern Mediterranean Lands in the Period of the Crusades* (Warminster, 1977*), The Age of the Crusades: The Near East from the Eleventh Century to 1517* (London, 1986), and *The Memoirs of a Syrian Prince* (Wiesbaden, 1983), a translation of Abū al-Fidā' Ismā'īl ibn 'Alī's *al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar*.

The work under review is the twelfth volume in the series entitled *Islamic History and Civilization: Studies and Texts*, edited by Ulrich Haarmann. In it Holt presents translations of eleven truces and treaties negotiated by the Mamluk sultans Baybars and Qalāwūn with various Christian states of both the Middle East and Europe. Previously, Holt published a number of these texts in assorted scholarly journals; the remaining material was hitherto unavailable in English. All of the texts are pertinent to the history of the thirty-year period between 1260 and 1290, which witnessed both the consolidation of the Mamluk Sultanate as a significant power in the eastern Mediterranean, and the obliteration of the Frankish Crusader states in the Levant, which was assured by the 1291 Mamluk conquest of Acre.


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Although the main body of the book consists of the translations, Holt does include a concise analytical introduction. This accounts for the bulk of the critical analysis found in the book; despite its brevity, it is clear and thoughtful. In it he discusses the sources in which he found the various truces and treaties, details the status of the truce in its various forms as it was known and used in Mamluk diplomatic practice, and provides a concise description of Mamluk relations with such powers as the European Christian kingdoms, the Levantine Crusader and Armenian states, and the Byzantine Empire. He briefly addresses several overarching regional strategic and economic issues, and highlights the specific strategic policies undertaken by Baybars and Qalāwūn in their dealings with the Christian states. Finally, he situates each truce historically and explains how it reflects the changing military and political situation in the region.

Two maps of the northern and southern Fertile Crescent follow the introduction. While these maps are pertinent to those truces negotiated by the Mamluk sultans with the Frankish Crusader or Armenian states, they do not cover regions mentioned in other treaties. Therefore another map, perhaps of the entire Mediterranean basin, would have been welcome, especially for those texts concerned with Genoa, Aragon, and the Byzantine empire.

Holt introduces each annotated translation by clarifying the immediate circumstances of the truce, pinpointing its location in the sources, and referring to existing medieval or modern translations. Where necessary, he also translates variant copies of the text in the form of appendices. The book concludes with two indices, one of persons and one of places.

This work is a useful compilation of important primary sources, which so far have not been presented in a unified collection. Holt provides a skilled translation of the texts, thereby making them more accessible to Middle East historians and historians of the Crusades. Although the translations account for the bulk of the book, he furnishes a coherent historical context for each truce and establishes its relevance to the overall events of the time. *Early Mamluk Diplomacy* is a useful handbook for scholars investigating the political and diplomatic issues of the time period, and can also be used to introduce original sources to students.

MOHAMED TAHAR MANSOURI, *Recherches sur les relations entre Byzance et l'Égypte (1259-1453) (d'après les sources arabes)*. (Tunis: Université de Tunis 1. Faculté des Lettres de la Manouba, 1992). Pp. 309.

REVIEWED BY WALTER E. KAEGI, University of Chicago

This is a useful but nevertheless disappointing and rather superficial first attempt to write a comprehensive history of Byzantine-Mamluk relations. A comprehensive examination of Byzantine-Mamluk relations is an important desideratum of late Byzantine history. Unfortunately, this effort cannot fill that need. The author rightly stresses his use of Arabic and not Greek sources, and it is this fact that does indeed provide the principal value of the book, especially for Byzantinists and historians of Mediterranean trade who are not Arabists.


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The author writes in general, sometimes excessively broad terms. Pages 1 to 90 are merely derivative background, without any original evidence or new interpretations. He describes how the Mamluks attempted to bar more Crusades through diplomacy with Byzantium (pp. 97-98), the continuation of Italian commerce with the Mamluks, and the Mongol menace. However, in examining Mamluk-Mongol relations (pp. 104-111), he fails to use the 1984 Indiana University dissertation of Bruce Lippard on ″The Mongols and Byzantium, 1243-1341.″ He rightfully emphasizes the Mamluk need for slaves and horses and therefore the mutuality of interests of Byzantium and the Mamluks in keeping navigation open in the Bosphorus and Dardanelles. He briefly refers to Byzantine Emperor Michael VIII Palaeologus′s need to turn toward the Mongols, his detention of a Mamluk envoy to the Kipchaks for two years to avoid Mongol displeasure (p. 111). His real discussion of Byzantine-Mamluk relations begins on page 113. He notes that Mamluk sources do not give details about the reception of Byzantine envoys (p. 119). He notes that both parties used Melkite Christians as envoys (p. 118). He concludes that there is little evidence about the backgrounds of Mamluk ambassadors to Constantinople. His references to these embassies from Arabic sources, however, are valuable for Byzantinists.

The author′s delineation of Arabic sources′ descriptions of Byzantine qualities on page 137 are similar to some that Nadia Maria El-Cheikh Salibi has found in Arabic sources for earlier medieval periods in her 1992 Harvard University dissertation ″Byzantium Viewed by the Arabs.″

Mansouri assesses how the fifteenth century Emperor John V established Byzantine consular representation at Alexandria. He reviews commercial relations on pages 147-149, including the Mamluk need to import slaves. However, he provides no statistics, probably because none exist, on the number of slaves who passed through Byzantine-controlled navigational routes to Mamluk Egypt. Mansouri notes that there is little information on Byzantine merchants in Egyptian ports in the Muslim sources. He speculates that some horses may have come to Mamluk Egypt via Byzantium (pp. 164-165). There is nothing new in the author′s description of relations between Emperor Manuel II (r. 1391-1425) and the Mamluks. He gives a useful description of growing relations between the early Ottomans and the Mamluks, on pages 203-205.

While the Byzantinist will learn something from this book about Arabic sources on the Mamluks and some of the problems that pushed the Mamluks to seek relations with the Byzantines, he will find nothing new here about Byzantium and the Byzantines. In short, it is the author′s collection and citation of Muslim, that is, Arabic, sources on Mamluk-Byzantine relations that is the greatest contribution of this book. Even more desirable would have been the translation and analysis of these references for the use of non-Arabists, whether Byzantinists or medievalists, as A. A. Vasiliev did in his *Byzance et les arabes* for an earlier period of Byzantine-Muslim relations.

Mansouri does not show an up-to-date knowledge of the latest scholarship on Byzantium in this period. He omits reference, for example, to Kenneth Setton′s magisterial *Papacy and the Levant*, to books and articles on Byzantine economic history by Michael Hendy, other work on Palaeologan history by Alice-Mary Talbot and Speros Vryonis, studies on relevant aspects of Byzantine Jewish history by Zvi Ankori (on the Karaite Jews), and Steven Bowman generally on Jews in the Palaeologan Byzantine Empire. His familiarity with more specialized modern scholarship in article form seems to disappear early in the 1980s. He does not cite the latest editions of some important Byzantine sources


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such as Niketas Choniates and George Pachymeres. Although Mansouri could not have known it when he finished the manuscript of his book, the 1995 doctoral dissertation (History, University of Chicago) of John B. Williams on the Genoese slave trade, ″From the Commercial Revolution to the Slave Revolution: The Development of Slavery in Medieval Genoa,″ provides valuable comparative material on the contemporary slave trade in the central and western Mediterranean, even though Genoa´s slave trade in the central and western Mediterranean was not a direct source for Mamluk slaves. This book is useful, but a more thorough and rigorous study is still desirable, together with a fuller exploration of the sources and their ambiguities. Mamluk historians should use this book with great caution as a guide or introduction to Byzantine topics, because the author is simply unfamiliar with some of the most important recent work and interpretations of the relevant Byzantine historical context.

STEFAN HEIDEMANN, *Das Aleppiner Kalifat (AD 1261): Vom Ende des Kalifates in Bagdad über Aleppo zu den Restaurationen in Kairo*. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994). Pp. 424.

REVIEWED BY LUTZ WIEDERHOLD, Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg

Students of Mamluk history are often envied by their colleagues who work on other periods and areas of Islamic civilization for the abundance of historiographical and prosopographical sources at their disposal. It is true that certain phases of Mamluk rule over Egypt and Syria are documented in a much greater number of narrative sources than the preceding and subsequent periods of the history of Egypt and Syria—not to speak of other areas of the Islamic world. However, it must be kept in mind that, in these sources, certain periods and aspects of Mamluk history are hardly documented at all. Furthermore, over the past decades, students of Mamluk history have become more and more aware of the fact that the historiographical accounts cannot be taken at face value but must be examined from various perspectives.

The incompleteness and the potential tendentiousness of information in narrative sources has been a general problem of modern western historiography since its emancipation as an autonomous scholarly discipline, that is, since the beginning of the eighteenth century. It was at that time that western historians started to utilize systematically the results of smaller specialized scholarly disciplines—described as auxiliary sciences—in their attempts to reconstruct historical reality. In the book that is reviewed here, one of these auxiliary sciences, numismatics, serves as a critical tool in the examination of an important political and ideological aspect of the early history of Mamluk rule. According to the author, Stefan Heidemann, it was a number of coins struck in Aleppo in the name of the Caliph al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh (659/1261) that aroused his interest in the particulars of the transfer of the Abbasid Caliphate from Baghdad to Cairo (pp. XI, 134). Generally, Heidemann´s focus is on the events between the murder of the last Abbasid of Baghdad, al-Musta'ṣim, by Hülägü´s soldiers in 656/1258 and the demise of al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh, the second Abbasid Caliph after the fall of Baghdad (d. 701/1302).


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The contents of the book are organized in eleven chapters. In the first ten chapters, Heidemann provides a description of events that is mainly based on narrative sources (Mongol and Mamluk) and is occasionally compared with numismatic evidence. He presents a painstaking analysis of the relationship between the main protagonists of the fall and the restoration of the Caliphate. He devotes particular attention to the conflict between the two pretenders to the Abbasid Caliphate after the fall of Baghdad, al-Mustanṣir billāh and al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh, and to the role of the military elite as represented by Sultan al-Ẓāhir Baybars (r. 658/1260-667/1269) and the Amir Aqqūsh al-Burlī. Chapter 11 contains a description of 161 coins and a discussion of their historical relevance. At the end of the book, 137 of these 161 coins are reproduced in plates.

## CRITIQUE OF PREVIOUS STUDIES, GENERAL FRAMEWORK, AND THESES

Heidemann premises his study with some critical remarks on the current state of research on the Mamluk-Abbasid Caliphates of Aleppo and Cairo and on the role of Sultan Baybars (pp. 3-9). He describes the view prevalent among contemporary Western and Arab historians as oscillating between two different positions. According to one, Baybars restored the Caliphate in order to legitimate his regime (″Herrschaftslegitimation″); according to the other he did so in order to realize his own political aims (″Machtpolitik,″ p. 8).

Heidemann´s approach, as he states, differs from previous studies in the following respects: (1) He views the overthrow of the Baghdad Caliphate not merely as the necessary result of the Mongol occupation but as the consequence of the differing ideological positions of the various groups involved. (2) Furthermore, he promises an explanation of the Mamluk-Abbasid Caliphates that is not exclusively based on ideological patterns like the justification of political power (″Herrschaftslegitimation″), but mainly on the reconstruction of the sequence of political events (″die Abfolge tagespolitischer Ereignisse,″ p. 9).

In his introduction, Heidemann refers to a great number of earlier studies on his subject. However, some of his general remarks on the present state of research and his project appear to be based on an artificial polarization of phenomena and approaches that might equally be viewed as interdependent. This, for example, is the case when he makes a distinction between an approach based on ideological patterns like ″Herrschafts-legitimation,″ and one that focuses predominantly on the politics of the day when he explains the emergence of the Caliphates of Aleppo and Cairo (pp. 9, 11, 12). Also, his usage of the term ″Caliphate″ does not always indicate whether he means the abstract concept of caliphal rule, or the Caliphate as a political institution in interrelation with other institutions of legislative and executive power (pp. 9, 24, 27, 28 n. 2).

## SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY, RESULTS

Heidemann´s book is, among other things, an essay on the dialectics of event and description. He points to the fact that different historiographers—according to their confessional affiliation—put the overthrow of the Baghdad Caliphate into different perspectives (pp. 12-16). It is one of the strengths of the book that the author keeps in view these differences in the evaluation of historical information. In cases where his sources contradict each other or do not provide a full picture of events, he does not fill the gaps with presumptions. (One may find a few exceptions to this observation, as, for




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example, the remark on rivalries between the tribes of the Āl ʻAlī and the Āl Muhannā, p. 131. But, even in cases like this, a hypothesis is clearly identifiable to the attentive reader.) One should also mention the fact that Heidemann largely refrains from obscuring the borderline between information and interpretation. Verbatim quotations of the Arabic text (in transliteration) on several occasions (pp. 26, 41, 62, etc.) enable the reader to form his own opinion.

The incorporation of numismatic evidence into his argumentation is of particular interest. He points to the importance of the *sikkah* (the mentioning of rulers on coins) for the chronology of political events (pp. 209-211). According to him, the *sikkah*—often neglected besides the *khuṭbah* as another expression of the submission to a superior power—is in some cases the only material source for the reconstruction of historical events. This is illustrated by a number of concrete examples. To mention one of them, the only non-literary proof for the existence of the Caliphate of Aleppo are several *dirham*s struck in the name of al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh in 659/1261 (p. 134; on the mentioning of the Caliphate of Aleppo in narrative sources, see p. 133).

On the other hand, Heidemann emphasizes that, for the time examined, coins must not be regarded as a substitute for missing historiographical evidence. For example, the subjugation of local rulers of northern Mesopotamia like Badr al-Dīn Lu'lu' by the Mongols is not confirmed by numismatic evidence since the Mongols did not consider this form of recognizing their supremacy as important (p. 36).

In his conclusions, Heidemann makes reference to his methodological approach. He describes various historical developments as the result of political events (pp. 107, 197) as well as of diametrically opposed ideological positions among the Mongols and the Muslims concerning the notion of legitimate power (pp. 36, 44, 55, 56-57, 61, 102, 195).

Philologically, the book is sound. Only occasionally one finds cases of inconsistency in the transliteration of Arabic (for example *″ilā an-nabī″* against *″ʻalā d-darāhimi,″* pp. 72, 134 n. 9). One clear mistake is the transliteration of the Arabic term for civil strife as *″fiṭna″* instead of *″fitna″* (pp. 61, 62, 65).

To conclude, Heidemann has produced a valuable study on a subject which called for a comprehensive analysis. In view of the deficiencies of narrative sources his endeavors to incorporate numismatic evidence into his argumentation are useful. In principle, his methodological approach is identical with that of Reiske and other early representatives of Islamic numismatics. However, the wide range of sources and the critical discussion of the secondary literature lead him to original conclusions which offer a basis for further studies on Islamic coinage and on the early Mamluk period.

M. L. BENHASSINE, *Deux études sur la pensée économique d'Abderrahmane Ibn Khaldoun dans "Al Muqaddima"* (Algiers: Editions El-Adib, 1991). Pp. 54.

REVIEWED BY GILLES HENNEQUIN, Centre national de la recherche scientifique

From reading the preface (pp. 7-9), one might think that the author intended to rework his two articles dating from the 1970s into a single text. Ultimately he seems to have been content with a pure and simple reproduction of the originals in apparent


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expectation of an Arabic translation to be made by one of his colleagues. The second article (pp. 25-46) is actually the older of the two (written in 1974, though released only in 1980), the other text (pp. 11-24) dating from 1977. In either case, M. L. Benhassine implicitly confesses to his having knowledge of the *Muqaddimah*[1] only from the first edition of the French translation by Vincent Manṣūr Monteil.[2]

The article from 1974 is entitled, with great precision, ″La pensée économique d´Ibn Khaldoun dans le chapitre V, tome II.″ Benhassine insists that it is indeed in that very chapter entitled ″Comment gagner sa vie?″ (″How to make a living″) that Ibn Khaldūn has collected ″l´essentiel de ses réflexions économiques″ (p. 25). The article from 1977 purports to complement the former by exploiting the wealth of the rest of the *Muqaddimah* (ibid.: ″. . . digressions, . . . remarques passagères sur la vie économique et ses imbrications avec le corps social de la société maghrébine des quatorzième et du quinzième siècles . . .″ -*sic*-scattered ″dans d´autres parties de l´oeuvre″), and proclaims its ambition for synthesis through the title ″La pensées économiques d´Abderrahmane Ibn Khaldoun (1332-1406)″ (p. 11).[3]

One need not stand on the authority (?) of Friedrich Engels to observe that ″les penseurs des formations sociales précapitalistes ont développé une réflexion économique et sociale″ preceding largely ″l´économie politique du capitalisme″ which did not become a science until the seventeenth century. Concerning the very purpose of the *Muqaddimah*, namely, how to understand ″les causes de la naissance, de l´évolution et de la décadence ou de la disparition de la civilisation,″ Benhassine apparently takes exception to Ibn Khaldūn´s alleged failure to resort in a more systematic fashion to the explication ″par l´activité économique.″ This Marxist infatuation, still common in the 1970s, seems ridiculous in the wake of the ideological collapse of the self-proclaimed ″socialisme scientifique″ (p. 8). The developments assigned to the principal concepts of Ibn Khaldūn are hardly original.[4] One can readily admit that on certain points—labor-value, intervention of the state in economic life, etc.—Ibn Khaldūn did make an appreciable advance over his contemporaries, but it is unlikely that one can speak meaningfully of ″identité conceptuelle entre les éléments de pensée économique d´Ibn Khaldoun et les fondateurs de l´économie politique classique anglaise″ (p. 44). His observations about money are largely illusory: one fears that a large part of what Benhassine believes he has discerned in the corresponding passages of Ibn Khaldūn are but a figment of his own imagination. The numerous and sometimes lengthy allusions of Ibn Khaldūn to gold and silver, to the *sikkah*, etc., (see index, p. 47) unfortunately contain nothing, as far as perception and comprehension of economic phenomena are concerned, that marks any substantial advance over, say, the period of the

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[1]″Prolégomènes″ consisting of introduction (comprising invocation, foreword, and introduction *stricto sensu*) and book 1 (comprising preface and chapters 1-6) of *Kitāb al-ʻIbar*, or ″Reflections on the History of the Arabs, Persians, and Berbers.″

[2]Ibn Khaldūn, *Discours sur l´histoire universelle (al-Muqaddima)* new translation, preface, and notes, 3 vols. (Beirut, 1967, 1968). Second edition, revised (3 vols.) (Paris, 1978); the only significant addition to the first edition is to be found in vol. 1, pp. xli-xlviii: ″À la recherche d´Ibn Khaldûn.″

[3]Ibn Khaldûn, *Économie politique*, trans. Vincent Monteil, Classiques arabes, 6 (Paris, 1981) conveniently gathers together the most significant ″economic″ passages of the *Muqaddimah* drawn from the Beirut-Paris publication: chaps. 5, pp. 1-22; 3, pp. 36-41, 45, 48; 4, pp. 11-20.

[4]See Monteil, préface, vol. 1 (Beirut, 1967), xxv-xxxiv; M. Talbi, ″Ibn Khaldūn,″ *Encyclopédie de l´Islam*, 2nd ed., 3:849-855.


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Geniza.[5] One is led to believe that the author of the *Muqaddimah*, like the author of the ″Traité des monnaies″[6] and of *al-Ighāthah*,[7] who happened to be his student at al-Azhar,[8] would continue to maintain with money the same kind of relationship that Monsieur Jourdain had with prose.[9]

The only change made in the new edition is the ″Index abrégé des terms économiques utilisés dans Al-Muqaddima″ (pp. 47-53) that Benhassine, ″pour permettre un suivi ou un approfondissement de l´étude des problémes économiques″ and according to highly subjective and therefore largely arbitrary standards, has compiled from the second edition[10] of the translation of Monteil and which is little more than a useless repetition of the ″Index des notions et des institutions″ figuring in the former (vol. 3, Paris, 1978, pp. 1365-1372).

Even if Benhassine´s arguments are not always persuasive to the reader, one would not want to mince matters with an author who, on the theme—as real today as six centuries ago—of the decline of the Maghrib, visibly and understandably shares the anguish previously experienced by Ibn Khaldūn. French speakers will add their unreserved admiration for the mastery demonstrated by Benhassine in his handling of their language.

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[5]S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, vol. 1: *Economic Foundations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 230: ″. . . strange as it may appear, that highly monetized society of the Geniza period had no proper word for the abstract concept of money.″

[6]See the author´s views in *Hommages à la mémoire de Serge Sauneron*, 2 vols. (Cairo: Institut français d´archéologie orientale, 1979), 2:317-328.

[7]Adel Allouche, *Mamluk Economics: A Study and Translation of al-Maqrīzī´s* Ighāthah (Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press, 1994), with observations of Michael Bates in *Newsletter, Oriental Numismatic Society*, no. 141 (Summer, 1994), 4.

[8]Monteil, préface, viii.

[9]See the author´s views in his review of *La pensée socio-économique d´El Makrizi*, by Fathallah Oualalou, *Annales islamologiques* 15 (1979): 474-478, and more recently, in his ″*Waqf* et monnaie dans l´Égypte mamluke,″ *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 38, no. 3 (1995): 305-312.

[10]See above, note 2.


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ALEXANDER SCHEIDT, *Das Königheit von al-Karak in der mamlūkischen Zeit: Aus dem arabischen Geschichtswerk von Muḥammad ʻAdnān al-Bakhīt übersetz und ausführlich erläutert*. (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1992). Pp. 288.

REVIEWED BY DONALD P. LITTLE, McGill University

As all students of Mamluk history know, Karak was the seat of one of the seven provinces into which Mamluk Syria was divided, each being ruled by a governor appointed by the sultan in Cairo. More than any of these provinces, Karak was focused on a fortress, which bore its name. Constructed on a high spur by Crusaders in 1142, it commanded pilgrimage and caravan routes. This strategic prize was captured for Islam by the Ayyubids in 1188 and eventually fell to the Mamluks in 1263 during the reign of Baybars. Thereafter, while retaining its military and administrative importance in Transjordan, it figured frequently as a place of banishment and retreat for Mamluk dignitaries, most prominently for al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, who used it as his headquarters before returning to power in Cairo for the third time and later sent four of his sons there for training, away from the various vices of the big city.[1] As one of the most imposing and celebrated fortresses of the Mamluk Empire, with numerous references in the sources to it and the province it controlled, it is not surprising that it should be chosen as a subject for separate research.

This was first done by no less a scholar than Muḥammad ʻAdnān al-Bakhīt, known in the West primarily as the convener of the Bilād al-Shām conferences held in Amman but also as author of several works relating to the history of Muslim Syria. As a young scholar at the American University of Beirut he submitted an M.A. thesis in 1965, later revised and published in 1976 as *Mamlakat al-Karak fī al-ʻAhd al-Mamlūkī*. In order to make this somewhat inaccessible work better known to Western scholars Alexander Scheidt translated, corrected, and amplified it, which he, in turn, submitted to Heidelberg University. If only as a curious specimen of an M.A. twice removed, the present work is a noteworthy piece of scholarship.

The book is divided into nine chapters plus an appendix, covering the following topics: (1) A sketch of the history of Karak under the Crusaders and Ayyubids. (2) The boundaries of the province of Karak and a description of its towns and villages under the Mamluks. (3) Pilgrimage sites located in the principality. (4) Its inhabitants, sedentary and Bedouin, Muslim and Christian. (5) Economic aspects. (6) Administrative officials, military and civilian. (7) History of Mamluk Karak. (8) Sketches of notables. (9) Notes, bibliography, indices. The appendix contains Scheidt´s own brief survey of the history of Karak under the Crusaders, Ayyubids, and Mamluks.

Since almost all the chapters consist mainly of annotated lists of people and places, and since the notes, bibliography, and indices constitute half the book, it is obviously designed for reference rather than sustained reading. As such, it should be useful to scholars who might be interested in taking a more conceptual approach to the role of this province in the Mamluk state.

[1]See David Ayalon, ″The Eunuchs in the Mamluk Sultanate,″ *Studies in Memory of Gaston Wiet*, ed. Myriam Rosen-Ayalon (Jerusalem: Institute of Asian and African Studies, 1977), 292.


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CARL F. PETRY, *Twilight of Majesty: The Reign of the Mamluk Sultans al-Ashraf Qāytbāy and Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī in Egypt*. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1993). Pp. 236.

CARL F. PETRY, *Protectors or Praetorians? The Last Mamluk Sultans and Egypt's Waning as a Great Power*. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994). Pp. 226.

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL WINTER, Tel-Aviv University

As the readers of *Mamluk Studies Review* are well aware, the Mamluk Sultanate has been the subject of numerous important studies, in part owing to the unusual wealth of the source material for that period (1250-1517). There are excellent studies about the army, bureaucracy, economy and finance, cities, religious life, higher education, minorities, art and architecture, and historiography of the Mamluk era. There are suprisingly few monographs about Mamluk sultans, and not enough orderly, detailed, and authoritative narrative history.[1] Carl F. Petry's two books about the reigns and personalities of the Mamluk sultans al-Ashraf Qāytbāy (872-901/1468-1496) and Qānṣawh al-Ghawrī (906-922/1501-1616)[2] are a much needed addition to the list of sultans' monographs and a coherent narrative history of the last half-century of Mamluk history. The two sultans were by far the most important rulers in the late Mamluk period. Their reigns were long and both were clever, experienced and powerful sultans, whose very different personalities dominated Egypt's domestic and foreign policies.

Professor Petry has an unparalleled knowledge of the last half-century of the history of that sultanate, and his earlier contributions, particularly his *The Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1981), have established his reputation as one of the leading historians in the field. The first book, *Twilight of Majesty*, presents a lucid and authoritative political history of the two sultans' reigns. The book is a highly readable account of dramatic events, internal politics and international diplomacy, and wars. The focus is on the personalities and strategies of both sultans, but also gives fascinating profiles of their top military and civilian assistants and officers. Petry has based his narrative on the excellent Arabic sources, primarily the chronicles of Ibn Taghrībirdī, al-Ṣayrafī, al-Malāṭī, and Ibn Iyās. The writing is done with sensitivity, insight and empathy, yet with a scholar's critical caution. Moreover, Petry demonstrates real literary talent. The style is rich and idiomatic, yet the second volume, *Protectors or Praetorians?* in particular,

[1]There are exceptions, some quite recent: Peter Thorau's study of Sultan Baybars I (1987), Amalia Levanoni's book about al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalā'ūn (1995) and Ahmad Darrag's study of Sultan Barsbāy (1961). As for political history, one should mention Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The Early Mamluk Sultanate, 1250-1382* (London: Croom Helm, 1986) and P. M. Holt, *The Age of Crusades: The Near East from the Eleventh Century to 1517* (London: Longman, 1986), a useful introductory survey.

[2]Petry has decided to use the variant Qānṣūh rather than the more common Qānṣawh. In the list of the Mamluk sultans on page ix of *Twilight of Majesty*, there is an error concerning al-Ghawrī's reign which was 1501-1516 (not 1517), and Ṭūmānbāy's reign which was from 922 to the first days of 923 (1516 to the first days of 1517) and not 922/1517. This is obviously a technicality; the dates in the relevant chapters are correct.


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has compelled the present reviewer, who is not a native speaker of English, to consult his dictionary more frequently than usual, to find many of the text's words and phrases defined as "formal," "literary," or even "old use."

The second book, *Protectors or Praetorians?*, is more thematic than chronological and is an analysis of the Mamluk regime's characteristics and the strategies employed by the two sultans to survive against internal and external threats. Petry examines the ways the rulers exercised power and ponders over the historical, societal, cultural, and even ethical meanings of the mechanics of Mamluk government in that period.

The main theme that runs through both books is the comparison between the two sultans. This approach is natural, and was done by their contemporaries, most notably Ibn Iyās, the last and one of the greatest representatives of Mamluk historiography. Qāytbāy was regarded by his contemporaries and by the following generations as a model sultan: a just ruler, a pious Muslim, a brave warrior, a wise and benevolent monarch. Qāytbāy was also successful in his foreign policy. He was victorious over Shāh Suwār, the Turcoman chief who challenged Cairo's suzerainty in Anatolia, handled skillfully the aggression of Uzun Ḥasan on the sultanate's northern borders, and even forced the mighty Ottomans to respect the *status quo* in the buffer zones separating the two empires in Anatolia after a series of fierce battles from 1484 to 1491. In his obituary of Qāytbāy, Ibn Iyās eulogizes him in superlatives: "His career developed in glory and majesty. . . . He was serene and dignified, correct in decorum, invariably respected, projecting an aura of majesty to official ceremonies. . . . Although tainted by greed, he was the noblest of Circassian rulers, their finest."[3]

Inevitably, Qānṣawh al-Ghawrī was compared to Qāytbāy and was found wanting. Here is what Ibn Iyās has to say in his obituary of the last effective Mamluk sultan: "Al-Ghawrī's sultanate lasted fifteen years, nine months, twenty-five days, each of which weighed down on the people like a thousand years. . . . Truly the list of al-Ghawrī's misdeeds was endless."[4] Ibn Iyās acknowledges al-Ghawrī's strong personality and talents, but presents him as a selfish and cruel *bon vivant*, and a grasping tyrant.

Petry is careful to look at the chronicler's judgment critically. He calls Qāytbāy "Revered Conservator," and defines his main goal and achievement as the maintenance of the *status quo*: "That Qāytbāy had not a single new idea about governing his realm not one of his biographers found blameworthy."[5] It is worth noting that Qāytbāy's image as almost the ideal ruler was adopted not only by Ṭūmānbāy, al-Ghawrī's nephew and successor, who demonstratively followed Qāytbāy's (and not al-Ghawrī's) style of rulership, but even the Ottomans, who fought him in Anatolia and finally destroyed the Mamluk Sultanate. The *Qānūn-nāme-i Miṣir*, of 1525, the code regulating the administration of Ottoman Egypt, expressly calls for adherence to "Qāytbāy's laws" in administrative or fiscal matters.

While recognizing the unsavory sides of Qānṣawh al-Ghawrī's character, Petry correctly notes that we are almost wholly dependent for the description of al-Ghawrī on one source—the chronicle of Ibn Iyās, who makes no secret of his intense dislike for him, especially when compared to Qāytbāy. Petry finds al-Ghawrī far more original and interesting than his revered predecessor, and calls him "Vilified Innovator." Indeed, Petry

[3]Translated by Carl Petry, *Twilight of Majesty*, 15-16. Petry notes that Ibn Taghrībirdī's opinion of Qāytbāy, whom he served personally, was more reserved and critical.
[4]Ibid., 119, 121.
[5]*Twilight of Majesty*, 234; *Protectors or Praetorians?*, 224.


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emphasizes the contrast between the deeply conservative Qāytbāy, who left things as they were, and al-Ghawrī, who ″experimented with artillery, recruited new military units from outside the Mamluk caste[6] or manipulated *waqf*s to pay them.″ Predictably, these innovations raised apprehensions and opposition. Petry even speculates what could have happened, had the Ottomans not put an end to the Mamluk state and with it to al-Ghawrī′s military and financial experiments before they had the opportunity to mature into substantive reform.[7] I am not sure that these speculations do not go too far; after all, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, Qāytbāy′s incompetent son and successor (1496-1498), also tried to create a corps of arquebusiers, and Qāytbāy too converted income from his *waqf* funds into a private reserve, the sultan′s personal fisc, as Petry himself shows.[8] My own feeling is that precisely since Ibn Iyās′s evidence is almost all we have about al-Ghawrī′s personality, Petry′s judgment of him is too lenient. As Petry′s own account demonstrates in many instances, the sultan was justly ″vilified″; it is his achievements as innovator which I doubt. Yet these slightly different evaluations are admittedly subjective, and impossible to prove conclusively in a scholarly argument.

The personal contrasts between the two sultans are well documented, and convincingly pointed out by Petry. For example, both sultans faced a similar predicament when they had to decide how to host an Ottoman prince who sought shelter in their court from the sultan in Istanbul, Cem in Qāytbāy′s case, Qurqud in al-Ghawrī′s. The Mamluk sultan had to weigh the obligation of royal hospitality (and possible political benefits in the future) against the need to refrain from antagonizing the Ottoman sultan. Petry concludes: ″Restraint marked Qāytbāy′s approach, excess al-Ghawrī′s.″[9] Or consider the two sultans′ entirely different approach to religion: for Qāytbāy piety influenced his actions, while for the other, display compensated for his oppression. Piety versus pomp: most of Qāytbāy′s lavish expenditures promoted rituals or structures devoted to religious service; al-Ghawrī preferred festivals or edifices that advertised the regime′s beneficence in more secular ways.[10]

The second of Petry′s books surveys the central issue of Mamluk foreign policy, including the position of Syria in the sultanate,[11] but its most original contribution is the writer′s discussion of Mamluk government and economy, again relying on the chronicles and other literary sources, as well as on his pioneering study of the *waqf* documents. Petry examines the conditions of the exploited subjects of the sultanate, who suffered from the rulers′ growing demand for funds. During Qāytbāy′s reign extra money was needed in the first place to finance his sixteen northern campaigns; al-Ghawrī needed the money mainly to withstand the pressure of his troops. Assessing Egypt′s agriculture, Petry writes: ″The evidence, such as it is, depicts an inordinate heightening of demand rather than a decline in output.″[12] Egypt′s craft industries in the late Middle Ages were as accomplished and sophisticated as ever, but there were few changes in methods of production. Part of the

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[6]The arquebusiers, who were armed with hand guns which the Mamluk horsemen could not and would not use.
[7]*Protectors or Praetorians?*, 225.
[8]Ibid., 199-200.
[9]*Twilight of Majesty*, 182.
[10]*Protectors or Praetorians?*, 158-159.
[11]Ibid., chap. 3.
[12]Ibid., 107-108.


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explanation is that craftsmen had little incentive to increase their output if they faced the certainty of its expropriation.[13] Likewise, commerce exhibited signs of languor—local stagnation and foreign rivalry. The late Mamluk period witnessed stasis instead of growth.[14]

Chapter 6 examines methods, norms and practices of the people's exploitation by the sultans. Petry rightly focuses his attention not on bureaucratic structures but on clientage, rewards, and risks of the sultans' men. The stakes were high, but as Petry writes "al-Ghawrī's agents, excepting Zaynī Barakāt, came to violent ends at his hands. When their usefulness no longer matched the antipathy they provoked from his soldiers, al-Ghawrī turned on them and they suffered a scapegoat's fate."[15] Al-Zaynī Barakāt ibn Mūsá is indeed the most colorful figure among al-Ghawrī's assistants—a man who rose from obscure origins to unprecedented power, owing to his resourcefulness in expropriating funds from the rich through extortion and torture and serving at the same time as a popular *muḥtasib* (market inspector), who alone succeeded in maintaining price stability. It should be mentioned also that the Ottoman authorities later found him indispensable. Another fascinating example of an opportunist in the sultan's service presented by Petry is Sarī al-Dīn ibn al-Shiḥnah, a Syrian jurisconsult who betrayed his professional and religious conscience in al-Ghawrī's service. The book describes and discusses the uses and limits of loyalty, confiscation, and torture in a thoughtful and vivid way which has not been done before in Mamluk studies.

Clearly, the author of *Protectors or Praetorians?* believes that by the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century the Mamluks merited the epithet of Praetorians due to their venality and lawlessness. He shows that the Mamluk regime became responsible for economic lethargy: "A regime dedicated to upholding the status quo rarely encourages entrepreneurship."[16]

In concluding this review of two truly remarkable additions to the growing research library on the Mamluk period, I would make two suggestions: (a) *Twilight of Majesty* could have benefited from a chapter bridging the reigns of the book's two protagonists. The intervening five years, 1496-1501, during which four lesser sultans reigned, should have been covered, even if the study rightly focuses on the two great sultans. Students would benefit from a complete chronological coverage of the period. (b) The account of military and diplomatic relations between the Mamluk Sultanate and its neighbors, particularly the Ottoman Empire, is entirely based on the Arabic chronicles. The study could benefit from a view from Istanbul about the development of the Mamluk-Ottoman rivalry. There are important primary and secondary sources in Turkish whose findings could be integrated into Petry's book (this applies especially to *Twilight of Majesty*).

[13]Ibid., 113, 117.
[14]Ibid., 117-120.
[15]Ibid., 173.
[16]Ibid., 222.


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NASSER O. RABBAT, *The Citadel of Cairo: A New Interpretation of Royal Mamluk Architecture*. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995). Pp. 339.

REVIEWED BY DORIS BEHRENS-ABOUSEIF, University of Munich

Nasser Rabbat's study of Cairo's Citadel consists of eight chapters that describe the genesis and evolution of the Citadel until its apogee in the last phase of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's reign. Chapter 1 relates the history of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's foundation of Cairo's Citadel as the seat for Egypt's government following the fall of the Fatimid Caliphate, and shows that it was conceived as a defensive structure reflecting the founder's military upbringing and the Syro-Mesopotamian and east Anatolian tradition of that period, to which the founder belonged. Chapter 2 describes the Citadel in its present configuration. Here not only primary and secondary sources and various plans are used for the topography, but also recent excavations of the 1980s. In his capacity as architect the author is moreover able to provide his own plans of certain areas made especially for this study. Someone who is not already familiar with Cairo's Citadel may find it difficult, however, to follow certain passages, the descriptions not always being lucid. Perhaps some architectural details, such as the measurements, should have been left out of the topographical text, and either dealt with separately or simply indicated in the scales of the figures.

Chapter 3 is a reconstruction of the Citadel in its Ayyubid form, discussing Casanova's and Creswell's previous interpretations and placing it in the historical context of the period. Rabbat gives Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's foundation inscription special attention. In the course of this discussion, he makes a comparison between the use of Sūrat al-Fatḥ in the inscription and the citation of this Quranic text at the Mashhad al-Juyūshī built by Badr al-Jamālī in 1085, concluding that Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's inscription, which commemorated his ascendancy and celebrated his victory by citing this same Quranic text, was emulating at the same time Badr al-Jamālī's military victories. A few pages later the author states that Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's inscription has extraordinary features such as a "break with established epigraphic tradition" in order to express the great significance the Citadel had for its builders (p. 73). There is a contradiction here with the former comparison, but the latter interpretation is more convincing. It is difficult to believe that the colossal Citadel would need any reference to Badr al-Jamālī's tiny construction erected one hundred years earlier. Sūrat al-Fatḥ is universal and appropriate to be used for any victory commemoration. When he compares the inscription's style with that of al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's famous secretary, suggesting that it might have come from al-Qāḍī's own pen, Rabbat makes a very interesting statement.

The statement that "a citadel in an Islamic city would have had a congregation mosque, so Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's plan must have provided for one, although no source credits him with building it" (p. 65) needs rectification. Friday mosques were not common in citadels at that time in Egypt or elsewhere; al-Ṣāliḥ Najm al-Dīn's citadel at Rawḍah, for example, did not have a *jāmi'*. The Ayyubids, who adhered to the Shāfi'ī rite, were cautious not to have more than one Friday mosque within an urban agglomeration, a dogma shared also by the Mālikī rite. Therefore Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn canceled Friday prayer at al-Azhar, leaving only al-Ḥākim's mosque as the *jāmi'* of al-Qāhirah and 'Amr's mosque as that of al-Fusṭāṭ. In spite of its significance, the Citadel in the Ayyubid period was not conceived from the


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outset as a city in its own right. It was al-Ẓāhir Baybars who allowed more Friday mosques to exist in Cairo; Friday prayer at the Citadel was probably due to al-Ẓāhir's, and not to an Ayyubid, initiative. A pre-existing *masjid*, however, could have been transformed into a *jāmi'*.

Chapters 4 through 7 go on with the reconstruction of the Citadel in the respective periods of the early Baḥrī Mamluks, the early Qalāwūnid dynasty, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's early reign (1310-25) and, finally, his third period (1333-41). Here the author exploits thoroughly the copious descriptions of Mamluk literary sources and tries to extract an image as exact as possible from the texts. Whereas the Citadel's walls survive in very good condition, the Mamluk residential structures, where most of the architectural iconography was concentrated, have almost entirely disappeared.

Chapter 5 includes a comment on the fragment of a mosaic panel from an *īwān* that Rabbat identifies as the Īwān Ashrafī, recently excavated at the Citadel. The panel represents an architectural structure, which the author interprets as a celebration of conquests and territorial expansion. There are, however, Mamluk art objects with similar architectural representations: An anonymous bowl at the Museo Nazionale of Florence, published by D. S. Rice,[1] shows three houses with pergola amongst trees, very reminiscent of the one published in this book (p. 163, fig. 23). Architectural settings can also be seen on early Mamluk glass beakers at the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, published by Esin Atıl.[2] Whereas the bowl is uninscribed, the beakers bear votive inscriptions for an anonymous sultan together with Christian themes. The architectural structures on the beakers belong to the pleasance type as do those on the bowl and at the Īwān Ashrafī, where they are set amidst trees and birds and with pergolas including figures. It is possible, therefore, that architectural representation was a decorative topos in early Baḥrī Mamluk art, referring to royal pastimes, as do musical scenes, thus bearing auspicious meanings.

In his lexicographic discussion of architectural terms, the author is looking for an ″exact meaning″ (p. 217), which, as he shows, proves to be impossible. This is not surprising; there is a large number of similar examples that rather indicate the ambivalent character of architectural terms used in historiography as well as in *waqf* documents, and that cannot be pinned down to a specific architectural form. The word *masṭabah* in the Mamluk period refers to a bench, to a stage, and to a hippodrome; *qā'ah* refers simultaneously to a reception hall, to an entire palace, and also to a factory or workshop; *rīwāq* means a gallery in a mosque, an apartment, and a hall in a palace; *iṣṭabl* designates a stable and it refers to an important palace, Iṣṭabl Qūṣūn. Epigraphy refers to some mosques and palaces alike with the vague term *makān*.

Coming to the origin of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's Īwān Kabīr, which is a basilical plan combined with a dome, the author rightly refers to the Umayyad tradition of basilical audience halls (p. 256). In fact, the combination of the tripartite ground plan with a dome already exists at al-Aqṣá Mosque in Jerusalem and it is taken over, in a less oblong shape, in Fatimid shrines. Rabbat rejects, however, the continuity of this pattern in Fatimid shrines, which I demonstrated earlier, with the argument that the shrine plan derives from

[1] ″Studies in Islamic Metal Work—IV,″ *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 15, no. 3 (1953): 502-503.

[2] *Renaissance of Islam: Art of the Mamluks* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981), 125, 126, 144.


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the *majlis*.[3] He overlooks here a fundamental difference between the shrine and the *majlis*, which is the absence of the dome in the latter. The Fatimid shrine plan is not only a combination of a tripartite plan with a dome, but it shares with the Īwān Kabīr, furthermore, the square instead of the oblong configuration and moreover, as at Sayyidah Ruqayyah and Yaḥyá al-Shabīh, the ambulatory passage around the dome, which in both cases fulfills ceremonial functions. Being chronologically, geographically, and formally closer to the Īwān than the Umayyad Syrian tradition, the late Fatimid shrine plan must represent an intermediary stage.

Rabbat identifies the Dīwān al-Ghūrī mentioned by Evliya Çelebi as the Īwān Kabīr, arguing that it was misnamed Dīwān al-Ghūrī before its name changed again to Dīwān Yūsuf (p. 245). There is confusion here. Evliya makes a clear distinction between what he calls ″Divanhane-i Sultan Gauri″ and the Īwān Kabīr or Divanhane of Qalāwūn [*sic*] and also the *qaṣr* which he calls Yusuf Köşkü. The Īwān Kabīr is described as Old Divanhane, having forty-four columns (*'amūd*) made of stone known only from Aswan (i.e., granite). He attributes it, wrongly however, together with the mosque, to Qalāwūn instead of to his son.[4] What Evliya calls the ″Yusuf Köşkü″ is the *qaṣr*, known in the Ottoman period as Qaṣr Yūsuf and used at that time as a factory for the *kiswah* of the Ka'bah (p. 566). When referring to the Dīwān al-Ghūrī, Evliya mentions it as having a flat roof resting on wooden poles (*direk*), without dome, and being used as audience hall of the Ottoman pashas (p. 179). The pashas never dwelt at the Īwān or that part of the Citadel, but only in the Ḥawsh section, which had been rebuilt almost entirely by al-Ghūrī.[5] Not only these clear descriptions but also his placement of al-Ghūrī's hall as connected to administrative buildings and next to Qāytbāy's ″Divanhane,″ itself overlooking the mausoleum of Imam al-Shāfi'ī, leave no doubt that it was part of the Ḥawsh and could not have been mistaken for the Īwān. Evliya Çelebi dwelt many years at the Citadel and knew its history and read its inscriptions. We should trust him in this matter.

To complete the picture of the Īwān, Rabbat reconstructs as well the Dār al-'Adl ceremonial that took place therein, and connects it with the spatial organization, illustrating this with drawings. The last chapter, ″The Citadel and the Mamluk System,″ offers an interesting and convincing interpretation of the Citadel's topography, which Rabbat links with the structure of the Mamluk army, distinguishing between the private or inner (*juwānīyah*, *khāṣṣakīyah*) troops of the sultan, and the rest of his *mamlūk*s, showing the correspondence between the function and status of the various contingents and their settlement in relation to the Sultan's palace. By linking the apogee of the Citadel with Cairo's expansion, the author fills out the context of the royal residence to show its impact on the neighboring areas, al-Qāhirah's southern quarters, and to demonstrate al-Nāṣir's ambitious schemes for his capital.

Nasser Rabbat's book demonstrates a sound knowledge of Mamluk history and society together with good bibliographical work and informative architectural surveying. The author also consulted *waqf* documents when dealing with lexicographic analysis, admitting that they were not of great help, however, for his research on the Citadel. His investigative methods are very thorough; occasionally the author tends toward

[3]″The Citadel of Cairo: Stage for Mamluk Ceremonial,″ *Annales islamologiques* 24 (1988): 77f.
[4]Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatnamesi*, vol. 10 (Istanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1938), 171-172.
[5]Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr fī Waqā'i' al-Duhūr*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá, 5 vols. (Cairo: In Kommission bei Franz Steiner Verlag, Wiesbaden, 1960-84), 5:94.


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overinterpretation, which makes the reading sometimes tedious. The great merit of this book is its approach, which always connects the architecture with its social and historical setting, seeking the function it was created to fulfill and the circumstances that accompanied its evolution, making it intelligible and interesting. The book succeeds in revealing the greatness of a monument, unique in many respects, not only in Islam but probably in the whole medieval world.

MARTINA MÜLLER-WIENER, *Eine Stadtgeschichte Alexandrias von 564/1169 bis in die Mitte des 9./15. Jahrhunderts: Verwaltung und Innerstädtische Organisationsformen*. (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1992). Pp. 331.

REVIEWED BY CARL F. PETRY, Northwestern University

The revision in approaches to the social history of the Muslim Middle Ages that began with the publication of Ira Lapidus's *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1967) almost three decades ago has transformed our thinking about many aspects of urban life in the central Islamic lands. Yet an overwhelming focus on a few prominent cities, those that inspired a diverse group of writers to pen a range of sources sufficiently broad and textured to enable a meaningful qualification of assertions appearing in narrative chronicles, remains a methodological problematic, if not a defect, of this revision.

The author's attempt to write a coherent analysis of Alexandria during the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods therefore represents a laudable initiative. Anyone familiar with the secondary literature, in both Arabic and Western languages, generated over the preceding thirty years is well aware that Cairo, Damascus, and Aleppo have been worked over to a degree verging on excess. This writer's own concentration on the Egyptian capital is a case in point. Yet, as Müller-Wiener's monograph abundantly substantiates, such a concentration did not occur because of happenstance infatuation on the part of modern historians with the "grande métropole," at the expense of important provincial towns. The sources available have themselves oriented even revisionist scholars toward the capital cities. Even so vital a center of commerce and manufacture as Alexandria did not induce contemporary writers to compile a series of works showcasing the medieval city. The author confronts this situation in her opening chapter addressing the coverage provided by surviving texts. She notes that the late medieval prosopographer al-Sakhāwī mentions four so-called histories of Alexandria in his treatise on historiography: *I'lān bi-al-Tawbīkh*. One of these was misclassified, since it is in fact a biography of Alexander the Great. The three others do not provide significant data on the city's administration or economy. Müller-Wiener has thus turned to the published sources that focus primarily on the capital Cairo, and mention events or persons prominent in Alexandria's history as asides. This monograph was conceived as a library exercise, with no on-site consultation of either archival documents (charitable trusts [*awqāf*] for the most part) or unedited manuscripts. Whether such an inquiry would have significantly altered the author's findings about the political economy of medieval Alexandria is open to question.


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The monograph begins with an outline of Alexandria's political history to the extent that it may be gleaned from the sources examined. This survey essentially presents a list of events or crises that attracted the attention of writers based in Cairo or the Syrian capitals, along with a discussion of individuals salient in these developments. The author observes that the status of Alexandria, traceable from the Fatimid era onward, evolved from a semi-autonomous border entrepôt to a district within the west Delta province of al-Buḥayrah, and finally, after 767/1365, reverted to an autonomous province. The year 1365 was important since the author regards an event in that year as the pivotal event in the city's decline. Peter I of Lusignan, King of Cyprus, launched a maritime invasion against Alexandria that left much of the town in ruins and implanted an abiding paranoia over Frankish aggression in the Mediterranean within the Mamluk regime. The authorities in Cairo augmented the military rank and defensive capability of the city's governor. They replaced the *wālī,* a junior amir of forty subordinate to superiors in both Damanhūr and Cairo, with a *nā'ib* who was a senior amir of one hundred empowered to act independently on the sultan's behalf for the city's protection.

The author's subsequent discussions: of Alexandria's administrative patterning, and the roles of its senior jurists, financial supervisors, market inspectors, religious scholastics and Sufi mystics, rely heavily on generic descriptions of these figures in Arabic texts and secondary literature. Much of this material covers ground thoroughly trodden by specialists in the field, who will be the monograph's primary audience. Although the author has persuasively demonstrated the paucity of data illuminating classes of society below the military, mercantile, and scholastic elites that predictably dominated the city's ruling hierarchy, one does ponder the lack of attention paid to the contexts of commercial organization or urban unrest as these were manifested in this particular setting.

Many of the author's explanatory discourses deal with urban conditions that prevailed widely throughout the central Islamic lands, with little specific relevance to Alexandria. It is possible that the Arabic sources are not conducive to the production of a study similar to Jean-Claude Garcin's masterful analysis of Qūṣ in Upper Egypt.[1] The latter work also recognizes lacunae in primary sources, but it delves further than the book under review into the distinctive consciousness of the regional entity it reconstructs. One could hardly argue that Alexandria loomed less vividly in the imagination of contemporary writers than did Qūṣ, a smaller and more isolated garrison base defending the overland spice route between the Nile and the Red Sea. Garcin himself readily acknowledged the fortuitous survival of al-Udfuwī's biographical compendium[2] that preserved many intimate details on individuals active in that town. Nonetheless, one comes away from Garcin's nuanced analysis with a heightened respect for the insights an extended encounter *in situ* with the sources can promote.

The author also states that an objective of her monograph is to assess Alexandria's decline from an affluent commercial metropolis to a depressed regional port. This is indeed a significant issue, but one minimally elucidated since the monograph terminates rather abruptly with the mid-fourteenth century when the Levant trade with Europe was still important. The extensive commentary by the late fifteenth-century chronicler Ibn Iyās, who

[1] *Un centre musulman de la haute-Égypte médiévale: Qūṣ* (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1976).

[2] *al-Ṭāli' al-Sa'īd al-Jāmi' Asmā' Nujabā' al-Ṣa'īd* (Cairo: al-Dār al-Miṣrīyah lil-Ta'līf wa-al-Tarjamah, 1966).


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attributed the deterioration of Alexandria to the rapacity of the Circassian sultanate, is largely omitted (with the exception of his lament over the city's woeful condition in 1515, p. 89).

The preceding remarks should not be construed as a dismissal. The author's claim about the state of the sources should indeed give pause to those seeking a detailed understanding of Islamic urban history outside the heavily documented centers. She has thoroughly sifted through the texts available in published editions to produce a study that plausibly traces the evolution of Alexandria's position within the administrative structures of medieval Egypt—no small feat. I do believe that a study of this kind would benefit from on-site research and reflection. Such questions as the relevance of surviving *waqf* documents to the elite sponsorship of charitable foundations in the city could be explored.

The monograph, despite careful preparation, is dotted with a few errors, due more to typographical misprints than to author oversight. The example of Shaykh Abū al-'Abbās, which should read Abū al-Ḥasan, in reference to the founder of the Shādhilī order (p. 269, line 19) may be attributed to a mistake by the typist or word processor. These are minor and do not detract from the monograph's value.

BERNADETTE MARTEL-THOUMIAN, *Les civils et l'administration dans l'État militaire Mamlūk (IXe/XVe siècle)*. (Damascus: Institut français de Damas, 1991). Pp. 516.

REVIEWED BY W. W. CLIFFORD, University of Chicago

Since Weber's famous designation of the bureaucracy of the New Kingdom of Egypt as the historical model of all later bureaucracies, any study of Egyptian administration is necessarily welcome. Looking into the late Mamluk period, Martel-Thoumian has chosen to study not so much bureaucracy as bureaucrats themselves. Certainly there is some justification for this. Weber after all had little to say about such administrators except that they represented an "Oriental-Egyptian type." That is, they were organically stratified, tradition-bound, and irrationally oriented empiricists shaped by the eternal dynamic of Egypt's *Naturalwirtschaft*. Whatever the structural relationship between ancient and medieval Egypt, Martel-Thoumian has wisely moved beyond Weber's idealization of a functional bureaucratic personality to study actual civilian administrators in the round. Indeed, her attempted reconstruction of their social milieu has led Jean-Claude Garcin, who wrote the preface to her book, to embrace Martel-Thoumian's work as an example of the new "Histoire 'totale'."

Still, Martel-Thoumian's study does allow one to see something of the extent to which the administrative environment reflected a Weberian division between bureaucratic and patrimonial/prebendal societies. Did administrators, for instance, enforce a guild-like closure of their elite? Martel-Thoumian claims they maintained "an open milieu" (pp. 84, 433), preserving especially their provincial ties (p. 85). Did administrators enjoy tenure of office? Martel-Thoumian makes clear that they served entirely at the pleasure of the ruler, with whom they enjoyed at best a relationship "always full of ambiguity" (p. 161). Were public and private resources segregated? Since, as she suggests, the guiding vision of civil administrators was to acquire as much wealth and property as possible during their


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uncertain tenures, that separation seems unlikely. Was pecuniary compensation regulated? She finds little evidence of salaries, only monthly rations (p. 348), which may have encouraged at least some functionaries to supplement their earnings through parallel commercial careers (p. 350). To what extent were careers based on seniority? She argues that they were established and regulated almost entirely on the bases of heredity, clientelism, and venality. Without any apparent collegial organization to engender group solidarity, there were no collective norms in which seniority might have prevailed, ultimately, to protect civil administrators from sultanic whim. Clearly Martel-Thoumian means us to see ninth/fifteenth century Egypt not as a *Beamtenstaat* but a mere *Bureaukratie*—a civil officialdom full of arbitrary, grasping, and politically dependent families serving their own parochial interests.

Indeed, the family looms large in her study. Like the earlier efforts of Joan Gilbert and Carl Petry, her work affirms the value of prosopography as a tool for reconstructing historical elites through their personal lives, in this case, lives dedicated to the transformation of bureaucratic families into administrative dynasties. This is best reflected in perhaps the most original feature of her analysis—the social uses of matrimony. Martel-Thoumian theorizes in fact two types of marriage strategies: the ″political strategy″ and ″economic strategy.″ The former, based on exogamy, was meant to reinforce the prominent but often uncertain social status experienced by civil administrative families. The latter, based on endogamy—particularly with the daughter of the paternal uncle (*bint al-ʻamm*)—was intended to help preserve family resources. Unfortunately, she can shed no light on the impact of polygamy in the ″economic strategy.″

The ″political strategy″ centered around concluding marriage alliances principally with the *umarāʾ* as well as with other prominent administrative families. Martel-Thoumian is not really on any new ground in her assertion that the civil administrators of Circassian Egypt identified closely with the *umarāʾ*, whose *dīwān*s formed a ″nursery″ (*pépinière*) for state bureaucracies (p. 131). Indeed, she largely reiterates conclusions reached by Petry a decade ago about the close clientelistic relationship between the *umarāʾ* and administrators, especially those of Syrian or Coptic origins. She argues more provocatively, however, that civil administrative families held other social elites—clerical, judicial, and mercantile—in considerably less matrimonial esteem. She believes marriage relationships with clerical and judicial groups were infrequent because often such people were clients of prominent administrators, who exercised their ″discretionary powers″ to obtain posts on their behalf. With commercial groups, there were no matrimonial affiliations whatever. She, at any rate, can find no trace of them (p. 369), despite the likelihood that some civil administrators must have come themselves from commercial backgrounds (p. 130). The mystery deepens since a majority of the administrative families studied lived in two of the most important centers of economic activity in Cairo—al-Qāhirah and Būlāq. Moreover, she believes that in al-Qāhirah at least some of the lesser functionaries living around the *sūq*s may have owned shops; she further speculates that other civil administrators engaged in parallel commercial careers.

The lack of intimate ties between administrative and especially mercantile elites does not seem readily explicable, certainly when compared with other societies such as China, where merchants and bureaucrats were often closely intertwined historically. Ultimately, Martel-Thoumian has been unable to develop our understanding about the place of merchants in the Circassian civil elite much beyond where Petry left it more than a decade


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ago. The problem is deserving of greater discussion since any relationship between governmental and entrepreneurial elites bears on the larger issue of capital formation in traditional societies. One possible answer to this social distance lies in her suggestion that prominent civil administrative families, through their acquisition of landed property largely for conversion into *awqāf*, may have developed an attitude ″latifundiaire″ (pp. 384, 430). This cultural identification, reinforced no doubt by their social climbing among the Mamluk *Landadel*, may have inhibited administrative families from greater social intercourse with other groups, including those who derived their incomes chiefly from commerce rather than land.

Martel-Thoumian provides little cultural context for evaluating such things as social attitudes. She has described in great detail the origins, functions, and careers as well as marital connections of civil administrators. Yet, the sum total of these empirical observations does not seem to account entirely for their social role in the Circassian period. Indeed, this underscores the central paradox of Martel-Thoumian′s study: although these administrators possessed a social milieu they did not ultimately constitute a ″coherent social group.″ This is all the more curious since she maintains that, while perhaps geographically and confessionally diverse, these functionaries issued generally from the same social (secretarial/judicial) environment.

This paradox is an issue of no small importance for Circassian history. Scholars have long viewed the ninth/fifteenth century as a period of systemic decline of Mamluk society driven largely by a financial collapse in which Mamluk bureaucrats were highly complicit. Martel-Thoumian has not perhaps explored this issue as fully as it deserves. She does suggest that civil-administrative families were too socially fragmented by competition for status and resources to develop the same sort of social solidarity which, she believes, allowed the *'ulamā'* to act autonomously of Mamluk rapacity. Though this is a largely materialist view, she also indicates a more cultural explanation for this lack of ″esprit de corps.″ Though pious and educated, civil administrators, she believes, failed to extend their role as ″cultural guardians.″ One infers that, unlike the earlier Confucian *chün-tzu* or the later Prussian *Berufsmensch*, ninth/fifteenth century Egyptian civil administrators did not constitute an intelligentsia. Though educated, they were not it seems an intellectually unitary group whose actions reflected a social knowledge of the relationship between structure and belief in their society. They exercised no mediatory function between social groups and cultural ideas; they were content apparently to remain passive transmitters of ruling class interests. Certainly they did not act as spokesmen for social groups unable to speak for themselves. Martel-Thoumian does not share Petry′s view about the constructive, if symbolic, social role played by the Circassian civil administrative elite in society; in any case, she does not see these administrators intervening meaningfully on behalf of the communities that they oversaw.

Though certain administrators enjoyed access to rulers, the administrative elite did not seek to play a role equivalent to the *'ulamā'* in influencing the direction of state policy; weak matrimonial links between administrators and clerics perhaps underscore this disparity in social consciousness. Certainly, civil administrators made no intellectual claim to a ″Mandate of Heaven″ by which they might have converted personal influence over rulers into direct power. As Martel-Thoumian puts it, they were hardly a ″noblesse de robe″ (p. 435). No Mamluk sultan need have feared a *Beamtenrevolution* conducted by radicals ″in dressing gown and slippers.″ Still, Petry has suggested recently that late


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Mamluk government experienced ″tokens of propensity for change at the final hour.″ Was a cultural rift emerging between ″traditionalists″ and ″modernists″ within the late Mamluk bureaucracy, such as affected the late Ottoman administrative elite a half millennium later? Might this rift have been reflected in a split between secular and *adab* education? In light of the recent works of Jonathan Berkey and Michael Chamberlain, one regrets Martel-Thoumian´s failure to discuss more fully the role which education may have played in shaping the social identity of the civil administrative elite, particularly how it may have reoriented them culturally in the final, crucial years of the Classical Mamluk state.

As valuable as Martel-Thoumian´s empirical generalizations about the civilian administrative elite are, one regrets her decision not to raise more substantive issues about structure and process in Mamluk administration itself. She might easily have broadened her description of the lives of bureaucrats to engage, for instance, the long-standing functionalist-interactionist debate about the sociology of the bureaucratic profession. Were the actions of civil administrators in late medieval Egypt totally structured by their competitive social environment or was there a functional pattern of institutional behavior which created some collective orientation among them? Did civil administrators operate among themselves entirely on the basis of intimidation and autonomy, or were their actions in some way shaped by such things as trust and collegiality? Only by raising new types of questions about Mamluk society are scholars ever likely to realize Garcin´s ultimate hope, expressed about Martel-Thoumian´s otherwise admirable book, that we be able ″to modify our vision of the Mamluk military state.″

MICHAEL CHAMBERLAIN, *Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus, 1190-1350*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). Pp. 199.

REVIEWED BY JOHN L. MELOY, University of Chicago

Scholars have long investigated the place of elite culture, and in particular the role of learning, in the medieval Middle East, and in recent years researchers have started to explore the popular manners and customs of this time and place. At its core, *Knowledge and Social Practice* investigates one feature of the manners and customs of the learned elite of Damascus: ″the practices by which power and status were acquired, exerted, and asserted″ (p. 2). Michael Chamberlain argues that ″it was the elite household (*bayt*; pl., *buyūt*), and not the state, the agency, or the autonomous corporate or religious body, that held power, and that exercised it in most of its social, political, cultural, and economic aspects″ (p. 2). The subjects of this study are the *a'yān* of Damascus during the years 1190-1350, when ″Syria and Egypt maintained a strong and fairly stable position within Mediterranean and Indian Ocean patterns of trade,″ and which saw the arrival of people from a variety of ethnic groups. The end of this period is marked by ″the beginning of the end,″ when the Black Death swept the Middle East starting in 748/1347 (pp. 25-26). However, the author has a much broader aim: he poses the fundamental problem in such a way that the entire exercise serves as a critique of the study of the medieval Middle East, examining a variety of issues and themes in Islamic history. In so doing, Chamberlain has taken on various methodological and historical objectives, perhaps too many, to the extent


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that the impact of this book is somewhat diminished in its attempt to solve fundamental issues in the study of the medieval Middle East.

Chamberlain's introduction presents a necessarily wide-ranging discussion of the historical and methodological issues germane to the book's elaborately constructed problem. The author's thesis, that "[t]he a'yān of Damascus advanced their strategies of social survival through cultural practices associated with knowledge," enables an understanding of "how elite households constructed their fundamental social bonds, competed among themselves and with others, and passed on their status in time" (p. 23). The argument is built on three concepts: "maladroit patrimonialism," *manṣab*, and *fitnah*. What made the social position of the civilian elite so intriguing during this period, the author writes, was that with the rise of the military patronage state from the time of the Zangids, the civilian elite's hold on property weakened. Chamberlain asserts that the civilian elite were never fully incorporated into the state apparatus and the bureaucracy was never established as a strong and permanent force in society. The result of this social and political configuration was that the military rulers "never had the knowledge, the agencies, and the independent coercive power to coordinate and control the subordinate elites upon whom they depended to rule. Rather, power was diffused among the households of powerful amīrs and a'yān" (p. 8). The political order of "maladroit patrimonialism" compelled the elite to use *manṣab*s, "stipendiary posts" (p. 24), as a means to maintain status and power, just as the military elite struggled over *iqṭā'*s. Chamberlain argues that elite practices, such as lecturing, reading, writing, reproducing texts, debating, and scholarly discipleship, have been misinterpreted as educational endeavors; instead, these should be treated as forms of social and political competition. This leads the author to "show how both amīrs and a'yān had similar relations to rulers, similar forms of social and political competition, and imagined the social and political universes in similar ways" (p. 8). Thus it is *fitnah* that embodies the distinctively political character of the city's social relations:

> By studying the competitive practices of fitna as exercised by both amīrs and a'yān, we come to understand on a more general level what historians have formalized as the distinct spheres of "society," "culture," and the "state." We can also undermine the anachronistic notion of the existence of "state" and "society" as distinct entities, and of political and social competition as the separate domains of amīrs and a'yān respectively. Fitna . . . was not the temporary breakdown of a preexisting legitimate order, but in concert with maladroit patrimonialism formed the central dynamic of all elite social and political life. It imposed its logic on most of their political and social relationships. (p. 9)

Five chapters follow the introduction. Chapter 1 reviews the changes in power relations that occurred with the establishment of the military patronage states, elaborating also the concepts of "maladroit patrimonialism" and *fitnah*. The discussion provides comparative material from the Latin West and Sung China. Chapter 2 reviews the *madrasah*, the *dār al-ḥadīth*, and the *waqf*, mainly in terms of previous scholarship, and discusses how these issues have been misunderstood, all of which sets up arguments laid out in the following chapters. Chapter 3 argues that the foundation of *waqf*s, which offered *manṣab*s, changed social life by offering objects of social struggle, rather than the objects


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of higher education. Chapter 4 discusses the means by which the civilian elite gained social distinction and passed it on within households. The chief proposition here is that these practices cannot be reduced to a matter of higher education; in medieval Damascus, these practices ″are better studied as a single group of ritual, mimetic, and performative practices″ (p. 108). Chapter 5 describes the civilian elite´s control over the production of knowledge in social struggles, relying on a description of ″how the a'yān imagined the social world and the nature of social competition″ (p. 153). Thus ″law,″ ″education,″ and ″the suppression of heresy″ were fields of social contest between members of the '*ulamā*', rather than scholarly endeavors.

Chamberlain´s methodological premise is that by asking how the elite used writing, we can make more effective use of the surviving literary sources, chiefly the biographical dictionaries. By means of this methodological framework, the author claims to solve a variety of related problems—principally Eurocentrism and the inappropriate and ineffective use of sources—that have plagued studies of the medieval Middle East. Western scholars, in looking for their native social categories in the medieval Middle Eastern situation, have found only ″a nightmarish reversal of the European social order″ (p. 4). The result has been that Islamic ″institutions″ have been measured against those of Europe and interpreted as ″corrupt,″ or at best as ″informal.″ A reconsideration of the available sources, biographical dictionaries in particular, entails also a critique of those who have lamented the paucity of documentary sources from the medieval Middle East and who have failed to see the value of the sources that we do possess. Chamberlain´s approach consists of three elements: (1) A critical use of the sources (p. 3), founded on the recognition that biographical dictionaries are sources for the cultural practices of the learned elite mentioned above (p. 7); (2) A comparative ″Eurasian″ perspective, in an effort ″to see more clearly the distinctiveness of the social and cultural history of Damascus, and of the Middle East more broadly″ (p. 28). The author believes this is necessary because ″it enables us to criticize the mistaken imposition of European notions of order on the high medieval Middle East″ (p. 24); and (3) A more precise understanding of ″informality″ in medieval Islamic societies (p. 4), which, when used as a category is drained of its ″particularity and complexity″ (p. 7). This aspect of the investigation is built upon the notion of the reproduction of social practice, as elaborated by Pierre Bourdieu.[1] The quest here is for the ″deeper structures″ of medieval Middle Eastern social life, particularly, the use of ″symbolic capital″ as a means of competing for and perpetuating relationships of power (p. 23).

Chamberlain´s approach to the notion of informality is probably the most innovative aspect of the book. The interpretation of these cultural practices as performative and mimetic is an illuminating approach, although I am not convinced that this interpretation is sufficient to explain why some individuals succeeded and others failed in obtaining *manṣab*s, or why others refused them. To what extent might intellectual convictions have affected any of these actions? Can the substance of their scholarly endeavors be divorced from their cultural practices? It seems to me that this approach would be that much more illuminating if it acknowledged the educational aspects of these practices. As for the thesis that the *bayt* was the principal repository of social power, the role of households of civilian elite remains disappointingly unclear. The author´s portrayal of social competition between

[1]See, for example, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977) and *The Logic of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990).


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scholars is plausible, but how this competition occurred between households, a number of which are mentioned on occasion, is not described at all. Some of these households were wealthy, by the author's own account, and it is difficult to imagine that material resources played no role in the consolidation of their positions, even among the scholarly community. Had the author described the social interaction of even one typical household synchronically or diachronically, the book's argument in this regard would perhaps have been more convincing.

The other two aspects are not tackled so successfully. Quite frankly, the Eurasian perspective reveals little about the Middle Eastern situation. As for a critical use of the sources, Chamberlain is quite right to investigate the sources for evidence concerning cultural practices and to see in prosaic educational activities a more telling cultural function. However, a critical use of the biographical dictionaries should entail a discussion of camps within the scholarly community and the differential treatment of entries; not to do so is simply to regard them as documentary information, a problem all too often encountered in the historiography of medieval Islam. This feature of his approach is based on a subsidiary argument that medieval Middle Eastern archives are not preserved because "the document collections that existed appear not to have had the critical role in political and social competition characteristic of state, corporate, or household archives elsewhere" (p. 17) and that "[t]he scarcity of original documents thus represents a fundamental difference in the social uses of writing" (p. 18). This argument is flawed. Chamberlain assumes divergent cultural attitudes based on the differential preservation of evidence; subsequent attitudes toward cultural heritage must be considered first. Indeed, chronicle authors frequently mention anecdotes suggesting that medieval Middle Easterners did "brandish" documents, and both chancery and notarial manuals testify to a demand for documentation. What is clear is that the individuals, families, and institutions that had any reason to store documents simply did not survive for centuries.

Two stylistic points, though minor, are frequent and obvious enough to deserve attention here as well. First, transliteration systems, obnoxious to read as they are, must be tolerated, and effective ones conform consistently to Arabic orthography. Chamberlain uses a version of the transliteration system used by the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, modified with respect to several features, of which the treatment of some is troubling: "without assimilation of the definite article or elision of the hamza al-waṣl." These, we are told, are how "titles and proper nouns are spelled in data bases and research resources" (p. 26). The first feature is not followed consistently while the second is by no means standard practice in libraries with romanized catalogs. His treatment of the *tā' marbūṭah* in construct is inconsistent as well. "Tā'rīkh," used throughout the book, is plain wrong. In general, the transliterated text needs a thorough editing. Second, the prescriptive nature of the prose, while enthusiastic, nonetheless betrays a certain blindness to the historiographic perspectives that, for better or worse, have shaped our field: "if we learn to read the sources more carefully . . ." (p. 21), and "[i]n all cases we have to read these sources critically, and we must be especially concerned to take into account the motives of their authors in writing them." (p. 20). Unfortunately, this study does not include a thorough discussion of the motivations and attitudes that may have guided the compilers of biographical dictionaries, and the possibility of differential treatment of scholars from competing households, so that there is a tendency to treat the information in these sources as documentary. This is by no means a problem unique to this study, since our field's


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sources require all historians, perhaps more than other fields of history, to be historiographers.

In spite of these criticisms, there is no doubt that Chamberlain's investigation of how knowledge was used by the *a'yān* of Damascus is a significant and incisive methodological contribution to medieval Islamic history, illuminating new aspects of research in daily culture and education in the medieval Levant. As can be seen from the summary above, the author has set for himself a problem with many ramifications, and it may well be the author's attempt to deal with all of them that lends the book a rather unfocused quality, notwithstanding the attempts to sharpen conceptual aspects of the argument. Social historians of medieval Islam will nevertheless find it stimulating reading.

BOAZ SHOSHAN, *Popular Culture in Medieval Cairo*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Pp. 148.

REVIEWED BY TH. EMIL HOMERIN, University of Rochester

Inspired by Peter Burke's *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (1978), Boaz Shoshan has undertaken the study of popular culture in Cairo during the period corresponding approximately to the Mamluk era (1250-1517). Readers should be warned, however, that the product of Shoshan's research thus far is not a comprehensive treatment of the subject—as his book's title might suggest—but rather a small collection of disparate essays whose subjects touch upon particular aspects of what Shoshan has designated as popular culture. In the introduction, Shoshan raises several pertinent points regarding the specter of death looming over the masses, and the question of how people spent their leisure time. This leads to the thorny problem of the definition of "popular culture," which Shoshan tends to equate with "those socially inferior to the bourgeoisie; hence, supposedly also illiterate, at least by and large" (p. 7).

Leaving aside further discussion of definition, Shoshan turns in his first essay to Sufism and its importance to the religious life of Mamluk Cairo. Shoshan notes the contributions made by the Sufi orders to congregational life, and the vital role of the Sufi shaykhs and their sermons for disseminating Islamic doctrines and religious obligations. Shoshan pays particular attention to the sermons of the famous Shādhilī Sufi master Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh (d. 1309), which stress the importance of faith, repentance, and avoiding the wiles of Satan and sin, as well as the performance of prayer, religious duties, and *dhikr*. Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh also extols visiting the tombs of the pious saints, who have the ability to perform miracles and acts of grace.

Shoshan then briefly considers the *mawlids,* or "saints' days," and some of their rituals and licentious behaviors that were rumored to have occurred during these times of popular revelry. He then concludes this chapter by probing Sufism's "reintroduction into Islam of the old association of religion and magic" (p. 18). He reports several lively cases of charlatans and con-men to be found in Mamluk sources, together with Ibn Taymīyah's legal opinion condemning many Sufi tenets regarding the saints and their miracles. Shoshan also cites a number of miracles ascribed to various Sufis and saints, and the


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mediation by some of these figures between the Mamluk regime and the larger Cairene populace.

The various reports of saints and sinners recounted by Shoshan are quite engaging, and he is also to be commended for selecting the often ignored popular sermons as a source and instrument to probe religious life in medieval Islam. However, Shoshan falls victim to the still pervasive misreading of Islam as having an ″orthodoxy.″ Shoshan consistently contrasts Sufis to ″orthodox scholars *(‘ulamā’)*″ (p. 21; also see pp. 11, 13) when many Sufi shaykhs were, in fact, respected members of the *‘ulamā’* having a special expertise in the study and practice of mysticism. Shoshan appears to regard conservative legal scholars, such as Ibn Taymīyah, as the ″orthodox″ men of religion, though most of them, too, (including Ibn Taymīyah) regarded mystical dimensions of Islam to be a vital and nourishing part of their faith. Further, the doctrines and practices reviewed by Shoshan including the belief in saints and miracles, the visitation of their shrines, and celebration of their *mawlids*, clearly were not held by the illiterate alone, but as Mamluk sources explicitly report, they were embraced by elite and commoner alike and so were quite ″popular,″ though not in Shoshan´s restricted sense of the word.

Without transition or logical connection, Shoshan proceeds to his second chapter on a biography of Muḥammad ascribed to the story-teller Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bakrī (fl. 13th century?). Shoshan details the arrangement and contents of the work, which was quite popular in its own day, and is still influential today. Shoshan maintains that al-Bakrī´s account of the Prophet does not differ substantially from similar works composed by medieval Muslim scholars, yet many of the latter group denounced al-Bakrī as a liar and teller of tall tales. Shoshan seems at a loss to explain this discrepancy, attributing it to ″the personalities involved much more than the nature of the material itself″ (p. 38).

A more logical explanation than Shoshan´s undocumented assertion of conflicting personalities is class or career conflict. Many story-tellers and popular preachers were not the product of the educated elite, though they often dealt with the same religious subjects, albeit in a more entertaining fashion. This fact, together with the story-tellers´ popularity, posed a threat to the religious establishment and its control of the sacred canon. Thus in order to preserve true religion and to protect the common herd from going astray, unauthorized teachers of religion, such as al-Bakrī, had to be vigorously opposed, even if a particular work or teaching by them was in general agreement with scholarly consensus.

Turning to chapter 3, Shoshan examines the Cairene celebration of Nawrūz, a spring festival that was popular for some time and ″celebrated by both the elite and the ordinary people″ (p. 42). Shoshan discusses the early Iranian origins of the festival, possible influence on it from ancient Egyptian, Roman, and Coptic sources, and the incorporation of the holiday into the Muslim calendar. Then he comparatively analyzes the festival and its rituals in terms of the medieval European carnival with its reversal of status and its uninhibited, wanton celebration. Shoshan concludes that Nawrūz may have served to ease social tensions between Cairo´s elite minority and the struggling lower classes, while at the same time conveying the poor´s frustration, anxiety, and dissatisfaction to the authorities.

Similar matters involving public protest are the subject of chapter 4 as Shoshan examines the issue of ″moral economy.″ He begins the chapter with an insightful account of the Cairene public´s demand for a ruler who was a born Muslim, and hence the mass demonstrations in support of the young sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad against his foreign-


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born, convert rival. Shoshan builds on this example to postulate the presence in Cairo of what E. P. Thompson has labeled a ″moral economy,″ ″a consistent traditional view of social norms and obligations, of the proper economic functions of several parties within the community″ (p. 65). Shoshan supports his assertion by a careful and detailed analysis of the Mamluk grain trade, and the grain riots and protests resulting from abuses which frustrated the masses′ expectations and/or violated accepted government policies.

Chapter 5 serves as a kind of conclusion to this book which Shoshan describes as being ″about the culture of ordinary people in medieval Cairo″ (p. 67). However, the acceptance and active participation of Mamluks and members of the scholarly class in many of the matters involving Sufis, Nawrūz, and public protests would suggest otherwise. Though the regime and some religious scholars might call for the banning of certain popular celebrations or practices (particularly if public morality or sexual promiscuity were an issue), Shoshan′s assertion that ″the learned and the rulers″ exhibited a ″general hostility . . . toward the culture of the commoners″ (p. 70) appears extreme, if not plain wrong. In fact, in this final chapter, Shoshan cites additional accounts of royal and scholarly participation in popular events and festivals (e.g. the Hajj caravan, and the ″Plenitude of the Nile″), and the veneration of Sufis. In the end, Shoshan, too, seems to sense the limitations and inadequacy of viewing Islam through the distorting lens of high vs. low cultures or its religious equivalent—and, perhaps origin—in orthodoxy vs. heterodoxy when he says (pp. 77-78):

> [W]e come to the argument that, in the final analysis, a refined approach to the history of culture should transcend the ″-chotomous″ view, the tendency to emphasize the dichotomy between ″high″ and ″low″. . . . The Cairene case was no exception: in medieval Cairo the cult of saints created a common ground for the people and the elite.

Shoshan′s approximately eighty pages of essays are followed by an appendix listing chronologically forty-two Sufi shaykhs of the Mamluk period and some of the sources which mention them. Why Shoshan included this appendix is not at all clear, though scholars of Sufism may find it of some use. After this appendix are forty-two pages of copious endnotes and a select bibliography, which underscores Shoshan′s laudable comparative approach to popular culture. Nevertheless, while he cites important studies on Europe, he ignores relevant studies on Islam. For example, concerning Islamic preaching, preachers and story-tellers Shoshan neglects the pioneering work of Johannes Pederson (1948, 1953) as well as Merlin Swartz′s edition and translation of Ibn al-Jawzī′s *Kitāb al-Quṣṣāṣ* (1971). Regarding the Muslim cult of the saints, Shoshan mentions that he knew of but did not consult Christopher Taylor′s 1989 dissertation on the important pilgrimage guide by Ibn al-Zayyāt; I am curious to know why, since Taylor′s dissertation is easily obtained through dissertation reprint services, or why Shoshan did not consult Ibn al-Zayyāt directly. Further, Shoshan incorrectly ascribes ʻAlī al-Sakhāwī′s *Tuḥfat al-Aḥbāb* to the famous Mamluk biographer Muḥammad al-Sakhāwī.

Such shortcomings aside, Boaz Shoshan′s *Popular Culture in Medieval Cairo* does contribute to the nascent research field of medieval Muslim popular culture while, at the same time, underscoring the need for the further sustained study of medieval Muslim societies.


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MOHAMED-MOAIN SADEK, *Die Mamlukische Architektur der Stadt Gaza*. (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1991). Pp. 700.

REVIEWED BY JONATHAN M. BLOOM, Richmond, New Hampshire

This book is the text of a doctoral dissertation submitted to the Freie Universität, Berlin in 1990 concerning architecture in the Palestinian city of Gaza during the Mamluk period. German doctoral dissertations, which must be published, normally represent work at a level between an American M.A. and a Ph.D., and this book is no exception. The first of its eight sections is an introduction to the city of Gaza, including discussion of topography, history, meaning (i.e., historical role), and population. The second through sixth sections present the surviving buildings of the Mamluk city, including nine mosques, two *madrasah*s, one *zāwiyah*, the governor´s palace, and a *qaysārīyah*. The seventh section discusses additional buildings that are known to have existed but are now destroyed: these include twenty-six mosques, seven *madrasah*s, a *zāwiyah*, a *ribāṭ*, the birthplace of the Imam al-Shāfi'ī, four tombs, a *masṭabah*, a palace, a *maydān*, a bath, a hospital, two caravanserais and three water-dispensaries. The book concludes with an assessment of the style of Mamluk architecture in the city, in which the author considers such features as plans, architectural elements—including courts, minarets, entrances, arches, and domes—and finally decoration—including *muqarnas*, *ablaq*, and vegetal, geometric, and epigraphic ornament. The book is illustrated with over two hundred pages of plans, sections, and rather gray, small and sometimes amateurish (e.g., nos. 36, 39, etc.) photographs. The plan of the city in the pocket was originally published in the *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* in 1888.

This is a straightforward book which presents the material in a methodical and logical, if not particularly exciting, fashion. The typical presentation of a building comprises several parts, including discussion of its location, dating and history, a general description, discussion of restorations, analysis of the exterior, description of special ornament, a review of the documentary sources, and a presentation of the inscriptions. The author is not especially interpretive or critical of his sources, but, considering the alternatives, this can be seen as a blessing. The book´s value lies in documenting largely unfamiliar material before it disappears and making it accessible for further study. Considering that the field of Islamic art and architecture is now over a century old, the author´s potted recapitulations of the early history of such features as the mosque, *miḥrāb*, and minaret are of little interest, particularly since the Gaza material offers little, if anything, new on the subject. The decision to present the material in a typological, rather than chronological, framework means that the monumental evidence is hardly used to help explain why and illustrate how Gaza developed as a regional center during the Mamluk period.

This study invites comparison with several other recent works on Mamluk and Syrian architecture. The most important is, of course, the late Michael Meinecke´s masterpiece, *Die Mamlukische Architektur in Ägypten und Syrien* (Abhandlungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Kairo, Islamische Reihe, 5-6. Glückstadt: J. J. Augustin, 1992), which represents the culmination of over two decades of the author´s work on the subject. Despite the earlier publication date of Dr. Sadek´s book, he was able to consult Meinecke´s work in proof, and Meinecke was able to incorporate Sadek´s


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findings in his far more integrative and detailed study, which will remain the book of first reference for Mamluk architecture for many decades. It might be fairer to compare Dr. Sadek´s book with recent studies about architecture in provincial Mamluk cities, in which case it stands between Michael Hamilton Burgoyne´s magisterial *Mamluk Jerusalem, an Architectural Study, with additional historical research by D. S. Richards* ([London]: World of Islam Festival Trust, 1987) and Hayat Salam-Leiblich´s *The Architecture of the Mamluk City of Tripoli* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, 1983). Nasser O. Rabbat´s imaginative work, *The Citadel of Cairo: A New Interpretation of Royal Mamluk Architecture* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), successfully integrates architectural and archaeological information with historical sources for the Mamluk period. Perhaps the most innovative of recent studies is Terry Allen´s work on Ayyubid and early Mamluk architecture based on an extraordinarily close reading of texts and examination of masonries. The evidence of the stones themselves reveals how individual masons worked and demonstrates how they moved from one project to another. Not only is Dr. Allen´s methodology innovative, but so is the electronic form in which he is publishing his new book. It can be found on the World Wide Web at: http://www.wco.com/~books/readmeaa.html.

AMALIA LEVANONI, *A Turning Point in Mamluk History: The Third Reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad Ibn Qalāwūn (1310-1341)*. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995). Pp. 221.

REVIEWED BY W. W. CLIFFORD, University of Chicago

Readers may gain the impression from Levanoni´s title that her monograph is exclusively about the third reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad. In fact, she ranges widely over the whole of the Baḥrī period and even well into that of the Circassian. Indeed, Levanoni´s ultimate concern is with the Mamluk army of the Circassian period, and her task is to demonstrate precisely how ″the spreading of professional and moral laxity in the Mamluk army″ of the ninth/fifteenth century ″set in during al-Nāṣir Muḥammad´s [third] rule″ (pp. 98-99). In doing so, Levanoni has broken significantly with the ahistorical model of the Mamluk system often associated with David Ayalon. Levanoni´s focus on the problems of change within the early eighth/fourteenth century Mamluk army recalls similar efforts made twenty years ago by R. Stephen Humphreys to question the stasis of the Syro-Egyptian military structure during the mid-seventh/thirteenth century. Humphreys´s controversial admonition at the time that the early Mamluk army ″should not be understood teleologically,″ as he believed Ayalon understood it, ″but as a series of responses to . . . a changing sociopolitical context″ has clearly struck a responsive chord in Levanoni.[1]

The ″dynamic″ nature of the Mamluk system was manifest, Levanoni believes, in its sudden transition from normative to anomic social behavior in the early eighth/fourteenth century. In short, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad´s third reign generated regressive changes in traditional practices of ″training, advancement and remuneration″ within the Mamluk military—changes which led later in the century to a proletarianization of the army and a

[1] R. Stephen Humphreys, ″The Emergence of the Mamluk Army,″ *Studia Islamica* 45 (1977): 69.


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collapse of internal social discipline. In the half century before al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, she argues, social solidarity among the Mamluks had been much more cohesive, based on ″norms,″ that is, one infers, idealized cultural constraints on action. These were represented by the ″principle of loyalty″ and ″a specific code of conduct which included modesty, order, and strictness,″ and which tended ″to foster a sense of respect for authority″ as well as ″underpin master-mamluk relations″ (pp. 14-19, 34). Levanoni seems to be arguing that the early Mamluks, owing to a high degree of both primary and secondary socialization, were actually able to internalize such norms, though she readily concedes we know little of the system by which *mamālīk* were raised and advanced (p. 3).

Yet, how reflective were such ″norms″ of a common value system among the early Mamluks? Levanoni suggests elsewhere that the motivation behind their social behavior may have been more material than normative, secured ultimately by Baybars′s linkage of ″rank″ and ″economic power″ through ″military hierarchy″ (p. 10). Perhaps the social stability Levanoni perceives in the early period reflects not so much internalized cultural definitions of behavior as individual responses to a common material stimulus. In any case, Levanoni′s functional assumptions about the effectiveness of early Mamluk socialization largely ignore the role of coercion in maintaining early consensus; she appears to hold to the Durkheimian view that conformity to social norms is better achieved through socialization than external sanctions. Yet, early sultans, including Baybars, relied heavily on a system of external rewards and penalties to regulate already highly dynamic social relationships among the Mamluks. Levanoni has obligated herself to argue, somewhat naively, that the same sociopolitical tensions extant in the early eighth/fourteenth century were not already present just fifty years earlier at the formation of the Mamluk state.

If Levanoni indeed accepts that there was a consistency of belief, values, and norms among the early Mamluks, how then did this cultural system collapse so soon and so completely? Conformity to norm is of course a matter of degree; actors always bring something with them to their social encounters. Norms can and do change, therefore, and any concept of social process has to explain how this occurs. Levanoni′s explanation is rather *deus ex machina*. She believes largely that al-Nāṣir′s ″general laxity″ and ″permissiveness″ were the root cause of ″decline″ of the Mamluk system. Indeed, one detects a certain Khaldunian censure of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad—a ruler like the Umayyad Hishām or the Abbasid al-Mu‘taṣim whose reign marked the end of true *siyāsat al-mulk wa-al-sulṭān*. Levanoni argues ultimately that al-Nāṣir consciously intended to destroy the social fabric of the Mamluk system through his dissociative behavior, though she relies somewhat incautiously on Circassian sources for this controversial observation (pp. 30-31, n. 13). While heeding Humphreys′s advice elsewhere, she seems to have ignored his admonition against conflating the authority of non-contemporary Circassian with contemporary Baḥrī chroniclers.[2]

Like many before her, then, Levanoni cannot finally resist reducing Mamluk history to the personal idiosyncrasies of Mamluk rulers. Yet, political cultures rarely change so dramatically for such simplistic reasons. And even an unstructured and conflictive environment such as Levanoni has described eventually creates pressure for the

[2] R. Stephen Humphreys, ″The Emergence of the Mamluk Army (Conclusion),″ *Studia Islamica* 46 (1977): 179; ″. . . we must abandon our traditional reliance on al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Taghrībirdī, for both men . . . tend to reinterpret their sources (while ostensibly reproducing them) in light of the conditions and issues of their own time.″


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development of new norms through a new process of mediation, negotiation, and compromise. What, then, were the new cultural definitions that emerged after al-Nāṣir Muḥammad? Levanoni can seem to suggest only normlessness as a new norm. This sort of argumentation, which plays neatly into the Orientalist myth of Mamluk anarchy, may still resonate among traditional scholars, but modern social historians, historical sociologists and political anthropologists of the Middle East, who arguably could have been Levanoni's most appreciative audience, are not likely to find this sort of reductionism particularly persuasive.

It is equally unlikely, though for different reasons, that the doyen of Mamluk studies, David Ayalon, will find Levanoni's arguments any more compelling. She has after all fundamentally rejected his basic assumptions about the ideal nature of the *mamlūk*'s relationship with his patron (*ustādh*) and comrades-in-bondage (*khushdāshīyah*). Indeed, Ayalon made what might be considered a pre-emptive criticism of Levanoni when, in 1990, he suggested that any future attempt to undercut his *idée fixe* about the Mamluk system would be "a very erroneous and most unwelcome tendency."[3] Ayalon has, of course, admitted that discipline and training declined later, during the Circassian period, and with it the loss of the "feeling of solidarity" within the Mamluk system as a whole, but he is unlikely to concede its origins scarcely a half century after the rise of Baybars. Ayalon's ready admission that the auxiliary military arm, the *ḥalqah*, began its disintegration in al-Nāṣir's day is of course tied precisely to his belief that the *ajnād al-ḥalqah* lacked in any case the very "feeling of solidarity linking companions in slavery and freedom (*al-khushdāshīyah*)."[4]

Levanoni's own evaluation of the Mamluk army's poor relation, the *ḥalqah*, conforms to Ayalon's general view that it experienced an administrative "down-grade" over the course of the eighth/fourteenth century (pp. 106-109). Levanoni, however, suggests a further interesting ramification. The *ḥalqah* may have emerged after al-Nāṣir's death as an open recruiting ground for the *umarā'* in their political squabbles. One wonders if the *ajnād al-ḥalqah*, as they endured official *déclassement*, might also have made their experience and services available to the *'āmmah*, improving perhaps the paramilitary competence of proto-militia like the *ḥarāfīsh*. Unlike Ayalon, Levanoni has not attempted to distinguish between the conditions of the *ḥalqah* of Egypt and that of Syria. Did the Syrian *ḥalqah* suffer ultimately a fate similar to its Egyptian counterpart? It is, of course, tempting to see a degraded *ḥalqah* as a paramilitary link in Syrian urban history between the high medieval *aḥdāth* and the late medieval *zu'ar*. Certainly, the image of disaffected *ajnād al-ḥalqah* buttresses Levanoni's larger argument about the proletarianization of the Mamluk army by rowdy "rank-and-file mamluks" (pp. 61-72).

In trying to differentiate her belief in the radical social transformation affected during al-Nāṣir's third reign from earlier interpretations, Levanoni has perhaps inevitably overstated her case at points. Her contention, for instance, that until the death of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad "the common people, *al-'āmmah*, lacked all influence on matters of rule and government" (p. 109) overlooks the impact the Cairene populace already had on the politics of al-Nāṣir's second reign. Or, Levanoni believes that "the formative years of the Mamluk

[3] David Ayalon, "Baḥrī Mamlūks, Burjī Mamlūks—Inadequate Names for the Two Reigns of the Mamlūk Sultanate," *Tārīḫ* 1 (1990): 46.

[4] David Ayalon, "Studies on the Structure of the Mamluk Army—II," *Studies on the Mamlūks of Egypt (1250-1517)* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1977), 456.


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state″ witnessed an almost perfect solidarity between master and man. Her argument that it was only after al-Nāṣir′s reign that amirs and sultans ″could no longer count on the loyalty of their own mamluks″ (pp. 86, 115) ignores the humiliation, mistreatment, and betrayal suffered, for instance, by early sultans such as al-Malik al-Sa'īd Barakah, Baybars′s son, or al-Malik al-Muẓaffar Baybars al-Jāshnakīr, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad′s predecessor, at the hands of their own *mamālīk*.

Levanoni′s provocative break with the traditional interpretation of the Mamluk system seems, ultimately, more instinctual than conceptual. She has broached important issues of historical sociology and even anthropology but, without the benefit of even the most basic social scientific texts, has been unable to develop them analytically. Without such a discursive framework she has not perhaps gotten the most out of her own discussion; certainly, she has missed a valuable opportunity to provide the sort of modern insight into problems of medieval Middle Eastern social structure and process which, for instance, Michael Chamberlain has recently done. Nevertheless, Levanoni′s work stands as both a credible alternative to the ahistorical view of David Ayalon, as well as the most detailed current study of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, somewhat better overall than the only other modern monograph, that of Hayat Nasser al-Hajji, which curiously she fails to cite.[5]

Levanoni has effectively circumnavigated the unremarkable if well-established modern tradition of political biography of Mamluk rulers by focusing on some of the linkages between the problems of one reign and those of others. In doing so, she has perhaps unintentionally delineated one of the principal shortcomings of Mamluk studies: the inability to envision the Mamluk polity as a holistic sociopolitical system—a state—whose operation possessed an internal logic capable of transcending the temporal limitations of individual reigns and personalities. This myopia has long been abetted by unrealistic historiographic perceptions of the Mamluk as an atavistic and regressive superimposition on indigenous Syro-Egyptian civilization. Fortunately, recent scholarship has begun to draw attention to certain socialized aspects of Mamluk behavior—desire for political consensus, leisure, education and manners, progressive agricultural management, and affiliation with local religious custom; no doubt the evolving study of women and family structure will help to portray the Mamluks in an even more socializing environment.

In sum, Levanoni has painted a rather grim picture of the Mamluk system scarcely a half century after its foundation. Yet, despite her rigorous claims of ″decline″ in the early eighth/fourteenth century, the Classical Mamluk state remained intact for another two centuries, and even afterward Mamluk political culture continued to thrive almost into the modern period. Perhaps we should be assessing the Mamluk achievement not in terms of its putative early failure but, rather, its obvious viability as a sociocultural phenomenon. The ultimate value of Levanoni′s book, ironically, may be to awaken in scholars the need to rethink more incisively what we mean by Mamluk ″decline.″

[5] Hayat Nasser al-Hajji, *The Internal Affairs in Egypt during the Third Reign of Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalāwūn 709-741/1309-1341* (Kuwait: Kuwait University Press, 1978).


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