

MAMLŪK STUDIES REVIEW

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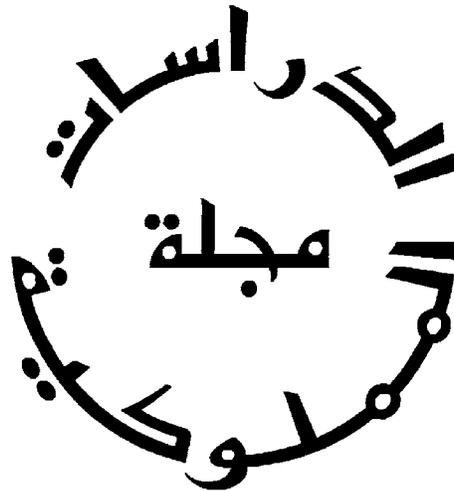
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MAMLŪK STUDIES REVIEW

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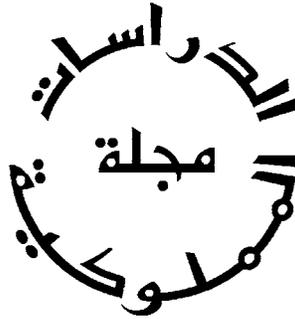
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UNIVERSITY OF BONN

Tankiz ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥusāmī al-Nāṣirī (d. 740/1340) as Seen by His Contemporary al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1363)

INTRODUCTION

Many take Hayden White’s “theory of narrativity” to be the beginning of a “change of paradigm,” in the sense of Thomas Kuhn, that indicated the bankruptcy of mechanistic and organic models of truth and explanation. Historians could no longer believe in explanatory systems and monolithic visions of history.¹ From now on, they would prefer the formist or contextualist form of argument, which is more modest and fragmentary. It is thanks to “narrativity” that historians were reminded of their cognitive limits, which had been neglected by positivism and other historiographical trends, and it is thanks to White, and to his *Metahistory* in particular, that they were reminded of the importance of their medium, language, and of their dependence on the linguistic universe. With the appearance of White’s much-disputed book, the exclusively interlinguistic debate on the so-called “linguistic turn” gained ground among historians. The literary theory which has been developed by Ferdinand de Saussure, Roland Barthes, and Mary Louise Pratt points out that history possesses neither an inherent unity nor an inherent coherence. Every understanding of history is a construct formed by linguistic means. The fact that a human being does not have a homogeneous personality without inherently profound contradictions leads to the inescapable conclusion that every text, as a product of the human imagination, must be read and interpreted in manifold ways: behind its reading and interpretation there is an unequivocal or unambiguous intention. In addition to this, Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida have referred to the political implications of language and to the hierarchy of power that is expressed by it. The contradictions of human life force the reader to deconstruct every text to lay open its ideological elements. Reality is not transported or mediated but constructed by language and discourse. Language may no longer be seen simply as an “innocent” medium, relatively or potentially transparent, for the representation or expression of a reality outside of

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¹For references and bibliographic details, see Stephan Conermann, “Einige allgemeine Überlegungen zum vormodernen ‘Historischen Denken’ der Araber,” *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung* 93, no. 2 (1998): 141–158; idem, *Historiographie als Sinnstiftung: Indo-persische Geschichtsschreibung während der Mogulzeit (932–1118/1526–1707)* (Wiesbaden, 2002), 1–33; and idem, *Die muslimische Sicht (13.–18. Jahrhundert)*, vol. 2 of *Geschichtsdenken der Kulturen: Eine kommentierte Dokumentation*, ed. Jörn Rüsen and Sebastian Manhart (Frankfurt, 2002), 15–25.



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itself. The “linguistic turn” has drawn the attention of historians to the important fact that the line between fact and fiction is no Iron Curtain. The single text is a web woven of “threads of discourses,” which penetrate into it from the outside and which the scholar must unravel.

Whoever composes a historical narrative approaches elements of the past as objects of historiography through the medium of the language which he employs.² The way in which a writer, chronicler, or historiographer makes use of the linguistic categories and of the “literary canons” underlying every representation of history is decisive for the manner in which the past is told and construed in his text. Although there might be a strong will to find the truth and to put things—epistemologically speaking—into the right light, historiography cannot, as most of the older “Quellenkunde” suggest, free the sources from their inherent subjectivity, so that we can, somehow, examine the object as though through the objective medium of a clear magnifying glass. On the contrary, subjectivity stands for the fact that historiography, as a created and organized product of the imagination, is the work of a fallible individual and therefore necessarily reflects the attitude of the chronicler toward his object. The individual intention is embedded in mind sets or mentalities that depend as much on the personal situation of the author as on the overall political, local, material, or social conditions. One of the basic attitudes is surely the conviction that it is important to call attention to one single event or the whole past. In many cases, a writer has it in mind to show his contemporaries and all future generations the evil of past deeds as a caution and the goodness of others as exemplary actions that should be followed by everyone. This pattern is based on the second mind set which is typical for medieval historiography: history is the history of the human being that has been created by God. It is finite and embedded in God’s will, which is recognized in revelation and which represents the normative values by which all human behavior is judged.

In analyzing what medieval Muslim historiography has produced, one might point out that its most important principle is didacticism, according to which accuracy as to “fact” was much less important than validity as to life vision.³ “Facts” often served as the raw material of problem solving, or at least of problem raising. Accordingly, historians did not argue from the particular to the general;

²For a good introduction, see Elizabeth A. Clark, *History, Theory, Text: Historians and the Linguistic Turn* (Cambridge, MA, 2004).

³An overview of studies on Mamluk historiography is given by Li Guo, “Mamluk Historiographic Studies: The State of the Art,” *Mamlūk Studies Review* 1 (1997): 15–44. An excellent study on Ibn Wardi’s (d. 749/1349) chronicle is Konrad Hirschler, *Medieval Arabic Historiography: Authors as Actors* (London, 2006). See also Sami G. Massoud, *The Chronicles and Annalistic Sources of the Early Mamluk Circassian Period* (Leiden, 2007).



rather they made particular events and people conform to traditional types or patterns. Since Muslim historiographers pursued the goal of showing the ideal nature of the Islamic community in all its manifestations, in the chronicles the gap between the ideal and the real is especially apparent. The explosive potential of historical writing lay in its ability to depict this gap, to reveal that whatever could be learned about elusive “historical reality” could contradict the ideals of the very pattern into which it was being pressed. Thus, on the one hand there is created in a chronicle a canonical picture of the world and a conventional portrayal of historical figures, while on the other hand, a chronicle is necessarily a compendium of original facts which are to a certain degree capable of destroying the ideal. Historiography played an important role in the politics of a traditional society dependent, as was medieval society, upon the past for legitimacy. It is only by appreciating how deeply this attitude of piety towards the past ran in medieval Muslim society that we can begin to understand the use made of history. It is not a question of the mindless repetition of tradition, of an inability to innovate or create, but of a compelling necessity to find in the past the means to explain and legitimize every deviation from tradition. In such a society, every deliberate modification of an existing type of activity must be based on a study of individual precedents. Every plan for the future is dependent on the pattern found in the past. What is important here is to recognize the fruitfulness of the medieval approach to the past. Medieval Muslim chroniclers often see the past as a school of moral instruction, a storehouse of examples of good and evil conduct which illuminate principles of behavior and teach men how to live. By their very adherence to the theory of the exemplary nature of history, Muslim chroniclers expressed the belief that history had a moral and political utility beyond mere description of past deeds. One result of this approach to history was a willingness to reduce the complexity of human experience into stereotypes according to “literary canons” which could be utilized easily to make a moral point.

To explain these “literary canons,” it is useful to consider the method of literary criticism applied by the historian Dimitriĭ Likhachev to medieval Russian chronicles. Likhachev argues that the analysis of various stylistic phenomena in medieval literature should be based on distinctions between “literary cliché” (*literaturnoe kliše*) and “literary canon” (*literaturnyj kanon*)—a distinction for which he provides the following picturesque elucidation:

“The same suit may be worn day after day. This will only make it soiled by wear but will not transform it into a formal outfit. A formal outfit, on the other hand, is worn only on those occasions when etiquette requires it. The shiny, threadbare suit represents literary cliché while the splendid formal attire which always has



the same shape and appearance and is worn on the appropriate occasions represents literary canon. The author is the master of ceremonies who creates a gala procession. And we witness a festival, not the week-days of routine.”⁴

While the medieval Muslim historian may have lacked a specifically modern sense of causation, he nevertheless operated from a set of assumptions about the relationship between past events and present reality which, for him, functioned much as modern theories of causality do for us. In order to understand this, it is necessary to return to the use of *exempla* and reinterpret their possible function in medieval historiography. By means of interpretation within “literary canon,” the significance of the past is reaffirmed for the present: the past becomes a prophecy of the future and is predeterminant in the sense that its very existence determines the shape and interpretation of what comes later. With the aid of such “literary canons,” the chroniclers could use past figures and events as explanations and modes of legitimizing present political life.

In the year 1969, at a time when the term “linguistic turn” became popular with the anthology *The Linguistic Turn: Essays in Philosophical Method* which the philosopher Richard Rorty edited in 1967, Ulrich Haarmann wrote in his Ph.D. thesis about a process of *Literarisierung* taking place in Arabic historiography during the last centuries of the Middle Ages.⁵ Without knowing the philosophical debates on language as constructing reality, Haarmann shows in his study that Mamluk chronicles are in general works of fiction as much as of history. In my opinion, Mamlukologists should pursue this train of thought. By analyzing the biography which the scholar and historian al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1363) wrote about the amir Tankiz ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥusāmī (d. 740/1340), I would like to draw our attention again to this remarkable approach.

“FACTS” ABOUT TANKIZ

Tankiz ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥusāmī al-Nāṣirī Amīr Sayf al-Dīn (d. 740/1340) was governor of the province of Damascus (712–40/1312–40) during the third reign of the Mamluk sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn (709–41/1310–41).⁶

⁴Dmitriĭ Sergeevich Likhachev, *Poëtika drevnerusskoĭ literatury*, 2nd ed. (Leningrad, 1971), 139.

⁵Ulrich Haarmann, *Quellenstudien zur frühen Mamlukenzeit* (Freiburg, 1969). On the discussion about Haarmann’s hypothesis that there was a trend deviating from the classic medieval Islamic standard in Mamluk historical writing, see Guo, “Mamluk Historiographic Studies,” 33–43.

⁶This is an extended version of my article on Tankiz in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 10:185–86. For good biographies of Tankiz, see Ellen Kenney, “Power and Patronage in Mamluk Syria: The Architecture and Urban Works of Tankiz al-Nasiri (1312–1340)” (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 2004), 19–32 and 396–403; and Ḥayāt Nāṣir al-Ḥajjī, *Al-Amīr Tankiz al-Ḥusāmī—Nāʿib al-Shām fī Fitrat 712–741/1312–1340* (Kuwait City, 1980).



Tankiz, whose name is an Arabic transcription of Old Turkish *teniz*, “sea, ocean,” was bought, as a young man, by a certain al-Khwājah ‘Alā’ al-Dīn al-Sīwāsī. He was brought to Egypt, where he was eventually purchased by the future sultan Ḥusām al-Dīn Lājīn. After Lājīn’s violent death in 698/1299 Tankiz became one of the bodyguards (*khāṣṣakīyah*) of Sultan al-Nāṣir. In al-Nāṣir’s service he distinguished himself in several battles with Mongol forces. Before the sultan went into exile to al-Karak 708/1308–9, he raised him to the rank of *amīr* ‘*asharah*. From al-Karak, Tankiz was sent to Syria on some dangerous missions, and, because of the skill with which he fulfilled these tasks, al-Nāṣir appointed him *nā’ib al-salṭanah* of Damascus when he himself took over the Mamluk sultanate for the third time. In Rabī’ II 712/August 1312 Tankiz arrived at his new headquarters.

Although some chroniclers claim that Tankiz suffered from hallucinations, that he had a mean and weak character, and that his punishments were sometimes unnecessarily cruel,⁷ he was respected by the population because of his strong sense of justice. During his governorship, Tankiz maintained a strong personal relationship with the sultan so that he became extremely powerful: in 712/1312 al-Nāṣir gave orders to all governors of Syria not to contact him directly anymore but to send every message via Tankiz. With this appointment to the *niyābah* of al-Shām in 714/1314, Tankiz finally controlled all *nuwwāb* of the Syrian provinces. Almost every other year he travelled to Egypt to meet with al-Nāṣir, who normally received him with great honor and bestowed precious gifts on him. In 730/1331, al-Nāṣir raised Tankiz’ son ‘Alī to the amirate and even welcomed the promotion of Tankiz’ two other sons, Muḥammad and Aḥmad, as being useful for his own aims.⁸ When in 737/1336 Tankiz came to the royal court for the wedding of al-Nāṣir’s son to the daughter of Amīr Ṭuquzdamur, the sultan greeted him like a ruler of his own rank.⁹ The climax of this kingly favor was reached with the honors that were granted to Tankiz during a visit on the occasion of his daughter’s confinement, as she was married to al-Nāṣir. In the course of his meeting, the sultan also arranged the marriage between two of his daughters and the sons of his highly esteemed governor.¹⁰

During his governorship Tankiz also distinguished himself as an able commander-

⁷Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī, *Kitāb al-Wāfi bi-al-Wafayāt*, vol. 10, ed. Ali Amara and Jacqueline Sublet (Wiesbaden, 1980), 424; ‘Umar ibn al-Muẓaffar ibn al-Wardī, *Tatimmat al-Mukhtaṣar fi Akhbār al-Bashar*, ed. Aḥmad Rif‘at al-Badrāwī (Beirut, 1970), 2:466ff.

⁸For references see Amalia Levanoni, *A Turning Point in Mamluk History: The Third Reign of al-Nasir Muhammad Ibn Qalawun (1310–1341)* (Leiden, 1995), 48, n. 95.

⁹See Mūsā ibn Muḥammad al-Yūsufi, *Nuzhat al-Nāẓir fi Sirat al-Nāṣir*, ed. Aḥmad Ḥuṭayṭ (Beirut 1986), 363–64.

¹⁰See Shams al-Dīn al-Shujā‘ī, *Tārīkh al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn al-Ṣālīhi wa-Awlādihī*, ed. and trans. Barbara Schäfer (Wiesbaden, 1977–85), 42ff. (Arabic text), 63ff. (German trans.).



in-chief. At the end of the year 715/1315, the sultan sent several regiments from Egypt to Syria to join the Syrian troops and attack Malatya, a town that was allied with the Mongols. He entrusted Tankiz with the supreme command, and Tankiz succeeded not only in taking the town but also in accomplishing some effective raids on the neighboring areas of Lesser Armenia.¹¹

The rapid expansion of the Mamluk capital under Sultan al-Nāṣir was followed by repercussions throughout the whole kingdom. The provincial governors displayed a remarkable building activity.¹² This is especially true of Tankiz, whose reconstructions and foundations changed the landscape of Damascus. Besides nine public bath houses and a large expansion of the communications network, he was responsible for the building of an impressive mosque that was named after him, for the extensive restoration of the Great Mosque, and for the rebuilding of the Dār al-Dhahab, which became his residence. In addition one should also mention the mausoleum of Sitt Sitītah, a double construction consisting of a mausoleum and a *ribāt* for women that was built for his wife Sitītah bint Amīr Kūkbāy al-Manṣūrī posthumously in Dhū al-Ḥijjah 730/September–October 1330.¹³

Over the course of time the wealth and authority of Tankiz steadily increased, so that the amirs at the court of Sultan al-Nāṣir began to fear his immense power. Tankiz even thought himself powerful enough to undermine the sultan's authority. For example, he sent back one of the envoys of Aratnā, the ruler of al-Rūm, when he arrived in Damascus with a message for the sultan. The insulted Aratnā complained to al-Nāṣir and demanded that he rebuke Tankiz for his improper behavior. Although the sultan kept the affair to himself, his ire rose when he sometime later learned that Tankiz had put one of the sultan's mamluks in prison and refused the ruler's request to release him.¹⁴ In addition to this, Tankiz once again incurred the anger of the sultan when in 739/1340 he not only held back the taxes levied from Damascene Christians who had been accused of arson in the provincial capital but also punished them with inappropriate cruelty. As a result, the relations between the sultan, who was suspicious by nature, and his *nāʿib al-*

¹¹ See Abū al-Fidāʾ Ismāʿīl ibn ʿAlī, *Al-Mukhtaṣar fī Tārīkh al-Bashar* (Cairo, 190–8), 4:74–76; P. M. Holt, *The Memoirs of a Syrian Prince* (Wiesbaden, 1983), 67ff.

¹² Cf. Kenney, “Power and Patronage,” and idem, “A Mamluk Monument “Restored”: The *Dār al-Qurʾān wa-al-Ḥadīth* of Tankiz al-Nāṣirī in Damascus,” *Mamlūk Studies Review* 11, no. 1 (2007): 85–118.

¹³ See Ismāʿīl ibn ʿUmar Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-Nihāyah fī al-Tārīkh* (Cairo, 1932–39), 14:151; ʿAbd al-Qādir ibn Muḥammad al-Nuʿaymī, *Al-Dāris fī Tārīkh al-Madāris*, ed. Jaʿfar al-Ḥasanī (Damascus, 1948–51), 2:274–75.

¹⁴ See Mufaḍḍal ibn Abī al-Faḍāʾil, *Al-Nahj al-Sadid wa-al-Durr al-Farid fīmā baʿda Tārīkh Ibn al-ʿAmīd*, ed. and trans. Samira Kortantamer (Freiburg, 1973), 92–93 (Arabic text), 239–41 (German trans.).



salṭānah in Syria worsened even more, if one can trust al-Maqrizī, who reports on Tankiz' intention to overthrow al-Nāṣir.¹⁵

When the sultan informed Tankiz of his decision to send some of his amirs, including Sayf al-Dīn Bashtāk, together with 350 of his mamluks to Damascus in order to accompany his two sons to their promised wives, Tankiz tried with sundry excuses to prevent them from coming. It seems that he now for his part mistrusted the sultan and had a strong suspicion that the real aim of this visit was his incarceration. His suspicions proved to be right, as al-Nāṣir did eventually give the order for his arrest. On 23 Dhū al-Ḥijjah 740/21 June 1340, Tankiz was put into prison by Amīr Sayf al-Dīn Ṭashtamur, the governor of Ṣafad. He was brought to Cairo in chains and later to Alexandria, where he was imprisoned and finally, on Dhū al-Ḥijjah 740/May–June 1340 or Muḥarram 741/June–July 1340, executed. His fortune and properties were confiscated and distributed among various high-ranking amirs. Two years after the death of Sultan al-Nāṣir (he died in 741/1341), Tankiz was buried in his mausoleum in Damascus.

THE STORY

The philologist, literary critic, litterateur, biographer, and all-around humanist Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī (696–764/1297–1363),¹⁶ who served Tankiz as a chancery secretary in the *dīwān al-inshā'* from 731/1331 onward, writes of him in his *Kitāb al-Wāfi bi-al-Wafayāt*:¹⁷

Tankiz, the great and formidable amir Sayf al-Dīn Abū Sa'īd, the viceroy of Syria. He was brought to Egypt as a boy and grew up there. He had a light olive complexion, was lean of physique, and had beautiful, slightly grey hair and a slow growth of beard. He was of handsome build. It was al-Khwājah 'Alā' al-Dīn al-Sīwāsī who brought him and from whom the amir Ḥusām al-Dīn Lājīn bought him. When Lājīn was murdered during his reign, he became one of the sultan [al-Malik al-Nāṣir]'s bodyguards. He fought with him in the battle of Wādī al-Khazindār and at Shaqḥab. The judge Shihāb

¹⁵See Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Maqrizī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Ma'rifat Duwal al-Mulūk*, ed. Muṣṭafā Ziyādah and Sa'īd 'Abd al-Fattāḥ 'Āshūr (Cairo, 1930–73), 2:509.

¹⁶On him, see F. Rosenthal, "al-Ṣafadī," *EP*, 8:759–60; Josef Van Ess, "Ṣafadī-Splitter," *Der Islam* 53 (1976): 242–66 and 54 (1977): 77–108; Donald P. Little, "Al-Ṣafadī as Biographer of his Contemporaries," in *Essays on Islamic Civilization Presented to Niyazi Berkes*, ed. idem (Leiden, 1976), 190–210, esp. 206–10.

¹⁷Al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi*, 10:420–43. The text has been translated into German by Susanna Fischer in her M.A. thesis, "Ägypten und Syrien in der ersten Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts: Vier ausgewählte Sultans- und Emirsviten aus dem biographischen Wörterbuch aṣ-Ṣafadis (Übersetzung und Kommentar)" (University of Freiburg in Breisgau, 1991), 35–47.



al-Dīn ibn al-Qaysarānī told me [the following], saying:

“One day he told me he and the amir Sayf al-Dīn Ṭaynāl belonged to the mamluks of Malik al-Ashraf.” He frequently listened to Bukhārī’s *Ṣaḥīḥ* [read] by Ibn al-Shiḥnah,¹⁸ to al-Ṭahāwī’s¹⁹ work *Al-Āthār* and Muslim’s *Ṣaḥīḥ*; he listened to [readings by] ʿĪsā al-Muṭʿim²⁰ and Abū Bakr ibn ʿAbd al-Dāyim,²¹ studying the science of hadith. Al-Maqrīzī [i.e., Shaykh Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Qādir ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Tamīm al-Maqrīzī al-Ḥanbalī,²² the grandfather of Abū ʿAlī ibn ʿAbd al-Qādir’s father] read to him Bukhārī’s *Thulāthiyāt* in the city of the Prophet [Medina].

Sultan al-Malik al-Nāṣir made him the amir of ten mamluks before going to al-Karak. He had left his *iqṭāʿ* in the care of the amir Ṣārim al-Dīn Ṣārūgā al-Muẓaffarī.²³ He [i.e., the sultan] was an *aga* to him [i.e., Tankiz], as the Turks would say. When he [i.e., the sultan] went to al-Karak, he was in the sultan’s service. Once he sent him as a messenger to al-Afram in Damascus, who suspected him of carrying letters to the amirs of Syria with him. He [i.e., al-Afram] became very afraid of him. He was searched and threatened with punishment. When he returned to the sultan, he gave him news about this, and the sultan said to him: “When I assume power again, you will be governor of Damascus.” When he came back from al-Karak, he installed the amir Sayf al-Dīn Arghūn al-Dawādār as viceroy of Egypt after capturing al-Jūkandār al-Kabīr and he said to Tankiz and Sūdī: “Be with Arghūn every day and learn from him to perform the duties of a governor and [also learn] the rules.” They did so assiduously for a year. When they had gained experience, he sent Sayf al-Dīn Sūdī as governor to Aleppo and Sayf al-Dīn Tankiz as governor to Damascus. He, al-Ḥājj Sayf al-Dīn Ariqtāy,²⁴ and the amir Ḥusām al-Dīn Ṭuruntāy al-Bashmaqḍār²⁵ came [to Damascus]

¹⁸Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad ibn Niʿmah, called Ibn al-Shiḥnah, d. 730/1313. Gaston Wiet, *Les biographies du Manhal Safī* (Cairo, 1932), 46.

¹⁹On him, see Norman Calder, “al-Ṭahāwī,” *EP*, 10:101–2.

²⁰Cf. Ibn Hajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Al-Durar al-Kāminah fī Aʿyān al-Mīʾah al-Thāminah*, ed. Muḥammad Sayyid Jād al-Ḥaqq (Hyderabad, 1966), 2:56.

²¹Ibid.

²²Died 732/1332. Cf. Wiet, *Les biographies*, 210.

²³Died 743/1343. Cf. *ibid.*, 171.

²⁴He successively held the offices of governor of Ṣafad, Tripoli, and Aleppo, viceroy of Egypt, governor of Aleppo, and Damascus; he died in 750/1349 aged 80. Cf. *ibid.*, 54.

²⁵Died 748/1347. Cf. *ibid.*, 176.



using the messenger route. They arrived there in the month of Rabīʿ II 712/[August 1312]. He was a good governor. He led the troops to Malatya and conquered it. His reputation was great; the amirs and governors in Damascus treated him with reverence and the subjects felt safe under his rule. For fear of him, because of his scrupulousness and his severe punishments, neither an amir nor a man of high degree could oppress anybody, whether it was a *dhimmī* or another. He constantly rose in rank which doubled his *iqṭāʿ*, his presents, and his income in horses, fabric, birds, and birds of prey, so that he was given the title of *Aʿazz Allāh Anṣār al-Maqarr al-Karīm al-ʿĀlī al-Amīrī*, and among his courtesy titles was *al-Atābikī al-Zāhidī al-ʿĀbidī*. He was called *Muʿizz al-Islām wa-al-Muslimīn, Sayyid al-Umarāʾ fī al-ʿĀlamīn*. And it was not known to us that letters of a sultan can also be written by a governor or by someone who is not governor but has a different function or position. The sultan hardly took any steps without sending for and consulting with him.

Rarely was he denied a request he addressed to the sultan. Whatever he decided concerning the appointment of an amir, a governor, an official or a judge, the bestowal of an *iqṭāʿ*, and so forth, the sovereign's approving signature would be given forthwith. Neither I nor any other man has ever heard of him giving someone an *iqṭāʿ*, the position of an amir, or any other office, whether important or unimportant, and accepting a bribe for it. He was incorruptible and virtuous.

Sharaf al-Dīn al-Nashw told me: "What he was given as a present by the sultan in the year 733/[1332–33] added up to 1,050,000 dirhams in addition to the horses and saddles which he was [also] given, the money in cash, the yield of the crops, and the small livestock which he owned in Syria. Then I saw documents in his hand which showed his expenses. These were 23 registers of what he needed during his sovereignty. They included two falcon-drums made of pure gold that weighed 1,000 *mathāqīl*, as well as the dusty long-sleeved gown which he was wearing." At length al-Nashw told me: "It [i.e., the gown] was valued for the sultan at 2,000 or 1,500 Egyptian dinars."

After that he betook himself [to the sultan] four times, I think, and every time the presents he received were doubled. His power and his reputation increased until the Egyptian amirs who were the [sultan's] bodyguards dreaded him. The amir Sayf al-Dīn Qurmushī



al-Ḥājib told me that the sultan had said to him: “O Qurmushī, for 30 years I have been trying to make people understand what I want to do for the amir, and [yet] they haven’t understood what I mean with that. The code of sovereignty keeps me from saying myself that I will not do anything for anyone unless it is on his request or intercession,” and he wished him [i.e., Tankiz] a long life. This reached his ears, and he said: “For the sultan’s life I will die.” When the amir Sayf al-Dīn Qurmushī communicated this to the sultan he said to him: “Tell him, if he lives longer than me, then he will be of use for my children, wives, and relatives; if he dies before I do, what should I do with his children? They can’t become anything higher than amirs, which they already are now, during his lifetime.” This is about how he spoke.

He introduced something we haven’t heard of anyone before, for he had a secretary who didn’t have any other business than to calculate the wealth which he [i.e., Tankiz] gained and that which he actually possessed. When the year came to an end, he compiled documents about the *zakāt* he [i.e., Tankiz] had to pay. He ordered that [the money] should be taken and given to those who were rightfully entitled to it.

His capital and his private property increased. He built the mosque in Ḥikr al-Summāq in Damascus which was named after him. Next to it he built a tomb and a bath. He built a tomb for his wife next to al-Khawāṣīn and a madrasah next to his house, the Dār al-Dhahab. In Jerusalem he built a caravansary; he renewed Jerusalem, supplied [the city with] water and diverted it to the Ḥaram district right towards the doors of the Aqṣá Mosque. He built two bathhouses there and an extraordinarily beautiful covered bazaar. In Ṣafad he built the hospital which was named after him and renewed the canals in Damascus because their water had changed. He renovated mosques and madrasahs, broadened the paths there [i.e., in Damascus] and took care of issues [regarding the city]. He owned edifices, buildings, and properties all over Syria.

He was not devious and did not hide anything. He would not let anything pass and would not allow any injustice. Neither did he flatter the amirs nor did he pay any special attention to them. In his time people’s properties and employment were safe. Each year he went hunting near the Euphrates with his troops. On some of his travels he crossed the Euphrates and stayed on the other side



for five days, hunting. The people fled from him into the cities of Tabriz and Sulṭānīyah, as well as to the cities of Mārdīn und Sīs.

His only aims were justice and its promotion, and to foster the application of the shari‘ah. However, he suffered from a hallucination [clouding of the mind], which made him imagine things that were not real, but of which he was absolutely certain. Awestruck, nobody was able to open his eyes and tell him the truth about what he was doing, [even though] it was the cause of several people’s deaths. When he was angry he could neither approve nor forgive. When he turned to violence he was immoderately cruel.²⁶ Even if the offence was inconsiderable and of little account, he magnified and exalted it and inflated it more and more, exceeding all limits.

I saw the following things in His Excellency: mostly, when he was seized by a fury against someone, this person would become so weak and miserable that he died. The judge Sharaf al-Dīn Abū Bakr ibn al-Shihāb Maḥmūd said: “By God, I was constantly worrying and afraid; I always expected something like this,” until [eventually] he was arrested and died.

When he was infuriated with someone he would not forgive him. Qiwām al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Abī al-Fawāris al-Baghdādī told me [the following]: “Once I said to him: ‘By God, O master, I have seen greater personalities and wealthier people than you.’ When he heard these words, he got into a fury and said to me angrily: ‘Whom have you seen that was greater and wealthier than me?’ At this I said to him: ‘Kharbandā,²⁷ Jūbān,²⁸ und Abū Sa‘īd.’²⁹ When he heard that, his fury abated. Then I said to him: ‘But [their] subjects did not love them as [yours love you], and they did not wish them any good, as your subjects wish for you. Their subjects did not live in this safety and justice.’ At this he said to me: ‘What joy could a sovereign have, whose subjects are not safe and sound?’”

About his love for justice [I can report the following]: One day one of his closest confidants, whose name I have forgotten, had

²⁶An allusion to Quran 26:130.

²⁷The person meant is Khudābandā, Qāzān’s brother.

²⁸Great Mongolian amir under Uljāytū and Abū Sa‘īd. He was Abū Sa‘īd’s deputy and son-in-law. Cf. Samira Kortantamer, *Ägypten und Syrien zwischen 1317 und 1341 in der Chronik des Mufaḍḍal b. Abī l-Faḍā’il* (Freiburg, 1973), 61.

²⁹Ninth sovereign of the Ilkhanate (704–36/1305–35), ruled 716–36/1316–35. Cf. Paul Jackson, “Abū Sa‘īd,” *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, 1: 374–77.



a meal with him. He [i.e., Tankiz] looked at his bandaged finger and asked for the reason, but the man did not want to name it. However, he did not leave him any peace until he finally said: “O master, a bowyer tried to make an arch three times [without succeeding]. He made me angry and I hit him with my fist.” When he heard what the man was saying, he turned away from his food and said: “Raise him.” Then he hurled him to the ground and gave him the cane 400 times, as it is said. He stripped him of his *iqṭāʿ* and was angry with him for years, until someone put in a good word for him. Then he showed himself favorable to him again. Years after Tankiz’s death, his secretary Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Kūndak told me: “By God, during the time I was in his service I have never seen him inattentive. I always saw him as if he stood in front of God, the Sublime. At nighttime he only prayed with a fresh ritual washing,” so he said.

The Shaykh Ḥasan ibn Damurtāsh³⁰ was vexed with him [i.e., Tankiz] and dreaded him. It is said that he defamed him in front of the sultan and said to him: “He wanted to come to me and conspire against you.” After this the sultan acted unapproachably [towards Tankiz]. This happened [just] when the amir Sayf al-Dīn Bashtāk, Sayf al-Dīn Yalbughā al-Yaḥyawī,³¹ as well as twenty amirs from the [sovereign’s] bodyguard were planning on coming to Damascus with two of the daughters of the sultan of Egypt, to marry them off to the two sons of the amir Sayf al-Dīn Tankiz. Thereupon [Tankiz] sent the following [message to the sultan]: “O master, what is the use of those noble amirs coming to Damascus? The coast lands are barren this year, [and] high expenses for the army are necessary. I will come to [your] palace together with my sons and the wedding will take place there.”

At this, [the sultan] sent the amir Sayf al-Dīn Ṭājār al-Dawādār³² to him, who told him: “The sultan is sending you his regards and says he is not asking you to come to Egypt any more; also he is not sending you a noble amir any more, so you do not need to worry.” Thereupon he said: “I will go to him with you and my sons.” The other said to him: “If you arrived in Bilbays he would send you back. I want to spare you this sorrow. In eight days I will

³⁰Cf. Kortantamer, *Ägypten und Syrien*, 194.

³¹He successively became governor of Ḥamāh, Aleppo, and Damascus and died in 748/1347. Wiet, *Les biographies*, 403.

³²A Mamluk amir, died 742/1341. Wiet, *Les biographies*, 174.



be with you again with a new certificate of appointment and new presents.” With these words he convinced him. Had he gone to see the sultan it would have been better for him, but God decides what will be executed.³³

In those times the inhabitants of Damascus had spread the rumor that he had decided to go to the country of the Mongols. This gossip came to the ears of Ṭājār al-Dawādār. Tankiz had treated him in an indecorous manner in those times, whereupon he angrily turned away from him. It seemed as if he had falsified a remark [of Tankiz], but God knows best. The sultan was very cross. He sent 5,000 or 10,000 horsemen, and Bashtāk was their commander. He made the entire Egyptian army swear [allegiance] because he was scared. He sent [an order] by way of a messenger to the amir Sayf al-Dīn Ṭashtamur, the governor of Ṣafad, commanding him to go to Damascus to arrest Tankiz. He wrote [orders] to the chamberlain, the amir Sayf al-Dīn Quṭlūbughā al-Fakhrī and the amirs [and commanded them] to arrest him, and he said: “If you can keep him from going [to the Mongols], then that is all I want. The troops will come to you from Egypt.”

The amir Sayf al-Dīn Ṭashtamur reached al-Mizzah by noon and sent for the amir Sayf al-Dīn al-Fakhrī. His secretary had already arrived in the early morning of that day and had met the amirs. They had made an arrangement. The amir Sayf al-Dīn al-Lamash al-Ḥājib went to al-Qābūn and made the way [there] impassable. He threw pieces of wood on [the way], tethered camels [there], and [unloaded] bales of straw. He said to the people: “The enemy of the sultan will be passing you soon; stop him.” The amirs rode off and gathered at the Bāb al-Naṣr.

All this happened while he [i.e., Tankiz] was awaiting the arrival of Ṭājār al-Dawādār, without having any notice of what was being planned against him. This day he had gone to the palace which he had built on [his] fief with his wives. The amir Sayf al-Dīn Qurmushī went to him and told him about the arrival of the amir Ṭashtamur. He was astonished and perplexed about that and said to him: “What am I supposed to do now?” [The other] said: “We are going into the Dār al-Sa‘ādah.” Thereupon he went and entered the Dār al-Sa‘ādah, and the gates of the city were closed. He wanted to put on [his battle] dress and fight. Then he was told

³³An allusion to Quran 8:42.



that the people were plundering and that Damascus was at war; upon this he preferred allaying the riot without drawing weapons. He was advised to leave. Thereupon he sent for the amir Sayf al-Dīn Ṭashtamur and had him told: “Why have you come [here]? Come in to see me.” [The amir] said: “I have come as a messenger from your master; if you come outside to see me I will tell you what he told me to do. Even if you go to where the sun rises, I will follow you. I will not return unless one of us dies. [But] I will not enter the city.”

Thereupon he went outside to them and realized that this was his end. So he surrendered. His sword was taken from him, and he was tied up behind the mosque al-Qadam; in the afternoon on 23 Dhū al-Ḥijjah 740/[21 June 1340] he was sent to the sultan, together with the amir Rukn al-Dīn Baybars, the armor-bearer. The inhabitants of Damascus pitied him. How long they pitied him! Hail to the one who can sweep away [all] wealth [at once], the one whose reign does not end, whose power is everlasting and who is not befallen by misfortunes.

I saw him myself in the year 739/[1338–39], when the sultan went to Biʿr al-Bayḍāʾ with his amirs and children to meet him. When he was close to him, he approached him by foot, kissed his head, embraced him, and honored him in an exaggerated way, after one amir after the other had already come to him, greeted him, and kissed his hand and his knee. The amir Sayf al-Dīn Qawṣūn came to the inn in al-Ṣāliḥīyah to welcome him. As for the presents with which he [i.e., the sultan] overwhelmed him daily in the year [739], until he went away for a period of almost fifty days, they were beyond all limits.

I saw him when he was hunting in Upper Egypt that year. The sultan came to him. In front of him came the amirs Malaktamur al-Ḥijāzī,³⁴ Yalbughā al-Yaḥyawī, Alṭunbughā al-Māridānī,³⁵ Āqsunqur, and another, whom I have now forgotten. On the hand of each of them sat a bird of prey. He [i.e., the sultan] said to him: “O officer, I am your hunting amir; those are your falcon-bearers and these are your birds.” Then [Tankiz] wanted to dismount to kiss the earth, but [the sultan] kept him from it.

Then I saw him myself the day he was arrested and chained.

³⁴A Mamluk amir, died 748/1347. Wiet, *Les biographies*, 380.

³⁵A Mamluk amir and governor of the province of Ḥamāh and Aleppo; died 744/1343. *Ibid.*, 77.



The blacksmith [who put him in irons] made him stand up and sit down again four times while the people stood in front of him. This was a clear warning to me. His income was confiscated, and Ṭughāy³⁶ and Janghāy,³⁷ his two mamluks, were held in the citadel. After a short while the amirs Sayf al-Dīn Bashtāk, Ṭājār al-Dawādār, al-Ḥājj Ariqṭāy, and seven more amirs arrived. They stayed at the palace al-Ablaq. At their arrival they made the amir swear [allegiance] and began to exhibit his income in public. They brought out his treasures and accumulated belongings.

Bashtāk went to Egypt; with him he had 336,000 Egyptian dinars from [Tankiz'] property, as well as 1,500,000 dirhams, jewels made of precious rubies, wonderful pieces, rare pearls, brocade fabrics, caps made of brocade, golden belts, silver containers inlaid with gold, and satin and other fabrics whose quantity added up to 800 *ḥiml*. He had left Barsbughā³⁸ in his place, who then went [after him] to Egypt carrying 40,000 dinars as well as 1,100,000 dirhams, after having extorted these from the people and the remaining property of Tankiz, and having taken his mamluks, [female] slaves, and valuable horses.

As for himself [i.e., Tankiz], he was sent to Alexandria. There he was held prisoner for a period of less than a month. Then God the Sublime decided on his case. It is said that the commandant Ibrāhīm ibn Šābir³⁹ went to him, and that this was the last thing ever to become known about him. He died and the inhabitants of Alexandria prayed for him. His grave is now visited and prayed at. May God the Sublime take pity on him. [In the meter *al-kāmīl*]:

“Like lightning, flaring up in the land, he vanished as if he had never shone.”

Then the decree of the sultan was published [with the command] to list his property. This was done justly by experienced people and persons who knew how to estimate the value properly. Together with this [list] official statements came into the state chancellery to be sent to the sultan. From these I copied the following: [Here

³⁶Died 741/1341. *Ibid.*, 177.

³⁷Died 741/1341. *Ibid.*, 124.

³⁸A close confidant of Sultan al-Malik al-Nāṣir. He died 742/1342. Kortantamer, *Ägypten und Syrien*, 160.

³⁹As a *jandār*, he was responsible for torture and executions. After Sultan al-Malik al-Nāṣir's death, he himself was tortured until he died in 742/1341. *Ibid.*, 236.



follows a list of his properties in Syria and their values]. . . .

All this [which has just been listed] is in addition to the properties and charitable institutions he owned in Ṣafad, ʿAjlūn, Jerusalem, Nābulus, al-Ramlah, Jaljūlyah, and Egypt. He built a beautiful hospital in Ṣafad, and this was also where he had some of his charitable foundations. In Jerusalem he built a hospice, two bath houses, and covered bazaars. He owned a very beautiful caravansary in Jaljūlyah, which I think is a charitable institution [foundation]. In al-Ramlah and in the Kāfūrīyah gardens in Cairo he owned a magnificent house, a bath, and several stores.

At the beginning of Rajab 744/[middle of November 1343] his coffin was transferred from Alexandria to Damascus. He was laid to rest in his mausoleum next to his mosque, of which it is known that he had it built. May God take pity on him.

FACTS OR FICTION?

A typical feature of Mamluk historiography is the various narrative strategies the different chroniclers use in their biographical or annalistic texts to produce emotional effects on their readers.⁴⁰ They utilize, for example, tropes (metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony) or anecdotes, dialogues, and/or quotations from poems and from the Quran. In his description of Tankiz' life and career we find several of these literary elements:

ANECDOTES

Al-Ṣafadī enriches his story with numerous little anecdotes (*nukat*), i.e., short tales narrating an interesting or amusing biographical incident. By giving variety and color to the text, they satisfy the taste of the audience. Ulrich Haarmann writes in his study on Mamluk historians that such anecdotes serve as a connection between history and literature. In general they should

on the one hand, illustrate complex, dry, or very factual accounts to increase the readers' awareness of the historian's main issues. On the other hand, they can serve the author's interest in entertaining his readership as well. If this is the case, the anecdotes exclusively focus on those facts which are suited to telling a good story. At this point, it is no longer the question for the chronicler whether these textual fragments are important for the overall scheme of his work

⁴⁰Cf. Haarmann, *Quellenstudien*, 167. For some of the following arguments, see also Fischer, "Vier ausgewählte Sultans- und Emirsviten," 66–76.



or not.⁴¹

Within al-Ṣafadī's *Wāfi* these short, entertaining, and amusing anecdotes have the function of emphasizing certain features and characteristics of historic figures. They illuminate special events in their *curricula vitae*. The annalistic framework of their narratives is punctuated by the inclusion of anecdotes, digressions which serve as commentary on the events of the present. Haarmann quotes Ibn al-Dawādārī (d. 713/1313), who recommends in his universal history *Kanz al-Durar* the use of stories as a rhetorical stylistic device:

For this digression we have several good reasons. The first is the following: books whose story follows just one mode of narration are bound to be boring. Therefore, we tried to present our speech in an interesting and varied way by using odd and remarkable anecdotes.⁴²

Two short anecdotes which al-Ṣafadī incorporates in his biography of Tankiz constitute a good example of this narrative strategy:

When he was infuriated with someone he would not forgive him. Qiwām al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Abī al-Fawāris al-Baghdādī told me [the following]: "Once I said to him: 'By God, O master, I have seen greater personalities and wealthier people than you.' When he heard these words, he got into a fury and said to me angrily: 'Whom have you seen that was greater and wealthier than me?' On this I said to him: 'Kharbandā, Jūbān, and Abū Sa'id.' When he heard that his fury abated. Then I said to him: 'But [their] subjects did not love them as [yours love you], and they did not wish them any good, as your subjects wish for you. Their subjects did not live in this safety and justice.' On this he said to me: 'What joy could a sovereign have, whose subjects are not safe and sound?'"

About his love for justice [I can report the following]: One day one of his closest confidants, whose name I have forgotten, had a meal with him. He [i.e., Tankiz] looked at his bandaged finger and asked for the reason, but the man did not want to name it. However, he did not leave him any peace until he finally said: "O master, a bowyer tried to make an arch three times [without succeeding]. He made me angry and I hit him with my fist." When

⁴¹Haarmann, *Quellenstudien*, 167.

⁴²Quoted from Ulrich Haarmann, "Auflösung und Bewahrung der klassischen Formen arabischer Geschichtsschreibung in der Zeit der Mamluken," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 121 (1971): 55–56.



he heard what the man was saying, he turned away from his food and said: “Raise him.” Then he hurled him to the ground and gave him the cane 400 times, as it is said. He stripped him of his *iqṭāʿ* and was angry with him for years, until someone put in a good word for him. Then he showed himself favorable to him again.

These insertions correspond to the aim and objective of anecdotes. On the one hand they give us information about al-Ṣafadī’s idea of Tankiz’ character. On the other hand they provide us with an interesting and entertaining biography of the governor.⁴³ In general, one should be very careful when it comes to reconstructing reality from this material. We never know whether the picture the author draws in his text is real or just the result of his imagination. One has to find really independent sources which tell the same story to be sure that the event described actually happened.

DIALOGUES

When reported or imitated in the narrative, dialogues constitute a form of literature used for purposes of rhetorical entertainment and instruction. In his biographies al-Ṣafadī often puts words into the mouths of people. Everything in these scenes, from their setting to the dramatis personae, can be an invention of the chronicler.⁴⁴ Normally, he just wants to bring out a very complex and complicated relationship between two or three persons:

His power and his reputation increased until the Egyptian amirs who were the [sultan’s] bodyguards dreaded him. The amir Sayf al-Dīn Qurmushī al-Ḥājib told me that the sultan had said to him: “O Qurmushī, for 30 years I have been trying to make people understand what I want to do for the amir, and [yet] they haven’t understood what I mean with that. The code of sovereignty keeps me from saying myself that I will not do anything for anyone unless it is on his request or intercession,” and he wished him [i.e., Tankiz] a long life. This reached his ears, and he said: “For the sultan’s life I will die.” When the amir Sayf al-Dīn Qurmushī communicated this to the sultan he said to him: “Tell him, if he lives longer than me, then he will be of use for my children, wives, and relatives; if he dies before I do, what should I do with his children? They can’t

⁴³Sometimes al-Ṣafadī includes in his *Wāfi* biographies in which we find only anecdotes and no concrete information about the person at all. Cf. Donald P. Little, *An Introduction to Mamlūk Historiography: An Analysis of Arabic Annalistic and Biographical Sources for the Reign of al-Malik an-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāʿūn* (Wiesbaden, 1970), 104–5.

⁴⁴Cf. Haarmann, “Auflösung,” 57.



become anything higher than amirs, which they already are now, during his lifetime.” This is about how he spoke.

All this happened while he [i.e., Tankiz] was awaiting the arrival of Ṭājār al-Dawādār, without having any notice of what was being planned against him. This day he had gone to the palace which he had built on [his] fief with his wives. The amir Sayf al-Dīn Qurmushī went to him and told him about the arrival of the amir Ṭashtamur. He was astonished and perplexed about that and said to him: “What am I supposed to do now?” [The other] said: “We are going into the Dār al-Sa‘ādah.” Thereupon he went and entered the Dār al-Sa‘ādah, and the gates of the city were closed. He wanted to put on [his battle] dress and fight. Then he was told that the people were plundering and that Damascus was at war; upon this he preferred allaying the riot without drawing weapons. He was advised to leave. Thereupon he sent for the amir Sayf al-Dīn Ṭashtamur and had him told: “Why have you come [here]? Come in to see me.” [The amir] said: “I have come as a messenger from your master; if you come outside to see me I will tell you what he told me to do. Even if you go to where the sun rises, I will follow you. I will not return unless one of us dies. [But] I will not enter the city.”

Dialogue expresses the convolutions of human thought so spontaneously that it almost defies analysis. We should not trust it.

POEMS

Al-Ṣafadī had a predilection for poetry. In his *Wāfi*, he heaps very long and redundant *saj‘* poems upon the reader. They don’t refer to any event in the life of the main character but are only of rhetorical value. That is also true for the verses at the end of Tankiz’ biography.⁴⁵ As a rule, the poems were not written by him. This does not mean that al-Ṣafadī wasn’t a good poet. Quite the contrary, he belongs to the small group of outstanding, creative, and innovative poets of the Mamluk era.⁴⁶

⁴⁵Cf. al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi*, 432–35.

⁴⁶On al-Ṣafadī as a remarkable poet, see Thomas Bauer, “Literarische Anthologien der Mamlūkenzeit,” in *Die Mamlūken: Studien zu ihrer Geschichte und Kultur: Zum Gedenken an Ulrich Haarmann (1942–1999)*, ed. Stephan Conermann and Anja Pistor-Hatam (Schenefeld, 2003), 71–122. See also Bauer’s “Mamluk Literature: Misunderstandings and New Approaches,” *Mamluk Studies Review* 9, no. 2 (2005): 105–32.



QURANIC ALLUSIONS

References to the Holy Book are a very important rhetorical element in historiographical texts. In Tankiz' biography al-Ṣafadī writes:

His only aims were justice and its exercise, and to foster the application of the shariʿah. However, he suffered from a hallucination [clouding of the mind], which made him imagine things that were not real, but of which he was absolutely certain. Awestruck, nobody was able to open his eyes and tell him the truth about what he was doing, [even though] it was the cause of several people's deaths. When he was angry he could neither approve nor forgive. *When he turned to violence he was immoderately cruel.* Even if the offence was inconsiderable and of little account, he magnified and exalted it and inflated it more and more, exceeding all limits.

At this, [the sultan] sent the amir Sayf al-Dīn Ṭājār al-Dawādār to him, who told him: "The sultan is sending you his regards and says he is not asking you to come to Egypt any more; also he is not sending you a noble amir any more, so you do not need to worry." Thereupon he said: "I will go to him with you and my sons." The other said to him: "If you arrived in Bilbays he would send you back. I want to spare you this sorrow. In eight days I will be with you again with a new certificate of appointment and new presents." With these words he convinced him. *Had he gone to see the sultan it would have been better for him, but God decides what will be executed.*

The italicized passages are allusions to Quran 26:130 ("And if you attack, you strike ruthlessly?") and to Quran 8:42 ("And had you planned for this meeting, you would have disagreed on its timing, but God was to enforce a command that was already done. So that He would destroy those to be destroyed with proof, and to let those who will live be alive with proof"). For us, it is very difficult, not to say nearly impossible, to supply proof of the truth of al-Ṣafadī's statements.

To sum up, a typical feature of Mamluk biographies is the fact that the personality of the person whom the author describes in his text seems not to be that important. The person as such is only of secondary importance. The biographer does not show any interest in describing the inner development or socialization of character. The traits of the heroes are very often presented in the form of short anecdotes. We get, for example, very meagre information about Tankiz. He is characterized by al-Ṣafadī as being cruel but just, violent-tempered, and unforgiving. At the same time, the author of the *Wāfi* says that he acted open-mindedly, honestly,



and cleverly. We learn nothing concrete about his childhood, his upbringing, his family, or his feeling. The biographies offer the reader nothing more than a list of certain characteristics. But these features are put so vaguely that they could fit every second historical personality.

Al-Şafadī is no exception among the Mamluk historians. Comparing his biographies to vitae written by other scholars, one must say that their inner structures always follow the same pattern: the biographer wants to emphasize the religious, political, or cultural contribution of the chosen person to the Muslim community.⁴⁷ Al-Şafadī deems Tankiz appropriate and worthy to be included in his *Wāfi* because he was not only an important amir but also a confidant of the sultan, a very successful military leader, and a respected and generous patron of architecture in Egypt and Syria.

Al-Şafadī was a man with literary ambitions. He knew all the literary strategies and rhetorical tricks. He was very interested in Abbasid poetry and had an excellent knowledge of the sources. As a Mamluk official he had a tendency to describe his peers. Al-Şafadī's method of working meets the expectations of the readership and complies with its demand for "stark literarisierten Werken der Popularitätsmethode."⁴⁸ Historical writing is as fictional as other forms of literary expression, being as Hayden White puts it, "a verbal structure in the form of a narrative prose discourse."⁴⁹

RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

The discussion of the relationship between "narrativity" and historiography, poetry and narration, language and textuality, fact and fiction has demonstrated that even after the imposition of the scientific method on all realms of knowledge which set in with the closing of the eighteenth century, there are more similarities than differences among historiography, poetry, and rhetoric. Recent studies across the field have shown the soundness of this hypothesis. Unfortunately, the overwhelming majority of modern theoreticians are only interested in European and Anglo-American historiography after 1800 and do not take into consideration other cultures or "premodern" historiographical works. This is, in my opinion, a culpable omission, because I think it a very interesting field of research for a historian not only to sort out basic facts and information about social phenomena from the chronicles but also to analyze how these works are composed. What does the author intend with his chronicle? What kind of narrative techniques does he use, and to what end? Which topoi, stereotypes, clichés, myths, archetypes, and/or

⁴⁷Cf. Little, *Introduction*, 112.

⁴⁸Cf. Haarmann, "Auflösung," 59.

⁴⁹Hayden White, *Metahistory* (Baltimore, 1973), ix, quoted in Hirschler, *Medieval Arabic Historiography*, 4.



legends can we isolate? Is it possible to gain some insight into the “literary canon” and the “literary cliché,” i.e., the two categories discussed by Likhachev? Can we distinguish prevailing cultural semiotic associations? What do we know about the historical consciousness that is expressed in the chronicles? Does the author try to make “sense” of the past? And if he does, what form does this “sense” take? What about linguistic and semantic connotations in the text?

Another field of research could be the representation and narratological translation of “historical thinking” in historiographical texts. Here are the main characteristics of “historical thinking”: (1) Both happy and unhappy or fortunate and unfortunate events have to be explained. This is the more necessary if these events do not come up to the expectations one has in mind while doing something. Above all it is the realized or unrealized intention that leads to the desire to explain these events. This is true for individuals, groups, or communities, if they want to create an identity. (2) Experiences are always experiences in time. The “historical thinking” has to interpret and explain these experiences in time. (3) Although historiography must invariably be used for interpreting experiences in time, it is not the only form of “historical thinking.” It is a fact that historiography normally tries to be nearer to the truth than other texts and tries to operate with chosen elements of “historical thinking,” but in the end one shouldn’t consider this approach or this sort of texts totally different from other approaches or texts. This is all the more the case if we proceed on the assumption that every text is part of the mental process we call “historical thinking.” (4) “Historical thinking” produces sense or meaning out of time. Time in this context again means events which have taken place in time and which have to be explained, whereas sense or meaning stands for understanding all the connotations and epistemological facets the word “time” includes. If someone wants to understand what meaning the present time has for him, he has to refer to the experiences of the past. In addition to that, he can, for example, deduce the further course of development or future processes from comparable cases, which also occurred in the past. His expectations or hopes for the future exercise a strong influence on his acting in the present. They lay the foundation for his social, political, or individual behavior. In the final analysis “historical thinking” and historiography have only the task to make it possible for an individual, a group, or a community to master his or its life or—to say it in other words—to give an orientation in time. The essence of “historical thinking” and historiography is not necessarily its scientific claim. (5) Aside from this orientation in time, “historical thinking” achieves a reflection of the subject or the historical self on its own premises. One can say that action as well as writing as a consequence of thinking always leads to the idea a historical subject has of its own, if this subject understands itself as a planning and acting unity. Therefore, if an action upon which one has been reflecting does not achieve the



intended results, not only the understanding of the world but also the self-image, the conception of oneself is affected. The result is personal and extra-personal self-doubt, especially if we keep in mind that during a period of upheaval and change “historical thinking” gives meaning to our life (*Sinnstiftung*) and continuity to the individual or collective identity. In this manner the understanding of oneself is preserved or newly formulated and has repercussions on future actions, insofar as the historical agents want to be seen and judged by other subjects in the context of its self-image. (6) “Historical thinking” and historiography do not give and cannot give eternal verities or supertemporal answers. This statement seems the more true if we consider the fact that “historical thinking” has to give meaning to the world again and again. On the other hand, it is impossible to think of this task, i.e., giving meaning to the world, without the claim of being true. (7) Here we have the problem of what to consider true. In the field of “historical thinking” historiography or—generally speaking—occupation with the past in every scientific form is synonymous with the institutionalized public dealing with its own collective memory (*Erinnerungsarbeit*), what in the end is a problem of norms. If we ask for the intentions and motives for acting in the past, we have in the first place to reflect upon the current values of this past. Norms, i.e., value judgements on things, attitudes, ways of acting, tastes, etc., are part of the process which leads to the description of the past as history. We are obliged to decipher these norms, because the human past gives us no key to decode its events as a history which has any meaning for the present. The past as such makes no history. What transforms the past into a history is our interest in it, our desire to let the past explain who we are. (8) Today, historical science and historiography are bound to the necessity of being universally valid. This is of course a self-image that this so-called science can hardly ever fulfill. History as the result of historiography is basically in its fundamental structure, i.e., as a narration, not different from other narrations which are related without the claim of being scientific. This narrativity illustrates that history is a construct. It is not possible to give meaning to the world out of the knowledge of past events if we do not see the inner epistemological coherence of a text which becomes evident by its narrative pattern. (9) Considering the fact that we cannot separate historiography from other texts, we have to presume that we can find in historical texts the same narrative strategies as in other texts. Thus, we find for example the following three elements: (a) the claim of having been an eyewitness to the events (*empirical validity*); (b) the hint that the story is important for the reader, i.e., that it leads to a better understanding of the present (*normative validity*, because the choices the narrator makes are influenced by his norms, because he wants the reader to share his values); (c) the narration unites experiences and norms and wants to give meaning to the world (*narrative validity*). (10) To understand the present in the



context of the past is not possible with isolated facts (*empirical validity*) or with values even if one agrees with these values (*normative validity*). For this reason, the *narrative validity* is the specifically historical criterion of what is true. Through the applications of norms and values (what is interesting?), it turns the past into history and then draws out of that history conclusions for the present time by giving instructions for acting. This finally is essential for planning the future.

If we want to understand our chronicles better it might be a good idea to follow both of these tracks. At the least, there are some interesting and new questions. I am sure that the answers will broaden our horizon.



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Ibn Nubātah al-Miṣrī (686–768/1287–1366): Life and Works Part II: The *Dīwān* of Ibn Nubātah

4. AUTOGRAPH MANUSCRIPTS

Ibn Nubātah's handwriting was considered to be exceptional. Nearly all of his biographers comment on it. Al-Ṣafadī, who cultivated his own, easily recognizable style of writing, praised the hand of his master and colleague. "As far as his handwriting is concerned, it is more precious than pearls," he writes.¹ Ibn Taghrībirdī praises the "extreme beauty of his handwriting."² More effusive is the statement of Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī, who says:³

سبق الناس . . . إلى براعة الخطّ فما قدر معارض على أن يحكي له خطأ أو يجاريه في أصول كتابته
وانسجامها وجريانها

"He surpassed everyone . . . in his excellence of penmanship, so that no one who tried to vie with him succeeded in matching him in his script or keeping pace with him in the fundamentals of the art of writing or its harmony and fluency."

Al-Sakhāwī, the devoted pupil of Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, praises his master's handwriting with the words: "He had nice handwriting in the style of Ibn Nubātah."⁴ Since Ibn Nubātah was also Ibn Ḥajar's model in the field of poetry, it is probably not too farfetched to assume that he consciously tried to emulate Ibn Nubātah's style of writing. In fact, the similarity between his and Ibn Nubātah's handwriting can hardly be missed, as figure 5 shows.

As this unanimously enthusiastic judgment of Ibn Nubātah's handwriting shows, a study of his autographs is doubly important. First, these manuscripts shed light on the history of handwriting and the aesthetic principles prevailing at certain times in regard to the beauty of a script, and second, they allow us to reconstruct the history of Ibn Nubātah's work in an unusually detailed way.

Ibn Nubātah makes ample use of ligatures, but also of vowel signs and, at least

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Continued from *MSR* 12, no. 1 (2008): 1–35. Bibliographical references given in footnotes nos. 1–29 of the first part are not repeated here in full.

¹Al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi*, 1:312; similarly al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffá*, 7:104.

²Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, 5:248–49.

³Al-Subkī, *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʿīyah*, 5:153.

⁴Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Jawāhir wa-al-Durar fī Tarjamat Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Ḥajar*, ed. Ibrāhīm Bājīs ʿAbd al-Majīd (Beirut, 1419/1999), 1:287–88.



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in some of his manuscripts, quite regularly provides *sīn* with three dots beneath in order to make clear that it is not an undotted *shīn*. Since I am not an expert in this field, I cannot precisely analyze the factors that make Ibn Nubātah's handwriting so distinctive. However, one can hardly fail to notice its elegance. Ibn Nubātah's handwriting obviously matches the sophistication of his texts. And just as his poetry and prose are not particularly easy to understand, his handwriting is not particularly easy to read. But both his literature and his handwriting are very distinctive and easily recognizable. The identification of manuscripts written by Ibn Nubātah is possible beyond any doubt even if the writer is not mentioned (as in El Escorial MS árabe 548). This helps in identifying additional manuscripts written by Ibn Nubātah, and perhaps also manuscripts of works other than his own. So far, the only published reproduction of an autograph manuscript can be found in al-Naṣṣār's edition of the poetry of Ibn al-Rūmī. The editor expresses doubts about its having been written by Ibn Nubātah, but these doubts are unfounded.⁵

So far, I have managed to identify five autograph manuscripts.⁶ The principal facts are given in Table 1.

Only one manuscript is dated and provided with a carefully produced title page. The other four manuscripts are undated. Two of them lack a colophon altogether. We may attribute this lack to Ibn Nubātah's loathing of long prefaces, or conclude that these manuscripts were either created as Ibn Nubātah's personal records (though they seem not to be *musawwadāt*), or meant as presents for his friends and colleagues, who knew their writer anyway. As we will see, the text of most of these autograph manuscripts is not identical with the *textus receptus* of the corresponding works. This is due to Ibn Nubātah's habit of constantly revising and restructuring his own works. This working method of Ibn Nubātah causes major problems for the editors of his works, but it also gives us a singular opportunity to closely observe the creative process of a Mamluk artist. In some cases, passages of poems can even be compared in two different autograph versions. The next section will show how the existence of different versions of Ibn Nubātah's poems had an influence on the history of his *Dīwān*.

5. A WORK IN PROGRESS

There are few pre-modern authors whose work can be observed as closely as that of Ibn Nubātah. Thanks to the wealth of sources and the number of autograph manuscripts, the process of creating many poems and prose texts can be

⁵See *Dīwān Ibn al-Rūmī*, ed. Ḥusayn Naṣṣār, 3rd ed. (Cairo, 1424/2003), 1:33–35 and the plates on pages 51 and 53.

⁶In addition, three leaves at the end of the *Dīwān* manuscript Köprülü MS 1249 (fols. 165–67) were doubtlessly written by Ibn Nubātah himself. Their presence in this (quite old) manuscript remains to be explained.



Table 1
Manuscripts Written by Ibn Nubātah

Manuscript	Work	Folios	Lines per page	Title	Colophon	Identification as Autograph
Istanbul, Ayasofya MS 4045	<i>Sajʿ al-Muṭawwaq</i> [3]	77	11	كتاب/سجع المطوق/من قبل الإتياء/ تصنيف العبد الفقير الى الله تعالى محمد بن الخطيب ابن نباته (written by the author himself)	ونجز الكتاب في سنة تسع عشره وبسماعيه وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد/ واله وصحبه الطاهرين وسلم تسليما كثيرا	title page, written by a third hand: بخط مؤلفه رحمه الله عليه
Istanbul, Köprülü MS 1397	<i>Muntakhab al-Hadīyah</i> [5]	74	8–9	منتخب الهدية/في المدائح المؤيدية/نظم الشيخ الامام الأديب الفاضل جمال الدين/ابي عبد الله محمد بن الشيخ الإمام المحدث شمس الدين محمد بن نباته/ادام الله فوائده (written by a third hand)	none	top left corner of the title page, written by another hand than the title: وهو بخط المصنف الشيخ جمال الدين رحمه الله/...
El Escorial MS árabe 548	<i>Collection of Letters</i> [11]	147	10–12	من ترسل/ابن نباته (probably written by a third hand)	الحمد لله وحده وصلوته على سيدنا محمد وآله وصحبه الطاهرين وسلام	no indication; so far not known to be an autograph
Istanbul, Ayasofya MS 4261	<i>Mukhtār Shīʿr Ibn al-Rūmī</i> [21]	137	11–13	مختار شعر بن الرومي/لابن نباته/ بخطه (written by the author himself)	الحمد لله وحده وصلوته على سيدنا محمد وآله وصحبه الطاهرين وسلام	indicated in the title
El Escorial MS árabe 449	<i>Sūq al-Raqīq</i> [29]	115	8–10	كتاب/سوق الرقيق/من غزل شعر/ابن نباته المصري بخطه/عفا الله عنه (left side of fol. 1v, probably written by the author himself)	هـ	indicated in the title



reconstructed in great detail. For these reasons, we are able to gain considerable insight into the history of Ibn Nubātah's works. The most important conclusion of such an inquiry is that Ibn Nubātah considered his poems and prose texts as "works in progress," which underwent constant revision and reworking. He reused verses in other poems, adapted texts dedicated to one person to another, reworded verses or passages in his *rasā'il*, exchanged parts of his works, shortened or expanded texts in order to accommodate them to a new purpose, and so on.

As interesting as such findings are, they obviously make the editing of Ibn Nubātah's works more difficult. How do we deal, for example, with the fact that the autograph manuscript of *Saj' al-Muṭawwaq* [3]⁷ contains a poem in praise of Kamāl al-Dīn Ibn al-Zamlakānī different from all other manuscripts of the work? This poem, an *'ayniyah* that comprises 56 lines, appears in Ibn Nubātah's own early compilation of his *Dīwān* in a revised and shortened version of 27 lines.⁸ Obviously, only after Ibn Nubātah realized that another poem, a *tā'iyyah* he had sent to Kamāl al-Dīn in the same year, had become a striking success, did he substitute this one for the *'ayniyah*. The new *qaṣidah*, a poem of the extraordinary length of a hundred lines, is introduced with the words:

كُتِبَتْ إِلَيْهِ هَذِهِ الْقَصِيدَةُ الَّتِي كَثُرَ نَظْمُ شُعْرَاءِ الْعَصْرِ فِي رَوِيَّهَا وَوَزْنُهَا

"I sent him this *qaṣidah*, which the poets of this time often imitated in its rhyme and meter."⁹ Needless to say, Ibn Nubātah again revised the poem and included a shortened version of 64 lines in his early *Dīwān*.¹⁰

The first victim of this situation was al-Bashtakī, the compiler of Ibn Nubātah's *Dīwān* after the latter's death. The modern redactor of the printed version further aggravated this situation by several editorial decisions.

The first poem of the *Dīwān* (*khafīf/-ā'i*) after the initial poem in praise of the Prophet may serve as an illustration of the problem. In fact, this poem must have caused Ibn Nubātah many a headache, since he did not subject many others to such drastic revision. The reason for Ibn Nubātah's permanent discontent with the poem may be found in the fact that it is of an experimental nature. Obviously, it was one of Ibn Nubātah's first attempts to develop his *tawriyah* style, which he

⁷Numbers in brackets refer to the chart of the works of Ibn Nubātah found in part I of this article, pp. 4–5.

⁸See *Saj' al-Muṭawwaq*, Ayasofya MS 4045, fols. 33v–36r; *Proto-Dīwān*, Berlin MS 7861, fol. 119r–v; *Dīwān*, 297–99.

⁹Cairo, Dār al-Kutub MS 170 *adab*, fol. 28r. See also al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah*, 5:108–11 (article on Ibn al-Zamlakānī).

¹⁰Berlin MS 7861, fols. 44v–46v; the version in *Dīwān*, 67–71, is a pastiche between the version in *Saj' al-Muṭawwaq* and that in the *Proto-Dīwān*.



perfected only in the later phases of his life, especially in his poems dedicated to ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Ibn Faḍl Allāh. But among his poems dedicated to the Ayyubid prince of Ḥamāh, the *Mu’ayyadīyāt*, it is not typical and may create the impression of being somewhat contrived. His main artistic goal seems to have been to compose a poem that treats only a few themes that evoke many associations by a technique based on *tawriyah* (double entendre) and *ṭibāq* (antithesis). We will limit our investigation to the *nasīb*, which comprises 14 of 33 lines altogether (a remarkably high percentage) in the printed *Dīwān*. Line 15 is the *takhalluṣ* that leads from the *nasīb* to praise of Abū al-Fidā’, the Ayyubid prince. The *madīḥ* focuses nearly exclusively on the subject of generosity. The *nasīb* and the *takhalluṣ* are given in the *Dīwān* (p. 4) as in the left column of the following chart:

Table 2 Text according to <i>Dīwān</i> , p. 4 (meter <i>khafīf</i>)	(2) MH	(3) PD	(4) SR	(5) Bash
١ قام يرئو بمقلة كحلاء عَلمتني الجُنون بالسوداء	x	x	x	x
٢ رَشَا دَبَّ في سوافه النمل فهامت خواطرُ الشعراء	x	x	x	x
٣ روضُ حُسنِ غَنَى لنا فوقه الحُلَى فأهلاً بالروضة الغناء	x			
٤ جائزُ الحُكمِ قلبه لي صخرٌ وبكاني له بكى الخنساء			x	x
٥ عَدَلوني على هواه فأغروا فهواه نصبٌ على الإغراء	x	x	x	x
٦ مَن مُعيني على رَشَا صرت من ماء دموعي عليه مثل الرشاء			x	x
٧ مَن مُعيني على لواعج حبّ تنلّظي من أدمعي بالماء	x	x		x
٨ وحبیبِ إليّ يفعل بالقلبِ فعال الأعداء بالأعداء	x	x		x
٩ ضيق العين إن رنا واسنمحننا وعناء تسمّح البخلاء			x	x
١٠ ليت أعطافه ولو في منامٍ وعدتُ باستراقه للقاء			x	x
١١ يتننّي كقامة العُصن اللدن ويعطو كالظبية الأدماء	x	x		x
٢١ يا شبّية العُصون رفقا بصبّ نائح في الهوى مع الورقاء	x	x	x	x
٣١ يذكرُ العهدَ بالعقيق فيبكي لهواه بدمعة حمراء	x	x	x	x
٤١ يا لها دمعة على الخدّ حمراء بدت من سوداء في صفراء	x	x	x	x
٥١ فكأنّي حملتُ رنك ابن أيوب على وجنتي لفرط ولاء	x	x	x	x

As a matter of fact, the text given in the *Dīwān* does not contain a single word that is not by Ibn Nubātah himself, and there are only two clear mistakes in it, for in line 10, instead of *istirāqatin* one has to read *istirāqihī*, and in line 14 instead of *yā lahā dam’atun* one must read *yā lahā dam’atan*, as Ibn Nubātah clearly noted in both of his autograph manuscripts. Nevertheless, the text of the *Dīwān* is not



an authentic text, since the poem never existed in this form during the lifetime of Ibn Nubātah. Lines 3, 7, 8, and 11 never occurred together with lines 4, 6, 9, and 10, and in none of Ibn Nubātah's versions did the *nasīb* take such a large portion of the whole poem. Instead, Ibn Nubātah obviously cancelled line 3 and replaced lines 7, 8, and 11 with three other lines. In the chart above, the lines occurring in *Muntakhab al-Hadīyah* (= MH), the *Proto-Dīwān* (PD), and *Sūq al-Raqīq* (SR) are marked in columns 2 to 4 with an X. These are the three major versions that can be established to have existed during the poet's lifetime. The recension of al-Bashtakī (column 5) is nothing but a pastiche of all these versions. Line 3 is only reintroduced in a very late version of this recension. To reconstruct the history of the text, we must therefore have recourse to the manuscript material.

The earliest version of the poem available to us is found in the *Muntakhab al-Hadīyah* [5], Ibn Nubātah's collection of poems in praise of al-Malik al-Mu'ayyad. The book was completed before 729, perhaps around the year 725, and is preserved in a number of manuscripts and early printed editions. The earliest document is an autograph manuscript (Köprülü MS 1397) the text of which is not always identical with the version presented by all other known sources (which, nevertheless, must also present an authentic version going back to the author himself). In the case of our *nasīb*, there are only a few variant readings between the two recensions. Therefore, I will give the version of the autograph manuscript (fols. 15v–16r), which is as authentic as a text can be:¹¹

قام يَرْنُو بِمَقْلَةٍ كَحَلَاءِ عَلَّمْتَنِي الْجُنُونَ بِالسُّودَاءِ	١
رَشَاءُ دَبِّ فِي سِوَالْفِهِ النَّمْلِ فَحَارِبَتْ خَوَاطِرُ الشُّعْرَاءِ	٢
رَوْضُ حُسْنِ غَنَى عَلَى قَدِّهِ الْحَلِيِّ فَأَهْلًا بِالرَّوْضَةِ الْغَنَاءِ	٣
عَدَلُونِي عَلَى هَوَاهُ فَأَعَزَّوْا فِهْوَاهُ نَصَبًا عَلَى الْإِعْرَاءِ	٤
مَنْ مُعِينِي عَلَى لَوَاعِجِ حُبِّ تَتَلَطَّى مِنْ أَدْمَعِي بِالْمَاءِ	٥
وَحَبِيبٍ لَدَيَّ يَفْعَلُ بِالْقَلْبِ فِعَالِ الْأَعْدَاءِ بِالْأَعْدَاءِ	٦
يَتَنَتَّى كَقَامَةِ الْعُصْنِ الرُّطْبِ وَيَعْطُو كَالظَّبْيَةِ الْأَدْمَاءِ	٧
يَا شَبِيهَ الْعُصُونِ رَفَقًا بَصَبًا نَائِحٍ فِي الْهَوَى مَعَ الْوَرَقَاءِ	٨
يَذَكُرُ الْعَهْدَ بِالْعَقِيقِ فَيُبْكِي مِنْ هَوَاهُ بِدَمْعَةِ حَمْرَاءِ	٩
يَا لَهَا دَمْعَةٌ عَلَى الْخَدِّ حَمْرَاءِ بَدَتْ مِنْ سُودَاءِ فِي صَفْرَاءِ	١٠
فَكَأَنِّي حَمَلْتُ رَنَكُ ابْنِ أُيُوبِ عَلَى وَجْنَتِي لِفَرْطِ وَلَانِي	١١

(1) He stood, gazing with dark eyes that taught me madness in consequence of *black (eyes)/melancholia*,¹²

¹¹Since the poem is in the meter *khafif*, in which the caesura between the hemistichs is less important than with other meters and often runs across single words, we will not mark it here.

¹²A *tawriyah* is noted in the translations in the following way: The primarily intended meaning is



(2) a young gazelle on the temples of whom ants were crawling so that the poets' minds were confounded.

(3) He is a garden of beauty; the jewelry on his body sings—welcome to the lush garden full of rustling/*garden of the singer!*

(4) They blamed me for my love for him and incited desire, so that the love for him became a banner/*accusative* marking incitement.

(5) Who can aid me against the ardor of a love that is aflame even in the water of my tears,

(6) and against a beloved who inflicts on my heart things that only enemies are used to inflicting on each other?

(7) He sways in the form of a tender bough and stretches his neck like a light-brown gazelle.

(8) O you, who resemble boughs: Have mercy on an ardent lover who, in his passion, moans with the dark gray doves,

(9) while he remembers the days of intimacy with al-ʿAqīq/*the cornelian*, so that he weeps a red tear out of love.

(10) Oh what a tear on the cheek: Red that appeared from the black [eyes] [and runs down] on a yellow cheek!

(11) It is as if I would bear the emblem of Ayyūb's scion on my cheek, so great is my devotion!

Let us try an interpretation of the *nasīb* in this form. The first observation is that the *nasīb* has to be interpreted from the perspective of the *takhalluṣ* (line 11). This line leads from the subject of love to the subject of praise by means of the emblem of the prince. Considering the small number of literary references to the *rank*,¹³ the line is also not without historic interest. As we learn from lines 10 and 11, the *rank* of al-Muʿayyad was a tricolor bearing the same colors as

underlined, the secondarily suggested meaning written in italics. In reading aloud, the words in italics should be omitted.

¹³N. Rabbat, "Rank," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 8:431.



the Belgian or the German flag (in whatever sequence). These three colors are now introduced through themes of love poetry, until they serve as a very neat and astonishing *takhalluṣ* to the *madīh*. This is carried out in three steps, each comprising three lines.

The first step, lines 1–3, is to give an idea about the fascination felt by the lover for the beloved. One of the three colors, black, is already introduced in the first line. This is done in a complex way in the form of a *tawriyah* and by making “blackness” the rhyme word. In this way the subject of color is on the stage from the very beginning. One may also note that the very first rhyme word, i.e., the rhyme word at the end of the first hemistich (*kaḥlāʾ*) is also a color term, but a term only applicable to eyes. The sequence: (a) special color term (*akḥal*) → (b) generally applicable color term (*aswad*) given in the first line is echoed in an expanded form in lines 7–10: (a) special color terms in the rhymes of lines 7–8 (*admāʾ*, *awraq*) → general color terms in the rhymes of lines 9–10 (*aḥmar*, *aṣfar*).

The second step, lines 4–6, can be read as an antithesis of the first one. Now the enemies of love, the faultfinders, enter the stage in line 4. As a consequence, the lover’s love turns into a “banner.” This motif anticipates the idea of the *rank*, but without mentioning any color. Further lines illustrate the reluctance and the cruelty of the beloved that are the reason for the lover’s despair and will eventually engender the two colors red and yellow, which are not yet mentioned in the colorless passage. The theme of “color” now is the point of the third step presented in lines 7–9. The beloved is compared to a red-brown gazelle. He resembles a bough, and on boughs we find doves whose sad cooing is one of the most time-honored motifs of love poetry. A common word for doves is *warqāʾ*, which originally means “dark gray”. So we have two lines that end with rhyme words that designate colors, *admāʾ* and *warqāʾ*. But they are not pure colors, but only color terms that can be applied to special categories of objects. As a climax, the third line of the passage concludes with a rhyme word which designates a pure color, i.e., red (*ḥamrāʾ*), which is introduced again in the complex way of a *tawriyah*, just as the color black had been in the first line. The color yellow is represented by the sallow cheeks of the pain-stricken lover as a natural consequence of what has been said in the second passage. This is a conventional *topos* of love poetry and need not be introduced separately to complete the tricolor. Instead, it forms the rhyme word of line 10, in which all three colors are now assembled. These are the colors of the *rank* of the sultan al-Muʾayyad, which the poet acquires through love just as the sultan had acquired them by rank and descent.

A few words may be in order to explain the rather dense stylistic construction, especially of the first section. Each of its three lines contains a *tawriyah*, the form of double entendre that was so popular in Ayyubid and Mamluk times that Ibn



Ḥijjah even called the whole period the “age of the *tawriyah*,” and Ibn Nubātah was unanimously considered the chief master of the *tawriyah* in his time. The *tawriyah* makes use of the fact that many words have more than one meaning, and it must be constructed in such a way that, though only one of its meanings is primarily intended, the hearer/reader is made aware of the other, non-intended meaning of the word. In the case of these three lines, we have no less than three different kinds of *tawriyah*. In the first line, the lyrical I is going mad on account of the black eyes of the beloved. However, *sawdā* means also “black bile, melancholia,” which enables a medical interpretation of the line. Since the context points to the primarily-intended meaning, we have a *tawriyah mubayyanah* before us. The situation in the next line is more complex. The “ants” that are creeping up the beloved’s cheek are a simile for the downy beard, one of the main subjects of Arabic love poetry from the time of Abū Tammām onwards until the middle of the nineteenth century.¹⁴ The comparison is not new at all, but Ibn Nubātah adds a *tawriyah* by stating that the downy beard “seizes the minds of the poets.” By mentioning the word *shu‘arā*’ the hearer becomes aware of the fact that *al-naml*, just like *al-shu‘arā*’, is the name of a *sūrah* of the Holy Quran. This form of *tawriyah*, which only becomes conspicuous by means of another *tawriyah*, is called *tawriyah muhayya’ah*. The third line adds the acoustic dimension to the optic one. The beloved’s face is a garden (a common image), but a garden is only perfect when birds sing in it. Instead of birds, the beloved’s garden here is filled with the rustling of his adornment (probably his earring); therefore it is a *rawdah ghannā*’ which one can interpret as “a garden, a singer.” But the intended meaning of *ghannā*’ is not that derived from the root *gh-n-y*, but that from the root *gh-n-n*. *Ghannā*’ can also be the feminine of *aghann* and means as an epithet a garden “abounding with herbs . . . in which the winds [murmur] by reason of the denseness of its . . . herbage.”¹⁵ It is an old Arabic expression for a *locus amoenus* just as is *al-‘Aqīq* in line 9. The *tawriyah* in this case is a *tawriyah murashshahah*, in which the context (“singing”) points to the not-intended meaning (“singer”).

The next three lines (lines 4–6) are stylistically less complicated. Line 4, which brings in society in the form of the faultfinders, takes up the old motif of blame that incites the lover even further. Its classical formulation is by Abū Nuwās.¹⁶ The motif is turned into another *tawriyah*, which fits the profanation of love by the faultfinders, since *naṣb ‘alā al-ighrā*’ (accusative of incitement) is simply a

¹⁴See Thomas Bauer, *Liebe und Liebesdichtung in der arabischen Welt des 9. und 10. Jahrhunderts* (Wiesbaden, 1998), 225–80; on 264–65, references to further comparisons between the beard and ants in the love poetry of the ninth and tenth centuries.

¹⁵E. W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon* (London, Edinburgh, 1863–93), q.v.

¹⁶See *Dīwān Abī Nuwās*, 3rd part, ed. Ewald Wagner (Stuttgart, 1408/1988), 2: دَعَّ عَنْكَ لَوْمِي فَإِنَّ اللَّوْمَ إِغْرَاءٌ



common grammatical term.¹⁷ Lines 5 and 6 are marked by antitheses (fire-water; beloved-enemy) instead of *tawriyāt*. It is only in line 9 in the third section that the art of the *tawriyah* is perfected in the form of an *istikhdām*. It is presented by the word al-‘Aqīq, the name of a wadi in the Ḥijāz (and of several other places in the region), which at first seems out of place in Ibn Nubātah’s poem. But its geographical place is completely irrelevant since in Arabic poetry it is not so much a real place as a motif, and as such “part of the poetic idea embodied in that peculiarly suggestive landscape that may be called pastoral, idyllic, or, in an archetypal way, a vestige of man’s dream of the earth when it was good. It is a metaphor of sweetness, joy, and garden surroundings, too.”¹⁸ As such, it is in perfect harmony with the references to the Quran and the garden in lines 2 and 3. But at the same time the word ‘aqīq has to be taken to mean “cornelian” in order to serve as an object of comparison for the red (i.e., bloody) tears of the lover. If both significations of a word have to be actualized, theorists speak of an *istikhdām*, which, nevertheless, may be considered a type of *tawriyah*. Though Ibn Nubātah left theory to al-Ṣafadī,¹⁹ it is quite clear that he was very well aware of the different kinds of *tawriyah*, and it is certainly no accident that he tried to assemble them in this very passage, each fulfilling a specific task in its specific place. Further, it is also striking to see how Ibn Nubātah combines motifs of the traditional form of the *nasīb* (for this is rather a *nasīb*, not a *ghazal*)²⁰ with “modern” content, for no doubt it is a homoerotic love poem. In the same way as Ibn Nubātah offers modernized tradition (conventional *nasīb* motifs in modern style and content), the Ayyubid prince combines a glorious dynastic past with his generous activities in modern Mamluk society.

Given the two poles, “crafted” (*maṣnū‘*) and “natural” (*maṭbū‘*), there is no doubt that Ibn Nubātah’s lines are to be located at the very end of the “crafted” pole. A text containing a maximum of allusions and associations will inevitably end up on this side of the scale. Nevertheless, Ibn Nubātah must have felt a certain unease about his lines, or about some of them, and therefore decided to revise the poem.

Such changes had taken place already in the text of *Muntakhab al-Hadiyah*. The text of the other manuscripts and the nineteenth-century printed text of this work is not identical with the text of the autograph. Apparently, most differences go back to Ibn Nubātah himself, as the drastic changes (such as the exchange of whole poems) and the corroboration of some of these changes through later

¹⁷See W. Wright, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge, 1933), 2:74–75.

¹⁸J. Stetkevych, *The Zephyrs of Najd* (Chicago, 1993), 112.

¹⁹See al-Ṣafadī, *Faḍḍ al-Khitām ‘an al-Tawriyah wa-al-Istikhdām*, ed. al-Muḥammadī ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Ḥinnāwī (Cairo, 1399/1979).

²⁰On this distinction see Bauer, *Liebe*, 185–97.



autograph sources show. In our case, there are only minor alterations. We find *hāmat* instead of *hārat* in line 2 (a variant reading corroborated by the autograph of *Sūq al-Raqīq*) and *ilayya* instead of *ladayya* in line 6. More important is Ibn Nubātah's attempt to improve line 3. The phrase '*alā qaddihī* "above his stature" must have disturbed Ibn Nubātah, perhaps as not being very precise. Therefore he replaced it with the phrase *lahū fawqahū* "for which above it." The reading of the printed *Dīwān*, *lanā fawqahū*, has no textual basis whatsoever. It owes its existence to the fact that the writer of the manuscript that forms the basis for the printed text, had omitted *lahū*. The word *lanā* was only later added above the line, perhaps by another hand and as a conjecture. There is no senseless "for us" in Ibn Nubātah's text and no "we" is addressed in the whole passage.

Another step of his revisions is represented by what I call Ibn Nubātah's "Proto-Dīwān." It is a collection of Ibn Nubātah's poetry, compiled by the poet himself, with which he answered requests for a *Dīwān* of his poetry during his Syrian years and which forms the basis for the *Dīwān al-Aṣl*. An early version of the *Proto-Dīwān* is included in Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn Faḍl Allāh's *Masālik al-Abṣār* and therefore must be dated before 749. Further sources for the *Proto-Dīwān* are four manuscripts, one of which was written before Ibn Nubātah's death. Though the manuscripts do not depend upon each other, all five sources give an identical text of the poem, which differs in a few respects from the text given above. This version must be considered as another authentic version that can be traced back to Ibn Nubātah himself. It presents a text virtually identical with the autograph version of the *Muntakhab*. It still has *hārat* (line 2) and *ladayya* (line 6), but it reads *al-ghuṣn al-ladn* instead of *al-ghuṣn al-raṭb* in line 7 and *li-hawāhu* instead of *min hawāhu* in line 9. The most important change again concerns line 3, which is now entirely deleted. The poet had already marked it with a line in the autograph. The exact chronology of these modifications cannot be established. Perhaps Ibn Nubātah deleted the line first and tried to save it later for the *Muntakhab* by reformulating it in part, or he considered his attempt to improve it a failure and deleted it once and for all. As a matter of fact, the line does not turn up again in later versions of the poem, and it was not even included in the pastiche text compiled by al-Bashtakī. Copyists only added it subsequently, almost certainly from the *Muntakhab*.

Ibn Nubātah occupied himself with the poem for many years, as we see from the preceding, before he finally decided to rework it fundamentally. This new version is again preserved in an autograph manuscript. This is a manuscript of Ibn Nubātah's late work *Sūq al-Raqīq* [29], in which the author assembled a selection of the *nasīb* sections of his *qaṣīdahs* to create a work of love poetry. The *nasīb* is now not part of a longer poem, but stands alone. Nevertheless, in all probability the text was not changed on the occasion of its inclusion in *Sūq al-Raqīq*. Rather it



represents the form the *nasīb* had taken in the meantime in Ibn Nubātah's *Dīwān al-Aṣl*, i.e., in a revised and enlarged version of the *Proto-Dīwān*. This is corroborated by the Paris manuscript Bibliothèque Nationale MS 3362, which contains excerpts of Ibn Nubātah's *Dīwān* in a pre-Bashtakī recension (most certainly from the *Dīwān al-Aṣl*), and in which on fol. 98v a shortened version of our poem is given, which corresponds to the version given below. Further, the modifications made in this stage are obviously made to align the *nasīb* more closely to the main topic of the *madīḥ* instead of making it more erotic as one would expect from modifications undertaken for an anthology of love poetry.

This is the complete text of the poem in the autograph copy of *Sūq al-Raqīq* (Escorial MS árabe 449, fols. 2r–v):

قام يَرنُو بمقلَّةٍ كحلاءِ أبا منها المجنونُ بالسُّوداءِ	١
رَشَا دَبَّ فِي سِوَالِفِهِ النَّمْلُ فَهَامَتْ خِوَاطِرُ الشُّعْرَاءِ	٢
جَانِزُ الحُكْمِ قَلْبَهُ لِي صَخْرٌ وَبِكَائِي لَهُ بَكَا الخِنْسَاءِ	٣
عَدَّلُونِي عَلَى هَوَاهُ فَأَعْرَوَا فِهَوَاهُ نَصَبٌ عَلَى الإِغْرَاءِ	٤
مَنْ مُعِينِي عَلَى رَشَا صرْتِ مِنْ مَاءِ دَمِوعِي عَلَيْهِ مِثْلُ الرِّشَاءِ	٥
ضَيْقُ العَيْنِ إِنْ رَنَا وَاسْتَمَحْنَا وَعِنَاءُ تَسْمَحُ البِخْلَاءِ	٦
لَيْتَ أَعْطَاهُ وَلَوْ فِي مَنَامٍ وَعَدْتُ بِاسْتِرَاقِهِ لِلْقَاءِ	٧
يَا شَبِيهَ العُصُونِ رَفَقًا بَصَبٌ نَائِحٌ فِي الهَوَى مَعَ الورْقَاءِ	٨
يَذَكُرُ العَهْدَ بالعَقِيقِ وَأَهْلِيهِ فَيَبْكِي بِدَمْعَةٍ حَمْرَاءِ	٩
يَا لَهَا دَمْعَةٌ عَلَى الخَدِّ حَمْرَاءِ بَدَتْ مِنْ سِوَدَاءِ فِي صَفْرَاءِ	١٠
فَكَأَنِّي حَمَلْتُ رَنكَ ابْنِ أَيُّوبَ عَلَى وَجْنَتِي لِفِرْطٍ وَلائِي	١١

(1) He stood, gazing with dark eyes that left me mad with *black (eyes)/melancholia*,

(2) a young gazelle on the temples of whom ants were crawling so that the poets' minds were seized by the raptures of love.

(3) A tyrant, his heart is (hard as) *stone/Ṣakhr* to me, and my weeping for him is like the weeping of al-Khansā'!

(4) They blamed me for my love for him and incited desire, so that the love for him became a banner/accusative marking incitement.

(5) Who can aid me against a fawn that made me seem a well-rope, for so many tears did I weep for him,



(6) a fawn that gazes with small eyes when we ask a favor of him—
but it is distress to expect favors from misers!

(7) Would that his inclinations promised—and if only in a dream—
that he could be stolen away for a rendezvous!

(8) O you, who resemble boughs: Have mercy on an ardent lover
who, in his passion, moans with the dark gray doves,

(9) while he remembers the days of intimacy with al-^ʿAqīq/*the
cornelian* and its inhabitants, so that he weeps a red tear.

(10) Oh what a tear on the cheek: Red that appeared in consequence
of black on yellow!

(11) It is as if I would bear the emblem of Ayyūb’s scion on my
cheek, so great is my devotion!

If we compare these lines with the corresponding lines in *Muntakhab al-Hadiyah*, we see that only four lines survived without change (lines 4, 8, 10, 11), four were replaced by completely different lines (lines 3, 5–7), and three lines were modified in a more moderate way (lines 1, 2, 9). The length of the poem and the sequence of the lines remain unchanged. This is clear evidence of the fact that the new lines were not meant as an addition, as it appears from the printed *Dīwān*, but as replacements for earlier verses.

Line 3 is a substitute for the “singing jewelry” line that had proven resistant to all attempts at improvement. Instead of stressing the beloved’s beauty (to which little space is devoted in this revised version of the *nasīb*), the line complains about the reluctance and harshness of the beloved whose “heart is of stone (*ṣakhr*),” a very common theme of love poetry. As a result, the lover must weep, and the poet compares his weeping to that of the pre-Islamic poetess al-Khansāʾ who, according to tradition, spent many years composing elegies on the death of her beloved brother, whose name was Ṣakhr. Since the brother’s name is clearly not intended by the word *ṣakhr* in the first hemistich, this is a *tawriyah murashshahah*.²¹ The new line therefore provides for exactly the same type of *tawriyah* as the line it was meant to replace. Despite the many changes, the number of *tawriyāt* representing

²¹Instead of *wa-bukāʾi lahū bukā al-Khansāʾi*, the Paris MS reads *wa-bukāʾi ʿalayhi ka-al-Khansāʾi*, which should be considered an authentic and plausible alternative reading of the line, since it avoids the contrast between *bukāʾ* and *bukan*, and *bakā ʿalā* is the normal construction of the verb.



four different types remains unchanged. With Ṣakhr and al-Khansā', two historical figures from old Arabic tradition have been introduced. As we have already seen, the confrontation between Arabic tradition and modern style and content is a specific trait of this poem. This tendency is underscored by the introduction of two additional figures of this kind. This helps to explain the transformation of line 1. While I do not think *ana minhā al-majnūnu* is necessarily better than *‘allamatnī al-junūna*, through the word *majnūn* another figure of old Arabic lore is brought to the awareness of the hearer. In addition, juxtaposed to the word *al-majnūn*, the rhyme word *al-sawdā'* "black" strongly suggests the name of Laylá, the beloved of al-Majnūn, and thus completes the pair. This association was absent from the first version. By means of this transformation, the four *tawriyah* lines give the following sequence of historical allusions: Line 1 reminds the hearer of al-Majnūn, the hero of unrequited love in the *‘udhrī* tradition, and his beloved Laylá. Line 2 recalls the Quran, and line 3 mentions in a more direct way another old Arabic hero and his sister, a model of sisterly love. The fourth *tawriyah* line, which introduces the "colors of the banner" passage, is line 9. In the original version, this line mentions al-‘Aqīq as a *locus amoenus* in the Arabian Peninsula and thus leads back to the scene of the first three verses. But there are no people in it. But by replacing *fa-yabkī min hawāhū* with *wa-ahlīhi fa-yabkī*, the place becomes populated and the line is in closer harmony with the first three lines. One may note also that in the first part of the *madih* several historical figures are mentioned (al-Ayyūb, Ka‘b, Ismā‘īl). The allusion to figures and stories of the past, which is called *‘unwān* in *badī‘* theory, is thus a stylistic device that unites *nasīb* and *madih*. This becomes much more obvious in the second version than in the first, though the new versions of the lines are not necessarily better than the old versions (with the exception of line 3, which is clearly improved in the second version).

Another attempt to thematically unify the poem was to strengthen the notion of avarice and refusal as opposed to generosity and liberality, which form the focus of the *madih*. For this purpose, the beauty of the beloved was no longer signalled by the image of the bough, but by his "small eyes." In a time when the male beloved is often a Turkish soldier, small eyes were considered a mark of beauty. Whereas the ancients used to write love poems on those with wide eyes (*al-‘uyūn al-nujalā'*) "the modern poets often write love poems on the small eyes (*al-‘uyūn al-ḍayyiqah*), that is, the eyes of the Turks."²² But in line 6 of our poem, the small eyes are not so much a mark of beauty, but rather a sign of the beloved's reticence. The only favor that can be hoped for from such a stingy beloved is a theft committed in a dream. This idea of line 7 forms the climax of the middle passage of the revised *nasīb*, which can now be structured in the

²²Al-Ṣafādī, *Al-Ghayth al-Musajjam fi Sharḥ Lāmiyat al-‘Ajam* (Beirut, 1411/1990), 2:19; see also Bauer, *Liebe*, 285–86.



following way: Lines 1–3: The beloved, who has to be conceived in a “modern” way as a young man, evokes memories of old Arabic and Islamic heritage. This ambiguous experience is expressed in the form of three *tawriyāt* of three different types. The stylistic device of the *tawriyah* is not only the device of ambiguity *par excellence*, but also the *modern* stylistic device *par excellence*. The reader is left with several associations and contradictions after this section. Line 4 brings in the poet’s contemporaries who make him a banner of love parallel to the banner of the Ayyubid prince that has to be introduced in the course of this *nasīb*, as has been explained above. But at first the beloved is portrayed as the antipode of the prince, as the embodiment of avarice, just as the prince will be shown to be the embodiment of generosity. This is accomplished in the revised middle part, which starts with a line featuring the traditional stylistic device of the *jinās* (line 5: *rashan - rishā*). A last part follows, in which the *tawriyah* style and the historic recollections of the first part are taken up again in line 9 and the poet’s sufferings of the middle part in line 10, only to bring about a synthesis in the form of the colors of the *rank* of the Ayyubid prince, who turns out to be the antipode of the beloved.

This last revision was made several decades after al-Malik al-Mu’ayyad’s death in 732/1332 and even after the end of the Ayyubid dynasty of Ḥamāh (742/1341). No Ayyubid prince ever read the poem in this form. Obviously the poet’s revisions were not made for the addressee, but for the general public. The same procedure of revising and polishing his texts can be observed with Ibn Nubātah’s prose texts. In winter 716, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Qazwīnī received a letter from Ibn Nubātah, in which he complained about the cold and snow. The text that al-Qazwīnī received must have been more or less identical with that of the autograph manuscript El Escorial MS árabe 548, fols. 91r–92r. But already a few years later, when Ibn Nubātah compiled his *Sajʿ al-Muṭawwaq* [3], he included a polished version, in which several cola were substituted for others. This new version is also documented in an autograph manuscript.²³ The new text was modified again, and a shortened version was prepared for its inclusion in *Zahr al-Manthūr*.²⁴ Al-Qazwīnī probably never read one of these revised versions of the letter that had once been addressed to him.

This process of revision demonstrates that Ibn Nubātah’s poems and prose texts were occasional texts in so far as they were induced by certain circumstances, which also became part of their thematic content. As works of art, however, their communicative potential was not limited to the occasion. Their author considered them artistic creations the value of which was not bound to the circumstances of

²³Ayasofya MS 4045, fols. 29r–30r.

²⁴See Chester Beatty MS 5161, fol. 24r–v.



their creation or to the person to whom they were first addressed. Therefore, the process of creation did not end with the occasion or the death of the addressee, but only with the author's decision to consider his work finished.

The effort expended by the poet must be reciprocated by the modern interpreter devoting a comparable amount of care and attention to Ibn Nubātah's text. It is quite clear that the text of the poem discussed above as it is given in the printed version does not allow for an adequate interpretation of the lines. Whereas both the early and the late version of the *nasīb* make perfect sense, each in their own way, the pastiche given in the printed text is marred by senseless repetitions (esp. lines 6 and 7), thematic breaks and inconsistencies, and an unbalanced proportion between *nasīb* and *madīh*. One who reads only this text does not know Ibn Nubātah's poem. It was al-Bashtakī's ambition to collect every line ever written by Ibn Nubātah as completely as possible. He had no critical edition in mind. Ibn Nubātah's method of working, however, is exactly the kind that calls for a critical edition that elucidates the different stages of Ibn Nubātah's creations.

It is true that only a few of Ibn Nubātah's poems were subjected to a comparably fundamental revision as the poem discussed above. An impression of the degree of re-working may be given by a comparison between Ibn Nubātah's poems quoted in Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn Faḍl Allāh's *Masālik al-Abṣār* and their counterparts in the printed *Dīwān*. As will be shown later, Ibn Faḍl Allāh simply copied Ibn Nubātah's *Proto-Dīwān* to compile his section on the poet in his encyclopaedia, without bothering with an introduction and without making any textual changes. This is corroborated by four additional manuscripts of this version of Ibn Nubātah's *Dīwān*. Whenever the number of lines of a poem in Ibn Faḍl Allāh's *Masālik* differs from the number of its lines in the printed *Dīwān*, this is not due to an abridgement carried out by Ibn Faḍl Allāh. Instead, the additional lines were either added by the poet later or they are the result of a blend between lines from different stages of revision, as was the case in the *nasīb* discussed above. In the *Masālik*, Ibn Faḍl Allāh included 37 poems by Ibn Nubātah that comprise more than twenty lines. Of these poems, only 14 contain the same number of lines in the *Dīwān* as they do in the *Masālik*. In one case the *Masālik* version is longer. In all other cases, the *Dīwān* provides more lines than the *Masālik*, i.e., Ibn Nubātah's *Proto-Dīwān*. As a whole, the difference is 204 lines. This means an average difference of 5.6 lines, or of 14.6 lines if we only regard the poems with different lengths. In most cases, the difference is one or two lines (six cases each), but in other cases the difference amounts to 18 (no. 694 in the *Masālik*), 42 (no. 685), 45 (no. 747), and 51 (no. 703) lines, respectively. These figures only capture the different lengths of the poems, but not the numerous variant readings. As we saw above, most variants have to be traced back to the poet himself and are not scribal errors. An example is the introductory line of no. 678, which is completely different in the *Dīwān* (p.



483). Our statistics do not capture, either, the many cases in which poems were trimmed to become two-line epigrams or expanded to become seven-liners to be included in *Al-Sabʿah al-Sayyārah* [31], and many similar cases. To mention only two examples, the congratulatory poem on p. 47 of the *Dīwān (mutaqārib/3bū)* comprises 9 lines. It has 6 lines in the *Proto-Dīwān* and was shortened to 4 in *Al-Qaṭr al-Nubātī* [6]. The two lines of no. 894 in the *Masālik* are the beginning of a poem of 24 lines in the *Proto-Dīwān*, which appears in the printed *Dīwān* with 41 lines (p. 448).

The situation is similar with Ibn Nubātah's prose texts. The *Mufākharah bayna al-Sayf wa-al-Qalam* [10] appears in several sources, but never in an identical form. Further, it was dedicated to two different persons at two different times. As we have seen above, letters were also revised and reworked, even after they had long fulfilled their immediate purpose, and even after the death of their addressee.

The story of Ibn Nubātah's works, therefore, is complicated and requires meticulous reconstruction. But it offers singular insight into the creative process of one of the major literary figures of the eighth/fourteenth century and the intellectual life of the period in general.

6. THE *DĪWĀN* IBN NUBĀTAH

We are accustomed to accessing the works of the great poets, beginning with the Abbasid period, through their *dīwāns*. A *dīwān* in this sense is a more or less comprehensive collection of the poetic work of a poet. From the Umayyad poet Dhū al-Rummah onwards, many poets compiled their own *dīwān*. Many a *dīwān* was also arranged by philologists shortly after the death of a poet. The most famous case is that of Abū Bakr al-Ṣūlī (d. ca. 335/946), who not only compiled the *dīwān* of Abū Nuwās, but also the *dīwāns* of Abū Tammām, Ibn al-Rūmī, and others. In principle, this practice was still common in the Mamluk period. Poets like Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī still compiled their own *dīwāns*, and a person like al-Bashtakī collected the *dīwān* of his teacher, Ibn Nubātah, whereas Shihāb al-Dīn al-Ḥijāzī collected that of al-Bashtakī. Nevertheless, to a certain extent, the *dīwān* had lost its former character as the central work of an *adīb*. Many *udabāʿ* such as al-Ṣafadī never had their poems collected in the form of a single *dīwān*. Other *dawāwīn* of this period present only selections of a person's poetry. Such "best ofs" may have been compiled by the poet himself (as in the case of Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī) or again by another person (for example, Ibn Ḥijjah's selection of the *dīwān* of Burhān al-Dīn al-Qīrāṭī, entitled *Tahrīr al-Qīrāṭī*). Often poems that were composed for a certain occasion, or poems of a certain form or treating a specific subject, were compiled in the form of a small or medium-size book. Collections of this kind are also often called *dīwāns*. An example of a *dīwān* of this kind is Ibn Nubātah's



Muntakhab al-Hadiyah [5], which is often referred to as *Dīwān Ibn Nubātah* or *Al-Dīwān al-Ṣaghīr*. In a period when it was common to produce several smaller books, the compilation of a single, comprehensive *dīwān* was less common than it had been in the Abbasid period. Another factor that contributed to a decrease in importance of the traditional *dīwān* or to a modification of its form was the fact that many, if not most, *udabā'* of the Mamluk period gave as much weight to their prose texts as to their poems. Consequently, a *dīwān* of poetry represents only one facet of an *adīb's* output in this period and is therefore less central than it was before. Alternatively, an *adīb* may compile a *dīwān* consisting of both poetry and prose. It seems as if this development occurred only in the generation after Ibn Nubātah. Ibn Nubātah's *dīwān* is still confined to poetry despite the overwhelming importance of his prose. From *udabā'* of the generations after Ibn Nubātah, several *dawāwīn* of the mixed kind have been preserved, for example the *dīwāns* of al-Qīrāṭī, Ibn Makānis, and Ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī.

Accordingly, we can say that whereas the *Dīwān al-Mutanabbī* is al-Mutanabbī's life work, and to know the *Dīwān al-Mutanabbī* means to know all of his verse, to know the *Dīwān Ibn Nubātah* gives only a limited view of the literary universe of Ibn Nubātah, which should be accessed first through the works Ibn Nubātah intended for publication. The *Dīwān* contains neither Ibn Nubātah's copious production in prose, nor does it present the poems in their original context, when Ibn Nubātah first published them. Nevertheless, the *Dīwān* remains an indispensable source for our knowledge of Ibn Nubātah's poetic work since it contains many poems from collections otherwise lost (such as *Al-Sab'ah al-Sayyārah* [31]) as well as poems that were probably never part of a separate collection (such as the poems in praise of 'Alā' al-Dīn Ibn Faḍl Allāh).

In the printed version at our disposal, the *Dīwān* can fulfill these functions only in a very limited way. The printed *Dīwān* represents one of al-Bashtakī's recensions of Ibn Nubātah's poetry, but it is marred by a number of arbitrary and capricious interventions so that we have to conclude that still no reliable text—much less a critical edition—of the *Dīwān Ibn Nubātah* is available. Several factors contributed to this unsatisfactory situation. First, the poet himself had the habit of constantly revising his own works so that even he could not arrive at definitive versions of his poems. Second, the compiler al-Bashtakī lacked the perseverance and diligence necessary to undertake a task like this. As a result, he did not compile a single, definitive version of the *Dīwān*. And third, the modern editor lacked philological training and did more harm than good by his whimsical approach to the text. Therefore, the printed *Dīwān* is the result of a sum of unfortunate circumstances and a rather entangled history, which we will try to unravel in this section.

The most interesting result of this research is, however, that we are able to reconstruct the pre-Bashtakī history of the *Dīwān*. As will be shown, we are in



possession of two different recensions of Ibn Nubātah's *Dīwān* that were compiled by the poet himself in two different periods of his life. The exploitation of these sources, together with the sources for the other poetic works of Ibn Nubātah, will allow us to reconstruct the history of many of his great poems in a more detailed way than is possible for the works of any other Arabic author. We will also be able to date many of Ibn Nubātah's poetic works quite exactly and to understand them in their specific biographical and historical contexts. This will also enhance our understanding of the history of this period and the personalities of the time.

(1) THE *PROTO-DĪWĀN*

The longest section in al-Ṣafadī's *Alḥān al-Sawāji'* treats his correspondence with Ibn Nubātah. In this chapter, al-Ṣafadī tells us about all the works of Ibn Nubātah he had heard from him or for which he had received Ibn Nubātah's *ijāzah*. But still there was a source that did not fall into one of these categories, since he once mentions two lines Ibn Nubātah had written 'alá juz' *ahdāhu min shi'rihi* "on a fascicle of his poetry that he presented to me."²⁵ It is obvious that this *juz'* is not one of Ibn Nubātah's works provided with a title and preface and intended for a wider public, but a compilation of poetry that Ibn Nubātah used to hand out to his close friends when he was asked to do so, perhaps in exchange for other texts.

Another friend of Ibn Nubātah was Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn Faḍl Allāh, who eventually brought Ibn Nubātah into the chancellery of Damascus. Ibn Nubātah's texts addressed to Shihāb al-Dīn (a dozen *qaṣīdahs* and a number of epigrams and letters) far outnumber those addressed to al-Ṣafadī. Given the close relationship between Shihāb al-Dīn and Ibn Nubātah and the latter's importance as a poet, it is only natural that Ibn Nubātah was accorded a privileged place in Shihāb al-Dīn's encyclopedia *Masālik al-Abṣār*. Volume 19 of the *Masālik* is dedicated to the younger Egyptian poets, among them Ibn Nubātah.²⁶ It is interesting that Ibn Nubātah, who lived in Syria for quite a long time, who had no family in Egypt after his father had moved to Damascus, and who was proud of his Syrian ancestors Ibn Nubātah al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Nubātah al-Sa'dī, still appears as an Egyptian. Most of the 24 poets from this volume are granted only a few pages. Two exceptions are Ibn Dāniyāl, given 27 pages in the printed edition, and al-'Azāzī, given 35. The first poet in the volume is Sirāj al-Dīn al-Warrāq (615–95/1218–96), the most popular late Ayyubid/early Mamluk poet of Egypt, who churned out poems in large quantities of uneven quality. Ibn Faḍl Allāh produced only a selection of his *dīwān* that still filled 292 pages.²⁷ Shihāb al-Dīn's *tarjamah* and *mukhtār*

²⁵ Al-Ṣafadī, *Alḥān al-Sawāji'*, 2:192.

²⁶ Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Faḍl Allāh al-'Umarī, *Masālik al-Abṣār fi Mamālik al-Amṣār*, vol. 19, *Baqīyat Shu'arā' Miṣr*, ed. Yūnis Aḥmad al-Sāmarrā'ī (Abu Dhabi, 1424/2003).

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 15–306.



are so far our most important sources on this man. The counterpart at the end of the volume is the article on Ibn Nubātah that comprises 256 pages.²⁸ Taken together, the articles on al-Warrāq and Ibn Nubātah fill more than three quarters of the volume and obviously are its *raison d'être*, presenting the beginning of Mamluk Egyptian poetry and its contemporary end (however questionable Ibn Nubātah's Egyptianness may be). But there is one remarkable difference between the entries. Whereas the entry on al-Warrāq starts with the obligatory *tarjamah*, informing the reader about his life and praising his literary achievements, such a *tarjamah* is completely lacking in the case of Ibn Nubātah. The entry simply starts by mentioning his name and introduces the first poem by the formula *wa-qawluhū*. We are not informed about who chose the poems of this entry, either. But nothing suggests that Shihāb al-Dīn was responsible for the selection. Its first part consists of *qaṣīdahs* and epigrams on al-Malik al-Mu'ayyad, followed by numerous epigrams on different subjects, interspersed with a few *qaṣīdahs* such as one on the 'ālim Ibn al-Zamlakānī and Ibn Nubātah's famous elegy on the death of his son. Most conspicuously, we find none of the poems that Ibn Nubātah had dedicated to the author of the encyclopedia. Obviously, the text was not adapted by Ibn Nubātah to be part of the *Masālik al-Abṣār*, and, considering the total absence of a *tarjamah* of Ibn Nubātah, we can only conclude that Shihāb al-Dīn had had no time to polish this entry before his premature death, at which time the *Masālik* was not yet finished. Therefore, it is most probable that the Ibn Nubātah entry in the *Masālik* is not more than, as al-Ṣafadī calls it, a *juz' ahdāhu min shī'rihī*, a collection of his poetry that Ibn Nubātah used to give to his friends.

different manuscripts corroborate this, each of them representing a different line of transmission. They all bear the title *Dīwān Ibn Nubātah* and present a text that is virtually identical with that of the Ibn Nubātah section in *Masālik al-Abṣār*. In the first part, they contain the same poems, each poem comprising the same number of lines and the same version of each verse (usual variants apart). In the second part, most long *qaṣīdahs* that appear in the three manuscripts are missing in the *Masālik*, but the epigrams in between are all present in the same sequence. Whether it was Ibn Nubātah who had not yet included these *qaṣīdahs* in his collection, or if he had left them out purposely in his copy for Shihāb al-Dīn, or if Shihāb al-Dīn omitted them, cannot be ascertained and is of little importance for our purpose. More important is the fact that one of the three manuscripts—the Berlin manuscript—is dated in the year 761, but is not an autograph. Accordingly, it corroborates the existence of a pre-Bashtakī *dīwān* and shows that the *Masālik* version represents a compilation made by Ibn Nubātah himself that was circulated during the poet's lifetime. A comparison between this version of Ibn Nubātah's

²⁸Ibid., 433–688.



poetry and autograph manuscripts of *Muntakhab al-Hadiyah* and *Saj' al-Muṭawwaq* on one hand, and the Bashtakī recensions on the other, show that differences between the printed *Dīwān* and the text in the *Masālik* are nearly always due to later revisions by Ibn Nubātah himself and a subsequent amalgamation of different versions by al-Bashtakī or even later redactors. This discovery gives a value to the *Masālik* section on Ibn Nubātah that the editor could hardly have foreseen. In fact, the version of the poems presented in this encyclopedia represent the only doubtlessly authentic poetic texts by Ibn Nubātah critically edited so far! Therefore, any scholar who desires to work on the early poetry of Ibn Nubātah, especially his *Mu'ayyadīyāt*, without having recourse to manuscripts, should start with the text in the *Masālik*.

However, the text of this version was not meant by Ibn Nubātah to be a definitive version of his poetry. As we will see, it is not identical with what Ibn Nubātah called his *Dīwān al-Aṣl*, which is of a later date. Therefore, I will call it Ibn Nubātah's *Proto-Dīwān*, because it forms a preliminary stage of what would become the *Dīwān al-Aṣl*. Despite its preliminary character, the *Proto-Dīwān* survived long after al-Bashtakī's compilation had come to dominate the market. There is a sumptuous manuscript from the fifteenth century, in which the text is fully vocalized and the headings written in gold. There is a copy from the seventeenth century, which is carefully produced and must be considered a textual source of relevance despite its late date. The five sources are closely related to each other, but none of them is the immediate copy of one of the others. It seems as if quite a number of manuscripts of the *Proto-Dīwān* must have been in circulation during the poet's lifetime. The following chart summarizes the sources for the *Proto-Dīwān* that are known to me:

Source	Date	Observations
Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn Faḍl Allāh, <i>Masālik al-Abṣār</i> , 19:433–688	before 749/1349 (death of Shihāb al-Dīn)	many <i>qaṣīdahs</i> in the second half missing; no <i>arājiz</i> and <i>muwashshahāt</i>
Berlin MS 7861	12 Rajab 761/29 May 1360	one of the most important Ibn Nubātah manuscripts



Istanbul, Köprülü Kütüphanesi MS 1249	acquired by Ḥasan ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Ḥusayn al-Makhzūmī, ²⁹ 845/1441–42	a beautiful and carefully written manuscript; several folios in disorder; a most important source
Istanbul, Ayasofya MS 2292	end of Dhū al-Ḥijjah 854/January 1452	lavishly decorated <i>khizānah</i> manuscript; several additions at the end
Cairo, Dār al-Kutub MS 558 <i>adab</i>	29 Jumādā I 1064/17 April 1654	a fine, carefully produced manuscript

Though the *Proto-Dīwān* does not represent a fixed text, as additional poems at the end of the Berlin manuscript show, the text as it is represented by the five sources mentioned above can be dated with some precision. First, we observe that the *Muʿayyadīyāt* are represented in an even more complete form than in *Muntakhab al-Ḥadīyah*. There is also the famous ode composed after the death of al-Muʿayyad, in which Ibn Nubātah both expressed condolence to the prince al-Afḍal on the death of his father and at the same time congratulated him on his succession to the throne.³⁰ But most of Ibn Nubātah’s eulogies on al-Afḍal are conspicuously missing. Therefore, the *Proto-Dīwān* must have been composed after 733, but several years before the death of al-Afḍal in 742, because, as we have seen, the prince was no longer interested in poetry during the last years of his reign. Consequently, the *qaṣīdahs* on al-Afḍal, which we find in other recensions of Ibn Nubātah’s *Dīwān*, must have been composed before 740 or even earlier, which means that the *Proto-Dīwān* still must have been compiled some years before them. Further dates are furnished by elegies on ‘ulamā’. Such elegies can be dated quite exactly. None of the elegies in the *Proto-Dīwān* date from the second half of the thirties or later. There are two poems, however, that were sent to ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Ibn Faḍl Allāh, obviously immediately after his departure for Egypt and the beginning of his employment in the chancellery of Cairo.³¹ ‘Alā’ al-Dīn came to Cairo in 737 as a deputy for his father and became *kātib al-sirr* in 738. As far as I can tell, this date supplies the latest *terminus post quem*. We can conclude therefore that the *Proto-Dīwān*, as represented by the above-mentioned sources, assumed its final shape in the years 738 or 739, and, in any case, not later than 740.

Having established this date, we have at our disposal a tool to approximately date the many epigrams and *qaṣīdahs* in the *Proto-Dīwān* that do not give any further

²⁹See al-Sakhāwī, *Dawʿ*, 3:91.

³⁰*Dīwān*, 429; Ibn Ḥijjah, *Khizānat al-Adab*, 2:43–45.

³¹See *Dīwān*, 30–32.



clue about the circumstances of their creation. An example will demonstrate the usefulness of such knowledge.

Among the *qaṣīdahs* of the *Proto-Dīwān* is a comparatively short panegyric, which bears the heading “*Kāmīlyah*” in the printed *Dīwān* (p. 397), but no heading in the manuscripts of the *Proto-Dīwān*. The eulogized person is addressed as *malik* and as *al-kāmil*. It is therefore natural to identify the addressee as the sultan al-Malik al-Kāmil Sha‘bān. This conclusion seems to be corroborated by the fact that Ibn Nubātah composed a two-line epigram on the occasion of al-Kāmil Sha‘bān’s accession to the throne in Rabī‘ II 746/August 1345, making a pun on the words “Rabī‘” and “Sha‘bān.”³² ‘Umar Mūsā Bāshā took this identification for granted and dedicated a short chapter to the relationship between Ibn Nubātah and al-Kāmil Sha‘bān.³³ However, there was no such relationship besides the epigram, which must not necessarily have been sent to the sultan himself.

The first fact that ought to have aroused suspicion is the brevity of the poem. Why did Ibn Nubātah send a poem to the sultan that was shorter and less ambitious than the poems he usually sent to the prince of Ḥamāh? Further, there are several allusions in the poem that do not readily correspond to the Cairene monarch. The addressee is praised for his great ancestors and for the fact that, thanks to him, the poet finds all that he hoped for from Syria more than fulfilled. Further, the last line lacks an understandable point. It reads: *lā jawra fī dahrin wa-fīhi mumaddaḥun washajāt manābituhū bi-nabti al-‘ādilī*³⁴ “There can be no tyranny at a time in which we can praise a man whose roots are entangled with the sprouts of the Just.” Ibn Nubātah, the master of lexical ambiguity, was not the poet to choose a word like *al-‘ādilī* in such a prominent position of the poem without intending more than a simple, not very well-fitting meaning. We can be sure that not any just man is meant, but an ancestor who bore the name or title *al-‘Ādil*. But there is no probable candidate in the sultan’s ancestry. And finally, the poem is part of the *Proto-Dīwān* and must therefore have been written before 740, if our theory is right. But al-Kāmil Sha‘bān came to the throne only six years later. Therefore, we have to look for another al-Malik al-Kāmil.

Such a person does indeed exist. He is al-Malik al-Kāmil Nāṣir al-Dīn ibn al-Malik al-Sa‘īd ibn al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ Ismā‘īl ibn al-Malik al-‘Ādil ibn Najm al-Dīn

³²*Dīwān*, 320; al-Ṣafadī found it charming and quotes it in *A‘yān*, 2:523.

³³‘Umar Mūsā Bāshā, *Ibn Nubātah*, 211–12.

³⁴The reading *washaḥat* of *Dīwān*, 398 must be corrected to *washajāt*, as all MSS read. There are a number of further variants; all MSS of the *Proto-Dīwān* suggest that the original reading of the last words of the line is *manāsibuhū bi-bayti al-‘ādilī*—see Berlin MS 7861, fol. 104v (slightly corrupted text); Ayasofya MS 2292, fol. 120v; Cairo, Dār al-Kutub MS 558 *adab*, p. 184. This reading points even more obviously to an ancestor named *al-‘Ādil*.



Ayyūb,³⁵ an Ayyubid prince, who had served as an *amīr ṭablkhānāh* in Damascus. He was a distant relative of al-Muʿayyad and spent many years in Ḥamāh. His closest friend among the *ʿulamāʾ* was Kamāl al-Dīn Ibn al-Zamlakānī, in his turn an elder friend of Ibn Nubātah. This al-Malik al-Kāmil was born in 653/1255 and died in 727/1327. All these facts fit perfectly with the person addressed in Ibn Nubātah’s poem and its inclusion in the *Proto-Dīwān*. We can now understand the references to the glorious (Ayyubid) ancestors, the poet’s gratitude for helping to make him a home in Syria, and the reference to the “sprout (or: house) of the Just,” the “Just” being al-Malik al-ʿĀdil, the brother of Saladin and al-Kāmil’s great-grandfather. If still another proof for the identity of this Ayyubid prince with the addressee of Ibn Nubātah’s *qaṣīdah* should be needed, one could refer to the manuscripts of the recension *Bashtakī α*, where the prince is mentioned with full name and title.³⁶

This example shows how important it is to follow a poem through its different recensions in order to avoid false conclusions. In this case, we can establish a connection between Ibn Nubātah and an elderly Ayyubid scion, who was an old man when Ibn Nubātah met him. Ibn Nubātah’s poem may have been hardly more than a gesture of politeness and respect towards an old relative of his venerated patron, which gives a new starting point for an interpretation of the poem. Further, we learn that Ibn Nubātah, indeed, never directed a *qaṣīdah* to a Mamluk sultan prior to al-Nāṣir Ḥasan.

(2) THE *DĪWĀN AL-AṢL*

A *Dīwān al-Aṣl* is mentioned as one of the sources of al-Bashtakī in the printed *Dīwān*. But we learn more about it in the longer preface of al-Bashtakī’s recension (*Bashtakī α*, see below). In this version, instead of *wa-jamaʿtuhū min Dīwān al-Aṣl . . .*, we read: *. . . min dīwānihī alladhī sammāhu Dīwān al-Aṣl wa-huwa bi-khaṭṭ yadihī fī mujalladayn . . . mablaghuhū min hādhā al-Dīwān qadar al-thulth* “I collected it from his *Dīwān*, to which he had given the title *Dīwān al-Aṣl*, and which, in his own hand, fills two volumes. It amounts to about one third of the present collection.” As we see from this formulation, *Dīwān al-Aṣl* is a title that was given by Ibn Nubātah himself to a compilation of his poetry. We also learn that it was of considerable size and therefore a “real” *dīwān* and more than an occasional collection. The *Proto-Dīwān* is not divided into two volumes, and none of the four sources makes any reference to the title *Dīwān al-Aṣl*. Further, it had been completed about thirty years before Ibn Nubātah’s death. Too many poems must have been missing, therefore, to make it the main source for al-Bashtakī’s

³⁵Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān*, 4:550–55.

³⁶Ayasofya MS 2352, fol. 141v; Cairo, Dār al-Kutub MS *adab Ṭalʿat* 4658, fol. 172v.



compilation.

There is a manuscript, however, that bears the title *Dīwān al-Aṣl*. The writer of the manuscript Oxford MS Marsh 273 informs us on the first page that the volume is “the second part of the poetry of Ibn Nubātah, the one that is called the *Dīwān al-Aṣl*.” The beautiful volume is not the only copy written by the copyist, who must have been a proficient and professional scribe. A manuscript in the Ayasofya was written by the same copyist. The handwriting and the way in which verses are distributed on the page is absolutely identical. The Ayasofya manuscript is nearly complete. Only a few pages at the beginning and in the second part are missing. Consequently, we lack the title page, the preface, the first poem, which certainly was the poem in praise of the Prophet with which the Bashtakī version starts, and a few other poems, among them the poem on al-Mu’ayyad we treated above. The second part, which starts with Ibn Nubātah’s *munāẓarah* on Ka‘b’s *Burdah*,³⁷ does not bear a heading, but the text is identical with that of the Oxford manuscript. Both manuscripts are undated and the copyist remains anonymous. There can be no doubt that these manuscripts represent a nearly complete text of the *Dīwān al-Aṣl*. Moreover, the style of the writing suggests a date not too long after the death of the poet.

Source	Date	Observations
Ayasofya MS 3891	undated	vol. 1 and 2; beginning missing; right order: fols. 1, 317–35, 2–316, 336–38; omission of 61 poems in vol. 2 (see fol. 292v and MS Marsh 273, fols. 74v–90v)
Oxford MS Marsh 273	undated; same hand	vol. 2 only; fol. 1r, by the copyist’s hand: <i>al-juz’ al-thānī min shī‘r Ibn Nubātah al-Miṣri wa-huwa al-musammá bi-Dīwān al-Aṣl</i> ; lacunae after fols. 8, 28, 102.

It is tempting to see a connection between Ibn Nubātah’s compilation of the *Dīwān al-Aṣl* and the order of Sultan al-Nāṣir Ḥasan to produce a copy of Ibn Nubātah’s *Dīwān* (probably for his *khizānah*). Ibn Nubātah commemorates this event in one of his miniature *qaṣīdahs* that constitute his late *Al-Sab‘ah al-Sayyārah* [31].³⁸ The poem, however, is not part of the *Dīwān al-Aṣl*, and neither are the four long odes on Sultan al-Nāṣir Ḥasan,³⁹ nor are most of the seven-liners that

³⁷See *Dīwān*, 428–29.

³⁸*Dīwān*, 519; see also ‘Umar Mūsá Bāshā, *Ibn Nubātah*, 224.

³⁹See *Dīwān*, 195, 380, 381, 491.



would become *Al-Sab‘ah al-Sayyārah*. Most of these poems are even lacking in the recension *Bashtakī* α. The *rā‘īyah* on al-Ḥasan, probably Ibn Nubātah’s first Cairene poem, found its way into *Bashtakī* α, but not into the *Dīwān al-Aṣl*. Thus we can conclude that the *Dīwān al-Aṣl* was composed in Damascus before Ibn Nubātah’s departure for Cairo. This means that a great part of the many poems on ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Ibn Faḍl Allāh were not written in Cairo, but sent to him from Damascus just as were the two poems already in the *Proto-Dīwān*. On the other hand, the great number of poems on al-‘Alā’ Ibn Faḍl Allāh shows that the *Dīwān al-Aṣl* cannot have been composed long before Ibn Nubātah’s departure for Cairo in 761/1360. It is a good guess, therefore, that the *Dīwān al-Aṣl* was composed around 760 and contains the greatest part of Ibn Nubātah’s Syrian production.

The *Dīwān al-Aṣl* is obviously an expanded and revised version of the *Proto-Dīwān*, about twice its size. Its structure is a consequent development of the structure of the *Proto-Dīwān*. The *Proto-Dīwān* starts with a poem in praise of the Prophet, followed by the 37 *qaṣīdahs* on al-Malik al-Mu‘ayyad, followed by 27 epigrams on the same patron. After a dirge on al-Mu‘ayyad’s death, there is an absence of any detectable principle of order. *Qaṣīdahs* and epigrams follow without chronological or alphabetical order, and poems directed to a certain addressee are no longer put together. The author never placed more than three *qaṣīdahs* next to each other without interrupting the sequence with some epigrams, and the number of epigrams following each other without an interrupting *qaṣīdah* rarely exceed ten. But any regular pattern is absent.

The revision of the *Proto-Dīwān* in the form of the *Dīwān al-Aṣl* proves that this was done consciously. In the *Dīwān al-Aṣl*, the principle of avoiding any detectable pattern of order is carried even further. Three poems on the Prophet are used to frame the text. There is one at the beginning of the first part, one at the beginning of the second part, and a third at the end of the *qariḍ* poems. These are the only poems that owe their place to the person of their addressee. Most importantly, Ibn Nubātah saw no reason to uphold the special position given to al-Mu‘ayyad in the *Proto-Dīwān* any longer. Consequently he had to dissolve the cluster of *Mu‘ayyadiyāt* at its beginning. This was done by distributing the *Mu‘ayyadiyāt* between the two volumes. Most of them can now be found in the beginnings of the first and of the second volumes. Sometimes epigrams have been put between them. Occasionally, sequences of a few poems that display the same rhyme consonant appear. Since a similar phenomenon is encountered in the revised version of *Al-Qaṭr al-Nubātī* [6], we may conclude that Ibn Nubātah by now used to archive his poems in alphabetical order. He also applied the alphabetical principle to his late collection of the *nasīb*s of his *qaṣīdahs*, *Sūq al-Raqīq* [29], but for his *Dīwān al-Aṣl* he still chose the principle of avoiding monotony by eschewing order. Since al-Ṣafadī advocates a similar idea in his preface to *Al-Ghayth al-Musajjam* with direct



reference to al-Jāhiz,⁴⁰ Ibn Nubātah seems to have been following conventions that were current during these years, though I know of no other *Dīwān* ordered (or rather disordered) in a similar way.

After having distributed his *Mu'ayyadīyāt* to different parts of the *Dīwān*, he next added his new poems, i.e., the poems that were created after his *Proto-Dīwān*, in an order similar to that of the *Proto-Dīwān*. Here the high percentage of poems on al-'Alā' Ibn Faḍl Allāh and on members of the Subkī family is remarkable. As in the *Proto-Dīwān*, *qaṣīdahs* and epigrams alternate freely. The second volume of the *Dīwān al-Aṣl* starts with a poem in praise of the Prophet, followed by several *Mu'ayyadīyāt*, interspersed with epigrams and *qaṣīdahs* of a later production. The greater part of the second volume is occupied by the *Proto-Dīwān*.⁴¹ Besides a few transpositions of larger groups of poems, its text is put here without any remarkable changes. In a few cases, the poet himself fell victim to his conscious construction of disorder, since at least two poems appear twice.

The *Dīwān al-Aṣl* does not represent Ibn Nubātah's last word on his poems. Some of them were revised later, as becomes clear from *Sūq al-Raqīq* [29] and the Bashtakī recensions. Some of the poems already display their later forms, while others are as they were in the *Proto-Dīwān*. Remarkably, many of the *qaṣīdahs* are shorter than they were in the *Proto-Dīwān*, if only by one or two lines. If these abridgements were not made by the copyist (which is rather improbable), they display an increasingly critical attitude by Ibn Nubātah towards his own creations. In revising his *Dīwān*, he began to consider several of his lines dispensable. This approach of Ibn Nubātah towards his own poetry is fundamentally different from al-Bashtakī's method of accumulating as many verses as possible.

(3) THE BASHTAKĪ RECENSIONS

The Cairene *adīb* Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad al-Bashtakī was born in the Khānqāh Bashtak (hence his *nisbah*) in 748/1347 and died eighty years later (830/1427) in the pool of a bathhouse.⁴² He kept company with many famous poets and *udabā'* of his time, among them Ibn Abī Ḥajalah, Ibn al-Ṣā'igh, Ibn Makānis, and al-Qīrāṭī. As soon as Ibn Nubātah came to Cairo, al-Bashtakī joined him and heard his *Dīwān*. Al-Bashtakī earned his livelihood as a copyist, and his ability in this profession was highly praised. He could write both quickly and accurately and used to spend the whole day and part of the night copying books with only a lunch break. When he was tired, he lay down on his side without interrupting his work. On Mondays and Thursdays he used to sell his manuscripts

⁴⁰ Al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Ghayth al-Musajjam fī Sharḥ Lāmiyat al-'Ajām* (Beirut, 1411/1990), 1:11–12.

⁴¹ Ayasofya MS 3891, fols. 162–287.

⁴² See Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, *Inbā' al-Ghumr*, 8:132–33; idem, *Dhayl al-Durar*, ed. 'Adnān Darwish (Cairo, 1412/1992), no. 608; al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍaw' al-Lāmi'*, 6:277–79.



in the market. Later at night he went home to meet other *udabā'* to hear and recite poetry. He was a clever, quick-witted, and sharp-tongued man, but “the extensive copy work had a stupefying effect on his intellect.”⁴³ He composed a lot of poetry himself, but did not collect it in a *dīwān*.

In the year 773/1371–72, al-Bashtakī could offer a new commodity on the book market, the *dīwān* of his master Ibn Nubātah, who had died five years before. As becomes obvious through a comparison of different manuscripts, al-Bashtakī produced not just one recension of the *Dīwān Ibn Nubātah*, but two. They not only differ in the arrangement of the poems, but also in their preface and in their content. Two manuscripts of the recension which I call *Bashtakī α* start with a preface that is considerably longer than the preface of the other recension. The shorter preface can be found in the printed *Dīwān*. Since it is unlikely that the *Bashtakī α* recension will ever be published separately, it seems appropriate to present the longer preface here based on the Cairo manuscript (Dār al-Kutub MS 4658 *adab Ṭalʿat*):

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 أما بعد حمد الله المنفرد بالجمال * والصلاة والسلام على سيدنا محمد جامع محاسن الكمال * وعلى آله وصحبه أفصح
 صحب وأفصح آل * وسلم ومجد وكرم * فيقول العبد الفقير إلى الله تعالى المستغني به عن من سواه محمد ابن ابراهيم
 ابن محمد البشتكي تجاوز الله تعالى عن خطاه وعمده * وتداركه برحمة من عنده * إنني كنت في سنة ٧٧٣ جمعت
 شعر شيخنا—القاضي الفاضل الإمام الحافظ جمال الدين محمد بن محمد بن محمد بن حسن بن الحسن بن صالح بن
 علي بن يحيى بن طاهر بن محمد بن الخطيب بن عبد الرحيم بن نباتة ومولده في سنة ٦٨٦ بزقاق القناديل بمصر
 ووفاته بالبيمارستان المنصوري صبيحة يوم الثلاثاء من صفر سنة ٧٦٨ ودفن بمقبرة الصوفية خارج باب النصر بترية
 الصوفية رحمه الله تعالى ورضي عنه—من ديوانه الذي سماه ديوان الأصل وهو بخط يده في مجلدين ونسبته المنسوبة
 سعيد السعداء رضي الله عنه ورحم مبلغه من هذا الديوان قدر الثلث وطرائف الزيادة والمدائح المؤيدية والسوق الرقيق
 وديوان الخاص بالسبعة السيارة والقطر النباتي وجلاسة القطر وغالبها بخطه وأرجو أن لا يفوتني من شعره إلا النادر
 أو ما أسقطه هو ولا أدعي الإحاطة فمن صح عنه شيء من شعره فليلحقه بتوفيته ونقلته من مسوداته ومبعضاته كل
 ما وقفت عليه من شعره مرتباً لكل ذلك على حروف المعجم ثم كتبت نسخة ثانية قدمت فيها القوائد المطولات على
 السباعيات ثم المثالث على المثاني⁴⁴ وكتب الناس من كل منهما عدة من النسخ هي فذلكت ذلك الجمع ومن أذ ما يقرع
 السمع ولا أدعي الإحاطة بكل ما قال رحمه الله تعالى ولا يعرف قدر هذه النسخة إلا من طالع ما طالع وجمع من
 كلامه ما جمعت والله تعالى بحسن الخاتمة كفيلاً * وهو حسبي ونعم الوكيل.

In this foreword, al-Bashtakī tells the whole story of his compiling of the *Dīwān Ibn Nubātah* and his revising his own compilation. Remarkably, this longer foreword is attached to the non-revised version of the compilation, i.e., *Bashtakī α*. We will have to solve the enigma of why al-Bashtakī tells the story of his revision in the preface to the non-revised edition, whereas it cannot be found in

⁴³Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā'*, 8:133.

⁴⁴Both MSS (Cairo, Vienna) erroneously: الثالث على الثاني, correct in Tunis MS 8717.



most manuscripts of the revised edition.

In the version presented above, al-Bashtakī mentions the date of his compilation. The short account of Ibn Nubātah's life is part of both versions of the preface. Then al-Bashtakī mentions his sources. We learn that his main source was the *Dīwān al-Aṣl* in an autograph manuscript. The reference to the Khānqāh Saʿīd al-Suʿadā⁴⁵ is enigmatic. In all probability, the passage from *nisbatuhū* to *raḥima* has to be deleted here. In the other versions of the preface, Saʿīd al-Suʿadā is given as the place of Ibn Nubātah's burial. According to al-Bashtakī, the size of the *Dīwān al-Aṣl* "is a third of the present *Dīwān*." This is a gross exaggeration. After all, al-Bashtakī earned his living by selling his manuscripts, and since other versions of Ibn Nubātah's *Dīwān* were still being sold, al-Bashtakī obviously expected to increase sales by this sort of advertising. According to my estimation, the *Dīwān al-Aṣl* is not one third, but rather three-quarters of the size of al-Bashtakī's recension. As a sample, I counted the longer poems (more than ten lines) in the section of poems with a rhyme on *lām* or *lām-alif* in the printed *Dīwān*, which represents *Bashtakī* β. In the printed *Dīwān* there are 30 long *lāmīyāt*, 22 of which had already found their way into the *Dīwān al-Aṣl* and 15 of which were already included in the *Proto-Dīwān*.

Al-Bashtakī then enumerates other works of Ibn Nubātah that he used as a source. This enumeration is of great value for our purpose. But al-Bashtakī's knowledge of most of these works did not contribute much to his recension of the *Dīwān*. All *Muʿayyadīyāt* and all (or at least most of) the epigrams of *Al-Qaṭr al-Nubātī* (and probably those of *Julāsat al-Qaṭr*) are already part of the *Dīwān al-Aṣl*. The same is true for *Sūq al-Raqīq*, which, however, displays later versions of many texts. Again, al-Bashtakī's main intention with this passage may have been to show off his intimate knowledge of the work of his master.

Al-Bashtakī then admits that his recension cannot claim to be exhaustive. This is a topos of modesty, but it may also reflect an uneasy feeling of the author, since the phrase is repeated a few lines later. This overtly apologetic tone is absent in the preface of *Bashtakī* β and provides an important hint to the understanding of the story of the recension. Al-Bashtakī closes his introduction with another bit of advertising, saying that nobody who does not share his extensive knowledge of Ibn Nubātah's poetry can properly assess his achievement.

As we see, al-Bashtakī did the following: (1) He rearranged the *Dīwān al-Aṣl* in alphabetical order; (2) he added poems from a few later books (perhaps *Tarāʾif al-Ziyādah* [32] was an important one); and (3) he inserted lines from different versions of a poem into the *Dīwān al-Aṣl* version. All in all, he contributed much less than he claimed in his preface, and not everything he did was to the benefit

⁴⁵See S. Denoix, "Saʿīd al-Suʿadā," *EF*, 8:861.



of the poems.

At first, it may seem rather strange that al-Bashtakī compiled two different versions. As he says, he first compiled an alphabetically arranged version, which he copied again, this time arranging the poems also according to their length: “First the long poems (*al-muṭawwalāt*), then the seven-liners, then the three-liners, and finally the two-liners. People copied numerous manuscripts from both versions.” So far, I have been able to identify three manuscripts that represent the first recension, which I call *Bashtakī* α. They are presented in Table 5.

Source	Date	Observations
Istanbul, Ayasofya MS 2352	3 Rajab 878/24 November 1473	no preface; fol. 208v end of the <i>Dīwān</i> and beginning of a section of additions (the same as in 4658 <i>adab Ṭalʿat</i>). A very faulty manuscript.
Cairo, Dār al- Kutub MS 4658 <i>adab Ṭalʿat</i>	6 Jumādā I 1233/ 13 March 1818	long preface; fol. 239v end of the <i>Dīwān</i> and beginning of the additions
Vienna MS 483 ⁴⁶	10 Muḥarram 1236/18 October 1820	long preface, no section of additions

As far as I can judge, the manuscripts in the following table represent the recension *Bashtakī* β. I have not had the opportunity to examine all of them, and the list is not complete:

⁴⁶See Gustav Flügel, *Die arabischen, persischen und türkischen Handschriften der Kaiserlich-Königlichen Hofbibliothek zu Wien* (Vienna, 1865–67), 1:472–74.



Table 6 <i>Dīwān Ibn Nubātah: Bashtakī β</i>		
Source	Date	Observations
Dublin, Chester Beatty MS 3831	20 Shawwāl 803/3 June 1401	written during al-Bashtakī's lifetime by the <i>adīb</i> and historian Ibn Duqmāq; one of the most important MSS of the β recension; several additions by Ibn Duqmāq; second half only (from <i>fā'</i> onwards)
Berlin MS 7862	19 Ramaḍān 812/25 January 1410	another manuscript from al-Bashtakī's lifetime; unvoweled, sparingly dotted; second half only (from <i>ʿayn</i> onwards)
Istanbul, Nuruosmaniye MS 3802	date unreadable	written by a certain Aḥmad ibn Mubārakshāh al-Ḥanafī
Tunis MS 8717	Ṣafar 1174/ September 1760	lavishly decorated manuscript in Maghribī script, copied from a "very faulty" Bashtakī manuscript
Cairo, Dār al-Kutub MS 1018 <i>adab</i>	Rajab 1291 / Aug.–Nov. 1874	see the following entry
Cairo, Dār al-Kutub MS 2125 <i>adab</i>	11 Shaʿbān 1314/15 January 1897	copied from Dār al-Kutub MS 1018 <i>adab</i> , basis for the printed edition
Maṭbaʿat al- Tamaddun, ʿAbidīn, Cairo	1323/1905	printed under the direction of Muḥammad al-Qalqīlī on the basis of Dār al-Kutub MS 1018 <i>adab</i> ; several additions, a few omissions, deliberate combination of readings that belong to different versions of a poem; many transpositions. The 1905 edition has been reprinted several times and forms the only basis for all studies on the poetry of Ibn Nubātah carried out so far.
further MSS		Cairo, Dār al-Kutub MS 30 <i>Muḥammad ʿAbduh zāy</i> ; MS 923 <i>Shīr Taymūr</i> ; MS 1264 <i>adab</i> ; El Escorial MS 449; Gotha MS 2304; Leiden MS 734; London, Br. Museum MS 1086; Upsala MS 144; see also Brockelmann II, 11, Brockelmann Supplement II, 4.



As far as the arrangement of the poems is concerned, the main difference between the two recensions is not so much the separation between long and short poems, but the arrangement of epigrams according to length. Even in *Bashtakī* α, in general, the long odes precede the short poems, though there are a number of exceptions that were eliminated in *Bashtakī* β. In *Bashtakī* α, there is no further order as far as the epigrams are concerned. In his preface, al-Bashtakī mentions seven-liners because Ibn Nubātah had composed numerous miniature *qaṣīdahs* of seven lines, which he collected in his *Al-Sab‘ah al-Sayyārah* [31]. The bulk of Ibn Nubātah’s epigrams comprise two or three lines, as do most epigrams in this period. This is the reason why al-Bashtakī mentions three- and two-liners, but not four- or five-liners. The term *al-mathālith wa-al-mathānī* (or vice versa) had become a near synonym for “epigram” in this time.⁴⁷ Of course, poems of four, five, or six lines also exist, but only in comparatively small quantity. In all manuscripts of *Bashtakī* β, the epigrams are strictly sorted according to the number of lines. Exceptions are due to later additions or to al-Qalqīlī’s re-arrangement in the printed text.

But these are not the only differences. In *Bashtakī* β, the long poems are again arranged in a certain order. Every chapter begins with (a) poems in praise of the Prophet (if there are any), then follows (b) poems on al-Malik al-Mu‘ayyad, (c) poems on al-Malik al-Afḍal and other *umarā’* (including the sultan), (d) poems on ‘*ulamā’*, and (e) elegies. There is no such order in *Bashtakī* α. A further modification concerns poems with the rhyme *-lā*. Whereas in *Bashtakī* α they are included in the chapter of poems rhyming in *lām*, in *Bashtakī* β a separate chapter of poems rhyming in *-lā* is inserted between *wāw* and *yā’*. The idea is to define rhyme on the basis of rhyme *letters*, and since the ligature *lām-alif* was often counted as a letter of its own, one could argue that poems ending with the graphic sequence *lām-alif* form a separate category. This idea is incompatible with the Arabic rhyme system, and it is contrary to Ibn Nubātah’s own perception of rhyme. Whenever Ibn Nubātah arranged poems alphabetically according to the rhyme consonant (in *Sūq al-Raqīq* [29] and some of his anthologies [21, 25]), poems rhyming in *-lā* are always grouped with the other *lāmīyāt*.

A closer comparison between *Bashtakī* α and early manuscripts of *Bashtakī* β is necessary to establish the extent to which al-Bashtakī added additional texts to his second version. The *nūniyah* on Sultan Ḥasan,⁴⁸ to mention one example, is missing in *Bashtakī* α, whereas it can be found in Ibn Duqmāq’s manuscript of *Bashtakī* β from the year 803. In any case, al-Bashtakī’s achievement as a collector of Ibn Nubātah’s poems is not very impressive, judging from the *Bashtakī* α manuscripts.

⁴⁷Safī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī entitled his collection of epigrams *Dīwān al-Mathālith wa-al-Mathānī fī al-Ma‘ālī wa-al-Ma‘ānī*; see Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS 3341; the edition by Muḥammad Ṭāhir al-Ḥimṣī (Damascus, 1419/1998) is insufficient.

⁴⁸See *Dīwān*, 491.



Again, I checked the *qaṣīdahs* with the rhyme *lām*, and found only a single *qaṣīdah*, a poem on al-Afḍal,⁴⁹ which is neither in the *Proto-Dīwān* nor in the *Dīwān al-Aṣl*. A poem on al-‘Alā’ ibn Faḍl Allāh, which was included in the *Dīwān al-Aṣl*, can only be found in the additions to the *Dīwān* in the *Bashtakī α* recension. The existence of an appendix of this kind is disturbing anyway. This appendix follows after a full-fledged colophon and is identical in two of the three manuscripts (which are not dependant upon each other), but missing in the third. Therefore, I presume that these additions are the work of al-Bashtakī himself, who must have known the ‘Alā’ al-Dīn poem from the *Dīwān al-Aṣl*. But even considering the appendix, al-Bashtakī’s omissions are considerable. Four odes included in the printed *Dīwān* and in manuscripts of *Bashtakī β* are missing in *Bashtakī α*,⁵⁰ among them two panegyric odes to al-Nāṣir Ḥasan. Further, Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī copied a *qaṣīdah* in the meter *ṭawīl* from Ibn Nubātah’s autograph.⁵¹ The poem starts with the line:

كَفَى أَلَمًا أَنْ النَّسِيمَ رَسُولُ أَرُومُ شَفَائِي مِنْهُ وَهُوَ عَلِيلُ

This rather long ode of more than fifty lines is missing in all of al-Bashtakī’s recensions and is not known from any source other than Ibn Ḥajar so far.

As this survey of the rhyme letter *lām* shows, the shortcomings of *Bashtakī α* are only too obvious. Consequently, people who already had a certain expertise on Ibn Nubātah must have started to complain (as Ibn Ḥajar actually did). Al-Bashtakī tried to meet this criticism by revising his original work. Though not everything he changed was a real improvement, he must have considered his new version better. But still the question remains as to why he continued to support his earlier version and provide it with a preface.

The key to the solution of this question is to be found in the fact that the manuscript Ayasofya MS 2352 does not have a preface (besides “this is the *Dīwān* of N.”), though it is the oldest manuscript of this group and the rest of the text is the same as that of the other manuscripts of *Bashtakī α*. It shares not only the colophon with Dār al-Kutub MS 4658 *adab Ṭal‘at*, but also the rather large section of additions, which considerably distorts the original purpose of its composition. It is reasonable, therefore, to conclude that the copyist did *not* omit the original preface and substitute for it two short introductory lines, but that there was no longer a preface to the original version of *Bashtakī α*. Indeed, the preface given above is only understandable if it is understood as a later addition by the author

⁴⁹Ibid., 551.

⁵⁰Ibid., 380, 381, 389, 403.

⁵¹Göttingen, MS arab. 179, fols. 32r–v; see figure 5, top.



after he had completed the revised version of *Bashtakī* β. But why did al-Bashtakī continue to support his earlier recension, when he considered it inferior to his new one?

The only possible answer is that there were still copies of *Bashtakī* α left after he had already compiled *Bashtakī* β. Neither al-Bashtakī nor the brokers and booksellers that used to collaborate with him wanted to be left holding the manuscripts of the earlier version or to hear complaints about having sold an inferior product. Therefore al-Bashtakī had to add a preface in which he explains the differences between the two versions and states that the earlier version is still valid in its own right. This also explains the apologetic character of the text. After all, al-Bashtakī's compilation was first and foremost a commercial enterprise and not made for philological reasons as was Ibn Ḥajar's volume of additions to the *Dīwān*.

The manuscript that was the basis for the Tunis manuscript (Tunis MS 8717) was obviously written after al-Bashtakī had provided the manuscripts of *Bashtakī* α with a preface, since its preface corresponds to the short preface of the other manuscripts of *Bashtakī* β in the first part, but adds the story of the compilation and the concluding apologetic phrases from the longer preface. The story of the prefaces may thus be reconstructed as follows: Al-Bashtakī's first manuscripts of the *Dīwān Ibn Nubātah* had no preface at all. Complaints about the deficiencies of these manuscripts induced al-Bashtakī to produce a new, more complete recension. These manuscripts were introduced by a preface, the "short" preface. A longer, more apologetic preface was then added to the remaining copies of the first recension (*Bashtakī* α) to make them easier to sell. As a final step, parts of the longer preface were added to the old "short" preface in new manuscripts of *Bashtakī* β. At that time, al-Bashtakī must have sold a considerable number of manuscripts of Ibn Nubātah's *Dīwān* in two different recensions and with several versions of the preface. His manuscripts were not always of good quality. The writer of the Tunis manuscript complains about the many mistakes in the *Bashtakī* manuscript from which he had to copy his own manuscript. When we consider the profit al-Bashtakī must have made from selling copies of Ibn Nubātah's *Dīwān* under the pretense of being the greatest authority on his master's poetry, and his rather mediocre achievements in establishing a complete and correct text, we can hardly avoid characterizing al-Bashtakī's relationship to Ibn Nubātah as parasitic. But since a considerable part of the poetry of Ibn Nubātah is only accessible through the filter of al-Bashtakī, it is necessary to study carefully the different versions produced by Ibn Nubātah's business-minded disciple.

For the reconstruction of al-Bashtakī's efforts, the manuscripts of *Bashtakī* α are still important, since they represent a text that carries no signs of later modifications or additions. Therefore, they can be of help in assessing the amount



of al-Bashtakī's interference in the text of Ibn Nubātah. Manuscripts of *Bashtakī* β far outnumber manuscripts of *Bashtakī* α. For obvious reasons, *Bashtakī* β soon gained wider currency than *Bashtakī* α and it formed the basis for the printed text. Since al-Bashtakī's invitation to add further lines and poems by Ibn Nubātah did not go unheard, it is not always easy to determine the exact form of al-Bashtakī's original text. This can only be done by a careful comparison between its manuscripts and the other versions of Ibn Nubātah's poetry.

One of the first to make additions to the *Dīwān* was Šārim al-Dīn Ibn Duqmāq (b. between 740 and 750, d. 809/1496), who is mainly known as a historian today, but who was also a proficient *adīb*.⁵² He wrote his manuscript of Ibn Nubātah's *Dīwān* thirty years after al-Bashtakī had compiled it. Al-Bashtakī was still alive then. Several poems in his manuscript, of which only the second part has been preserved, are not in the printed *Dīwān*, and a remark by Ibn Duqmāq shows that he was in possession of autograph drafts (*musawwadāt*) by Ibn Nubātah. He was certainly not the only one who could add to the corpus assembled by al-Bashtakī, and perhaps al-Bashtakī himself added newly discovered poems in different copies of his *Dīwān Ibn Nubātah*. Hence the story of *Bashtakī* β is a rather complicated one, and it cannot be reconstructed in complete detail on the basis of the manuscripts that are at my disposal.

(4) IBN ḤAJAR'S ADDITIONS TO THE BASHTAKĪ RECENSION

Whereas Ibn Duqmāq and others inserted their additions in their manuscripts of the recension *Bashtakī* β, others compiled separate volumes with their additions to the *Dīwān*. The most important supplement of this kind was written by Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī. A second collection of this kind from the eleventh/seventeenth century was unavailable to me:

Table 7 Supplements to the <i>Dīwān Ibn Nubātah</i>		
Source	Author and date	Observations
<i>Ziyādāt ʿalā al-Dīwān</i> , Göttingen, 8 ^o Cod. MS arab. 179, fols. 21r–62v ⁵³	Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī	autograph; <i>musawwadah</i>
<i>Ziyādāt Dīwān Ibn Nubātah</i> , Damascus, Dār al-Kutub al-Ḍāhirīyah MS 7681 <i>Shiʿr Majmūʿ</i>	Ramaḍān ibn Mūsā al- ʿUṭayfī, 1046/1636–37	see ʿUmar Mūsā, <i>Ibn Nubātah</i> , 243

⁵²See *Mamlūk Studies Review* 7, [no. 1] (2003): 260–62.

⁵³See Tilman Seidensticker, *Die Arabischen Handschriften Cod. Ms. arab. 136 bis 180 der*



What motivated the greatest hadith scholar of post-formative Islam to assemble a supplement to the *dīwān* of the greatest post-Mutanabbian Arabic poet? Ibn Ḥajar's relationship to Ibn Nubātah was threefold. First, there was an indirect personal relationship between them; second, Ibn Nubātah was also a hadith transmitter; and third, Ibn Nubātah was Ibn Ḥajar's model in the field of *adab* to such an extent that Ibn Ḥajar even emulated Ibn Nubātah's handwriting.

Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (773–852/1372–1449) was born five years after the death of Ibn Nubātah. But his father, Nūr al-Dīn ʿAlī Ibn Ḥajar (d. Rajab 777/December 1375), a productive poet and trained *faqīh*, was a close acquaintance of Ibn Nubātah during Ibn Nubātah's last years. In those days, Ibn Nubātah lived in a house that Nūr al-Dīn had lent him. For some reason, a quarrel arose between them and Nūr al-Dīn asked for the key to the house back. Ibn Nubātah complained to ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Ibn Faḍl Allāh about “a man of stone (*ḥajar*) in his descent and in his wrath.”⁵⁴ The poet al-Qīrāṭī was asked to mediate between them. The story left a trace in a number of poems preserved in Ibn Nubātah's *Dīwān*. Most of them are miniature *qaṣīdahs* of seven lines.⁵⁵ Ibn Ḥajar junior ascribes the break-up of their friendship to Ibn Nubātah, who, according to him, used to behave in a whimsical manner in his friendships.⁵⁶ Shihāb al-Dīn cannot have heard this story directly from his father, nor can he have heard transmissions of Ibn Nubātah's poems by him, because Nūr al-Dīn died when his son was a boy of only four years. But he may have inherited a number of Ibn Nubātah autographs, which form the basis of his supplement to the *Dīwān*.

Another connection between the hadith scholar Ibn Ḥajar and Ibn Nubātah was the result of Ibn Nubātah's activities as a transmitter of hadith. Ibn Ḥajar had heard some of Ibn Nubātah's transmissions by one of Ibn Nubātah's transmitters. Therefore, Ibn Nubātah appears in Ibn Ḥajar's *Fahrasah*.⁵⁷

A more important bond, however, was Ibn Ḥajar's interest in *adab*. Ibn Ḥajar was a poet of major importance himself and left a *dīwān* in different recensions.⁵⁸

Niedersächsischen Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen (Stuttgart, 2005), 154–57.

⁵⁴*Dīwān*, 229.

⁵⁵See *ibid.*, 74, 75, 158, 228–30, 240, 242, 271, 309.

⁵⁶See Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʾ al-ʿUmr*, 1:174.

⁵⁷Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Muʿjam al-Mufahras aw Tajrīd Asānīd al-Kutub al-Mashhūrah wa-al-Ajzāʾ al-Manthūrah*, ed. Muḥammad Shakkūr al-Mayādīnī (Beirut, 1418/1998), nos. 191 (*Sīrat Ibn Ishāq-Ibn Hishām*), 356 (Abū ʿUbayd, *Faḍāʾil al-Qurʾān*), and 1942 (the *Dīwān*); the editor is unable to distinguish between Jamāl al-Dīn Ibn Nubātah and his father Shams al-Dīn; most references in the index, p. 541, refer to Shams al-Dīn.

⁵⁸See *Mamlūk Studies Review* 6 (2002): 219–24, and Thomas Bauer, “Ibn Ḥajar and the Arabic Ghazal of the Mamluk Age,” in *Ghazal as World Literature*, vol. 1, *Transformations of a Literary Genre*, ed. Th. Bauer and A. Neuwirth (Beirut, 2005), 35–55.



In his poetry, he proved himself an adherent of Ibn Nubātah's *tawriyah* style. In his youth, Ibn Ḥajar even planned a career as an *adīb* before he turned to hadith. Perhaps the thoroughness with which Ibn Nubātah covered the whole field of *adab* influenced Ibn Ḥajar's decision to specialize in the field of hadith. Here he could do exactly what Ibn Nubātah had done in *adab*. In *adab*, Ibn Nubātah had written exemplary works in nearly all of its branches, and what he left undone was covered by al-Ṣafadī. Remarkably, this is exactly what Ibn Ḥajar did in the field of hadith, covering all of its fields and sub-disciplines with at least one comprehensive and exemplary work. As an *adīb* with this ambition, Ibn Ḥajar could not have escaped the shadow of Ibn Nubātah. As hadith scholar, he could become as epochal a figure as Ibn Nubātah was as an *adīb*.

Ibn Ḥajar was in possession of a number of manuscripts of the works of Ibn Nubātah, among them several autographs, and Ibn Ḥajar knew many *udabā'* who had known Ibn Nubātah. One of them was al-Bashtakī, with whom Ibn Ḥajar had a close relationship for twenty years from 791 onwards.⁵⁹ Al-Bashtakī heard hadith from Ibn Ḥajar, exchanged *mutārahāt* with him, and dedicated to him an entry in his biographical dictionary of the poets of the age.⁶⁰ They had a common interest in the poetry of Ibn Nubātah. Whereas al-Bashtakī had the advantage of having known Ibn Nubātah himself, Ibn Ḥajar was a more diligent worker who felt that al-Bashtakī could have achieved more than he did. The introductory words of his supplementary volume are not without reproach. Though he does not mention the name al-Bashtakī, everybody knows to whom the following words allude:

This is what [I could assemble] from what escaped the collector of the poetry of the leading figure among the literati of the modern age (*shaykh al-udabā' al-muta'akhhirīn*), Jamāl al-Dīn Ibn Nubātah. It includes texts that I found written by himself or by people who transmitted them from his manuscripts or who heard it from him. . . [it is] astonishing how much it is, though he who had collected [Ibn Nubātah's poetry] before claimed comprehensiveness.⁶¹

This is not exactly true, since al-Bashtakī did not claim comprehensiveness but apologized for not being able to reach it. Nevertheless, Ibn Ḥajar's discontent with al-Bashtakī is certainly justified. In a similar vein, al-Sakhāwī states that al-Bashtakī "collected the poetry of his master Ibn Nubātah in two volumes. Though he had worked hard to obtain it, a portion of it escaped him in such a quantity that our master [Ibn Ḥajar] compiled a whole supplementary volume, which I have

⁵⁹Ibn Ḥajar, *Dhayl al-Durar*, no. 608.

⁶⁰Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Jawāhir wa-al-Durar*, 1:287–88, 486–92, 2:793.

⁶¹Arabic text: see Seidensticker, *Handschriften*, 154–55 = fol. 21r. I follow Seidensticker's reading; the text is extremely difficult to read.



also seen.”⁶² Al-Sakhāwī also mentions this volume in his list of Ibn Ḥajar’s works, and he adds that he had seen both the *musawwadah* as well as the *mubayyadah* of the book.⁶³

It is an important event for the study of both Ibn Ḥajar and Ibn Nubātah that this volume has now come to light. A copy of it has been found in Göttingen and is described in the catalogue.⁶⁴ The copy is a *musawwadah*, written by Ibn Ḥajar himself, perhaps the same copy that al-Sakhāwī refers to. It is very difficult to read and it will be impossible to edit the poems without another textual basis, but it gives a good impression of what is lacking in al-Bashtakī’s recension. In whatever way, some of its poems and lines have found their way into manuscripts and the printed texts of the Bashtakī recensions. For other poems, among them the only *bullayq* Ibn Nubātah ever composed, Ibn Ḥajar’s supplement is the only source. Contrary to the expectation raised by al-Sakhāwī, the volume is much smaller than a volume of the *Dīwān*, but is long enough to demonstrate again the insufficiency of the Bashtakī recensions.

(5) THE PRINTED TEXT

A printed book is more accessible than a manuscript copy but no longer in a dynamic state. Very few printed books are revised and adapted after their author’s death. The reader is now restricted to his role as receiver, whereas in a manuscript culture he can engage the text by adding marginal jottings, and the copyist can intervene by improving the text, by introducing additional materials available to him (among them marginal jottings by other readers), or by adding comments. Thus he can, however marginally, intrude on the role of the author. In the case of Ibn Nubātah, this was the usual practice for centuries. Long after the poet’s death, the *Dīwān Ibn Nubātah* existed in many different versions and was still subjected to continuous modifications. In a print culture, the diversity of voices representing the voice of the poet has to be kept alive by the philologist who produces a critical edition that allows reconstruction of the range of diversity, which is inevitably lost as a consequence of his activity. Philological work of this kind, however, is necessary.

This was exactly what happened in the case of Ibn Nubātah. A late and unimportant manuscript representing an incomplete recension of Ibn Nubātah’s *Dīwān* was subjected to arbitrary abridgements and senseless transpositions before it was converted into a sparsely voweled, unsightly printed book. But as a printed text, it enjoyed an authority that it would never have enjoyed as a manuscript

⁶²Al-Sakhāwī, *Ḍawʿ*, 6:277.

⁶³Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Jawāhir wa-al-Durar*, 2:695 (no. 268).

⁶⁴See Seidensticker, *Handschriften*, 154-57, and figure 5, top.



(though some surviving manuscripts are superior to it). For more than a century, nobody ever doubted that the book that was printed in 1323/1905 in the Maṭba‘at al-Tamaddun in Cairo, and has been reprinted several times since, contained an authentic text of Ibn Nubātah’s poetry.

This was not the first book of Ibn Nubātah’s that was printed. During the last decades of the nineteenth century, Ibn Nubātah’s *Muntakhab al-Hadiyah* [5] was printed in Cairo under the title *Dīwān Ibn Nubātah*. This text was reprinted by several printing houses in Beirut. Obviously, Ibn Nubātah still guaranteed commercial success. It was only natural that after the success of Ibn Nubātah’s “small *Dīwān*,” as *Muntakhab al-Hadiyah* is called already in some manuscripts, the “large *Dīwān*” would find a publisher. This was the case in 1323/1905, when the book was printed “in a short time”⁶⁵ in the Maṭba‘at al-Tamaddun. The editor was a certain Muḥammad al-Qalqīlī.

The manuscript he used as the basis for his edition can be identified. It is the Dār al-Kutub MS 2125 *adab*, a manuscript completed only a few years before the printed text. This manuscript was in turn a copy of a manuscript written in 1291/1874. The manuscript 2125 *adab* carries numerous editorial remarks so that we are able to reconstruct in detail the process by which the *Dīwān* was converted to print. We can see that al-Qalqīlī compared parts of the text to another source. This was perhaps a printed text of *Muntakhab al-Hadiyah*. Often, the editor substituted the readings of *Muntakhab al-Hadiyah* for that of *Bashtakī* β. In this way, elements of a very early version of a poem have been inserted in a very late version. The main shortcoming of the *Bashtakī* recensions is that they present an amalgamation of different versions of a poem. This problem is further aggravated by al-Qalqīlī’s arbitrary interference with the text.

When al-Qalqīlī started his work, he first planned to shorten the *Dīwān*. In chapter *alif*, a number of poems, among them several seven-liners, are omitted. From chapter *bā*’ onwards, the editor changed his method. Instead of leaving out poems, he assembled them in a separate subsection under the heading *wa-min muqatta‘ātihī*. In this subsection, poems do not have a heading but are separated by a line. All epigrams, which do not bear a more detailed heading in the manuscript, are relegated to this subsection, along with several longer poems that did not appeal to al-Qalqīlī. Among them is a *qaṣīdah* of 33 lines addressed to Quṭb al-Dīn Mūsā Ibn Shaykh al-Salāmiyah (d. 732/1332),⁶⁶ which now appears under the heading “epigrams.” The heading is al-Qalqīlī’s, and of course, Ibn Nubātah had never considered a poem like this an epigram. An original heading like *qāla fī al-sab‘ah al-sayyārah* means that the following seven-liners are taken

⁶⁵*Dīwān*, iii.

⁶⁶*Dīwān*, 330–31; on Quṭb al-Dīn see *A‘yān*, 5:469–72.



from the book of this name. The editor left the first poem in the first section, because it bears a heading, though the heading belongs not only to this poem, but also to the following seven-liners. These seven-liners, however, were transferred to the second subsection, where they do not have any heading now. The creation of this subsection in every chapter misleads the reader and violates al-Bashtakī's principle of arrangement.

Though al-Qalqīlī gave up his plan to shorten the *Dīwān*, even in latter chapters poems, mainly epigrams, have been removed. More often, single lines were deleted. Towards the end, omissions increase. In chapter *wāw*, a long ode on al-Qazwīnī (42 lines) and three shorter poems are missing. The concluding section containing Ibn Nubātah's *muwashshahāt* suffered the heaviest losses. Of fifteen *muwashshahāt* and a *zajal* present in the manuscript used by al-Qalqīlī, only four *muwashshahāt* found their way into the printed *Dīwān*.⁶⁷

It is obvious that al-Qalqīlī's printed text is not a reliable source for the poetry of Ibn Nubātah. Nevertheless, it will still be used for a long time, since a new edition is unlikely. Therefore, it is necessary for every user to know the shortcomings of the printed text and to be aware of the changes made by its editor. Despite all the deficiencies of the printed text, I do not consider it a most urgent task to re-edit the Bashtakī version of Ibn Nubātah's poetry. Rather, the *Dīwān al-Aṣl* should be made the basis for a new edition, to which should be added the poems not in the *Dīwān al-Aṣl* in the form of a supplement, and the different texts of each poem when different versions exist should be carefully presented. But even more important is an edition of all those works which Ibn Nubātah himself considered worthy of publication. In this way, a great portion of the poems of the *Dīwān* will appear in their authentic context. These works will be the subject of the next part of this survey.

To be continued

⁶⁷I know of eighteen *muwashshahāt* composed by Ibn Nubātah. Fourteen of them are edited in Aḥmad Muḥammad 'Aṭā, *Dīwān al-Muwashshahāt al-Mamlūkiyah fī Miṣr wa-al-Shām (al-Dawlah al-Ūlá* (Cairo, 1419/1999).



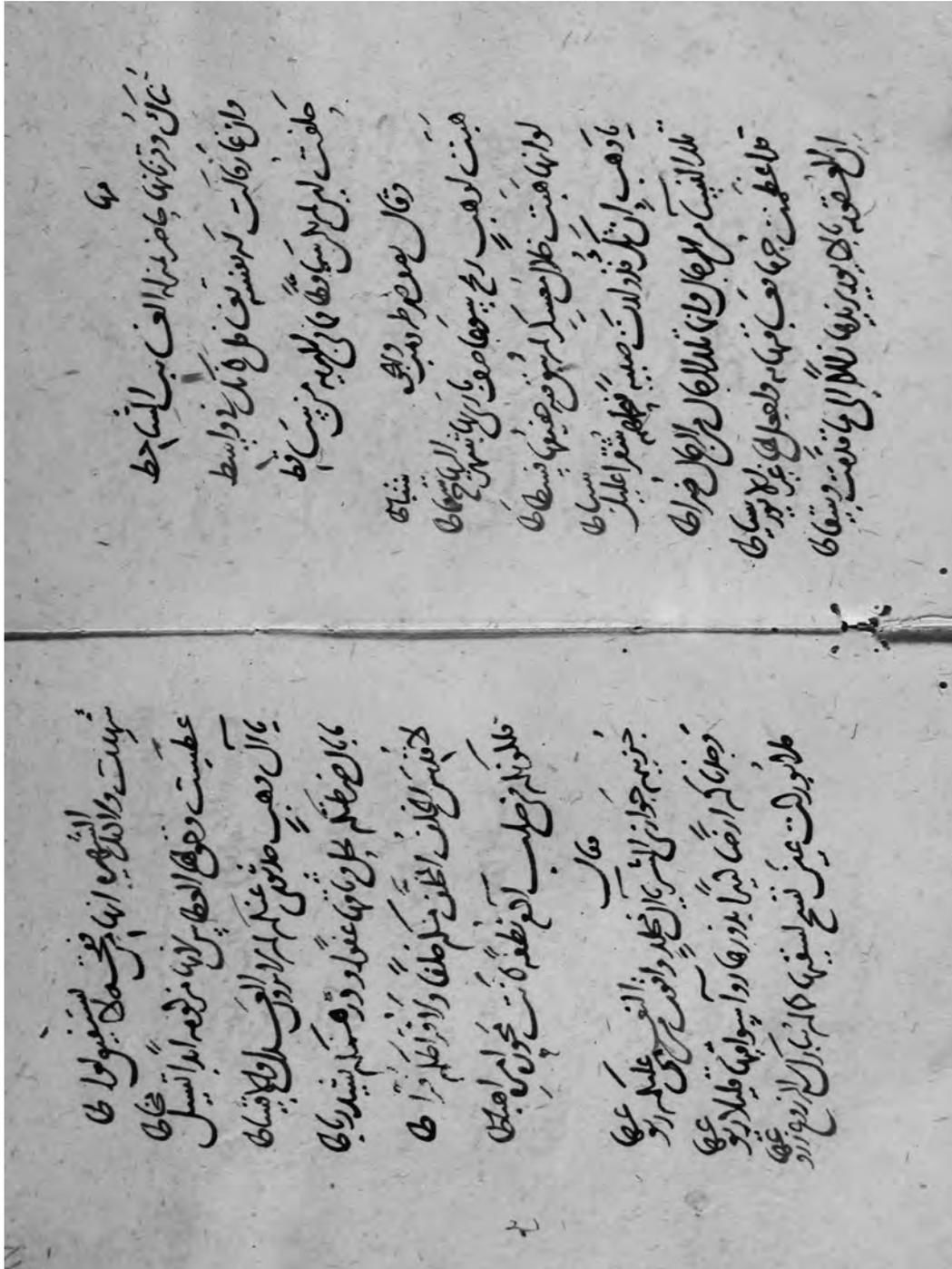


Fig. 2. Two pages from *Mukhtār Shi'r Ibn al-Rūmī*, Ayasofya MS 4261, fols. 96r–97v



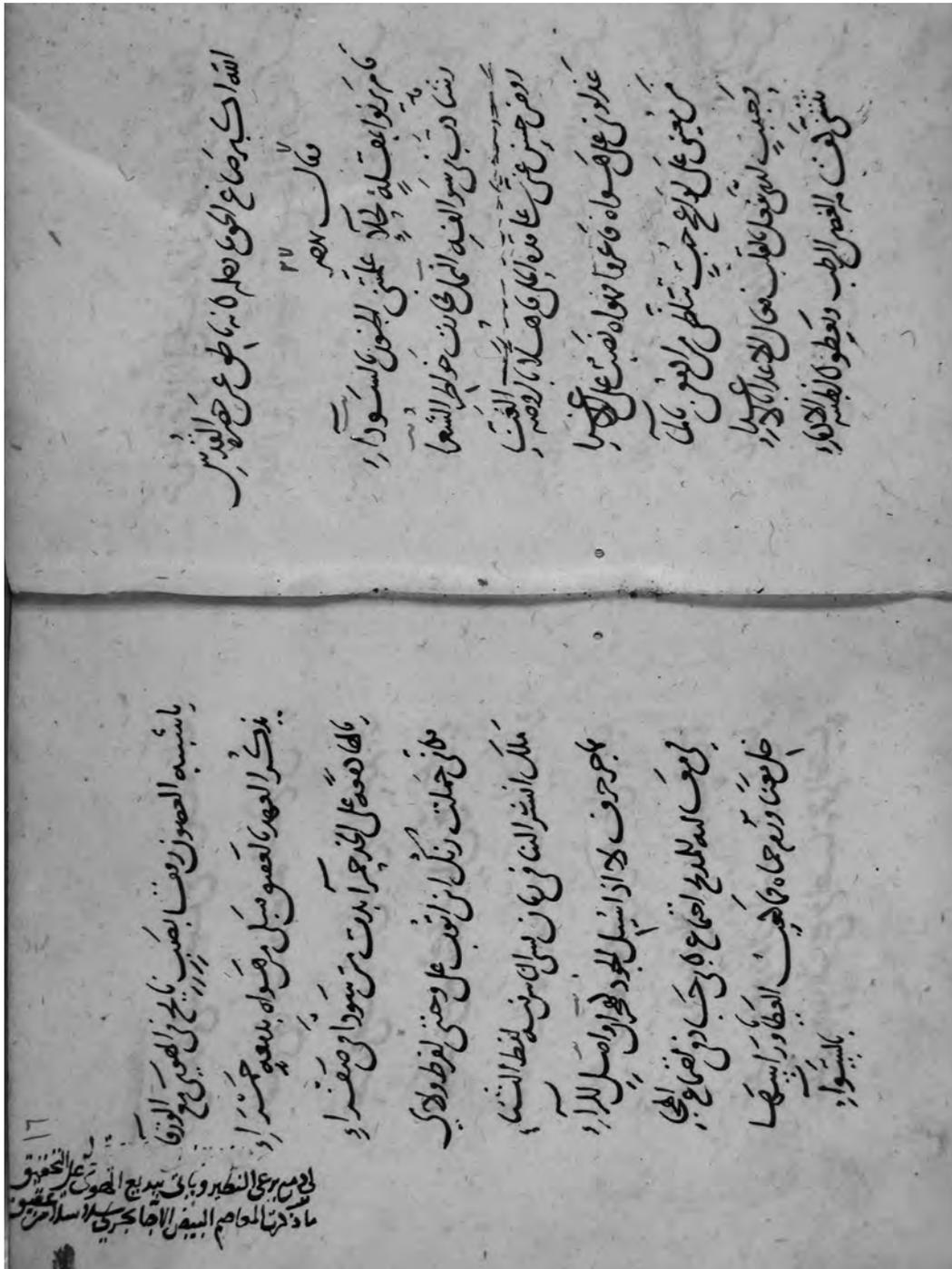


Fig. 3. Beginning of the *Mu'ayyadiyah Khaṭīf/-ā'ī* in the autograph manuscript of *Muntakhab al-Hadiyah*, Köprülü MS 1397, fols. 15r-16v



٢
تجمع الاضراس السود والكسوف الفصح والمردود
قامه الالف
قام برنومفله حج ان ذمها المحنون بالسودا
رشادتي في سوالفها فها من خواطر المشغرا
جاير الكله طلبه في صخره في لوعده الحنيسا
عدلون عسيل هواه فاعزوا فهاولة نصد على الاعرا
من معني على رشادتي في ما دوني عنده مثل النسا
ضيق العيس ازنوا واستمخا وعما تسير الذكرا

Fig. 4. The first lines of the same poem in the autograph manuscript of *Sūq al-Raqīq*, El Escorial MS árabe 449, fol. 2v



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Sultans with Horns: The Political Significance of Headgear in the Mamluk Empire

INTRODUCTION

When the number of Ottomans increased in Cairo [after the Ottoman conquest in Muḥarram 923/February 1517] they started to ask the *awlād al-nās*¹ whom they saw wearing the red *zamṭ* or the *takhfīfah* [both were distinctive Mamluk hats]: Are you a Circassian? And then they cut their heads off. Thereafter all the *awlād al-nās*, even the sons of the [high ranking] amirs and the sons of former sultans, quit wearing the *takhfīf* and the *zumūt* in Egypt.²

Mamluks were apprehended by the Ottomans throughout Egypt in these early days of Ottoman rule and they were easily recognizable by their headgear. Therefore many of them and their sons got rid of their hats as they represented a potential threat to their lives. However, after the first impetus of the conquest had slowed down, Mamluks were allowed to wear the red *zamṭ* again for a while by the new Ottoman governor of Egypt, Khāyrbak, a former Mamluk amir himself. In the summer of 924/1518 this practice was then finally forbidden, but some Circassian Mamluks disobeyed the order and the governor reinstated it in Shawwāl 927/September 1521, saying that anyone still wearing the red *zamṭ* after the announcement, whether Mamluk, son of a Mamluk, or even Ottoman, would be hanged without mercy.³ Mamluk headgear thereafter disappeared from Egyptian heads as did the specific Turkish names of the Mamluks, which had marked their elite status for centuries. From now on, it was Ottoman turbans and Arabic names for the remaining Mamluks.⁴

One has to keep in mind, though, that the hats which disappeared at the end of the Mamluk Empire in the early sixteenth century bore little resemblance to

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¹ “The sons of the people,” i.e., the descendants of the Mamluk soldiers.

² Ibn Iyās (d. ca. 930/1524), *Badāʾiʿ al-Zuhūr fī Waqāʾiʿ al-Duhūr*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá (Wiesbaden, 1961), 5:150.

³ *Ibid.*, 263, 407.

⁴ For the continuity of the Mamluk element in Egypt after 1517 see: Michael Winter, “The Re-emergence of the Mamluks Following the Ottoman Conquest,” in *The Mamluks in Egyptian Politics and Society*, ed. Thomas Philipp and Ulrich Haarmann (Cambridge, 1998), 87–106.



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the ones Mamluk officials had on their heads at the beginning of their reign in the mid-thirteenth century. The world of fashion has always been somehow fickle, and the *haute couture* of the Mamluk Empire was no exception to this rule. New trends concerning color, shape, and size of headgear were set in general by sultans or amirs. The latest fashion then travelled down the Mamluk hierarchy.

The aim of this article is to present the changing fashions of headgear of the ruling elite in the Mamluk Empire throughout their reign in Egypt and Syria, and to show how fashion and headgear functioned as markers of social differences in a medieval Islamic society. The emphasis lies therefore on official representative headgear and not on military helmets or veils for women.

The main historical sources for the article are the usual suspects of Mamluk historiography like al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442)⁵ and Ibn Iyās (d. ca. 930/1524).⁶ In these sources, the topic of headgear fashion is only a minor concern and consequently one must piece information together from several places. Only seldom has an author devoted a passage of his work especially to aspects of clothing like al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418) does in his well-known secretarial manual *Ṣubḥ al-Aʿshá*, in which he describes the garments of Mamluk officials and ulama.⁷ The secondary literature concerning Mamluk headgear is scarce. To my knowledge no books or articles have been devoted so far to this aspect of Mamluk history. Nevertheless, considerable information can be drawn from Mayer's general work on Mamluk costume and from Dozy's *Dictionnaire détaillé des noms des vêtements chez les Arabes*.⁸

In addition to these works, the institutions of *tashrif* and *khil'ah*, i.e., the receiving of robes and other apparel of honor by rulers, in the Islamic and Mamluk context has been the subject of two recent publications by Diem and Springberg-Hinsen, where information on ceremonial headgear is to be found.⁹

⁵ Al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442), *Al-Mawā'iz wa-al-I'tibār fī Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Āthār*, ed. Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid (London, 2002–4); idem, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Ma'rifat Duwal al-Mulūk*, ed. M. Ziyādah and S. A. ʿĀshūr (Cairo, 1934–73).

⁶ Ibn Iyās (d. ca. 930/1524), *Badā'ī' al-Zuhūr fī Waqā'ī' al-Duhūr*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá (Wiesbaden, 1960–75).

⁷ Al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418), *Ṣubḥ al-Aʿshá fī Ṣinā'at al-Inshā'* (Cairo, 1914), 4:39–43.

⁸ L. A. Mayer, *Mamluk Costume* (Geneva, 1952); Reinhart P. Dozy, *Dictionnaire détaillé des noms des vêtements chez les Arabes* (Amsterdam, 1845). On the clothing section of al-Qalqashandī see Urbain Vermeulen, "La Tenue protocolaire à la Cour Mamlouke," in *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras IV: Proceedings of the 9th and 10th International Colloquium Organized at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in May 2000 and May 2001*, ed. idem and Jo van Steenberg (Leuven, 2005), 491–96.

⁹ Werner Diem, *Ehrendes Kleid und ehrendes Wort: Studien zu Tašrif in mamlükischer und vormamlükischer Zeit*, Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, vol. 54, 2 (Würzburg, 2002); Monika Springberg-Hinsen, *Die Hil'a: Studien zur Geschichte des geschenkten Gewandes im*



Besides written sources we possess images of Mamluk garments in contemporary Mamluk and Ottoman manuscripts. Unfortunately, there are not many of these and they do not provide much detail concerning the headgear of Mamluk dignitaries. Besides the manuscripts there are also images of Mamluk costume on metalwork.¹⁰

Especially during the second half of the fifteenth century, an increasing number of European pilgrims, merchants, diplomats, and artists traveled to the Mamluk Empire and some of their drawings provide us with a realistic impression of court scenes in the Mamluk context. As for the actual textiles, we have little left. There was apparently no tradition of keeping ceremonial or everyday clothing in the Mamluk Empire. The Ottoman invasion and the prohibition of Mamluk garments which accompanied it surely did not encourage the survival of Mamluk textiles. According to Mayer, all that has come down to us from Mamluk times are an undercoat, two pairs of trousers, a hat, and a few caps.¹¹

THE MAMLUKS AND TEXTILES

It seems that, especially since Abbasid times and the introduction of a monumental court culture in Baghdad after 145/762, clothing, and more specifically luxury clothing, became increasingly popular. Early Islamic aversions to silks and satins, evidence of which can be found in the hadith literature, were consistently ignored by all but a pious few.¹² Clothes had been, even before that date and now even more so, a clear marker of social differences. Under the Fatimids, a costume supply house known as *dār al-kiswah* oversaw the supply of ceremonial costumes for public occasions from the caliph down to government clerks. The most striking fashion item of the caliph's attire was the so-called "noble crown" (*al-tāj al-sharif*). It consisted of an enormous turban, in which a headscarf (*mandīl*) was wound around a cap (*shāshīyah*) in a very unique manner in the shape of a myrobalan (cherry plum/*ihlīlajah*).¹³ Therefore, it seems that oversized headdresses for rulers were not a Mamluk innovation.

The mode of dress of the military elite in the Middle East changed with the arrival of the Turks and the establishment of Turkish dynasties, starting with the Saljuq Empire in the eleventh century. The typical outer garment of this period is represented by their shirts. The Saljuqs and Ayyubids wore the "Turkish shirt" (*al-aqbīyah al-turkīyah*), in which the hem crossed the chest from right to left, whereas

islamischen Kulturkreis (Würzburg, 2000).

¹⁰ Mayer, *Mamluk Costume*, 8.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹² Y. K. Stillman, "Libās," *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 5:735, 737.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 738; al-Maqrīzī, *Khīṭaṭ*, 2:468–69.



the Mamluks preferred the “Tartar shirt” (*al-aqbīyah al-tatarīyah*) with the hem crossing the other way around. Over this shirt, Mamluk dress consisted of the so-called *takalāwāt*, of which we know little. The Mamluks then wore the so-called *qabāʾ al-islāmī* (“Islamic shirt”) as the last layer. This was tailored in the Arab style. Metal plaquettes (*ḥiyāsah*) or sashes (*band*) were worn over the garment. The sleeves of the coats were often indicative of rank and social status. Higher status was shown through longer and more ample sleeves.¹⁴ In Circassian times, the Tartar coat with its tight sleeves was replaced by the *mallūṭah* loose shirt with broad sleeves, which became the standard fashion in the fifteenth century.¹⁵

In the Mamluk Empire social class was evident by one’s outer appearance. Riding horses as well was almost exclusively limited to members of the ruling military elite.¹⁶ The ulama had to content themselves with mules, although according to al-Qalqashandī, high ranking ulama rode mules of such quality that their price equaled that of horses.¹⁷ Christians and Jews were only allowed to ride donkeys. Headgear also marked religious differences. A sultan’s decree (*marsūm*) of the year 755/1354, which was announced in Damascus and reinforced the so-called regulations of the caliph ‘Umar (r. 12–22/634–44) (*al-shurūṭ al-‘Umarīyah*), insisted that Christians had to wear blue and Jews yellow linen. Moreover, Christians had to wear one white and one black shoe. The turban of Christians and Jews was not to exceed 10 ells, which must be a reference to the length of the cloth taken to bind the turban, as otherwise the term restriction acquires a totally new sense.¹⁸ Other surviving decrees of Mamluk officials hint at the fact that the color regulation applied only to the cloth of the turbans, i.e., blue for Christians and yellow for Jews, the rest of their clothes being the same as those of other Mamluk subjects¹⁹ (fig. 1).

The frequent repetition of these discriminatory rules in Mamluk sources indicates that they were not enforced. It seems that Christians and Jews had the same tendency to enlarge their turbans as did the members of the Mamluk military and learned elite with their respective headgear.

The ulama were apparently distinguished by the size of their turban (*‘imāmah*)

¹⁴ Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, 4:40; Stillman, “Libās,” 739; Vermeulen, “La Tenue protocolaire,” 492.

¹⁵ Ibn Iyās (d. ca. 930/1524), *Alltagsnotizen eines ägyptischen Bürgers*, trans. Annemarie Schimmel (Stuttgart, 1985), 22 (introduction by Annemarie Schimmel.)

¹⁶ David Ayalon, “The Muslim City and the Mamluk Military Aristocracy,” in *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities* 2, no. 14 (1968): 323. (Reprinted in idem, *Studies on the Mamlūks of Egypt [1250–1517]* [London, 1977]).

¹⁷ Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, 4:42.

¹⁸ Ibn Sibāṭ (d. after 926/1529), *Tārīkh Ibn Sibāṭ*, ed. ‘Umar ‘Abd al-Salām Tadmurī (Tripoli, 1993), 2:711.

¹⁹ Mayer, *Mamluk Costume*, 65.



and therefore as a class were named *arbāb al-‘amā’im*, masters of the turbans. The wearing of turbans was not limited exclusively to the ulama, but for them it was much bigger, sometimes reaching abnormal sizes.²⁰ The expression “to enlarge one’s turban” became a synonym for showing off.²¹ The practice encountered criticism even among the ulama. When the eminent scholar of thirteenth-century Cairo, al-Sulamī, also known as *sultān al-‘ulamā’*, was asked if the wearing of an enlarged turban was an heretical innovation (*bid‘ah*) he responded in a fatwa (legal opinion) that all kinds of exaggerations were to be condemned and that people should follow in general the example of the Prophet concerning their dress. Nevertheless, he saw nothing wrong in the idea that ulama should wear distinctive dress in order to be easily recognizable in case of the need to answer questions for the faithful.²²

FORMS OF OFFICIAL HEADGEAR IN THE MAMLUK EMPIRE

HEADGEAR OF THE CALIPH: Ideally, the caliph would bestow ceremonial clothing on the sultan, but in the case of the Abbasid shadow caliph of Cairo it was in practice the other way around. Ibn Taghrībirdī reports a striking episode that illustrates this fact: “On Monday, 1 Sha‘bān [808/22 January 1406] Sultan al-Malik al-Nāṣir sent for Abū al-Faḍl al-‘Abbās, son of the caliph al-Mutawakkil ‘alā Allāh Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad, and recognized him as caliph after the death of his father. The former then put on the *tashrif* [ceremonial clothing], received the title of al-Musta‘in billāh and went back to his home.”²³

An integral part of the ceremonial clothing of the caliph was his turban. He sported a fine round specimen with a trailing two-foot-long and one-foot-wide endpiece at the back which covered the entire back of the turban.²⁴ The usual color of the caliph’s clothes was black and so was his turban, over which was worn a black embroidered head shawl.²⁵ The reason for the black color was due to the fact that it always had been the color of the Abbasids. Unfortunately, there is no surviving image of a Mamluk caliph from Cairo. Their shadowy existence meant that caliphs were not in the public eye and therefore they neither figure in manuscript illustrations nor in drawings of European visitors, who would have

²⁰ Mayer, *Mamluk Costume*, 49; al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, 4:42; al-Maqrizī, *Histoire des Sultans Mamlouks de l’Égypte*, trans. M. Quatremère (Paris, 1847), 1:1:244, n. 119.

²¹ Ibn Iyās, *Alltagsnotizen*, 22 (introduction by Annemarie Schimmel).

²² Al-Sulamī (d. 660/1262), *Al-Fatāwā al-Mawṣiliyah*, ed. Iyyād Khālid al-Ṭabbā‘ (Damascus, 1999), 65–66.

²³ Ibn Taghrībirdī (d. 874/1470), *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah* (Cairo, 1970), 13:51; Diem, *Ehrendes Kleid*, 62.

²⁴ Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, 3:280; Mayer, *Mamluk Costume*, 13.

²⁵ Mayer, *Mamluk Costume*, 13.



hardly recognized their function anyway.

HEADGEAR OF THE SULTAN: During the ceremony of accession to office the Mamluk sultan received his official insignia: a black turban, a black robe, and a sword.²⁶ The black turban Sultan Baybars I (r. 658–76/1260–77) received for his coronation was apparently woven of gold material.²⁷ As already mentioned above, black represented the color of the Abbasids. The Mamluk sultans, having installed the Abbasid puppet caliph at the citadel, still upheld nominally the idea of an Abbasid caliphate. Mayer argues that the sultans wore these kinds of clothes exclusively for their inauguration ceremony, and that these clothes had more of an ecclesiastic character, as turbans of this type would not be worn by a Mamluk amir, and the black robe was usually observed only on shaykhs.²⁸

On other public occasions Mamluk sultans would wear different kinds of headgear. In the early days of the Mamluk sultanate this could be the *sharbūsh*, a headgear that resembled, according to al-Maqrīzī, a triangular-shaped crown put on the head without a kerchief around it. In the early Mamluk period it was often bestowed on Mamluk amirs as well.²⁹ The *sharbūsh* seems to have been quite popular with Turkish rulers of the tenth to thirteenth centuries, and seems to have come with the Turks from the east (figs. 2 and 3).

In Egypt the *sharbūsh* was apparently introduced by the Ayyubids and its existence is confirmed until the time of the Bahri Mamluks. On the so-called Baptistère de Saint Louis, a large brass basin inlaid with silver and gold from the early Mamluk period, we can identify enthroned figures of a ruler apparently wearing the *sharbūsh*. Behrens-Abouseif has convincingly made the case that these figures represent Sultan Baybars, the great Mamluk hero and victor over the Mongols and Crusaders³⁰ (figs. 4 and 5).

Finally we learn from al-Maqrīzī (who does not provide us with any reason for this) that the wearing of the *sharbūsh* was abolished by the Circassian sultans.³¹ Maybe the *sharbūsh* was too Turkish or Mongolian for them.

Since Ayyubid times, the alternative as official headgear had been the so-called *kallawtah* or *kallaftah* caps. These were small yellow caps that were worn without a turban wrapped around them (figs. 3 and 6).

The hair of the Mamluks at that time was worn long and fell down loosely on

²⁶ Al-Maqrīzī, *Khīṭaṭ*, 3:668.

²⁷ Mayer, *Mamluk Costume*, 15.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Al-Maqrīzī, *Khīṭaṭ*, 3:328.

³⁰ Doris Behrens-Abouseif, “The Baptistère de Saint Louis: A Reinterpretation,” *Islamic Art* 3 (1989): 6.

³¹ Al-Maqrīzī, *Khīṭaṭ*, 3:328.



their necks. Sultan al-Ashraf Khalil (r. 689–93/1290–93) then had the color of the *kallawtah* changed from yellow to red and ordered that a turban be wrapped around it. This remained the practice until his brother Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn (r. 693, 698–708, 709–41/1293, 1299–1309, 1310–41) had his head completely shaved after he went on a pilgrimage in 732/1332. This new skinhead look was then immediately copied by his entourage. The loss of hair was compensated for by the fact that the *kallawtah* cap arrangement with the turban grew much bigger in size and of better quality in the second half of the fourteenth century.³²

However, the most spectacular headgear of the Mamluk sultans ever has to be the so-called *takhfifah*, i.e., the “lighter one.” As the *kallawtah* caps with the wrapped turban around them grew larger and were hard to handle, on some occasions the Mamluks started to wear only a small, light turban, the *takhfifah ṣaghīrah*. The first mention of it can be found in the writings of Ibn Iyās. Sultan Barqūq (r. 784–91, 792–801/1382–89, 1390–99) had a *takhfifah ṣaghīrah* on his head when he appeared in public in the year 796/1394.³³ But this incidence did not trigger a completely new fashion wave. Apparently the *takhfifah* started to become increasingly popular only after the mid-fifteenth century, as we do not find any mention of a *takhfifah* in al-Maqrizī’s *Khīṭaṭ*, which usually mentions all aspects of contemporary dress.

After the episode with Sultan Barqūq, Ibn Iyās does not mention another public sighting of the *takhfifah ṣaghīrah* until the year 872/1467, when the *atābak* Yalbāy wore one at the gathering of amirs after the death of Sultan Khushqadam (r. 865–72/1461–67).³⁴ After the year 872/1467, the *takhfifah ṣaghīrah* is mentioned on a more regular basis, and by the end of the fifteenth century it seems clearly established that it could be worn by Mamluk amirs at certain public outings, but it was not acceptable to wear it at very official occasions. When Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (r. 901–4/1496–98), son of Sultan Qāyṭbāy (r. 872–901/1468–96), appeared in Muḥarram 902/September 1496 at the Friday prayer with a *takhfifah ṣaghīrah* on his head instead of a *kallawtah* (*kallaftah*), Ibn Iyās disparaged it as a sort of youthful mindlessness. Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad was harshly criticized for this by leading amirs.³⁵

On a woodcut that was made by the German pilgrim Arnold von Harff, Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad is depicted with a round turban, which might be identified as the *takhfifah ṣaghīrah*, and no *kallawtah* cap is to be seen. The Mamluk dignitary to

³² Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, 4:39–40.

³³ Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ*, 1:2 :467.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 2:455.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 3:339.



his left, called “Thodar” (*dawādār*) by von Harff, seems clearly to wear a *kallawtah* cap with a turban wrapped around it³⁶ (fig. 7). It seems that there were two kinds of the *takhfifah ṣaghīrah*, i.e., the round one (*mudawwarah*) and the smooth one (*mumallasah*).³⁷ Needless to say, these too started to increase in size over time.

At the end of the fifteenth century another type of *takhfifah* increased in popularity among the fashion mavens of the Mamluk military elite, the *takhfifah kabīrah* (the big *takhfifah* turban). This kind of *takhfifah*, worn for special occasions, was the result of the ongoing enlargement of the *takhfifah ṣaghīrah*. The amirs even started to put horns on it. The largest version of this type was called *nāʿūrah* (waterwheel) and the Mamluk sultan wore it as a crown. Apparently it reached very impressive sizes. The Venetian ambassador Domenico Trevisan, who was received by Sultan Qānṣawh al-Ghawrī (r. 906–22/1501–16) in 1512, recalls that the sultan was sitting on his richly-decorated bench (*maṣṭabah*) wearing a great turban (“fez”) with two horns which were the length of half an arm.³⁸

The question remains why the Mamluks would put horns on their turbans after more than 200 years of rule. Ibn Iyās has the following story about the first appearance of the horned *takhfifah kabīrah*: “And in this month [Ṣafar 902/October 1496] the wearing of the *takhāfif* with long horns by the amirs started and they exceeded any boundary. And this incident was commented on by some poets: ‘Our amir told us why he started [wearing it]: ‘I was in the war and Dhū al-Qarnayn was calling me: ‘I am a ram. When the sheep pass me by and try to go out then I push them with my horns.’”³⁹ In another passage of his work Ibn Iyās explains the historical background of the *takhfifah kabīrah* as follows: “It [the *nāʿūrah*] nowadays takes the place of the crown of the kings of Egypt; with it the Turks show their might. It was worn by the Persian kings before.”⁴⁰

If we take a close look at both of these quotations from Ibn Iyās, the reason the Mamluk amirs chose horns as a sign of legitimacy and power becomes quite evident. Dhū al-Qarnayn, the two-horned hero from the Quran (Surah 18:83–98),

³⁶ Arnold von Harff, *Die Pilgerfahrt des Ritters Arnold von Harff von Cöln durch Italien, Syrien, Aegypten, Arabien, Aethiopien, Nubien, Palästina, die Türkei, Frankreich und Spanien, wie er sie in den Jahren 1496 bis 1499 vollendet, beschrieben und durch Zeichnungen erläutert hat*, ed. Eberhard von Groote (Hildesheim, 2004), 90. Sometimes this image is incorrectly identified as Sultan Qāytbāy (r. 872–901/1468–96), which is quite impossible as Harff left Cologne in November of 1496 and Qāytbāy had died in August of the same year. Harff even mentions the death of the former sultan (*ibid.*, 87).

³⁷ Mayer, *Mamluk Costume*, 15; Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ*, index, 4:1:142.

³⁸ *Le Voyage d’outremer de Jean Thénaut (Gardien du couvent des Cordeliers d’Angoulême): Suivi de la relation de l’ambassade de Domenico Trevisan auprès du Soudan d’Égypte*, ed. Ch. Schefer (Frankfurt, 1995), 184. (Reprint of Paris, 1884).

³⁹ Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ*, 3:340.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 4:332.



is clearly to be identified as Iskandar⁴¹ or Alexander the Great in the Muslim tradition.⁴² Especially through the popular reception of the Alexander romance (*Iskandar Nāmāh*) throughout the Muslim world, Alexander became “the model of the Muslim hero, the Iranian knight, through his own merits worthy of acceding to the rank of prophet of the One God.”⁴³

Alexander the Great was clearly seen as the prototype of a Muslim ruler. Therefore, he served as a role model for the Mamluk amirs when they took horns and affixed them on their turbans. Moreover, in the Egyptian context, Alexander the Great enjoys another connection with horns. He is said to have once visited the Oasis of Siwa in Western Egypt, home of a famous oracle in antiquity. Here Alexander was declared son of Zeus-Amun. The god Amun is often depicted as a ram-headed deity. Additional evidence for the fact that the Mamluks wore ram horns is that Ibn Iyās mentions on at least two occasions the word *kabash* (ram) in poems about the *takhfifah kabīrah*.⁴⁴ This argumentation provides us with an insight as to the emotional motivation to choose horns as a sign of power, but let us now have a look at the political side of the emergence of the longhorn *takhfifah kabīrah*.

We have to go back to the historical context of the year 901/1496. Sultan Qāyṭbāy died in Dhū al-Qa‘dah 901/August 1496. His fourteen-year-old son al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ascended the throne and he seemed determined to keep it. He seemed unwilling to stand idly by and wait for one of the powerful old amirs of his father to replace him and become the new sultan as was always the case in the history of Mamluk successions in the fifteenth century. *Al-mulk ‘aqīm* they say.⁴⁵ Regency has no children. Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad tried to change this pattern and wanted to be the exception. We remember that al-Nāṣir Muḥammad appeared one month after the death of his father in Muḥarram of 902/September 1496 at the Friday prayer wearing only a *takhfifah ṣaghīrah* on his head instead of the more official *kallawtah* (*kallaftah*) despite receiving harsh criticism⁴⁶ (fig. 7). Apparently he wanted to introduce a new order by making a clear political statement to the established powerful amirs. Their reaction was soon to follow. One month later in Ṣafar 902/October 1496 the amirs started wearing the *takhāfif* with long

⁴¹ I would like to express my gratitude to Stefan Heidemann for valuable information concerning the Iskandar topic.

⁴² W. Montgomery Watt, “al-Iskandar,” *IE*², 4:127.

⁴³ A. Abel, “Iskandar Nāma,” *IE*², 4:127.

⁴⁴ Ibn Iyās, *Badā‘i*, 3:340; 4:138.

⁴⁵ Ulrich Haarmann, “Der arabische Osten im späten Mittelalter 1250–1517,” in *Geschichte der arabischen Welt*, ed. idem (Munich, 2001), 229.

⁴⁶ Ibn Iyās, *Badā‘i*, 3:339.



horns.⁴⁷ This gesture indicated that they were the ones entitled to power. They had more established rights than the young sultan, rights to power that went back to Alexander the Great.

The uneasy relationship between the two sides was to remain. Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad endured a somewhat difficult reign over the next two years with frequent uprisings against him. He even tried to create a new military basis for his authority by the inauguration of a force of black slaves with firearms to get rid of the old amirs, only they got rid of him first. He was assassinated near Giza on 15 Rabīʿ I 904/31 October 1498. The ensuing power struggle went on among the high-ranking amirs until Qānṣawh al-Ghawrī emerged finally as sultan in 906/1501. With the victory of the old elite their political symbol, the *takhfīfah kabīrah* with long horns, became the official headgear of the sultan and the high-ranking Mamluks. Because of its peculiar shape, the *takhfīfah kabīrah* was nicknamed *nāʿūrah* (waterwheel). According to the Meccan author of the sixteenth century, Qutb al-Dīn al-Nahrawālī (d. 990/1582), one's position in the Mamluk hierarchy was shown by the number of horns one was entitled to wear on his turban. The sultan had six horns, while the high ranking amirs of one hundred (*amīr miʿah wa-muqaddam alf*) wore four horns and the amirs of ten were permitted two horns.⁴⁸ The six-horn version was attested by contemporary European witnesses. In 1512 Jean Thénaut, the guardian of the Franciscan monastery of Angoulême, describes the clothing of Sultan Qānṣawh al-Ghawrī during an official reception with the following statement: "Sa robe estoit de tafetas jaulne et avoit en sa teste une faciolle de fine toile d'Ynde moult haulte, laquelle faisoit six longues et larges cornes dont deux estoient sur le front, aultres deux à dextre, aultre à senestre."⁴⁹

Fortunately we possess images of the *nāʿūrah* in European paintings. The most spectacular and seemingly the most realistic of these paintings is the so-called *Reception of the Ambassadors* by an anonymous painter, housed in the Louvre in Paris (fig. 8). According to the analysis of Raby, many details, such as the accurate drawing of the Umayyad mosque⁵⁰ and heraldic emblems,⁵¹ give evidence that the artist must have visited Damascus, "taking his view of mosque and bath-house from an upper story of the Venetian *fondaco* which was situated inside the *suq*

⁴⁷ Ibid., 340.

⁴⁸ Al-Nahrawālī (d. 990/1582), *Kitāb al-ʿIlām bi-ʿĀlām Bayt Allāh al-Ḥarām: Geschichte der Stadt Mekka und ihres Tempels*, ed. Ferdinand Wüstenfeld (Leipzig, 1857), 188.

⁴⁹ *Le Voyage d'outremer de Jean Thénaut*, 45.

⁵⁰ In 1488 the western minaret of the Umayyad Mosque was built and it appears on the extreme left of the painting.

⁵¹ The emblem depicted in the *Reception* strikingly resembles the emblem of Qāyṭbāy; see Julian Raby, *Venice, Dürer and the Oriental Mode* (London, 1982), 53.



to the south of the Great Mosque.”⁵² Apparently the painting arrived in Venice between 1496, the date high-ranking Mamluk amirs started to wear the *takhfifah kabīrah* with long horns, and 1499, a date when other painters had already started to copy elements from the *Reception*.⁵³

Therefore, the central Mamluk dignitary of the painting, sitting to the right of the city gate on a podium, might be a governor of Damascus, as he was high-ranking enough to wear the *takhfifah kabīrah*. It is quite obvious how this headgear got its nickname “waterwheel” (fig. 8). It seems that the two persons beside him and the gentleman riding on a horse to the left wear as well forms of the *takhfifah*, but without horns.

Another contemporary European image of Qānṣawh al-Ghawrī with the *nā‘ūrāh* on his head seems not as realistic as the reception but it clearly shows the horns (fig. 9). As can easily be guessed this headgear seems to be extremely heavy and was certainly not very comfortable. For example, in 917/1511 Sultan Qānṣawh al-Ghawrī suffered from an abscess on his head and therefore he had to wear the light *takhfifah* instead.⁵⁴

We do possess as well a European image of the last Mamluk sultan, Ṭūmān Bāy (r. 922–23/1516–17). Here he does not wear the *takhfifah kabīrah* (fig. 10). But it seems that the origin of this image dates back to the time when Ṭūmān Bāy still held the important office of *dawādār* (“bearer of the inkwell”), as that is how he is named on the drawing. It seems that he wears either a lighter form of the *takhfifah* or, what is more likely, a special form of the *kallawtah*, as since the days of al-Maqrīzī the kerchief was wound around the *kallawtah* caps in order to form bumps (*iwaj*), the so-called Circassian *kallawtah* hats which were introduced by Sultan Barqūq at the end of the fourteenth century.⁵⁵ But as we do not know how realistic this image is in its details, the question of which hat it is exactly is not easy to answer.

To conclude the discussion about the *takhfifah kabīrah*, perhaps a voice from the common people from the year 914/1508 should be heard, which is reported by Ibn Iyās. The common people commented on the exclusive headgear of high-ranking Mamluks like this: “Every ram is wearing wool and also horns, and what horns! And I am happy to be in peace, without wool, without horns.”⁵⁶

⁵² Ibid., 55.

⁵³ Ibid., 62. During recent restorations, however, the date 1511 was discovered on the painting, but this must not necessarily be the actual date of the drawing; see Denise Howard, “Venise et les Mamlouks,” in *Venise et l’Orient, 828–1797* (Paris, 2006), 84.

⁵⁴ Ibn Iyās, *Badā‘i*, 4:212.

⁵⁵ Al-Maqrīzī, *Khitaṭ*, 3:328.

⁵⁶ Ibn Iyās, *Badā‘i*, 4:138.



HEADGEAR OF AMIRS: Many kinds of headgear that the Mamluk amirs were entitled to wear have already been dealt with in the context of the caps and turbans of the sultans. The *sharbūsh* was apparently worn by amirs as well until it was abandoned by the Circassian Mamluks altogether. The early Mamluk sultans would ceremoniously bestow a *sharbūsh* upon amirs.⁵⁷ Circassian sultans would instead put an expensive *kallawtah* on the heads of their amirs to show their gratitude.⁵⁸ The *kallawtah* cap represents the constant factor in Mamluk headgear, although it changed color and size and a kerchief was wrapped around it during Mamluk times. It remains the only headgear which was worn by Mamluk officials throughout the more than 250 years of Mamluk rule in Egypt and Syria. Other headgear like the *takhfifah ṣaghīrah* or the *takhfifah kabīrah* with horns were latecomers compared to the *kallawtah*.

Another headgear that apparently gained popularity in the fifteenth century among ordinary Mamluks was the so-called *tāqīyah*, which was a cylindrical hat with a flat top. It used to be made in several sizes and colors and was one-sixth of an ell high. At the beginning of the fifteenth century it grew taller until it reached two-thirds of an ell and the upper part took the shape of a small dome. In this form it then became well known as the so-called “Circassian.” At the end of the fifteenth century it was manufactured in a two-colored version. The lower part was apparently green and the upper part black.⁵⁹ In this form it appears in the *Reception* painting in the Louvre, where it is worn by the Mamluks standing on the porch (fig. 8).

During the late Circassian period the so-called *zamṭ* hat witnessed a breakthrough in Mamluk fashion. Originally it seems that it had been a headgear of the lower classes.⁶⁰ Then the Mamluks adopted it and made it exclusively theirs. In the year 840/1436 Sultan Barsbāy (r. 825–41/1422–38) forbade every *fallāh* (peasant) and every slave from wearing the red *zamṭ*.⁶¹ But this decree apparently did not guarantee the necessary exclusivity for the Mamluks with respect to the red *zamṭ*. Therefore Mamluks rode through Cairo in 868/1464 beating everyone not entitled to wear the red *zamṭ*, especially eunuchs and servants.⁶² Finally it became such a common and distinctive marker for an ordinary Mamluk soldier that the Ottomans pursued everyone wearing a red *zamṭ* on his head when they conquered Cairo, rightly thinking that only members of the Mamluk military elite would

⁵⁷ Mayer, *Mamluk Costume*, 27; Dozy, *Vêtements*, 200; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 3:328.

⁵⁸ Diem, *Ehrendes Kleid*, 13.

⁵⁹ Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 3:343; Mayer, *Mamluk Costume*, 31.

⁶⁰ Mayer, *Mamluk Costume*, 32.

⁶¹ Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ*, 2:172.

⁶² Mayer, *Mamluk Costume*, 32.



wear such a headgear.⁶³ We are quite well informed about what the red *zamṭ* looked like. We have the eyewitness account of Dietrich von Schachten, a German traveller who journeyed to the Near East in 1491. He described it as red with finger-long tufts and with kerchiefs wrapped around them. Apparently he liked the arrangement, as he calls it beautiful. Then he states that no heathen [Arab] was allowed to wear it, but only a Mamluk.⁶⁴

Another German visitor, Arnold von Harff, provides us with a good picture of the red *zamṭ* (fig. 11). Most people on the right-hand side of the Louvre *Reception* seem to wear it and fortunately we even have a surviving *zamṭ* hat in the Coptic Museum in Cairo (figs. 8 and 12).

CONCLUSION

Fashion is a social marker and headgear, with its very prominent position on the human body, even more so. Nevertheless, the present contribution has shown that even in a medieval society like Mamluk Egypt and Syria fashion set its own trends. New colors, new sizes, new shapes became en vogue, older styles had to go. When the Mamluk military upper class began to wear the red *zamṭ*, for example, the peasants and servants were forced to give up their headgear. A general trend that can be noted is the tendency to enlarge the size of the latest models almost to the point of being unwearable. When the maximum size is reached, then one starts with a new model all over again. This happened with the *takhfīfah*, which started off as the “lighter one” until someone put horns on it and transformed it into an immense “waterwheel.” Putting on a distinctive hat could also be a clear political statement in Mamluk times, as could be seen during the struggle of Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad with his opponents among the established amirs.

After the Ottoman conquest it was apparently difficult for the Mamluks to give up their specific dress and with it most of their former exclusive social status. After learning of the death of the Ottoman sultan Selīm in 926/1520, the Ottoman governor of Damascus, al-Ghazālī, a former Mamluk, revolted immediately. “And then the governor entered the Citadel and the Circassian dress appeared once again: the *takhfīfāt* and *kallawtāt*. The wearing of Ottoman turbans and kaftans was abolished,” reports the contemporary author Ibn Ṭūlūn.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, the time of the old hats was definitely over, and the revolt was crushed only three months after it started in Ṣafar 927/February 1521. The bare heads of al-Ghazālī and his companions were cut off and sent to Istanbul⁶⁶ (fig. 13).

⁶³ Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ* 5:150.

⁶⁴ Reinhold Röhrich and Heinrich Meissner, *Deutsche Pilgerreisen nach dem heiligen Lande* (Berlin, 1880), 191.

⁶⁵ Ibn Ṭūlūn (d. 953/1546), *Mufākahat al-Khillān fī Hawādith al-Zamān*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafā (Cairo, 1964), 124.

⁶⁶ Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ*, 5:382.



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Figure 7. Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad on his throne. Reproduced by permission from Arnold von Harff, *Die Pilgerfahrt des Ritters Arnold von Harff von Cöln durch Italien, Syrien, Aegypten, Arabien, Aethiopien, Nubien, Palästina, die Türkei, Frankreich und Spanien, wie er sie in den Jahren 1496 bis 1499 vollendet, beschrieben und durch Zeichnungen erläutert hat*, ed. Eberhard von Groote (Hildesheim: Olms, 2004), 90.



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Fig. 1. Syrian Christians



Fig. 2. Maḥmūd of Ghaznah donning a *khil'ah*



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Fig. 3. Ruler wearing a *qabā' turkī* with *ṭirāz* bands



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Fig. 4. Inner medallion of the Baptistère de Saint Louis



Fig. 5. Inner medallion of the Baptistère de Saint Louis



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Fig. 6. Mamluk wearing the *kallawtah*





Fig. 7. Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad on his throne



Fig. 8. Reception of the Ambassadors



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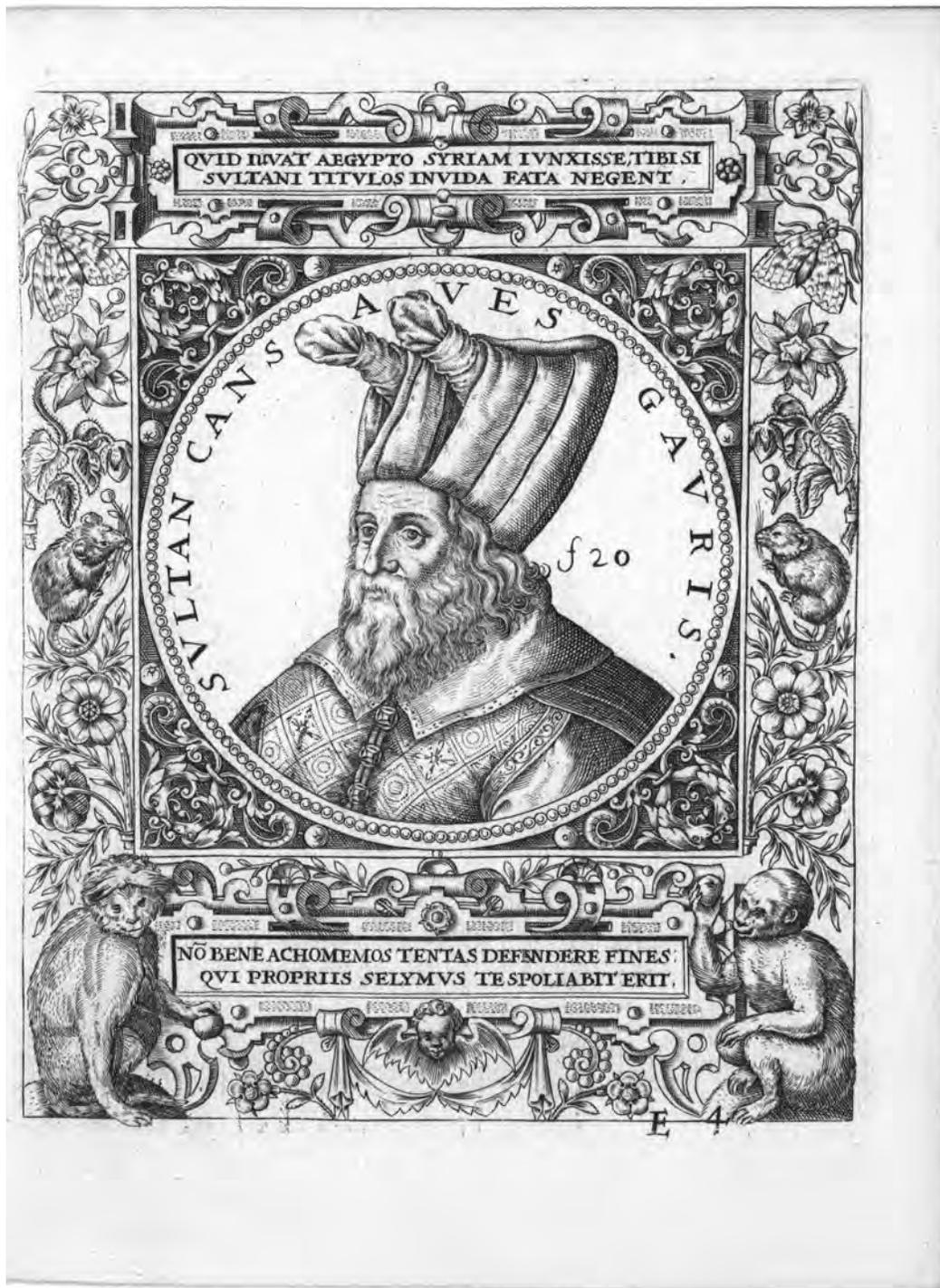


Fig. 9. Qānṣawh al-Ghawrī with the *nā'ūrah*



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Fig. 10. Tūmān Bāy



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Fig. 11. Red *zamṭ*



Fig. 12. *Zamṭ*



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Fig. 13. Ottomans besieging the Mamluks in Damascus



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KONRAD HIRSCHLER

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The Formation of the Civilian Elite in the Syrian Province: The Case of Ayyubid and Early Mamluk Ḥamāh

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades our knowledge of urban history in northern Mesopotamia, Syria, and Egypt during the post-formative period has continuously increased.¹ Studies such as those by Douglas Patton on Zangid Mosul, Anne-Marie Eddé on Ayyubid Aleppo, Louis Pouzet on thirteenth-century Damascus, Michael Chamberlain on thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Damascus, Carl Petry on fifteenth-century Cairo, Bernadette Martel-Thoumian on the fifteenth-century Mamluk state, and others have added significantly to our knowledge of pre-modern Middle Eastern society.² A particular concern of these studies has been the section of the population that Petry termed the “civilian elite,” i.e., the ulama and the non-military administrative personnel whom biographers regarded as notables.³

The present article further extends this stream of research by discussing the

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² Douglas L. Patton, “A History of the Atabegs of Mosul and their Relations with the Ulama A.H. 521–660/A.D. 1127–1262” (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1983); Anne-Marie Eddé, *La principauté Ayyoubide d'Alep (579/1183–658/1260)* (Stuttgart, 1999); Louis Pouzet, *Damas au VIIIe/XIIIe siècle: Vie et structures religieuses dans une métropole islamique*, 2nd ed. (Beirut, 1991); Michael Chamberlain, *Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus, 1190–1350* (Cambridge, 1994); Carl F. Petry, *The Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1981); Bernadette Martel-Thoumian, *Les civils et l'administration dans l'état militaire Mamlūk (IXe/XVe siècle)* (Damascus, 1992).

³ Petry, *Civilian Elite*, 4 and 312–25. There are a number of individuals who crossed the boundary between the military and the civilian elite who do not fit into this simple differentiation. In the case of Ḥamāh this is illustrated by Shihāb al-Dīn al-Bulāʿī, who turned to the military profession after a career as religious scholar (Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij al-Kurūb fī Akhbār Banī Ayyūb*, ed. Jamāl al-Dīn al-Shayyāl, Ḥasanayn al-Rabīʿ, and Saʿīd ʿĀshūr [Cairo, 1953–77], and for years 646–59 Bibliothèque Nationale MSS Arabe nos. 1702 and 1703; here published edition, 3:163), and the case of Shihāb al-Dīn ibn al-Quṭub, which is discussed below. For a detailed discussion of the vocabulary employed during this period for the different groups within the civilian elite cf. Bernadette Martel-Thoumian, “Les élites urbaines sous les Mamlouks Circassiens: quelques éléments de réflexion,” in *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras III*, ed. U. Vermeulen and J. Van Steenbergen (Leuven, 2001), 271–308.



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example of the middle-sized north Syrian town of Ḥamāh during the period from the late sixth/twelfth to the eighth/fourteenth centuries. This urban settlement, situated on the banks of the Orontes River and with a population of some 7,000⁴ during the period considered here, tended to stand in the shadow of neighboring Aleppo and Damascus. In the late fourth/tenth century it was included within the Aleppan realms of the Hamdanid ruler Sayf al-Dawlah (d. 356/967). In the following century this status of dependency continued with Ḥamāh either in the Fatimid sphere of influence or subject to Bedouin, especially Mirdasid, domination typical of this period in northern Syria. With the Saljuq conquest of Aleppo in 479/1086 Ḥamāh became a bone of contention in conflicts between the autonomous Saljuq rulers in the Syrian lands. It changed hands repeatedly until the founder of the Burid dynasty in Damascus, Ṭuḡtigin (d. 522/1128), incorporated it into his realm in 517/1123.⁵ This period ended with the conquest by the Zangids who in 530/1135 included the town in their emerging empire, which gradually extended into Syria and al-Jazīrah. During the Ayyubid period the princes of Ḥamāh gained some degree of independence within the Ayyubid family confederation after Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn had handed over the town to his nephew al-Malik al-Muẓaffar I ‘Umar (r. 574–87/1178–91). Al-Muẓaffar’s descendants and other members of the Ayyubid family were able to rule the town, with short interruptions, well into the early Mamluk period when this last Syrian Ayyubid principality was finally absorbed into the Mamluk administrative system in the 730s/1330s.

From an economic perspective, Ḥamāh could draw on the fertile soil of the surrounding lands, ample water supplies, and its location on the main north-south trade axis linking Aleppo and Damascus.⁶ However, while Egypt experienced economic prosperity during the fifth/eleventh century,⁷ the northern Syrian towns, like their north Mesopotamian and Iraqi counterparts, experienced a period of urban stagnation or even decline. The weakening of fiscal institutions and the near-complete absence of building activities during this period was

⁴ According to Josiah C. Russel, “The Population of the Crusader States,” in *A History of the Crusades*, ed. Kenneth M. Setton (Madison, 1985), 5:295–314, the population of the town was 6,750 in the beginning of the seventh/thirteenth century.

⁵ For the pre-Zangid political history of northern Syria, cf. Thierry Bianquis, *Damas et la Syrie sous la domination fatimide (359–468/969–1076): Essai d’interprétation de chroniques arabes médiévales* (Damascus, 1989), and specifically for Aleppo cf. Suhayl Zakkar, *The Emirate of Aleppo, 1004–1094* (Beirut, 1971).

⁶ Thierry Bianquis, “Cités, territoires et province dans l’histoire Syrienne médiévale,” *Bulletin d’Etudes Orientales* 52 (2000): 207–8.

⁷ Cf. Paula A. Sanders, “The Fāṭimid State, 969–1171,” in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, vol. 1, *Islamic Egypt, 640–1517*, ed. Carl F. Petry (Cambridge, 1998), 151–74.



characteristic of this decline. The predominant Bedouin rulers of northern Syria did little to support the region's urban network. With the establishment of Saljuq rule the towns of the region experienced a renaissance that continued during the Zangid, Ayyubid, and Mamluk periods. The Saljuqs' measures, especially those of the regional Atabeg dynasties, aimed at supporting their urban basis, most importantly through a reorganization of the fiscal system, and were accompanied by increased building activities.⁸

The disastrous Syrian earthquake in the year 552/1157 was a setback in the case of Ḥamāh's ascendancy. The epicenter was close to the town and further seismic shocks followed in subsequent months.⁹ The destruction of the infrastructure must have been massive and the loss of human life considerable. The estimation of an Andalusian traveller who visited the town some fifteen years after the catastrophe, that of the purportedly 25,000 inhabitants of the town only 70 men survived, is certainly exaggerated.¹⁰ However, the chronicles show that this earthquake was estimated to be among the most disastrous catastrophes in the Syrian lands during the sixth/twelfth and seventh/thirteenth century. Anecdotes played, as is typical in premodern historiography, a crucial role in structuring the earthquake narrative. For instance, the Zangid chronicler Ibn al-Athīr included a report on a teacher leaving the teaching premises shortly before the earthquake. Not only did all of his students perish, but their relatives who might have inquired in the following days about the children's fate also did not survive.¹¹ In the same vein, later topographical descriptions of Ḥamāh are centered on this event. The only diachronic passage in Ibn al-ʿAdīm's seventh/thirteenth-century description of the town, for instance, sets the earthquake at center stage, and mentions the castle's

⁸ On the urban decline and renaissance in northern Syria cf. Stefan Heidemann, *Die Renaissance der Städte in Nordsyrien und Nordmesopotamien: Städtische Entwicklung und wirtschaftliche Bedingungen in ar-Raqqa and Ḥarrān von der Zeit der beduinischen Vorherrschaft bis zu den Seldschuken* (Leiden, 2002).

⁹ Ibn al-Qalānisi, *Dhayl Tārīkh Dimashq* [History of Damascus, 363–555 a.h.: from the Bodleian Ms. Hunt. 125; being a continuation of the history of Hilāl al-Sābi], ed. Henry Frederick Amedroz (Leiden, 1908), 337, 343–47, 351–52; Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Tārīkh al-Bāhīr fī al-Dawlah al-Atābakīyah*, ed. ʿAbd al-Qādir Aḥmad Ṭulaymāt (Cairo, 1963), 110; idem, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, ed. Carolus Johannes Tornberg (Beirut, 1965–67) [reprint of 1851–71 edition with corrections and new pagination], 11:218; Abū Shāmah, *Kitāb al-Rawḍatayn fī Akhbār al-Dawlatayn al-Nūriyah wa-al-Ṣalāhiyah*, ed. Ibrāhīm al-Zībaq (Beirut, 1997), 1:332–39; Ibn Wāsil, *Mufarrij*, 1:128; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām wa-Wafayāt al-Mashāhīr wa-al-Aʿlām*, ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī (Beirut, 2002–3), vol. 551–60:17–18.

¹⁰ Binyāmīn Ben-Yōna 'Tudela,' *Syrien und Palästina nach dem Reisebericht des Benjamin von Tudela [Sēfer ham-massāʿōt]*, trans. Hans-Peter Rūger (Wiesbaden, 1990), 64, who visited the town in the early 560s/late 1160s.

¹¹ Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Bāhīr*, 110. This anecdote was to be included by most of the period's authors.



destruction and the following efforts at refortification.¹² The consequences for the civilian elite are reflected in references to scholars who either perished in the earthquake or left the town in its aftermath.¹³ However, Ḥamāh soon recovered and continued to enjoy “[i]n the Ayyūbid period, and during the governorship of Abū ‘l-Fidā’, . . . true prosperity.”¹⁴ This prosperity can be seen here, as elsewhere, in increased building activities, especially with regard to madrasahs, which will be discussed below.

The present article traces this urban renaissance in more detail by focusing on the civilian elite. The construction of a high number of endowed madrasahs provided the financial basis for a variety of civilian careers.¹⁵ However, the source material currently available precludes a systematic examination of career patterns based on endowments in the case of a middle-sized town such as Ḥamāh. Consequently, the following discussion will focus on holders of judgeships and will be subsequently supplemented by the fragmentary material available on *khaṭībs*, secretaries, and posts in madrasahs. This discussion will show the gradual formation of an indigenous civilian elite during this period that was increasingly able to monopolize the crucial civilian posts in the town.

The purpose of the present article in engaging with the case of the civilian elite in Ḥamāh is twofold. Firstly, it has a descriptive outlook, namely to give an overview of those names that appear repeatedly when studying the civilian elite of the town. In the course of the description it will become evident that the basic unit of the civilian elite organization was the elite household. In this sense the article describes how such families established themselves in a provincial town. Secondly, it puts forth the argument that the urban renaissance in northern Syria set the framework for the development of a strong civilian elite from the second half of the sixth/twelfth century onwards. Furthermore, this urban elite took on a

¹² Ibn al-‘Adīm, *Bughyat al-Ṭalab fi Tārīkh Ḥalab*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār (Beirut, 1988), 1:149–50.

¹³ Among its victims in Ḥamāh were for example the scholar ‘Alī Abū al-Ḥasan al-Tanūkhī (Ibn ‘Asākir, *Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq*, ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid, Sukaynah al-Shihābī, et al. [Damascus, 1951–], 51:227–31) and the poet ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Mudrak ibn ‘Alī al-Tanūkhī al-Ma‘arrī, who died in a subsequent seismic shock in 553/1158 (Ibn ‘Asākir, *Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq*, 41:372–78; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 551–60:124; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi bi-al-Wafayāt*, ed. Hellmut Ritter et al. [Istanbul, 1931–2004], 18:265–66). Among those who left the town after the disaster was for instance the hadith scholar and Quran reader Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad al-Qaysī (d. 553/1158) (Ibn ‘Asākir, *Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq*, ed. ‘Umar al-‘Amrawī [Beirut, 1995–98], 7:112–13).

¹⁴ Dominique Sourdel, “Ḥamāt,” *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed. CD-ROM (Leiden, 2003).

¹⁵ Discussed for the case of Damascus by Stefan Leder, “Damaskus: Entwicklung einer islamischen Metropole (12.–14. Jh.) und ihre Grundlagen,” in *Alltagsleben und materielle Kultur in der arabischen Sprache und Literatur: Festschrift für Heinz Grotzfeld zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Thomas Bauer and Ulrike Stheli-Werbeck (Wiesbaden, 2005), 233–50.



decisively local character during the seventh/thirteenth century and the first half of the eighth/fourteenth century.

Owing to the historiographical nature of the available sources, the focus is on chronicles and biographical dictionaries. The rise of historical writing from the seventh/thirteenth century allows the formation of the civilian elite, even in considering the case of a middle-sized town such as Ḥamāh, to be traced in some detail. This is because the prosperity enjoyed by the town also encouraged the publication of a multitude of historical works. Not only two rulers of the town, al-Malik al-Manṣūr I Muḥammad and Abū al-Fidā', but also a number of scholars or administrators from the town, such as Ibn al-Naẓīf (d. after 634/1236–37), Ibn Abī al-Dam (d. 642/1244), the latter's relative Ibn Wāṣil (d. 697/1298), and 'Alī al-Muẓaffarī Ibn al-Mughayzil (d. 701/1302), composed chronicles. Despite the fact that the royal chronicles are of rather limited interest for any inquiry into a field beyond politics, Ibn al-Naẓīf's work¹⁶ is rather focused on the neighboring town of Homs, and most of Ibn Abī al-Dam's chronicle is lost,¹⁷ these works, especially the chronicle of Ibn Wāṣil and its supplement by Ibn al-Mughayzil, allow insights into the town's development. Although these insights cannot be compared with those gained for major urban centers, such as Cairo, Damascus, and Aleppo, the focus on this middle-sized town is a crucial addition to our understanding of urban society in the Syrian lands during the seventh/thirteenth and eighth/fourteenth centuries.

ḤAMĀH'S GROWING PROSPERITY: MADRASAHS AND THE CIVILIAN ELITE

The considerable ascent of Ḥamāh after the earthquake setback in 552/1157 can be traced by turning to the building activities within the town, which are well illustrated by the number of endowed madrasahs. These testify to the dynamic development of the urban infrastructure during the late Zangid, Ayyubid, and early Mamluk periods. The starting point of this development in Ḥamāh was in the late Zangid period under the Sultan Nūr al-Dīn (d. 569/1174). Nūr al-Dīn initiated a considerable building project encompassing representative and functional buildings, not only in the major towns of his realms such as Damascus

¹⁶ On the author and his work cf. Angelika Hartmann, "A Unique Manuscript in the Asian Museum, St. Petersburg: the Syrian Chronicle *al-Ta'rīḥ al-Manṣūrī* by Ibn Naẓīf al-Ḥamawī, from the 7th/13th Century," in *Egypt and Syria*, ed. Vermeulen and van Steenberghe, 89–100. Edition by Abū al-ʿĪd Dūdū (Damascus, 1981).

¹⁷ The first part, covering the period from the Prophet Muḥammad until the late Umayyad era, has been edited by Ḥamid Ziyān Ghānim Ziyān as *Al-Tārīkh al-Islāmī al-Ma'rūf bi-Isim al-Tārīkh al-Muẓaffarī* (Cairo, 1989). Passages from the final surviving part of the chronicle ending in 628/1230–31 have been edited and translated by Donald S. Richards, "The Crusade of Frederic II and the Ḥamāh Succession: Extracts from the Chronicle of Ibn Abī al-Damm," *Bulletin d'études orientales* 45 (1993): 183–206.



and Aleppo but also in middle-sized towns such as Baalbek and Ḥamāh.¹⁸ In Ḥamāh he built two madrasahs, one Shafi‘i and one Hanafi, in addition to the mosque in the lower town with a hospital next to it.¹⁹ The Shafi‘i madrasah, the ‘Aṣrūniyah, was built for Sharaf al-Dīn Ibn Abī ‘Aṣrūn (d. 585/1189), who indeed taught there at least once.²⁰ It was situated, similarly to the Hanafi madrasah, in the market area of the lower town. Eminent scholars of the indigenous civilian elite, such as the town’s *shaykh al-shuyūkh* Tāj al-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn al-Mughayzil (d. 687/1288)²¹ and the town’s judge ‘Imād al-Dīn Abū al-Qāsim (d. 652/1254), taught there.²²

In the following century, members of the ruling Ayyubid family endowed additional madrasahs. Al-Malik al-Manṣūr I Muḥammad (d. 617/1221) founded the Shafi‘i Madrasah al-Manṣūriyah.²³ This madrasah proved attractive even to a prominent scholar from outside the town, Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī (d. 631/1233), its first teacher.²⁴ In the later Ayyubid period Mu‘nisah Khātūn bint al-Malik al-Muẓaffar II Maḥmūd (d. 703/1303) endowed the Madrasah al-Khātūniyah. She was the paternal aunt of the town’s last Ayyubid ruler during the Mamluk period, Abū al-Fidā’ (r. 710–32/1310–32). Having acted herself as attending authority (*musmi‘ah*) in scholarly readings she provided this school with a generous endowment.²⁵ Abū al-Fidā’ himself endowed the Madrasah al-Mu‘ayyadiyah (also known as al-Khaṭībiyah), in which members of grand Hamawian families such as ‘Abd al-Laṭīf Ibn al-Mughayzil (d. 690/1291) and Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn al-Bārīzī (d. 875/1470)²⁶ taught.

The military elite formed the second group of madrasah founders. Sayf al-Dīn ‘Alī Ibn al-Masḥūb (d. 588/1192), one of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn’s amirs, founded Madrasat Ibn al-Masḥūb. A freedman of the town’s first Ayyubid ruler, al-Malik al-Muẓaffar I ‘Umar, Abū Manṣūr Jaldak al-Muẓaffarī al-Taḳawī (d. 628/1231), endowed the Madrasah al-Jaldakiyah.²⁷ Shujā‘ al-Dīn Murshid al-Ṭawāshī (d. 669/1270–71),

¹⁸ Cf. Yasser Ahmad Tabbaa, “The Architectural Patronage of Nūr al-Dīn (1146–1174)” (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1983).

¹⁹ Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 1:282–83.

²⁰ Dominique Sourdel, “Sur quelques traditionnistes d’Alepp au temps de Nur al-Din,” *Arabica* 2 (1955): 354.

²¹ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 681–90:290.

²² Ibn al-‘Adīm, *Bughyat*, 10:4581.

²³ Also called Madrasat al-Turbah, as he had it built for the grave of his father.

²⁴ Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 4:78, 80.

²⁵ Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ḥanbalī, *Shifā’ al-Qulūb fī Manāqib Banī Ayyūb*, ed. Nāzim Rashīd (Baghdad, 1978), 447; Abū al-Fidā’, *Al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar* (Cairo, 1907), 4:51; Murtaḳā al-Zabīdī, *Tarwīḥ al-Qulūb fī Dhikr Mulūk Banī Ayyūb*, ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid (Damascus, 1969), 81.

²⁶ Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍaw’ al-Lāmi’ li-Ahl al-Qarn al-Tāsi’* (Cairo, 1934–36), 10:24–25.

²⁷ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 621–30:311–12; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 11:174.



a freedman of al-Malik al-Muẓaffar II Maḥmūd, set up the Hanafī Madrasah al-Ṭawāshīyah.²⁸ Finally, members of the civilian elite endowed a number of madrasahs, which illustrates the wealth of these families of notables. Among these civilian founders were Najm al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Ghuffār Ibn al-Mughayzil (d. 688/1289–90),²⁹ Zayn al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 659/1261), *khaṭīb* of the Great/Upper Mosque,³⁰ and Mukhlīṣ al-Dīn Ibrāhīm Ibn Qarnāṣ (d. 648/1248).³¹

This rise of the madrasah as an urban institution from the mid-sixth/twelfth century onwards was paralleled by the formation of an urban elite that was firmly entrenched within the town itself. In contrast, the sources are almost completely silent, typically for northern Syria, with regard to the civilian elite in Ḥamāh in the preceding period. This might be explained as a result of chronological distance in the case of the works composed during the seventh/thirteenth century, such as the chronicle *Mir’āt al-Zamān* by Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī (d. 654/1256) or the biographical dictionaries *Wafayāt al-A’yān* by Ibn Khallikān (d. 681/1281–82), *Muʿjam al-Udabā’* by Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (d. 626/1229), and *Bughyat al-Ṭalab* by Ibn al-‘Adīm (d. 660/1262), which rendered the events or persons linked to minor towns of limited significance.³² However, even a contemporary work such as Ibn ‘Asākīr’s (d. 571/1176) *Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq*, which covers the Syrian scholars well beyond the borders of the town of Damascus, has little to say about scholars originating from or being active in Ḥamāh—in contrast to those linked, for example, to neighboring Homs.³³ Even appointments to the most eminent position, the chief judgeship, can only be traced systematically starting with the late sixth/twelfth century.³⁴ This picture is not altered when taking into account

²⁸ ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Nūr al-Dīn Ibn al-Mughayzil, *Dhayl Mufarrij al-Kurūb fī Akhbār Banī Ayyūb*, ed. ‘Umar ‘Abd al-Salām Tadmūrī (Beirut, 2004), 74; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 661–70:297.

²⁹ Ibn al-Mughayzil, *Dhayl Mufarrij al-Kurūb*, 124.

³⁰ Ibn Wāṣil, “Mufarrij,” BN MS 1703, fol. 170r–v; al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl Mir’āt al-Zamān* (Hyderabad, 1954–61), 2:129; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 651–60:389.

³¹ Mentioned in al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl Mir’āt al-Zamān*, 2:127–28. Further madrasahs founded by members of the civilian elite included, for example, the Madrasah al-Ṣīhyawniyah, founded by Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Khaṭīb Ibn Ṣīhyawn. Among its teachers was Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥamawī al-Shāfi‘ī (d. 649/1251) (cf. al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 641–50:413).

³² In Ibn al-‘Adīm’s biographical dictionary of Aleppo (*Bughyat al-Ṭalab*), for instance, nineteen entries refer to individuals linked to Ḥamāh, of which five persons are only superficially connected to the town. Of the remaining fourteen, eight lived partly or mostly in the seventh/thirteenth century and only four in the sixth/twelfth century.

³³ In the only complete edition of the work (the commercial Dār al-Fikr edition) Ḥamāh is referred to 17 times, while neighboring Homs has some 700 entries. These numbers match my impression gained from the published volumes of the scholarly Majma‘ al-Lughah edition.

³⁴ Similar to the case of al-Raqqah, where the names of the chief judges are only known from the mid-sixth/twelfth century onwards (Heidemann, *Renaissance*, 284–85).



the works produced in Ḥamāh: while chronicles such as those by Abū al-Fidā³ or Ibn Wāṣil are indispensable in order to trace the civilian elite starting with the second half of the sixth/twelfth century, they have little to say about earlier periods.

Considering the civilian elite, a striking feature becomes apparent that parallels the rise of the madrasah and which hints again at the mid-late sixth/twelfth century as a decisive turning point in the urban history of the Syrian lands: the first relevant persons, in a sense the “founding fathers,” of those families that came to dominate the civilian elite in the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods in Ḥamāh were active during this period (Banū Rawāḥah, Banū al-Bahrānī, Banū Qarnās) or in the following decades of the early seventh/thirteenth century (Banū al-Bārizī, Banū al-Mughayzil). The formation of this civilian elite, particularly the indigenous civilian elite, will be discussed in the following in three sections: First, appointments to the Shafi‘i judgeship, the crucial position in the town, are considered. This is followed by an analysis of the *khatībs*, secretaries, and non-Shafi‘i judges. Finally, those grand scholarly families of the town that did not hold a large number of civilian posts will be discussed.

THE SHAFI‘I JUDGESHIP: LOCALS AND COSMOPOLITANS

Ḥamāh became, as was typical for the region, dominated by the Shafi‘i school of law and affiliation with it became one of the prerequisites for attaining prestigious religious posts during the Zangid and subsequent periods. All the grand local households discussed below were Shafi‘i. This *madhhab* was sponsored by the political elite, which furthered its dominant role. For instance, the town’s last Ayyubid ruler, Abū al-Fidā³, and its Mamluk governor Sanjar were both themselves Shafi‘i jurists³⁵ who supported the *madhhab*. This dominance is evident in the appointments to the town’s judgeship during the early phase of the period considered here. The judgeship of Ḥamāh had initially not been explicitly restricted to any specific school of law. It was only with the introduction of the other *madhhabs*’ judgeships in the late seventh/thirteenth and eighth/fourteenth centuries that this judgeship became to be nominally attached to the Shafi‘i community. However, despite the theoretical possibility that a non-Shafi‘i scholar might be appointed before this introduction of *madhhab*-affiliated posts, the Shafi‘is were able, owing to their dominance, to monopolise the post entirely.

Appointments to the Shafi‘i judgeship (cf. fig. 1) followed, with regard to the geographical origin of the post holders, distinctively different patterns during the period considered here. While individuals from outside the town prevailed in the first stage until the early seventh/thirteenth century, the local elite dominated

³⁵ Heinz Halm, *Die Ausbreitung der šāfi‘itischen Rechtsschule von den Anfängen bis zum 8./14. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden, 1974), 228.



this post in the following 150 years until the mid-eighth/fourteenth century. Thereupon, the post holders' provenance became significantly more varied and the dominance of the local elite started to vanish. These different patterns indicate two alternative career patterns—that changed in importance over time—which led to the post.

In the first and third phase, a “cosmopolitan” profile was decisive for the candidate's appointment.³⁶ It was crucial to belong to trans-regional networks of learning and/or political power. Many of the post holders, especially during the first phase, were distinguished scholars who had the prestige of having studied with the grand scholars of their time. In the third phase candidates belonged more often to the trans-regional Mamluk civilian elite. Owing to the integration of trans-regional networks, judges who left the post voluntarily or involuntarily during both phases frequently moved on to take up positions in other towns and regions.

In the second phase, in contrast, post holders typically had a “local” profile, i.e., they were closely integrated into the local network of influential families. Generally, they were born into one of the grand families and followed a career centered on the town, especially holding other (minor) posts before attaining the judgeship. In contrast to the preceding and following phases, judges often held the post until an advanced age or death. Those who left the post voluntarily or involuntarily tended to remain within the town, as it was here that they had networks that had been—and often continued to be—crucial for their career.

THE SHAFĪI JUDGESHIP FROM 559/1164 TO 616/1219: THE COSMOPOLITANS' PERIOD

During the first sixty years of the period under discussion cosmopolitan scholars from outside the town played an important role in appointments to the judgeship. Initially these scholars originated in particular from the eastern lands, more specifically Mosul, the Zangid dynasty's first stronghold. In a sense the Zangids “imported” prestigious scholars from their possessions in the East to newly conquered towns such as Ḥamāh. These scholars tended to hold the post—typical for the cosmopolitan career pattern—only for a limited period and soon moved on to other urban centers.

The first judge, Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Anṣārī (d. 600/1203),³⁷ came from Mosul under the Zangid Nūr al-Dīn. He stayed in the post for eight years, but then moved on further west in order to settle in Egypt, where he was appointed

³⁶ The differentiation between “cosmopolitans” and “locals” is based on Merton's terminology; cf. his “Patterns of Influence: Local and Cosmopolitan Influentials,” in Robert K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure*, 3rd ed. (New York, 1968), 441–74.

³⁷ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 591–600:477–78; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 4:171; al-Asnawī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah*, ed. 'Abd Allāh al-Jubūrī (Baghdad, 1971), 2:443; Sourdel, “Traditionnistes,” 354.



to the judgeship of the Upper Egyptian town of Asyūṭ. The second judge, Ḍiyāʾ al-Dīn al-Qāsim Ibn al-Shahrazūrī (d. 599/1203), held the judgeship twice: he had left Ḥamāh after his first appointment in order to move to Baghdad, where he was also appointed judge. However, after his deposition in Baghdad he had to return to Ḥamāh, where he filled the post again for some months until his death. Ibn al-Shahrazūrī belonged to a family which held high offices throughout the sixth/twelfth and seventh/thirteenth centuries in Syria and Iraq.³⁸ His paternal uncle, Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 576/1176), like al-Anṣārī, came from Mosul and had been appointed by Nūr al-Dīn to the judgeships of Damascus and Aleppo simultaneously.

That this family originated from Mosul and subsequently gained a great reputation within Syria parallels the shift of the Zangids' power base from the East westwards. This shift also became apparent in the nominations to the judgeship in Ḥamāh: after the first decades of Zangid rule, post holders were increasingly recruited from the Syrian lands. The early seventh/thirteenth-century judge Najm al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥīm Ibn Abī ʿAṣrūn (d. 622/1225),³⁹ for instance, was the son of the aforementioned Sharaf al-Dīn Ibn Abī ʿAṣrūn, for whom Nūr al-Dīn had built the Shafīʿi madrasah of the town. Sharaf al-Dīn had succeeded Kamāl al-Dīn al-Shahrazūrī in the position of the most eminent Shafīʿi scholar in the Syrian lands and more specifically he had taken over the judgeship in Damascus. It was the family's cosmopolitan prestige that allowed his son to hold office in Aleppo and Ḥamāh, where he was twice judge and also vizier. Najm al-Dīn is in this sense representative of a transition period: his family still had hardly any connections to the local elite of Ḥamāh, but it was already well-placed within the civilian elite of the Syrian lands.

In this early period there are already three cases which hint at the developing local elite, most importantly two judges belonging to the al-Bahrānī family (cf. fig. 2 with sources), Amīn al-Dawlah/Dīn al-Ḥusayn (d. 587/1191) and Aḥmad ibn Mudrak (d. 590/1194 or 591/1195). This family also continued to play a remarkable role in the following seventh/thirteenth century. Two additional members of the family, Muḥyī al-Dīn Ḥamzah (d. 663/1264–65)⁴⁰ and Muwaffaq al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 699/1300), were appointed judges in 642/1244–45 and

³⁸ On the al-Shahrazūrī family, cf. Eddé, *Alep*, 381–82. It seems that al-Anṣārī and al-Shahrazūrī for some time held the judgeship in Ḥamāh simultaneously (cf. Abū Shāmāh, *Al-Rawḍatayn*, 2:158, and al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 571–80:105). On al-Qāsim cf. Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 4:79; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 591–600:407–8.

³⁹ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 621–30:63 and 115; al-Safadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 18:164; Eddé, *Alep*, 382–83. On Ibn Abī ʿAṣrūn as judge cf. Ibn Naẓīf, *Al-Manṣūrī*, 6 and 8.

⁴⁰ On the dates of Muḥyī al-Dīn's judgeship cf. Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 5:347, and idem, "Mufarrij," fol. 111r.



697/1298 respectively. Other members of the family focused on scholarship without attaining formal positions of importance, such as Muḥyī al-Dīn's wife Ṣafiyat (d. 646/1248), one of the grand female hadith scholars of her time; Muwaffaq al-Dīn Nabā/Muḥammad (d. 665/1267), a hadith scholar who was at least appointed repetitor (*mu'īd*) in Cairo; as well as 'Umar ibn Muḥammad (d. 654/1256) and Muḥyī al-Dīn 'Abd al-Wahhāb (d. 688/1289), son and grandson of Ṣafiyat respectively.

The third relevant case—although he only briefly held office—is Zayn al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn al-Raffā' (d. 617/1220), who originated from Kafartāb (some 40 km to the north of the town).⁴¹ He moved on to take the judgeship of neighboring Bārīn (some 40 km southwest of the town). His son 'Abd al-'Azīz (d. 662/1263)⁴² was to become the *shaykh al-shuyūkh* of Ḥamāh and entered the networks of the Hamawian civilian elite by marrying his daughters to members of the influential al-Mughayzil family. However, it is significant that neither the indigenous al-Bahrānī family nor Ibn al-Raffā' were yet able to control the post more tightly. Both lost it to Ibn Abī 'Aṣrūn, the outsider who was twice appointed to the post.

Tellingly, Ibn Abī 'Aṣrūn's second office—the last of the cosmopolitan period—came to an end owing to his involvement in an event that had implications well beyond the confines of the town: the Ibn al-Mashtūb revolt of 616–17/1219–20. 'Imād al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn al-Mashtūb (d. 619/1225), a high-ranking Kurdish amir and son of the aforementioned madrasah founder Sayf al-Dīn Ibn al-Mashtūb, had been exiled from Egypt after an attempted revolt against the sultan al-Malik al-Kāmil (r. 615–35/1218–38). He found refuge in Ḥamāh and subsequently entered the service of the strongman in northern Syria, al-Malik al-Ashraf Mūsā (r. 607–17/1210–20 in Diyarbakr), whom he challenged soon after. Al-Malik al-Manṣūr I Muḥammad of Ḥamāh supported him financially and provided armed men. Furthermore, he authorised Ibn Abī 'Aṣrūn, to whom Ibn al-Mashtūb had promised an appointment as judge in the lands that were to be brought under his control, to resign and to participate in the endeavour.⁴³

Ibn Abī 'Aṣrūn was arrested after Ibn al-Mashtūb's defeat and the entire correspondence with rulers of the region as well as copies of the oath of allegiance to be sworn by those allied with Ibn al-Mashtūb were found in his possession. Nevertheless, in contrast to Ibn al-Mashtūb, who perished in al-Ashraf's captivity, Ibn Abī 'Aṣrūn was liberated owing to his family connections, which went well

⁴¹ Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 4:273–74; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 611–20:317–18; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 4:26–28.

⁴² Abū al-Fidā', *Al-Mukhtaṣar*, 3:215; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 661–70:101–4; Eddé, *Alep*, 428.

⁴³ The most detailed account of this revolt is in Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 4:28–31 and 70–77. For his biography cf. al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 611–20:442 (with further sources). On him cf. also Eddé, *Alep*, 92–93, 383.



beyond Ḥamāh. It was Fakhr al-Dīn ibn Shaykh al-Shuyūkh (d. 647/1250), the influential member of the Damascene Ḥamawayh family, which had intermarried with the Banū Abī ‘Aṣrūn, who came as Egyptian envoy to al-Ashraf’s court. He convinced al-Ashraf to release Ibn Abī ‘Aṣrūn, who returned to Ḥamāh without regaining a formal position of influence.⁴⁴

THE SHAFI‘I JUDGESHIP FROM 616/1219 TO 764/1363: THE DOMINANCE OF THE LOCALS

With Ibn Abī ‘Aṣrūn’s resignation in the early seventh/thirteenth century the second period in the recruitment pattern for the judgeship began. For some 150 years the judgeship was entirely monopolized by local scholars while cosmopolitan outsiders, be they from the neighboring large towns of Aleppo and Damascus or from Mosul, ceased to play an important role in Ḥamāh. In this period the urban renaissance began to bear fruit and a strong local civilian elite was able to gain complete control over the post. Particularly notable with regard to the judgeship were three of the town’s grand families, the Banū Wāṣil, the Banū al-Bahrānī discussed above, and the Banū al-Bārīzī.

The al-Bārīzī family (cf. fig. 3)⁴⁵ was at the very core of the Hamawian civilian elite. It was able to monopolise the judgeship for some 120 years during the late seventh/thirteenth and eighth/fourteenth centuries with only one interruption. The first notable individual of this family, Shams al-Dīn Ibrāhīm I (d. 669/1270),⁴⁶ specialised in jurisprudence, and taught and studied in various Syrian towns until he settled in his hometown. Here he taught, composed works, issued fatwas, and was finally appointed as the town’s judge. He bequeathed this position upon his death to his deputy and son Najm al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥīm I (d. 683/1284),⁴⁷ a multidisciplinary scholar. Najm al-Dīn was deposed after some ten years of holding office in favour of Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn Wāṣil (see below), but this did not loosen the grip of the Banū al-Bārīzī on the post. A member of the clan

⁴⁴ Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 4:76–77.

⁴⁵ This family has been treated comprehensively by Martel-Thoumian, *Civils*, 249–66. The following remarks, centered on Ḥamāh, draw on the results of her study. The following individuals who are mentioned in figure 3 will not be discussed in the present section: Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad II (d. 776/1374–75) (mentioned in biography of his son Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad II: al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Daw*, 9:137–38); Shams al-Dīn Ibrāhīm II (d. before 738/1337–38) (al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 671–80:145; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Al-Durar al-Kāminah fi A‘yān al-Mī‘ah al-Thāminah*, ed. Muḥammad Sayyid Jād al-Ḥaqq [Cairo, n.d., reprint of 1966–67 edition], 1:77 and 2:461–62); Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad II (d. 755/1354) (Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 1:188–89).

⁴⁶ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 571–80:324 and vol. 661–670:276; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 6:146. On the dates of his judgeship cf. Ibn Wāṣil, “Mufarrij,” BN MS 1703, fol. 111r.

⁴⁷ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 681–90:149–52; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 18:317–20; al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Umar Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirat al-Nabih fi Ayyām al-Manṣūr wa-Banīh*, ed. Muḥammad Amin and Sa‘id ‘Āshūr (Cairo, 1976–86), 1:92–94. He is named “‘Abd al-Raḥmān” in some sources.



was reappointed two years after Ibn Wāṣil's death and a short interlude by one of the Banū al-Bahrānī, Muwaffaq al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 699/1300).

This member was Sharaf al-Dīn Hibat Allāh I (d. 738/1338),⁴⁸ Najm al-Dīn's son, who was the most famous member of his family. He not only held the judgeship for forty years, but was also wealthy enough to dispense with the salary. Although he was offered the judgeship in Egypt, he preferred to stay within the confines of his hometown where he was embedded via his family into a tight network with members of the civilian elite. He passed the post on to his grandson and deputy Najm al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥīm II (d. 764/1363),⁴⁹ whose death marked the end of the Banū al-Bārīzī's grip on the judgeship. However, the influence of the family extended beyond the judgeship to other posts so that it was able to retain crucial influence in the town despite having lost control of the judgeship. Further civilian posts held by this family in Ḥamāh included the deputyship of the judge,⁵⁰ teaching positions,⁵¹ and administrative positions (*kātib al-sirr*,⁵² *wakīl bayt al-māl*,⁵³ and vizier⁵⁴).

Members of the family were still appointed in the following decades to the judgeship. Now it was the second main line of al-Bārīzīs in Ḥamāh—going back to Sharaf al-Dīn's brother Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad I (d. 698/1299)—that started to play a more prominent role.⁵⁵ However, the careers of Kamāl al-Dīn's descendants show that the al-Bārīzīs had been transformed from a typical local family of Ḥamāh into one with a cosmopolitan outlook. Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad II (d. 823/1420),⁵⁶ Kamāl al-Dīn's great-grandson, quickly abandoned the judgeship in

⁴⁸ Abū al-Fidā', *Al-Mukhtaṣar*, 4:124–27; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 27:290–91; Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 5:174–76.

⁴⁹ Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 2:461–62.

⁵⁰ Besides those who later became judge themselves, such as Najm al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥīm I and Najm al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥīm II, other members of the family remained deputies, such as Zayn al-Dīn 'Umar (mentioned in the biography of his grandson Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad III [d. 847/1443–44]: al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Daw'*, 10:69). Zayn al-Dīn deputized for his brother Najm al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥīm II and for Fakhr al-Dīn 'Uthmān (d. 730/1330), who became judge in Aleppo and *khaṭīb* in Ḥamāh (Abū al-Fidā', *Al-Mukhtaṣar*, 4:100–1; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 661–70:274; idem, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām wa-Wafayāt al-Mashāhīr wa-al-A'lām*, ed. 'Umar 'Abd al-Salām Tadmuri (Beirut, 2004), 275; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 19:466; Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 3:50).

⁵¹ Besides several judges of the family who obviously taught in addition to their juridical tasks, mention can be made of Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad I.

⁵² Cf. Sharaf al-Dīn Hibat Allāh II (mentioned in the biography of his son Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad III: al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Daw'*, 10:69) and the aforementioned Sirāj al-Dīn 'Umar.

⁵³ Cf. Ṣadr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 733/1333) (Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 2:445–46).

⁵⁴ Cf. Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad II.

⁵⁵ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 691–700:364–65; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 3:248.

⁵⁶ Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Muqaffá al-Kabīr*, ed. Muḥammad al-Ya'lawī (Beirut, 1991), 7:71–72; Ibn



order to become secretary of the chancellery in Ḥamāh, judge in Aleppo, and finally secretary of the chancellery in Egypt. Here, his descendants attained positions in the Mamluk military and administrative elite.⁵⁷ His son Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad I (d. 822/1419),⁵⁸ who opted for a military career, rose to such high rank that the sultan al-Malik al-Muʿayyad (815–24/1412–21) attended his funeral. The other son, Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad III (d. 856/1452), succeeded his father in the post of *kātib al-sirr* in Egypt, which he held alternately with the same post in Damascus where he was also appointed chief judge for a while. He married into the sultan's family and the reigning sultan, al-Malik al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq (842–57/1438–53), was present at his funeral.⁵⁹

Back in Ḥamāh, Sharaf al-Dīn's great grandson Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad I (d. 812/1409–10)⁶⁰ reinstated the pivotal role of his family in the town's judgeship. Although the family was no longer able to monopolize the post, two more al-Bārīzī judges in the ninth/fifteenth century, Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 875/1470)⁶¹ and Sirāj al-Dīn ʿUmar (b. 844/1440),⁶² are evidence of continuing influence. However, these appointments hint again at the transformation of the al-Bārīzīs from a local to a cosmopolitan family. Appointments of family members in Ḥamāh now depended less on a local network than on the influence of the developing Egyptian al-Bārīzī branch. For instance, it was Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad III who interceded with Sultan Jaqmaq in Egypt for the appointment of Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad to the judgeship of Ḥamāh.⁶³

Another family, besides the Banū al-Bārīzī and the Banū al-Bahrānī, that was of some importance for the judgeship was the Banū Wāṣil. This clan played a role in the civilian elite of Ḥamāh throughout the seventh/thirteenth century. Three members of the family were appointed judges: Sālīm (d. 629/1232),⁶⁴ the

Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʿīyah*, ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAlim Khān (Hyderabad, 1978–79), 4:137–41; Ibn Taghribirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah*, ed. Fahīm M. Shaltūt et al. (Cairo, 1963–72), 14:161; al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Dawʿ*, 9:137–38. On his judgeship cf. Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Al-Flām bi-Tārīkh Ahl al-Islām*, ed. ʿAdnān Darwīsh (Damascus, 1977–97), 1:504, 588, 613.

⁵⁷ Their integration into the Egyptian civilian and military elite is also evident in marriage patterns: such relations were established with the crucial civilian and military households. In the mid-ninth/fifteenth century the al-Bārīzīs were one of the families with whom such alliances were regularly sought (cf. Martel-Thoumian, *Civils*, 258–60).

⁵⁸ Ibn Taghribirdī, *Al-Nujūm*, 14:159.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 16:13–18.

⁶⁰ Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Dawʿ*, 8:236.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 10:24–25. Ṣadr al-Dīn taught also in the Madrasah al-Mukhlīṣīyah that had been endowed by Mukhlīṣ al-Dīn Ibrāhīm Ibn Qarnāṣ (d. 648/1248).

⁶² *Ibid.*, 6:131.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 10:24–25.

⁶⁴ On the dates of Sālīm's judgeship cf. Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 4:118.



historian Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad (deputized by his brother),⁶⁵ and Shihāb al-Dīn Ibrāhīm Ibn Abī al-Dam,⁶⁶ who was linked to the Banū Wāṣil clan via Sālīm's wife. Another son of Sālīm was an intimate of the Hamawian ruler al-Malik al-Manṣūr II Muḥammad (d. 683/1284) and one of his nephews was physician at the Hamawian court. Jamāl al-Dīn's appointment shows that even during the period of local recruitment trans-regional networks were of benefit. The reasons for the deposition of his predecessor Najm al-Dīn al-Bārīzī are not known, but one might assume that Jamāl al-Dīn's tight network within the military and civilian elite of late Ayyubid and early Mamluk society was instrumental in his appointment.⁶⁷ However, the influence of this family was in sum rather limited, as it was not able to monopolize specific posts and only rose to some prominence for two generations.

During the period of local recruitment to the judgeship in Ḥamāh some individuals who did not belong to the grand families of the town were appointed. These individuals were nevertheless part of the civilian networks of the town and had the local background that was typical of this period of recruitment. 'Imād al-Dīn Abū al-Qāsim (d. 652/1254) held the judgeship twice but had to flee owing to the conflicts of his brother, Shihāb al-Dīn ibn al-Quṭub, with the town's ruler.⁶⁸ Shihāb al-Dīn had initially embarked on a civilian career, acting for example as Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī's repetitor (*mu'īd*) in the Madrasah al-Manṣūriyah. However, he turned later to a military career and became an amir.⁶⁹ Although their family

⁶⁵ This brother was 'Abd al-Rahmān (d. 692/1293) (al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 691–700:158).

⁶⁶ Ibn Naẓīf, *Al-Manṣūri*, 39; Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 4:174 and 5:346; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 641–50:112.

⁶⁷ On Ibn Wāṣil's network and the Banū Wāṣil in general cf. Konrad Hirschler, *Medieval Arabic Historiography: Authors as Actors* (London, 2006), 18–28. The exact date of Ibn Wāṣil's appointment is curiously not identifiable as his nomination and Ibn al-Bārīzī's deposition are not exactly dated. It is on al-Yūnīnī's statement (*Dhayl Mir'āt al-Zamān*, 4:218–23) that the latter was deposed "a few years" before his death, that my estimation "late 670s" is based.

⁶⁸ Ibn Naẓīf, *Al-Manṣūri*, 39; Ibn al-'Adīm, *Bughyat*, 10:4581–82; Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 4:87, 119, 173–74; idem, "Mufarrij," BN MS 1703, fols. 111v–112r; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 651–60:132 [Imād al-Dīn]; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 651–60:168–69 [Shihāb al-Dīn].

⁶⁹ This change from a civilian to a military career pattern was a consequence of Shihāb al-Dīn's close alliance with the younger son of Ḥamāh's ruler, al-Malik al-Nāṣir Qilij Arslan (r. 617–26/1221–29), who was to be installed on the throne against the explicit will of his father. Qilij Arslan granted Shihāb al-Dīn a considerable *iqṭā'*, so that he "took off the turban from his head, put on the *sharbūsh*, and wore the soldiers' garments. Al-Malik al-Nāṣir appointed him as governor of al-Ma'arraḥ [Ma'arrat al-Nu'mān]. He acted there just as the kings act in their lands." (Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 4:87–88) (The *sharbūsh* was the distinct headgear of the amirs; cf. R. Dozy, *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes* [Leiden, 1881], 1:742.)



was of no great importance within the civilian elite,⁷⁰ their marriage connections secured them the necessary local backing. ‘Imād al-Dīn’s wife, for instance, was the daughter of a prominent member of the Banū Qarnāṣ, Mukhlīṣ al-Dīn Ibrāhīm (d. 648/1248), discussed below.

‘Imād al-Dīn’s predecessor, Ḥujjat al-Dīn Ibn Marājil (d. 617/1220),⁷¹ also did not belong to one of the grand families. Nevertheless, his family, which was at least described as “a renowned household in Ḥamāh,” had a somewhat prominent standing,⁷² particularly due to its holding of administrative positions. Ḥujjat al-Dīn’s nephew, ‘Afif al-Dīn ‘Abd Allāh, acted as envoy for the Ayyubid rulers of the town.⁷³ Ishāq ibn ‘Alī Ibn Marājil (d. after 658/1260) was secretary of the chancellery under al-Malik al-Muẓaffar II Maḥmūd, before moving on to Cairo where he held the same position.⁷⁴ Members of the family also held administrative posts in other Syrian towns, such as Damascus and Aleppo.⁷⁵

The dwindling grip of the indigenous elite on the Shafi‘i judgeship in the third period, that is from the death of Najm al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥīm II in 764/1363 onwards, is evident in the much more varied background of those appointed to the post. Most importantly, judges tended to be recruited from cosmopolitan individuals who had, just like the judges in the first period of the judgeship, hardly any connections to the town. A case in point is Najm al-Dīn ‘Umar ibn al-Ḥijjī (d. 830/1427). During his career Najm al-Dīn was secretary of the chancellery in Egypt and judge in Damascus, Tripoli, and Ḥamāh without being linked to the local elite of the town.⁷⁶ This trend of cosmopolitan candidates

⁷⁰ Their father was a rather minor jurist. Although Ibn Wāṣil describes him as “eminent in scholarship and fatwas” (Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 4:87), biographical dictionaries refer to him only briefly (e.g., al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 611–20:98).

⁷¹ Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 4:118–19, who refers to him as “Ibn Marāḥil.”

⁷² Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Muqaffā*, 6:359, in the biography of Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī Ibn Marājil (d. 663/1264); cf. also al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 661–70:155.

⁷³ Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 4:128 and 141.

⁷⁴ Ibn al-‘Adīm, *Bughyat*, 3:1489.

⁷⁵ ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Ibn Marājil (d. 703/1304) was secretary (in Ḥamāh?) and held further unspecified administrative posts (al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 21:234–35; Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 3:131). His father Shihāb al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥīm had been secretary in different functions in Aleppo and Damascus (al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 21:234–35). His son Taqī al-Dīn Sulaymān ibn ‘Alī (d. 764/1363) was employed in several *dīwāns*, held the trusteeship in the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, and moved on to Egypt to become vizier (Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 2:254–55; Ibn Taghribirdī, *Al-Nujūm*, 11:18).

⁷⁶ On him cf. al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Daw’*, 6:78; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Ṭabaqāt*, 4:122–27; Martel-Thoumian, *Civils*, 61, 88, 96, 452. On his judgeship in Ḥamāh: Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh*, 2:23; 4:258, 269, and 311. The only traceable connections are marriage alliances that this family concluded with the Egyptian al-Bārīzī branch (Martel-Thoumian, *Civils*, 367).



was accompanied by a significantly enhanced turnover. The average length for holding the judgeship now halved to under seven years, compared with more than thirteen years in the preceding period of local dominance. There were still some local scholars appointed to the post, such as Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Ḥamawī (d. 776/1374–75).⁷⁷ However, the example of the Bārizī family—which could retain some influence over the judgeship only because it became a cosmopolitan family—shows that the period of the local scholars had definitely come to an end by the mid-eighth/fourteenth century.⁷⁸

THE NON-SHAFI‘I JUDGESHIPS, *KHAṬĪBS*, AND OTHER POSTS

The case of the Shafi‘i judgeship exemplifies the rise of the local civilian elite during the Ayyubid period and its continuing influence well into the Mamluk Sultanate until it lost its monopoly to candidates with a more cosmopolitan background. A consideration of appointments to other judgeships presents nevertheless a more complex picture. The Hanafi judgeship was established in Ḥamāh during the rule of the Mamluk sultan al-Malik al-Zāhir Baybars (r. 658–76/1260–77). In the 660s/1260s Baybars introduced the ruling according to which—at least theoretically—each *madhhab* was to be represented by a judge in the empire’s major centers. With regard to the judgeships for the other two *madhhabs*, Ḥamāh followed the normal course of affairs in provincial Syrian towns that only introduced them hesitantly:⁷⁹ both the first Maliki judge and the first Hanbali judge in Ḥamāh would be appointed only about a century after Baybars’ decree.

THE HANAFI, MALIKI, AND HANBALI JUDGESHIPS

The Hanafi judgeship (cf. fig. 4) was monopolized after its introduction⁸⁰ for

⁷⁷ Al-Maqrizī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Ma‘rifat Duwal al-Mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Ziyādah et al. (Cairo, 1934–75), 3:1:243; Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 1:190.

⁷⁸ Sources for those judges in figure 1 who are not discussed in the present section are as follows: no. 19: Ibn Qāḍi Shuhbah, *Tārīkh*, 1:244; no. 20: Ibn Qāḍi Shuhbah, *Tārīkh*, 1:216, Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 3:417–18 (d. 764/1363 [sic]); no. 21: Ibn Qāḍi Shuhbah, *Tārīkh*, 1:473 and 504; no. 23: Ibn Qāḍi Shuhbah, *Tārīkh*, 1:613 and 4:258; no. 26: Ibn Qāḍi Shuhbah, *Ṭabaqāt*, 4:141–42; al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍaw’*, 10:129–31; no. 27: al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍaw’*, 10:129–31 (biography of no. 26); no. 28: al-Nu‘aymī, *Al-Dāris fī Tārīkh al-Madāris* (Beirut, 1990), 1:249 (al-Madrasah al-Ṣārimiyah); no. 29: al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍaw’*, 10:24–25 (biography of no. 30).

⁷⁹ Cf. Huda Lutfi, *Al-Quds al-Mamlūkiyya: A History of Mamlūk Jerusalem Based on the Ḥaram Documents* (Berlin, 1985), 192, for the case of Jerusalem where even the Hanafi judgeship was introduced only in 784/1382. Al-Qalqashandī describes for his time the status quo that had developed in the preceding periods: in Ḥamāh judges for each *madhhab*, in addition to a Hanafi *qāḍi ‘askar*, were nominated (al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A‘shā fī Ṣinā‘at al-Inshā’* [Cairo, 1913–19], 4:238).

⁸⁰ Halm, *Ausbreitung*, 227, mentions Najm al-Dīn al-Khalil ibn ‘Alī al-Ḥanafī (d. 641/1243) as an



some eighty years by the Banū al-ʿAdīm. The Hamawian Banū al-ʿAdīm branch retained its close links to Aleppo, where the Banū al-ʿAdīm were one of the most influential families within the civilian elite. For example, the deputy of the Hanafi judge Jamāl al-Dīn ʿAbd Allāh⁸¹ was sent to Ḥamāh from Aleppo by order of the Aleppan Hanafi judge, Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿUmar Ibn al-ʿAdīm (fl. 738/1337–38).⁸² However, the period of the Banū al-ʿAdīm in the Hamawian office had, parallel to the development of the Shafiʿi judgeship, a distinctive local character. The first Hanafi judge in Ḥamāh, Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn al-ʿAdīm (d. 694/1295), not only settled in the town but became part of the local elite. He was buried in his *turbah* in the cemetery in ʿAqabah Naqirīn, a village close to Ḥamāh where other Hamawian notables such as the Shafiʿi judge Jamāl al-Dīn Ibn Wāṣil had their *turbahs* built.⁸³ Furthermore, he was able to establish a kind of indigenous Hamawian line of succession as his son and grandson, Najm al-Dīn ʿUmar (d. 734/1333)⁸⁴ and Jamāl al-Dīn ʿAbd Allāh, held the post too. ʿIzz al-Dīn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Ibn al-ʿAdīm (d. 711/1311), the second Hanafi judge of the town, was appointed as an outsider, but remained in the office for some forty years and died in Ḥamāh.⁸⁵ The local tradition established by the Banū al-ʿAdīm was continued by Taqī al-Dīn Maḥmūd Ibn al-Ḥakīm (d. 760/1359),⁸⁶ who belonged to a Hamawian family that had a *zāwiyah* in the town and a *muhtasib* among its members.⁸⁷ With Taqī al-Dīn’s death in 760/1359 this local tradition came to an

earlier judge, but I was not able to find evidence for a judgeship for this individual in Ḥamāh. Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mirʾāt al-Zamān fī Tārīkh al-Aʿyān* (Hyderabad, 1951–52), 8:2:743; Ibn al-ʿAdīm, *Bughyat*, 7:3379–80; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 641–50:76; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 13:397; al-Qurashī, *Al-Jawāhir al-Muḍīyah fī Ṭabaqāt al-Hanafiyah* (Hyderabad, n.d.), vol. 1, no. 596; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Muqaffā*, 3:769; Ibn Taghribirdī, *Al-Nujūm*, 6:348.

⁸¹ Abū al-Fidāʾ, *Al-Mukhtaṣar*, 4:123, 136.

⁸² The deputy was Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd Allāh Ibn al-Muhājir (d. 739/1338–39). On him cf. Abū al-Fidāʾ, *Al-Mukhtaṣar*, 4:129; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 7:136–38; Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 1:194–95. His son Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 794/1391–92) turned Shafiʿi and became judge in Ḥamāh for a period not further defined (Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 3:417–18).

⁸³ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 691–700:227–28; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 4:263; al-Qurashī, *Al-Jawāhir*, vol. 2, no. 300; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirah*, 1:181; Eddé, *Alep*, 366f.

⁸⁴ Abū al-Fidāʾ, *Al-Mukhtaṣar*, 4:110; al-Qurashī, *Al-Jawāhir*, vol. 1, no. 1098; Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 3:265–66; Ibn Taghribirdī, *Al-Nujūm*, 9:302.

⁸⁵ Al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām*, 111; al-Qurashī, *Al-Jawāhir*, vol. 1, no. 857; Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 2:492.

⁸⁶ His *shuhrah* is sometimes given as “Ibn al-Ḥakam.” Abū al-Fidāʾ, *Al-Mukhtaṣar*, 4:123, 136; Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 5:105; Ibn Taghribirdī, *Al-Nujūm*, 10:332.

⁸⁷ For the *zāwiyah* cf. the entry on Najm al-Dīn ʿAbd Allāh Ibn al-Ḥakīm (d. 678/1279) in al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 671–80:305, and al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 17:583. The *muhtasib* was Sharaf al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Karīm Ibn al-Ḥakīm (d. 711/1311–12), cf. al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām*, 114, and Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 3:15.



end. For instance, Amīn al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb ibn Aḥmad (d. 768/1367), one of the subsequent judges, had no background in the town.⁸⁸ Thus, the role of the local background in appointments to the Hanafi judgeship started to disappear, similar to the Shafi‘i case, in the second half of the eighth/fourteenth century.

In this same period both the Maliki and the Hanbali judgeships were introduced. It is striking that in both cases local scholars from the outset played hardly any role, but that individuals with a cosmopolitan background dominated the list of post holders. The first Maliki judge in Ḥamāh (cf. fig. 5), Sharaf al-Dīn Ismā‘īl al-Gharnāṭī (d. 771/1369),⁸⁹ originated—as was typical for this *madhhab*—from the western Islamic lands. This predominance of post holders originating from the Maghrib or al-Andalus remained unchanged in the following decades: among them were Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Maghribī (d. 795/1392),⁹⁰ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Maghribī (d. 840/1437),⁹¹ and, indirectly, Sharaf al-Dīn’s son Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 828/1424).⁹² Equally important was Damascus, with which the Maliki community of Ḥamāh entertained close links, as illustrated by Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Dimashqī (d. 796/1394)⁹³ and ‘Alam al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Nāṣir al-Dīn (d. 805/1402).⁹⁴ The latter was deposed and reappointed some ten times as judge in Damascus and filled some of the resulting intervals with appointments to the judgeship of Ḥamāh.

The same is valid for the Hanbali judgeship, which was introduced roughly in the same period as the Maliki post. Its first holder, Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mardāwī (d. 787/1385–86),⁹⁵ was born in Mardā, a village close to Nablus which produced a number of Hanbali scholars active in Syria and Egypt.⁹⁶ He moved first to Damascus and then to Ḥamāh, where he was appointed to the judgeship and

⁸⁸ Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 3:37; Ibn Taghribirdī, *Al-Nujūm*, 11:92. A similar case of an outsider in the Hanafi judgeship is Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Ibn ‘Arab Shāh (d. 854/1450), who held a number of offices in Persia, Anatolia, Syria, and Egypt (J. Pedersen, “Ibn ‘Arabshāh,” *EI²* [CD-ROM]; Ibn Taghribirdī, *Al-Nujūm*, 15:549). Badr al-Dīn Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad (d. 868/1463) descended from a Hamawian trader family and took for a while the Hanafi judgeship of the town, but moved on to Cairo where he was also appointed to the judgeship (Ibn Taghribirdī, *Al-Nujūm*, 16:326).

⁸⁹ Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 1:406–7; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh*, 3:368.

⁹⁰ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Inbā’ al-Ghumr bi-Anbā’ al-‘Umr*, ed. Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Mu‘īd Khān (Hyderabad, 1967–75), 3:186.

⁹¹ Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’*, 8:447; al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Daw’*, 10:26–27.

⁹² Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’*, 8:91–92; al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Daw’*, 7:142.

⁹³ Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 1:359; idem, *Inbā’*, 3:224; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh*, 1:527–28.

⁹⁴ Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’*, 5:122–23; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh*, 1:516, 4:334.

⁹⁵ Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 1:179.

⁹⁶ In Damascus the Mardāwīyūn cemetery was favored by the Hanafi milieu of the town (Pouzet, *Damas*, 235).



taught.⁹⁷ He was followed by his brother Taqī al-Dīn ‘Abd Allāh,⁹⁸ and among the post holders of the following decades, such as ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ‘Alī Ibn al-Maghli (d. 828/1424–25),⁹⁹ Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn al-Rassām (d. 844/1441),¹⁰⁰ Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-‘Abbāsī (d. 869/1464),¹⁰¹ his grandson Muḥyī al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Qādir,¹⁰² and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Kāzarūnī (d. 895/1489–90),¹⁰³ rarely can any specific link to Ḥamāh be detected.

This salience of outsiders in the case of the Maliki and the Hanbali judgeships cannot be directly linked to the shift from local to cosmopolitan post holders that was evident in the Shafi‘i case and to some degree also in the Hanafi case. Certainly, the introduction of the two former judgeships coincided with the period when the local elite also lost control over the Shafi‘i and the Hanafi judgeships to the benefit of individuals with a cosmopolitan background. However, the weak role of local families in appointments to the Maliki and the Hanbali judgeships can to a large degree be explained, as was the case in other towns,¹⁰⁴ by the quantitative weakness of these *madhhabs* in Ḥamāh. Arguably a similar quantitative weakness also explains the “importation” of the Hanafi Banū al-‘Adīm judges from Aleppo. These *madhhabs*’ weaknesses are apparent in the source material. The biographical dictionary by al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, for instance, shows hardly any entries for Hanafi, Maliki, and Hanbali scholars linked to Ḥamāh until the end of the seventh/thirteenth century. Similarly, *madhhab*-focused works, such as al-Qurashī’s (d. 775/1373) biographical dictionary of Hanafi scholars *Al-Jawāhir al-Muḍīyah* and Ibn Rajab’s (d. 795/1392) biographical dictionary of Hanbali scholars *Al-Dhayl ‘alā Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah*,¹⁰⁵ are rather silent on Ḥamāh.

Similarly, no Maliki or Hanbali madrasah is mentioned with regard to Ḥamāh, while the Hanafis were represented by two madrasahs, one founded by Nūr al-Dīn and the Madrasah al-Ṭawāshīyah. However, the teaching staff in Nūr al-Dīn’s madrasah was to a large extent comprised of scholars from outside the town. Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn al-Abyaḍ (d. 614/1217), for example, descended—

⁹⁷ Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 1:179.

⁹⁸ Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh*, 1:140.

⁹⁹ Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’*, 8:86–88; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh*, 4:262; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm*, 15:126–28; al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍaw’*, 6:34–36.

¹⁰⁰ Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh*, 4:262; al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍaw’*, 1:249.

¹⁰¹ Ibn al-‘Imād, *Shadharāt al-Dhahab fī Akhbār Man Dhahab* (Cairo, 1931–33), 7:309.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 357.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Petry, *Civilian Elite*, 315, for the example of Cairo, where many judges of the three “minority” *madhhabs* (Hanafi, Maliki, and Hanbali), possibly most of them, were outsiders to the town.

¹⁰⁵ Ibn Rajab, *Al-Dhayl ‘alā Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah*, ed. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-‘Uthaymīn (Riyadh, 2005).



just like the Banū al-‘Adīm—from an Aleppan Hanafi family. He had left Aleppo owing to conflicts with the central figure of the town’s *madhhab*, Iftikhār al-Dīn al-Hāshimī, and taught in Ḥamāh in 609/1212–13 but then returned to his teaching post in Aleppo.¹⁰⁶ Another teacher in this school was ‘Alam al-Dīn Qayṣar (d. 649/1251),¹⁰⁷ who had to leave Egypt owing to misconduct in his administrative post.¹⁰⁸ The relatively weak stature of the *madhhab* in the town certainly contributed to al-Malik al-Muẓaffar II Maḥmūd’s (r. 626–42/1229–44) decision to have this madrasah destroyed in 630/1232–33 during fortification works.¹⁰⁹

KHAṬĪBS AND OTHER POSTS: THE RISE OF THE BANŪ AL-MUGHAYZIL

Turning to those positions that are less well-documented in the sources, i.e., *khaṭīb*ships and other civilian posts, a development similar to that illustrated above for the Shafi‘i and the Hanafi judgeships emerges: from the mid-sixth/late twelfth century onwards the number of post holders rose distinctively; these post holders were generally Shafi‘is and the majority belonged to the indigenous civilian elite. The *khaṭīb*ship especially, throughout the various locations (see fig. 6 with sources), was dominated by members of grand Hamawian families. Among these were names of families introduced previously such as the Banū al-Bahrānī and the Banū al-Bārīzī.

Another name emerging from the list are the Banū al-Mughayzil (cf. fig. 7), a “grand household”¹¹⁰ of the town whose members reappear frequently as *khaṭīb*s, especially in the central mosque of the upper town, the Great or Upper Mosque (*al-jāmi‘ al-kabīr/al-a‘lá*). The origins of this family are not clear, as they did not attract the interest of the authors of contemporary chronicles or biographical dictionaries. However, it is obvious that it was—or had recently become—an indigenous Hamawian family by the mid-seventh/thirteenth century. Family members rarely rose to prominence in other Syrian towns and focused their career patterns typically on Ḥamāh. The family’s head, Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Naṣr Allāh, was seemingly the *muḥtasib* of the town, although he is only mentioned in the biographies of his sons.¹¹¹ His sons started to rise to prominence in the late Ayyubid and early Mamluk period and Badr al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Laṭīf¹¹² (d. 690/1291),

¹⁰⁶ On him cf. al-Mundhiri, *Al-Takmilah li-Wafayāt al-Naqalah*, ed. Bashshār ‘Awwād Ma‘rūf, 4th ed. (Beirut, 1988), 2:408–9; al-Maqrizī, *Al-Muqaffá*, 7:495–96; Eddé, *Alep*, 369.

¹⁰⁷ Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 5:343.

¹⁰⁸ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 641–50:429–30.

¹⁰⁹ Ibn Nazīf, *Al-Manṣūrī*, 80.

¹¹⁰ Al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām*, 229.

¹¹¹ Cf. the entry on his son ‘Abd al-Ghuffār in al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 19:27.

¹¹² Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 681–90:418–19; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 19:117; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirah*, 1:148.



for instance, was nominated *khaṭīb* in the Upper Mosque. His two sons Mu‘īn al-Dīn Abū Bakr¹¹³ (d. 724/1324) and Bahā’ al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Ṣamad¹¹⁴ (d. 725/1325) followed respectively. Further *khaṭībs* emanating from this family are Badr al-Dīn’s grandson Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Yūsuf¹¹⁵ (d. 719/1319), who was attached to a place that is not specified, and his nephew Zayn al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 699/1299)¹¹⁶ in the Lower Mosque (*al-jāmi‘ al-asfal*), the central mosque of the lower town. Together with Badr al-Dīn’s three brothers, the family was able to fill religious posts and offices in different branches of the town’s civil administration to an impressive extent.

Tāj al-Dīn Aḥmad (d. 687/1288),¹¹⁷ the eldest of the four brothers, became the town’s *shaykh al-shuyūkh*, i.e., the head of the mystical milieu of the town who represented its interests vis-à-vis the political elite. In general the *shaykh al-shuyūkh* was chosen from the grand families of a town (in Aleppo, for instance, the Banū al-‘Ajāmī and in Damascus the Banū Ḥamawayh)¹¹⁸ because his influence transcended the mystical milieu considerably. Tāj al-Dīn was able to pass the post on to his sons, which reflected also the active marriage policy of the al-Mughayzil family: his son Nāṣir al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥīm¹¹⁹ (d. 707/1307) had been married to a daughter of Tāj al-Dīn’s predecessor in this post, Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Anṣārī (d. 662/1263),¹²⁰ the son of Ibn al-Raffā’, the town’s previous Shafī‘ī judge, who is mentioned above.

Two other brothers of Badr al-Dīn chose careers in the town’s civil administration. Najm al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Ghuffār¹²¹ (d. 688/1289–90) became *kātib al-darj*, working for both al-Malik al-Manṣūr II Muḥammad and his son al-Malik al-Muẓaffar III Maḥmūd (d. 698/1299), and acquired sufficient wealth to set up

¹¹³ Al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām*, 229; Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 1:478.

¹¹⁴ Al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām*, 229; Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 2:477.

¹¹⁵ Al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām*, 167; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 29:339; Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 5:245; born 668.

¹¹⁶ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, 691–700:407 and 440; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 8:124 (“Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad”).

¹¹⁷ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 681–90:290–91; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirah*, 1:119.

¹¹⁸ For Aleppo cf. Eddé, *Alep*, 427–28, and for Damascus cf. Pouzet, *Damas*, 213–14.

¹¹⁹ Ibn al-Mughayzil, *Dhayl Mufarrij al-Kurūb*, editor’s introduction, 20.

¹²⁰ Abū al-Fidā’, *Al-Mukhtaṣar*, 3:215; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 661–70:101-4; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 18:546–56. The political role of the *shaykh al-shuyūkh* in Ḥamāh is clearly reflected in his involvement in local and regional affairs: Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 4:273–74, 293, 303; 5:30, 69, 84, 94, 124, 307, 345, 383) as well as idem, “Mufarrij,” BN MS 1703, fols. 98v, 102r, 157r.

¹²¹ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 681–90:333; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 19:27; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirah*, 1:124–25.



several endowments. Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Karīm¹²² (d. 697/1297) was appointed assistant to the treasurer (*wakīl bayt al-māl*). The administrative role of the family was continued by two individuals mentioned above: Badr al-Dīn’s son Bahā’ al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Ṣamad, who was the vizier of the town and Nāṣir al-Dīn’s son Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī al-Muẓaffarī (d. 701/1301),¹²³ the author of the supplement to Ibn Wāṣil’s *Mufarrij al-Kurūb fī Akhbār Banī Ayyūb*, who was appointed as *kātib al-dīwān* in 682/1283–4. After the early eighth/fourteenth century no member of the Banū al-Mughayzil held any further positions of importance in Ḥamāh and this local family ceased to play a prominent role.

LOCAL ELITE FAMILIES BEYOND FORMAL POSITIONS

Not all the grand families that emerged in Ḥamāh during the late sixth/twelfth century and flourished from the early seventh/thirteenth century onwards necessarily occupied civilian posts in great number. However, the rise of these families was also a consequence of the urban renaissance that provided a framework for alternative ways to acquire a standing in the town. These alternatives were based on the usage of cultural and/or economic capital. In comparison to the families discussed hitherto, social capital in the sense of activating the networks of the town’s civilian elite in order to acquire posts played only a secondary role.¹²⁴ A typical example of this are the Shafī‘ī Banū Qarnāṣ (cf. fig. 8 with sources), a “renowned family,”¹²⁵ which possessed its *zāwiyah*¹²⁶ and whose members are called “grandee”¹²⁷ or “notable”¹²⁸ of the town. A number of them were renowned scholars, especially in the field of hadith, who never took any formal positions, such as Ṣafī al-Dīn Aḥmad (b. 510/1117), Muḥammad ibn Hibat Allāh (d. 637/1239), Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (d. 654/1256–57), Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 662/1264), Muwaffaq al-Dīn Muḥammad (fl. 678/1279–80), and Shihāb al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥīm (d. 700/1300–1). Only a few members held religious/civilian posts, such as Mukhlīṣ al-Dīn Ismā‘īl (d. 659/1261), a teacher

¹²² Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 691–700:331–32; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirah*, 1:208–9.

¹²³ For details on his career cf. his *Dhayl Mufarrij al-Kurūb*, passim. Fig. 7 includes also Sayf al-Dīn ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd al-Laṭīf (d. 690/1291), who died at a young age (al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 681–90:427).

¹²⁴ On these different forms of capital cf. Pierre Bourdieu, “The Forms of Capital,” in *Handbook for Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. J. G. Richardson (New York, 1986), 241–58.

¹²⁵ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 651–60:171; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 9:182.

¹²⁶ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 671–80:385.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 631–40:348–49 on Muḥammad ibn Hibat Allāh (d. 637/1239): “*kabīr baladihi*.”

¹²⁸ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 671–80:133 on Jamāl al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī ‘Alī (d. 673/1274): “*min a’yān baladihi*.”



both in the “Jāmi‘ Ḥamāh” and the Madrasah al-Mukhliṣīyah, and Faṭḥ al-Dīn (d. 730/1329–30), who held the trusteeship (*nazr*) in the central mosque of Ḥamāh.

The main exception to the family’s focus on scholarly activities was Mukhliṣ al-Dīn Ibrāhīm (d. 648/1248), the founder of the Madrasah al-Mukhliṣīyah. He later played an active political role in Homs, which started in a somewhat unfortunate manner as he was imprisoned by the town’s ruler al-Malik al-Mujāhid Asad al-Dīn (r. 581–637/1186–1240). The imprisonment of both him and other members of the Banū Qarnāṣ was a consequence of the aborted ruse by Sayf al-Dīn ‘Alī al-Hadhabānī, the strongman of Ḥamāh under al-Malik al-Muẓaffar II Maḥmūd. Al-Hadhabānī undertook with a number of Hamawian notables a feigned flight from Ḥamāh to Homs on the pretence of seeking the support of Asad al-Dīn. Asad al-Dīn saw through the stratagem and imprisoned al-Hadhabānī and his companions on the spot.¹²⁹ Nevertheless, Mukhliṣ al-Dīn was more fortunate than al-Hadhabānī and a number of notables who perished in captivity. Released by Asad al-Dīn’s successor, al-Malik al-Manṣūr Ibrāhīm (r. 637–44/1240–46), he made a career in the town’s administration. He became vizier and de facto regent of al-Manṣūr’s son, al-Malik al-Ashraf Mūsá (r. 644–62/1246–63).¹³⁰

The Banū Qarnāṣ did not base their role within the civilian elite exclusively on intensive scholarly activities, i.e., the activation of cultural capital, and occasional political involvement. Rather, they are a typical example of the families who also profited from the economic development of the town from the late sixth/twelfth century onwards. Jamāl al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 673/1274), for instance, was only described as a “notable of his town” because he had an outstanding fortune at his disposal.¹³¹ Owing to this wealth of the family, Zayn al-Dīn Ismā‘īl (d. between 635/1238 and 642/1244), one of the town’s grand estate owners, played a central role in the conflict between the town’s landed elite and its ruler al-Malik al-Nāṣir Qilij Arslān. When the latter came to power in 617/1221 he obliged the inhabitants of Ḥamāh to buy overpriced wheat. Zayn al-Dīn refused and fled to Egypt and al-Nāṣir had his house destroyed and his estates confiscated. Seemingly his family had, owing to weak integration into the town’s administration, insufficient standing to settle the affair through local mechanisms of conflict resolution. Zayn al-Dīn was only able to recover his estates when al-Malik al-Kāmil of Egypt enthroned his candidate in the town, al-Nāṣir’s brother al-Malik al-Muẓaffar II Maḥmūd. However, after al-Kāmil’s death in 635/1238 Zayn al-Dīn

¹²⁹ Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 5:222–27.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 5:371–72. On his regency cf. Konrad Hirschler, “‘He is a child and this land is a borderland of Islam’: Under-Age Rule and the Quest for Political Stability in the Ayyūbid Period,” *Al-Masāq: Islam and the Medieval Mediterranean* 19 (2007): 29–46.

¹³¹ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 671–80:133.



was imprisoned, where he died.¹³²

A second example of a grand family of the town that did not hold civilian posts in considerable number is the Banū Rawāḥah (cf. fig. 9),¹³³ who gained in strength starting in the mid-sixth/twelfth century. This family originated from Ḥamāh, but its members appear in a number of different Syrian and Egyptian towns. They display a focus on scholarship mixed with some commercial activities and involvement in administrative posts comparable to the profile of the Banū Qarnāṣ. The family started to rise to prominence with ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Rawāḥah (d. 561/1165), the renowned *khaṭīb* of Ḥamāh.¹³⁴ His son Jamāl al-Dīn al-Ḥusayn (d. 585/1189–90) left the town for Damascus and Egypt where he studied hadith, was imprisoned for an extended period in Sicily, and finally died a martyr below the walls of Frankish Acre.¹³⁵ Jamāl al-Dīn’s sons, ‘Izz al-Dīn ‘Abd Allāh (d. 646/1248)¹³⁶ and Nafīs al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 642/1245),¹³⁷ both dwelled in Ḥamāh and were hadith scholars who were renowned well beyond the confines of their hometown. Nafīs al-Dīn’s daughter Fāṭimah (d. 716/1316–17), who played a crucial role among the town’s hadith scholars, subsequently continued this tradition of hadith scholarship.¹³⁸ Jamāl al-Dīn’s brother Muḥammad (d. 631/1233)¹³⁹ and their nephew Zakī al-Dīn Hibat Allāh (d. 622/1225) exemplify the trading activities of the family.¹⁴⁰ Both seem to have left Ḥamāh and were active in Aleppo and Damascus where Zakī al-Dīn endowed madrasahs.¹⁴¹ Mainly remembered for holding civil posts are Nūr al-Dīn Aḥmad (d. 712/1312), *kātib al-inshā’* in Tripoli, who only returned to Ḥamāh shortly before his death,¹⁴² and Zayn al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 722/1322–3), secretary in the Upper Egyptian

¹³² Ibn Naẓīf, *Al-Manṣūrī*, 49; Ibn al-‘Adīm, *Bughyat*, 4:1609–12.

¹³³ Not mentioned in this section on the family is Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 729/1329 in Cairo) (al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Muqaffá*, 6:523).

¹³⁴ Al-Dhababī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 561–70:79; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 17:142–44; Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mir’āt al-Zamān*, 8:1:263; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq* (Damascus edition), 33:185.

¹³⁵ Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Mu’jam al-Udabā’*: *Irshād al-Arib ilá Ma’rifat al-Adīb*, ed. Iḥsān ‘Abbās (Beirut, 1993), 3:1087–90; al-Mundhirī, *al-Takmilah*, 1:116; Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 2:300–2; al-Dhababī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 581–90:214–15; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 12:413–14; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Muqaffá*, 3:517–20.

¹³⁶ Al-Dhababī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 641–50:314–15; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 17:144–45; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Muqaffá*, 4:392; Eddé, *Alep*, 384.

¹³⁷ Al-Dhababī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 641–50:137; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Muqaffá*, 5:584.

¹³⁸ Al-Dhababī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām*, 145.

¹³⁹ Al-Dhababī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 631–40:77.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 621–30:138–39.

¹⁴¹ Cf. al-Nu‘aymī, *Dāris*, 1:199–207 for the Madrasah al-Rawāḥiyah in Damascus.

¹⁴² Al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 6:56–57; Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Durar*, 1:176.



town of Asyūt.¹⁴³

From the sixth/twelfth century onwards, the Banū Qarnāṣ and especially the Banū Rawāḥah rose beyond the confines of the town to a considerably larger extent than the families discussed above. Focusing on scholarly and trading activities they had to seek contacts in the Egyptian and Syrian lands. A middle-sized town such as Ḥamāh did not offer the family members sufficient opportunity to pursue their careers. As these families did not seek civilian posts—or were not able to attain them—they chose the more promising cosmopolitan outlook. Nevertheless, they were firmly grounded in the town that offered, owing to its cultural and economic development, ample resources from which they could draw. In this sense they complete the picture of the town's local elite during the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods.

CONCLUSION

Two principal points emerge from the analysis of the Hamawian civilian elite in comparison with the development of the civilian elite in other towns during the period: the importance of the household in structuring the civilian elite and the ability of the Hamawian families to close their social universe to outsiders until the mid-eighth/fourteenth century.

Starting with Lapidus, the household has been increasingly defined as the basic unit for exercising power during the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods.¹⁴⁴ Chamberlain in particular has stressed the household's role in the post-Saljuq states, which were characterized by a low number of state agencies and autonomous corporate or religious bodies in both rural regions and urban centers.¹⁴⁵ Military and civilian households alike took charge of most of the administrative functions that were still hardly specialized and often applied on an ad-hoc basis. The Hamawian civilian elite discussed in this article was, similar to that in the region's large cities, structured according to such households. Only those functions that were at the very core of political power, such as the vizierate, were generally beyond the reach of these households.¹⁴⁶ The Hamawian families tended to some kind of

¹⁴³ Al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām*, 201–2; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 18:145–46.

¹⁴⁴ Ira Marvin Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, MA, 1967).

¹⁴⁵ Chamberlain, *Knowledge*, and idem, “The Crusader Era and the Ayyūbid Dynasty,” in *Cambridge History of Egypt*, 211–41.

¹⁴⁶ Viziers in Ḥamāh who were not attached to the grand families of the town include for example: Shihāb al-Dīn Asʿad ibn Yaḥyá (d. 614/1217) (al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 621–30:101–2 and 183–84; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 9:32–34); ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad (d. 674/1275) (al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 671–80:164); Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ḥalabī, vizier under al-Malik al-Manṣūr II Muḥammad (d. 683/1284) (al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl Mirʾāt al-Zamān*, 3:147–48); Ṣafī al-Dīn Naṣr Allāh ibn Muḥammad (d. 683/1284) (al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 681–90:173 and al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl Mirʾāt*



division of labor: the judgeship was largely the domain of the Banū al-Bahrānī, Wāṣil, and al-Bārīzī; the Banū al-Mughayzil played a salient role in the *khaṭīb*ship; administrative posts that went to the grand families were dominated by the Banū al-Mughayzil and al-Bārīzī; and finally the Banū Qarnāṣ and Rawāḥah were main actors in the transmission of knowledge.

It is not evident how these families put this division of labor into practice or, in other words, in which ways or by what means they conducted the struggle over posts and influence. The only indicators available to us are appointments to the judgeship. It has been shown above that the turnover in the post was relatively low during the period of the local elite. Also of relevance is whether new judges were appointed upon the death of the previous post holder or whether their predecessor was deposed. Between 617/1220 and 764/1363, i.e., the period of the local elite, the large majority of judges died in office and deposition was a rather rare occurrence. These two characteristics of appointments to the judgeship indicate that, compared with a town such as Damascus, the division of labor among the grand households secured a larger degree of social stability within the civilian elite.¹⁴⁷ Thus, we encounter in Ḥamāh the household as the typical basic unit of social organization, but the tight networks of this middle-sized town seem to have prevented social strife to a considerable extent.

The second point emerging from the comparison of Ḥamāh with other cities was the ability of the Hamawian families to close their social universe to outsiders during the period of the local elite. Studies of Cairo and Damascus have shown that scholars from outside the respective town played a considerable role within the civilian elites.¹⁴⁸ Yet in Ḥamāh cosmopolitans ceased to take a prominent position within the social fabric during the hegemony of the town's households in the local period. One explanation for the salience of local scholars is that a post in such a minor town was simply not prestigious enough for cosmopolitan scholars, especially those of greater standing. The case of the aforementioned judge Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Anṣārī, who later moved on to Egypt, shows that the judgeship of Ḥamāh was not necessarily perceived as the climax of one's

al-Zamān, 4:238); Ḍiyāʾ al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad (d. 696/1297) (al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 691–700:310–11).

¹⁴⁷ On the *fitnah* among the civilian households in Damascus cf. Chamberlain, *Knowledge*. In Ḥamāh in the above-mentioned period Shafīʿi judges died in office on eight occasions (nos. 7a, 9a, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, and 17 in fig. 1) and were deposed on three occasions (nos. 9, 11, and 13 in fig. 1).

¹⁴⁸ Joan E. Gilbert, “The ‘Ulama’ of Medieval Damascus and the International World of Islamic Scholarship” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1977), 40–42, estimates that about 50% of the senior religious scholars up to 1260 were outsiders. Petry, *Civilian Elite*, 313, shows for the case of Cairo that especially the jurist scholars were recruited from a wide variety of regional backgrounds.



career. His successor al-Qāsim Ibn al-Shahrazūrī was even criticized for “lack of ambition” for taking up a post in such a minor town.¹⁴⁹ Like the renowned Damascene scholar Ibn ‘Abd al-Salām (d. 660/1262), who refused the invitation of al-Malik al-Nāṣir (d. 656/1258) of al-Karak to join him at his court somewhat indignantly with the words “Your lands are too small for my knowledge” and moved on to Egypt,¹⁵⁰ many scholars from inside and outside the town preferred not to continue their careers in the province.¹⁵¹ Whenever scholars of greater standing came to reside in the town for a longer period, they were mostly scholars of the rational sciences. These scholars found a particularly receptive climate for pursuing their careers in the town during the seventh/thirteenth century.¹⁵²

However, while the comparatively low reputation of Ḥamāh might have facilitated the control of the town’s posts by the local elite, this did not entirely exclude outside scholars, who played a role before and after this local period. In order to understand the local elite’s capacity to dominate the distribution of the town’s positions a further characteristic of Ḥamāh is of relevance: its prolonged status as a semi-autonomous principality, first within the Ayyubid family confederation and subsequently within the Mamluk Empire. The local elite flourished some decades after the town’s first Ayyubid ruler al-Malik al-Muẓaffar I ‘Umar came to power in 574/1178. The economic ascent of the region, which was a prerequisite for the development of the local elite, took a decisively local turn with the consolidation of the town’s autonomy. It was the following period of some 150 years of nearly uninterrupted autonomy that offered the local elite the political framework necessary for its development. The end of this local period followed the political development again with some delay: after the absorption of the Hamawian principality within the Mamluk Empire in the 730s/1330s, it took further decades until the dominance of the local elite on the town’s posts was weakened. The local families either changed their profile to a cosmopolitan

¹⁴⁹ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 591–600:408.

¹⁵⁰ Al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘īyah al-Kubrā*, ed. Muḥammad al-Ṭanāḥī and ‘Abd al-Fattāh al-Ḥilw (Cairo, 1964–76), 8:210.

¹⁵¹ A typical example of this is Taqī al-Dīn Muḥammad al-‘Āmirī al-Ḥamawī (d. 680/1281) who excelled in his hometown at the age of 18 years, was appointed professor in the Ashrafiyah in Damascus, and finally as chief judge in Cairo (al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 671–80:365–67; al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi*, 3:18–19).

¹⁵² On rational scholars in Ḥamāh (and al-Karak) cf. Hirschler, *Historiography*, 59–60. Typical examples of such scholars are ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Andalusī (d. 637/1239–40), an Andalusian scholar of rational sciences who, although criticized for his beliefs, stayed in Ḥamāh with the Banū al-Bārīzī (al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 631–40:336–37; Ibn Taghrībīrdī, *Al-Nujūm*, 6:317) and the above-mentioned Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī, the first teacher in the Madrasah al-Manṣūriyah. Al-Āmidī was a theologian with a brilliant reputation in the rational sciences who had to flee Egypt due to accusations of heresy (Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 4:78 and 80).



outlook during this gradual weakening of their position or they disappeared from the social fabric of the town, which came to be dominated by the trans-regional Mamluk civilian elite.



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1	559–67	Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Anṣārī
2	550s/60s	Ibn al-Shahrazūrī, Ḍiyā’ al-Dīn al-Qāsīm (1)
3	571–?	Ibn al-Bahrānī, Aḥmad ibn Mudrak
4	?–587	Ibn al-Bahrānī, Amīn al-Dawlah/Dīn al-Ḥusayn
5	?–598	Ibn Abī ‘Aṣrūn, Najm al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥīm (1)
2a	599	Ibn al-Shahrazūrī, Ḍiyā’ al-Dīn al-Qāsīm (2)
6	599–ca. 600	Ibn al-Raffā’, Zayn al-Dīn Muḥammad
5a	ca. 600–16	Ibn Abī ‘Aṣrūn, Najm al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥīm (2)
7	616	Ibn Marājil Ḥujjat al-Dīn (1)
8	616	Ibn Wāṣil, Sālim
7a	616–17	Ibn Marājil Ḥujjat al-Dīn (2)
9	617–22	‘Imād al-Dīn Abū al-Qāsīm (1)
10	622–42	Ibn Abī al-Dam, Shihāb al-Dīn Ibrāhīm
11	642–52	Ibn al-Bahrānī, Muḥyī al-Dīn Ḥamzah
9a	652	‘Imād al-Dīn Abū al-Qāsīm (2)
12	652–69	Ibn al-Bārizī, Shams al-Dīn Ibrāhīm I
13	669–late 670s	Ibn al-Bārizī, Najm al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥīm I
14	late 670s–697	Ibn Wāṣil, Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad
15	697–99	Ibn al-Bahrānī, Muwaffaq al-Dīn Muḥammad
16	699–738	Ibn al-Bārizī, Sharaf al-Dīn Hibat Allāh I
17	738–64	Ibn al-Bārizī, Najm al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥīm II
18	760s/770s	Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Ḥamawī
19	780s	Nāṣir al-Dīn, Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad
25a/22b	?–789	Ibn al-Bārizī, Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad I or II
20	789–?	Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad, Ibn Muhājir
21	795–96	‘Alā’ al-Dīn ibn Makkī al-Ḥamawī (1)
22	796–99	Ibn al-Bārizī, Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad II (1)
23	799	Badr al-Dīn ibn al-Ma‘arrī
22a	799–?	Ibn al-Bārizī, Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad II (2)
21a	?–804	‘Alā’ al-Dīn ibn Makkī al-Ḥamawī (2)
24	804–5	Ibn al-Ḥijjī, Najm al-Dīn ‘Umar
25	early 9th c.	Ibn al-Bārizī, Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad I
26	ca. 815–26	Ibn Khaṭīb al-Dahshah, Maḥmūd
27	826–?	al-Zayn ibn al-Kharazī (1)
28	829–30	Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Khaṭīb Qārā
29	?–842	al-Shihāb al-Zuhrī
30	842–ca. 857	Ibn al-Bārizī, Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad
27a	ca. 857–?	al-Zayn ibn al-Kharazī (2)
31	late 9th c.	Ibn al-Bārizī, Sirāj al-Dīn ‘Umar

Fig. 1. Shafi‘i Judges in Ḥamāh



Name	Born	Died	Main Source(s)
Amin al-Dawlah/Din al-Ḥusayn ibn Ḥamzah	?	587/ 1191	Al-Dhahabī, <i>Tārīkh</i> , vol. 581–90:265, 290–91; Ibn Wāṣil, <i>Mufarrij</i> , 2:377; Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, <i>Mirʿāt al-Zamān</i> , 8:1:412
Aḥmad ibn Mudrak	?	590/ 1194 or 591/ 1195	Al-Dhahabī, <i>Tārīkh</i> , vol. 591–600:56–57; Ibn al-ʿAdīm, <i>Bughyat</i> , 3:1127–28
Ṣafiyat bint ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ibn ʿAlī	?	646/ 1248	Al-Dhahabī, <i>Tārīkh</i> , vol. 641–50:310–11; Ibn Taghrībirdī, <i>Al-Nujūm</i> , 4:361
ʿUmar ibn Muḥammad	?	654/ 1256	Al-Dhahabī, <i>Tārīkh</i> , vol. 651–60:174
Muḥyī al-Dīn Ḥamzah ibn Muḥammad	?	663/ 1264– 65	Al-Dhahabī, <i>Tārīkh</i> , vol. 661–70:144–45; al-Yūnīnī, <i>Dhayl Mirʿāt al-Zamān</i> , 2:326
Muwaffaq al-Dīn Nabāʾ/Muḥammad ibn Saʿd Allāh	577/ 1181– 82	665/ 1267	Al-Dhahabī, <i>Tārīkh</i> , vol. 661–70:208
Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ibn Ḥamzah	621/ 1224– 25	688/ 1289	Al-Dhahabī, <i>Tārīkh</i> , vol. 681–90:334–35
Muwaffaq al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad	622/ 1225	699/ 1300	Al-Dhahabī, <i>Tārīkh</i> , vol. 691–700:456–57; al-Ṣafadī, <i>Al-Wafī</i> , 1:284–85
Jamāl al-Dīn Ismāʿīl ibn Muḥammad	642/ 1244– 45	?	Al-Dhahabī, <i>Tārīkh</i> , vol. 641–50:148
ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb	645/ 1247– 48	?	Al-Dhahabī, <i>Tārīkh</i> , vol. 641–50:304

Fig. 2. Banū al-Bahrānī



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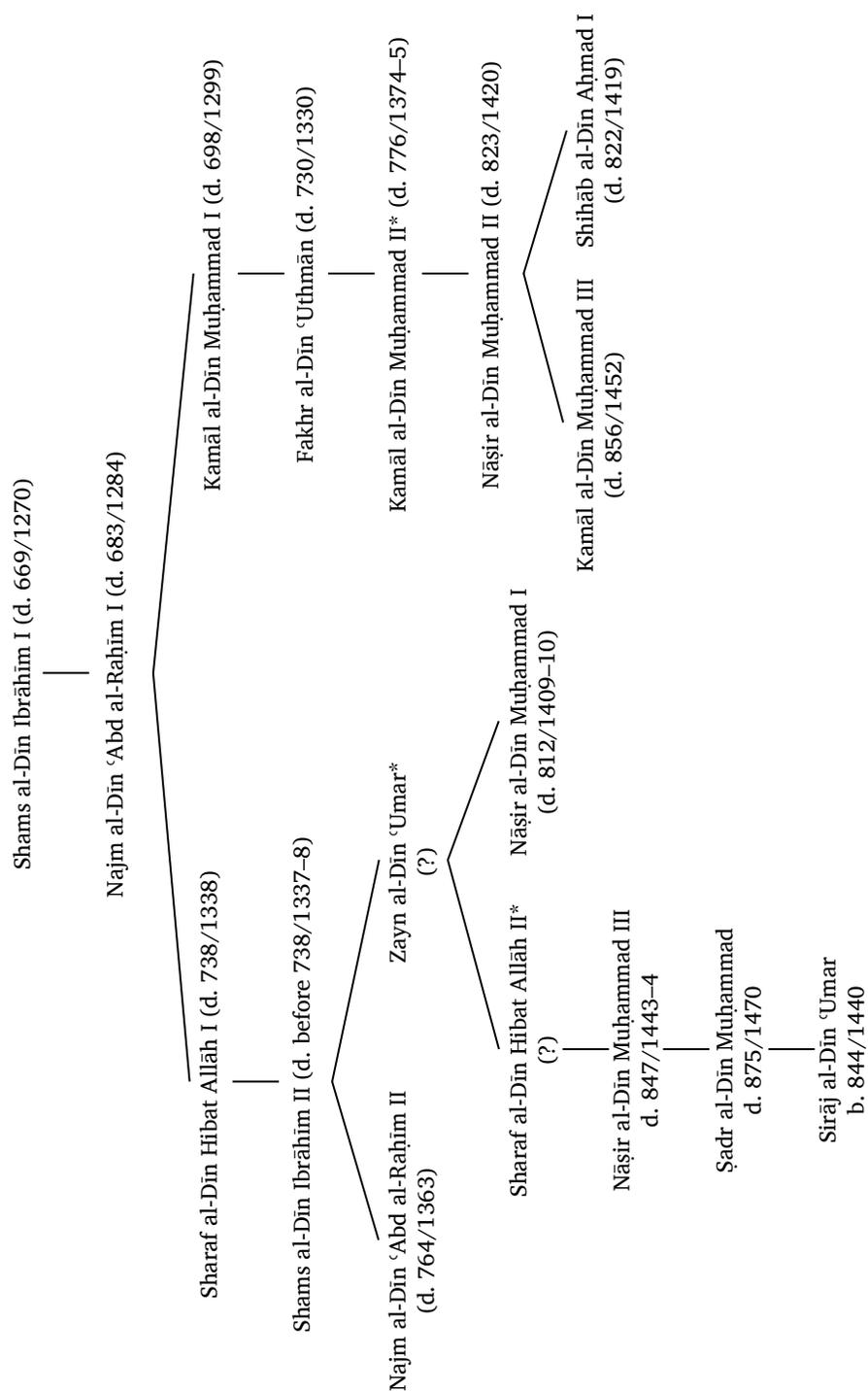


Fig. 3. Banū al-Bārīzī (Ḥamāh)

* No entry in biographical dictionaries; known only from *nasab* or short references in other entries. Further members of the al-Bārīzī family active in Ḥamāh who cannot be placed in this genealogy: Ṣadr al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ‘Alī ibn Yahyá ibn Ismā‘īl (d. 733/1333); Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad II ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm (d. 755/1354)



after 658	Ibn al-‘Adīm, Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad
ca. 671–711	Ibn al-‘Adīm, ‘Izz al-Dīn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz
711–21	?
721–34	Ibn al-‘Adīm, Najm al-Dīn ‘Umar
?–738	Ibn al-Ḥakīm, Taqī al-Dīn Maḥmūd (1)
738–42	Ibn al-‘Adīm, Jamāl al-Dīn ‘Abd Allāh
742–60	Ibn al-Ḥakīm, Taqī al-Dīn Maḥmūd (2)
760–62	Amīn al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb ibn Aḥmad (1)
762–63	?
763–68	Amīn al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb ibn Aḥmad (2)
early 9th century	Ibn ‘Arab Shāh, Aḥmad
mid-9th century	Badr al-Dīn Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad

Fig. 4. Hanafi Judges in Ḥamāh

760s–ca. 770	Sharaf al-Dīn Ismā‘īl al-Gharnāṭī
ca. 770–76	Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Gharnāṭī
776–84	Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Maghribī
784–89	Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Dimashqī
790s	‘Alam al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn Nāṣir al-Dīn (1)
796	‘Alam al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn Nāṣir al-Dīn (2)
early 9th century	Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Maghribī

Fig. 5. Maliki Judges in Ḥamāh



Name	Place/Date	Madhhab	Source(s)	Further Posts in Ḥamāh
Ibn al-Bahrānī, Aḥmad (d. 590/1194 or 591/1195)	Ḥamāh	Shafīʿī	see fig. 2	judge
Ibn al-Bahrānī, Muwaffaq al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 699/1300)	Ḥamāh	Shafīʿī	see fig. 2	judge
Ibn al-Bārīzī, Fakhr al-Dīn ʿUthmān (d. 730/1330)	Ḥamāh	Shafīʿī	see article	deputy judge
Ibn al-Mughayzil, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Yūsuf (d. 719/1319)	Ḥamāh	Shafīʿī	see article	
Ibn Rawāḥah, ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Ḥusayn (d. 561/1165)	Ḥamāh	Shafīʿī	see article	
Ibn al-Mughayzil, Zayn ad-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 699/1299)	Lower Mosque	Shafīʿī	see article	
Zayn al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Rahmān ibn Muḥammad (d. 659/1261)	Great/Upper Mosque	Shafīʿī	see article	
Ibn al-Mughayzil, Badr al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Laṭīf (d. 690/1291)	Great/Upper Mosque (- 690)	Shafīʿī	see article	<i>mudarris</i>
Ibn al-Mughayzil, Muʿīn al-Dīn Abū Bakr (d. 724/1324)	Great/Upper Mosque (690–724)	Shafīʿī	see article	
Ibn al-Mughayzil, Bahāʾ al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Ṣamad (d. 725/1325)	Great/Upper Mosque (724–25)	Shafīʿī	see article	previously vizier

Fig. 6. *Khaṭībs* in Ḥamāh

Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf ibn Muḥammad (d. 732/1332)	Great/Upper Mosque	Shafi'i	Abū al-Fidā, <i>Al-Mukhtaṣar</i> , 4:107; al-Dhahabī, <i>Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām</i> , 306–7; Ibn Ḥajar, <i>Al-Durar</i> , 5:249–50; al-Ṣafadī, <i>Al-Wāfi</i> , 29:338–39	
Ibn al-Bārīzī, Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 875/1470)	Great/Upper Mosque	Shafi'i	see article	judge, <i>mudarris</i>
ʿAfif al-Dīn Ishāq ibn Khalīl (d. 672/1274)	Citadel	?	Al-Dhahabī, <i>Tārīkh</i> , vol. 671–80:87; Ibn al-Mughayzil, <i>Dhayl Muḥarrir al-Kurūb</i> , 87; al-Yūnīnī, <i>Dhayl Mir'āt al-Zamān</i> , 3:38; al-Ṣafadī, <i>Al-Wāfi</i> , 8:412	
Muḥammad ibn ʿUmar, Abū Bakr (d. after 620)	Citadel	Shafi'i	Al-Dhahabī, <i>Tārīkh</i> , vol. 621–30:422–23	

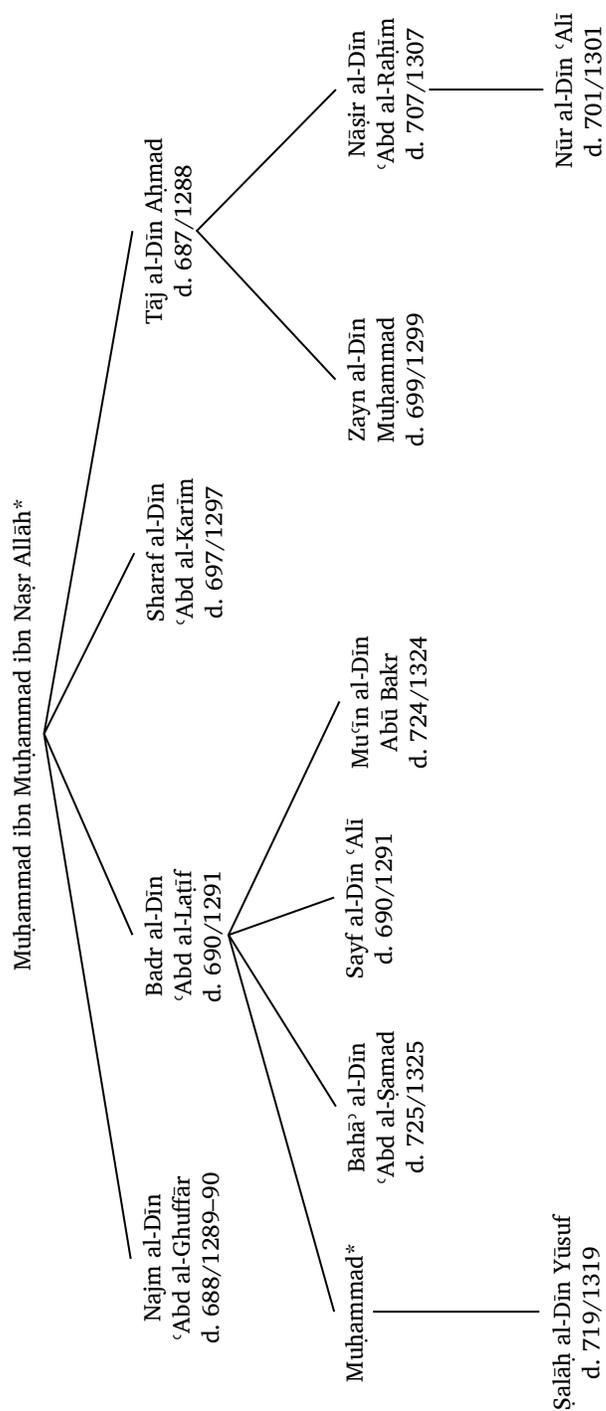
Note: “Ḥamāh” is given as place when no further specification is given in the sources.



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* No entry in biographical dictionaries; known only from *nasab* or short references in other entries.

Fig. 7. Banū al-Mughayzil



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Name	Born	Died	Main Source(s)
Şafī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Hibat Allāh	510/1117	?	Ibn al-‘Adīm, <i>Bughyat</i> , 3:1204–6
Hibat Allāh ibn Aḥmad	?	?	mentioned in Ibn al-‘Adīm, <i>Bughyat</i> , 3:1205
Zayn al-Dīn Ismā‘īl ibn Ibrāhīm	?	635–42/ 1238–44	Ibn al-‘Adīm, <i>Bughyat</i> , 4:1609–12
Muḥammad ibn Hibat Allāh ibn Aḥmad	556/1161	637/1239	Al-Dhahabī, <i>Tārīkh</i> , vol. 631–40:348–49
Mukhliş al-Dīn Ibrāhīm ibn Ismā‘īl	?	648/1248	Ibn Wāşil, <i>Mufarrij</i> , 5:371–72
Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān	588/1191–92 (?)	654/1256–57	Al-Dhahabī, <i>Tārīkh</i> , vol. 651–60:170–71; al-Şafadī, <i>Al-Wāfi</i> , 18:519; al-Yūnīnī, <i>Dhayl Mir’āt al-Zamān</i> , 1:19–21
Mukhliş al-Dīn Ismā‘īl ibn ‘Umar	602/1205–6	659/1261	Al-Dhahabī, <i>Tārīkh</i> , vol. 651–60:385–86; al-Şafadī, <i>Al-Wāfi</i> , 9:182; al-Yūnīnī, <i>Dhayl Mir’āt al-Zamān</i> , 2:127/8; Ibn Taghribirdī, <i>al-Nujūm</i> , 7:202; Ibn al-‘Adīm, <i>Bughyat</i> , 4:1721/2
Nāşir al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad	613/1216–7	662/1264	Al-Yūnīnī, <i>Dhayl Mir’āt al-Zamān</i> , 2:307–8
Jamāl al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī ‘Alī	?	673/1274	Al-Dhahabī, <i>Tārīkh</i> , vol. 671–80:133
Muwaffaq al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī	604/1208	fl. 678/ 1279–80	Al-Dhahabī, <i>Tārīkh</i> , vol. 671–80:385
Shihāb al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥīm ibn Ya‘qūb	627/1229–30	700/1300–1	Al-Dhahabī, <i>Tārīkh</i> , vol. 691–700:481; al-Maqrīzī, <i>Al-Muqaffá</i> , 6:366
Faṭḥ al-Dīn	?	730/1329–30	Abū al-Fidā’, <i>Al-Mukhtaşar</i> , 4:100

Fig. 8. Banū Qarnāş



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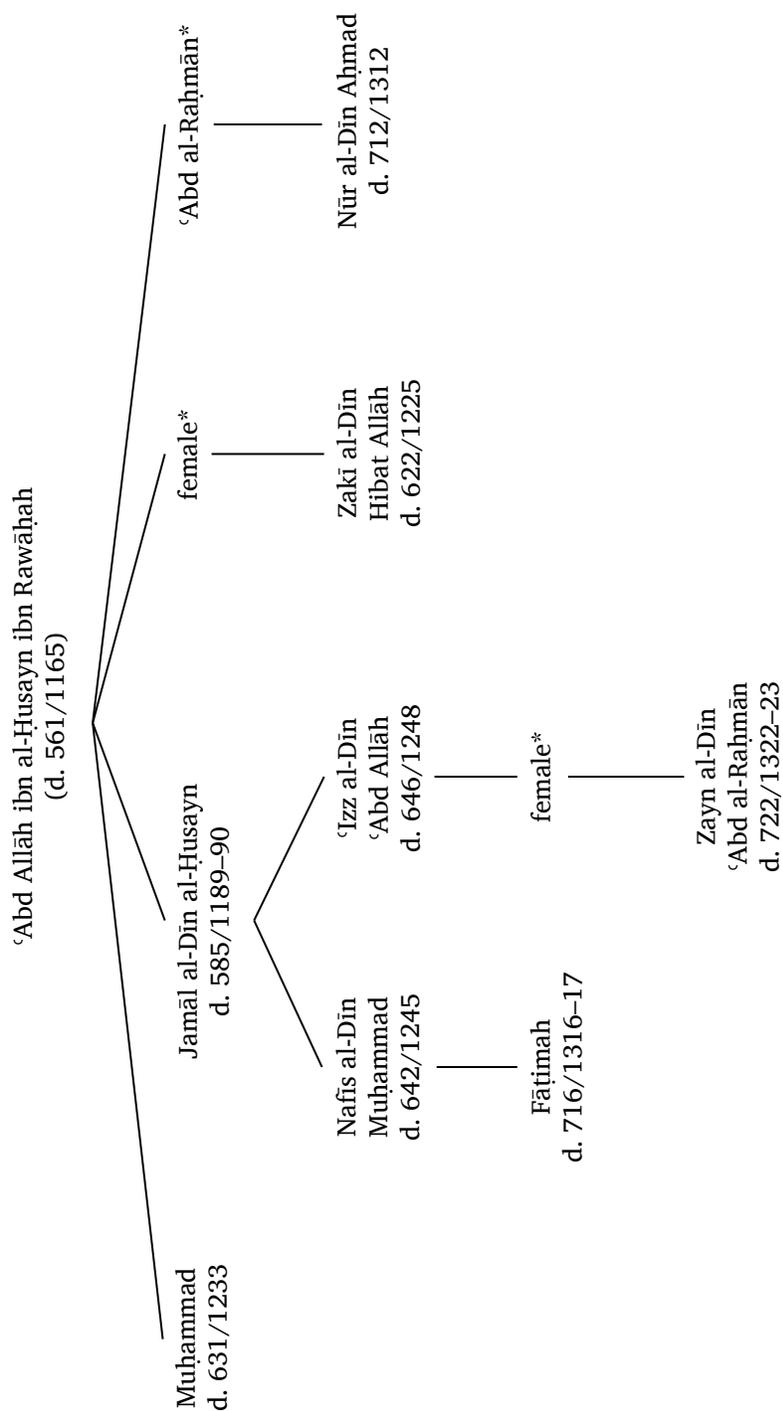


Fig. 9. Banū Rawāḥah

* No entry in biographical dictionaries; known only from *nasab* or short references in other entries.



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The Ayyubid and Mamluk Revaluation of the Hinterland and Western Historical Cartography

Considering that a “boom” has taken place in Mamluk studies particularly during the past three decades,¹ research on the spatial conditions of the Sultanate—society, economy, culture, and science—is markedly lagging behind. Contributions both to the geographical and cartographic sources, as well as to the historical geography and cartography of the period, date mostly from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as the *Chicago Online Bibliography of Mamluk Studies* shows.² Moreover, the lack of research reviews on these subjects shows that little has been added since.³ Although the general efflorescence of Mamluk studies has coincided temporally with a refinement of the notions of spatiality, map, and landscape in the social and cultural sciences,⁴ that development has not been responded to in a significant way.

This deficiency is even more conspicuous when we consider that the period of the

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¹Stephan Conermann, “Es boomt! Die Mamlükenforschung (1992–2002),” in *Die Mamlüken: Studien zu ihrer Geschichte und Kultur*, ed. Stephan Conermann and Anja Pistor-Hatam (Schenefeld, 2003), 1–2.

²<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/su/mideast/mamluk> (all websites were last accessed on 18 April 2007).

³Peter Thorau, “Zur Geschichte der Mamluken und ihrer Erforschung,” *Die Welt des Orients* 20/21 (1989/90): 227–40; Ulrich Haarmann, “Mamlük Studies: A Western Perspective,” *Al-Majallah al-‘Arabīyah lil-‘Ulūm al-Insānīyah/Arab Journal for the Humanities* 51 (13th year) (1995): 328–47, but see 344, last paragraph; Li Guo, “Mamluk Historiographic Studies: The State of the Art,” *Mamlük Studies Review* 1 (1997): 15–43; W. W. Clifford, “*Ubi sumus?* Social Theory and Mamluk Studies,” in *ibid.*, 45–62; Robert Irwin, “Under Western Eyes: A History of Mamluk Studies,” *MSR* 4 (2000): 27–51; Conermann, “Es boomt!”; R. Stephen Humphreys, “The Politics of the Mamluk Sultanate: A Review Essay,” *MSR* 9, no. 1 (2005): 221–31.

⁴A text of seminal importance to the recent discussion of socially constructed spaces is Edward W. Soja’s *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London, 1988). Criticism of geo-deterministic ideas, however, was practiced before, notably by French historians. See for example Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le Monde méditerranéen à l’époque de Philippe II* (Paris, 1949), 295–304; Henri Lefebvre, *La production de l’espace* (Paris, 1974), 39–53.



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Mamluks and, to a lesser degree, their Ayyubid predecessors holds a considerable potential for analysis in these regards. Following the Crusaders' and Mongols' intrusions, the Sultanate saw a rise in military, political, and infrastructural action which pertained to its spatial cohesion and operability. At the same time, men of letters created a more substantial body of space-related literature than was produced in Arabic either before or after. It may be asked which actions these were and to what extent they connected to each other, or perhaps even answered to an overarching scheme; how factual developments bore on space perceptions; and how the course of Mamluk history was in turn affected by modifications of spatial thinking.

Today this subject is almost a blank—and a challenge to the historian to whom the narrative, geographical, and administrative sources in particular provide a fair point of departure. To begin with, I will address space relations and perceptions in a certain field, viz. nomad-state interaction. I will argue that the Mamluks, on the shoulders of the Ayyubids, pursued a policy intended to lend territorial depth to their rule, for which purpose some sort of expansion into the Bedouin areas in the long-neglected hinterland was of prime importance. While such a policy should be well-suited to mapping, the under-development of historical geography and cartography in Mamluk studies requires that some consideration of its causes and its consequences be examined first. In fact these prolegomena occupy most of this article. The discussion will be concluded by looking ahead to an attempt of mine at historical cartography on this subject.⁵

A GRIP ON THE STEPPE

The Frankish state-building in the Levant prompted changes in Muslim territory, inter-regional communications, and the spatial pattern of government. While the reactions of the two subsequent sultanates are well known, they are not yet understood in terms of potential alignment. I dare say that they signify a change in the attitude toward the spatial extension of rule, adopted by the Ayyubids and continued in an intensified manner by the Kipchak Mamluks.

Particularly overturning the existing geographic order was the fact that the land bridge between the African and Asian hemispheres of Islam, the Sinai Peninsula, was successively sealed by the Kingdom of Jerusalem. First, the northern route

⁵The ongoing project “Bedouin Groups in Syria and Egypt: Interplays between Nomads and the Ayyūbid and Mamlūk State Systems” is part of the Collaborative Research Center “Difference and Integration.” See <http://www.nomadsed.de>. My interest in nomad-state interaction is informed by my previous research in the center’s framework, the results of which are included in my *Vom Beutezug zur Territorialherrschaft: Das lange Jahrhundert des Aufstiegs von Nomaden zur Vormacht in Syrien und Mesopotamien 286–420/889–1029: Beduinische Gruppen in mittelislamischer Zeit I* (Wiesbaden, 2007).



across the coastal desert through al-Jifār fell out of use. Second, expansion southward into the Bilād al-Sharāh under King Baldwin I led in 510/1116 to the seizure of ‘Aqabat Aylah. Elim, or Helim as the Crusaders called it thereafter, was fortified, as was the close-by Jazīrat Fir‘awn (then Île de Graye) off the Sinai coast. These were the final links in a chain of castles which connected Latin Palestine by the Lordship of Oultrejourdain to the Red Sea. Consequently the Syrian lands were cordoned off from Egypt.⁶ The overland routes that had previously run through al-‘Aqabah were now altered to circumvent the Frankish reach. They were shifted up-country or replaced by maritime routes, which was conducive to Muslim sea transport.

In terms of perceived spaces, the century-old cultural designation of Bilād al-Shām, Greater Syria, was invalidated both as a basic constituent of the realm of Islam and as an entire framework of reference in itself (although that had been a reminiscence rather than a reality following the Ikhshidid-Hamdanid partition agreement some 180 years earlier). Muslim rule was reduced to a narrow strip of land between the Latin principalities to the west and south and the zone of Bedouin tribal domination to the east. Now that much of the arable land of Syria belonged to the Franks, the steppe areas in the hinterland deserved new attention. In fact, the term Bādiyat al-Shām (or Bādiyat al-Samāwah) had always signified that the area of predominantly nomadic use was adjacent to Syria (or to al-‘Irāq) rather than forming part of it. Virtually squeezed in between the Latin principalities and the Bādiyah, the width of that strip was now, for the most part, only one day’s journey on horseback, and access to Egypt and the Hijaz depended perforce more than before on transit through the autonomous sphere of the Bedouin.

The situation of al-‘Aqabah at the junction of the Egypt-to-Syria and Syria-to-Hijaz roads was of strategic value to Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn when shaping a Syro-Egyptian polity. In fact, he occupied the town in 566/1170, i.e., the very year after he had seized power in Cairo. Thus, in the moment of its creation the Ayyubid Sultanate put an end to more than half a century of an exceptionally disjointed situation and restored the territorial continuity of Egypt, Syria, and the Hijaz. It was reasserted, after a Frankish interlude in the town, in 578/1183. The approximate synchronicity of political and territorial change suggests a background on which to conceive several measures of a new space-constituting quality not only in a rough chronological sequence, but also as causally related. At least six sets of actions come to mind. Since all of these are well known, I limit myself here to a brief outline.

1. Stress on the Bedouin population resulted in efforts to stabilize relations with

⁶On this fact and the eventual countermeasures, see Andrew S. Ehrenkreutz, *Saladin* (Albany, 1972), 82–83, 100; Jean-Michel Mouton, “Saladin et les Bédouins du Sināi,” in *Le Sināi de la conquête arabe à nos jours*, ed. idem (Cairo, 2001), 197–206.



them instead of reiterating the policy of general neglect and sporadic repression to which all settled powers following the Umayyads had resorted. Shortly after Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's reign, the institution of the *amīr al-ʿarab* or “Shaykh Superior of the (Syrian) Bedouin” was introduced.⁷ Conceptually, the amir was to serve as an addressee to the government and as an arbitrator in cases of conflict. Practically, he was to ensure adequate levels of military service by his people in the sultan's army, as well as the safeguarding of the roads of the interior. As this arrangement was accompanied by subsidies and land grants for the amir, it produced frictions among competing tribal groups, which may have been a welcome side-effect. The Āl Faḍl ibn Rabīʿ of the Banū Ṭayyīʿ emerged as the dominant family under this system and further consolidated their position during Mamluk times. Although the institutionalization of the amirate could not secure the Bedouins' good conduct at all times, it largely fulfilled the objective of providing an interface with them. The impression that both dynasties pursued a systematic policy towards the Bedouin is further supported by the fact that the office of *mihmindār* was established at the court in Cairo.⁸ Serving as counterpart to the *amīr al-ʿarab*, this official was responsible for receiving Bedouin representatives and regulating the Bedouin-state relations. For the first time in four centuries, the Bedouin were involved to some degree in state administration, and the Bādiyah became more closely linked to Syria proper (though in a still rudimentary way), thus essentially extending the territory of the Sultanate. The importance of the Bedouin even increased when the Mongols' first invasion of Syria in 657/1259 turned the Bādiyah into a buffer zone between Mamluk Syria and Il-Khanid al-ʿIrāq for three-quarters of a century—the Bedouins' supremacy over the steppe allowed them to adopt the role of the Mamluks' indispensable confederates, albeit rather unreliable ones.

2. A system of governmental postal communications, the *barīd*, was set up by Baybars I to serve again as the backbone of an all-regional intelligence network that had been defunct since the early Buyid period.⁹ By means of this institution,

⁷David Ayalon, “The Auxiliary Forces of the Mamlūk Sultanate,” *Der Islam* 65 (1988): 23–24, 27 (written in 1945); Mustafa A. Hiyari, “The Origins and Development of the Amirate of the Arabs during the Seventh/Thirteenth and Eighth/Fourteenth Centuries,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 38 (1975): 509–25; idem, *Al-Imārah al-Ṭāʾiyah fī Bilād al-Shām* (Amman, 1977).

⁸Abdel Hamid Saleh, “Mihmindār,” *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 7:2.

⁹Richard Hartmann, “Politische Geographie des Mamlūkenreiches: Kapitel 5 und 6 des Staatshandbuchs Ibn Faḍlallāh al-ʿOmārī's,” *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 70 (1916), especially 477–500; Maurice Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *La Syrie à l'époque des Mamelouks d'après les auteurs arabes: Description géographique, économique et administrative, précédée d'une introduction sur l'organisation gouvernementale* (Paris, 1923), 239–49; Jean Sauvaget, *La poste aux chevaux dans l'empire des Mamelouks* (Paris, 1941); Donald S. Richards, “The Mamluk Barīd: Some Evidence from the Haram Documents,” in *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan*, vol. 3,



Egypt and Syria moved closer together than ever before. This instrument was particularly helpful in informing and enforcing governmental decisions and lent greater effectiveness to centralized rule. To say that the territorial extension of the Sultanate was made operable is to imply that the issue of space had been identified and properly addressed. The most precarious *barīd* routes passed through areas over which Bedouin groups held sway. Bridging these stretches—namely between Cairo and Gaza through al-Jifār, between Damascus and al-Raḥbah across the Palmyrena, and between al-Karak and al-Shawbak through al-Sharāh—was of utmost importance for the proper functioning of the system. There the Bedouins' influence was to be encountered, and their areas could not be allowed to remain extra-territorial, as they had been since the early Abbasid period. Securing the postal service called for the political appeasement of the Bedouin, if not control of them, or in other words, for an extension of state authority into the Bedouin habitat.

3. Already one century earlier the pigeon post (*ḥamām*) had been set up, or rather revitalized, by Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn Zangī, and an optical signaling system by means of beacons (*manāwir*) was now also employed.¹⁰ It may be presumed that these networks improved as the new postal service coincided with their routes for the most part, notably including the crossing of the Palmyrena towards al-Raḥbah. They were altogether instrumental for coping with the dimensions of the empire and allowed news to travel quickly. Although the pigeon post and the signaling system did not depend to the same extent on control of the terrain as did the postal system, the possibility of interference by the Bedouin could not be ruled out.

4. Another reiteration of Umayyad policies consisted in fortification works in a number of strategic places within the Bedouin sphere or within the zone of the nomads' contact with the agricultural area. Most notable among these are the constructions of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's uncle, Shirkūh I, and the Ayyubid prince of Hims, Shirkūh II, at Qal'at Shirkūh above Palmyra (only in the eleventh/seventeenth century renamed Qal'at Ibn Ma'n),¹¹ Qal'at Shumaymis near Salamiyah,¹² and

ed. Adnan Hadidi (Amman, 1987), 205–9. The recent study by Adam J. Silverstein, *Postal Systems in the Pre-Modern Islamic World* (Cambridge, 2007), 165–85, especially 169–70, convincingly argues that Baybars' introduction of the *barīd* was informed by its potential to strengthen the Mamluks' horse-based military system and to allow affiliation of the Sultanate to the Abbasid caliphate, but little mention is made of its bearing on geopolitics.

¹⁰Hartmann, "Politische Geographie," 500–2, 503–7; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *La Syrie*, 250–54, 258–61; Sauvaget, *La poste aux chevaux*, 36–41, 77; Silverstein, *Postal Systems*, 176–79.

¹¹Janusz Bylinski, "Qal'at Shirkūh at Palmyra: A Medieval Fortress Reinterpreted," *Bulletin d'études orientales* 51 (1999): 151–208, 318–19.

¹²It is not yet comprehensively studied, but see now Janusz Bylinski, "Exploratory Mission to



Qal‘at al-Raḥbah on the Euphrates.¹³ These were still used or had been rebuilt in the time of the Kipchak Mamluks, namely by Baybars I. They belonged to an innovative sort of fortification (possibly adapted from the Crusaders), the free-standing hilltop castle, which is most significantly present in the Levantine coastal mountains.¹⁴ These elevated structures were better suited to the supervision of their surroundings than the previous Islamic ground-level building traditions of the *qaṣr* (as a citadel and refuge inside a settlement) and the Umayyad “desert castles” (as hybrid structures with military functions and functions for agriculture and livestock breeding). Each new fortification occupied a position of strategic value above an important town in or at the fringe of the Bedouin habitat; this allowed the authorities to exercise control over Bedouin movement in a considerable radius. Furthermore, some caravanserais of the *barīd* were fortified¹⁵ and, as a more general trend in architectural style, pseudo-fortification elements were applied to many non-military buildings.¹⁶

5. A number of Bedouin groups whose territory extended deep into the steppe or desert and was transected by a long-distance communication route were assigned the surveillance of the area along that route (*darak*).¹⁷ In such a precinct they acted as legitimate deputies of the sovereign and became agents of the state’s expanded territorial authority.

6. Bedouin military service was a widespread practice, loyal groups being collectively referred to as “the obedient Bedouin” (*‘arab al-ṭā‘ah*).¹⁸ Moreover, the groups that inhabited Egypt’s Western Desert and the Sinai Peninsula had a

Shumaymis,” in *Muslim Military Architecture in Greater Syria: From the Coming of Islam to the Ottoman Period*, ed. Hugh Kennedy (Leiden, 2005), 243–50, figs. 1–13. Its Zangid (re-)foundation in 628/1231 is mentioned by Ibn al-Athīr, *Chronicon quod Perfectissimum inscribitur* [= *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārikh*], ed. Carl Johan Tornberg (Uppsala, 1851/53, and Leiden, 1862–76), 12:329–30, reading *smym*s. A previous castle there had been demolished by an earthquake in 552/1157, as noted by Ibn al-‘Adīm, *Zubdat al-Ḥalab fī Tārikh Ḥalab*, ed. Sāmī al-Dahhān (Damascus, 1954), 2:306.

¹³Marie-Odile Rousset, “La Ville de Raḥba–Mayādīn et sa région, IXe–XIVe siècle,” *Bulletin d’études orientales* 52 (2000): 243–61.

¹⁴For example, see Andrew Petersen, “Two Medieval Castles and Their Position in the Military Architecture of Muslim Palestine,” in *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras*, vol. 3, ed. Urbain Vermeulen and Jo van Steenbergen (Leuven, 2001), 383–406.

¹⁵Sauvaget, *La poste aux chevaux*, 63–67, pls. iv–vii; idem, “Un relais du barīd mamelouk,” in *Mélanges Gaudefroy-Demombynes* (Cairo, 1935–45), 44, pls. i and ii.

¹⁶Nasser O. Rabbat, “The Militarization of Taste in Medieval Bilād al-Shām,” in *Muslim Military Architecture in Greater Syria*, 84–105.

¹⁷Ayalon, “Auxiliary Forces,” 23, with n. 55.

¹⁸Ibid., 14; Maḥmūd al-Sayyid, *Tārikh ‘Arab al-Shām fī al-‘Aṣr al-Mamlūki* (Alexandria, 1997), 130–73; idem, *Tārikh al-Qabā’il al-‘Arabīyah fī ‘Aṣr al-Dawlatayn al-Ayyūbiyah wa-al-Mamlūkiyah* (Alexandria, 1998), 77–118.



share in maintaining the postal system on a regular basis with mounts, fodder, and personnel, and they were thus called the “horse unit of the monthly service” (*khayl al-shihārah*).¹⁹ In Egypt the Bedouin were more closely drawn into state interaction than in Syria, due to their greater dependence on agriculture and to the government’s particularly tight control of the country.²⁰ The largest part of the nomadic population was compelled to seek the immediate proximity of the Nile Valley or the oases because the interior was considerably more inhospitable than the Syrian Bādiyah. It is clear from Jean-Claude Garcin’s study of Qūṣ and its zone of influence that Bedouin involvement was a function of confined provincial locales.²¹ However, no permanent pacification was accomplished, the political rationale of tribalism remaining largely intact in spite of the state’s attempt to supersede it. At times the Bedouin even gained the upper hand.

Summing up these measures, it appears that in combination they contributed to an overarching trend in Ayyubid and Mamluk governance. Both sultanates surpassed the older pattern of a state that is content with rule over urban-rural continua within the sedentary sphere. Instead, they also aimed at controlling the sparsely inhabited hinterland which was the sphere of nomadic groups. Seen against the background of state conduct following the Umayyad period, this revaluation of the steppe areas and its Bedouin population is strikingly different from previous practice. We may refer to it as a change in the perception and organization of space towards a new characteristic of extensiveness and cohesion. This shift was effective by the time of the early Ayyubids, supposedly as a remedy to the experience of territorial disconnection during the Fatimid/Börid/Zangid period, and it became a continuous trend that was sustained and pushed still further under the Mamluks. It seems to harmonize with another, though negative, trend in their attitude towards space, i.e., the renunciation and even willful degradation of the coastal space and of maritime connections, which Albrecht Fuess has elucidated in his study on the Levantine “burnt shore.”²² Both trends indicate that the Mamluks were more at ease with controlling the interior, even a vast hinterland, than they were with controlling its contested borders.²³

¹⁹Hartmann, “Politische Geographie,” 486. On the possible origin of this arrangement in the time of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, see Mouton, “Saladin et les Bédouins du Sināi,” 205.

²⁰Ayalon, “Auxiliary Forces,” 14, 24–26, 28–29.

²¹Jean-Claude Garcin, *Un centre musulman de la Haute-Égypte médiévale: Qūṣ* (Cairo, 1976), especially 359–410, 468–98, 574.

²²Albrecht Fuess, *Verbranntes Ufer: Auswirkungen mamlukischer Seepolitik auf Beirut und die syro-palästinensische Küste (1250–1517)* (Leiden, 2001).

²³A parallel process of spatial restructuring took place in Egypt alone, where an individual Egyptian totality had assumed shape since the fifth/eleventh century. It discontinued in the mid-eighth/fourteenth century (remarkably for some of the same reasons that undermined the permeation of



However, the Mamluk attempts at involving the Bādiyāh waned from the early eighth/fourteenth century onward, when they abandoned the Syrian beacon and pigeon services, seemingly due to the cessation of Mamluk–Mongol hostilities in about 720/1320, and the *barīd* went into decline. Moreover, they reduced their presence in Upper Egypt, owing to the outbreak of the Black Death in 748/1347. Half a century later, the intelligence network in Syria finally collapsed under Tīmūr’s invasion, and after his retreat in 803/1401 no attempt at renewing those mechanisms was made.²⁴

These six sets of actions should have helped to generate and perpetuate a new sort of spatial organization. More evidence of development could be collected, but some reservations will better inform the upcoming discussion of the subject. While the *barīd*, the amirate of the Bedouin, and other elements are clearly highlighted in the sources, the grip on the steppe as such is hidden between the lines. It is yet to be determined whether the alignment of these elements worked with or without a deliberate plan. For the moment it seems appropriate to assume a confluence of various measures that were nonetheless effective as if having been designed to work together. With regard to the Bedouin as pivotal actors, it is evident that the amirate emerged from a decidedly invasive governmental scheme. It affected them deeply enough to be perpetuated as a mode of inter-tribal organization and representation to the outside well into the first century of Ottoman rule.

Another difficulty of interpretation arises from our insufficient understanding of spatial thinking in this period. Unfortunately, there is no work comparable to André Miquel’s *Géographie humaine* (which ends a century before the rise of the Ayyubids).²⁵ Even central categories are rarely broached. Ralph W. Brauer’s exposition of how boundaries and frontiers were conceived by geographers also centers on pre-Mamluk times. However, his finding, for instance, that they were inclined to measure a given area of land by its width and length but disregard

the steppe). See Jean-Claude Garcin’s “Pour un recours à l’histoire de l’espace vécu dans l’étude de l’Égypte arabe,” *Annales E. S. C.* 35 (1980), reprinted in his *Espaces, pouvoirs et idéologies de l’Égypte médiévale* (London, 1987), pt. iii, 438, 442–45.

²⁴Silverstein, *Postal Systems*, 179–85, also shows that the decline of the *barīd* ensued from its demilitarization and bureaucratization in the course of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad’s reforms. A late effort to reorganize the *barīd* seems to be indicated by the construction of the *khāns* at Inqirātā (north of Ma‘arrat al-Nu‘mān) and Dannūn (south of Damascus) in the 770s/1370s. See Sauvaget, “Un relais du *barīd* mamelouk,” 48. For Egypt and the effects of the plague, see Robert Lopez, Harry Miskimin, and Abraham Udovitch, “England to Egypt, 1350–1500: Long-Term Trends and Long-Distance Trade,” in *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East from the Rise of Islam to the Present Day*, ed. Michael A. Cook (London, 1970), especially 118–20 (Udovitch).

²⁵André Miquel, *La géographie humaine du monde musulman jusqu’au milieu du 11e siècle*, 4 vols. (Paris and the Hague, 1967–88). The work of Sayyid Maqbul Ahmad, *A History of Arab-Islamic Geography, 9th–16th Century A.D.* (Mafraq, 1995), is no match.



surface areas and square measures²⁶ brings to mind the potential otherness of historical spatial notions and sheds light on the difficulty of reconstruction. While we must consider mental maps a historically embedded phenomenon, we still have to tease out how the Ayyubids and Mamluks “mapped” their dominion.²⁷

NOTES ON HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY AND CARTOGRAPHY

Knowledge of spatial contexts is critical to the historian. In the process of making an argument, multiple references are inevitably made to places, routes, landscapes, and bodies of water, as well as to distances and proximities. It is not surprising, therefore, that many studies are accompanied by one or more maps, which usually display a number of labeled dots for cities, battles, etc., as well as some lines for coasts and streams, communications and borders, plus perhaps shadings which represent mountains or some other feature. Yet more often than not, there is no such visual aid. We are then required to recollect locations and regional settings from previous knowledge. Obviously, it is expected that each reader should have a mental map, and not just an individual but a generally shared one. Such an implicit requirement is in part acceptable, as we ought to be grateful each and every story does not begin with Adam and Eve—or a “Cairo” dot and a “Damascus” dot in a largely unvarying sort of base map. On the other hand, the lack of a detailed map in any given study is painfully felt as soon as either minor or remote places or complex formations are mentioned. All too often in such cases, that presumed mental map will prove deficient in both topographical and thematic respects. One must return after all to previous works of historical geography and cartographic materials.²⁸

²⁶Ralph W. Brauer, *Boundaries and Frontiers in Medieval Muslim Geography* (Philadelphia, 1995), 36.

²⁷Compare the term “géographie de l’attention” in Garcin, “Pour un recours à l’histoire de l’espace vécue,” 438.

²⁸Cartography as we know it, and as it was prefigured for the most part by medieval Islamic authors in growing contrast to Ptolemaic standards, postulates a central problem. The surface of a spherical/ellipsoid body—technically speaking, a topology of geographic features that have coordinates in a curved graticule of meridians and parallels—must be transferred on a plane according to one of many possible procedures of geometric projection. This implies that some distortion of the real is unavoidable, while the rules of each projection determine which particular properties of the three-dimensional body are preserved on the plane. The achievement may pertain to the equal representation of angle, distance, and/or area, but cannot possibly reconcile the three of them at the same time. Compliance to modern standards is signified to the map reader in three definite ways: one, through a verbal projection statement; two, through a scale statement, either numerical, verbal, or in the shape of a bar graph; and three, through a grid which is referenced to a prime meridian (not necessarily the circle of longitude of Greenwich) and a prime parallel (not necessarily the equator). It will be shown why maps that do not comply with these principles may rather be termed sketch maps.



Mamluk studies are not only short on such helpful works, but there is also no review of what has already been produced. The following attempt to outline the development of historical geography and cartography of the Middle East so far is certainly preliminary, for it must not claim to bridge the gap at once. Yet, in the absence of a better alternative,²⁹ it may be helpful for the time being to acknowledge certain gaps and possible future tasks. Therefore, the scarcity of Mamlukist contributions requires adopting a more general point of view than one of strict chronological periodization. I should also point out that this article relates primarily to Western mapping activities. While Arab and Ottoman specialists had been at the vanguard since the early Middle Ages,³⁰ they lagged behind the advancement of cartography which some European countries experienced during the eighteenth century. At the heart of this progress was geodetic triangulation, i.e., the measurement of distances between positioned points with the objective of forming a network of triangles, practiced first in France in the 1740s by César François Cassini de Thury. Beyond scientific and technical progress, I believe that the reversal of leadership was an outcome of the Europeans' increasingly practical application of cartography to governance, administration, warfare, and commerce, whereas the Arab-Ottoman tradition of cartography was hardly challenged. With Asia Minor attracting the greatest Ottoman attention, the Sublime Porte neglected the mapping of its Arab provinces. This subject merits a closer look which is beyond the scope of the present article. Here I rather wish to keep to Western mapping of the Middle East, arguing that it has seen four more or less sequential stages which have affected the opportunities of historical mapping in specific ways. The technical side of mapping will not be considered to the same extent as the relationship between historians—formerly, “Orientalists”—on the one hand and cartographers on the other.

1. NAPOLEON AND AFTER

During the opening stage of this cartographic advancement, the time of European exploration and colonial expansion, mapping was firmly tied to geodesy and served to document primary topographical stock-taking. For the first time, the terrain was to undergo systematic surveying so that points and linear objects, as a start, could

²⁹Since 2006, the carto-bibliography of the region is being addressed country by country on a website under the direction of Jean-Luc Arnaud, *La cartotheque méditerranéenne*, <http://cartomed.mmsh.univ-aix.fr>. The focus is on French and British topographical map series produced after 1900. The site will soon expand its range and be renamed *CartoMundi*.

³⁰This is demonstrated throughout the massive work of Fuat Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, vols. 10–12, *Mathematische Geographie und Kartographie im Islam und ihr Fortleben im Abendland* (Frankfurt am Main, 2000). For a starting point, see the introduction to the map volume, vi–xiii.



be positioned on geo-referenced gridded maps. The initial and most important single scheme was carried out by a colonial body *par excellence*, a detachment of the Napoleonic Egyptian expeditionary forces. Formed on the spot in 1798, the Service topographique de l'armée d'Égypte worked as a veritable survey authority, although understaffed and obstructed by many external imperfections. By 1801 it had achieved the first triangulation of some parts of the region. The survey resulted in the first map of the Middle East along modern principles. Forming part of the *Description de l'Égypte*, 47 sheets were printed on a scale of 1:100,000 showing the settled areas along the Nile, the Mediterranean coast of Sinai, and the Levant up to Sidon in great detail and expressive graphic style.³¹

This pioneering work was recommenced in Egypt only after the establishment of the Egyptian Survey Authority in 1878—the very year the British and French disempowered the Khedive.³² Western Palestine saw an interlude from 1871 to 1878, when British military personnel mapped most of the area on behalf of the—specially founded—Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF),³³ before finally, in 1920, the British established the Survey of Palestine.³⁴ In Syria and Lebanon, large-

³¹Field work was conducted from 1798 to 1801, and the engraving of the plates in Paris was completed in 1803. Put to press in 1808, the map was guarded as a state secret and published only ten years later, then entitled “Carte topographique de l'Égypte et de plusieurs parties des pays limitrophes levée pendant l'expédition de l'armée française . . . à l'échelle de 1 millimètre pour 1000 mètres.” Together with a three-sheet version on a reduced scale, it constituted the *Atlas géographique*, ed. Pierre Jacotin (Paris, 1818), being part of the *Description de l'Égypte, ou Recueil des observations et des recherches qui ont été faites en Égypte pendant l'expédition de l'armée française*, édition impériale. The reprint of the atlas (Paris, 1826) within the 2nd ed. or édition royale is now also accessible through the DVD edition of the corpus by the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (Alexandria, 2004). This includes Jacotin's “Mémoire sur la construction de la carte de l'Égypte,” *Description de l'Égypte: État moderne*, 1st ed., vol. 2.2 (1822), 1–118 (= 2nd ed., vol. 17 [1824], 436–652), and the “Index géographique, ou Liste générale des noms de lieux de l'Égypte . . .,” in *ibid.*, 787–846 (= 2nd ed., vol. 18.3 [1830], 35–266). See Anne Godlewska, *The Napoleonic Survey of Egypt: A Masterpiece of Cartographic Compilation and Early Nineteenth-Century Fieldwork* (Toronto, 1988) = *Cartographica* 25 (1988), 1/2; Ghislaine Alleaume, “Entre l'inventaire du territoire et la construction de la mémoire: L'œuvre cartographique de l'expédition d'Égypte,” in *L'expédition d'Égypte: Une entreprise des lumières 1798–1801*, ed. Patrice Bret ([Paris], 1999), 279–94.

³²Its major mission to produce a cadastral survey did not progress well. Replaced by the Survey Department in 1898, activities regained momentum and resulted in a cadastral map series of more than 30,000 sheets on a scale of first 1:4,000, later 1:2,500 (Cairo, 1892–1918). See *La cartotheque méditerranéenne*, <http://cartomed.mmsh.univ-aix.fr/mmsh/Egypte/series/G16.swf> and [~/G98.swf](http://cartomed.mmsh.univ-aix.fr/mmsh/Egypte/series/G98.swf).

³³Claude Conder and Horatio Herbert Kitchener, *Map of Western Palestine in 26 Sheets from Surveys Conducted for the Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund . . . during the Years 1872–1877*, scale 1:63,360, one inch to the mile (London, 1880), indexed by *Arabic and English Name Lists*, ed. Edward Henry Palmer (London, 1881).

³⁴Clifford W. Mugnier, “Grids and Datums: The State of Israel,” *Photogrammetric Engineering and*



scale³⁵ mapping languished until in 1918 the same rush for mandatory institution-building impelled France to set up the Bureau topographique de l'Armée française du Levant.³⁶ One need not be a Foucauldian to notice that the cartography of the Middle East was thus deeply rooted in the European struggle for domination.

In the meantime, the agents of mapping projects were individuals, or at most tiny companies of scholars and/or adventurers, who traveled on behalf of an inquiring princely Maecenas, an academic society, or on their own behalf. Following the example of Carsten Niebuhr, most traveler-explorers in the Orient were trained in the use of astronomic and geodetic devices, as well as the scrutiny of textual sources. They supplemented the positioning of sites by asking how historical place names preserved in ancient and medieval literature ought to be identified against the background of recent toponymy. Consequently, large-scale maps of selected small regions were often produced together with an onomastic commentary and tentative historical geography.

The better of these mapping projects not only appealed to the Orientalist but were on the cutting edge of geography and cartography. Hence, it is not surprising that researchers and professional cartographers encouraged and supported each other. Alois Musil's map "Northern Arabia"—companion to his four volumes of topographical itinerary—lent the crowning glory to that map-cum-text genre,³⁷ but even though he was a highly-trained and untiring map maker,³⁸ he had the map drawn by the Militärkartographisches Institut in Vienna, one of the most advanced institutions of its kind at that time. Probably the most productive liaison

Remote Sensing (abbr. *PE&RS*) 66 (2000): 915b; Dov Gavish, *A Survey of Palestine under the British Mandate, 1920–1948* (London, 2005), based on his *Qarqa' u-mapah: Me-hesder qarqa'ot le-mapat Erets Yisra'el, 1920–1948* (Jerusalem, 1991).

³⁵Even cartographers get confused once in a while about what is termed large and small. Thus it may be helpful to mention that scales are fractions; hence a scale of 1:10,000 (one ten-thousandth) is larger than a scale of 1:1,000,000 (one millionth).

³⁶Clifford J. Mugnier, "Grids and Datums: The Syrian Arab Republic," *PE&RS* 67 (2001): 1000–3.

³⁷Alois Musil, *Northern Arabia*, scale 1:1,000,000, on four sheets (New York, 1926), accompanying four of his monographs in the American Geographical Society's Oriental Explorations and Studies series, vols. 2–5 (previously published as *Karte von Nordarabien, nach eigenen Aufnahmen*, same scale [Vienna, no date]). Along the course of the Euphrates it adjoins the map "Southern Mesopotamia" on the same scale, attached to his *The Middle Euphrates: A Topographical Itinerary*, vol. 3 of the series (New York, 1927), while the southwestern sheet is elaborated by the map on a scale of 1:500,000 which is attached to his *The Northern Heğâz: A Topographical Itinerary*, vol. 1 of the series (New York, 1926).

³⁸E.g., his journey of 1908–9 yielded no less than 61 manuscript maps on a scale of 1:300,000 of 37 × 35.5 cm each with an approximate 3,000 place names. See Musil's communication in the Viennese *Anzeiger der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften: Philos.-hist. Kl.* 47 (1910): 188–89. The series merged in the map *Northern Arabia* (see n. 37).



across the disciplines was established between the distinguished geographers and cartographers Heinrich Kiepert (1818–99) and Richard Kiepert (1846–1915) and several scholarly explorers, among them Edward Robinson and Eli Smith, L. M. A. Linant de Bellefonds, Richard Lepsius, Johann Gottfried Wetzstein, Eduard Sachau, Carl Humann, and Max Freiherr von Oppenheim.³⁹ While the Kiepersts regarded their reports and drafts as full-fledged sources, the ensuing maps of the Middle East helped define the state of the art in regional cartography and in return cleared the way for other explorers to come. Despite many inevitable shortcomings, the best of these maps remained in use for decades and served as a basis for later topographical studies until World War I.⁴⁰

Understanding the contemporary topography was considered such an essential prerequisite to historical understanding that historiographic mapping itself was discouraged for most of the nineteenth century. As long as the determination of coordinates was the focus, stock-taking implied a tendency to absorb the remnants and toponymic substrata of different eras and blend them into area-specific maps. This has been demonstrated in the case of the Napoleonic scholars whose policy on toponymy was directed towards standardization.⁴¹ Although mapping seemed urgent enough to leave nothing undone, several regions remained difficult to access and therefore survey, and were thus even more aptly subjected to historical reconstructions. Such conditions prevailed beyond the Nile Valley and the Fertile Crescent. It is for this reason that Ferdinand Wüstenfeld, who had neither been to the region nor considered doing so, could dare to combine a tentative geographical outline with place names derived from medieval Arabic historians and geographers. The first such map was lent credence by having been

³⁹E.g., Heinrich Kiepert, “A New Map of Palestine Including also Phoenicia and Coelesyria,” scale 1:600,000, on two sheets in Edward Robinson, Eli Smith, et al., *Later Biblical Researches in Palestine and the Adjacent Regions: A Journal of Travels in the Year 1852* (London, 1856), following 664; H. Kiepert, eight maps on various scales in Richard Lepsius, *Denkmaeler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien*, plate vol. 1 (Berlin, [1859]), pls. i–vi, some based on Linant de Bellefonds and Lepsius himself; H. Kiepert, “Die Landschaften im Osten von Damaskus (Ḥaurân und Trachonen),” scale 1:400,000, in Johann Gottfried Wetzstein, *Reisebericht über Hauran und die Trachonen nebst einem Anhang über die sabäischen Denkmäler in Ostsyrien* (Berlin, 1860), preceding p. i; H. Kiepert, two maps on a scale of 1:750,000, attached to Eduard Sachau, *Reise in Syrien und Mesopotamien* (Leipzig, 1883); H. Kiepert, “Karte des nördlichsten Theiles von Syrien,” scale 1:300,000, in Carl Humann and Otto Puchstein, *Reisen in Kleinasien und Nordsyrien*, atlas (Berlin, 1890), preceding pl. i; Richard Kiepert, map on a scale of 1:850,000 on two sheets, attached to Max Freiherr von Oppenheim, *Vom Mittelmeer zum Persischen Golf durch den Ḥaurân, die Syrische Wüste und Mesopotamien* (Berlin, 1899/1900), also separately published (Berlin, [1915]).

⁴⁰E.g., see Gavish, *A Survey of Palestine*, 12, 14–15.

⁴¹Alleaume, “Entre l’inventaire du territoire et la construction de la mémoire,” 282–85.



executed by Heinrich Kiepert,⁴² but as the successive maps bear only Wüstenfeld's name it is conceivable that the venture had proven unrewarding to the specialist.⁴³ After all, intense and fruitful cooperation between cartographers and historians, philologists, and others lasted only as long as the political situation on the ground did not allow for regular surveying along technical lines.

2. DIVERGING PATHS

The turning point in the relationship between topography and historiographic mapping was reached when the example of Egypt was followed in the establishment of survey authorities all over the region at the beginning of the British and French mandatory administrations. A bifurcation took place. On the one hand, hosts of professional engineers, geodesists, and cartographers took up work in a field which was now pacified. At the same time, the heterogeneous national or mandatory mapping activities in the region began to adapt—due to the first internationally agreed-upon mapping scheme, the *Carte internationale du monde/International Map of the World*⁴⁴—to a system of divisible metric scales and sheet lines.⁴⁵ The cartographers applied ever better scales and more sophisticated techniques to the areas previously mapped and set about filling in the blanks. Only part of the interior of the Arabian Peninsula retained for some time the air of

⁴²Heinrich Kiepert, map on a scale of 6 cm to 150 *mīl* or 50 *farsakh* (i.e., ca. 1:5,000,000) in Ferdinand Wüstenfeld, "Die Strasse von Baġra nach Mekka mit der Landschaft Dharīja, nach arabischen Quellen bearbeitet," *Abhandlungen der Königlich-Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen: Hist.-philol. Cl.* (abbr. *AGWG*) 16 (1871): following 89.

⁴³Ferdinand Wüstenfeld, map on a scale of 6.7 cm to 140 *mīl* (i.e., ca. 1:4,000,000) in his "Das Gebiet von Medina, nach arabischen Geographen beschrieben," *AGWG* 18 (1873): facing 86; idem, map not to scale in his "Baġrein und Jemâma, nach arabischen Geographen beschrieben," *AGWG* 19 (1874): facing 222. Both maps as well as that in n. 42 were also included in the monographic offprints (Göttingen, 1871, 1873, and 1874).

⁴⁴The framework of the World series on the millionth scale, published from 1913 on, sprung from a proposal of 1891 and was agreed upon by international conferences at London 1909, Paris 1913, and Cambridge 1928. It was projected under the combined aegis of national, colonial, and mandatory survey authorities and published accordingly by a multiplicity of bodies. The Middle East was the responsibility of Great Britain's Ordnance Survey, Southampton, except for Egypt which was covered by the Survey Department, later Survey of Egypt, Giza. Collaboration broke off during World War II at a state of about a sixth of the planned number of sheets; it was resumed in 1945 and continued from 1953 on under the auspices of the United Nations until it petered out in the mid-1980s while still less than half of the sheets had been achieved. The relative importance which was attributed to Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and Iraq is illustrated by the fact that they counted among the well covered areas of the World series even before World War II.

⁴⁵As the pace of integration was slow, the various grids (Egyptian quadrant/standard and kilometric/normal grids, Palestine grid, Lambert Levant grid, etc.) remained in use well into the mid-twentieth century.



terra incognita to the Western observer.⁴⁶ As now even many remote and sparsely settled areas could be surveyed, it became possible to expand the representation of the topography beyond the river valleys and densely populated areas onto the entire region. Only then did maps attain a fully two-dimensional quality. Furthermore, the replacement of old-style provisional hachures, form lines, and hillshades by contour lines and elevation coloring allowed map-makers for the first time to shape a consistent and reliable overall picture of the region's three-dimensionality. In the case of Egypt, coverage had proceeded so far as to allow the compilation of atlases.⁴⁷ As professional cartography outgrew its dependence on the contribution of semi-skilled enthusiasts, the physical aspect became dissociated from the historical.

On the other hand, specialization, as well as technical and organizational progress, could not leave the mapping activity of men of letters untouched. In fact, it suffered badly. The publication of Musil's map of Northern Arabia in 1926, though marking the apogee of the older one-man business, was belated, the basic inquiries having been conducted between one and almost two decades earlier. Consequently, it was also anachronistic in that it mirrored pre-World War I requirements of primary exploration.⁴⁸ Only in the field of historical geographies and gazetteers could advantage be taken of the European preeminence over the region in the period until the end of World War II. Several works of lasting value were compiled on that background, e.g., by René Dussaud on Syria and Lebanon⁴⁹ and by the British Naval Intelligence—for official use only—in its geographical handbook series on most of the region.⁵⁰ The way had been paved in pre-1900 Egypt by 'Alī Bāshā Mubārak's geographical lexicon and the country's surveyors.⁵¹

⁴⁶The first modern map series superior to the millionth scale, a work of collaboration between the U.S. Geological Survey and the Arabian American Oil Company, was executed only from the late 1950s on: *Geographic Map . . . , Kingdom of Saudi-Arabia*, scale 1:500,000, 21 maps (Washington, D.C., 1956–62), accompanied by *Arabian Peninsula: Official Standard Names Approved by the United States Board on Geographic Names* (Washington, D.C., 1961).

⁴⁷*Atlas of Egypt*, scale 1:50,000, 2 vols. (Cairo, 1914); *Atlas of Egypt: A Series of Maps and Diagrams with Descriptive Text Illustrating the Orography, Geology, Meteorology and Economic Conditions*, scales 1:500,000 to 1:7,500,000 (Giza, 1928).

⁴⁸For an exemplary description of his mapping method that also concedes various sources of inaccuracy see Alois Musil, *Arabia Deserta: A Topographical Itinerary* (New York, 1927), xiii–xvi.

⁴⁹René Dussaud, *Topographie historique de la Syrie antique et médiévale* (Paris, 1927).

⁵⁰Originally, only a few classified copies were sent to press. They are now accessible through two series of reprints: *A Collection of First World War Military Handbooks of Arabia, 1913–1917*, 9 vols. (Farnham Common, 1988), and *The Middle East Intelligence Handbooks 1943–1946*, 5 vols. (Gerrards Cross, 1992).

⁵¹'Alī Bāshā Mubārak, *Al-Khiṭaṭ al-Tawfiqīyah al-Jadidah li-Miṣr al-Qāhirah wa-Mudunihā wa-Bilādihā al-Qadimah wa-al-Shahirah*, 20 vols. (Bulāq, 1887–89). A selection of the older Orientalist research



There, historical geography flourished so much that a voluminous special bibliography could be compiled as early as 1929.⁵²

A special point must be made about Palestine as the initial focus of Western Middle East mapping. The country's special place as the Holy Land has nourished a prolific mutual relationship between men of letters and cartographers ever since the Middle Ages. Recalling that Palestine already formed part of the Napoleonic survey and that the 1880 PEF map of Western Palestine marked another groundbreaking step, it became virtually over-mapped in both topographical and historical regards, although Muslim affairs were dealt with far less than Biblical and Crusader matters. Accordingly, Palestine was also the first and only part of the region that attracted continuous carto-bibliography.⁵³

Aside from the Holy Land, however, the individual scholarship of Orientalists could not maintain its importance opposite the advancement of surveys on a regional scale. The interest of Orientalists in mapping declined and simultaneously focused *volens nolens* on historical matters. As the status of cartography sank to the point that it was deemed an ancillary science, that which remained to be done was taken over by non-cartographers—a fact which proved detrimental to quality. It is not necessary to focus on any particular specimen of Orientalist (not to mention Mamlukist) research to illustrate this point, nor would it be fair to do

has been assembled in *Texts and Studies on the Historical Geography and Topography of Egypt*, 5 vols., ed. Fuat Sezgin (Frankfurt am Main, 1992). Besides, the constriction of Egypt to the banks of the Nile together with the intensity of cultivation there conditioned a cadastral—and thus chiefly contemporary—approach to geography. See *Dictionnaire des villes, villages, hameaux, etc. de l'Égypte* (Bulāq, 1881); [Albert Boinet], *Dictionnaire géographique de l'Égypte*, and its Arabic version, *Qāmūs Jughrāfi lil-Quṭr al-Miṣri* (both Cairo, 1899); [idem], *Géographie économique et administrative de l'Égypte*, vol. 1 (Cairo, 1902, no more published). See also, in the historical field, Jean Maspero and Gaston Wiet, *Matériaux pour servir à la géographie de l'Égypte*, vol. 1 (Cairo, 1919, no more published).

⁵²Henri Munier, *Bibliographie géographique de l'Égypte*, vol. 2, ed. Henri Lorin (Cairo, 1929). Carto-bibliography was as well restricted for a long time to either Palestine or Egypt. See n. 53 and Alfred L. Fontaine, *Monographie cartographique de l'isthme de Suez, de la péninsule du Sinai, du nord de la Chaîne Arabique, suivi d'un catalogue raisonné sur les cartes de ces régions* (Cairo, 1955).

⁵³Reinhold Röhricht, *Bibliotheca geographica Palaestina: Chronologisches Verzeichniss der auf die Geographie des Heiligen Landes bezüglichen Literatur von 333 bis 1878 und Versuch einer Cartographie* (Berlin, 1890), 2nd ed. procured by David H. K. Amiran (Jerusalem, 1963), especially 598–662. Materials published between 1878 and 1945 were recorded by Peter Thomsen, *Die Palästina-Literatur: Eine internationale Bibliographie in systematischer Ordnung mit Autoren- und Sachregister*, 5 vols. (Leipzig and Berlin, 1908–38), sections 4 and 5, and three posthumous supplementary volumes (Berlin, 1956–72). The quarterly Jewish (later, Israeli) national bibliography *Qiryat Sefer* has continued the report (Jerusalem, 1924/25–2003), first without a special rubric, later in section 14. It now works as an online resource, http://aleph500.huji.ac.il/F/?func=file&file_name=find-b&local_base=nnlqrs&con_lng=eng.



so, as any choice of cartography would display similar mapping tendencies.

As a rule, a map of Egypt or the Levant in a historical context was a monochrome line-drawing in an unskilled hand. Most probably it was page-sized and contained in a book. Owing to regular octavo and quarto formats, such a page-size map, if we use that term for the moment, typically would have a very small scale.⁵⁴ Moreover, it would have displayed a limited sample of features and a rudimentary symbology and legend, if any at all; it would have no relief, no grid,⁵⁵ and no mathematical descriptors. Only a scale statement or graph bar would usually maintain the map's geometrical foundation. Given projective distortion, neither of these two features alone allows for the satisfactory determination of distances and location of places. Hence, any two maps of this kind tend to be incompatible by cartographic standards. This does not mean that such maps are dysfunctional; it may be rightly assumed that the observer is able to perceive topologic constellations and to recognize them on another map thanks to spatial thinking. But a map that is vague enough to demand this ability and to evoke a variety of personal understandings casts doubts on whether or not it actually deserves to be called a map. Instead, it is advisable to speak of a sketch map whenever the extrinsic aspect of a cartographic specimen prevails over the intrinsic. Sketch maps, thus understood, work as diagrams rather than as maps.

The first general historical atlases of Islam, published in 1951, 1957, ca. 1960, and 1969, were drawn up with the help of cartographers and represented true maps, but they did little to improve the situation with regard to our period of concern. Although their broad claim made it inevitable that the Mamluk realm be treated, a look at the relevant plates—at best two or three per atlas⁵⁶—betrays the perfunctory attitude towards the Mamluks which was so common before David

⁵⁴The elongated shape of both Egypt and the Levant, as well as the perpendicular axis of each—in the tradition of north-south oriented maps—seems to demand an upright map face such as would fit in an ordinary single-page layout. Thereby an unsatisfactory five millionth scale is suggested (1 cm to 50 km). An even more limited area such as the Sinai Peninsula allows at best for a two millionth scale. The larger formats of fold-outs and independently published map sheets could have resolved the inconvenience, but have been rarely utilized.

⁵⁵Sometimes the grid is not shown but indicated by border ticks only. This method basically suits projections that represent the graticule in an orthogonal way. Yet, in contrast most maps of that kind are evidently based on a projection which produces a curved grid, so that figuring the position of some place without fully plotted grid lines relies on guesswork.

⁵⁶Harry Williams Hazard, *Atlas of Islamic History* (Princeton, 1951), 21, 23, 25; Roelof Roolvink, *Historical Atlas of the Muslim Peoples* (Amsterdam, 1957), 21[a], 26[b], 27; 'Abd al-Mun'im Mājid, *Al-Atlas al-Tārīkhī lil-Ālam al-Islāmī fī al-ʿUṣūr al-Wuṣṭā* (Cairo, [ca. 1960], 2nd ed. 1967); Rolf Reichert, *Atlas histórico regional do mundo árabe (Mapas e resumo cronológico)/A Historical and Regional Atlas of the Arabic World (Maps and Chronological Survey)* (Salvador da Bahia, 1969), 82 map 26, 84 map 27.



Ayalon's time. Moreover, the map contents deserve criticism. While topographical minima were included, the relief and the composition of historical landscapes were left out. This, it seems, is due to a uniform preoccupation with the delineation of political entities on the state level (though not even the drawing of boundaries was consistently achieved).

Another characteristic of both the atlases and the maps contained in books and articles was—and still is—a disregard of the fact that natural environments change and are mutable under human influence. Almost as a rule, historical settlements are placed within recent topography and hydrography as borrowed tacitly from present-day cartography. The findings of earlier generations of scholars, regarding for example the hydrography of the Nile as studied by Prince Omar Toussoun,⁵⁷ are not always appropriately taken into account. A look into any of the more recently produced general atlases on Islamic history shows that the issue has not been addressed. Likewise, the majority of (sketch) maps in books and articles continue to be produced today along modest lines.

A last point shall be made about the distinction between maps and plans, as it answers to a prominent strand of Mamlukist research. For the sake of clarity, cartographic materials that show the ground-plan of a locality like a city, an archaeological site, or a battlefield may best be termed plans. Because they are drawn on a very large scale, say of 1:5,000, plans do not require a format beyond the regular page-size and still allow the depiction of a medieval city, for example, with expedient resolution. It is not surprising that these premises have favored the drawing up of a considerable number of city plans, given the fact that urban research, connected to the history of architecture, is prominent in Mamluk studies. Cairo, of course, figures first. Many of these plans depict certain historical issues, be they, for instance, shifts in demography and topography, professional and social composition, fortification and the architectural representation of power, or the distribution of religious institutions, thus counting among the best cartographic materials that we possess for the period.⁵⁸ However, disparities between plans and maps are such that more plans will not necessarily aid the progress of mapping on a more expanded topographical basis. This is again due to the implications of large scales. Plans, first of all, are in practice not subject to

⁵⁷Omar Toussoun, *Mémoire sur les anciennes branches du Nil*, 2 pts. (Cairo, 1922/23); idem, *Mémoire sur l'histoire du Nil*, 3 pts. (Cairo, 1925); idem, *La géographie de l'Égypte à l'époque arabe*, pt. 1 (Cairo, 1926–36, no more published).

⁵⁸E.g., see the plans in Susan Jane Staffa, *Conquest and Fusion: The Social Evolution of Cairo A.D. 642–1850* (Leiden, 1977), facing 12, 100, and 228; reworked in *An Historical Atlas of Islam/Atlas historique de l'islam*, ed. Hugh Kennedy (Leiden, 2001), 30–31. On Damascus, Jerusalem, and Aleppo, plus Middle Eastern cities outside the Mamluk Empire (ibid., 17, 19, 26–28), see Kennedy's notes on map sources, xiv–xv.



projective distortion and thus do not require mathematical descriptors. Secondly, there is neither a need nor an opportunity to plot the graticule, lest the reader go astray amongst meaningless infinitesimal calculations. Thirdly, representation of the relief is mostly dispensed with. Only a scale statement reminds one of geometry. Notwithstanding the sound geometric sub-construction that is inherent in a good plan, plans as a genre facilitate comparatively quick production and forgive one technical flaw or another. As plans resemble sketch maps in these respects, it shows that, and explains why, historical maps take a middle position in between the extremes of either minimum-scale sketch maps or maximum-scale plans.

3. A RECONCILIATION

The next stage was initiated by the *Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients*, an unrivalled corpus of regional maps acknowledged as a standard reference in many fields. Being a multidisciplinary research program conducted from 1969 to 1989 by the University of Tübingen, the *TAVO* constitutes a loose-leaf atlas, in German and English, that finally comprised 121 sheets in series A, natural sciences, and another 174 sheets in series B, humanities. This tremendous work met the most exacting technical standards of the time and is a study in aesthetic balance.⁵⁹ Among its historical maps, those on Islamic subjects figure prominently and provide the most sophisticated and variegated set of cartographic materials we have in the field of Islamic Studies. Leaving aside for a moment the achievements of any individual *TAVO* map, the main general improvements observed in the atlas are that, first, cartography was brought back into the purview of historians of Islam and collaboration with fully trained cartographers was reestablished. Second, thoroughly georeferenced topographical mapping and thematic mapping could thus be reconciled. As a result, the conventional limitation to cities and polities was overcome and attention was drawn to spatial formations such as confessional distribution, fortification patterns, juridical institutionalization, rural settlement, etc. Third, an unprecedented precision of content was achieved by manifold symbologies, carefully arranged legends, and the clear delimitation of each map's

⁵⁹The atlas proper (Wiesbaden, 1977–93) is accompanied by two monograph series: *Beihefte zum Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients* (abbr. Beihefte), series A and B, of hitherto 28 plus 98 volumes in altogether 161 parts (Wiesbaden, 1972 to date), and by the *Register zu den Karten/General Index*, ed. Horst Kopp and Wolfgang Röllig (Wiesbaden, 1994). The concluding volume *Von der Quelle zur Karte: Abschlußbuch des Sonderforschungsbereichs*. . . , ed. Wolfgang Röllig (Weinheim, 1991), 252–82, records the maps and volumes published until that year. The maps on Biblical history were recollected in an extra series as *Tübinger Bibelatlas, auf der Grundlage des Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients (TAVO/Tübingen Bible Atlas)*, ed. Siegfried Mittmann and Götz Schmitt (Stuttgart and Wiesbaden, 2001). A comprehensive list of publications may be obtained from Reichert publishers.



temporal range. Of course, the comparatively large sheet format and thus large scale of the maps (here, up to a millionth) was critical to these achievements. Fourth, the premise of undertaking only such research as suits the objective of mapping effected, in some cases, the spelling out of methodology.⁶⁰ Moreover, the technical aspects of atlas cartography were explained.⁶¹

Although it must be said with regret that the Mamluk period does not constitute a focal concern of the atlas, two maps in particular touch upon the Ayyubid and Mamluk Sultanates. Heinz Halm mapped the distribution of Islamic law schools until the end of the Kipchak Mamluks⁶² and, more relevant to the readership of this journal, the record of fiefdoms in Egypt as registered in 777/1376 by the military *dīwān* and preserved in the *Kitāb al-Tuḥfah al-Saniyah bi-Asmā' al-Bilād al-Miṣriyah* of Ibn al-Jī'ān (d. 885/1480).⁶³ The latter map also reflects the administrative divisions and the density of settlement and agriculture in the Nile Valley and the Delta during the time of al-Malik al-Ashraf Sha'ḥbān. Together with Halm's two-volume companion and the fifty basic location maps contained therein, the work can serve as a historical gazetteer of Egypt in the period of the Kipchak sultans in general and as a master index to its medieval and nineteenth-century sources.⁶⁴ Otherwise, Egypt and Syria are but superficially touched upon,⁶⁵

⁶⁰E.g., Heinz Gaube, "Die Quellen zur Karte B VII 6: 'Die Kernländer des 'Abbāsidenreiches' und ihre Auswertung," in *Von der Quelle zur Karte*, 199–216.

⁶¹Wolfgang Denk, *Atlaskartographie: Theoretische und praktische Probleme dargestellt am Beispiel des "Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients (TAVO)"* (Wiesbaden, 1990).

⁶²TAVO B VIII 16 = Heinz Halm, *Die islamischen Rechtsschulen: Palästina, Syrien und Ägypten/ Islamic Law Schools: Palestine, Syria and Egypt*, scale 1:4,000,000 (Wiesbaden, 1977).

⁶³TAVO B VIII 13 = Heinz Halm, *Ägypten unter den Mamlūken/Egypt under the Mamlūks*, scale 1:1,000,000 (Wiesbaden, 1984).

⁶⁴Heinz Halm, *Ägypten nach den mamlukischen Lebensregistern*, 2 vols. (Wiesbaden, 1979), including 50 monochrome maps on a scale of 1:200,000; see 1:35–36. Another convenient key to identify one of the anonymous smaller settlements of the map—and a proof of toponymic continuity—is his map of Egypt in an earlier period, based on the name list of Ibn Mammāti (d. 606/1209): TAVO B VII 13 = Heinz Halm, *Ägypten unter den Fāṭimiden (969–1171)/Egypt under the Fāṭimids (969–1171)*, scale 1:1,000,000 (Wiesbaden, 1984).

⁶⁵TAVO B VIII 1 = Heinz Halm and Verena Klemm, *Der Vordere Orient um 1200/The Middle East around 1200*, scale 1:8,000,000 (Wiesbaden, 1985), is an overview map of the wider region's political setting and must not be expected to offer local detail. TAVO B VIII 15 = Dorothea Krawulsky, *Īrān: Das Reich der Īlḥāne 656–736 h/1258–1336 n. Chr. (Westteil)/Īrān: The Īlḥānid Empire 656–736 h/1258–1336 A.C.*, scale 1:4,000,000, two sheets (Wiesbaden, 1984), also shows the itineraries of Ibn Baṭṭūṭah in Syria, Egypt, and the Hijaz with a fair number of cities and villages he passed through, but hardly anything beyond his path. As a gazetteer to the map including its Middle Eastern reaches, see idem, *Īrān—das Reich der Īlḥāne: Eine topographisch-historische Studie* (Wiesbaden, 1978), containing 11 monochrome location maps mostly on a scale of 7.1 cm to 100 km (i.e., ca. 1:1,400,000).



while maps of Oriental Christendom and of conflict with the Latin principalities and the Mongols are preponderant.⁶⁶ As these foci show, little is to be learned from the maps about the interior of the two sultanates.

While the factual results and appraisal of the *TAVO* are tremendous, it is noteworthy that it did not reverse the general attitude towards mapping. Since its newly established technical and heuristic standards have been difficult to meet, the *TAVO* has remained an exceptional case instead of encouraging further mapping activities in the field. For the most part, the drawing of piecemeal sketch maps, which was induced by the transition from the first to the second stage of development, is still going on. It is likely that there will be no cartographic endeavor of comparable magnitude and variety with relevance to Islamic studies for quite some time to come.

4. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Since the 1980s, the sciences and humanities have seen an intensification of spatial thinking and mapping activities which place Islamic and Mamluk studies in a changed intellectual environment. On the one hand, new concepts of social space, space perceptions, and mental maps are emanating from geography, sociology, cognitive psychology, and other fields.⁶⁷ Whether or not one is inclined to subscribe to the vogueish labeling of a “spatial turn,” it is apparent that these concepts have heralded a renunciation of the older, basically topographical, understanding of space and have instead promoted notions of a socially and culturally encoded space. This is illustrated for instance by a shift in archaeology from site towards landscape archaeology, part of which is *nota bene* a growing regard for the embedding of urban cultures in nomadic contexts.⁶⁸

On the other hand, the information revolution since the 1990s has promoted spatial issues. Researchers are now confronted with an ever-expanding field of electronic spatial data, information retrieval and mapping tools, and opportunities

⁶⁶On Christendom, see *TAVO* B VIII 2 and 5; on conflict with the Franks, B VIII 6, 8, 10, and 12; and on the invasion of Timūr, B VIII 6, 19.1, and 19.2.

⁶⁷In addition to n. 4, special mention may be made of the collective volume *Image and Environment: Cognitive Mapping and Spatial Behavior*, ed. Roger M. Downs and David Stea (Chicago, 1973), and of Pierre Bourdieu, “Espace social et genèse de ‘classe,’” *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 52/53 (1984): 3–14.

⁶⁸Kurt F. Anschuetz, Richard H. Wilshusen, and Cherie L. Scheick, “An Archaeology of Landscapes: Perspectives and Directions,” *Journal of Archaeological Research* 9 (2001): 157–211; Stefan R. Hauser, “Archaeological Approaches to Nomadism,” in *The Visibility of Nomads and Seasonal Occupation in the Archaeological Record: Multi-Disciplinary Approaches to a Methodological Problem*, ed. idem (Wiesbaden, forthcoming) (for the time being, see his introduction to *Die Sichtbarkeit von Nomaden und saisonaler Besiedlung in der Archäologie: Multidisziplinäre Annäherungen an ein methodisches Problem*, ed. idem (Halle, 2006), 1–26).



to discuss, collaborate, and publish. Mainly for extra-scientific reasons, spatial data has become virtually ubiquitous because a plethora of maps, aerial photography, and space imagery that had been patronized for decades by the military and by military-associated companies was disclosed to the public, for the most part via the internet and other channels of electronic distribution.⁶⁹ Taking advantage of this, online 3-D-mapping earth viewers make topographical information available on both the global and local scale in previously unseen quantity and quality.⁷⁰ This has the effect, among others, that governments in the region can no longer hope to protect their territory from outsiders' eyes by concealing maps and survey data, now that access to georeferenced high-resolution imagery of any location from above has become technical child's play.⁷¹ Hence, habits of spatial thinking and expectations in printed materials have undergone a radical change in all areas. Responding to this, specialized library map collections have begun to grant online access to their catalogues and holdings.

Rather than dwelling on the overwhelming range of services and tools, one may note that a basic operation such as determining the geographical location of some given place or learning which place names exist in the vicinity of a particular location meant considerable hardship one generation ago—whereas now online gazetteers, remote sensing data, and some historical maps allow one to check coordinates and toponymy in a short time. With regard to Egypt, for instance, one official U.S. online database alone puts 42,759 place names (including variants) plus coordinates at one's fingertips.⁷²

Certainly, the technical side of innovation must not be overstressed, as it is not

⁶⁹Crucial to this is high-resolution space imagery generated through international cooperation on the basis of public funds which is therefore distributed freely, e.g., via NASA's *Global Land Cover Facility*, <http://glcf.umiacs.umd.edu>. Another source of "new" information is the dissemination of Soviet military maps some time after the end of the Cold War. By this, topographical maps on scales of 1:1,000,000 up to 1:50,000 that were quite timely, having been compiled mainly during the 1970s and 1980s, became available for almost the entire Middle East, be it in the print version or as electronic resources. Now the tide has ebbed away and libraries have reduced online access to these maps.

⁷⁰*Google Earth*, <http://earth.google.com>; *NASA World Wind*, <http://worldwind.arc.nasa.gov>; *Microsoft Virtual Earth*, <http://local.live.com>.

⁷¹The Middle Eastern national survey and mapping authorities are still adapting to this change after a long period of secrecy, the forerunners being the Survey of Israel/ha-Merkaz le-Mipuy Yisra'el and the Royal Jordanian Geographic Center/al-Markaz al-Jughrāfi al-Maliki al-Urdunni.

⁷²*Geographic Names Server*, hosted by the United States National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, <http://earth-info.nga.mil/gns/html>. It incorporates and refreshes the inventories which before were furnished in the Gazetteer series of the United States Board on Geographic Names (Washington, D.C., 1955–97). The country file on Egypt referred to above was last modified in February 2007, <~/namefiles.htm>. Note also the *Getty Thesaurus of Geographic Names Online* at http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/vocabularies/tgn.



sufficient in itself. The abundance of new spatial data and methods of processing them could create a maelstrom unless appropriate research designs make use of them. Fortunately, this is what seems to have happened most recently. A multitude of electronic and often web-based scientific initiatives in the field of space relations are springing up everywhere. The *Chicago Online Encyclopedia of Mamluk Studies* is scheduled to be supplemented by a set of high-resolution “interactive online and freely printable maps of the Mamluk Sultanate and the wider region during the Mamluk period”—an intent which proves that a need for such material exists.⁷³ I understand that these will not be static but account for diachronic shifts in trade routes, etc. However, this is not yet nearing completion.

Besides, relevant activities may for the most part be found in neighboring branches of research. A few may be named here, without any criticism of the many that are omitted. A newly posted website on the anonymous fourth/tenth-century *Kitāb Gharā'ib al-Funūn wa-Mulaḥ al-ʿUyūn*, which surfaced only in 2000, is a study in the online presentation of a manuscript source that pertains through both maps and text to astronomy, cartography, and geography⁷⁴—similar source digitizations of just a few years back prove to be comparatively unwieldy.⁷⁵ Classical scholars have recently published the *Historischer Atlas der antiken Welt*, English edition forthcoming.⁷⁶ Biblical scholars are collaborating on a *Digital Archaeology Atlas of the Holy Land*,⁷⁷ and in Central Asian studies an *Archaeological Information System of Central Asia* is being undertaken.⁷⁸ The *Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative* aims to serve as a clearing house for projects that range, so far, between China and Egypt.⁷⁹ As already mentioned, *La carto-thèque méditerranéenne* (soon becoming *CartoMundi*) explores the modern regional carto-bibliography,⁸⁰ and a promising attempt is now being made to register the modern literature

⁷³For the announcement see <http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/su/mideast/medoc.html>.

⁷⁴*Medieval Islamic Views of the Cosmos: The Book of Curiosities*, ed. and trans. Yossef Rapoport, Emilie Savage-Smith, and Jeremy Johns, <http://cosmos.bodley.ox.ac.uk>.

⁷⁵See for example *La Géographie d'Idrīsī: Un atlas du monde au XIIe siècle*, CD-ROM (Paris, 2000). For a modern subject, see the DVD edition of Jacotin's atlas to the *Description de l'Égypte* (Alexandria, 2004), mentioned in n. 31.

⁷⁶*Historischer Atlas der antiken Welt*, ed. Anne-Maria Wittke, Eckart Olshausen, and Richard Szydlak (Stuttgart, 2007) (= Der Neue Pauly; Supplemente, 3). The English edition by Brill Publishers is scheduled for 2010.

⁷⁷The atlas is being prepared by the Levantine Archaeology Laboratory of the University of California, San Diego; see http://www.anthro.ucsd.edu/~tlevy/index_files/Digita_Arch.htm.

⁷⁸AISCA is directed by Bernardo Rondelli and Sebastian Stride. For an abstract, see http://www.uam.es/otroscentros/asiriologiayegipto/5icaane/ws4_prog.html.

⁷⁹ECAI is a community of affiliates hosted by the University of California, Berkeley, <http://ecai.org>.

⁸⁰See n. 29.



on Islamic cartography.⁸¹ Research in the scientific traditions of both Western and Islamic cartography is vital to an understanding of medieval perceptions of space and physical space relations and of how these may account for present-day biases.

Initiatives of this kind would equally hold that the visual items they produce are not mere reworkings of previous results. Instead, mapping is conceived as a heuristic means that allows one to address issues, if spatially related, along more suitable lines than textual treatment could. This is because maps can best take advantage of that potential which is specific to the visual sense, namely the perception of a multitude of distributed contents synoptically. Hence, maps may serve not only as a secondary visualization but as a clue to historical understanding in its own right. The requirements of mapping even modify the foregoing study of the sources. It is inherent in the two-dimensional nature of maps that they reveal their contents at once and betray blanks and inconsistencies to the observant reader in a pitiless manner. The observer of a map beholds its positive contents and at the same time interprets the vacant stretches in between, which impose themselves on him much more than gaps within a text would. Map-makers therefore need to exercise exhaustive and unequivocal criticism of content. They share the experience of having to decide whether a matter is appropriate to mapping at all, i.e., whether it is possible to represent it in all parts of the mapped area with similar meaningfulness—and to refrain from mapping when source evidence is too scant or too confined to one place. This caution is imperative in order for historical mapping to attain the value of cartography in showing the spatial condition of a certain matter. We should demand this care all the more as the necessities of localization and identification are widely realized, and as the way is open for considering more complex spatial issues.

A THEMATIC ATLAS

The above notes are the prolegomena to a substantial undertaking: the making of a series of maps that shed light on the interaction of nomads and sedentary people in Syria and Egypt during the Ayyubid and Kipchak Mamluk periods. They are part of a study in the textual sources in progress.⁸² This combined work aims at expounding the development, possible structure, and impact of that mutual relationship, thus highlighting a hitherto little-known period in the history of

⁸¹Tarek Kahlaoui, *Islamic Cartography: A Bibliography of Modern Literature*, <http://islamic-cartography.blogspot.com>, an offshoot of the author's still ongoing doctoral thesis, having proceeded to date to the letter B.

⁸²See n. 5. The maps are drawn up by the cartographer Martin Grosch with the collaboration of the Institute for Geo Research (geo3) of the University of Applied Sciences, Berlin, and the Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography, Leipzig.



Middle Eastern nomadic-sedentary relations. It will perhaps also help in assessing the initial suggestion that both dynasties devised a new attitude toward space and adequately engaged in a heightened spatial organization that should have expanded over the hinterland and brought the Bedouin population under state supervision.

Drawing on lessons to be learned from the course of historical cartography, the work is characterized by the following properties. First, the separation of topographical and historical mapping has proven detrimental to the latter, and here they are merged again. Placing historical content on a topographical background will reveal the visual properties of the map. As the relief, bodies of water, etc., help to envision the setting of some historical matter on the ground, they moreover provide a yardstick as to whether there is relevance to space and thus whether it is appropriate to map a particular object. This is best achieved with large-scale colored maps which suggest folio size, except for the smallest regions.

Second, thematic mapping is needed, which takes the conventional geography of settlement and large political entities as a starting point and proceeds to focus on more specific issues. While some contexts require the static exposure of aspects in multiple synchronic maps, sequences of maps on a diachronic scale better highlight developments and changes over time. At the same time, relevant efforts of an older date, now often difficult to access or sunk into oblivion, deserve reassessment and mapping according to present-day standards, including historical topography and hydrography.

Third, a historico-critical approach is to be reintroduced after a long time in which mapping activity has failed to explicate its methodological foundations. This also basically holds true for those maps which accompany historical gazetteers, since even the most accurate reference to textual sources does not make it clear why some item was placed on a particular spot on the map. The two Kiepert, already mentioned, may serve as an example in that they often made detailed references to their source materials. They evaluated them, discussed their subtle decisions closely, and pointed out uncertainties.⁸³ This way, the reader's attention is drawn to the fact that maps are not bearers of positive facts to which they are secondary, but rather are constructs of the map-maker.

Last but not least, the profound change in cartographic techniques since the making of the *TAVO* seems to lend itself to thematic cartography, as it has an immediate impact on which spatial issues may be addressed and how. In

⁸³E.g., H. Kiepert, "Zu den Karten," in Humann and Puchstein, *Reisen in Kleinasien und Nordsyrien*, text volume, 407–12; R. Kiepert, "Zu den Karten," in Max von Oppenheim, *Vom Mittelmeer zum Persischen Golf*, 2:389–414. See also, though to a lesser extent, *An Historical Atlas of Islam*, ed. Kennedy, xi–xix.



fact, electronic mapping on the basis of georeferenced remote sensing data is invaluable for the achievement of a precise topography in which history can be embedded soundly. Speaking in general, combination with a digital elevation model (DEM) allows for a three-dimensional impression with a vast potential to fuel one's spatial imagination and is yet technically impeccable. Furthermore, the integration of electronic maps in a geographical information system (GIS) opens up unforeseen possibilities of thematic analysis, interpretation, and presentation.⁸⁴ Finally, distribution of the results in electronic form is a welcome opportunity to advance the recognition and further study of spatial contexts in history.

⁸⁴See *Islamic Area Studies with Geographical Information Systems*, ed. Okabe Atsuyuki (London, 2004).



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The ‘Aṭṭār Mosque in Tripoli

In the year 1112/1700 the scholar ‘Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī¹ visited Tripoli in present-day Lebanon. In his travelogue *Al-Riḥlah al-Ṭarābulusīyah* he gives brief notices of the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque,² reporting that the mosque is said to have been a church originally and that a perfume merchant had secretly paid to have it rebuilt as a mosque.³ With this brief passage, al-Nābulusī is the first author to posit a connection between the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque and a church. He can thus be seen as the originator of an idea that has influenced treatises on the architecture of the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque ever since. Although al-Nābulusī did not supply any references for his statement that the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque was formerly a church, the preponderance of research on the mosque is based upon this assumption, even though it is not confirmed by any other written source nor have investigations of the building itself specifically examined this question. The following article aims to take a closer look at this hypothesis by analyzing the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque’s integration into the urban and social spheres as well as its decorative scheme, and by suggesting

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This article is a summary of the results of my master’s thesis, completed under Dr. Martina Müller-Wiener and Professor Dr. Stephan Conermann at the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-University in Bonn, 2004. I would like to thank the Orient-Institut in Beirut (OIB), who provided me with institutional assistance, accommodation, and access to their library and archives during my fieldwork in Lebanon in April/May 2004. I am indebted to them for their permission to publish photographs and drawings which evolved out of the Tripoli project which is hosted and financed by them. My special gratitude is extended to Dr. Stefan Weber of the OIB, who made my research in Beirut and Tripoli possible, and to Nathalie Chahine, who assisted me in Tripoli. I am especially grateful to Emily Schalk for her helping hand in translating this article into English and to Ulrike Siegel for her suggestions concerning questions about architectural research. Lastly, I would like to thank Dr. Robert Saliba, American University of Beirut, Department of Architecture and Design, for granting me permission to publish figure 1.

¹‘Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī, *Al-Tuḥfah al-Nābulusīyah fī al-Riḥlah al-Ṭarābulusīyah (Die Reise des ‘Abd al-Ganī al-Nābulusī durch den Libanon)*, ed. Heribert Busse (Wiesbaden, 1971), 72–73.

²Michael Meinecke, *Die mamlukische Architektur in Ägypten und Syrien (648/1250 bis 923/1517)* (Glückstadt, 1992), 2:165, 9C/320, and 215, 19A/30, listed as “Moschee des Badr ad-Dīn al-‘Aṭṭār.” In this article, in contrast, I shall use the designation “‘Aṭṭār Mosque,” for the following reasons: the lack of a definite determination of the commissioner’s name, the earliest reference to the mosque as the “jāmi‘ al-‘Aṭṭār,” and the mention of the mosque by this name in Ottoman travelogues.

³“Qīla inna aṣlahu kanisah, wa-qaḍ ‘amarahu rajul kāna ‘aṭṭāran, wa-kāna yunfiqū ‘alayhi min al-ghayb fa-nusiba ilayhi” (al-Nābulusī, *al-Riḥlah al-Ṭarābulusīyah*, 72–73).



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other interpretations for its special architectural features.

DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING

The ʿAṭṭār Mosque was built during the eighth/fourteenth century in the middle of today's old city of Tripoli, which is still relatively well preserved. The nucleus of the mosque consists of a prayer hall, a vestibule in the east, and a minaret.⁴ The prayer hall is situated longitudinally from south to north (fig. 1). A barrel vault takes up this axis and is interrupted in the northern section by a dome. To the north, west, and east of the area of the dome are the three entrances to the mosque.

Whereas the portal in the west opens directly into the prayer hall, the portal in the east opens into a vestibule leading to this room. The vestibule is flanked by a room for ablution in the north and by a further adjoining room in the south. Altogether, this group of rooms forms an eastern annex. To the east of the northern entrance arises the minaret.

The prayer hall is bordered to the south by the qiblah wall, which is distinguished by the minbar in the center and the mihrab in the east (fig. 2). Starting at the qiblah wall and extending as far as the dome, the east and west sides of the southern prayer hall are divided by three large niches, each of different size (fig. 3). The barrel vault and the wall division with niches⁵ continue to the north of the area of the dome. Today this area is encompassed by a gallery (fig. 4).

Altogether, with the longitudinal direction of the prayer hall, the position of the mihrab in the east and the minbar in the middle of the qiblah wall,⁶ the domed area, and the arrangement of the entrance and the annex in the east, the ʿAṭṭār Mosque displays architectural elements that do not permit a simple correlation

⁴ In this article I shall focus primarily on the core structure of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque. The latrine, the inaccessible adjoining room F, the blocked up niche C 1, and a room adjoining A 2 are not the immediate subjects of this study.

⁵ Whereas the eastern niche (C 2) is fully shaped, the western niche (C 1) seems to have been blocked up. This is indicated, on the one hand, by alterations in the course of the masonry and, on the other, by the similar front walls that are in both cases located above the gallery. A window blocks up the opening in the west (C 1), while the front wall continues in the vaulting of the niche in the east (C 2).

⁶ In addition, it is noteworthy that the present-day direction of the qiblah does not correspond with the original qiblah and is modified by means of lines spanned across the floor. Basing his calculations on Mamluk astronomical writings, King is able to determine a qiblah-orientation of ca. 30 degrees southeast in Tripoli. Yet he notes that the direction of the qiblah in Mamluk mosques in Tripoli actually ranges from 15 degrees southeast to 10 degrees southwest (David A. King, "The Astronomy of the Mamluks: A Brief Overview," *Muqarnas* 2 [1984]: 82). Thus, the ʿAṭṭār Mosque does not present an exception in Tripoli with the "inexact" orientation of the qiblah.



with the otherwise common typology of mosques.⁷

A CRUSADER CHURCH AS PREDECESSOR?

Various scholars have attempted to explain the peculiarities in the elevation and ground plan of the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque with the hypothesis of a predecessor structure (often suggested to have been a church) located at the same site of the present-day mosque.⁸ The aforementioned passage in al-Nābulusī’s text and the history of the city of Tripoli are essential pieces of evidence used in the development of this hypothesis. The present-day old city of Tripoli emerged as a new creation of the Mamluks in the late seventh/thirteenth century, following Sultan al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn’s⁹ conquest of and complete destruction of the old port city of Tripoli in 688/1289, which had been under Crusader rule since 1109. The new city, given the same name, was built a few kilometers farther inland¹⁰ on the banks of the Abū ‘Alī river, at the site of a suburb (*mons peregrinus*). The latter had already developed after the building of the citadel at the beginning of the twelfth century¹¹ and thus has given rise to speculation about possible previous structures from Crusader times that might still have been preserved.¹²

The first suggestion of a church as predecessor to the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque is found in al-Nābulusī’s writings, as mentioned above. This hypothesis was initially taken up by the scholar Kurd ‘Alī, who surmised that the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque was preceded by a Crusader church.¹³ Two lines of argument have developed in research, which

⁷ Cf. Hayat Salam-Liebich, *The Architecture of the Mamluk City of Tripoli* (Cambridge, MA, 1983), 76. For mosque typology, see, for example, Robert Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture: Form, Function and Meaning* (Edinburgh, 1994).

⁸ One exception is Meinecke, who views the present form as the enlargement of an “original” structure (Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 2:165 and 215).

⁹ R. 678–93/1279–90.

¹⁰ Al-Qalqashandī, *Kitāb Ṣubḥ al-A‘shā fi Ṣinā‘at al-Inshā’* (Cairo, 1914), 4:142–43.

¹¹ Salam-Liebich, *The Architecture*, 6.

¹² Cf. for example, the Great Mosque: Max van Berchem and Edmond Fatio, *Voyage en Syrie* (Cairo, 1914), 1:118–19; Camille Enlart, *Les monuments des croisés dans le royaume de Jérusalem: Architecture religieuse et civile*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1928), 434; and the mosque of the governor Ṭaynāl al-Ashrafī: Nina Jidejian, *Tripoli through the Ages* (Beirut, 1980), 86–87; Berchem and Fatio, *Voyage en Syrie*, 1:120–21. In order to attain substantiated information about Crusader structures that still exist in the city, more archaeological investigations are necessary. Until now excavations have been conducted only by Salamé-Sarkis in the area of the citadel and in al-Mīna (Ḥassān Salamé-Sarkis, “Chronique archéologique du Liban-Nord II: 1973-1974,” *Bulletin du Musée de Beyrouth* 26 [1973]: 91–102; idem, “Tripoli: Textes et Fouilles,” *Berytus* 31 [1983]: 129–49). Cf. Gunnar Lehmann, *Bibliographie der Archäologischen Fundstellen und Surveys in Syrien und Libanon* (Rahden/Westfalen, 2002), 561.

¹³ Kurd ‘Alī notes that it was well known among the inhabitants of Tripoli that during the time of



unlike Kurd ʿAlī, maintain explicitly that a Crusader church is still evidenced in the structure of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque of today.¹⁴ Whereas one view proposes that an original Crusader church was simply converted into a mosque,¹⁵ the other has developed the theory of an original Crusader church that was destroyed, whereupon a mosque was built in the same place, making use of parts of the predecessor structure.¹⁶

The main proponent of this second theory is Tadmurī. He augments the remarks of al-Nābulusī and Kurd ʿAlī with the assertion that the southern part of the Crusader church remained standing, while the newly erected mosque was adjoined to the northern part.¹⁷ Thereby Tadmurī makes the first attempt to support Kurd ʿAlī's reference to the common opinion of Tripoli's inhabitants about the mosque by providing arguments which he, however, presents only in the form of assertions without further facts or data; hence, his assumption of a cemetery¹⁸ or the existence of objects from Crusader times (now missing).¹⁹ Further, Tadmurī does not supply any arguments or references for his assumption that the former baptismal font forms the cupola of the present-day minbar.²⁰ Tadmurī's assertion

the Crusaders the ʿAṭṭār Mosque was a church and that after the conquest of Islam it was changed into a congregational mosque. Allegedly, after the structure had deteriorated, it was reconstructed (Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī, *Khiṭaṭ al-Shām* [Damascus, 1928], 6:54).

¹⁴ Al-Nābulusī uses the phrase *wa-qad ʿamarahu*, which could be understood in this way if Herzfeld's reading of "amara, ʿammara" is followed: "reconstruire, en conservant une assez grande partie de ce qui existait avant, et, dans la plupart des cas, moins que cel: reparer" (Ernst Herzfeld, *Matériaux pour un Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum: Deuxième Partie: Syrie du Nord: Inscriptions et Monuments d'Alep* [Cairo, 1954–55], 162).

¹⁵ Al-Sayyid ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Sālim, *Ṭarābulus al-Shām fī al-Tārīkh al-Islāmī* (Alexandria, 1967), 414; Samīḥ Wajīh al-Zayn, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus Qadīman wa-Ḥadīthan* (Beirut, 1969), 423; Salam-Liebich, *The Architecture*, 78; Dick Doughty, "Tripoli: Lebanon's Mamluk monument," *Aramco World* 51, no. 3 (2000): 9.

¹⁶ ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī, *Tārīkh wa-Āthār Masājīd wa-Madāris Ṭarābulus fī ʿAṣr al-Mamālīk: Min al-Faṭḥ al-Manṣūrī ḥattā al-Ān (688–1394H/1289–1974M)* (Tripoli, 1974), 194.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 194; idem, "Al-Āthār al-Islāmīyah fī Ṭarābulus al-Shām," *Al-Fīkr al-ʿArabi* 9, no. 52 (1988): 212.

¹⁸ Tadmurī, "Al-Āthār al-Islāmīyah," 212. Here he refers solely to the mosque keeper. With the lack of a thorough investigation in the area of the courtyard, which is paved with marble slabs, it can only be stated that today there are no signs of a cemetery.

¹⁹ ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus al-Siyāsī wa-al-Ḥadārī ʿabra al-ʿUṣūr: ʿAṣr Dawlat al-Mamālīk*, vol. 2, *Min al-Faṭḥ al-Manṣūrī 688h/1289m ḥattā Suqūṭ Dawlat al-Mamālīk 922h/1516m* (Tripoli, 1981), 291.

²⁰ Here in comparison reference should be made to two baptismal fonts from Crusader times in Lebanon, which Enlart presents: one in the cathedral in Byblos and one in the monastery church in Belmont. They do not display any similarity with the cupola of the minbar (Enlart, *Les monuments des croisés*, vol. 1, atlas [Paris, 1926], pl. 38, fig. 128; *ibid.*, vol. 1 [Paris, 1925], 163). On the



that the southern part of the roof does not look like an “Islamic building”²¹ cannot be accepted due to the lack of any details.

The arguments made by Salam-Liebich in favor of a converted church, which are supported by Doughty,²² al-Zayn, and Sālim,²³ are, however, based upon observations of the building. Salam-Liebich views the disposition of the ground plan (fig. 1), the later addition of an ablution room, and the mihrab set in the east of the qiblah wall as decisive arguments in support of the prior use of the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque as a church.²⁴

Salam-Liebich’s observation that the ground plan of the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque cannot be assigned to any known classification of mosque can be affirmed. Yet, neither does the plan correspond with a Crusader church which has been converted but still basically preserved in its original structure. Whereas the core structure of the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque is in a north-south direction, that of the typical Crusader church was orientated towards the east.²⁵ Furthermore, the mihrab contradicts Salam-Liebich’s argument in favor of a church. That is, the mihrab was integrated from the start into the present qiblah wall, as attested by the continuous masonry within the mihrab niche and the surrounding wall surface (fig. 5). Therefore, it must be seen as an original as well as fundamental endorsement of the building as a mosque. Even though accord must be given Salam-Liebich’s note that an ablution room is essential for a mosque, its later addition is not a compelling

contrary, the material, decoration, and technique of the minbar’s cupola are comparable to other contemporary minbars, as will be dealt with in detail below.

²¹ Tadmuri, *Tārīkh wa-Āthār*, 194.

²² Doughty, “Tripoli,” 9.

²³ Although Sālim also refers to Kurd ‘Alī, he nevertheless reaches the conclusion—contrary to Tadmuri—that the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque was converted from a church (Sālim, *Ṭarābulus al-Shām*, 414). Al-Zayn shares this opinion, with reference to Kurd ‘Alī (al-Zayn, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus*, 423).

²⁴ Salam-Liebich, *The Architecture*, 78.

²⁵ Cf. for example Denys Pringle, *The Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem: A Corpus*, vol. 2 (Cambridge, 1998); Enlart, *Les monuments des croisés*, vol. 1, atlas; and Santino Langè, *Architettura delle crociate in Palestina* (Como, 1965), 129–74. Enlart emphasizes the orientation to the east again expressly (Enlart, *Les monuments des croisés*, 1:41–42). The possibility that a church might have stood there that was not built by the Crusaders can be dismissed, as both Maronite as well as early Christian churches in Syria are situated with the sanctuary towards the east (for Maronite churches, see Youhanna Sader, *Peintures murales dans des églises maronites médiévales* [Beirut, 1987]; for early Christian churches see Howard Crosby Butler, *Early Churches in Syria: Fourth to Seventh Centuries: Edited and Completed by E. Baldwin Smith: Part One: History*, ed. E. Baldwin Smith [1929; repr., Amsterdam, 1969], 182; for churches of the Byzantine, Armenian, and Syrian rites see Raymond Janin, *Les églises orientales et les rites orientales: Cinquième édition avec compléments bibliographiques par Sandrine Lerou et Philippe Escolan: Préface par Etienne Fouilloux* [Paris, 1997], 28, 313, 366).



argument for the building's former use as a church.²⁶

Meinecke assumes as well that there was an “original structure,” but, on the contrary, dates it to the Mamluk period; according to his theory, a predecessor structure was erected before 735/1334–35, to which the west portal might have belonged. Later, the eastern portal and the marble minbar, both dated through an inscription to 751/1350–51, were added to this complex.²⁷ This sequence in building phases, which is implied in Salam-Liebich's and Meinecke's assertion that the ablution room or the portal was added at a later time to a building that was already present (Crusader church, “original structure”), will be discussed in the following.

RELATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF THE BUILDING PHASES OF THE CORE STRUCTURE

Clearly recognizable in the masonry are joints which a recent restoration of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque brought to light from beneath the plaster of the interior room.²⁸ These joints have made it possible to formulate a relative chronology of several building phases (fig. 1). Construction of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque began in the south (I), continued in the north (II), and culminated in the construction of an annex consisting of the ablution room, vestibule, and adjoining room in the east.

One distinct joint is located to the south of niches A3 and A6 and runs on both sides from the top of the vault down to the floor (fig. 5). The course of the stone layers to the south and to the north of the joint differ. Moreover, great differences are noticeable in the composition of the vaulting on both sides. Whereas in the south the stones are almost ashlar-like and the vertical and horizontal masonry relatively flat and more tightly applied, in the north the stones resemble quarry stones and the joints appear to be deeper and more spacious, so that the surface seems to be essentially more uneven. The vaulting in the entire prayer hall of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque was constructed in *Kufverband* (one horizontal row at a time) (fig. 3). This construction technique is characterized by regular horizontal layers with an uninterrupted course of horizontal joints and alternating vertical joints from the base to the top of the vaulting throughout its entire length.²⁹ This, however,

²⁶ There is a possibility that there were temporary facilities for washing; however, this must remain a hypothesis at present.

²⁷ Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 2:165 and 215.

²⁸ My hypotheses on the relative chronology of the building phases are based on observations of the masonry which I documented photographically during my field trip in preparation of my Master's thesis in April and May 2004. The exact date of restoration is unknown to me, but on older photographs, the plastered wall surface is still to be seen.

²⁹ For the construction technique of vaulting with the use of scaffolds and *Kufverband*, see Franz Hart, *Kunst und Technik der Wölbung* (Munich, 1965), 16; Otto Warth, *Die Konstruktionen in Stein* (1903; repr., Hannover, 1981), 177–78. For the technique of vaulting using the runner (German:



is not the case in the vaulting under study here; thus, it must have been built in two stages.

As the vaulting to the north of the joint is lower than that to the south, it may be deduced that the section in the north (II) was built after the section to the south (I) (fig. 4). The continuation of the vault was first adjusted towards the height of the older, already settled, part of the vault and ultimately was lower after the setting of the masonry upon completion.³⁰ The hypothesis of a later erection of the northern section is supported by the observation that despite the otherwise even course of masonry, this section is joined denticulately in the southern section.³¹

The later northern section (II) also displays an uneven surface in the vaulting to the north, east, and west of the dome (fig. 4). Building phase II is distinguished from building phase I through the molding on the front of the pillars that does not continue in building phase II and a pointed form of the front wall of the niches (II) instead of a round one (I) (figs. 3 and 4). Yet, structural characteristics such as the direction and the approximate height of the vaulting are maintained.

In a further building phase (III) the annex consisting of an ablution room, vestibule, and adjoining room was set before the prayer hall (I, II). The mostly uniform course of the masonry on the portal, the exterior wall of the ablution room,³² and the adjoining room suggest that this building unit was erected all at one time.³³

In the interior, this annex (III) is clearly separate from the interior of the prayer hall (I, II). The presumption that it is a later addition is supported by the fact that the west wall of the ablution room seems to be just superimposed to the east wall of the prayer hall (fig. 6).³⁴ Furthermore, a joint is quite distinct on the north

Kufe), see Hans Koepf and Günther Binding, *Bildwörterbuch der Architektur* (Stuttgart, 1999), 291.

³⁰ I thank Dr. Stefan Weber for inviting me to the two international workshops of the German Lebanese Tripoli Project in 2002 and 2003 in Beirut/Tripoli, where this idea arose out of the discussion with different architectural historians.

³¹ Cf. Warth, *Die Konstruktionen*, 56–57. The corbelling can be ascribed to the northern section; it was incorporated into the south masonry at a later time.

³² In the lower area on the façade of the ablution room, the course of the masonry of the portal continues on the level of the window sill. Only beyond does the uncovered ashlar masonry begin.

³³ In addition, a corbelling of the portal frame extends into the façade of the ablution room, which would not have had a function without a planned adjoining building.

³⁴ This is suggested, on the one hand, by the stout jamb of the northern window and the door below in the west wall of the ablution room and east wall of the prayer hall. On the other, at this point a different course in the horizontal masonry can be recognized. Besides this, the arrangement of the west wall of the ablution room is adjusted to meet the features of the east wall of the prayer hall: the windows and the door in the back wall of the northern-most niche of the prayer hall (C 2) are integrated into the wall arrangement of the ablution room (fig. 6).



corner of the passage between the prayer hall (II) and the vestibule (III) (fig. 7),³⁵ and the eastern supporting pillar for the dome had to be modified (fig. 8) in order to permit access to the ablution room.

Thus, Salam-Liebich's and Meinecke's assumption of the later annexation of the ablution room or eastern portal is confirmed and can be expanded to include the south room as constituting building phase III. However, the possibility that the building (I, II), which was enlarged through the addition of the east complex (III), was originally a Crusader church is not supported, either typologically or by my analysis of the masonry. Instead, dating inscriptions and historiographic sources provide clues that the ʿAṭṭār Mosque was first erected in the seventh/fourteenth century and thus cannot be a Crusader church.

THE DATING

The single inscription that dates the ʿAṭṭār Mosque is located above the entrance in the eastern portal³⁶ and denotes the year 751/1350–51.³⁷ Yet, another date

³⁵ One building joint is formed on the northern corner of the passage between the prayer hall (II) and vestibule (III), which the wall of the ablution room adjoins. The joint runs from the floor to the beginning of the vaulting of the vestibule (fig. 7).

³⁶ The building inscription in the western portal does not display a date, but rather the signature of a craftsman: *ʿamala Abū Bakr ibn al-Ṣiṣ*. The name of a craftsman is mentioned here, yet Tadmurī must refer to the *Tārīkh Bayrūt* of Ṣāliḥ ibn Yaḥyá so that he can date the craftsman, and with him the portal as well, to the middle of the eighth/fourteenth century. In drawing upon Ṣāliḥ ibn Yaḥyá, he does not read the latter's name as "Abū Bakr ibn al-Ṣiṣ," but as "Abū Bakr ibn al-Baṣīṣ (Tadmurī, *Tārīkh wa-Āthār*, 195). Tadmurī presents the inscription in the first rendition in writing, but maintains that the "correct" name should be "Abū Bakr ibn al-Baṣīṣ" (Tadmurī, *Tārīkh wa-Āthār*, 195, n. 1). This name is mentioned by Ṣāliḥ ibn Yaḥyá, who writes about Abū Bakr ibn al-Baṣīṣ al-Baʿlabakī, an experienced engineer (*muhandis*) in coastal works who rebuilt a bridge over the Nahr al-Kalb and who undertook other important tasks in the region of Tripoli (Ṣāliḥ ibn Yaḥyá, *Tārīkh Bayrūt: Récits des anciens de la famille de Buḥtur b. ʿAlī, Emīr du Gharb de Beyrouth*, ed. Francis Hours and Kamal Salibi [Beirut, 1969], 103; L. A. Mayer, *Islamic Architects and Their Works* [Geneva, 1956], 37). Secondary literature since 1974 follows Tadmurī's reading of the craftsman's signature as "Abū Bakr ibn al-Baṣīṣ al-Baʿlabakī" (cf. for example Salam-Liebich, *The Architecture*, 71; Robert Saliba, ed., *Tripoli: The Old City: Monument Survey: Mosques and Madrasahs: A Sourcebook of Maps and Architectural Drawings* [Beirut, 1994], Monument Number 13; Muḥammad ʿAlī Ḍinnāwī, *ʿAwdat al-Dhākīrah ilá Tārīkh Ṭarābulus wa-al-Miṭṭaqah* [Tripoli, 1998], 256 [Abū Bakr ibn ʿAlī al-Balaʿbakī]; Muḥammad Kāmil Bābā, *Ṭarābulus fī al-Tārīkh* [Tripoli, 1995], 358). By contrast, only Meinecke takes into account the difference between the signature present on the structure and the name as interpreted by Tadmurī; he presents the name of the craftsman as "Abū Bakr ibn al-[Ba]ṣīṣ" (Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 2:165).

³⁷ "Bismillāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm hādhā al-bāb al-mubārak wa-al-minbar ʿamal al-muʿallim Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-muhandis fī sanat ihdā wa-khamsīn wa-sabʿi miʿah." Moritz Sobernheim, *Matériaux pour un Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum: Deuxième Partie: Syrie du Nord I: Akkār, Ḥiṣn al-Akrād, Tripoli* (Cairo, 1909), 105; Nikita Elisséeff, David Storm Rice, and Gaston



can be gained from the chronicle of Ibn al-Dawādārī,³⁸ *Kanz al-Durar*.³⁹ In his list of construction works during the reign of al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn, Ibn al-Dawādārī mentions the foundation or beginning of the building of a mosque (*jāmiʿ anshaʿahu*) by one Badr al-Dīn ibn al-ʿAṭṭār in Tripoli. However, he does not supply an exact date for this undertaking. Thus, Ibn al-Dawādārī’s information opens up a broad scope of interpretation regarding the date of the mosque’s construction. On the basis of the chronicle, which ends with the year 735/1334–35 and the actual writing of which was completed in 736/1335–36,⁴⁰ the event described can be dated prior to 735–36/1334–36, during the reign of al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn (first regnal period: 693–94/1293–94; second regnal period: 698–708/1299–1309; third regnal period: 709–41/1310–41). The verb “*anshaʿa*” that Ibn al-Dawādārī used in this reference implies a formal act of founding, that is, the foundation of a *waqf*, but also the actual beginning of construction of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque itself.⁴¹

Wiet, *Répertoire Chronologique d’Epigraphie Arabe*, vol. 16 (Cairo, 1964), 106, no. 6158; Amine Bizri, ed., *La calligraphie Arabe dans l’architecture: Les inscriptions dans les monument Islamiques de la ville de Tripoli à l’époque mamelouke* (s.l., 1999), 99. The building inscription is engraved on a stone in the back wall of the portal; the stone is integrated into the masonry so that its coevalness with the portal can be assumed.

³⁸ Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-Durar wa-Jāmiʿ al-Ghurar*, pt. 9, *Al-Durr al-Fākhir fī Sirat al-Malik al-Nāṣir*, ed. Hans Robert Roemer (Wiesbaden, 1960), 391.

³⁹ Until Tadmuri’s study in 1974, which introduces Ibn al-Dawādārī, the dating of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque was based primarily upon the building inscription in the eastern portal. Sobernheim first published the inscription on the eastern portal, noting that this inscribed date of 751/1350–51 could refer either to the foundation or to a restoration of the mosque (Sobernheim, *Matériaux*, 105). Sālim had already drawn upon Ibn al-Dawādārī’s chronicle and, relying thereupon, arrived at the date of 751/1350 for the mosque, a date that Tadmuri explicitly contradicts (Sālim, *Ṭarābulus al-Shām*, 413). Tadmuri rejects the date 751/1350–51 with reference to Abū al-Fidāʿ and Ibn al-Wardī, according to whom the donor of the mosque had already died in 749/1348–49 (Tadmuri, *Tārikh wa-Āthār*, 190–91). While al-Qaṭṭār (Ilyās al-Qaṭṭār, *Niyābat Ṭarābulus fī ʿAhd al-Mamālik [688–922 H/1289–1516 M]* [Beirut, 1998], 490) and Sharif (Ḥikmat Bik Sharif, *Tārikh Ṭarābulus al-Shām* [Tripoli, 1987], 184–85) follow Tadmuri in his opinion about the date 735/1334–35, Ḥimṣī (Naḥdī Ṣubḥī Ḥimṣī, *Tārikh Ṭarābulus min khilāl Wathāʾiq al-Maḥkamah al-Sharʿiyah fī al-Niṣf al-Thānī min al-Qarn al-Sābiʿ ʿAshar al-Milādī* [Beirut, 1986], 68), al-Bakhīt (in Yahyá ibn Abī al-Ṣafáʿ Ibn Maḥāsīn, *Al-Manāzil al-Maḥāsiniyah fī al-Riḥlah al-Ṭarābulusiyah*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAdnān al-Bakhīt [Beirut, 1981], 67), and Salam-Liebich (*The Architecture*, 69) support Sālim’s date of 751/1350–51.

⁴⁰ From Ibn al-Dawādārī’s introduction to the first volume, Roemer infers that the chronicle was begun in 709/1309–10, and, in view of the colophon in the ninth volume, that it was completed in 736/1335–36 (Roemer, ed., *Kanz al-Durar*, 14).

⁴¹ See, for instance, Lane, who explains one of the meanings of “*anshaʿa*” as: “he founded or began to build a house.” (q.v., E. W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*). Cf. Herzfeld, *Matériaux*, 119, and Sheila Blair, *Islamic Inscriptions* (New York, 1998), 32.



Hence, this results in two possibilities for the dating of the construction of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque. If Herzfeld's reading of the word "*ansha'a*" as a formal founding act ("l'institution abstraite du sanctuaire") is followed,⁴² then merely a *waqf* was established during the reign of al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn before 735–36/1334–36 and the actual construction began later. For this interpretation, attention should be drawn to Abū al-Fidā' and Ibn al-Wardī, who are to be dated before 749/1348–49, and who mention an endowment and do not refer expressly to the erection of a mosque.⁴³ Therefore, only the building inscription of 751/1350–51 can be viewed as a fixed date for the actual construction work.

On the contrary, if the verb "*ansha'a*" is understood to denote the actual beginning of construction, then based upon the dates at hand the construction began during the reign of al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn, yet before 735–36/1334–36, and was still going in 751/1350–51.⁴⁴ This relatively long time span can be viewed in association with the three phases of building. However, their precise temporal fixation and the duration of possible interruptions in building cannot be determined on the basis of the sources at hand and my analysis of the masonry. The postulated erection of the southern part of the prayer hall (I) prior to 735–36/1334–36 would, nevertheless, confirm the designation of the eastern annex with its inscribed date of 751/1350–51 as the latest section of the building. Therefore, Meinecke's assumption of an original structure that comprised the entire prayer hall that was erected before 735/1334–35 and that was later enlarged with an annex (III) can be expanded through the identification of a third building phase (II), so that the prayer hall was not erected in one single building phase, but in two (I, II).⁴⁵

Following the theory that the southern part is the oldest section of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque, that its erection took place before or after 735–36/1334–36, and that the mihrab was originally integrated into the qiblah wall, it can be maintained that the building was initially a mosque. This is further supported by the chronicles of Ibn al-Dawādārī and Ibn al-Wardī and the travelogue of Ibn Maḥāsin, which are contemporaneous, and which in contrast to al-Nābulusī do not mention a

⁴² Herzfeld, *Matériaux*, 119.

⁴³ Abū al-Fidā' Ismā'il ibn 'Alī, *Kitāb al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar* (Cairo, 1325/1907), 153; Zayn al-Dīn 'Umar ibn al-Muẓaffar Ibn al-Wardī, *Tatimmat al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar (Tārikh Ibn al-Wardī)*, ed. Aḥmad Rif'at al-Badrāwī (Beirut, 1970), 2:500.

⁴⁴ This seems unusually long when compared to other structures such as, for example, the madrasah of al-Nāṣir Ḥasan in Cairo, the construction of which began in 757/1356 and was completed after 761/1360, and which was considered to be exceedingly laborious and expensive (cf. Mayer, *Islamic Architects*, 23; Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "Muhandis, shad, mu'allim—Note on the Building Craft in the Mamluk Period," *Der Islam* 72, no. 2 (1995): 305.

⁴⁵ Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 2:165 and 215.



previous structure or a church as predecessor. All in all, they weaken Salam-Liebich's argument that the mosque is a converted Crusader church with the later addition of an ablution room, and also Tadmuri's suggestion that the southern part is the remnant of a Crusader church.

THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE 'AṬṬĀR MOSQUE IN ITS URBAN SETTING

Since the analysis of the building of the 'Aṭṭār Mosque does not confirm the hypothesis of a present-day structure in which a (preceding) Crusader church can be recognized, al-Nābulusī can be assumed to be the creator of this particular topos. Yet, the "unusual" disposition of this mosque still remains unresolved. As an alternative hypothesis for explaining its atypical layout, the relationship of the mosque to its urban setting⁴⁶ will be considered here.⁴⁷ Thereby attention should be directed to other architectural features of the 'Aṭṭār Mosque that have not yet been noted, namely the incorporation of the dome and the remarkable situation of the passageways (fig. 1).

The 'Aṭṭār Mosque lies north of the citadel of Tripoli on the left bank of the Abū 'Alī river.⁴⁸ It is located in the Bāb al-Ḥadīd quarter and enclosed by the Sūq al-Bāzirkān to the east and the Sūq al-Jadīd to the north.⁴⁹

The immediate urban surroundings (fig. 9) seem to have developed at about the same time as the 'Aṭṭār Mosque. Both the Khān al-Miṣriyīn to the south of the mosque and the Khān al-Khayyāṭīn adjoining in the east date from the eighth/fourteenth century.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ To date, the immediate urban environs of the 'Aṭṭār Mosque have not been investigated in detail, or the results have not been published. With all necessary caution, here an attempt will be made, departing from the present town's structure and by means of individual datable buildings, to determine the urban situation in the eighth/fourteenth century. Thereby, the possible interdependence of the mosque's architecture and the urban setting should be seen as a reciprocal interaction.

⁴⁷ Cf. in this regard Howayda Al-Harithy, "The Concept of Space in Mamluk Architecture," *Muqarnas* 18 (2001): 73–93. Hillenbrand points to the interaction of external and internal space in mosques, using the inward shift of the façade in the form of the qiblah as an example (Robert Hillenbrand, "Some Observations on the Use of Space in Medieval Islamic Buildings," in *Studies in Medieval Islamic Architecture* [London, 2001], 1:165). This interaction of the 'Aṭṭār Mosque with its urban setting can be seen as the example of an exception, if its ground plan and its integration into the urban landscape are compared to the Great Mosque, for instance. In its design as a court mosque, the latter interacts less with its surroundings; it displays a regular rectangular ground plan and no through passageways.

⁴⁸ Cf. a plan of the city in Paul Collart, Maurice Chehab, and Armando Dillon, *Liban: Aménagement de la Ville de Tripoli et du Site de Baalbek: Rapport de la mission envoyée par l'UNESCO en 1953*, Paul Collart, Chef de Mission, Emir Maurice Chehab et Armando Dillon (Paris, 1954), 11.

⁴⁹ Cf. Tadmuri, "Al-Āthār al-Islāmiyah," 212; Jidejian, *Tripoli*, 93.

⁵⁰ Nonetheless, the date of both khans is controversial. Luz views the Khān al-Miṣriyīn and the



The ʿAṭṭār Mosque is closely integrated into this urban setting through the neighboring houses, surrounding passageways, and the course of streets. A street leads to each of the three entrances of the mosque. Thus, the northern portal of the mosque⁵¹ is connected to the Zuqāq al-Tarbiʿah and the western portal to the Khān al-Jāwīsh.⁵² In the east a small street leads on a slightly divergent line to the eastern portal of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque, so that all in all there is a distinct east-west axis in the network of streets.⁵³

Likewise, the ʿAṭṭār Mosque interacts with its urban setting, especially with regard to the course of streets, through its architectural design and its decorative scheme. The streets running from the east, west, and north directly towards the entrances converge in the mosque's interior in the area of the dome (fig. 4). The dome distinctly marks this "intersection of streets" and "thoroughfare" situation in the interior and exterior of the mosque. This might be an explanation for the off-center position of the dome within the mosque, for which there are no parallels, either in Tripoli or in other cities. Domes of madrasahs and mosques in Tripoli emphasize the liturgically central places in front of the mihrab and the qiblah wall,⁵⁴ and in such buildings which vary the multi-*iwān* scheme, they mark the

Khān al-Khayyāṭīn as endowments established prior to 750–51/1350 (Nimrod Luz, "Tripoli Reinvented: A Case of Mamluk Urbanization," *Towns and Material Culture in the Medieval Middle East*, ed. Yaacov Lev [Leiden, 2002], 66, map 5). This date for the Khān al-Khayyāṭīn can also be found in Salam-Liebich (Salam-Liebich, *The Architecture*, 178), Jidejian (Jidejian, *Tripoli*, 92), and Ḍinnāwī (Ḍinnāwī, *ʿAwdat al-Dhākirah*, 255), whereas Meinecke does not list it among the Mamluk structures. On the contrary, he agrees with the date of the Khān al-Miṣriyīn to the mid-eight/fourteenth century (Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 2:226). This view is also held by Salam-Liebich (Salam-Liebich, *The Architecture*, 175) and Tadmurī (ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī, *Wathāʿiq Nādirah min Sijillāt al-Maḥkamah al-Sharʿīyah bi-Ṭarābulus: Dirāsah Taḥlīliyah li-Aḥamm al-Nuṣūṣ al-Tārīkhīyah [1666–1780m]* [Beirut, 2002], 39), while Scharabi dates the building to the sixteenth century (Mohamed Scharabi, *Der Bazar: Das traditionelle Stadtzentrum im Nahen Osten und seine Handelseinrichtungen* [Tübingen, 1985], 203).

⁵¹ Tadmurī notes that the north entrance is of recent date (Tadmurī, *Tārīkh wa-Āthār*, 195); Salam-Liebich makes no mention of this portal. My analysis of the masonry in the area of the northern entrance did indeed reveal irregularities there, which makes the later addition of this entrance a possibility.

⁵² Tadmurī dates the building to the Ottoman period (Tadmurī, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus*, 290; idem, "Al-Āthār al-Islāmiyah," 212; idem, *Wathāʿiq*, 40. Cf. Jidejian, *Tripoli*, 92).

⁵³ At the eastern end of this small street there is a building with an inscription dating to Mamluk times, in which an Amir Sayf al-Dīn Ṭaṇṭash/Ṭuṇṭash is named (cf. Tadmurī, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus*, 290; Bizri, *La calligraphie Arabe*, 165–66, nos. 56–58).

⁵⁴ Examples to mention here are the Great Mosque, the Tawbah Mosque, the Madrasat al-Burṭāsī, the Ṭaynāl Mosque, the Madrasat Qarāṭāy al-Manṣūrī, and the Madrasah al-Khātūniyah. For the use of the dome as a designation of central places, cf. Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 53–54.



center.⁵⁵

While the line of the street leading to the northern entrance ends at the qiblah wall in the prayer hall, the street from the west towards the portal diverges slightly from its course in the east. This “external” east-west axis in the street network is incorporated architecturally into the plan of the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque through both of the opposite portals and the area of the dome as an “internal” east-west axis. Whereas the massiveness and verticality of the face of the barrel vault of the prayer hall to the north and south of the dome pose a boundary in these directions, the cap-like parts of the vault to the east and west of the dome (B 1, B 2) emphasize this way through the axis.

The entrances as crossing points between interior and exterior space likewise emphasize the way through the east-west axis. Correspondingly, the eastern and western portals are distinguished by ornamentation, while the northern entrance is not decorated. Thus, in contrast to the western portal, the eastern portal, with its essentially larger decorative scheme and size, is clearly marked as the main portal (figs. 10 and 11).⁵⁶ The prominence of the main portal is augmented by the integration of the entrance in the north and the portal in the west into (likely, formerly existing) vaulted passageways, so that there was no distant effect.⁵⁷

The fact that the eastern entrance is distinguished with a free-standing high

⁵⁵ Examples are again the Madrasat al-Burṭāsī, the Ṭaynāl Mosque, the Madrasat Qarāṭāy al-Manṣūrī, and the Madrasah al-Qadiriyyah. In addition, sepulchres can also be covered by a dome. Examples in Tripoli include the sepulchres of the Madrasat al-Burṭāsī, the Ṭaynāl Mosque, the Madrasah al-Nūriyyah, the Madrasah al-Khātūniyyah, and the Madrasah al-Qadiriyyah, among others. For domes in sepulchres, cf. R. Stephen Humphreys, “The Expressive Intent of the Mamluk Architecture of Cairo: A Preliminary Essay,” *Studia Islamica* 35 (1972): 113–14.

⁵⁶ The eastern portal can be divided into four zones, one above the other, of which the lowest two display *ablaq*. The first zone is defined by a door in the center of the back wall of the portal, which is flanked by two stone benches that fill almost the whole width of the portal. Above this is the second zone: above the relieving beam of the door is a lintel decorated with stylized lily motifs in marble incrustation. This zone is followed by the third zone: the aforementioned panel with the inscription and above this a square field with marble incrustation. The fourth zone is constituted by a section of four levels of *muqarnas*, which lead to the concluding calotte of the eastern portal. The design of the portal extends beyond the jamb and is incorporated into an encompassing framework. The decoration of the western portal is less elaborate. It is distinct from the accompanying masonry not through its height, but through its projection and the uncovered ashlar. The door is situated in the middle of the portal, and above it rises a three zoned frieze of *muqarnas*.

⁵⁷ The continuation of the roofing above the northern portal in a northerly direction is suggested by the consoles that are still preserved on both sides of the small street. Regarding the western portal, bases of vaults to the north and south indicate that this portal was vaulted. Furthermore, the western portal displays a rather flat *muqarnas* frieze, whose smaller size might be on account of the above vaulting (fig. 11).



portal and extensive decoration, as well as the fact that it draws attention to the east-west axis through the mosque, supports the reconstruction of the major street network in Mamluk Tripoli presented by Salamé-Sarkis.⁵⁸ In this reconstruction, he assumes the existence of a main street that runs south to north through the entire city, supposedly also passing by the ʿAṭṭār Mosque in the east.⁵⁹ The main street passed by the Great Mosque, the Khān al-Ṣābūn, the Khān al-Miṣriyīn, and the Khān al-Khayyāṭīn to the ʿAṭṭār Mosque, farther to the Sūq al-Ḥarāj and the Khān al-ʿAskar, and ultimately led out of the city via the Jisr al-Jadīd or Jisr al-ʿAtīq.⁶⁰ The north-south direction of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque corresponds approximately with the course of this main street to its east and thereby blocks direct access to the street that leads to the Khān al-Jāwīsh (fig. 9) to its west. Nonetheless, a direct connection between the khan and the main street is provided by the portals of the mosque that lie opposite each other to the east and west and by the continuation of the street’s course through the interior, which is emphasized by the architecturally distinct axis.⁶¹

Finally, the main street’s course, which has not yet been ascertained conclusively, might help to explain the divergent position—in view of the setting of the entire mosque—of the eastern annex. Possibly the axis with the divergence in relation to the prayer hall was made in order to adjust the east part of the mosque to the main street’s course and thus enable the outer façade to be clearly visible and as large as possible.⁶²

⁵⁸ However, caution is advised when following this theory. Salamé-Sarkis reconstructs the network of streets based upon important buildings, so that the network deduced from a building might actually be the result of circular logic (Ḥassān Salamé-Sarkis, *Contribution à l’histoire de Tripoli et de sa région à l’époque des croisades: Problèmes d’histoires, d’architecture et de céramique* [Paris, 1980], map no. 4, legend).

⁵⁹ This assumption might possibly be confirmed if one accepts Al-Harithy’s argument that the vestibules served as “transitional space” that provide a transition to the more “private” zone of the mosque, especially in the case of busy streets (Al-Harithy, “The Concept of Space,” 85–86). By contrast, in the north and west there is no vestibule, but instead a direct entrance to the prayer hall.

⁶⁰ Thereby, the course of this street resembles that of the ancient street network, which was supposedly retained by the Crusaders (cf. Salamé-Sarkis’ reconstruction of streets at the time of the Crusaders [Salamé-Sarkis, *Contribution à l’histoire de Tripoli*, 4, and map no. 3]; also Guy Le Strange, *Palestine under the Moslems: A Description of Syria and the Holy Land from A.D. 650 to 1500: Translated from the Works of Medieval Arab Geographers* [1890; repr., Beirut, 1965], 350–51).

⁶¹ A further example of a dominant east-west axis is found in the nearby Khān al-Miṣriyīn, whose entrances lie only in the east and west.

⁶² Cf. also Humphreys, “The Expressive Intent,” 98, and Al-Harithy “The Concept of Space,” 87. Comparable examples of this can be found in Cairo as well as in Tripoli. In Cairo, cf. for instance the mosque of Amir Shaykhu (Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Islamic Architecture in Cairo: An Introduction* [Leiden, 1989], 117) and the Mosque of Amir Aqsunqur al-Nāṣirī (Meinecke, *Mamlukische*



THE JĀMI' AL-ʿAṬṬĀR: ITS POSITION BETWEEN FUNCTION AND INTENT

Yet another architectural peculiarity which led Salam-Liebich to presume a converted Crusader church is the placement of the mihrab in the east section and not in the center of the qiblah wall (fig. 2).⁶³ As could be discerned above, this positioning took place during the construction of the qiblah wall and, therefore, cannot be ascribed to a facility built at a later time, which for instance might have been necessary when converting a church into a mosque. Instead, the minbar is obviously interjoined in the center of the qiblah wall. In order to explicate this peculiarity, here the edifice will be examined according to its social and religious function as “*jāmi' al-ʿAṬṬĀR*,” which was built by a non-Mamluk person.

THE MOSQUE AND ITS COMMISSIONER

In determining the commissioner of the ʿAṬṬĀR Mosque, reference can be made to the name of the mosque, “*jāmi' al-ʿAṬṬĀR*,” as well as to the Mamluk chronicles and descriptions in Ottoman travelogues. The decree of 821/1418 inscribed in the northern jamb of the eastern portal confirms the historicity of the mosque’s name of “*jāmi' al-ʿAṬṬĀR*.” Although contemporary sources⁶⁴ report that the mosque was named after its donor, the absence of a name in any inscription on the building⁶⁵

Architektur, 1:108, fig. 67). In Tripoli, cf. the Madrasat al-Burṭāsī, along whose northern façade the street via the Jisr al-ʿAtīq (today demolished) once ran (Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 1:75).

⁶³ Salam-Liebich, *The Architecture*, 78. Of almost the same age is the mausoleum of Amir Arāq al-Silāḥdār in Damascus (750/1349–50), where the mihrab was likewise built in the east of the qiblah wall (Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 2:213–14). The reason for the position of the mihrab seems to be that a window (Karl Wulzinger and Carl Watzinger, *Damaskus, die islamische Stadt* [Berlin, 1924], 100, fig. 22) or a passageway (Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 1:111, fig. 71) was built into the qiblah wall instead of a mihrab.

⁶⁴ Abū al-Fidāʿ, *Kitāb al-Mukhtaṣar*, 153; Ibn al-Wardī, *Tatimmat al-Mukhtaṣar*, 2:500.

⁶⁵ Herzfeld and Allen suggest that the absence of a founder inscription is possibly due to the premature death of the founder (Herzfeld, *Matériaux*, 275). Allen points out that buildings often remained “uninscribed” at the time of death of the founder; further, it was the obligation of the founder’s descendants not only to put the donated structure to use, but also to complete the decorative scheme with an inscription of the *waqfiyah*. This, however, was not always carried out (Terry Allen, “Madrasah al-Farrūkhshāhīyah,” chap. 3 in *Ayyūbid Architecture*, 6th ed. [Occidental, CA, 1999], <http://sonic.net/~tallen/palmtree/ayyarch/index.htm>. See especially the sub-section entitled “Missing Inscriptions and Blank Places”). There Allen refers in particular to uninscribed *tabula-ansata* cartouches and lintels in Ayyubid architecture. Thus, the absence of an inscription naming the commissioner might be explained by the mention of the death of the commissioner in 749/1348–49, as reported by Ibn al-Wardī and Abū al-Fidāʿ. The death would have occurred two years before the erection of the eastern portal, which would have been the most appropriate place for the placement of his name (Abū al-Fidāʿ, *Kitāb al-Mukhtaṣar*, 153; Ibn al-Wardī, *Tatimmat al-Mukhtaṣar*, 2:500). Cf. the location of such inscriptions in the Great Mosque, the Madrasat al-



might help to explain al-Nābulusī's assumption that it was endowed in secret (*min al-ghayb*⁶⁶). As far as the structure itself is concerned, only the name “*al-ʿAṭṭār*” in the inscription can be presumed to be a reference to a commissioner. Thus, the designation *al-ʿAṭṭār* affords several interpretative possibilities: literally “*al-ʿAṭṭār*” denotes the occupation of a perfume merchant and pharmacist.⁶⁷ As a component of the name (*laqab*) of a person, *al-ʿAṭṭār*—aside from the actual occupational designation of its bearer—can also be understood as a name which no longer connotes its original meaning.⁶⁸

Sobernheim and Condé point to the first reading of “*al-ʿAṭṭār*” as solely an occupational designation and suggest the interpretation of the mosque's name according to the urban context that they reconstructed. Whereas the present-day ʿAṭṭār Sūq is in the vicinity of the Qarāṭāy al-Manṣūrī madrasah,⁶⁹ Sobernheim views its location in Mamluk times as being confirmed by inscriptions in the ʿAṭṭār Mosque and a nearby house.⁷⁰ Therefore, Sobernheim understands the ʿAṭṭār Mosque as the “mosque of the perfume merchant” (Mosqué du Parfumeur), and “*al-ʿAṭṭār*” not as the specific *laqab* of the commissioner.⁷¹ Condé's translation of the mosque's name as “Perfumers' Mosque” corresponds with this theory as well.⁷² Ibn Maḥāsin's travelogue confirms the theory of Sobernheim and Condé,

Burtāsī, and the Ṭaynāl Mosque in Tripoli (for inscriptions, see Bizri, *La calligraphie arabe*).

⁶⁶ Al-Nābulusī, *Al-Riḥlah al-Ṭarābulusiyah*, 72–73.

⁶⁷ Cf. the dictionary entries in Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, and Dozy, *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes*; and A. Dietrich, “*al-ʿAṭṭār*,” *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, CD-ROM, edition v. 1.0 (Leiden, 1999), 1:751b–752b.

⁶⁸ Annemarie Schimmel, *Islamic Names* (Edinburgh, 1989), 54.

⁶⁹ Cf. Salam-Liebich, *The Architecture*, 117.

⁷⁰ Sobernheim, *Matériaux*, 107; cf. Gaston Wiet, “Répertoire des décrets mamlouks de Syrie,” *Mélanges syriens offerts à Monsieur René Dussaud par ses amis et ses élèves*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1939), 524; Tadmurī, *Tārīkh wa-Āthār*, 197–200. Tadmurī considers this assumption as being confirmed by Ottoman court documents (Tadmurī, *Wathāʾiq Nādīrah*, 152, n. 4).

⁷¹ Sobernheim further assumes that the mosque was a gathering place for the guild of the perfume merchants (Sobernheim, *Matériaux*, 104, n. 2).

⁷² Condé (Bruce Condé, *Tripoli of Lebanon* [Beirut, 1961], 92–93) apparently considers that the ʿAṭṭār Mosque was the kind of mosque meant for a specific quarter in the city. The fact that “*al-ʿAṭṭār*” is a singular form argues against his translation of the mosque's name and its interpretation. An example of a mosque whose name is in the plural form (“*al-ʿAṭṭārīn*,” meaning “mosque of the perfume merchants”), and which is read by Müller-Wiener as “Moschee (des Viertel) der Drogisten” (mosque in the pharmacists' quarter), can be found in Alexandria (Martina Müller-Wiener, *Eine Stadtgeschichte Alexandrias von 564/1169 bis in die Mitte des 9./15. Jahrhunderts: Verwaltung und innerstädtische Organisationsformen* [Berlin, 1992], 269; cf. Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 2:182). Salam-Liebich argues against the location in the perfumers' suq as well as against Sobernheim's interpretation of the edifice as a mosque of the perfumers' guild and implicitly also Condé's interpretation of a mosque for an urban quarter. She instead propounds



insofar as the mosque must have stood in the perfume merchants' suq, at least in the eleventh/seventeenth century (*fi nafs sūq al-buzūriyīna*), yet Ibn Maḥāsīn makes explicit mention of the person Shaykh al-ʿAṭṭār as commissioner.⁷³

Nevertheless, the earliest chronicles pertaining to the ʿAṭṭār Mosque imply an association between the name of the mosque “Jāmiʿ al-ʿAṭṭār” and a commissioner with the *laqab* “al-ʿAṭṭār.” Whereas Ibn al-Dawādārī mentions a person by the name of “Badr al-Dīn ibn al-ʿAṭṭār,” who supposedly founded a mosque in Tripoli, Abū al-Fidāʾ and Ibn al-Wardī confirm a direct tie between a “Shaykh Nāṣir al-Dīn al-ʿAṭṭār,” who endowed a congregational mosque in Tripoli, and the mosque’s name, as this edifice had been named after him (*wa-huwa wāqifu al-jāmiʿ al-maʿrūf bihi bihā*).⁷⁴

The mention by name of a commissioner with the *laqab* “al-ʿAṭṭār” in chronicles written around the time of the mosque’s erection is supportive of the existence of a person known by name who endowed the ʿAṭṭār Mosque. Due to the limitations of the available written sources, this still does not answer the question as to whether the name of the commissioner was “Badr al-Dīn ibn al-ʿAṭṭār” or “Nāṣir al-Dīn al-ʿAṭṭār.”⁷⁵ Nevertheless, the component of the mosque’s name, “al-ʿAṭṭār,”

that the name of the mosque should be ascribed to the *laqab* of a person named as commissioner in the chronicles. The person’s name was al-ʿAṭṭār, who merely by coincidence was a perfume merchant, and the mosque was named after him (Salam-Liebich, *The Architecture*, 69). She thereby refers to Ibn al-Dawādārī’s introduction in Sālim (Sālim, *Ṭarābulus al-Shām*, 413. Al-Zayn, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus*, 422, follows the passage almost precisely).

⁷³ Ibn Maḥāsīn, *Al-Manāzil*, 82.

⁷⁴ Abū al-Fidāʾ, *Kitāb al-Mukhtaṣar*, 153; Ibn al-Wardī, *Tatimmat al-Mukhtaṣar*, 2:500.

⁷⁵ Various deliberations about the commissioner of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque, which are based upon these three Mamluk chronicles, have appeared in the secondary literature. One group of scholars maintain that either Shaykh Nāṣir al-Dīn al-ʿAṭṭār, mentioned by Ibn al-Wardī and Abū al-Fidāʾ (Bābā, *Ṭarābulus fi al-Tārīkh*, 358), or Shaykh Nāṣir al-Dīn ibn al-ʿAṭṭār (Sulaymān ʿAbd al-ʿAbd Allāh al-Kharābishah, *Niyābat Ṭarābulus fi al-ʿAṣr al-Mamlūkī* [Amman, 1993], 156), or Badr al-Dīn ibn al-ʿAṭṭār, traceable to Ibn al-Dawādārī (Ḥimṣī, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus*, 200, n. 2; Sharif, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus*, 174; al-Bakhīt, *Al-Manāzil al-Maḥāsiniyah*, 67; Ḍinnāwī, *ʿAwdat al-Dhākīrah*, 256), is the commissioner. Other scholars prefer the reading of Badr al-Dīn al-ʿAṭṭār as found in Ibn al-Dawādārī, which is not documented and is presumably wrongly bequeathed. Whereas Salam-Liebich mentions both Badr al-Dīn al-ʿAṭṭār and Badr al-Dīn ibn al-ʿAṭṭār as commissioner (Salam-Liebich, *The Architecture*, 68–69), Meinecke and Saliba decided in favour of Badr al-Dīn al-ʿAṭṭār (Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 2:215, and 1:76; Saliba, *Tripoli*, Monument No. 13). Referring to three different variations, Tadmurī reflects the broadest scope of interpretations of the commissioner’s name: Badr al-Dīn ibn al-ʿAṭṭār (Tadmurī, *Tārīkh wa-Āthār*, 191–92), Badr al-Dīn al-ʿAṭṭār (idem, *Wathāʾiq Nādirah*, 105; idem, “Al-Āthār al-Islāmiyah,” 212; idem, “The Plans of Tripoli Alsham and its Mamluk Architecture,” *ARAM* 9–10 (1997–98): 476) and “undecided,” Badr al-Dīn al-ʿAṭṭār, and Nāṣir al-Dīn al-ʿAṭṭār (idem, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus*, 291. Cf. also al-Qaṭṭār, *Niyābat Ṭarābulus*, 490).



is so closely tied to the specific personage of a commissioner that still in the eleventh/seventeenth century al-Nābulusī reported that the mosque was named after its commissioner, without supplying this person's full name.⁷⁶ Instead, he goes beyond the information of his contemporaries and identifies the person as a wealthy perfume merchant and therefore views the *laqab* “al-ʿAṭṭār” as denoting the person's occupation as well.⁷⁷

Whether the commissioner was actually a merchant in perfumes, as the *laqab* and al-Nābulusī maintain, cannot be ascertained on the basis of the available source material. It can, however, be assumed that the person was likely wealthy in order to be able to endow the building of a mosque.⁷⁸ The first explicit reference to the endowment of the mosque (*waqf*) occurs in the mid-eighth/fourteenth century in the writings of Abū al-Fidāʾ and Ibn al-Wardī,⁷⁹ but the kind and extent of the *waqf* are not specified.⁸⁰ A *waqf* is also mentioned in the decree on the eastern portal of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque, so that an endowment can likewise be assumed in the ninth/fifteenth century. Al-Nābulusī writes in more detail about a *waqf* during the

⁷⁶ Al-Nābulusī, *Al-Rihlah al-Ṭarābulusiyah*, 72–73.

⁷⁷ “Wa-qad ʿamarahu [jāmiʿ] rajul kāna ʿaṭṭāran, wa-kāna yunfiqū ʿalayhi min al-ghayb fa-nusiba ilayhi” (al-Nābulusī, *Al-Rihlah al-Ṭarābulusiyah*, 72 f.).

⁷⁸ Fernandes ascertained that anyone, regardless whether a member of the civil or military elite, could be a commissioner (Leonor Fernandes, “Mamluk Architecture and the Question of Patronage,” *Mamlūk Studies Review* 1 [1997]: 108). The sole decisive criterion was the person's financial standing. Thus, Fernandes explicitly includes women and merchants in the group of commissioners.

⁷⁹ Abū al-Fidāʾ, *Kitāb al-Mukhtaṣar*, 153; Ibn al-Wardī, *Tatimmat al-Mukhtaṣar*, 2:500.

⁸⁰ Tadmurī attempts to connect the Madrasat Sibṭ al-ʿAṭṭār and a Ḥamām al-ʿAṭṭār and the commissioner of the mosque (Tadmurī, *Tārīkh wa-Āthār*, 309; idem, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus*, 287–88; idem, “The Plans of Tripoli,” 476–77; idem, *Wathāʾiq Nādirah*, 181). Although an inscription dated to 862/1457 has been documented in the Madrasat Sibṭ al-ʿAṭṭār (Sobernheim, *Matériaux*, 124–25; Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 2:381), and although both structures are named in Ottoman sources (cf. al-Nābulusī, *Al-Rihlah al-Ṭarābulusiyah*, 73; *Sijillāt Maḥkamat Ṭarābulus al-Shām al-Sharīʿiyah*, *sijill* 2, p. 135 [Ḥimṣī, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus*, 271–73; Tadmurī, *Wathāʾiq Nādirah*, 112 ff.]), Tadmurī's assignment of this data to supposedly extant buildings as well as the relationship of the respective commissioners to the commissioner of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque—which Tadmurī assumes—must nevertheless be carefully thought about. Whereas at first view the inference of a connection between mosque, *ḥamām*, and madrasah by means of a name may seem reasonable, the subsequent assumption that therefore a connection must have existed between the commissioners is unfounded, based upon the sources at hand. Only one single tie can be reconstructed between the Ḥamām al-ʿAṭṭār and the Madrasat Sibṭ al-ʿAṭṭār: an Ottoman court document from the year 1079/1668 mentions that the Ḥamām al-ʿAṭṭār was connected with the madrasah through a *waqf* and located in its vicinity (*Sijillāt Maḥkamat Ṭarābulus al-Shām al-Sharīʿiyah*, *sijill* 2, p. 135; dated to the beginning of Rabīʿ II 1079/September–October 1668 [Ḥimṣī, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus*, 271–73; Tadmurī, *Wathāʾiq Nādirah*, 112 ff.]).



Ottoman period, naming teachers as beneficiaries for the first time.⁸¹

The mention of the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque and the commissioner in chronicles and travelogues emphasizes the commissioner’s performing a devout act in endowing a *jāmi‘*. The mention of the name of the commissioner of the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque in supra-regional Mamluk chronicles leads to the conclusion that the name seems to have been widely known, or it was meant to designate an important personage in the city. As an inscription containing his name is absent on the mosque itself, the chronicles serve to preserve his *memoria*. Thereby the chronicles determine the personage of al-‘Aṭṭār primarily as commissioner and founder of the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque. The construction of the *jāmi‘* is then cited as an attribute of the commissioner as a person, which underscores his outstanding achievement, his service and—over and above that—his devoutness.⁸² At the same time the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque gains widespread renown. In a list of construction projects carried out during the reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad,⁸³ Ibn al-Dawādārī cites the mosque, along with the madrasah of Qarāṭāy al-Manṣūrī (716–26/1316–26),⁸⁴ as the only *jāmi‘* and the solitary edifice erected by a non-Mamluk in Tripoli.⁸⁵ This in turn could lead to deductions regarding the mosque’s local prominence as a *jāmi‘* and to the social status of its commissioner.

THE ‘AṬṬĀR MOSQUE AS JĀMI‘

The ‘Aṭṭār Mosque’s function as a congregational mosque or *jāmi‘* is documented in

⁸¹ Al-Nābulusī, *Al-Riḥlah al-Ṭarābulusīyah*, 72–73. That instruction was held in the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque during the Ottoman period is confirmed by published court documents of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Tripoli (cf. Ḥimsī, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus*, 200, with reference to *sijill* 1, p. 4 [from 1077/1667], in which the pay for a teacher in the *jāmi‘* al-‘Aṭṭār is mentioned).

⁸² Cf. Adam Sabra, *Poverty and Charity in Medieval Islam: Mamluk Egypt, 1250–1517* (Cambridge, 2000). Cf. also the religious as well as social significance of a *jāmi‘* in Fernandes, “Mamluk Architecture,” 113.

⁸³ Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-Durar*, 9:391.

⁸⁴ Salam-Liebich, *The Architecture*, 107. Ibn al-Dawādārī refers to the Madrasat Qarāṭāy al-Manṣūrī as a *jāmi‘*, but its use as such is unknown. The latter might be explained by the madrasah’s location directly next to the Great Mosque.

⁸⁵ If the importance of the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque during the Ottoman period were to be judged by its place in the sequence of Tripoli’s mosques named in travelogues, then the picture becomes less clear. Accordingly, al-‘Uṭayfī mentions only the Great Mosque, the madrasah/mosque of al-Burṭāṣī, and the Tawbah and the Ṭaynāl Mosques (al-‘Uṭayfī, *Riḥlah min Dimashq al-Shām ilā Ṭarābulus al-Shām*, in *Riḥlatān ilā Lubnān, Ta‘līf ‘Abd al-Ghanī ibn Ismā‘īl al-Nābulusī wa-Ramaḍān ibn Mūsā al-‘Uṭayfī*, ed. Stefan Wild and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid [Wiesbaden, 1979], 21). Al-Nābulusī and Ibn Maḥāsīn, on the other hand, deal with the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque extensively. Ibn Maḥāsīn lists it in fourth place (Ibn Maḥāsīn, *Al-Manāzil*, 82). Although the mosque is only eighth in al-Nābulusī’s sequence, compared with the other mosques mentioned it receives a relatively detailed description (al-Nābulusī, *Al-Riḥlah al-Ṭarābulusīyah*, 72–73).



the inscription on the building itself and further verified through its designation as “*jāmiʿ*” in Ottoman travelogues as well as through its name today. Contemporary chronicles and the building inscription on the eastern portal indicate this function as being the original one. Although the building inscription above the entrance in the eastern portal does not explicitly designate the ʿAṭṭār Mosque as a *jāmiʿ*, this function can be deduced indirectly through the allusion to the minbar, erected by Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm in 751/1350–51 (fig. 10). The Friday sermon (*khuṭbah*), part of the Friday prayers (*ṣalāt al-jumʿah*) conducted in a mosque and obligatory for every adult male Muslim, is delivered from the minbar. Thus, the minbar also serves as a characterizing element of the *jāmiʿ* as a mosque in which the Friday prayers are held.⁸⁶

In addition to the inscription on the main portal that refers to the minbar, the minbar becomes the liturgical center of the prayer hall through its decorative presence in the otherwise (present-day) plain interior room as well as its placement in the middle of the qiblah wall (fig. 2). The role of the minbar as the place for the *khaṭīb* and the *mawʿiẓah* is declared by the inscription on the minbar.⁸⁷

A hypothetical interpretation for this emphasis on the ʿAṭṭār Mosque as a *jāmiʿ* might be gained from the urban setting and the social position of the commissioner. Here it should be emphasized that the ʿAṭṭār Mosque is the only structure in the immediate vicinity that is designated expressly (by a decree) on the building as being a *jāmiʿ*. The Madrasat al-Burṭāsī, which is used for the Friday prayers, lies farther to the southeast;⁸⁸ the Tawbah Mosque (*jāmiʿ*) lies to the north.⁸⁹ Thus, in this developing economic center,⁹⁰ the ʿAṭṭār Mosque takes on a supportive function both ritually as well as socially for the population that lives and works there. It is the place where the congregation can attend daily prayers and Friday prayers, and hear the *khuṭbah*.⁹¹

The function of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque as the only *jāmiʿ* in the immediate urban

⁸⁶ J. Pedersen, “Masjid,” *El*, CD-ROM, edition v. 1.0, 6:655.

⁸⁷ The inscription panel on the east flank of the minbar reads as follows: “Anā maraḍ li-khaṭīb wa-muʿadd lil-mawāʿiẓ” (I am the base for a *khaṭīb* and intended for sermons). Cf. Bizri’s translation: “I am the threshold [sic] for a speaker and a deviser of preaching [sic]” (Bizri, *La calligraphie arabe*, 102, no. 12). The inscription on the west flank reads: “Fa-iʿtabir fiya wa-finafsik talaqqā kull wāʿiẓ” (Contemplate upon me, and accept every preacher unto yourself). Cf. translation: “Take advice from me and in yourself consider every preacher” (Bizri, *La calligraphie arabe*, 102, no. 13).

⁸⁸ Cf. the building inscription that alludes to the building’s twofold function as madrasah and place for Friday prayers (Salam-Liebich, *The Architecture*, 35).

⁸⁹ The exact date is unknown, but Tadmuri and Salam-Liebich reckon an approximate date between 693 and 715/1293–94 and 1315–16 (Salam-Liebich, *The Architecture*, 97).

⁹⁰ Cf. Luz, “Tripoli Reinvented,” 56.

⁹¹ Fernandes, “Mamluk Architecture,” 109.



environs⁹² is corroborated by its architectural layout, which is designed to enable easy access. This is provided in the first place by the three entrances and their interaction with the course of the streets. Further, the portals, the minaret, and the dome of the almost completely enclosed ‘Aṭṭār Mosque serve as distinguishing features of the mosque in general⁹³ and of the entrances in particular. They thus act as a kind of guide in the urban setting.⁹⁴ While the east portal draws the attention of passers-by with its extensive decoration and its high visibility on the main street as reconstructed, and is thus easy to find, the minaret directs attention towards the adjacent northern portal. The minaret’s function as a guide to the mosque relies upon its visibility from afar, as is shown in the decorative plan, which only begins in the third storey.⁹⁵

Finally, the building of a *jāmi‘* is likewise of political significance. On the one hand, the construction of a *jāmi‘* in a certain area encourages further urban development.⁹⁶ In the case of the Mamluk reestablishment of Tripoli, this means of urbanization was applied by al-Ashraf Khalil and al-Nāṣir Muḥammad—among others—with the Great Mosque in the city’s center, and by Amir Ṭaynāl

⁹² Cf. Baybars al-Manṣūrī’s description, furnished by Fernandes, of the erection of the *jāmi‘ al-jadīd al-Nāṣirī* by al-Nāṣir Muḥammad on the island of al-Rawda in Cairo. The *jāmi‘* was built for the inhabitants of this *maḥallah*, who did not have their own *jāmi‘* and who wanted one so that they would not have to attend Friday prayers in another mosque (Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Al-Tuḥfah al-Mulūkīyah*, quoted in Fernandes, “Mamluk Architecture,” 113).

⁹³ For the significance of these structural components and their effect upon the urban environment, see also Al-Harithy, “The Concept of Space,” 89, who studied the effect of the dome and the minaret from near and afar, using the building complex of al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn as an example. Humphreys, “The Expressive Intent,” 111–12, notes that minarets would assume a kind of “advertising” function in an environment in which many smaller and anonymous buildings attempted to attract attention. Hillenbrand points in general to the association between densely populated urban areas, the lack of space, and the resultant limited size of mosques, which consequently led to an elaborate design of façades in order to attract the attention of passers-by (Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 99).

⁹⁴ For the function of main portals, domes, and minarets as distinguishing signs of mosques, see Al-Harithy, “The Concept of Space,” 87 ff.

⁹⁵ Although the lowest zone of the minaret (floors 1–2) takes up the largest surface, the minaret’s emphasis through decoration starts only in the third floor with columns in the corners and twin arcades in the balcony above in the fourth floor. Correspondingly, the mouldings that separate the floors into the first and second stories are in a simple design, while the cornice between the second and third stories is decorated with tongued leaves and between the third and fourth floors—the balcony of the minaret—is supported by an expanding *muqarnas* cornice in two zones.

⁹⁶ Doris Behrens-Abouseif, “Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad and al-Aṣraf Qāyṭbāy—Patrons of Urbanism,” in *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras: Proceedings of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd International Colloquium organized at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, May 92/93/94*, ed. Urbain Vermeulen and D. De Smet (Leuven, 1995), 268.



(736/1336) with the Ṭaynāl Mosque in the south of Tripoli.⁹⁷ On the other hand, the Friday prayers are held in the *jāmiʿ* in the name of the ruler, for which reason the erection of the *jāmiʿ* must be viewed as a privilege granted by the sultan and confirmed by religious scholars.⁹⁸ As can be seen from the examples above, this privilege was allotted foremost to members of the military elite at this time.⁹⁹ In this respect, no information could be gained from the available sources concerning the identification of the commissioner of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque, that is, whether or not he was a member of the Mamluk military elite.¹⁰⁰ Instead, it seems that the person was a civilian, whose influential position and/or wealth permitted him the privilege¹⁰¹ of erecting the *jāmiʿ* and thus also of making a significant contribution towards the development of the infrastructure of the city.¹⁰²

THE DECORATIVE SCHEME OF THE ʿAṬṬĀR MOSQUE

The decorative scheme of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque proves to be a cosmopolitan assemblage. The form of the portal, the minbar, and the minaret have parallels in contemporary structures in Cairo, Jerusalem, Damascus, and Gaza. The question thus arises as to the mastermind(s) behind these decorative elements in the ʿAṭṭār Mosque. Meinecke explains the phenomenon of the appearance of the same decorative forms in different places based on his concept of itinerant craftsmen or workshops,¹⁰³ which he maintains were responsible for the exchange of forms in architecture and ornamentation between Cairo, the provinces of the Mamluk empire, and other dominions.¹⁰⁴ He follows the theory that itinerant craftsmen adopted formal and decorative elements characteristic of one locale and then carried them to new locales. Thus, the presumed “itinerant craftsmen” can be deduced on the basis of the appearance of similar design characteristics

⁹⁷ Cf. Luz, “Tripoli Reinvented,” 56.

⁹⁸ Fernandes, “Mamluk Architecture,” 109.

⁹⁹ The madrasat/*jāmiʿ* al-Burṭāsī was likewise donated by a member of the military elite, whose death date, 725/1325, provides an *ante quem* date for the mosque: ʿĪsā ibn ʿUmar ibn ʿĪsā, al-Amīr Sharaf al-Dīn ibn al-Burṭāsī al-Kurdī (cf. Salam-Liebich, *The Architecture*, 39). The Tawbah Mosque is associated with the Great Mosque by a *waqf*; Salam-Liebich and Tadmurī consider its commissioner to be one of the ruling elite (Tadmurī, *Tārīkh wa-Āthār*, 135–38; Salam-Liebich, *The Architecture*, 97). Yet Meinecke does not list it among the Mamluk buildings.

¹⁰⁰ For names of Mamluks, see Schimmel, *Islamic Names*, 70–72.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Fernandes, “Mamluk Architecture,” 116.

¹⁰² The position and prosperity of these commissioners, however, cannot be determined on the basis of the sources at hand.

¹⁰³ Cf. for example Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, vol. 1, and idem, *Patterns of Stylistic Changes in Islamic Architecture: Local Traditions versus Migrating Artists* (New York, 1996).

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Michael Meinecke, “Mamluk Architecture: Regional Architectural Traditions: Evolution and Interrelations,” *Damaszener Mitteilungen* 2 (1985): 174–75.



in different localities. Meinecke sees an example of this in the signature of the craftsman, Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm, on the eastern portal, whose workmanship he (Meinecke) attempts to discern, to the limited extent that his overview of Mamluk architecture permits, through the comparison of decorations and motifs. However, Meinecke has no larger preliminary works on the stylistic assessment of the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque within the local tradition in Tripoli and the Mamluk realm to which he can refer.¹⁰⁵ He sees parallels to the use of *ablaq* and the variations in the polychrome marble panel on the eastern portal of the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque (fig. 10) in the madrasah of the merchant Afrīdūn al-‘Ajāmī (744/1343–44) in Damascus.¹⁰⁶ Further, he considers the design of the minbar in the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque as having been influenced by the minbars in Aleppo.

Meinecke’s concept of itinerant craftsmen makes it possible for him to postulate an itinerary. Accordingly, the marble minbar of the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque, “inspired” by Aleppo, would indicate that Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm originally belonged to a workshop in Aleppo. From there via Cairo he could have joined the workshops of the Madrasat al-‘Ajāmī in Damascus,¹⁰⁷ which Meinecke attempts to prove with a comparison of the portal of the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque and the Madrasat al-‘Ajāmī.¹⁰⁸

Meinecke’s comparison of decoration and motifs found in the polychrome marble panel on the portal of the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque and the Madrasat al-‘Ajāmī¹⁰⁹ seems conclusive, but only at first glance. The number of parallels observed in

¹⁰⁵ Stylistic comparisons of prominent decorative elements such as the eastern portal, the minaret, and the minbar are only implied and refer solely to Tripoli. Thus, Sālim, al-Zayn, and Dīnnāwī merely make note of the similarity between the decorative scheme of the eastern portal and the Madrasat Qarāṭāy al-Manṣūrī (Sālim, *Ṭarābulus al-Shām*, 414; al-Zayn, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus*, 423; Dīnnāwī, *‘Awdat al-Dhākīrah*, 256). Regarding the minaret, note is only made that it can be considered as one of the most important and magnificent minarets in Tripoli (Salam-Liebich, *The Architecture*, 75; Tadmurī, *Tārīkh wa-Āthār*, 201; Sālim, *Ṭarābulus al-Shām*, 414; Condé, *Tripoli*, 94). The minbar has also received little attention. Tadmurī notes at least that it is the only marble minbar in Tripoli from the Mamluk period (Tadmurī, *Tārīkh wa-Āthār*, 200).

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 1:109.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 112, n. 208.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 112.

¹⁰⁹ Both are square and display knots radiating out from a central circle and stylized lilies as well as colored marble incrustation. Whereas the center of the zone of patterns in the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque is inscribed in three octagons, of which the outermost forms in parts the frame, the central circle of the panel of the Madrasat al-‘Ajāmī is encircled by two squares standing on end, which are knotted with the frame by trefoils at the corners. Furthermore, as a whole the work on the portal of the Madrasat al-‘Ajāmī displays finer workmanship. The vines have an additional darker framework and the lilies in the corners are clearly distinguished from the other blossoms. By contrast, compared with the vines, the blossoms in the panel on the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque are not placed in the foreground. Finally, the ornamentation of the Madrasat al-‘Ajāmī does not present the predominant triangular elements in decorative patterns as found in the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque.



motifs and materials in the panels of the Madrasat al-ʿAjami and the ʿAṭṭār Mosque, which initially seem so similar to one another, diminish when they are compared to other structures. For instance, the structure and motifs in panels found in the gate room of the northern portal of al-ʿUmari congregational mosque in Gaza, built under al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, show greater parallels to the ʿAṭṭār Mosque than does the Madrasat al-ʿAjami.¹¹⁰

The Madrasat al-ʿAjami may not be viewed as the sole example of the use of a particular model of polychrome marble panel and the *ablaq* technique at the same time.¹¹¹ This scheme can also be seen in the southern portal niche of the mosque of Aṣlam al-Bahāʾī al-Silāḥdār (746/1345)¹¹² in Cairo, where aside from the *ablaq*, a variation of the square panel—with a motif of knots and blossoms—is carried out in marble incrustation. Finally, with regard to the design of frames around entrances,¹¹³ a fine example is offered in the portal of the *turbah* of Turkān Khātūn in Jerusalem (753/1352–53),¹¹⁴ not the Madrasat al-ʿAjami. When attempting to explain the motifs of the panel of marble incrustation and the simultaneous use of *ablaq* in the ʿAṭṭār Mosque, these examples indicate even more that in his works Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm was not oriented exclusively towards the Madrasat al-ʿAjami nor was he necessarily employed there.

Likewise, the marble minbars in Aleppo need not have been the sole “inspiration”¹¹⁵ for the design of the marble minbar in the ʿAṭṭār Mosque.¹¹⁶ The

¹¹⁰ Like the panel in the ʿAṭṭār Mosque, this field is organized around an octafoil, which however resembles a form of blossom and is not inscribed within a circle, as in the ʿAṭṭār Mosque, but in an octagon. As in the ʿAṭṭār Mosque, the three encircling octagons are formed by “triangular elements” with a central lily blossom (Mohamed-Moain Sadek, *Die mamlukische Architektur der Stadt Gaza* [Berlin, 1991], 54). Two later examples consist of ornamental panels on the exterior of the minbar in the mosque of Kātib Wilāyah, erected in the mid-fifteenth century (ibid., 133–34) and on the façade of the prayer hall of the congregational mosque al-Zufurdimri, dated to 762/1360 (ibid., 152).

¹¹¹ The portal of the Madrasat Qarāṭāy al-Manṣūri can be viewed as a local comparison displaying the use of both the knot pattern and *ablaq* at the same time.

¹¹² Chahinda Fahmi Karim, “The Mosque of Aṣlam al-Bahāʾī al-Silāḥdār (746/1345),” *Annales islamologiques* 24 (1988): 233.

¹¹³ The frame of the portal of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque is decorated with a border composed of an astragal between two grooves, which is accompanied on the inner zone by a frieze. The latter consists of alternating positive and negative forms in relief that swell in volume below and gradually run out above; the crown is pointed.

¹¹⁴ Michael Hamilton Burgoyne, *Mamluk Jerusalem: An Architectural Study* (Buckhurst, 1987), 321.

¹¹⁵ Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 112, n. 208.

¹¹⁶ A local tradition of the marble minbar in the ʿAṭṭār Mosque can be ruled out on the basis of the Mamluk minbars preserved today. As Tadmuri ascertains (*Tārīkh wa-Āthār*, 200), the ʿAṭṭār Mosque’s minbar represents a singular case among the Mamluk minbars found in Tripoli. The



decoration on Aleppo's minbars¹¹⁷ differs essentially from that on the 'Aṭṭār Mosque's minbar. Compared to the latter, the minbars in Aleppo display marble incrustation over a greater surface area. The marble minbar¹¹⁸ of the *jāmi'* Alṭunbughā al-*ʿAlāʿi*, which was erected in 718/1318, corresponds somewhat to this tendency.¹¹⁹ Although this minbar may be the earliest preserved example in marble,¹²⁰ marble minbars are not a phenomenon that is restricted to Aleppo alone in the mid-eighth/fourteenth century. On the contrary, many examples that are similar in decoration, design, and technique are found outside of Aleppo.

The marble incrustation, used primarily on the cupola of the minbar in the 'Aṭṭār Mosque, can be compared with the fragmentary marble minbar of the Khaṭīrī Mosque¹²¹ in Cairo (built in 736/1336), specifically with respect to the small-sized, geometrical decorative patterns. The minbar in the 'Aṭṭār Mosque, however, shares the same kind of small-sized, extensive decorative stone cutting

other two examples that are of earlier date, the minbar in the Great Mosque (726/1326) and that in the Ṭaynāl Mosque (736/1336), are made of wood.

¹¹⁷ Meinecke does not supply any concrete examples to support this idea, but only mentions Aleppo's minbars.

¹¹⁸ Michael Meinecke, "Die Moschee des Amīrs Āqsunqur an-Nāṣiri in Kairo," *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts in Kairo* 29, no. 1 (1973): 33.

¹¹⁹ Jean Sauvaget, "Inventaire des monuments musulmans de la ville d'Alep," *Revue des études islamiques* 5 (1931): 88; cf. also Herzfeld, *Matériaux*, 1:324–25. The sides are taken up by a capacious marble incrustation, which displays a triangle composed of dark marble; this is encircled by a lighter-colored border and again by a darker stone. This generous use of marble incrustation technique differs decisively from the moderate marble incrustation in the 'Aṭṭār Mosque, for instance on the cupola of the minbar. Later examples of expansive use of marble incrustation are found on the minbar in the Mankalībughā al-Shamsi Mosque, founded in 763/1393–94 (Jean Sauvaget, «*Les Trésors d'or*» de Sibṭ ibn al-*ʿAjami: Matériaux pour servir à l'histoire de la ville d'Alep* [Beirut, 1950], 40), and in the *Jāmi'* Taghrībirdī (796/1393–94) (Herzfeld, *Matériaux*, 1:355). They as well exhibit the central triangle enclosed by more triangles, some in different colors, on the staircase.

¹²⁰ Meinecke, "Die Moschee des Amīrs Āqsunqur," 33.

¹²¹ Islamic Museum in Cairo, Inv. No. 2983 (Gloria S. Karnouk, "Form and Ornament of the Cairene Bahri Minbar," *Annales islamologiques* 17 [1981]: 138). Only the sides of the minbar are preserved. They display a pattern that is based upon a star with twelve rays, which is made of stones of diverse colors and set in marble (*ibid.*, 136; *idem*, "Cairene Bahri Mamluk Minbars: With a Provisional Typology and a Catalogue" [M.A. thesis, American University of Cairo, 1977], 125–27). Although other stars and geometric forms are also used here, it should be noted that the decorative pattern found in the 'Aṭṭār Mosque's minbar appears to be more clearly organized geometrically through its more angular forms than that of the minbar fragments in Cairo. The latter also contains round forms, in addition to the star-pattern and polygons. Karnouk therefore has doubts about the early date of the fragment. Round decorative elements do not appear on wooden minbars before the fifteenth century (*ibid.*, 125–26).



as the minbar in the Mosque of Āqsunqur (dated 748/1347) in Cairo.¹²² The cupola, baldachin, and banister of the Āqsunqur minbar exhibit decorative stone cutting; this technique is present on the portal and flanks of the minbar in the ʿAṭṭār Mosque. On the other hand, close parallels in the structure can be observed on the minbar in the Jāmiʿ Ibn Marwān in Gaza.¹²³

Meinecke's concept of itinerant craftsmen as a medium for the transfer of different forms, insofar as it is applied to the ʿAṭṭār Mosque, must therefore be called into question. This model does not suffice to explain all of the similarities in decoration and motif found in the "work" of Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm or in reconstructing stations in his travels.¹²⁴ Only in the case of a very unlikely "itinerary" via Aleppo, Gaza, Cairo, Jerusalem, and Damascus, which could be enlarged with other stations, would further comparisons be found. The attempt to personalize the motifs and decorations as representing the signature of the craftsman is not sufficient for an understanding of the forms used to ornament the ʿAṭṭār Mosque.

Instead, here the function of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque as a *jāmiʿ* and the decisive role of its commissioner in the choice and objective of the decorative scheme should be asserted. This assertion concentrates on both central elements of the mosque within the townscape: the portal and the minaret. In the mosque's interior the marble minbar, which distinguishes the ʿAṭṭār Mosque as *jāmiʿ*, is accentuated by its decorative scheme. This restricted use of decoration only on exposed and significant elements might imply a purposeful choice of ornamental forms.

The ʿAṭṭār Mosque thus takes on both local and supra-regional features from buildings which were erected by Mamluk as well as non-Mamluk commissioners.¹²⁵

¹²² Karnouk "Form and Ornament," 137; cf. also idem, "Cairene Bahri Mamluk Minbars," 41.

¹²³ Sadek dates it to the beginning of the eighth/fourteenth century on the basis of a donation inscription (Sadek, *Gaza*, 113). It resembles the squat form of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque's minbar. The baldachin of the Jāmiʿ Ibn Marwān is similar to that of the ʿAttar Mosque, in that they both share octagonal and relatively thick columns, a hemispherical cupola, a similar proportional relationship between cupola and baldachin, and openings formed by round arches. Here, as in the minbar of the ʿAṭṭār Mosque, the baldachin and the cupola appear to have been well understood architecturally: the cupola is carried by pendentives and supported by arcades. A later example of this understanding of the construction of cupolas can be seen in the minbar in the Madrasah of al-Nāṣir Ḥasan (Karnouk, "Cairene Bahri Mamluk Minbars," 27).

¹²⁴ The exclusive comparison of the minbar in the ʿAṭṭār Mosque with marble minbars in Aleppo does not suffice for its stylistic attribution, especially since both the decoration and the technique do not appear alone in a tradition that is restricted to Aleppo. Thus, the assignment of Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm to an "Aleppan workshop" based solely upon formal criteria of the minbar cannot be assumed.

¹²⁵ For instance, a Mamluk commissioner: Aṣlam al-Bahā'ī al-Silāhdār; a non-Mamluk commissioner: the merchant Afridūn al-ʿAjāmī.



The employment of similar decorative motifs might be viewed as the claim for equivalence in rank between these buildings and their commissioners.¹²⁶ The claim of the ‘Aṭṭār Mosque can thus be based upon its being the first *jāmi‘* in Tripoli that was commissioned by a non-Mamluk.

¹²⁶ Dieter Kimpel and Robert Suckale, review of *Bau und Überbau: Soziologie der mittelalterlichen Architektur nach den Schriftquellen*, by Martin Warnke, *Kritische Berichte* 4/5 (1977): 63–64.



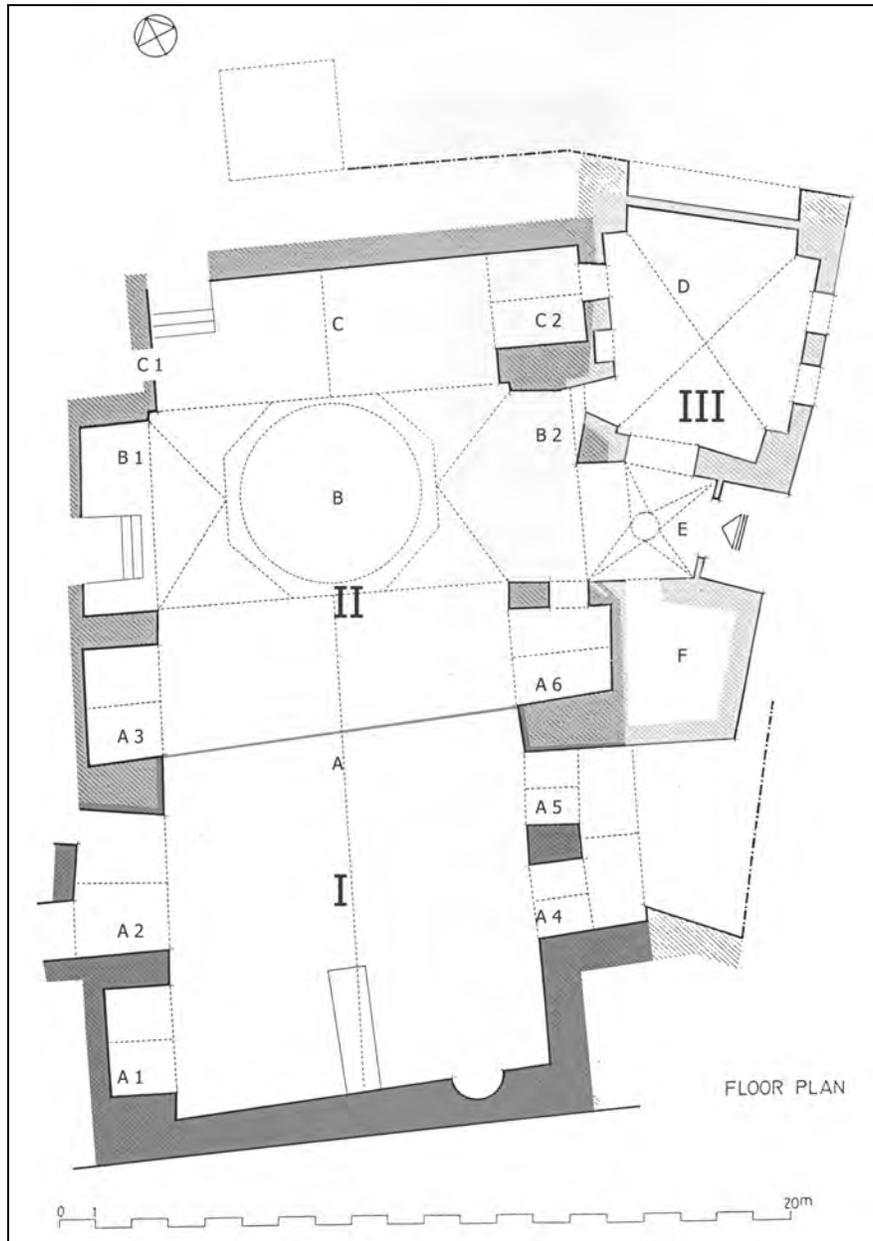


Fig. 1. Tripoli, ʿAṭṭār Mosque. Ground plan with a schematic division of the interior of the mosque (A–F) and a schematic suggestion for the reconstruction of the three building phases (I–III) (after R. Saliba et al., *Tripoli, the Old City: Monument Survey—Mosques and Madrasas; A Sourcebook of Maps and Architectural Drawings* [(Beirut): American University of Beirut, Department of Architecture, 1994], Monument No. 13).





Fig. 2. Tripoli, Ṣaṭṭār Mosque. General view of the interior with the prayer hall: southern area (A) and qiblah. Photograph courtesy of Tripoli project of the Orient-Institute in Beirut: *Zur Stadt und Architekturgeschichte von Tripoli/Libanon*, Stefan Weber, 2003.



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Fig. 3. Tripoli, ʿAṭṭār Mosque. View of the interior with the prayer hall, southern area (A): west wall with three niches (A 1, A 2, A 3). Photograph: Miriam Kühn, 2004.



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Fig. 4. Tripoli, 'Atṭār Mosque. View of the interior with the prayer hall: area of the cupola (B) and the northern section (C). Photograph courtesy of Tripoli project of the Orient-Institute in Beirut: *Zur Stadt und Architekturgeschichte von Tripoli/Libanon*, Stefan Weber, 2003.



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Fig. 5. Tripoli, ʿAṭṭār Mosque. View of the interior with the prayer hall, southern area (A): qiblah wall with mihrab. Photograph courtesy of Sven Jentner, 2003.



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Fig. 6. Tripoli, 'Atṭār Mosque. View of the interior with the ablation room (D): west wall with entrances to the prayer hall. Photograph courtesy of Tripoli project of the Orient-Institute in Beirut, *Zur Stadt und Architekturgeschichte von Tripoli/Libanon*, Team Weber, 2003.



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Fig. 7. Tripoli, ʿAṭṭār Mosque. View of the interior with the vestibule (E): northwest corner to the prayer hall, southern entrance to the ablution room (D). Photograph: Miriam Kühn, 2004.



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Fig. 8. Tripoli, 'Aṭṭār Mosque. View of the interior with the entrance to the ablution room from the prayer hall (B2): inserted muqarnas on the supporting pillar of the cupola. Photograph: Miriam Kühn, 2004.



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Fig. 9. Tripoli, ‘Aṭṭār Mosque–A. Ground plan: a–minaret; b–latrine; c–courtyard; d–room bordering to the southwest; e–enclosing passageways. B–Sūq al-Bāzirkān; C–Khān al-Miṣriyīn; D–Khān al-Khayyāṭīn; E–Khān al-Jāwīsh; F–Zuqāq al-Tarbī‘ah.

Courtesy of Tripoli project of the Orient-Institute in Beirut, *Zur Stadt und Architekturgeschichte von Tripoli/Libanon*, Team Weber, 2004.



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Fig. 10. Tripoli, 'Atṭār Mosque. View of the exterior with the upper part of the eastern portal (detail). Photograph courtesy of Tripoli project of the Orient-Institute in Beirut, Zur Stadt und Architekturgeschichte von Tripoli/Libanon, Team Weber, 2003.



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Fig. 11. Tripoli, ʿAṭṭār Mosque. Exterior, view of the entire western portal from the west. Photograph courtesy of Tripoli project of the Orient-Institute in Beirut, *Zur Stadt und Architekturgeschichte von Tripoli/Libanon*, Team Weber, 2003.



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PHILIPP SPEISER

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The Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad Madrasah in Cairo: Restoration and Archaeological Investigation

Cairene architecture reached its heyday during the reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad Ibn Qalāwūn. . . . A man of strict morals, keen intelligence, iron willpower, and boundless energy, yet vengeful and dishonest, al-Nāṣir was also a man of taste and culture, a patron of scholars, and friend of the historian Abu al-Fidā'.¹

Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad had three reigns altogether: as a child from 1293 to 1294, as an adolescent from 1299 to 1309, and, finally, as an adult from 1310 to 1341. The sultan's reigns were characterized less by warfare than by frenetic building activity; Michael Meinecke attributes no fewer than seventy-seven new buildings and renovations to his second reign. His third reign, which lasted for thirty-one years, saw four hundred and fifty new buildings and renovations. In the capital alone, for instance, the sultan endowed a madrasah, a mosque on the Nile (of which all traces have vanished), and the mosque named after him in the citadel.²

The Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad Madrasah was the first building the ruler had anything to do with.³ Begun sometime between 694/1294 and 696/1296 by Sultan al-ʿĀdil Kitbughā, it was finished in 703/1303 by al-Nāṣir Muḥammad during his second reign.⁴

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¹ Oleg V. Volkoff, *1000 Jahre Kairo: Die Geschichte einer verzaubernden Stadt*, trans. Marguerite Haeny (Mainz, 1984), 154.

² Michael Meinecke, *Die mamlukische Architektur in Ägypten und Syrien (648/1250 bis 923/1517)*, part 2, *Chronologische Liste der mamlukischen Baumassnahmen* (Glückstadt, 1992), 88–103 and 107–93.

³ On this madrasah, see K. A. C. Creswell, *Muslim Architecture of Egypt* (New York, 1978), 2:234–40, fig. 137 and pls. 85–89a, 111c, and 124d; Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 88; Philipp Speiser, “Restaurierungsarbeiten an der al-Nasriyya Madrasa in Kairo,” *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* Suppl. 10 (1994): 527–40, pls. 1–4 and figs. 1–2; Wolfgang Mayer, Giorgio Nogara, and Philipp Speiser, “Archäologische Untersuchungen und Restaurierungsarbeiten an der Madrasa des Sultan an-Nasir Muhammad,” *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo* 57 (2001): 219–38, pls. 32–37.

⁴ For the building activities of the sultan, see Viktoria Meinecke-Berg, “Quellen zur Topographie und Baugeschichte in Kairo unter Sultan an-Nasir Muhammad b. Qala’un,” in *XIX. Deutscher*



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MADRASAH AND MAUSOLEUM OF AL-NĀṢIR MUḤAMMAD

On the western side of Shāriḥ Muʿizz li-Dīn Allāh at Bayn al-Qasrayn, the al-Nāṣir Muḥammad Madrasah (694–96/1284–96, 703/1303, Index no. 44) occupies a roughly rectangular site sandwiched between two other Mamluk monuments, the slightly earlier Qalāwūn complex (683–84/1284–85, Index no. 43) and the later Barqūq complex (786–88/1384–86, Index no. 187).⁵ Its façade on the main entrance side, overlooking Shāriḥ Muʿizz li-Dīn Allāh, is aligned with the street and is thus oriented more or less north-south. It consists of an ashlar wall some ten meters high and twenty-one meters long, defined at the top by horizontal molding and stepped crenellation. A little over half-way up this wall, a wide horizontal inscription band running the full length of the façade gives the names and titles of Kitbughā, who began the building, and al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, during whose second reign it was completed.

This inscription band is interrupted by the building's famous entrance portal, which divides the ashlar wall into two unequal segments. The southern segment, to the left as one faces the portal, measures 6.6 meters in length, and the northern segment, to the right, measures roughly ten meters. The portal is built around a marble doorway that formerly belonged to the church of St. Agnes in the Crusader-occupied town of Acre and was brought to Cairo by order of Sultan Ashraf Khalil ibn Qalāwūn, an elder brother of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, after the Mamluk recovery of Acre in 1291.⁶ The portal thus consists of concentric Gothic arches, echoing this doorway, framed by a rectangular molding which is a Mamluk addition, which rises to stop just short of the horizontal molding at the top of the wall. The doorway allows equal entrance to both the mausoleum and the madrasah.

Immediately on either side of the portal are tall vertical recesses, both of which have barred fenestration on the ground-floor level. Above the inscription band, these vertical recesses enter oblong spaces or panels created by molding that merges with the horizontal molding along the top of the ashlar wall. The recess on the left (south-eastern) side of the portal rises the full height of the wall and culminates in two lobes with carved decoration, which terminate with the horizontal molding at the top of the wall. The recess on the right (north-western)

Orientalistentag, vom 28. September bis 4. Oktober 1975 in Freiburg im Breisgau, ed. W. Voigt, ZDMG Suppl. 3, no. 1 (Wiesbaden, 1977), 538–50.

⁵ The monument number refers to the *Index to Mohammedan Monuments in Cairo* (Cairo, 1952 and 1980), including a map of Cairo in two sheets (Cairo, 1950; Arabic version, Cairo, 1948).

⁶ On the gate see Mayer, Nogara, and Speiser, "Archäologische Untersuchungen," 232–38, pls. 35–37; Viktoria Meinecke-Berg, "Spolien in der mittelalterlichen Architektur von Kairo," in *Ägypten: Dauer und Wandel: Symposium anlässlich des 75 jährigen Bestehens des Deutschen archäologischen Instituts Kairo*, MDAIK Sonderschrift 18 (Mainz, 1985), 131–42, pls. 11–13.



side is slightly shorter. It is topped with three carved lobes, which stop short in the middle of the terminal oblong; and it makes a pair not with its taller companion on the left portal, but with a third recess five meters to the right at the far end of the façade. This third recess has a slightly narrower panel at the top, but is of the same height, two-lobed, and identically fenestrated. The windows set in both these two recesses open into the monument's mausoleum chamber.

Above a medallion in the inscription band midway between these two shorter vertical recesses is a deep round-arched niche. It makes a symmetrical pair with another round-arched niche above a medallion in the inscription band on the opposite side of the portal. Whatever their other purposes, these niches combine with the placement and scale of other elements to give the façade an air of noble and uncluttered mathematical balance, an effect achieved despite difficulties imposed by the site and by canonical requirements.

Above and behind the portal is the building's extraordinary minaret, which is built of fired brick with stucco decoration and girdled by two tiers of balconies; round faience elements are set into the upper part. Its base stands 15.2 meters tall and is topped by an octagonal segment of 8.5 meters and a wooden tip of Ottoman style. Immediately behind the portal, a passage with a high-coffered ceiling leads to the inner courtyard, at the center of which stands a rectangular water basin one meter in height.

At the south-east end of the court is the main *iwān* with a prayer niche; its semi-dome and the wall above it also boast elaborate stucco decoration. Across from it, the north-west side of the inner courtyard is taken up by an *iwān* of virtually identical dimensions, the back wall of which displays a very fine stucco relief. Two shallow niches finished at the top with pointed arches made of brick are set into the south-western outer wall (of the *iwān*) made of ashlar masonry. Their form and position suggest that the existing corridor was adorned with niches on either side, as exemplified by the Maṣṣūr Qalāwūn Madrasah.⁷ Aligned with the central axis of the two long sides are two lateral *iwāns*, one on each side, with dormitory cells to the left and right of each; these are reconstructions dating from 1985–89, which were erected on existing foundations. The alignment of the inside rooms adjacent to the open courtyard and the *iwāns* is determined by the direction of Mecca, whereas the outer façade follows the course of the street or the site. This is a feature encountered particularly often in Cairo.

FUNCTION AND MANAGEMENT

The al-Nāṣir Madrasah is regarded by Creswell as the earliest structure in Egypt

⁷ The question arises as to whether they were matched on the opposite side originally, which might well have been the case because the present-day wall dates from the nineteenth or twentieth century.



with four *iwāns*.⁸ According to the Mamluk historian al-Maqrīzī, a different law school taught in each of the *iwāns*: Maliki law in the main *iwān*, Hanbali in the south-western *iwān*, Hanafi in the north-eastern side *iwān*, and Shafi'i in the rear *iwān*.⁹ There was also a library in the madrasah, possibly between the main *iwān* and the mausoleum of Qalāwūn.¹⁰ Al-Maqrīzī goes on to report that in the heyday of the complex, several eunuchs were stationed in the large entry passage to ensure that no unauthorized persons gained admittance. Sugar was distributed monthly to students, Quran readers, and other officials. The function of the building as a boarding school affected the architecture in that, in addition to the classrooms and the above-mentioned *iwāns*, accommodations for teachers and pupils as well as sanitary facilities fed by cisterns had to be provided on a sufficiently large scale. The cisterns were probably for the most part below the inner courtyard and the mausoleum, as well as behind the rear *iwān*. The living quarters were primarily housed in the upper floors, which disappeared long ago, with only a few on the ground floor, which were not reconstructed until 1987. It is not clear whether the madrasah also had a kitchen; no archaeological evidence for one has come to light.

Since the madrasah was expected to continue functioning after the sultan's death, it was endowed, according to al-Maqrīzī, by several *waqfs*, not from agricultural yields but from the revenue earned from rents paid for a storehouse, a *qaysāriyah*, and the apartment (Arabic: *rabʿ*) above it, a complex known as al-Dahishah.¹¹ This complex originally belonged to one Amīn ʿAlī and was situated in the street of the makers of head-dresses (*sharībshiyīn*). He also endowed some shops located in the Bāb al-Zuhūmah street in Cairo and with the Dār Tam outside Damascus.¹² When his son Anūk died in 1340, he was buried in the mausoleum and Amīn ʿAlī created a special endowment dedicated for readers of the Quran.¹³

CONDITION OF THE MONUMENT BEFORE 1985

Before restoration work began on the madrasah in 1985, it was in poor condition. The elegant architectural ornament was full of gaps; most parts of the complex were damaged and only partially preserved, and the rooms grouped several storeys high along the long sides of the inner courtyard had for the most part vanished. The condition of the building as of 1985 was the result of gradual decay and is

⁸ Creswell, *MAE*, 2:104–34, and figs. 50–68.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ See *ibid.*, 234.

¹¹ See *ibid.*

¹² On this gate, see Mayer, Nogara, and Speiser, “Archäologische Untersuchungen,” 232–38, pls. 35–37.

¹³ See Creswell, *MAE*, 2:234.



documented by a ground-plan (fig. 2) published by Creswell in 1959.¹⁴ Julius Franz, who is known as the father of Egyptian Islamic monument conservation, described the madrasah as long ago as 1900 with the following words:

As is also the case in the Māristān [of Sultan Qalāwūn], the mausoleum of the donor and the prayer hall lie on either side of the entrance along the eastern façade; both are in a bleak state of dilapidation. The dome above the tomb has long since collapsed, and we had not expected to find well-preserved characteristic plaster sculpture, reminiscent of the delicate ornamentation of Alhambra, in the decrepit prayer hall. In the background of the extensive complex, important remains of the walls with fragments of their erstwhile beautiful plaster sculpture still stand, between which storehouses, workshops, and run-down dwellings have been wedged.¹⁵

In fact three dwellings, which have in the meantime been demolished, were built on the ruined site in the nineteenth century. Interestingly, an illustration (in the work written by Franz) depicts a minbar (pulpit) next to the prayer niche. This must surely indicate that the complex, despite the dilapidation described, was still being used for religious purposes. That this was indeed the case in the first half of the nineteenth century is attested in a drawing by Prisse d'Avennes; he was in Egypt from 1827 until 1844. In it several worshippers are depicted in front of the prayer niche and below a metal chandelier.¹⁶

At the end of nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries, the Comité de Conservation des Monuments de l'Art Arabe undertook fairly extensive reinforcement and reconstruction measures.¹⁷ The ceiling beams of the two main *iwāns* were replaced and, although discussion about its original form ensued, the missing dome above the mausoleum was not reconstructed; instead, the opening was boarded up. The elevation of the rear *iwān* was reconstructed with red brick.

RESTORATION FROM 1985 TO 1987

In 1985 the German Archaeological Institute in Cairo began the restoration of

¹⁴ See Creswell, *MAE*, vol. 2, fig. 137.

¹⁵ Julius Franz, *Berühmte Kunststätten no. 21: Kairo* (Cairo and Leipzig, 1903), 55–56.

¹⁶ In 2003 the Ministry of Culture ordered a replica of the chandelier; see Prisse d'Avennes, *L'art arabe d'après les monuments du Caire depuis le VIIe jusqu'au XVIIIe siècles* (Paris, 1877), 235, pl. XIII.

¹⁷ Comité de conservation des monuments de l'art arabe, *exercice 1890*, 45–46.



the madrasah. The work was finished to a large extent in 1987.¹⁸ Following a careful survey of the complex and mapping of damage, a restoration program was developed. It focused on three areas of construction and undecorated sections:

1. Securing the masonry and replacing damaged and missing parts: this affected most parts of the complex and especially the south-west wall of the qiblah *iwān*, the street façade with its unrendered ashlar masonry, and the mausoleum masonry. The crown molding of the walls and some of the crenellation on the street side had to be rebuilt.

2. Repairing and replacing roofs and ceilings: all roofs had to be made watertight. The original coffered passage ceiling, which had only survived below the minaret, and the *muqarnas* cornices below it had to be reconstructed.

3. Reinforcing and replacing both fixed and movable parts of wood and metal: existing door panels were worked over and missing ones replaced. The same held for the inside shutters on the street side. The railings of the two-tiered balconies of the minaret, as well as the spiral staircase within it and the tip of the minaret (which dated from the Ottoman period) were all replaced. The missing metal grills across the windows were also replaced.

As has already been mentioned, the madrasah boasted particularly elegant architectural decoration of stucco, wood, and marble. Here, too, securing and cleaning what was left took priority. Replacement was only undertaken where it could be verified. The most important replacements are listed below:

- Stucco decoration: undoubtedly the largest decorated surfaces (covering many square meters) are on the minaret. In addition to very careful and time-consuming cleaning, removing later layers of plaster and securing the original structure, some parts had to be replaced. The restoration work that was carried out on the upper semi-dome of the prayer niche in the main *iwān* was particularly elaborate, since the semi-dome is clad with a complex relief in the repoussé technique. At the same time, the decorated field above the niche as well as an Ottoman decorative window were restored. Other elements of decoration that were preserved and restored are the mausoleum pendentives and the grills of high windows. The stucco rendering was also restored and completed in four window niches on the main *iwān* façade overlooking the courtyard.

- Wooden decoration: the complex boasts numerous ornamental appointments of carved and partially polychromed wood, for instance in the mausoleum and the entry passage. In the passage, the carved coffered ceiling had to be replaced (save for three sections) in addition to the wall moldings.¹⁹ The wooden decoration of

¹⁸ Under the auspices of the Historic Cairo restoration project carried out by the German Institute of Archaeology jointly with the Egyptian Antiquities Organization, restoration work funded by the Kulturhilfe des Auswärtigen Amtes der Bundesrepublik.

¹⁹ Three original elements of the ceiling were preserved because they are located below the



the mausoleum was still largely intact; it was carefully cleaned and in some cases refitted.

RECONSTRUCTION

Since only part of the madrasah had survived, and especially since all the rooms grouped along the long sides were either in a fragmentary state or non-existent, the question arose as to whether reconstruction should be undertaken in part of the complex to at least give visitors some idea of what the original structure, as well as the archaeological remains, looked like. As archaeological investigation furnished reliable information on the course of the foundations of the rooms abutting the inner courtyard, we opted for rebuilding one *iwān* on each side with the adjacent single-storey dormitory cells, since survey measurements can be vouched for up to that level. Similarly, the water basin uncovered at the center of the inner courtyard was put in again as a significant element of the design.

The original entrance to the mausoleum is on the courtyard façade. From the standpoint of statics, it had been subjected to stresses at some unknown time, since one of the two marble columns supporting the lintel had broken below the capital. After the column was repaired, the doorway, which virtually corresponds to that of the roughly contemporary Qalāwūn Madrasah, was closed with a door of turned bobbins. All these measures were intended to secure the historic architecture and elements of decoration and, through restoration of part of the complex, make the fragmentary sequence of rooms more intelligible.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

In the course of the restoration work already discussed, archaeological investigations were carried out in several places by means of trial trenches dug to shed light on the original ground-plan and on buildings that had previously existed at the site, and to gain general insights into the architectural history of the various sites. Five areas were studied: trial trenches A–D were made during restoration work in 1985–87 and 1989. Considerably more extensive investigations were conducted on the western corner (zone E) of the al-Nāṣir Muḥammad Madrasah site. They were made possible by generous funding from the Max Van Berchem Foundation (Geneva) in 1998, 1999, 2003, and 2004. The opportunity to excavate in Historic Cairo on this site, or at least near the Fatimid Western Palace, made the project particularly enticing. Unfortunately, however, it was soon discovered that ground-water and drainage seepage made it impossible to dig deeper than 1.5 meters below street level, so that the Fatimid strata could only be uncovered to a very limited extent.

minaret.



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TRIAL TRENCH A

It was hoped that excavating what had existed on the site before the mausoleum would uncover remains of a forecourt enclosed by arcades—as was indeed the case with the nearby Qalāwūn Mausoleum—especially since traces of stucco-clad niches are discernible on the exterior wall.²⁰ However, no remains of foundations were found. All that was encountered was the partly collapsed brick vault of a water cistern some 0.8 meters below the level of the forecourt.²¹ The cistern is presumably Mamluk, since part of it lies beneath the mausoleum. Remains of floor flags, presumably from the above mentioned forecourt, were found immediately below the first visible course of the masonry of the outer wall of the adjacent Barqūq Madrasah. This same wall intersects with several barrel vaults from the side rooms of the al-Nāṣir Muḥammad Madrasah. Both circumstances indicate that by the time the Barqūq complex was built, nearly a century after the al-Nāṣir Muḥammad Madrasah, not much attention was being paid to the latter. This might mean that maintenance of the facility was considerably scaled down not long after the sultan's death in 1341 and that attempts at repair were not undertaken until the Ottoman period (from 1516). This conjecture is supported by al-Maqrīzī, who wrote in 1404: “All this is past and the mosque has lost its lustre, but it is still flourishing as one of the finest madrasas.”²²

TRIAL TRENCH B

This trial trench affects the part of the site immediately to the north-west of trial trench A, in which wall remains had been shown by an earlier investigation to be parts of the *iwān* on the north side. A modern storeroom abutted the north-west side, enclosed in the inner courtyard by a stretch of façade with two door apertures. On the north-east side is a cell with barrel vaulting, which, intriguingly, had an opening for ascending to the (now vanished) upper floor. The conclusion to be drawn from the unity of foundation and superstructure is that they most likely date from the Mamluk period. Their north-west wall, which is also the wall of the side *iwān*, still retains the historic spring of the vault in situ, which made it possible to reconstruct the pointed arch and barrel vaulting. When the side *iwān* foundation was uncovered, it was revealed that a wall niche had been set into its back wall. The two door openings mentioned above were slightly recessed from the uncovered threshold substructure, a clear indication that this was a historic reconstruction.

²⁰ For the floorplan of the Qalāwūn Mausoleum, see Creswell, *MAE*, vol. 2, fig. 108.

²¹ According to Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) inspectors, several cisterns as well as a corridor were found below ground level. So far no plans or photos are available.

²² Quoted in Creswell, *MAE*, 2:234.



TRIAL TRENCH C

After the removal of a layer of rubble more than one meter high in the inner courtyard, the remains of a rectangular water basin (3.75 by 2.9 meters) were revealed at its center.²³ The inner corners of the basin were rounded, a feature characteristic of the basins found in Fatimid layers in Fustat. The basin has a rim approximately one meter high of bonded brick, which was rendered inside with a water-resistant or waterproof lime mortar (an aggregate of brick dust or charcoal ash). It was finished off at the top with limestone slabs, of which, however, only a few pieces were found. At some time, the basin had been partly filled in with bricks. The fresh water needed to fill it was probably brought from one or more subterranean cisterns via a lined shaft sunk several meters deep under the courtyard. Since there are no traces of individual places for ablution with the usual drains, the water basin is unlikely to have been used originally for ablutions. Instead, the reflecting surface of the water was perhaps a design feature of the courtyard.²⁴ There are similar basins in the Nūr al-Dīn Madrasah and Mārīstān (built 567/1162) and the ‘Ādilīyah Madrasah (built 623/1219), both in Damascus.²⁵

TRIAL TRENCH D

The south-west side of the inner courtyard was cleared of later additions, which were all in a precarious state, and partly excavated. This excavation made it possible to ascertain the Mamluk ground-plan to a large extent from the alignment of its foundations. It contained a side *iwān*, identical to the one on the opposite side, with three small rooms, most likely dormitory cells, on its left side. On the site of a demolished house, adjacent to the right (north-west) of the side *iwān*, the foundations of three more dormitory cells were uncovered, as well as remains of a linking passage running behind them, in which some of the limestone flag flooring has survived. Beneath two of the cells two sewage shafts were found, which are in part aligned with the inner courtyard. These shafts belong to a pre-Mamluk building phase and are part of an elaborate drainage system centered at some distance to the south-west.²⁶

²³ See Philipp Speiser, “Recherches archéologiques dans le Caire fatimide: Les éléments d’un puzzle,” in *Colloque international d’Archéologie Islamique*, ed. Roland P. Gayraud (Cairo, 1993), 423–26, figs. 9–10.

²⁴ On basins in mosques, see Martin Frishman, “Die Ursprünge des Islam und die Gestalt der Moschee,” in *Die Moscheen der Welt*, ed. Martin Frishman and Hasan-Uddin Khan (Frankfurt and New York, 1995), 39.

²⁵ Creswell, *MAE*, 2:109–12, figs. 56 and 59.

²⁶ On the design of the individual wastewater shafts, see Speiser, “Les éléments d’un puzzle,” 434, fig. 11



ZONE E

In the late 1990s the city government had another decrepit house demolished, and its removal made possible the excavation of a wider area (177 square meters) in the western corner of the site. The site is bounded on the south-west towards the Qalāwūn Madrasah by a modern brick wall, on the south-east by the reconstructed side *iwān* and dormitory cells, on the north-east by the rear *iwān*, and on the north-west by a neighboring building. This site is part of the area in which the Fatimid Western Palace is thought to have stood, although pottery finds have hitherto failed to furnish evidence for it.²⁷

Within a jumble of wall remains (spoils from several damaged Mamluk and Ottoman structures which are beyond the scope of this work), a continuous, slightly trapezoidal complex showed up clearly. On each of three sides it has the remains of four identical cells or cubicles, all of which open on to what was probably an open courtyard measuring 5.5 by 5.5 meters.

The above-mentioned twelve cubicles are almost identical in form, and all have a surface area of almost 1.5 square meters. At the back, each has a seat built of two blocks of limestone. Between the two blocks of limestone is an opening that drains into the sewage system below. Each of the cubicles, most likely covered at one time by a vault or dome, enters onto the courtyard through a simple wooden door. Along the right-hand side wall of each cubicle runs an open water channel, which has a brickwork rim up to 0.4 meters high. It is unclear how the fresh-water channel was fed, since there are no indications of a cistern nearby; perhaps it was filled at its highest point from skin water bags or buckets. In two cubicles, remains of a floor from an earlier building phase were found about 0.3 meters deeper. An even earlier building phase was found beneath the north-eastern row of cubicles, where at least three cubicles were built on the demolished masonry superstructure of identical structures dating from the time the madrasah was built.²⁸

The south-east side, the fourth side of the courtyard, sustained considerably more damage; all that remains is the substructure of three toilet cubicles on top of another sewer.²⁹ The approach, now vanished, to the small courtyard with its water basin must also have been on this side. Incidentally, a similar facility was found several years ago in the nearby Sultan al-Kāmil (626/1229) Madrasah, mentioned above.

²⁷ Viktoria Meinecke-Berg, "Historische Topographie des Viertels," in *Die Restaurierung der Madrasa des Amīrs Sāqad-Dīn [sic] Mitqāl al-Ānūki und die Sanierung des Darb Qirmiz in Kairo*, ed. Michael Meinecke (Mainz, 1980), 18–28, especially 24, nn. 58 and 59, figs. 1 and 2.

²⁸ The frequent rebuilding of sanitary installations is not surprising, due to the destructive effects of water.

²⁹ It seems logical to place toilets after washrooms, using their waste water to keep the sewers clean.



Virtually at the center of the courtyard, but one meter deeper than the level of the cubicles, is an octagonal water basin whose nine parts were later adapted to fit into a square rim. This represents an example of recycling, perhaps of an element from the Fatimid Western Palace. A coin that was found dates the recycling of the basin to the Ayyubid era. The structure was undoubtedly a sanitary facility. The presence of a continuous freshwater channel in most cubicles suggests they were used by the teachers and pupils for the purposes of physical hygiene.³⁰

On the south-western outer wall of the washing facility, nine cells were excavated that were approximately 1.7 meters lower than the adjacent cubicles and were entered from the south-west. As clearly shown in a sketch from the first half of the nineteenth century, this was the outermost group of rooms in the adjacent Qalāwūn Māristān, in which the mentally ill were incarcerated and shackled under intolerable conditions in dark cells of only about four square meters.³¹

CONCLUSIONS

The excavations confirmed the conjecture that the ground-plan provided for four *iwāns*. However, stratigraphic analysis showed that cells and remains of secondary or minor *iwāns* visible before 1985 on the long side of the madrasah and marked on Creswell's plan as Mamluk likely date from the Ottoman period (1517–1798) and later.³² The madrasah does not seem to have been properly maintained after the donor's death; to judge from the pottery finds, extensive restoration work was carried out in the sections along the long sides at a time that cannot be precisely ascertained. Further, the minaret was given a new tip and the mausoleum may have been topped with a wooden dome.

The sanitary installations featuring cubicles around an open courtyard, described above, were also rebuilt during the Ottoman period. The numerous brickwork sewers, some of which go back to the first phase of building in the Ayyubid period (564–667/1169–1249) were, interestingly, left in place despite several renovations and were simply adapted to the new conditions. Most of the sewers are probably linked with the earlier development on the site, which according to al-Maqrīzī, included a bath.³³ This might explain why there was such an elaborate sewage system.

The importance of superior hydraulic installations for architectural planning has hitherto been too little appreciated and studied. This may be due to the fact

³⁰ Given the absence of taps and proper drainage, except for one small hole, a system with running water seems most unlikely.

³¹ See Creswell, *MAE*, vol. 2, fig. 124.

³² Except for one Mamluk wall of the north-eastern side *iwān*.

³³ Creswell, *MAE*, 2:234.



that Cairo, unlike many other cities, did not have public water mains until well into the late nineteenth century and even today does not possess a sophisticated municipal sewage system. Nor have historic sanitary facilities in mosques and madrasahs been sufficiently studied; consequently, it is difficult to classify this unusually large facility with twelve cubicles for washing and four toilets. The introduction of public water mains into such historic facilities would have made their cisterns and cesspits obsolete.

The octagonal basin that has been dated to the Ayyubid period might well have been part of the previously mentioned bath. The theory that this might have been a room in the Fatimid Western Palace, on the other hand, is dubious, especially since its architectural connection with the adjacent Mamluk Mārīstān of Sultan Qalāwūn, which itself has Fatimid elements, has yet to be investigated.

Despite archaeological excavation of several ground-floor rooms or at least their foundations, the floor-plan of the al-Nāṣir MuḤammad Madrasah still has gaps. Two to three storeys can be reconstructed on the basis of the window niches in the rear façade of the main *iwān*, which faces the inner courtyard. However, it is because the vertical architectural elements such as stairwells, light shafts, etc., are missing without a trace that the madrasah remains incomplete. The only possibility, therefore, is comparison by function and ground-plan with similar facilities which still have upper floors. One example suitable for such comparison is the virtually contemporaneous Baybars al-Jāshnkīr Khānqāh (706–9/1306–10), situated nearby in the Shāri‘ al-Jamaliyah.

CONSERVATION MEASURES

After the archaeological excavations had been finished, the sanitary installations and parts of the adjacent finds were preserved, and the excavated surfaces abutting the buildings of the two madrasahs were filled in with sand. The restored and partially rebuilt sanitary installations should be regarded as an “archaeological window” offering a glimpse of the earliest building stage in the Fatimid/Ayyubid era (tenth and twelfth centuries).





Fig. 1. Key map: no. 44, Madrasah of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad; no. 43, Madrasah of Maṣṣūr Qalāwūn; no. 187, Madrasah of Barqūq (drawing by N. Hampikian/Ph. Speiser)



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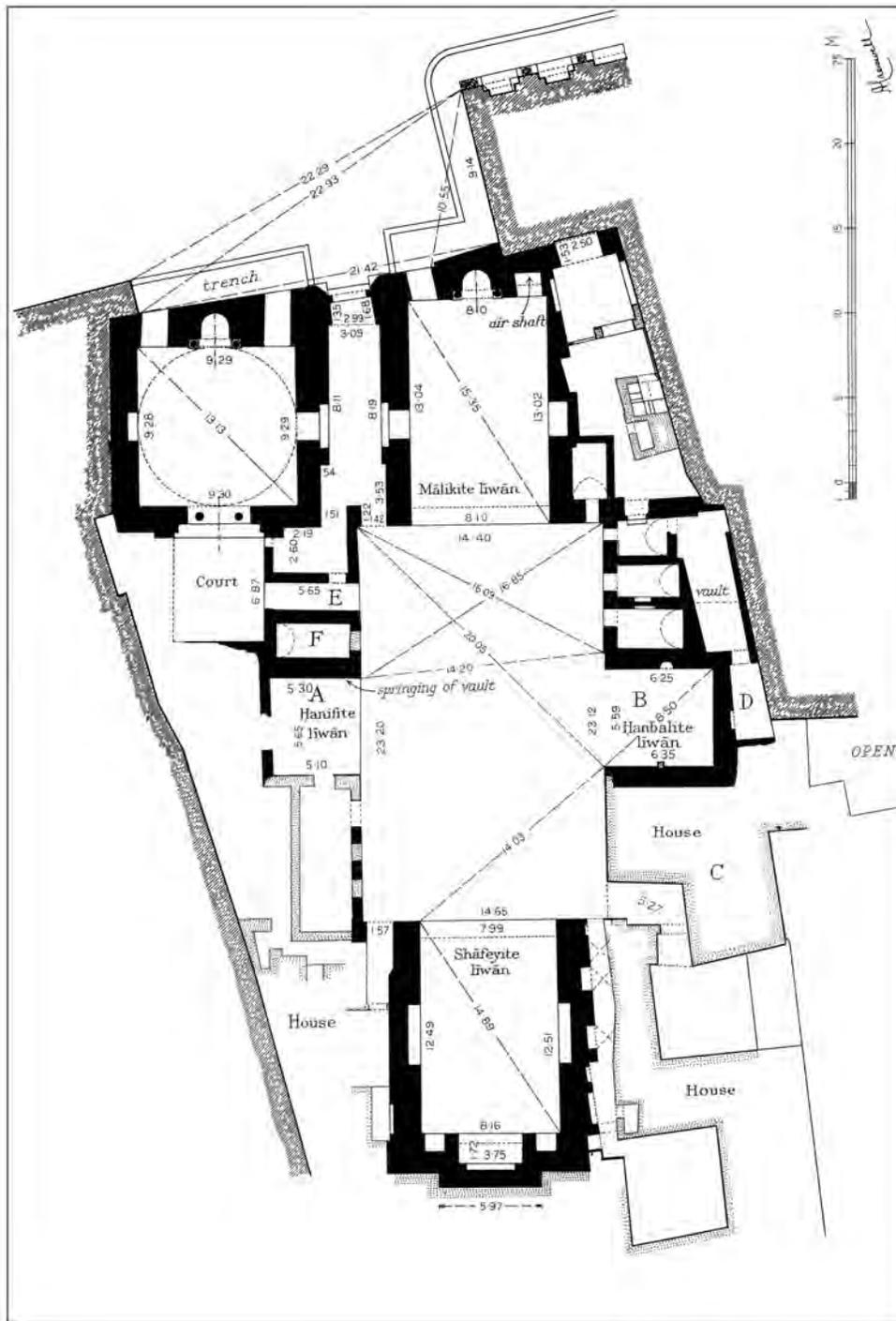


Fig. 2. Madrasah of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, ground plan, 1959 (by K. A. C. Creswell)



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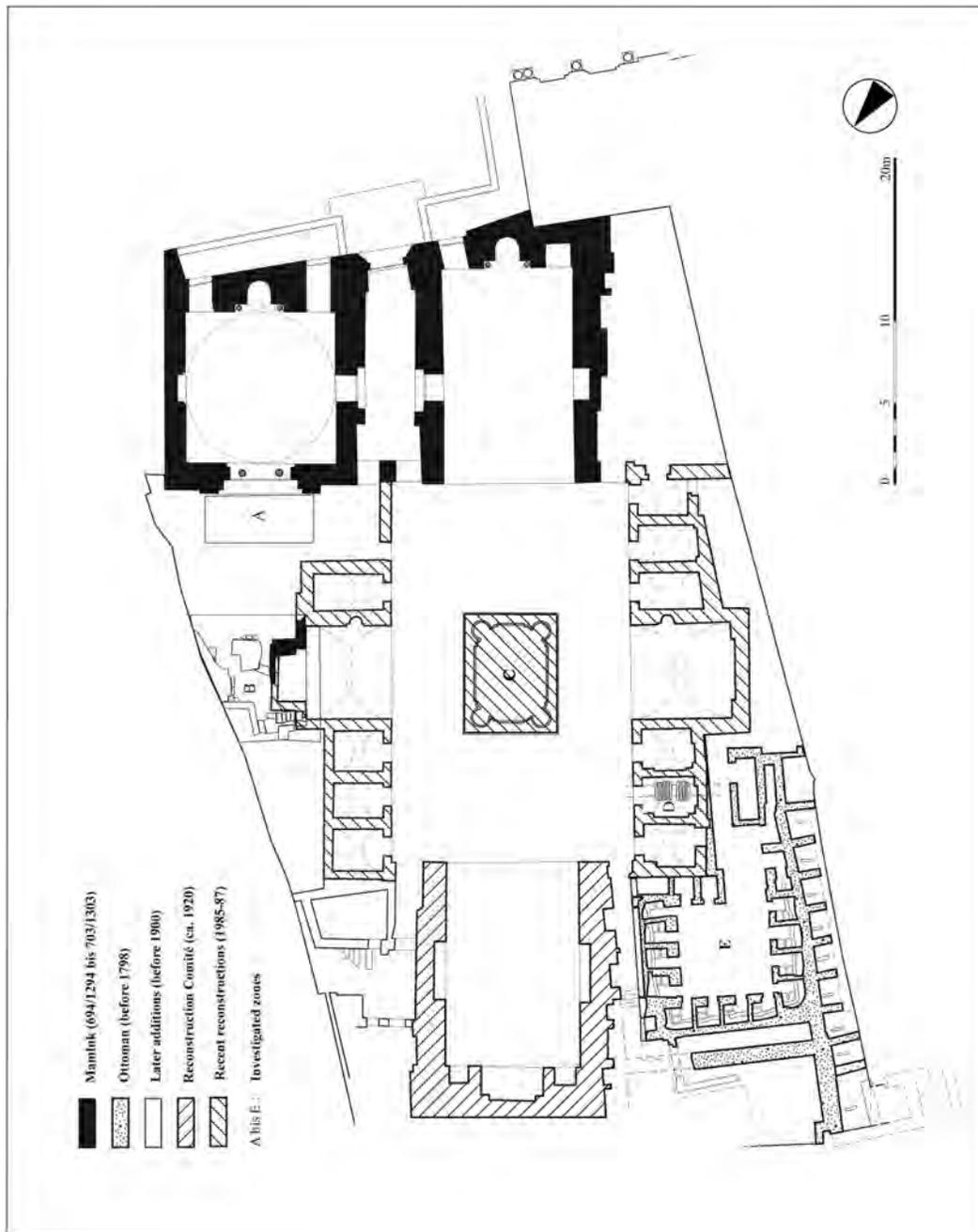


Fig. 3. Madrasah of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, ground plan after excavation in 1985–89 and 1998–2004 (by M. Lehner, Ph. Speiser, and G. Nogara)



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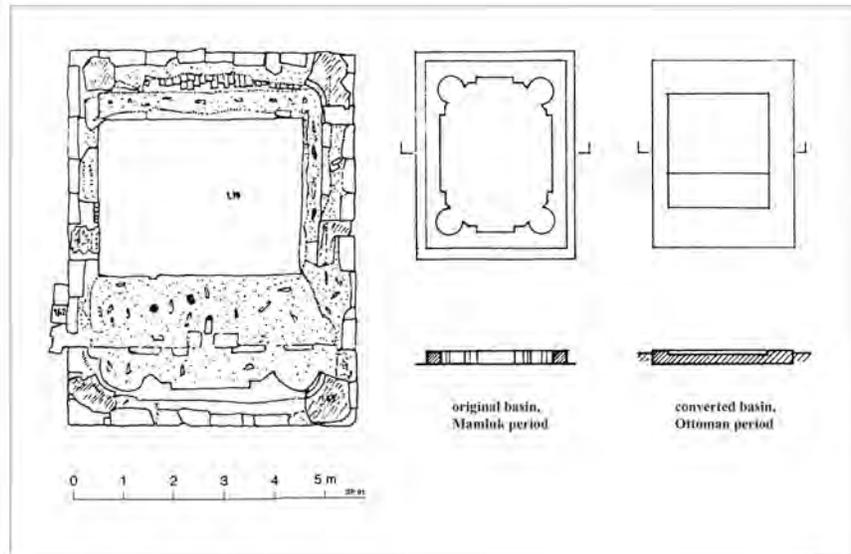


Fig. 4. Madrasah of al-Nāṣir MuḤammad, zone C courtyard, fountain (by Ph. Speiser)

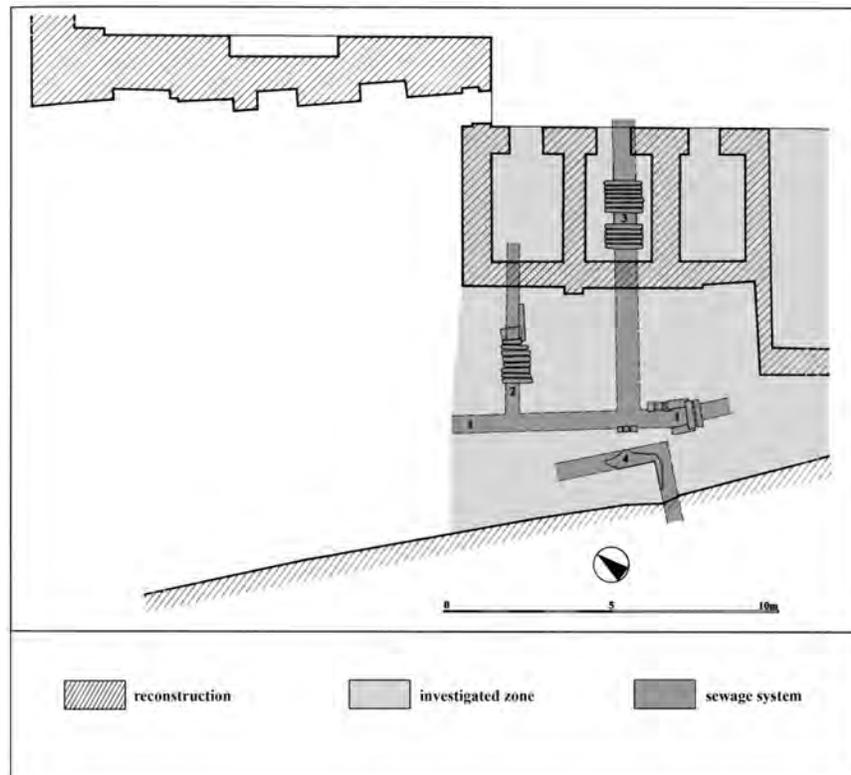


Fig. 5. Madrasah of al-Nāṣir MuḤammad, zone D, phase 1 (by G. Nogara)



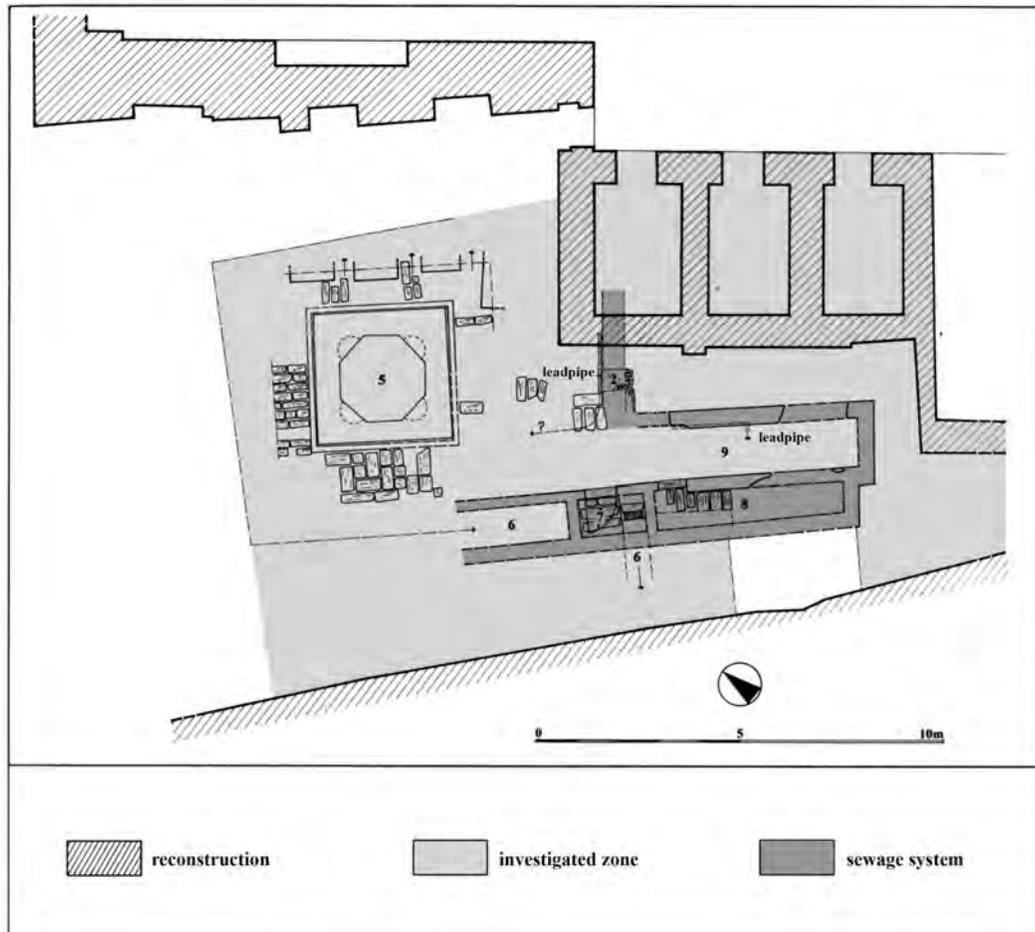


Fig. 6. Madrasah of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, zone D and E, phase 2 (by G. Nogara)



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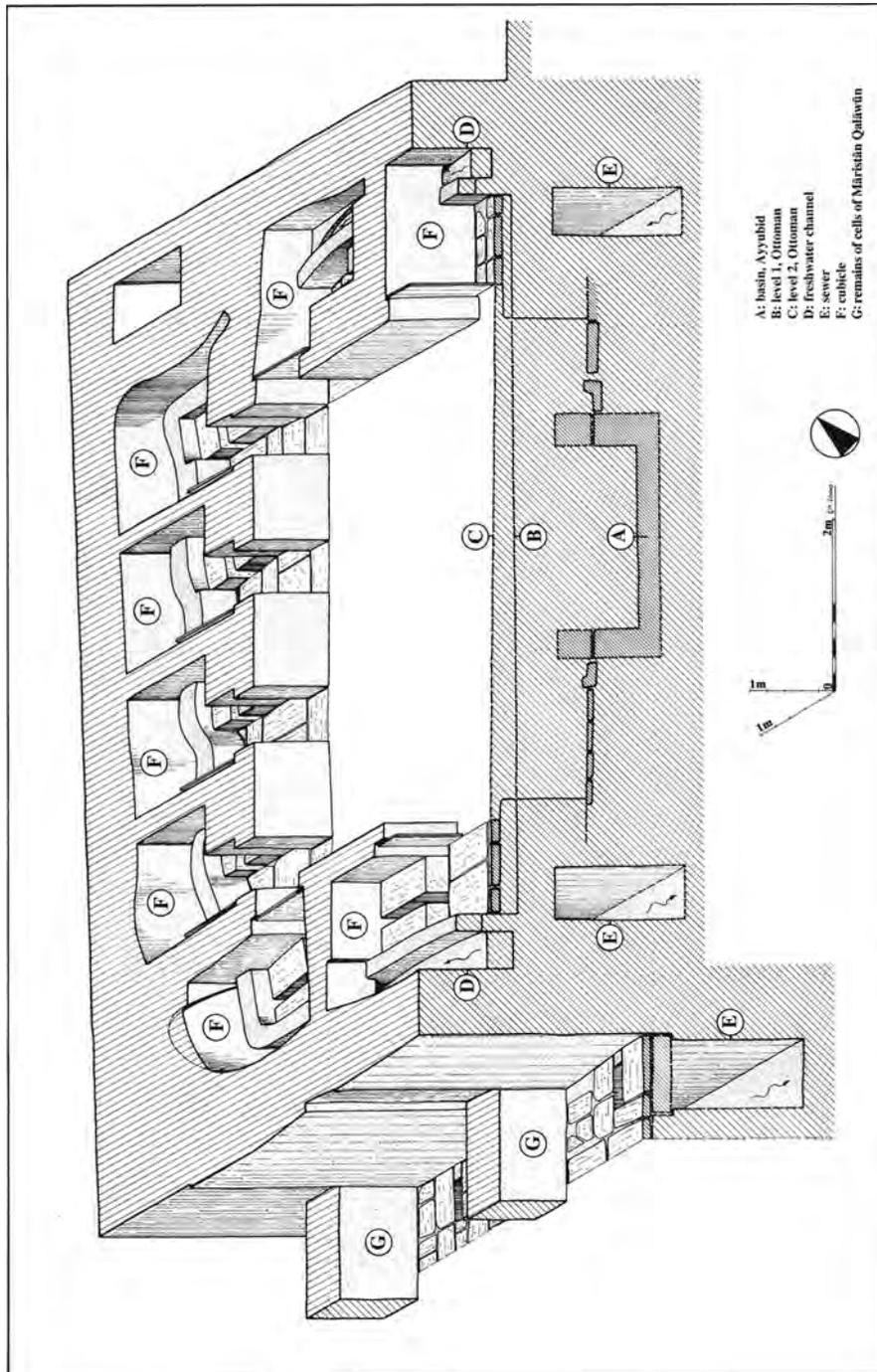


Fig. 7. Madrasah of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, sanitary installations, axonometric reconstruction (by G. Nogara)



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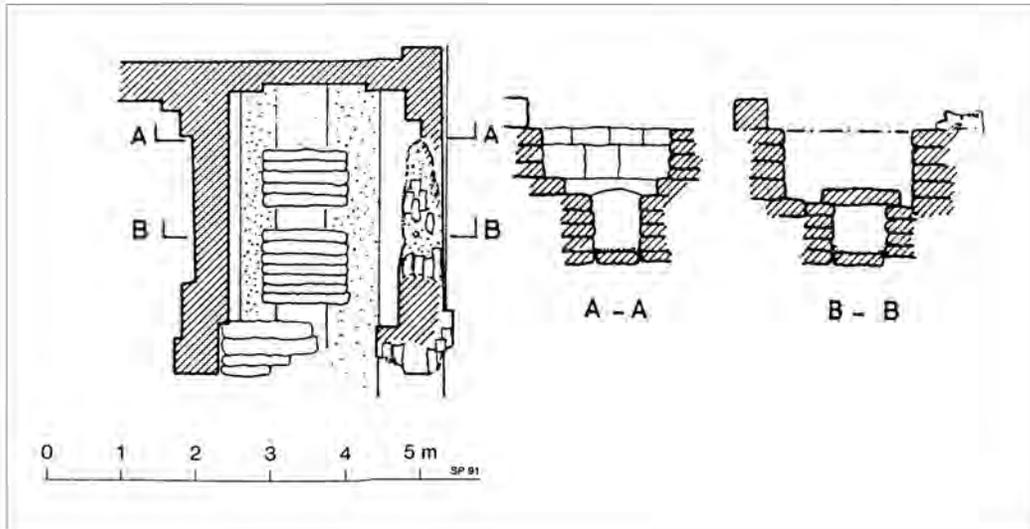


Fig. 8. Madrasah of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, zone D, sewer details (by Ph. Speiser)

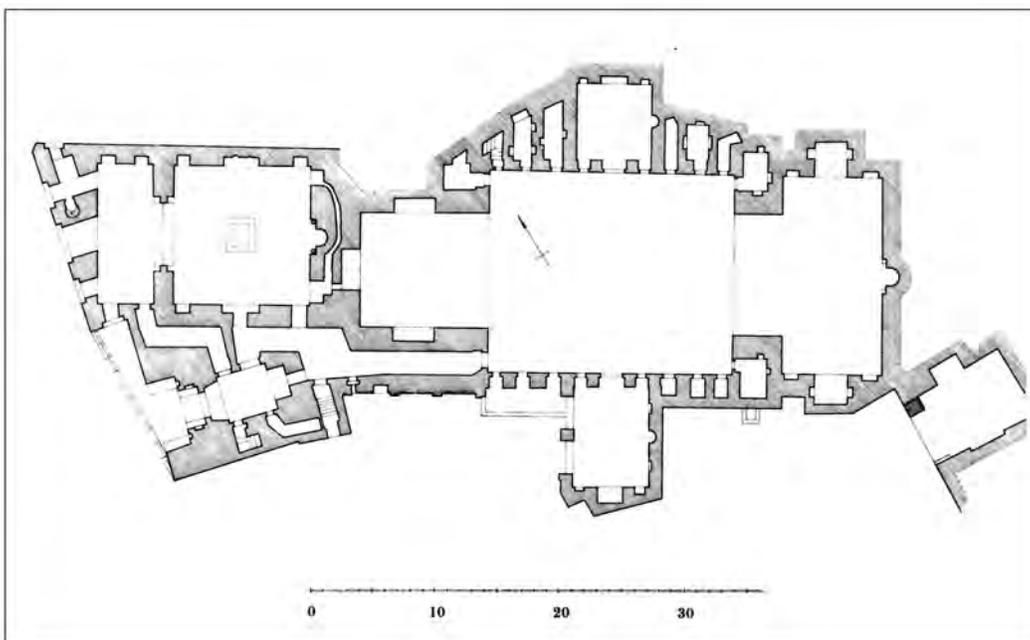


Fig. 9. Cairo, Khānqāh of Amir Baybars al-Jashnkīr (by M. Meinecke)



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Fig. 10. Madrasah of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, street elevation during restoration, 1986 (Speiser)



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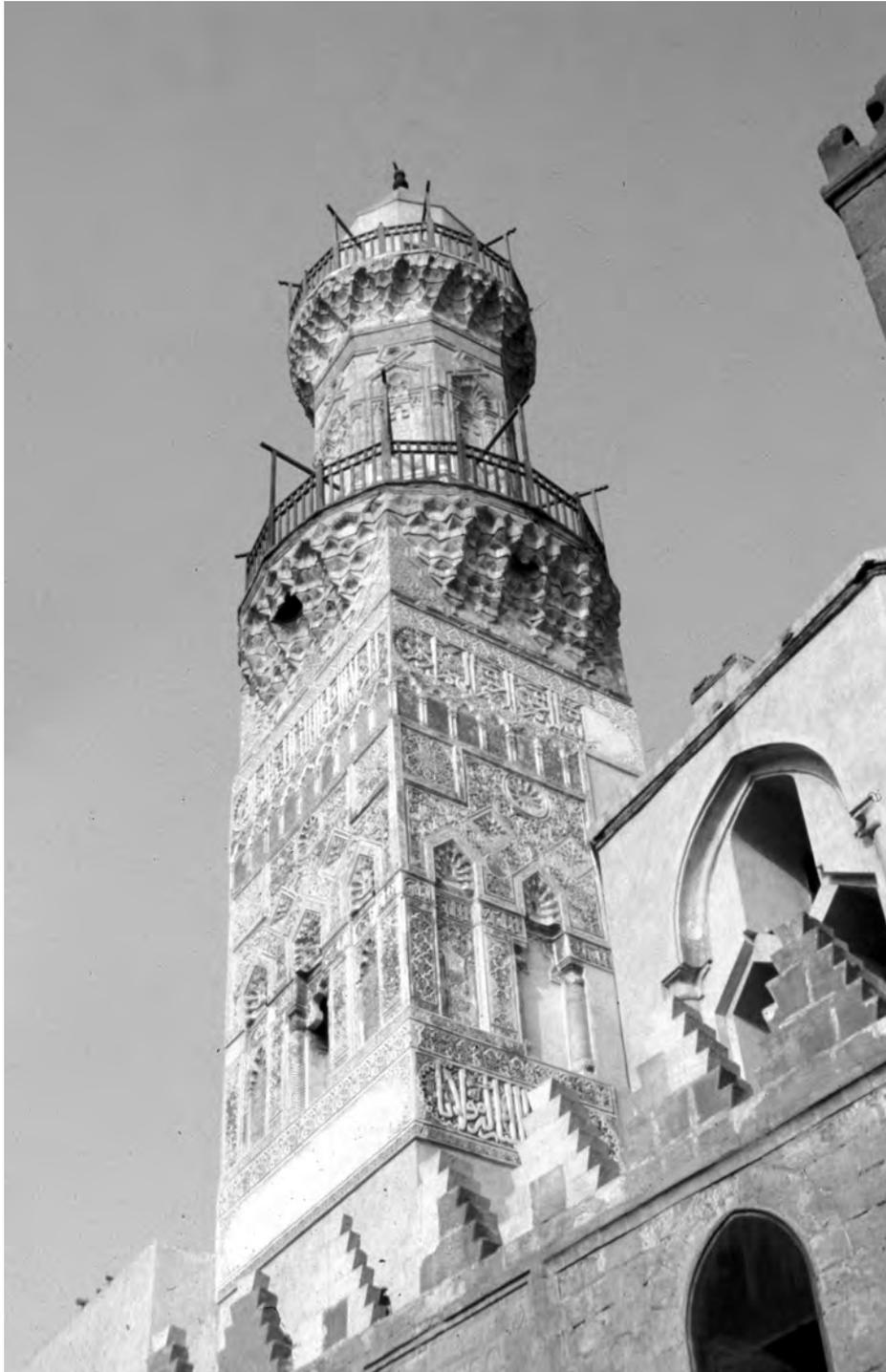


Fig. 11. Madrasah of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, minaret, 1989 (Speiser)



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Fig. 12. Madrasah of al-Nāṣir MuḤammad, remains of northern iwān in front of the mausoleum, 1986 (Speiser)



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Fig. 13. Madrasah of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, northern iwān during reconstruction in front of the mausoleum, 1987 (Speiser)



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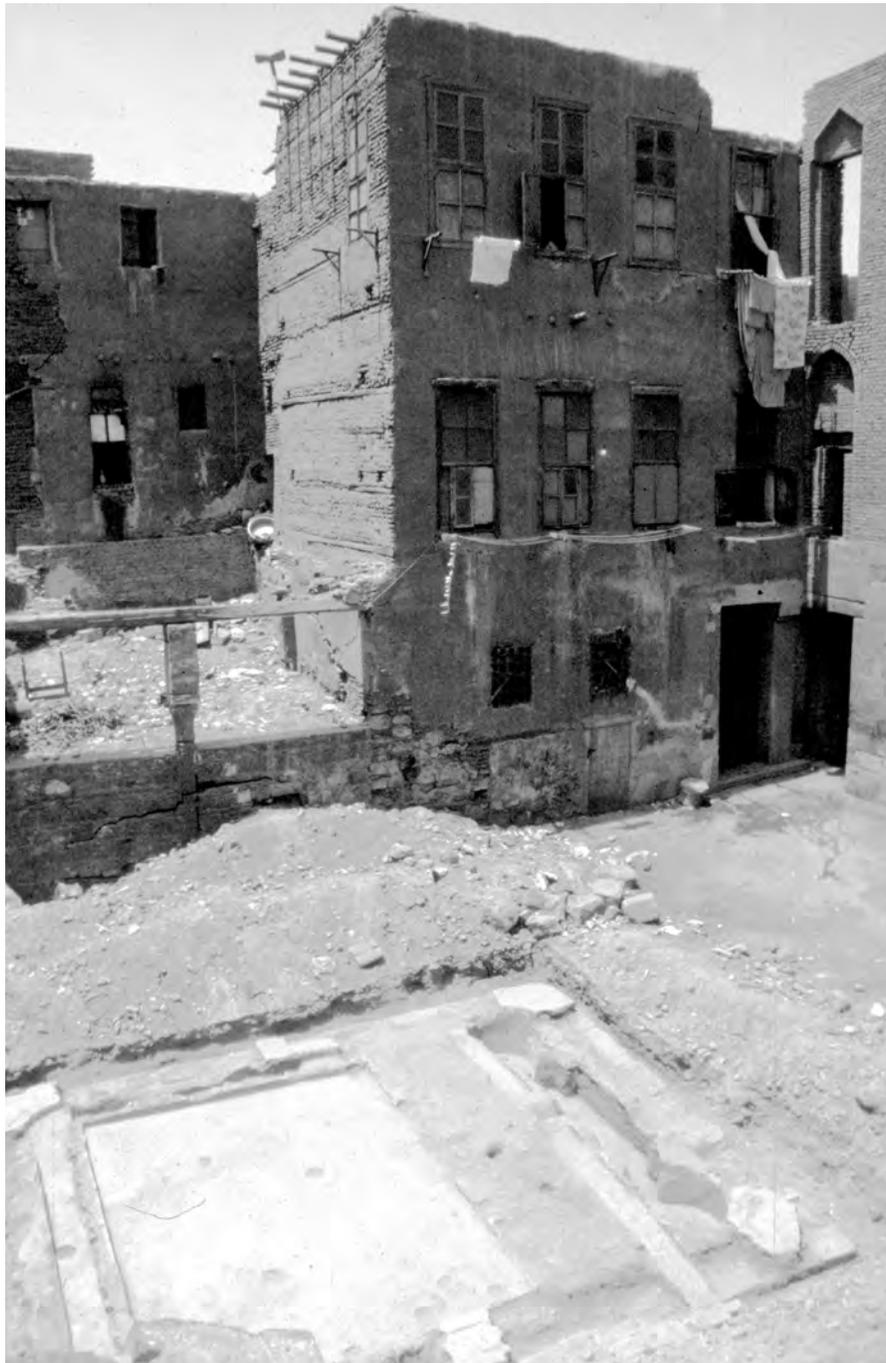


Fig. 14. Madrasah of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, 1985, excavated basin in the courtyard in front of a residential building from the nineteenth century, now demolished (Speiser)



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Fig. 15. Madrasah of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, excavated Ottoman sanitary installations with Ayyubid basin in the center, 1998 (Speiser)



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When Is It Possible to Call Something Beautiful?: Some Observations about Aesthetics in Islamic Literature and Art

It often happens that a teacher must occupy himself with topics that are somewhat distant from his own field of research. I have encountered this situation several times in recent years in connection with Islamic art, which I greatly admire, despite not being an expert. In the Czech Republic, this situation results from a growing interest in the art of Islamic countries, the increasing number of collectors, and the need for experts at museums, galleries, and auction houses. The need for a proper presentation and interpretation of traditional Islamic art is made all the more pressing by the fact that even experts in the field of art and artists themselves express their opinion of it with surprising superficiality and ignorance. Many factors have induced me to search for aesthetic points of view and principles valid for understanding Islamic art: the need for insight into traditional Islamic creative arts, my own particular experience with the palaeography of Arabic script (connected closely with calligraphy, as well as with heraldry and other auxiliary historical sciences), some problems that have struck me while studying sources dealing with Islamic material culture, and questions I have been asked by my students. In my search for these aesthetic principles, I have hoped to move beyond the viewpoint of the Western observer or listener steeped in an environment of Christian art, aiming instead to discover those principles which guided the creators and original viewers of Islamic art.

“Western” aesthetic points of view are well-known, but it is possible that they do not always conform to Islamic ones. To find Islamic aesthetic viewpoints, we could turn to the works of Islamic philosophers, literary critics, and other thinkers. But this does not hold true absolutely. Although literary theory, especially in the field of poetry, is worked out in detail, information about music is limited and about creative arts almost non-existent. Even the work of specialists on the Middle East says nothing about how Islamic art has been perceived by its intended audience. There are various philological studies, historical studies of literature and its individual genres, general works on creative arts or treatises on their individual kinds, classifying surveys and catalogues for collectors, as well as some treatises on individual musical forms, instruments, etc. Thus, the three most important branches of Islamic art—literature, creative arts, and music—

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are naturally detached and treated separately. When looking at how the original listeners of musical works, readers of literary works, and observers of artwork and other crafts perceived aspects that were decisive for their relationship to a work of art with which they came into contact, I found that this problem has never been treated by any orientalist. This gap in the comprehension of the mutual relationship of authentic users of “Islamic” art was finally bridged by Doris Behrens-Abouseif in her recent book *Schönheit in der arabischen Kunst*.¹ On the basis of examples collected from various works of classical Arabic authors and interpreted thoroughly, she has given a clear and nuanced answer to this question.

One of the reasons for writing this article was also a question which I encountered several times during the preparation of my edition of *Qahwat al-Inshāʾ*, the book of Ibn Ḥijjah,² the poet and official (*munshīʿ*) of the chancery during the Mamluk period (1366–1434). In it I found not only some metaphors referring to an authentic and not “Western” classification of art, but also the explication of a way of perceiving some of its manifestations. The problem prompted me to skate on the thin ice of art and in a few words point out the questions raised by Ibn Ḥijjah. The facts that I try to deduce from his words could complement and support the conclusions reached by Doris Behrens-Abouseif.

In our “Western” point of view, “art” is usually defined as graphic or plastic. When speaking about the Islamic world, we are used to calling it “Islamic art,” and we perceive it as a material one, starting with buildings and ending with jewels. Such art can be considered visual. Arabs, Persians, and Turks have always considered the arts of the word, i.e., poetry and fine prose, a separate branch named comprehensively “literature.” This, along with music, can be considered an auditory art. Visual and auditory arts are brought together in dance and theatre. As for the latter, traditional Islamic society has never considered it an art.

Muslims have been active within all these vast fields of art, and as for created works, they either accepted or refused them. The question is: what was the reason for their acceptance or refusal? Why did the users of art take up a positive or a negative position towards it? What was “beautiful” and what was not? Many students have asked me what in Islamic art was considered beautiful and according to which aesthetic criteria was a work of art—auditory, visual, material, literary, or musical—evaluated. I have also asked my colleagues which criteria the critics apply or have applied for the evaluation of aesthetic and artistic aspects that make it possible to call any creation “a work of art.” The result was not too satisfactory

¹Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Schönheit in der arabischen Kunst* (Munich, 1998). Also available in an English translation, *Beauty in Arabic Culture* (Princeton, 1999).

²Taqī al-Dīn Abū Bakr ibn ‘Alī Ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī, *Das Rauschgetränk der Stilkunst, oder Qahwat al-inšāʾ*, ed. Rudolf Veselý (Beirut, 2005).



and related mostly to literature, especially poetry. I did not learn much about visual art, to say nothing of music.

There is a hadith that refers to the meaning of “the beautiful”: *Inna Allāh jamīl wa-yuḥibb al-jamāl* (or *al-jamīl*) (God is beautiful and he loves the beautiful).³ It could be a matter of principle for the Muslims. But it is known that in spite of this principle’s existence, the Islamic thinkers—philosophers and theologians—have never drawn up any aesthetics, any comprehensive theory of the beautiful for which they could find a clue in the works of the philosophers of the classical and post-classical eras. It could be admitted that a Muslim should look for, find, and admire beauty because the beautiful and beauty-loving God had created the world in accordance with his will. That is why the world must be beautiful, and with respect to this fact it can be assumed that some criterion could be determined for its beauty. As far as I know, this has not happened—and if so, it has been very limited at best. Was it because nobody dared it, or because man had to respect the beauty of the world created by God as an indisputable fact without any clue for its evaluation? He could find the beautiful in his surroundings and use it for his own good. He found it useful and named it “beautiful.” This related above all to material resources that were necessary for life and were therefore useful—either provided by nature or created by man. It is probable that Ibn Sinā had these godsend and human creations in mind when he wanted a “beautiful” thing to be good, useful, and also usable.⁴ To this effect he at least conceded man his right to evaluate the beautiful.

Did a Muslim who created anything multiply the beauty created by God? Was he entitled to do so? Was any human creation merely an act of rivalry with God? On the one hand, man could be charged with trying to imitate the creation of the “jealous” God, which he could consider an audacity or even a blasphemy that could result in his deserved retribution. On the other hand, one could argue that man has a chance to discover the perfect beauty of the creation of God and God himself by means of the imperfection of his own creation. Thus, the work of man can be considered a means to a more perfect comprehension of God, a form of worshiping him, an act of piety, and even—with some exaggeration—a divine

³A. J. Wensinck, *Concordance et Indices de la Tradition Musulmane* (Leiden, 1933–38), 1:373. This hadith is found in Ibn Ḥanbal and Ibn Mājah, not al-Bukhārī or other canonical compendia of hadiths. The fact that this hadith is included in the oldest collection of hadiths, i.e., *Al-Musnad* by Ibn Ḥanbal (which does not belong to the six “canonical” collections), as well as in Ibn Mājah’s work, which was the last hadith collection to be declared “canonical” due to its inclusion of many “weak” hadiths (see Carl Brockleman, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur* [Weimar, 1898–1902], 1:163), arouses a suspicion that this particular hadith is also “weak.” Nevertheless, its contingent “weakness” has not influenced its importance as a hadith that supported the necessity to create “the beautiful.”

⁴S. Kahwaji, “ʿIlm al-Djamāl,” *Encyclopédie de l’Islam*, 2nd ed., 3:1162–63.



service. Man should comprehend that when he works, he utilizes both material and spiritual means with which he was provided by God.

It is well-known that this quandary, as well as the fear of idolatry, resulted in the fact that traditional Islamic arts—with the exception of some works from the first century—did not include the three-dimensional representation of human beings or animals, although no explicit prohibition ever existed. Also, the two-dimensional portrayal of human beings and animals was very limited. It was applied at most as a part of the decoration of objects assigned to private life, such as utensils and books. The decoration of public premises, i.e., buildings and their interior, consisted exclusively of a combination of calligraphy, geometry, and floral motifs. These ideological factors and practical considerations laid for creative or visual arts the foundations of a generally accepted tradition that was not defined by any clear rule or norm.

The position of auditory art—the art of the word and music—was different. It was Arabic poetry that followed up fully and continuously on its pre-Islamic ideal pattern. It is not necessary to remind us that on the one hand Arabic poetry influenced the poetries of non-Arabic Islamic countries and on the other was influenced by them. It is important that some innovations (*badā'i'*) in the field of form, content, and lexicon have been applied as a reflection of the aesthetic demands of individual eras. As opposed to creative arts, poetry also formulated the aesthetics of physical beauty, especially female beauty.

In contrast to visual art, where the individuality of the creator was almost indistinguishable, every poetic work reflected the personality of its author. Musicians and singers expressed not only their skill, but also their immediate frame of mind and relation to a performed work. The freedom of poets and musicians was incomparably greater than that of graphic or plastic artists because they were not at risk of idolatry. At most, they had to satisfy the expectations of their readers and listeners.

Another important aspect of the different conception of visual and auditory art was the fact that visual art was connected inseparably with matter, while auditory art related to sound. A work made of matter—from a large mosque to a delicate piece of jewelry—can be perceived and admired at any time and is unchangeable because it was created once and for all. On the contrary, every sound of a work made of tones dies away after being heard, so that it was possible to call recitation, singing, or playing an instrument “the art of the moment.” At the same time, it was possible to change any auditory—and especially musical—work as desired. Every presentation depended on a soloist, an instrumentalist or a singer. For example, in *Kitāb al-Aghānī* we find some remarks, headed by the word “*ṣawt*” (“voice, tune”), below the verses of poems, indicating that these verses were assigned for singing; these notes usually represent fingering for playing a lute. A composer determined



only a basic key in which the respective song and its accompaniment were to be performed. A melody depended on the singer. Players who accompanied him on musical instruments had to adapt themselves to him. Thus one song—or even one of its verses—could be presented again and again with a new melody and its corresponding accompaniment. This art necessitated a listener’s concentration and experience, enabling him to identify and appreciate such variations. During the impromptu recitation of his verses, a poet could improvise freely like a musician or a singer. This variability of auditory art was practically unlimited. On the contrary, visual art made it possible to change a theme only within the artistic trends of the respective era. This can be compared to a gem that begins to glow with a new color when it is turned half-circle.

Changing these possibilities into reality required an active approach of a recipient to a given work of art, whether visual or auditory. At the same time, a reaction to a work of art was an individual act. The effect of a “seen” or “heard” work of art upon its recipient has always depended on his readiness to perceive it. The importance of this inward experience during the perception of a work of art was realized by al-Ghazālī, who stressed the close connection between a perceived object and a perceiving subject. The evaluation of an object depends on the sympathy of a subject for it. The spiritual perception of the beauty of an object that need not be perceived necessarily by sight has a much stronger effect than impressions formed during its observation.

Now, let us see which of these theories and assumptions are confirmed by Ibn Ḥijjah. In his *Qahwat al-Inshāʾ* a combination of two words occurs seven times. As usual in Ibn Ḥijjah’s work, it is a metaphor: *al-mathānī wa-al-mathālith*. The first word of this pair is also used in connection with the number “seven.”⁵ There is no doubt that it is a metaphor for the Quran, or the seven verses of the surah *al-Fātiḥah*, or even other surahs. Nevertheless, in connection with the word “*al-mathālith*” this metaphor has no meaning. The dictionaries say that the word “*al-mathnāʾ*” (pl. *al-mathānī*) has inter alia the same meaning as the Persian word “*daw-baytī*” (distich), i.e., something that consists of two parts. With more imagination, which is a precondition for explicating the *tawriyāt*⁶ of Ibn Ḥijjah, “*sabʿat mathānin*” could also mean “the seven Muʿallaqāt.” The meaning of this word will become clear if we solve the problem of the word “*mathālith*.” The dictionary of Biberstein-Kazimirski says that “*mithlath*” (pl. *mathālith*) means “the third string on a lute.”⁷ It can be deduced from this that Ibn Ḥijjah applied the word “*al-mathānī*”—i.e., “distichs”—to a poem or to poetry as such, and the word

⁵“*Unzilāt fī al-sabʿ al-mathānī*” (Ibn Ḥijjah, *Qahwah*, 131, line 6); “*Awwadhatʿhu al-raʿāyā bi-al-sabʿ al-mathānī*” (ibid., 207, line 3); “*Awwadhatʿhu bi-al-sabʿ al-mathānī*” (ibid., 385, lines 4–5).

⁶S. A. Bonebakker, “Tauriya,” *EF*, 10:395.

⁷Albert de Biberstein-Kazimirski, *Dictionnaire Arabe-Français*, s.v. *mithlath*.



“*mathālith*” analogously to music.⁸ It seems as if Ibn Ḥijjah presented music and poetry—i.e., auditory arts—as some special artistic form. The first of these arts, i.e., music, invites dancing (*raqs*) and is therefore *murqīṣ*; the second, i.e., poetry, along with the first brings a man into a state of exultation (*ṭarab*) and is therefore *muṭrib*. *Ṭarab* is an exultation that arises from a man’s heart and is experienced by him.⁹ This way of perceiving auditory art accords fully with al-Ghazālī’s calling for individual inward experience with a work of art.

An impressive declaration of the love of poetry and music, as well as a remarkable summary of the objectives of art and how to achieve them, can also be found in the *taḥmīd* in the preface to Ibn Ḥijjah’s *Dīwān*¹⁰ which closes his *Qahwat al-Inshāʾ* and, as one should say, crowns it. Here he thanks God, who riveted the attention of admirers of poetry and music (*ahl al-mathālith wa-al-maghānī*) and made accessible to their ears all that invites dancing (*murqīṣ*) and is emotionally moving (*muṭrib*). He points out that the instruments for both arts have a common origin (*nasab*) because they both are made from reed (*qalam*): a pen is “a lute for words” (*mizmār al-maʿānī*) which “inflames hearts” (*yūliʿu bi-al-albāb*), while a musical instrument is a “lute for melody” (*mizmār al-maghānī*) that “entertains ears” (*yalʿabu bi-al-asmāʿ*). Both arouse their listeners’ exultation (*ṭarab*). Ibn Ḥijjah names both arts “*adab*” that he considers “a godsend” and “a good mediated by angels” (*hibah ilāhīyah wa-malkah malakīyah*). In his view, an art that can be declared “beautiful” is “an art of the moment,” i.e., an art of changeable spoken or recited words and its musical accompaniment that every listener must perceive individually and allow to “penetrate to his heart.” He himself says: “I have not heard yet any valuable work that would not have fascinated my inward mind and stricken my heart.”¹¹ This declaration culminates with an aphorism that summarizes what has been said:

⁸For instance: “*tughnī ʿan al-mathānī wa-al-mathālith*” (Ibn Ḥijjah, *Qahwah*, 45, lines 18–19); “*aghmat bishāratuhā ʿan ṭib al-mathānī wa-al-mathālith*” (ibid., 251, line 4); “*yuṭribu tarjīʿu waṣfihā al-mufrad ʿalā al-mathānī wa-al-mathālith*” (ibid., 280, line 19); “*fa-aghna ʿan al-mathānī wa-al-mathālith*” (ibid., 332, line 13); “*wa-baṭula tashbih hādihā al-yarāʿ ʿalā al-mathālith min sajaʿātihi wa-al-mathānī*” (ibid., 419, lines 8–9); “*awwadhat hā rabāʿiyatan bi-al-mathālith wa-al-mathānī*” (ibid., 487, line 14); “*ahl al-mathānī wa-al-mathālith*” (ibid., 497, line 16).

⁹J. Lambert, “*Ṭarab*,” *EP*, 10:210; Behrens-Abouseif, *Schönheit*, 81. As Yaseen Nourani proved recently, *ṭarab* was not always considered positive from the social point of view, because it could be connected with “*jahl*” (violent emotion in opposition to self-control), which could consequently lead to a sin (Yaseen Nourani, “Heterotopia and the Wine Poem,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 36 [2004]: 348).

¹⁰Ibn Ḥijjah, *Qahwah*, 497 ff.

¹¹“*Wallāh uqsimu: mā samiʿtu shayʿan min ṭayyib al-adab illā khalaba lubbi wa-akhadha bi-majāmīʿ qalbi*” (ibid., 498, lines 3–4).



Wa-man ḥaḍara al-samā‘a bi-ghayri qalbin
Wa-lam yaṭrab fa-lā yalumi al-mughannī

(You won't be moved by music if your hearing is deaf,
 This is but your mistake and not that singer's you now blame)

What more could we add to Ibn Ḥijjah's words? Probably only that he gives an intelligible answer to our initial question. He evidently prefers auditory over visual art because it arouses a listener's "ṭarab" resulting from his experience with the beautiful. In his view, this is the only mission of "genuine" art. On the other hand, for those Western observers—either professionals or amateurs—who become familiar with Islamic art and culture, it is material culture (i.e., visual art) that in accordance with their aesthetic criteria deserves to be named "Islamic art." For those whom this material culture served, it was no more than the products of handicrafts, the effect of which has never been comparable with that of the products of *adab*. These different attitudes of domestic and foreign creators and recipients towards auditory and visual art are an example of cultural variability. What some admired, others considered an integral part of everyday life, and it can be said with some sarcasm that what brought some to exultation—i.e., poetry and music—for others was often but a source for philological research or a simple sound track for "oriental" dances.



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Book Reviews

TIMOTHY MAY, *The Mongol Art of War: Chinggis Khan and the Mongol Military System* (Yardley: Westholme, 2007). Pp. 214. Includes maps, illustrations, photographs, and glossary.

REVIEWED BY PATRICK WING, University of Redlands

Warfare and military conquest have long been associated with the Mongol Empire of Chinggis Khan in historical literature. We need only to consider the titles of works such as Juvayni's "History of the World Conqueror," or Grigor of Akanc's "History of the Nation of Archers" to realize that the earliest encounters between the Mongols and their Eurasian neighbors were essentially encounters with the Mongol army. In our own time, books such as J. J. Saunders' *The History of the Mongol Conquests* and, more recently, Stephen Turnbull's *Genghis Khan and the Mongol Conquests, 1190-1400* have addressed the military aspects of the foundation and expansion of the Mongol Empire. However, for all the attention given to the Mongols as conquerors, there have been fewer attempts to provide a systematic and comprehensive overview of Mongol military organization, training, tactics, and leadership.¹ This is the goal of Timothy May's *The Mongol Art of War*, a valuable contribution to our understanding of the structure of the Mongol military and the reasons for the Mongols' success against almost all of their adversaries in the thirteenth century. For the readers of this journal, perhaps an even more pertinent question is why the Mongols were unable to conquer the Mamluk Sultanate, one for which May provides some insightful suggestions.

After an introductory chapter providing a general overview of Chinggis Khan's early life and career, as well as a narrative of the dynastic and political history of the Mongol Empire until the 1260s, May addresses several themes relating to the structure of the Mongol army. These include recruitment and organization, training and equipment, logistics and supply, espionage, tactics and strategy, and leadership. Two chapters discuss the Mongols' major military opponents, including the Jürchen Chin, the empire of the Khwarazmshah, and the Mamluks, as well as detailed accounts of specific campaigns and battles. A final chapter on the military legacy of the Mongols offers an assessment of the major strengths and weaknesses of the Mongol army, as well as an interesting summary of the ways in which Mongol tactics and strategy have impacted the history of warfare down to

¹ A general overview of Mongol military organization is provided by H. Desmond Martin, "The Mongol Army," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1943): 46–85.



the twentieth century.

For the specialist, there are few new revelations about the details of the Mongols' campaigns. May relies on standard contemporary sources, including the *Secret History of the Mongols*, Juvaynī's *Tārīkh-i Jahān-gushāy*, Nasawī's *Sīrat al-Sultān Jalāl al-Dīn Mankuburnī*, Rashīd al-Dīn's *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*, accounts of travelers from the Latin West, including Marco Polo, and many others. The value of this work is in the synthesis of the enormous amount of material relating to military matters in these sources, which enables the reader to comprehend the high degree of planning, organization, and strategy that accompanied the Mongols' campaigns of conquest. Of particular value is the way in which the author illustrates the correlation between military organization, leadership, and mobility, a combination which accounts for the Mongols' often overwhelming success on the battlefield. May illustrates how the *keshik*, the royal bodyguard of the khan, provided both a kind of military academy for Mongol commanders, as well as a proving ground where they could demonstrate their skill in the field while still under the control of the khan. Here May acknowledges the work of Thomas Allsen on the *keshik* as an institution of social control within the Mongol military and political system.² The experience gained in the *keshik* meant that when generals were given command of a mission, they came having had experience coordinating their actions with other units on the battlefield. Unlike many of their European enemies, Mongol commanders did not lead personal contingents, based on their own noble status. Instead, Mongol leadership was based on merit proven within the context of the royal bodyguard.

The quality of leadership that the *keshik* provided became most valuable when it was translated into coordinated movement. Superior mobility combined with discipline were the major strengths of the Mongol army, according to May. Coordinated maneuvers of the Mongol horse archers made them deadly against armies in the field. Mongol weapons technology was also developed to enhance the advantages of the mounted archer. May provides a fascinating discussion of the superiority of the Mongol composite bow, which had a range far greater than the Frankish Crusader crossbow. The Mongols preferred to shoot their enemies at a distance, and to avoid close combat if possible. However, Mongolian practices like the *nerge*, or group hunt, could be employed to take advantage of coordinated cavalry movement. The enemy would be surrounded and forced to the center of a gradually contracting circle of warriors, in the same way that wild game on the steppe would be corralled during a hunt.

May does address the Mamluk army, one of the few adversaries the Mongols could not conquer. The main reason for this was that the Mamluks fought like

² Thomas T. Allsen, "Guard and Government in the Reign of the Grand Qan Möngke, 1251-1259," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 46 (1986): 495-521.



the Mongols did, and, man for man, they did it better. The Mamluks represented an elite warrior caste, in which every individual was specifically chosen for specialized training and combat. The Mongols, on the other hand, while effective as a group, were individually not as talented as the Mamluks in all areas of warfare. In a compelling analysis, May compares the Mamluks to the Japanese samurai. Both the Mamluks and the samurai were elite warriors who, unlike the knights of Europe, had mastered archery, a major strength of the Mongols. The Mamluks' main weakness was that they did not have as many horses as the Mongols, and thus could not compete with the Mongols' mobility. However, the Mamluks compensated for this by carrying out scorched earth measures on the Syrian frontier, thus denying the invading Mongols adequate pasture for their usual number of horses. With the mobility of the Mongols restricted, the Mamluks' discipline and archery skill left little advantage to the Mongols in Syria.

In the final chapter on the long-term legacy of Mongol warfare, the impact of the Mongols on the development of Muscovite and Russian tactics and organization is analyzed. The princes of Moscow emulated the Mongols, and borrowed institutions like the postal system (*yam*). May illustrates how enduring this experience was, pointing out that Mikhail Ivanin's 1846 publication *The Art of War of the Mongols and Central Asian Peoples* continued to be part of Russian and Soviet military academy curriculum until World War II. May also discusses the relationship between Mongol tactics and the use of gunpowder weapons. Although the impact of the Mongols on the diffusion of gunpowder technology has been discussed before, May argues that the degree to which gunpowder weapons were developed in Eurasia was related to the degree of conflict particular states and societies had with the Mongols and other steppe nomads. Early cannons and firearms were effective against heavy artillery and infantry, as was widespread in Central and Western Europe, in a way they were not against steppe nomads. For this reason, May suggests, states sharing frontiers with the steppe saw less development in gunpowder weapons before the seventeenth century, when field artillery became mobile enough to counter the movements of nomad armies.

The Mongol Art of War does not offer new interpretations of individual campaigns or battles, nor does it provide new perspectives on the familiar sources on which it relies. However, by providing a thorough, systematic analysis of several issues relating to the organization and projection of Mongol military power, Timothy May has produced a valuable contribution to our understanding of the Mongol Empire, its encounters with its neighbors and adversaries, and military history in general. For scholars of the Mamluk Sultanate, May's treatment of the Mamluks' military success against the Mongols is sure to stimulate positive discussion and debate within the field.



History and Historiography of Post-Mongol Central Asia and the Middle East: Studies in Honor of John E. Woods. Edited by Judith Pfeiffer and Sholeh A. Quinn in collaboration with Ernest Tucker (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006). Pp. 604, tables and index.

REVIEWED BY THOMAS T. ALLSEN

Like all such tributes to distinguished scholars, this volume collects essays from colleagues and former students, but unlike most endeavors of this sort, it has a “shape” which it sustains to a surprising degree. Thus, while many *Festschriften* are best described as “miscellanies,” covering diverse and disconnected topics, this celebration of Woods’ scholarly career takes on many of the attributes of a symposium volume arising from a research conference organized around a central theme, in this instance, Islamic historiography. The editors, contributors, and, ultimately, the honoree, deserve much credit for this uncommon result.

Grouped under a variety of chronological and geographical headings, the first set of essays, despite the title, is devoted to “The Mongol World Empire.” Peter Jackson investigates their concept of a heavenly mandated universal dominion and concludes that it probably arose in the later stages of Chinggis Qan’s life as the unprecedented success of their imperial venture became apparent. He also makes the important point that alongside their claims of world dominion, the Mongols frequently tried to trick or cajole foes into submission and often downplayed their ideological pretensions in order to gain allies, divide enemies, or make temporary peace. To this end, they used a host of intermediaries—subordinate princes, merchants, and translators—recruited from across Eurasia. All this is persuasively argued on the basis of both Muslim and Latin sources, of which the latter are particularly enlightening on the Mongols’ little-studied diplomatic techniques.

In his contribution, Devin DeWeese notes that while the Mongols visited great destruction on the Islamic world, Sufi orders adapted well to the new order and extended their influence. While many Sufi narratives explain these gains through conversion tales involving shaykhs and qans, others put forward the rather unexpected claim that it was Sufi leaders’ guidance of Chinggis Qan that account for the success of the Mongols conquests, that is, God provided these alien forces with spiritual guides as a manifestation of his divine wrath, his disappointment with the failings of Muslim society. DeWeese points out, too, that such a narrative accords nicely with the Mongols’ strong attraction to “holy men” of all stripes.

The early history of the Qongrat is carefully reconstructed by Isenbike Togan through a close analysis of Chinese and Persian sources and later tribal oral traditions. She finds that the Qongrat were divided into two major lineages, one in northeast Mongolia and another in the southeast abutting the agricultural lands



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of the North China plain. The former, and most famous grouping, became allies and the consort clan of the Chinggisids, while the latter were later subdued by force. Her findings demonstrate the great potential of this kind of ethno-historical research for illuminating the past of the steppe zone.

The next three offerings focus on Anatolia. The late Zeki Validi Togan explores the correspondence of Rashīd al-Dīn as a source of data on the region, noting that it contains statistics on all kinds of products and commodities, agricultural lands, and a variety of building projects. In his introduction, Gary Leiser, who translated the article from Turkish, succinctly summarizes the ongoing controversy concerning the authenticity of these letters and argues that some of their purely economic information might still be of value if handled critically. Hopefully, Togan's article will stimulate further attempts to authenticate and retrieve specific categories of data embedded in the letters.

Halil İnalçik takes a long view of "Autonomous Enclaves in Islamic States," arguing that grants of royal land and immunity were characteristic of Muslim polities from the Abbasids to the Ottomans. Such enclaves originated in a number of bestowals—*mulk*, *vaqf*, *soyurgal*, etc.—that not only transferred land to favored retainers, officials, and commanders, but also granted freedom from administrative interference and from taxes, the highly desirable *tarkhan* status. Over time, he concludes, these grants constituted a persistent force for political decentralization.

Charles Melville investigates the principal Persian chronicles prepared in Anatolia during the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, those of Ibn Bībī, Karīm al Dīn and the anonymous *Tārīkh Āl-i Saljūq*. He characterizes each, its sources, literary style, principles of organization, didactic purposes, and political allegiances. Lastly, he deftly situates these three sources into the larger framework of Ilkhanid historiography.

The second letter of the Ilkhan Amad Tegüder to the Mamluk sultan Qalāwūn in 1283 is examined in Judith Pfeiffer's article. She offers a detailed analysis of the context of their diplomatic exchanges and the first full translation and commentary on the letter in question. In so doing, she makes a substantial contribution to the interstate relations of the Mongolian era, which involved a multitude of players, and at the same time furthers our understanding of the internal history of Tegüder's reign.

The next section, "The Age of Timur," the field most closely associated with Woods' own interests and work, is well represented. Robert McChesney gives us an informative biographical study of Ibn 'Arabshāh, a major historian of the period, that reveals the sources of the author's extreme dislike of the famed conqueror. At the same time his treatment of Ibn 'Arabshāh's career richly illustrates the cosmopolitan and peripatetic nature of Muslim intellectual and cultural life in the



fifteenth century.

Surprisingly, there are still parts of Babur's manifold literary activities largely unexplored. Eiji Mano studies and compares Babur's Chaghatay Turkish translation of the *Vālidīyah*, a Persian mystical text composed by Khwājah Aḥrār, the famed Naqshbandīyah shaykh. This affords an opportunity for an informative discussion of other extant works of the Sufi leader long thought lost.

In another historiographical study, Beatrice Manz surveys fifteenth-century local chronicles of southern Iran, all by authors based in Yazd. She places the individual texts in their appropriate local and regional contexts, and identifies their sources of information, intended audiences, and ideological perspectives. Most impressively, she compares the chronicles written at Timurid courts with those from the south and shows that their discrepancies, no less than their areas of agreement, tell us much about the political dynamics between the center and the provinces.

Paul Losensky presents a convincing case that although overshadowed by the literary fame of Timurid Herat, the Aqqyunlu court at Tabriz also collected its own luminaries in the fifteenth century. He focuses on the highly esteemed poetry of Shahīdī of Qum, who, so characteristic of his age, began his career in Herat, moved on to Tabriz, and ended his days in India.

The next section, "The Safavids and their Legacy," has a pronounced historiographical emphasis. One of the more important sources on the origins of this dynasty is *Ṣafvat al-Ṣafā*, a history of the eponymous founder of the Safavid Sufi order written by a lieutenant, Ibn-i Bazzāz. Michel Mazzaoui discusses the available manuscripts and the complicated history surrounding attempts to produce a critical edition, and gives an evaluation, largely positive, to a newly published (1995) edition from Ardabil. Sholeh Quinn traces the evolution of Safavid coronation ceremonies from their austere beginnings to their more elaborate manifestations in the seventeenth century. By comparing the differing emphases of the chronicles, she charts the changing notions of kingship and legitimacy, and identifies the mix of Islamic and Iranian elements in the ceremony. Camron Michael Amin looks at the coverage of Safavid history in official textbooks and public discussion in twentieth-century Iran. He finds that although the rhetorical and ideological contexts differed, both the Pahlavi regime and the Islamic Republic extolled the Safavids for their creation of a "modern" Iranian national identity and for fending off the encroachments of foreign invaders.

In a somewhat different vein, Ernest Tucker studies the efforts of Nādir Shāh, the all-powerful Safavid general and founder of the Afshārid dynasty, to associate himself with Timur, who, faced with a similar situation, initially ruled through a series of Chinggisid figureheads. Nādir Shāh followed suit, found Safavid puppets and tried, unsuccessfully, to emulate Timur's vast conquests. This is an intriguing



example of historical memory and of the role of “models” in empire building, for Timur himself took Chinggis Qan as his model and, like Nādir Shāh, was unable in the end to duplicate his predecessor’s record of expansion.

The section on “Mamlūk Studies” begins with Anne Broadbridge’s revealing examination of the numerous apostasy trials held in Cairo in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, proceedings that shed considerable light on the relationship between the military and scholarly elites and on the Mamluk sultans’ quest for legitimacy.

Li Guo pursues the interesting theme of the use of verse in chronicle writing, particularly that of Ibn Dāniyāl, whose poems were widely cited and presented as accurate descriptions of contemporary events. This he did with some regularity, but his satirical verses on Mamluk anti-vice campaigns, as Guo demonstrates, were recycled and placed in differing chronological frameworks and in different literary forms. This recycling, he argues cogently, is in itself a useful source for cultural history.

The annual *maḥmal* festival, held in Cairo during the month of Rajab, formally opened the Mamluks’ pilgrimage to Mecca. But as John Meloy shows in his study of its origins and development, there was a sharp contrast between the institution’s “solemn intent” and its public reception, which transformed the event into a carnival-like celebration. The resultant tension provides a useful window on the dynamic relationship between governmental policy and popular culture.

The famous pilgrimage of Mansa Mūsá, the ruler of Mali who passed through Cairo in 1324, is the subject of Warren Schultz’s contribution, which compares the depiction of this event in the Arabic sources with its conventional treatment in world history texts. He convincingly shows that the textbook perception that the Malian ruler’s gifts of gold were so vast that they depressed gold prices for decades is simply not true. What the sources do show is that his largesse produced one of the many short-term variations in the money market of medieval Cairo.

In the shortest section, “Historical Geography,” the noted Persian scholar Īraj Afshār employs a close textual-philological approach to questions connected with the name and location of Damadan, a mountain mentioned in various sources from pre-Islamic times down to the Mongols. By way of methodological contrast, two Mongolian scholars, D. Bazargur and D. Enkhbayar, investigate, on the basis of toponymics and modern environmental studies, the geographical and natural worlds of the *Secret History*. Among their more interesting findings is that many migratory routes have been in continuous use since the days of Chinggis Qan.

In the final section, “Interregional Contacts and Cross-cultural Transmission,” Abolala Soudavar examines the historiographical and publication activities of the Yuan Hanlin Academy, which he connects to similar efforts in the Ilkhan capital of Tabriz and to the rise of illustrated manuscript production in Iran. The Chinese



antecedents of this activity, expressed in official portraiture and book illustration, are well worth pursuing; such an investigation will need to take into account the vital importance of visual representation and its reproduction in the political culture of the Mongols and other steppe peoples.

Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam analyze the variable views of two seventeenth-century Safavid travelers on India and the Indians. While some of their differences, they argue, are attributable to personal characteristics, a full explanation of their divergent images must also take into consideration internal developments within Mughal India.

The spread of Persianate art to Istanbul is investigated by Fariba Zarinebaf-Shahr, who documents the importance of Tabriz as a cultural center and its influence on the Ottomans. This was exercised, in her view, through the forced removal of Tabrizi artists and artisans in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries following successful Ottoman military operations. This fine study points up again the significance of this kind of “technician transfer” in the circulation of culture.

The concluding essay by Douglas Streusand forcefully challenges H. A. R. Gibb’s view that Islam alone engendered Islamic civilization, thereby ignoring and minimizing its composite character, which drew upon both ancient Near Eastern, mainly Old Iranian, and Greek-Byzantine elements.

Viewing the volume as a whole, and from the perspective of my own research interests, several other recurrent themes, besides that of historiography, emerge from this collective endeavor. First, is the peripatetic lives of so many artists and intellectuals; Muslim culture was highly mobile during the Chinggisid and Timurid eras. A second, and related, connecting thread is the importance of Tabriz, whose ample cultural resources were eagerly appropriated throughout this period by neighbors near and far.

This brings us back to the honoree, whose first major contribution to the field dealt with the Aqquyunlu and their capital, Tabriz. Indeed this collection nicely mirrors Woods’ own research interests chronologically, geographically, and thematically, and many articles build upon and elaborate his work.

Lastly, the overall quality of the papers is uniformly high; there are no learned notes here, only carefully argued papers based on primary research of a kind one would normally expect to find in a serious professional journal. And, as an added bonus, there is an extensive analytical index! In all respects, this is an uncommon *Festschrift*, one well earned.



ADAM SILVERSTEIN, *Postal Systems in the Pre-Modern Islamic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Pp. 190.

REVIEWED BY ELIZABETH URBAN, University of Chicago

This impressive book is easily the most comprehensive work on the Islamic *barīd* to date. Temporally, it ends with the arrival of modern postal techniques, namely the telegraph and the privatization of postal systems in the sixteenth century. Spatially, it is confined to “those regions that were ‘Islamic’ throughout the formative and classical periods of Islamic history” (p. 3), which excludes most of Africa, southeast Asia, and Europe. Within these expansive parameters, the book is divided into three parts. Part One, “The pre-Islamic background,” deals mainly with the Roman *cursus publicus*, Persian postal systems as far back as the Achaemenid period, and the postal practices of pre-Islamic Arabia. Part Two, “Conquest and centralisation—the Arabs,” covers the Umayyads, the Abbasids along with several of their autonomous successor states, and the Fatimids. Finally, Part Three, “Conquest and centralisation—the Mongols,” includes the Il-Khan *yām* and Mamluk *barīd*. Throughout the book, Silverstein utilizes a staggering amount of primary and secondary source material, from Herodotus and the Babylonian Talmud to Islamic-era Greek papyri and studies on Chinese administrative history (though he of course did not consult every conceivable source, and this reviewer particularly noted the absence of such Syrian Islamic historians as Ibn ‘Asākir and Ibn al-Adīm).

More crucial than the impressive amount of material that Silverstein has collected in this book, however, are the insightful questions he asks and useful analysis he provides. That is, the purpose of the book is not merely to amass data and dryly describe the minutiae of the *barīd* institution, but rather to provide answers to such questions as, “What (if anything) makes an Islamic postal system ‘Islamic’?” (p. 4). Indeed, the greatest strength of this book lies in its examination of the way various dynasties adapted the *barīd* to their particular circumstances; instead of focusing on one dynasty, geographical area, or time period, Silverstein traces the developments of the *barīd* institution across various times and places. As he eloquently puts it, the relatively simple idea of the *barīd* “was expressed and elaborated upon in manifestly different ways throughout Islamic history. The idiosyncratic ways in which different states chose to interpret the basic postal formula offer us rare insights into the political traditions of particular dynasties and rulers” (p. 188). For example, Silverstein describes the changes that occurred within the Abbasid *barīd* network in the turbulent periods of Zanj and Qarāmiṭah revolts (pp. 111–21), and how both the Samanids and Ghaznavids simultaneously preserved and altered parts of the Abbasid *barīd* model (pp. 125–31). He does not



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frame these changes in terms of Abbasid “decline,” but in terms of adapting to new circumstances.

The readership of this journal will be most interested in the book’s fifth and shortest (at 22 pages) chapter, entitled “The Mamluk *barīd*.” Silverstein points out that the Mamluk *barīd* has received more scholarly attention than other Islamic postal systems, tipping his hat in particular to Jean Sauvaget’s masterpiece *Poste aux cheveux dans l’empire des Mamelouks*. Silverstein’s work improves upon *Poste aux cheveux* in two ways. First, he draws upon sources that were unavailable to Sauvaget, such as Baybars al-Manṣūrī al-Dawādār’s *Zubdat al-Fikrah fī Tārīkh al-Hijrah* and ‘Umar ibn Ibrāhīm al-Anṣarī’s *Tafriḥ al-Kurūb fī Tadbīr al-Ḥurūb*. Secondly and more importantly, rather than attempting to supersede Sauvaget’s work in detail, Silverstein aims to “contextualise the Mamluk *Barīd* in relation to previous and contemporary postal systems, a subject in which Sauvaget was uninterested” (p. 167, n. 12). He achieves this goal through a discerning comparison of the postal systems in Mamluk, Abbasid, Fatimid, and Il-Khan domains. First, he analyzes the very origins of the Mamluk *barīd*, asking why Baybars would have wanted to create a *barīd* given that the Fatimids and Ayyubids before him had thrived without one. Then, while acknowledging the significant impact of the Il-Khan *yām* on the Mamluk postal system (an idea first noted by Sauvaget and taken up by other scholars such as Gazagnadou), Silverstein also examines the ways the Mamluk *barīd* drew on models other than the *yām*. He notes that the Mamluk system differed from the Il-Khan system in several important ways, that the Mamluks inherited political traditions from many sources aside from the Mongols, and that the Mamluks themselves consciously (or self-consciously) attributed their *barīd* to the Abbasid caliphal model. Examining this claim of Abbasid legitimacy, Silverstein also details how the Mamluk *barīd* was distinct from the Abbasid model. Finally, Silverstein sees the decline of the Mamluk *barīd* in light of the peace achieved between the Mamluks and Mongols in the fourteenth century, as well as the reforms instituted by al-Nāṣir Muḥammad. As a whole, Silverstein’s assessment of the Mamluk *barīd* is enlightening and carefully argued. However, he does very occasionally verge on oversimplification or even cultural bias; a superficial reading of the book might lead some readers to think the Mamluks were military machines who could not maintain a purely bureaucratic institution, or that ethnic Turks were better suited to horsemanship than anything else (see especially p. 169). In the end, his analysis of the Mamluk *barīd* is actually much more nuanced than any pre-conditioned understanding of the Mamluks would permit, and these seemingly biased statements are often the result of blithe phrasing rather than misconception.

Unfortunately, there is one noticeable gap in the book’s attempt to contextualize the Mamluk postal system. Silverstein mentions that the Mamluk *barīd* may have



been influenced by the Golden Horde (p. 185), a statement which he cannot elaborate upon because he does not include the Golden Horde's postal system in this book. This is partially justifiable, as the Golden Horde falls outside the parameters set in the Introduction; however, in this case the chosen parameters seem more cumbersome than helpful. It is understandable that Silverstein had to draw his limits somewhere, but to cover the Il-Khans and the Mamluks but not the Golden Horde seems unwise given the close (if not always friendly) contact between those three states.

As a final note, readers will be pleased with the book's flowing style and engaging mixture of primary source quotation and ensuing analysis. However, it does occasionally suffer from lack of clarity. For instance, when Silverstein claims that the Il-Khan *barīd* "became an 'Islamic' postal system" within a few decades of Hülegü's conquering Iran and Iraq (p. 153), he gives no immediate indication of what he means by this. This omission is especially frustrating as one of the stated goals in the Introduction is to discover what makes an Islamic postal system "Islamic." Eventually, Silverstein does explain the meaning of this statement, but it is not until the Conclusion of the book more than thirty pages later. Other examples of unclear writing could be cited, but in general his narrative is quite lively and readable. In the end, no amount of nitpicking about the occasional missed source or unclear sentence can decrease the importance of this book. Students of Islamic administrative history, whether or not they focus on the Mamluk period, will benefit greatly from Silverstein's perceptive analysis and fruitful comparisons of Islamic *barīd* systems throughout the pre-Modern period.



LIST OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- ‘ABBĀSĪ, AL-ḤASAN IBN ‘ABD ALLĀH. *Mulūk Miṣr min al-Ṭūfān ilá al-Nāṣir ibn Qalāwūn, al-Musammá bi-Nuzhat al-Mālik wa-al-Mamlūk: fī Mukhtaṣar Sīrat man Waliya Miṣr min al-Mulūk*. Edited by Sayyid Muḥammad Sayyid ‘Abd al-Wahhāb. Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 2007. Pp. 504.
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Arabic Transliteration System

Romanized Arabic in *Mamlūk Studies Review* follows the Library of Congress conventions, briefly outlined below. A more thorough discussion may be found in *American Library Association-Library of Congress Romanization Tables* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1991).

ء	’	خ	kh	ش	sh	غ	gh	م	m
ب	b	د	d	ص	ṣ	ف	f	ن	n
ت	t	ذ	dh	ض	ḍ	ق	q	ه	h
ث	th	ر	r	ط	ṭ	ك	k	و	w
ج	j	ز	z	ظ	ẓ	ل	l	ي	y
ح	ḥ	س	s	ع	‘				
		ة	h, t (in construct)			ال	al-		
		ـَ	a	ـُ	u	ـِ	i		
		ـَـ	an	ـُـ	un	ـِـ	in		
		آ	ā	وُ	ū	يِ	ī		
		أ	ā	وُـ	ūw	يِـ	īy (medial), ī (final)		
		ى	á	وِ	aw	يِـ	ay		
						يِـ	ayy		

Avoid using apostrophes or single quotation marks for ‘*ayn* and *hamzah*. Instead use the Unicode characters ‘ (02BF) and ’ (02BE).

Capitalization in romanized Arabic follows the conventions of American English; the definite article is always lower case, except when it is the first word in an English sentence. The *hamzah* is not represented when beginning a word, following a prefixed preposition or conjunction, or following the definite article. Assimilation of the *lām* of the definite article before “sun” letters is disregarded. Final inflections of verbs are retained, except in pausal form; final inflections of nouns and adjectives are not represented, except preceding suffixes and except when verse is romanized. Vocalic endings of pronouns, demonstratives, prepositions, and conjunctions are represented. The hyphen is used with the definite article, conjunctions, inseparable prepositions, and other prefixes. Note the exceptional treatment of the preposition *li-* followed by the article, as in *li-l-sultān*. Note also the following exceptional spellings: Allāh, billāh, lillāh, bismillāh, mi’ah, and ibn (for both initial and medial forms). Words not requiring diacritical marks, though following the conventions outlined above, include all Islamic dynasties, as well as the following terms: Quran, sultan, amir, imam, shaykh, Sunni, Shi’i, and Sufi. Common place-names should take the common spelling in American English. Names of archaeological sites should follow the convention of the excavator.