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Mamluk Historiographic Studies: The State of the Art

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

I

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[8]*al-Mukhtār min Taʾrīkh ibn al-Jazarī al-Musammá Ḥawādith al-Zamān* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1988).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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[16]David Reisman has recently discovered a holograph manuscript of the work; see ″A Holograph MS of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah's *Dhayl*,″ paper presented at the Middle East Studies Association annual meeting, 1996.

[17]For a description of the manuscripts see the editor´s introduction, 10-17.

[18]″Kitāb al-Nuqūd al-Qadīmah wa-al-Islāmīyah,″ *Majallat al-ʿUṣūr* [London] 3, no. 1 (1988): 117-147.

[19]See pp. 132-154 of the edition.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[36]″Editing Arabic Chronicles,″ 1.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[53]″Editing Arabic Chronicles,″ 5.

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

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

II

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

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

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

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

[57]A number of bio-bibliographical studies of Mamluk historians, written in Arabic, has been published over the past years. Nearly all these publications, however, are of a popular nature: e.g., Muḥammad Kamāl al-Dīn ʿIzz al-Dīn′s *Silsilat al-Muʾarrikhīn*, published in Beirut by ʿĀlam al-Kutub, including *al-Maqrīzī Muʾarrikhan* (1990), *Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī Muʾarrikhan* (1987), *Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Qalqashandī Muʾarrikhan* (1990), *ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ al-Ḥanafī Muʾarrikhan* (1990), *al-Badr al-Zarkashī Muʾarrikhan* (1989); and Ḥusayn ʿĀṣī′s *al-Maqrīzī Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbd al-Qādir al-ʿUbaydī 766-845 H./1366-1441 M. Muʾarrikh al-Duwal al-Islamīyah fī Miṣr* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmīyah, 1992), and his *Ibn Iyās Muʾarrikh al-Fatḥ al-ʿUthmānī li-Miṣr* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmīyah, 1993).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[62]*Introduction*, 1.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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the fellow students of the person in question.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[74]Guo, ″al-Yūnīnī,″ 11-27.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

III

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

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

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

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

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

[95]*Introduction*, passim.

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

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

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

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

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

[98]″Auflösung,″ 52f.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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[104]Wrongly spelled as ″al-Muʿaiyad,″ 222.

[105]*Formen*, 222.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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[110]Ibid., 110.

[111]Berkey, *Transmission of Knowledge*, 82ff.

[112]This statistical survey is part of a revised version of my dissertation, yet to be published.

[113]Much previous scholarly emphasis has been placed on the folkloric materials found in Ibn al-Dawādārī′s chronicles; e.g., Haarmann, *Quellenstudien*, 162-175; Barbara Langner, *Untersuchungen zur historischen Volkskunde Ägyptens nach mamlukischen Quellen* (Berlin: Schwarz, 1983), passim.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[118]See note 5 above.

[119]*Ibn Iyās wa-al-Lughah: Min Kitābihi Badāʾiʿ al-Zuhūr fī Waqāʾiʿ al-Duhūr* (Alexandria: al-Maktab al-Jāmiʿī al-Ḥadīth, 1989).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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